

## **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra October 26 programme complementary content**

Mozart and Mahler stand both as two giants of the music world and on either side of the interval in this unmissable October concert. Ebullient Liverpool favourite Julian Bliss returns to perform one of Mozart's final masterpieces, his only *Clarinet Concerto*. Then Chief Conductor Domingo Hindoyan and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra embark on Mahler's epic Fifth Symphony.

This companion page draws together a range of complementary content that we hope will help shine further light on the pieces, the people who composed them and the performers bringing them to life here in Hope Street.

### **Domingo Hindoyan**

[Domingo Hindoyan](#) was born in Caracas in 1980 to a violinist father and a lawyer mother. He started his musical career as a violinist in the ground-breaking Venezuelan music education programme El Sistema.

He studied conducting at [Haute Ecole de Musique in Geneva](#), where he gained his masters, and in 2012 was invited to join the Allianz International Conductor's Academy, through which he worked with the London Philharmonic and the Philharmonia Orchestra and with conductors like Esa-Pekka Salonen and Sir Andrew Davis.

He was appointed first assistant conductor to [Daniel Barenboim](#) at the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin in 2013 and in 2019, he took up a position as principal guest conductor of the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra.

In the same year, he made his debut with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and was appointed as the Orchestra's new Chief Conductor in 2020, taking up this position in September 2021. In July he announced he had extended his contract until 2028.

### **Julian Bliss**

[Julian Bliss](#) was born in Hertfordshire in 1989 and started to play at the age of four when his parents took him to a music shop, and he picked out a plastic [Lyons C clarinet](#).

At five he appeared on television, and aged six he played at Buckingham Palace – returning in 2002 to perform in the Proms at the Palace during the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations. Bliss studied at the Purcell School for Young Musicians and was 12 when he earned his postgraduate artist's diploma at Indiana University. He went on to study in Germany under Sabine Meyer.

In 2010, inspired by Benny Goodman, he formed the [Julian Bliss Septet](#) which has become renowned for its jazz-fuelled shows which have captivated audiences across the globe.

Bliss is in great demand as a soloist and recitalist and has played with the world's leading orchestras and chamber groups. In 2020 he launched Bliss Music through which his arrangements of pieces for clarinet and piano are made available as digital sheet music.

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

In the autumn of 1791, a 35-year-old [Mozart](#) still had little idea that he was rapidly running out of time. Needing ready money, as the Mozarts so often did, he had spent much of the year either seeking employment opportunities or working hard on new commissions and compositions.

His motet *Ave Verum Corpus*, operas *The Magic Flute* and *La Clemenza di Tito*, *String Quintet No 6*, several dances, two works for organ and, of course, the *Requiem Mass* were all started and/or completed over the course of the year. Despite that, he still managed to steal some time away with his pregnant wife Constanza and son who had decamped to Baden to take the waters.

Back in Vienna, at the end of September he embarked on what would be his only [Clarinet Concerto](#), composed for the clarinetist Anton Stadler. As usual, the composer worked quickly, and Stadler was able to premiere the new piece at a concert in Prague on October 16. Weeks later, Mozart would be dead.

**Did you know? Mozart's good friend and fellow Mason Anton Stadler played a basset clarinet designed and made by the Vienna court instrument maker, Theodore Lotz. A basset clarinet is usually an A-clarinet with additional deeper tones, in Stadler's case an extension of four semitones.**

Watch Julian Bliss play Mozart's [Clarinet Concerto](#) at the *BBC Proms* in June 2012.

## Gustav Mahler

During his lifetime, [Gustav Mahler](#) was best known not as a composer but as a conductor. As the 20<sup>th</sup> Century dawned, the 40-year-old was at the top of his profession as director of the Vienna Court Opera and principal conductor of the Vienna Philharmonic. But while he had to carve out time around his substantial conducting duties, by 1900 he was also [the composer](#) of four symphonies along with a number of cantatas, orchestral songs and songs with piano.

Summer 1901 took Mahler to his holiday home at the lakeside Maiernigg in Carinthia, where his 'composing hut' is now a tiny museum. It was there that he started sketching what would become his [Fifth Symphony](#), set out over five movements which go on a soaring trajectory from funeral opening to triumphant finale. Mahler completed the work the following summer, having married in the meantime, and the symphony's soulful adagietto is believed to be a love letter to his new young wife, [Alma](#).

