



OLD PICTURES, NEW WORLDS

Friday 10 May 2024

The BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican

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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
DON'T APPLY

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 Pearse *baritone*
Vilde Frang *violin*
Lawrence Power *viola*
BBC Symphony Chorus
Sakari Oramo *conductor*

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FRIDAY 10 MAY, 2024

7.30pm, BARBICAN HALL



JOSÉ MAURÍCIO NUNES GARCIA Missa de Santa Cecilia 60'

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

MODEST MUSSORGSKY, ORCH. MAURICE RAVEL Pictures at an Exhibition 36'

Erika Baikoff soprano
Marta Fontanals-Simmons mezzo-soprano
Joshua Stewart tenor
Ross Ramgobin baritone
BBC Symphony Chorus
Martyn Brabbins conductor

*April Koyejo-Audiger, the advertised soprano, has had to withdraw from tonight's performance for health reasons.
The BBC Symphony Orchestra is grateful to Erika Baikoff for taking her place at short notice.*

RADIO 3 SOUNDS

This concert is being recorded for BBC Radio 3 in *Radio 3 in Concert* on Monday 3 June. 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 Martyn Brabbins leads the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus and a quartet of soloists in a concert that comprises a rarity from Brazil and a popular favourite from Russia.

Brazilian composer José Maurício Nunes Garcia was a contemporary of Beethoven – a musician and priest of mixed heritage whose career reached its pinnacle when the exiled Portuguese court relocated to Rio de Janeiro. His magnificent Mass setting from 1826 – dedicated to the patron saint of music, St Cecilia – is his final and most-celebrated work.

Following the interval we hear Ravel's orchestration of Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, inspired by a visit to an exhibition of works by a much-missed friend. With its glowing skulls, dancing chicks and Great Gate of Kiev, this piece is one of the most colourful in the concert repertoire. Martyn Brabbins and the BBC Symphony Orchestra bring it to life.

B B C

 **SOUNDS**

Tonight's concert will be available on BBC Sounds from 3 June to 3 July.

 **iPLAYER**

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**JOSÉ MAURÍCIO NUNES
GARCIA (1767–1830)
Missa de Santa Cecília (1826)**

Kyrie

1 **Kyrie eleison**

Gloria

2 **Gloria in excelsis Deo**

3 **Et in terra pax**

4 **Laudamus te**

5 **Gratias agimus tibi**

6 **Domine Deus Rex coelestis**

7 **Qui tollis peccata mundi**

8 **Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris**

9 **Quoniam tu solus sanctus**

10 **Cum sancto spiritu**

Credo

11 **Patrem omnipotentem**

12 **Et incarnatus est**

13 **Crucifixus etiam pro nobis**

14 **Et resurrexit**

15 **Sanctus**

16 **Benedictus**

17 **Agnus Dei**

Erika Baikoff soprano

Marta Fontanals-Simmons mezzo-soprano

Joshua Stewart tenor

Ross Ramgobin baritone

BBC Symphony Chorus

It was in the 1930s that scholars first came to recognise the importance of sacred music by Afro-Brazilian composers, thanks largely to the work of musicologist Francisco Curt Lange (originally Franz

Kurt Lange), who emigrated to South America from his native Germany. Colonial Brazil enjoyed a varied and impressive musical tradition, yet composers such as Marcos Coelho Netto (1746–1806), Ignacio Parreiras Neves (c1730–93) and Manoel Dias de Oliveira (c1735–1813) are largely unfamiliar to listeners outside of Brazil.

As for José Maurício Nunes Garcia, his birth and death dates correspond closely to those of Beethoven: he was born three years before, and died three years after, the German composer. He also had access to prints of Beethoven's music, as well as those of Boccherini and Haydn. The *Missa de Santa Cecília*, Garcia's final – and one of his finest – compositions, makes a powerful statement. First, it reminds us that its creator helped found the Brotherhood of St Cecilia. Next, in paying homage to the patron saint of music, Garcia joined the company of many another musician, including Alessandro Scarlatti and Joseph Haydn, both of whom honoured St Cecilia with Masses. Most important is the work itself, noteworthy for its prominent use of woodwinds (especially the clarinet), the influence of 18th-century opera and orchestral writing typical of the Viennese Classical style.

