

LCO & FRIENDS THE ONE WITH KSENIJA SIDOROVA



FREE CONCERT PROGRAMME

WELCOME!

Hello and welcome to tonight's concert. We're very happy you're here.



Did you know the London Chamber Orchestra played a series of concerts at Hammersmith Apollo back in the 1990s? This innovative and seemingly 'out there' move wasn't that unusual for the LCO - the UK's first professional chamber orchestra - who have been innovating from day one. When the BBC began broadcasting concerts in the 1920s, most orchestras didn't want to be involved, fearing it'd mean curtains for live concerts, but the London Chamber Orchestra stepped up to the mic and was soon broadcasting regularly. Hop, skipping and jumping ahead to 1996, the LCO flew the GB flag as the only British orchestra to perform at the Atlanta Olympics arts festival. They were back on the podium as part of the London 2012 games and, just the year before, played to their biggest global audience yet - all 175 million of them - performing at the wedding of Prince William and Catherine Middleton.

We're resisting the urge to reel off more 'firsts' that we're super proud of so we can focus on the here and now. So, firstly, we'd like to say thank you so much for spending your evening - and your cash - with us. Our biggest hope is that you'll have a good time, and want to come back for more. There is so much incredible music that we want to share with you: music that'll make the hairs on the back of your neck stand-up, music that'll make you weep buckets or cry a quiet tear. Music that'll make you feel alive. It's no more our music than it is yours and nothing makes the incredible, talented musicians of the LCO happier than getting the chance to share the music with you.

Please feel free to clap, whistle and whoop whenever the spirit moves. Truly. You can take photos of us playing during the performance - video clips too - on the condition that you tag us if you post them! No, seriously. We're at @LCOorchestra

We're heading to the Royal Court Theatre Bar afterwards so please come along and join musicians, staff and supporters of the LCO for a drink. We'd love to meet you.

Jossy Lightfoot and the LCO team

TONIGHT'S MUSIC

Dani Howard Symmetry

Sergey Akhunov Concerto "Chaconne" for accordion, strings and percussion
(UK PREMIERE)

Interval - 25 minutes

J. S. Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G Major
(additional vibraphone arrangement by George Morton)

- Adagio in E Minor
- Allegro

George Gershwin Three Preludes arr. George Morton

- Allegro ben ritmato e deciso
- Andante con moto
- Agitato

Please feel free to applaud between movements, should you like to!

NEXT TIME, AT CADOGAN HALL

Friday 24 November 7.30pm
With Benjamin Beilman

We first collaborated with Ben in 2016 and we're happy to be back together for a concert that he'll direct and perform the solo in Bach's Violin Concerto in E major. Also on the programme, Entr'acte by Caroline Shaw, Stravinsky's Concerto for Strings, and Appalachian Spring by Copland.



USE OFFER CODE LCHAMBER15 AND SAVE 15%

TONIGHT'S PERFORMERS

Ksenija Sidorova accordion

George Morton conductor

VIOLIN I

John Mills^{^*}

Michael Jones

Eunsley Park

Anais Boyadjieva

Orpheus Leander

VIOLIN II

Alexandra Caldon^{^*}

Kirsty Mangan

Kathryn Parry^{*}

Rebecca Baratto

VIOLA

Jordan Bergmans

Lorena Canto

Louise Parker

CELLO

Tim Gill

Rachael Lander

Desmond Neysmith

BASS

Martin Ludenbach^{*}

Siret Lust

PERCUSSION

Julian Poole^{*}

Tristan Fry

[^] Soloists in Dani Howard Symmetry

^{*} Bach Brandenburg Concerto No.3

PROGRAMME NOTES BY LEAH BROAD



DANI HOWARD (B.1993) SYMMETRY (2016)

Our concert tonight opens with an intimate piece by the LCO's current Composer in Residence, Dani Howard. Written for just two instruments, Howard describes Symmetry as 'a short, animated work which challenges the performers' natural instincts of playing either a leading or an accompanying role.' It's built on two alternating notes which gives the piece its feeling of constant animation. 'It continuously and seamlessly shifts between the two roles in symmetry to each other, keeping both the players and the audience on their feet!'

