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# TOTAL IMMERSION: ITALIAN RADICALS

Sunday 5 May 2024

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### CONCERTS APRIL – MAY

FRIDAY 19 APRIL 7.30pm

**CAMILLE PÉPIN** *Les eaux célestes*  
*UK premiere*

**FRANCIS POULENC** *Gloria*

**HECTOR BERLIOZ** *Symphonie fantastique*

**Jader Bignamini** *conductor*  
**Elizabeth Watts** *soprano*  
**BBC Symphony Chorus**

FRIDAY 26 APRIL 7.30pm

**KATE ATKINSON**  
**AND THE BBC SYMPHONY**  
**ORCHESTRA: NORMAL RULES**  
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Author Kate Atkinson joins the BBC SO for an evening of words and music.

SUNDAY 5 MAY

**TOTAL IMMERSION:**  
**ITALIAN RADICALS**

A day of immersion in the music of four composers who redefined a nation: Luciano Berio, Luigi Dallapiccola, Bruno Maderna and Luigi Nono.

FRIDAY 10 MAY 7.30pm

**JOSÉ MAURÍCIO NUNES GARCIA**  
*Missa de Santa Cecilia*

**MODEST MUSSORGSKY**  
*Pictures at an Exhibition*  
(orch. Ravel)

**April Koyejo-Audiger** *soprano*  
**Marta Fontanals-Simmons**  
*mezzo-soprano*  
**Joshua Stewart** *tenor*  
**Ross Ramgobin** *baritone*  
**BBC Symphony Chorus**  
**Martyn Brabbins** *conductor*

FRIDAY 17 MAY 7.30pm

**SOFIA GUBAIDULINA**  
*The Wrath of God* *UK premiere*

**SERGEY RACHMANINOV**  
*Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*

**PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY**  
*Symphony No. 4 in F minor*

**Lise de la Salle** *piano*  
**Anna Rakitina** *conductor*

FRIDAY 24 MAY 7.30pm

**OLIVER KNUSSEN**  
*Cleveland Pictures*

**BENJAMIN BRITTEN** *Double Concerto for Violin and Viola*

**RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS**  
*A Sea Symphony (Symphony No. 1)*

**Silja Aalto** *soprano*  
**Morgan Pearce** *baritone*  
**Vilde Frang** *violin*  
**Lawrence Power** *viola*  
**BBC Symphony Chorus**  
**Sakari Oramo** *conductor*

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SAKARI ORAMO CHIEF CONDUCTOR

TOTAL IMMERSION

# Italian Radicals

SUNDAY 5 MAY 2024



# TOTAL IMMERSION: ITALIAN RADICALS

**11.00am**  
CINEMA 1

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FILM

## **Voyage to Cythera**

'For me, Mahler is a ship plying the ocean, a ship filled with fine things, magnificent people and gifts,' said Luciano Berio, describing the central movement of his *Sinfonia* (1968). In this 1999 documentary he discusses the creative process behind a defining modern masterpiece.  
Dir. Frank Scheffer, 51 mins, 1999.

**1.30pm**  
AUDITORIUM 1, LEVEL 4

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FREE EVENT

## **Meet the Radicals 1**

Professor Jonathan Cross (University of Oxford) and Associate Professor Harriet Boyd-Bennett (University of Nottingham) introduce the world of Luciano Berio, Luigi Dallapiccola, Bruno Maderna, Luigi Nono. *Free event. Limited capacity but entry guaranteed to Day Pass holders.*

**3.00pm**  
MILTON COURT CONCERT HALL

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CONCERT 1

## **O King**

**Luciano Berio** O King 5'

## **Luigi Dallapiccola**

Ciaccona, Intermezzo e Adagio 16'

**Bruno Maderna** Honeyrêves 5'

**Luigi Dallapiccola** Goethe Lieder 8'

## **Bruno Maderna**

Serenata per un satellite 8'

Viola 8'

**Luigi Nono** ... sofferte onde serene ... 14'

**Guildhall School Musicians**

**Simon Wills** conductor

*There will be no interval*

*For programme notes, see page 8*

**5.00pm**  
AUDITORIUM 1, LEVEL 4

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FREE EVENT

## **Meet the Radicals 2**

Professor Jonathan Cross (University of Oxford) and Associate Professor Harriet Boyd-Bennett (University of Nottingham) introduce the music in tonight's Total Immersion concert. *Free event. Limited capacity but entry guaranteed to Day Pass holders.*

**7.30pm**  
BARBICAN HALL

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CONCERT 2

## **Sinfonia ... and more!**

## **Luigi Dallapiccola**

Three Questions With Two Answers 15'

**Luigi Nono** Canti di vita e d'amore 18'

**Bruno Maderna** Oboe Concerto No. 3 25'

**Luciano Berio** Sequenza IXc 13'

Sinfonia 27'

**Anna Dennis** soprano

**John Findon** tenor

**Nicholas Daniel** oboe

**Thomas Lessels** bass clarinet

**BBC Singers**

**BBC Symphony Orchestra**

**Martyn Brabbins** conductor

*For programme notes, see page 20*



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## ITALIAN RADICALS

### ***Harriet Boyd-Bennett introduces the key figures of a new musical renaissance in post-Second World War Italy***

Amid the fall of fascism and the ruins of the Second World War, Italian culture faced a moment of national reckoning. Music, always seen as Italy's national art form, took centre stage. What role was music to play in post-war reconstruction and in the forging of the nation's future? The situation Italian musicians faced was one made all the more challenging by the recent fascist past. The fascist regime had come to power in 1922 (consolidated as a dictatorship in 1925) and had set about infiltrating Italian culture in myriad ways. Musical life was dominated by the regime's corporate structures: festivals, state patronage and competitions became features of the musical year and enmeshed musicians into the fascist fold. Unlike totalitarian regimes elsewhere, the fascists tried to co-opt, rather than dictate, individual activity. This attracted scores of intellectuals and artists to the party, while keeping its cultural policy (to the extent that there was one) relatively pluralist. While debates raged between the pro-modernists and anti-modernists as to what direction music under the regime should take, no consensus ever emerged. Mussolini himself was seemingly less interested in music than in other spheres of cultural activity, and for the most part gestured support in every direction. The regime was, as a

result, notably more pro-modernist and avant-gardist in cultural terms than Nazi Germany. This made the situation after the war, of how to be seen to be anti-fascist, all the more complicated – something that played out as much from composers' pens as across the pages of national broadsheets.

In addition to processing the recent past, there were still ongoing perceptions of an opera crisis in Italy, that no opera had been produced since Puccini's death in 1924 to rival the glories of Italy's operatic past. Yet opera was still widely perceived as the heart of the country's musical identity and its greatest export. The watershed moment of the post-war period brought this crisis to the fore yet again. As with everything in Italy, the continual weight of the nation's glorious past continued to be felt, and nowhere more so than in music, the nation's *lingua franca*. The Italian 20th century also witnessed a direct reckoning with this past: forgotten works were revived and given new 'premieres', and composers from Monteverdi to Verdi enjoyed a renaissance. Much of this work had gained impetus under the regime, which had directly supported numerous projects of reviving earlier composers in its celebration of the nation's heritage.

The post-war period, then, was a startling moment of historical self-consciousness, a collective turning point in the development of Italian music. It was a moment when composers paused and reflected on the course of music history

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and directly posed questions about where music might go in the future. The four composers we will hear from today were at different stages in their careers in this post-war moment, and all had navigated the fascist years in different ways. Luigi Dallapiccola, the elder statesman of the four, had turned 40 in 1944; his career had flourished under much of the regime's rule, and until the mid-1930s he gave it his support. However, he became increasingly politically disillusioned with the fascist campaign in Abyssinia and with the Spanish Civil War: as the composer put it, 'The world ... of carefree serenity closed for me, and without the possibility of return.' Further disillusionment was fostered by the introduction of anti-Semitic racial laws in Italy in 1938, which directly impacted Dallapiccola and his Jewish wife. His music now started to become more explicitly political, notably in his *Canti di prigionia* ('Songs of Imprisonment') for chorus and instrumental ensemble (1938–41), which was one of the few works produced under fascism to openly resist it. He later described Mussolini's removal in 1943 as 'the happiest day of my life'.

Bruno Maderna, Luigi Nono and Luciano Berio were part of a new, younger generation of Italian composers, born in the early 1920s and united in friendship, who all looked to Dallapiccola as a model and mentor. They were struck, above all, by the way Dallapiccola pursued a modernist musical language to support his left-wing political beliefs. All three

younger composers were establishing their careers during fascism's later stages and were directly impacted by its final unfolding. Maderna, a formidable child prodigy, had been showcased to glorify the regime in his youth and had subsequently been forced to serve in the army in 1942–3, before joining the partisans in 1945. Nono and Berio had also been involved in the resistance, as had many others, during the regime's collapse; this left Nono with a lifelong commitment to communism.

