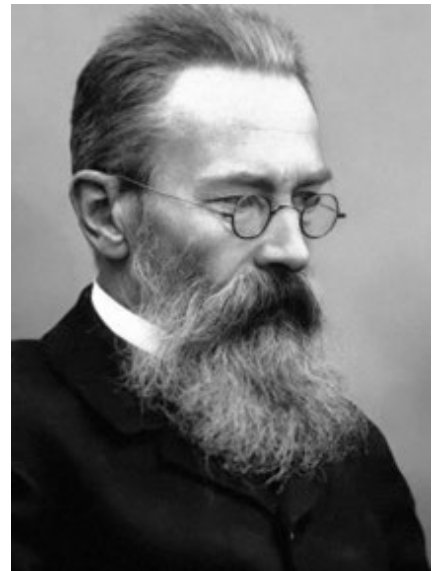




C A M D E N
S Y M P H O N Y
O R C H E S T R A

Summer Concert



Conductor Levon Parikian
Leader John Crawford
Cello Ben Tarlton

Saturday 20th June 2026 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 2025-2026 season, which opens with Dorothy Howell's *Lamia*. The success of its debut gained the composer recognition as the 'English Strauss'. We're thrilled to welcome back Ben Tarlton to perform Saint-Saëns' *Cello Concerto No. 1*. In the second half, we journey into the colourful world of *The Arabian Nights* with Rimsky-Korsakov's electrifying *Scheherazade*. We look forward to seeing you again in November, and if you enjoy our concerts, please do consider becoming a Friend of the Orchestra - and thank you to 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 Brahms, Elgar, Berlioz, Florence Price and Tchaikovsky, Bernstein's *West Side Story Symphonic Dances*, music from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* and Holst's *The Planets*. 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 violin concertos by Bloch, Bruch and Szymanowski, piano concertos by Beethoven and Gershwin and York Bowen's *Viola Concerto*. We have also performed several operas and many choral works over the years.

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.



Follow us on Instagram and Facebook and join our mailing list, via the links at: www.camdenso.org.uk.

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





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

Dorothy Howell

Lamia

Camille Saint-Saëns

Cello Concerto No. 1

Soloist: Ben Tarlton

~ Interval ~

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

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Scheherazade

Thank you for not photographing and filming the orchestra while we're performing as this can be very distracting for players and audience members.

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.

Dorothy Howell (1898-1982)

Lamia (1918)

Howell was an English composer and pianist, born in Birmingham. From a young age, she studied piano and composition and was encouraged by her parents. She came from a musical family: her father, Charles Edward Howell, was an ironmaster by trade and self-taught pianist whilst her mother, Viola Rosetta Feeny, was the daughter of Alfred Feeny, Arts and Music Critic for the Birmingham Daily Post. Dorothy preferred music to regular academia, and began her studies at the Royal Academy of Music aged just 15, where her talents were quickly acknowledged. She won the Hine Prize for composition of an English Ballad in 1914.

Howell achieved her greatest fame aged 21, with this symphonic poem. *Lamia*, inspired by the Keats' poem of the same name, was premiered under the baton of Sir Henry Wood at the Proms on 10th September 1919. Wood conducted *Lamia* again on 13th September 1919 and in six subsequent Proms seasons, and so perhaps it's unsurprising that Howell dedicated *Lamia* to Wood when it was published in 1921. The piece was an immediate critical success, with Howell described as the "English Strauss" in a press review of *Lamia*'s first performance. Sadly, after 1940 the piece was neglected and was only revived in 2010. It was given a centenary performance at the Proms in 2019 and has now been restored to the repertoire.

*Dorothy Howell
photographed in 1919,
the year of Lamia's
triumphant debut.*



Keats' poem tells the story of a snake that transforms into a woman and falls in love with Lycius, but their relationship is doomed. During the wedding scene, she is recognised and is forever turned back to her original form, never to find love again. *Lamia* is full of English pastoral sounds, big dramatic lyrical lines and has a sizable orchestration. The ebb and flow throughout the piece resonate the story, with bold brass lines accentuating its intensity and the revelation at the end. Howell writes lyrical themes, initially assigned to a soloist and then played by the ensemble. At the time of the premiere many critics wrote about her bold use of brass, which dominates sections of *Lamia*. Her daring style and talented ear for detail make for a striking work.

