



STRING SOCIETY PRESENTS:

A WINTER SERENADE

THURSDAY 20TH NOVEMBER
2025 8:00PM

WINDSOR AUDITORIUM
ROYAL HOLLOWAY,
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

CONCERT PROGRAMME

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Serenade for Strings, *Movement I*

CAROLINE SHAW

And the Swallow

ANTONIN DVORAK

Piano Trio No. 4 in E minor, *Movement II*

CHARLES MARIE WIDOR

Piano Quintet Op. 7, *Movement II*

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Erlkönig

- INTERVAL -

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

String Symphony No. 12, *Movement II*

ERIC WHITACRE

Sleep

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Death and the Maiden, *Movement I*

JOHANNES BRAHMS

String Sextet No. 2, *Movement II*

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Serenade for Strings, *Movement IV*

JOHN WILLIAMS

Somewhere in my Memory, *from Home Alone*

PERFORMERS

STRING ORCHESTRA

Violin

Phedra Low
Hannah Lam
Nicole Yuen
Lily Thompson
Livia Domaingue
Angel Katsenza
Millie Shurmer
Paul Kam
Conrad Ho
Joseph McCarthy
Catherine McAlpine
Elodie Fifield
Solveiga Urbanaviciute
Terry Chen
Mako Uemura
Christopher Bacon

Viola

Harry Aldridge
Maisie Pearce
Isobel Wroe
Poppy Shingler
Angel Katsenza

Cello

Evelyn Pong
Claudia Buchanan
Kian Jan-Dickens
Niamh Sherwood
Bella Hughes
Jasmine Akibo-Betts
Joshua Wen

Double Bass

Owen Morgan

Piano

Hsin-Hsiang Tong
Jason Fan

CONDUCTORS

Joshua Wen
Hannah Lam
Conrad Ho

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Serenade for Strings

I. Pezzo in forma di sonatine

Conducted by Hannah Lam

Tchaikovsky composed his *Serenade for Strings* at the height of emotional turmoil. He described the composition as one written "from inner compulsion", "a piece from the heart". This unfurling of emotion through the exploration of Tchaikovsky's psychological realm is laid bare for the world through his music. The first movement, subtitled *Pezzo in forma di sonatina* (Piece in the form of a sonatina) reveals his reverence for "great" composers of the past. Much of its musical material is a seeming pastiche of Mozart, and the structure is peculiarly reminiscent of a Handelian overture. It is framed by a rich, grand slow introduction that returns at the end after a lively middle section whose length -- the movement takes ten minutes -- belies the "sonatina" of the subtitle.

CAROLINE SHAW

And the Swallow

arr. Hannah Lam

Conducted by Joshua Wen

Caroline Shaw's *And the Swallow* originally a choral work rooted in Psalm 84. It is a meditation on longing, refuge, and the universal need for a place to call home. The psalm's imagery of yearning and shelter resonates deeply with contemporary humanitarian crises. This arrangement is written specifically for string orchestra, allowing Shaw's evocative musical gestures to unfold in a new sound world.

ANTONIN DVORAK

Piano Trio No. 4 in E minor, *Movement II*

Violin: Conrad Ho

Cello: Evelyn Pong

Piano: Jason Fan

CHARLES MARIE WIDOR

Piano Quintet Op. 7, *Movement II*

Violin 1 : Nicole Yuen

Violin 2: Paul Kam

Viola: Poppy Shingler

Cello: Jasmine Akibo-Betts

Piano: Hsin-Hsiang Tong

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Erlkönig

Conducted by Conrad Ho

'Erlkönig' originated as a poem by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and over time, it has been set to music by a numerous of composers, such as Beethoven, Spohr, Loewe etc. However, the most widely known version is commonly identified to be the one by Franz Schubert. The popularity of Schubert's version can simply seen from the number of later arrangements for a number of instrumentations (e.g. piano by Liszt, solo violin by Ernst, orchestral versions by Berlioz, Liszt and Reger etc)

The piece begins with a repeated triplet ostinato figure that lasts throughout the piece, portraying a horse's galloping. Schubert's music paints a picture with an immense sense of urgency as a mystical being named 'Erlkönig' (or Elf King) chases after a young boy who is riding with his father. - This piece is definitely not for those with a faint heart!

And it leaves, then, what would be the final fate for the boy!?



INTERVAL

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

String Symphony No. 12

II. Andante

Conducted by Joshua Wen

Mendelssohn's String Symphony No. 12 in G minor, composed in 1823 when he was just 14 years old, is a sophisticated, three-movement work that showcases his prodigious talent and mastery of counterpoint. It was written as a composition exercise under the guidance of his teacher, Carl Zelter, and reflects the influence of Baroque and Classical masters such as J.S. Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Haydn.

ERIC WHITACRE

Sleep

Conducted by Conrad Ho

Sleep, by Eric Whitacre, is originally an a capella choral work, however our version is transcribed for string orchestra. Depicting its name, the lyrics, written by Charles Silvestri describe the safety and tranquility of falling asleep and the music itself resembles this. With a flowing, calm tempo and fluctuating time signature the piece lulls one to sleep, with the ending 'drifting off' with the listener.

