



Unity From Diversity

Vasily Petrenko casts fresh light on familiar repertoire and explores little-known and new works across fascinating 2023-24 season

Conductor's acclaimed partnership with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra continues to grow with *Icons Rediscovered* series at London's Royal Albert Hall and Royal Festival Hall

Season highlights include 150th anniversary celebration of Verdi's *Requiem*, a Tchaikovsky double-bill of *The Nutcracker* (Act II) and *Iolanta*, and guest engagements in Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Dresden, Hamburg, Seoul, Hong Kong, Pittsburgh, Dallas, Liverpool, Oslo and Valladolid

'Petrenko's left hand was hypnotic to watch, shaping phrases, highly expressive and fluid. The players responded by giving it their all, thrillingly, elementally,' *The Arts Desk*, 25 March 2022

Variety and versatility are among the hallmarks of Vasily Petrenko's concert programmes throughout the coming year. He is set to launch his third season as Music Director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with *Icons Rediscovered*, a series of eight concerts that offer fresh perspectives on the music of Elgar, Rachmaninov, Tchaikovsky and Wagner, and lead the ensemble on tour to Italy, the United States, Germany and Austria. His well-stocked schedule also includes guest conducting engagements with, among others, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Oslo and Hong Kong Philharmonic, the Pittsburgh and Dallas Symphony orchestras, and debut performances with the NDR-Elbphilharmonie Orchester, the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra and the Berner Symphonieorchester.

Under Vasily Petrenko's direction, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra has received critical acclaim and audience ovations for their performances of grand choral works such as Britten's *War Requiem* and Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* and for Mahler's monumental Second and Eighth Symphonies. "We are enjoying each other's company," he notes. "The orchestra is in such great shape already, so it's always a joy to be there. We will precede our 2023-24 season with a concert on 15 August at the BBC Proms, which will include Ligeti's *Lontano*, rarely performed today, Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto with Alexandre Kantorow and Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony. I firmly believe that music can be a tool to unify people, to bring them together and share the same emotions regardless of their nationalities, or political, ethical or religious backgrounds. These concerts are accessible for everyone to enjoy together. This is so important for increasing mutual respect and trust in the world."

Icons Rediscovered includes three landmark projects at the Royal Albert Hall. The first, scheduled for 8 November, pairs the second act of Tchaikovsky's final ballet *The Nutcracker* with *Iolanta*, the composer's last finished opera. *Iolanta* is based on a one-act Danish play about a king's blind daughter and the miraculous, magical restoration of her sight. Both works were staged together for the first time in December 1892 at the Mariinsky Theatre in St Petersburg. "Tchaikovsky intended both works to be performed on the same bill," notes Petrenko. "But it appears that the director of the Imperial Theatres realised there was more money to be made from playing them on separate evenings, so that connection was soon broken. We have an excellent cast, with Maria Motolygina as *Iolanta*, Alexander Tsymbalyuk, with whom I have just performed *Boris Godunov* at the Bavarian State Opera, as King René, Alexey Dolgov as Count Vaudémont and Andrei Kymach as Robert, and will do somewhat more than a semi-staged version. Both *Iolanta* and *The Nutcracker* are, in a way, about a teenage girl becoming a woman in the psychological sense. It will be fascinating to put them together again."

Petrenko and the RPO return to the Royal Albert Hall on 13 March with an all-Wagner bill. The evening recalls the Grand Wagner Festival held at the Royal Albert Hall in May 1877, arranged to help offset the dire financial losses accrued by the first Bayreuth Festival eight months earlier. Wagner conducted during the first halves of

eight Albert Hall concerts before taking his place onstage in a large armchair to listen to his music being conducted by the young Hans Richter. "In some ways this will be a reconstruction of what Wagner himself conducted," notes Vasily Petrenko. "He heard that Queen Victoria was a big fan of his music and knew about this new royal concert hall in London. Wagner, who organised the concerts to raise money for Bayreuth, usually conducted the opening overture and then sat down facing the audience, accepting the admiration! We will begin with his *Huldigungsmarsch*, which he wrote for the birthday of Ludwig II of Bavaria in 1864, and then perform fragments from *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Wotan's "Abendlich strahlt der Sonne Auge" from *Das Rheingold* with Matthew Rose, and selections from *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung* including 'The Ride of the Valkyries' and 'Wotan's Farewell' from the former and 'Siegfried's Funeral Music' from the latter."

