



LSO

CONCERTO FOR ORCHESTRA

Thursday 30 May
Barbican

7.30–9.50pm

LSO SEASON CONCERT
MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS

Cage *The Seasons*
Beethoven *Violin Concerto*
Interval
Bartók *Concerto for Orchestra*

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Julia Fischer violin

Tonight's concert is broadcast live by **BBC Radio 3**



Free Pre-Concert Recital
LSO Platforms: Guildhall Artists
6pm Barbican Hall

Beethoven *Sonata No 18 in E-flat major*
Rachmaninov/Mendelssohn *Scherzo*
Nimrod Borenstein
Kangding Qingge *Étude* (world premiere)
Brahms *Variations on a Theme of Paganini*

Ming Xie piano

barbican
Resident Orchestra

London Symphony Orchestra

Welcome



 warm welcome to this evening's LSO concert at the Barbican. Following a two-week tour to Latin America, including performances in Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Uruguay and Chile, we're delighted to return to London for the first of LSO Conductor Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas' performances with the Orchestra this season.

Drawing on the theme of 'roots and origins', which runs through the 2018/19 season, Michael Tilson Thomas presents a work that reflects the composer's Hungarian heritage and looks back to the roots of the concerto genre – Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra. Before this, we hear ballet music by a composer Michael Tilson Thomas has championed throughout his career, John Cage, and Beethoven's Violin Concerto. It is a great pleasure to welcome Julia Fischer,

who last performed with the Orchestra in 2013, as the soloist for this piece. Thank you to our media partner BBC Radio 3, which is broadcasting tonight's concert live.

Prior to the LSO's performance tonight we also hosted a pre-concert recital by Guildhall School student Ming Xie, who performed a programme of Beethoven, Rachmaninov, Brahms and a world premiere by Nimrod Borenstein. These free LSO Platforms recitals seek to complement the repertoire in the Orchestra's main season and showcase the musicians of the future. Visit Iso.co.uk/Isoplatforms for details.

I hope you enjoy the concert and that you will join us again soon. Michael Tilson Thomas conducts the Orchestra once again on 2 June, pairing Ives' *A Symphony: New England Holidays* with Beethoven's 'Emperor' Concerto, with Daniil Trifonov appearing as soloist as part of his Artist Portrait series. That same day, we will be exploring the life and music of Charles Ives with an LSO Discovery Day made up of an open rehearsal, talks and chamber music.

Kathryn McDowell CBE DL
Managing Director

Latest News

BMW CLASSICS IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE

On 30 June, the LSO takes over Trafalgar Square as Sir Simon Rattle conducts a dance-inspired programme of music by Dvořák, Poulenc, Ravel and Bushra El-Turk. There will also be performances by young musicians from the LSO On Track scheme in East London and from the Guildhall School.

LSO AT THE BBC PROMS 2019

The LSO and a 300-strong choir perform Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* on Tuesday 20 August at the BBC Proms, conducted by Sir Simon Rattle. The programme also includes Varèse's *Amérique* and French composer Charles Koechlin's *Les bandar-log*.

WELCOME TO TONIGHT'S GROUPS

We are delighted to welcome:
FIE: Foundation for International Education University of Louisiana at Lafayette

On Our Blog

IVES' SECOND SYMPHONY

Like much of Charles Ives' music, the Second Symphony is scattered with references and allusions to familiar tunes from the American songbook. On our blog, we take a look at just a few of the moments to listen out for.

ARTIST PORTRAIT: DANIIL TRIFONOV

Piano superstar Daniil Trifonov tells us about his life away from the concert stage and the experiences that made him love music: from rock and jazz to the films of Andrei Tarkovsky and Scriabin's 'Poem of Ecstasy'.

Read these articles and more
▷ Iso.co.uk/blog

Please ensure all phones are switched off. Photography and audio/video recording are not permitted during the performance.

Tonight's Concert In Brief



celebrations of sound, nature and the seasons fill this programme.

The cycle of the year forms the backdrop to John Cage's *The Seasons*, music written to accompany a ballet choreographed by Merce Cunningham, Cage's lifelong partner and collaborator. His first orchestral score, *The Seasons* was inspired by Cage's immersion in Indian philosophy, bringing to life each phase of the annual cycle, from the austerity of winter to the stirring of spring.

The warmth and radiance of the solo instrument take centre stage in Beethoven's Violin Concerto. Beginning with four quiet beats on the timpani, it moves through a lyrical allegro and slow movement, before culminating in a spirited rondo finale.

In the Concerto for Orchestra, Bartók lets every instrument and section shine, creating a joyful celebration of music and the collection of individuals that make up the orchestra. In the composer's own words, the five movements represent 'a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious death-song of the third, to the life-assertion of the last one', a virtuosic, dancing rondo.

PROGRAMME CONTRIBUTORS

Wendy Thompson studied at the Royal College of Music before taking an MMus in musicology at King's College, London. In addition to writing about music she is Executive Director of Classic Arts Productions, a major supplier of independent programmes to BBC Radio.