FRANZ SCHUBERT

Death and The Maiden, *Movement I*

Violin 1: Joseph McCarthy

Violin 2: Solveiga Urbanaviciute

Viola: Angel Katsenza

Cello: Joshua Wen

JOHANNES BRAHMS

String Sextet No. 2, *Movement II*

Violin 1: Lily Thompson

Violin 2: Hannah Lam

Viola 1: Maisie Pearce

Viola 2: Isobel Wroe

Cello 1: Bella Hughes

Cello 2: Claudia Buchanan

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Serenade for Strings

IV. Finale (Tema russo)

Conducted by Hannah Lam

The final movement of Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings, subtitled Finale (Tema Russo), opens with the image of a quiet, distant pastoral sunrise. A simple folk tune, "On the Green Meadow", emerges from the silence, but is quickly transformed into a second, dance-like musical motif that subsumes the music. This gives rise to a frenzied interchange between the sections, leading to a blooming melody in the cellos. Russian folk themes are continually weaved into the structured, traditional sonata form of the piece, creating a lively, nationalistic conclusion that provides a sense of unity to the entire work. In what can only be interpreted as a final burst of desperation, Tchaikovsky closes the work by calling back to the opening - only this time in 4, with the melody in the cellos. Perhaps, the near-violent yet cathartic metamorphosis enacted upon the original is symbolic of growth of the individual after the suffering. However insurmountable the journey may seem, the self remains irrevocably changed but intact.

JOHN WILLIAMS

Somewhere in My Memory from Home Alone

Conducted by Conrad Ho

‘Somewhere in My Memory’ comes from the soundtrack of ‘Home Alone’ – the family favourites’ of Christmas movies, and composed by none other than John Williams. The piece comes with the connotation, perhaps most memorably, as the opening theme of the film.

As our concert concludes, we hope this familiar melody brings you the same sense of warmth and joy that defines the season — and we wish you a very happy holiday.

CONDUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

JOSHUA WEN



Joshua Wen is a music composer, conductor, and educator. Joshua grew up in Guangzhou, China, and later pursued his Bachelor's degree in Music from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago where he studied composition and conducting under Dr. Jae Hyeok Jang and Dr. Yongmin Kim. Joshua recently earned his Master's degree in Music Composition with distinction from Royal Holloway University.

Joshua's creative evolution is largely guided by expressive storytelling, diverse cultural influences, and complex soundscapes. His compositions include orchestral, ensemble, chamber, solo, and choral works, and have been performed, broadcast, and recorded worldwide. His recent project The Emoji Suites, in collaboration with Moody Campus Orchestra, is an interdisciplinary work with multimedia elements for advanced music education that aims to inspire young minds to creativity in music.

Joshua has conducted choral, instrumental, and combined ensemble works around the world, from EnZhu children's choir in Guangzhou, China to Moody Campus Orchestra and the Rise, Heart musical recital in Chicago. Recent guest conducting includes Heathside Walton-on-Thames String Orchestra and WBC Orchestra of Winnetka. Joshua brings joyful and energetic influence to the performances through engaging and expressive conducting.

CONDUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

HANNAH LAM



Hannah Lam is a composer and conductor. She studied composition and piano at the Junior Royal Academy of Music and is currently pursuing a joint degree in Music and Mathematics. She was chosen as a Ludlow Song Festival Young Composer in 2024, receiving mentorship from Julian Philips and subsequently was awarded a commission for the 2025 festival.

As a New Music Residency Composer with Music for Youth, Hannah composed and arranged for a large massed orchestra and choir, conducting the premiere at the Royal Albert Hall in 2024.

Hannah was awarded the prestigious ORA Singers Young Composer Prize in 2023 and was a finalist in the International Young Percussion Composer Competition. Her compositions have been performed at renowned festivals, including the Ludlow English Song Weekend, Cambridge Summer Festival and the Three Choirs Festival. She has also received mentorship from esteemed composers such as Gareth Moorcraft, Alexander Campkin, Dr Ewan Campbell, Diederik Glorieux and Annelies Van Parys.

CONDUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

CONRAD HO



Conrad is a 2nd year undergraduate reading Theoretical Physics here at Royal Holloway. Alongside their academic pursuits, Conrad is also a flautist and violinist, with a primary focus on conducting.

They previously studied at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Junior Department, receiving flute tuition from Ms. Liz Wrighton, violin tuition from Mr. Sam Mason, and conducting tuition under Ms. Margarita Mikhailova. During this time, Conrad benefited from mentorship by Mr. Jeff Snowdon and Ms. Monica Leiher, and gained early ensemble leadership experience through directing student groups.

At Royal Holloway, Conrad previously served as Junior Assistant Conductor of the Royal Holloway Symphony Orchestra under Ms. Rebecca Miller (Director of Orchestras). They are currently conductor for both the Royal Holloway String Society and the newly established, temporary named, Gustav Mahler Philharmonie where they also serve as the overall musical director.

THANK YOU!

COMMITTEE

General Manager - *Maisie Pearce*

Musical Director - *Hannah Lam*

Librarian - *Phedra Low + Lily Thompson*

Socials Secretary - *Evelyn Pong*

Stage Manager - *Terry Chen*

Events Officers - *Izzy Wroe + Kian Jan-Dickens*

Treasurer - *Nicole Yuen*

Tech + Stage - *Phoebe Canell*

THANKS!

Programme notes - *Phedra Low + Maisie Pearce + Conrad Ho*

Programme design - *Maisie Pearce*

Do follow us on instagram, @rhstringsociety for more updates on our future concerts!



Autumnal Reflections

Egham United Church

22nd November 2025

12.30pm-1.20pm

£5 tickets, £2 for Students

Please join the members of Royal. Holloway Symphony
Orchestra for a series of solo and chamber pieces



Ballades of Love and Loss



United Church of Egham, TW20 9EX

25th November 2025 , Tuesday, 3pm

Doors at 2.45pm

£3 (pay at the door)