The 'Kyrie', for example, beautifully showcases the clarinet, particularly in the concluding passage. In the 'Benedictus' a walking-bass bassoon introduces the vocal quartet. Frequent moments of luminous, transparent textures – as in the introduction and conclusion of the

‘Gratias’, glinting with woodwind timbres – recall the words of British scholar Cuthbert Girdlestone, who compared similar-sounding passages in Mozart’s music to ‘stained glass’.

One especially affecting moment can be heard at the opening of the ‘Qui sedes’, in which the woodwinds, clear and bright, yield to the sound of the sopranos. Brass instruments are not slighted, however, as the fanfare that introduces the ‘Gloria’ and peak moments in the ‘Cum sancto spiritu’ and ‘Et resurrexit’ attest.

Operatic influences are clearly evident in the ‘Laudamus te’, whose soprano solo is comparable to Rossini, given its demands on range and coloratura style. Similarly florid writing prevails in the vocal quartet of the ‘Domine Deus’, a tour de force with wide leaps, ornamentation and considerable range. In the ‘Qui tollis’, meanwhile, we hear a lengthy melisma on ‘deprecationem’ (a prayer for divine help) in the tenor solo. Contrasting with these operatic strategies is the straightforward declamation of the chorus, which sometimes engages in dialogue with the orchestra, as in the solemn repetitions of ‘misere’ in the ‘Agnus Dei’. Throughout, the orchestra draws on the formulae of Mozart, Haydn and their predecessors.

In the *Missa de Santa Cecilia* the ‘Gloria’ dominates, in part because, as in most of Garcia’s Masses, the ‘Credo’ is brief, a surprising approach to that text-heavy portion of the Mass Ordinary.

(In explaining why the ‘Credo’ was the longest movement of his own Mass, Stravinsky once quipped that ‘there is much to believe’.) Still, Garcia’s ‘Credo’, which incorporates movements 11 to 14, contains some peak moments. These include the exuberant octave leap in the opening statement; the sequential treatment on ‘visibilium’ and the chromatic colouring that follows; the abrupt change of tonal centre at ‘facta sunt’; and the shouts of jubilation in the chorus during the ‘Et resurrexit’, juxtaposed with a dramatic drop in volume and thinning of texture on ‘et mortuos’.

After all this remarkable variety, the final-movement ‘Agnus Dei’ ends on a quiet prayer for peace: ‘Dona nobis pacem’. Although a sentiment for the ages, surely it will resonate especially deeply with audiences in 2024.

JOSÉ MAURÍCIO NUNES GARCIA

José Maurício Nunes Garcia spent his career in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. His father was a lieutenant and his mother a Black woman. In colonial Brazil, with its plantation economy and slave trade, Africans played a fundamental role in daily life. The Church did not oppose mixed-race marriages and they were fairly common at the time.

Black and mixed-raced musicians have long contributed to Brazilian culture. During the colonial period many composed for the Roman Catholic Church, established in Brazil by the Portuguese in c1500. Musical guilds (*irmandades*), often founded by musicians, oversaw the administration of church music, which flourished in the states of Pernambuco, Bahia and especially Minas Gerais, a region celebrated for its Baroque churches. As Garcia's career shows, Rio de Janeiro was another important musical centre.

Little is known of Garcia's early life. He had some formal training in *solfège* (a music education method that teaches aural skills) but he seems to have relied mainly on his own musical instincts, along with careful study of scores by European composers. He read philosophy and theology, and in 1784 he helped found the Brotherhood of St Cecilia (he was ordained as a priest in 1792). Garcia also cared about making music available to ordinary citizens and opened a tuition-free music school.

In 1798 Garcia was appointed *mestre de capela* of Rio de Janeiro Cathedral. Even more prestigious was his position with the Portuguese royal house of Bragança: in 1807, when the Portuguese court retreated from the Napoleonic wars on the Iberian peninsula to reside in Brazil, Rio de Janeiro served as the capital of an empire that comprised the Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarve. The following year Garcia was appointed *mestre de capela* of the royal chapel.

