



BYCHKOV CONDUCTS BRAHMS

Friday 24 November 2023

The BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican

Be transported to a world where music tells powerful stories, and no emotion is off limits.

CONCERTS OCTOBER – DECEMBER

FRIDAY 6 OCTOBER 7.30pm

GYÖRGY LIGETI Concert
Românesc

DORA PEJAČEVIĆ Phantasie
concertante *UK premiere*

GUSTAV MAHLER Symphony No. 5

Alexandra Dariescu *piano*
Sakari Oramo *conductor*

SUNDAY 22 OCTOBER 7.00pm

ȘTEFAN NICULESCU Ison II
UK premiere

ANNA MEREDITH Origami Songs

ARVO PÄRT Perpetuum mobile

IGOR STRAVINSKY The Rite of
Spring

Erik Bosgraaf *recorders*
Ryan Wigglesworth *conductor*

FRIDAY 27 OCTOBER 7.30pm

OLIVIER MESSIAEN Les offrandes
oubliées

OUTI TARKIAINEN Milky Ways
BBC co-commission: UK premiere

DMITRY SHOSTAKOVICH
Symphony No. 10

Nicholas Daniel *cor anglais*
David Afkham *conductor*

FRIDAY 3 NOVEMBER 7.30pm

CLAUDE DEBUSSY Prélude à
l'après-midi d'un faune

LOTTA WENNÄKOSKI Prosoidia
BBC co-commission: world premiere

BORIS LYATOSHINSKY Grazhyna

IGOR STRAVINSKY The Firebird –
suite (1919)

Ilya Gringolts *violin*
Eva Ollikainen *conductor*

FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER 7.30pm

DETLEV GLANERT Prague
Symphony – Lyrical Fragments
after Franz Kafka (Symphony No. 4)
BBC co-commission: UK premiere

JOHANNES BRAHMS Symphony
No. 4 in E minor

Catriona Morison *mezzo-soprano*
Christian Immler *baritone*
Semyon Bychkov *conductor*

FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER 7.30pm

ALICE MARY SMITH Overture
'Jason, or The Argonauts and
the Sirens'

MAURICE RAVEL Shéhérazade

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
Symphony No. 3 in E flat major,
'Éroica'

Jennifer Johnston *mezzo-soprano*
Sakari Oramo *conductor*

FRIDAY 8 DECEMBER 7.30pm

CARL NIELSEN An Imaginary
Journey to the Faroe Islands

TEBOGO MONNAKGOTLA Globe
Skimmer Surfing the Somali Jet
BBC commission: UK premiere

JEAN SIBELIUS
Symphony No. 6 in D minor
Symphony No. 7 in C major

Johan Dalene *violin*
Sakari Oramo *conductor*

FRIDAY 15 DECEMBER 7.30pm

CLAUDIO MONTEVERDI arr. Ryan
Wigglesworth Lamento d'Arianna
London premiere

RYAN WIGGLESWORTH
Magnificat *London premiere*

ROBERT SCHUMANN Symphony
No. 2 in C major

Sophie Bevan *soprano*
BBC Symphony Chorus
Ryan Wigglesworth *conductor*

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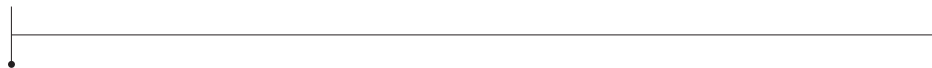
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SAKARI ORAMO CHIEF CONDUCTOR

FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER, 2023

7.30pm, BARBICAN HALL



DETLEV GLANERT Prague Symphony – Lyrical Fragments after Franz Kafka
(Symphony No. 4) *BBC co-commission: UK premiere* 45'

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

JOHANNES BRAHMS Symphony No. 4 in E minor 40'

Catriona Morison mezzo-soprano

Christian Immler bass-baritone

Semyon Bychkov conductor

RADIO 3 SOUNDS

This concert is being broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 in *Radio 3 in Concert*. It will be available for 30 days after broadcast via BBC Sounds, where you can also find podcasts and music mixes.