The four composers were united by a strong desire to renew Italian music and return it to the forefront of international activity. They each in their own way pushed the boundaries of music, responding to the latest developments elsewhere – most notably at the annual Darmstadt Summer School, quickly established as the post-war home of European musical modernism. Each developed their own brand of serialism (the arrangement of the chromatic scale into a post-tonal row). But this forging ahead was never to be done at the expense of the past – both recent and more distant. They were all involved in transcribing and editing earlier Italian music, particularly that of the late Renaissance and early Baroque, and incorporated techniques from this repertoire in their music. All four – along with thousands of other intellectuals and public figures in the post-war period – became committed anti-fascists and had to navigate all the complexity

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that entailed. For Dallapiccola, as we have seen, it meant weaving directly political content into his modernist music. Nono followed suit, enmeshing left-wing political messaging with his compositional technique.

While the messaging was perhaps more muted in the work of Maderna and Berio, they too sought to activate their audience and heighten their listeners' engagement with the world around them. The four composers shared a concern that the Italian public must not forget what had happened to the nation, and they believed this concern must play a direct role in their musical craft. Post-war musical modernism has a reputation for being esoteric for its own sake, detached from the world around it and a retreat into the ivory tower. The music we're going to encounter today could not be further from this. Undoubtedly modernist, yes, but actively engaging with the most powerful and important questions of the era.

Harriet Boyd-Bennett is Associate Professor of Music at the University of Nottingham. She is the author of a prize-winning monograph on music in post-Second World War Italy, *Opera in Postwar Venice: Cultural Politics and the Avant-Garde* (CUP, 2018).

“The main pioneering figures in [the] new generation, among whom Bruno Maderna, Luigi Nono and Luciano Berio were the first to establish international reputations, were motivated almost from the start by the urge to construct a post-war musical culture utterly different from almost anything that had existed in Italy before 1945. Significantly, all three composers (and other Italians too) made regular visits to ... the annual Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik [International Summer School for New Music] in Darmstadt. In Germany the need for a total clean break from the officially approved music of the immediate past was obviously somewhat greater than in Italy. However ... it was understandable that many Italians, too, should want to make a radically innovative start.

John C. G. Waterhouse in *The Cambridge Companion to Italian Culture* (2001)

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## ITALIAN RADICALS: TIMELINES

### LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA (1904–75)

#### 1904

Born on 3 February in Pisino, in the province of Istria, then part of the Habsburg Empire, now in Croatia.

#### 1921

The shock of hearing Debussy causes him to stop composing for three years in order to absorb this new influence.

#### 1934

Teaches piano as a second-study instrument at the Florence Conservatory – continuing in the role until his retirement in 1967.

#### 1938

Mussolini introduces anti-Semitic legislation to ally himself with Hitler; Dallapiccola marries a Jewish woman, Laura Luzzatto; begins his protest piece, *Canti di prigionia* ('Songs of Imprisonment').

#### 1944

Birth of first child, Annalibera, named following the liberation of Florence; begins writing his key work, the one-act opera *Il prigioniero* ('The Prisoner', completed 1948).

#### mid-1950s

Absorbs the influence of Webern into a mature style; *Canti di liberazione* for chorus and orchestra (1951–5).

#### 1960–68

Writes his last and only full-length opera, *Ulisse*.

### BRUNO MADERNA (1920–73)

#### 1920

Born on 21 April in Venice.

#### 1932

By age 12 he has conducted the Orchestra of La Scala, Milan; over the next three years he goes on to conduct in Trieste, Venice, Padua and Verona.

#### 1940s

Graduates in composition from the Rome Conservatory; serves in the army (1942–3); teaches at the Venice Conservatory, where he meets Luigi Nono.

#### 1951

Attends the Darmstadt summer courses for the first time, which deeply influences his music; later at Darmstadt meets Beate Christine Köpnick, whom he later marries; 12 of his works in all are given world premieres at Darmstadt, and he lives there from 1962 until his death in 1973.

#### 1958

Conducts one of the orchestras in the premiere of Stockhausen's *Gruppen* for three orchestras.

#### 1969

*Serenata per un satellite*, his key 'open work', comprising a single sheet of notation with the instruction for players to play 'what they can ... improvising with the notes that are set down'.

#### 1973

In his last year, composes the Oboe Concerto No. 3.

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## **LUIGI NONO (1924–90)**

### **1924**

Born on 29 January in Venice; both parents are amateur pianists.

### **1941–2**

Meets the composer Gian Francesco Malipiero who, he later recalled, ‘opened up all the musical horizons’. Leaves school (1942) and enrolls for a Law degree at the University of Padua (graduating in 1947); meets Maderna (1946) and, soon after, Dallapiccola.

### **1950s**

Attends (and later teaches at) the Darmstadt summer courses falling under the influence of Varèse; marries Schoenberg’s daughter, Nuria (1955); *Il canto sospeso* (1955–6), setting letters written by condemned prisoners of the European resistance, and establishing a style of text fragmentation.

### **1960**

His first electronic composition, *Omaggio a Emilio Vedova*, made in the electronic music studio of Italian Radio in Milan.

### **1965/6**

Becomes friends with the conductor Claudio Abbado and pianist Maurizio Pollini, with both of whom he later collaborates (including, with Pollini, on ... *sofferte onde serene* ... (1976) for piano and tape.

### **1979/80**

With the string quartet *Fragmente-Stille, an Diotima* begins a focus on silence, pauses and musical space.

## **LUCIANO BERIO (1925–2003)**

### **1925**

Born on 24 October in Oneglia, on the Ligurian coast.

### **1945**

Enters the Milan Conservatory but an earlier hand injury sustained as an army conscript means he abandons plans of becoming a pianist, focusing instead on composition.

### **1950s**

While accompanying singing classes, meets and soon marries an American student, Cathy Berberian, for whom he later composes the tape piece with voice *Visages* (1961) and *Sequenza III* (1965–6).

### **1952**

Studies with Dallapiccola at Tanglewood and becomes interested in serial composition.

### **1960s**

Flourishing of his *Sequenza* series of solo miniatures exploring playing techniques, with instalments for harp, voice, piano, trombone, oboe and viola; the series continues until 2002.

### **1980s & 1990s**

After working at the IRCAM computer-music research centre in Paris, forms his own electro-acoustic group in 1987, working on the projection and transformation of live sound in *Ofanim* (1988, for female singer, children’s choir and ensemble) and in his last opera *Cronaca del luogo* (1998–9).

**CONCERT 1**

3.00pm MILTON COURT CONCERT HALL

*O King***LUCIANO BERIO****O King** 5'**LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA****Ciaccona, Intermezzo e Adagio** 16'**BRUNO MADERNA****Honeyrêves** 5'**LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA****Goethe Lieder** 8'**BRUNO MADERNA****Serenata per un satellite** 8'

Viola 8'

**LUIGI NONO****... sofferte onde serene ...** 14'

Guildhall School Musicians

Simon Wills conductor

*There will be no interval*

The music in this concert explores in miniature form the state-of-the-nation questions that today's four composers confronted in the context of postwar Italian culture and society. All four grapple here with primary questions about their craft: the balance of voice and instrument, jarring dissonance and harmonic beauty, the violence of the era and Italian lyricism, political activism and musical interiority – explored in fleeting musical moments of sometimes less than a minute in length.

**LUCIANO BERIO (1925–2003)****O King (1967–8)****Roza Herwig** mezzo-soprano**Pauline Delamotte** flute**Benat Erro Diez** clarinet**Leo Barbosa** violin**Nathanael Horton** cello**Henry Lewis** piano**Simon Wills** conductor

Originally scored for mezzo-soprano, flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano, *O King* was written as a memorial to Martin Luther King Jr, who had been assassinated shortly before Berio completed the piece. The text consists entirely of the letters of King's name. The voice intones the individual vowels and then the consonants, with the full name only being heard in the final bars, sounding as a lament. The overall effect is an abstraction of the voice that renders it at one with the instruments. The eerily quiet opening (marked *pppp*) is interrupted by loud interjections of

bell-like sounds that toll for King's death. The music is mathematically arranged in tone rows, but the effect is ethereally beautiful and spontaneous. Compositional decisions serve these atmospheric ends: when the voice sounds the consonants, it sings the softest ones first ('n', 'm', 'ng'), saving the harshest one ('k') for the work's noisy climax. In the synergy of voice and instruments, the work is something of a statement on Berio's wider output, which is notable for the equal balance between vocal and instrumental music. This was his way of navigating the legacy of the Italian lyric tradition; the voice is fully instrumentalised, save for the sudden lyric outburst at the work's conclusion. We will hear this material again this evening, in the orchestral version that was integrated into *Sinfonia*.