Performed by John Mills and Alexandra Caldon

- NEW MUSIC - NEW MUSIC - NEW MUSIC - NEW MUSIC - NEW MUSIC



Matthew Johnson Photographer

SAVE THE DATE

Be the first to hear Dani Howard's new Saxophone Concerto. Commissioned by LCO and written for Jess Gillam, we'll be giving the world premiere together next year. Get Wednesday 27 March 2024 in your diaries now - tickets will go on sale soon.

[Sign up to our newsletter and be the first to find out when tickets go on sale!](#)



SERGEY AKHUNOV (B.1967)
CONCERTO “CHACONNE” FOR ACCORDION, STRINGS
AND PERCUSSION (2018) UK PREMIERE

A chaconne is a musical form that builds sets of variations over a repeated bass line. Because of this structure, the chaconne is perfect for exploring ideas that benefit from the ability to change and develop slowly over time — it allows the composer to show the same musical theme from different perspectives, bring out different emphases in each variation, and leave the listener with a sense of profound transformation. As a result, chaconnes are often among a composer's darkest and most intense works, dealing with huge, philosophical questions.

Akhunov's Chaconne is one of these works. He composed the first version of the piece in 2018 for Ksenija Sidorova, but the premiere was postponed. 'The events taking place in the world over the past few years have changed a lot in me', he writes, 'and this led to the need to

make a new edition. As a person born and raised in Kiev and who has lived in Moscow for the last 20 years, I feel the war keenly. My feeling of helplessness and futility of all my efforts to change something could not but leave a mark on my attitude to music.' It is this revised edition that we are hearing today. 'The point here is not the volume of sound', he continues, 'but in the nature of the music, in its relation to the outside world: it is as if the music is trying to oppose herself to that brute force that does not create anything, but tries to destroy everything created by silence, humility, talent and work.'

The concerto is in five parts. The first three parts develop different strands that come together in the fourth, before concluding with a 'Postlude'.

A graduate of the Kiev State Conservatory, Sergey Akhunov started as an oboe player before moving on to other genres, including electronic music and Rock 'n roll. He made a decisive break from this style of music in 2005 to exclusively concentrate on orchestral and chamber music. His prizes and awards include Gramophone critic's choice for Maxim Rysanov "In Schubert's Company" (2017), Ksenija Sidorova "Piazzolla reflections" (2021) and a nomination for his album "Sketches" in the prestigious International Classical Music Awards, 2017. Sergey Akhunov's music is distributed by Fancymusic, Alfa classics, Melodya, Onyx and Glossa.



JS BACH (1685-1750) BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 3 IN G MAJOR (C. 1719-1721)

In Bach's lifetime, the two main ways that musicians could earn a living were by being employed either by the church or at court. When he composed the Brandenburg Concertos, Bach was working at the court of Leopold, prince of Anhalt-Köthen in Germany. He held the court's most prestigious musical position, the Kapellmeister (the Director of Music), which meant that he was in charge of both directing the court's musicians and composing music for performance at the court.

Bach grew up singing in a church choir, was famous as an organist, and had composed vast quantities of religious music. Under the Prince's employ, however, much of the music he wrote was secular. It's unclear quite when Bach composed the Brandenburg concertos, but they were probably written over a few years and then pulled together into one collection in 1721.

They are named 'Brandenburg' after their dedicatee, Christian Ludwig, Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt, who was not Bach's employer. He had heard Bach perform a few years earlier and invited him to send him some

compositions. By 1721, it was quite possible that Bach was thinking about employment elsewhere, and hoped that the concertos would endear himself to the Margrave. Bach's dedication implored him to 'take into benign Consideration the profound respect and the most humble obedience which I thus attempt to show him.' If this was Bach's version of sending his resumé, it didn't work — the Margrave neglected to even thank Bach for the score, let alone offer him a job.

