TONIGHT'S CONCERT

Lisa Batiashvili: Artist Portrait

Sunday 25 May 2025 Barbican 7pm

Richard Strauss

Till Eulenspiegel

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Violin Concerto No 5

Interval

Richard Strauss

Ein Heldenleben

Sir Antonio Pappano conductor Lisa Batiashvili violin London Symphony Orchestra

Concert finishes at approximately 9.15pm

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and broadcast live on Stage+



STAGE+

Welcome



A special welcome to this evening's concert, conducted by Sir Antonio Pappano, LSO Chief Conductor, with violinist Lisa Batiashvili. Tonight, in a performance recorded for broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and Stage+, we present the final of three Barbican concerts in Lisa Batiashvili's LSO Artist Portrait series, concluding a rich and varied journey through the violin repertoire including Schnittke and Szymanowski.

Mozart's Violin Concerto No 5 – his final violin concerto, despite being written in his late teens – balances poise and playfulness with striking originality. Strauss is also heard in two contrasting tone poems: the irreverence of *Till Eulenspiegel* and the expansive, richly scored *Ein Heldenleben*.

We hope you enjoy this concert and that you will be able to join us again soon. Next month, we return to Trafalgar Square for our annual open-air concert, BMW Classics, on 15 June, which is conducted this year for the first time by Sir Antonio Pappano. Later in June at the Barbican, Dirk Brossé conducts a selection of film music by French composers, originally recorded by the LSO. In July, Sir Antonio Pappano brings the 2024/25 season to a close in concert performances of Strauss' opera *Salome*, with Asmik Grigorian in the title role. We hope to see you there.

KaruyaMJowell

Dame Kathryn McDowell DBE DL Managing Director

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Coming Up

Friday 11 July Sunday 13 July Barbican

7pm

Strauss' Salome

Sir Antonio Pappano conducts a concert performance of Strauss' scandalous opera Salome, with the brilliant soprano Asmik Grigorian in the title role.

Sunday 14 September Barbican

7pm

2025/26 Season Opening: **Bernstein and Copland**

Sir Antonio Pappano conducts two dramatic, emotionally intense American symphonies, both born of 20th-century tumult.

Wedneday 17 September Barbican

6.30pm

Half Six Fix: Copland

Aaron Copland's Third Symphony contains everything the American composer is famous for: breathtaking vistas, moments of forceful intensity and plenty of skittish humour. Sir Antonio Pappano conducts.

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Details correct at time of going to print.

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survey about tonight's concert.



Till Eulenspiegel

Richard Strauss





15 minutos

Programme note by **Stephen Johnson**

There really was a character called Till (or 'Tyll') Eulenspiegel (literally 'owl-glass'). Born into the lowest rank of medieval German society. he took on everyone - from king to the humblest commoner - in a series of vivid practical jokes. Though sentenced to death more than once, it seems he actually died of the Black Death in 1350. Stories of Till's escapades became legendary; then, in the early 1890s, a new, handsomely illustrated account of his adventures appeared, catching the imagination of the young Richard Strauss.

At first, Strauss thought of making Till the hero of an opera, and a libretto was drafted. But he soon dropped that idea in favour of a purely instrumental symphonic poem, Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche (Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks), telling the story in music. The form of the work was to be loosely based on the classical rondo, with Till's adventures placed as episodes between the recurrence of a main theme or themes.

Strauss' work begins with a tiny introduction for strings and woodwind – a kind of musical 'once upon a time'. Then we hear the first of Till's two themes: a lively, syncopated horn phrase, plunging downwards at the end. A big crescendo follows, then comes the motif of Till's mockery on high clarinet, short but memorably

pungent. After this, we have vigorous development, then a strangely formal tune for violas and woodwind; in Strauss' commentary, this is Till 'dressed as a priest, oozing unction and morality'. He preaches a sermon, although a weird chromatic fanfare for muted horns and trumpets represents his 'horrid premonition as to the outcome of his mockery of religion'.

