

PENTATONE OXINGALE SERIES:
De Hartmann Cello Concerto
Matt Haimovitz

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 2023
Baarn, The Netherlands

Allie Summers, Marketing & PR Manager

DIGITAL RELEASE DATE

29 September 2023

*Released in digital formats for streaming and
high-resolution downloads*

AUDIO RESOLUTION

Dolby Atmos, 48/24 PCM Surround,
48/24 PCM Stereo & 44.1k/16 PCM

B2B PRESS KIT: [De Hartmann](#) (*log in here*)

LISTENING LINK: [De Hartmann](#)



PTC5187159

EXPLORING THE UNSUNG HERO OF UKRAINIAN COMPOSITION

Cellist **Matt Haimovitz**, the **MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra** and its chief conductor **Dennis Russell Davies** present the first commercial recording of Ukrainian unsung composer Thomas de Hartmann's cello concerto.

De Hartmann was an important compositional voice in his own time, connected to the greatest musicians and artists of his era, but has sunk into oblivion after his death in 1956. This EP release is part of the greater **Thomas de Hartmann Project**, aimed to reintroduce his colourful and compelling music.

The cello concerto was composed in 1935 and premiered in 1938 by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Serge Koussevitsky. It was inspired by the anxiety of the 1930s, linking the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany to de Hartmann's own recollections of local Jewish folk musicians. While not being Jewish himself, de Hartmann felt a strong connection to Jewish traditions, and the piece is deeply influenced by Jewish musical folklore, as well Eastern-European folk traditions. This glowing and cinematic work, dedicated to and premiered by Paul Tortelier and hailed by Pablo Casals, is a hidden gem within the cello concerto repertoire, and the war in Ukraine makes a reintroduction of this glorious piece timelier than ever.

This is the first episode of a series of cello concerto EPs performed by Matt Haimovitz, produced by Oxingale and appearing on Pentatone.

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"I, like many, am horrified by the cycles of history. Once again we find ourselves in the midst of a tumultuous war in Europe, with Ukraine at the heart of an existential struggle.

Ukrainian-born composer Thomas de Hartmann identified closely with his homeland, and, although not Jewish, since his youth, was deeply affected by Jewish music and culture... Throughout his Cello Concerto Op. 57 (1935), de Hartmann's expansive melodies, progressive form, rich chromatic harmonies, and the virtuosic cello in colorful dialogue with the orchestra, transcend the stifling oppression of the 1930's. De Hartmann embraces the power of humanity to endure. The concerto's opening movement begins with grand cinematic gestures and a sweeping narrative. In the prayerful second movement, the cello channels the voice of a hazan, or Jewish cantor, lifting a cry to the heavens. The work concludes in a celebration of love, imagining Rachel's dance lighting our way through the darkness.

In 1938, three years after its composition, the great French cellist Paul Tortelier gave the world premiere of de Hartmann's Cello Concerto with the Boston Symphony, with which Tortelier was the principal cellist. Tortelier performed the work a few more times, and the legendary cellist Pablo Casals took note of the work, communicating his enthusiasm in a letter to de Hartmann. However, since the last performance in 1952 the concerto has remained obscure to the world.



VIDEO: Matt Haimovitz rehearses De Hartmann Cello Concerto with MDR Leipzig

Almost seventy years later, Efrem Marder, the Thomas de Hartmann Project Orchestral Director passionate about recovering the music, brought the Cello Concerto to my attention. In September 2021, I was scheduled to record the concerto in Lviv, Ukraine with the Lviv National Philharmonic Orchestra of Ukraine and Maestro Theodore Kuchar, but the pandemic intervened and the recording fell through. When war broke out in Ukraine in February 2022, the advocacy of Thomas de Hartmann's music took on a new urgency. In June of that year I was scheduled to perform and record a different work with Maestro Dennis Russell Davies and the MDR Orchestra at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Germany. Weeks before the recording date, the members of the orchestra and administration demonstrated their total solidarity with the people of Ukraine: the decision was made to change the program and instead make a live recording of the de Hartmann concerto.

