

Louis Schwizgebel

with Principal Players
of Aurora Orchestra

Sat 7 Nov | 7pm
Live from Kings Place Hall One



Resident Orchestra at
KINGS PLACE



Programme

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (arr. Lachner)

Piano Concerto No. 26 in D, K537 'Coronation'

- i. Allegro
- ii. Larghetto
- iii. Allegretto

Sasha Scott

Lucid (world premiere)

Maurice Ravel

Piano Trio in A minor

- i. Modéré
- ii. Pantoum (Assez vif)
- iii. Passacaille (Très large)
- iv. Final (Animé)

Sasha Scott's new commission
is generously supported by the
RVW Trust.

This performance will last
approx. 70 mins with no interval.

AURORA ORCHESTRA

Maia Cabeza violin I

Jonathan Stone violin II

Hélène Clément viola

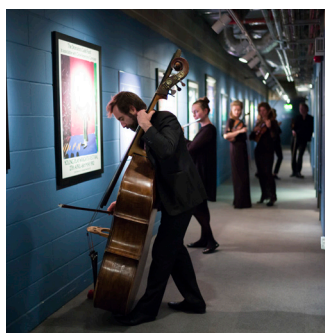
Sébastien van Kuijk cello

Ben Griffiths double bass

with

Louis Schwizgebel piano

Tom Service presenter



As the nights draw in and we all continue to face unusual and challenging circumstances, we at Aurora are delighted to welcome you to this special Mozart's Piano concert, and hope that it brings some joy. While it feels very strange not to be welcoming our audience to Kings Place in person this evening, we are thrilled that with the power of digital streaming we can still share tonight's programme with you, wherever you are in the world. Whether you are joining us live or on catch-up, we extend the very warmest of welcomes to you – it's great to have you with us.

2020 was to have been the culminating final season in Aurora's five-year *Mozart's Piano* project here at Kings Place – the first complete cycle of all 27 of Mozart's piano concertos ever performed within the span of a single concert series in the UK. With the advent of the coronavirus pandemic it soon became clear that the orchestral programmes we had originally planned would no longer be possible because of the constraints of social distancing. But with the support of Kings Place – and in the spirit of versatility and resourcefulness which characterised Mozart's own approach to music-making! – we're continuing our Mozart's Piano journey this autumn with three specially-adapted concerts for reduced instrumental forces.

Each of these special chamber concerts places an arrangement of one of the late piano concertos for string quintet and piano alongside a masterpiece of the chamber music 'canon', together with a brand-new work specially commissioned from a young UK-based composer. This evening, Principal Players of Aurora are joined by Swiss pianist Louis Schwizgebel for Mozart's Coronation Concerto and Ravel's Piano Trio, plus a new work by Sasha Scott, last year's winner of the BBC Young Composer Competition's senior category. And we're delighted to be joined by our good friend Tom Service, to introduce the concert.

Do keep an eye on the Kings Place website for details of the final concert in this special Mozart's Piano series with Spanish virtuoso Javier Perianes, plus a new commission for string quartet and trombone by Sylvia Lim. And in the meantime I'd invite you to explore Aurora's digital series Aurora Play (auroraorchestra.com), which includes many of Aurora's highlight performances from recent years, available to stream free of charge.

John Harte, Chief Executive, Aurora Orchestra

Programme Notes

Piano Concerto No. 26 in D, K537 'Coronation'

Having composed no fewer than 15 piano concertos between 1782 and 1786, Mozart came to a halt with the form in 1787. This seemingly had little to do with Mozart's creative reserves and far more to do with the looming Austro-Turkish War which saw the entertainment industry in Vienna dwindle to almost nothing in the late 1780s. The stream of patrons and lucrative house concerts that Mozart so keenly relied upon all but dried up, leaving the composer in a desperate financial state. A year passed with no further piano concerto, but in February 1788 Mozart returned to the form with his Piano Concerto No. 26 in D, K537, composed with no specific performance in mind. Indeed, the work was not premiered until the following year, when Mozart played the work for the Elector Friedrich August III of Saxony and his wife Amalie, who in turn gave Mozart 'a very pretty snuffbox' filled with the generous sum of 100 ducats. It was not until 1790 that the occasion arose which would furnish the concerto with its 'Coronation' nickname. Pawning his furniture in order to raise the funds to pay for the journey, Mozart travelled to Frankfurt (alongside a who's who of Viennese high society) to attend the coronation of Leopold II as Holy Roman Emperor, and the composer arranged a performance of the concerto in the city with mixed results. The performance itself was received warmly enough in Mozart's view ('a splendid success') but other hoped-for commissions and opportunities were not forthcoming: writing to Constanze, the composer noted, 'to be sure, I am famous, admired and popular, but people here are even greater skinflints than the Viennese.'

