

LONDON SYMPHONIA **2023-24** SEASON



JANUARY 27, 2024 | 7:30 pm | Metropolitan United

JANINA FIALKOWSKA PLAYS CHOPIN

Guest Artists

- Rei Hotoda, conductor
- Janina Fialkowska, piano

Presenting Partner: *Serenata Music*

London
Symphonia 



Dear Friends,

On behalf of London City Council, let me welcome you to the London Symphonia's 2023-24 Season. As we gather together in the name of music and art, we celebrate not only the remarkable talents of this orchestra but also the vibrant cultural tapestry of our beloved city.

London, often referred to as the Forest City, is indeed a place where music runs deep within its veins. We stand tall as the first UNESCO City of Music in Canada, a distinction that underscores the profound significance of music in our community.

London Symphonia has long been a shining star in our artistic constellation, serving as a creative catalyst that ignites our collective passion for excellence, the love of music, and innovative collaborations. Through inclusive programming, you provide us with a unique opportunity to explore and celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures that call London home.

I join with you in celebrating the dawn of London Symphonia's 2023-24 Season. May this season be a symphony of unforgettable moments, a crescendo of creativity, and a fortissimo of artistic excellence. As we come together in the name of music, let us embrace the harmonious melodies that unite us and the shared vision of a culturally enriched London.

Best wishes to all for another positive and memorable experience!

Kind regards,

Josh Morgan
Mayor, City of London

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We are thrilled to present five exciting concerts in our Winter/Spring Season that we think you will really enjoy.

Join us as we continue to welcome a diverse array of extraordinary artists, some of whom you may know, and a new generation of performers and composers. Each concert will take you on a unique musical journey of discovery.

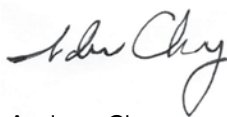
Great music and amazing artistry await you! Upcoming programming includes cherished orchestral masterworks, works by living composers, including a World Premiere, and an eclectic mix of jazz and modern musical genres.

Our audience members are vital to the continued success of London Symphonia. On behalf of the musicians, staff and Board of Directors, thank you for your support.

We look forward to seeing you often.



April Voth
Executive Director



Andrew Chung
Artistic Producer

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

London Symphonia wishes to acknowledge and honour the land on which we are meeting as the traditional territory of the First Nations peoples; the Chippewa of the Thames First Nation (part of the Anishinaabe), the Oneida Nation of the Thames (part of the Haudenosaunee) and the Munsee-Delaware Nation (part of the Leni-Lunaape). Let us reflect on how we as individuals and as a community can carry this spirit of gratitude into everything we do to honour the work that all the First Nations peoples of the Turtle Island have done, and continue to do, for the land that supports us all.

JANINA FIALKOWSKA PLAYS CHOPIN

JANUARY 27, 2024

7:30 pm

Metropolitan United

Rei Hotoda, conductor

Janina Fialkowska, piano

Louise Farrenc

Symphony No. 2 in D major, Op. 35

- I. Andante – Allegro
- II. Andante
- III. Scherzo – Vivace
- IV. Andante – Allegro

INTERMISSION

Frédéric Chopin

Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11

- I. Allegro Maestoso
- II. Romance – Larghetto
- III. Rondo – Vivace

Support for Janina Fialkowska's performance is dedicated in memory of Dr. Krystyna Wojakowski.

This concert runs approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes, and will be performed with a 20-minute intermission.



MEET JANINA FIALKOWSKA, REI HOTODA AND THE MUSICIANS AFTER THE CONCERT

Come to the Great Room, immediately behind the stage, and speak with the musicians.

