



## EVENT PROGRAMME

# SYMPHONIC MIXTAPE WITH LONDON MOZART PLAYERS

Thursday, 26 February 2026

Picture Gallery, Founder's Building

with

**London Mozart Players**

**Royal Holloway Chamber Orchestra**

**Rebecca Miller** Conductor

## EVENT PROGRAMME

This event will include the following music:

**Alice Mary Smith (1839 - 1884)**

Symphony No. 2 in A minor, Mvt. IV

**Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827)**

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36, Mvt. II

**Joseph Haydn (1732 - 1809)**

Symphony No. 100 in G major, Hob. I/100, Mvt. III

**Felix Mendelssohn (1809 - 1847)**

Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 11, Mvt. I

There will be a short rest break during this evening's event

Estimated event finish time: 9.30pm

Please no flash photography or visual/audio recording throughout the event.

For news about our future events, please visit [royalholloway.ac.uk/music/events](https://royalholloway.ac.uk/music/events)

## PROGRAMME NOTES

### **ALICE MARY SMITH (1839-1884)**

#### **Symphony No. 2 in A minor, Mvt. IV**

The British composer and one of the first British women to have a symphony publicly performed, Alice Mary Smith, wrote two large symphonies. Her orchestral compositions are made up of six concert concertos and two symphonies. In November 1867, she became one of the earliest female composers elected as Female Professional Associate of the Royal Philharmonic Society. In 1884, she was elected an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Music. In this same year, she suffered a period of illness in which she went abroad to try to recover, but she then died of typhoid soon after in London. Her Second Symphony was written for the Alexandra Palace competitions of 1876, but it was never submitted.

The fourth movement brings the work to an energetic close with lively rhythms and bright orchestral melodies. Opening with a bold and spirited theme, the strings drive the momentum of the piece whilst other parts are balancing lighter, more lyrical passages. This movement contrasts with the more reflective character heard earlier in other movements of the symphony. The main theme returns to close of the symphony with renewed energy.

Today, her music is seeing a gradual revival due to her being the first known woman in Britain to have composed a symphony.

### **LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)**

#### **Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 36, Mvt. II**

Only shortly after finishing his first symphony in 1800, Beethoven began writing his second. By 1802 as Beethoven was finishing this symphony, he was sent to Heiligenstadt, a quiet village away from the hustle and bustle of Vienna, as his hearing problems became acute. This time marked the start of Beethoven's emotional life as he processed the reality of his increasing and permanent deafness. In 1803, the premiere took place in a concert at the Theater an der Wien on April 5.

The second movement, Larghetto, presents a catchy main theme that is darkened when it is recast in a minor key to begin the development section. It is full of unruly offbeat accents providing some fidgetiness to the lyricism of the movement giving the music a feeling of growing impatient.

Beethoven creates a cheerful, enthusiasm demonstrating the composer's strength and nature of seizing the day despite the many negative obstacles that he was facing. The nickname "Unfinished" has caught on due to the nine measures of a scherzo found on the back of the final page of the andante followed by four blank pages.

The first movement, Allegro Moderato, in B minor is characterised by harsh contrasts in dynamics and mood, representative of the features of the Romantic musical style. Original sketches suggest this movement was intended to be written in B major which would have set a very different tone. The music is intense and an abrupt transition to the second subject is stylistic of Schubert's utilisation of sustained notes and fortissimo chords to create tension and release. Timpani and, unusually, three trombones (as in the Mass in E flat) emphasise the dramatic moments. This interplay between lyricism and drama, pervades the whole of the first movement. Listeners are taken on a turbulent journey of suspense and resolution.

## **JOSEPH HAYDN 1732-1809**

### **Symphony no. 100 in G major, Hob. I/100, Mvt. III**

Known as both the 'Father of the Symphony' and the 'Father of the String Quartet' Haydn is said to have shaped and consolidated the emerging Classical musical forms of the symphony, concerto, string quartet and piano sonata. Haydn's life spanned a period of great social change and he was one of the last major musicians who worked almost exclusively for a single aristocratic patron.

The work, premiered on 31 March 1794, was written for the impresario Johann Peter Salomon's concert series at the Hanover Square Rooms, London. The original title for his piece was the Grand Military Overture. It is easy to hear why through Haydn's use of kettledrums and other percussion (strongly associated with military marches) in the second Allegretto movement.