## **LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA (1904–75)**

### **Ciaccona, Intermezzo e Adagio**

(1945)

- 1 Ciaccona**
- 2 Intermezzo**
- 3 Adagio**

**Gabriel Francis-Dehqani** cello

Dallapiccola is perhaps best known as the foremost pioneer of serialism in Italy. However, the title of this work – *Ciaccona, Intermezzo e Adagio* – harks back to his lifelong interest in earlier Italian music of the 16th and 17th centuries. Scored for solo cello, it was also written with a

particular performer in mind: the great Spanish cellist Gaspar Cassadó. Cassadó had willingly performed in Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, something for which he had been widely criticised, including by his former teacher Pablo Casals. Perhaps acknowledging his own complicated relationship with the fascist regime, this did not stop Dallapiccola dedicating this work to Cassadó. It was written amid the war's final days, when Dallapiccola had also begun work on his explicitly political opera *Il prigioniero* ('The Prisoner'). In contrast, this instrumental miniature again seems more preoccupied with the interiority of its musical workings, with the cello's sonorities and the technique of its performer.

The 'Ciaccona' (Chaconne) opens as a loud irruption (*fff*), with the cello playing brash grinding dissonances. Brief moments of reprieve are found in the movement's central section, but remain mysterious (*misterioso* is even a score marking), opaque and enigmatic.

The 'Intermezzo' continues this drama of musical contrasts with angular bristles of sound in the movement's outer two sections. Again, a quiet middle section (a 'quasi Trio') ushers in a moment of aural reprieve, where a wandering melodic line maps out dissonant contours.

The final 'Adagio' opens with a melody of perfect fifths, a striking contrast to the complex dissonance that has preceded it, and almost sounding like the cello is

simply tuning up, ready to begin. Gradually dissonance begins to encroach. Towards the end, the theme in fifths returns, but now inverted and in the cello's upper register, before it arrives at the final phrases, marked 'come un soffio' ('like a sigh') and gradually retreating into silence on a final, strange chord.

## **BRUNO MADERNA (1920–73)** **Honeyrêves (1962)**

**Justyna Szykarczyk** flute  
**Sooyeon Baik** piano

Scored for flute and piano, Maderna's *Honeyrêves* was written for the renowned Italian flautist Severino Gazzelloni. Indeed, the unusual name of the work is a sort of made-up compound noun: a play on a backwards reading of 'Severino' and an evocation of 'sweet dreams'. The miniature espouses a beautifully sweet lyricism that does not shy away from exploring the full drama of the flute's range. Exploring instrumental colour was an abiding preoccupation of Maderna's, and we hear that across his works programmed today. The flute begins unaccompanied, seemingly the harbinger of melody; when the piano enters, it serves more as a disruptor. What follows is an interplay of timbral and dynamic contrasts that at once instigates and disturbs the dream-like atmosphere.

## **LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA** **Goethe Lieder (1953)**

- 1 In tausend Formen** [In a thousand shapes]
- 2 Die Sonne kommt!** [The sun is rising!]
- 3 Lass deinen süßen Rubinenmund**  
[Let your sweet ruby lips]
- 4 Möge Wasser, springend, wallend**  
[May the water, springing and bubbling]
- 5 Der Spiegel sagt mir** [The mirror tells me]
- 6 Kaum das ich dich wieder habe** [Hardly do I hold you in my arms again]
- 7 Ist's möglich, dass ich, Liebchen**  
[Is it possible, darling]

**Alexandra Achillea Pouta** mezzo-soprano  
**Beñat Erro Díez** E-flat clarinet  
**Jonathan Ainscough** B-flat clarinet  
**Lily Payne** bass clarinet

### ***For texts, see page 12***

Dallapiccola's *Goethe Lieder* comprises settings of seven quatrains from Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan* ('West-Eastern Divan'), a collection of lyrical poems inspired by the great 14th-century Persian poet Hafiz. All but one of the poems Dallapiccola chose to set are from the 'Book of Suleika'. The collection was ostensibly about the female protagonist Suleika, but in reality was supposedly about Goethe's tempestuous love affair with the actress Marianne von Willemer.

Although the individual settings are recounted from a variety of perspectives, the mezzo-soprano as a constant here takes on a mirror role to that of Suleika. The seven



settings vary in instrumentation, creating new timbres and contrasts between the voice and three clarinets.

The first song opens with winding, dissonant clarinet lines that meander through the texture. The writing for the voice, when it does enter, matches that of the clarinets – the voice is again instrumentalised. Dallapiccola himself claimed that his vocal melodies were ‘imbued with *bel canto*’ (referring to the traditional Italian ideal of ‘beautiful singing’), but the sound-world that emerges is more complicated.

The voice alone enters at the start of the second song, but the lines are angular and unidiomatic, shaping the drama. The third song is a three-part canon, where the voice is but one part of the instrumental texture; the fifth song is similarly canonic, with the clarinets following the lead of the voice. The ubiquitous use of canon reflects the composer’s long-standing interest in archaic modes and forms, especially in counterpoint and madrigalian polyphony.

The voice is almost entirely obliterated in the fourth song, where the clarinets loudly take up the role of creating the angular drama. The sixth song sees the voice in a dialogue with the bass clarinet.

The final song gives the impression of canonical entries by the clarinets, playing with three-note cells, and includes the first and last moments of descriptive word painting: the E-flat and B-flat clarinets in

the final bars play a fluttering pattern as if to evoke the nightingale of the text. The voice seems continually pulled between high drama and ethereal tenderness, perhaps better supporting Dallapiccola’s statement that ‘if one side of my nature demanded tragedy, the other attempted an escape towards serenity’.



FRIDAY 10 MAY 7.30pm

## Old Pictures, New Worlds

**JOSÉ MAURÍCIO NUNES GARCIA**

Missa de Santa Cecilia

**MODEST MUSSORGSKY** Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. Maurice Ravel)

**Erika Baikoff** soprano

**Marta Fontanals-Simmons** mezzo-soprano

**Joshua Stewart** tenor

**Ross Ramgobin** baritone

**BBC Symphony Chorus**

**Martyn Brabbins** conductor

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**barbican**

Associate Orchestra

## LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA

### Goethe Lieder

#### 1

In tausend Formen magst du dich ver  
stecken,  
Doch, Allerliebste, gleich erkenne ich dich;  
Du magst mit Zauberschleiern dich be  
decken,  
Allgegenwärt'ge, gleich erkenn ich dich.

In a thousand shapes you may hide yourself,  
but, best-beloved, I recognise you at once;  
you may cover yourself with magic veils,  
but, ever-present one, I recognise you at  
once.

#### 2

Die Sonne kommt! Ein Prachterscheinen!  
Der Sichelmond umklammert sie.  
Wer konnte solch ein Paar vereinen?  
Dies Rätsel, wie erklärt sich's? Wie?

The sun is rising! A vision of splendour!  
The crescent moon embraces it.  
Who could unite such a pair?  
How can this mystery be explained?

#### 3

Lass deinen süßen Rubinenmund  
Zudringlichkeiten nicht verfluchen:  
Was hat Liebesschmerz andern Grund,  
Als seine Heilung zu suchen?

Let your sweet ruby lips  
not curse my importunity;  
what else can a lover do  
but seek some cure for his pains?

#### 4

Möge Wasser, springend, wallend,  
Die Cypressen dir gestehn:  
Von Suleika zu Suleika  
Ist mein Kommen und mein Gehn.

May the water, springing and bubbling,  
and may the cypresses avow it to you:  
from Suleika to Suleika  
is all my coming and going.

#### 5

Der Spiegel sagt mir: ich bin schön!  
Ihr sagt: zu altern sei auch mein Geschick.  
Vor Gott muss alles ewig stehn,  
  
In mir liebt Ihn für diesen Augenblick.

The mirror tells me I am beautiful!  
You tell me it is also my fate to grow old.  
Before God everything must stand  
eternally;  
for this moment, love him in me.

**6**

Kaum das ich dich wieder habe,  
Dich mit Kuss und Liedern labe,  
Bist du still in dich gekehret;  
Was beengt und drückt und störet?

Hardly do I hold you in my arms again,  
reviving you with kisses and with songs,  
than you start to brood.  
What oppresses, troubles and disturbs you?

**7**

Ist's möglich, dass ich, Liebchen, dich kose,  
Vernehme der göttlichen Stimme Schall!

Is it possible, darling, that I should be  
caressing you, that I should be hearing the  
sound of your heavenly voice!