Sir Henry Wood continued to champion Howell's music throughout his lifetime, although she refused to attend his conducting class and instead became a teacher at the Royal Academy of Music. Wood conducted several of her later compositions, including the ballet score *Koong Shee* in 1921 and her *Piano Concerto* in 1923 and 1927 (with the composer as pianist). Under the headline, "Girl Composer Plays Solo Part in Her Own Concerto", the Daily Mail reported that the work was, "of remarkable promise for so young an artist". Howell's concert overture *The Rock*, inspired by a visit to Gibraltar, was premiered at the 1928 Proms. In 1940, Wood was scheduled to conduct the premiere of *Three Divertissements*, her last known orchestral work, but the concert was cancelled due to the Blitz.

During World War II, Howell served with the Women's Land Army, and during the post-war period she focused on teaching before retiring in 1970. For many years she tended the grave of Sir Edward Elgar in Malvern on behalf of the Elgar Society, and it was in Malvern that she died in 1982. She was buried near Elgar in the churchyard of St Wulstan's Roman Catholic Church, Little Malvern. Howell's legacy has benefitted from the growing prominence of music by women composers over the last few years, and she is one of four women composers (along with Dame Ethel Smyth, Rebecca Clarke and Doreen Carwithen) featured in Leah Broad's award-winning group biography *Quartet: How Four Women Changed the Musical World*, published in 2023, which has drawn attention to Howell's enduring influence on composition.

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Cello Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Opus 33 (1872)

Allegro non troppo – Allegretto con moto – Tempo primo

Born in Paris, Camille Saint-Saëns was an organist, pianist and composer of music steeped in the classical French tradition. He showed remarkable talent from an early age; at the age of three he could read and write and had begun piano lessons, by the time he was five he had begun composing and he made his piano debut aged ten to an audience in Paris. In 1848, he began studies on the organ and in composition at the Paris Conservatoire. He was appointed organist of the Church de la Madeleine in 1857 where he remained for 20 years. Whilst working as a piano teacher, he taught Gabriel Fauré and in 1871, Saint-Saëns co-founded the Société Nationale de Musique, established to promote contemporary French chamber and orchestral music. During this association, he composed many of his better-known works, including his *Cello Concerto No.1*.

Saint-Saëns composed the concerto in 1872 for the eminent French cellist Auguste Tolbecque, who performed its premiere at a Paris Conservatoire concert in January 1873. It is a mainstay of the cello repertoire, alongside the works of Joseph Haydn, Robert Schumann, Edward Elgar and Antonín Dvořák, and it remains one of the French composer's most popular works with concert hall audiences being greatly admired by composers and musicians alike. The concerto's appeal is noted by the French writer Romain Rolland, who wrote in 1908, "His music strikes us by its calm, its tranquil harmonies, its velvety modulations, its crystal clearness, its smooth and flowing style, and an elegance that cannot be put into words".

Saint-Saëns avoided using the typical three movement concerto form for something that unfolds more organically: a single movement in three parts where the musical material of the

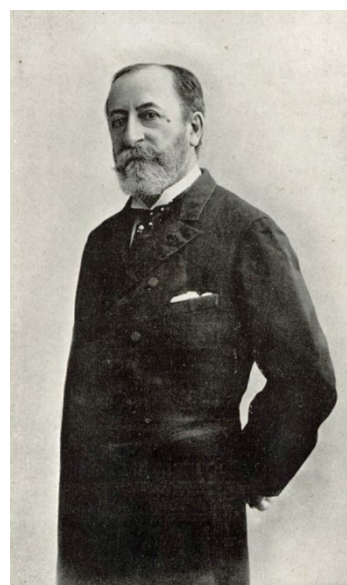
first section returns and is developed in the third. The work is characterised by a lyrical freedom, which highlights the cello's virtuosic capacity as a solo instrument as well as demonstrating its sonorous tone. Used subtly and delicately, the orchestra and soloist interact dynamically throughout.

The French cellist Auguste Tolbecque who was also a composer and noted luthier, writing three authoritative books on making and restoring stringed instruments.