Lindsay Kemp is a senior producer for BBC Radio 3, including programming lunchtime concerts from LSO St Luke's. He is also Artistic Director of Baroque at the Edge Festival, and a regular contributor to *Gramophone* magazine.

Paul Griffiths has been a critic for nearly 40 years, including for *The Times* and *The New Yorker*, and is an authority on 20th and 21st-century music. Among his books are studies of Boulez, Ligeti and Stravinsky. He also writes novels and librettos.

Coming Up

Sunday 9 June
Barbican

7-9pm

SCHEHERAZADE

Liam Mattison Violet from 'Two Ladies' *
Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No 1
Rimsky-Korsakov Scheherazade

Elim Chan conductor
Alice Sara Ott piano

Generously supported by the
Reignwood Culture Foundation.

* World premiere, commissioned via the Panufnik
Composers Scheme, generously supported by
Lady Hamlyn and **The Helen Hamlyn Trust**

Thursday 20 June
Barbican

7.30-9.45pm

LSO + GUILDHALL SCHOOL: BRUCKNER

Vaughan Williams Fantasia on a Theme by
Thomas Tallis
Grainger Lincolnshire Posy for Winds
Bruckner Symphony No 4

Sir Simon Rattle conductor
London Symphony Orchestra
Guildhall School Musicians

Generously supported by Baker McKenzie

Thursday 27 June
Saturday 29 June
Barbican

7.30-9.25pm
7.30-9.25pm

THE CUNNING LITTLE VIXEN

Janáček The Cunning Little Vixen (semi-staged)

Sir Simon Rattle conductor
Peter Sellars director
Lucy Crowe, Gerald Finley, Sophia Burgos, Peter Hoare, Jan Martiník, Hanno Müller-Brachmann, Paulina Malefane, Anna Lapkovskaja soloists

Produced by LSO and Barbican

Sunday 30 June
Trafalgar Square

5-7pm

BMW CLASSICS

Dvořák Selection of Slavonic Dances
Bushra El-Turk Tuqus (world premiere) *
Poulenc Selection from 'Les biches - Suite'
Ravel La valse

Sir Simon Rattle conductor
London Symphony Orchestra
LSO On Track Young Musicians *
Guildhall School Musicians *

Produced in partnership with BMW

John Cage The Seasons 1947 / note by Wendy Thompson



described by his teacher Schoenberg as 'not a composer, but an inventor – of genius', John Cage's interests extended far beyond Western classical music to embrace music, art and philosophy from many different cultures. Dance was central to Cage's career. He spent his early years working as a dance accompanist at several West Coast colleges, and in 1938, at the Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle, he met the modern dance pioneer and choreographer Merce Cunningham, who in 1946 became his lifelong personal and professional partner. Together they created a sequence of classic dance collaborations, based on a temperamental affinity for interlocking aesthetic disciplines, summed up in Cage's statement: 'Art, instead of being an object made by one person, is a process set in motion by a group of people. Art's socialised. It isn't someone saying something, but people, doing things ...'

One of the first results of this fruitful partnership was a short ballet, *The Seasons*, created in early 1947 while Cage was working on his ground-breaking sequence *Sonatas and Interludes* for prepared piano. It was his first orchestral score, commissioned by Lincoln Kirstein's Ballet Society, predecessor of the New York City Ballet. The Ballet Society gave the premiere on 17 May 1947 at

the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York City, with choreography by Cunningham, and designs by Martha Graham's favourite Japanese designer, Isamu Noguchi.

At this point in his life, Cage was deeply influenced by Indian aesthetics. He had agreed to tutor an Indian musician who was studying Western music, and who in return introduced Cage to Indian music and philosophy. *The Seasons*, which is in a single act divided into nine sections – Prelude I, Winter; Prelude II, Spring; Prelude III, Summer; Prelude IV, Fall; and a finale that repeats Prelude I as the annual cycle recommences – is based on the Indian concept of seasonal affections. Winter represents quiescence, spring is associated with burgeoning creation, summer with preservation, and autumn with decay.

The ballet also uses the concept of 'nested music', characteristic of Cage's compositions of the 1940s, in which the complete work and its component parts are all based on a predetermined proportion, in this case the ratio 2, 2, 1, 3, 2, 4, 1, 3, 1; while the harmonic structure is based around 'gamuts' – a sequence of chords with fixed instrumentation, through which the piece progresses. □

