

2026–27 Season Short Biography

'An orchestra on top form' *The Guardian* on the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO), with Music Director Vasily Petrenko, is on a mission to bring the thrill of live orchestral music to the widest possible audience. The RPO's musicians believe that music can – and should – be a part of everyone's life. In 2026, the RPO's journey reaches a milestone: 80 years since its first concert. Over the last eight decades, millions have been inspired, touched and entertained by its music. Over the same period, the Orchestra has continually reimagined what an orchestra can be, never stopping adapting, innovating and including, and bringing the same energy, commitment and excellence to everything it plays, from the great symphonic repertoire to collaborations with pop stars and music for TV, video games and film.

Founded in 1946 by Sir Thomas Beecham, live performance has always been at the heart of what the RPO does, and through its thriving artistic partnership with Vasily Petrenko, the RPO has reaffirmed its status as one of the world's most respected and in-demand orchestras. In London, that means flagship concert series at Cadogan Hall, the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, and the iconic Royal Albert Hall, where the RPO is proud to be Associate Orchestra. The Orchestra is also thrilled to be resident in four areas of the UK: Crawley, Hull, Northampton and Reading. And around the world, the RPO flies the flag for the best of British music-making.

The RPO remains true to its pioneering, accessible roots. Now in its fourth decade, the RPO Resound community and education programme continues to thrive as one of the UK's – and the world's – most innovative and respected initiatives of its kind.

Passionate, versatile and uncompromising in its pursuit of musical excellence, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra continues to build on an enviable heritage to scale new heights. The Orchestra looks to the future with a determination to explore, to share and to reaffirm its reputation as an orchestra with a difference. There has never been a better time to join us on the journey.

Discover more online at rpo.co.uk

338 words

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Not to be edited without permission. If you require an updated version of the RPO biography, please contact the RPO Office: +44 (0)20 7608 8800 / marketing@rpo.co.uk.