

LSO ST LUKES

CHAMBER MUSIC

BBC
RADIO 3

Friday 13 February 6–7.05pm
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

SPOTLIGHT ON SEONG-JIN CHO

Seong-Jin Cho and Sunwook Kim

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Sonata for Piano Four-Hands in F major K497

Wolfgang Rihm

Waltzes Nos 1, 2, 4, 5, 13 and 18

Franz Schubert

Fantasia in F minor D940

Seong-Jin Cho piano

Sunwook Kim piano

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3



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In accordance with the requirements of Islington Council, persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any gangway.

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are strictly forbidden without formal consent from LSO St Luke's.

Please make sure that digital watch alarms and mobile phones are switched off during the performance.

Please recycle this programme after use.

Programme Note

Both Mozart and Schubert were fond of four-hands piano music. As children, Mozart and his sister Maria, nicknamed Nannerl, would perform duets on their tours of aristocratic Europe, while Schubert's first surviving work – written when he was 13 – is a four-hands fantasy. Later in life, each would contribute handsomely to the genre, composing works that far outshone the domestic role it had traditionally occupied.

Mozart's Sonata for Piano Four-Hands in F major was written in the summer of 1786 by a composer at the peak of his powers. The 30-year-old had by now successfully established himself as a freelance musician in Vienna, and probably wrote this piece for the daughter of botanist Nikolaus Joseph von Jacquin, one of his circle of distinguished friends and patrons in the city. The young Franziska was a talented pianist – as the duet's scope and technical demands would suggest.

Each of the three movements features knotty layers of counterpoint and elaborate dialogue between the two players. The finale in particular makes liberal use of canon and fugato, concerto-like scale passages and bold appoggiaturas. Mozart also revels in unexpected modulations and chromatic shapes. This can be heard in the searching preface to the first movement – a forerunner of the slow introductions to his last four symphonies – and the subsequent, bubbling Allegro di molto.

With the premiere of *The Marriage of Figaro*, alongside other major works such as the Fourth Horn Concerto and numerous piano concertos, 1786 would prove to be one of Mozart's busiest years.

The smiling centre of tonight's programme comprises a **selection of four-hands waltzes by Wolfgang Rihm**, Germany's late, great Opa of contemporary music; he died in 2024 with an astonishing 500 works to his name. Written in the spirit of gentle satire and affection, these miniatures form part of a piano-waltz tradition that stretches back via Ravel and Brahms to Schubert.

Rihm delights in tongue-in-cheek references to his forbears. No 2, for example, oozes Schubertian yearning. He also fills the set with musical jokes – 'wrong' notes, odd phrasings, misleading cadences – that poke fun at the tradition of amateur music-making. As well as this, there is the odd cryptic marking, hinting at the dinner party setting in which historically many of these pieces would have first been heard. No 18 is a prime example, designated the 'Ear and Worm Waltz'.

As Rihm explained, these waltzes were written either as gifts (like so many of Chopin's) or for 'newly arrived composing guests in order to whet the palate'. Shut your eyes and you can hear the clinking of schnapps glasses and the chuckling of good company.

Programme Note

Schubert's Fantasia in F minor is the product of an astonishing period. Between spring and autumn 1828, the composer finished this four-hands duet and wrote three solo piano sonatas, a string quintet and his 14 'Swan Song' settings. Then, on 5 November, he took to bed with a fever, dying soon after.

Since contracting syphilis in 1823 – essentially a death sentence at the time – Schubert had coped with crippling anxiety, and it is hard not to hear in these late works the voice of a man who knows his end is near. The Fantasia's dotted opening theme is a case in point: simple, desolate and devastating, this music is archetypal Schubert. He then leads us down a wandering path, passing without pause through a brief, lyrical Largo and a wild Scherzo, before returning to the opening theme which, after a brief fugal interlude, seals a desolate coda.

Programme Note Writer

Timmy Fisher is an editor within the BBC Proms Publications team and co-host of *The Classical Music Pod*. His arts journalism has appeared in *BBC Culture*, *The i Paper*, *the Financial Times*, *Radio Times* and *VAN*.

