



London Symphony Orchestra
Living Music



London's Symphony Orchestra

barbican

Resident
Orchestra

Thursday 26 January 2017 7.30pm
Barbican Hall

BRAHMS AND STRAUSS

Brahms Piano Concerto No 1

INTERVAL

Brahms Variations on a Theme by Haydn

Strauss Death and Transfiguration

Alpesh Chauhan conductor

Benjamin Grosvenor piano

Concert finishes approx 9.35pm

RECOMMENDED BY
CLASSIC *fm*

Welcome Kathryn McDowell



A very warm welcome to tonight's LSO performance at the Barbican. This evening we are delighted to be joined by two musicians making their debuts with the Orchestra: conductor Alpesh Chauhan, who is becoming known both in the UK and internationally for his work with leading orchestras; and pianist Benjamin Grosvenor, who has steadily built his career after winning the Keyboard Final of the 2004 BBC Young Musician of the Year competition at just 11 years old.

This evening's programme explores pivotal works from two beloved Romantic composers. We begin with Brahms' Piano Concerto No 1, before hearing his *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* – which, although composed at the age of 40, was Brahms' first major work for orchestra alone. Paired with these pieces is Strauss' *Death and Transfiguration*, a 25-year-old composer's ambitious meditation on life itself, and one of his most celebrated works.

Thank you to our media partners, Classic FM, who have recommended this concert to their listeners.

I hope you enjoy tonight's performance and that you are able to join us again soon. On Sunday 5 February violinist Janine Jansen gives the first concert of her LSO Artist Portrait series, performing Bernstein's *Serenade* with conductor Sir Antonio Pappano.

Kathryn McDowell

Kathryn McDowell CBE DL
Managing Director

Living Music In Brief

2017/18 SEASON LAUNCH

On 17 January the LSO revealed the full details of its 2017/18 Season, the first with Sir Simon Rattle as Music Director. Booking opens to the public online at **10am on Friday 3 February**, and all of the concert listings can be found on our website.

alwaysmoving.iso.co.uk

MAHLER SYMPHONY NO 6 LIVE STREAM: NOW ON YOUTUBE

Sir Simon Rattle and the LSO's performance of Mahler's Symphony No 6 and Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Remembering* was streamed live on the LSO's YouTube channel on 19 January, preceded by a backstage tour with presenter Rachel Leach. The broadcast is now available to watch again.

youtube.com/iso

A WARM WELCOME TO TONIGHT'S GROUPS

The LSO offers great benefits for groups of 10+, including 20% discount on standard tickets, a dedicated group booking hotline and, for larger groups, free hot drinks and interval receptions.

At this concert we are delighted to welcome:

The Friends of St Albans Abbey
Richard Wimberley & Friends
Hertford U3A
Gerrards Cross Community Association

iso.co.uk/groups

Alpesh Chauhan In Conversation



Alpesh Chauhan makes his conducting debut with the Orchestra at this evening's concert. Ahead of the performance, Rebecca Sharp spoke to him about his career as a conductor, this evening's repertoire and working with Benjamin Grosvenor.

Having been Principal Cello with the CBSO Youth Orchestra, what made you decide to go down the conducting route rather than the instrumental?

I used to love playing in orchestras more than any other aspect of my music-making when I was younger. When I started playing in full symphony orchestras, I developed a real fascination with the people at the front and the dark art that they practised! This led me to set up orchestras of my own so I could try my hand at the craft, and to then take part in a conducting masterclass offered by the CBSO Youth Orchestra. From that point on, I never looked back. I loved being in the middle of the sound, shaping and crafting the musical journey and sound-world.

What have been some of the highlights of your career so far?

I have had some really fantastic opportunities that have helped me develop at this crucial early stage. One particular highlight was conducting my first Bruckner symphony with the CBSO this season – the orchestra I grew up with, and where I later became Assistant Conductor. The post gave me a brilliant education, as it offered unrestricted access to all of the CBSO rehearsals, concerts and two years shadowing Andris Nelsons. Of course, there have been some other great opportunities for me including concerts with the BBC orchestras, and debuts this season with the Philharmonia and the LSO!

