

Yevhen STANKOVYCH

COMPLETE CHAMBER SYMPHONIES, VOLUME ONE
NO. 15 FOR VIOLA AND CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
NO. 7 FOR VIOLIN AND CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
NO. 3 FOR FLUTE AND STRINGS

Natalia Kozhushko-Maksymiv, flute
Eva Rabchevska, violin
Luba Tunnicliffe, viola
Dmytro Tavanets, keyboards
Kyiv Chamber Orchestra
Natalia Ponomarchuk

AN ENDEAVOUR OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE

by Natalia Ponomarchuk

Yevhen Stankovych's music sounds incredibly contemporary. We are living through difficult times that are entirely congruent with the content of his music.

Stankovych's seventeen *Chamber Symphonies* are the life-story of a genius. With these recordings we are attempting to follow in his footsteps, to see where he began, how his style and thinking evolved, what colours he found in the orchestra. To see these symphonies in the context of what was and what will be. To feel him as a creator who has gone through all manner of trial, risk and passion, and personally experienced the fate of the state and the people.

He was and remains part of an artistic current that tirelessly forges new paths. Yevhen Fedorovych was always multifaceted, and this lifelong journey is reflected in his music. The biggest challenge for the conductor and musicians is not only to perform these symphonies perfectly, but to try to re-live his experience and convey it through sound. These works must coalesce into a single universe.

It was important for me to record this music now, not to postpone it for years. When we conceived the project, there were suggestions that we should wait until the war ends and Ukraine is rebuilt. For an indefinite period... But life cannot be postponed. Especially at a time when people are giving their lives for us on the front lines. It is now, therefore, that we must create valuable things. We cannot wait – we must act: fully, comprehensively, with all the energy and soul that we possess today. Set goals and achieve them. That is a fundamental consideration. Our task is not to endure, but to build, insist and create anew. I am therefore confident that this recording project is very timely.

Our mission is to show the spirit of this music and our love for the composer, and to leave this document for history. From us, to future generations.

YEVHEN STANKOVYCH'S *CHAMBER SYMPHONIES*: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

by Olena Zinkevych

I am probably one of the few who remember how Yevhen Fedorovych and his music, entered, or rather, burst onto, the musical space of Ukraine. Back in the early 1970s, there was a calm in Ukrainian symphonism. The creative audacity of the avant-gardists did not disturb the musical peace because it was forbidden, not performed. Lyatoshynsky was not heard... The music that was officially recognised and performed was professionally crafted, solid, adhering to centuries-old rules – a dutiful repetition of the past. Against this backdrop, Stankovych's works sounded like a revelation. They captivated with their emotional freedom, decisive violation of rules and bold intrusion into the realm of the symphony.

Stankovych's symphonic flow immediately rushed into two streams: large and chamber symphonies. And both streams are equal; moreover, they interact and influence each other. His *Sinfonia Larga* (1973) was numbered by Stankovych as the first 'large' symphony, but is scored for chamber ensemble, with fifteen strings! This 'consonance' (the precise translation of the term *sinfonia*), Baroque in appearance and modern in technique, contains delicate lyrical solos, angry oratorical exclamations and landscapes filled with epic severity, all compressed into the small space of a single-movement (rather than three- or four-movement) form, giving the emotional charge and imagery of the symphony a particularly powerful explosive force. Or the *Sinfonia Lirica* for sixteen strings (numbered as the fourth 'large' symphony) with its watercolour subtlety, a multi-stringed melody that flows into numerous soli (up to eight simultaneously). And alongside are episodes filled with oratorical power (*ffff* violins in unison against a tense cluster vibrato).

