

Steven Osborne

with Principal Players
of Aurora Orchestra

Sat 12 Dec | 7pm
Live from Kings Place Hall One



Resident Orchestra at
KINGS PLACE



Programme

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (arr. Lachner)

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A, K488

- i. Allegro
- ii. Adagio
- iii. Allegro assai

Sylvia Lim

Points of Intersection (world premiere)

Dmitri Shostakovich

Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 57

- i. Prelude (Lento)
- ii. Fugue (Adagio)
- iii. Scherzo (Allegretto)
- iv. Intermezzo (Lento)
- v. Finale (Allegretto)

Sylvia Lim's new commission is
generously supported by the
RVW Trust.

This performance will last
approx. 75 mins with no interval.

AURORA ORCHESTRA

Matthew Gee trombone

Alexandra Wood violin I

Jamie Campbell violin II

Ruth Gibson viola

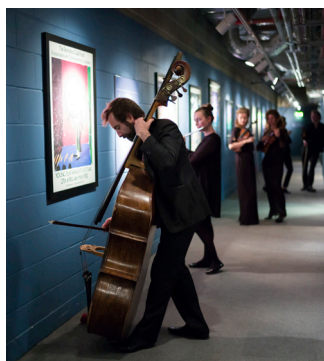
Sébastien van Kuijk cello

Ben Griffiths double bass

with

Steven Osborne piano

Tom Service presenter



Whether you are joining us in Hall One or remotely via the KPlayer, a very warm welcome to this evening's concert at Kings Place.

We're delighted that **Steven Osborne** has been able to step in at short notice as soloist for this performance, replacing **Javier Perianes** whose

travel arrangements had been affected by current coronavirus restrictions. And I'm likewise pleased to confirm that we have lined up another opportunity to welcome Javier for his debut with Aurora at the end of 2021. Watch out for an announcement in the coming days about Aurora concerts next year, including the rescheduled finale of this complete cycle of Mozart's piano concertos on New Year's Eve 2021. We very much hope that by then the current social distancing measures will be receding into memory, and that it will be possible to pack this wonderful hall to the rafters with listeners once again.

One of the silver linings of this very challenging season has been the opportunity it has created for the commissioning of new work for reduced forces here at Kings Place. Last year marked the 10-year anniversary of Aurora's association with the BBC Proms Young Composer Competition, and we decided to mark that milestone to commission three of the composers whose works we'd most enjoyed performing during that period to write new works for performance as part of our reduced-scale season. **Sylvia Lim** has of course come a long way since we first encountered her music back in 2011, and is now firmly established as one of the UK's most exciting emerging musical voices. We're delighted to present the premiere of her new work, *Points of Intersection*, tonight.

We hope tonight's concert brings you joy and light in the midst of this winter, and look forward to welcoming you back for more music-making in 2021. In the meantime you can find much more from Aurora online at auroraorchestra.com – sign up for our regular e-newsletter if you'd like to stay in touch.

John Harte, Chief Executive, Aurora Orchestra

Programme Notes

Piano Concerto No. 23 in A, K488

Composed in 1786, Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 23, K488 was one of his three piano concertos written alongside the *Marriage of Figaro*. This A-major concerto certainly shares something of the opera's warmth of spirit but is somewhat more restrained in its energy and exuberance. Indeed, the concerto does not open with any sort of flourish or fanfare, but rather introduces the soloist through a gentle melody, and this serene mood characterises much of the movement. The 'Adagio' that follows is a magnificent example of a Mozartian slow movement, here drawing on a lilting Siciliano rhythm in its melancholy theme. Intriguingly, it is also the only piece of music Mozart ever wrote in F-sharp minor. The work concludes with a playful sonata rondo, full of wit and bravura, marking a dazzling end to this most varied and satisfying of concertos. Indeed, Mozart himself regarded these three concertos composed alongside *Figaro* as something special, writing to a patron with a gift copy of the scores: "they are compositions which I keep for myself, or for a small circle of music-lovers and connoisseurs."

The work is heard this evening in an arrangement by the nineteenth-century German composer Ignaz Lachner, who arranged twelve of Mozart's piano concertos for chamber forces. Lachner leaves the solo piano line untouched but reorders the orchestral accompaniment for string quartet plus double bass in this imaginative and idiomatic arrangement. *Kate Wakeling*

Points of Intersection

Points of Intersection explores the movement of lines. Lines in flux. Lines that are in-between, shifting and always in motion. Sometimes they intersect, passing through each other and overlapping. While composing, I was reading Tim Ingold's book, *Lines*, and also thinking about the imperceptible boundaries of fog. I wanted to capture something of this ambiguity and irregularity in the sounds. *Sylvia Lim*

Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 57

Completed in 1940, the Piano Quintet in G minor, Op. 57 was written soon after Shostakovich had finished work on his Sixth Symphony and his re-orchestration of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*. The composer's star was once more rising after his dramatic fall from favour in the mid-1930s and, buoyed by the success of his First String Quartet (1938) for the Glazunov Quartet, Shostakovich agreed to write another chamber work for the ensemble. The Quintet was an immediate hit and won Shostakovich the auspicious Stalin Prize. Premiered on 23 November 1940, the work was actually first performed by the

Beethoven Quartet and Shostakovich is said to have later joked that he wrote the Quintet only so "the 'Glazunovs' and the 'Beethovens' won't be able to do without me – and I'll get a chance to see the world."