The concerto begins with an impetuous theme of rushing triplets for the soloist which recurs throughout the piece. For contrast, a lyrical second theme for the cello is accompanied by sedate, chordal strings. The vibrant opening theme soon returns, and the entire orchestra joins for a developmental discussion. The lyrical theme is heard again as part of the concerto's central section, a slow movement with the spirit of a delicate minuet embellished by a simple, flowing melody from the soloist. The mood is broken by a return of the rushing triplet theme which acts as a link to the concerto's final section. After a brief pause, the cellist introduces a gently syncopated theme, the music builds on this and later adds another in the cello's sonorous, low register as it calls forth increasingly brilliant technicality from the soloist. The rushing triplets return for a final time, to mark the beginning of the coda and to launch the concerto towards its invigorating enthusiastic finish.

Saint-Saëns photographed in around 1880, a few years after his first cello concerto was completed. He would write a second in 1902.





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Scheherazade, Opus 35 (1888)

I The Sea and Sinbad's Ship (Largo e maestoso – Lento - Allegro non troppo - Tranquillo)

II The Story of the Kalender Prince (Lento – Andantino - Allegro molto - Vivace scherzando - Moderato assai - Allegro molto ed animato)

III The Young Prince and the Young Princess (Andantino quasi allegretto - Pochissimo più mosso - Come prima - Pochissimo più animato)

IV The Festival of Baghdad - The Sea - The Ship Breaks Against a Cliff Surmounted by a Bronze Horseman. (Allegro molto – Lento – Vivo - Allegro non troppo e maestoso - Tempo come I)

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov was a Russian composer, and a member of the group of prominent composers known as The Five. He was a master of orchestration, and his best-known orchestral compositions, including *Capriccio Espagnol* and the *Russian Easter Festival Overture* as well as the symphonic suite *Scheherazade*, are considered staples of the classical music repertoire. Following on from his first career in the Russian navy, Rimsky-Korsakov contributed significantly to Russian musical life in the second half of the nineteenth century. He was also head of the conservatory in St Petersburg where his great ability as an orchestrator and teacher of orchestration is one of his many legacies.

On 27th February 1887, the acclaimed Russian composer Alexander Borodin, another member of The Five, was attending a party when, after dancing a waltz, he passed away suddenly from a heart attack. The composer's death sent shockwaves through Russia's musical circles. As both his friend and as a fellow composer, Rimsky-Korsakov felt the loss greatly and soon went to Borodin's apartment to save his music. There he recovered Borodin's unfinished masterpiece, the opera *Prince Igor*, and he immediately resolved to complete it.

In the winter of 1888, Rimsky-Korsakov was hard at work on *Prince Igor*. Borodin's epic opera was filled with striking, exotic music that fired Rimsky-Korsakov's imagination, and he soon conceived the idea of composing an orchestral suite full of his own exotic melodies. His subject: *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights* (first published in English as *The Arabian Nights*), the collection of Middle Eastern folktales compiled during the Islamic Golden Age. Rimsky-Korsakov's suite is the best known of numerous pieces of music inspired by *The Arabian Nights*, which has also inspired many works of literature and art, and film and television adaptations.



Rimsky-Korsakov at work as painted by the renowned Russian portraitist Valentin Serov in 1898, now in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.

As a collection of folk tales, *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights* includes stories that have their roots across the Middle East, North Africa and Asia over several centuries. The common motif is Scheherazade, the eponymous heroine who entertains her bridegroom, the murderous sultan, with intriguing tales hoping to delay the arrival of the executioner who had beheaded a thousand previous wives the morning after their successive weddings. The peaceful coda at the end of the final movement of Rimsky-Korsakov's suite is representative of Scheherazade finally winning over the heart of the Sultan, allowing her to gain a peaceful night's sleep at last.

