

London
Philharmonic
Orchestra

2024/25 season at the
Southbank Centre

FREE CONCERT
PROGRAMME

*Moments
Remembered*



**SOUTHBANK
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RESIDENT

London Philharmonic Orchestra

Principal Conductor Edward Gardner supported by Aud Jepsen

Principal Guest Conductor Karina Canellakis

Conductor Emeritus Vladimir Jurowski KBE **Patron** HRH The Duke of Kent KG

Artistic Director Elena Dubinets **Chief Executive** David Burke

Leader Pieter Schoeman supported by Neil Westreich

Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall

Saturday 12 April 2025 | 7.30pm

Jan Lisiecki plays Beethoven

Sibelius

Pohjola's Daughter (12')

Beethoven

Piano Concerto No. 5 (Emperor) (38')

Interval (20')

Sibelius

Symphony No. 2 (44')

Tarmo Peltokoski

conductor

Jan Lisiecki

piano

Part of

*Moments
Remembered*

The timings shown are not precise and are given only as a guide.
Concert presented by the London Philharmonic Orchestra

Contents

- 2 Welcome
LPO news
- 3 On stage tonight
- 4 London Philharmonic
Orchestra
- 5 Leader: Pieter Schoeman
- 6 Tarmo Peltokoski
- 7 Jan Lisiecki
- 8 Moments Remembered
- 10 Programme notes
- 14 Recommended recordings
- 15 Next concerts
- 16 LPO Player Appeal 2025
- 17 Sound Futures donors
- 18 Thank you
- 20 LPO administration

**SOUTHBANK
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Welcome

Welcome to the Southbank Centre

We're the UK's largest centre for the arts and one of the nation's top five visitor attractions, showcasing the world's most exciting artists at our venues in the heart of London. As a charity, we bring millions of people together by opening up the unique art spaces that we care for.

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 email hello@southbankcentre.co.uk or write to us at Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX.

Subscribers to our email updates are the first to hear about new events, offers and competitions. Just head to our website to sign up.



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If you don't want to take your programme home, please make use of the recycling bins in the Royal Festival Hall foyers. Please also use these bins to recycle any plastic drinks glasses after the concert. Thank you.

LPO news

New Artistic Director for the LPO



© Liz Isles Photography

We're excited to share the news that **Jesús Herrera** has been appointed Artistic Director of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He will take up the role from 16 June, following Elena Dubinets's departure at the end of April.

Spanish-born Jesús joins us from the classical music agency Intermusica, where he is currently Director of Creative Partnerships & Projects. Prior to this, he played a huge role in shaping the artistic vision of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León in Valladolid, Spain, where he was General Manager and Artistic Director.

We're thrilled to welcome Jesús to the LPO family, and look forward to working alongside him as he shapes the future of the LPO, bringing fresh ideas and artistic initiatives to our Orchestra, audiences and communities in the years ahead.

LPO Fellow Conductors 2025/26



© Danae Kavoura

Nefeli Chadouli



© Jino Park

Wilson Ng

We're also thrilled to announce our new LPO Fellow Conductors for the 2025/26 season: **Nefeli Chadouli** and **Wilson Ng**, who will join the LPO family from September. We can't wait to work with them!

Launched in 2023, our flagship LPO Conducting Fellowship seeks to support the development of world-class conductors of the future. Each season the programme offers an intensive opportunity to work closely with the Orchestra to two outstanding early-career conductors from backgrounds currently under-represented in the profession.

lpo.org.uk/conductingfellowship

The LPO Conducting Fellowship receives generous support from Gini and Richard Gabbertas.

