



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

For more than seven decades the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) has been at the forefront of music-making in the UK. Its home base since 2004 at London's Cadogan Hall serves as a springboard for seven principal residencies as well as more than forty-five concerts per year in long-term partnership venues across the country, often in areas where access to live orchestral music is very limited. In London, the Orchestra's regular performances at Cadogan Hall are complemented by a distinguished series at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall and a hugely popular series at the Royal Albert Hall. With a wider reach than any other UK large ensemble, the RPO has truly become Britain's national orchestra.

Alongside its concert series, the RPO embraces twenty-first-century opportunities, including appearances with pop stars and on video game, film and television soundtracks, whilst its artistic priority remains paramount: the making of great music at the highest level for the widest possible audience. This would have been lauded by its Founder and first conductor, Sir Thomas Beecham, who set up the RPO in 1946, leading a vital revival in the UK's orchestral life after World War II. Since then, the Orchestra's principal conductors have included Rudolf Kempe, Antal Doráti, Walter Weller, André Previn, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Yuri Temirkanov, Daniele Gatti and Charles Dutoit; and its repertoire has encompassed every strand of music from the core classical repertoire to music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and works by leading composers of recent years, such as Sir Peter Maxwell Davies and Sir John Tavener.

The RPO's commitment to working with the finest conductors continues and in July 2018, the RPO announced Vasily Petrenko as the Orchestra's new Music Director, assuming the title of Music Director Designate in August 2020 prior to commencing the full role in August 2021. Vasily Petrenko joins the RPO's roster of titled conductors which includes Pinchas Zukerman (Principal Guest Conductor), Alexander Shelley (Principal Associate Conductor) and Grzegorz Nowak (Permanent Associate Conductor).

International touring is vital to the Orchestra's work, taking it to many prestigious destinations worldwide. Recent engagements include concerts at the festivals of Montreux, Lucerne and Granada, an extensive tour of the USA, and visits to central Europe and the Far East, including South Korea and China.

In 2018, RPO Resound, the Orchestra's community and education programme, marks its twenty-fifth anniversary. Throughout its history it has thrived on taking music into the heart of the regions that the Orchestra serves. From Azerbaijan to Jamaica and from Shanghai to Scunthorpe, the team – comprising the majority of the Orchestra – has worked with young people, the homeless, recovering stroke patients (in the award-winning STROKESTRA project in Hull) and in settings ranging from the Sea Life London Aquarium to hospitals, orphanages and children's hospices.

In 1986, the RPO became the first UK orchestra to launch its own record label. The Orchestra has embraced digital advances and continuing its tradition of entrepreneurial innovation, in 2017 the RPO teamed up with the concert-enhancing app, EnCue by Octava, becoming the first orchestra in Europe to offer its audiences real-time programme notes for selected performances delivered to their mobile or tablet devices. The Orchestra has become increasingly active on social media platforms, inviting audiences to engage informally on Facebook and Twitter (@rpoonline) and to enjoy behind-the-scenes insights on the RPO website (www.rpo.co.uk), YouTube (RPOOnline) and Instagram (@RPOOnline). As the RPO proudly looks to its future, its versatility and high standards mark it out as one of today's most open-minded, forward-thinking symphony orchestras.