Please ensure all mobile phones and watch-alarms are switched off.

Tonight Semyon Bychkov – for more than a decade holder of the BBC Symphony Orchestra’s Günter Wand Conductor Chair – contrasts two German Fourth Symphonies, composed almost 140 years apart.

Receiving its UK premiere, Detlev Glanert’s Symphony No. 4, his *Prague Symphony*, written for Bychkov’s Czech Philharmonic, takes the form of a symphonic song-cycle. In featuring texts by Franz Kafka, with mezzo-soprano and bass soloists reflecting two sides of the same personality, Glanert sought to turn away from the darker realms familiar from the Prague-based writer’s books: ‘There is definitely a lyrical side revealed in his poetry,’ Glanert has said. ‘And there are accounts that he was an elegant and light-hearted man, often bursting into laughter.’

For many, Brahms’s final symphony is his most ‘serious’, with the rigorous form of its finale and associations with death, even if the solemn mood is interrupted by the lighter – sometimes stomping – march of the third movement.

B B C

SOUNDS

Tonight’s concert is available on BBC Sounds until 23 December.

iPLAYER

Watch the BBC SO’s performances at the First and Last Nights of the Proms this year on BBC iPlayer until a year after first broadcast

For the full range of BBC SO performances currently available – including Stravinsky’s ‘The Firebird’ suite and Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 10 – visit the BBC SO homepage and scroll to ‘Watch and Listen’

DETLEV GLANERT (1960)
Prague Symphony – Lyrical
Fragments after Franz Kafka
(Symphony No. 4) (2019–20)

*BBC co-commission with the
Czech Philharmonic and support
from Nicholas Berwin: UK premiere*

- 1 Wenn du vor mir steht** [When you stand before me] –
- 2 Träume** [Dreams] –
- 3 Menschen** [Humanity] –
- 4 Um was klagst du** [What is your complaint?] –
- 5 Hades** [Hell]
- 6 Stelle dich** [Stand strong] –
- 7 Kleine seele** [Little soul] –
- 8 O schöne Stunde** [O beautiful hour] –
- 9 In der abendlichen Sonne** [In the evening sun] –
- 10 Kühl und hart** [Cold and hard] –
- 11 Du bist zu spät gekommen** [You've come too late] –
- 12 Nimmermehr** [Never again]

Catriona Morison mezzo-soprano
Christian Immler bass-baritone

The title was Mozart's, of course – or at least it was the name that later tradition gave to the symphony Mozart presented on his first visit to Prague, in 1787.

Fast forward to 2018, when Semyon Bychkov became Chief Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic and commissioned Detlev Glanert to write a work for the orchestra that would have some connection with Prague. Hence this

second 'Prague Symphony', which Glanert composed in 2019–20 for a premiere in the city on 8 December last year.

Glanert's first decision was that the connection would be through Kafka, who spent almost his whole life in Prague. Reading and re-reading Kafka's entire output made Glanert realise that the writer's diaries, sketchbooks and letters contained a large number of passages that could be isolated as poems, and from these poems he created a song-symphony having two singers. His models were Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* and Zemlinsky's *Lyric Symphony*, but his work is much more of a dramatic dialogue, which we might imagine as unfolding between two people, a man and a woman, or between two voices within the one personality.

Being a dialogue, the piece draws strongly on Glanert's experience and inclinations as an opera composer. So it does in its vivid definition of images (in which the excerpts he chose are rich) and states of mind. At the same time, it is very much a symphony. The 12 songs are 12 miniature movements at once linked and punctuated by orchestral interludes in a continuous 45-minute sweep. Moreover, the music is threaded through with small motifs from which it is generated, beginning with a rising arpeggio figure heard in the opening bars on the two harps.