The Quintet is neo-classical in part, not least in its taut movement titles, but the work otherwise bears all the hallmarks of Shostakovich's distinctive compositional voice, from its sinewy textures to its wrenching harmonies. The 'Prelude' opens with a muscular piano solo promptly answered by the strings, the cello line notably pronounced in the texture. The piano soon introduces a three-note motif – the first three steps of the tonic minor scale – that comes to permeate the entire work. The substantial second movement is structured around a strict four-part fugue for muted strings that is haunting in its emotional reserve. As the Glazunov cellist D.Y. Mogilevsky noted about performing the piece with the composer himself, Shostakovich would brook no "emotional exaggeration... We wanted to 'sing,' to play with more emotion [but] the emotional restraint of his playing led to a certain contradiction with the nature of strings." The third movement is a playful if somehow hypnotic 'Scherzo' (with a folk-like Trio at its centre) and marks the first occasion we hear an extended passage scored for all five instruments. The 'Intermezzo' that follows thrums with closely-guarded emotion, its tugging harmonies unfolding across a sober walking bass. The Finale swims directly out of the 'Intermezzo' via a gentle piano solo. Numerous themes from the previous movements are here reimaged as the Quintet finds its way to a bright G major and draws to a warm and delicate close. *Kate Wakeling*

Biographies

Steven Osborne

"This recording [Beethoven's last three piano sonatas] contains the full dynamic range of Osborne's playing without compressing or distancing for safety. The volatility and dangerous edge to it comes through undiminished. This is Beethoven with no safety net, thrillingly alive. The cover – Rodin's Hand of God – seems the perfect fit for the music and the musicianship." *BBC Radio 3 Record Review, Disc of the Week*, 18 May 2019

Steven Osborne is one of Britain's most treasured musicians whose numerous awards include The RPS Instrumentalist of the Year and two Gramophone Awards.

Concerto performances take Osborne to leading orchestras worldwide including recent performances with the Sydney Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic, Finnish Radio Symphony, Detusche Sinfonieorchester Berlin and 14 performances at the



BBC Proms. His carefully crafted recital programmes are performed in prestigious venues around the world including regular appearances at both New York's Lincoln Center and Wigmore Hall.

Described by *The Observer* as "always a player in absolute service to the composer", Steven Osborne recently released his 30th recording for Hyperion, Prokofiev's War Sonatas, which was shortlisted for a Gramophone Award. His residences at Wigmore Hall, Antwerp's deSingel, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra are a testament to the respect he commands.

Sylvia Lim

Sylvia Lim is a composer based in the UK. Her works are intimate, exploring a small amount of material in depth – often a single sound, texture, or entity. She is interested in the materiality of sound, notions of close listening, perception, rawness and instability. Her music is influenced by natural phenomena and the visual arts. She works very closely with musicians, visual artists and dancers.

Sylvia's music has been performed by Plus-Minus Ensemble, EXAUDI, CoMA Singers, Liam Byrne, Natasha Zielazinski, Musarc, Fournier Trio, and Kaleidoscope Saxophone Quartet. Her music has been published in the CoMA Partsong Book, and performed at the London Contemporary Music Festival, CoMA Festival and Barbican OpenFest's Unfinished. She was on the LPO Young Composers Programme and Psappha's Composing for Piano scheme in 2019/20, and is now on the RPS Composers Programme as a Rosie Johnson RPS / Wigmore Hall Apprentice Composer. Sylvia completed her PhD at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, where she now teaches composition.

www.sylvialim.co

Aurora Orchestra

With its signature creative ethos, Aurora Orchestra combines world-class performance with adventurous programming and presentation. Founded in 2005 under Principal Conductor Nicholas Collon, it has quickly established a reputation as one of Europe's leading chamber orchestras, garnering several major awards including three Royal Philharmonic Society Music Awards, a German ECHO Klassik Award and a Classical:NEXT Innovation Award.

Collaborating widely across art forms and musical genres, Aurora has worked with an exceptional breadth of artists, ranging from Sarah Connolly, Patricia Kopatchinskaja and Pierre-Laurent Aimard to Wayne McGregor, Edmund de Waal and Björk. A champion of new music, it has premiered works by composers including Julian Anderson, Benedict Mason, Anna Meredith, Nico Muhly and Judith Weir. In recent years, it has pioneered memorised performance (without the use of printed sheet music), and is thought to be the first orchestra worldwide to perform whole symphonies in this way. Since 2016, Aurora has been creating Orchestral Theatre productions spanning diverse musical genres and art forms. These orchestral adventures rethink the concert format and offer bold new ways to engage with orchestral music for both old and new concertgoers alike.

Based in London, Aurora is Resident Orchestra at Kings Place and Associate Orchestra at Southbank Centre. Its busy UK calendar includes ongoing regional residencies at St George's Bristol, The Apex (Bury St Edmunds) and Colyer-Fergusson Hall (Canterbury). International highlights include appearances at The Royal Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Kölner Philharmonie, Victoria Concert Hall Singapore, Melbourne Festival and Shanghai Concert Hall.



By challenging expectations of what an orchestra can and should do on the concert platform, Aurora inspires audiences of all ages and backgrounds to develop a passion for orchestral music. Through an award-winning Creative Learning programme, Aurora regularly offers workshops and storytelling concerts for families, schools and young people, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. In 2020, Aurora launched 'Aurora Play', a free digital series showcasing the very best of Aurora's orchestral adventures online, with creative ways for listeners of all ages to join in at home.

Support Aurora Orchestra

These are challenging times for our musical community, but we are determined to continue to deliver a vibrant and inspiring programme both during and after the current crisis. If you are in a position to help us safeguard Aurora's future with a donation we would be hugely grateful for your support.

To make a donation please visit auroraorchestra.com/donate-to-aurora. From all of us, thank you.

Acknowledgements

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The Parabola Foundation (Principal Series Supporter)

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Aurora gratefully acknowledges the additional support of **Bärenreiter** and **Green & Fortune** for the Mozart's Piano series.

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