

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra
November 22 programme complementary content

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.

Sophie Bevan

Widely recognised as one of the leading lyric sopranos of her generation, [Sophie Bevan](#) was born into a musical family in Somerset and studied at the Royal College of Music's International Opera School, where she was awarded the Queen Mother Rose Bowl for excellence in performance. She was the recipient of the 2010 Critics' Circle Award for Exceptional Young Talent, The Times Breakthrough Award at the 2012 South Bank Sky Arts Awards and was made an MBE for services to music in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2019.

[Bevan](#) works regularly with orchestras worldwide and with conductors including Sir Antonio Pappano, Andris Nelsons, Laurence Cummings, Sir Mark Elder and Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla. Recent highlights include *Ah! Perfido*, *The Seasons*, Knussen Whitman settings and Ryan Wigglesworth's *Augenlieder* all with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Strauss' *Four Last Songs* with the Philharmonia, Faure's *Requiem* and Haydn's *Nelson Mass* with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, and Mahler 4 and the world premiere of Wigglesworth's *Magnificat* with the Hallé Orchestra, as well as concerts with the Bergen Philharmonic, BBC Scottish and BBC Philharmonic Orchestras, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Royal Concertgebouw.

An acclaimed recitalist, she has appeared with pianists including Julius Drake, Malcolm Martineau, Christopher Glynn and Graham Johnson at venues including Aldeburgh Festival and Oxford Lieder Festival, and she appears regularly at the Wigmore Hall. She is also sought after for her work in opera and has appeared at the Royal Opera House, Metropolitan Opera, Glyndebourne, Teatro dell'Opera in Rome and Teatro Real, Madrid, and with companies such as Welsh National Opera, ENO, Dresden Semperoper and Garsington Opera.

Samuel Hasselhorn

Following his triumph at the 2018 [Queen Elisabeth Competition](#), German baritone Samuel Hasselhorn has established himself internationally as a versatile artist who is equally at home in the genres of opera, lied and oratorio. He is a regular guest at the world's most prestigious opera houses and works with some of the most important conductors of our time. Recent seasons have

been marked by high-profile projects including his role debut in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* and Papageno in a new production of *The Magic Flute* at Staatstheater Nürnberg, *Tannhäuser* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, Richard Strauss' *Die schweigsame Frau* at Staatsoper Berlin, a debut with the Atlanta Symphony, a European tour with the Collegium Vocale Gent/Orchestre de Champs-Élysées, Beethovenfest Warsaw and Britten's *War Requiem* in Hanover and Darmstadt.

[Hasselhorn](#) is also in demand internationally as a lied recitalist and works with many of the world's most renowned pianists.

He has released many CDs, including 2023's *Die Schöne Müllerin* with Ammiel Bushakevitz as accompanist, which received the renowned French critics' award Diapason d'or as the best lied recording of the year. His first orchestral CD *Urlicht, Songs of Death and Resurrection* won best vocal album at the International Classical Music Awards 2025.

Born in Göttingen in Lower Saxony, [Hasselhorn](#) studied at the Hannover University of Music, Drama and Media with Prof Marina Sandel and at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de la Musique et de Danse de Paris with Malcolm Walker.

Watch Samuel Hasselhorn [share insights](#) into performance mindset and wellness.

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir

When the Liverpool Philharmonic Society was founded in 1840, it saw the birth not only of an orchestra but of a chorus too. [The Choir](#) added 'royal' to its title in 1990. In recent years, the Choir has performed Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and *Mass in B minor*, Orff's *Carmina Burana*, Mahler's *Symphony No.2*, Rachmaninov's *Vespers*, Poulenc's *Gloria*, Karl Jenkins' *Stabat Mater*, James MacMillan's *St John Passion*, Beethoven's *Mass in C*, and Britten's *War Requiem*.

It has also appeared in many of the UK's major concert venues, including the Royal Albert Hall, and has sung on a number of foreign tours.

The Choir is led by Director of Choirs and Singing Matthew Hamilton. During the 2025/26 season, members of the Choir will perform Handel's *Messiah* and Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, as well as appearing in December's Spirit of Christmas concerts and the Classic FM Hall of Fame performance. They will also lead A Choral Celebration which includes the world premiere of a new work by Rushworth Composition Prize winner, Andrew Barney.

