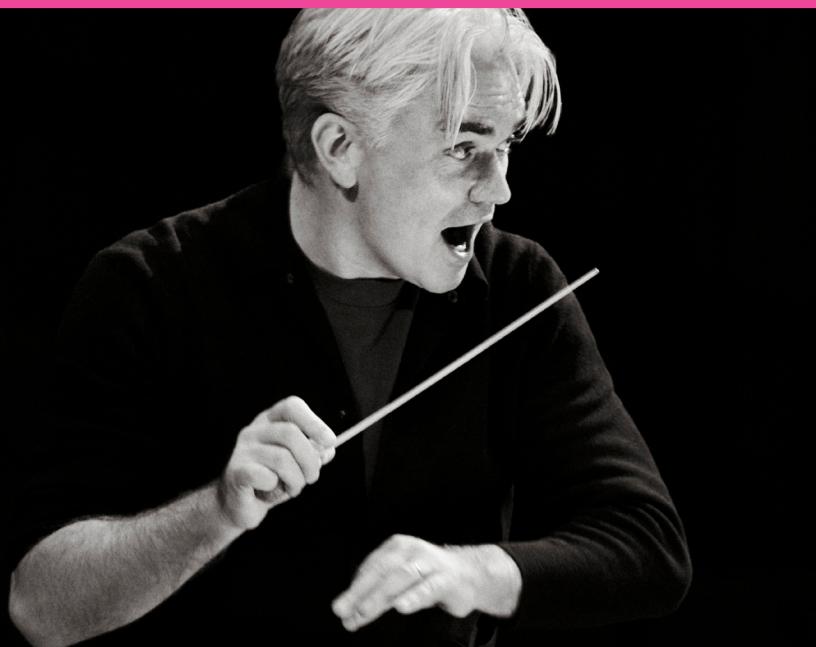




Free concert
programme

London Philharmonic Orchestra



2025/26 season
at the
Southbank Centre



**SOUTHBANK
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RESIDENT

London Philharmonic Orchestra

Principal Conductor Edward Gardner supported by Aud Jebsen

Principal Guest Conductor Karina Canellakis supported by Richard Buxton

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

Artistic Director Jesús Herrera Chief Executive David Burke

Leader Pieter Schoeman supported by Neil Westreich

Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall

Wednesday 21 January 2026 | 7.30pm

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

Mosolov

The Iron Foundry (3')

Rachmaninov

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini (23')

Interval (20')

Anna Korsun

Terricone (15')

Prokofiev

Symphony No. 2 (36')

Vladimir Jurowski

conductor

Anna Vinnitskaya

piano

Part of



Harmony with Nature
Music for a sustainable future

The timings shown are not precise and are given only as a guide.

Concert presented by the London Philharmonic Orchestra

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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.

LPO news

LPO Friends – Behind-the-scenes

Earlier today, LPO Friends enjoyed exclusive behind-the-scenes access to a Private Members' Rehearsal with the Orchestra, conductor Vladimir Jurowski and pianist Anna Vinnitskaya ahead of tonight's concert.



If you'd like to see for yourself what goes into putting on an LPO concert – plus enjoy a host of other amazing benefits, like a private bar space and meeting our musicians – join our family of LPO Friends today, from just £6 per month! Scan the QR code or visit lpo.org.uk/friends to find out more.

New video series: Humans of the Orchestra

Have you seen our new video series yet? 'Humans of the Orchestra' gives LPO audiences and fans a chance to get to know the people behind the music – the personalities, stories and passions of our players.

So far, we've featured Leader Pieter Schoeman, Principal Cello Kristina Blaumane, Principal Trumpet Paul Beniston and Principal Tuba Lee Tsarmaklis – with more to come very soon!



