

WIENER PHILHARMONIKER

G Minor, C Minor, and a Posthorn

Saturday, January 30, 2027 · 19:30 · Großes Festspielhaus

Philippe Jordan, conductor · Víkingur Ólafsson, piano

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME		MIN
1	MOZART 1756–1791 <i>Symphony No. 25 in G minor, K. 183</i>	22'
2	MOZART 1756–1791 <i>Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491</i>	30'
3	MOZART 1756–1791 <i>Serenade No. 9 in D major, K. 320, 'Posthorn'</i>	45'
TOTAL MUSIC		97'

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

1756–1791

Symphony No. 25 in G minor, K. 183

22 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was seventeen when he finished this symphony in Salzburg on 5 October 1773. He wrote dozens of symphonies, and only two of them are in a minor key, both in G minor: this one, and the famous No. 40 of 1788. To tell them apart, musicians call the earlier work the ‘little’ G minor.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Allegro con brio. The strings begin with urgent repeated notes pushed off the beat (syncopations), and the melody drops through a wide, dissonant interval, a diminished seventh. There are sudden pauses. The bass line is unusually active throughout, carrying themes of its own.

II. Andante. A short slow movement in E-flat major, built like an opera aria. Muted violins and the two bassoons trade sighing phrases as if in conversation.

III. Menuetto and Trio. The minuet is in G minor, stern, and begins with the whole orchestra in bare octaves. The trio in G major is for the wind instruments alone, a piece of village-band music that lets some air into the room.

IV. Allegro. The finale returns to G minor and to the drive of the opening, more compressed, with sudden changes between soft and loud. It ends in the minor.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

1756–1791

Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor, K. 491

30 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart entered this concerto in his catalogue on 24 March 1786 and played it for the first time at the Burgtheater in Vienna early the following month, probably on 7 April. He was working on *The Marriage of Figaro* at the same time, and the opera opened a few weeks later. The two pieces could hardly be less alike. Figaro lives almost entirely in major keys. The concerto is one of only two that Mozart wrote in the minor.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Allegro. The opening is in three-time, which is rare for a Mozart concerto, and begins quietly with strings and bassoons in unison. The theme twists through all twelve notes of the chromatic scale before it finds its way home, and for a moment the key itself seems in doubt. When the piano enters, it does not take up this theme but offers a

plaintive new idea of its own. At the very end, after the cadenza, the soloist keeps playing, accompanying the orchestra with soft rippling figures as the music sinks to a pianissimo close.

II. Larghetto. A rondo in E-flat major on a tune of nursery-rhyme simplicity, stated by the piano alone. Between its returns the woodwind take over with two episodes of their own, one in C minor and one in A-flat major, which the piano and strings then decorate.

III. Allegretto. Instead of the usual cheerful rondo, Mozart writes a theme and eight variations in C minor. Listen for the march-like third variation, for the two turns to the major (the fourth variation in A-flat, the sixth in a sunny C major), and for the last variation, where the metre changes to a swaying 6/8. A major-key ending seems possible until the final page. It does not come.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

1756–1791

Serenade No. 9 in D major, K. 320, 'Posthorn'

45 minutes

ABOUT THE WORK

The University of Salzburg closed its academic year each summer with graduation ceremonies, and part of the tradition was a Finalmusik, a serenade for orchestra. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, then twenty-three and employed at the Salzburg court, wrote the one for 1779. His manuscript is dated 3 August of that year.

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

I. Adagio maestoso. Allegro con spirito. A few bars of slow, ceremonial introduction, then a quick, energetic Allegro.

II. Minuetto. The first of the two minuets, sturdy and formal.

III. Concertante: Andante grazioso. The strings step back and the principal flutes, oboes and bassoons come forward as soloists, in G major, over a light accompaniment that includes plucked strings. Near the end the wind players have a cadenza to themselves.

IV. Rondeau: Allegro ma non troppo. The concertante idea continues, with the tune carried mostly by a solo flute and a solo oboe.

V. Andantino. The surprise of the work: a slow movement in D minor, beginning low in the violins over murmuring basses. For a few minutes the party music is set aside for something inward and troubled.

VI. Minuetto, with two Trios. The mood lifts again. The first trio is a solo for piccolo over the strings. The second brings the posthorn, with its handful of open-air notes.

VII. Finale: Presto. A fast, brilliant close in D major for the full orchestra.

Tonight's artists

Víkingur Ólafsson *piano*

Ólafsson is the soloist in the C minor Concerto. Mozart left no cadenza for its first movement, so the choice of what to play there is the pianist's own.

Víkingur Ólafsson, born in Reykjavík in 1984, is one of the most sought-after pianists of his generation. He had his first lessons from his mother, a piano teacher, and studied at the Juilliard School in New York before returning to Iceland, where he founded his own record label, Dirrindí, and the Reykjavík Midsummer Music festival. Since signing with Deutsche Grammophon he has released a series of thoughtfully conceived albums (Philip Glass, Johann Sebastian Bach, Debussy and Rameau, Mozart and his contemporaries) which have won him a wide international following. His recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations, which he performed around the world throughout the 2023/24 season, won the Grammy Award for Best Classical Instrumental Solo in 2025. Admired for the clarity, rhythmic precision and imaginative programming of his playing, he joins the Berliner Philharmoniker this season.

CONCERT PROGRAMS

<https://concertprograms.eu/concerts/wp-2027-01-30-jordan>

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