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# Yuri Simonov

## Selected Reviews

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### **Moscow Philharmonic Sheffield City Hall (May 2014)**

"A packed City Hall witnessed the return of the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra to deliver a programme of Russian music, two years after their last appearance in Sheffield. Yuri Simonov, their charismatic Director, stepped in at the last moment to deliver a thoroughly entertaining experience that culminated in two encores: Rimsky-Korsakov's virtuoso 'Flight of the Bumblebee' and Shostakovich's 'Polka' from The Golden Age Suite. Simonov displayed a flamboyant enthusiasm throughout that left the audience in raptures." – **Gary O'Shea, *Classical Sheffield***

### **Moscow Philharmonic Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham (May 2014)**

"Russian orchestras bring a degree of passion and a richness of colour that is somehow completely their own. In Thursday night's programme the Moscow Philharmonic delivered three sharply contrasting pieces which allowed them to project the Russian musical soul with sharp focus and a no-holds-barred approach to raw emotion.

This epic, Technicolor approach took the audience by the throat in the opening piece: Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini* in which big melodies were built into richly emotional climaxes with accompanying whirlwinds of sound generated by the opulent strings.

Rachmaninov's 3rd is the least performed of his symphonies [...] Conductor Yuri Simonov coaxed an openhearted yet decidedly un-schmaltzy performance from his players, shaping melodies so that they seemed to take flight. Three generous encores followed which, not surprisingly, brought the audience cheering to their feet." – **William Ruff, *Nottingham Post***

### **Moscow Philharmonic Bristol Colston Hall (May 2014)**

"Composed only months after the defeat of Nazi Germany, Shostakovich's Symphony No 9 was described as a merry little piece that musicians will love to play.

The Symphony No 10, composed shortly after the death of Stalin would, you think, also be a cause for musical joy. But the shadows cast by those years spent under such an oppressive regime show in the harsher tones to be found amongst the delicate beauty and triumphant sounds within this work.

Conductor Yuri Simonov who, for all the fact that he uses many gestures that cannot be found in the conductor's manual, was inspirational in the way that he coaxed the very best out of this fine orchestra [...] Between them, conductor and orchestra explored every nuance within the scores of these very differing symphonies." – **Gerry Parker, *Bristol Post***

### **Moscow Philharmonic Leeds Town Hall (May 2014)**

"With their principal conductor, Yuri Simonov, the orchestra set the scene for the evening with a vivid account of highlights from Tchaikovsky's ballet, *Sleeping Beauty*, the outstanding woodwind section featured flute solos of uncommon quality. Red-blooded excitement from brass and percussion in the outer movements of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* was never in short supply,

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but Simonov's reading also looked towards creating the plethora of subtle tone colours. That approach brought out many details usually skimmed over, the string section bringing to the score the full measure of shimmering beauty."

**-David Denton, Leeds Concert Season**

### **Moscow Philharmonic Birmingham Symphony Hall (May 2014)**

"I achieved some kind of record on Tuesday, when, notorious for my loathing of encores, stayed for no fewer than five at the end of an extraordinary evening from the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra. There was something in the air for this opening event of the orchestra's 18-concert tour. The audience just wanted more and more, and the musicians under the genial baton of Yuri Simonov were happy to deliver the goods [...] When more wonderful is Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony, tortured yet determined, and there was much to admire here[...]as a concept this interpretation was shattering." **- Christopher Morley, Birmingham Post**

"Simonov led a determined account, expansive and with sweep, not entirely personal, but it sounded glorious. The conclusion to the first movement was viciously doom-laden, which gave the second movement's calmness a heart-skipping contrast. The pizzicato scherzo was on the slow side, although the scoring shone with brilliance. The Symphony concluded triumphantly, and proved a great showcase for the Moscow Philharmonic, clearly enjoying its rapport with Simonov [...] There were five encores! Then, glancing at his watch, Simonov decided that there was still time for Dvořák's Tenth and Eighth Slavonic Dances: the former swooned as salon music, conductor having a ball; the latter very fast and executed with gusto."