What are you looking forward to about your performance with the LSO?

It's such an honour to have this concert with the LSO – one that I've been mentally and musically preparing for since we started discussing it around 18 months ago! I think for a 26-year-old to have an opportunity to work with the world-class LSO is a real privilege, and one that I will do everything I can to make the absolute most of. The repertoire, though, is the biggest highlight. I feel very lucky but also extremely excited to be able to share this Brahms/Strauss programme with an orchestra that really knows how to perform these works.

I performed the Brahms Piano Concerto with Benjamin Grosvenor earlier this season with the CBSO, and I'm really interested to see how the piece has changed for both of us (still being relatively young!) in the interim period. We really enjoyed working with each other in Birmingham (Benjamin is a real chamber musician and I found it so natural and easy to work with him on this piece, which is more a symphony for piano and orchestra!) so it will be great to bring the concerto to London for both of our LSO debuts.

Read the rest of this interview and more at [Iso.co.uk/blog](https://iso.co.uk/blog)

Johannes Brahms (1833–97)

Piano Concerto No 1 in D minor Op 15 (1854–58)

- 1 MAESTOSO
- 2 ADAGIO
- 3 RONDO: ALLEGRO NON TROPPO

BENJAMIN GROSVENOR PIANO

'My Concerto has had here a brilliant and decisive failure'. Brahms was writing to his friend, the violinist and composer Joseph Joachim, the morning after the Leipzig premiere of his First Piano Concerto in January 1859. He wasn't exaggerating. A performance in Hannover a few days earlier had been received politely, though without enthusiasm. But this performance, in Germany's unofficial musical capital, could not have been less like the breakthrough the 25-year-old composer had been hoping for. In the same letter, Brahms described the audience's reaction to both his music and his playing (Brahms himself played the solo part): 'At the conclusion three pairs of hands were brought together very slowly, whereupon a perfectly distinct hissing from all sides forbade any such demonstration. There is nothing more to say about this episode, for not a soul has said a word to me about the work!'.

'My Concerto has had here a brilliant and decisive failure'.

Johannes Brahms

Unfortunately the critics weren't so restrained. For the reviewer Edward Bernsdorf, the Concerto had 'nothing to offer but hopeless desolation and aridity ... for more than three-quarters of an hour one must endure this rooting and rummaging, this straining and tugging, this tearing and patching of phrases and flourishes! Not only must one take in this fermenting mass; one must also swallow a dessert of the shrillest dissonances and most unpleasant sounds'.

Such incomprehension may be surprising today; nevertheless it's possible to feel some compassion for the Leipzigers. However much they may have prided themselves on their musical sophistication, they simply weren't prepared for what Brahms was offering them. Here was a piano concerto conceived in much grander terms than most contemporary symphonies. Not since Beethoven had anyone attempted anything on this scale in concerto form. And while the piano writing may have been hugely challenging, it wasn't the kind of glamorous display-piece that mid-19th century audiences had come to expect. The orchestral contribution was much weightier than normal in a concerto, and the harmonic language must have seemed exceptionally dissonant to its first hearers. And in place of the usual scintillating acrobatic solo cadenzas, Brahms had provided a series of intensely serious dramatic monologues for the piano.

It wasn't that Brahms had set out with the intention of writing something difficult. Even as a young composer he showed little interest in novelty for its own sake. For an explanation we have to look at the First Piano Concerto's history. Initially Brahms hadn't intended to write a concerto at all. His first plans were for a symphony – a massively ambitious orchestral work that would justify the composer Robert Schumann's prophecy that Brahms would become Germany's leading symphonist. A four-movement sketch was nearly completed in 1854. But Brahms was plagued by doubts and insecurities: was this an orchestral work at all, or might it be more effective as a sonata for two pianos? The example of Beethoven's symphonies was just too intimidating. As he put it years later, 'You've no idea how discouraging it is with such a giant marching behind you'.