The third of the RPO's Albert Hall concerts, on 23 April 2024, marks the 150th anniversary of Verdi's *Requiem*. The work was first performed in Milan in May 1874. It received its UK premiere exactly a year later at the Royal Albert Hall under Verdi's direction, complete with the first performance of the composer's new setting of the 'Liber scriptus' for mezzo-soprano. "Verdi's *Requiem* is ideally suited to the Royal Albert Hall," says Vasily Petrenko. "We have a terrific solo quartet in Miah Persson, Jennifer Johnston, Stefano La Colla and Alexander Vinogradov, and we will be joined again by the Philharmonia Chorus."

Icons Rediscovered includes five Royal Festival Hall concerts built around works by Elgar and Rachmaninov. The series opens on 29 October with Lera Auerbach's surging symphonic poem *Icarus* from 2006, Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No.2 with Nikolai Lugansky as soloist and Elgar's Symphony No.1. Petrenko has also programmed the second symphonies of Elgar and Rachmaninov, the latter's Piano Concerto No.3 and *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*, with 2022 Van Cliburn Competition Gold Medallist Yunchan Lim as Alexander Malofeev as respective soloists, Elgar's *Falstaff* and *Cockaigne (In London Town)*, Ethel Smyth's Overture to *The Wreckers* and Richard Strauss's 'Brentano Lieder' with Jennifer France as soprano soloist. The series includes the compelling combination of Elgar's concert overture *In the South (Alassio)*, Mieczysław Weinberg's Cello Concerto, with Sheku-Kanneh Mason as soloist, and Rachmaninov's choral symphony *The Bells* (11 April). "Although Elgar was sixteen years older than Rachmaninov, their careers both took off in the early 1900s," observes Vasily Petrenko. "There's a certain nostalgia in their music, about their epoch and the century which has just ended. Elgar's music reflects Britain's great Edwardian era but also a sense of its sunset; Rachmaninov was always looking to this old, golden Russia of the 19th century. Of course their musical language is entirely different, but it will be fascinating to place them side by side and explore those contrasts as well as the feelings they share in common."

In addition to their work together at home, Petrenko and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra will undertake three major international tours as the season unfolds, starting with five concerts in Italy (12-16 September). Their overseas itinerary continues with twelve concerts in the United States (16-30 January), complete with the RPO's first Music Academy in Costa Mesa, California, and embraces six concerts in Germany and Austria (13-18 April). "Our big tour of the States will include a mini-residency in Costa Mesa and, I hope, it will help us to nurture young musicians in the area," comments Petrenko. "Some players from the RPO will coach the local teenagers and I will do some work with their youth orchestra. As well as our tours to Italy, Germany and Austria, we have several short visits to territories such as Abu Dhabi. We have a lot of projects together and the orchestra is in high demand. I am now doing around 15 weeks a year with the RPO, which is what you need to build an orchestra and raise its reputation."

Vasily Petrenko's 2023-24 season is rich in its share of guest dates. "I'm particularly looking forward to working for the first time with the Elbphilharmonie Orchestra in Lübeck and in the amazing acoustics of the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg (9 & 10 March)," he comments. "And I am delighted to be making my debut with the Berner Symphonieorchester (21 & 22 September) and, after many times of being invited but unable to accept because of other commitments, to have the chance to conduct the Sofia Philharmonic for the first time (21 December)."

Other season highlights of Petrenko's 2023-24 season include a programme with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra (28 & 29 September) comprising songs by Alma Mahler, with Karen Cargill as the mezzo-soprano soloist, and Gustav Mahler's Symphony No.5; the world premiere of Korean composer Jaejun Ryu's new trumpet concerto with the Seoul International Music Festival Orchestra (14 October); and, following rapidly after an acclaimed debut last season, two projects with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, the first including Ravel's complete *Daphnis et Chloé* ballet (1 & 2 December), the second pairing Richard Strauss's Serenade for 13 wind instruments Op.7 and a group of five songs, with Elizabeth Watts as soloist, with Mahler's Symphony No.4 (8 & 9 December).