On stage tonight

First Violins

Pieter Schoeman* Leader
Chair supported by Neil Westreich

Alice Ivy-Pemberton
Co-Leader

Vesselin Gellev Sub-Leader

Lasma Taimina

Chair supported by Irina Gofman
& Mr Rodrik V. G. Cave

Cassandra Hamilton

Katalin Varnagy

Yang Zhang

Julian Schad

Victoria Gill

Elodie Chousmer-Howelles

Maeve Jenkinson

Tayfun Bomboz

Alison Strange

Ronald Long

Rebecca Dinning

Katherine Waller

Second Violins

Tania Mazzetti Principal

Chair supported by The Candide
Trust

Claudia Tarrant-Matthews

Kate Birchall

Nancy Elan

Joseph Maher

Ashley Stevens

Sioni Williams

Vera Beumer

Sheila Law

Nicole Stokes

Nynke Hijkema

Kate Cole

Lyril Milgram

Harry Kerr

Violas

Fiona Winning

Guest Principal

James Heron

Lucia Ortiz Saucó

Benedetto Pollani

Kate De Campos

Terry Nettle

Christopher Beckett

Louise Hawker

Naomi Holt

Jisu Song

Toby Warr

Kevin Saw

Cellos

Kristina Blaumane Principal

Chair supported by Bianca & Stuart
Roden

Wayne Kwon

David Dale

Marion Portelance

Francis Bucknall

Aristide du Plessis

Helen Thomas

George Houlit

Sibylle Hentschel

Colin Alexander

Double Basses

Sebastian Pennar*

Principal

Hugh Kluger

George Peniston

Tom Walley

Chair supported by William & Alex
de Winton

Laura Murphy

Chair supported by Ian Ferguson
& Susan Tranter

Adam Wynter

Charlotte Kerbegian

Elen Roberts

Flutes

Juliette Bausor Principal

Jack Welch

Piccolo

Stewart McIlwham*

Principal

Oboes

Alison Teale Guest Principal

Eleanor Sullivan

Cor Anglais

Sue Böhling* Principal

Chair supported by Dr Barry
Grimaldi

Clarinets

Thomas Watmough

Principal

Chair supported by Roger
Greenwood

Bethany Crouch

Bass Clarinet

Paul Richards* Principal

Bassoons

Jonathan Davies* Principal

Chair supported by Sir Simon
Robey

Helen Storey*

Chair supported by Friends of the
Orchestra

Contrabassoon

Simon Estell* Principal

Horns

John Ryan* Principal

Martin Hobbs

Mark Vines Co-Principal

Gareth Mollison

Duncan Fuller

Trumpets

Paul Beniston* Principal

Tom Nielsen Co-Principal

Anne McAneney*

Chair supported in memory of
Peter Coe

Cornets

Tom Nielsen

David Hilton

Trombones

David Whitehouse Principal

Merin Rhyd

Bass Trombone

Lyndon Meredith Principal

Tuba

Lee Tsarmaklis* Principal

Chair supported by William & Alex
de Winton

Timpani

Simon Carrington*

Principal

Chair supported by Victoria Robey
CBE

Harp

Sally Pryce Guest Principal

**Professor at a London
conservatoire*

The LPO also
acknowledges
the following chair
supporters whose
players are not present
at this concert:

Sir Nigel Boardman &
Prof. Lynda Gratton
David & Yi Buckley
Dr Alex & Maria Chan
Gill & Garf Collins
David & Bettina Harden
Ryze Power
Eric Tomsett

London Philharmonic Orchestra



© Jason Bell

Uniquely groundbreaking and exhilarating to watch and hear, the London Philharmonic Orchestra has been celebrated as one of the world's great orchestras since Sir Thomas Beecham founded it in 1932. Our mission is to share wonder with the modern world through the power of orchestral music, which we accomplish through live performances, online, and an extensive education and community programme, cementing our position as a leading orchestra for the 21st century.

Our home is at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, where we're at the beating heart of London's cultural life. You'll also find us at our resident venues in Brighton, Eastbourne and Saffron Walden, and on tour worldwide. In 2024 we celebrated 60 years as Resident Symphony Orchestra at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, combining the magic of opera with Glyndebourne's glorious setting in the Sussex countryside.

Soundtrack to key moments

Everyone will have heard the Grammy-nominated London Philharmonic Orchestra, whether it's playing the world's National Anthems for every medal ceremony of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics, our iconic recording with Pavarotti that made *Nessun Dorma* a global football anthem, or closing the flotilla at The Queen's Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant. And you'll almost certainly have heard us on the soundtracks for major films including *The Lord of the Rings*.

