

BERLINER PHILHARMONIKER

A Spring Awakening: From Bohemia to Vienna

Thursday, January 8, 2026 · 20:00 · Philharmonie Berlin

Petr Popelka, conductor · Gil Shaham, violin

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME		MIN
1	DVORAK 1841–1904 <i>"The Wood Dove" (Holoubek), Symphonic Poem, Op. 110</i>	18'
2	BERG 1885–1935 <i>Concerto for Violin and Orchestra "To the Memory of an Angel"</i>	25'
3	SCHUMANN 1810–1856 <i>Symphony No. 1 in B-flat major, Op. 38 "Spring"</i>	33'
TOTAL MUSIC		76'

Antonin Dvorak

1841–1904

"The Wood Dove" (Holoubek), Symphonic Poem, Op. 110

18 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

"The Wood Dove" (also known as "The Wild Dove") was composed in the autumn of 1896, shortly after Dvorak's return from America to his beloved Bohemia. It is the last of four symphonic poems he wrote in quick succession, all based on ballads from Karel Jaromir Erben's celebrated collection *Kytice* (A Bouquet of Folk Legends).

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

The mournful melody representing the dove's song, which becomes increasingly prominent as the woman's guilt intensifies. Notice how Dvorak transforms the bright wedding music into something increasingly hollow and desperate as the psychological drama unfolds.

Alban Berg

1885–1935

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra "To the Memory of an Angel"

25 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

In February 1935, the Ukrainian-American violinist Louis Krasner approached Berg with a commission for a violin concerto. Berg, absorbed in composing his opera *Lulu*, was initially reluctant. But his precarious finances and, soon after, a devastating personal loss changed his mind.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

The Carinthian folk tune in the first movement, evoking youthful innocence. In the second movement, listen for the moment when the Bach chorale emerges from the twelve-tone texture, its centuries-old melody offering consolation. The violin's final ascent into the stratosphere is one of the most moving passages in all of music.

Robert Schumann

1810–1856

Symphony No. 1 in B-flat major, Op. 38 "Spring"

33 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

The “Spring” Symphony marks Schumann’s triumphant entry into orchestral composition. Until 1841, he had been known primarily for his piano music and songs. It was Clara who encouraged him to think bigger, noting in her diary that his piano compositions were orchestral in feeling.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

The opening brass fanfare and how its rhythm pervades the entire first movement. In the slow movement, listen for the warm, singing melody that could have come straight from one of Schumann’s Lieder. The finale’s exuberance is irresistible, carrying the listener forward on a wave of vernal optimism.

CONCERT PROGRAMS

<https://concertprograms.eu/concerts/bp-2026-01-08-popelka>

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