John Cage In Profile 1912–92 / by Liam Hennebery



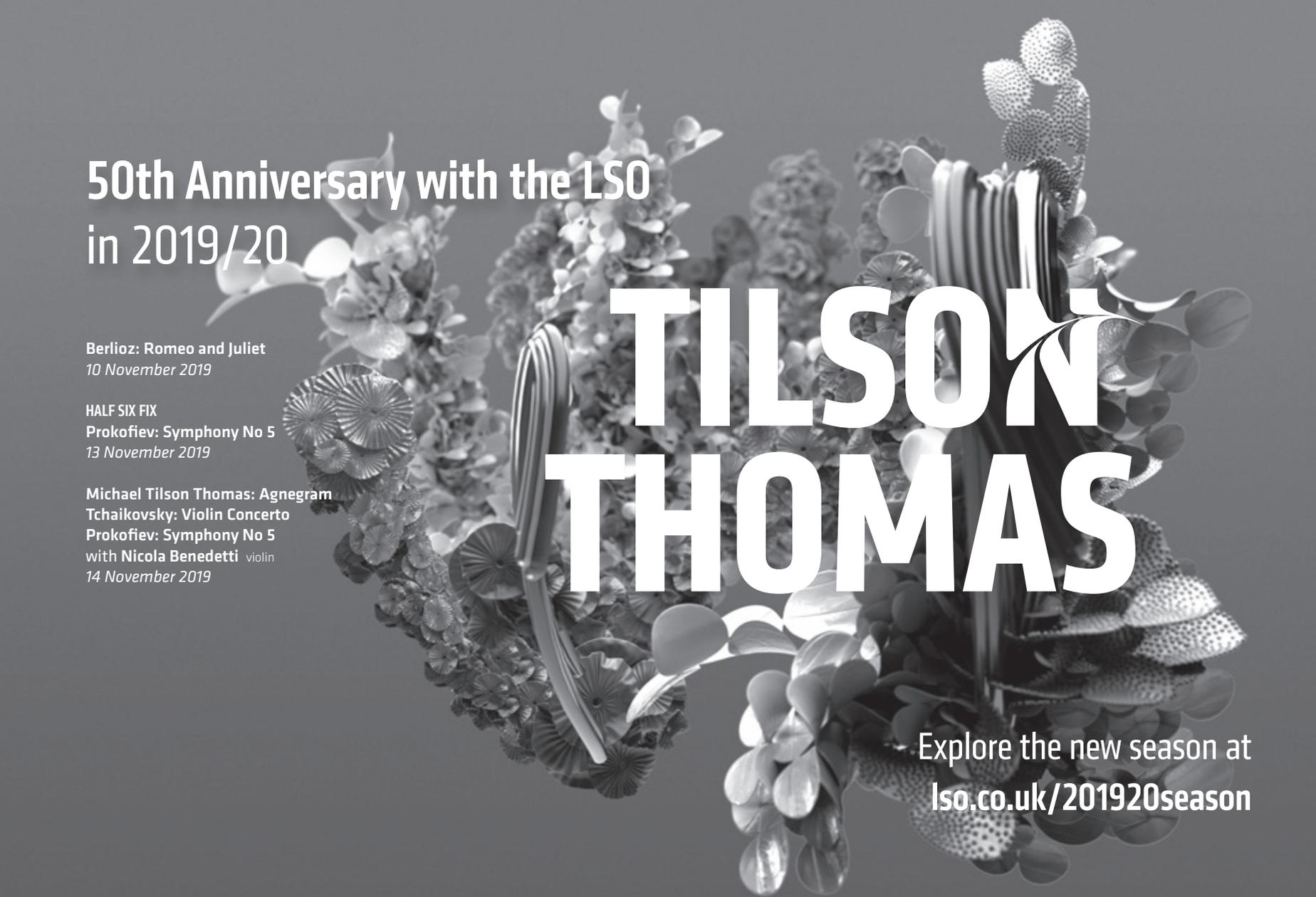
 John Cage was one of the leading figures of the 20th-century avant garde, having arguably a greater impact on music of the century than any other American composer. He was born in 1912 in Los Angeles to a family with deep American roots: his ancestor (also named John Cage) assisted George Washington in the task of surveying the Colony of Virginia.

Cage learned to play the piano as a child, but by the time he was 16 he was convinced that he would go on to become a writer. He graduated from Los Angeles High School as valedictorian and majored in Theology at Pomona College in Claremont. He spent a year in Europe studying a variety of arts

subjects before returning to Los Angeles in 1931 to study composition with Richard Buhling, Henry Cowell, Adolph Weiss and eventually Arnold Schoenberg.

Modern dance, Indian philosophy and Zen Buddhism all played a significant role in Cage's music. From the 1950s onwards, he began to experiment with chance and indeterminacy. This move proved unpopular with colleagues, and he drew criticism from both Pierre Boulez and Karlheinz Stockhausen. Cage's fame grew in the 1960s, during which time he toured widely and established an affiliation with the Music Department at Wesleyan University, an association that would last until his death. The following decade he would produce some of his largest and most ambitious works.

His last new direction was opera. Between 1987 and 1991, he produced five, despite his worsening health and arthritis. In August 1992, Cage suffered his second stroke in New York and died at age 79. Today, he is perhaps best known for his composition *4'33"*, which is absent of deliberate sound, inviting the audience to listen musically to other noises. However, his wider impact remains considerable, with composers Steve Reich, Philip Glass, La Monte Young and even Frank Zappa all acknowledging his influence. □



50th Anniversary with the LSO
in 2019/20

Berlioz: Romeo and Juliet
10 November 2019

HALF SIX FIX
Prokofiev: Symphony No 5
13 November 2019

Michael Tilson Thomas: Agnogram
Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto
Prokofiev: Symphony No 5
with **Nicola Benedetti** *violin*
14 November 2019

TILSON
THOMAS

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lso.co.uk/201920season

Ludwig van Beethoven Violin Concerto in D major Op 61 1806 / note by Lindsay Kemp

- 1 **Allegro ma non troppo**
- 2 **Larghetto**
- 3 **Rondo. Allegro**

Julia Fischer violin

For Beethoven, the concerto was not a form to be taken lightly. Like Mozart, the first great master of the Classical concerto, he composed concertos principally for his own instrument, the piano. Whereas Mozart's output of piano concertos ran to nearly 30, Beethoven completed only five, each of them a dynamic and virtuosic conflict between soloist and orchestra. It is not hard to picture him at the keyboard, challenging the orchestra to battle in the gigantic flourishes of the first movement of the 'Emperor' Concerto, running it ragged in the fleet-footed games of the finale of the First, or coaxing it patiently into submission in the slow movement of the Fourth.