1794 saw Britain at the beginnings of war with revolutionary France. Previously Haydn had not been known to write music reflecting contemporary issues but it is said this piece makes overt references to the political situation at the time. The C major opening presents themes of pastoral innocence, scoring for woodwind, including clarinets (known for their ability to blend sounds seamlessly) which Haydn omits from the other movements. However, 'war' gradually infiltrates the music lead by a trumpet fanfare that quotes the Austrian General Salute, and a fortissimo crash in the remote key of A flat.

The final movement is a rondo, and the recurring main theme became widely popular in England. This movement appeared ballrooms around the country, anxious to reflect what was happening in London. In addition to this, the militarian employment of rhythmic percussion at the end of the last movement reinforces this idea at the end of the piece.

## **FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809 - 1847)**

### **Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 11, Mvt. I**

Felix Mendelssohn was a German composer, pianist and conductor of the early Romantic period. Born into a wealthy banking family, Felix showed an early aptitude for music. Fortunately, he had parents willing to let him become a musician, and he received the finest training. Mendelssohn began writing masterpieces around the age of 15 which including the Overture to 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.

Symphony no.1 in C minor was also composed by Mendelssohn at just 15 years old. It was originally titled Symphony in C minor 'No 13', indicating he initially composed it as one in a series of 12 other works. His writing in this piece sets itself apart from previous pieces he wrote as a youth. Most notably the presence of wind instruments. This change in his orchestration instigated the renaming of his work to be the first in a new series of works.

The first movement, although set in C minor, bursts with energy and driving rhythms. It is followed by an Andante section in which the main theme's major harmonies bring a warm and idyllic feel, though it does feel slightly restless by the way it is varied on each return, combined with recurring syncopated murmurings in the strings. The third movement features a driving C minor Menuetto with a contrasting calmer Trio in which woodwind plays gently over strings. However, later Mendelssohn changed this section to present an extended version of a scherzo he had written for a string octet. The reception of his now altered version was enthusiastic and embraced when heard by British audience. However, Mendelssohn restored the original third movement when the Symphony was published in 1831. The finale presents an upbeat energy and Mendelssohn displays his gift for fugal counterpoint in the strings. Lusty trumpeting and drumming bring this work to a close.

## THE PERFORMERS

### THE LONDON MOZART PLAYERS

Founded in 1949 by Harry Blech to delight audiences with the works of Mozart and Haydn, over the last 70-odd years the LMP has developed an outstanding reputation for adventurous, ambitious programming from Baroque through to genre-crossing contemporary music. It continues to build on its long history of association with many of the world's finest artists including Sir James Galway, Dame Felicity Lott, Jane Glover, Howard Shelley, Nicola Benedetti, John Suchet and Simon Callow. The orchestra enjoys an international reputation, touring throughout Europe and the Far East, most recently Dubai and Hong Kong, and records for Naxos, Chandos, Signum, Hyperion, Convivium Records and the German label CPO.

The London Mozart Players has been the resident orchestra at Croydon's Fairfield Halls for thirty years, and in September 2019 enjoyed a gala concert to celebrate the Halls' reopening. As Croydon's resident orchestra, the ensemble has shown an invigorated and growing commitment to the borough's cultural life.



In 2016, LMP relocated its office from Fairfield Halls to St John the Evangelist, Upper Norwood, undertaking a programme of initiatives within the local community. The orchestra has brought classical music stars Nicola Benedetti, Michael Collins and Sheku Kanneh-Mason to Upper Norwood in world-class performances, and its annual St John's season has included family concerts and collaborations with local community groups and schools.

During the closure of Fairfield Halls for refurbishment, the orchestra took classical music to new and unusual venues across Croydon in its award-winning three-year series #LMPOnTheMove. This saw the ensemble pushing the perceived boundaries of classical music performance in the borough, welcoming new audiences and partnerships. Events included a live film score played on top of a shopping mall car park, a house music set at Boxpark with young DJ/producer Shift K3Y, free concerts in libraries for children and a series of musical initiatives in Centrale.