Stankovych's chamber symphonies are not inferior to his 'large' ones in the diversity of themes and narratives, and, most important, they lack the conceptual lightness that some (unfairly) consider a sign of chamber music. The world appears

in these chamber symphonies as if more detailed, closer to the listener. This insight is facilitated by the programmatic titles the composer gives his works, and the isolation of soloists from the orchestral mass, creating a sense of direct, immediate address. And here, among the soloists, there is also a variety of colours: the rich, 'masculine' timbres of the bassoon (*Chamber No. 4*) and horn (No. 6, *Anxieties of Autumn Days*), the 'feminine' fragility of the flute (No. 3) and violin (No. 11, *Angel's Touch*); the clear, warm sounds of the clarinet (No. 5, *Secret Calls*), and even entire ensembles that, by their composition, recall the times of Vivaldi (No. 7). But not only personal, but also restless rhythms of our social life pulsate in Stankovych's chamber symphonies – as in *Maidan Frescoes* (No. 12), a unique testament to history. But music transforms this restlessness, filling it with life-giving light energy. How much space, transparency, and a kind of cheerful ringing is in the *Anxieties of Autumn Days* of the Sixth Symphony! What captivating play-competition between the clarinet and the orchestra arises in *Secret Calls*, the Fifth Chamber Symphony! How much beauty and peace is in the nature-filled *Music of the Forest* (Symphony No. 14).

Someone once said: 'A symphonist is one who is not afraid to summon the elements.' Yevhen Stankovych is among those who are not afraid. He challenges these elements and subjugates them to his creative will. The intense flow of his music does not weaken, creating new testimonies about our tragic era and our country. Stankovych's art does not shy away from the harsh realities of life, and at the same time, amidst suffering and trials, it brings hope for future harmony.

Olena Zinkevych is a musicologist, scholar and educator, widely recognised both in Ukraine and internationally. Her research interests encompass the methodology of musicology, the fundamental patterns of the musical-historical process, the Ukrainian musical avant-garde of the 1960s, Ukrainian musical post-modernism and the development of Ukrainian symphonism. Her teaching has been an important element in the professional training of musicologists in Ukraine. She has published an extensive body of scholarly work in Ukraine and elsewhere, including Symphonic Hyperboles (on the music of Yevhen Stankovych) and On the Present and the Past: Yevhen Stankovych Reflects in Conversations with Olena Zinkevych (2012). She is a professor at the Department of the World History of Music at the Ukrainian National Academy of Music in Kyiv.

YEVHEN STANKOVYCH'S *CHAMBER SYMPHONIES* NOS. 3, 7 AND 15

by Paul Conway

'Every composer goes his own way.'¹ Yevhen Stankovych's observation seems apt when considering the individual path he has chosen to take as a creative artist. He was born in Svaliava, in the Transcarpathian region of Ukraine on 19 September 1942 and studied at the Kyiv Conservatoire under Borys Lyatoshynsky² and then Miroslav Storyk.³ After graduating in 1970, he quickly gained a reputation as one of the foremost Ukrainian composers of his generation. He worked as an editor at the Muzychna Ukraina publishing house from 1970 to 1976. In 1977 he received Ukraine's highest award for artistic creativity, the Taras Shevchenko National Prize. A full member of the National Ukrainian Academy of Arts since 1997, he was head of the Composers' Union of Ukraine from 2004 to 2010 and has been head of the composition department at the National Music Academy of Ukraine in Kyiv, since 1988. In 2023 he was made an honorary citizen of the city of Kyiv.

Stankovych is a prolific composer, with a varied and extensive output featuring six symphonies, fifteen chamber symphonies, two operas, six ballets, three violin concertos, two viola concertos, two cello concertos and a flute concerto. His chamber music includes a string quartet (1973), *Music for Heavenly Musicians* for wind quintet (1993), an *Elegy* for string quartet (1997), a piano trio *Epilogues* (2007) and a piano quartet (2009). Among his instrumental pieces are *Two Pieces For Violin and Cello*

¹ 'Yevhen Stankovych: "The day before the invasion, we took our grandchildren out of Bucha..."', *Ukrainian People: Ukrainian-American Magazine*, January 2026, <https://ukrainianpeople.us/>.

² Composer, conductor and teacher, and funder of the Society of Contemporary Music in Ukraine, Lyatoshynsky (1895–1968) was a highly influential figure in twentieth-century Ukrainian music. His creative output includes operas, symphonies, chamber and instrumental music, piano works and music for cinema.

