

New Year's Eve Concert with Kirill Petrenko and Alexander Malofeev

Tuesday, December 29, 2026 · 20:00 · Philharmonie Berlin
Kirill Petrenko, conductor · Alexander Malofeev, piano · David Guerrier, trumpet

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME		MIN
1	NICOLAI 1810–1849 <i>Overture to Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor (The Merry Wives of Windsor)</i>	9'
2	SHOSTAKOVICH 1906–1975 <i>Piano Concerto No. 1 in C minor, Op. 35</i>	21'
3	PROKOFIEV 1891–1953 <i>Symphony No. 1 in D major, Op. 25, 'Classical'</i>	15'
4	STRAUSS 1864–1949 <i>Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28</i>	15'
5	STRAUSS II 1825–1899 <i>Overture to the operetta Der Zigeunerbaron (The Gypsy Baron)</i>	8'
TOTAL MUSIC		68'

Otto Nicolai

1810–1849

Overture to Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor (The Merry Wives of Windsor)

9 minutes

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

The overture opens quietly, with a slow, lyrical introduction in the strings that sets a romantic, nocturnal mood before the comedy begins. The main Allegro is quick, light and full of bustle, with themes from the opera tossed between strings and woodwind. Nicolai, an experienced conductor, writes with great clarity; listen for the crisp dialogue between sections of the orchestra and for the brilliant, high-spirited coda.

Dmitri Shostakovich

21 minutes

1906–1975

Piano Concerto No. 1 in C minor, Op. 35

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Allegro moderato. The piano begins with a flourish and a quote from the “Appassionata”, before setting out a wistful main theme. The music moves quickly between lyrical moments and sharp, sarcastic ones, with the trumpet adding the occasional comment.

Lento. The emotional centre: a slow, melancholy movement with a long piano solo in the middle that builds to an impassioned climax. Near the end the muted trumpet takes over the melody in a moment of real tenderness.

Moderato. A short, reflective interlude, often played as an introduction to the finale.

Allegro con brio. The finale is a madcap chase full of quotations, abrupt changes of direction and music-hall humour. After a short piano cadenza that parodies the classical concerto, the trumpet comes into its own with fanfares and street-band tunes, and the work ends with a burst of C major.

Sergei Prokofiev

15 minutes

1891–1953

Symphony No. 1 in D major, Op. 25, 'Classical'

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Allegro. A crisp sonata-form movement that opens with a rocket-like arpeggio. Listen for the way Prokofiev uses classical gestures (scales, trills, sudden contrasts of loud and soft) and then gives them a small twist, jumping into an unexpected key and straight back again. The second theme, for the violins, is famous for its huge leaps and delicate grace notes.

Larghetto. A graceful slow movement whose melody floats high in the first violins over a gently ticking accompaniment.

Gavotta. Barely more than a minute long, a stately old dance with heavy-footed bass notes, wide leaps and harmonic surprises.

Finale: Molto vivace. A breathless finale that Prokofiev wrote, by his own account, without a single minor chord. It races along with sparkling woodwind writing and cheerful good humour to the end.

Richard Strauss

15 minutes

1864–1949

Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche, Op. 28

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

After a few gentle bars in the strings that suggest “once upon a time”, the horn plays Till’s first theme, a long, lilting phrase that rises, falls and ends with three emphatic notes. Soon the D clarinet answers with his second theme, a cheeky, wheedling figure that seems to laugh at its own joke. These two ideas return throughout the piece in endless disguises.

Then the adventures begin. Till rides his horse through the market, scattering the stalls (listen for the rattle of the ratchet). He disguises himself as a priest, and the music turns mock-solemn until his theme pokes through. He flirts with the girls, with a love theme in the first violins. He mocks a group of pompous scholars, their pedantic theme given to the bassoons.

The mood changes abruptly with a loud drum roll. Till is arrested and put on trial, and the heavy chords of the court alternate with his increasingly nervous attempts to joke his way out. The sentence is death. The D clarinet screams as he is hanged, and then the music falls silent. But Strauss adds an epilogue: the “once upon a time” music returns, and a final burst from the whole orchestra suggests that the spirit of a Till Eulenspiegel can never really be killed.

Johann Strauss II

8 minutes

1825–1899

Overture to the operetta Der Zigeunerbaron (The Gypsy Baron)

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

The overture is a medley of the operetta’s best tunes, in the manner of a Viennese potpourri. It moves between Hungarian and Viennese moods: dark, chromatic themes and the fiery accelerations of the csárdás on one side, lilting waltz melodies on the other, above all the tune of the famous *Schatz-Walzer*

(Treasure Waltz). Listen for the colourful orchestration that gives the Hungarian passages their flavour, and for the way Strauss builds the final pages into a whirlwind of speed and brilliance, a fitting close to a New Year's Eve programme.



CONCERT PROGRAMS

<https://concertprograms.eu/concerts/bp-2026-12-29-petrenko>

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