Fear is cast aside with a precipitous solo violin glissando, then a swooning version of Till's theme reveals that he has fallen in love. But the girl rejects him on account of his lowly status, and he vows revenge on society. A jerky theme for bassoons and bass clarinet depicts a group of learned men whom Till taunts and teases, ending with a sharp-edged orchestral trill that Strauss called the 'Great Grimace'.

The mockery grows in pace and vividness, until a harsh side-drum roll announces Till's arrest and sentence to death. The high clarinet motif goes on pretending airy indifference, but the end is grim: the clarinet shoots upwards to its highest, shrillest note, then drops earthwards like Till's lifeless body. However, after that comes a kind of resurrection: Till himself may be dead, but the brief, finally uproarious coda suggests that his spirit of subversive mockery is not so easily silenced.

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Richard Strauss

1864 to 1949 (Germany)



Contemporaries Gustav Mahler, Claude Debussy

Key events 1889: Triumphant premiere of Don Juan 1905: First operatio success with Salome 1911: Premiere of his opera *Der* Rosenkavalier, perhaps his finest achievement 1945-48: 'Indian Summer' during which he produces several masterpieces

Listen to Eine Alpensinfonie Isolive.co.uk

With the LSO 1953: UK premiere of The Legend of Joseph

Composer profile by **Andrew Stewart**

Richard Strauss was born in Munich in 1864, the son of Franz Strauss, a brilliant horn player in the Munich court orchestra. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that some of the composer's most striking writing is for the French horn. Strauss had his first piano lessons when he was four and he produced his first composition two years later, but, surprisingly, he did not attend a music academy. his formal education ending instead at Munich University, where he studied philosophy and aesthetics, continuing with his musical training at the same time.

Following the first public performances of his work, he received a commission from Hans von Bülow in 1882 and two years later was appointed Bülow's Assistant Musical Director at the Meiningen Court Orchestra, the beginning of a career in which Strauss was to conduct many of the world's great orchestras. in addition to holding positions at opera houses in Munich, Weimar, Berlin and Vienna. While at Munich, he married the singer Pauline de Ahna, for whom he wrote many of his greatest songs.

Strauss' greatest achievements were his operas, songs and magnificent symphonic poems. Scores such as Till Eulenspiegel, Also sprach Zarathustra. Don Juan and Ein Heldenleben demonstrate his supreme mastery of orchestration. The thoroughly modern operas Salome and Elektra, with their Freudian themes and atonal scoring, are landmarks in the development of 20th-century music, and his fifth opera. Der Rosenkavalier (1911). has become one of the most popular operas of the 20th century. His later operatic masterpieces include Ariadne auf Naxos, Die Frau ohne Schatten. Arabella and the 'conversation piece in music' - Capriccio, his final opera.

From the final years of the war until 1948 Strauss experienced a remarkable late flowering. during which he composed works including Metamorphosen for strings, the Oboe Concerto and the much-loved Four Last Songs. From late 1945 until summer 1948, he and his wife lived in self-imposed exile in Switzerland, waiting to be officially cleared of complicity in the Nazi regime. In June 1948, they returned to their home in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, where Strauss died in 1949, shortly after his widely celebrated 85th birthday.

Violin Concerto No 5

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Lisa Batiashvili violin

- 1 Allegro aperto
- 2 Adagio
- 3 Rondeau: Tempo di minuetto





30 minutes

Programme note by **Lucy Walker**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is known primarily as a composer, and perhaps secondarily as a keyboardist: his childhood appearances with his elder sister Nannerl, performing to emperors on the harpsichord, are well documented, and he composed numerous concertos for the piano in later life. But he was also an accomplished violinist. A Salzburg court chronicle of February 1763 reports witnessing 'the new vice-Kapellmeister's [Leopold's] little son, aged seven, and daughter, aged ten, performing on the harpsichord, the son likewise on the violin, as well as one could ever have hoped of him'. He had composed all five of his violin concertos by December 1775, aged only 19 - the last four written within nine months (the first, originally thought to be from this period, was most likely written two years earlier).

