



## Global Vision

**Vasily Petrenko's 2024-25 season includes a thought-provoking London season with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, tours of Europe and China, and a new staging of *Boris Godunov* at Dutch National Opera**

**Conductor is set to make his debut with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and resume long-stand relationships as guest conductor worldwide**

'The orchestra's game has been lifted to new levels by the arrival of Vasily Petrenko as music director'  
*The Observer* review of RPO concert (17 February 2024)

The spirit of adventure flows through Vasily Petrenko's 2024-25 season, present in the breadth of his programming and geographical reach of his engagements. The conductor's forthcoming schedule, bookended by an outing this summer's BBC Proms with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and a new staging of Musorgsky's *Boris Godunov* for Dutch National Opera in Amsterdam, spans compositions by everyone from Adams to Zemlinsky, new works and great symphonic landmarks by Brahms and Shostakovich, and collaborations with an admirable roster of concerto soloists, Julia Fischer, Alexandre Kantorow and Yunchan Lim among them.

Vasily Petrenko has won critical plaudits for his work as Music Director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. His contract with the RPO has been extended to run until 2030, in recognition of their relationship. Conductor and orchestra enter their fourth season together in fine fashion at the BBC Proms on 1 August 2024. The programme's first half pairs Ives's *Three Places in New England*, a grand orchestral showpiece shot through with quotations drawn from American popular culture, with Ravel's Piano Concerto in G major. The post-interval bill offers the imaginative coupling of Debussy's *Nocturnes* and Tchaikovsky's Symphonic Fantasy *Francesca da Rimini*, the latter inspired by the tragic lovers Francesca and Paolo from Dante's *Inferno*.

"This is a real Proms programme," comments Petrenko. "I've wanted to perform *Three Places in New England* for a long time, but this is the first opportunity I've had to make it work. I'm delighted that Denis Kozhukhin will join us for the Ravel and to have the Ives and Ravel together. There are some jazz-like connections between the two pieces and they share a flamboyance in common. I love Debussy's *Nocturnes*, but it's a difficult work to programme. I think it sits well with the Tchaikovsky. I'm trying to promote *Francesca da Rimini*, which was once popular but has been undeservedly neglected."

*Boris Godunov* stands in wait at the end of Petrenko's season. The production, freshly staged by the Russian theatre and film director Kirill Serebrennikov, marks the conductor's debut with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (10-26 June 2025). "Although I have performed *Boris* several times, including for Bavarian State Opera, this will be my first new production," he notes. "Kirill's concepts for the staging are very strong. Of course Tsar Boris will be the centre of attention, but the main message will be about the indifference of the people to what's happening in their country. They just watch as their rulers rob and betray them, thinking they can do nothing about it; they only cry out when they have nothing to eat. The production will be about taking our personal responsibilities for the future, which I think is the original, tragic message that Pushkin and Musorgsky intended."

Dutch National Opera has chosen to perform the work's revised four-act version, complete with the so-called Polish act at its centre and final Kromi scene, with its 'Revolutionary' Chorus and the Holy Fool lamenting Russia's fate. "Knowing a little of Kirill's methods, I'm sure we will have an intense rehearsal period," observes Vasily Petrenko. "I think there will be a lot of acting required from the chorus, which suits the strengths of Dutch National Opera. I'm sure they will tackle it with their characteristic fervour. Musorgsky's incredible score, which is so far advanced for its time, will be a great way for me to meet the Concertgebouw Orchestra."

Petrenko's season with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra includes tours near and far and a compelling series of London concerts. Soon after their Prom appearance, they embark on a nine-concert tour of China, opening with two performances at Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts (8 & 9 August) before moving to Shanghai, Wuhan, Changsha, Shenzhen, Xiamen and Nanjing. It marks the orchestra's first visit to China since the cancellation of two planned tours during the Covid pandemic. The repertoire includes Tan Dun's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* Suite, Korngold's Violin Concerto, with Ray Chen, and Shostakovich's Symphony No.5. "I'm glad we're finally going to China together," notes Petrenko. "The orchestra has a partnership with the NCPA, so we look forward to being in Beijing and performing in these other very fine halls." Conductor and orchestra will also tour to Wrocław, Budapest, Belgrade and Athens (10-13 October), featuring Chopin's Piano Concerto No.2 in F minor, with Yunchan Lim, Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra and Prokofiev's Symphony No.5.