Watch the series on our YouTube channel by scanning the QR code, or visit youtube.com/londonphilharmonicorchestra

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On stage tonight

First Violins

Pieter Schoeman* Leader
Chair supported by Neil Westreich
Alice Ivy-Pemberton
Co-Leader
Kate Oswin
Chair supported by Eric Tomsett
Lasma Taimina
Chair supported by Irina Gofman & Mr Rodrik V. G. Cave
Minn Majoe
Chair supported by Dr Alex & Maria Chan
Vera Beumer
Yang Zhang
Martin Höhmann
Katalin Varnagy
Nilufar Alimaksumova
Tom Aldren
Daniel Pukach
Ricky Gore
Caroline Heard
Victoria Gill
Alice Apreda Howell

Second Violins

Tania Mazzetti Principal
Chair supported by The Candide Trust
Emma Oldfield Co-Principal
Claudia Tarrant-Matthews
Coco Inman
Nynke Huijkema
Nancy Elan
Marie-Anne Mairesse
Kate Birchall
Sophie Phillips
Chair supported by Friends of the Orchestra
Ashley Stevens
Sioni Williams
Kate Cole
Emma Crossley
Eriko Nagayama

Violas

Jane Atkins Guest Principal
Samuel Burstin
Laura Vallejo
Martin Wray
Chair supported by David & Bettina Harden
Benedetto Pollani
Katharine Leek

Cellos

Lucia Ortiz Sauco
James Heron
Michelle Bruil
Stanislav Popov
Jisu Song
Jill Valentine
Kristina Blaumane Principal
Chair supported by Bianca & Stuart Roden
Henry Shapard Co-Principal
Wayne Kwon
Chair supported by an anonymous donor
Francis Bucknall
Leo Melvin
Helen Thomas
Colin Alexander
Iain Ward
Hee Yeon Cho
Pedro Silva

Double Basses

Kevin Rundell* Principal
Sebastian Pennar*
Co-Principal
Hugh Kluger
Tom Walley
Chair supported by William & Alex de Winton
Charlotte Kerbégian
Lowri Estell
Adam Wynter
Michael Fuller

Flutes

Juliette Bausor Principal
Chair supported by Malcolm & Alison Thwaites
Hannah Grayson
Stewart McIlwham*

Piccolos

Stewart McIlwham*
Principal
Hannah Grayson

Oboes

Ian Hardwick* Principal
Alice Munday
Chair supported by David & Yi Buckley

Cor Anglais

Sue Böhling* Principal
Chair supported by Dr Barry Grimaldi

Clarinets

Benjamin Mellefont*
Principal
Chair supported by Sir Nigel Boardman & Prof. Lynda Gratton
Thomas Watmough
Chair supported by Roger Greenwood
Paul Richards*

Bass Clarinet

Paul Richards* Principal

Bassoons

Jonathan Davies* Principal
Chair supported by Sir Simon Robey
Helen Storey*
Simon Estell*

Contrabassoon

Simon Estell* Principal

Horns

Annemarie Federle
Principal
Chair supported by Victoria Robey CBE
John Ryan* Principal
Martin Hobbs
Mark Vines Co-Principal
Gareth Mollison

Trumpets

Paul Beniston* Principal
Chair supported by the Williams family in memory of Grenville Williams
Tom Nielsen* Principal
Anne McAnaney*
David Hilton

Trombones

Mark Templeton* Principal
Chair supported by William & Alex de Winton
David Whitehouse

Bass Trombone

Lyndon Meredith Principal

Tuba

Lee Tsarmaklis* Principal
Chair supported by William & Alex de Winton

Timpani

Jonathan Phillips
Guest Principal

Percussion

Andrew Barclay* Principal
Chair supported by Gill & Garf Collins
Karen Hutt Co-Principal
Chair supported by Joe Topley & Tracey Countryman
Oliver Yates
Feargus Brennan
Francesca Lombardelli

Harp

Elizabeth McNulty
Guest Principal

Piano

Philip Moore

Assistant Conductor

Wilson Ng

*Professor at a London conservatoire

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

Ian Ferguson & Susan Tranter
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London Philharmonic Orchestra



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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, and in 2024 we featured in a TV documentary series on Sky Arts: 'Backstage with the London Philharmonic Orchestra', which was nominated for a 2025 BAFTA. During 2025/26 we're once again working with Marquee TV to broadcast selected live concerts to enjoy at home.

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. Karina Canellakis is our current Principal Guest Conductor, and Sir George Benjamin 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, resources and training. Reflecting our values of

Pieter Schoeman

Leader

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 outstanding early-career conductors from backgrounds under-represented in the profession.