Sharing the wonder worldwide

We're one of the world's most-streamed orchestras, with over 15 million plays of our content each month. In 2023 we were the most successful orchestra worldwide on YouTube, TikTok and Instagram, with over 1.1m followers across all platforms, and in spring 2024 we featured in a TV documentary series on Sky Arts: 'Backstage with the London Philharmonic Orchestra', still available to watch via Now TV. During 2024/25 we're once again working with Marquee TV to broadcast selected live concerts to enjoy from your own living room.

Our conductors

Our Principal Conductors have included some of the greatest historic names like Sir Adrian Boult, Bernard Haitink, Klaus Tennstedt and Kurt Masur. In 2021 Edward Gardner became our 13th Principal Conductor, and Vladimir Jurowski became Conductor Emeritus in recognition of his impact as Principal Conductor from 2007–21. Karina Canellakis is our current Principal Guest Conductor, and Tania León our Composer-in-Residence.

Next generations

We're committed to nurturing the next generation of musicians and music-lovers: we love seeing the joy of children and families experiencing their first musical moments, and we're passionate about inspiring schools and teachers through dedicated concerts, workshops,

Pieter Schoeman

Leader

resources and training. Reflecting our values of collaboration and inclusivity, our OrchLab and Open Sound Ensemble projects offer music-making opportunities for adults and young people with disabilities and special educational needs.

Today's young instrumentalists are the orchestra members of the future, and we have a number of opportunities to support their progression. Our LPO Junior Artists programme leads the way in creating pathways into the profession for young artists from under-represented communities, and our LPO Young Composers and Foyle Future Firsts schemes support the next generation of professional musicians, bridging the transition from education to professional careers. We also recently launched the LPO Conducting Fellowship, supporting the development of two outstanding early-career conductors from backgrounds under-represented in the profession.

2024/25 season

Principal Conductor Edward Gardner leads the Orchestra in an exciting 2024/25 season, with soloists including Joyce DiDonato, Leif Ove Andsnes, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Víkingur Ólafsson and Isabelle Faust, and works including Strauss's *Alpine Symphony*, Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* and Mahler's Eighth Symphony. Principal Guest Conductor Karina Canellakis joins us for three concerts including Bruckner's Fourth Symphony, Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony, and Mozart with pianist Benjamin Grosvenor. We'll also welcome back Conductor Emeritus Vladimir Jurowski, as well as guest conductors including Mark Elder, Lidiya Yankovskaya, Robin Ticciati and Kevin John Edusei.

Throughout the season we'll explore the relationship between music and memory in our 'Moments Remembered' series, featuring works like Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony, Strauss's *Metamorphosen* and John Adams's *On the Transmigration of Souls*. During the season there'll be the chance to hear brand new works by composers including Freya Waley-Cohen and David Sawer, as well as performances by renowned soloists violinist Gidon Kremer, sarod player Amjad Ali Khan, soprano Renée Fleming and many more. The season also features tours to Japan, the USA, China and across Europe, as well as a calendar bursting with performances and community events in our Brighton, Eastbourne and Saffron Walden residencies.



© Benjamin Ealovega

Pieter Schoeman was appointed Leader of the London Philharmonic Orchestra in 2008, having previously been Co-Leader since 2002. He is also a Professor of Violin at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance.

Pieter has performed worldwide as a soloist and recitalist in such famous halls as the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, Moscow's Rachmaninoff Hall, Capella Hall in St Petersburg, Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles and the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall. As a chamber musician he regularly appears at London's prestigious Wigmore Hall. His chamber music partners have included Anne-Sophie Mutter, Veronika Eberle, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Boris Garlitsky, Jean-Guihen Queyras, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Martin Helmchen and Julia Fischer.

Pieter has performed numerous times as a soloist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Highlights have included an appearance as both conductor and soloist in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* at the Royal Festival Hall, the Brahms Double Concerto with Kristina Blaumane, Florence Price's Violin Concerto No. 2, and the Britten Double Concerto with Alexander Zemtsov, which was recorded and released on the LPO Label to great critical acclaim.