³ Composer, pianist, conductor and teacher, Storyk (1938–2020) was artistic director of the National Opera of Ukraine from 2011 to 2016. He wrote a wide range of music from sonatas and concertos to cantatas, opera and film music. His music for violin and piano was released on Toccata Classics TOCC 0137 and his orchestration of Paganini's *Caprices*, Op. 1, on TOCC 0463.

(1972),⁴ three cello sonatas (1966, 1968 and 1971), a clarinet sonata (1996) and a wide range of music for violin and piano.⁵ He has also written vocal pieces, such as *Black Elegy* for chorus and orchestra (1991), liturgical works, art songs, music for the theatre and over one hundred film scores.

Many of his larger compositions were created in response to tragic events in Ukraine's history: his Sixth Symphony, *Dictum* (1987), for chamber ensemble, commemorates the Chernobyl disaster; *Kaddish-Requiem 'Babyn Yar'* (1991) honours the Jews murdered by Nazis in Kyiv in 1941, and the *Holodomor Requiem* (1993) was written in memory of the victims of the Ukrainian famine of the early 1930s. More recent political events affecting his country have also had a profound effect upon his output. *Psalms of War*, for choir and orchestra, premiered at Lviv National Opera in 2023, was described by the librettist Vasyl Vovkun, Director of Lviv Opera as 'a distillation of all our wars with Russia into this present one, and into this piece'.⁶ His *Requiem*, another work written in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, was premiered on 2 November 2025 at the National Philharmonic of Ukraine, performed by the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine under the baton of Volodymyr Sirenko and the 'Dumka' choir under the direction of Yevhen Savchuk.

His early pieces, including symphonies and chamber symphonies, served notice of an originality and freedom of thought in their synthesis of various musical trends, and he has fostered and refined this openly eclectic approach to his craft in the following decades. He has often incorporated advanced compositional techniques in his scores, but these effects are entirely at the service of the wider musical argument. In addition to such progressive elements, his style is sufficiently variegated and broad-based to include song-like melodic lines. He has also drawn upon Ukrainian folklore, as in his folk opera, *When the Fern Blooms* (1978), a representation of Ukrainian national culture which was

⁴ Featured on the Toccata Next album *Postcards from Ukraine*, Volume Two: Chamber Music (TOCN 0043).

⁵ His music for violin and piano is featured on a 2017 Toccata Classics album (TOCC 0402).

⁶ Ed Vulliamy, *theartsdesk in Ukraine – Stankovych's 'Psalms of War' at the Lviv National Opera*, <https://theartsdesk.com/opera/theartsdesk-ukraine-stankovychs-psalms-war-lviv-national-opera>.

banned by the Soviet authorities ‘for technical reasons’⁷ and staged for the first time in 2017 at Lviv National Opera.

Chamber Symphony No. 3 (1982), for solo flute and twelve stringed instruments [4], was written at the request of the renowned flautist and Professor of the National Music Academy of Ukraine, Oleh Kudryashov, who studied at the Paris Conservatoire. The piece was selected by UNESCO as one of the ten best works of 1985 at the UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers of that year, held in Paris. It is cast in a single movement divided into shorter, clearly defined sections. The main material consists of a handful of sharply etched ideas, which are either restated or revisited in varied form throughout the work. The first of these ideas, an insistent rhythmic sequence played *staccato* on violins, is heard at the outset. It is followed by a sighing, descending, chromatic, two-note motif given out by flute. After a repeat of this initial statement, there follows a more fluent section with the rhythmic string pattern now heard in tandem with another important flute subject, an obsessively repeated, arch-shaped, five-note figure. Concentrating on these few motifs, the music becomes steely and driven, generating considerable cumulative power. Several string effects, such as *glissandi*, harmonics and playing on the bridge of the instrument are sparingly deployed and matched by an equally judicious use of extended flute techniques, such as trills and flutter-tonguing.

An easing of tempo heralds the arrival of a slower, more freely expressive, recitative-like passage for flute over sustained lower strings and a brief, *pizzicato* reminder by violins of the rhythmic motif. Directly after this episode, another principal element of the score is heard for the first time. It takes the form of an airily ecstatic paragraph featuring strings in weaving counterpoint. These sublime, harmonically shifting lines have a visionary intensity.