Throughout *Scheherazade*, several musical themes recur. However, Rimsky-Korsakov was adamant about the generality of this "musical data". He wrote, "All I had desired was that the hearer, if he liked my piece as symphonic music, should carry away the impression that it is beyond doubt an oriental narrative of some numerous and varied fairy-tale wonders and not merely four pieces played one after the other and composed on the basis of themes common to all the four movements. Nonetheless, the two ideas presented at the opening of the work do bear some later significance. These are the themes of the stern Sultan (trombones, low woodwinds, and strings in unison) and of Scheherazade (solo violin and harp). The composer used the latter as a unifying device throughout the suite, presenting it as introductions to the first, second, and fourth movements and as an interlude in the third. At the end of the work, the theme of Scheherazade and the theme of the Sultan are joined in a final moment of quiet sensuousness".

Opening Themes

["The Sultan":]



["Scheherezade":]



Scheherazade premiered in St Petersburg on 28th October 1888, conducted by the composer. The reasons for its popularity are clear enough: it is a score full of beguiling orchestral colours, fresh and piquant melodies, a mild oriental flavour, a rhythmic vitality largely absent from many major orchestral works of the later 19th century.

The first movement takes us on a sea-tossed voyage with Sinbad, the mythic sailor. Through the adventure, the Sultan's motif is transformed into a majestic and heroic statement. Scheherazade's captivating story is filled with endless twists and turns. The music is constantly modulating, and the ends of phrases lead continuously to new beginnings. From the solo cello to the horn, new "characters" enter the drama and converse.

The second movement takes us on a new path. A wistful melody, first heard in the bassoon, introduces us to Kalender, a magician and mystic. The melody, which resembles a Russian folksong, develops through a series of variations. The Sultan's theme emerges during pizzicato passages played by the lower strings. Simultaneously, Scheherazade's voice takes the form of a lament in the oboe. The movement grows into a spirited scherzo. In one passage, a thrilling dialogue unfolds over the hushed intensity of pizzicato strumming. The movement ends as the ultimate exhilarating cliffhanger.

The third movement is a tender love song. Its graceful notes echo Scheherazade's theme. As the movement develops, it becomes increasingly youthful and vivacious. Then, the story halts as Scheherazade, through the solo violin, appears to speak directly. Following a passionate climax, the final bars drift off to conclude the movement.

In the opening of the final movement, we are transported to a lively festival with a boisterous dance, accompanied by the tambourine and cymbals. Themes from previous movements return, and the excitement builds. We return to Sinbad's ship, this time tossed by gigantic, tempestuous waves. The story ends with a violent shipwreck. Scheherazade sings a gentle lullaby and the now accepting Sultan drifts off into blissful sleep.

The stories of The Arabian Nights have inspired numerous works of art, including this collage, Scheherazade, by London artist Henry Mathews from 1982.





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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Dr Eduardo Álvarez Armas
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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.
- Complimentary refreshments with those concert tickets.

For a donation of **£25** per year, **Silver Friends** will receive:

- A free ticket for one concert per year.
- Complimentary refreshments at that concert.

All Friends will also receive:

- An acknowledgement in each programme (unless you prefer to remain anonymous).
- The opportunity to attend a rehearsal, giving insight into how the orchestra works.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at info@camdenso.org.uk.

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I would like to make a donation of £_____ to Camden Symphony Orchestra.

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Ben Tarlton - Cello



Ben Tarlton is a London-based cellist and enjoys a varied career as a soloist, chamber musician, teacher and festival director. As of June 2026, he will be the new cellist in the award-winning Mithras Trio.

In September 2024, Ben performed with the Basler Madrigalisten in Bern and Basel where they gave the world premiere of Christian Henking's *Stone Mountain* for cello and choir, amongst other works, and were invited to repeat the programme at Schlosskonzerte Spiez. As a part of a BBC Radio 3 'Total Immersion' Concert in Milton Court Concert Hall, Ben gave the UK premiere of Anders Hillborg's *Duo for Cello and Piano* in 2020, on which The Guardian commented, "playing with extraordinary precision and insight".

Other concert highlights include recitals at Wigmore Hall, St James's Church Piccadilly, St Martin-in-the-Fields and concerto performances at Cadogan Hall, Sinfonia Smith Square, West Road Concert Hall, BBC Hoddinott Hall and Dora Stoutzker Hall. In 2022, he performed in Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time* in the Barbican Hall, which was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and reviewed by The Guardian as "sensationally played".

