

Stutzmann: Beethoven's Third Concerto, Rieni and Der Rosenkavalier

Thursday, May 14, 2026 · 19:00 · Barbican
Nathalie Stutzmann, conductor · Leif Ove Andsnes, piano

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME		MIN
1	BEETHOVEN 1770–1827 <i>Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37</i>	33'
2	WAGNER 1813–1883 <i>Rieni, Overture</i>	12'
3	STRAUSS 1864–1949 <i>Der Rosenkavalier, Suite</i>	21'
TOTAL MUSIC		66'

Ludwig van Beethoven

1770–1827

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37

33 minutes

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

The first movement opens not with the soloist but with a long orchestral exposition built on a terse, marching C minor theme; listen for its quiet, ominous beginning and the way it grows in power. When the piano finally enters, it does so dramatically, with rising scales, and then takes command. Listen for the interplay of stormy drama and lyrical tenderness, and for the big cadenza near the end (Beethoven's own), after which the movement closes with a mysterious, hushed timpani-and-piano passage before a final flourish.

The slow movement (Largo) is a sublime surprise: it moves to the remote, glowing key of E major, far from the home key, and unfolds as a serene, hymn-like meditation of great beauty and stillness. Listen for the rapt, song-like piano writing and the magical, almost sacred atmosphere. The finale is a vigorous rondo that returns to C minor with a spiky, energetic main theme; listen for its rhythmic drive, its wit and its episodes of

contrasting lyricism, and for the thrilling coda, where Beethoven shifts at last into a bright, fast C major (Presto), turning struggle into exuberant triumph to bring the concerto to a joyous close.

Richard Wagner

12 minutes

1813–1883

Rienzi, Overture

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Listen at the very start for the famous slow build: a single sustained trumpet note, swelling out of silence, which heralds the broad, hymn-like melody that is the heart of the Overture: the noble tune of Rienzi's prayer ('Allmächt'ger Vater'), one of Wagner's most heartfelt early inspirations. Listen for how this great melody is introduced gently and then returns later in full, glowing orchestral splendour.

Around it, listen for the contrasting material: stirring, martial rhythms and fanfares evoking the opera's political and military drama; surging, energetic string writing; and a gradual building of excitement. The Overture follows the classic 'grand opera' pattern of stitching together the opera's best themes into an exciting orchestral showpiece, and it builds, through accelerating energy and brilliant orchestration, to a rousing, triumphant conclusion. Enjoy it as a vivid glimpse of the young Wagner, writing to dazzle and to please, already a master of the orchestra and not yet the revolutionary he would become.

Richard Strauss

21 minutes

1864–1949

Der Rosenkavalier, Suite

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Listen at the very opening for the music depicting the night of love between the Marschallin and Octavian: surging, ardent strings and whooping horns (Strauss's famously vivid, unmistakable evocation of passion). Then listen for the magical music of the 'Presentation of the Silver Rose,' one of the opera's most exquisite moments: shimmering, otherworldly high writing (celesta, harps, high violins) conjuring the silvery glint of the rose, as young Octavian and Sophie fall instantly in love.

The heart of the Suite is its waltzes. Listen for the sequence of lilting, swaggering Viennese waltz tunes (associated especially with the comic Baron Ochs), full of charm, swing and nostalgia. Then listen for the music drawn from the opera's sublime final scene: the great trio in which the Marschallin, with aching tenderness, gives up Octavian to Sophie, and the radiant closing love duet, some of the most beautiful music Strauss ever composed. The Suite ends with a final, energetic waltz flourish. Throughout, savour Strauss's opulent orchestration and his gift for melody: a glowing, sentimental, utterly captivating farewell to the evening.



CONCERT PROGRAMS

<https://concertprograms.eu/concerts/lso-2026-05-14-stutzmann>

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