

LSO ST LUKES

CHAMBER MUSIC

BBC
RADIO 3

Friday 18 September 2026 12.30–1.35pm
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

PROKOFIEV SONATAS

**Elizaveta Ivanova
and Sanja Bizjak**

Ernst von Dohnányi

Aria for Flute and Piano

Lowell Liebermann

Sonata for Flute and Piano

Edison Denisov

Prelude and Air for Flute and Piano

Philippe Gaubert

Ballade for Flute and Piano

Sergei Prokofiev

Sonata for Flute and Piano

Elizaveta Ivanova flute

Sanja Bizjak piano

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3



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Programme notes by Stephen Johnson

The Hawksmoor Space

The Hawksmoor Space is open from one hour before the concert and during the interval (where applicable), selling hot and cold drinks. Please note we can accept card payments only. Only cold drinks will be permitted inside the Jerwood Hall.

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.

Aria for Flute and Piano

Ernst von Dohnányi

An unapologetic Romantic, whose idols were Liszt and Brahms, composer and pianist Ernst (Ernö) von Dohnányi's music became unfashionable after World War I, but he continued to follow his own path, even after leaving his native Hungary for the US in 1948 (Soviet Communism was anathema to him).

The Aria for Flute and Piano was written in 1958, for the American flautist Ellie Baker, but it could have been written 50 years earlier. It's the sort of warmly melodious music that in more self-consciously modernist times would have been condemned as 'regressive', but which now can be simply enjoyed for the lovely thing it is.



1958



6 minutes

Sonata for Flute and Piano

Lowell Liebermann

1 Lento

2 Presto

The US composer Lowell Liebermann is another example of a composer who baulks trends. His music is tonal and melodious, sometimes suggesting Samuel Barber and Sergei Prokofiev as models. But it's clear from his music that Liebermann is fully aware of the musical world around him, and in his finest works he has achieved an impressive harmony of new and old.

The Sonata for Flute and Piano was written just after Liebermann had finished his studies at the Julliard School, to a commission from the Spoleto Festival, for the flautist Paula Robison and the pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet, and it has been a hit with flautists ever since. There are two movements: a moody and emotive Lento (with an echo of Wagner's *Walküre* at one point), and a wild, exciting tarantella.



1987



13 minutes

Prelude and Air for Flute and Piano

Edison Denisov

1 Prelude

2 Air

As a Soviet Russian, Edison Denisov experienced pressure to avoid modernism and concentrate on music for 'The People'. But the fascination of Schoenberg, Webern and the post-war European avant-garde (banned in Russia) was just too strong to resist, causing him problems in the USSR but making him into something of a hero in the West.

Prelude and Air for Flute and Piano, however, was written in 1961, three years before Denisov took the plunge into full-blown Schoenbergian serialism. The style here is deliciously neo-Classical, with a hint of the Baroque, and more than a hint of Prokofiev in the Air's sustained wistful lyricism.



1961



6 minutes

Ballade for Flute and Piano

Philippe Gaubert

Flautist and composer Philippe Gaubert was one of the outstanding French performing musicians in the period between the two world wars. The Ballade for Flute and Piano was composed in 1927, while Gaubert was Professor of Flute at the Paris Conservatoire and is dedicated, with characteristic generosity, 'à mes élèves' – 'to my students.'

Although the music is continuous, there are two distinct sections: a sweetly melodic Andantino followed by an agile but unfailingly elegant *Vif et joyeux*.



1927



6 minutes

Sonata for Flute and Piano

Sergei Prokofiev

- 1 **Moderato**
- 2 **Scherzo: Presto**
- 3 **Andante**
- 4 **Allegro con brio**

Prokofiev's Flute Sonata sounds like a product of idyllic times, and in a sense it was, up to a point. It was composed in 1943, while the composer was staying at an artists' retreat in Perm in the Ural Mountains, well to the east of Moscow, and safely away from the trauma and carnage of the Nazi invasion of the USSR – and in 1943 the war in Russia had entered a particularly perilous stage. It's easy to believe that this was the work of a man who had at last found peace from the horrors of war, and was only too happy to think of other things. There may also be an element of relief that Soviet officialdom, its mind forced upon more pressing matters, was content to leave the composer to his own devices: after all that Prokofiev had experienced at the hands of Stalin's régime before the invasion, the freedom and natural beauty of Perm must have felt like a dream come true.