PROGRAMME NOTE WRITER

STEPHEN JOHNSON is the author of *Bruckner Remembered* (Faber). He also contributes regularly to *BBC Music Magazine*, and broadcasts for BBC Radio 3 (Discovering Music), Radio 4 and the World Service.

JOSEPH JOACHIM (1831–1907)

was a Hungarian violinist, conductor, composer and teacher. He is noted for reviving interest in the Violin Sonatas and Partitas of J S Bach, as well as Beethoven's Violin Concerto, both now key pieces in the repertoire. Joachim's close collaboration with Brahms produced the Violin Concerto in D major, and several other major violin works were written for him, including Schumann's Concerto in D major and Dvořák's Concerto in A minor.

COMPOSER PROFILES**PAGE 7**

Eventually the last two movements were discarded, and the theme for the original slow Scherzo became the starting point for the movement 'Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras' (For all flesh is as grass) from his German Requiem. Brahms realised that combining piano and orchestra in a concerto of symphonic proportions might be the ideal compromise. The first movement was reworked with Joachim's assistance, and a new slow movement and finale were composed.

But something of the original conception remained. Brahms could with justice have called the result 'Symphony for Piano and Orchestra'. It wouldn't have been completely unprecedented: Berlioz had composed a large-scale symphony with a prominent solo part in his *Harold in Italy* as early as 1834. But, unlike Berlioz, Brahms provided no literary programme to help the audience. However dramatic and emotionally intense the music may be, it could be understood and explained only on its own abstract terms. No wonder audiences balked.

FIRST MOVEMENT

The opening of the concerto can startle audiences even today, a century and a half after it was written. A fortissimo growl from timpani, low horns and low strings introduces a darkly impassioned first theme, its harmonies clashing with the sustained deep bass D. According to Joachim, it reflects Brahms' feelings on hearing that his mentor Schumann had tried to end the torment of his mental illness by throwing himself into the River Rhine. This theme sets the tone for the whole first movement.

The piano's first entry is gentler, more soothing; indeed for a while the soloist seems to offer consolation in the face of the orchestra's onslaughts. But the piano is drawn deeper and deeper into the

conflict, until at the beginning of the recapitulation it is pitted against the orchestra in the return of that first theme, the harmonies clashing more strikingly than ever. The ending is as stormy as the beginning.

SECOND MOVEMENT

The slow movement is mostly peaceful and otherworldly. When Brahms sketched out the orchestra's first theme he wrote above it the words 'Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini' (Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord). Brahms was no believer; in fact the text suggests another link with Schumann, whom Brahms nicknamed 'Mynheer Domini' – which has led some writers to interpret the movement as a wordless requiem for Schumann (the words appear in the text of the Latin Requiem mass). Brahms said nothing further on this subject, though the hushed ending could certainly be heard as a prayer for the repose of a soul.

FINALE

The finale returns to action, beginning with a muscular theme that looks back to the first movement – and perhaps further still to the finale of Bach's Triple Harpsichord Concerto, BWV 1063, also in D minor. The sense of struggle from the first movement returns, but at the crucial moment an ardent piano solo turns the key from D minor to major, and from grim conflict to defiant hope. ■

INTERVAL – 20 minutes

There are bars on all levels of the Concert Hall; ice cream can be bought at the stands on Stalls and Circle level.

Why not tweet us your thoughts on the first half of the performance @londonsymphony, or come and talk to LSO staff at the Information Desk on the Circle level?

BERLIOZ'S HAROLD IN ITALY

was the French composer's second symphony. Berlioz was encouraged to write the work by virtuoso violinist Niccolò Paganini, who asked the composer to write a piece for solo viola. The resulting work was inspired by Lord Byron's narrative poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, and was described by the composer as a series of orchestral scenes in which the solo viola 'would be involved, to a greater or lesser extent, like an actual person ... a kind of melancholy dreamer.'

