

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

After Dark: ZRI – Cellar Sessions

Friday 5 December 2025, 10.30pm | Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer

We are proud to be a place where people come together to discover and connect with the wonder of classical music. Throughout the year, we provide unrivalled opportunities to encounter, live in person, the full range of music, and a variety of different ways for you to experience it.

Some of the world's most exciting artists, including our Resident Orchestras and Resident Artists, join us to shine a light on this incredible art form. Welcome to Classical Music: Autumn/Winter 2025/26.

Toks Dada, Head of Classical Music, Southbank Centre

Performers

Zum Roten Igel (ZRI)

Max Baillie *violin*

Matthew Sharp *cello and baritone*

Ben Harlan *clarinet and bass clarinet*

Jon Banks *accordion*

Iris Pissaride *santouri (hammered dulcimer)*

Find out more

- ▶ ZRI
- ▶ southbankcentre.co.uk

The Red Hedgehog – a tavern in Vienna in the 19th century – is the world, for Vienna at that time was a world city, the hub of an empire that covered much of central Europe, from Prague to the Adriatic, from Switzerland to Transylvania. Musicians from across this vast region and beyond – composers, performing virtuosos – were drawn to its centre. Now, in the foyer, we hear from a bunch of them, ZRI-style.

Of course, there were also the native-born Viennese, among them Schubert, who is still here, contributing a scary song and, at the end, a defamiliarised familiar farewell. Fritz Kreisler, too, was born in the city, and remembered it in his violin piece *Liebesleid* (Love's Sorrow), which, hoaxer as he was, he attributed to Joseph Lanner, the most popular waltz composer of Schubert's time.

Among the more celebrated immigrants are Mozart, who spent his last decade in the city, and Brahms, here for much longer – Brahms who ate his beef and dumplings at the Red Hedgehog. We hear from Mozart in the Turkish rondo he applied to a piano sonata he composed in Vienna (the Austrian Empire had a long south-eastern border with the Ottoman Empire). Brahms meanwhile is paying attention to populations represented within the city: Roma (finale of a piano quartet) and Hungarian (Hungarian Dance No.5), both no doubt to be encountered at his favourite lunch place.

Then there are the visitors. Dvořák often comes, from his homes in Prague and rural Bohemia, whose traditional music gets into his compositions (example: the furiant, a fast dance, in his Sixth Symphony). Rossini calls by in 1822, meets Beethoven, annoys Schubert by his success, and is remembered for the fast music from his *William Tell Overture*. Chopin, before settling in Paris, makes two visits and leaves a trace here in a waltz.

Finally, here for a night, the eternal travellers arrive, performers always on the road, with Vienna an inevitable way-station. Two on the popular-music circuit came from Roma families in Romania: Georges Boulanger, who survived the Nazi years in Germany and even appeared in German films, and, from a later generation, Aurel Gore. Django Reinhardt might have been on a train with either of them, getting the idea for his *Rhythm Futur*.

Programme notes © Paul Griffiths, 2025

This performance lasts approximately 1 hour.
There is no interval.