Compared to these dramas, his only completed violin concerto is a very different animal, a work of unprecedented warmth and serenity that its first audiences evidently found rather puzzling. 'The opinion of connoisseurs admits that it contains beautiful passages but confesses that the context often seems broken and that the

endless repetition of unimportant passages produces a tiring effect', ran one account of its first performance.

Clearly, a little more action was expected. It was not until one of the 19th century's greatest violinists, Joseph Joachim, performed it in London in 1844 under Mendelssohn's baton that the work came to be recognised as the sublime masterpiece that it is. Joachim was only twelve years old at the time, but later descriptions of his playing, which talked of artistic perfection with bravura as a secondary consideration, perhaps explain how it was that he was the first one to be able to put the concerto across; these qualities, after all, apply equally well to the work itself.

The circumstances of the first performance in Vienna in December 1806 sound somewhat less promising. Beethoven had rushed to complete the piece in time and the soloist, Franz Clement, was apparently forced to sight-read much of the music at the concert. This sounds hard to believe, but it is surely significant that the autograph contains many alterations to the solo part, perhaps made at Clement's suggestion, after what one can only imagine was a somewhat hairy premiere. If Beethoven made things hard for his soloist, however,

Clement did not show the concerto to its best advantage by playing the second and third movements at opposite ends of the concert from the first, and inserting some virtuoso showpieces in between (including one played with the violin upside down).

Although Beethoven knew how to play the violin, it was not really his instrument, so we should not be too surprised that his concerto does not adopt the confrontational and virtuoso tone of the piano concertos. And unlike the piano, the violin cannot accompany itself, with the result that the orchestra has to play along almost all of the time. Beethoven does not fight against this. Instead he turns it to an advantage by writing a supremely conciliatory concerto in which the violin and orchestra are in agreement throughout. As musicologist Donald Tovey has said, 'all its most famous strokes of genius are not only mysteriously quiet, but mysterious in radiantly happy surroundings'.

First Movement

This is certainly true of the work's unusual opening, where a series of gentle drum beats introduce the sublime first theme, and then proceed to dominate and unify the whole movement through repeating and recycling their insistent rhythm in different contexts. There is no menace in this (as well there

might be), and when the solo violin first enters it is not to contradict the orchestra, or even to contribute any new themes of its own, but to enrich the music with soaring embellishments and eloquent refinements of the movement's glorious melodic material.

Second Movement

This non-aggressive attitude is even more noticeable in the placid slow movement, which seems to start out as a straightforward set of variations on the theme introduced right at the beginning on muted strings – so straightforward, indeed, that the music never leaves the key of G major and the solo violin at first offers no more than gentle accompanimental arabesques. After the third variation, however, (a loud restatement of the theme by the orchestra alone), the soloist introduces a brief but sonorous new tune, which is then alternated with the main theme before a peaceful coda, a fanfare-like outburst from the strings and a short cadenza lead straight into the finale.

Finale

Here again, the form is simple – a rondo whose uncomplicated treatment may owe much to Beethoven's haste to complete the concerto, but whose recurring theme is irresistible nevertheless. And there is real originality in the way in which the

Ludwig van Beethoven in Profile 1770–1827 / by Andrew Stewart

movement opens with the theme given out by the soloist over a bare, prompting accompaniment from the cellos and basses, and in the way that, just when you feel Beethoven has proved that he could carry on for ever, he wittily brings the concerto to an end. □



Beethoven showed early musical promise, yet reacted against his father's attempts to train him as a child prodigy. The boy pianist attracted the support of the Prince-Archbishop, who supported his studies with leading musicians at the Bonn court. By the early 1780s Beethoven had completed his first compositions, all of which were for keyboard. With the decline of his alcoholic father, Ludwig became the family breadwinner as a musician at court.

Encouraged by his employer, the Prince-Archbishop Maximilian Franz, Beethoven travelled to Vienna to study with Joseph Haydn. The younger composer fell out

with his renowned mentor when the latter discovered he was secretly taking lessons from several other teachers. Although Maximilian Franz withdrew payments for Beethoven's Viennese education, the talented musician had already attracted support from some of the city's wealthiest arts patrons. His public performances in 1795 were well received, and he shrewdly negotiated a contract with Artaria & Co, the largest music publisher in Vienna. He was soon able to devote his time to composition and the performance of his own works.

