



VIOLINIST RACHEL BARTON PINE,
TEDDY ABRAMS AND
THE ROYAL SCOTTISH NATIONAL ORCHESTRA PERFORM
DVOŘÁK AND KHACHATURIAN VIOLIN CONCERTOS ON
AVIE RECORDS, AVAILABLE NOVEMBER 1

Project Highlights the Influences of Traditional Folk Music on Both Concertos



Chart-topping, international violin soloist Rachel Barton Pine, joined by multi-faceted conductor Teddy Abrams and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, releases *Dvořák and Khachaturian Violin Concertos*, on AVIE on November 1. The album, featuring Dvořák’s Violin Concerto in A minor Op. 53 and Khachaturian’s Violin Concerto in D minor, highlights each composer’s prominent use of his own traditional ethnic music.

(Press release continues after shareable sound clips)

Rachel Barton Pine in Conversation about Dvořák’s Violin Concerto in A minor Op. 53

Rachel Barton Pine in Conversation about Khachaturian’s Violin Concerto in D minor

Hear Rachel Barton Pine discuss the “furiant” folk dance found in Dvořák’s last movement

Hear Pine on her favorite moment in the Khachaturian Violin Concerto

WAVFile (58 sec): <https://tinyurl.com/pinedvorakfuriantlv>
 You Tube (58 sec): <https://tinyurl.com/pinedvorakfuriantytlv>

WAVFile (50 sec): <https://tinyurl.com/PinefaveKhach>
 You Tube (50 sec): <https://tinyurl.com/PinefaveKhachyt>

Hear Pine discuss Dvořák’s infamous opening passage

Hear Pine highlight the dance in rondo form found in the last movement of the Khachaturian’s Violin Concerto

WAVFile (30 sec): <https://tinyurl.com/pinedvorakopening>
 You Tube (30 sec): <https://tinyurl.com/pinedvorakopeningyt>

WAVFile (1:17 min): <https://tinyurl.com/pinekhachrondo>
 You Tube (1:17 min): <https://tinyurl.com/pinekhachrondoyt>

Hear Pine on the theme found in Dvořák’s second movement

Hear Pine on first learning the Dvořák and Khachaturian violin concertos, and why the “riffs” in the first movement of the Khachaturian appealed to her as a teenage heavy metal fan

WAVFile (55 sec): <https://tinyurl.com/pinedvorfavetheme>
 You Tube (55 sec): <https://tinyurl.com/pinedvorfavethemeyt>

WAVFile (1:06 min): <https://tinyurl.com/khachismetall>
 You Tube (1:06 min): <https://tinyurl.com/khachismetallt>

sound clips edited by Steve Robinson, New Media Productions

Explains Pine, “The thing that really connects the Dvořák and Khachaturian concertos is that both composers were really inspired by the ethnic music of their particular region of the world: Czech composer Antonín Dvořák by Czech folk music from his homeland, while the Soviet-Armenian Khachaturian drew upon the harmonies, rhythms, and colorful affects of Armenian folk music and other music of the Caucasus. It’s not so much that one needs to specifically study Armenian folk music or Czechoslovakian folk music in order to bring that element to these concertos, it’s more tuning into how their presence is dancing throughout the works.”

Adds Abrams, “It’s a very natural way of accessing this music. Quite often, popular music infiltrates our mind and becomes part of our musical identity. It certainly was the case with those two composers as both concertos showcase a folk influence in pretty prominent ways. You can derive almost every section of the Khachaturian from some element of Armenian folk and Dvořák, of course, was constantly influenced by Bohemian Czech folk music.”

Pine first fell in love with Dvořák’s Violin Concerto in A minor Op. 53 and Khachaturian’s Violin Concerto in D minor when she learned them at age 15, and she has performed them each regularly ever since.

“These are two concertos that I know so well and have lived with for a long time. I’m so grateful that the brilliant conductor Teddy Abrams and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra joined me on this recording. Teddy truly enhanced what I was doing interpretationally, and the RNSO was not only playing wonderfully, but really feeling it. The music-making was so lovely and vibrant,” says Pine.

Dvořák and Khachaturian Violin Concertos marks Pine’s 39th recording and fifth album on AVIE records (AV 2375). Pine’s previous four AVIE albums, *Mozart: Complete Violin Concertos* with The Academy of St Martin in the Fields, conducted by Sir Neville Marriner; *Bel Canto Paganini: 24 Caprices and other works for solo violin*; *Testament: Complete Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin* by Johann Sebastian Bach, and *Elgar & Bruch Violin Concertos* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andrew Litton all debuted on the classical charts.



