



C A M D E N
S Y M P H O N Y
O R C H E S T R A

Summer Concert



Conductor Levon Parikian
Leader John Crawford
Soloist Fenella Humphreys

Saturday 6th July 2024 at 7.30pm

St Cyprian's Church, Glentworth Street, London, NW1 6AX

Tickets: £15 / £12 concessions including programme.

Camden Symphony Orchestra is a registered charity, number 1081563.

Camden Symphony Orchestra

Welcome to the final concert of our 2023-2024 season which opens with Fanny Mendelssohn's *Overture in C*, giving us the opportunity to celebrate a special personal connection. Acclaimed violinist Fenella Humphreys joins us to perform Szymanowski's rarely heard *Violin Concerto No. 2*, which we originally programmed for June 2020. After the interval, enter the hallucinatory world of Hector Berlioz in his highly evocative *Symphonie Fantastique*. If you enjoy the concert, please do consider becoming a Friend of the Orchestra - and thank you to all our existing Friends for your continued support.

Camden Symphony Orchestra has been a mainstay of musical life in north London for more than forty years with around seventy regular players. Under our Musical Director Levon Parikian we seek to combine the familiar staples of the classical and romantic repertoire with less well-known and more challenging works. We rehearse weekly and perform three major orchestral concerts a year.

Recent highlights have included symphonies by Rachmaninov, Dvořák, Vaughan Williams and Florence Price, Holst's *The Planets*, Strauss' *Four Last Songs*, Khachaturian's *Masquerade Suite* and Sibelius' *Finlandia*. Our world premiere performance of *Dream Big for Tomorrow*, a work for improvising vocalist and orchestra, was broadcast on BBC Radio 3. Recent concerto performances include Brahms' *Violin Concerto*, Gershwin's *Piano Concerto* and Elgar's *Cello Concerto*. We have performed choral works including Brahms' *Ein Deutsches Requiem*, Elgar's *The Spirt of England* and Handel's *Coronation Anthems*.

Whilst we pride ourselves on our friendly, inclusive environment, we take our music-making seriously. We are always pleased to hear from musicians interested in joining us. For more information about the orchestra, please visit www.camdenso.org.uk.



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Camden Symphony Orchestra is affiliated to Making Music which represents and supports amateur choirs, orchestras and music promoters.





C A M D E N
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O R C H E S T R A

Fanny Mendelssohn
Overture in C

Karol Szymanowski
Violin Concerto No. 2
Soloist: Fenella Humphreys

~ Interval ~

Please join us for refreshments which will be served at the back of the church.

Hector Berlioz
Symphonie Fantastique

Please ensure that mobile phones, pagers, digital watch alarms and other electronic devices are switched off during the performance.

We would like to thank the Clergy, Parish Administrator and PCC of St Cyprian's Church for permission to perform here tonight, and for their assistance in organising this concert.

Fanny Mendelssohn (1805-1847) - *Overture in C* (1832)

Felix Mendelssohn is one of the best-known composers from the early Romantic period, but he was not the only genius in the family. His sister, Fanny was also a brilliant composer, technically brilliant and boldly ground-breaking. But while Felix's music has enjoyed enduring popularity, Fanny's has been largely neglected, with most of her works unpublished in her lifetime and some inaccurately credited to Felix. Fanny's compositions - including a piano trio, a piano quartet, cantatas, more than 125 pieces for the piano and over 250 lieder - are now finally beginning to get the recognition they deserve.

We're delighted to open our concert with Fanny Mendelssohn's *Overture in C*, completed shortly after her marriage to the artist Wilhelm Hensel, and to celebrate a special connection with the composer. Sheila Hayman, leader of our Second Violins, is the composer's great-great-great-granddaughter and directed the widely acclaimed 2023 documentary film *Fanny: The Other Mendelssohn*. Sheila has written the following introduction to the overture.

In June 1830 Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel gave birth to her only surviving child, Sebastian. A few months later she wrote a panicked letter to her brother Felix saying she hadn't composed anything since the birth, to which he replied that looking after a baby was more than enough occupation for her. Possibly in response, in 1831-2 Fanny wrote three choral cantatas, the dramatic concert aria 'Hero and Leander', and this overture. But the overture wasn't performed until 1834, and then only once. By the time it was finished, Fanny was pregnant again, this time confined to bed, knowing something was dreadfully wrong, until in November she delivered a dead baby girl.