No 5 is possibly the most well known, and is certainly the most innovative. The orchestral introduction, with its brisk, climbing theme, is conventional enough. But when the violin enters for the first time, it plays a similar climbing figure but at a quarter of the opening speed, followed by a beautifully expanded songlike melody. The string accompaniment responds with a gentle murmur underneath, not unlike that of the famous aria in *Così van tutte* ('Soave sia il vento') composed

15 years later. The tempo picks up again, but the violin riffs on an entirely new melody above the opening theme. The rest of the movement follows the more usual rules of Classical form, but the opening excursion into luxurious melody finds full expression in the extensive slow movement, including some call-backs to the 'murmuring' of the opening movement.

The central passage of the final movement explains the 'Turkish' subtitle of this concerto. After a graceful 'minuetto' section, there is a shift into an entirely different universe - that of 'turquerie' (an approximation of 'Turkishness'). As literary scholar Eve Mayer puts it, 'turquerie was in fashion' in the 18th century. This voque would frequently appear as a 'style' in musical works, generally with a somewhat stereotyped perception as to what constituted 'Turkish' music. In Mozart's Violin Concerto. it manifests through percussive effects in the strings (through the use of the wood rather than the string of the bow), a heavy 'drone' figure, and slithering up and down the chromatic scale. Mozart would revisit the style again in several works, but he had, at the age of 16 - remember, this was no ordinary teenager - already composed some 'turquerie' for an opera named Lucio Silla, some of which found its way into this concerto's finale.



Interval - 20 minutes Find us on Instagram @londonsymphonyorchestra

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Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

1756 to 1791 (Austria)



Contemporaries Joseph Haydn, Domenico Cimarosa

Key events 1763-66: Tours Europe as a child prodigy **1773:** Becomes court musician in Salzburg 1781: Moves to Vienna 1784-86: Writes many inspired works ranging from piano concertos to the opera The Marriage of Figaro 1791: In his final months, composes works including the Requiem and the opera The Magic Flute

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Composer profile by Jessica Duchen

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was one of the most extraordinary child prodigy musicians known to history. He was born in Salzburg, son of the violinist and teacher Leopold Mozart. Wolfgang's sister, Anna Maria, or 'Nannerl', was reputedly as talented as he was. The proud Leopold toured both of them around the royal courts of Europe to display their skills, beginning what perhaps inevitably developed into a toxic father-son relationship.

Mozart's early adulthood was further stamped by trauma when he travelled to Paris with his mother in 1778, attempting to establish a career there: the sojourn ended in tragedy when his mother died. His move to Vienna in 1781 was an act of rebellion against his father's insistence that he should stay home and provide income for the family. Instead, Mozart married Constanze Weber and soon gained a foothold in the imperial capital, at first with some support from the Emperor. A series of subscription concerts, for which he wrote numerous

symphonies and piano concertos, set him on a stellar path. He also made a name for himself in the field of opera in both Prague and Vienna. writing three inspired works - The Marriage of Figaro, Don Giovanni and Così fan tutte - in collaboration with the librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte

The Austro-Turkish War, however, heralded a period of reduced prosperity in which the aristocracy was less able to support artistic work. Mozart's debts accumulated, his health began to fail and when a mysterious visitor (now known to be Count Franz von Walsegg) commissioned a Requiem from him, Mozart, according to Constanze, became convinced he was writing his own requiem. Nevertheless, he remained active throughout the late summer and autumn of 1791, completing his two final operas (La clemenza di Tito and The Magic Flute) and composing the Clarinet Concerto, as well as working on the Requiem. He died on 5 December 1791, aged 35.