Vasily Petrenko's London season with the RPO at the Royal Festival Hall unfolds under the banner of *Lights in the Dark*. "We live in intense and, in many ways, bleak times," he observes. "I've programmed pieces that were written during turbulent times, either for their composers personally or for humanity in general, when countries were on the brink of war or already at war. I chose works that offer light and hope, and that invite people to share this vision of hope and building resilience against violence and dark forces through art. The season warns us not to forget about art even in the darkest times. Art is one of the most powerful tools we have to preserve our humanity and bring people together."

*Lights in the Dark* opens with Berg's Three Pieces for Orchestra, Beethoven's Piano Concerto No.5 'Emperor', with Paul Lewis, and Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (26 January). "The Berg was composed during the First World War, the 'Emperor' was completed while Vienna was under siege by Napoleon's army, and *The Rite* was first performed the year before the outbreak of the first global war in 1914. Those composers used their creative powers to give people something other than hatred, fear and violence."

Petrenko's commitment to the next generation of orchestral musicians shines bright across the 2024-25 season. He will return to Georgia's Tsinandali Festival to conduct the Pan-Caucasian Youth Orchestra (6 September). Their programme includes Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No.1, with Alexandre Kantorow, and Rachmaninov's *Symphonic Dances*. "I took part in its first edition several years ago," he recalls. "It's a remarkable festival in a remarkable place. The youth orchestra unites people from all Caucasian and bordering countries, so from Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Turkey, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine. When we last worked together, it was after the start of the war in Ukraine and all those musicians played together without angst or hatred. They are there for the music and as friends. I think this is a great example to the world of how things should be between people."

Petrenko makes the first of two visits to the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra this autumn for the latest instalment in their project to perform and record works by Prokofiev and Myaskovsky. Their programme includes Myaskovsky's Sinfonietta Op.68 and Prokofiev's Seventh Symphony (3 October). "Myaskovsky's Sinfonietta is an ingenious piece," he notes. "Prokofiev wrote his Sinfonietta in 1909 and revised it five years later, not long before he composed his *Classical* Symphony. He wrote to a friend that he intended the symphony as a light-hearted joke and thought the Sinfonietta would become part of the orchestral repertory. That didn't happen, of course, and the *Classical Symphony* is far better known. The Sinfonietta is very virtuosic, with humour and wit, but it's almost twice as long as the Symphony, which is perhaps why it's rarely performed today. I'm trying to introduce it to as many people as possible."

November sees Petrenko at work in Europe and Australasia. He returns to the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra with a programme comprising John Adams's *Absolute Jest* (2012), the American composer's concerto for string quartet and orchestra, and Shostakovich's Symphony No.4, given at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw and the Theater aan de Parade, den Bosch (9 & 10 November). "This orchestra has a deep understanding of contemporary music," the conductor comments. "Of course the Shostakovich is almost ninety years old, but I think their approach will bring out its modern character. The ideas it contains and its uncompromising nature make it very special."

Vasily Petrenko travels from the Netherlands to Auckland for two concerts with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, presenting Lera Auerbach's scintillating symphonic poem *Icarus* (2006) as preface to Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra (15 & 16 November). From there he crosses Australasia to lead the West Australian Symphony Orchestra in Brahms's Violin Concerto, with Clara-Jumi Kang, and Symphony No.4 (22 & 23 November) before returning to Sydney for dates with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (27-30 November). Their programme includes *The Rite of Spring*, Saint-Saëns's Cello

Concerto No.1 in A minor, with Johannes Moser, and the first public performance of *Nineteen Seventy-Three*, a new fanfare by rising-star Australian composer Elizabeth Younan.

On his journey home to the UK, Petrenko will stop in Singapore to conduct the Singapore Symphony Orchestra in a programme comprising Tchaikovsky's String Serenade and other works suited to the size of the city-state's Victoria Hall (5 & 6 December). The Barcelona Symphony Orchestra beckons thereafter, where Petrenko will be joined by Jan Liesicki in Grieg's Piano Concerto in A minor before a second half devoted to Zemlinsky's fantasy for large orchestra, *Die Seejungfrau* (13 & 14 December). He returns to the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra to close his year with a pre-Christmas performance of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* in Utrecht (20 December).

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**The information in this press release was correct at the time of sending. Please check the organisations' websites and social media for the latest updates.**

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## **BBC PROMS**

**Thursday 1 August 2024, 7.30pm**

**Royal Albert Hall, London**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Denis Kozhukhin** piano | **Philharmonia Chorus** | **Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

*Ives Three Places in New England*

*Ravel Piano Concerto in G major*

*Debussy Nocturnes*

*Tchaikovsky Francesca da Rimini*

## **RPO CHINA TOUR 8-18 AUGUST 2024 (soloist Ray Chen)**

Thursday 8 August Beijing, Friday 9 August Beijing, Saturday 10 August Shanghai, Sunday 11 August Shanghai, Tuesday 13 August Wuhan, Wednesday 14 August Changsha, Thursday 15 August Shenzhen, Friday 16 August Xiamen & Sunday 18 August Nanjing.