Johannes Brahms (1833–97)

Variations on a Theme by Haydn Op 56 (1873)

- 1 THEME – CHORALE ST ANTONI (ANDANTE)
- 2 VARIATION I – POCO PIÙ ANIMATO (ANDANTE CON MOTO)
- 3 VARIATION II – PIÙ VIVACE (VIVACE)
- 4 VARIATION III – CON MOTO
- 5 VARIATION IV – ANDANTE CON MOTO (ANDANTE)
- 6 VARIATION V – VIVACE (POCO PRESTO)
- 7 VARIATION VI – VIVACE
- 8 VARIATION VII – GRAZIOSO
- 9 VARIATION VIII – PRESTO NON TROPPO (POCO PRESTO)
- 10 FINALE – ANDANTE

PROGRAMME NOTE WRITER

ANDREW HUTH is a musician, writer and translator who writes extensively on French, Russian and Eastern European music.

In 1870 Karl Ferdinand Pohl, who was researching his biography of Haydn, showed Brahms some divertimentos for wind band. The second movement of the first of these, headed 'Choral St Antoni', immediately struck Brahms as a suitable theme for variations: it had a clear and memorable harmonic and melodic structure, but with an unusual five-bar phrasing.

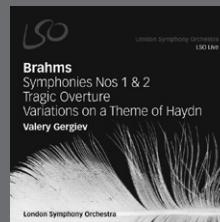
As it happens, the divertimentos are certainly not by Haydn, nor has the St Anthony Chorale been properly identified. Some have suggested that it is a traditional Austrian pilgrims' hymn, others that it was by the unknown composer of the divertimentos. No matter: Brahms believed his theme to be by Haydn, and was keen to pay tribute to a composer he always greatly admired.

The theme is presented as Brahms originally found it, the orchestration adapted but still featuring the reedy woodwind colours of the original. There follow eight variations, widely contrasted in mood, tempo and colour, but all preserving the five-bar phrasing of the theme and closely following its harmonic pattern. The finale is built on a repeated phrase derived from the bass of the original theme. In the course of this work, Brahms uses any number of intricate contrapuntal devices, but with a remarkable lightness of touch:

the ingenuity is all below the surface, lending strength to the natural flow of the music.

Brahms made two versions of the *Variations*, one for two pianos and one for orchestra. He played the piano version with Clara Schumann in August 1873 and conducted the first performance of the orchestral version in Vienna that November. Although he was 40 years old, this was his first major work for orchestra alone, and is actually the first significant independent set of variations for orchestra. Its immediate success almost certainly encouraged him to complete his First Symphony within the next three years. ■

BRAHMS ON LSO LIVE



Brahms

Symphonies Nos 1 & 2;
Tragic Overture;
Variations on a Theme
by Haydn
£12.99

Valery Gergiev conductor

'Gergiev produces a gripping, architecturally secure account of the First Symphony ... his account of the Second ... is refined and sensitive.'

BBC Music Magazine

Isolive.Iso.co.uk

Johannes Brahms Composer Profile



Johannes Brahms was born in Hamburg, the son of an impecunious musician; his mother later opened a haberdashery business to help lift the family out of poverty. Showing early musical promise he became a pupil of the distinguished local pianist and composer Eduard Marxsen and supplemented his parents' meagre income by playing in the bars and brothels of Hamburg's infamous red-light district. In 1853 Brahms presented himself to Robert Schumann in Düsseldorf, winning unqualified approval from

the older composer. Brahms fell in love with Schumann's wife, Clara, supporting her after her husband's illness and death. The relationship did not develop as Brahms wished, and he returned to Hamburg; their close friendship, however, survived.

In 1862 Brahms moved to Vienna where he found fame as a conductor, pianist and composer. The Leipzig premiere of his German Requiem in 1869 proved a triumph, with subsequent performances establishing Brahms as one of the emerging German nation's foremost composers. Following the long-delayed completion of his First Symphony in 1876, he composed in quick succession the majestic Violin Concerto, the two piano Rhapsodies Op 79, the First Violin Sonata and the Second Symphony. His subsequent association with the much-admired court orchestra in Meinigen allowed him freedom to experiment and develop new ideas, the relationship crowned by the Fourth Symphony of 1884.