An appearance on flute of the main rhythmic idea of the work is succeeded by a descending flute sequence ending in a solemn cadence, which is, in effect, a harmonised version of the two-note sighing figure of the flute. By this point, all the main material has now been heard and the remainder of the piece consists of further explorations

⁷ Lviv National Opera, *When the Fern Blooms*, <https://opera.lviv.ua/en/shows/koly-tsvite-paporot/>.

of the expressive potential of these subjects, sometimes placed in stark juxtaposition. Of especial note in the second half is a short, rhythmically flexible flute cadenza and a descending, partly aleatoric, bridge passage for strings in free rhythm. A sustained string chord that rises from *pianissimo* to quintuple *forte* appears to bring the piece to an emphatic conclusion, but Stankovych is not interested in easy solutions, and he follows this chord with a final, fleeting recurrence of the sighing flute motif and the rhythmic string figure, the latter fading uncertainly into silence.

In this *Chamber Symphony* No. 3, the strict, self-imposed limitation on thematic material ensures clarity of purpose and vision, and the disparate sections of the piece provide variety of character and texture within the tautly unfolding narrative. At first, the material for the solo flute is distinct from that for the strings, but gradually the chief themes are shared between the two protagonists in taut and closely argued dialogues. The piece creates its own, highly individual soundscape and evolves with a convincing integrity and authority.

Chamber Symphony No. 7, Path and Steps (1996–98), for solo violin, harpsichord, celesta, piano and seventeen stringed instruments, was commissioned by Bohodar Kotorovych for his chamber orchestra, Kyiv Soloists. It comprises three dramatically contrasting movements, each featuring a different keyboard instrument. The first, entitled ‘Path and Steps’ [1], is scored for violin, strings and celesta. It starts with an extended, lyrically eloquent violin solo which provides the material for the rest of the movement. Contrast with the song-like solo part is supplied by the varied and more adventurous string-writing, which contains effects such as harmonics, *glissandi*, *pizzicati*, playing with a mute and playing close to the bridge of the instrument. The celesta adds splashes of colour, either in flurries of arpeggiated figures or, near the end of the movement, in widely spaced, ascending lines. The overall impression of this opening movement is one of spontaneity and improvisatory freshness.

Scored for solo violin, piano and strings, the central movement, ‘Several Remarks’ [2], serves as a bridge between the outer movements, retaining some of the impulsiveness and exploratory character of the first and featuring brief outbursts of elegant, rhythmic

music played on solo violin harmonics and piano in high register that look ahead to the finale.

Called ‘Once upon a Time Visiting Great Vivaldi’ and scored for solo violin, harpsichord and strings [3], this closing movement is radiant and intensely affirmatory. The essence of the musical language of that Baroque Italian composer is captured in this driving, incisive movement that combines noble, grand gestures and filigree passagework. Familiar phrases from Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons* are subtly reworked to create a vigorous closing movement that inhabits and celebrates, rather than parodies, the music it is emulating. The ending is emphatic and decisive.

Chamber Symphony No. 7 offers a range of styles, from the progressive techniques employed in the first movement to the Neo-Classical tribute of the finale – although Stankovych’s own creative personality is always readily discernible, a testament to the flexibility and range of his musical language.

***Chamber Symphony* No. 15** (2018) is scored for viola and a chamber orchestra consisting of piano and 25 stringed instruments. It was premiered by the Kyiv Camerata (also known as the National Ensemble of Soloists of Ukraine), under the direction of Valeriy Matyukhin. There are two untitled movements, which share the same material.

The first movement [5] begins with a slow introduction presenting a series of hushed, rippling figurations from the piano in the high register of the instrument and, as the work unfolds, it becomes apparent that the contribution of the piano to this work is restricted exclusively to intermittent appearances of these high-pitched contours. In the ensuing *Andante* section, the solo viola enters with an eloquent, directly communicative melody featuring wistful falling cadences. There emerges an expressive discourse between the viola and various stringed instruments. A brief, steeply rising, cadenza-like sequence for the solo instrument precedes the arrival of a *Lento* episode and the second main idea of the movement, a gently melancholic theme, introduced by the viola. The calm atmosphere is momentary threatened by a restless *Moderato* passage, but this disruptive element is short-lived and the music soon returns to a serene contemplation of the tuneful principal subjects.

