London Philharmonic Orchestra

The power of listening

2026/27 season at Eastbourne's Congress Theatre

Concert programme

CONGRESS THEATRE
EASTBOURNE THEATRES

The power of listening

What happens when we really listen? This season we're exploring the extraordinary ways that listening can inspire creativity, connection and new perspectives.

To begin our journey, we asked eight Royal College of Art students to listen to a piece of music featured in our London season, from Stravinsky's *The Firebird* to Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony. From there, the artists unleashed their imagination, each creating an original artwork based on their personal response to the music.

You can see how varied their visual interpretations of the music were from the artworks on this page and on the programme cover.

If you haven't had the chance to see the artworks on billboards around London, you can view them all in detail on our website. You can also find out more about each of the artists and the processes they used, as well as listen to the music that inspired them.

Check out the artworks and the pieces that inspired them:
lpo.org.uk/listening

Artworks designed by (clockwise from top left) Megan Peng, Zengyue Zhao, CTZ, Yunqi Peng, Anna Korbel, Yejin Seo, Ishita Sharma, Ruwani Rajapakse



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

Congress Theatre, Eastbourne
Sunday 22 November 2026 | 3.00pm

Brahms's Second

Beethoven
Overture, Leonore No. 3 (13 mins)

Neruda
Trumpet Concerto (15 mins)

Interval (20 min)

Brahms
Symphony No. 2 (39 mins)

Adam Hickox
conductor

Tom Nielsen
trumpet

Approximate finish time: 4.45pm

Free pre-concert performance | 2.15pm
Enjoy the sound of local young talent, as musicians from Create Music give a special free performance in the Congress Theatre foyer. Create Music is part of Brighton Dome and Brighton Festival and the Hub Lead Organisation for the Sussex Music Hub.

Please note the timings shown are given only as a guide.

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CONGRESS THEATRE
EASTBOURNE THEATRES

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Welcome

Welcome to the Congress Theatre

Venue Director Neil Jones

Welcome to the London Philharmonic Orchestra, today's conductor and soloist, and most importantly, to all of you in the auditorium.

Whether you're a season regular or this is your very first concert, we're pleased to welcome you to our fantastic venue, unique in its Grade II listed perfect cube design which creates an acoustic environment like no other. If there is anything we can do to improve your visit, please do chat with a member of our team.

As a courtesy to others, please ensure mobile phones are switched off during the performance. Please also note that photography and recording are not allowed in the auditorium unless announced from the stage.

Thank you for supporting classical music – sit back, relax and enjoy your afternoon.

Today's programme cover

Artwork by Royal College of Art student Ruwani Rajapakse: 'Letting go, one note at a time'. Designed while listening to Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, performed by the LPO under Edward Gardner.

Part of The Power of Listening project. See all eight artworks and listen to the music that inspired them: **lpo.org.uk/listening**

LPO news

Inside the Music: our new Sky Arts TV series

Our 2024 Sky Arts TV series, *Backstage with the London Philharmonic Orchestra*, was nominated for a BAFTA, recognising its compelling storytelling and rare behind-the-scenes insight into orchestral life.

Following this success, Sky Arts have commissioned a second series, which began on 10 November and will air weekly each Tuesday at 8pm. *Inside the Music with the London Philharmonic Orchestra* explores five major orchestral works performed by the LPO, with conductors Edward Gardner, Karina Canellakis and Paavo Järvi guiding viewers through each work. Combining performance footage and insights from musicians, the series reveals how these masterpieces are built.

Inside the Music airs each Tuesday at 8pm until 8 December. Sky Arts is free to view on Freeview channel 36. Sky and NOW Entertainment Members can catch up on demand.

New on the LPO Label: Edward Gardner conducts Bartók

Principal Conductor Edward Gardner's latest recording on the LPO Label is out now. It pairs two ballets at opposite extremes – the menacing swagger of *The Miraculous Mandarin*, which outraged its first audience in 1926, and the folk-song fairytale forest of *The Wooden Prince*, full of what Ed calls 'such a sunlit lyricism'.

The album is available to stream wherever you listen to music, or you can buy the CD from the LPO Label store. Turn to page 7 for more details and a link to listen.