From here the orchestra rapidly gains in strength, enough to prompt an entry from the bass soloist to sing of how we cannot

truly know other people. Vehemence quickly subsides for an extension of the thought in the song's second part, where solo instruments come forward – violin, flute, oboe – as will often happen again. The mezzo-soprano comes in at this point to answer the bass in a slow movement, with a solo alto flute that arrives with the first mention of dreams. Suddenly power and speed pick up for the bass's response ('Humanity'), discounting dreams and hope. The music then remains fast, but now in a state of fluttering flow, for the mezzo's challenge: 'What is your complaint?' Glanert has, in this first part of the symphony, established conventional roles for the two soloists, the man forceful and beset, the woman calming.

The man's mental storms continue as he feels himself adrift in a boat on one of the rivers of Hell ('Hades'). Sounds of the soul's battering continue through an interlude, to be stopped by the mezzo, now singing with equal power but on the side of human agency ('Stand strong'). That power seems to quieten her own music, but this long song regains energy when she sings of how one must call out for the 'splendour of life'. She leaves on a starry sound, which the bass interprets as an image of the soul in the dance song that follows ('Little soul'). Here the soloists sing in alternation and finally together. In exquisite tranquillity the bass begins the seventh song ('O beautiful hour'), which is the symphony's love scene, followed by an interlude that changes the atmosphere.

The last four songs find the two together still, but in a different world of feeling. They sing in bare harmony, later splitting, listlessly ('In the evening sun'). Their wintry observations in 'Cold and hard' are delivered on repeating notes (bass), with slides (mezzo) and in a dreamworld (both). In what is at first unaccompanied recitative, the mezzo declares he (the bass?) has gone ('You've come too late'), but they are together again, almost conjoined, as they sing in octaves to carry the work to its conclusion.

Detlev Glanert

Detlev Glanert was 21 before he began composition studies (Hans Werner Henze was then his main teacher) but he rapidly made up for the late start. His First Symphony was played by the Berlin Philharmonic in 1985; his first opera followed three years later in Munich. Those early works established a style and a reputation. Fine craftsmanship underpins consistency, expressive immediacy and, not least, compelling continuity, within a language where a modernist upsurge is disrupting the forces of traditional harmony.

Glanert had his first notable performance in this country in 1992, when Oliver Knussen brought his *Mahler/Skizze* to the London Sinfonietta. The engagement with the late-Romantic past was to become characteristic, with Brahms more recently displacing Mahler as focus of interest.

More immediately, the Sinfonietta performance brought the young composer to the attention of the BBC, resulting in a Proms commission he fulfilled with his Third Symphony (1996). Also composed for the Proms, *Theatrum bestiarum* (2004–5), a score at once rampageous and sophisticated, marked the beginning of a fruitful relationship with Semyon Bychkov. In 2012 came an English National Opera production of *Caligula*, the only opera by Glanert staged here so far. In 2019 he was featured in one of the BBC Symphony Orchestra's Total Immersion days at the Barbican, programmed around his biggest concert work, *Requiem for Hieronymus Bosch*.

Meanwhile in Germany he has succeeded Henze as the opera composer whose works are most often performed, no doubt thanks to their gripping theatricality and close awareness, no matter what the setting, of contemporary questions about identity and viewpoint, social cohesion and political power. Most often Glanert has found his subjects in literature: a play by Albert Camus in the case of *Caligula* (2004–6), a novel by Stanisław Lem (*Solaris*, 2010–12), a prose fragment by Theodor Fontane about a mysterious woman who emerges from the sea (*Oceane*, 2016–18). His next opera will be *The Jewess of Toledo*, due for performance in Dresden in February and based on a classic of the German-language theatre, by Franz Grillparzer.

His exceptional technique also continues to bring him frequent orchestral

commissions, including most recently concertos for the cellist Johannes Moser and the percussionist Christoph Sietzen, for performance respectively in Luxembourg and the Norwegian Arctic city of Bodø. Chamber music was taking rather a back seat until, closed in by the pandemic, he came up with his Third String Quartet (2021–2) and viola duet *The Pleiades* (2022).

Programme note and profile © Paul Griffiths

A critic for over 30 years, including for *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* and *A Concise History of Western Music*. His novels *let me tell you* and *let me go on* were published in July.