Unmöglich scheint immer die Rose,  
Unbegreiflich die Nachtigall.

The rose seems always an impossibility,  
the nightingale an unfathomable mystery.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832)

## BRUNO MADERNA

### Serenata per un satellite (1969)

**Jonathan Ainscough, Beñat Erro Díez, Lily Payne** clarinets • **Pauline Delamotte, Justyna Szykarczyk** flutes • **María Rojas Cruz** oboe  
**David Palmer** piano • **Matilde Freiria** guitar  
**Simon Wills** conductor

Maderna's *Serenata per un satellite* ('Serenade for a Satellite') is dedicated to the Turin engineer and physicist Umberto Montalenti, who was at the time the director of the European Space Operation Centre. The work, for a small mixed ensemble, was commissioned to premiere simultaneously with the launch of *Boreas*, an early European satellite, both taking place in Darmstadt.

*Serenata* is an example of aleatoric (chance) music. The score consists of a single sheet, on which snippets of precisely notated musical material are arranged at various angles across the page. Some of the shapes that emerge resemble planetary orbits. The composer himself prescribed in the score that the musicians can 'play what they can, all together or separately in groups, improvising with the written notes'. In other words, the performers are free to play whatever musical staves on the page they fancy, in whatever order and as many times as they wish. The musical world created is not linear and unidirectional, but now circular, spherical – planetary even. The piece calls on both the performers and the audience to embody a renewed curiosity and a freer

creativity. However, while the performers may be granted greater freedom, Maderna still exerts compositional control. In this new flexibility, *Serenata* exemplifies the idea of an *opera aperta* ('open work') that was emerging in musical and literary circles in Italy during the 1960s as an early form of postmodernism. Again, the radicalism here comes from the work's interiority, its questioning of stable parameters of music history – narrative, linearity, coherence – and of what constitutes a musical work.

### Viola (1971)

**Dominic Stokes** viola

*Viola*, written just two years later, at first glance resembles the other solo instrumental works on today's programme. It is dedicated to the Italian viola player Aldo Bennici. However, here too Maderna gives new liberties to the performer in the manner of the *Serenata*. He stated in the performance instructions that the violist can decide where to begin and end, in what order to play phrases and fragments, and how many times these can be repeated. The option is also provided for the performer to play the piece in 'closed form' – conventionally, from beginning to end.

The resulting flexibility of the work's structure again suggests the idea of an open work. But the material is given coherence by a remarkable lyricism,

a song-like idiom that is a shared feature of much of Maderna's writing for solo instruments.

## **LUIGI NONO (1924–90)** **... sofferte onde serene ... (1976)**

**David Palmer** piano

Nono's ... *sofferte onde serene* ... ('... serene waves endured ...') was written for piano and tape, again with a particular performer in mind. The work was dedicated to Nono's friend and collaborator, the Italian pianist Maurizio Pollini and his wife Marilisa. Nono himself said that 'a harsh wind of death' had swept through his life and that of the Pollinis: fellow composers Bruno Maderna and Gian Francesco Malipiero had recently died, as had Nono's parents, and Marilisa had recently suffered a miscarriage. The work was thus written in a moment of personal crisis. Out of the darkness of this moment of loss, the sounds of Venice – Nono's home city – emerge on the tape, particularly the bell sounds that Nono said he could hear from his house on the Giudecca. As he said, 'They are signs of life on the lagoon, on the sea. They are invitations to work, to meditation, warning sounds. And life continues there in the painful and serene need for the "equilibrium of the profound interior", as Kafka said.'

This was also a moment of artistic crisis for Nono. He had become disillusioned

with the more explicit political messaging in his music up until now, and this work represents something of a turning point in his output, where he seems to make a more introspective move to the interiority of musical structures, smaller instrumental forces and quieter, more subdued sound-worlds. Rather than political activism, the preoccupation here is seemingly with the piano's sonority and the performer's technique. This is not to say he eschewed politics: in fact, only the previous year, he had become a member of the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party. Now the idea of challenging things from within, of upturning the smallest details to change a system, became an intrinsically political act.

The radicalism of this quiet interiority demands active listening from the audience, as does the perceptual confusion of what is coming from the live piano and what is from the tape. As Nono put it, 'To listen to music. That is very difficult. I think it is a rare phenomenon today.' Again, the hope was that engaging the audience in the concert hall would foster a greater engagement with the world around them once they had left.

### **Programme notes © Harriet Boyd-Bennett**

Harriet Boyd-Bennett is Associate Professor of Music at the University of Nottingham. She is the author of a prize-winning monograph on music in post-Second World War Italy, *Opera in Postwar Venice: Cultural Politics and the Avant-Garde* (CUP, 2018).

## **SIMON WILLS**

### CONDUCTOR

A member of Guildhall School staff since 1986, Simon Wills began his career as a trombonist, later joining the London Symphony Orchestra and (as Principal Trombone) the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He also played in the orchestras of La Scala, Milan, and the Berlin State Opera, as well as with the Moscow Soloists and Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen.

He was for many years well known on the contemporary scene, giving premieres of works by Carter, Peter Maxwell Davies, Maw, Nono and John Woolrich. He has also been involved in period performance practice.

Also a composer, in 2013 the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra opened its season with his orchestral overture *Empress of Blandings*, which the BBC Symphony Orchestra also recorded for Radio 3. Other works have been performed by the Munich Philharmonic and the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich.

He has appeared as conductor with the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, Cyprus State Orchestra and the Turan Alem Symphony Orchestra in Kazakhstan. As part of the celebrations for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kampala in 2007, he conducted what is believed to have been the Ugandan premiere of Mozart's *Requiem*.

## **SOOYEON BAIK**

### PIANO

Pianist Sooyeon Baik, from South Korea, has given recent performances in Germany, South Korea, Spain, the UK and the USA. As a devoted chamber musician and a vocal collaborative pianist, she founded Espoir Ensemble in Korea and has served as a vocal accompanying graduate assistant at University of Cincinnati and as an adjunct instructor in collaborative piano at Ohio University in the USA.

She studied piano in South Korea and the USA before studying for an Artist Diploma in collaborative piano at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama under Julius Drake and Carole Presland. And this year she was the winner for GSMD's Jubilee Accompaniment Prize and Franz-Schubert-Institut Lieder Prize.

Since moving to London last September Sooyeon Baik has appeared at the Barbican Hall and Wigmore Hall among other venues and worked with pianists Iain Burnside, Graham Johnson and Lada Valešová.

She has been invited to many international music festivals, including Bowdoin International Music Festival (Brunswick, Maine) and Gijón International Piano Festival in northern Spain. She was recently invited to the Ludlow English Song Weekend, run by Iain Burnside, to play as a masterclass pianist.

**GABRIEL FRANCIS-DEHQANI**  
CELLO

Gabriel Francis-Dehqani read Music at Durham University, graduating with a First Class degree. He studied with Guy Johnston and was awarded the Andrew Lloyd Webber Scholarship to Eton College, studying with Sue Lowe. He now studies at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama with Louise Hopkins.

Last year he won First Prize at the International Contemporary Music Interpretation Competition and First Prize at the Irish Heritage UK 2024 competition, held at the Wigmore Hall.

He has broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Radio 4 on numerous occasions as a soloist and chamber musician, and has performed at venues such as the Arnold Schönberg Center, Barbican Hall, Milton Court Concert Hall, Snape Maltings Concert Hall, St John Smith's Square, St Martin-in-the-Fields and Wigmore Hall, and looks forward to a forthcoming recital tour of five Chinese cities.

He has attended festivals around Europe such as the International Summer Academy of the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, Santander Encounter of Music and Academy, IMS Prussia Cove and Schiermonnikoog Festival (the Netherlands).

**DAVID PALMER**  
PIANO

David Palmer is a London-based composer and pianist specialising in 20th- and 21st-century repertoire. He is in demand as a soloist and collaborative pianist, and has a particular interest in song accompaniment.

He studies piano with Rolf Hind and Ronan O'Hora at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama on the Artist Diploma course, and has attended the Britten-Pears and Leeds Lieder young artist programmes. He read Music at the University of Oxford, where he now teaches undergraduate modules.

## ALEXANDRA ACHILLEA POUTA

### MEZZO-SOPRANO

Greek mezzo-soprano Alexandra Achillea Pouta studied Musicology at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and Historical Performance at the Early Music Centre of the Athens Conservatory. She graduated with a Bachelor of Music and Artist Masters in Opera Studies from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and is currently a Guildhall Junior Fellow. She is winner of the Guildhall Gold Medal and two-time finalist of the Maria Callas Foundation Competition. She is a Samling Artist and was a 2022 Snape Artist in Residence at Britten Pears Arts.