**-Kevin Rodgers, Classical Source**

"Like a good many Russian orchestras, it retains a distinctively Soviet sound albeit with some of the harder edges smoothed out slightly. The portentous opening to Tchaikovsky's Francesca da Rimini featured an upbeat from a particularly full-throated double bass section, highly responsive to Simonov's gestures. The conductor adopted a statuesque posture throughout Tchaikovsky's symphonic poem, somehow managing to summon terrifying blasts of sound in climactic moments with only discreet, staccato movements. In this respect, Dante's Inferno was spectacularly and vividly conjured by Simonov and the orchestra. The finale was impressively dispatched and Simonov, more effectively than others, avoided any hint of episodism by not allowing the pauses between sections to linger." **- Peter Marks, Bachtrack**

### **Moscow Philharmonic St. David's Hall, Cardiff (May 2014)**

"Yuri Simonov and his Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra were accorded a warm welcome at St David's Hall. The second half comprised extracts (selected by Mr Simonov) of Tchaikovsky's Sleeping Beauty. While piecemeal in construction, it worked remarkably well. The performance was witty and compelling, and was followed by not one, nor two, but three encores.

It would be wrong to say the orchestra handled this repertoire so masterfully because of any innate Russianness. It does them far more justice to say they played extremely well because they're extremely good musicians." **- David Owens, Wales Online**

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### **Moscow Philharmonic Usher Hall, Edinburgh (May 2014)**

"In this all-Russian programme, the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, with their inimitable conductor Yuri Simonov, gave a brilliant performance of familiar works, alongside those not often played in the concert hall." – **Susan Nickalls, *The Scotsman***  
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### **Moscow Philharmonic Belfast St. Brides Hall (October 2011)**

"The conductor was Yuri Simonov, whose work in the Rachmaninov ensured strong ensemble playing and sympathetic interpretation [...] It was terrific to hear the Mussorgsky played by a large orchestra, steeped in the tradition from which the work emerged." – **Andrea Rea, *Studio Symphony***

### **Moscow Philharmonic Bridgewater Hall Manchester (October 2011)**

"The Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra enjoyed an evening of youthful exuberance in the Bridgewater Hall with an all-Russian programme, conducted with grace and refinement by Yuri Simonov[...]The excitability and bouncy attack of the third movement were well managed by Simonov, who also made the most of his beautifully sonorous string section. The first of the evening's many encores, a Brahms Intermezzo, was a satisfying epilogue to a gutsy and yet sensuous reading of a fine concerto[...]The understated beauty and skittish playfulness of these works were a very pleasing end to a fine concert."

– **Rohan Shotton, *Bachtrack***

### **Moscow Philharmonic Usher Hall Edinburgh (October 2011)**

"As they started to play some excerpts from Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet he at first appeared very regimental as he took full control of his players. But a gentler side started to emerge and by the end of the concert he was thoroughly enjoying himself demonstrating that he might be 70 this year but remains remarkably sprightly. By the end the audience was on its feet with well deserved applause." – **Barnaby Miln, *The Edinburgh Guide***

### **Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg Das OPS segelte in sicheren, glitzernden Gewässern (November 2010)**

"Am 10. November segelte eine große Fregatte namens OPS (Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg) bei gutem Wind über sicheres Gewässer. Der Kapitän, Yuri Simonov, hielt das Steuerruder fest in seiner eleganten Hand und ließ kein Schwanken oder gar ein Abgleiten vom Kurs aufkommen. Die umschifften Inseln namens Nikolai Rimski-Korsakov, Carl Maria von Weber und Alexander Glazounov präsentierten sich von ihrer schönsten Seite. Dass man ein klassisches Konzert mit einer seemännischen Metapher zusammenfassen kann zeigt vor allem eines: Die schier unendliche Farbigkeit der gespielten Stücke, in welchen sich wie an einer Perlenschnur eine Melodie an die nächste reihte."