Pieter has appeared as Guest Leader with the BBC, Barcelona, Bordeaux, Lyon and Baltimore symphony orchestras; the Rotterdam and BBC Philharmonic orchestras; and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra.

Pieter's chair in the LPO is generously supported by Neil Westreich.

Tarmo Peltokoski

conductor



© Peter Rigaud

Finnish conductor Tarmo Peltokoski will become the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra's Music Director from the 2026/27 season, after serving as Music Director Designate in 2025/26. He was awarded the title of Principal Guest Conductor of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen in 2022 – the first holder of this position in the orchestra's 42-year history. In 2022 he also became Music & Artistic Director of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, and was subsequently named Principal Guest Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra. In August 2022, at the age of 22, he completed his first Wagner *Ring* Cycle, at the Eurajoki Bel Canto Festival in Finland. In December 2022, he was announced as Music Director of the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse.

Tonight's concert is Tarmo Peltokoski's debut with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, which will be followed tomorrow by a second performance at Eastbourne's Congress Theatre. In recent seasons he has also made debuts with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony, Swedish Radio Symphony and Gothenburg Symphony orchestras, as well as the SWR Symphonieorchester at Pfingstfestspiele Baden-Baden and the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin. Summer festival debuts include the Rheingau Music Festival, Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, Beethovenfest Bonn, Verbier Festival, Musikfest Bremen and Festival de Música y Danza Granada.

In 2023, Tarmo returned to the Eurajoki Bel Canto Festival to conduct Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. In summer 2023 he conducted *Siegfried* with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, and in October 2023, *Don Giovanni* at the Finnish National Opera. In August 2024 he conducted Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* in Riga. In September 2024 he made his BBC Proms debut at the Royal Albert Hall with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and later in the autumn conducted the Filarmonica della Scala and Philharmonia Zürich, as well as the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

This spring he tours Germany with the Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse; makes his debut with the Bavarian State Orchestra; conducts Wagner's *Der fliegende Holländer* in Luxembourg and Brussels; and makes his Japanese debut conducting the NHK Symphony. This summer he will conduct *Parsifal* with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra.

Tarmo Peltokoski has worked with soloists including Yuja Wang, Asmik Grigorian, Matthias Goerne, Julia Fischer, Golda Schultz, Martin Fröst, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Janine Jansen, Martin Helmchen, Leonidas Kavakos, Camilla Nylund and Sol Gabetta.

In 2023, Tarmo Peltokoski signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon. His debut album was released in May 2024. In 2022 he received the Lotto Prize at the Rheingau Musik Festival, and in 2023 received the OPUS Klassik Award for his recordings with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen.

Tarmo Peltokoski began his studies with Professor Emeritus Jorma Panula at the age of 14, and studied with Sakari Oramo at the Sibelius Academy. He has also been taught by Hannu Lintu, Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Esa-Pekka Salonen. Also an acclaimed pianist, Tarmo studied piano at the Sibelius Academy with Antti Hotti. His piano playing has been awarded at many competitions and he has appeared as a soloist with all the major Finnish orchestras. Tarmo has also studied composing and arranging, and especially enjoys music comedy and improvisation.

Jan Lisiecki

piano



© Christopher Köstlin

Canadian pianist Jan Lisiecki looks back on a career spanning a decade and a half on the world's greatest stages. He works closely with the foremost conductors and orchestras of our time, performing over a hundred concerts a year.

Jan has appeared many times with the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall, around the UK and on tour. As well as this weekend's concerts with the LPO in London and Eastbourne, this season also sees him return to the Boston Symphony, Munich Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony and Seattle Symphony orchestras.

This season, Jan leads the Academy of St Martin in the Fields in a tour of 19 concerts throughout Germany and Austria, including complete Beethoven cycles in residencies at Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, in Munich, and in Cologne. As the Toronto Symphony Orchestra's Artist-in-Residence, he inaugurates the orchestra's season and returns to lead them from the piano in a complete cycle of Beethoven concertos. He also takes his acclaimed 'Preludes' solo recital programme, recently celebrated at Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium, to La Scala Milan, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, San Francisco's Herbst Theatre, BOZAR Brussels and the Klavier-Festival Ruhr. A duo programme of Mozart, Beethoven and Schumann with violinist Julia Fischer takes him to 15 venues across Europe and the USA, including New York's Lincoln Center, Chicago Symphony Center, Boston's Jordan Hall, Berlin Philharmonie, Hamburg Elbphilharmonie and Munich Prinzregententheater.