2025/26 season

This season's theme, *Harmony with Nature*, explores humanity's bond with the natural world through works by Beethoven, Sibelius, Mendelssohn, Elgar and Dvořák; masterpieces of an era that saw nature as a mirror of human emotion. Closer to our own time, we'll hear from composers as diverse as Duke Ellington, John Luther Adams and Anna Thorvaldsdóttir, who have all found a source of creative energy in the processes of nature.

Highlights with Principal Conductor Edward Gardner include symphonies by Tchaikovsky, Mahler, Brahms and Rachmaninov; a pair of concerts spotlighting 20th-century Central European composers; an evening dedicated to Elgar; and a performance of Berg's *Wozzeck* to end the season. We'll also welcome back Karina Canellakis and Vladimir Jurowski, as well as guest conductors including Robin Ticciati, Kirill Karabits, Mark Elder and Kahchun Wong. Our lineup of soloists this season includes violinists Anne-Sophie Mutter, Alina Ibragimova, James Ehnes and Himari; cellist Nicolas Altstaedt; and pianists Yefim Bronfman, Alexandre Kantorow and Tomoko Mukaiyama. The season features nine world and UK premieres, including Tan Dun's choral 'Ode to Peace' *Nine*, and *A Tale of God's Will (A Requiem for Katrina)* by jazz icon Terence Blanchard.

This season also sees tours to South Korea and across Europe, as well as a wide range of 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 Amsterdam Concertgebouw, 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. He has also appeared as Guest Leader with many prestigious orchestras across the world. 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 LPO. Highlights have included an appearance as both conductor and soloist in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, the Brahms Double Concerto with Kristina Blaumane, Florence Price's Violin Concerto No. 2, and the Britten Double Concerto with Alexander Zemtsov, which was released on the LPO Label to great critical acclaim.

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

New video series: 'Humans of the Orchestra'

Scan the QR code to watch our interview with Pieter



Vladimir Jurowski KBE

Conductor Emeritus, London Philharmonic Orchestra



© Drew Kelley

Vladimir Jurowski became the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Conductor Emeritus in 2021, following 14 years as Principal Conductor, during which his creative energy and artistic rigour were central to the Orchestra's success. In August 2021 – his final official concert as LPO Principal Conductor – he received the Royal Philharmonic Society Gold Medal, one of the highest international honours in music. In 2024 he was appointed an Honorary Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (KBE) by His Majesty King Charles III, in recognition of his services to music and the arts.

In April 2024, Vladimir Jurowski concluded his acclaimed Wagner *Ring Cycle* with the LPO with a semi-staged performance of *Götterdämmerung* at the Royal Festival Hall. Last season, he conducted the Orchestra in three Royal Festival Hall concerts – including memorable performances of John Adams's *On the Transmigration of Souls*, Lyatoshynsky's Symphony No. 3 and Schubert's Symphony No. 9 – as well at Saffron Hall and on a tour of Spain. He returns to the Royal Festival Hall this Saturday (24 January) to conduct the Orchestra in Mahler's Symphony No. 10.

In 2021 Vladimir became Music Director at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. Since 2017 he has been Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra. He is also Principal Artist of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and in 2021 stepped down from his decade as Artistic Director of the Russian State Academic Symphony Orchestra to become its Honorary Conductor. He has previously held the positions of First Kapellmeister of the Komische Oper, Berlin; Principal Guest Conductor of the Teatro Comunale di Bologna; Principal Guest Conductor of the

Russian National Orchestra; and Music Director of Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

Vladimir enjoys close relationships with the world's most distinguished artistic institutions, collaborating with many of the world's leading orchestras including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, the Staatskapelle Dresden, the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, the Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras, the New York Philharmonic and the Chicago and Boston symphony orchestras.

A committed operatic conductor, Vladimir's recent highlights include his semi-staged Wagner *Ring Cycle* with the LPO; the Munich premiere of Weinberg's *The Passenger*; new productions of *Così fan tutte*, Prokofiev's *War and Peace*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, Shostakovich's *The Nose* and Penderecki's *Die Teufel von Loudun* at the Bavarian State Opera; *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in Berlin and Bucharest with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra; Henze's *The Bassarids* and Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* at the Komische Oper Berlin; his acclaimed debut at the Salzburg Festival with *Wozzeck*; and his first return to Glyndebourne as a guest conductor, for the world premiere of Brett Dean's *Hamlet* with the LPO.