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Zu Beginn erklang Rimski-Korsakovs Suite aus der Oper "Das Märchen vom Zaren Saltan", das mit zauberhaften, einfachen, ins Ohr gehenden Themen und knapp aufeinander folgenden musikalischen Gegensätzen so voll bestückt ist. Das Märchen, in welchem das arme Bauernmädchen Militrissa vom Zaren geschwängert und dennoch verstoßen wird, allerlei Abenteuer und Gefahren erleiden muss, um erst zu Ende des Stückes errettet zu werden, wurde vom Komponisten in dieser Suite meisterhaft zusammengefasst. Der russische Dirigent, Yuri Simonov, der kurzfristig für Neeme Järvi einsprang und dieses Stück anstelle des vorgesehenen von Eduard Tubin auswählte, dirigierte mit Verve, Kennerschaft und Eleganz das schillernde Werk. Ob Lyrismen, große Spannungsböden, wie im zweiten Satz oder wahre Dramatik, welche die Streicher zu einem Toben und Brausen verleitet sodass man meinte, sie – oder besser gesagt die Segelfregatte – müsste sich sogleich in die Lüfte erheben – alles wurde vom

Orchester einfühlsam interpretiert. Dass man den Hummelflug, der auch als Solobearbeitung für Violine und Cello gerne gespielt wird, etwas anders hören konnte als man es gewöhnt ist, vor allem weil Simonov die Streicher fast adäquat vom Rest des Klangkörpers begleiten ließ, kann man als erweiterte Hörerfahrung bezeichnen.

...Alexander Glazounov, der mit seiner 5. Symphonie am Schluss des Abends vertreten war, reihte sich von der Thematik wunderbar in die zuvor erklangenen Stücke ein. Große Dramatik steht in diesem Konzert neben schwebender Leichtigkeit, ein musikalisch hübscher Einfall kommt nach dem anderen daher und wohl klingende Melodien fungieren als erholsame Verbindungsstücke. Der letzte Satz, der viel stärker als die vorhergegangenen zeigt, dass Glazounov noch 36 Jahre im 21. Jahrhundert lebte, ersetzt, wenn man müde ist, jede noch so starke Tasse Espresso. Die Nervosität, die sich in den Streichern zeigt und die starken Bläser- und Paukeneinsätze, sowie das immense Auf- und Abwachen, welches das gesamte Klangapparat erfasst, lässt auch zu später Stunde noch keine Müdigkeit aufkommen.

Eine wunderbare Konzertzusammenstellung, ein herausragender Solist, ein flexibles Orchester und eine gediegene Führung nach alter Schule – das ist jener Wind, mit dem das OPS zur Freude des Publikums an diesem Abend in sicherem, aber glitzerndem Gewässer segelte." – **Michaela Preiner, *European Cultural News***

"Rimsky-Korsakov et Glazounov y engageaient l'orchestre dans une soirée roborative, où s'intercale avec légèreté le concerto pour clarinette en fa mineur de Weber. C'était ce mercredi, dans la saison du Philharmonique.

Inspirée d'une nouvelle en vers de Pouchkine, la Suite du Conte du Tsar Saltan constitue, en plusieurs « portraits musicaux », une ouverture au large pouvoir évocateur. A la tête de l'orchestre, Yuri Simonov adopte une posture opératique, incarnant du geste les visions fantastiques de l'histoire, à la manière d'ombres chinoises : tour à tour nerveux et souples, les bras se baladent et les mains babillent pour illustrer la texture voulue, le corps ondule avec la musique dans une véritable danse."

### Un phrasé souple et effilé

"La direction généreuse de ce chef expérimenté - assistant de Mvarinski en son temps - surprend visuellement mais opère avec clarté. Dans un passage plus mystérieux, les ondoyantes arabesques des violoncelles dessinent des chromatismes descendants;

l'écriture, proche de Tchaïkovski, voit fusionner les pupitres avec bonheur. Un choral cuivré laisse place à un final plus sucré, où le geste se fait plus sobre avant l'ultime rush - l'orchestre recueille une belle ovation."

– **Christian Wolff, *Dernieres nouvelles d'Alsace***

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### **Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra / Freddy Kempf (piano) Colston Hall, Bristol (October 2008)**

**Khachaturian:** Spartacus Suite (1950/1953)

**Prokofiev:** Piano Concerto No.3 in C, op.26 (1921)

**Tchaikovsky:** Symphony No.4 in F minor, op.36 (1877/1878)

"The days when well known orchestras and soloists toured extensively have passed, but the arrival in Britain of the Moscow Philharmonic, under its Conductor Yuri Simonov, is showing that it can still send audiences away with the feeling of having participated in a remarkable musical event. The programme in Bristol's newly refurbished Colston Hall on October 23rd began with Rimsky Korsakov's "Sadko, Opus 5", based on a Russian legend and composed in 1867. Rimsky Korsakov wrote to Mussorgsky that he was satisfied with it and that "It was one of the best things he had composed to date". The Moscow players

made the most of the work's voluptuous qualities, which draw particular attention to the woodwind section. This performance showed the orchestra's confidence in doing all that was necessary to recreate Rimsky Korsakov's delightful music.