Seong-Jin Cho

piano



© Stephan Rabold

Seong-Jin Cho has established himself worldwide as one of the leading pianists of his generation and most distinctive artists on the current music scene. With an innate musicality and consummate artistry, his poetic, virtuosic and colourful playing can combine panache with purity and is driven by an impressive natural sense of balance.

Cho is celebrated unanimously across the globe for his expressive magic and illuminative insights. He was brought to the world's attention in 2015 when he won First Prize at the Chopin International Competition in Warsaw, and his career has rapidly ascended since. In early 2016, he signed an exclusive contract with Deutsche Grammophon. Cho was awarded the prestigious Samsung Ho-Am Prize in the Arts in

2023, in recognition of his exceptional contributions to the world of classical music. An artist high in demand, he works with the world's most prestigious orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Concertgebouworkest, and Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Conductors he regularly collaborates with include Myung-Whun Chung, Gustavo Dudamel, Andris Nelsons, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Gianandrea Noseda, Sir Antonio Pappano, Sir Simon Rattle, Santtu-Matias Rouvali, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Lahav Shani. In the 2024/25 season, Cho held the position of Artist in Residence with the Berlin Philharmonic.

Sunwook Kim

piano



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As a soloist, Sunwook Kim enjoys close relationships with renowned conductors, including Daniel Harding, Paavo Järvi, Myung-Whun Chung, Marek Janowski, Sir Mark Elder and Jakub Hrůša. In November 2025, he worked once again with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra as a soloist for their tour of Korea under Kirill Petrenko. Other highlights include an extensive tour of Europe and Korea play-directing Beethoven concertos with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, with concerts at Lotte Concert Hall, Berlin Philharmonie, Salle Philharmonique de Liège, Halle Aux Grains, Toulouse and the Barbican, London. Other recent concerto highlights include concerts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic (Matthias Pintscher) and Netherlands Radio Philharmonic (Karina Canellakis).

The 25/26 season sees Kim continue his role as Music Director at Gyeonggi Philharmonic Orchestra conducting works from Mozart and

Beethoven to Strauss, Bartók and Unsuk Chin. He made his conducting debut with the orchestra in June 2023, and was immediately announced as their next Music Director.

Kim has an extensive recording catalogue, including concerto discs with the Seoul Philharmonic (Deutsche Grammophon) and Staatskapelle Dresden (Accentus), both led by Myung-Whun Chung. In 2023, the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra released a new box of recordings of works by Unsuk Chin, highlighting their collaboration with the composer over the past 20 years. The Piano Concerto was performed by Kim and conducted by Sakari Oramo.

Born in Seoul in 1988, Kim completed an MA in conducting at the Royal Academy of Music and was subsequently made a fellow (FRAM) of the Royal Academy of Music in 2019.

SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

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Thursday 26 February 7pm

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Wednesday 4 March 6.30pm
Thursday 5 March 7pm

Edward Elgar The Dream of Gerontius

with Sir Antonio Pappano
Sunday 19 April 7pm
Tuesday 21 April 7pm

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Thursday 26 February 2026 1–2.05pm
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VAUGHAN WILLIAMS AND HIS CIRCLE

**Kitty Whately &
William Vann**

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Four Poems by Fredegond Shove; The
Sky Above the Roof; Four Last Songs

Rebecca Clarke

Return of Spring; Colour of
Life; Tears; The Seal Man

Elizabeth Maconchy

In Fountain Court; Ophelia's
Song; The Woodspurge

Grace Williams

Black-Eyed Susan from 'The
Billows of the Sea'

Kitty Whately mezzo-soprano
William Vann piano

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3

Thursday 5 March 2026 1–2.05pm
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS AND HIS CIRCLE

**Geneva Lewis &
Sam Armstrong**

Elizabeth Maconchy

Violin Sonata No 2

Grace Williams

Violin Sonata

Benjamin Britten

Reveille: Concert Study
for Violin and Piano

Ralph Vaughan Williams

The Lark Ascending

Geneva Lewis violin

Sam Armstrong piano

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3