
Welcome

A very warm welcome, especially if this is your first ever Philharmonia concert – we hope it will be the first of many.

It's a privilege for us to be working with conductor Masaaki Suzuki for the first time this week. I'm fascinated to hear what new insights this revered conductor, known chiefly as a Baroque music specialist, gives us into three pieces spanning the nineteenth century.

If you'd like to get to know the Philharmonia better, and support our mission to bring the highest quality music-making to the widest possible audience, please consider becoming a Friend. Our Friends enjoy open rehearsals, priority booking, and opportunities to meet our players. We'd love to welcome you to the Philharmonia family.

With my best wishes,



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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thorben".

Thorben Dittes
Chief Executive

Welcome to the Southbank Centre

We're the largest arts centre in the UK and one of the nation's top visitor attractions, showcasing the world's most exciting artists at our venues in the heart of London. We're here to present great cultural experiences that bring people together, and open up the arts to everyone.

The Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, Hayward Gallery, National Poetry Library and Arts Council Collection. We're one of London's favourite meeting spots, with lots of free events and places to relax, eat and shop next to the Thames.

We hope you enjoy your visit. If you need any information or help, please ask a member of staff. You can also write to us at Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX, or email hello@southbankcentre.co.uk

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**Sol
Gabetta**



**Isabelle
Faust**

Philharmonia

**Sunwook Kim
plays Brahms**

Thursday 2 May, 7.30pm

**Soumik Datta:
Artist in Residence**

Saturday 11 May, 7.30pm

**Brahms and Beethoven
with Isabelle Faust**

Sunday 2 June, 7.30pm

**Alexandre Kantorow
plays Liszt**

Thursday 9 May, 7.30pm

**The Bach Choir:
The Dream of Gerontius**

Thursday 16 May, 7.30pm

**Santtu conducts Elgar's
Enigma Variations**

Thursday 6 June, 7.30pm

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This evening's concert

Masaaki Suzuki conducts Schumann and Dvořák

Sunday 28 April 2024, 7.30pm
Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall

Masaaki Suzuki – conductor
Jean-Guihen Queyras – cello

BEETHOVEN Egmont Overture (9 mins)

SCHUMANN Cello Concerto (25 mins)

Interval (20 mins)

DVOŘÁK Symphony No. 6 (40 mins)

This performance finishes at
approximately 9.20pm.

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Julia Bullock
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Free Insights Talk

6pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall

Find out more about this evening's programme with Teddy Prout, the Philharmonia's Director of Learning & Engagement, and Joanna Wyld, writer and editor.

Programme notes

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

Egmont Overture (1810)
(9 mins)

In 1809 the director of the Burgtheater in Vienna asked Beethoven to write incidental music for a revival of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 1787 play *Egmont*. The composer later revealed that he was offered no fee and agreed to the commission 'solely out of love for the poet'. In all, he wrote ten items of music. He composed the overture last, leaving it so late that it was only ready for the play's third performance on 15 June 1810. Despite the delay, his *Egmont* music was well received, and was revived in both theatrical and concert contexts. Goethe was especially impressed, stating that Beethoven had 'reflected my intentions with the most admirable genius'.

Egmont is set in the 16th century, during the Spanish occupation of the Netherlands. The heroic Count Egmont is tricked by the tyrannical Duke of Alba into committing treason, and is condemned to death. At the scaffold, he is saved from despair by a vision of his country's liberation. Beethoven's contemporaries may have drawn parallels between Goethe's authoritarian Spaniards and Napoleon's powerful French army, which had invaded Vienna in 1805 and 1809.

Writer Anthony Burton describes the *Egmont* overture as 'a miniature symphonic poem summarising the action of the play'. Its sombre introduction evokes the rhythms of the sarabande, a dance that originated in Spain. In the ensuing Allegro, a noble and restless theme symbolising heroic resistance is pitted against a sped-up version of this dance. A sudden

dramatic pause indicates Egmont's execution. The overture's jubilant final section celebrates his courage and the future triumph of freedom; it returns at the play's ending as a 'symphony of victory'.