The programme continued by making the most of the immensely talented young soloist, Freddy Kempf, in the Prokofiev piano concerto No.3. Here, however, came the first sign that all was not well. Some of the orchestra's enthusiastic playing and abrupt attack left the soloist struggling to bring authority and subtlety to his part in the proceedings. It is difficult to know what could

have been done to protect the orchestra from its own enthusiasm, though the audience seemed to love it and rose to applaud one of the noisiest performances I have heard in many years of concert-going. The determination of the orchestra to be the most brilliant item on the platform did not reward Kempf with the opportunities he needed to display his remarkable technique to the full. The concerto itself is a strange mixture of lyricism and twenties musical modernism.

The Spartacus Suite by Khachaturian comprises excerpts from the ballet, constructed by the Orchestra's Conductor, Yuri Simonov, which bring together highlights of the original score and was used in the BBC Television series The Onedin Line, broadcast during the early 1970s.

The Orchestra was generous with its encores, of which the only one familiar to me was an orchestral arrangement of a movement from a quartet by Borodin." – **Roy Brewer, [www.musicweb-international.com](http://www.musicweb-international.com)**

### **Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra / Freddy Kempf (piano) Cadogan Hall, London (October 2008)**

**Khachaturian:** Spartacus Suite (1950/1953)

**Prokofiev:** Piano Concerto No.3 in C, op.26 (1921)

**Tchaikovsky:** Symphony No.4 in F minor, op.36 (1877/1878)

"Apart from a recent CD re-issue of a live performance (8 April 1944) of his Piano Concerto by William Kappell (conducted by Eugene Ormandy, Music and Arts CD-1109) I haven't heard a note of Khachaturian's music in over 25 years – indeed, not since I wrote a sleeve note for an LP of his orchestral Suites. I wasn't over impressed with what I heard then and I was more than slightly miffed at the prospect of having to sit through a three movement Suite of music from his ballet Spartacus. I am very happy to report that I thoroughly enjoyed this music, it's vibrant, colourful, passionate – the famous Adagio of Spartacus and Phrygia – and full of good tunes and great orchestrations! It made a sparkling overture to a very exciting evening of great music making.

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Freddy Kempf made a wonderful job of the demanding 3rd Concerto of Prokofiev....Throughout, Kempf and Simonov gave such commitment to the work that it proved to be a revelation to one as saturated with music as me! Marvellous stuff!

After the interval, full of angst, paranoia and not a little self doubt and a belief in kismet, Simonov and the orchestra delivered a monumental account of Tchaikovsky's troubled 4th Symphony. The opening horn calls immediately knocked us back into our seats and the disturbed first movement – even the, supposed, gentler second theme was overlaid with a sense of foreboding – was filled with worry and an almost unbearable tension. The second movement, with its glorious oboe solo, felt less than comfortable – there was always something there in the background which you couldn't quite get hold of, and it disquieted you. The scherzo was taken at a more deliberate tempo than is usual but this allowed Simonov to really point the differences between the three elements of the music; the pizzicato strings, the fairground woodwind and the brass march. The playful mood was broken by the carnival music of the finale but, even here, Simonov knew that tensions were mounting and when the huge repeat of the motto, fate, theme broke through the festive mood it was devastating in its power and fury.

What a fine orchestra the Moscow Philharmonic is! And what a predominantly young orchestra too. Over the past ten years or so, the Russian orchestras have lost some of their, what we always thought of as, essential Russian sound, especially the wobbly horns! They now sound much more Western than before but this hasn't tempered their enthusiasm for their music making! The orchestra displayed a full and rich sound – wonderful warm string tone, singing woodwinds, forceful and ringing brass and rampant percussion (when necessary). Simonov directed performances of the highest distinction. The full house was more than well pleased but, like *Oliver Twist*, we wanted more and the strings gave a beautiful and restrained performance of the Nocturne from Borodin's 2nd Quartet. We were even more pleased and wanted even more but Simonov had to check his pocket watch

before launching into a swaggering account of the Waltz from Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* and the full band delighted us and sent us home happy and most satisfied.

