

## Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra Beethoven in Barrow

“If I understood war like I understand music, I would conquer him!” Ludwig van Beethoven was an idealist – and when his hero Napoleon betrayed the revolution, he tore up the score of his *Eroica* symphony. That same energy pulses through every bar of this game-changing work, and Domingo Hindoyan certainly won’t hold back tonight.

### 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.

### Schubert *Symphony No.5*

Franz Schubert celebrated his nineteenth birthday in January 1816, and it turned out to be a busy year for the young composer. He continued teaching, first at the school his father ran, then going on to give private music lessons. But his friends – mostly wealthier than him – championed Schubert’s talents, and supported him as he turned increasingly to composition. And so, 1816 also saw him compose approximately 200 works, including his truly irresistible *Symphony No.5*.

It’s a piece that very much reflects the composer at that point in his career – it’s positively bursting with youthful energy, packed with infectious tunes, and it delivers a clear nod to the composer a young Schubert adored.

“O Mozart, immortal Mozart, how many, oh how endlessly many such comforting perceptions of a brighter and better life hast thou brought to our souls!” Schubert noted that thought down in his diary just a few months before completing his Fifth Symphony. Written for smaller orchestra, and hinting at various themes from Mozart’s own works, the finished *Symphony No.5* clearly pays homage to the great composer. But it also allows Schubert’s own style and voice to be heard. Its opening is something quite original for the time, and throughout the work he plays with expected conventions – something that would become a hallmark of Schubert’s vast catalogue.

### Beethoven *Symphony No.3, ‘Eroica’*

Just like the man who inspired it (until he dismayed Beethoven by crowning himself Emperor), the *‘Eroica’* symphony had a seismic effect on history. The composer’s mighty *Symphony No.3* became a watershed moment, marking a strong line in the sand between the symphonic form, which had been the norm until then, and everything that came after. Bigger, longer, darker, deeper – it was heroic in every sense, like an Ancient Greek epic in musical form.

Fired by the French Revolution and his own revolutionary zeal, Beethoven started sketching out the work in 1802 during a stay in Heiligenstadt, a village just north of Vienna, where he decided to spend the summer to try and relieve his hearing difficulties. Returning to Vienna, by 1803 he

was concentrating fully on the symphony and by spring 1804, the initial manuscript was complete. A private performance of the work took place at Vienna's Palais Lobkowitz on June 4. Between that early performance and its public premiere in April 1805, Napoleon made his fateful power grab, and a disillusioned Beethoven struck his hero's name 'Buonaparte' from the top of the score.

But while the Little General may have fallen from his pedestal, the work he inspired retained the revolutionary spirit.

## About the Music

### **Franz Schubert (1797-1828): Symphony No.5 in B-flat major, D 485**

1. Allegro
2. Andante con moto
3. Menuetto: Allegro molto
4. Allegro vivace

Composed: 1816

First Performed: 1816? Amateur orchestra at the home of the Viennese violinist Otto Hatwig?

For most of his life, Schubert was a devotee of Beethoven, and the older master's death in 1827 was clearly devastating for him. But that's not to say that his faith didn't waver. In 1816, he went to a concert of orchestral works by Beethoven and Mozart, and this time it was Mozart who set his spirits soaring. It was all so different from the wildness and disregard for formal convention exhibited by 'one of our greatest German artists' - by which he clearly meant Beethoven.

It may have been a passing mood, but it fills his Fifth Symphony. In it we find the expression of the 'light, clear and lovely, for which we may constantly hope', which he'd found in Mozart. Those who know Mozart's famous G minor Symphony (No.40) may hear echoes in Schubert's second and third movements, but this is far from slavish imitation: Schubert has taken his 'fair impressions' of Mozart's music and worked them into something entirely personal - sparkling, sweetly seductive, and full of the vigour and playfulness of youth. The symphony was probably performed in 1816, but if so, amazingly, Schubert made no effort to get it played again. When a conductor approached him in 1823, asking if he had anything his orchestra could play, Schubert replied, 'nothing which I could send out into the world with a clear conscience'. The Fifth Symphony had to wait until 1841, thirteen years after Schubert's death, for its first public performance, at the Josefsstadt Theatre in Vienna. Since then it has remained, justly, one of his best-loved concert works.

### **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827): Symphony No.3 in E-flat major, op 55, 'Eroica' ('Heroic')**

1. Allegro con brio
2. Marcia funebre. Adagio assai
3. Scherzo. Allegro vivace
4. Finale. Allegro molto

Composed: 1803-4

First Performed: June 1804, Vienna, Lobkowitz Palace (private premiere). 7 April 1805, Vienna, Theater an der Wein (public premiere)

Beethoven's feelings about Revolutionary France's military hero Napoleon Bonaparte wavered from the start. But when it came to the democratic cause Napoleon embodied, he had no doubt at all. From early on he was talking about his new Third Symphony as his 'Bonaparte Symphony'. Then, in 1804, Beethoven heard that Napoleon had proclaimed himself Emperor, and in fury he tore out the dedication, shouting, 'So he's just an ordinary being! Now he will trample the rights

of men under foot and pander to his own ambition; he will place himself high above his fellow creature and become a tyrant!' The printed title page now stated simply, 'Sinfonia eroica, composed in memory of a great man'. That 'in memory of' is very telling.

But Beethoven's belief in heroism and in the possibility of human beings transforming their political destiny wasn't so easily shaken, and that belief resounds and surges throughout the Eroica Symphony. The first movement is one of Beethoven's most truly heroic creations, brilliantly conveying the effect of epic conflict. It seems to end in triumph – or at least the promise of triumph; which only makes the contrast with the sombre, powerful Funeral March that follows all the more extreme. This movement's emotional range is awe-inspiring, culminating in a hushed depiction of grief-stricken collapse in which the music almost literally 'breaks down' – but it's also a model of formal control.

An exhilarating, rapid symphonic dance movement follows, the writing for the three horns in the central trio section suggesting battlefield celebrations to some, the exuberance of the hunt to others. Finally comes an epic set of variations on a skeletal pizzicato figure heard first in the bass, blending elements of classical variation, sonata form and fugue into a new kind of dynamic super-structure which, at the same time fulfils the 'promise of triumph' in the first movement. Beethoven knew he had achieved something special here. Years later, in 1817, about to begin work on his Ninth, he was asked which was his favourite amongst his symphonies. Beethoven replied without hesitation, 'The Eroica'.