Recent return invitations include the New York Philharmonic, The Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich and Staatskapelle Dresden. Jan made his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic in spring 2024. He is a fixture at major summer festivals across Europe and North America, has performed at the Salzburg Festival, and recently made his third appearance at the BBC Proms. His previous recital programme was celebrated in over 50 cities around the globe.

At the age of just 15, Jan Lisiecki was offered an exclusive recording contract by Deutsche Grammophon. He has since recorded nine albums, which have been awarded with the JUNO Award, ECHO Klassik, Gramophone Critics' Choice, Diapason d'Or and Edison Klassiek awards. Aged 18, he received both the Leonard Bernstein Award and Gramophone's Young Artist Award, becoming the youngest ever recipient of the latter. He was named UNICEF Ambassador to Canada in 2012.

Moments Remembered

Journeys at the Crossroads of Music and Memory

by Jeremy Eichler, LPO Writer-in-Residence 2024/25

Is music the ultimate medium of memory?

Ever since the mythical poet Orpheus retrieved his beloved Eurydice from the underworld through the magical power of his song, music has been summoning souls, bridging time, and raising the dead. Its ability to trigger flights of memory is

a phenomenon many people still experience: think, for instance, of the song that pops up on the car radio and, like Proust's madeleine, instantly calls to mind a moment or experience that took place years or even decades earlier.

Yet as so many works presented across the London Philharmonic Orchestra's 2024/25 season will illustrate, it is not just we who remember music. *Music also remembers us.* Music reflects the individuals and the societies that create it, capturing something essential about the era of its birth. When a composer in 1824 consciously or unconsciously distills worlds of thought, fantasy and emotion into a series of notes on a page, and then we hear those same notes realized in a performance two centuries later, we are hearing the past literally speaking in the present.

In this sense, music can fleetingly reorder the past, bring closer that which is distant, and confound the one-way linearity of time. In these very ways, music shares a profound affinity with memory itself. For memory by definition also challenges the pastness of the past and the objective distance of history; it also reorders time and flouts the forward march of the years. An event seared in memory from decades ago may haunt the mind with a power far greater than events that took place only yesterday. Indeed, while Mnemosyne, the Greek goddess of memory, was said to be mother of all the Muses, one daughter may stand as first among equals. Memory resonates with the cadences, the revelations, the opacities and the poignancies of music.

But what exactly can music remember? How does it do so differently to other art forms? Whose stories are being recalled? Who is doing the remembering? And toward what ends are we being asked to recollect?

Over the course of its 2024/25 season, the LPO will explore these questions through no fewer than 15 programmes, a curated gallery of sonic memory. Some will represent iconic figures at the heart of the Western musical tradition (such as Haydn, Beethoven, Schoenberg, Britten, Strauss, Shostakovich and Prokofiev). Some carry forward lesser-known but essential 20th-century voices (Mieczysław Weinberg, Boris Lyatoshynsky, Julia Perry). And some are by living composers (György Kurtág, John Adams, Freya Waley-Cohen, Evan Williams, Dinuk Wijeratne), artists who ply their craft while looking both forward and back, creating memories of yesterday for the world of tomorrow.

Across this season we will find sonic bridges to the wartime past, the utopian past, the personal past, the national past, the literary past, the imagined past, the forgotten past, the obliterated past. Implicit in this journey is an awareness of memory's complexity and contingency, beginning with Beethoven's 'Eroica', a work whose original dedication to Napoleon was itself renounced with a fury that tore the composer's manuscript paper. And the season ends with the cosmos-embracing euphoria of Mahler's Eighth Symphony, itself a Goethe-inspired memory of earlier Enlightenment dreams, etched at the dawn of the modern world.