This was a concert which will live long in the memory and is a superb start to this season's Zurich International Concert Series at the Cadogan Hall." – **Bob Briggs, [www.musicweb-international.com](http://www.musicweb-international.com)**

### **St Petersburg Philharmonic The Sage, Gateshead (October 2008)**

"The St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra treated a sell-out audience at The Sage Gateshead to magnificent performances of works by musical giants from their homeland and that of their hosts. Yuri Simonov, who had to take up the baton at short notice from Yuri Termikanov, opened with Elgar's Introduction and Allegro for Strings. It was an assured reading, with the strings producing a lush resonance that brought out the full splendour of the work...

The evening was rounded off with a stunning performance of...Elgar's Variations on an Original Theme Enigma. Simonov displayed an innate grasp of the underlying wit of the piece, which was written as a series of musical portraits of his close acquaintances. From the flowing opening of the Enigma the audience was swept away. One highlight, among many, was the Nimrod Adagio. The orchestra conveyed the solemn nobility of this cornerstone of the work with heartfelt warmth. The applause was rapturous and the audience was treated to an encore in the shape of the third movement of Prokofiev's Symphony No 1."

– **Gavin Engelbrecht, *The Northern Echo***

"Conductor Yuri Simonov shaped and moulded an immaculate interpretation of Tchaikovsky's Fantasy Overture: Romeo and Juliet...

As an encore, Simonov [gave us]...a rendition of Nimrod from Elgar's Enigma Variations. Here's looking forward to an early return visit." – **Gavin Engelbrecht, *The Northern Echo***

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### St Petersburg Philharmonic European tour (May 2008)

"Bajo la batuta de Yuri Simonov, enargado de sustituir al director titular de la formación, Yuri Temirkanov, la Filarmónica de San Petersburgo levantó a los aplausos de un CAEM totalmente entregado."

[Trans: "Under the baton of Yuri Simonov, entrusted with substituting the orchestra's regular conductor, Yuri Temirkanov, the St Petersburg Philharmonic aroused applause from a CAEM that was totally enraptured"] – **La Gaceta de Salamanca**

"Simonov...director de sobrada valía y una impecable trayectoria artística que inició como asistente del mítico Evgheny Mravisky en la Filarmónica de Leningado y que acaba de cumplir cincuenta años de labor directorial."

[Trans: "Simonov, is a renowned conductor whose worth and impeccable artistic trajectory began as assistant of the mythical Evgheny Mravisky at the Leningrad Philharmonic, and is approaching fifty years on the podium."]

– **Joaquín Valderòn, La Nueva Espana**

"El reconocido director Yuri Simonov dio una lección desde la batuta, llegado desde el podio de la Filarmónica de San Petersburgo."

La Orquesta de San Petersburgo mostró todo su esplendor a través de la interpretación de la obertura de "La leyenda de la ciudad invisible de Kitezsh".

La Orquesta de San Petersburgo obtuvo la ovación del público abbarotó la sala. La formación puso el broche con un par de bises, un Momento Musical de Schubert y el Cascanueces de Tchaikovsky."

[Trans: "The renowned conductor Yuri Simonov gave a masterclass with his baton..."]

*The St Petersburg Orchestra displayed all of it's splendour in the overture of "The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezsh".*

*The St Petersburg Orchestra obtained the sell-out public's ovation. The ensemble cemented this with a couple of encores, a Moment Musicale by Schubert and Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker."* – **Diana Díaz, La Nueva Espana**

"Gestern haben die St. Petersburger Philharmoniker die Symphonie im Konzerthaus gespielt - seit Monaten ausverkauft. Yuri Simonov ist für den erkrankten Yuri Temirkanov eingesprungen. Ich kann mir für diese Musik kein besseres Orchester vorstellen. Die Aufführung hat alles übertroffen, was ich je an Konzerten und Einspielungen der Siebten gehört habe."

