



Press Release

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Contact: Jasper Watkins, jasper.watkins@southbankcentre.co.uk / 07974897119

Full event listings: [here](#)

Artist images: available to download [here](#)

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From Vivaldi to virtual reality: Southbank Centre announces Classical Music Autumn/Winter 2024/25 programme



L-R: Paraorchestra © Paul Blakemore; Lawrence Power © Jessie Rodger; Julia Bullock © Allison Michael Orenstein

The **Southbank Centre** and its family of six Resident Orchestras – **Aurora Orchestra**, **Chineke! Orchestra**, **London Philharmonic Orchestra**, **London Sinfonietta**, **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** and **Philharmonia Orchestra** – today announce the **Classical Music Autumn/Winter 2024/25** programme.

A presentation of the dynamic variety and staggering influence of the genre in all its forms, the programme features soaring symphonic works, powerful premieres, ambitious anniversary events performed by ground-breaking orchestras and ensembles. Key highlights of the Autumn/Winter 2024/25 programme can be found below with the full event listings and details available [here](#).

Commenting on the launch of Autumn/Winter 2024/25 programme, **Southbank Centre Head of Classical Music Toks Dada**, said: “*Classical music has always had reinvention at its core. In Autumn/Winter 2024/25, we capture that trailblazing spirit with works that broke the mould across the ages, brand new approaches to timeless classics and forward-thinking artists who are broadening the*

horizons of the artform. This is writ large throughout the programme, in particular during our newly expanded Opening Weekend, reflecting the strong appetite for classical music with everything from powerful large-scale symphonic works to adventurous virtual reality experiences. With this programme, we are welcoming all audiences, however they choose to experience classical music.”

Southbank Centre Artistic Director Mark Ball, added “Classical Music in all its forms opens our ears and our imaginations and has a central place as our most programmed and supported artform. Sustaining the legacy of the Festival of Britain and the opening of the Royal Festival Hall in 1951, our ongoing commitment to classical music, through our Resident Orchestras, artist residencies, and diverse programming, will ensure a lively and robust future for both artists and audiences - it’s the ultimate reflection of the scale of our ambition and breadth of our appeal.”

OPENING WEEKEND

Building on the popularity of previous Opening Weekends, the newly expanded five-day Opening Weekend for Autumn/Winter 2024/25 encapsulates the thrilling themes and high-quality performances of the whole programme with unmissable moments for all audiences to experience the very best of classical music.

- The **London Philharmonic Orchestra** with Principal Conductor **Edward Gardner** and **Joyce DiDonato** performs Berlioz’s *Death of Cleopatra* in addition to Beethoven’s *Symphony No.3* (25 Sept, Royal Festival Hall) as part of its *Moments Remembered* series, a year-long focus exploring ideas of memory and music
- The **Philharmonia Orchestra** launches its *Nordic Soundscapes* series with Principal Conductor **Santtu-Matias Rouvali** and special guests including the **Ylioppilaskunnan Laulajat Male Voice Choir**, the oldest Finnish-language choir, and **Stephen Hough** appearing in Grieg’s *Piano Concerto* (26 Sept, RFH)
- Throughout the Opening Weekend, the **Philharmonia Orchestra** presents a free virtual reality experience providing audiences with the unique experience of hearing the power of orchestral music from within the orchestra, featuring music by Sibelius, Tchaikovsky and Vaughan Williams (26-29 Sept, Clore Ballroom)
- World-renowned pianist **Igor Levit** performs works by Bach, Brahms and Beethoven in his Royal Festival Hall solo recital debut (27 Sept, RFH) while new Resident Artist for 2024/25, violist **Lawrence Power**, is joined by **Thomas Adès** in a programme inspired by fairy-tale dances featuring percussion and live dance (27 Sept, Queen Elizabeth Hall and QEH Foyer)
- **The Multi-Story Orchestra** returns following a rapturous response to RPS-award winning *The Endz* (2023/24) with *Verified* – a work about the search for authenticity amidst the pressures of social media (28 Sept, QEH) – co-created by Kate Whitley and The Multi-Story Orchestra’s Young Creatives. Cellist **Matthew Barley** presents two performances of the world premiere of his project *Light Stories*, a multidisciplinary collaboration with specially commissioned visuals from production company **Yeast Culture**, exploring the magic and power of music to console, comfort and uplift (28 Sept, Purcell Room)
- In the Royal Festival Hall, the **London Philharmonic Orchestra** presents an all-Rachmaninov programme with *Piano Concerto No.3* featuring **Leif Ove Andsnes** and *The Bells (Choral Symphony)* featuring the **London Philharmonic Choir** (28 Sept, RFH)