Printed with the planet in mind

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On stage today

First Violins
Pieter Schoeman* Leader
Chair supported by Neil Westreich
Kate Oswin
Chair supported by Eric Tomsett
Lasma Taimina
Chair supported by Irina Gofman & Mr Rodrik V. G. Cave
Katalin Varnagy
Martin Höhmann
Chair supported by Hans-Wilhelm & Evelyn Jenckel
Gary Ngan
Sylvain Vasseur
Camille Buitenhuis
Maeve Jenkinson
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Gabriel Bilbao

Second Violins
Claudia Tarrant-Matthews Principal
Chair supported by anonymous donors
Kate Birchall
Ashley Stevens
Joseph Maher
Fiona Higham
Nancy Elan
Sioni Williams
Alison Strange
Olivia Ziani

Violas
Miguel Sobrinho Guest Principal
Benedetto Pollani
Shiry Rashkovsky
Sarah Malcolm
Kate De Campos
Mark Gibbs
Toby Warr
Richard Cookson

Cellos
Kate Gould Guest Principal
Heeyeon Cho
Leo Melvin
Tom Roff
Iain Ward

Double Basses
Benjamin Russell Guest Principal
Tom Walley
Chair supported by William & Alex de Winton
Yijia Cui
Simon Oliver

Flutes
Ian Mullin Guest Principal
Hannah Grayson

Oboes
Tjadina Wake-Walker Guest Principal
Jack Tostevin-Hall

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

Bassoons
Simon Estell* Principal
Helen Storey*
Chair supported by Louise Worthington

Horns
John Ryan* Principal
Jonathan Quaintrell-Evans
Mark Vines Co-Principal
Chair supported by Friends of the Orchestra
Oliver Johnson
Will Scotland

Trumpets
Paul Beniston* Principal
Chair supported by the Williams family in memory of Grenville Williams
Tom Watts
Anne McAneney*
Chair supported by anonymous donors

Offstage Trumpet
Paul Beniston*

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
Simon Carrington* Principal
Chair supported by Victoria Robey CBE

**Professor at a London conservatoire*

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About us: London Philharmonic Orchestra



© Jason Bell

Uniquely groundbreaking and exhilarating to watch and hear, since 1932 we've been recognised as one of the world's leading orchestras, celebrated for our excellence, versatility, invention and inclusivity. Our mission is to create unrivalled orchestral experiences on stage and cultivate human connections beyond it. We achieve this through our exceptional live performances, pioneering education and community projects, acclaimed recordings, online activity and trailblazing international tours.

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

Life's big 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*.

Connecting worldwide

We're one of the world's most-streamed orchestras, with over 15 million plays of our content each month. We're the most followed UK orchestra on Instagram, the most followed orchestra globally on TikTok, and the third most followed globally across all social platforms. Our 2024 Sky Arts documentary series, *Backstage with the London Philharmonic Orchestra*, was nominated for a 2025 BAFTA, and a second series, *Inside the Music with the LPO*, is currently airing on Tuesday evenings at 8pm on Sky Arts.

Our conductors

Our Principal Conductors have included great 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 Sir George Benjamin is 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

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 offer a range of opportunities to support their progression. Our LPO Junior Artists programme creates pathways into the profession for young players from under-represented backgrounds, and our LPO Young Composers and Future Firsts schemes support the next generation of professional musicians, bridging the transition from education to professional careers. The LPO Conducting Fellowship supports the development of outstanding early-career conductors from backgrounds under-represented in the profession.

2026/27 season

Our season theme, *In Search of Purpose*, explores the human spirit's resilience and quest for meaning, inspired by Beethoven's triumph over despair and the ways subsequent composers have used music as a vessel to confront life's big questions. Principal Conductor Edward Gardner returns with programmes including Britten's *War Requiem*, Stravinsky's *The Firebird*, and Composer-in-Residence George Benjamin's opera *Lessons in Love and Violence*. We'll also welcome back titled conductors Karina Canellakis and Vladimir Jurowski, as well as Chief Conductor & Artistic Advisor Designate Paavo Järvi.