As one of the original pioneers of orchestral outreach work, LMP has enjoyed a host of relationships with schools and music hubs across the UK (and recently in Dubai and Hong Kong), working with teachers and heads of music to inspire the next generation of musicians and music lovers. As well as working with schools, LMP continues its long-established tradition of promoting young up-and-coming musicians. Nicola Benedetti, Jacqueline du Pré and Jan Pascal Tortelier are just three of many young musical virtuosos championed early in their careers by the orchestra.

The LMP enjoys a special relationship with its audience and has thriving Friends and Sponsors programmes. The orchestra always tries to break down the 'fourth' wall between musicians and audience, and this is achieved in part as the orchestra is self-directed. LMP is the only professional orchestra in the UK to be managed both operationally and artistically by the players. The orchestra has enjoyed the patronage of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh since 1988.

[Londonmozartplayers.com](http://Londonmozartplayers.com)

# REBECCA MILLER



California-born conductor Rebecca Miller has earned an international reputation for her compelling, insightful, and energetic presence on the podium and for her ability to communicate with audiences of all ages. Recent guest-conducting includes the Kuopio Symphony Orchestra, Västerås Sinfonietta, DalaSinfoniettan, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Gävle Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of the Swan, The Orchestra Now, The Bard Music Festival, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, London Mozart Players, London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, City of London Sinfonia, National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional de Mexico, and at the BBC Proms in the Royal Albert Hall. Following her debut with the Uppsala Chamber Orchestra in Sweden, she was immediately re-invited and appointed Chief Conductor, a post which she held from 2019-2023.

In previous seasons, Rebecca has guest-conducted the Houston Symphony, Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra, Reno Philharmonic, Bakersfield Symphony, Santa Cruz Symphony, Chicago College of the Performing Arts, Huntsville Symphony, Williamsport Symphony, and Musiqua Houston, and with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra in Israel. Firstprize winner in the Eduardo Mata International Conducting Competition, she has conducted throughout Mexico, including repeated engagements with the Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional and Orquesta Filarmonica del UNAM, and the state orchestras of Yucatan, Aguascalientes, and Sinaloa. In 2017, Rebecca was also featured in the Bruno Walter National Conductors Preview with the Nashville Symphony.

Rebecca's discography includes CDs with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (CPE Bach Symphonies / Signum Records, which made the final shortlist for a 2014 Gramophone Award), with the BBC Concert Orchestra (Henry Hadley Orchestral works / Dutton Epoch), with the BBC Scottish Symphony (piano concertos by Amy Beach, Dorothy Howell, Cecil Chaminade / Hyperion Records), and three CDs with the Royal Northern Sinfonia (Haydn Symphonies / Signum Records; George Frederick Bristow's 'Jullien Symphony' / New World Records; Concertos by Aaron Jay Kernis / Signum Records).

Rebecca is passionate about her work with young musicians – she has recently started regular partnerships with the National Children's Orchestra and the with the London Symphony Orchestra Discovery, and previously worked with the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland, NYO Wales, and NYOGB, with the Chicago College of the Performing Arts, and with the National Youth Orchestra of Venezuela (Teresa Carreño), much to the acclaim of its late founder José Antonio Abreu. She was conductor at the Royal Academy of Music's Junior Department for many years, where she formed the groundbreaking and unique JA Classical Orchestra, and works regularly with the Southbank Sinfonia in London, where she was Associate Conductor for three years.

As Director of Orchestras at Royal Holloway University of London, she has been widely acclaimed for building the orchestral programme to new heights – starting an orchestral scholarship programme, initiating a side-by-side programme with the London Mozart Players, securing high-profile engagements (including 'Magna Carta 800 at Runnymede' a project with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Temple Church Choir, performed in the the presence of HM Queen Elizabeth II and 4000 dignitaries and honoured guests), and establishing a new initiative called 'Music +', which aims to build bridges through music with interdepartmental projects and interdisciplinary research.

Previously, Rebecca served as Resident Conductor of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra and American Conducting Fellow of The Houston Symphony, and Assistant Conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. She holds a B.Mus. in Piano Performance from Oberlin Conservatory, an M.Mus in Orchestral Conducting from Northwestern University, and for two years was the Paul Woodhouse Junior Fellow in Orchestral Conducting at London's Royal College of Music.

Rebeccamiller.net