English surtitles produced and operated by Damien Kennedy

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

JOHANNES BRAHMS
(1833–97)

Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98
(1884–5)

1 Allegro non troppo

2 Andante moderato

3 Allegro giocoso

4 Allegro energico e passionato

Brahms's symphonies came into the world in complementary pairs. After the turbulent darkness-to-light drama of the First Symphony (completed in 1876), Brahms was soon working on its successor (1877), which begins serenely and – however sombre some of the vistas opened up along the way – ends in almost riotous good humour. The Third Symphony (1883) bases itself on a musical motto, F–A–F, standing for the German words *Frei aber froh* ('Free but happy') – an idea that is put to the test as the work progresses, but that might seem at least partially vindicated at the close. Once again, the Third was hardly finished when Symphony No. 4 was beginning to take shape. Work took a little longer this time, and the score wasn't completed until the summer of 1885. But again the contrast in character is striking.

That might help explain why some of Brahms's closest musical friends found the Fourth Symphony so difficult to comprehend at first. The conductor Hans von Bülow's initial report to his concert agent was tight-lipped: 'Brahms Fourth, E minor, seems to be difficult,

very.' After having heard a preliminary play-through on two pianos, Brahms's critical ally Eduard Hanslick admitted that 'all through I felt I was being thrashed by two terribly clever men'. Brahms himself seems to have been uneasy about its potential reception. Writing to von Bülow from the Austrian Alpine resort of Mürzzuschlag, Brahms wondered – only half jokingly – if the weather hadn't had a negative effect on the music: 'I'm afraid it takes after the climate in these parts – the cherries don't get ripe here; you wouldn't eat them!' The sour cherries image also turned up in a letter to another close confidante, Elisabeth von Herzogenberg: 'In this region the cherries do not grow ripe and sweet to the taste – if you don't like the thing, don't hesitate to say so.'

What was it about the new symphony that made it so difficult to grasp on first hearing? There are two clues in the comments quoted above. First there is Hanslick's remark about the music being 'terribly clever'. The Fourth is Brahms's most intellectually taut and ingenious symphony. The lilting opening theme may seem spontaneous enough, but it is rigorously constructed from a chain of descending thirds. The same pattern recurs throughout the symphony, drawing seemingly disparate ideas together, spawning new ones – so much so that the whole work emerges as a complex tapestry of motifs. Then in the finale Brahms revives an old, at that time positively archaic, formal device: the passacaglia. A passacaglia movement is built up on repetitions of, or variations on,

a theme in the bass – which in this case is also interwoven with that very chain of descending thirds that formed the basis of the first-movement theme. This sort of thing may have delighted the formidably intellectual Arnold Schoenberg, but even Brahms's closest friends seem to have found it initially intimidating.

Along with that go Brahms's remarks about sour cherries. The typical autumnal ripeness of Brahms's later works is replaced by something less comfortable. Many have found a hint of a 'dark saying' in the Fourth Symphony. For those who like to seek out meanings, Brahms provides a handful of delicately planted clues. The presentation and development of the first movement's two main themes can be enjoyed as pure music, though there is clearly an undercurrent of restlessness and, at times, anguish. But, as the movement prepares for the return of the first theme, a hush descends, and the texture becomes ominously calm; then woodwind spell out the opening phrases of the first theme slowly, ending in swirling, mysterious full-orchestral harmonies. This is an almost literal anticipation of the third of Brahms's *Four Serious Songs*: 'Oh death, oh death, how bitter you are.' Mortality was a lifelong preoccupation for Brahms, but this has to be one of his most haunting annunciations of death.

The late Brahms biographer Malcolm MacDonald offered a valuable insight into the character of the next two movements. The *Andante moderato* begins with a

theme in the old church Phrygian mode. (Imagine a scale on the white notes of the piano, beginning and ending on E.) In one of the musicological books he owned, Brahms underlined a passage about the character of this mode, stating that it expresses deep need and remorse, and longing for heavenly comfort.