This season, Vladimir Jurowski leads the Bavarian State Opera in new productions of Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Night Before Christmas* directed by Barrie Kosky, and Wagner's *Die Walküre* staged by Tobias Kratzer; the world premiere of Brett Dean's *Of One Blood* directed by Claus Guth; and revivals of *Elektra* and *Hänsel und Gretel*, as well as tours in Europe and Asia with the Bavarian State Orchestra. His repertoire with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra includes the continuation of a Brahms symphony cycle, Henze's Ninth, Shostakovich's 11th and Bruckner's Eighth symphonies, and music from Sibelius and Suk to Sviridov and Lachenmann.

Vladimir Jurowski's latest recording on the LPO Label – Mahler's Symphony No. 9 – is released this Friday, 23 January (see page 13). This follows numerous acclaimed recordings released during his time as Principal Conductor, including Mahler's Symphonies Nos. 1, 2, 4 & 8, the complete symphonies of Tchaikovsky and Brahms, and many others. 2024 saw the completion of a highly-praised three-volume Stravinsky series on the label, and in 2017 the Orchestra released a 7-CD box set of Jurowski's LPO recordings in celebration of his 10th anniversary as Principal Conductor.

Anna Vinnitskaya

piano



© Marco Borggreve

Winning First Prize at the 2007 Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels marked the beginning of Anna Vinnitskaya's international career. Since then, she has performed with leading orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Staatskapelle Dresden, Munich Philharmonic, NHK Symphony Orchestra Tokyo, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and Boston Symphony Orchestra, receiving great acclaim worldwide. The breathtaking technical precision and tonal subtlety of her playing give her extraordinary freedom in her interpretations, and her performances are distinguished by total dedication, energy, and poetic depth.

Tonight's concert is Anna Vinnitskaya's debut with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. This season she also performs Rachmaninov's piano concertos with the Orchestre de Paris under Klaus Mäkelä and the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra under Eva Ollikainen, among others. With the Bern Symphony Orchestra and Chief Conductor Krzysztof Urbański, she performs all four of the composer's piano concertos over two consecutive evenings. Ravel's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand features in a 125th anniversary concert by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra at the Musikverein with Chief Conductor Petr Popelka, followed by a tour to the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, Müpa Budapest, Essen Philharmonie and Konzerthaus Freiburg.

This season, Anna will give recitals in Bordeaux, Tokyo, Paris, Luxembourg, Madrid and Hamburg. Together with fellow pianists Evgeni Koroliov and Ljupka Hadzi-Georgieva, she will perform Bach's works for pianos and orchestra with the Menuhin Academy Soloists in Vienna and Basel, and with the Cologne Chamber Orchestra at the Cologne Philharmonie.

Last season, Anna Vinnitskaya was the focus of an Artist Portrait at the Essen Philharmonie. Alongside a series of chamber concerts and recitals, she performed with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich under Paavo Järvi, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra under Elim Chan, and the Bochum Symphony Orchestra under Herbert Grönemeyer.

Anna Vinnitskaya's recordings have received numerous awards, including the Diapason d'Or and *Gramophone* Editor's Choice. Her acclaimed discography includes albums dedicated to Chopin and Rachmaninov (with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra and Krzysztof Urbański), and 'Piano Dances' (2024), which pairs her own arrangement of Ravel's virtuosic *La Valse* and *Valses nobles et sentimentales* with Shostakovich's *Puppet Dances* and Jörg Widmann's *Circus Dances*. Her recording of Bach's Piano Concertos with Evgeni Koroliov, Ljupka Hadzi-Georgieva and the Kammerakademie Potsdam is particularly important to her.

Born in Novorossiysk, Russia, Anna Vinnitskaya studied with Sergei Osipienko in Rostov and later with Evgeni Koroliov at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg, where she has been a Professor since 2009. She regularly serves on the juries of major piano competitions, including the Concours Reine Elisabeth (May 2025) and the ARD International Music Competition (September 2025).

Harmony with Nature

Tonight's works and our 2025/26 season theme

This season, we invite audiences to join us in exploring one of the most urgent conversations of our time – our relationship with the natural world – through the power of music. We'll marvel at oceans, forests, caves, mountains and wildlife through works by Beethoven, Sibelius, Mendelssohn, Elgar and Dvořák; masterpieces of an era that saw nature as a mirror of human emotion – but also, perhaps, experienced it more immediately and organically than in the digital age.