“There’s a good deal of diversity in my guest programmes this season, which is something I now insist upon. With the Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León, for example, we will give the first performance of a new arrangement for orchestra of Falla’s piano piece *Fantasia Bætica* together with Tchaikovsky’s First Piano Concerto and Sibelius’ First Symphony (15 & 16 February). I have conducted well over 90 concerts with the orchestra in Valladolid over the past twenty years, which is more than any of its music directors have done since the orchestra was founded in 1991.”

As the orchestra’s Conductor Laureate, Vasily Petrenko will return to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic twice in the coming season, for Shostakovich’s Symphony No.11 together with Liadov’s tone poem *Kikimora* and Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto, with the young soloist Chistian Li (19 October), and the complete version of Stravinsky’s *The Firebird*, paired with Martinů’s *La bagarre*, a symphonic evocation of the jubilant crowd that greeted Charles Lindbergh at Le Bourget airfield outside Paris following the completion of the aviator’s pioneering solo transatlantic flight in May 1927, and Grieg’s Piano Concerto with Simon Trpčeski (22 February). The conductor is set to open his subsequent programme with the Oslo Philharmonic with Øyvind Torvund’s two *Symphonic Poems* and includes Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* and Prokofiev’s Seventh Symphony (28 & 29 February).

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The information in this press release was correct at the time of sending. Please check the organisations’ websites and social media for the latest updates.

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BBC PROMS

Tuesday 15 August 2023, 7.30pm

Royal Albert Hall, London

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Alexandre Kantorow** piano | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

Ligeti *Lontano*

Beethoven Piano Concerto No.4 in G major

Shostakovich Symphony No.10 in E minor

RPO ITALY TOUR 12-16 SEPTEMBER 2023 (soloist Julia Fischer)

Tuesday 12 September Merano, Wednesday 13 September Rimini, Thursday 14 September Milan, Friday 15 September Turin, Saturday 16 September 2023 Verona

Thursday 21 & Friday 22 September 2023, 7.30pm

Casino Bern

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Katia Labèque, Marielle Labèque** piano | **Berner Symphonieorchester**

Prokofiev Symphony No.1 ‘Classic’

Martinů Concerto for two pianos and orchestra

Sibelius Symphony No.5

Thursday 28 & Friday 29 September 2023, 7.30pm
DR Koncerthuset, Copenhagen

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Karen Cargill** mezzo-soprano | **Danish National Symphony Orchestra**

Alma Mahler Lieder
Gustav Mahler Symphony No.5

Saturday 14 October 2023, 5pm
Seoul Arts Center Concert Hall

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Gábor Boldoczki** trumpet | **Seoul International Music Festival Orchestra**

Brahms Tragic Overture, Op.81
Jaejun Ryu Trumpet Concerto (world premiere)
Brahms Symphony No.1

Thursday 19 October 2023, 7.30pm
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Christian Li** violin | **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra**

Liadov *Kikimora*
Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto
Shostakovich Symphony No.11 'The Year 1905'

Sunday 29 October 2023, 7.30pm
Royal Festival Hall, London

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Nikolai Lugansky** piano | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

Lera Auerbach *Icarus*
Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No.2
Elgar Symphony No.1

Wednesday 8 November 2023, 7.30pm
Royal Albert Hall, London

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Denni Sayers** choreographer | **Maria Motolygina** *Iolanta* | **Alexey Dolgov** Count Vaudémont | **Alexander Tsybalyuk** King René | **Andrei Kymach** Robert | **Vladislav Sulimsky** Ibn-Hakia | **Bekhzod Davronov** Almería | **Pavlo Hunka** Bertrand | **Veena Akama-Makia** Marta | **Isabela Díaz** Brigitta | **Gabrielė Kupšytė** Laura | **Philharmonia Chorus** | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

Tchaikovsky *The Nutcracker*. Act II
Tchaikovsky *Iolanta* (semi-staged)