Today, concertos usually have one soloist. This piece, however, is very much a group concerto. All the players — three violins, three violas, and three cellos — have virtuosic parts, requiring the performers to really function together as a single unit. The concerto is technically in three movements, but the second, slow movement is only one bar long, and effectively functions as a transition between the first and third movements. Perhaps it was originally intended that one or more of the soloists would improvise a linking passage here. The result is an overwhelmingly exuberant piece, dominated by the faster, lively material.

The concerto launches with a memorable three-note motif that forms the basis for the whole of the first movement. Its energy level never drops; even when Bach moves to a minor key for the central section, he uses strings of musical sequences to ratchet up the tension. There is no silence in this movement; there is always somebody playing, and usually playing

quite fast, right until the end. Instead, Bach creates drama and contrast through the dynamics and texture, creating different sounds and moods by changing the number of instrumentalists who are playing at any one time. The third movement keeps up the relentless momentum, driving the concerto to an exhilarating, joyful close.



GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898-1937)
THREE PRELUDES (1926) ARR. GEORGE MORTON

Allegro ben ritmato e deciso
Andante con moto
Agitato

New York in the early twentieth century was a cultural melting-pot. Born in 1898, George Gershwin was brought up in East New York which had a large immigrant population, all of whom had brought music with them. Gershwin's parents were no exception. They were Russian Jews, and much of Gershwin's childhood was spent in the Yiddish Theatre District, where he sometimes made an appearance as an extra in shows that ranged from Shakespeare plays to operetta and vaudeville entertainments. Then there was classical music, the songs of Tin Pan Alley that dominated commercial music-

making, and the dance, ragtime, blues and spirituals from which jazz would grow. Out of this musical crucible came Gershwin's distinct sound, blending and combining all the influences of his younger years.

The Gershwins rarely listened to music at home until they bought a piano for George's older brother, Ira. Ira never really took to it — he inclined more towards words. But George loved it, and it quickly became obvious that he was extremely talented. By the time he was fifteen he had been hired by a Tin Pan Alley firm as a “song plugger”

— someone who promoted songs by performing them. From there he began writing his own songs, and soon had his own show running on Broadway. By the time he composed these Three Preludes he had several hits behind him including the song 'Swanee' and the musical Lady, Be Good! (with lyrics by Ira), and he had started to make his mark in classical music as well with a piece for piano and orchestra called Rhapsody in Blue.

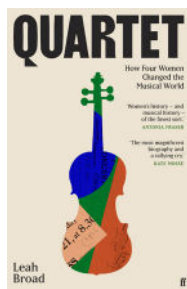
The Preludes were originally composed for piano solo, and the composer premiered them himself in 1926 at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York. Although the style of these pieces might not sound unusual now, the Preludes' first audiences would have heard this blend of jazz and classical as being extremely innovative. The performance direction of the first prelude means 'Fast, rhythmically and decisively', and it launches the set with a propulsive vigour. It opens with a short phrase that sounds almost improvised,

and the whole piece is built on this theme. Gershwin uses syncopated (off-beat) rhythms inspired by a Brazilian genre called the baião which gives the prelude its dance-like feel.

The second prelude is a complete contrast. Gershwin called it 'a sort of blues lullaby', and a melancholy melody hangs over a litting accompaniment. There is a short central section where the bass takes the tune and the mood becomes more uplifting, but Gershwin soon returns to the dream-like, wistful atmosphere of the opening. The third prelude, with a performance marking meaning 'Agitated', gives a surprising end to the set. The main theme has a question-and-answer structure — the question in a minor key, and the answer in major. The debate between the two is never really resolved, and the question lingers on into the piece's closing statement.

ABOUT LEAH BROAD

Dr Leah Broad is an award-winning music writer, historian, and public speaker. She specialises in twentieth-century music, especially women in music. Her first book, *Quartet*, is a group biography of four women composers: Ethel Smyth, Rebecca Clarke, Dorothy Howell and Doreen Carwithen. It is published by Faber & Faber.