In his final years, Brahms composed a series of profound works for the clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld, and explored matters of life and death in his *Four Serious Songs*. He died at his modest lodgings in Vienna in 1897, receiving a hero's funeral at the city's central cemetery three days later.

Composer Profiles © Andrew Stewart

Richard Strauss Composer Profile



Richard Strauss was born in Munich in 1864, the son of Franz Strauss, a brilliant horn player in the Munich Court Orchestra; it is therefore perhaps not surprising that some of the composer's most striking writing is for the French horn. Strauss had his first piano lessons when he was four, and he produced his first composition two years later, but surprisingly he did not attend a music academy, his formal education ending rather at Munich University where he studied philosophy and aesthetics.

Following the first public performances of his work, he received a commission from Hans von Bülow in 1882 and two years later was appointed Bülow's Assistant Musical Director at the Meinigen Court Orchestra, the beginning of a career in which Strauss was to conduct many of the world's great orchestras, in addition to holding positions at opera houses in Munich, Weimar, Berlin and Vienna. While at Munich, he married the singer Pauline de Ahna, for whom he wrote many of his greatest songs.

Strauss' legacy is to be found in his operas and his magnificent symphonic poems. Scores such as *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, *Don Juan* and *Ein Heldenleben* demonstrate his supreme mastery of orchestration; the thoroughly modern operas *Salome* and *Elektra*, with their Freudian themes and atonal scoring, are landmarks in the development of 20th-century music, and the neo-Classical *Der Rosenkavalier* has become one of the most popular operas of the century. Strauss spent his last years in self-imposed exile in Switzerland, waiting to be officially cleared of complicity in the Nazi regime. He died at Garmisch Partenkirchen in 1949, shortly after his widely celebrated 85th birthday.



London Symphony Orchestra
Season 2016/17



Spring 2017 Highlights

LSO ARTIST PORTRAIT: JANINE JANSEN

Sun 5 Feb 7pm
Bernstein Serenade
Sir Antonio Pappano conductor

Sun 12 Mar 7pm
Brahms Violin Concerto
Valery Gergiev conductor

Thu 6 Apr 7.30pm
Berg Violin Concerto
Gianandrea Noseda conductor

FRANÇOIS-XAVIER ROTH: AFTER ROMANTICISM

Thu 30 Mar 7.30pm
Debussy Jeux
Bartók Piano Concerto No 3
Mahler Symphony No 1 ('Titan')
Simon Trpčeski piano

Sun 23 Apr 7pm
Debussy Prélude à l'après-midi
d'un faune
Bartók Viola Concerto
Bruckner Symphony No 4
Antoine Tamestit viola

FABIO LUISI RETURNS TO CONDUCT BRAHMS

Thu 16 Mar 7.30pm
Beethoven Piano Concerto No 5
(‘Emperor’)
Brahms Symphony No 2
Igor Levit piano

Sun 19 Mar 7pm
Schubert Symphony No 8
(‘Unfinished’)
Brahms German Requiem
Julia Kleiter soprano
Ruben Drole bass-baritone
London Symphony Chorus
Simon Halsey chorus director

BBC RADIO 3 LUNCHTIMES: RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONARIES

Thu 2 Feb 1pm, LSO St Luke’s
Elisabeth Leonskaja piano

Thu 9 Feb 1pm, LSO St Luke’s
Alexei Volodin piano

Thu 16 Feb 1pm, LSO St Luke’s
Anna Vinnitskaya piano

Thu 23 Feb 1pm, LSO St Luke’s
Vadym Kholodenko piano



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Richard Strauss (1864–1949)

Death and Transfiguration Op 24 (1888–89)

We tend to think of the late 19th century as an era of emotional repression – an age when children were to be ‘seen and not heard’ and polite conversation steered clear of any subject that had the remotest connection with sex.