TONIGHT'S MUSICIANS

Violin 1

Joe Lanza
Mikela Witjes
Mel Martin
Chia-Hsuan Chen*
Peter Carter
Jessica Elliotson
Adam Diderrich

Violin 2

Sarah Wiebe
Andrew Bensler
Andrew Chung
Yanet Campbell-Secades*
Jillian Yang
Leah Grandmont

Viola

Kelvin Enns
Ellis Yuen-Rapati*
Marie-Eve Lessard
Tasman Tantasawat*
Jacqueline Milne
John Wiebe

Cello

Ben Bolt-Martin
Sonya Nanos
Patrick Theriault
Eve Thompson*

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Fil Stasiak

Flute

Gillian Derer
Sharon Kahan

Oboe

Graham Mackenzie
Jennifer Short

Bassoon

Julie Shier
Thomas Roy-Rochette

Clarinet

Przemyslaw Raczynski
Marc Blouin

Horn

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Kate Stone
Sasha Gorbasew
Deborah Stroh

Trombone

Mike Polci

Trumpet

Shawn Spicer
Scott Harrison

Timpani

David Campion

*London Symphonia Fellows from Western University



GUEST ARTIST BIOS



Janina Fialkowska

For 50 years, concert pianist Janina Fialkowska has enchanted audiences and critics around the world. She has been praised for her musical integrity, her refreshing natural approach and her unique piano sound thus becoming “one of the Grandes Dames of piano playing” (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung).

Born in Canada, she began her piano studies with her mother at age 4 continuing on in her native Montréal with Yvonne Hubert. In Paris she studied with Yvonne Lefébure and in New York at the Juilliard School with Sascha Gorodnitzki, experiencing the best of both French and Russian piano traditions. Her career was launched in 1974, when the legendary Arthur Rubinstein became her mentor after her prize-winning performance at his inaugural Master Piano Competition, calling her a “born Chopin interpreter” and laying the foundation for her lifelong identification with this composer.

Since then she has performed with the foremost orchestras worldwide under the baton of such conductors as Zubin Mehta, Bernard Haitink, Lorin Maazel, Sir Georg Solti, Sir Roger Norrington, Klaus Mäkelä and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. She has won special recognition for a series of important premieres, notably Liszt’s newly discovered Third Piano Concerto with the Chicago Symphony and several contemporary piano concertos. Ms Fialkowska’s discography includes many award-winning discs, e.g. the BBC Music Magazine’s 2013 “Instrumental CD of the Year” award as well as the Canadian JUNO Award in 2018.

Her native Canada has bestowed upon her their highest honours: Officer of the Order of Canada, the Governor General’s 2012 Lifetime Achievement Award in Classical Music, as well as three honorary doctorates. She passes on her wide musical experience in master classes and at her annual “International Piano Academy” in Bavaria, where she now resides.

Ms. Fialkowska makes frequent appearances as a juror of the world's most prestigious piano competitions such as this year in Munich at the ARD Competition, Rubenstein Competition in Tel Aviv, and Liszt Utrecht Competition. She was President of the venerable Geneva Competition. She also gave several sought-after master classes around the world, contributing to the success of a whole new generation of talented pianists. Recent highlights included her return to the Berlin Piano Festival, three tours in North America and numerous concerts in Germany, Austria and Croatia.

Her autobiography "A Note in Time" (Novum Publishing, London) – released in November 2021 – has received rave reviews globally. "Subtlety, which is a hallmark of her playing on the piano keys, distinguishes also her writing." (Augsburger Allgemeine). A "mesmerizing memoir" (Classical Voice North America). "A totally absorbing read" (La scena musicale). The book is currently being translated into German.

Ms Fialkowska's long awaited fourth and final recording of her immensely successful "Chopin Recital" was released on the ATMA Classique label in February 2023.



Rei Hotoda

Conductor Rei Hotoda has been hailed as an inexhaustible dynamo with a deep commitment to reimagining the 21st-century concert experience. Currently Music Director of the Fresno Philharmonic, her vision can be seen through her thought-provoking programming, passionate allyship to marginalized artists, advocacy for arts education, and an unwavering commitment to presenting many of today's leading composers alongside masterworks of the classical repertoire.

As a champion of today's living composers and an artist dedicated to amplifying marginalized voices, Rei's innovative programming and interdisciplinary collaborations continue to position her as a leader in the industry. Across nearly every concert in 2023-24, Rei has made it her mission to program works by Black, Indigenous, or women composers, including her upcoming debuts with London Symphonia, the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, Greensboro Symphony Orchestra, and the Kansas City Symphony.

One of the most sought-after conductors of her generation, she has guest conducted prestigious ensembles, including the symphony orchestras of Chicago, St. Louis, Dallas, Detroit, Toronto, Louisville, Winnipeg, and Utah, among others.