All these emotions are evoked in this movement, just as the song 'Oh death' eventually offers us the image of Death the comforter – and in the same key, E major. But Brahms's book also tells how the gloomy Phrygian mood melts away in the face of the 'bright, cheerful' Ionian mode – essentially the scale of C major, in which the *giocoso* (joyous) third movement begins and ends. This movement is often described as a scherzo, but it is more like a rousing 2/4 march – classical scherzos are almost invariably in three-time.

Joy may have vanquished Phrygian gloom but the first movement's challenging evocation of death still needs to be faced. Brahms does this magnificently in the concluding passacaglia. The theme is taken (and adapted) from one of Bach's church cantatas: No. 150, *Nach dir, Herr, verlanget mich* ('My soul longs for thee, O God'). It appears in the cantata's final chorus, which expresses the hope that God will turn the singer's 'days of suffering' to joy. Despite a wonderful moment of 'heavenly comfort' (warm major-key harmonies on trombones), the dark minor mode prevails in the end. Yet there is a kind of joy here: defiant,

yet undoubtedly still full of life. One may remember Dylan Thomas's words: 'Time held me green and dying / Though I sang in my chains like the sea.'

Programme note © Stephen Johnson

Stephen Johnson is the author of books on Bruckner, Wagner, Mahler and Shostakovich, and is a regular contributor to *BBC Music Magazine*. For 14 years he was a presenter of BBC Radio 3's *Discovering Music*. He now works both as a freelance writer and as a composer.

JOHANNES BRAHMS

Brahms's father, a Hamburg town musician, initially brought up the young Johannes to follow in his footsteps, making sure he could play horn, cello and piano. But it was at the latter he excelled, performing Bach, Mozart and Beethoven in public and learning the core of his compositional craft by modelling movements on their works and by composing variations and songs; he developed a lifelong love of folk song and Hungarian Gypsy music. In 1853, aged 20, Brahms visited the Schumanns – a life-changing experience, bringing him fame, publication of his early works and access to their library, where he broadened his compositional study to include Renaissance and Baroque choral music, counterpoint and instrumental forms. Schumann encouraged him to write for larger forces, and his First Piano Concerto (1854–9) and First Serenade (1857–8) were at stages in their genesis intended as symphonies.

The 1860s saw a flowering of chamber music, including the First Cello Sonata (1862–5), Horn Trio (1865), songs and sets of piano variations, including the *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel* (1861), about which Wagner maintained (before Brahms had become a serious rival to be attacked): 'One sees what may yet be achieved in the old forms, when someone comes who understands how to handle them.' He composed his choral masterpiece *A German Requiem* in the latter half of the decade, giving its first (nearly complete) performance on Good Friday 1868 in Bremen Cathedral. Brahms had moved to Vienna and become involved in the rediscovery of Bach and Schubert there, giving the first Viennese performances of their works with choral and orchestral societies.

He at last finished his First Symphony in 1876, which inaugurated a decade of large-scale works for orchestra and soloists carrying forwards the Beethovenian legacy: the Symphonies Nos. 2–4 (1877, 1883 and 1884–5), the Violin Concerto (1878), Second Piano Concerto (1878–81) and Double Concerto (1887). In 1890 he intended to retire, but met the great clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld and composed chamber music showcasing the instrument, notably the Clarinet Quintet (1891), which immediately became one of his most loved works, as it remains to this day. His last music, 11 chorale preludes for organ, returns overtly to Bachian models. Thus Brahms fashioned an individuality of voice based

on profound study and understanding of a long historical perspective. Yet he was in some ways a Janus figure: the power and immediacy of his works rest on compositional subtlety and intricacy which particularly appealed to the Second Viennese School; Schoenberg characterised him as 'the progressive', from whom he had learnt 'economy yet richness'.

Profile © Robert Pascall

Robert Pascall (1944–2018) was vice-chair of the *New Brahms Complete Edition*, for which he edited the four symphonies. He was an honorary professor at Cambridge University and wrote on music ranging from Bach to Schoenberg and Franz Schmidt.



FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER 7.30pm

Fantastic Voyages

ALICE MARY SMITH Overture 'Jason, or The Argonauts and the Sirens'

MAURICE RAVEL *Shéhérazade*

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 3, 'Eroica'

Jennifer Johnston mezzo-soprano

Sakari Oramo conductor

Alice Mary Smith defied the expectations of 19th-century Britain, and her musical imagination travelled without boundaries. Tonight, she sets sail with Jason and the Argonauts: just the start of a concert that voyages East onboard Ravel's ship of dreams, before confronting Napoleon Bonaparte himself in Beethoven's revolutionary 'Eroica' Symphony.

By any standards, it's an incredible journey – but BBC SO Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo is a born explorer, and this is a long overdue chance to hear Smith's spirited overture. British mezzo-soprano Jennifer Johnston is the soloist in Ravel's *Shéhérazade*: an unashamedly poetic vision of an imagined Orient, performed by a singer described by one critic as having 'one of the most generous and beautiful voices in the business'.

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Associate Orchestra

SEMYON BYCHKOV

CONDUCTOR

Born in St Petersburg, Semyon Bychkov has been Chief Conductor and Music Director of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra since 2018 and has held the Günter Wand Conducting Chair with the BBC Symphony Orchestra since 2012. He previously held music director positions with the Orchestre de Paris, WDR Symphony Orchestra (Cologne) and Dresden Semperoper.

Recognised for his interpretations of the core repertoire, he has also collaborated with composers including Luciano Berio, Henri Dutilleux and Maurizio Kagel, and more recently Julian Anderson, Bryce Dessner, Detlev Glanert, Thierry Escaich and Thomas Larcher.

He is a frequent guest with the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Royal Concertgebouw (Amsterdam) and Munich Philharmonic orchestras, as well as the New York, Chicago and Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestras, and the Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras. Recent opera productions include *Elektra* in Vienna, *Tristan and Isolde* in Madrid and *Rusalka* with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; next year he returns to the Bayreuth Festival to conduct *Tristan and Isolde*.

He has made many recordings and in 2022 was named Conductor of the Year by *Musical America*.

CHRISTIAN IMMLER

BASS-BARITONE

German bass-baritone Christian Immler performs around the world across lieder, oratorio and opera. He studied with Rudolf Piernay in London and won the International Nadia and Lili Boulanger Competition in 2001.

His operatic performances range from Monteverdi and Rameau through Mozart, Beethoven and Weber to Strauss and Unsub Chin. In concert he has performed Mahler's Symphony No. 8 with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Minnesota Orchestra, *Kindertotenlieder* with the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Zemlinsky's *Lyrical Symphony* with the Orchestre National de France, as well as the Requiems of Mozart, Dvořák, Brahms, Verdi and Fauré. He returns often to the major works of Bach and Handel, and has appeared under the batons of Herbert Blomstedt, Ivor Bolton, William Christie, Daniel Harding, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Philippe Herreweghe, René Jacobs, Marc Minkowski, Kent Nagano, Raphaël Pichon, Christophe Rousset and Masaaki Suzuki.

In recital he has sung in London, New York, Paris and Salzburg. His discography spans more than 60 recordings, attracting a Grammy nomination, several *Diapason d'Or* Awards, the Echo and Opus Klassik awards, German Record Critics' Award and a *Gramophone* Award.

CATRIONA MORISON

MEZZO-SOPRANO

Scottish-born, Berlin-based mezzo-soprano Catriona Morison first came to wider attention as winner of the Main Prize and Song Prize at the 2017 BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition. At that time she was an ensemble member at the Wuppertal Opera House, where her roles included Nicklausse (*The Tales of Hoffmann*), Charlotte (*Werther*), Hansel (*Hansel and Gretel*) and Maddelena (*Rigoletto*).

In 2019 she made her BBC Proms debut singing Elgar's *Sea Pictures* and a new work, *This Frame Is Part of the Painting*, by Errolyn Wallen, while in recital she has appeared at the Wigmore Hall, Edinburgh International Festival, Leeds Lieder Festival and Oxford International Song Festival.

