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*New Babylon*

**May 19, 1990**

# **NEW BABYLON**

*An evening at the cinema*

**RUSSIA 1929**

**Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra**  
**Royce Hall, UCLA**





CHAMBER  ORCHESTRA

IONA BROWN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

May 19, 1990

Dear Patrons of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra,

We are pleased to welcome you to this truly unique cultural event -- the presentation of the Soviet epic film, "New Babylon." This 1929 movie has been rejoined, after many years of eclipse, by its original Dmitri Shostakovich score, performed tonight by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

"New Babylon" portrays historical upheavals surrounding the Paris Commune of 1871 and has been hailed as one of the most vivid cinematic examples of the Expressionist movement, which took root in art and music during the 1920s. The heightened, stylized imagery of the film, matched with Shostakovich's music, which incorporates waltzes, fragments from Offenbach, jazz, and even the "Marseillaise" for effect, provides a rare treat for both film and music fans.

Thank you for attending. Your generous support of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra ensures that this world-class musical organization can continue to perform great music, as it has done incomparably for Southern California audiences for more than two decades.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah Rutter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping initial 'D'.

Deborah Rutter  
Executive Director



The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra Society, Inc.  
presents

# "NEW BABYLON"

A silent film by Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg

with original music by Dmitri Shostakovich

performed by the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra

conducted by Neal Stulberg

commentary by Martin Marks





## **"New Babylon" Benefit Performance**

*The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra offers its most sincere thanks to those individuals and corporations without whose support this evening's screening would not be possible.*

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Monsieur Henri Wines**

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*We are grateful to Monsieur Henri for providing Stolichnaya Vodka  
and wines for the post-screening reseption.*

Caterer: Peggy Dark, The Kitchen for Exploring Foods





## The Historical Backdrop

"New Babylon" is set within the events of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71 and its aftermath. Bismarck's troops overwhelmed the French in short order and exacted harsh peace terms, which required France to pay a large indemnity and give up the territories of Alsace and Lorraine. In capitulating, the French Assembly, backed by the Parisian bourgeoisie, made plans to move from Paris to Versailles, sparking an insurrection in the city. Thousands of Parisian workers, students, artisans and intellectuals united under the banner of the Paris Commune to take over the city.

With the help of the independent national guard, the Commune held out for three months against the government. In May, 1871, it was defeated with the loss of 20,000 people, most of them executed by the upper ruling classes taking out their resentment and terrors on the supporters of the Commune.

Although the Commune's agenda for ruling Paris was rather vague and certainly not very revolutionary by historical standards, later Communists, with help from Karl Marx, would enshrine this resistance as a first attempt to set up a Communist state.

"New Babylon," the fictional department store that provides much of the film's setting, is based on the Parisian emporium "Bon Marché," which was founded in the 1860s. The Soviet filmmakers saw the department store as a fitting symbol for capitalist decadence and materialistic excess.



## New Babylon (Novii Vavilon)



Direction and script  
From idea by  
Assistants

Photography  
Art direction  
Historical consultant  
Music (for performance)

Grigori Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg  
P. Blaikin  
S. Bartenev, Sergi Gerasimov,  
M. Egorov, S. Shkliarskii  
Andrei Moskvina, E. Mikheilov  
Evgeni Enei  
A. Molok  
Dmitri Shostakovich

### CAST

Elena Kuzmina  
Piotr Sobolevskii  
David Gutman  
Sophie Magarill  
Sergei Gerasimov  
S. Gusev  
Janina Jeimo  
A. Gluchkova  
Evgeni Chervakov  
Andrei Kostrichkin  
Anna Zarahinskaia  
Vsevolod Pudovkin

Louise Poirier, shop assistant  
Jean, a soldier  
Grasselin, "New Babylon" proprietor  
An actress  
Lutro, a journalist  
Old Poirier  
Therése, a seamstress  
A washerwoman  
A soldier in the National Guard  
Old shop assistant  
Young girl at the barricades  
Shop assistant

Produced by the FEKS group for Sovkino (Leningrad)  
Filmed at the Odessa Studio, May 1928 - January 1929  
Premiere - Leningrad, March 1929.

Running time: 85 minutes. THERE WILL BE ONE INTERMISSION.

## Director/Writers

Grigori Kozintsev, born in 1905 in Kiev, was the youngest of the post-revolutionary filmmakers. He formed a performing group in 1921 with Leonid Trauberg and Sergei Yutkevich. After staging several plays in Moscow, they began filming in 1924.

Leonid Trauberg was born in 1902, and his career was closely identified with Kozintsev through the 1920s and 1930s.

Kozintsev's and Trauberg's first serious feature was "The Devil's Wheel." Their second film, "The Cloak," based on Gogol's "The Overcoat" and "The Nevsky Prospect," was done in a more bizarre, expressionistic style.

