

KENJI BUNCH

The Snow Queen

orchestra**NEXT**

BRIAN MCWHORTER



NOTES FROM THE COMPOSER

When Brian McWhorter first approached me with the idea of working on a ballet for *The Snow Queen*, I immediately said “yes” and then realized just as quickly that I had very little idea of what I was getting myself into. Helping to tell this hauntingly beautiful but entirely wordless story for close to two hours was, simply put, the largest undertaking of my career to date, by a longshot.



Eugene Ballet Artistic Director and Choreographer Toni Pimble and I were drawn to the same aspects of the story, particularly the loyal, pure friendship of Gerda and Kay, and the strong, self-reliant heroine Gerda becomes through her many trials. Musically, my first and most important task was to define the two diametrically opposed musical characters for the Snow Queen’s cold, clinical, icy realm and the warmth of Gerda and Kay’s friendship. Essentially, the entire work became a struggle between those two forces.

Along the way, there are of course some fun excursions: the quirky Conjure Woman’s Garden, the incessantly cawing Crows, the madcap antics of the Gypsy Camp. But at its heart, this is a story of love and friendship, and the indomitable will of the human spirit. My musical inspirations were the masters of the orchestral ballet form: Prokofiev, Ravel, Stravinsky, and the greatest of them all, Tchaikovsky.

Now I’ve come full circle. Just as I had no idea how monumental the task was that I was taking on, I now listen back to this beautiful recording and look at our score with a similar sense of bewilderment. How did we do that? I don’t really know, but am beyond grateful to Eugene Ballet and Orchestra Next to have been a part of this wonderful project!

— Kenji Bunch





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Brian McWhorter, *conductor*
Sarah Viens, *everything else*

VIOLIN 1

Ron Blessinger, *concertmaster*
Julia Frantz, *principal*
Mary Evans
Bashar Matti
Christopher Stark

VIOLIN 2

Matthew Fuller, *principal*
Sasha Chandler, *principal*
Izabel Austin
Paige Buursma

VIOLA

Holland Phillips, *principal*
Lauren Elledge, *principal*
Hyrum Kohler
Karlie Roberts

CELLO

Heather Blackburn, *principal*
Noah Seitz, *principal*
Kathryn Brunhaver

BASS

Tyler Abbott, *principal*
Milo "The Rock" Fultz

FLUTE/ALTO FLUTE

Molly Barth

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

Melissa Peña

CLARINET

Mark Dubac

BASSOON

Steve Vacchi

HORN

Lydia Van Dreel

TRUMPET

Sarah Viens

TROMBONE

Carson Keeble

PIANO

Hung-Yun Chu

HARP

Jane Allen

TIMPANI

Pius Cheung

PERCUSSION

Eriko Daimo
Jade Hails
Kathie Hsieh

THE SNOW QUEEN: Ballet in Two Acts

ACT 1

- 1 Prologue (4:12)
- 2 The Snow Queen's Palace (7:06)
- 3 The Snow Queen's Dance (2:32)
- 4 The Mirror (4:05)
- 5 Kay and Gerda (4:55)
- 6 Arrival of the Snow Queen (4:37)
- 7 Kay's Heart Turns to Ice (7:52)
- 8 Gerda Mourns (2:05)
- 9 The Conjure Woman (3:46)
- 10 Dance of the Flowers (4:52)
- 11 The Rose Briar Returns to Life (3:33)

ACT 2

- 1 The Fields (2:08)
- 2 Arrival of the Crows (6:36)
- 3 Gerda Awakes (1:38)
- 4 The Prince's Palace (3:06)
- 5 The Palace Bedroom (10:19)
- 6 Gerda Flies with the Crows (2:24)
- 7 Gypsy Camp (4:13)
- 8 The Robber Girl (4:47)
- 9 Return to the Snow Queen's Palace (3:32)
- 10 Song of the Ice Captives (5:52)
- 11 Gerda Finds Kay (2:58)
- 12 Gerda Thaws Kay's Heart (5:31)

Producers Brian McWhorter, Sarah Viens, Bob Ponto, Kenji Bunch

Engineer and Mastering Lance Miller

General Manager Sarah Viens

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Toni Pimble, Eugene Ballet Company Artistic Director and *The Snow Queen* Choreographer, for creative concept and direction

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