PROGRAMME NOTE WRITER STEPHEN JOHNSON

But there were subjects that late 19th-century Europeans approached far more readily than we do: death, for instance. It is hard to imagine a young artist today following up his or her first big public success with a work about the experiences of a dying man. But that’s exactly what the 25-year-old Richard Strauss did. Having scored a huge hit with his tone poem *Don Juan*, he set to work almost immediately on a successor entitled *Tod und Verklärung* (Death and Transfiguration). *Don Juan* had ended with the death of its hero; now, in *Death and Transfiguration*, Strauss set out to depict the thoughts and feelings of a man struggling with, and finally yielding to, death. Its first performance, in June 1891, was another triumph for Strauss. For decades it was to remain one of his most popular works.

THE TONE POEM (also known as symphonic poem) is an orchestral form that expresses a short story, poem or work of art, inviting the listener to recreate the scene or narrative. Strauss was to become one of the most important contributors to this genre, composing ten tone poems over the course of his life. His most famous, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, became immortalised in popular culture when it was featured in Stanley Kubrick’s 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey*.

Given that Strauss was a young man when he wrote *Death and Transfiguration* – an ambitious young man, moreover, with everything to live for – its urgency and vividness is striking. Significantly, Strauss makes the unnamed hero of his musical narrative an ‘idealist’, racked by memories of childhood, youthful loves, and worst of all, by the sense that he has failed to fulfil his ideals. But after death comes ‘transfiguration’, in which the soul ‘finds gloriously achieved in eternal space those things which could not be achieved here below’.

The musical storyline is easy to follow. The quietly pulsing rhythms at the opening suggest the uneven beat of the failing heart, or the throbbing beat

of deathly fever. The hero’s struggles with death can be heard in the explosive, agitated Allegro that follows. Calmer, sweetly sad music clearly represents nostalgic memories of childhood and youth. Then the struggles begin again, with the quietly pulsing rhythm from the opening now blaring threateningly on trombones. The moment of death is unmistakable: a sweeping upward glissando ending in hush, with only a pianissimo low C sustained in the depths of the orchestra. Then an aspiring theme heard earlier rises slowly and majestically, leading to the grand affirmation of the coda – the vision of the soul’s fulfilment in ‘eternal space’.

‘It’s a funny thing Alice.
Dying is just as I composed
it in *Tod und Verklärung*.’

Nearly 60 years after he wrote *Death and Transfiguration*, the elderly Richard Strauss was to quote this slow aspiring motif in the last of his *Four Last Songs* – a tribute to the power of his youthful vision? It seems so. On his deathbed, the following year, Strauss told his daughter-in-law: ‘Dying is just as I composed it in *Tod und Verklärung*’. ■

Alpesh Chauhan Conductor



Principal Conductor Designate
Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini

Alpesh Chauhan is Principal Conductor Designate of the Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini in Parma, a position he will take up in the 2017/18 season. Quickly rising to international prominence, the insight which Alpesh brings to the music is enjoyed by orchestras and audiences alike, and his natural rapport with musicians has resulted in him already establishing relationships with some of the major orchestras in the UK and Europe.

Alpesh Chauhan held the position of Assistant Conductor at the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra from 2014 to 2016, having previously been the Orchestra's first Conducting Fellow. In summer 2016 he made his first appearance at the BBC Proms, conducting two *Ten Pieces* concerts with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, following on from the *Ten Pieces Secondary* film, which he recorded with the Orchestra in 2015. In November 2016 he made his US debut with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra.

Alpesh's career to date includes engagements with the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Symphony, Scottish and Philharmonic orchestras, Ulster Orchestra, Kymi Sinfonietta and the orchestras of Opéra National Lorraine, Teatro Carlo Felice Genoa, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini and Teatro Petruzzelli Bari. This season sees Alpesh return to conduct many of these orchestras, as well as make his debuts with the Royal Flemish Philharmonic, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the Philharmonia Orchestra, as well as the LSO.

Alpesh was Principal Cello of the CBSO Youth Orchestra, which gave him the opportunity, as part of the Youth Orchestra Academy in 2007, to take conducting masterclasses. He joined the Royal Northern College of Music in 2008 to study the cello with Eduardo Vassallo, before deciding to pursue the prestigious Master's Conducting Course, taught by Clark Rundell and Mark Heron. Alpesh has studied with Stanisław Skrowaczewski, participated in masterclasses with Juanjo Mena, Vasily Petrenko and Jac van Steen, and has been mentored by Andris Nelsons and Edward Gardner.