**Friday 6 September 2024, 7.00pm**

**Tsinandali Festival**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Alexandre Kantorow** piano | **Pan-Caucasian Youth Orchestra**

*Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2*

*Rachmaninoff Symphonic Dances*

**Friday 20 & Saturday 21 September 2024, 8.00pm**

**Hong Kong Cultural Centre**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Li-Wei Qin** cello | **Hong Kong Philharmonic**

Huang *Folk Songs for Orchestra*  
Haydn Cello Concerto No.1  
Delius *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring*  
Stravinsky *The Rite of Spring*

**Friday 27 September 2024, 8.00pm & Saturday 28 September 2024, 5.00pm**  
**Hong Kong Cultural Centre**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Anna Fedorova** piano | **Hong Kong Philharmonic**

Rakhmadiyev *Kudasha-Duman*  
Grieg Piano Concerto in A minor  
Bruckner Symphony No. 7

**Thursday 3 October 2024, 7.00pm**  
**Oslo Concert Hall**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Oslo Philharmonic**

Mjaskovskij Sinfonietta Op. 68  
Britten *Four Sea Interludes*  
Debussy *La Mer*

**RPO TOUR 10-13 OCTOBER 2024 (soloist Yunchan Lim)**

Thursday 10 October Wrocław, Friday 11 October Budapest, Saturday 12 October Belgrade & Sunday 13 October Athens.

**Wednesday 30 & Thursday 31 October 2024, 7.30pm**  
**La Maison Symphonique, Montreal**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Simon Trpčeski** piano | **Orchestre symphonique de Montréal**

Higdon *Blue Cathedral*  
Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 5  
Sibelius Symphony No. 5

**Saturday 9 November 2024, 2.15pm**  
**Het Concertgebouw, Amsterdam**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Dudok Quartet Amsterdam** | **Radio Filharmonisch Orkest**

Roukens *Strange Oscillations* (from String Quartet No. 4 'What Remains')  
Adams *Absolute Jet*  
Shostakovich Symphony No.4 in C minor

**Friday 15 November, 6.30pm**  
**Michael Fowler Centre, New Zealand**

**Saturday 16 November 2024, 7.30pm**  
**Auckland Town Hall, Auckland**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Alexander Gavrylyuk** piano | **New Zealand Symphony Orchestra**

Auerbach *Icarus* (New Zealand Premiere)  
Rachmaninov Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini  
Bartók Concerto for Orchestra

**Friday 22 & Saturday 23 November 2024, 7.30pm**  
**Perth Concert Hall, Perth**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Clara-Jumi Kang** violin | **West Australian Symphony Orchestra**

**Brahms** Violin Concerto  
**Brahms** Symphony No.2

**Wednesday 27 November 8.00pm, Thursday 28 November 1.30pm, Friday 29 November & Saturday 30 November 2024, 8.00pm**  
**Sydney Opera House, Sydney**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Johannes Moser** cello | **Sydney Symphony Orchestra**

**Younan** *Nineteen Seventy-Three* (50 Fanfares Commission)  
**Saint-Saëns** Cello Concerto No.1  
**Stravinsky** *The Rite of Spring*

**Thursday 5 & Friday 6 December 2024, 7.30pm**  
**Victoria Concert Hall, Singapore**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Javier Perianes** piano | **Singapore Symphony Orchestra**

**Tchaikovsky** Serenade for Strings in C major  
**De Falla** *Nights in the Gardens of Spain*  
**Beethoven** Symphony No. 7

**Friday 13 & Saturday 14 December 2024, 7.00pm**  
**L'Auditori, Barcelona**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Jan Lisiecki** piano | **Barcelona Symphony Orchestra**

**Grieg** Piano Concerto in A minor  
**Zemlinsky** *Die Seejungfrau* (The Mermaid)

**Thursday 19 December, 9.00pm & Friday 20 December 2024, 8.15pm**  
**Tivoli Vredenburg, Utrecht**

**Vasily Petrenko** conductor | **Nationaal Kinderkoor** | **Radio Filharmonisch Orkest**

**Tchaikovsky** *The Nutcracker* (complete)