Sunday 19 November 7.30pm (open rehearsal), Monday 20 November 2023 8pm
Teatro alla Scala, Milan

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Isabelle Faust** violin | **Filarmonica della Scala**

Adams *The Chairman Dances*
Bartók Concerto No.1 for Violin and Orchestra
Rachmaninov *Symphonic Dances*

Friday 1 & Saturday 2 December 2023, 8pm
Hong Kong Cultural Centre

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Nobuyuki Tsujii** piano | **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra**

Berlioz *Benvenuto Cellini*: Overture
Ravel Piano Concerto in G
Ravel *Daphnis et Chloé* (complete ballet music)

Friday 8 & Saturday 9 December 2023, 8pm
Hong Kong Cultural Centre

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Elizabeth Watts** soprano | **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra**

Strauss Serenade in E flat, Op.7
Strauss Five Lieder ('Das Rosenband', 'Ruhe, meine Seele!', 'Winterweih', 'Morgen!', 'Cäcilie')
Mahler Symphony No.4

Thursday 21 December 2023, 7pm
Bulgaria Hall, Sofia

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Children's Philharmonic Choir** | **Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra**

Tchaikovsky *The Nutcracker*

Friday 29 December 2023, 8pm
Teatro de la Maestranza, Seville

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Orquesta Fundación Barenboim-Said**

Rimsky-Korsakov *Scheherazade* symphonic suite
Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet* (suites 1 and 2)

RPO US TOUR 16-30 JANUARY 2024 (soloist Isata Kanneh-Mason)

Tuesday 16 January Palm Desert, Wednesday 17 January Santa Barbara, Thursday 18, Friday 19 & Saturday 20 January Costa Mesa, Sunday 21 January Northridge, Tuesday 23 January Kansas City, Wednesday 24 January Iowa City, Friday 26 January Greenvale, Sunday 28 January Fairfax, Monday 29 January Athens, Tuesday 30 January 2024 Winston-Salem

Thursday 8 February 2023, 7.30pm
Royal Festival Hall, London

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Jennifer France** soprano | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

Elgar *Cockaigne* Overture
Strauss Six Songs After Poems by Brentano
Rachmaninov Symphony No.2

Thursday 15 & Friday 16 February 2024, 7.30pm
Sala Sinfónica, Valladolid

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Martín García García** piano | **Orquesta Sinfónica de Castilla y León**

Falla (orch. Coll) *Fantasia Bætica*
Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No.1
Sibelius Symphony No.1

Thursday 22 February 2024, 7.30pm
Liverpool Philharmonic Hall

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Simon Trpčeski** piano | **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra**

Martinů *La bagarre*
Grieg Piano Concerto
Stravinsky *The Firebird* (complete)

Wednesday 28 & Thursday 29 February 2024, 7pm
Oslo Concert Hall

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Denis Kozhukhin** piano | **Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra**

Torvund *Symphonic Poems*
Gershwin *Rhapsody in Blue* (29 February only)
Prokofiev Symphony No.7

Saturday 9 March 2024 7.30pm, Musikhalle Lübeck
Sunday 10 March 2024 4pm & 6.30pm, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Anaëlle Turret** harp | **NDR-Elbphilharmonie Orchester**

Tchaikovsky *Romeo and Juliet*: Overture (9 March only)
Glière Harp Concerto Op.74
Prokofiev Symphony No.7

Wednesday 13 March 2024, 7.30pm
Royal Albert Hall, London

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Irene Theorin** soprano | **Andreas Schager** tenor | **Matthew Rose** baritone | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

Wagner *Huldigungsmarsch*
Wagner *Die Meistersinger*: Prelude to Act I and 'Was duftet doch der Flieder'
Wagner *Das Rheingold*: 'Abendlich strahlt der Sonne Auge'
Wagner *Die Walküre*: Ride of the Valkyries, Wotan's Farewell, Magic Fire Music
Wagner *Götterdämmerung*: Prologue: Dawn and Siegfried's Rhine Journey; Act I: Duet; Act III: Siegfried's Death and Funeral Music, Brünnhilde's Immolation and Finale