The sudden appearance of repeated string figures signals the arrival of the second movement [6], which follows without a break. It begins with a brisk *Allegro* variant of the material of the preceding movement. A bold, sweeping solo viola passage, which begins *fff*, stems the flow of the music, and from now on the movement proceeds in a more measured tempo, recalling the character and the music of the opening movement. In the final bars, a soft, held string chord underpins an abrupt, ringing piano flourish and its echo, before fading away into silence.

In *Chamber Symphony* No. 15, the solo viola is an ever-present figure, initiating and dominating the musical narrative with its richly sonorous melodies. The other stringed instruments fulfil accompanying roles, while the decorative input of the piano is always heard on its own, discrete, untouched and unaffected by the rest of the material and thus bringing a sense of ‘otherness’.

Paul Conway is a freelance writer specialising in twentieth-century and contemporary British music. He has reviewed for The Independent, Tempo and Musical Opinion and provided programme notes for The Proms and the Edinburgh, Spitalfields and Three Choirs festivals. His book, Moorland Symphonies: An Introduction to the Music of Arthur Butterworth was published by Lyrita in 2023.

Sought after for her emotionally charged interpretations and dynamic podium presence, **Natalia Ponomarchuk** is one of Ukraine’s most prominent orchestral conductors. She became Chief Conductor of the Kyiv Chamber Orchestra, part of the National Philharmonic of Ukraine, in 2018. In March 2022, after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, she escaped from Kyiv and now makes her home in London. She regularly undertakes guest-conducting engagements around the world in addition to returning frequently to perform in Kyiv.

She previously held positions as Resident Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, Resident Conductor of Kyiv Camerata, Principal Conductor of the Kyiv Symphony Orchestra, Artistic Director and Principal



Conductor of the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Dnipro Philharmonic of Ukraine and Resident Conductor of the Ukrainian National Radio. In Ukraine, she often appears with the Academic Symphony Orchestra of the National Philharmonic of Ukraine, the National Odesa Philharmonic Orchestra, the National Presidential Orchestra of Ukraine, and the 'INSO-Lviv' Symphony Orchestra of the Lviv National Philharmonic, as well as at major Ukrainian music festivals.

She works with major orchestras all over the world, including the London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Kiel Philharmonic Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfônica do Espírito Santo, Istanbul State Symphony Orchestra, Bilkent Symphony Orchestra, Bursa State Symphony Orchestra, Thessaloniki State Symphony Orchestra, Chongqing Philharmonic Orchestra, Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonietta Riga and the Presidential Symphony Orchestra, Ankara.

She has performed at major concert-halls and opera-houses around the world, among them the Teatro Real, Auditorio Nacional and Teatro Zarzuela in Madrid, Queen Elizabeth Hall in London, Palau de la Música Catalana in Barcelona, Philharmonic Hall in Warsaw, Sala Verdi in Milan, Casa da Música in Porto and Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia.

Recent and future highlights include her debuts with the Calgary Philharmonic, Dresden Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of Columbia, Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire, Bremen Philharmonic, Slovenian Philharmonic, George Enescu Philharmonic Bucharest, Sønderjyllands Symfoniorkester and the Orchestra I Pomeriggi Musicali in Milan, as well as a return to the London Philharmonic to conduct the orchestra on tour in Belgium.

She was a jury member of the 2025–26 Geneva Conducting Competition. She received her Master of Music in Orchestral Conducting from the National Music Academy of Ukraine in 1997, studying under Allin Vlasenko. In 2001 she was named an Honoured Artist of Ukraine and in 2025 was awarded the title 'Best Symphony Conductor' by the Ukrinform News Agency.

Founded in 1963 by Anton Sharoyev, the **Kyiv Chamber Orchestra** holds an honourable place among the world's leading chamber ensembles. Its artists are virtuoso musicians characterised by refined ensemble-playing. Over the years, the orchestra was led by distinguished conductors: Anton Sharoyev (1963–68 and 1976–87) being followed by Igor Blazhkov (1968–76), Arkady Vinokurov (1987–90), Roman Kofman (1990–2016) and Mykola Dyadyura (2016–20).



