

**Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra**  
**March 20 and 23 programme complementary content**

“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 energy pulses through every bar of this game-changing work, and Domingo Hindoyan certainly won’t hold back tonight. But Beethoven was a poet, too, and when Veronika Eberle plays his radiant *Violin Concerto*, you’ll hear just how beautiful music can be.

As an added treat, her performance on 20 March will incorporate ingenious new cadenzas by Jörg Widmann: one of Germany’s boldest living composers shaking hands across the centuries with the greatest of them all.

### **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.

### **Veronika Eberle** *violin*

[Veronika Eberle’s](#) exceptional talent, and the poise and maturity of her musicianship, have been recognised by many of the world’s finest orchestras, venues, festivals and conductors.

Sir Simon Rattle’s introduction of Eberle, aged just 16, to a packed Salzburg Festspielhaus at the 2006 Salzburg Easter Festival in a performance of Beethoven’s *Violin Concerto* with the Berlin Philharmoniker, brought her to international attention.

Key orchestral collaborations since then include the London Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Montreal Symphony, Munich Philharmonic and Gewandhaus Orchestras, Bamberg Symphoniker, Tonhalle Orchester Zurich, NHK Symphony and Rotterdam Philharmonic. Recent concerto highlights include Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lille, Chamber Orchestra of Europe and a tour with London Symphony Orchestra. Last season she made her debut with the Budapest Festival Orchestra, Orchestre National Capitole Toulouse and Detroit Symphony.

Recent chamber music projects include performances at Gstaad Menuhin Festival with Sol Gabetta and Antoine Tamestit, and Schubertiade with Steven Isserlis and Connie Shih among others.

Eberle plays the [1693 ‘Ries’ Stradivarius](#) which is on generous loan from the Reinhold Würth Musikstiftung gGmbH.

Listen to Veronika Eberle play the [third movement](#) of Beethoven’s *Violin Concerto*.

## **Beethoven** *Violin Concerto*

**Beethoven** produced his only concerto for violin during a prolific period in the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century. From his First Symphony in 1800 to the 'Emperor' Piano Concerto in 1809, and despite ever shifting employment and the disruption of the Napoleonic Wars, **the decade** saw the composer change the face of classical music.

In the midst of all this came his *Violin Concerto in D major* which was commissioned by, and dedicated to, Beethoven's good friend – violinist, composer and concertmaster **Franz Clement**. The two of them had first met in 1794 when Beethoven was a rising young composer and Clement a precocious 13-year-old talent. Beethoven followed the young performer's career, and the *Eroica Symphony* was premiered in 1805 at a benefit concert for Clement. Another work premiered at the same Vienna concert – Clement's own *Violin Concerto in D major*.

The violinist premiered Beethoven's commission in another benefit concert, on December 23, 1806. With the finished manuscript only made available to him a couple of days before the concert, rehearsal opportunities had been brief, and his performance was part-practice and part-sight reading. While it's long been recognised as one of the great violin concertos, it wasn't an immediate smash hit. In fact, despite Clement subsequently playing it a handful of times, it fell out of favour with violinists until the 1840s when another precocious virtuoso, the 12-year-old Joseph Joachim, revived it in a **performance in London** under the baton of Felix Mendelssohn.

Watch Hilary Hahn play the Beethoven ***Violin Concerto***.

**Did you know? A young Beethoven was taught the violin and viola by Bonn court musician Franz Georg Rovantini, and for three years early on in his musical career, he earned his living playing viola in the Esterházy Court Orchestra.**

## **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 the Austrian village of Heiligenstadt, where he decided to spend the summer to try and relieve his hearing difficulties (it was there he also wrote what has become known as the **Heiligenstadt Testament** letter to his brothers). While there Beethoven also worked on completing his Second Symphony, wrote three piano sonatas and the *Prometheus Variations* for solo piano.

Returning to Vienna, by 1803 he was concentrating more fully on the symphony and by spring 1804 the initial manuscript was complete. It was given a private premiere at 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.

Listen to the second movement from Beethoven's ***Eroica Symphony***.

## About the Music

### **Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827): Violin Concerto in D major, op 61**

1. Allegro ma non troppo
2. Larghetto –
3. Rondo: Allegro

Composed: 1806

First Performed: 23 December 1806, Vienna, Theater an der Wien, Franz Clement (violin)

It may be hard to believe now, but Beethoven's brilliant and poetic Violin Concerto was a flop at its world premiere. Clement, the soloist, more or less sight-read the violin part - even if he was a phenomenal player that would give him no time to master the concerto's emotional and intellectual complexities. The critics were lukewarm or dismissive. But how seriously did Clement take his task? Apparently in the pause between the first two movements he improvised a jig holding the violin upside-down! Significantly, when the Violin Concerto appeared in print, two years later, it bore a dedication, not to Clement, but to Beethoven's close childhood friend Stephan von Bruening. Even then, the concerto was unlucky in the concert hall until 1844, when the twelve-year-old superstar virtuoso Joseph Joachim took it up, with the assistance of Felix Mendelssohn, and scored a sensation.

Maybe we shouldn't be too surprised at the concerto's initial failure. It is very long indeed by the standards of the classical era, and technically it's hugely demanding. 'When I composed it', Beethoven told the violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh, 'I was conscious of being inspired by God Almighty. Do you think I can consider your puny little fiddle when He speaks to me?' Yet the first movement begins gently, with a hymn-like theme for woodwind, preceded by five quiet drum-taps, which turn out to be a significant motif in their own right. The orchestra presents all the main themes, then the soloist enters, as though in mid-phrase, leading to an exquisite high-soaring version of the first theme. The rest of this movement maintains a fine balance between lyricism and dramatic display.

In the slow movement lyricism prevails. The rapt, otherworldly quality of this music is enhanced by the muting of the strings, and by the extreme transparency of much of the orchestral accompaniment. A jagged fortissimo and short solo cadenza leads straight into the Rondo finale, and to one of Beethoven's catchiest dance tunes. After the solo cadenza, there's a moment of teasing mystery. Then the coda is mostly triumphant display, but with one deft little touch of humour left for the very end.

### **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'.