Along the way, many of the works treat, implicitly or explicitly, the great ruptures of the 20th century, including extraordinary sonic monuments to the Second World War and the Holocaust. We may feel we already know these epochal events through history books. But the information accumulating on library shelves provides just one mode of access. The survivor Jean Améry once went as far as bitterly attacking what he saw as his own era's tendency to publish books about the horrors of the Holocaust in order to forget those horrors with a clean conscience, to relegate a shocking and morally unassimilable past to 'the cold storage of history'.

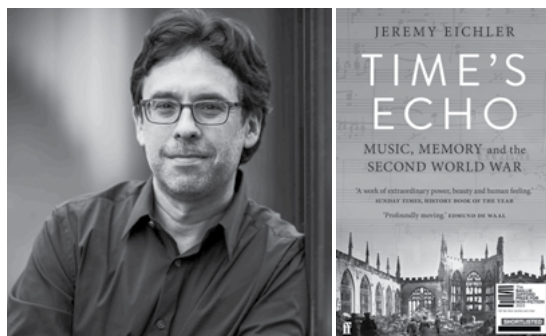
Music, on the other hand, possesses a unique and often underappreciated power to burn through history's cold storage, to release its frozen stores of meaning and emotion. Its power may originate in the visceral immediacy of sound itself: sound surrounds us, penetrates our bodies, vibrates within us. Listening to a song, the critic John Berger once wrote, 'we find ourselves inside a message.' But music's potency as a medium of cultural memory also flows from its mysterious capacity to bridge intellect and emotion; its ability to short-circuit the centuries by yoking 'then' and 'now' within a single performance; and its haunting way of expressing deep yet untranslatable truths that lie beyond the province of language. Thomas Mann called this last quality the 'spoken unspokenness' that belongs to music alone.

Each of the season's works can and should be experienced on its own terms, but one hopes they will also add up to something greater than the sum of their parts. Listeners, in short, are being invited to consider music not only as aesthetic entertainment or even spiritual uplift – but as a unique witness to history and carrier of memory, a window onto humanity's hopes, dreams and cataclysms. This approach can yield dividends all its own. Indeed, to listen with an awareness of music as an echo of past time opens the possibility of

hearing so much more. Here, in essence, are the sounds of culture's memory, resonating between and behind the notes.

lpo.org.uk/whats-on/london

*Jeremy Eichler is a critic and historian based at Tufts University, Massachusetts, as well as the LPO's inaugural Writer-in-Residence. Portions of this essay were adapted from his award-winning book *Time's Echo: Music, Memory, and the Second World War*, recently published in paperback (Faber, 2023).*



New release on the LPO Label

THOMAS ADÈS: ORCHESTRAL SUITES

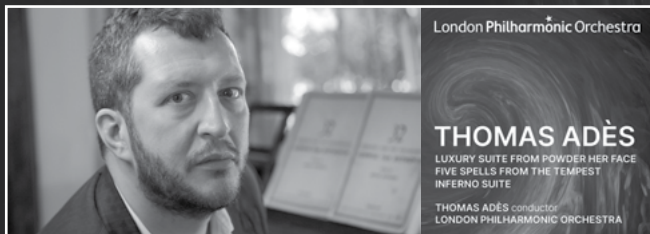
Three world premiere recordings:

Luxury Suite from Powder Her Face

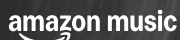
Five Spells from The Tempest | Inferno Suite

London Philharmonic Orchestra | Thomas Adès conductor

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Programme notes

Jean Sibelius

1865–1957

Pohjola's Daughter

1905–06

The *Kalevala* is the Finnish national epic. Its poetry and stories are drawn from both Finland and Karelia, the lands shared between modern-day Finland and Russia, which have long been a source of dispute. The texts are ancient, but had largely disappeared from Finnish consciousness until Elias Lönnrot published an edition in 1835, from which point the *Kalevala* again became a symbol of national pride.

A committed patriot, albeit only speaking Swedish at the beginning of his life, Sibelius made a rigorous study of Finnish literary culture, as spurred by his fiancée Aino Järnefelt. Enthralled by the *Kalevala*, Sibelius found 'pure music' in its metre, images and atmosphere. 'All my moods derive from the *Kalevala*', he wrote to Aino in 1891, before embarking on what would become his *Kullervo* Symphony. It began a whole series of works that derived their inspiration, programmes, even rhythms from passages of the *Kalevala*, including 'four legends' about one of the epic's heroes, Lemminkäinen, and, in 1905–06, a 'symphonic fantasia' about Pohjola's Daughter.