In 1800 Beethoven began to complain bitterly of deafness, but despite suffering the distress and pain of tinnitus, chronic stomach ailments, liver problems and an embittered legal case for the guardianship of his nephew, Beethoven created a series of remarkable new works, including the *Missa Solemnis* and his late symphonies and piano sonatas. It is thought that around 10,000 people followed his funeral procession on 29 March 1827.

Certainly, his posthumous reputation developed to influence successive generations of composers and other artists inspired by the heroic aspects of Beethoven's character and the profound humanity of his music. □

▷ BEETHOVEN AND NAPOLEON

Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), born in Corsica, came to prominence during the French Revolution of 1789–99, rising through the ranks of the French army to become a general. After successful campaigns during the Revolution, Napoleon staged a coup d'état in 1799, taking power as the First Consul of France, before crowning himself 'Emperor of the French' in 1804. This title was an attempt to emphasise the abolition of monarchy, showing Napoleon as a ruler of the people, and not of the Republic. However Napoleon's self-coronation, his founding of the House of Bonaparte, his residence in the Tuileries Palace (the historical residence of kings) and his relentless building of a new French Empire suggested otherwise. Throughout the Revolution, Beethoven admired Napoleon as a figurehead of anti-monarchism and a defender of the rights of man, initially dedicating his Third Symphony to the then First Consul. Upon learning of his self-coronation, Beethoven is reported to have thrown the symphony to the floor, crying in a rage, 'so he is no more than a common mortal! Now, too, he will tread under foot all the rights of man, indulge only his ambition; now he will think himself superior to all men, become a tyrant!'

Interval – 20 minutes

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London Symphony Orchestra

ROOTS & ORIGINS

Sir Simon Rattle

Season Opening Concert
14 September 2019

Messiaen's Éclairs sur l'au-delà
15 September 2019

Brahms & Rachmaninov
18 & 19 September 2019

Berg & Beethoven's Seventh
16 January 2020

Beethoven:
Christ on the Mount of Olives
19 January & 13 February 2020

Beethoven's Ninth Symphony
16 February 2020

Bartók: Duke Bluebeard's Castle
23 April 2020

Mahler's Fourth Symphony
26 April 2020

Grainger
4 June 2020

Produced by the LSO and Barbican. Part of the
LSO's 2019/20 Season and Barbican Presents.

Gershwin, Ives, Harris & Bernstein
6 June 2020

50 YEARS WITH THE LSO

Michael Tilson Thomas

Berlioz: Romeo and Juliet
10 November 2019

HALF SIX FIX
Prokofiev: Symphony No 5
13 November 2019

**Michael Tilson Thomas, Tchaikovsky
& Prokofiev**
14 November 2019

SMALL SCALE

LSO Chamber Orchestra

Mozart Concertos
12 & 13 October 2019,
LSO St Luke's

Rameau, Purcell, Handel
15 December 2019,
Milton Court Concert Hall

RUSSIAN ROOTS

Gianandrea Noseda

Shostakovich's Sixth Symphony
31 October 2019

Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony
3 & 28 November 2019

Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony
5 December 2019

Shostakovich's Ninth Symphony
30 January & 9 February 2020

James MacMillan: St John Passion
5 April 2020

ARTIST PORTRAIT

Antoine Tamestit

Jörg Widmann's Viola Concerto
with Daniel Harding
19 April 2020

Berio's Voci with François-Xavier Roth
11 June 2020

Walton's Viola Concerto
with Alan Gilbert
14 June 2020

BBC Radio 3 Lunchtime Concerts:
Antoine Tamestit & Friends
8 & 15 May; 5 & 26 June 2020, LSO St Luke's

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[iso.co.uk/201920season](https://www.iso.co.uk/201920season)

Béla Bartók Concerto for Orchestra 1943 / note by Paul Griffiths

- 1 **Introduzione: Andante non troppo**
- 2 **Presentando le coppie: Allegro scherzando**
- 3 **Elegia: Andante non troppo**
- 4 **Intermezzo interrotto: Allegretto**
- 5 **Finale: Pesante – Presto**



Bartók's attachment to folk music was not just to its rhythms and melodies but also to its social force, how it would bind communities in ways of joy or lament, work or relaxation. His Concerto for Orchestra is music in this image – music in which orchestral players exert themselves as a community, performing with, to and against one another, and modelling, for the larger society of us listeners, an ideal in which an array of diverse individuals can discover a unity that does not iron out but rather springs from difference and honours it. All this is implied by the title, which Bartók did not invent (his friend [Kodály](#) had written a concerto for orchestra a few years before, and the first was probably Hindemith's of 1925), but which his work took full possession of.

The score – the biggest Bartók completed during the last five years of his life, living in the United States as a sick, disheartened refugee from fascism and war – was commissioned by [Serge Koussevitzky](#) >

at the urging of two of the composer's younger Hungarian friends, Fritz Reiner and Joseph Szigeti, who hoped that such a request would help restore their mentor's morale, his health and his finances.

—
'The title of this symphony-like orchestral work is explained by its tendency to treat the single orchestral instruments in a 'concertante' or soloistic manner.'