Of course, there are shadows, but even the martial theme that heralds the first movement's central development section sounds more like the antics of a toy soldier than the real thing. And elsewhere Prokofiev's gift for creating gorgeous, touching, long-breathed melodies is in full flight: in the demure but inviting theme that begins the first movement, in the capricious tunefulness of the fleet-footed Scherzo, throughout the lovely Andante, and the lovely melody that emerges amid the high-spirited fun-and-games of the finale. For all his love of grotesquerie, twisted wit and ironic self-distancing, Prokofiev is arguably most himself in such almost, but not quite childlike song-themes as these.



1943



25 minutes

Elizaveta Ivanova

Flute



© Barbara Aumüller

Elizaveta Ivanova has been Associate Principal Flute of the Frankfurt Opera and Museum Orchestra since 2022. She previously held the same position, from 2017 to 2022, at the St Petersburg Symphony Orchestra.

Born in 1997 in Estonia to a musical family, Ivanova started studying music very early. From 2009 to 2014, she studied at the St Petersburg Music Lyceum with Vladimir Ushakov, continuing her education at the St Petersburg State Conservatory with Olga Chernyadeva and Ksenia Kuelyar. She also studied at the Academy of music in Basel (Switzerland) in the class of Felix Renggli, and in 2023 finished the Master Soloist programme with the highest score. During her studies in Basel she received a scholarship from the Lyra Foundation (Zürich).

In 2023, Ivanova won first prize at the Geneva International Competition, where she also received the Arts Society

prize, Soufflee prize and a Rose-Marie Huguenin prize. She is also a prize winner of several flute competitions such as Crusell Flute Competition in Finland, Cluj International Flute Competition in Romania, Maxence Larrieu Flute Competition in France, and was admitted to the semi-final of the Kobe Flute Competition in Japan. As a part of the woodwind quintet St Petersburg Winds, she also won prizes at several chamber music competitions in Russia. In 2024, Ivanova was selected as a BBC New Generation Artist for a period of two years.

Ivanova regularly performs in chamber music groups and as a soloist with different orchestras, including the Transylvania Philharmonic Orchestra, Meiningen Court Orchestra and Neue Philharmonie Frankfurt, and appears at various music festivals (including the Ljubljana Festival and the Austrian Flute Festival).

Sanja Bizjak

Piano



© Marco Borggreve

Born in Belgrade in 1988 (where she studied the piano with Zlata Maleš), Sanja Bizjak became a student at the Paris Conservatoire under Jacques Rouvier at the age of twelve. She has since studied with Alexander Satz in Graz, Elisso Virsaladze in Munich and Dmitri Alexeev in London, and has played in masterclasses for Ferenc Rados, Menahem Pressler, Maurice Bourgue, Oleg Maisenberg, Igor Lazko, Felix Gottlieb and Stanislav Pocheikin.

After winning many competitions for young pianists, she gained second prize at the 2003 Vladimir Horowitz Competition in Kiev. Bizjak has given a large number of recitals in Europe, the US, South America and Japan, performing with the Orchestre d'Avignon, Essen and Belgrade Philharmonics, Ukraine Symphonic Orchestra and at the Mozart Virtuoso Festival.

She made her Paris debut in the Auditorium du Louvre in 2006 and has participated as a soloist in festivals such as La folle journée in both Nantes and Tokyo, Festival de La Roque-d'Anthéron and Festival d'Auvers-sur-Oise in France, Bemus in Serbia, and performed in Victoria Hall in Geneva, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris and Palazzetto Bru-Zane in Venice.

Bizjak has featured on recordings for 3Sat, BBC Radio 3, RAI 2, SAT, TV France 3, France Musique and Mezzo, as well as her first solo CD dedicated to Rachmaninoff's *Etudes-Tableaux*, released in 2013 for the French label DiscAuvers. She was Laureate of the Natixis Foundation in Paris from 2005.

FUTURE CONCERTS

Thursday 5 November 2026
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

12.30pm

PROKOFIEV SONATAS

Andreas Brantelid and Julien Quentin

Sergei Prokofiev

Cello Sonata

Dmitri Shostakovich

Cello Sonata

Andreas Brantelid cello

Julien Quentin piano

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3

Thursday 26 November 2026
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

12.30pm

MAHAN ESFAHANI & FRIENDS

Mahan Esfahani and Lars Anders Tomter

Music by **Johann Sebastian Bach**,
Wilhelm Friedemann Bach,
Poul Ruders and **György Kurtág**

Mahan Esfahani harpsichord

Lars Anders Tomter viola

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3

Thursday 21 January 2027
Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

12.30pm

PROKOFIEV SONATAS

Giorgi Gigashvili

Frédéric Chopin

Piano Sonata No 2

Sergei Prokofiev

Piano Sonata No 8

Giorgi Gigashvili piano

Recorded for future broadcast on BBC Radio 3