Our lineup of soloists this season includes Alice Sara Ott, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Hilary Hahn, Pekka Kuusisto, Renée Fleming and Mitsuko Uchida, and we join the London Philharmonic Choir in celebrating its 80th anniversary year with Fauré's *Requiem* alongside a choral world premiere by Dame Judith Weir. The season concludes on 24 April with Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, again with the LPC. New music remains a core pillar this season, with further premieres by Mark Simpson, Jacob Mühlrad, Dai Fujikura and Kevin Puts.

The season also sees tours to China, Spain, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and the Canary Islands, as well as performances and community events in our Brighton, Eastbourne and Saffron Walden residencies.

lpo.org.uk

Pieter Schoeman

Leader



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.

As well as at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, Pieter has performed worldwide as a soloist and recitalist at famous venues including the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Moscow's Rachmaninoff Hall, Capella Hall in St Petersburg, Staatsbibliothek in Berlin and Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles. He has also appeared as Guest Leader with many leading 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 London Philharmonic Orchestra. Highlights have included 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 London Philharmonic Orchestra is generously supported by Neil Westreich.

Video series: 'Humans of the Orchestra'

Scan the QR code to watch our interview with Pieter



Adam Hickox

conductor



With luminous expressive finesse and an incisive musical intelligence, Adam Hickox commands the concert hall and the opera pit with equal authority, and has become one of the most sought-after talents of his generation. The 2026/27 season marks his second as Chief Conductor of the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra. Previously, he was Principal Conductor of the Glyndebourne Sinfonia from 2023 to 2025.

Adam made his London Philharmonic Orchestra debut last season, when he conducted a pair of concerts in Brighton and Eastbourne featuring Brahms's Symphony No. 4 alongside works by Schumann and Beethoven.

Highlights of Adam's current season include debuts with the Leipzig Gewandhausorchester, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Bruckner Orchester Linz, Orchestre national du Capitole de Toulouse, and at the BBC Proms. He also returns to the Danish National Symphony, Dresden Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and BBC Symphony orchestras, and is Conductor-in-Residence with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

On the operatic stage, Adam makes his debut at the Santa Fe Opera conducting Brett Dean's *Of One Blood*. Further season highlights include his debut at the Semperoper Dresden (*La bohème*) and a return to Norwegian National Opera (*The Marriage of Figaro*).

Recent orchestral appearances include the Orchestre de Paris, Oslo Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Tokyo Symphony, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Staatskapelle Dresden and Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. In opera, he has conducted Weinberg's *The Passenger* at Dutch National Opera, *Candide* at Norwegian National Opera, *Hänsel und Gretel* at Hamburg State Opera, *Tosca* at Opera North, and *La traviata* and *La bohème* for Glyndebourne.

Adam studied music and composition with Robin Holloway at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, and conducting with Sian Edwards at the Royal Academy of Music. He served as Assistant Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic (2019–22) working closely with Lahav Shani, and was a Conducting Fellow at Tanglewood in 2021.

Tom Nielsen

trumpet



Tom Nielsen joined the London Philharmonic Orchestra as Co-Principal Trumpet in April 2023, and was appointed Joint Principal in May 2025. This is his first concerto performance as a soloist with the Orchestra.

Tom was appointed Professor of Trumpet at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama in 2025.

He has performed as Guest Principal Trumpet with the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and Aurora Orchestra.

Tom studied at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama from 2019-22. He began to play the cornet at the Salvation Army in Croydon, and was a member of the International Staff Band of the Salvation Army from 2017-22.

Tom was Principal Cornet of the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain from 2017–20. In 2018 he became the first cornet player to win the BBC Radio 2 Young Brass Award. This led to solo performances with Black Dyke Band at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, and with the BBC Concert Orchestra at the Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall live on BBC Radio 2.

OUT NOW ON THE LPO LABEL



LPO-0141

Edward Gardner conducts Bartók:
The Miraculous Mandarin Suite
The Wooden Prince

'Gardner revels in the vivid colours ... The London Philharmonic Orchestra is taut and dramatically alert throughout.'
The Guardian, Oct 2026

Available on all major streaming platforms.Scan the QR code to listen now or find out more.