Despite the work's imposing title, the concerto itself is less grandiose and more playful and virtuosic in spirit. The score itself was also evidently penned with just the composer in mind as performer, for the piano writing is skeletal in places with the left-hand omitted entirely in a number of substantial passages, including the piano's opening solo and the whole of the second movement (these missing passages were later completed by Johann Anton André when the work was first published in 1794). The concerto begins with a spritely Allegro and has its fair share of festive dotted rhythms and triadic fanfares, alongside virtuosic writing for the piano and some striking shifts between keys in the development section. A delicate and lyrical Larghetto (titled 'Romance' in Mozart's sketches) follows, before the concerto concludes with a spirited Rondo, its good cheer only occasionally darkened with excursions into the minor key. *Kate Wakeling*

Lucid

Lucid was inspired by the act of lucid dreaming; a dream during which the dreamer is aware that they are dreaming and have the ability to control the narrative, themes, and environment of the dream. In particular, what inspired me about the act of lucid dreaming was how the dreamer was in between consciousness and unconsciousness, and how this causes a warped reality. I tried to depict that in this piece by contrasting warped and slightly distorted textures with artificial harmonic soundscapes to highlight the contrast of being between waking and sleep. I was also intrigued by how dreaming affects the electrical activity of the brain, and how when we enter a stage of sleep, the brain starts to break down concepts we use to make sense of the world, leading to moments of experience unconstrained by our usual mental filters. I wanted to depict the activity of the brain, alongside the sense of feeling entranced and disorientated; I attempted this by creating smudged and blurred sound worlds. *Sacha Scott*

Piano Trio in A minor

Ravel first mentioned plans for a Piano Trio in a 1908 letter, where the composer outlined a wish-list of future compositions. Ravel did not, however, start work on the score until a summer holiday in 1913 near his birthplace in the Basque region of France. Composing progressed casually at first, but with the outbreak of the first World War Ravel was determined to enlist as swiftly as possible and so set to work on completing the Trio with a furious intensity, writing to Stravinsky in September 1914: 'The thought that I would go away forced me to do five month's work in five weeks. I have finished my Trio.' The work was premiered on 28 Jan 1915 in Paris and is dedicated to Ravel's counterpoint teacher, André Gedalge.

The Trio's dancing first movement derives its distinct 3+2+3 rhythm from a popular Basque folk dance, here cast within traditional sonata form. The second movement is titled 'Pantoum', drawing on a Malay literary form, the pantun, where the second and fourth lines of a stanza are re-deployed as the first and third lines of the following stanza. Ravel sets this poetic form to work musically, re-purposing passages from the opening scherzo in the central trio. There follows a grave Passacaglia, the Baroque form which here finds a melody repeated a number of times but on each occasion reimagined with fresh harmony (and gradually rising in pitch across its ten vivid repeats). The trio concludes with a virtuosic sonata rondo for a brilliantly colourful finale. *Kate Wakeling*

Biographies



Louis Schwizgebel

Described as 'a genuine virtuoso, a spirited young genius with real depth' (*Fono Forum*) and an 'insightful musician' (*New York Times*), Louis Schwizgebel is praised repeatedly for his poise, elegance, imagination, expressive lyricism and crystalline articulation.

Schwizgebel performs regularly with many of the world's finest orchestras and in solo and chamber recitals at the major festivals and halls across the globe. Schwizgebel records for Aparté and his discography includes solo discs as well as concerti with the London Philharmonic and BBC Symphony orchestras, all of which have received critical acclaim.

Born in 1987 in Geneva, Schwizgebel studied at the Juilliard School and Royal Academy of Music and now lives in London.



Sasha Scott

Sasha Scott (b. 2002) is a composer and violinist from London currently studying composition with Mark Anthony-Turnage at the Royal College of Music, supported by a RCM BAME scholarship. She was the senior winner of 'BBC Young Composer of the Year' in 2019, for her electro-acoustic work, *Humans May Not Apply*. This was subsequently premiered by Aurora Orchestra at BBC Maida Vale Studios and broadcast on BBC Radio 3. An electronics only version of the piece was broadcast on Shiva Feshareki's show 'New Forms' on NTS Radio. In March 2020, Sasha's orchestral piece, *Shapeshifter*, was premiered by the Purcell School Symphony orchestra in the QEH, Southbank Centre. As a BBC Inspire winner, Sasha was commissioned to write an orchestral piece for the BBC Concert Orchestra and received mentoring from Errollyn Wallen. Sasha was previously a joint first study composer and violinist at the Purcell School, where she studied with Simon Speare and Alda Dizdari. She was a composer in the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain from 2018-2019 where she received tutoring from Larry Goves. Sasha has also had compositions performed in Cadogan Hall, the Saatchi Gallery, and Marlborough House.

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 concert-goers 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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Sasha Scott's new commission is generously supported by the RVW Trust.



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MOZART'S PIANO

Aurora Orchestra, Resident at Kings Place, continues its ambitious five-year series, built around the first full cycle of piano concertos by Mozart, with another concerto in chamber version.



Sat 12 Dec 2020

Javier Perianes

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 23, K488

Schumann Piano Quintet

Sylvia Lim New work

Limited audience tickets

available from £24.50*

Online streaming tickets – £12.50

*Subject to a £3 booking fee.

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Photo: Igor Studio

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