

Just the basics...

Elgar - Falstaff, A Symphonic Study in C minor

- Written in 1912 for the Leeds Festival.
- "I have, I think, enjoyed writing it more than any other music I have composed and perhaps for that reason it may prove to be among my better efforts".
- Elgar was almost entirely self-taught as a musician and was also extremely well-read. His passion for Shakespeare led to this portrait of the fictional knight Sir John Falstaff, sidekick to Prince Hal, the future Henry V.
- The drama and narrative of the plays is heard throughout the music. The presence of living actors to add context is a mischievous implant of tonight's conductor, who hopes you enjoy it!
- As Elgar famously said; *My idea is that there is music in the air, music all around us; the world is full of it, and you simply take as much as you require*".

Beethoven - Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61

- Written in 1806 and first performed in Vienna at the Theatre an der Wien on December 23rd
- The soloist and dedicatee was Franz Clement, a noted soloist of the time and frequent collaborator of Beethoven's.
- Despite the enormous love and renown the concerto eventually garnered, the first performance was not entirely successful. Beethoven was incredibly late delivering both the solo and orchestral parts and rumour has it that Clement even sight-read sections in the concert.
- The concerto consists of three movements, the first being by far the most substantial with the soloist only entering after a long orchestral 'exposition'. The second is a beautiful and softly lyrical 'Larghetto' (a movement which is fairly slow) before a powerful and dark transition from the orchestra leads us straight into a jolly and carousing rondo!