Béla Bartók

—

Bartók began work in August 1943, while resting at Saranac Lake in upstate New York, and finished the piece within eight weeks – a remarkably short period, proving he had been reinvigorated by the challenge. Writing to Szigeti that he was feeling better he remarked: 'Perhaps it is due to this improvement (or it may be the other way round) that I have been able to finish the work that Koussevitzky commissioned.' Koussevitzky conducted the premiere on 1 December 1944 with his Boston Symphony Orchestra, after which Bartók extended the ending.

His programme note for the first performance suggests a more or less continuous narrative: 'The general mood of the work represents,' he wrote, 'apart from the jesting second

movement, a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious death-song of the third, to the life-assertion of the last one.' However, there is also the invitation to understand the work as

returning symmetrically back to its beginning. As in several earlier works, Bartók created a five-part symmetrical form, where in this case two big symphonic dances enclose two scherzos with, at the centre, an elegy.

In keeping with the spirit of a public occasion, the musical materials are laid out clearly and the working takes place in, as it were, full view. First comes a pentatonic theme in the bass, built entirely from fourths and major seconds – a memory from central Europe, perhaps, but also an evocation of night, of darkness. This becomes the ground for gathering activity that springs to life with the acceleration of an upward scale figure to initiate the bounding main theme – still featuring fourths – of a sonata allegro.

The calmer second subject is delivered by a solo oboe and repeated by clarinets in octaves, then by flutes and oboe in triads. One implication of the title is that this is a concerto with multitudinous soloists, and so it is already appearing. A third subject arrives on solo clarinet, from which it is passed to cor anglais and around the woodwind ensemble. Phases of development and recapitulation (the second subject now coming first) are compact.

The next movement, first of the two scherzos, is a game of couples, with pairs of instruments playing at different intervals: bassoons in minor sixths, oboes in minor thirds, clarinets in minor sevenths, flutes in clear fifths, muted trumpets in discordant major seconds. After a brass chorale the couples return as before, their games at once elaborated and mollified. The trumpets, for instance, settle their differences and agree on D, the keynote of this movement.

Then the work's very beginning is recalled, to give rise to a slow movement whose climax has brass chords falling as avalanches against the searing melody for violins in octaves. A solitary piccolo calls out like a night bird.

Its high B is seized on two octaves down by unison strings to start the second

scherzo, an intermezzo introduced by solo oboe and interrupted by a quotation from Shostakovich's 'Leningrad' Symphony, which was being played everywhere at the time. Bartók has the orchestra laugh at the theme and give it fairground-organ treatment before continuing as before, but he also humanely undercuts the satire by having the Shostakovich theme emerge as a transformation of his own.

For the finale, as often before, he provides a lively dance rondo in duple time, with figures from earlier in the work – especially from the opening movement – reappearing in bright sunlight, and with canons adding to the supreme virtuosity. □.

▷ ZOLTÁN KODÁLY

Zoltán Kodály (1882–1967) was a Hungarian composer, ethnomusicologist and, like his good friend Bartók, a committed collector of the folk music of his native country. In 1906 he received a PhD for his thesis on Hungarian folk song, and he began field trips to collect folk music from the Hungarian countryside with Bartók at around the same time. The two composers published collections of folk song, programmed their music side-by-side in concerts, formed a New Hungarian Music Society, and remained lifelong friends. After Bartók's death, Kodály described their shared 'vision of an educated Hungary, reborn from the people ... We decided to devote our lives to its realisation'.

Bartók described Kodály's music as 'the most perfect embodiment of the Hungarian spirit', and most of his most famous works – including the *Dances of Galánta*, the choral *Psalmus Hungaricus* and the opera *Háry Janos* – bear the influence of his studies and research.

▷ SERGE KOUSSEVITZKY



Serge Koussevitzky (1874–1951) was a Russian-born conductor and publisher. He founded the Editions Russes de Musique in 1909, through which he promoted the music of Scriabin, Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Medtner, before leaving Russia in 1920 for Paris, where he organised a summer concert series. He moved to the US a few years later, where he became conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, commissioned and conducted the premieres of numerous new works, founded the Tanglewood Music Center, and set up the Koussevitzky Foundation to support the composition of new works; the list of composers receiving its support reads like a who's who of modern composition.

Béla Bartók in Profile 1881–1945 / by Andrew Stewart



Béla Bartók's family boasted how the boy was able to recognise different dance rhythms before he could speak. Born in 1881 in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary (now Sînnicolau Mare, Romania), he began piano lessons with his mother at the age of five. From 1899 to 1903 he studied piano and composition at the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest, where he created a number of works that echoed the style of Brahms and Richard Strauss.

After graduating he discovered Austro-Hungarian and Slavic folk music, travelling extensively with his friend Zoltán Kodály and recording countless ethnic songs and dances which began to influence his own compositions. His music was also influenced by the works of Debussy, to which he was introduced by Kodály in 1907, the year in which he became Professor of Piano at the Budapest Conservatory.

Bartók established his mature style with such scores as the ballets *The Wooden Prince* (1914–16, completed 1917) and *The Miraculous Mandarin* (1918–19, completed 1926–31), and his opera *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* (1911, completed 1918). He revived his career as a concert pianist in 1927 when he gave the premiere of his First Piano Concerto in Mannheim.

