

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

February 6 programme complementary content

Fiery folk tunes meet the Orchestra – Domingo Hindoyan dives deep into a whirlwind of colour and rhythm, straight from the untamed musical imagination of Zoltán Kodály. A different kind of passion drives Bartók's Second Violin Concerto, and violinist Michael Barenboim is just the artist to uncover both its poetry and its inner fire. Meanwhile, if you enjoy Dvořák's 'New World' symphony, you simply have to hear the Seventh. This tempestuous portrait of a nation awakening to freedom packs a serious emotional punch.

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 musical 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 his position in September 2021. He has now extended his contract with the Orchestra to 2028.

Michael Barenboim

Since his breakthrough as a soloist with Schönberg's *Violin Concerto* under the baton of Pierre Boulez in 2011, [Michael Barenboim](#) has been anchored in the international concert scene.

He has performed with outstanding colleagues including the Vienna Philharmonic under Daniel Barenboim, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under Asher Fisch, the Israel Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta, the Berlin Philharmonic under Vasily Petrenko and the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Gustavo Dudamel. He has also worked as a soloist with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Filarmonica della Scala, Philharmonia Orchestra London, Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Orchestre de Paris and the Spanish National Orchestra.

Solo recitals regularly take [Barenboim](#) to the most famous international halls and renowned concert series. He has performed at London's Wigmore Hall, the Elphilharmonie in Hamburg, the Sydney Opera House, the Teatro di San Carlo in Naples and the Lucerne Festival. Featuring works by Pierre Boulez, he played recitals at the Berlin Philharmonie, Carnegie Hall, Konzerthaus Dortmund, the Barbican Centre London, the Opéra national de Paris and Salzburg Festival.

While committed to the core Classical and Romantic repertoire, Barenboim is also deeply invested and recognized for his performances of 20th Century and contemporary music.

Barenboim is a founding member of the Erlenbusch Quartet and is frequently invited to the Lucerne, Verbier, Aix en Provence and Jerusalem Chamber Music Festivals.

He collaborates regularly with his mother, the pianist [Elena Bashkirova](#), as well as with artists such as Frans Helmerson, Julian Steckel, Guy Braunstein, Andras Schiff and Martha Argerich. He

also serves as concertmaster of the [West-Eastern Divan Orchestra](#) and cultivates a continuous and strong involvement in educational activities. In addition, he is a professor of violin and chamber music, as well as Dean, at the Barenboim-Said Academy and gives masterclasses around the world.

Listen to Michael Barenboim perform the [fugue](#) from Bartók's *Sonata for Solo Violin*.

Zoltán Kodály - *Dances of Galánta*

When [Zoltán Kodály](#) was commissioned to create a work celebrating the 80th anniversary of the Budapest Philharmonic Society, he turned to the sounds of his childhood for inspiration.

The composer had spent seven years – from the ages of three to 10 – living in Galánta, then a small town in the Kingdom of Hungary (now part of Slovakia), about 35 miles east of Bratislava. It was where his father Frigyes, an amateur musician, was the stationmaster on the Budapest to Vienna line. It was there that Kodály's impressionable young ears heard what he later described as 'the first orchestral sonority', which came from a famous town gypsy band and fired his interest in the folk music tradition of his nation. Throughout his career, he would dedicate himself to [ethnomusicological research](#) as well as composing.

Along with those youthful memories, *Dances of Galánta* (or *Galántai Tácok* in Hungarian) was also informed by late 18th/early 19th Century books of Hungarian dances which included music 'after several gypsies from Galánta' and whose melodies he celebrated in this new work.

Friend and fellow composer Dohnányi conducted the Budapest Philharmonic at the premiere in the city in October 1933. And the *Dances* went on to become one of Kodály's best-loved orchestral pieces.

Enjoy Zoltán Kodály's [Dances of Galánta](#).

Did you know? Kodály studied at the Liszt Academy as a young man but also earned degrees in Hungarian and German and a doctorate in linguistics, all from the University of Hungary.