Saturday 23 March 7.30pm, Sunday 24 March 2024 11am & 6pm
Kulturpalast, Dresden

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Julia Fischer** violin | **Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra**

Elgar Violin Concerto (excluding 24 March 11am)
Brahms Symphony No.4

Wednesday 27 March 2024, 7.30pm
Royal Festival Hall, London

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Yunchan Lim** piano | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

Ethel Smyth *The Wreckers*: Overture
Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No.3
Elgar Symphony No.2

Thursday 11 April 2024, 7.30pm
Royal Festival Hall, London

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** cello | **Olga Pudova** soprano | **Pavel Petrov** tenor | **Andrei Kymach** baritone | **Philharmonia Chorus** | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

Elgar *In the South (Alassio)*
Weinberg Cello Concerto
Rachmaninov *The Bells*

RPO GERMANY, AUSTRIA TOUR 13-18 APRIL 2024 (soloists Sheku Kanneh-Mason / Isata Kanneh-Mason)

Saturday 13 April Essen, Sunday 14 April Baden-Baden, Monday 15 April Innsbruck, Tuesday 16 & Wednesday 17 Munich, Thursday 18 April 2024 Bregenz

Tuesday 23 April 2024, 7.30pm
Royal Albert Hall, London

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Miah Persson** soprano | **Jennifer Johnston** mezzo-soprano | **Stefano La Colla** tenor | **Alexander Vinogradov** bass | **Philharmonia Chorus** | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

Verdi *Requiem*

Friday 26 & Saturday 27 April 2024, 8pm
Palacio de la Ópera de A Coruña

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Sergei Dogadin** violin | **Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia**

Glazunov Violin Concerto in A minor, Op.82
Tchaikovsky *Manfred* Symphony

Saturday 4 May 2024 9pm, Charles Bronfman Auditorium, Tel Aviv

Monday 6 May 2024 8pm, Jerusalem Theatre

Tuesday 7 May 2024 8pm, Baruch and Ruth Rappaport Center for Art and Culture, Haifa

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Steven Osborne** piano | **Cécile Lartigau** ondes martenot | **Israel Philharmonic Orchestra**

Messiaen *Turangalila* Symphony

Thursday 9 May 7pm, Friday 10 May 11am, Saturday 11 May 2024 9pm
Charles Bronfman Auditorium, Tel Aviv

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Christianne Stotijn** mezzo-soprano | **Gwyn Hughes Jones** tenor | **Israel Philharmonic Orchestra**

Mozart Symphony No.35, K.385 'Haffner' (except for Intermezzo)
Mahler *Das Lied von der Erde*

Friday 17 May 2024 8.15pm, TivoliVredenburg Utrecht
Sunday 19 May 2024 11am, Congertgebouw, Amsterdam

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Noa Wildschut** violin | **Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra**

Respighi *Fontane di Roma* (17 May only)
Tchaikovsky / **Alexander Glazunov** *Souvenir d'un lieu cher*
Rimsky-Korsakov *Scheherazade*

Thursday 23 & Friday 24 May 7.30pm, Sunday 26 May 2024 3pm
Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center, Dallas

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Denis Kozhukhin** piano | **Dallas Symphony Children's Chorus** | **Dallas Symphony Orchestra**

Prokofiev Piano Concerto No.2
Walton Symphony No.1

Friday 31 May 8pm & Sunday 2 June 2024 2.30pm
Heinz Hall, Pittsburgh

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Benjamin Grosvenor** piano | **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra**

Dukas *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*
Liszt Piano Concerto No.1
Tchaikovsky *Manfred* Symphony

Sunday 9 June 2024, 3pm
Royal Festival Hall, London

Vasily Petrenko conductor | **Alexander Malofeev** piano | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

Rachmaninov Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini
Elgar *Falstaff*

Thursday 13 June 2024, 7.30pm
Palau de les Arts Valencia

Vasily Petrenko conductor | soprano, alto tenor, baritone TBC | **Cor de la Generalitat Valenciana** | **Orquestra de la Comunitat Valenciana**

Beethoven Symphony No.9