Arvo Pärt

According to fellow composer (and friend) Steve Reich, Arvo Pärt is a "brave, talented man" whose music "fulfils a deep human need that has nothing to do with fashion". So perhaps it is no surprise the veteran Estonian remains one of the most widely performed of contemporary classical composers, with fans across the world enjoying his hypnotic minimalist music.

[Pärt](#) was born in September 1935 in Paide, a town 55 miles southeast of the Estonian capital Tallinn, and as a small child his family moved to Rakvere, close to the Gulf of Finland. He went on to study at the Tallinn Music School and the Tallinn State Conservatoire – although his student days were bisected by compulsory service in the Soviet Army.

Pärt's first compositions date from this time, and his earliest music encompasses neo-classical works, children's music and pieces penned for the Estonian State Puppet Theatre, although he only became a fulltime composer after quitting his job at Estonian State Radio at the age of 32.

A leading figure in the avant-garde movement, since the 1970s Pärt has composed in a distinctive minimalist style. He utilises the technique of [*tintinnabuli*](#) – meaning ‘little bells’ and influenced by Gregorian Chant – which creates a mesmerising and meditative effect. *Tintinnabuli* is a musical algorithm. In an interview with composer and conductor Antony Pitts, originally broadcast on *BBC Radio 3*, Pärt described it as: “the mathematically exact connection from one line to another...the rule where the melody and the accompaniment is one.”

In 1980, with Estonia still under Soviet rule and Pärt becoming involved in the Orthodox Church, he and his family emigrated to Vienna and then on to Berlin where they lived for three decades. While his work is defined by its “[*silence, simplicity and spiritual depth*](#)”, over the past 20 years the harmonies in his music have also become fuller and richer. A distinctive musical voice, among his many much loved and best-known works are *Fratres*, *Für Alina*, *Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten*, *Spiegel im Spiegel* and *Summa*. His most recent work, *Für Jan van Eyck* for mixed choir and organ, was performed at the 2025 BBC Proms to mark his 90th birthday.

Johannes Brahms

He’s been described as the ‘Janus’ of musical history – a figure looking both back to the classical tradition of Mozart and Beethoven but also forwards, incorporating features of 19th Century Romanticism in work that was innovative, new and entirely his own.

[**Johannes Brahms**](#) was born in 1833 in Hamburg, and showed early promise on the piano, giving his first recital aged 14. Alongside the piano, he also started to compose. While on concert tours with young Hungarian violinist Ede Reményi, he met and played some of his works to violinist Joseph Joachim who became a (mostly) lifelong friend. It was a letter of introduction from the future superstar fiddler that first threw Brahms into the orbit of [**Robert and Clara Schumann**](#). And the rest, as they say, is history.

Over the course of the next four decades, despite his often painfully meticulous approach and the powerful self-criticism that saw him destroy both early drafts and completed works – including, it’s said, a score of string quartets – Brahms would produce a prodigious number of compositions. Among the work that survived its composer’s own cull are four symphonies, choral works including his *German Requiem*, serenades, chamber works, overtures and variations such as the 1879 *Academic Festival Overture*, motets, organ music, piano music and songs.

It also wasn’t just music he destroyed – Brahms also burned letters and other papers, even asking for his own letters to be returned so he could consign them to the flames.

In later life, many honours were bestowed on the composer. He received the freedom of Hamburg in 1889, and six years later was acclaimed as the third ‘B’ alongside Bach and Beethoven at a [**music festival in Meiningen**](#). Brahms succumbed to cancer in April 1897, a year after Clara Schumann’s death, to whom he had remained devoted for more than 40 years.

About the Music

Arvo Pärt (b 1935): *Cecilia, vergine romana*

Composed: 2000

First Performed: 19 November 2000, Rome, Academia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, cond. Myung-whun Chung

As a young Estonian composer, Arvo Pärt identified with modernist elements in post-World War Two classical music, earning himself strong condemnation from the Soviet authorities. But in the mid-70s came a musical and spiritual crisis, during which Pärt converted to Orthodox Christianity and rediscovered the eloquent simplicity of Gregorian chant. The result was a series of religious works whose language seems to return to primal simplicity. By the time he came to compose *Cecilia, vergine romana* ('Cecilia, Roman Virgin'), this thinking had become second nature, allowing Pärt to create music whose expressing power and spiritual radiance appears out of all proportion to its simple means. The text is a brief description of the life of St Cecilia, patron saint of music, which Pärt transforms into a hymn to a life of devotion, and to music itself.