So perhaps it's not surprising that it was another year before she was ready to resume the private Sunday concerts in her home, which were the only way she could perform or hear her own music. Finally, in June 1834 the Overture was performed. The Königstadt Theatre orchestra convened at her house with their director, Julius Lecerf planning to conduct, but he'd damaged his hand and persuaded Fanny to take over - as far as we know, the only time she conducted. With wincing self-effacement, she wrote to Felix, 'Had I not been so horribly shy, and embarrassed with every stroke, I would have been able to conduct reasonably well'.

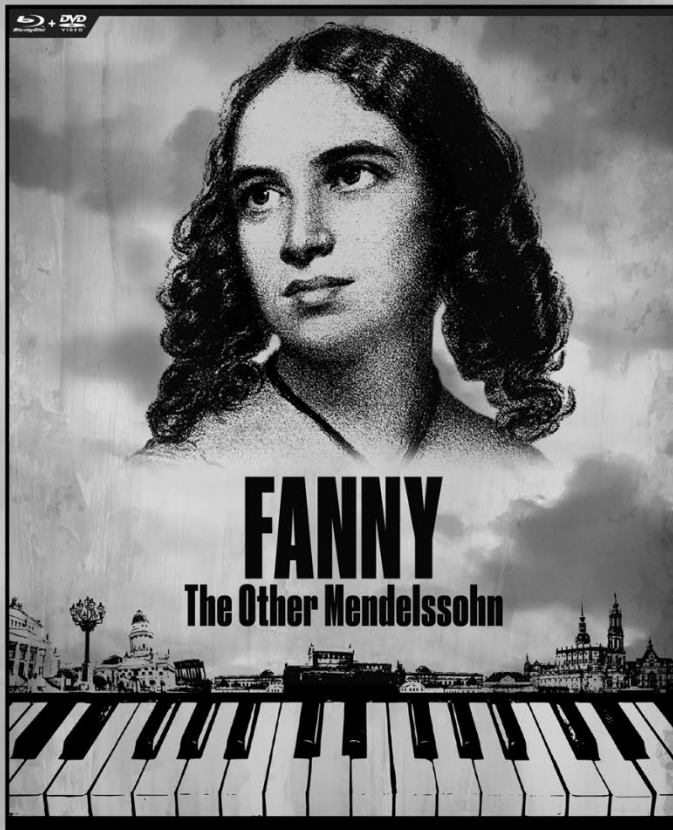
Fanny never wrote for orchestra again. Possibly because when she sent Felix the first of the three 1831 cantatas, he responded: 'What in heaven made you set the G horns so high? Have you ever heard anyone take on a high G without a squeak?... And don't you know that you need a special license to write a low B for oboes, which is only issued for music about witches, or to express some enormous grief?' What he didn't mention was that he'd been taught orchestration, but Fanny hadn't.

This overture isn't her most adventurous or innovative work, though musically expert listeners may enjoy the colourful woodwind writing and the tonal plan enriched by excursions from C major and G major into B flat major. But given all the above - I hope you'll agree it's a triumph.

A VERY MODERN WOMAN - 200 YEARS AGO

FANNY

The Other Mendelssohn



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SCAN TO
PURCHASE

Karol Szymanowski (1882-1937) - *Violin Concerto No. 2, Opus 61 (1933)*
Moderato molto tranquillo; Allegramente molto energico; Allegretto tranquillo;
Andantino - Allegramente animato

Pianist and composer Karol Szymanowski was born in Tymoszwówka, Poland (now part of Ukraine) into a wealthy artistic family. He studied at the State Conservatory in Warsaw, and found inspiration in the indigenous music of Poland but also travelled throughout Europe and North Africa, spending extensive periods in Berlin and Vienna and taking time to study Islamic culture, ancient Greek drama and philosophy. Szymanowski was a prolific composer, with his works including four symphonies, two violin concertos, ballets, operas, string quartets, songs, a setting of a Polish translation of the *Stabat Mater* and many works for solo piano.

Both of Szymanowski's violin concertos were dedicated to his lifelong friend, the violinist Paweł Kochański. His lyrical *Violin Concerto No. 1* features great clarity of texture. Inspired by Kochański's visit to Poland in 1932, the *Violin Concerto No. 2* was written towards the end of the composer's creative life. The two musicians worked together to create the score, which is notably influenced by the music of the Polish mountain people, especially that of the Tatra Mountain district around Zakopane.