Portrait of Lamoral, Count of Egmont
(public domain)

Robert Schumann (1810 – 1856)

Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129 (1850)
(25 mins)

Nicht zu schnell
Langsam
Sehr lebhaft

Robert Schumann wrote his Cello Concerto in just two weeks in October 1850, during his brief and unsuccessful tenure as Music Director of the City of Düsseldorf. It was one of his last

substantial orchestral compositions, and one of the first significant works for cello and orchestra since Joseph Haydn's C Major Concerto of 1765. Schumann's wife Clara especially admired it, praising 'the Romantic quality, the vivacity, the freshness and humour', the 'highly interesting interweaving of violoncello and orchestra' and the 'deep feeling' in its melodies.

However, feedback from the principal cellist of the Düsseldorf orchestra Christian Reimers and from the composer and cellist Robert Bockmühl was less positive, leading Schumann to revise the work extensively. By the time it was published in 1854 he had suffered a devastating and permanent mental collapse. The concerto's premiere took place four years after his death, in Leipzig in 1860. The work was subsequently championed by leading cellists such as Carlo Alfredo Piatti and Pablo Casals, bringing it to international recognition.

Schumann hated applause between movements and, like his friend Felix Mendelssohn in his Violin Concerto, wrote his concerto to be played continuously without pauses. He also followed Mendelssohn in having his soloist enter straight away rather than after a lengthy orchestral introduction in his first movement. Marked 'Nicht zu schnell' (not too fast), this movement has two principal themes, one ardent and yearning, the other graceful and placid. Its central section features abrupt dynamic contrasts and much volatile dialogue between soloist and orchestra.

Following a recapitulation of the opening material, the music flows seamlessly into the central movement, marked 'Langsam' (slow). This tender song without words includes a duet between the soloist and the orchestra's principal

cellist. (It has been suggested this represents a conversation between Schumann and his wife Clara.) Other striking features include pizzicato (plucked) passages in the orchestral strings, and a double-stopping section (in which the soloist plays two notes simultaneously).

A brief orchestral reminiscence of the concerto's opening bars and an agitated solo episode lead into the finale, marked 'Sehr lebhaft' (very lively). This may be the movement Schumann was thinking of when he called the concerto 'quite a jolly piece'. The recurrent principal theme – a jaunty march – alternates with more lyrical episodes. There is plenty of virtuosic writing for the soloist, culminating in a flamboyant cadenza (a solo section displaying the cellist's skill) with discreet orchestral accompaniment, before the full orchestra bursts in to sweep the piece to a spirited conclusion.

Interval (20 mins)

Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904)

Symphony No. 6 in D major, Op. 60 (1880)
(40 mins)

Allegro non tanto

Adagio

Scherzo (Furiant)

Finale – Allegro con spirito

Until 1874, Antonín Dvořák was little known outside his native Bohemia. This changed after he won an Austrian State stipend for 'young, talented and poor' artists based in the Austrian half of the Habsburg empire. On the

jury was Johannes Brahms, who became a good friend and introduced him to his publisher Simrock. In 1878, buoyed up by the success of Brahms's orchestral Hungarian Dances, Simrock commissioned Dvořák to write a set of Slavonic ones. Their popularity gained the composer many new admirers.

One of them was the Chief Conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic, Hans Richter. Richter conducted Dvořák's Third Slavonic Rhapsody (written the same year as the Slavonic Dances) in November 1879, and liked it so much that he promptly commissioned a new symphony for the Vienna Philharmonic. Dvořák quickly set to work and completed his commission in October 1880. Whereas his Fifth Symphony (1875) had reflected his admiration for Wagner, his Sixth was a tribute to his friend Brahms. Indeed, it has strong similarities to Brahms's Second Symphony (1877), including its D major key and predominantly sunny ambience.

When Dvořák played the work through to Richter on the piano, the conductor was thrilled – so much so that he allegedly kissed the composer after every movement. However, the Vienna Philharmonic seem to have objected to playing two new Czech works in quick succession. The premiere eventually took place not in Vienna but in Prague on 25 March 1881, with Adolf Čech conducting the Czech Philharmonic. Richter's performance of the work in London the following year led London's Philharmonic Society to commission Dvořák's Seventh Symphony.

