

Klaus Mäkelä in Valencia: Lisa Batiashvili plays Sibelius, and the Symphonie fantastique

Saturday, February 6, 2027 · 19:00 · Palau de la Música de València

Klaus Mäkelä, conductor · Lisa Batiashvili, violin

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME		MIN
1	SIBELIUS 1865–1957 <i>Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47</i>	34'
2	BERLIOZ 1803–1869 <i>Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14</i>	50'
TOTAL MUSIC		84'

Jean Sibelius

1865–1957

34 minutes

Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Allegro moderato. There is no orchestral introduction. Over a soft, pulsing cushion of strings the soloist enters at once with a long, wandering melody that seems to come out of the far distance. A second theme arrives dark and low on the violin's G string. Where a development section would normally stand, the orchestra falls silent and the soloist plays a long cadenza built on the opening theme, full of double stops, trills and runs. When the themes return they are darker in colour, and the movement ends with the main theme's dramatic material at full strength.

II. Adagio di molto. A short phrase from clarinets and oboes leads in the violin's broad, heartfelt melody, played over plucked strings. It asks for restraint and simplicity more than brilliance. The orchestra turns stormy in the middle of the movement, and the violin answers with plaintive double stops before the opening melody returns and the music sinks to a serene close.

III. Allegro, ma non tanto. Four bars of drumming rhythm from timpani and low strings set the pace, and the violin leaps in on its lowest string with a dance theme of fierce energy. Tovey called this movement ‘a polonaise for polar bears’, a joke that has stuck to it ever since. A second theme, with something of the waltz about it, is given first to the orchestra. The solo part grows steadily harder, with passages in thirds, arpeggios, octaves and high harmonics, and the major key is won only in the final bars, where the violin’s line climbs upward and the orchestra seals the ending with it.

Hector Berlioz

50 minutes

1803–1869

Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Rêveries, Passions. A slow introduction of muted, sighing strings stands for the vague longings of the artist before he has seen his beloved. When the Allegro begins, violins and flute play the *idée fixe* almost unaccompanied: a long melody that climbs by stages and keeps falling back. Fix it in the ear here, since everything later depends on recognising it.

II. Un bal. Harps and shimmering strings set the scene for a waltz. In the middle of the dance the *idée fixe* drifts in on flute and oboe, as if the artist had caught sight of her across the room, and it returns once more, on a clarinet, before the brilliant close.

III. Scène aux champs. A cor anglais calls, and an oboe answers from offstage: two shepherds piping to each other. The long, calm movement that follows is troubled at its centre, when the beloved’s theme returns over agitated low strings. At the end the cor anglais calls again. There is no answer, only distant thunder from four timpani.

IV. Marche au supplice. The artist dreams that he has killed his beloved and is being led to the scaffold. Muffled drums and growling low brass alternate with a blazing march for the full band. At the last moment a solo clarinet begins the *idée fixe*, his final thought of her, and a single crashing chord cuts it off.

V. Songe d'une nuit du sabbat. He sees his own funeral, attended by witches and monsters. The beloved's theme arrives squealing on the small clarinet, turned into a vulgar jig. Bells toll, and bassoons and tubas intone the Dies irae, the chant from the Mass for the Dead. A witches' round dance starts up as a fugue in the strings, and near the end Berlioz plays both at once. Listen too for the dry clatter when the violins strike the strings with the wood of their bows.



CONCERT PROGRAMS

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