Bela Bartók – *Violin Concerto No.2*

The storm clouds were starting to loom ever larger over Europe as [Bela Bartók](#) sat down in 1937 to write a concerto for his regular recital partner [Zoltán Székely](#). The violin virtuoso had been requesting a concerto from his friend for some time and finally the composer agreed.

While the piece was Bartók's second violin concerto, it was the only one published during his lifetime. His youthful *Violin Concerto No.1* had been composed 30 years earlier, inspired by and dedicated to the leading Hungarian violinist – and object of his affection – Stefi Geyer. But it only saw the light of day a decade after his death after Geyer spurned both composer and concerto. The second is recognised as one of Bartók's [masterpieces](#) and one of the great 20th Century violin concertos.

Székely had emigrated from Hungary to the Netherlands in the 1920s, and it was there at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam that he premiered the concerto in March 1939. Meanwhile, within 18 months and with the continent gripped by war, Bartók (a staunch and vocal opponent of fascism) had also left his native Hungary, fleeing with his pianist wife Ditta by ship from Lisbon to [New York](#), where he would die in September 1945.

Listen to Zoltán Székely playing Bartók's [Violin Concerto No.2](#) at its premiere in 1939.

Antonin Dvořák – *Symphony No.7 in D minor*

British audiences were first introduced to Antonin Dvořák's music in 1879 when conductor [August Manns](#) included three of the *Slavonic Dances* in one of his popular 'Saturday concerts' at Crystal Palace.

Manns, who championed many composers relatively unknown in Britain, went on to conduct several of the Czech's works (including, in 1882, *Symphony No.6 in D major*), and over the next few years they also found their way into other orchestra programmes, including a performance of his *Stabat Mater* in 1883. The latter was such a success that the composer himself was invited by the Philharmonic Society to come to London the following March – the first of what would be nine visits to Britain – where he conducted the oratorio at the Royal Albert Hall at the start of [a trio](#) of engagements.

The 42-year-old was fêted at special events held in his honour, and later made an honorary member of the Society which immediately commissioned him to compose a new symphony. In December 1884 he set to work and by March he had completed the score. The following month he returned to London and on April 22 1885, after just two rehearsals, Dvořák took the baton to conduct the premiere of [Symphony No.7 in D minor](#) at St James' Hall, where it was given a rousing reception. "There was pandemonium after every movement, rousing to the very end, just like at home," he wrote to a friend.

Watch a performance of the first movement from Dvořák's [Symphony No.7 in D minor](#).

Did you know? In 1884, Dvořák appeared at the Three Choirs Festival in Worcester Cathedral, conducting his *Stabat Mater* and Sixth Symphony in a pair of concerts. Among the orchestra was a 27-year-old violinist called Edward Elgar.

About the Music

Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967): *Dances of Galánta*

Composed: 1933

First Performed: 23 October 1933, Budapest, Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra, cond. Ernő Dohnányi

National borders in Central and Eastern Europe have rarely been stable for long, and the town Galánta, which Zoltán Kodály knew and loved as part of his native Hungary, now belongs to Slovakia. Kodály remembered being stirred as a boy by its pungent, muscular Gypsy music before he'd ever heard a classical orchestral concert. When he later found an old collection of folk dances from the area, he decided to work some of them up into a musical evocation of the spirit of Galánta and its surrounding countryside. Most of the dances are in the 'verbunkos' style – originally military recruiting music but developing into a vibrant dance form that became hugely popular with Hungarian nationalists. It's usually divided into two sections: slow (lassú), typically to a jerky dotted rhythm, and fast (friss), with intricate rapid running figures. Kodály elaborates on that, but the dynamism of that slow-majestic/fast-virtuosic contrast remains. The clarinet has a particularly important part to play in the slower music, imitating the edgy sound of the Hungarian folk instrument the tárogató. Kodály may never have been as radical as his countryman Bartók, but you can still feel the raw native vitality in this flavoursome, compelling dance music.