This noteworthy work is a Ukrainian treasure, a significant contribution to the cello works of its time. Deep gratitude goes out to my friend and colleague, Maestro Dennis Russell Davies, and the MDR Orchestra, for joining me in celebrating and bringing to the world the marginalized, majestic de Hartmann Cello Concerto."

MATT HAIMOVITZ

Track List

Thomas de Hartmann (1884-1956)

Cello Concerto, Op. 57 (*first commercial recording*)

I. Allegro con brio 20:46

II. Andante. Solenne 7:51

III. Finale. Allegro ma non troppo)

Executive producer Matt Haimovitz

Co-Executive producer Efrem Marder (on behalf of the Thomas de Hartmann Project)

About Thomas de Hartmann (*from an article by Elan Sicroff - [website](#)*)

Thomas Alexandrovich de Hartmann (1884–1956) was born on his family's estate outside of Khoruzhivka, Ukraine. From the age of eleven he studied composition with Anton Arensky, the teacher of Rachmaninov, Prokofiev and Skryabin, and later with Sergei Taneyev, a master of counterpoint and adviser to (and former student of) Tchaikovsky. By the age of fifteen de Hartmann had seen his music published by Jurgenson Edition in Moscow. An accomplished pianist, he studied with Annette Essipova-Leschetzky, who also taught Prokofiev and Skryabin. He graduated from the St Petersburg Conservatoire when he was eighteen.

In 1906 de Hartmann was catapulted to fame in Russia with the performance of his ballet *La Fleurette rouge*, with Nijinsky, Fokine, Pavlova and Karsavina in the cast: it was staged for seven consecutive seasons in St Petersburg and Moscow. In 1908 he went to Munich, where he met the painter Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), who was to become a lifelong friend, and joined the avant-garde in art and music: he was an original member of the 'Blaue Reiter' group.

In 1916 he met his spiritual teacher, Georges Ivanovich Gurdjieff (1877–1949), in St Petersburg. With the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in 1917, they fled with a small band of followers across the Caucasus. Eventually they settled in Fontainebleau, outside Paris, where in 1922 Gurdjieff set up his Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man. In an unusual collaboration the two men composed a large body of sacred music from the East, mostly for piano. In 1929 de Hartmann left Gurdjieff's Institute and moved to the outskirts of Paris, where he supported himself by composing over 50 film scores.

The years from 1934 marked de Hartmann's most productive period. By the late 1940s he was well known in France and Belgium, where many leading musicians performed his music, among them the cellists Pablo Casals and Paul Tortelier, the flautists Marcel Moyse and Jean-Pierre Rampal, the violinist Alexander Schneider and the conductors Eugène Bigot and Serge Koussevitzky. He developed a strong friendship with Casals, who played and promoted his work at the Prades Festival.

He moved to the United States in 1950, where his last works were composed in a more modernist idiom. He established relations with the conductor Leopold Stokowski and a few other influential musicians, but his health was failing, and he struggled for recognition. He died suddenly from a heart attack in Princeton, New Jersey, on 28 March 1956, three weeks before he was due to give a recital of his music in New York Town Hall.

About The Thomas de Hartmann Project

The Thomas de Hartmann Project was initiated in 2006 by its Artistic Director and pianist Elan Sicroff and its Executive Director, Robert Fripp. Utilizing recordings, performances, writings, videos and lectures, the Project aims to preserve and recover de Hartmann's musical legacy and rightful place in the classical repertoire.

In 2021, three albums (first time recordings) of de Hartmann's solo piano, chamber, and vocal music were released, followed by three albums of orchestral music in 2022. In the first half of 2023, the Project helped facilitate multiple concert and recital opportunities, including American premieres of the composer's piano and violin concertos, as well as a wonderful performance by Matt Haimovitz of the cello concerto with guest conductor Theodore Kuchar and the Springfield Symphony Orchestra in Massachusetts. Additional orchestral recordings are in the works. And, the remarkable opera "Esther" is waiting in the wings.