At the Fresno Philharmonic, Rei continues to lead and design programs that reflect the rich diversity of the community while highlighting the stellar artistry of the musicians in the ensemble. This season, Rei and the FPO explore and celebrate the remarkable two-way street between Jazz and western classical music, entitled "Jazzing it Up".

As an active and critically acclaimed keyboardist, Rei embraces her time conducting from the piano and harpsichord. In 2023-24, in addition to her season-opening performance leading the Fresno Philharmonic from the keyboard in Poulenc's Concerto for Two Pianos, she will also perform Jessie Montgomery's *Rounds for Piano and String Orchestra* as soloist with the Kamuela Philharmonic.

Rei's deep knowledge and remarkable versatility on and off the podium have led to several collaborations and special projects. She has worked with tabla master Sandeep Das; pipa player Wu Man; violinists Jennifer Koh and Chee Yun; pianists Laura Downes, Awadagin Pratt, Orion Weiss, and Joyce Yang; guitarist Pablo Villegas; ensembles such as Time for Three, Indigo Girls, Steep Canyon Rangers, and Pink Martini; singers Damien Geter, Jessica Rivera, Idina Menzel, Michael Feinstein and Ben Folds, among many others.

Rei is the proud recipient of several prestigious awards, including the 2006 Taki-Alsop Conducting Fellowship, created by Marin Alsop to mentor women conductors. Her teachers and mentors include Gustav Meier, Marin Alsop, Jaap van Zweden and Thierry Fischer.

Louise Farrenc (1804-1875)

Symphony No.2 in D major

In recent years works composed by women have increasingly found their place on orchestral programs as the movement toward diversity of representation in all aspects of Western society has flourished. But if the presence of women composers in the field of art music has steadily increased in the past century, and more particularly since World War II, their compositions have generally been classified as ‘modern’ or ‘contemporary’ – and before that, even ‘contemptible’ – and shelved, frequently before the composers themselves have passed on. However, efforts to address the previous neglect of women in our music histories and concert halls have intensified in the past 30 years, and have shed light on the achievements of some remarkable and under-appreciated musicians.

One of these is the 19th-century French composer Louise Farrenc (Far-renk’). She was born Louise Dumont, into a distinguished family of painters and sculptors long associated with the royal court, which facilitated her pursuit of an artistic career even though she was the first of them to take up music. Her great talent was evident from the age of six, and later was nurtured by the most prominent teachers in Paris – the virtuosi Moscheles and Hummel

in piano, and Antoine Reicha in composition, counterpoint and orchestration, among whose pupils were Berlioz, Liszt and later César Franck. At 17 Louise was ready to undertake concert tours with her new husband, Aristide Farrenc. Here again she was fortunate: Farrenc was more than a professional flautist, he was a burgeoning music publisher who in addition to issuing editions of Beethoven and Hummel could – and would! – print the compositions of his gifted wife. Thereby Louise became known as a pianist and composer not only in Paris but abroad, garnering approval from no less a figure than Robert Schumann.

But she was not satisfied to restrict herself to writing variations and rondos for the piano, and in 1834 she produced two concert Overtures for full orchestra, her remarkable first ventures in orchestral composition. The second, given by the Paris Conservatoire orchestra in 1840, was favourably reviewed by Berlioz, but both remained in manuscript, awaiting rediscovery in a later age.

However, they were preparation for Farrenc’s entry into the rarefied genre of the symphony, terra incognita for most French composers of the day, never mind a woman (in France composers

wrote symphonies, if at all, as graduation exercises prior to pursuing success in the opera house). The first of her three symphonies was completed in 1841, the year before she joined the Conservatoire as its first female professor of piano – a position she held for the next 30 years. It was only given a hearing in April 1845 by the Conservatoire orchestra, but that doubtless spurred the composition of her Symphony No.2, the manuscript of which is dated December of that year.