Bernstein Symphony No 3, 'Kaddish'
Copland Symphony No 3
with Sir Antonio Pappano,
Katharina Konradi and
Dame Felicity Palmer
Sunday 14 September 2025 7pm

Sibelius Symphony No 3
plus Ruders, Paxton and Adès
with Thomas Adès
and Sean Shibe
Sunday 19 October 2025 7pm

Chopin Piano Concerto No 2 plus Stravinsky and Borodin with Gianandrea Noseda and Seong-Jin Cho Thursday 12 February 2026 7pm Sunday 15 February 2026 7pm

Mahler Symphony No 4 plus Gerhard and Strauss with Sir Simon Rattle and Lucy Crowe Thursday 21 May 2026 7pm

Explore the full season **Iso.co.uk/2526**

Ein Heldenleben

Richard Strauss

- 1 The Hero
- 2 The Hero's Adversaries
- 3 The Hero's Companion
- 4 The Hero's Deeds of War
- 5 The Hero's Works of Peace
- 6 The Hero's
 Retreat from
 the World and
 Fulfillment





Programme note by **Stephen Johnson**

Whatever Richard Strauss' faults as a man, false modesty wasn't one of them. He was well aware that composing a 'heroic' symphony would invite comparison with one of the Alpine peaks of the symphonic repertoire. Beethoven's 'Eroica' Symphony, and that this was quaranteed to incense his critics. 'I am composing a largish tone poem entitled Heldenleben,' he wrote, 'admittedly without a funeral march. yet in E-flat [like the Beethoven], with lots of horns, which are always a yardstick of heroism.'

Did Strauss even dream of outdoing the revered 'Eroica'? In one respect, he did precisely that. Beethoven's 'Heroic' Symphony was originally conceived as a tribute to another man, the French revolutionary hero Napoleon Bonaparte; in Strauss' Ein Heldenleben, the 'hero' portrayed looks suspiciously like Strauss himself.

This apparent act of self-aggrandisement angered critics at the work's premiere in 1899 – it still offends some today. But it is worth remembering that Strauss saw *Ein Heldenleben* as forming a complementary pair with his previous tone poem, *Don Quixote*, which depicts a hero whose mind gradually unravels as he pursues his pathetically deluded ideals. So, there is ironic

self-awareness amid the self-celebration, and there are moments in *Ein Heldenleben* itself which tend to confirm this. 'I'm no hero: I'm not made for battle,' Strauss confided later, suggesting that the music was really a celebration of 'a more general and free idea of great and manly heroism'.

In any case, the criticisms might be more credible if Heldenleben were a failure: in fact, it is an intellectual and imaginative triumph. On one level, it can be enjoyed as a strongly argued, ingeniously proportioned symphony; on another, it tells a story in music that is every bit as gripping and entertaining as Strauss' earlier masterpieces, Don Juan, Death and Transfiguration and Till Eulenspiegel. At the same time, the handling of the huge orchestra is stunning in its richness and daring. The conductor Thomas Beecham told how he and a friend 'amused ourselves by discovering how many notes we could take out of Heldenleben and leave the music essentially intact. By the time we had finished, we had taken out 15,000'. But a sympathetic conductor can make one feel that there isn't a note too many.

Ein Heldenleben opens with a heroic, upward-thrusting theme, scored for eight horns. Strauss' horn writing is one of the most

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consistently impressive features of his formidable orchestral technique - a legacy of his father, Franz Strauss, principal horn of the Munich Court Orchestra and a phenomenal player, much admired by composer Richard Wagner.

For a while, all is radiantly confident forward motion, as in the first movement of Beethoven's 'Eroica'. But at the climax - just when one might expect the horn theme to return in triumph - the heroic hymn is suddenly cut off, and weirdly chattering woodwind, plus a motif in lumpen fifths on tubas, take centre stage. This is Strauss' acrid portrait of the critics who, as he correctly predicted, would pour withering scorn on Fin Heldenleben.

The heroic main theme now becomes troubled, but it is gradually soothed by a solo violin - a portrait of Strauss' wife, the formidable but clearly invaluable Pauline, scolding at first but increasingly tender. Strauss once told his half friend, half rival Gustav Mahler that: 'My wife's a bit rough, but she's what I need.' In this music, he allows us to see both sides of Pauline's paradoxical but definitely 'big' personality.

