

BERLINER PHILHARMONIKER

Maxim Emelyanychev conducts Mendelssohn, Mozart and Haydn

Thursday, November 19, 2026 · 20:00 · Philharmonie Berlin

Maxim Emelyanychev, conductor · Yun Zeng, horn · Maxim Emelyanychev, fortepiano

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME		MIN
1	MENDELSSOHN 1809–1847 <i>Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage (Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt), Overture in D major, Op. 27</i>	12'
2	MOZART 1756–1791 <i>Horn Concerto No. 4 in E-flat major, K. 495</i>	17'
3	HAYDN 1732–1809 <i>Keyboard Concerto in D major, Hob. XVIII:11</i>	20'
4	HAYDN 1732–1809 <i>Symphony No. 104 in D major, Hob. I:104 ('London')</i>	28'
TOTAL MUSIC		77'

Felix Mendelssohn

1809–1847

Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage (Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt), Overture in D major, Op. 27

12 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

Goethe's two short poems *Meeresstille* ("Calm Sea") and *Glückliche Fahrt* ("Prosperous Voyage") were hugely popular in the early nineteenth century. Beethoven set them as a cantata for chorus and orchestra, Schubert set the first as a song, and in 1828 the nineteen-year-old Felix Mendelssohn turned them into a concert overture without words. The titles are not a pair of synonyms. For a sailing ship a dead calm was a real danger, since without wind the crew could only wait, and the "prosperous voyage" begins when the breeze finally rises and the ship can move again.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

The **Calm Sea** is an Adagio of almost motionless music: soft, sustained chords, a hymn-like melody in the strings, and a sense of waiting. There is no drama here, only stillness and unease.

Listen for the moment when a small rising phrase in the flute, like the first breath of wind, breaks the spell. The orchestra swells, the tempo quickens and the **Prosperous**

Voyage begins, a bright and energetic Allegro in which the winds, timpani and trumpets join in. Near the end a broad, ceremonial passage seems to welcome the ship into harbour. Then comes Mendelssohn's surprise: instead of ending with a blaze of brass, the overture closes quietly, with a brief, gentle memory of the voyage.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

1756–1791

Horn Concerto No. 4 in E-flat major, K. 495

17 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

All of Mozart's horn concertos were written for one man: Joseph Leutgeb, the leading Austrian horn player of his time. Leutgeb had been first horn of the court orchestra in Salzburg, where he became a friend of the Mozart family, and he later moved to Vienna, as Mozart himself did in 1781. The friendship lasted until the end of Mozart's life, and it was full of teasing. Mozart peppered his horn manuscripts with jokes at Leutgeb's expense, and he wrote the score of this concerto in four colours of ink (red, green, blue and black). This may have been a joke intended to rattle the soloist, although some scholars have suggested that the colours are a kind of code for dynamics and phrasing.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Allegro maestoso. A broad, stately orchestral opening, after which the horn enters with a singing theme. Listen for the passages where the soloist moves by semitones: easy on a modern instrument, but on the natural horn a feat of hand-stopping.

II. Romance: Andante cantabile. Essentially a song without words, in which the horn's warm middle register carries a gentle, lyrical melody.

III. Rondo: Allegro vivace. The best-known movement, a lively hunting-style finale in 6/8 time. Its bouncing main theme, built largely on the notes of the major chord that a natural horn plays most easily, keeps coming back between episodes, each time with a little more brilliance.

Joseph Haydn

1732–1809

Keyboard Concerto in D major, Hob. XVIII:11

20 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

Unlike Mozart, Haydn was not a keyboard virtuoso, and his reputation rests above all on his symphonies and string quartets. Yet his Keyboard Concerto in D major, Hob. XVIII:11, is the best known of his concertos for keyboard and one of the

few to be published during his lifetime. It was written in the early 1780s and published in 1784, and it was his last concerto for the instrument.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Vivace. A lively, instantly catchy main theme sets the tone. Listen for the dialogue between the fortepiano and the orchestra and for the crisp, sparkling passagework in the solo part.