- On the final day of the Opening Weekend, the **Philharmonia Orchestra** and soloist **Bomsori Kim** perform works by Sibelius and Nielsen continuing the orchestra's *Nordic Soundscapes* series (29 Sept, RFH). **Scottish Ensemble** visits London for the first time since 2019 with works including Philip Glass' *Symphony No.3* (29 Sept, QEH), and **Paraorchestra** returns, following a thrilling performance of *Drone Refractions*, closing the Opening Weekend with an immersive concert experience of Gorecki's *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*, where the audience are free to move amongst the players (29 Sept, Clore Ballroom)

RESIDENT ARTISTS

The Southbank Centre's seasonal residencies in Classical Music support some of the most forward-thinking and ambitious music-makers working today and provide the opportunity to collaborate with its Resident Orchestras and partners as well as hone their creative ideas.

- In addition to his Opening Weekend performance, **Lawrence Power** presents *Lock In*, performing an eclectic programme including video footage from Power's lockdown commission series, featuring groundbreaking soprano and composer **Héloïse Werner** and lutenist **Sergio Bucheli** (9 Nov, PUR), before appearing with the **Philharmonia Orchestra** for the UK premiere of Magnus Lindberg's *Viola Concerto* (10 Nov, RFH)
- Returning Resident Artist **Manchester Collective** collaborates with the ambitious pianist **Zubin Kanga** for *Fever Dreams*, performing the world premiere of Laurence Osborn's *Piano Concerto* featuring sampled sounds from within the piano (12 Oct, QEH). Following, Kanga will take over the Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer with new work from his multi-year research project – *Cyborg Soloists* – exploring the use of AI, robotics, motion-sensors and brain-scanning biosensors (12 Oct, QEHF). **Manchester Collective** later performs with former Resident Artist **Abel Selacoe** (2022/23) for *Sirocco*: a heady mix of traditional South African and Western classical music (14 Nov, QEH)
- Star of the *Royal Festival Hall Organ at 70* anniversary series in Spring/Summer 2024, **James McVinnie** continues his residency with two performances: the first featuring fantasias by Stanford, Byrd and Liszt (2 Oct, RFH), then illustrating his keyboard prowess with an evening of Bach on the organ and piano (10 Jan, QEH)

SYMPHONIC WORKS & COMPELLING CONCERTOS

The Southbank Centre is at the heart of classical music in the capital, and the UK, thanks to its world-class family of Resident Orchestras and visiting orchestras, staging staggering symphonic works and captivating concertos with the world's best soloists and conductors:

- Following a powerful performance by the West-Eastern Divan Ensemble in 2023/24, the full **West-Eastern Divan Orchestra** and **Daniel Barenboim** will take to the Royal Festival Hall stage with a programme including Mendelssohn's *Symphony No.4* (4 Nov, RFH)
- **Chineke! Orchestra** performs the UK premiere of Price's *Symphony No.4* alongside works by Eleanor Alberga and Valerie Coleman with conductor **Jeri Lynne Johnson** (9 Oct, QEH) before being joined by pianist **Isata Kanneh-Mason** for Prokofiev's *Piano Concerto No.3* and Brian Raphael Nabors' *Concerto For Orchestra* (21 Nov, QEH)
- The **London Philharmonic Orchestra's** *Moments Remembered* series explores the relationship between music and memory. It features Shostakovich's *Symphony No.13* (27 Nov, RFH), which challenged officially sanctioned memory in the Soviet Union, Schoenberg's *A Survivor from Warsaw*, his tribute to Holocaust victims (27 Nov, RFH), and John Adams' *On Transmigration of the Souls* in his evocation of the victims of 9/11 (18 Jan, RFH). Critic and

scholar **Jeremy Eichler** will join the orchestra as its first-ever Writer-in-Residence, taking part in pre-concert talks, as well as writing programme notes and essays

- The **Philharmonia Orchestra** welcomes its new Featured Artist violinist **Nemanja Radulović** whose first concert includes Khachaturian's *Violin Concerto* and Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 1* (31 Oct, RFH); Principal Guest Conductor **Marin Alsop** conducts Gustav Mahler's *Symphony No. 5* alongside songs by Alma Mahler (24 Oct, RFH); **Sir Andrés Schiff** play-directs concertos by Haydn and Mozart and conducts Schubert's *Unfinished Symphony* (6 Oct, RFH) while **Herbert Blomstedt**, at the age of 97, conducts Mahler's *Symphony No. 9* (21 Nov, RFH)
- The **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** appears with a performance of Bruckner's *Symphony No. 5* under the baton of **Ádám Fischer** (13 Oct, QEH), followed by an ambitious programme of all six of Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos* (13 Nov, QEH)
- The **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra** returns with its Music Director **Vasily Petrenko** performing Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and pianist **Paul Lewis** as the soloist for Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No. 5* (26 Jan, RFH)