'Quartet's four lives span 145 years, two world wars and a dizzying mess of social, cultural and political upheaval. This is a hugely ambitious, beautifully written first book' Flora Wilson, Times Literary Supplement

'A blast of fresh air... Insightful, probing, full of heart, brilliantly readable.' Kate Molleson



Photo: Roberts Blaubeuks

KSENIJA SIDOROVA ACCORDION

Praised as “revelatory” (The Telegraph) and playing with “verve, style, attitude and impeccable virtuosity” (ZealNYC), Ksenija Sidorova is the world’s undisputed leading ambassador for the classical accordion. Ksenija’s charismatic performances showcase not only her instrument’s unique capabilities, but also her own intense passion and breathtaking skill. Her repertoire spans over three centuries from J.S. Bach to Václav Trojan. She has championed concertos by Astor Piazzolla and Erkki-Sven Tüür around the world – the latter often in collaboration with Paavo Järvi.

A passionate advocate of new music, several accordion works have been composed especially for her. Already in January 2023, Ksenija has released the first recording of Arturs Maskats’ accordion concerto with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra and Andris Poga, described as “wonderful and evocative” (Gramophone). She begins this season by giving the world premiere of Chaconne by Sergei Akhunov with both Riga Sinfonietta and London Chamber Orchestra acting as cocommissioners. Estonian composer Tõnu Kõrvits is also writing a new concerto for her to be premiered with Paavo Järvi and his Estonian Festival Orchestra at Parnu Festival in summer 2024.

This season, she returns to Münchner Philharmoniker and will make her debut with Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana, Istanbul State Symphony, Romanian Radio Chamber Orchestra, and Collegium Musicum Basel. Recent highlights include Le Concert de Paris with Orchestre National de France and the Last Night of the Proms with BBC Symphony Orchestra where she was “the indisputable highlight of the evening” (BBC News). She performs regularly with Tonhalle Orchester-Zürich, Liverpool Philharmonic, NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester, Orchestre National d’Île de France, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg and Stuttgarter Philharmoniker. She maintains long-standing working relationships with eminent conductors such as Paavo Järvi, Thomas Hengelbrock and Vasily Petrenko, and also with Krzysztof Urbanski, Christian Reif and Nil Venditti.

In chamber music this season, she starts original collaborations with artistic colleagues: a beautifully crafted programme 'Anima' with Signum Saxophone Quartet and a special project with baritone Benjamin Appl. Last season, Ksenija and longtime friend, mandolinist Avi Avital, celebrated their 10-year anniversary of playing together at the Wigmore Hall, and they tour this season across Germany and Belgium. Her other chamber partners include Nemanja Radulović, Andreas Ottensamer, Goldmund Quartet, Camille Thomas, Tine Thing Helseth, Juan Diego Flórez and Nicola Benedetti. Ksenija is a staple guest performer at the Ravinia, Cheltenham, Mostly Mozart, Schleswig-Holstein, Gstaad Menuhin, MITO, Verbier and Rheingau music festivals.

Her album Piazzolla Reflections (Alpha), released in 2021, has been acclaimed as "brilliantly played [and] beautifully recorded" (Gramophone), numbered among the best new classical albums of the year (Classic Review), and was named BR Klassik's album of the month. This follows previous successful releases: Classical Accordion (Champs Hill Records, 2011); Fairy Tales (Champs Hill Records, 2013) recorded with BBC National Orchestra of Wales/Rundel; and Carmen (Deutsche Grammophon, 2016) for which she won the ECHO prize for Instrumentalist of the Year in 2017.

Encouraged by her grandmother, herself steeped in the folk tradition of accordion playing, Ksenija started to play the instrument at the age of six under the guidance of Marija Gasele in her hometown of Riga. Her unfettered interest in classical and contemporary repertoire took her to the Royal Academy of Music, London, where she became a prize-winning undergraduate and postgraduate studying under Owen Murray. In May 2012, she became the first International Award winner of the Bryn Terfel Foundation and appeared at the Royal Albert Hall in October 2015 as part of his 50th birthday celebrations, alongside Sting. She is a recipient of Philharmonia Orchestra's Martin Musical Scholarship and Friends of the Philharmonia Award, as well as the Worshipful Company of Musicians Silver Medal. Ksenija has been an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music since 2016, was made a Fellow (FRAM) in 2021 and was appointed Visiting Professor of Classical Accordion to start in September 2023.