– **JR, Tamino Klassikforum**

"Yuri Simonov und die St. Petersburger Philharmoniker zeigen Kraft, Gewalt, Brutalitaet, Unerbittlichkeit, Todesangst, aber auch die Feinheiten dieser Hoechst kunstvollen Symphonie. Den St. Petersburgern gelingt es, mit Schostakowitschs in einen magischen Bann zu ziehen."

Trotz immense breiten Tempi haelt Simonovimmense Spannung durch. Betoerend die klaenglische Schoenheit und Ausgewogenheit, beindruckend die hohe rhythmische Praezision. Mit hoechster Konsequenz und Schluessigkeit fuegt er die Abschnitte zur Monumentalform zusammen."

Allerdings neigt er auch zu Kraftentfaltung und exaltierter dramatischer Geste. Die Musiker ueberzeugten mit einer

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sorgfältigen Wiedergabe in den Monumentalteilen, aber auch mit einer beachtlichen Bandbreite an intimen, lyrischen Passagen. Grossartig die Leidenschaft und Energie im dritten Satz, die dann in tiefe Verzweiflung und Lethargie zurueckfaellt." – **Florian Krenstetter, Kronen Zeitung**

"Ohne seinen Chefdirigenten Yuri Temirkanow war das Philharmonische Orchester aus St. Petersburg nach Zürich gekommen. Aus gesundheitlichen Gründen hatte der 70-jährige Temirkanow die Leitung des Klubhaus-Konzerts in der Tonhalle Zürich abgesagt. An seiner Stelle dirigierte Yuri Simonow die Aufführung der «Leningrader» Sinfonie Nr. 7 von Dmitri Schostakowitsch.

Simonow wurde 1941 in Saratow geboren, in jenem Jahr also, in welchem Schostakowitsch unter dem Eindruck der deutschen Belagerung Leningrads seine siebte Sinfonie komponierte. Nach der Ausbildung in Leningrad machte Simonow als Chefdirigent am Bolschoi-Theater in Moskau Karriere. Dass er dort reichlich Erfahrung mit Ballettmusik gesammelt hat, hörte man den mitreissenden Zugaben aus Tschaikowskys «Schwanensee» an.

Bei Schostakowitsch setzte Simonow ganz auf die brillante orchestrale Wirkung, ohne dabei Tempi und Dynamik besonders zu modifizieren. Der Kopfsatz mit seinem unablässig wiederholten, von Trommelwirbeln begleiteten Thema steigerte sich zwar zu schneidender Schärfe, erinnerte in den herausgespielten Farbwechseln der Instrumentierung aber wohl nicht zufällig an Ravels «Boléro». Mit Lautstärke wurde an diesem Abend nicht gespart. Die St. Petersburger Philharmoniker traten in glanzvoller Grossformation an, die Wucht der Klangexplosionen schien zuweilen den Tonhallsaal zum Erbeben zu bringen. Aber es gab auch fein Ausgehörtes wie das Solo der Bassklarinette zur Begleitung der beiden Harfen im zweiten Satz und die kühle Neoklassik der Bläserakkorde im Adagio. Das Finale fegte als gewaltiger Sturmwind dahin, wobei die Streicher beim Pizzicato ihre Saiten so stark anrissen, dass sie auf die Griffbretter schlugen und wie peitschende Schüsse klangen. Das machte wie der ins dreifache Forte gesteigerte Schluss grossartigen Effekt. Entsprechend begeistert fiel der Applaus aus, wenn man sich auch nicht ganz des Eindrucks erwehren konnte, dass Schostakowitschs Musik vielleicht mehr tragische und expressive Untertöne enthält, als hier zum Klingen gebracht wurden." – **Martina Wohlthat, Neue Zürcher Zeitung**

"Wie Simonov aber das strahlende Beginnthema im Finale durchbrechen liess, kam einem Befreiungsakt gleich. Zuletzt viel, vermutlich schallender Beifall." – **Christoph Irrgeher, Wiener Zeitung**

## Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra UK Tour (November 2005)

"The orchestra rose to every challenge, providing the heart-on-sleeve emotional excitement audiences expect from a Russian orchestra – and which was cheered to the rafters before three encores." – **Will Ruff, Nottingham Evening Post**

"I've never been a big fan of his Fourth Symphony featured here... But let's face it, if anyone is going to do it justice, it's going to be the Moscow Phil. And after last night's performance I have been forced to change my mind.

