

Nosedá's Prokofiev and Shostakovich, with Kavakos

Thursday, December 10, 2026 · 19:00 · Barbican
Gianandrea Nosedá, conductor · Leonidas Kavakos, violin

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME		MIN
1	PROKOFIEV 1891–1953 <i>The Love for Three Oranges, Suite, Op. 33bis</i>	16'
2	SHOSTAKOVICH 1906–1975 <i>Violin Concerto No. 2 in C-sharp minor, Op. 129</i>	33'
3	PROKOFIEV 1891–1953 <i>Chout (The Tale of the Buffoon), Suite, Op. 21bis</i>	35'
TOTAL MUSIC		84'

Sergei Prokofiev

1891–1953

16 minutes

The Love for Three Oranges, Suite, Op. 33bis

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Listen above all for the famous March, which you may well recognise: a jaunty, slightly sinister tune with a clipped, marching rhythm and Prokofiev's trademark 'wrong-note' wit, brassy and irresistible. The Scherzo that follows is all glittering, scurrying activity, conjuring the opera's magic and mischief.

Across the suite's six short movements, listen for Prokofiev's brilliant, sardonic orchestration and his love of the grotesque and the comic: sudden contrasts, mock-pompous fanfares, eerie atmospheres for the opera's sorcerers, and splashes of bright colour. It is music of theatrical flair and sharp humour, a perfect curtain-raiser, and a reminder of why Prokofiev was considered the wittiest of the great twentieth-century Russians.

Dmitri Shostakovich

33 minutes

1906–1975

Violin Concerto No. 2 in C-sharp minor, Op. 129

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Listen for the prevailing mood of shadowy introspection. The first movement (Moderato) opens with a brooding, long-breathed melody for the soloist over dark orchestral colours. This is music of melancholy and unease rather than brilliance, though it builds to anguished climaxes and ends with a contrapuntal cadenza. Listen, too, for Shostakovich's spare, sometimes desolate orchestration: solo woodwinds, low strings, ominous horn calls.

The slow movement (Adagio) is the concerto's lyrical heart: a long, sorrowing, song-like meditation of great tenderness, the violin singing over hushed accompaniment. The finale brings more energy and some of Shostakovich's grotesque, sardonic wit (driving rhythms, sharp accents, a sense of bitter dance) and includes a further long cadenza. But even here the music keeps returning to shadow. Listen for the prominent horn writing and for the way the concerto ends not in triumph but in a kind of hard, ambiguous defiance. It is late Shostakovich at his most personal and searching.

Sergei Prokofiev

35 minutes

1891–1953

Chout (The Tale of the Buffoon), Suite, Op. 21bis

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

This is a sequence of twelve vivid scenes, so enjoy the colour and contrast. Listen for the brash, stamping dance rhythms and the folk-tune flavour that runs through the score: Prokofiev drawing on Russian popular idioms but twisting them with his characteristic harmonic 'wrong notes' and grotesque humour. There are wild, raucous numbers (the buffoons' antics, market scenes) set against gentler, more lyrical interludes (such as the dance of the buffoons' daughters).

Listen, too, for Prokofiev's brilliant and sometimes deliberately crude orchestration: blaring brass, scurrying woodwinds, percussion adding to the knockabout energy. The mood is comic, even cartoonish, full of theatrical flair and physical exuberance. You don't need to follow the convoluted plot; simply enjoy the

riot of invention and the sheer rhythmic vitality of young Prokofiev writing for the most glamorous ballet company in the world.



CONCERT PROGRAMS

<https://concertprograms.eu/concerts/lso-2026-12-10-nosed>

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