The piece concerns an older hero from the *Kalevala*, Väinämöinen, who is making his way home from the far north ('Pohjola'). There, he encounters a strange, beautiful woman, sitting on a rainbow and weaving a cloth of gold. He asks her to join him on his journey, but she challenges him to build a boat from her spindle. Evil spirits intervene and, having failed the task, Väinämöinen has to carry on alone.

Sibelius describes the tale in a vivid, 12-minute sonata-form structure, in which a 'bardic' cello provides the introduction, the brute force of the brass section speaks of Väinämöinen, and the strings and the woodwind – as well as, notably, the harp (evoking the central spinning wheel) – introduce the beautiful daughter of the title. At last, she laughs shriekingly in Väinämöinen's face, before he wends his desolate way and recedes into the frozen distance.



Programme notes

Ludwig van Beethoven

1770–1827

Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat major, Op. 73 (Emperor)

1809

Jan Lisiecki piano

1 Allegro

2 Adagio un poco mosso –

3 Rondo: Allegro



Courtesy of the Royal College of Music, London

One has to wonder whether the organisers of the concert at which Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto received its Viennese premiere in February 1812 – the actual premiere having taken place in Leipzig the previous November – provided the ideal audience. A contemporary report of the combined concert and art exhibition mounted by the Society of Noble Ladies for Charity tells us that 'the pictures offer a glorious treat; a new pianoforte concerto by Beethoven failed'. And it is true that, while it was later to become as familiar a piano concerto as any, in its early years the 'Emperor' struggled for popularity. Perhaps its leonine strength and symphonic sweep were simply too much for everyone, not just the Noble Ladies. Cast in the same key as the 'heroic' Third Symphony, it breathes much the same majestically confident air, though in a manner one might describe as more macho. Composed in the first few months of 1809, with war brewing between Austria and France, this is Beethoven in what may have seemed overbearingly optimistic mood.

The Concerto is certainly not reticent about declaring itself. The first movement opens with extravagant flourishes from the piano punctuated with stoic orchestral chords, leading us with an unerring sense of direction towards the sturdy first theme. This march-like tune presents two important thematic reference-points in the shape of a tight melodic twist (technically known as a 'turn') and a tiny figure of just two notes (long and short) which Beethoven refers to constantly in the

Programme notes

course of the movement. The latter ushers in the chromatic scale with which the piano re-enters, and the same sequence of events later serves to introduce the development section. Here the turn dominates, dreamily passed around the woodwind, but the two-note figure emerges ever more strongly, eventually firing off a stormy tirade of piano octaves. The air quickly clears, however, and reappearances of the turn lead back to a recapitulation of the opening material. Towards the end of the movement Beethoven makes his most radical formal move. In the early 19th century it was still customary at this point in a concerto for the soloist to improvise a solo passage (or cadenza), but in this work Beethoven for the first time includes one that is not only fully written-out, but involves the orchestra as well. It was an innovation that many subsequent composers, perhaps glad of the extra measure of control, would follow.

The second and third movements together take less time to play than the first. The *Adagio*, in distant B major, opens with a serene, hymn-like tune from the strings, which the piano answers with a theme of its own before itself taking up the opening one in ornamented form. This in turn leads to an orchestral reprise of the same theme, now with greater participation from the winds and with piano decoration.

At the end, the music dissolves, then eerily drops down a semitone as the piano toys idly with some quiet, thickly scored chords. In a flash, these are then transformed and revealed to be the main theme of the bouncy *Rondo* finale, which has followed without a break. Physical joins between movements were a trend in Beethoven's music at this time, but so too were thematic ones. At one point in this finale, with the main theme firmly established, the strings gently put forward the 'experimental' version from the end of the slow movement, as if mocking the piano's earlier tentativeness. The movement approaches its close, however, with piano and timpani in stealthy cahoots before, with a final flurry, the end is upon us.