Watch the BBC Philharmonic play the '[Adagietto](#)' from *Symphony No 5* at the 2014 Proms.

## About the Music

### Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91): Clarinet Concerto in A major, K.622

1. Allegro
2. Adagio
3. Rondo: Allegro

Composed: 1791

First Performed: 16 October 1791 (probably), Prague, Anton Stadler (clarinet)

The Clarinet Concerto was the last major work Mozart was able to finish. Six weeks later he died, at just 35, leaving his mighty *Requiem* incomplete. Inevitably, this has coloured the way people have approached this work. Did Mozart foresee his own end, and if so, is the Clarinet Concerto his instrumental Swansong? Actually, there's strong evidence that Mozart was feeling new hope,

and looking forward keenly to his promised appointment as Kapellmeister (Music Director) at St Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna. Certainly, there are passages in the Concerto which show a melancholic tendency, but that had been evident in Mozart's music from early adulthood.

In this case the stimulus was a request from Mozart's friend, the Viennese virtuoso Anton Stadler, whose playing had inspired some of his most beautiful and moving chamber music. All three movements seem poised between idyllic loveliness (or is it 'lost content?') and an underlying sadness. The first movement is in general more lyrical than virtuosic, while the central *Adagio* is a triumph of sustained, aria-like melody. The finale is full of light, lilting dance-tunes, on the surface carefree, yet one eminent writer was reminded of a line from Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale*: 'my heart dances; but not for joy; not joy'. As with the 'triumph' at the end of Mahler's Fifth Symphony, there's more than one way of hearing this remarkable music.

### **Gustav Mahler (1860-1911): Symphony No 5**

Part I

1. Funeral March: In gemessenem Schritt. Streng. Wie ein Kondukt. [With measured tread. Strict. Like a procession]
2. Sturmisch bewegt. Mit grösster Vehemenz [Stormy. With utmost vehemence]

Part II

3. Scherzo: Kräftig, nicht zu schnell [Vigorous, not too fast]

Part III

4. Adagietto: Sehr langsam [Very slow]
5. Rondo-Finale: Allegro

Composed: 1901-2

First Performance: Cologne, Gürzenich Orchestra, cond. Mahler, 18 October, 1904

Mahler's Fifth is the first of his symphonies to appear without a title, an explanatory programme note or any kind of sung text. As Mahler had discovered, when you provide audiences with pointers to deeper meanings, some of them will keep getting the wrong end of the stick. This is clearly a symphony with a story to tell, but what kind of story? Fortunately for us, Mahler does provide several helpful clues. Even if he hadn't called the first movement 'Funeral March', it would be brazenly obvious that Death is portrayed here, first in magnificent ghastly pomp, then in poignant, wintry lamentation. The second movement is clearly a life-and-death struggle, culminating in a radiant hymn-tune on full brass – so, is faith the answer? And if so, what kind of faith? But in this instance affirmation collapses pathetically. Apparent defeat is followed by a manic waltzing Scherzo, all wild escapism, except for those moments when dark memories peer out from behind the curtain, or horn calls evoke the vast spaces of Mahler's beloved Alps. Then comes the famous Adagietto, an exquisite love song without words for just strings and harp, leading to a joyously determined, energetically fugal Finale, at whose height the hymn-tune returns, now apparently in unqualified triumph.

As so often with Mahler there's a personal side to all this. In 1901, just before beginning the Fifth Symphony, Mahler had survived a near-fatal haemorrhage – no wonder death is such a strong presence. Mounting anti-Semitism in Vienna had soured his feelings about his adopted home city, hence perhaps the weirdly equivocal character of the waltz-parody in the Scherzo. But he'd also met his future wife, Alma Schindler, who is clearly the beloved hymned so poignantly in the Adagietto, and the final triumph of the hymn-tune may be inspired by her too: if divine love can't help us face death, then perhaps human love can. But this is a symphony, not a novel: as Mahler's great precursor Felix Mendelssohn put it, 'Music is a language too precise for words.' These are only prompts. The real adventure begins, as Mahler realised, when we discover the meaning of the music for ourselves.