Session recording photos of Rachel Barton Pine, Teddy Abrams and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra are here: <https://tinyurl.com/rbpdvorkhachphotos>
Photo credit: Sally Jubb Photography.

Album Artwork is here:
<https://tinyurl.com/rbp-dvorkhachpix>
Photo credit: Lisa-Marie Mazzucco.

About Dvořák’s Violin Concerto (adapted from Pine’s liner notes)

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) was a respected European-style composer of his time; his writing demands a fullness of tone typical of German Romantic music and his Violin Concerto makes copious use of the lyrical quality of the solo violin in all three movements.

Slavic rhythms infuse the entire concerto; its opening draws on an international musical language with a very strong regionalism of Czech rhythms. Pine's interpretation draws out the folk element in Dvořák's passagework and her characterful dance-like playing brings the music to life.

Dvořák's last movement is particularly folkloric, with a bagpipe texture in the accompaniment and the typical "dumka" section in the middle appearing in its expected melancholy guise, and then returning at the coda, having transformed into a celebration. Dvořák's catchy main rondo theme containing energetic and indeterminate rhythmic patterns of two against three is inspired by a Czech folk dance called a "furiant."

It was 1879 when Dvořák began writing a violin concerto for the eminent violinist Joseph Joachim, a process which would consist of composing, sharing the music with Joachim, receiving comments, making revisions, and repeating as necessary until Joachim was ready to give the work a public premiere. Dvořák had every reason to expect a favorable outcome.

Things did not go as planned. Although Dvořák had been a proficient string player, Joachim had concerns about the writing for the solo violin. He wrote in a letter to Dvořák that, "certain details make it clear that you have not played [the violin] yourself for some time." Furthermore, Joachim did not look favorably on the formal structure of Dvořák's first movement which contained no significant orchestral tutti, no solo cadenza, and a truncated recapitulation that is essentially interrupted by a transitional section.

The collaborative process dragged on for three years. Joachim had clearly thought enough of the music's potential to make copious notes necessitating significant rewriting. In November 1882, Joachim gave the piece a run through. However, he was never satisfied and ultimately declined to perform the concerto publicly. The premiere was given by the young Czech violinist František Ondříček in Prague in 1883. Ondříček had a strong affinity for his countryman's new piece and toured it all over the world to great success.

About Khachaturian's Violin Concerto (adapted from Pine's liner notes)

Considered the most important Armenian composer of the 20th century, Aram Khachaturian's (1903-1978) major works garnered international attention and earned him the reputation as the third great Soviet composer after Shostakovich and Prokofiev. Khachaturian's Violin Concerto was premiered by its dedicatee David Oistrakh, and quickly gained international popularity. It was awarded the Soviet Union's highest artistic award, the Stalin Prize, the following year.

As a child, Khachaturian had been exposed to a variety of ethnic folk music. He explained, "I grew up in an atmosphere rich in folk music: popular festivities, rites, joyous and sad events in the life of the people always accompanied by music, the vivid tunes of Armenian, Azerbaijani and Georgian songs and dances performed by ashugs (folk bards) and musicians... They shaped my musical consciousness and lay at the foundations of my artistic personality." The year before writing the Violin Concerto, Khachaturian spent six months in Armenia immersing himself in its folk music.

The sounds of Transcaucasia permeate Khachaturian's violin concerto, with vibrant rhythms, rich ornamentation in imitation of improvised melismas, modal scales, harmonies based on folk music tunings and overtones, and timbres suggestive of Eastern instruments.

Khachaturian wrote his Violin Concerto during two months in the summer of 1940, while he was anticipating the birth of his son. Describing the inspiration that he experienced during the compositional process, Khachaturian wrote, "Sometimes my thoughts and imagination outraced the hand that was covering the staff with notes. The themes came to me in such abundance that I had a hard time putting them in some order... I wrote music as though on a wave of happiness; my whole being was in a state of joy, for I was awaiting the birth of my son. And this feeling, this love of life, was transmitted to the music."

"I particularly love that analogy between giving birth to a composition and creating the new life that is a new human being," says Pine. "We certainly have heard all about composers and artists who are full of angst, struggling for each measure, or not satisfied with anything he or she has done. I love the fact that Khachaturian's process was a celebration, an anticipation and so filled with joy."