KEYBOARD & CHAMBER MUSIC

The keyboard continues to be a core part of the Classical Music programme following highly acclaimed performances in 2023/24 by Víkingur Ólafsson, Marc-André Hamelin and the Labèque sisters. In addition to performances by **Igor Levit** and **James McVinnie**, highlights include:

- A truly unmissable concert with **Yuja Wang** and former Resident Artist **Víkingur Ólafsson** (2023/24) performing a full programme of works for two pianos and piano duos by Berio, Schubert, Ligeti, Brubeck, John Adams and more (1 Nov, RFH)
- Harpsichordist **Jean Rondeau** with electronics artist **Silouane Colmet Daâge** presenting a mix of works by Ligeti, Bach and Couperin interspersed with his own improvisations (6 Dec, PUR)
- **Pavel Kolesnikov** presenting an enchanting evening of works by Ravel and Mozart (31 Jan, QEH)

Meanwhile, Chamber Music concerts continue to be a catalyst for exciting collaborations. In addition to **Lawrence Power's** performance with **Thomas Adès**:

- **Benjamin Grosvenor** is joined by violinist **Hyeyoon Park**, violist **Timothy Ridout** and cellist **Kian Soltani** performing works by Brahms and Strauss (18 Oct, QEH)
- Early Music ensemble **Concerto Italiano** perform the fourth book of Monteverdi's *Madrigals* focussing on emotional states of abandoned lovers (8 Dec, QEH)
- The **Borodin Quartet** celebrates its 80th anniversary performing Brahms' *String Quartet in A minor* and Tchaikovsky's *String Quartet No. 2* (12 Jan, QEH)

CONTEMPORARY EDIT

The *Contemporary Edit* champions boundary-pushing work by 21st century composers and artists alongside major voices of the 20th century. In addition to performances from **Manchester Collective**, **Scottish Ensemble** and **Matthew Barley**, the *Contemporary Edit* includes:

- The latest edition in **London Sinfonietta's** season-opening composer portraits celebrating the 150th anniversary of Arnold Schoenberg (20 Oct, QEH). Under the baton of **Jonathan Berman**, the concert will feature works including *Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte* and *Chamber Symphony, Op.9* as part of an event exploring the life and influence of the pioneering 20th century composer. The Sinfonietta will also be joined by the **Royal Academy of Music Manson Ensemble** with conductor **Jack Sheen** for a performance of Morton Feldman's mysterious and beautiful *For Samuel Beckett* (29 Nov, QEH)
- The **Philharmonia Orchestra** presenting *Music of Today* with conductor **Chloe Rooke** and soprano **Ella Taylor** performing Saariaho's *Semafor* and Hans Abrahmsen's *Two Inger Christensen Songs* (6 Oct, RFH) as part of its series *Nordic Soundscapes*
- The **BBC Concert Orchestra** returning with Chief Conductor **Anna-Maria Helsing** and cellist **Senja Rummukainen** (4 Oct, QEH), while broadcaster **Elizabeth Alker** and conductor **André de Ridder** host *Unclassified Live*, the BBC Radio 3 programme showcasing composers and performers whose music transcends genres (23 Jan, QEH)

INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE & AMBITIOUS FORMATS

Central to the Southbank Centre's support for Classical Music is its wide array of inclusive events and ambitious formats focussing on families, young people and first-time attendees. Alongside our commitment to traditional works, these engaging events continue to draw new and curious audiences to classical music.

Unpacking The Canon

Taking audiences on a journey through history and music, a number of shows focus on demystifying classical music through insightful dissection and discussion, allowing audiences to reach new depths of the genre.

- **Aurora Orchestra**, with conductor **Nicholas Collon**, performs Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* from memory with an introduction and detailed discussion of the work by broadcaster and journalist **Tom Service** (23 Oct, QEH)
- The **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's** *Baroquebusters* concert (9 Jan, QEH), featuring guest artist **Julia Bullock**, is designed to introduce new audiences to the live experience of music from the period. Presented from the stage by the musicians, it invites the audience to explore how familiar 18th century music such as Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, Handel's *Fireworks Music* or Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto No.3* became instant hits and have remained so for 300 years. Julia Bullock will be soloist in songs and music from operas by Handel, Purcell, Rameau and Strozzi

Family Concerts

Ensuring the Southbank Centre continues to be the most inclusive and culturally democratic space in the UK, the Classical Music programme offers accessible and entertaining events for families and young people.