Polish composer and pianist Karol Szymanowski, photographed in 1922, was a prominent member of the modernist Young Poland movement.



Violinist Paweł Kochański gave the first performance of the concerto.

Kochański played a major role in the development of the solo part and its technicalities. He had been unable to give the premiere of the first concerto in 1916, but did give the first performance of the second on 6th October 1933 in Warsaw. It was his last appearance as he died just three months later. Szymanowski was already ill and survived for only four more years. After Kochański's death in 1934, the composer added the dedication '*A la memoire du Grand Musicien, mon cher et inoubliable Ami, Paweł Kochański*' (*To the memory of a Great Musician, my dear and unforgettable Friend, Paweł Kochański*) before publishing the concerto.

The second concerto is very different to the first, following a more traditional harmonic approach, featuring the extensive use of modes. It is in a single continuous movement, although there are four discernible major sections. It features a lengthy cadenza which provides the transition between the first and second sections. A performance of the concerto lasts around twenty-two minutes, which is relatively short for a violin concerto of the time.

The concerto shows a new leanness in Szymanowski's writing and a *concertante* approach to the combination of soloist and orchestra. Its mood is initially introverted, with the violin in conversation with muted horn and trumpet. However, as other sections of the orchestra join, the solo picks up the pace and becomes ever more impassioned. The first climax is a mixture of layered themes that recall Szymanowski's early orchestral works; his polyphonic textures, ear for harmony and lyricism, and his ability to create both chamber-like and rich orchestral textures whatever the size of the performing forces are all on show. After a lyrical episode and a second climax on the main theme, Szymanowski inserts a cadenza which is the heart of the concerto. The second section, marked *molto energico*, follows without a break, recalling in its opening bars the start of Szymanowski's *Symphony No. 4*. The violin introduces a decorated version of the concerto's first theme, confirming Szymanowski's lifelong fascination with both integration and variation. A further surprise lies in the introduction of a central section in the guise of a mazurka. It permeates the ensuing recapitulation, where both versions of the concerto's main theme crown Szymanowski's last orchestral work.

Hector Berlioz (1803-1869) - *Symphonie Fantastique*, Opus 14 (1830)
I Rêveries – Passions – II Un Bal – III Scène aux Champs – IV Marche au Supplice -
V Songe d'une Nuit du Sabbat

Born near Grenoble to an eminent physician, Berlioz began to study music at the age of twelve. He played the guitar and flute but was discouraged from learning the piano by his father, so instead he composed and learnt harmony from textbooks. Aged eighteen, he went to Paris to study medicine but showed no interest and was disgusted by the dissection of a human corpse. His love for the music of Gluck and Beethoven led him to make the most of the resources available to him at the Paris Opera and in the library of the Paris Music Conservatoire. He abandoned medicine at twenty-one and devoted himself to composition. Encouraged by a professor, he began to formally study composition at the Conservatoire.

Just before his twenty-fourth birthday, he became infatuated with the Irish-born, Shakespearean actress Harriet Smithson. Even though they had never met, the besotted Berlioz terrified her with an avalanche of unanswered love letters. The *Symphonie fantastique: Épisode de la vie d'un artiste... en cinq parties* was inspired by Berlioz's obsession with Harriet Smithson and written in just six weeks. By the time of its premiere in 1830, Berlioz was in a relationship and subsequently engaged to Marie Moke. The engagement was called off by Marie's mother and an enraged Berlioz developed an elaborate plan to murder Marie, her new fiancé and Marie's mother and then to kill himself. Thankfully, he abandoned his foolish plan.

In 1832, a revised version of the *Symphonie Fantastique* was performed in Paris in front of an illustrious audience including Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, Niccolò Paganini, Franz Liszt, Frédéric Chopin, George Sand and also, Harriet Smithson. A few days later, Hector and Harriet were introduced and despite the language barrier, they began a relationship which led to marriage in 1833 and a child the following year. Sadly, they were both prone to violent tempers and the marriage ended with divorce seven years later.



George Clint's portrait of Harriett Smithson, the inspiration for the symphony.