Béla Bartók (1881-1945) Violin Concerto No.2

1. Allegro non troppo
2. Andante tranquillo
3. Allegro molto

Composed: 1937-8

First Performed: 23 March 1939, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Concertgebouw Orchestra, Zoltan Székely (violin), cond. Willem Mengelberg

Unlike many of the twentieth century's other outstanding modernists, Bartók found inspiration, not in the dynamism of industry or in the vivid intensity of city life, but in nature and in folk music, which he considered to be a form of human creativity that hadn't yet become alienated from nature. But his view of folk music was remarkably unsentimental. Unlike other composers, he made no attempt to 'tidy up' or 'civilise' the harsh colours, abrasive harmonies and complex dance rhythms of Eastern European folk music, and it led him to create some of the most radical, challenging soundscapes in music.

But by the time he wrote the Second Violin Concerto, Bartók's modernism had softened. Expressive lyricism and warmer tonal harmonies became increasingly part of his thinking and feeling. Throughout the Second Violin Concerto, the argument is sustained with a single-mindedness that is typical of this titan amongst musical intellects, yet it is also rich in contrast of colour and atmosphere, and Bartók sustains a masterly balance between drama and brilliant display on the one hand and moving lyricism on the other. The first theme, introduced by harp chords and pizzicato low strings, is one of the loveliest things Bartók ever wrote. Bartók originally marked this movement 'Tempo di verbunkos', after the swaggering Hungarian soldiers' recruiting dance. Even at this late stage in his career, his love for his country's musical culture seems to be as strong as ever, despite his horror at the Nazi leanings of the Hungarian regime. A wonderfully atmospheric set of variations follows, full of the 'night music' nature poetry Bartók loved and returned to again and again, then the vigorous dance finale is a brilliant 'retake' on some of the ideas from the first movement. Hungary's fate in World War Two would later draw from Bartók some of his most heart-rending, desolate music, but at this stage his love of its rich folk culture is still triumphant.

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904): Symphony No 7 in D minor, Op.70

1. Allegro maestoso
2. Poco Adagio
3. Scherzo: Vivace – Poco meno mosso
4. Allegro

Composed: 1885

First Performed: 22 April 1885, London, St James's Hall, London Philharmonic, cond. Dvořák

In 1884, the London Philharmonic Society elected Dvořák an honorary member (quite an honour in those days!) and asked him for a new symphony. Dvořák's previous symphony, No.6, had made no secret of its composer's admiration for Brahms. If Brahms was flattered, he was wise enough to take a step back: 'My idea of your new symphony is quite different from this', he told Dvořák, pointing to the manuscript of the Sixth.

So, this time Dvořák had to break new ground. This time concentration was required, and it paid off. None of Dvořák's previous symphonic orchestral or chamber works is as compellingly purposeful as the Seventh Symphony. All his natural lyricism is here – the symphony abounds in stirring tunes – but there is nothing superfluous: everything is part of the grand design. From the dramatic tension between its two leading ideas – a tense, darkly eloquent theme on cellos and lilting melody on flute and clarinets – the movement builds a magnificent, increasingly tragic argument. The ending is hushed, like the opening, with fragments of the main ideas ebbing darkly away.

A hint of a folk hymn on woodwind and pizzicato strings opens the slow movement, followed by a sensuous, rising motif on full orchestra, then a long, songlike melody on flutes and oboes. The build-up to the climax, topped with trumpet and horn fanfares, has a stirring inevitability, and the return of the opening 'folk hymn' idea on oboe above tremolando strings is also beautifully

judged. The Scherzo third movement for instance is based on the rhythms and melodic characteristics of a Czech country dance called the 'Furiant': a quick waltz-like ONE-two-three ONE-two-three in the bass against a more measured ONE-two TWO-two THREE-two in the treble – or vice versa. At the same time, it is one of the most gripping and original symphonic scherzos since Beethoven. The finale then picks up on and intensifies the first movement's tragic drama. Towards the end it seems the dark minor key is going to win, but at the last minute, high woodwind, horns and violins twist the opening theme into a defiant D major. Victory has been seized from the jaws of defeat.