The Concerto's nickname was not chosen by Beethoven, and, given the composer's angry reaction to Napoleon's self-appointment as Emperor in 1804, it may seem more than usually inappropriate. Yet there is an aptness to it if we take the music's grandly heroic stance as a picture of what, perhaps, an emperor ought to be. Beethoven once remarked that if he had understood the arts of war as well as he had those of music, he could have defeated Napoleon. Who, listening to this Concerto, could doubt that?

Programme note © Lindsay Kemp

Interval – 20 minutes

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Programme notes

Jean Sibelius

1865–1957

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 43

1901–02

1 Allegretto

2 Tempo andante, ma rubato

3 Vivacissimo

4 Finale

In the early months of 1901 Jean Sibelius and his family escaped the harsh Finnish winter in Rapallo, a small town on the west coast of Italy not far from Genoa. Sibelius borrowed a study up in the mountains, surrounded by 'magnolia, cypresses, vine, palm trees and a manifold variety of flowers.' In this Mediterranean setting the composer was reminded of the legend of Don Juan, and began to sketch a symphonic poem on the famous narrative entitled 'Festival.'

Physically and artistically, Sibelius was indulging in little more than escapism and he knew it; dark clouds remained in his life. His daughter Ruth was recovering from dangerous illness, a tormenting situation for the composer and his wife Aino, who had lost a child the previous year. Meanwhile, Finland's journey towards freedom from Russian rule had suffered yet another blow: in the wake of the 1899 February Manifesto, the Russians had begun the incorporation of the Finnish army into their own, a huge weakening of Finland's status.

It was back home in May 1901 that Sibelius began serious work on the piece he'd conceived amid the flowers of Rapallo – now planned as an abstracted symphony uncontrolled by the *Don Juan* narrative but cast in the bright, floral key of D major. By the following spring it was complete, the composer conducting four successive performances in Helsinki starting with the premiere on 8 March. Robert Kajanus, director of the Helsinki Philharmonic, concluded that the piece was an ode to Finnish nationalism – a stirring hymn

to strengthen and inspire the programme of passive resistance that many artists (including Sibelius) had initiated.

You can hear why Kajanus might have reached such a conclusion, but according to Sibelius he was way off the mark. The composer's annotations and working processes reveal struggles rather more private and personal: the second theme of the *Andante* was apparently inspired by Ruth's recovery, and the more subdued, lamenting theme of the final movement was dedicated to Elli Järnefelt, Sibelius's sister-in-law, who had recently died by suicide.

Technically speaking, the Symphony consolidates some musical practices that would soon become Sibelius hallmarks. Perhaps the most important of these – alongside his particular use of 'stepping' string motifs and his fondness for themes based on adjacent notes – is the coherence of those themes, which appear to relate more naturally to one another, as if tributaries to the same river. That's immediately recognisable in the pastoral opening movement, which is controlled entirely by the three upward-stepping notes that are heard right at the beginning.

The residue of the *Don Juan* tale lurks amid the conflicts of the second movement. Sibelius pits a theme he called 'death' (first heard on bassoons playing in unison but an octave apart) against one he called 'Christus' (the 'Ruth' theme, which emerges from jagged strings). The third movement has been described as

Programme notes

a 'call to arms', and is a stormy dance that eventually – after twice visiting a more saddened trio section – collapses back into the three upward-stepping notes that formed the Symphony's opening.

With this, the Symphony slips inevitably into its final movement and the mustering of a heroic, striving tune soaked in optimism and renewal in its journey from a cautious harmonisation to a brilliantly confident one. The tune, again born of those upwardly-stepping notes, lightens the dark shadows of the troubling Elli Järnefelt theme to suggest the blossoming of life anew, in all its richness and colour.

Programme note © Andrew Mellor

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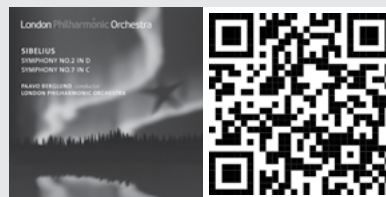
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