Regularly appearing in the media, Alpesh has been featured as a 'Rising Star' in *BBC Music Magazine*, interviewed on BBC Radio 4 and the World Service, and appeared on *BBC Breakfast*. He has guest blogged for *Gramophone* magazine and was on the judging panel for 2016's *BBC Young Musician*.

Benjamin Grosvenor

Piano



British pianist Benjamin Grosvenor is internationally recognised for his electrifying performances and insightful interpretations. He first came to prominence as the winner of the Keyboard Final of 2004's *BBC Young Musician of the Year* at the age of 11. In 2016 he was announced as the inaugural recipient of the Ronnie and Lawrence Ackman Classical Piano Prize with the New York Philharmonic. He has performed with orchestras including the London Philharmonic, RAI Torino, Philharmonia, Leipzig Gewandhausorchester, Tokyo Symphony, and in venues such as the Royal Festival Hall, Singapore's Victoria Hall, The Frick Collection and Carnegie Hall.

At the age of 19, Benjamin performed with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the First Night of the 2011 BBC Proms, with re-invitations in 2012 for a concert with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Charles Dutoit, and in 2014 for a recital and Chopin's Piano Concerto No 1 with the BBC Philharmonic and Gianandrea Noseda. Benjamin appeared in the 2015 Last Night of the Proms, performing Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No 2 with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Marin Alsop.

Recent and future highlights include engagements with the Cleveland and Hallé Orchestras, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Atlanta, San Francisco, Singapore, Melbourne, Washington National and KBS Symphony Orchestras. Major recitals include the Vienna Konzerthaus, Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall, Cologne Philharmonie, Konzerthaus Berlin, Lucerne Festival, La Roque d'Antheron, International Piano Series at the Southbank Centre, and his first tour of South America. The current season sees Benjamin embark on new collaborations with the Filarmonica della Scala and Riccardo Chailly, the Tonhalle-Orchestra Zurich and François-Xavier Roth, and the Orchestra of St Luke's and Sir Roger Norrington.

Benjamin enjoys incorporating chamber music collaborations into his schedule, including performances with the Escher, Elias and Endellion String Quartets, and the chamber ensembles of the Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal and the Naples Philharmonic.

In 2011 Benjamin signed to Decca Classics, becoming the youngest British musician ever to sign to the label, and the first British pianist to sign to it in almost 60 years. Autumn 2016 saw the release of his third recital disc for Decca, *Homages*, which has been hailed by *Diapason* magazine as 'the perfect title: a superlative tribute to the art of the piano'.

During his career to date, Benjamin has received *Gramophone's* Young Artist of the Year and Instrumental Awards, a Classic Brits Critics' Award, UK Critics' Circle Award for Exceptional Young Talent and a Diapason d'Or Jeune Talent Award. He has been featured in two BBC television documentaries, on *BBC Breakfast* and *The Andrew Marr Show*, and in CNN's *Human to Hero* series.

The youngest of five brothers, Benjamin began playing the piano at the age of six. He studied at the Royal Academy of Music with Christopher Elton and Daniel-Ben Pienaar, where he graduated in 2012 with the Queen's Commendation for Excellence, and in 2016 was made a Fellow. Benjamin has been supported since 2013 by EFG International, the global private banking group.

