



## Many Happy Returns

**Vasily Petrenko and the Oslo Philharmonic celebrate acclaimed Norwegian orchestra's centenary year with major UK tour (6-10 March 2019)**

"Vasily Petrenko's Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra play as if possessed," *Arts Desk*

The Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra's centenary celebrations in 2019 are set to reach far beyond Norway thanks to an ambitious programme of international tours under the leadership of Chief Conductor, Vasily Petrenko. The critically acclaimed partnership returns to the UK to give five anniversary year concerts. Their tour programmes draw from a list of orchestral masterworks comprising Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No.3 and Symphony No.1, Delius's *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*, Grieg's Piano Concerto and Sibelius's Symphony No.5. Nikolai Lugansky will join the tourists as soloist in the Grieg and in Rachmaninov's fiendishly difficult Third Piano Concerto. The Oslo Philharmonic's tour itinerary begins at St David's Hall, Cardiff on Wednesday 6 March 2019, and continues with concerts at Nottingham's Royal Concert Hall (Thursday 7 March), Symphony Hall Birmingham (Friday 8 March), Leeds Town Hall (Saturday 9 March) and Sage Gateshead (Sunday 10 March).

"We want the greatest possible number of people to hear the Oslo Philharmonic in its centenary year," comments Vasily Petrenko. "This tour of the UK is an important part of our international celebrations. I'm very glad that, because of it, British audiences will have the chance to hear the orchestra during its landmark anniversary. Our tour repertoire will be familiar to a broad audience and the variety of pieces we'll be doing is also very good for the orchestra. This is wonderful music that stirs deep emotions among performers and listeners alike. We are delighted to share these rich programmes with audiences across the UK."

The Russian conductor also looks forward to renewing his long artistic partnership with Nikolai Lugansky. "We are good friends and have been collaborators over many years," recalls Petrenko. "Nikolai belongs to a very aristocratic tradition of Rachmaninov playing. He reveals all the passion and warmth in Rachmaninov's music without ever going over the top. The Third Piano Concerto is not just a showpiece for him; he goes deep into the music to explore what's there beneath the surface. And we will play Grieg's magnificent Piano Concerto together with an orchestra that has the composer's music in its blood. Grieg created the organisation from which the Oslo Philharmonic grew a century ago."

Vasily Petrenko's choice of Sibelius's Fifth Symphony was influenced by the Oslo Philharmonic's long tradition of performing the Finnish composer's music. It also flows naturally from the Sibelius legacy established in Oslo by Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Petrenko's immediate predecessor as the orchestra's Chief Conductor. "I'm continuing this proud tradition," he observes, "and am delighted that we will bring what is one of the most intense of the Sibelius symphonies to the UK."

The Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra's Chief Executive Officer, Ingrid Røynesdal, is certain that tour audiences will sense the excitement surrounding her organisation's centenary. "We're already seeing a huge increase of interest surrounding our anniversary," she notes. "It's always fantastic for us to come back to the UK. Vasily has an especially strong profile there and is held in such affection by British audiences. It's a joy for us to be part of that. To be able to play in great halls in one of the world's most important centres for classical music is always special, but will be doubly so for us in 2019 because of the orchestra's centenary year and the excitement and energy that has already been generated."

While the Oslo Philharmonic's centenary provides an opportunity to reflect on its history, Røynesdal says that the year's main focus will be on the orchestra of today and the orchestra of the future. "We'll explore the art of listening" she comments. "We believe that the orchestra, as a symbol for listening, can help people explore how the closer we listen to one another, the closer together society grows. We will also present a major European tour as part of our centenary. International tours belong to a broader outreach process that includes building new audiences at home and overseas."

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**Tour dates**

**Oslo Philharmonic**  
**Vasily Petrenko** conductor  
**Nikolai Lugansky** piano

**Wednesday 6 March 2019**  
**St. David's Hall, Cardiff, 7.30pm**  
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*Tchaikovsky Romeo and Juliet*  
**Rachmaninov** Piano Concerto No. 3  
**Sibelius** Symphony No. 5

**Thursday 7 March 2019**  
**Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham, 7.30pm**  
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*Tchaikovsky Romeo and Juliet*  
**Rachmaninov** Piano Concerto No. 3  
**Sibelius** Symphony No. 5

**Friday 8 March 2019**  
**Symphony Hall, Birmingham, 7.30pm**  
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*Delius On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*  
**Grieg** Piano Concerto  
**Sibelius** Symphony No. 5

**Saturday 9 March 2019**  
**Leeds Town Hall, 7.30pm**  
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*Tchaikovsky Romeo and Juliet*  
**Grieg** Piano Concerto  
**Rachmaninov** Symphony No. 1

**Sunday 10 March 2019**  
**The Sage, Gateshead, 3pm**  
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*Delius On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*  
**Grieg** Piano Concerto  
**Sibelius** Symphony No. 5