- The **London Philharmonic Orchestra** hosts its ever-entertaining *FUNharmonics* with Jason Chapman's cat and dog duo, Stan and Mabel (26 Oct, RFH)
- In addition to its Opening Week performance of *Verified*, **The Multi-Story Orchestra** hosts its recurring *Living Programme Notes* performance where works are deconstructed through demonstrations, action and movement (1 Dec, QEH)

- Lastly, in addition to its performance in the Opening Week, **Scottish Ensemble** presents *in Sync* (26 Jan, QEH). Combining music, movement and storytelling, the concert whisks audiences around the globe on the wings of vivacious classical and folk music, performed entirely from memory

Alternative Experiences

Challenging our understanding of how we can experience classical music, whether through new presentations, technologies or collaborations, the Southbank Centre continues to be at the forefront of innovative presentations of the genre. Special events include:

- The **Philharmonia Orchestra**'s free virtual reality experience and **Paraorchestra**'s immersive *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs* in the Opening Weekend
- **Lawrence Power**'s mixed-media performance of *Lock In* with soprano **Héloïse Werner** and lutenist **Sergio Bucheli**
- **Manchester Collective** and **Abel Selacoe**'s genre-blending collaboration featuring traditional South African and Western Classical music

MORE FROM THE SOUTHBANK CENTRE'S RESIDENT ORCHESTRAS

- **Aurora Orchestra** return with more concerts in Spring/Summer 2025
- **Chineke! Orchestra** hosts a concert celebrating its 10th anniversary (24 Jan, QEH). The concert, which will feature works by Ayanna Witter-Johnson, Hannah Kendall, James B Wilson and Roderick Williams, will be the first event in a year-long celebration of the music, musicians and composers that have been part of the orchestra's decade so far
- Other highlights of the **London Philharmonic Orchestra**'s season include **Patricia Kopatchinskaja** performing Shostakovich's *Violin Concerto No.1* (4 Oct, RFH) and **Mark Elder** conducting a programme of Ravel, Bruch and Richard Strauss (25 Oct, RFH). Principal Guest Conductor **Karina Canellakis** returns with three concerts, firstly celebrating Bruckner's 200th anniversary with his *Symphony No.4* (30 Oct, RFH). A few days later, she is joined by **Vadym Kholodenko** for Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No.3* (2 Nov, RFH). Her third programme includes Sibelius and Mozart's *Piano Concerto No.21* with **Benjamin Grosvenor** (29 Jan, RFH). **Zlatomir Fung** performs Tchaikovsky's *Variations on a Rococo Theme* (29 Nov, RFH); **Isabelle Faust** plays Berg's *Violin Concerto* in a concert bookended by Richard Strauss' *Metamorphosen* and Brahms' *Symphony No.2* (15 Jan, RFH); and the LPO performs Evan Williams' *Dead White Man Music (Concerto for Harpsichord and Chamber Ensemble)* before Co-Leader **Alice Ivy-Pemberton** is the soloist in Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* (22 Jan, QEH). Sarod player **Amjad Ali Khan** performs his own concerto *Samaagam* alongside a new overture by Reena Esmail and selections from film soundtracks by AR Rahman including *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Bombay* (25 Jan, RFH)
- Further concerts from **London Sinfonietta** at the Southbank Centre will be announced later this year which will form part of the Spring / Summer 2025 programme. In addition to the concerts at Southbank Centre, the Ensemble will be working throughout the year with 4 early-career composers on their *Writing the Future* project which will culminate in performances in June 2025. Its *Composition Challenge* programme will work in schools encouraging young people to compose their own music, some of which will be featured in their popular schools concert Sound Out in March 2025. International performances in the season include concerts in Vilnius and Tromsø

- The **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** return with more concerts in Spring/Summer 2025
- Alongside concerts conducted by three Finns, their Principal Conductor **Santtu-Matias Rouvali**, Conductor Laureate **Esa-Pekka Salonen**, and **Emilia Hoving**, the **Philharmonia Orchestra's Nordic Soundscapes** series features four *Notes on Nature* sessions: interactive discussions on the role of artists and arts organisations in addressing the climate crisis. Environmental and cultural leaders will challenge, provoke and inform over coffee and cinnamon buns. Other programme guests charismatic saxophonist **Jess Gillam** (1 Dec, RFH), and congenitally blind pianist **Nobuyuki Tsujii** (30 Jan, RFH)

ENDS

Images: available to download [here](#)

Event listings: available to view [here](#)

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About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest multi-arts centre and engages the most diverse audiences of any performing arts organisation in the UK. Our biggest venue, the Royal Festival Hall (2,700 seats) is the lasting legacy of the 1951 Festival of Britain and the ambition and values of that project – that arts, ideas, innovation and culture can heal communities and should be available and accessible to everyone – are still our guiding principles today. The Southbank Centre is uniquely able to offer a wide-ranging, inclusive and world-class artistic programme spanning contemporary visual arts, music, dance, performance, literature, comedy and spoken word across the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, the Hayward Gallery and our free spaces. We are also home to the National Poetry Library, the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP) and six resident orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Orchestra).

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