Programme notes

Ludwig van Beethoven
1770–1827

Leonore Overture No. 3, Op. 72b
1806



As Beethoven himself was willing to concede, composing for the voice was never his strongest suit. 'I do not like composing songs', he once admitted. The eminent musicologist Carl Dahlhaus would go so far as to declare that Beethoven composed 'against the voice'. It is little surprise then, that in an output that stretches from symphonies to string quartets, concertos to sonatas, there is just one opera attached to Beethoven's name. And even this lone opera endured a long and protracted process of conception.

Fidelio, as the opera would eventually become known, began life as *Leonore* in 1803. But this three-act opera (originally named after the heroine, Leonore), was subsequently revised and reduced into the two-act *Fidelio* ('the faithful one'), and was premiered in the 'final' version as we know it today some 11 years later. The Overture, meanwhile, appeared in no fewer than four separate versions, of which the second incarnation – confusingly now known as the 'Leonore Overture No. 3' – seems to have earned its place as the concert-hall favourite. While Beethoven's final Overture would take themes from the opera and use them to create a chronological précis of the opera's main dramatic action, the Overture No. 3 is a dramatic curtain-raiser in its own right. Indeed, its tone is so dramatic that it is often at risk of overshadowing the opera itself, hence its more fitting place in the concert hall.

The Overture begins morosely and in darkness in Florestan's prison cell, his thoughts gradually drifting towards happier, earlier times. As minor transforms to major and Florestan's fighting spirit returns, the Overture unfurls into a buoyant work of irrepressible energy, a triumph of liberty in the face of adversity, the epitome of Beethoven's 'heroic' style.

Programme note © Jo Kirkbride

Programme notes

Johann Baptist Neruda
c.1708–c.1780

Trumpet Concerto in E flat major
c.1750

Tom Nielsen trumpet

1. Allegro
2. Largo
3. Vivace

There is some doubt as to Neruda's exact dates of birth and death, but we know he was a conductor, composer and violinist, who was for a time concertmaster (leader) of the famous Staatskapelle rchestra in Dresden, where he died in the 1780s. Another more obscure claim to fame is that he has a crater on Mercury named after him – or rather co-named, with the unrelated 19th-century Czech writer Jan Neruda.

This Concerto was written for *corno da caccia*, a small valveless horn used in Bach cantatas, and in group concertos by Telemann, amongst others. The instrument is a vanishingly rare historical curiosity, and nowadays the piece is played by trumpeters. Musically it sits somewhere between the late Baroque and early Classical period. It was written around a decade since the death in Vienna of that prodigious composer of concertos, Vivaldi, and whilst a young Haydn was just honing his craft in that same city. Perhaps the most relevant comparison is with Neruda's near-contemporary Christoph Willibald Gluck, who so adroitly fused the worlds of Baroque and Classical into a style uniquely his own.

The work opens with a 'ritornello' style movement straight out of the Baroque concerto playbook, revolving round a recurring orchestral passage that is repeated and eloquently decorated by the soloist. The slow movement is akin to an opera aria, utilising the vocal qualities of the trumpet's higher registers. The final movement is in a rudimentary sonata form – that future cornerstone of Classical style – with two contrasting themes.

The Concerto is distinguished by Neruda's determination to show off the trumpet/horn's singing qualities as much as their heraldic heritage, and a rhythmic vitality that features jaunty syncopation and the mixing of triplets and regular quavers. It was written around half a century before the two great totems of the Classical trumpet concerto repertoire – those by Haydn and Hummel – and on recordings has been bracketed together with those better-known works. It is no mere 'filler' however, but an attractive, elegant work in its own right.

Programme note © Dan Whitfield

Interval – 20 minutes

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

Programme notes

Johannes Brahms
1833–97

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 73
1876

1. Allegro non troppo
2. Adagio non troppo
3. Allegretto grazioso, quasi andantino
4. Allegro con spirito



If evidence were needed of the rewards of confronting life's obstacles, Brahms's Second Symphony provides it. Brahms took the best part of two decades to compose his First Symphony, finally producing it at the age of 43 after years of reluctance to enter a field so dominated by the intimidating legacy of Beethoven. 'You have no idea how it feels to hear that giant marching behind me', he once wrote to a friend. That First Symphony seemed to embody something of Brahms's hard-won victory in its typically Beethovenian journey from darkness to light (famously, it was dubbed 'Beethoven's Tenth'), yet within a year of finally clearing the symphonic path, Brahms had composed his Second Symphony, taking just a few months over it during the summer of 1877, and finding in it a relaxed, almost pastoral atmosphere that speaks of anything but creative struggle.