Closer to our own time, voices as diverse as Duke Ellington, John Luther Adams, Gustavo Díaz-Jerez and Anna Thorvaldsdóttir have all found an unquenchable source of creative energy in the processes of nature, from river deltas to volcanic eruptions. For composers such as Anna Korsun, Gabriela Lena Frank and Terence Blanchard (whose powerful meditation on the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina receives its UK premiere), humanity enters the picture. As destroyer or protector? Or simply as an organic, inextricable part of nature itself?

Throughout the season, we'll also be partnering with local environmental organisations, and welcoming a host of eminent pre-concert speakers (see page 14), as we attempt to use the power of classical music to encourage environmental stewardship. We hope you'll join us!

Check out the full season at
lpo.org.uk/harmony-with-nature

Nature's voice in tonight's programme

The works that open each half of tonight's concert explore the complex and often uneasy relationship between humanity, industry and the natural world – a thread that runs throughout our *Harmony with Nature* season.

The short opening work, Alexander Mosolov's *The Iron Foundry*, is a thrilling evocation of early Soviet industrial power. Its clanging rhythms and relentless mechanical drive celebrate human progress, yet the piece also speaks to the dawn of large-scale industrialisation – the moment when humanity's mastery over nature began to have lasting consequences for the planet.

Opening the second half of the concert, *Terricone* by Ukrainian composer Anna Korsun confronts that lost balance directly. The title refers to the man-made hills of mining waste that scar industrial landscapes – monuments to both human ingenuity and ecological destruction. Through haunting soundworlds, Korsun evokes the invasion of nature by humankind, and by extension, the invasion of her homeland.

Programme notes

Alexander Mosolov
1900–73

The Iron Foundry
1926–27



A graduate of the Moscow Conservatory, Alexander Mosolov is closely associated with the Soviet 'Constructivist' movement in music, most notably through the suite from his unproduced ballet *Steel*. The suite was commissioned for the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution by the Moscow Association of Contemporary Music in 1927. *The Iron Foundry*, subtitled 'Music of the Machines', is drawn from the ballet's first act: 'Factory (A Strike)'. The other three movements of the suite are lost.

Constructivism, according to Wikipedia, was 'a philosophy that originated in Russia beginning in 1913 by Vladimir Tatlin. This was a rejection of the idea of autonomous art ... The movement was in favour of art as a practice for social purposes. Constructivism had a great effect on modern art movements of the 20th century, influencing major trends such as the Bauhaus and De Stijl movements. Its influence was pervasive, with major effects upon architecture, graphic design,

industrial design, theatre, film, dance, fashion and music.'

Mosolov and like-minded composers were all the rage at the time, but with the advent of Stalin, a more ear-pleasing, 'socially constructive' music was in demand: if factories were still a theme, then they were places where happy workers (and happy machines) lived to glorify the state. Dissonance, of Mosolov's kind, was if at first not specifically banished, then hardly encouraged.

The Iron Foundry was heard at the 1930 festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music in Liège, where it was positively received. 'We have ... a kind of lyrical theme [can you hear it?], the song of steel, or possibly of man, the ironmaster ... It is an essentially musical idea carried out with convincing skill', as one critic observed. All this in under three-and-a-half minutes: a two-ton tidbit.

The work received its UK premiere at the 1931 Last Night of the Proms under Sir Henry Wood. Its American premiere took place the same year at the Hollywood Bowl, performed by the Los Angeles Philharmonic under its assistant concertmaster Henry Svedrofsky, with choreography by Adolf Bolm and presented under the title 'The Spirit of the Factory'. Other conductors who championed *The Iron Foundry* include Ernest Ansermet and Victor de Sabata, the latter making the first recording of the work. Perhaps most memorably, in 1932 the Toronto Symphony performed it under Sir Ernest MacMillan, who began the second half of the concert dressed in overalls and conducted with a monkey wrench.