Born in Wales, Ben studied with Sharon McKinley and Alexander Baillie before attending the Yehudi Menuhin School to study with Thomas Carroll. He completed his Bachelor's and Master's at The Guildhall School of Music and Drama with Louise Hopkins, supported by Help Musicians UK and The Countess of Munster Trust. During his time at The Guildhall School, Ben was selected as a Fellow to participate in the 2016 Piatigorsky Cello Festival in Los Angeles. He performed as a soloist with the Guildhall Symphony Orchestra for The LSO's Donatella Flick Conducting Competition Semi-Finalists, frequently performed in the BBC Radio 3 'Total Immersion' projects and was a Finalist in the 2020 Guildhall Gold Medal concerto competition. Ben regularly gave performances as a Concordia Foundation Artist and a Park Lane Group Artist in major London venues and was the recipient of numerous awards.

Ben is Festival Director of the Llantwit Major Chamber Music Festival and was awarded the 2022 Master's Award from the Livery Company of Wales, contributing to the festival's educational work. He was a cello teacher at The Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama from 2021-2025, a member of Sinfonia Cymru from 2017-2025 and invited to be guest Course Director for the 2022 Pro Corda Cello Course in Suffolk.

Ben plays on a William Forster cello generously loaned to him by The Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain. Ben performed Brahms' *Double Concerto* with us in 2022, with violinist Samuel Staples, and we're delighted to welcome him back this evening.

Find out more about Ben, including details of his forthcoming engagements, at bentarltoncello.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
Nick Sexton
Marianne Tweedie
Sara Hourani
Susie Bokor
Martin Fraenkel
Lakshmi Sundaram
Breanna Fernandes
Jasmine Cullingford
Mark Denza

Violin II

Josh Hillman
Jo Wilson
Marion Fleming
Lea Bellamy
Kathy He
Nanako Kimura
Diana Muggleston
Angel Chen
Sheila Hayman
Kristin Zhu

Viola

James Taylor
Ingolf Becker
Roz Norkett
Isobel Jones
Lottie Copley
Sarah Dewis
Joanna Dunmore
Dominic Yeo

Cello

Susan Delgado
Jane Brett-Jones
Denis Ribeiro
Andrew Erskine
Antje Saunders
Benjamin Phipps
Sophie Linton
Alice Jeacocke
Rebecca Duncan

Double Bass

James Mott
Aarón Aguayo Juarez
Arwyn Ivey
Ginny Lewis

Flute

Amanda Lockhart Knight
Adam Stoodley

Piccolo

Tommaso Valletti

Oboe

Rachel Messiter
Rachel Sutton

Cor Anglais

Adam Bakker

Clarinet

Sheena Balmain
Noriko Lody

Bass Clarinet

Jess Sullivan

Bassoon

David Robson
Sebastian Till

Horn

Ed Dorman
John Isaacs
Gwen McDougal
Beatrice Driver

Trumpet

Sarah Hall
Daniel Haigh
Kieran Booker

Trombone

Kirk Robinson
Sam Dawes
Peter Biddlecombe

Tuba

Ramon Branch Biescas

Timpani

Owain Williams

Percussion

Francisco Negreiros
Toril Azzalini-Machecler
Bryony Che
Mariella Bromfield
Chris Thomas

Harp

Harrison Chau

Forthcoming Concerts

Saturday 21st November 2026 at 7.30pm

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

Benjamin Britten *Four Sea Interludes*

Sergei Rachmaninov *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*

Dmitri Shostakovich *Symphony No. 5*

Our next season opens with Britten's evocative *Four Sea Interludes* in the 50th anniversary year of the composer's death, and also includes Rachmaninov's dazzling *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and Shostakovich's monumental *Symphony No. 5*, a crucial work in restoring the composer's reputation.

~

Saturday 13th March 2027 at 7.30pm

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

Mieczysław Karłowicz *Violin Concerto*

Jean Sibelius *Symphony No. 2*

Polish composer Mieczysław Karłowicz's rarely performed *Violin Concerto* is a masterpiece of late-Romantic virtuosity showcasing the violin at its most captivating. Sibelius's *Symphony No. 2* is one of the most beloved works in the repertoire, taking listeners on a powerful emotional journey.

~

Saturday 19th June 2027 at 7.30pm

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

Programme to be announced.

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