"New Babylon," their last silent film, was released in 1929 and was promptly rejected by Soviet critics as being too expressionistic and intellectual. Kozintsev and Trauberg redeemed themselves with their first sound film, "Alone," the story of a young woman's survival in the wilderness (actually the soundtrack was added during the editing).

Kozintsev resurfaced in the late 1950s with the first of three highly acclaimed literary adaptations, "Don Quixote," followed by "Hamlet" (1964) and "King Lear" (1971). He died in 1973.

Trauberg began to direct movies again in the late 1950s. His later films included "Soldiers on the March" (1958), "Dead Souls" (1960) based on Gogol's story, and "Wind of Freedom" (1961). As of this writing, he is still alive and living in the Soviet Union.





## New Babylon An Episode in Eight Parts

Part	Narrative Segments	Musical Style
I	opening titles/"WAR!" montage the boss immobile in cafe/workers woman's gasps boss orders from menu Louise eats furtively Louise opens ... an invitation! more frenzied montage woman's agony/boss applause and cheering	brisk ironic tunes ... xylophone sickly waltz/motor rhythms near silence polka crescendo moody waltz buildup to ... xylophone! ironic tunes return sad waltz/flexaton waltz opening tune ends firmly
II	"PARIS" - love songs in the cafe Louise sits with boss enter a Deputy of France Boss confronts Deputy ... a contract! gay frenzy galloping to Paris panic/dispersal/curtain down	parody of Strauss waltzes  parody of martial tunes furious buildup ... can-can Offenbach + martial fragments galloping rhythms + weird harmonies/abrupt stop
III	"PARIS BESIEGED" Jean visits workers' quarters workers rush to seize guns Jean rejects Louise's pleas	slow murky dissonance  crescendo with motor rhythms Expressionistic outburst
IV	"MORNING OF THE 18th MARCH" women visit soldier - refresh them with milk workers of National Guard rebel army marches to Versailles Louise pleas with Jean Jean kisses Louise - leaves her	slow, murky dissonance buildup to <u>Ca Ira</u> (French Revolution song) heroic fragments sardonic march + Beethoven's 5th? tender strings eerie chords - march - silence
V	"IN OLD PARIS" hammer - Vendome topples - workers exult Jean gloomy at Versailles speeches	slow introduction fast motor rhythms joyous tunes (incl. <u>Ca Ira</u> ) martial fragments culminating in <u>Marseillaise</u> + Offenbach!
VI	"THE 49th DAY OF STRUGGLE" bourgeoisie surveys battle final battle despair of Communards Jean looks back toward Versailles	light waltzes (incl. <u>Marseillaise</u> ) martial fragments Tchaikovsky's <u>Old French Melody</u> buildup to brutal waltz
VII	"IN PARIS--PEACE AND ORDER" Louise and others mocked, beaten Jean searches for Louise	Expressionistic buildup, <u>Mars.</u> sombre march
VIII	"THE COURT MARTIAL" Louise refuses to confess Louise laughs Communards exult - "VIVE LA COMMUNE"	near silence passionate climax heroic tune + <u>Internationale!</u>





## Dmitri Shostakovich

(born September 25, 1906 in St. Petersburg; died August 9, 1975 in Moscow)

One of the greatest and most prolific composers to emerge from the Soviet Union, Dmitri Shostakovich will long be remembered for his significant and diverse musical contribution in an age when censorship and compliance were enforced. To his credit are fifteen symphonies, two operas, ballets, incidental music, chamber music, film music, choral works, music for military and dance bands, piano works and songs.



Shostakovich by Rémusat

His parents were both musical and when Dmitri was nine years old, his mother started him off on piano. His talent developed so rapidly that after one year he was taken to the Director of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire, Glazunov, who heard him not only in repertory pieces but also in some of his own first compositions. As a result, he entered the Conservatoire and studied piano and composition. He graduated from the Conservatoire in 1923.

His composing career did not begin easily. Shortly after his graduation he became dissatisfied with his music and destroyed nearly all of his student work. However, this difficult time quickly passed. His First Symphony was premiered in May, 1926, winning the composer early recognition when he was still under the age of twenty.

It is particularly ironic that Shostakovich's only full-length score to accompany a silent film should have been written after the "talkies" had triumphed almost everywhere except in the Soviet Union. Shostakovich, like many struggling music students, had played in cinemas, and the experience made him determined "to take cinema music properly in hand, to get rid of sloppy, inartistic vamping. The only solution is to write special music for each film," he wrote. When Kozintsev and Trauberg approached the twenty-three year old, largely on the strength of his avant-garde reputation, the result proved to be a unique collaboration that marked both the climax and the end of the silent film era.

The problem of musical expressionism in the political establishment grew until the real storm broke out after the premiere of Shostakovich's opera "Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk" in 1934. The official newspaper *Pravda* called it "confusion in place of music."