Programme note © Herbert Glass, reproduced by kind permission of the LA Philharmonic

Programme notes

Serge Rachmaninov
1873–1943

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini
1934

Anna Vinnitskaya *piano*

'It is called *Symphonic Variations on a Theme by Paganini*', wrote Rachmaninov to his sister-in-law in August 1934, of his new (and final) work for piano and orchestra. A few weeks later he was calling it a 'fantasy', but by the time of its premiere in Baltimore in November (the composer the soloist, with Leopold Stokowski conducting The Philadelphia Orchestra), it had acquired its now familiar name.

By 1934, Rachmaninov had been living in the USA for 16 years, having left Russia after the 1917 Revolution had deprived him of much of his property and comfortable existence. In Russia he had been known principally as a conductor and composer, but in America he had to develop his career as a concert pianist to earn a living, and the only significant compositions he had so far produced there – the Fourth Piano Concerto (1926) and the 'Corelli' Variations for solo piano (1931) – were conceived very much with his own public performances in mind. Neither of those had enjoyed great success, but with the *Rhapsody*, Rachmaninov struck gold; it quickly became one of his most popular and frequently performed works, a status it still enjoys today, rivalled only by the Second Piano Concerto of 1901.

'*Symphonic Variations*' would probably have been a more accurate title for the work, since, far from being free in construction, it is a taut set of 24 discrete variations on a theme from a caprice for solo violin by the great 19th-century virtuoso Nicolò Paganini. Paganini's piece, probably composed around 1805, was itself a set of variations and had already been the subject of solo piano variations by Liszt and Brahms, but

it is undoubtedly Rachmaninov's romantic treatment of it – supremely skilled in its orchestral scoring and glittering piano-writing – that has prolonged its popularity among composers even up to our own time.

Rachmaninov opens it with a neat trick, as Variation 1 precedes the theme proper, which is then announced by the violins with only token involvement of the piano. The first few variations fly by at pace, with a temporary slowing at Variation 7 for Rachmaninov to introduce a chordal secondary theme in the piano, that of the solemn plainchant melody associated with the *Dies irae* section of the Latin Mass for the Dead. This was not the first time he had made use of this ancient tune (it had occurred, for instance, in his 1909 tone-poem *The Isle of the Dead*) and it would not be the last (it would resurface in his last work, the *Symphonic Dances* of 1940), but the exact nature of its lasting significance to the composer has never been clear. It will also reappear later in this *Rhapsody*.

A greater change of mood comes at Variation 11, the start of a predominantly slower central section which modulates broadly and culminates in the famous Variation 18, in which, by inverting the theme's first five notes and putting them into the major, he produces one of music's great romantic melodies. After this has lingered on the air, the music snaps back to the home key and atmosphere of the opening, from there to begin its clamorous mount to the finish, with the *Dies irae* theme still in attendance.

Programme note © Lindsay Kemp

Interval – 20 minutes

An announcement will be made five minutes before the end of the interval.

Programme notes

Anna Korsun

born 1986

Terricone

2023



© Konrad Fersterer

The Ukrainian composer, sound artist and performer Anna Korsun was born in Debaltsevo, in the Donbas region. She studied composition with Moritz Eggert at both the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine in Kyiv, and as a postgraduate at the Munich University of Music and Theatre. Her music has been performed by leading new music groups, such as Ensemble Modern, Asko|Schönberg and, in the UK, Riot Ensemble. Festivals featuring her work include Warsaw Autumn, Darmstädter Ferienkurse, the International Society of Contemporary Music and the Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. She has garnered prestigious prizes, for example the Gaudeamus Award (2014) and a Fellowship at Villa Massimo, the German Academy in Rome (2018–19).

Korsun's compositions often explore the human voice in combination with acoustic instruments, as well as electronic sourced sounds. Her inspiration frequently springs from the visual arts, literature and nature, which has led to collaborations with artists of different disciplines. Consequently, each of her works is a unique distinctive sonic world, carefully crafted and notated. Among representative works are *Audioguide* (2018), for singing orchestra; *In einem andern Raum*, for orchestra with smartphones (2016); *Wehmut*, for five voices, prepared piano, violin, double bass and sound objects (2011); and *Ulenflucht* (2016) for 20 singing and playing performers.