Recent performance highlights include a European tour with Martha Argerich and the Peace Orchestra, performing in Ascona, Bologna, Paris and Rimini. She gave a recital with pianist Élisabeth Pion at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, and they subsequently appeared at Milton Court Concert Hall. Other recent highlights include performances at the Barbican Hall, Durham Cathedral, Snape Maltings and Union Chapel (London).

Her opera roles include Sister Helen (*Dead Man Walking*), Ottavia (*The Coronation of Poppaea*) and Signora Guidotti (Nino Rota's *I due timidi*). She was a member of the 2023 Glyndebourne Opera Chorus and in March she joined Dame Emma Kirkby and the Figure Ensemble for a staged performance of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*.

## DOMINIC STOKES

### VIOLA

Dominic Stokes began his musical life as Head Chorister at Westminster Abbey and currently studies at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama with Matthew Jones. He has worked with groups including Manchester Camerata, O/Modernt and Riot Ensemble and appeared at many of the European music festivals.

He is the current instrumental scholar at St James's Piccadilly, where he regularly performs as a soloist. He has collaborated with many prominent composers, including Ben Nobuto, Naomi Pinnock and Dobrinka Tabakova, premiering chamber and solo works at venues including the Barbican Centre and Kings Place. He is the founder and director of the Rothko Collective, a young new music group dedicated to pushing the boundaries of the standard concert format. With his group he has commissioned over 20 new works, been awarded First Prize in nonclassical's competition for emerging talent, given highly acclaimed performances and released one studio and one live album.



## JUSTYNA SZYNKARCZYK FLUTE

Justyna Szynkarczyk was born Warsaw and obtained a First Class Bachelor's degree in flute from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. She is currently studying for a Master's in Performance Orchestral Artistry at the Guildhall School, a course designed and run in collaboration with the London Symphony Orchestra. Her professors are Ian Clarke, Sarah Newbold, Philippa Davies, Gareth Davies (LSO Principal Flute) and Christopher Green (Royal Opera House Orchestra Principal Piccolo).

Highlights include a live radio broadcast for Polish Radio 3, Mahler's Symphony No. 1 with the Guildhall Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Hall, and playing principal flute in the Guildhall Chamber Orchestra for the Milton Court 10th-anniversary concert in November last year. She is also a keen ensemble player, regularly performing in her flute and harp duo, Yavara Duo.

She has always been passionate about film music, an interest that traces back to Howard Shore's music for the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, which first inspired her to pursue a career as a flautist. She hopes to become an orchestral and session musician, recording film scores and game soundtracks.

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The Guildhall School of Music & Drama is a vibrant international community of musicians, actors and production artists in the heart of the City of London.

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CONCERT 2  
7.30pm BARBICAN HALL

*Sinfonia ... and more!*

**LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA**  
**Three Questions With Two Answers** 15'

**LUIGI NONO**  
Canti di vita e d'amore 18'

**BRUNO MADERNA**  
Oboe Concerto No. 3 25'

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

**LUCIANO BERIO**  
Sequenza IXc 13'  
Sinfonia 27'

**Anna Dennis** soprano  
**John Findon** tenor  
**Nicholas Daniel** oboe  
**Thomas Lessels** bass clarinet  
**BBC Singers**  
**BBC Symphony Orchestra**  
**Martyn Brabbins** conductor

This concert is being recorded by BBC Radio 3 for broadcast in *Radio 3 in Concert* on Thursday 1 July at 7.30pm. The programme will be available for 30 days after broadcast via BBC Sounds, where you can also find podcasts and music mixes.

**LUIGI DALLAPICCOLA (1904–75)**  
**Three Questions With Two Answers**  
(1962)

- 1 **Sostenuto; sotto voce**
- 2 **Moderato; tranquillo**
- 3 **Impetuoso; violento – Calmando – Più lento – Di nuovo impetuoso**
- 4 **Largamente sostenutissimo – Poco movendo – Rallentando pochissimo – Largamente, ma deciso**
- 5 **Molto sostenuto – Tutti diminuendo – Quasi Cadenza (più rapido; leggerissimo) – A tempo – Come prima (fuggevole; leggerissimo)**

At the time Dallapiccola was working on his orchestral *Three Questions With Two Answers*, he was also composing his last and only full-length opera *Ulisse* (1960–68). The musical symbolism of the orchestral work is deeply connected to the opera. Indeed, such is the interconnectedness of the two, that Dallapiccola did not allow the orchestral work to be published until after the opera had been staged. The composer extracted three questions from the libretto of *Ulisse*, which he expressed as 'Who am I? Who are you? Who are we?'. These questions are posed by the first, third and fifth movements respectively of the five-movement *Three Questions With Two Answers*.

The answer to the first question comes in the second movement and is of a 'calm, optimistic and feminine character'; the second answer is presented in the fourth

movement as having a ‘hard, pessimistic and masculine character’. There is no answer to the third question – the composer stated that this was instead to be found in the final scene of *Ulisse*.

The somewhat programmatic unfolding of this instrumental work is especially striking, given that it is the only purely orchestral composition Dallapiccola wrote. The music is tightly woven into this programmatic scheme. A ‘question’ motif pervades all three question-movements and is subject to various contrapuntal and serial procedures. Sometimes this musical working unfolds in miniature – the third movement, for example, is under a minute in length – recalling the reduced form of the works in this afternoon’s concert. Serialism has often been denounced as ugly, as hard to understand as it is to listen to. Dallapiccola refutes this reputation here, with intensely beautiful lyricism emerging from the motivic cells and rows.

## LUIGI NONO (1924–90)

### **Canti di vita e d’amore (1962)**

**1 Sul ponte di Hiroshima** [On the Bridge of Hiroshima]

**2 Djamila Boupacha**

**3 Tu** [You]

**Anna Dennis** soprano

**John Findon** tenor

Nono’s *Canti di vita e d’amore* (‘Songs of Life and Love’) is subtitled ‘Sul ponte di

Hiroshima’ (On the Bridge of Hiroshima) and, as that subtitle suggests, adopted a topical stance. Written a year after his ‘scenic action’ and expressly political *Intolleranza 1960* (1961), this was Nono’s third major work for voice (here soprano and tenor soloists) and orchestra. From an earlier stage in his career than ... *sofferte onde serene* ..., this is Nono in his most politically activist phase. Following in the footsteps of Dallapiccola, he saw his music as a powerful means for protesting against fascist atrocities, racial intolerance, exploitation of the working classes and the decolonial struggles for freedom and independence. However, whereas Nono’s more politically inclined works up until now had been primarily about the past and the present, *Canti di vita e d’amore* was his first work to look directly to the future.

The work is divided into three parts, with each based on a literary source. The first, which gives the overall work its subtitle, draws from a book by Günther Anders, *Der Mann auf der Brücke: Tagebuch aus Hiroshima und Nagasaki* (‘The Man on the Bridge: Diary from Hiroshima and Nagasaki’, 1959), a polemic that denounces nuclear weapons. The second part, entitled ‘Djamila Boupacha’, is based on the poem ‘Esta noche’ (This Night) from a collection by the Spanish poet and dissident intellectual Jesús López Pacheco. In place of the original title, and the poem’s evocations of life in Spain under the fascist regime of General Franco, Nono gives the movement the

name of a young Algerian woman who had become an international hero in the anti-colonialist struggle for Algerian liberation. Nono had claimed elsewhere that the war of liberation in Algeria had moved him and his Italian contemporaries deeply: 'I realised that the struggle against fascism and oppression was not just a memory, but that it continued in the Third World, and had now shifted to have Algeria as its centre'. The third part of the work is based on the love poem 'Passerò per Piazza di Spagna' by the Italian poet Cesare Pavese, but again Nono replaces the title, this time simply with the direct pronoun 'Tu' (You), as if to openly address anyone who cares to listen.

We have here, then, three texts that together trace a commemoration of the victims of Hiroshima, a poem by a Spanish left-wing writer that vocalises a militant of the Algerian National Liberation Front, and an Italian love poem. A somewhat eclectic mix. However, as the work emerges across the three settings, a more coherent political statement is discernible.