The Project's work has been made possible by the collaboration of team member Tom Daly, inheritor/owner of the de Hartmann estate, who has made a significant ongoing effort (and investment) to have the scores prepared for performance, and ultimately also for publication. We are grateful to Matt Haimovitz and Maestro Dennis Russell Davies for organizing the exceptional concert and recording opportunity in Leipzig, with the Leipzig MDR in May 2022. (*Efrem Marder, Orchestral Project Director*)

[Website - The Thomas de Hartmann Project](#)

About Matt Hamovitz

Renowned as a musical pioneer, multi-Grammy-nominated cellist MATT HAIMOVITZ is praised by *The New York Times* as a "ferociously talented cellist who brings his megawatt sound and uncommon expressive gifts to a vast variety of styles" and by *The New Yorker* as "remarkable virtuoso" who "never turns in a predictable performance." He brings a fresh ear to familiar repertoire, champions new music, and initiates groundbreaking collaborations, as well as creating innovative recording projects. In addition to his touring schedule, Haimovitz mentors an award-winning studio of young cellists at the Schulich School of Music of McGill University in Montreal and is now the first-ever John Cage Fellow at The New School's Mannes School of Music in New York City.

Haimovitz made his debut in 1984, at the age of 13, as soloist with Zubin Mehta and the Israel Philharmonic. He has gone on to perform on the world's most esteemed stages, with such orchestras and conductors as the Berlin Philharmonic, the New York Philharmonic with Zubin Mehta, the English Chamber Orchestra with Daniel Barenboim, the Boston Symphony Orchestra with Leonard Slatkin, and the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal with Kent Nagano. His latest endeavor, THE PRIMAVERA PROJECT, encompasses 81 new commissions from a diverse intersection of North American communities and has been featured in the most recent 59th Venice Biennale Arte.

Making his first recording at 17 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Haimovitz's recording

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career encompasses more than 30 years of award-winning work on Deutsche Grammophon (Universal), Oxingale Records, and the PENTATONE Oxingale Series. His honors include the Trailblazer Award from the American Music Center, the Avery Fisher Career Grant, the Grand Prix du Disque, and the Premio Internazionale "Accademia Musicale Chigiana." He studied with Leonard Rose at The Juilliard School and graduated magna cum laude with highest honors from Harvard University. Haimovitz plays a Venetian cello, made in 1710 by Matteo Gofriller.

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About Dennis Russell Davies

Dennis Russell Davies was born in Ohio in 1944 and studied piano and conducting at New York's Juilliard School. He began his career as music director of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra from 1972-80, was a co-founder of the American Composers Orchestra New York in 1977, which he led for 25 years. In 1980 he became GMD of the Staatstheater Stuttgart and GMD of the city of Bonn. As principal conductor, he led the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra (1996-2002) and the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra (1995-2006), and held a professorship in conducting at the Salzburg Mozarteum from 1997 to 2009. From 2002 to 2017 he was opera director and principal conductor of the Bruckner Orchestra Linz and the Linz Opera, from 2009 to 2016 principal conductor of the Basel Symphony Orchestra. Since the beginning of the 2018/19 season, he has been Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Filharmonie Brno, and in September 2020 he assumed the post of Principal Conductor at the MDR Symphony Orchestra Leipzig.

Throughout his career, he has conducted the most prestigious orchestras in North America and Europe, and has made guest appearances at major opera houses and international festivals with a diverse operatic repertoire. Davies has always championed contemporary music while paying intense attention to the broad symphonic repertoire.

He left a lasting mark on "his" orchestras, among other things by opening them up to modernity and to new audiences, such as through concerts with Till Brönner, Dave Brubeck, and Keith Jarrett, but also through his constant work on the core symphonic repertoire. Davies was already personally involved with composers such as Glass, Copland, Berio, Cage, Henze, Bernstein, Boulez, Maderna, Kancheli, Pärt, Trojahn, Larcher, Chen Yi, Laurie Anderson, and others in the 1970s and 1980s. Through the many compositional commissions he launched worldwide over five decades, he helped write the music history of the 20th and 21st centuries. Like his contemporaries, he has devoted himself to the great symphonic repertoire such as Shostakovich, Beethoven, Mahler as well as Anton Bruckner. His extensive discography includes the complete recording of Haydn's 107 symphonies, all the symphonies of Glass, Honegger, and Dvorak (in progress) the great ballet music of Stravinsky both in the orchestral version and in that for piano four hands. He is also active as a pianist and chamber musician, and since 2003 has been playing highly successfully in a piano duo with his wife Maki Namekawa. ([Website](#))

(continued on next page)

About the MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra

The MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra is Germany's oldest of its kind and celebrating its centenary in the 2023/24 season. Founded to bring music and musical education to an increasing number of listeners, the current task of the orchestra has not changed. However, besides live concerts and regular radio broadcasts, the importance of streaming and other channels of digital distribution increasingly shape its tasks.