There is a popular belief that the symphony was composed under the influence of opium but opium (in the form of laudanum) was widely used at the time and Berlioz was taking it for his nervous disposition in the way that we might now take aspirin or Valium. Leonard Bernstein described it as the first musical expedition into psychedelia and said of it, 'Berlioz tells it like it is. You take a trip, you wind up screaming at your own funeral'.

The symphony is a piece of programme music that aims to present a narrative. In this case, the story of an artist who has poisoned himself with opium while in the depths of despair resulting from unrequited love. Unconventionally for the time, there are five movements and within each section, the artist's passion is represented by a recurring theme called the *idée fixe*. The score specifies a large orchestra including 2 harps, 4 bassoons, 2 cornets, 2 ophicleides (often replaced by tubas) and 2 timpani players. Berlioz provided two versions of his own programme notes for each movement of the work: one from 1845 in the first published edition of the work and the second from 1855.

I Rêveries – Passions (Visions and Passions) Berlioz's 1845 programme notes imagine a young musician who sees his ideal woman for the first time and falls desperately in love with her. He associates her with a melody which recurs throughout the symphony.

II Un Bal (A Ball) The 1855 programme notes describe the artist meeting his beloved again 'in a ball during a glittering fête'.

III Scène aux Champs (Country Scene) During the evening, two shepherds duet with their alpine horns (cor anglais and off-stage oboe). The programme notes advise that, 'the artist's hopeful heart calms but his beloved re-appears and his anguish and painful thoughts disturb him with fears of betrayal. The sun sets and there is the distant sound of thunder.'

IV Marche au Supplice (March to the Scaffold) The artist is convinced that his love is spurned and poisons himself with opium. Instead of killing him, the opium induces a vision that he has killed his beloved and is executed at the scaffold.

V Songe d'une Nuit du Sabbat (A witches' sabbath) A hideous throng of demons and sorcerers gather to celebrate the Sabbath night and his beloved attends to take part in her victim's funeral. The movement incorporates the theme of the ideal woman but transformed into a

vulgar dance tune. This is followed by the ancient motif of the Latin hymn *Dies Irae* which is combined with the grotesque satanic Sabbath dance in a climatic finale. There are a host of effects, including trilling in the woodwinds and *col legno* in the strings (played with the wood of the bow).

At the premiere of *Symphonie Fantastique*, there was protracted applause at the end with the press giving reviews that expressed both shock and pleasure. Some dissenting voices, such as that of Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl, regarded the work as an abomination for which Berlioz would suffer in Purgatory. However, despite its striking unconventionality, it was generally well received and Robert Schumann published an extensive, and broadly supportive analysis in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in 1835. When the work was played in New York in 1865 critical opinion was divided. The *New York Tribune* commented, 'We think the Philharmonic Society wasted much valuable time in the vain endeavour to make Berlioz's fantastic ravings intelligible to a sane audience', while the *New York Daily Herald* described it as, 'a rare treat... a wonderful creation'. By the middle of the 20th century the authors of *The Record Guide*, called the work, 'one of the most remarkable outbursts of genius in the history of music'.

The evocative music of *Symphonie Fantastique* continues to resonate. In 1946, Spanish-born artist Julio de Diego, by then living in Mexico, painted *Symphony Fantastique*, capturing the end of World War II – the image we used for the flyers for this concert. The surrealist figures are shrouded in smoke, some are cloaked, masked, poised for action, and inward-looking creatures surround them, ignoring the viewer. The title of the artwork comes from the symphony, and it is possible that the figures may be depicting a dance or a battle. Julio de Diego could be prompting the viewer to consider various subjects in his work; war, creativity or even death, as the artist was a war veteran who often spoke out about the horrors of war.



Julio de Diego's Symphony Fantastique, oil on board painted in 1946, now in the Fort Wayne Museum of Art, Indiana, USA.



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Friends of Camden Symphony Orchestra

Would you consider supporting the orchestra by joining our Friends Scheme?

We enjoy performing an extremely varied range of repertoire for you, but it costs around £5,000 to put on a concert, and ticket sales only cover around a third of the costs. In the present climate, funding for any arts endeavour is increasingly difficult and like any other organisation, we face rising costs every year.

Our aim is to continue to provide players and audiences with the opportunity to perform and hear adventurous repertoire, to keep membership of the orchestra open to accomplished players regardless of their means, and to provide a platform for emerging soloists. We would like to thank our Friends who are helping us to achieve this.