Calm restored, the hero sets off to do battle, armed with trumpet fanfares and side drum tattoos -

the percussion section really comes into its own in this section. After a thrilling struggle, victory seems assured, but again the splendour is suddenly cut off. After a long pause, the baleful tuba 'critics' return, this time with hushed funereal drums. Are the real critical. voices in Strauss' own head? Is his hero driven, like Don Juan, by a need to escape some dark, threatening inner questioning?

What follows is a remarkable depiction of spiritual recovery, 'The Hero's Works of Peace', in which Strauss quotes a succession of his own works with growing warmth and assurance. Significantly, there are several references to Don Quixote, echoing its hero's deranged adventures, but purged of their original grotesque intensity. Near the end, there is another moment of doubt - the darkest of them all – with swirling strings and woodwind, rasping muted brass and the critics' 'chattering' theme on stark trumpets; but once again, Pauline's solo violin brings peace and reassurance. The end is a mighty crescendo based on the famous three-note trumpet motif that begins Strauss' tone poem Also sprach Zarathustra. Then a radiantly scored wind chord clinches the heroic home key of E-flat, fading into silence.

Sir Antonio Pappano

Chief Conductor



One of today's most sought-after conductors, acclaimed for his charismatic leadership and inspirational performances in both symphonic and operatic repertoire, Sir Antonio Pappano is Chief Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra and was Music Director of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden from 2002 until 2024. He is Music Director Emeritus of the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome (having served as Music Director 2005–23) and was previously Music Director of Norwegian Opera and Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

Pappano is in demand as an opera conductor at the highest international level, including with the Metropolitan Opera, New York, the State Operas of Vienna and Berlin, the Bayreuth and Salzburg Festivals, Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Teatro alla Scala. He has appeared as a guest conductor with many of the world's most prestigious

orchestras, including the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras, the Staatskapelle Dresden, the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestre de Paris and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, as well as with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, Chicago and Boston Symphonies and the Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras. He maintains a particularly strong relationship with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

Pappano has been an exclusive recording artist for Warner Classics (formerly EMI Classics) since 1995. His awards and honours include *Gramophone*'s Artist of the Year in 2000, a 2003 Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera, the 2004 Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award, and the Bruno Walter Prize from the Académie du Disque Lyrique in Paris. In 2012, he was created a Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Republic of Italy and a Knight of the British Empire for his services to music, and in 2015 he was named the 100th recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society's Gold Medal.

Sir Antonio Pappano was born in London to Italian parents and moved with his family to the United States at the age of 13. He studied piano with Norma Verrilli, composition with Arnold Franchetti and conducting with Gustav Meier. He has also developed a notable career as a speaker and presenter, and has fronted several critically acclaimed BBC Television documentaries including Opera Italia, Pappano's Essential Ring Cycle and Pappano's Classical Voices.



Next on stage with the LSO Friday 11 July 7pm, Barbican Richard Strauss: Salome

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'It was a sumptuous performance of Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, so vividly and dramatically characterised that the ballet seemed to play out in my mind's eye.'

The Times

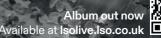
Daphnis et Chloé

Sir Antonio Pappano

Known for its rich harmonic textures and expansive scoring, Daphnis et Chloé is one of Ravel's largest and most loved orchestral masterpieces. Join the London Symphony Orchestra and Chief Conductor, Sir Antonio Pappano, on this dreamlike musical journey through Greek mythology, where passion, nature and divinity intertwine.