Farrenc's Second Symphony in D – her only one in a major key – is in four movements, the second one slow and the third dance-like, with a modest instrumentation of double winds, strings and timpani, all quite in the tradition of the late Classical period.. In these respects it is like Beethoven's Second, as well as in having an opening slow introduction; certain melodic and harmonic details are also similar. All that ends with the Andante, where Farrenc's individuality asserts itself in a sweet melody alternating in charming variations with a gruffer and more militaristic section; her skill in scoring for woodwinds is particularly on display here.

The scherzo, in D minor, is full of surprises, starting with irregular phrases, and continuing with unexpected pauses and sudden changes of key and volume. French-Canadian conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Music Director of the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Metropolitan Opera, has described it as 'experimental' – even suggestive of the early Bruckner symphonies of the 1860s! The central section, in its switch

from triple to duple time and in its repetitive little woodwind scale, may remind some of the trio in Beethoven's 9th Symphony scherzo; here as there it also provides a short coda.

The finale expands the wide range of moods traversed in this symphony with a stately and noble introduction that unfolds in the horns and basses the beginning of the light and joyous Allegro theme that follows. Several melodic fragments, ever-increasing in energy, are then strung together until the theme turns into a fugue, climaxing in – silence! The winds' tranquil transformation of the theme then leads to the recapitulation and a conclusion that proves that musical wit did not die with Haydn.

Louise Farrenc did more than show that women could write symphonies: her chamber music was published and widely performed; and not only was she the sole female professor at the Conservatoire in the entire 19th century – where her '30 Etudes in All the Major and Minor Keys' were in continuous use as teaching material for decades – but from 1850 she was paid on equal terms with her male colleagues. With her husband – and after his death – she spearheaded the publication of 23 volumes of 17th and 18th century keyboard works, for which her treatise on Baroque ornamentation was an important reference for many years. The recognition denied her for over a century is now justifiably becoming hers.

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Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849)

Piano Concerto No.1 in E minor, Op.11

“While you are away, may your heart remain ever with us.”

– Text of a farewell cantata performed on the day of Chopin’s departure from Poland

Although he lived the last half of his short life in France, Chopin’s heart was always in his native Poland. And it still is. At the composer’s request, his heart was preserved in alcohol at his death and returned to his home town of Warsaw where it remains to this day, entombed in a church column, although his body rests in Paris. This is undoubtedly the closest he came to being a pillar of the Church; as for being pickled in cognac, what may seem like an enviable fate to some probably would have been a matter of indifference to him. He was a man to whom excess of any kind was abhorrent.

Having a French father and a Polish mother, it seems natural that Chopin would have divided his life between these countries; but in fact, politics and the artistic environment were responsible. With an opera house and an active concert calendar Warsaw was no hick town, but it lacked the social network and sheer numbers of musical patrons that in Paris provided Chopin a living – and where in addition to composing and performing he could charge exorbitantly

for teaching the children of the wealthy. But Chopin’s emigration was more chance than choice. He was concertizing in Vienna when the doomed Polish revolution of 1831 broke out. Politically suspect, unwilling to return home to Russian repression and unable to rekindle the excitement exhibited earlier by the fickle Viennese, he wandered through southern Germany before arriving in the French capital in September 1831. There his arrestingly original technique, which effectively transferred the highly ornamented melody of *bel canto* opera to the piano – along with the exotic appeal of his Polish dance compositions and his unflinching social graces – made him a fixture at the fashionable salons.

Chopin’s two piano concertos were the creative culmination of his Warsaw years when, after returning from a resounding success in Vienna in 1829, a career as a piano soloist seemed inevitable if not desirable. When the F minor concerto was premiered in March 1830, he was already writing another in E minor, which

would be the highlight of his farewell concert in October. Thus the E minor Concerto, while published as his First, is actually the later of the two. This order of publication in turn reflects Chopin's priorities: the E minor Concerto, larger and more heavily orchestrated than its predecessor, was the vehicle the composer invariably chose to present himself publicly, evidently believing it the more effective in spite of its somewhat mixed reception over the years.

Unfortunately the original manuscripts of both concertos have disappeared, making it impossible to know how much revision separates what was played in Warsaw from what Chopin published in Paris. The E minor is the less traditional of the two in matters of form, although neither work conforms to the academic 'rules'; unusually its **first movement** retains the keynote of E until strikingly moving to C to begin the development. Unlike his contemporaries Mendelssohn, Schumann and Liszt, Chopin retained the old-fashioned extended orchestral introduction of the previous generation. If the influence of composer-pianists such as Hummel and Field may be discerned, the harmonic imagination and emotional thrust of the concertos are Chopin's own, which is why his works have survived and theirs, for all their superficial glitter, have not.