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Denis Ribeiro in Memory of Marie Francisca Ribeiro

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Mrs Elizabeth Jones
Mrs Jennie Taylor

If you have enjoyed our concert and feel able to contribute to the orchestra's future development, we ask you to consider becoming a Friend of Camden Symphony Orchestra.

For a donation of **£50** per year, **Gold Friends** will receive:

- Two free tickets per year for our concerts.
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If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at info@camdenso.org.uk.

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Fenella Humphreys - Violin



Fenella Humphreys, winner of the 2023 BBC Music Magazine Premiere Recording Award, has attracted critical admiration and audience acclaim with the grace and intensity of her remarkable performances.

With her playing described in the press as “alluring”, “unforgettable” and “a wonder”, Fenella is one of the UK’s most established and versatile violinists, having also won the 2018 BBC Music Magazine Instrumental Award. She enjoys a busy career combining chamber music with solo work, performing in the most prestigious venues around the world and is frequently broadcast on the BBC, Classic FM, Scala Radio and international radio stations.

Fenella performs widely as a soloist. Her recent album of Sibelius’ solo works with BBC National Orchestra of Wales and George Vass has been featured in BBC Radio 3’s *Building a Library*, Gramophone Magazine’s *Guide to the*

Concerto, and was Album of the Week on Scala Radio. BBC Music Magazine has written of the recording, “it takes an unusually fine artist to be able to bridge the two extremes. Fenella Humphreys’ playing is a genuine revelation in the way it brings out the music’s dark and introspective qualities, with no shortage of technical panache meanwhile”.

Fenella’s latest recording on Rubicon Classics, *Prism*, revisits the medium of unaccompanied violin repertoire - from new music written by young British composers to iconic recent works by Caroline Shaw, Jessie Montgomery and George Walker, with Fenella’s new arrangement of Bach’s *Tocatta and Fugue BWV565* at its heart. Immediately picked up by BBC Music Magazine as their June 2024 ‘Instrumental Choice’, the magazine described the album as “a hugely accomplished release, fearlessly and vibrantly performed...”.

For the launch of Apple Music Classical in April 2023, Fenella was one of a handful of artists invited to record a ‘Classical Session’ at home, alongside Daniel Barenboim, Beatrice Rana and Gautier Capuçon.

Fenella is grateful for the support of the Royal Philharmonic Society, Harriet’s Trust and Arts Council England for their support to keep making music during the Covid Pandemic. Fenella plays on a G.B. Guadagnini violin kindly on loan from Jonathan Sparey.

We’ve had the pleasure of performing with Fenella on three previous occasions: for Bruch’s *Violin Concerto No. 1* in November 2008, for Prokofiev’s *Violin Concerto No. 1* in March 2014 and for Korngold’s *Violin Concerto* in June 2017. Fenella was originally due to return in June 2020 to perform the Szymanowski, but that concert was cancelled by the pandemic, and we’re delighted that we’re finally able to perform it with her tonight.

Find out more about Fenella and her forthcoming engagements at fenellahumphreys.com.

Levon Parikian – Conductor

Levon Parikian has been one of our regular conductors since 2000, and our Musical Director since 2004.

After studying conducting with Michael Rose, David Parry and George Hurst, Lev went to St Petersburg to study with the great Russian teacher Ilya Musin. Since completing his studies, he has pursued a freelance career and is much in demand as Guest Conductor with orchestras in Britain. He currently holds Principal Conductor posts with several London-based orchestras, is Principal Conductor of the City of Oxford Orchestra, and Artistic Director of The Rehearsal Orchestra. He has worked extensively with students and youth orchestras, including the Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra, National Youth Strings Academy, Royal College of Music Junior Sinfonia, and at Royal Holloway, University of London, where he also taught conducting for fifteen years. In 2012, Lev conducted the UK première of Armen Tigranian's opera *Anoush* with London Armenian Opera. In 2014 he conducted the BBC Concert Orchestra in a re-recording of the theme tune for *Hancock's Half Hour* for lost episodes recorded for broadcast on BBC Radio 4. Lev conducted the BBC Concert Orchestra again, along with violinist Jack Liebeck, for *Raptures*, the debut orchestral album of composer Stuart Hancock which was released in November 2019.