In 2021, Anna's fellow Ukrainian, Kirill Karabits, then Principal Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, conducted her *Audioguide* in Lviv. Korsun's soundworld intrigued him, which led to a BSO commission, and hence *Terricone*, premiered by the orchestra, conducted by Karabits, at the Lighthouse, Poole, on 11 January 2023.

Like some other composers, Anna Korsun prefers not to write about her music herself, 'because for me it is difficult to transfer musical ideas into verbal means. When I compose a work, I think in terms of sounds, their relationships, connections, mixtures and musical time and not in terms of story-telling. For me, music creates its own world, which does not necessarily have to be applied to literature or image. This piece is another sound being, which the listeners and musicians will experience together with me in their personal way.'

Terricone is about 15 minutes long, scored for a standard-sized 21st-century orchestra, with an extra flute in the winds, a large array of percussion (requiring five players), harp and strings. The percussion instruments include timpani, vibraphone, two metal buckets with metal chains to be thrown from one to another, lion roar, ocean drum, waterphone, tam-tam,

Programme notes

glockenspiel, metal railway bar, suspended cymbal and flexatone. During the work there are sections with seamless notes, a proportional notation where a strict rhythm is absent, and the musicians make their individual choices where to play.

The work's title refers to the artificial mountains, accumulated from mining production waste, that are a feature of the Donbas's landscape. However, the title has no direct connection to the music itself, the

composer regarding it simply as 'a poetic abstraction' which 'the listeners and performers however can interpret it in different ways.' *Terricone* starts with an arresting, searing aural gesture, and given the composer's licence for interpretation, from this writer's perspective, it seems like a visceral howl of anguish for Ukraine and its people at this current time of war and danger for its very existence.

Programme note © Andrew Burn, 2025

Sergei Prokofiev
1891–1953

Symphony No. 2 in D minor
1925

1. *Allegro ben articolato*

2. *Theme and Variations*

Prokofiev's Second Symphony was one of the great hopes of his years living in Paris during his period of self-imposed exile from Russia, but it ended up being one of the worst disappointments. The fiasco of its French premiere under the baton of Serge Koussevitzky proved instructive, because Prokofiev realised that he could not achieve artistic success through self-conscious modernist means alone. The excesses of this score, like that of his Balmont-inspired cantata *Seven, They Are Seven*, would later yield to a lyrical idiom that Prokofiev called 'new simplicity.' The Second Symphony was his experiment with its opposite: new complexity.

The work is in two movements, the second of which, a set of six variations on a theme, can be partitioned into three sections that fulfil the traditional roles of a symphonic scherzo, slow movement and finale (though the idea that the work is at all traditional would have been anathema to Prokofiev at the time). The first

movement celebrates the industrial age, drawing inspiration from Arthur Honegger's *Pacific 231*, a tone-poem that mimics the actions of a lurching, straining locomotive. The movement preserves the three-part schema of sonata form, but it neither possesses a middle development section nor preserves the functional articulation of keys through harmonies. The movement nearly lacks harmony altogether, since the emphasis is on thickly interwoven contrapuntal lines. Chords, when articulated, tend to be of Mahlerian thickness, and result from two simultaneously unfolding keys.

The first section provides a fanfare-like first theme and chorale-like second theme; the ensuing section, which substitutes for the development, presents a hair-raising fugue that progresses to earsplitting unison; the third section provides respite by reprising the opening material. The culminating coda superimposes a slowed-down version of the fanfare with offbeat, syncopated trumpets.

Programme notes

The theme that opens the second movement is tuneful and diatonic, drifting from C major into A minor. The six variations that follow entail fragmentation, 'bitonal' harmonisation, and various generic mutations, from grotesque dance to march to chorale. The sixth and final variation has neo-primitivist, Stravinskian contours. It presents the theme in parallel, stacked chords and an asymmetrical (7/4) metre. The Symphony concludes in a tranquil D minor, the oft-overwhelmed home key, which establishes itself through sheer insistence.

Few heard that muted ending when the work received its 6 June 1925 premiere. The audience had fled the hall. Prokofiev himself confessed, in a letter to his colleague Nikolai Myaskovsky, that even he could not make head nor tail of the music during the performance, never mind the public. Still, he believed in the score, sensing that it was somewhat beyond the technique of orchestras of the time, and that the texture just needed to be thinned for the rigid, mechanical logic of its construction to be appreciated. He planned to make the needed changes in his later, Soviet years. But he never found the

opportunity to make those revisions, and the Symphony stands today as one of the most uncompromising statements of his Paris years – a work of steel and vision that still challenges players and listeners alike.