The introductory text is an epitaph that looks to the recent past, noting that the victims of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki 'must not rest in peace and let that be that. Theirs is not an ordinary death but an admonition, a warning.' This is accompanied by a music of violent contrasts. At the work's opening, brass and percussion at their loudest (*fff*) are pitted against quiet winds and strings (*p*). Both play dense

clusters of dissonant sounds. Here Nono was developing a new musical method: rather than deploying the complete chromatic series, he was now interested in the idea of *campi sonori* (sounding fields), based on small collections of intervals. These fields of sound here allow further moments of contrast and opposition, as if to further dramatise the threat of nuclear annihilation. Another striking feature of the first movement is that, after the two voices have sung the introduction to the text, they then fall silent and the orchestra alone continues. Fragments of the text are inscribed in the orchestral score, but are clearly not intended to be read aloud or projected. Nono stipulated that the audience should be provided with the text in the programmes (tonight we have surtitles), and they are thus left to draw their own conclusions about the relationship between music and text. But it is also as though the text has become pure music, with voice and instruments equally capable of conveying meaning.

In the second part, contrast and opposition now shape the unfolding of the soprano's vocal line – an unaccompanied monody. The movement opens in striking contrast to the final moments of the first part, the loudest point in the whole work. Out of that loudness now emerges an elegiac line of the solo soprano: quiet, subdued and with closed-mouth singing. The text is laced with images of darkness, but with a suggestion of hope, that a better time might come. In this way this solo movement literally sounds the

pivot between the retrospective opening movement and the final one that looks to the future.

This sonic drama continues on into the third part. The first sounds to come from the orchestra are dissonant clusters played by bells; they now toll the sounds of hope in a brighter future. Further drama is created through the playing techniques of the string instruments: throughout the movement, they never play in the normal ways of bowed or plucked; instead, the players are required to produce percussive effects, such as strings tapped by the fingers, or by the wooden part of the bow. The result is a percussive drama that matches the text's evocation of beating and fluttering – the nervous effects of love. Pavese's poem looks to the future (all the verbs are in the future tense), and this is further captured within Nono's artistic vision here. Love is the path to a better future and, in emerging from the themes of death and darkness that predominate in the first two texts, it offers the work's final contrast. This is love, as Nono states in the programme note, 'not as a suspension of or a flight from reality, but love in the full consciousness of life'.

Surtitles produced and operated by Damien Kennedy

## **BRUNO MADERNA (1920–73)** **Oboe Concerto No. 3 (1973)**

**Nicholas Daniel** oboe

Maderna's Third Oboe Concerto (1973) was the last piece he wrote before his death later that year. By this point he was an internationally renowned conductor and teacher, who had done much to promote and establish the work of the European avant-garde. The oboe was a favoured instrument for Maderna, who was drawn to its potential for both spiky directness and more *bel canto* lyricism. Melodic lyricism pervades this final concerto, taking up again the song-like instrumental lyricism we encountered earlier in *Viola*. The oboe sings throughout the work's myriad textures, with some of the most exquisite music ever written for the instrument.

The concerto opens with the oboe's high-pitched tones, quickly giving way to trills, and immediately showcasing the instrument's range and versatility. The orchestra enters as a quietly shimmering backdrop, before interjecting the oboe's lines with more direct dialogue. Yet everything is controlled and refined, as Maderna skilfully guides the oboe's expressive lines through an array of colourful textures. Maderna had a lifelong fascination with earlier Italian music, especially Venetian composers of the Renaissance. Having grown up near Venice, he had subsequently studied there – along with Nono – with the composer Gian

Francesco Malipiero, who had introduced the young composers not only to the latest developments in the European avant-garde but also to the music of their Venetian heritage. Maderna had gone on to edit and transcribe the works of Vivaldi, Monteverdi, Belli and Gabrieli, among others. These interests and activities filter through to the sound-world of the concerto, which showcases the application of older techniques – particularly contrapuntal techniques – in a modernist musical idiom. The adoption of contrapuntal procedures and madrigalian polyphony fed into Maderna's long-standing interest in form and construction, in the structural ordering of his material. Yet, amid this refinement and construction, it is the powerful, direct communicability in the oboe's lyricism that permeates above all, as if the instrument is the composer's voice entreating us to listen, and to listen closely.

## **LUCIANO BERIO (1925–2003)** **Sequenza IXc (1980; arr. Parisi, 1998)**

**Thomas Lessels** bass clarinet

Berio began his extensive series of solo *sequenze* (sequences) back in 1958, with the first, *Sequenza I*, for solo flute. Each *sequenza* explores both the performer's virtuoso skill and the capabilities of the instrument, particularly their full registers, with the scores incorporating a host of extended techniques. These miniatures (most are only 8–10 minutes long) became an outlet for him to explore instrumental and vocal gesture for the purposes of aural drama, something only fuelled by the extreme dynamic contrasts that are a notable feature of each. Berio was particularly interested in taking instruments that had been especially typecast in new directions, such as the fiery nature of *Sequenza II* for harp (1963) or *Sequenza VI* for viola (1967). In exploiting the limits of these instruments, and in the interplay of dynamics and gestures, the *sequenze* afforded ways for Berio to pursue his lifelong interest in the inherent theatricality of all modes of performance.

*Sequenza IXc* was originally written in 1980 for the standard B-flat clarinet. In 1998 the Italian clarinetist Rocco Parisi made an arrangement for bass clarinet. This is a rare chance for this instrument to have its moment in the limelight, and indeed we hear it tonight as we have probably never heard it before.

**INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES**

Programme notes © Harriet Boyd-Bennett

## LUCIANO BERIO

### **Sinfonia (1968, rev. 1969)**

1

2 **O King: Immobile e lontano** [Still and distant]

3 **In ruhig fliessender Bewegung** [Calmly flowing] –

4

5

#### **BBC Singers**

**Jonathan Green** sound mixing

Every Berio score excavates the future hidden in the past, but none does so in a more abundant, multifaceted and spectacularly public fashion than his *Sinfonia*. Answering a commission from the New York Philharmonic, which gave the first performance under Leonard Bernstein (to whom the score is dedicated) in 1968, Berio took on all the features of the traditional great symphony: the scale, the means, the drive, the voice, the seriousness. Everything, though, he altered.

His *Sinfonia* – he preferred the Italian term in order to emphasise the change – is in five movements, which differ not so much in their speed through time as in the kind of time they uncover: prehistory in the first movement, a remembered moment (the moment of a death) in the second, the swirl of impressions and memories as events pass by in the third, perhaps a process of reawakening in the fourth, and in the fifth (added after the premiere) all these times together, the fugitive and the persisting, the immemorially

ancient and the immediately present. The means expand on those of the traditional symphony, with additional instruments (electric harpsichord and organ), the division of the violins into three groups rather than the usual two and, most conspicuously, the participation of voices throughout.

As for the voice of the work itself, Berio's *Sinfonia* speaks not with the persuasive individuality of a symphony by Beethoven but as a crowd, clamorous and multifarious. Yet, although what it has to say is necessarily complex, sloping away from the direct to the allusive, covert or indistinct, it keeps faith with the Beethovenian ideal of a work made to address the times, and to withstand them.

By 1968 Berio had been based in the USA for several years, teaching first in California and then in New York. He witnessed the noise in the streets that he partly documents here: the sounds of voices raised against the tide of events, specifically those unfolding in Vietnam, or raised to claim equal rights for all citizens, regardless of ethnicity. Thus bringing in the world outside, Berio's *Sinfonia* is also a crossroads of musical cultures, its original forces being a European-style orchestra in the USA and a vocal group – the Swingle Singers, formed by Ward Swingle – that had transplanted the American tradition of scat singing to Paris and the music of Bach.

...

The first movement is based on scraps of text from Claude Lévi-Strauss's book *The Raw and the Cooked* – specifically on elements from the anthropologist's analyses of Amazonian myths on the origin of water. Here the subject becomes the origin of music, in calls sounding through the forest of the orchestra and coalescing.

In the second movement words and music pursue parallel journeys. The name of Martin Luther King, who was shot while Berio was working on the piece, is divided into its phonemes, with the addition of 'O' to complete the set of vowels. Differently ordered, the phonemes keep returning, like waves, until finally the name is reintegrated, while at the same time small sets of notes are constantly being regrouped, in a slowly rotating cloud of hazy consonance.

Now the pace changes. The third movement is a recomposition of that of Mahler's Second Symphony, which proceeds more or less intact, as a river bearing chunks of other music, by composers from Bach to Berio himself, with Ravel's *La valse* and Debussy's *La mer* among the most evident flotsam. Berio's first idea was to orchestrate a movement from one of the late Beethoven quartets as the bearer of signals from music's past and future, but it is impossible to imagine a better choice than this Mahler scherzo, which itself follows a river-like course of constant sameness in change and motion, and which offers such a variety

of harmonic conditions, out from which the foreign elements can seem to spring quite naturally. In a similar way, Beckett's *The Unnamable* provides a river of text, which carries in its sweep not literary quotations but fragments from everyday life, including the life of the performance happening now.

