

# SOUTHBANK CENTRE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday 16 December 2025, 10am

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IMAGES: [HERE](#)

## The Southbank Centre announces *Classical Mixtape: a live multi-venue takeover bringing together over 200 musicians from six orchestras for one night only*

Following the recent launch of the Southbank Centre's Under-30s scheme, the roam-as-you-like experience, curated for Under-30s, allows audiences to "mix" their own live classical mixtape throughout the evening of performances



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The Southbank Centre today announces *Classical Mixtape: A Live Takeover* (Thu 5 Feb 2026), a multi-venue event bringing together more than 200 musicians from six orchestras for a night of classical music's greatest hits. Presented as a series of live, looping performances, the evening allows audiences to shuffle and repeat their experience of the evening's music, mixing their own mixtape, while encountering some of classical music's most well-known works across the Southbank Centre site.

In an unprecedented first, the event will see all of the Southbank Centre's Resident Orchestras – **Aurora Orchestra**, **Chineke! Orchestra**, the **London Philharmonic Orchestra**, the **London Sinfonietta**, the **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment**, and the **Philharmonia Orchestra** – perform across a single night at the multi-arts centre in its 75th anniversary year for a first-of-its-kind event curated for Under 30s audiences. Chineke! Orchestra will perform with players from **Chineke! Junior Orchestra**, while the London Sinfonietta will be joined by students from the **Royal Academy of Music**.

*Classical Mixtape* offers a flexible way for audiences to experience classical music on their own terms as they roam across the site, discovering repertoire spanning 600 years of music, including Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, the symphonic score of *The Lord of the Rings* and a historically-informed 'oompah band' performance. With 20-minute programmes running on repeat, the event operates like a live classical mixtape, enabling audiences to mix "tracks" by choosing the order and number of times to enjoy each performance or individual piece of music.

The night kicks off with a full symphony orchestra in the Royal Festival Hall, as the **London Philharmonic Orchestra**, conducted by Principal Conductor **Ed Gardner**, opens the evening with the instantly

recognisable four-note motif from Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*. The London Philharmonic Orchestra then performs Howard Shore's well-loved symphonic score for *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring*. Having featured as the orchestra on the original recording of the film's score, the London Philharmonic Orchestra offers an opportunity to hear their performance of the music in a live context. The finale movement of Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 4* brings their set to a triumphant and jubilant conclusion.

From there, audiences can begin to mix their experience of the evening's music of wide-ranging moods and styles, with each orchestra performing its 20-minute set on a loop, allowing listeners to stay for a second run-through, move on to another stage or pause for a break.

- The **London Sinfonietta** will perform music by American minimalist composer Steve Reich, whose rhythmic repetition and phased patterns have influenced contemporary classical, ambient and electronic music, in the Queen Elizabeth Hall's underground, industrial Undercroft space.
- **Chineke! Orchestra** presents a spatially arranged programme that surrounds listeners with instrumental sound in the Royal Festival Hall's Clore Ballroom. They will perform Margaret Bonds' *Montgomery Variations* – a powerful orchestral response to the 1950s' Montgomery Bus Boycott and an evocation of Black resistance, endurance and dignity in the American South.
- The **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** performs a brass- and percussion-led programme inspired by Bavarian oompah traditions, presented in a reconstructed alehouse-style setting in the Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer.
- **Aurora Orchestra** leads a musical adventure in the Purcell Room inspired by Gustav and Alma Mahler's time in the Austrian Alps, exploring the musical landscapes and imagery associated with their mountain environments.

Following the site-wide performances, audiences return to the Royal Festival Hall for a grand finale led by the **Philharmonia Orchestra**, conducted by Principal Guest Conductor **Marin Alsop**, the first woman to conduct the Last Night of the Proms. As the largest ensemble of the evening, the 111-strong orchestra propels audiences into space with selections from John Williams' *Star Wars Suite*, and Holst's *The Planets*, two works that have immeasurably shaped both film and concert music.

Following the live orchestral performances, audiences can stick around to hear more contemporary-classical music favourites from a DJ set, while socialising at the bars of the Royal Festival Hall.