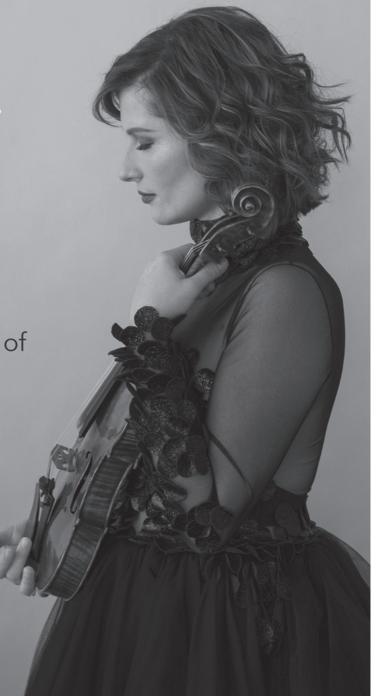
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Lisa Batiashvili

violin



Lisa Batiashvili, the Georgian-born German violinist, is praised by audiences and fellow musicians for her virtuosity. An award-winning artist, she has developed longstanding relationships with the world's leading orchestras, conductors and musicians.

In 2021, Batiashvili formed the Lisa Batiashvili Foundation, which she continues to lead and which serves her lifelong dream and commitment in supporting young, highly talented Georgian musicians.

In the 2024/25 season, she tours with the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and the London Symphony Orchestra. She also returns to the Orchestre de Paris, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic and the National Symphony Orchestra, among others.

Recent recordings in her impressive discography includes Visions of Prokofiev (Chamber Orchestra of Europe under Yannick Nézet-Séguin), which won an Opus Klassik Award. Earlier recordings include the concertos of Tchaikovsky and Sibelius (Staatskapelle Berlin under Daniel Barenboim), Brahms (Staatskapelle Dresden under Christian Thielemann) and Shostakovich (Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra under Esa-Pekka Salonen).

Her 2020 recording, City Lights, marks a musical journey that takes listeners around the world to eleven cities with an autobiographical connection, with music ranging from JS Bach to Morricone, and Dvořák to Charlie Chaplin. Batiashvili's latest album for Deutsche Grammophon, Secret Love Letters, was released in August 2022, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Batiashvili has won a number of awards including the MIDEM Classical Award, Choc de l'année, Accademia Musicale Chigiana International Prize, Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival's Leonard Bernstein Award and the Beethoven-Ring, Batiashvili was named Musical America's Instrumentalist of the Year in 2015, was nominated as Gramophone's Artist of the Year in 2017, and in 2018 was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the Sibelius Academy (University of Arts, Helsinki).

In 2025, she was honoured with the Kaiser Otto Prize of the City of Magdeburg for her commitment to speaking out against war and anti-semitism and for promoting the European democratic values.

Batiashvili lives in Berlin and plays a Joseph Guarneri 'del Gesu' from 1739. generously loaned by a private collector.

London Symphony Orchestra

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Roman Simovic

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Violas

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Malcolm Johnston
Germán Clavijo
Steve Doman
Thomas Beer
Julia O'Riordan
Sofia Silva Sousa
Robert Turner
Mizuho Ueyama
Michelle Bruil
Jamie Howe*
Alistair Scahill
David Vainsot

Cellos

Timothy Walden Alastair Blayden Salvador Bolón Daniel Gardner Danushka Edirisinghe Silvestrs Kalnins Ghislaine McMullin Peteris Sokolovskis Henry Hargreaves Joanna Twaddle

Double Basses

Rodrigo Moro Martín Patrick Laurence Chaemun Im Jani Pensola Harry Atkinson Ben Griffiths Hugh Sparrow Adam Wynter

Flutes

Gareth Davies Amy Yule Imogen Royce

Piccolo

Patricia Moynihan

Oboes

Olivier Stankiewicz Thomas Hutchinson Rosie Jenkins

Cor Anglais

Jérémy Sassano

Clarinets

Sérgio Pires Chris Richards Chi-Yu Mo Bethany Crouch

Bass Clarinet

Ferran Garcerà Perelló

Bassoons

Rachel Gough Daniel Jemison Joost Bosdijk

Contrabassoon

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Diego Incertis Sánchez Timothy Jones Angela Barnes Olivia Gandee Jonathan Durrant Jonathan Maloney Phillippa Koushk-Jalali Max Garrard Liam Duffy

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^{*} Members of the LSO String Experience Scheme