For just a moment it seems that the Mahler symphony will remain in tow into the fourth movement, but this soon slides off into reminiscences from the first two movements of *Sinfonia*. It forms an interlude before the finale, in which elements from all the preceding movements are recombined in a new musical river, if one with numerous currents and counterflows. 'This fifth part,' Berio wrote, 'may be considered the veritable analysis of *Sinfonia*, carried out through the language and medium of the composition itself.'

#### Programme note © Paul Griffiths

A critic for over 30 years for publications including *The Times* and *The New Yorker*, Paul Griffiths is an authority on 20th- and 21st-century music. Among his books are studies of Boulez, Cage and Stravinsky, as well as *Modern Music and After* (OUP, 2011, 3rd edition) and *A Concise History of Western Music* (CUP, 2006). His novels *let me tell you* and *let me go on* were published last year.



## MARTYN BRABBINS

### CONDUCTOR

Martyn Brabbins studied composition in London and conducting with Ilya Musin in Leningrad (St Petersburg). Music Director of English National Opera from 2016 to 2023, he has enjoyed a busy opera career, appearing in St Petersburg, Milan and Munich, in addition to regular performances in Amsterdam, Antwerp, Frankfurt and Lyon. He was Associate Principal Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra (1994–2005), Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Flemish Philharmonic (2009–15) and Chief Conductor of the Nagoya Philharmonic (2012–16).

He regularly appears with ensembles including the Royal Concertgebouw, San Francisco Symphony and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony orchestras and the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, as well as the Philharmonia, BBC Symphony and most of the other leading UK orchestras. Known for his advocacy of British composers, he has conducted hundreds of premieres around the world.

He opened the current season with *Peter Grimes* at English National Opera. Other season highlights include *Messiah* with Opera North and the Huddersfield Choral Society, and appearances in India, Poland, Spain and Sweden.

His discography of over 150 CDs includes prize-winning recordings of operas by Birtwistle, Harvey and Korngold.

## NICHOLAS DANIEL

### OBOE

Nicholas Daniel has significantly enlarged the repertoire for the oboe through commissioning hundreds of new works. He has also developed a varied conducting career alongside his playing

He has performed repertoire ranging from Bach to Xenakis and beyond, premiering works written for him by many composers. His recording of concertos by Vaughan Williams and Sir James MacMillan was awarded the *BBC Music Magazine* Premiere Award in 2016, and his Vaughan Williams recording was chosen as the best version of the work in *Gramophone* last year. He recently premiered and recorded a new cor anglais concerto, *Milky Ways*, by Outi Tarkiainen.

As a chamber musician, he is a founder-member of the Britten Sinfonia, Haffner Wind Ensemble, Orsino Ensemble and Britten Oboe Quartet. He also works regularly with the pianists Huw Watkins and Julius Drake, and with many leading string quartets. He is Principal Oboist of Camerata Pacifica, California's leading chamber music ensemble, and appears at international music festivals.

He supports a number of charities and trusts, and is sought after as a teacher. In 2012 he was awarded the Queen's Medal for Music and in 2020 was appointed OBE.

## ANNA DENNIS

### SOPRANO

Anna Dennis studied at the Royal Academy of Music and last year won the Royal Philharmonic Society's Singer Award.

Her opera performances include Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* at the Drottningholm Palace Theatre in Stockholm, Handel's *Rodelinda* at the Göttingen Handel Festival, Mozart's *Idomeneo* with Birmingham Opera Company and roles in all three Monteverdi operas during Sir John Eliot Gardiner's world tour of the trilogy. She recently created the title-role of Violet in Tom Coult's debut opera *Violet*, premiered at the Aldeburgh Festival.

She has appeared with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra of St Luke's in New York, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Gulbenkian Orchestra, Les Violons du Roy, Britten Sinfonia and Sinfonietta Riga.

Recent highlights have included Bach's Cantata No. 199 in Riga, Haydn's *The Seasons* with the Düsseldorf Symphony and Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus* with the Akademie für Alte Musik in Berlin. Her numerous recordings include Elena Langer's *Landscape with Three People*, the Grammy-nominated release of Alexander Kastalsky's *Requiem* under Leonard Slatkin and Handel's *Amadigi di Gaula* with the Early Opera Company under Christian Curnyn.

## JOHN FINDON

### TENOR

British tenor John Findon was a 2022/23 Harewood Artist at English National Opera and a semi-finalist at Operalia 2023.

Highlights of this season include his debut with the Bavarian State Opera in *The Magic Flute* and returns to English National Opera for Bob Boles (*Peter Grimes*), Luke (*The Handmaid's Tale*) and Števa (*Jenůfa*), before spending the summer at the Glyndebourne Festival (*The Magic Flute*). He also makes his debut with the Ulster Orchestra and records with the BBC Philharmonic.

Last season he made his debut with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, as the Fool (*Wozzeck*) under Sir Antonio Pappano. He returned to English National Opera for roles including Spoletta (*Tosca*) and Mime (*Das Rheingold*), as well as to Garsington Opera to sing Vašek (*The Bartered Bride*). Previously at Garsington Opera he has appeared as both Gamekeeper and Prince in *Rusalka*. For Opera North he has sung Second Jew (*Salome*) and Monostatos (*The Magic Flute*).

On the concert platform he has appeared in Tippett's *The Midsummer Marriage* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Edward Gardner, and sung Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* with the London Chamber Orchestra, as well as Verdi's *Requiem* at Blackheath Halls.

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**THOMAS LESSELS****BASS CLARINET**

Thomas Lessels grew up in Aberdeen and took clarinet lessons with Alison Waller before continuing his studies in Birmingham with Michael Harris and Colin Parr, in Oslo with Hans Christian Bræin, in Zurich with Michael Reid and at the Royal Academy of Music in London with Angela Malsbury, Tim Lines and Nicholas Rodwell.

He has been Principal Bass Clarinet of the BBC Symphony Orchestra since 2017, and, since 2013, sub-principal clarinet of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, where he is currently a player-director and enthusiastic member of the Artistic Planning Group. Lessels also regularly plays bass clarinet with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Aurora Orchestra and most of the UK's leading orchestras and ensembles.

## BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

For over 90 years the BBC Symphony Orchestra has been a driving force in the British musical landscape, championing contemporary music in its performances of newly commissioned works and giving voice to rarely performed and neglected composers. It plays a central role in the BBC Proms, performing regularly throughout each season, including the First and Last Nights. The BBC SO is Associate Orchestra at the Barbican, where it performs a distinctive annual season of concerts.

Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo opened this season, which features themes of voyaging and storytelling, including Stravinsky's *The Firebird* and Ravel's *Shéhérazade* and an evening of words and music with author Kate Atkinson. There are world and UK premieres from Detlev Glanert, Tebogo Monnakgotla, Outi Tarkiainen and Lotta Wennäkoski, and the BBC SO takes a deep dive into the musical worlds of American composer Missy Mazzoli, including a concert with Principal Guest Conductor Dalia Stasevska, and 'Italian Radicals' Luciano Berio, Luigi Dallapiccola, Bruno Maderna and Luigi Nono in two Total Immersion days. Performances with

the BBC Symphony Chorus include José Maurício Nunes Garcia's *Missa di Santa Cecília* (1826).

In addition to its Barbican concerts, the BBC SO makes appearances across the UK and beyond and gives regular free concerts at its Maida Vale studios.

You can hear the vast majority of the BBC SO's performances on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Sounds, with all 2023 Proms currently available on BBC Sounds, and a number of Proms, including the First and Last Nights, available to watch on BBC iPlayer.

The BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus – alongside the BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Singers and BBC Proms – offer innovative education and community activities and take a lead role in the BBC Ten Pieces and BBC Young Composer programmes, including work with schools, young people and families in East London ahead of the BBC SO's move in 2025 to its new home at London's East Bank cultural quarter in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Stratford.

### Keep up to date with the BBC Symphony Orchestra

To find out more about upcoming events and broadcasts, and for the latest BBC SO news, visit [bbc.co.uk/symphonyorchestra](https://bbc.co.uk/symphonyorchestra).