II. Un poco adagio. A singing slow movement in which the keyboard spins out long, ornamented melodies. Its expressive warmth can sound surprisingly forward-looking for music of the early 1780s.

III. Rondo all'Ungarese: Allegro assai. The finale is written in the “Hungarian” manner that was fashionable at the time: stamping rhythms, bright accents and a main theme that keeps returning with fresh energy.

Joseph Haydn

1732–1809

Symphony No. 104 in D major, Hob. I:104 ('London')

28 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

Symphony No. 104 is Haydn's last symphony and the last of the twelve he wrote for London. In 1790 the death of Prince Nikolaus Esterházy released Haydn from nearly three decades of court service, and the violinist and impresario Johann Peter Salomon persuaded him to come to London. His two visits, in 1791 to 1792 and 1794 to 1795, were among the great successes of his career, and the twelve symphonies he wrote for them are the summit of his orchestral music.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Adagio; Allegro. The symphony opens with a stern call for the full orchestra, using only two notes, so that you cannot tell at first whether the music is in D major or D minor. A brooding minor-key introduction follows. Then the Allegro begins quietly in the violins in a bright D major. Listen for how Haydn builds the whole movement from this one theme: when the “second theme” arrives, it is essentially the first one again, in a new key.

II. Andante. A simple, lilting melody in G major for the strings. It darkens gradually and then breaks out into a minor-key storm for the whole orchestra, before calm returns, with the flute prominent near the end.

III. Menuetto: Allegro. A robust minuet, full of Haydn's wit and unexpected pauses. The trio in the middle is lighter and dominated by the oboe and bassoon.

IV. Finale: Spiritoso. The finale opens over a sustained drone in the bass, like a bagpipe, with a folk-like tune in the violins. It was long thought to be based on a London street cry, but it has more recently been identified with a Croatian song, "Oj, Jelena". Listen for the surprises Haydn keeps springing almost until the final chord.

Tonight's artists

Yun Zeng *horn*

Yun Zeng joined the Berliner Philharmoniker as principal horn in 2024, and these concerts are his debut as a soloist with the orchestra. Mozart's Fourth Concerto asks for both a singing tone and agility, the two qualities that make a principal horn's reputation.

Yun Zeng comes from a family of horn players in Sichuan, China: his father, principal horn of the Sichuan Symphony Orchestra, gave him his first lessons. He studied at the conservatory in Beijing with Quan Wen and then in Geneva with Bruno Schneider. He won first prize at the 2019 International Tchaikovsky Competition and second prize at the ARD International Music Competition in 2021. After serving as principal horn of the Staatskapelle Berlin from 2022, he joined the Berliner Philharmoniker as principal horn in September 2024, fulfilling an ambition he had held since childhood.

Maxim Emelyanychev *fortepiano*

Emelyanychev takes a dual role tonight: he conducts the Mendelssohn, the Mozart and the Haydn symphony, and he directs Haydn's Keyboard Concerto from the fortepiano, as Haydn and his contemporaries would have done.

Maxim Emelyanychev, born in 1988, is a Russian conductor and keyboard player who studied in his home city of Nizhny Novgorod. He is chief conductor of the period-instrument ensemble Il Pomo d'Oro, with which he tours widely and has made many recordings, including albums with the mezzo-soprano Joyce DiDonato. In 2018 he stepped in at short notice to conduct the Scottish Chamber Orchestra; the musicians were so impressed that the orchestra appointed him its principal conductor from the 2019/20 season. Much of his work centres on Mozart and his contemporaries, and he often directs from the harpsichord or fortepiano; with Il Pomo d'Oro he has been recording all of Mozart's symphonies. He made his debut with the Berliner Philharmoniker in the 2022/23 season.

CONCERT PROGRAMS

<https://concertprograms.eu/concerts/bp-2026-11-19-emelyanychev>

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