The Sixth Symphony's first movement is expansive, marked 'Allegro non tanto' (not too fast). Writers have suggested that its lilting first theme is modelled either on a Czech folksong or a German folk dance. Both this and the movement's other principal theme – a

lyrical melody introduced in the oboe – begin gently, then build to majestic full-orchestral statements. Later, there are many striking contrasts in textures and dynamics, especially in the movement's central (development) section and coda. Dvořák's biographer Otakar Šourek wrote of the Adagio that it 'sings of the magic of a summer night'. Comparisons have also been made with the Adagio of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, especially in the writing for woodwind. The movement is notable for its melodic beauty and air of tranquil contentment.

The lively Scherzo contains the work's first undisputed reference to Czech folk culture. It is modelled on the *furiant*: a rapid Bohemian peasant dance which shifts between duple and triple metres. The fiery outer sections contrast with an ethereal central Trio that includes a solo piccolo – the only time the instrument features in the symphony. As in the first movement, the closing Allegro con spirito contains two principal themes. The first is a genial, broad-breathed string melody, the second a playful 'skipping' theme first heard in the woodwind. In the energetic central section, both are transformed in various ingenious ways. The exuberant coda culminates in a grand, chorale-like apotheosis of the first theme for the brass, ending the symphony in a mood of joyful exaltation.

Programme notes by Kate Hopkins
© Philharmonia Orchestra/Kate Hopkins

Kate Hopkins is an editor and writer specialising in classical music, literature, history and the visual arts. She is currently an English-language editor for Salzburg Festival's concert programmes.

Get to know Masaaki Suzuki



© Marco Borrgrave

You spend a lot of your time conducting music from the Baroque era, performed on period instruments. What do you enjoy most about switching to a large symphony orchestra like the Philharmonia?

The biggest pleasure in working with symphony orchestras is the opportunity to work on “new” repertoire compared to baroque orchestras, and I have great joy in performing these compositions. This repertoire requires a dynamic and steady sound, and it is delightful to be able to accomplish this relatively easily in comparison to period instruments.

What are the main differences between the orchestral sound in 1881, and what we’ll hear in this concert?

Unfortunately, I was not at the premiere of Dvorak’s Symphony! But to my imagination, since all the instruments were built and set up very differently at the time, the sound must have been very different. The instruments today are much more resonant. On the other hand, I think people back in the 19th century were much more passionate and romantic, and therefore the challenge today is to accomplish this emotional expression as they did back in 1881.

This is the first time you’ve worked with the Philharmonia. How do you form a connection with a new orchestra very quickly when you’ve only got a short amount of rehearsal time?

I have no strategy. I enter the room with an open mind and express my thoughts as an individual and hope this is reciprocated by the orchestra.

Have you and Jean-Guihen Queyras ever performed together before?

We have never performed together but of course I knew of him. His recording of the Schumann concerto with the Freiburger Barockorchester left a particularly strong impression on me and it is absolutely beautiful. The pureness of his expression, that is direct and sincere, is what I admire most about his performance.

What do you enjoy most about visiting London?

I enjoy looking at the beautiful churches and historic buildings in London. The city also reminds me of several famous movie scenes and this is so exciting - for example, the MI6 building that exploded in the James Bond film Skyfall is still standing there!

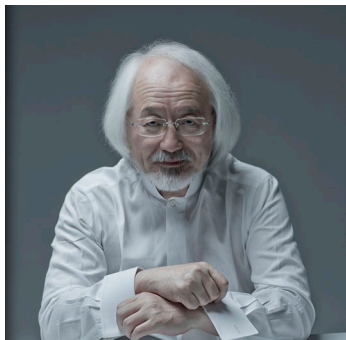
Which other concert coming up in our London season would you most like to hear, and why?

I would have loved to hear the performance of my dear friends David Hill and Roddy Williams with The Bach Choir on Thursday 16 May but it is a pity I will not be in London in May. Please send them my best regards and enjoy the concert for me too.