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**Chief Conductor**  
Sakari Oramo

**Principal Guest Conductor**  
Dalia Stasevska

**Günter Wand Conducting Chair**  
Semyon Bychkov

**Creative Artist in Association**  
Jules Buckley

**First Violins**  
Igor Yuzefovich *Leader*  
Cellerina Park  
Philip Brett  
Jeremy Martin  
Jenny King  
Celia Waterhouse  
Shirley Turner  
Ni Do  
Molly Cockburn  
James Wicks  
Stuart McDonald  
Joanne Chen  
Sarah Thornett  
Ruth Schulten  
William Hillman  
Tina Jacobs

**Second Violins**  
Heather Hohmann  
Rose Hinton  
Iona Allan  
Vanessa Hughes  
Danny Fajardo  
Lucy Curnow  
Tammy Se  
Victoria Hodgson  
Lucica Trita  
Nihat Agdach  
Ruth Funnell  
Peter Graham  
Lyrit Milgram  
Maya Bickel

**Violas**  
Fiona Winning  
Joshua Hayward  
Nikos Zarb  
Carolyn Scott  
Mary Whittle  
Peter Mallinson  
Matthias Wiesner  
Zoe Matthews  
Adrian Smith  
Anna Barsegjana  
Lisa Bucknell  
Daisy Spiers

**Cellos**  
Timothy Gill  
Tamsy Kaner  
Graham Bradshaw

Mark Sheridan  
Clare Hinton  
Michael Atkinson  
Jane Lindsay  
Ben Michaels  
Deni Teo  
Molly McWhirter

**Double Basses**  
Enno Senft  
Anita Langridge  
Michael Clarke  
Beverley Jones  
Elen Pan  
Lucy Hare  
Daniel Molloy  
Peter Smith

**Flutes**  
Claire Wickes  
David Cuthbert

**Piccolos**  
Fergus Davidson  
Rebecca Larsen

**Oboes**  
Alison Teale  
Imogen Smith  
Helen Vigurs

**Cor Anglais**  
Emily Cockbill

**Clarinets**  
Adam Lee  
Jonathan Parkin

**E-flat Clarinet**  
Harry Cameron Penny

**Bass Clarinet**  
Thomas Lessels

**Alto Saxophone**  
Dominic Childs

**Tenor Saxophone**  
Damon Oliver

**Bassoons**  
Julie Price  
Graham Hobbs

**Contrabassoon**  
Claire Webster

**Horns**  
Martin Owen  
Michael Murray  
Mark Wood  
Nicholas Hougham  
Mark Bennett

**Trumpets**  
Niall Keatley  
Joseph Atkins  
Martin Hurrell  
David Geoghegan  
Paul Mayes

**Trombones**  
Helen Vollam  
Dan Jenkins  
Ryan Hume

**Bass Trombone**  
Dan West

**Tuba**  
Sam Elliott

**Timpani**  
Tom Edwards

**Percussion**  
David Hockings  
Joe Cooper  
Rachel Gledhill  
Oliver Lowe  
Helen Edordu  
Elsa Bradley  
Heledd Gwynant

**Harp**  
Elizabeth Bass  
Rachel Wick

**Pianoforte/Celesta**  
Elizabeth Burley

**Electronic Harpsichord**  
Siwan Rhys

**Electronic Organ**  
Philip Moore

*The list of players was correct at the time of going to press*

**Director**  
Bill Chandler

**Head of Artistic Planning**  
Emma Gait

**Orchestra Manager**  
Susanna Simmons

**Orchestra Personnel Manager**  
Murray Richmond

**Orchestras and Tours Assistant**  
Indira Silks-Toomey

**Concerts Manager**  
Marelle McCallum

**Tours Manager**  
Kathryn Aldersea

**Music Libraries Manager**  
Mark Millidge

**Orchestral Librarian**  
Julia Simpson

**Planning Co-ordinator**  
Anna Schauder

**Chorus Manager**  
Brodie Smith

**Chief Producer**  
Ann McKay

**Assistant Producer**  
Ben Warren

**Senior Stage Manager**  
Rupert Casey

**Stage Manager**  
Michael Officer

**Commercial, Rights and Business Affairs Executive**  
Geraint Heap

**Business Accountant**  
Nimisha Ladwa

## BBC SINGERS

The BBC Singers has held a unique place at the heart of the UK's choral scene for almost 100 years and has collaborated with many of the world's leading composers, conductors and soloists. Based at the BBC's Maida Vale Studios, the choir records music for broadcast on BBC Radio 3 alongside work for other network radio, television and commercial use. It presents an annual series of concerts at Milton Court Concert Hall, gives free concerts in London and appears at major festivals.

The BBC Singers champions composers from all backgrounds. Recent concerts and recordings include music by Soumik Datta, Reena Esmail, Joanna Marsh, Cecilia McDowall, Sun Keting and Roderick Williams, and recent collaborations have featured Laura Mvula, Clare Teal, South Asian dance company Akademi and world music fusion band Kabantu.

The BBC Singers appears annually at the BBC Proms. The 2023 season saw the group perform at the First and Last Nights, as well as in a concert with Sir Simon Rattle, an evening with Jon Hopkins and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and a concert with Chief Conductor Sofi Jeannin.

At the heart of the BBC Singers' work is a wide-ranging programme of learning activities with children and adults in schools, music colleges, universities and community groups.

**Chief Conductor**  
Sofi Jeannin

**Principal Guest Conductors**  
Bob Chilcott  
Owain Park

**Associate Conductor, Learning**  
Nicholas Chalmers

**Associate Composer**  
Roderick Williams

**Artists in Association**  
Anna Lapwood  
Abel Selaoocoe

**Sopranos**  
Emma Tring  
Clare Lloyd-Griffiths

**Altos**  
Ciara Hendrick  
Katherine Nicholson

**Tenors**  
Stephen Jeffes  
Benjamin Durrant

**Basses**  
Edward Price  
Jimmy Holliday

*Correct at the time of going to press*

**Acting Co-Director and Choral Manager**  
Rob Johnston

**Acting Co-Director and Producer**  
Jonathan Manners

**Assistant Choral Manager**  
Eve Machin

**Assistant Producer**  
Jo Harris

**Tours Manager**  
Kathryn Aldersea

**Librarian**  
Naomi Anderson

**BBC London Orchestras and Choirs Marketing and Learning**

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**Marketing Executives**  
Chloe Jaynes  
Jenny Barrett  
Alice White

**Marketing Co-ordinator**  
Ellie Ajao

**Senior Learning Project Managers (job share)**  
Lauren Creed  
Ellara Wakely

**Learning Project Managers**  
Melanie Fryer  
Laura Mitchell  
Chloe Shrimpton

**Assistant Learning Project Managers**  
Siân Bateman  
Catriona Cayley  
Deborah Fether

**Learning Trainees**  
Dylan Barrett-Chambers  
Shah Hussain  
Nairobi Nomura



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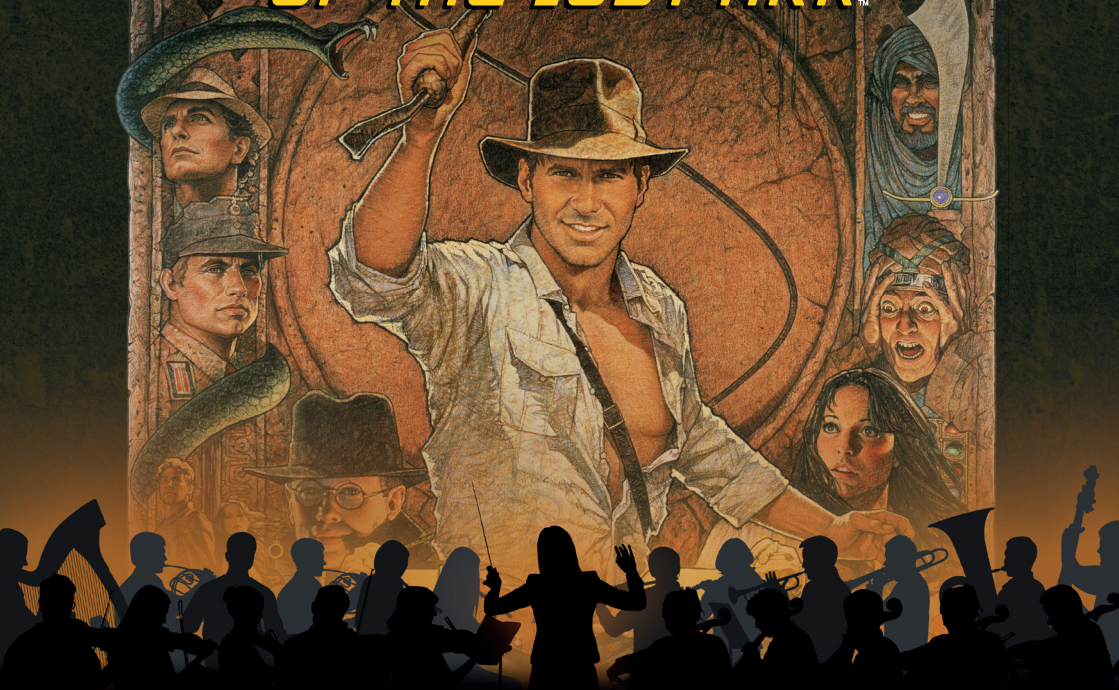
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