The ensemble actively popularises the music of Ukrainian composers both at home and abroad. Its repertoire includes works by Valentyn Bibik, Vitaliy Gubarenko, Leonid Hrabovsky, Levko Kolodub, Yuriy Laniuk, Sviatoslav Lunyov, Viktoriya Polova, Volodymyr Runchak, Valentyn Sylvestrov, Myroslav Skoryk, Yevhen Stankovych, Maksym Shalygin, Oleksandr Shchetinsky, Lyubava Sydorenko, Alla Zagaykevych, Volodymyr Zahortsev and others.

The Kyiv Chamber Orchestra has realised a number of large-scale projects. As well as the complete cycle of *Chamber Symphonies* by Yevhen Stankovych, it has given the complete symphonic cycles of Beethoven, Schubert and Mozart – the occasion for the first Ukrainian performances of most of Mozart's symphonies.

Performers with the orchestra have included Çağatay Akyol, Lucia Aliberti, Marc Bouchkov, László Fenyő, Natalia Gutman, Oleksiy Hrynuik, Liana Isakadze, Makvala Kasrashvili, Volodymyr Krainev, Gidon Kremer, Erik Kurmanqaliev, Viktoria Lukyanets, Oleksiy Lyubimov, Lev Marquis, Domenico Nordio, Boris Pergamenschikov, Daniil Raiskin, Benjamin Schmid, Naum Shtarkman, Dmitry Sitkovetsky and Valentin Zhuk.

KCO tours have covered leading musical centres of the world, in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Switzerland, Turkey, the USA, Mexico, Japan and South Korea.

Kyiv Chamber Orchestra

Yurii Stiopin, leader

Chamber Symphony No. 3

Violins

Oksana Hretchyn

Kyrylo Bondar

Yuliia Boldar

Nadiia Klymyuk

Oleksiy Kolesnyk

Marta Stiopina

Violas

Andrii Chop

Maksym Oschepkov

Cellos

Oksana Lytvynenko

Vira Kornilova

Bass

Mykhaylo Chaykin

Chamber Symphony No. 7

Violins

Marko Komonko

Victoria Hanapolska

Oleksandra Zinchenko

Oleksiy Kolesnyk

Marta Stiopina

Nataliia Bulat

Karyna Lebed

Anastasiia Shypak

Kyrylo Bondar

Violas

Andrii Chop

Maksym Oschepkov

Diana Primakova

Cellos

Vira Kornilova

Dmytro Glushchenko

Iryna Kyiashko

Basses

Mykhailo Chaikyn

Oleksandr Podyk

Chamber Symphony No. 15

Violins

Marko Komonko

Victoria Hanapolska

Nadiia Klymiuk

Oleksandra Zinchenko

Yuliia Boldar

Oleksiy Kolesnyk

Yevheniya Sirenko

Karyna Lebed

Nataliia Bulat



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Producer-engineer: Andriy Mokrytskyi

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YEVHEN STANKOVYCH Complete *Chamber Symphonies*, Volume One

Chamber Symphony No. 7, <i>Path and Steps</i>, for violin and chamber orchestra (1996)*	24:55
1 I Path and Steps	14:30
2 II Several Remarks	4:25
3 III Once upon a Time Visiting Great Vivaldi	6:00
4 <i>Chamber Symphony No. 3</i> for flute and twelve stringed instruments (1982)	17:42
Chamber Symphony No. 15 for viola and chamber orchestra (2018)*	16:08
5 I <i>Lento ad lib. – Andante –</i>	8:36
6 II <i>Allegro</i>	7:32

TT 58:48

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OF THE COMPOSER

Eva Rabchevska, violin 1–3

Dmytro Tavanets, celesta, piano, harpsichord 1–3

Natalia Kozhushko-Maksymiv, flute 4

Luba Tunnicliffe, viola 5 6

Kyiv Chamber Orchestra

Natalia Ponomarchuk, conductor