

■ Bell Tower In The Clouds

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, CHELTENHAM



Church bells are among the most evocative of noises, so it is scarcely surprising that bells have influenced composers for centuries, whether it be Rachmaninov's eponymous tone poem or the eerie tolling at the end of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*. But a more benign influence is demonstrated in a new piece by Dobrinka Tabakova (pictured), to be premiered by the Orchestra Of The Swan

in Stratford-upon-Avon on Monday. The *Bell Tower In The Clouds* refers to a village in the Dolomites where the composer happened to hear bells on Sunday morning. "It was the most fascinating sound I have heard bells make," she writes. Since the bells were in a confined space, "the sound bounced off old stone houses to become powerful clusters that lingered on." The effect inspired the new work, in which a string quartet aims to give a multi-dimensional sound against cluster chords from the body of the orchestra. CL

Civic Hall, Stratford-on-Avon, Mon 31; Pittville Pump Room, Cheltenham, Tue 1