



*Netherlands Reflections*

# **Lahav SHANI & Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra**

2026.6.14 Sun. 14:00

Weiwuying Concert Hall

Duration is 110 minutes with a 20-minute intermission.



National Kaohsiung  
CENTER FOR THE ARTS

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## **Program**

### **L. v. BEETHOVEN: Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61**

- I. Allegro ma non troppo
- II. Larghetto
- III. Rondo. Allegro

----- Intermission -----

### **L. v. BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 55 *Eroica***

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Marcia funebre. Adagio assai
- III. Scherzo. Allegro vivace
- IV. Finale. Allegro molto

### L. v. BEETHOVEN: Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 61

1844: Violin prodigy Joseph JOACHIM performs BEETHOVEN's Violin Concerto in D Major in London under the baton of MENDELSSOHN. *The Musical World* describes the success as astonishing: "The young boy attacked it with the vigour and determination of the most accomplished artist... no master could have read it better." This acclaim had come, finally, 38 years after the work's premiere. SCHUMANN remarked that "JOACHIM's masterful hands guided listeners through a magical structure where most could find no exit." JOACHIM's triumph not only launched his career but also refuted the idea that this concerto was unperformable, cementing its place as a great violin work.

#### Back to 1806

Legend holds that the score, written for BEETHOVEN's friend Franz CLEMENT, was finished only two days before the premiere, forcing CLEMENT—concertmaster of Vienna's Theater an der Wien—to sight-read the performance. Following harsh reviews of "endless repetitions of mediocre passages," the work vanished from Vienna's concert life.

#### BEETHOVEN the Contrarian

A disastrous premiere alone does not explain the neglect. BEETHOVEN rejected conventions: he emphasized restraint and lyricism to suit CLEMENT's refined style, with long high-register passages, pure and transparent. Lacking a typical virtuosic solo showcase, the concerto was unusually expansive and symphonic, demanding extraordinary control from the soloist to dialogue with the orchestra. Consequently, many judged it 'unplayable.'

BEETHOVEN's eccentric touches begin at once: five soft, mysterious timpani strokes open the piece, creating a rhythmic motif that earns it the nickname "the timpani concerto." A three-minute symphonic introduction unfolds with such breadth that one forgets it should be a concerto. When the violin finally enters, it lands unexpectedly on a D-sharp, casting a shadow over the calm D-major.

Compared to the monumental first movement, the others are much shorter and more delicate. The slow movement unfolds as variations suspended in an ethereal dream; the violin strangely merely ornaments the theme with elegant high-register arabesques. A cadenza then leads directly into the cheerful finale—a seamless transition unusual for its time.

After the previous serenity, the last movement returns to earth with a lively rondo built on a folksy dance. Even its ending surprises: after a fading close in the violin, the orchestra suddenly bursts out two rapid fortissimo chords—an abrupt shock.

### **Going His Own Way**

To Viennese audiences, this concerto failed to be a typical "showpiece." Yet the symphonic orchestra, balance between soloist and ensemble, varied forms of virtuosity, and seamless flow between movements opened a new path for the concerto form, freeing it from being merely a vehicle for display. BEETHOVEN's rebellious spirit drove him constantly to break conventions. After the Heiligenstadt Testament, he resolved to face fate, writing in his diary: "From today I shall follow a new path." He advanced confidently, far beyond his peers. With the concerto it took a generation, until JOACHIM, for others to grasp his innovation.

## L. v. BEETHOVEN: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major, Op. 55 *Eroica*

"...I was close to ending my life—only art held me back. Oh, it seemed impossible to leave this world before I had brought forth all that I felt within me." Luckily we are able today to hear BEETHOVEN's music which gives us the courage to confront fate. In autumn 1802, after six years of unsuccessful ear treatments, BEETHOVEN wrote to his brothers from the village of Heiligenstadt near Vienna, confessing despair and anger. This letter, now known as the Heiligenstadt Testament, is less a farewell than a declaration of defiance: a decision to live for art, a spiritual rebirth.

### Which Hero?

BEETHOVEN initially dedicated Symphony No. 3 to Napoleon, but angrily withdrew it when Napoleon crowned himself emperor. The score was retitled: "Sinfonia *Eroica*... composed to celebrate the memory of a great man." But who was this hero?

The symphony's most puzzling feature is the second movement: a funeral march in Adagio. Suddenly it suggests a narrative: whose funeral? The clue lies in the finale's Prometheus theme; the hero who defied the gods to steal fire for humanity, enduring eternal punishment for human enlightenment. His journey of suffering, defiance, and awakening mirrors BEETHOVEN's own struggle.