Bartók detested the rise of fascism and in October 1940 he quit Budapest and travelled, via Lisbon, to the US. At first he concentrated on ethnomusicological researches, but eventually returned to composition and created a significant group of 'American' works, including the Concerto for Orchestra, his Third Piano Concerto and the draft of a Viola Concerto.

His character was distinguished by a firm, almost stubborn refusal to compromise or be diverted from his musical instincts by money or position. Throughout his working life, Bartók collected, transcribed and annotated the folk songs of many countries, a commitment that brought little financial return or recognition but one which he regarded as his most important contribution to music. He also declined the security of a composition professorship during his final years in America, although he did accept the post of visiting assistant in music at Columbia University from March 1941 to the winter of 1942 until ill health forced his retirement. □

▷ BARTÓK ON LSO LIVE



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Bartók in the LSO's 2019/20 Season

at the Barbican

The Miraculous Mandarin
19 December 2019

HALF SIX FIX
The Wooden Prince
18 March 2020

The Wooden Prince
& Stravinsky Violin Concerto
19 March 2020

Duke Bluebeard's Castle
23 April 2020

Bartók Plus

BBC Radio 3 Concerts at LSO St Luke's

Carducci Quartet
13 September 2019 1pm

Meta4 String Quartet
4 October 2019 1pm

Quatuor Voce
20 September 2019 1pm

Vertavo String Quartet
4 October 2019 7.30pm

Arcadia Quartet
21 September 2019 1pm

BARTÓK

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Michael Tilson Thomas conductor



Michael Tilson Thomas is Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, Co-Founder and Artistic Director of the New World Symphony and Conductor Laureate of the London Symphony Orchestra.

Born in Los Angeles, he studied piano, conducting and composition at the University of Southern California, and as a young musician also worked with leading performers, including Gregor Piatigorsky and Jascha Heifetz, and composers, including Stravinsky, Boulez, Stockhausen and Copland. In 1969, after winning the Koussevitzky Prize at Tanglewood, he was appointed Assistant Conductor and pianist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and also conducted the BSO in his New York debut. Later serving as BSO Principal Guest Conductor until 1974, he held subsequent appointments as Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic (1971–79), Principal Guest Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic (1981–85) and Principal Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra (1988–95).

In 1988, he co-founded the New World Symphony, an orchestral academy in Miami dedicated to preparing gifted music graduates for leadership roles in classical music. As Artistic Director, he works with

NWS Fellows to further their artistic and professional development. Of the more than 1,100 NWS alumni, 90% maintain careers in music, often with major orchestras. Since 2011, the NWS campus has been the technologically advanced, Frank Gehry-designed, New World Center.

He was appointed Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony in 1995, and his tenure has been a period of significant growth and heightened international recognition for the orchestra. In addition to exploring the standard repertoire, he has led SFS in championing contemporary and American music and enriching the concert experience through semi-staged performances. In 2020, he concludes his 25-year directorship and becomes SFS Music Director Laureate, continuing to lead the orchestra regularly in concert, as well as in special projects.

His guest conducting engagements have included the major orchestras of Europe and the United States, and he is also a two-time Carnegie Hall Perspectives artist, curating and conducting series from 2003 to 2005 and from 2018 to 2019.

A winner of eleven Grammy Awards, he appears on more than 120 recordings, including a critically acclaimed Mahler cycle

with SFS and pioneering recordings of American music, including by Charles Ives, Carl Ruggles and Steve Reich. His television work includes a BBC series with the LSO, the *New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts*, PBS' *Great Performances*, and *Keeping Score* with SFS, which also includes web and radio content.

Throughout his career, he has been an active composer, and his major works include *From the Diary of Anne Frank*, commissioned by UNICEF and premiered in 1991 with narrator Audrey Hepburn; *Shōwa/Shoah*, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing; and a setting of Carl Sandburg's poem *Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind*, premiered in 2016 by NWS and receiving its New York premiere during the current Carnegie Hall Perspectives series.

He is a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France, a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, was *Musical America's* Musician of the Year and Conductor of the Year, *Gramophone* magazine's Artist of the Year and has been profiled on CBS' *60 Minutes* and ABC's *Nightline*. He was awarded the National Medal of Arts and was recently inducted into the California Hall of Fame and the American Academy of Arts and Letters. □

Julia Fischer violin



One of the world's leading violinists, Julia Fischer is a versatile musician, also known for her extraordinary abilities as a concert pianist, chamber musician and violin teacher. Born in Munich to German-Slovakian parents, Julia received her first violin lessons at the age of three and her first piano lessons shortly after from her mother, Viera Fischer. At the age of nine she began studying with the renowned violin professor Ana Chumachenco, later becoming her successor. Winning first prize at the international Yehudi Menuhin Competition in 1995 was one of the milestones of her early career, and she has since performed with top orchestras worldwide, working with renowned conductors including Herbert Blomstedt, Riccardo Muti, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Yuri Temirkanov and Franz Welser-Möst.