**Toks Dada, the Southbank Centre's Head of Classical Music, said:** *"Classical Mixtape: A Live Takeover continues our commitment to explore the breadth of ways in which classical music can be presented and experienced, welcoming new audiences to the artform. The evening brings together the outstanding work of our six Resident Orchestras in a format that celebrates classical music at its most experimental and lets audiences shape their own journey through the music."*

*Sharing classical music with the widest possible audience sits at the core of our vision, and, throughout our year-round programme we are proud to offer a range of experiences that speak to different people – from concerts featuring the most eminent keyboard and chamber musicians of today, to theatrically-staged performances. Earlier this year, Multitudes, our new multi-arts festival powered by orchestral music, brought in 59% new bookers to the classical music programme during its 2025 debut. Classical Mixtape continues this spirit by inviting audiences to encounter world-class music across our site in ways that feel open, social, and entirely their own."*

**Mark Ball, the Southbank Centre's Artistic Director, said:** *"Throughout the Southbank Centre's 75th anniversary in 2026, we're committed to exploring how we look to the future of the orchestral experience. Site-wide takeovers like Classical Mixtape allow us to rethink the familiar presentation of classical music,*

*making full use of our site as a hub of cultural discovery, and inviting audiences to engage with classical music in new ways.”*

**Classical Mixtape: A Live Takeover** takes place on Thursday 5 February 2026. The event goes on sale to Southbank Centre Members on Wednesday 17 December 2025, 10am and general sale on Thursday 18 December 2025, 10am.

**Under-30s tickets are £12 and include provision of a complimentary pre-event drink. Standard tickets are £28.**

- ENDS -

#### **Notes to editors:**

*Classical Mixtape: A Live Takeover* takes place on Thursday 5 February 2026.

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/classical-mixtape-a-live-takeover/>

The Association of British Orchestras (ABO) Conference will be hosted at the Southbank Centre on 4-6 February 2026.

**Under-30s tickets are £12 and includes access to Under-30s Pre-Drinks from 18:15, which includes a free drink**

For further information or to request press tickets, please contact: [alex.kemsley@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:alex.kemsley@southbankcentre.co.uk)

**Press images:** [HERE](#)

**Under 30s scheme:** <https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/support-us/southbank-centre-under-30s/>

#### **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), two resident organisations (Kinetika Bloco and Tomorrow's Warriors) and six resident orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Orchestra). [www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk)

#### **About the Southbank Centre's Resident Orchestras**

##### **Aurora Orchestra**

Innovative and boundary breaking, Aurora Orchestra is best known for its Orchestral Theatre productions and signature memorised performance style. Its creative learning strand reaches thousands of young people each year, from immersive performances to school classrooms to its free digital platform Aurora Classroom. This spring, Aurora performs two canon works from memory: Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* with a theatrical introduction, and an intimate setting of Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony* with the audience on stage.

##### **Chineke! Orchestra**

Founded in 2015 by Chi-chi Nwanoku CBE, Chineke! Orchestra is Europe's first majority Black and ethnically diverse orchestra. Performing classical works alongside music by Black and ethnically diverse composers, the ensemble made its debut at the Southbank Centre in 2015 and became a Resident Orchestra in 2022. For Spring/Summer 2026, they're joined by two star violinists: Julián Gil Rodríguez, who also directs; and Njioma Chinyere Grevious, for Coleridge-Taylor's Violin Concerto.

##### **London Philharmonic Orchestra**

The London Philharmonic Orchestra has been creating thrilling orchestral experiences at the Southbank Centre since the Royal Festival Hall's opening concert 75 years ago. This spring, the orchestra brings blockbuster moments like Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with Anne-Sophie Mutter, Beethoven's beloved Ninth Symphony, and Brahms' Double Concerto with LPO Principals, while continuing Harmony with Nature, a season that celebrates our planet and humanity's place in protecting it.

### **London Sinfonietta**

The London Sinfonietta is one of the world's leading contemporary music ensembles. Formed in 1968, it has commissioned over 470 works. Its musicians reimagine the contemporary repertoire they champion, and work with inspiring living composers and artists to create new music. They collaborate with young people, communities and the public in making projects involving film, theatre, dance and art, and their free-to-view digital channel reaches audiences around the world.

### **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment**

In 1986, a group of inquisitive musicians took a hard look at the orchestra and decided to start from scratch, throwing out the rule book. A single conductor? No way. Specialise in one era? Too restricting. Since then, the OAE has mesmerised and augmented the music world. Period-specific instruments have become just one element of its quest for authenticity, and its name stands for excellence, diversity and exploration.

### **Philharmonia Orchestra**

Celebrating their 80th birthday this year, the Philharmonia Orchestra continue to bring orchestral music of the very highest quality to the widest possible audience. Principal Conductor Santtu-Matias Rouvali leads a series of spring concerts that range from Beethoven, Rachmaninov and Bruckner to UK premieres by John Adams, Gabriela Ortiz and Jonathan Dove. Pianist Víkingur Ólafsson is their Featured Artist, with guests including violinists Hilary Hahn and Lisa Batiashvili and pianist Bruce Liu.