Arvo Pärt: *Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten*

Composed: 1977

First Performed: 7 April 1977, Tallinn, Estonian National Radio Symphony Orchestra, cond. Eri Klas

There is no greater example in music of how to make a great deal from very little than Arvo Pärt's *Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten*. In essence there are just three ingredients: a repeated bell stroke (an A), a falling A minor scale and a chord of A minor – that's it. But from these, Pärt brilliantly weaves an intricate, exquisitely beautiful tapestry of sound which manages to express both an extreme of grief and deep devotion. It was composed after Pärt heard the news on the radio of the death of Benjamin Britten. Pärt had only recently begun to discover Britten, and he'd been profoundly impressed by the 'unusual purity' of Britten's religious music. He'd hoped to meet Britten, but the difficulties of traveling from a then Soviet Bloc country to the UK had ruled that out. *Cantus* is an expression of Pärt's own sense of acute loss, and a heartfelt plea for the repose of a departed soul.

Johannes Brahms (1833-97): *Ein deutsches Requiem* (A German Requiem), Op 45

1. Selig sind, die da Leid tragen (Blessed are they that mourn)
2. Denn alles Fleisch es ist wie Gras (For all flesh is as grass)
3. Herr, lehre doch mich (Lord, teach me to know that I too must perish)
4. Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen (How lovely are your dwelling places)
5. Ihr habt nun Traurigkeit (Now you have sorrow)
6. Denn wir haben hie (For we have here an enduring city)
7. Selig sind die Toten, die in dem Herren sterben (Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord)

Composed: 1865-6

First Performed (complete: 18 February 1869, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Emile Bellingrath-Wagner (soprano), Franz Krückl (baritone), Gewandhaus Orchestra & Choir, cond. Carl Reinecke

Outwardly bluff, playful, sometimes cutting, Brahms was actually a very private man. It's almost certain that the death of his beloved mother in 1865 was the spur that set him thinking of composing a Requiem, though he never actually said so. In fact, it's a highly unconventional Requiem, based on Brahms' own text, compiled from Martin Luther's translation of the Bible. Brahms claimed to be an atheist, and none of the Bible verses he chose are specifically Christian. (There were complaints about this from prominent churchmen.) As for 'German' – here he wasn't thinking of his audience, still less trying to make a political statement. This is how he put it at the time:

'As regards the title I will confess that I should gladly have left out 'German' and substituted 'Human'. Also that I knowingly and intentionally dispensed with passages such as St John.3: 16 ('For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son'). On the other hand, I have no

doubt included much because I am a musician, because I required it, because I can neither argue away nor strike out a 'henceforth' from my venerable extracts. But I had better stop before I say too much.'

Could it be that Brahms was unable, as he put it, 'to strike out a "henceforth"' – in other words leave in the possibility that life might not end with death – because privately that's what he still hoped? Whatever the case, the emphasis in *A German Requiem* is very much on grief, and on how those left behind deal with loss. Unlike the Roman Catholic Mass for the Dead. There are no heartrending pleas for mercy, no terrifying depictions of the Last Judgement or glimpses of Hell. Instead there is, in the words of the philosopher Ernst Bloch 'a precious depth that avoids apotheoses.' Something of that 'precious depth' can be felt in the dignified opening hymn to the process of mourning. A grim funeral march (Denn alles Fleisch) follows; but this too offers hope: winter turns to spring, the seed endures and grows again. Reckoning with mortality follows in No 3, but in No 4 a majestic Bachian fugue, anchored to a secure sustained bass note, expresses the secure grasp of God's loving hand.

Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen is a vision of the blissful life of the departed portrayed in a kind of serene waltz. This is the heart of the *German Requiem*. In a sense the whole structure of the work turns upon it. From now on the progress is broadly one of return, through the poignant image of the mother and child in No 5, and stormy defiance of death turning suddenly into another magnificent fugue (echoes of Bach and Handel, and also Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*) in No 6. Then the final movement returns to the mood, and then the music, of the first and now it is the dead themselves who are celebrated. At the end we hear again the word sung at the very beginning, 'Selig' - 'Blessed'. The great arch is complete.