"It was a masterful, powerful, everything-ful tour de force. I got the impression this was how the composer would have wanted it to sound. The allegro finale was ebullient, full of drama and superbly executed. I even caught hitherto stony-faced conductor Yuri Simonov smiling...all were smiling. Quite a lot, actually." – **John Meredith, Cambridge Evening News**

"Rachmaniov's Piano Concerto No. 2 and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 may be staple fare, but under Yuri Simonov, Chief Conductor, they were performed with a natural freshness that can only be achieved as the result of endless dedicated hard work. Discipline and finesse gave the sound a classy sheen that was clean but not clinical and always from the heart. Dark drama poured from pianist Natalia Trull's Rachmaninov. Peaks and troughs of emotion flowed through its famous big tunes with the intensity of the concerto's romantic pull moulded by Simonov as its sculptor..."



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Even more familiar melodies riddled the Tchaikovsky, Simonov shaping them with subtle colouring and remarkable precision."  
– **Carol Main, Scotsman**

"...both conductor and players demonstrated most clearly their strengths: tight ensemble, clarity of sound and a feel for the grand sweep of the composer's expression." – **Tim Foxon, Musical Resources**

"Simonov... knew how to handle the broad issues of the Tchaikovsky..." – **Conrad Wilson, Herald**

### Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 6 (October 2003)

"Tschaikowskys 6. Sinfonie spielten die Moskauer mit einer Paezision, mit einer klanglichen Geschlossenheit, wie sie nicht oft zu erleben sind...hier ein perfekt vorbereitetes Spitzenorchester genau 'seine' Musik gemacht hat. Mit drei umjubelten Zugaben ..ging diesr Verwoehn-Abend zu Ende." – **Harald Likus, Braunschweiger Zeitung**

"Yuri Simonov bot ein genaues, detailfreudiges Dirigat...Das Orchester selbst bedurfte an diesem Abend allerdings der genauen Fuehrung. Dass die Moskauer mit ihrem unbeweglichen Ernst und ihrer fast kuehlen Spielhaltung dennoch dem Werk einen grossen Dienst erwiesen , war eine kleine Ueberraschung: Das Orchester spielt, unter Verzicht auf fast jedes aeusserliche Pathos, seinen Tschaikowski sicher noch immer unvergleichlich besser als andere, die die Nacht-und-Licht-Metaphern nur zum Schwelgen und Schwitzen bringen." – **Michael Neuner, Frankfurter Rundschau**

"Dazu kam das frisch und hervorragend motiviert aufspielende Orchester der Moskauer Philharmoniker. Yuri Simonov erwies sich wieder als erfahrener Chefdirigent, der auch aus einer laengst bekkanten Tschaikoxsky-Sinfonie etwas ganz Neues,

Ungewoehntes machen kann...Yuri Simonov hatte auch noch eine andere Besonderheit porat. Schnelle Tempowechsel erhoekten die Spannung und geben dem Finale eine ganz neue dynamische Note. Grosser Beifall und eine Zugabe."  
– **Frankfurter Neue Presse**

### Mahler's Symphony No. 1, Brilliant Classics

"...an eleven disc bargain set of all Mahler symphonies taken from different sources...The First Symphony gets a performance of contrasts and maximum involvement by the Royal Philharmonic under Yuri Simonov." – **Tony Duggan, Music Web UK**

### Moscow Philharmonic Tour (May 2000)

"From the blade edge of the cellos' and violins' opening attack, on through the harsh woodwind serenading, Simonov built and sustained extraordinary tension through the long first movement. And after the tutti scream, which leads to a goose-stepping march, he drew the orchestra back to a juddering aftershock of numb tremolando." – **Hilary Finch, The Times**

### Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (January 2002)

"Simonov's body language...helped the orchestra in Elgar's "Enigma Variations", performed in the second half of the concert. Like "Pictures at an Exhibition", each variation received its typical musical-illustrative characteristic, and all of them were united into an ear-pleasing musical whole." – **Ora Binur, Ma'ariv**