Lev has a parallel career as a writer, and his latest book, *Taking Flight: The Evolutionary Story of Life on the Wing*, published in May 2023, was shortlisted for the 2023 Royal Society Trivedi Science Book Prize. He also writes regularly for The Guardian's *Country Diary*. Lev's previous books include: *Waving, Not Drowning*, an entertaining insight into the conductor's world; *Why Do Birds Suddenly Disappear?*, a sorry tale of atrocious birdwatching; *Into the Tangled Bank*, an exploration of our relationship with nature longlisted for the Wainwright Prize; *Music to Eat Cake By*, a collection of essays commissioned by readers; and *Light Rain Sometimes Falls: A British Year Through Japan's 72 Seasons* which was published in September 2021. For further information, visit levparikian.com.

John Crawford - Leader

John Crawford has been our leader since September 2006.

John received his early musical training in Sheffield, but later was able to study with Molly Mack at the Royal Academy of Music through the help of the National Youth Orchestra. He won a Foundation Scholarship to the Royal College of Music where he studied with Leonard Hirsch. After further study in Vienna and Siena, John joined the BBC Symphony Orchestra where he played for a decade. A growing interest in teaching led to his appointment as principal violin teacher at the Keski-Pohjanmaan Conservatory in Finland. John now combines a busy performing life with teaching at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, the Purcell School and the Royal College of Music Junior Department.

John is also a qualified teacher of the Alexander Technique and has had a lifelong interest in freedom of movement for musicians. He works regularly as an adjudicator and leads the Ernest Read Symphony Orchestra as well as CSO.

Camden Symphony Orchestra

Violin I

John Crawford (Leader)
Ashleigh Watkins
Hannah Min
Marianne Tweedie
Nick Sexton
Susie Bokor
Robbie Nichols
Sarah Benson
Diana Muggleston
Martin Fraenkel
Jasmine Cullingford

Violin II

Sheila Hayman
Josh Hillman
Marion Fleming
Jo Wilson
Josie Pearson
Nanako Kimura
Martin Young
Mark Denza
Lyndsey Silver

Viola

James Taylor
Ingolf Becker
Roz Norkett
Sarah Dewis
Isobel Jones
Joanna Dunmore
Stephen Brown

Cello

Susan Delgado
Jane Brett-Jones
Denis Ribeiro
Andrew Erskine
Antje Saunders
Benjamin Phipps
Richard Campkin
Sophie Linton

Double Bass

James Mott
Mark McCarthy
Adam Churchyard
MiJi Plum

Flute

Amanda Lockhart Knight
Jarad Slater

Oboe

Rachel Messiter
Adam Bakker

Cor Anglais

Adam Bakker

Clarinet

Sheena Balmain
Jess Sullivan

Bassoon

David Robson
Sebastian Till
Thomas Feild
Lou Emmel

Horn

Ed Dorman
John Isaacs
Michael Slater
Gwen McDougal

Trumpet

Sarah Hall
Daniel Haigh

Cornet

Becky Strentz
Katie Bannister

Trombone

Kirk Robinson
Amelia Lewis
Peter Biddlecombe

Tuba

Sean Byrne
Stanley Aitken

Piano

Jo Lappin

Harp

Laura Marquino
Clara Gatti Comini

Timpani

Keith Price
Fran Lombardelli

Percussion

Rebecca Celebuski
Dan Johnstone
Lewis Blackstone

Forthcoming Concerts

Saturday 16th November 2024 at 7.30pm

St Cyprian's Church, Glentworth Street, London, NW1 6AX

Humperdinck - *Hansel and Gretel Prelude*
Bloch - *Violin Concerto* (Soloist: Hana Mizuta Spencer)
Elgar - *Symphony No. 1*

Saturday 22nd March 2025 at 7.30pm

St Cyprian's Church, Glentworth Street, London, NW1 6AX

Marquez - *Danzon No. 2*
Bernstein - *West Side Story Symphonic Dances*
Moncayo - *Huapango*
Estevez - *Mediodia en el Llano*
Piazzolla - *Tangazo*
Marquez - *Conga del Fuego Nuevo*
Abreu - *Tico Tico*

Saturday 28th June 2025 at 7.30pm

St Cyprian's Church, Glentworth Street, London, NW1 6AX

Berlioz - *Béatrice et Bénédict Overture*
Bowen - *Viola Concerto* (Soloist: Rosalind Ventris)
Sibelius - *Symphony No. 1*

For further details about future concerts, including ticket information, visit:

www.camdenso.org.uk

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