Shostakovich reacted quickly. He withdrew his Fourth Symphony which was in rehearsal and changed his artistic direction. This change is evident from the inscription to his Fifth Symphony: "A Soviet artist's response to just criticism." During World War II, he remained in the forefront of Soviet musical life. He was awarded a Stalin Prize for his Piano Quartet, and in 1942 he settled in Moscow with his family where he took up a post as teacher at the Conservatoire. The critical clouds gathered once again when a now notorious conference of the Composers' Union was convened by Stalin's right-hand man Zhdanov. Russia's leading composers, especially Prokofiev and Shostakovich, were taken to task for their failure to remember their duties toward the Soviet people and reminded that their work should afford inspiration and relaxation. Shostakovich defended himself with dignity and composed "acceptable" works such as "The Song of the Forests" (1949) and the cantata "The Sun Shines Over Our Land" (1952). From this time on he wrote introspective and dark-colored music quite freely alongside the public works expected of him. He was awarded a Lenin Prize for his massive Eleventh Symphony (1957). After heart trouble was diagnosed in the early 1960s, his work was not halted or even significantly slowed. But at that time he intended to follow a wholly





personal creative path. Thus the last of his string quartets (Nos. 12-15) and his Fourteenth and Fifteenth symphonies (1969 and 1971) are among his boldest yet most enigmatic works.

Shostakovich has been called "the only Soviet composer with an indisputable claim to genius." An obituary in The London Times described him as beyond doubt "the last great symphonist." Shostakovich perhaps looked with more courage into the abyss of despair than any other 20th century composer. He believed, he declared, in writing "good, beautiful, inspired music." After his death, his colleague Aram Khachaturian described him as "the conscience of Soviet music."



## CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

### IONA BROWN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Stephen Hartke, Composer-in-Residence

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*Concertmaster*  
Ralph Morrison  
*Concertmaster*  
Jacqueline Brand  
*Assistant*  
*Concertmaster*  
Daniel Shindaryov  
Jennifer Woodward  
Julie Gigante  
Richard Altenbach  
Helen Nightengale

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Connie Kupka  
Katia Popov

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## **Neal H. Stulberg** **Conductor**

Now in his fifth season as Music Director of the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, Neal Stulberg's efforts have won critical acclaim for that organization including broader audiences, growing financial support, and an expanding vision of the Symphony's role in New Mexico and throughout the southwest.

A native of Detroit, Mr. Stulberg grew up in a musical family and began playing the piano at the age of three. As a youth, he studied viola, violin and piano at the National Music Camp in Interlochen, Michigan. He began his conducting career as an undergraduate at Harvard College when he was elected to lead the college's Bach Society Orchestra. Subsequently, he earned a Master of Music at the University of Michigan and studied conducting at Santa Cecilia Academy of Rome and pursued post-graduate studies at Juilliard School in New York.

Prior to his Albuquerque appointment, Mr. Stulberg spent four years in Los Angeles, initially as Conductor of the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra and then as Exxon/Arts Endowment Assistant Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Carlo Maria Giulini. In addition, he has served as Resident Conductor of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Symphony Orchestra in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Assistant Conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra.

He has performed extensively as an orchestral violist and as an active concert pianist, appearing regularly in recitals and chamber programs. In June, 1988, Mr. Stulberg received America's most prestigious conducting prize, the Seaver/NEA Conductor's Award, given to young American conductors who are deemed to have the potential for major international careers.

## **Martin Marks** **Musicologist**

Martin Marks, a specialist on the music of the silent film era, is Assistant Professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is a lecturer in the Music and Theater Arts department and teaches a survey of film music from its beginning to the present. Dr. Marks attended Harvard University where he received both his undergraduate and graduate degrees. He has recently completed his dissertation, "Film Music of the Silent Period." Since his Harvard days, he has provided piano accompaniment for just such films at the Harvard Film Archive. He has also written dozens of his own accompaniments for silent films.

## **The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra**

For twenty-one years the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra has performed great music for Southern California audiences. During the 1989/90 season, the Chamber Orchestra has presented more than 40 concerts to more than 58,000 people at Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, the Japan America Theatre in downtown Los Angeles, Royce Hall at UCLA, the Wiltern Theatre in the mid-Wilshire district, plus a regional touring program to Santa Barbara, San Diego, Palm Springs and Orange County.

In more than two decades, the Orchestra has had only three music directors: Sir Neville Marriner (1968-1978), Gerard Schwarz (1979-1986), and, since 1987, Iona Brown. In addition to her work in Los Angeles, Miss Brown also serves as Director of the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in London, Artistic Director of Norwegian Chamber Orchestra in Oslo, and Principal Guest Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

The Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra's forty musicians are themselves outstanding solo artists and chamber musicians. An ever-expanding repertoire continually tests the virtuosity of orchestra members with new works by California and American composers in addition to music by the greatest classical composers. The Orchestra also commissions new works and has won awards for presenting many American and world premiere performances.



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