Chopin's orchestration has frequently been termed inept. This is rather harsh, although it must be said that no orchestral musician looks forward to a Chopin accompaniment – for they

are *desperately*, desperately dull to play! In fact, Chopin rarely performed the E minor with full orchestra; a reduced accompaniment for string quintet was printed and is thought to have been used at the Paris premiere in February 1832. He is also known to have performed it as a piano solo. But if nobody comes to hear a Chopin concerto for the accompaniments – mostly a rug of strings underneath the piano – it is kind of fun to keep half an ear cocked to hear how almost every instrument gets its moment in the shade.

That 1832 Paris performance launched Chopin: publishers lined up and the Pleyel piano firm made him a sponsor. Three years later, however, his full-orchestra rendition of the First at a Parisian benefit for Polish refugees was coolly received, leading Chopin to abandon public concerts completely in favour of salon recitals. But other pianists, notably Liszt and Clara Schumann, soon took the concerto up, although usually with cuts to the introduction and often with 'improved' orchestrations. The Romance and Rondo (the last derived from the Polish dance *krakowiak*) were often given separately, as indeed the composer himself had done.

A few years ago a request to have DNA from Chopin's heart analysed to determine the exact cause of his death was turned down by the Polish government; thus a theory that cystic fibrosis, a disease unrecognized in the 19th century, may have killed him rather than presumed tuberculosis ('consumption') remains speculative.

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ADMINISTRATION

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STAFF

April Voth, *Executive Director*

Andrew Chung, *Artistic Producer*

Scott Good, *Composer, Assistant Producer*

Paula Calzonetti, *Fundraising Associate*

Janet Mowat, *Senior Marketing Consultant*

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Wendy Perry, *Administrative Assistant*

Rachael Hunter, *Front of House Manager*

Mila Todorova, *Bookkeeper*

Kate Stone, *Personnel Manager, Musicians*

Shawn Spicer, *Music Librarian*

Louise Good, *Communications & Fundraising Assistant - Volunteer*

ARTISTIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

Joe Lanza, *Chair*

Graham Lord

Mikela Witjes

PRODUCTION TEAM

Jay Jacobs, *Production Coordinator*

Shawn Spicer, *Production Manager*

Mike Fisher, *Stream Studio, Video Content and Livestreaming*

Oleh Bilov, Andre Deplonty, *Camera Operators*

Geoff Warder, *Sound Engineer*

Ethan Sue, *Livestream Titles - Volunteer*

Abigail Bright, *Stage Manager*

CONCERT POLICIES

- Photography and video/audio recording of any kind is not permitted during the performance.
- Photos are permitted before and after the performance and during intermission.
- Mask wearing is not currently required. Not everyone may have the same degree of comfort with the lifting of restrictions, and we ask that you please respect the personal space and comfort level of those around you.
- Please put your cell phone on silent and put it away.
- Please do not remove cushions from the Premium seating areas.

Discover London Symphonia's **2023-24** Season


TICKETS AND TICKET PACKAGES ON SALE NOW!

Next Concert



FREEDOM: THE SPIRIT AND LEGACY OF BLACK MUSIC

FEBRUARY 24, 2024 at 7:30 pm

Guest Artist Sponsor: 

Celebrate the triumphant sounds of gospel, blues, jazz, rock 'n roll, R&B, reggae and rap with Beau Dixon, a multi-talented cast and London Symphonia.



A BOHEMIAN LIFE
APRIL 6, 2024



AN ELEGANT FIRE
MAY 4, 2024



TRANSFORMED
MAY 25, 2024

Visit londonsymphonia.ca to subscribe with a compose your own package or to buy tickets. We're looking forward to seeing you soon!



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Address: 289 Dufferin Avenue, London, ON N6B 1Z1
Phone: 226-270-0910
Email: contact@londonsymphonia.ca

Charitable registration number: 797488129 RR0001

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