Julia Fischer began the 2018/19 season touring Europe with her long-time chamber music partners Nils Mönkemeyer and Daniel Müller-Schott. She then embarked on a tour of Asia with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Vladimir Jurowski, performing in Seoul, Taipei, Beijing and Shanghai, as well as with the Dresden Philharmonic and Michael Sanderling with concerts in Japan and Korea. She was joined by violinist Augustin Hadelich for an extensive tour of

Germany with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, an orchestra with whom she frequently collaborates. Highlights of the 2017/18 season included concerts with the Bayerisches Staatsorchester under Kirill Petrenko at the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg and New York's Carnegie Hall, and a residency with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra and Philippe Jordan.

In 2011 Julia Fischer founded her own quartet with Alexander Sitkovetsky, Nils Mönkemeyer and Benjamin Nyffenegger and continues to tour extensively with them. Her concert at the Alte Oper Frankfurt in 2010 marked her debut as a pianist: she performed the Grieg Piano Concerto in the second half of the concert, having played Saint-Saëns' Violin Concerto No 3 in the first half. The performance is available on a Decca-released DVD. Teaching is another integral part of her musical life, as she continues to nurture and guide young talent. In February 2019, she performed with her students Eva Zavarov and Louis Vandory with the Kammerakademie Potsdam at the Berlin Philharmonie. She regularly gives masterclasses at Musikferien at Lake Starnberg (Starnberger See).

Over the course of her artistic career Julia Fischer has released numerous critically

acclaimed and award-winning CD and DVD recordings, first under the Pentatone label and later under Decca. Breaking new ground in the classical music market, she has recently launched her own music platform, the JF CLUB, which offers exclusive audio and video footage, previews of her new recordings and personal insights into her work. Recordings of the six solo sonatas by Ysaÿe, Franck's Sonata in A major, and Szymanowski's Sonata in D minor are all available exclusively on JF CLUB.

Julia Fischer holds numerous awards including the Federal Cross of Merit, *Gramophone Award* and the German Culture Prize. She plays a violin by Giovanni Battista Guadagnini (1742) as well as an instrument made by Philipp Augustin (2018). □

London Symphony Orchestra on stage tonight

Leader

Carmine Lauri

First Violins

Sharon Roffman
Maxine Kwok-Adams
William Melvin
Claire Parfitt
Laurent Quenelle
Colin Renwick
Sylvain Vasseur
Rhys Watkins
Matthew Gardner
Richard Blayden
Eleanor Fagg
Alexandra Lomeiko
Dániel Mészöly
Hilary Jane Parker
Julia Rumley

Second Violins

David Alberman
Thomas Norris
Sarah Quinn
David Ballesteros
Julian Gil Rodriguez
Naoko Keatley
Alix Lagasse
Belinda McFarlane
Csilla Pogany
Andrew Pollock
Paul Robson
Louise Shackelton
Ingrid Button
Grace Lee

Violas

Vicci Wardman
Gillianne Haddow
German Clavijo
Lander Echevarria
Stephen Doman
Julia O'Riordan
Robert Turner
Michelle Bruil
Samuel Burstin
Cynthia Perrin
Alistair Scahill
Sofia Silva Sousa

Cellos

David Cohen
Alastair Blayden
Jennifer Brown
Eve-Marie Caravassilis
Daniel Gardner
Hilary Jones
Laure Le Dantec
Gilly McMullin
Ella Rundle
Deborah Tolksdorf

Double Basses

David Desimpelaere
Colin Paris
Matthew Gibson
Thomas Goodman
José Moreira
Jani Pensola
Emre Ersahin
Paul Sherman

Flutes

Gareth Davies
Daniel Shao

Piccolo

Philip Rowson

Oboes

Juliana Koch
Daniel Finney

Cor Anglais

Christine Pendrill

Clarinets

Chris Richards
Chi-Yu Mo

Bass Clarinet

Katy Ayling

Bassoons

Daniel Jemison
Joost Bosdijk

Contra Bassoon

Dominic Morgan

Horns

Tim Jones
Angela Barnes
Alexander Edmondson
Jonathan Lipton
James Pillai

Trumpets

Huw Morgan
Toby Street
Paul Mayes

Trombones

Peter Moore
James Maynard

Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

Tuba

Sasha Koushk-Jalali

Timpani

Erika Ohman

Percussion

Neil Percy
Sam Walton
Glyn Matthews

Harps

Bryn Lewis
Fiona Clifton-Welker

Piano

Catherine Edwards

LSO String Experience Scheme

Since 1992, the LSO String Experience Scheme has enabled young string players from the London music conservatoires at the start of their professional careers to gain work experience by playing in rehearsals and concerts with the LSO. The musicians are treated as professional 'extra' players (additional to LSO members) and receive fees for their work in line with LSO section players.

The Scheme is supported by:

The Polonsky Foundation
Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust
Derek Hill Foundation
Lord and Lady Lurgan Trust
Angus Allnatt Charitable Foundation
Rod Stafford

Performing tonight are **Madeleine Pickering** (First Violin), **Tamaki Sugimoto** (Cello) and **Piotr Hetman** (Double Bass).

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