About Rachel Barton Pine

Billboard-chart topping violinist Rachel Barton Pine is a leading interpreter of the great classical masterworks, thrilling audiences with her dazzling technique, lustrous tone, and emotional honesty. With an infectious joy in music-making and a passion for connecting historical research to performance, Pine transforms experiences of classical music.

Pine performs with the world's leading orchestras, including the Chicago and Vienna Symphonies, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic, and Camerata Salzburg. She has worked with such renowned conductors as Zubin Mehta, Erich Leinsdorf, Neeme Järvi, and Marin Alsop. Her collaborators include leading artists such as Daniel Barenboim, Christoph Eschenbach, William Warfield, and Christopher O'Riley. The many contemporary composers with whom she has collaborated include David Chesky, Billy Childs, John Corigliano, Joe Deninzon, Mohammed Fairouz, Luis Jorge González, Earl Maneein, Daniel Bernard Roumain, José Serebrier, and Augusta Read Thomas.

She has recorded 39 acclaimed albums. Her AVIE discography includes Mozart: Complete Violin Concerto, Sinfonia Concertante with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Sir Neville Marriner conducting; Bel Canto Paganini; and Elgar & Bruch Violin Concertos with the BBC Symphony, Andrew Litton conducting.

A gold medalist in the J.S. Bach International Competition, her performances are heard on NPR and stations around the globe. She has appeared on NBC's Today Show, CBS Sunday Morning, CNN, PBS NewsHour, NPR's "Tiny Desk," "Performance Today" and "A Prairie Home Companion" and has been featured in the Los Angeles Times, The Wall Street Journal, and The New York Times. Her RBP Foundation assists young artists and runs the groundbreaking Music by Black Composers project. She performs on the 1742 "ex-Bazzini, ex-Soldat" Guarneri del Gesù, on lifetime loan from her anonymous patron.

About Teddy Abrams

Teddy Abrams, Music Director of the Louisville Orchestra and Music Director and Conductor of the Britt Festival Orchestra, is an acclaimed conductor, composer, pianist, and clarinetist. A tireless advocate for the power of music, Abrams promotes interdisciplinary collaboration with organizations including the Louisville Ballet, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Speed Art Museum, and the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Abrams moves fluidly across genres from rock to hip-hop, jazz, and gospel to classical. He recently collaborated with Jim James, vocalist and guitarist for My Morning Jacket, on the song cycle *The Order of Nature*, which they premiered with the Louisville Orchestra in 2018 and recorded on Decca Gold. His rap-opera, *The Greatest: Muhammad Ali*, premiered in 2017, celebrating Louisville's hometown hero with an all-star cast that included Rhiannon Giddens and Jubilant Sykes. Abrams' ground-breaking work with the Louisville Orchestra has been profiled on CBS News Sunday Morning, NPR, and in *The Wall Street Journal*.

Guest conducting highlights include engagements with the Los Angeles Philharmonic; the San Francisco, Houston, National, Seattle, Vancouver, Milwaukee, New World, and New Jersey Symphonies; and the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. Internationally, Abrams has conducted the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg in Luxembourg and Paris, the Malaysian Philharmonic, and Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Dedicated to exploring new and engaging ways to communicate with a diverse range of audiences, Abrams co-founded the Sixth Floor Trio as well as GardenMusic, the music festival of the world-renowned Fairchild Tropical Garden in Miami.

Royal Scottish National Orchestra

Music Director: Thomas Søndergård

The Royal Scottish National Orchestra is one of Europe's leading symphony orchestras. Formed in 1891 as the Scottish Orchestra, the company became the Scottish National Orchestra in 1950, and was awarded Royal Patronage in 1977. Many renowned conductors have contributed to its success, including Sir John Barbirolli, Walter Susskind, Sir Alexander Gibson, Neeme Järvi, Walter Weller, Alexander Lazarev and Stéphane Denève.

The RSNO performs across Scotland and appears regularly at the Edinburgh International Festival, the BBC Proms in London and the St Magnus Festival, Orkney, in addition to international tours. The Orchestra has a worldwide reputation for the quality of its recordings. Over 200 releases are available, including the complete symphonies of Sibelius (Gibson), Prokofiev (Järvi), Glazunov (Serebrier), Nielsen and Martinů (Thomson), Roussel (Denève) and the major orchestral works of Debussy (Denève).

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Contact for AVIE Records:
Melanne Mueller
+44 (0) 7788 662 461, +1 917 907 2785
melanne@avierecords.com

Contact for Rachel Barton Pine:
Allison Van Etten
+1 323 449 5030
allison@ravenscroftpr.com