Read the full interview on our website: philharmonia.co.uk

Masaaki Suzuki

Conductor



©Marco Borggreve

Since founding Bach Collegium Japan in 1990, Masaaki Suzuki has established himself as a leading authority on the works of JS Bach. He has remained their Music Director ever since, taking them regularly to major venues and festivals in Europe and the USA, recording the complete cycle of Bach's sacred cantatas and building up an outstanding reputation for the expressive refinement and truth of his performances.

In addition to working with renowned period ensembles, such as Collegium Vocale Gent and Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, Suzuki is invited to conduct repertoire as diverse as Brahms, Britten, Fauré, Mahler, Mendelssohn and Stravinsky, with orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Mozarteum Orchester Salzburg, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Bavarian Radio, Danish National Radio, Gothenburg Symphony, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, and Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra. This 2023/24 season includes his debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, hr-Sinfonieorchester, Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo and returns to Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal, NHK Symphony Orchestra, Spanish National Orchestra and Handel and Haydn

Orchestra among others. Tonight's concert is the culmination of a Spanish tour with the Philharmonia Orchestra.

Suzuki's impressive discography on the BIS label, featuring all Bach's major choral works as well as his complete works for harpsichord, has brought him many critical plaudits. *The Times* has written, "it would take an iron bar not to be moved by his crispness, sobriety and spiritual vigour". 2018 marked the triumphant conclusion of Bach Collegium Japan's epic recording of the complete sacred and secular cantatas initiated in 1995 and comprising sixty-five volumes. The ensemble has recently recorded Bach's St John's Passion, which won a Gramophone Award, and St Matthew's Passion.

Suzuki combines his conducting career with his work as an organist and harpsichordist; he recently recorded Bach's solo works for these instruments. Born in Kobe, he graduated from the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music with a degree in composition and organ performance and went on to study at the Sweelinck Conservatory in Amsterdam under Ton Koopman and Piet Kee. Founder and Professor Emeritus of the early music department at the Tokyo University of the Arts, he was on the choral conducting faculty at the Yale School of Music and Yale Institute of Sacred Music from 2009 until 2013, where he remains affiliated as the principal guest conductor of Yale Schola Cantorum.

In 2012 Suzuki was awarded with the Leipzig Bach Medal and in 2013 the Royal Academy of Music Bach Prize. In April 2001, he was decorated with 'Das Verdienstkreuz am Bande des Verdienstordens der Bundesrepublik' from Germany.

Jean-Guihen Queyras

Cello



© Marco Borrigre

Curiosity, diversity and a firm focus on the music itself characterise the artistic work of Jean-Guihen Queyras. Whether on stage or on record, one experiences an artist dedicated completely and passionately to the music, whose humble and quite unpretentious treatment of the score reflects its clear, undistorted essence. The inner motivations of composer, performer and audience must all be in tune with one another in order to bring about an outstanding concert experience.

Jean-Guihen Queyras learnt this interpretative approach from Pierre Boulez, with whom he established a long artistic partnership. This philosophy, alongside a flawless technique and a clear, engaging tone, also shapes Jean-Guihen Queyras's approach to every performance and his absolute commitment to the music.

Jean-Guihen Queyras was a founding member of the Arcanto Quartet and forms a celebrated trio with Isabelle Faust and Alexander Melnikov; the latter is, alongside Alexandre Tharaud, a regular accompanist. He has also collaborated with zarb specialists Bijan and Keyvan Chemirani on a Mediterranean programme.

The versatility in his music-making has led to many concert halls, festivals and orchestras inviting Jean-Guihen to be Artist in Residence, including the Concertgebouw Amsterdam and the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Vredenburg Utrecht, De Bijloke Ghent and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg.

Jean-Guihen Queyras's discography is impressive. His recordings of cello concertos by Edward Elgar, Antonín Dvořák, Philippe Schoeller and Gilbert Amy have been released to critical acclaim. As part of a harmonia mundi project dedicated to Schumann, he has recorded the complete piano trios with Isabelle Faust and Alexander Melnikov and at the same time the Schumann cello concerto with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra under Pablo Heras-Casado.