### A Hero Is Born

After writing the Testament, BEETHOVEN embarked on his hero's journey. Symphony No. 3, completed in 1804, was one of the first proclamations of this rebirth. It opens not with the customary slow intro but with two explosive E-flat major staccato chords. The main theme, played by cellos and basses, lands a C-sharp, an intrusive note in E-flat major that adds tension and threat, often seen as the "sting of fate." In merely eight bars, BEETHOVEN shattered more than half a century of symphonic convention.

The second movement's funeral march intertwines profound grief with glimmers of hope, uncommonly placing the work's emotional core within a slow movement. The scherzo breathes new vitality, with three horns intensifying the heroic atmosphere. The finale replaces conventional simplicity with grand variations and fugues on the Prometheus theme, creating an epic scale. *Eroica* portrays a journey of struggle, rebirth, and redemption, with emotional revelation at its heart.

## A New Era

*Eroica* was a musical revolution. Its length nearly doubled earlier symphonies, making it the longest of its time. Innovations abound: no slow introduction, unusually vast development and coda sections, a funeral march as the second movement, rhythmic ambiguity in the scherzo, and a finale of unprecedented depth. Rapidly shifting harmonies, bold dissonances, and extreme dynamic contrasts made the traditional symphony seem "lost in lawlessness."

One audience member reportedly joked after the premiere: "If only this thing would stop—I'd pay another kreutzer!" Today it is difficult to imagine the shock this music once caused. With *Eroica*, BEETHOVEN buried the past and turned forward. In becoming the hero within himself, he changed the course of music forever. Years later, after completing eight symphonies, a friend asked him which he liked best. BEETHOVEN answered unhesitatingly: "*Eroica*."

## About the Artists



**Conductor | Lahav SHANI**

Lahav SHANI is the Chief Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra. He assumed his position in September 2018, becoming the youngest Chief Conductor in the orchestra's history. In the 2020/21 season, SHANI succeeded Zubin MEHTA as Music Director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra; the Münchner Philharmoniker appointed Lahav SHANI as their new Chief Conductor, starting from September 2026.

Recent and upcoming guest conductor highlights include engagements with Wiener Philharmoniker, Berliner Philharmoniker, Gewandhaus Orchester, Münchner Philharmoniker, Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, London Symphony Orchestra, Filarmonica della Scala, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris and Philharmonia Orchestra.

SHANI was born in Tel Aviv in 1989 and started his piano studies aged six with Hannah SHALGI, continuing with Prof. Arie VARDI at the Buchmann-Mehta School of Music in Tel Aviv. He went on to complete his studies in conducting with Prof. Christian EHWALD and piano with Prof. Fabio BIDINI, both at the School of Music Hanns Eisler Berlin. Whilst a student he was mentored by Daniel BARENBOIM. In 2013, he won First Prize in the Gustav Mahler International Conducting Competition in Bamberg. June 2016 saw Lahav SHANI's debut with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra as a conductor and as a piano soloist; his appointment as Chief Conductor from 2018 was announced two months later.

As a pianist, SHANI has performed as a soloist with Daniel BARENBOIM, Zubin MEHTA and Gianandrea NOSEDA. He has play-directed piano concerti with many orchestras including the Vienna Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, Filarmonica della Scala, Staatskapelle Berlin and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. SHANI also has considerable experience performing chamber music and in recital and is a regular performer at the Verbier Festival, and has also appeared at the Aix-en-Provence Easter and Jerusalem Chamber Music Festivals, and in duo recitals with Martha ARGERICH.



**Violin | Paul HUANG**

Recipient of 2015 Avery Fisher Career Grant and the 2017 Lincoln Center Award for Emerging Artists, violinist Paul HUANG is one of the most distinctive artists of his generation. After his debut recital at the Kennedy Center, *The Washington Post* remarked that HUANG "possesses a big, luscious tone, spot-on intonation and a technique that ... feels as natural as breathing." His recent and forthcoming appearances include his Carnegie Hall debut with the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, as well as with the Cleveland Orchestra, Mariinsky Orchestra, London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Residentie Orkest Den Haag, Tampere Filharmonia, Detroit Symphony, Houston Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Dallas Symphony, NHK Symphony, Singapore Symphony, and his return to the National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan. A frequent guest artist at music festivals worldwide, he recently stepped in for Anne-Sophie MUTTER at Bravo! Vail Music Festival and made recital debuts at the Lucerne Festival and Aspen Music Festival. In 2021, HUANG became the first classical violinist to perform his own arrangement of the US National Anthem for the opening game of the NFL at the Bank of America Stadium. An exclusive recording artist for France's Naïve Records, his third album for the label (KORNGOLD / BARBER Violin Concertos with London Philharmonic) was released worldwide in June 2026. HUANG performs on the legendary 1742 "ex-Wieniawski" Guarneri del Gesù on extended loan through the Stradivari Society of Chicago and is on the faculty of Taipei National University of the Arts. He resides in New York.



## Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra

The Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, founded in 1918, is distinguished by its intensely energetic performances, acclaimed recordings, and innovative audience engagement. Over the decades, it has established a firm position among Europe's leading orchestras.

After its pioneering early years, the orchestra developed into one of the foremost ensembles in the Netherlands under Eduard FLIPSE, principal conductor from 1930. In the 1970s and 1980s, under Jean FOURNET, Edo de WAART, and James CONLON, the orchestra gained growing international recognition. The appointment of Valery GERGIEV marked the beginning of a new and flourishing era, later continued by Yannick NÉZET-SÉGUIN and, from 2018, Lahav SHANI.

The orchestra's home is De Doelen Concert Hall, yet it performs frequently in other venues—from local stages to major international concert halls in Europe and beyond. Since 2010, the Rotterdam Philharmonic has been a resident orchestra of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris. With its regular concerts, educational performances, and community projects, the orchestra reaches an annual audience of 150,000 to 200,000, including a significant number of young listeners.

Since the pioneering MAHLER recordings with Eduard FLIPSE in the 1950s, the Rotterdam Philharmonic has released numerous critically acclaimed recordings with labels such as Warner Classics, Deutsche Grammophon, Decca, Philips and BIS Records. Its performances are available online through concert streams on medici.tv, as well as video projects such as *From us, for you: Beethoven Symphony No. 9* (2020), which became international news after reaching millions of viewers worldwide within just a few weeks of its release.

# Members of ROTTERDAM PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

## Chief Conductor

Lahav SHANI

## Honorary Conductor

Yannick NÉZET-SÉGUIN

## Regular Guest Conductor

Tarmo PELTOKOSKI

## First Violin

© Marieke BLANKESTIJN

© Vlad STANCULEASA

Quirine SCHEFFERS

Hed Yaron MAYERSOHN

Saskia OTTO

Rachel BROWNE

Maria DINGJAN

Marie-Jose SCHRIJNER

Noemi BODDEN

Petra VISSER

Sophia TORRENGA

Hadewijch HOFLAND

Annerien STUKER

Alexandra VAN BEVEREN

Marie DUQUESNOY

Sarah DÉCAMPS

## Second Violin

Charlotte POTGIETER

Frank DE GROOT

Laurens VAN VLIET

Elna HIRVILAMMI-STAPHORSIUS

Jun Yi DOU

Bob BRUYN

Eefje HABRAKEN

Maija REINIKAINEN

Babette VAN DEN BERG

Melanie BROERS

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## Viola

Anne HUSER

Roman SPITZER

Galahad SAMSON

José MOURA NUNES

Kerstin BONK

Janine BALLER

Veronika LENÁRTOVÁ

Rosalinde KLUCK

Léon VAN DEN BERG

Olffe VAN DER KLEIN

Jan NAVARRO

Jutta DEMUYNCK

## Cello

Emanuele SILVESTRI

Gustaw BAFELTOWSKI

Joanna PACHUCKA

Daniel PETROVITSCH

Mario RIO

Eelco BEINEMA

Carla SCHRIJNER

Pepijn MEEUWS

FANG Yi-ting

Killian WHITE

Paul STAVRIDIS

## Double Bass

Matthew MIDGLEY

Ying Lai GREEN

Jonathan FOCQUAERT

Arjen LEENDERTZ

Ricardo NETO

Javier CLEMÉN MARTÍNEZ

Marta FOSSAS MALLORQUÍ

Mario FERNÁNDEZ

## Flute

Juliette HUREL

Joséphine OLECH

Manon GAYET

## Flute / Piccolo

Beatriz DA SILVA BAIÃO

## Oboe

Karel SCHOOF

Jesús PINILLOS RIVERA

Anja VAN DER MATEN

## Oboe / Cor Anglais

Ron TIJHUIS

## Clarinet

Julien HERVÉ

Bruno BONANSEA

Alberto SÁNCHEZ GARCIA

## Clarinet / Bass Clarinet

Romke-Jan WIJMENGA

## Bassoon

Pieter NUYTTEN

Lola DESCOURS

Marianne PROMMEL

## Bassoon / Contra-bassoon

Eliás AGSTERIBBE

## Horn

David FERNÁNDEZ ALONSO

Felipe SANTOS FREITAS

Wendy LELIVELD

Richard SPEETJENS

Laurens OTTO

Pierre BUIZER

## Trumpet

Alex ELIA

Adrián MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ

Simon WIERENGA

Giovanni GIARDINELLA

## Trombone

Pierre VOLDERS

Alexander VERBEEK

Remko DE JAGER

## Bass Trombone / Contra-Bass Trombone

Rommert GROENHOF

## Tuba

Martijn VAN RIJSWIJK

## Timpani / Percussion

Danny VAN DE WAL

Ronald ENT

Martijn BOOM

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## Harp

Albane BARON

## Production Team of Weiwuying

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