The prevailing mood of the work is unmistakably sunny, yet this is far from being the whole story. Unlike the First, it both begins and ends in light, but while Brahms was undoubtedly overstating the case when he told friends that he 'had never written anything so sad' and that it would have to be printed 'on black-edged paper', his teases are not without justification. The Second is never tragic, but in its first two movements it offers music of profound melancholy, occasionally darkening to the elegiac.

Such feelings are not evident as the Symphony begins, its gentle triple-time and smooth melodic contours seeming to offer a world of unalloyed pastoral contentment, but it is not long before a quiet drum-roll

Programme notes

and some troubled chords from the trombones and tuba cloud the air; though the sun appears to return, especially in a broad second theme that seems to be related to Brahms's famous *Wiegenlied* (or 'Lullaby'), the mood is never quite the same again. The command of emotional tone is masterful in this movement, but Brahms's technical control is no less impressive; the three-note figure outlined by the cellos and basses in the very first bar reappears in many guises to be a crucial thematic unifier throughout the work.

The second movement reaches depths of feeling as great as in any of Brahms's works, its falling theme announced at the outset by cellos and rising counter-melody on bassoons setting the mood for an *Adagio* of rich complexity and sustained passion. There is awe, perhaps even a hint of terror, in the *fortissimo* outburst towards the end, but the movement has a settled, if sombre, close.

The trumpets, trombone and tuba fall silent in the *Allegretto*, and the mood lightens for a rustic serenade in which a sedately piping main theme appears three times, interleaved with faster variations of itself.

The finale opens quietly but with barely concealed excitement, and indeed the joy cannot be contained for long, bursting free within 20 bars. Rarely, if ever, did Brahms show such rampant exuberance, yet even here his intellect maintains its grip; the generous theme of the second melody returns late on almost as a chant, albeit one whose syncopations impart an air of expectancy, before it is let loose and transformed again to power the music to a brilliant finish.

Programme note © Lindsay Kemp

We'd love to hear from you

We hope you enjoy today's concert. Could you spare a few moments afterwards to complete a short survey about your experience? Your feedback will help to shape our future plans.

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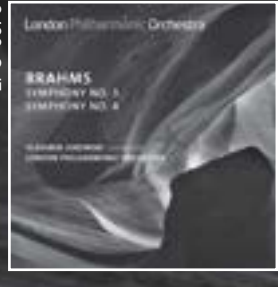


LPO-0043

'Superbly conceived as a whole, emotionally coherent and compelling ... The ending is roof-raising, and I'm glad that they left the applause in ... after the invigorating coda, I feel like joining in.'

The Arts Desk

Symphonies Nos. 1 & 2
Vladimir Jurowski conductor



LPO-0075

Symphonies Nos. 3 & 4
Vladimir Jurowski conductor



LPO-0045

A German Requiem
Yannick Nézet-Séguin conductor
Elizabeth Watts soprano
Stéphane Degout baritone
London Philharmonic Choir

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London Philharmonic Orchestra

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This season at Eastbourne's Congress Theatre

All concerts start at 3.00pm



Sibelius's Fifth

Sunday 24 January 2027

Copland Appalachian Spring: Suite
Errollyn Wallen Cello Concerto
Liadov The Enchanted Lake
Sibelius Symphony No. 5

Enyi Okpara conductor
Laura van der Heijden cello

Mendelssohn's Scottish Symphony

Sunday 14 February 2027

Fanny Mendelssohn Overture
Spohr Clarinet Concerto No. 4
Felix Mendelssohn Symphony No. 3 (Scottish)

Shira Samuels-Shragg conductor
Benjamin Mellefont clarinet

Alpesh Chauhan conducts Schumann

Sunday 7 March 2027

Felix Mendelssohn Overture, Ruy Blas
Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No. 2
R Schumann Symphony No. 3

Alpesh Chauhan conductor
Sophia Liu piano

Tchaikovsky's Fifth

Sunday 4 April 2027

Bacewicz Overture
R Strauss Horn Concerto No. 1
Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 5

Delyana Lazarova conductor
Felix Klieser horn

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