Highlights of the 2023/24 season include concert tours to Australia, the USA, Canada and Europe, performances with the Rosas Dance Company and Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker, invitations from the Koninklijk Concertgebouw Orkest, the Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Orquesta Nacional de España, the Residentie Orkest Den Haag or the Cleveland Orchestra, collaborations with conductors such as Philippe Herreweghe, Masaaki Suzuki or Maxim Emelyanychev, as well as numerous chamber music concerts with Isabelle Faust, Alexander Melnikov, Alexandre Tharaud, Kristian Bezuidenhout, Tabea Zimmermann and the Belcea Quartet.

Jean-Guihen Queyras holds a professorship at the University of Music Freiburg and is Artistic Director of the Rencontres Musicales de Haute-Provence festival in Forcalquier. He plays a 1696 instrument by Gioffredo Cappa, made available to him by the Mécénat Musical Société Générale.

About the Philharmonia



© Luca Migliore

The Philharmonia Orchestra is made up of 80 outstanding musicians of 17 different nationalities. Every one of us is dedicated to bringing orchestral music of the very highest standard to the widest possible audience – in the world’s top concert halls, in our residency communities and in your own home.

Founded in 1945, we quickly established our reputation as the leading recording orchestra, our unparalleled catalogue growing as fast as the global market for LPs. We’ve continued to embrace the use of cutting-edge technology to share the orchestral experience around the world and beyond – our recording of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5 is travelling through interstellar space on board the Voyager spacecraft. In the last two decades our pioneering immersive installations and VR experiences have introduced hundreds of thousands of people to the symphony orchestra, and our streamed performances have been enjoyed by listeners from Fiji and Indonesia to high above the Arctic Circle in Norway.

In 2021, Santtu-Matias Rouvali took up the baton as our Principal Conductor. He follows in illustrious footsteps: Herbert von Karajan, Otto Klemperer, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Carlo Maria Giulini, Arturo Toscanini, Riccardo Muti and Esa-Pekka Salonen are just a few of the great conductors to be associated with the Philharmonia over the years, honing the celebrated Philharmonia sound.

Marin Alsop is our Principal Guest Conductor. Violinist Nicola Benedetti and singer Julia Bullock are our Featured Artists this season, and sarod virtuoso Soumik Datta is our Artist in Residence.

We regularly tour throughout Europe, performing in some of the world’s most prestigious venues, such as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg. Further afield, we’ve performed in China, Japan and Colombia. We recently returned to China, and in January we were the first major international symphony orchestra to tour to Mauritius. You’ll also find us playing in some unexpected venues, from the Apple Store in Berlin to a multi-storey car park in Peckham.

The Southbank Centre’s Royal Festival Hall, in the heart of London, has been our home since 1995. Across the UK, we have residencies in Bedford, Leicester, Canterbury, Basingstoke, at Garsington Opera and at the Three Choirs Festival. Our established and award-winning Learning & Engagement programme is embedded in several of our residency communities, and delivers

experiences that empower people to engage with and participate in orchestral music. Our Emerging Artists Programme develops the next generation of instrumentalists, composers and conductors, with a focus on increasing diversity within the classical music industry.

We commission new music every year, and we have premiered works by Richard Strauss, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Errollyn Wallen, Kaija Saariaho, Anna Clyne, Laufey and many others. Our film credits stretch back to 1947, and we are in demand among film and videogame composers in the UK and Hollywood. We have recorded around 150 soundtracks, bringing the Philharmonia sound to millions of cinema-goers and gamers.

The Philharmonia is a registered charity. We are proud to be supported by Arts Council England, and grateful to the many generous individuals, businesses, trust and foundations who make up our family of supporters.

Thank you for coming to hear us play live. We look forward to sharing more great music with you, through memorable concerts and ground-breaking projects, for the next 80 years and beyond.

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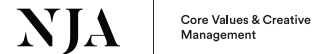
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