The orchestra reflects the creative spirit of Central Germany, represented by groundbreaking composers such as J.S. Bach, Felix Mendelssohn, Richard Wagner, Robert Schumann, Franz Liszt and Kurt Weill. The MDR Leipzig Radio Symphony Orchestra cultivates the (local) musical traditions and is equally engaged in performance and creation of contemporary music. The recording of unusual and rare repertoire, soundtracks for films, as well as the development of digital formats, especially in the area of education, are also part of the orchestra's duties.

Chief conductors of very different personalities - including Kristjan Järvi, Jun Märkl, Fabio Luisi, Wolf-Dieter Hauschild, Herbert Kegel, and Hermann Abendroth - have shaped the orchestra. Dennis Russell Davies, Chief Conductor since the summer of 2020, proves again to be an unusual programmer and masterful artistic leader, taking the orchestra to a new level of musical achievement. With 2024 also being the anniversary year for Anton Bruckner, all symphonies, conducted by Davies, will be released in their first version. ([Website](#))

About Pentatone

One of the leading classical music labels in the world, Pentatone presents a diverse range of world-class artists, and is dedicated to premium quality productions captured in exceptional sound. The label works together with today and tomorrow's leading artists to provide timeless recordings of core, fringe, and lesser-known repertoire, with Pentatone's uncompromising attention to the best possible quality in artistry, design and recording technology.

The label was founded in the Netherlands in 2001 by three former Philips Classics executives, with the ambition to offer classical music in the highest quality including surround sound. In its first years, Pentatone engaged Mikhail Gorbachev, Bill Clinton and Sophia Loren in a GRAMMY-winning recording of Prokofiev's *Peter & the Wolf* (released in Spanish with Antonio Banderas), with Kent Nagano conducting the Russian National Orchestra. Another early success was a recording of the official music performed during the wedding ceremony of the then Dutch crown prince (now king) Willem-Alexander to Máxima Zorreguieta. *The Music from the Royal Wedding* sold more than 75,000 copies, thereby attaining the unique "triple platinum" status in the Netherlands.

During its first decade, the label released several award-winning recordings with violinist Julia Fischer and several complete cycles: Beethoven's symphonies conducted by Philippe Herreweghe, Beethoven's piano sonatas performed by Mari Kodama, and Bruckner's symphonies under the baton of Marek Janowski. Violinist Arabella Steinbacher left her mark on these years and continues with several acclaimed recordings. Later, Pentatone recorded Wagner's ten mature

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operas, the only such label to take on this task in the 21st century.

From 2013, with a new management team, the label focused on embracing the digital era and expanding its repertoire. New artists and ensembles defined the label's second decade, including conductors Vladimir Jurowski, René Jacobs and Esa-Pekka Salonen, singers Piotr Beczala, Lisette Oropesa, Javier Camarena, Ian Bostridge and Magdalena Kožená, pianists Pierre-Laurent Aimard and Francesco Piemontesi, cellist Alisa Weilerstein, as well as the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig and the Czech Philharmonic.

In recent years, Pentatone has won multiple awards. In 2017, John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles* won Best Opera Recording and Best Engineered Album at the 59th GRAMMY Awards. Two years later, the premiere recording of the Mason Bates opera, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, won a GRAMMY for Best Opera Recording. Pentatone was awarded Label of the Year in 2019 by Gramophone Magazine and in 2020 by the International Classical Music Awards. Pentatone's third decade promises to be even more exciting and innovative as we expand our growing and diverse roster of artists, producing the most thrilling recordings in the world.

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