London Symphony Orchestra

On stage

FIRST VIOLINS

Roman Simovic *Leader*
George Tudorache
Lennox Mackenzie
Clare Duckworth
Nigel Broadbent
Ginette Decuyper
Jörg Hammann
Maxine Kwok-Adams
Claire Parfitt
Elizabeth Pigram
Laurent Quenelle
Harriet Rayfield
Colin Renwick
Sylvain Vasseur
Rhys Watkins
Shlomy Dobrinsky

SECOND VIOLINS

David Alberman
Thomas Norris
Sarah Quinn
Miya Väisänen
Matthew Gardner
Julian Gil Rodriguez
Naoko Keatley
William Melvin
Iwona Muszynska
Paul Robson
Eleanor Fagg
Ingrid Button
Alain Petitclerc
Robert Yeomans

VIOLAS

Krzysztof Chorzelski
Gillianne Haddow
Malcolm Johnston
Lander Echevarria
Anna Bastow
Julia O'Riordan
Robert Turner
Jonathan Welch
Stephen Doman
Francis Kefford
Shiry Rashkovsky
Fiona Dalgliesh

CELLOS

Rebecca Gilliver
Alastair Blayden
Jennifer Brown
Noel Bradshaw
Eve-Marie Caravassilis
Daniel Gardner
Hilary Jones
Amanda Truelove
Deborah Tolksdorf
Victoria Harrild

DOUBLE BASSES

Colin Paris
Patrick Laurence
Matthew Gibson
Thomas Goodman
Joe Melvin
Paul Sherman
Katy Furmansk
Siret Lust

FLUTES

Adam Walker
Alex Jakeman

PICCOLO

Sharon Williams

OBOES

Olivier Stankiewicz
Rosie Jenkins

COR ANGLAIS

Christine Pendrill

CLARINETS

Chris Richards
Chi-Yu Mo

BASS CLARINET

Duncan Gould

BASSOONS

Rachel Gough
Joost Bostdijk

CONTRA BASSOON

Dominic Morgan

HORNS

Timothy Jones
Angela Barnes
Alexander Edmundson
Jonathan Lipton
Jason Koczur

TRUMPETS

Mark O'Keefe
Gerald Ruddock
Neil Fulton

TROMBONES

Dudley Bright
James Maynard

BASS TROMBONE

Paul Milner

TUBA

Patrick Harrild

TIMPANI

Antoine Bedewi

PERCUSSION

Neil Percy

HARPS

Bryn Lewis
Ruth Holden

Your views

Inbox

SAT 14 & SUN 15 JAN – LIGETI'S LE GRAND MACABRE



Mario Delgado Wow for *Le grand macabre* @londonsymphony @BarbicanCentre. A vision of the end of the world that feels so resonant, so contemporary, so urgent



Harriet Wybor Absolutely brilliant #Ligeti *Le grand macabre* @BarbicanCentre from @londonsymphony & #SimonRattle! Outstanding in so many ways



Oliver Pashley Breathtaking Ligeti @BarbicanCentre tonight. Thank you for a chilling, evocative #grandmacabre @londonsymphony

THU 19 JAN – MAHLER SYMPHONY NO 6



Andrew Mosely Electrifying Mahler 6 from @londonsymphony and #SimonRattle on his 62nd birthday. Such energy and passion.



Neil Wallington Fascinating premiere of Mark-Anthony #Turnage's *Remembering* opened proceedings – sombre, yet powerful. #Rattle @londonsymphony



Alan Rosenbach @londonsymphony thank you for a stunning concert tonight. Mesmerisingly good #LSO

LSO STRING EXPERIENCE SCHEME

Established in 1992, the LSO String Experience Scheme enables young string players at the start of their professional careers to gain work experience by playing in rehearsals and concerts with the LSO. The scheme auditions students from the London music conservatoires, and 15 students per year are selected to participate. 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 Help Musicians UK
The Polonsky Foundation
Fidelio Charitable Trust
N Smith Charitable Settlement
Lord and Lady Lurgan Trust
Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust
LSO Patrons

Performing in tonight's concert are Rosa Hartley (First Violin), Ting-Ru Lai (Viola) and Margarita Balanas (Cello).

London Symphony Orchestra
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EC2Y 8DS

Registered charity in England No 232391

Details in this publication were correct at time of going to press.

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Cover Photography
Ranald Mackechnie, featuring LSO Members with 20+ years' service. Visit lso.co.uk/1617photos for a full list.

Photography
Ranald Mackechnie, Marcello Orselli, Operaomnia.co.uk

Print Cantate 020 3651 1690

Advertising Cabbell Ltd 020 3603 7937