Photo: Bill Lam

GEORGE MORTON CONDUCTOR & ARRANGER

George Morton is a conductor and arranger based in Sheffield, UK,

George is the Musical Director of the Sheffield Philharmonic Orchestra and is Principal Conductor of the Picture House Orchestra. In the 2023/24 season he's conducting the Luxembourg Philharmonic, Southbank Sinfonia, Stockholm Concert Orchestra, London Chamber Orchestra, and Nordic Chamber Orchestra for the first time, as well as returning to the Babylon Orchester Berlin following acclaimed performances in 2022.

Recent engagements include the film concert premiere of *Amazing Maurice* in Alexandra Palace, multiple concerts with the Babylon Orchester Berlin, conducting *Pride Classical* in the Bridgewater Hall and Blackpool Tower Ballroom, and debuts with the Orchestra of Opera North and Vaasa City Orchestra (Finland).

George's arrangements and reductions have been performed to great acclaim at venues worldwide and are published by Universal Edition, Schott Music, Boosey & Hawkes, and Novello & Co. He is the founder and director of Steel City Music Publishing, an independent publishing house that specializes in producing arrangements, orchestrations, and transcriptions for chamber orchestras and ensembles.



LONDON CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Founded by Anthony Bernard in 1921, the London Chamber Orchestra was the UK's first professional chamber orchestra and has recently celebrated its centenary. Throughout its 100 years, LCO has enjoyed many successes and become one of the UK's most compelling and inclusive musical organisations. Committed to supporting new musical voices and championing new compositions, LCO has commissioned and performed UK premieres by Stravinsky, Vaughan Williams, Prokofiev, Hindemith, Poulenc, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, James MacMillan, Freya Waley-Cohen, Cheryl Frances-Hoad, Gabriel Prokofiev, and Nicholas Korth.

Alongside its performance schedule, LCO runs Music Junction which brings children and young people together from different social and economic backgrounds, and provides them with opportunities to develop artistic and social skills through shared music making experiences.

www.lco.co.uk
@LCOorchestra

HOUSEKEEPING!

Smoking:

The use of all smoking materials (including vapes and electronic cigarettes) is not permitted in any area of our building.

Food & beverages:

A selection of drinks, sandwiches, confectionary and snacks is available from our bars, and concert-goers can enjoy a wider selection of champagnes, spirits, wine, beer and soft drinks from the Culford Room (the mainbar in our foyer). Draught beer is also available in our smaller Oakley Bar. Please be aware that refreshments from outside Cadogan Hall may not be brought on-site, and that glasses and bottles may not be taken into the auditorium.

Cameras and electronic devices:

Please ensure that all mobile devices are switched to silent before entering the auditorium.

Interval and timings:

Running time approx. 1hr, 40m including a 25 minute interval. If you arrive late, or leave the auditorium during the concert, you may need to wait for an appropriate moment in the performance to go in.

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5 Sloane Terrace
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JOIN US

“Music exists in the heart of the audience” - Christopher Warren-Green

The **LCO Audience Hub** is the place where our audience can be part of the LCO Family and connect with everything we do. From exclusive opportunities to partner discounts there are plenty of reasons to join; however, the most important reason is the LCO Audience Hub is a community of like minded culture lovers like you. A place where you can make friends and socialise whilst enjoying the best concerts London has to offer. Talk to us this evening to find out more - or visit our website.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Jess Gillam will give the world premiere performance of Dani Howard's new saxophone concerto (commissioned by us!) in 2024. Be the first to hear more about this and other future LCO concerts and events by signing up to our mailing list at **lco.co.uk**

We're on Instagram and Facebook.
Find and follow us **@lcoorchestra**



THANKS FOR JOINING US
SEE YOU AGAIN SOON!