Highlights of this season include four recitals last month in London and Oxford with pianist Malcolm Martineau, Chausson's *Poème de l'amour et de la mer* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra under Thomas Dausgaard and concert performances of *Die Walküre* with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra under Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Among other forthcoming engagements are Mahler's Symphony No. 2 under Jaap van Zweden and Symphony No. 8 with the NHK (Tokyo) Symphony Orchestra under Fabio Luisi, and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with both the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under Manfred Honeck and the Orchestre de Paris under Klaus Mäkelä.

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 a season featuring themes of voyage 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 Wennäkoska, 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 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.

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Sakari Oramo

Principal Guest Conductor
Dalia Stasevska

Günter Wand Conducting Chair
Semyon Bychkov

Conductor Laureate
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Jeremy Martin
Jenny King
Celia Waterhouse
Colin Huber
Shirley Turner
Ni Do
Molly Cockburn
James Wicks
Stuart McDonald
Alexandra Lomeiko
Rasa Zukauskaitė
Daniel Meszoly
Claire Sledd

Second Violins
Heather Hohmann
Rose Hinton
Patrick Wastnage
Danny Fajardo
Lucy Curnow
Rachel Samuel
Tammy Se
Caroline Cooper
Victoria Hodgson
Lucica Trita
Nihat Agdach
Dania Alzapiedi
Marina Solarek
Ingrid Button

Violas
Delphine Dupuy
Philip Hall
Joshua Hayward
Nikos Zarb
Michael Leaver
Carolyn Scott
Mary Whittle
Peter Mallinson

Matthias Wiesner
Alistair Scahill
Zoe Matthews
Mark Gibbs

Cellos
Tim Hugh
Tamsy Kaner
Mark Sheridan
Clare Hinton
Michael Atkinson
Morwenna Del Mar
Anna Beryl
Gilly McMullin
Auriol Evans
Rebecca Herman

Double Basses
Nicholas Bayley
Richard Alsop
Josie Ellis
Beverley Jones
Elen Pan
Simon Oliver
Alice Kent
Adam Wynter

Flutes
Michael Cox
Tomoka Mukai

Piccolo/Alto Flute
Jane Mitchell

Oboes
Tom Blomfield
Eleanor Sullivan
Cor Anglais
Olivia Fraser

Clarinets
Gonzalo Esteban
Jonathan Parkin

Bass Clarinet
Thomas Lessels

Bassoons
Julie Price
Graham Hobbs

Contrabassoon
Steven Magee

Horns
Nicholas Korth
Michael Murray
Mark Wood
Nicholas Hougham
Chris Pointon

Trumpets
Philip Cobb
John Blackshaw
Joseph Atkins

Trombones
Helen Vollam
Dan Jenkins

Bass Trombone
Paul Lambert

Tuba
Sam Elliott

Timpani
Antoine Bedewi

Percussion
Alex Neal
Fiona Ritchie
Joe Richards

Harp
Anne Denholm
Daniel de Fry

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

Acting Co-Director/ Planning Manager
Tom Philpott

Acting Co-Director/ Orchestra Manager
Susanna Simmons

Orchestra Personnel Manager
Murray Richmond

Orchestras and Tours Assistant
Indira Sills-Toomey

Concerts Manager
Marelle McCallum

Tours Manager
Kathryn Aldersea

Music Libraries Manager
Mark Millidge

Orchestral Librarian
Julia Simpson

Planning Co-ordinators
Naomi Faulkner
Zara Siddiqi

Chorus Manager
Wesley John

Chief Producer
Ann McKay

Assistant Producer
Ben Warren

Senior Stage Manager
Rupert Casey

Stage Manager
Michael Officer

Commercial, Rights and Business Affairs Executive
Zoe Robinson

Business Accountant
Nimisha Ladwa

BBC London Orchestras Marketing and Learning

Head of Marketing, Publications and Learning
Kate Finch

Communications Manager
Jo Hawkins

Publicist
Freya Edgeworth

Marketing Manager
Sarah Hirons

Marketing Executives
Jenny Barrett
Alice White

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
Deborah Fether

Learning Trainees
Dylan Barrett-Chambers
Sofia Heustice

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