Programme note © Simon Morrison

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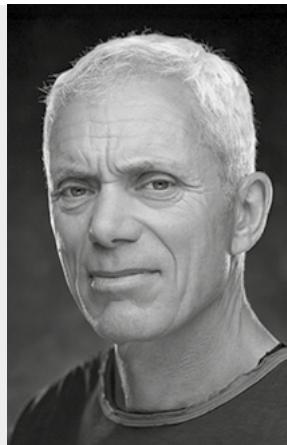
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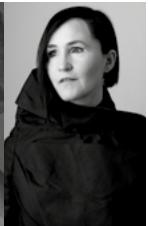
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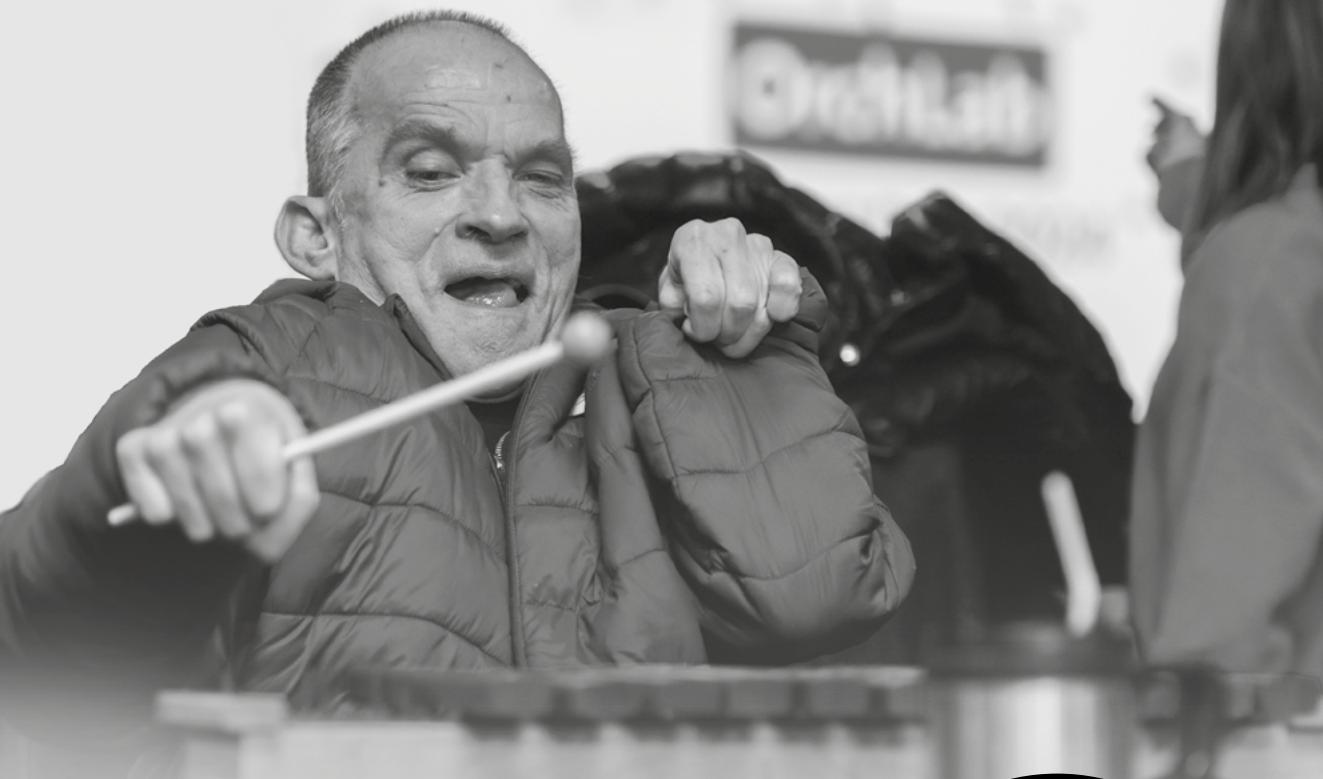
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