It was a propitious time. As well as being obliged to play the organ, conduct, teach music and manage personnel, Garcia wrote some 39 works for the royal chapel in 1809 alone. As a keyboard player, he would dazzle aristocratic audiences with his improvisations, winning praise from the Austrian composer Sigismund von Neukomm, who had once studied with Haydn. In December 1819 Garcia conducted the Brazilian premiere of Mozart's *Requiem*, an event reported in the venerable Leipzig-based publication *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* ('General Music Newspaper'). Unfortunately Garcia's star faded after the court returned to Portugal in 1821, and his final years were marred by poverty and ill health.

Programme note and profile © Carol A. Hess

Carol A. Hess is a Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of California, Davis. She has received numerous awards and grants for her research on music and politics in the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking world. Her most recent book, on Aaron Copland's cultural diplomacy in Latin America (Univ. of Illinois Press), was published last year.

Surtitles produced and operated by Damien Kennedy

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

**MODEST MUSSORGSKY
(1839–81), ORCH. MAURICE
RAVEL (1875–1937)**

**Pictures at an Exhibition
(1874, orch. 1922)**

Promenade

- 1 Gnomus [Gnome]
Promenade**
- 2 Il vecchio castello [The Old Castle]
Promenade –**
- 3 Tuileries (Dispute d’enfants après jeux)
[Quarrelling children at play]**
- 4 Bydło [The Ox-Cart]
Promenade –**
- 5 Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks**
- 6 Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuÿle**
- 7 Limoges: Le marché (La grande
nouvelle) [Marketplace (Hot gossip)] –**
- 8 Catacombæ (Sepulcrum romanum) –
Cum mortuis in lingua mortua
[Catacombs (Roman Tomb) – With the
Dead in the Language of the Dead]**
- 9 The Hut on Hen’s Legs (Baba Yaga) –**
- 10 The Great Gate of Kiev**

‘I loathe the orchestral version,’ the Russian pianist Sviatoslav Richter confided to his diary in May 1972. ‘I consider [*Pictures at an Exhibition*] the best Russian work for piano. Amen.’ Later, in an interview with the film-maker Bruno Monsaingeon, he remarked: ‘Much as I love Ravel’s music, I find his orchestral transcription of Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition* an abomination, a terrible, decorative travesty of the most profound masterpiece of Russian piano music.’ Richter would doubtless have reacted with

even less restraint to some of the other orchestral realisations of Mussorgsky’s score: there are dozens of them, done both before and after Ravel’s of 1922, but the Ravel version is at least as familiar today as Mussorgsky’s original.

Pictures is one of those maverick Russian works – another being Balakirev’s *Islamey* of 1869 – that brought the piano centre stage a whole generation before the emergence of the great pianist-composers such as Rachmaninov, Medtner and Scriabin. Mussorgsky himself was an able pianist, but the thoroughly individual exploitation of the piano’s range of colours and textures singles out *Pictures* as one of particular graphic vibrancy, directness and realistic, sinewy strength. Mussorgsky composed the work swiftly in the spring of 1874, indicating in a note on 8 August that the score was ready to go to the printer. It remained, however, in manuscript, and it was only thanks to the endeavours of Rimsky-Korsakov that *Pictures* was published at all, albeit in 1886, five years after Mussorgsky’s death. The music is so original and startling that it is no surprise to find that the well-meaning Rimsky took it upon himself to ‘correct’ it for public consumption, as he did with the opera *Boris Godunov* and the orchestral fantasy *A Night on the Bare Mountain*. Mussorgsky’s original score was not published until the 1930s, when it was included in the complete edition of the composer’s works prepared by the Soviet scholar Pavel Lamm.

The inspiration for Mussorgsky's suite came from a real exhibition. Early in 1874, Vladimir Stasov, the cultural panjandrum of 19th-century St Petersburg, organised a memorial retrospective for the architect, painter and designer Viktor Hartmann, who had died suddenly in August the previous year at the age of only 39. Hartmann was a close friend of Mussorgsky's and shared with him an ardent belief in the expression of Russian realism through the medium of the arts. Mussorgsky unequivocally achieved this through his music. The case for Hartmann is less easy to establish, since much of his work has disappeared from public view, and his only visible architectural legacy is an imposing millennial monument in Novgorod, unveiled in 1862 and marking the anniversary of the same historical event – the founding of the Russian state by the Varangian (Viking) chieftain Rurik in 862 – for which Balakirev wrote his symphonic poem *Russia*. Hartmann's project for the Great Gate of Kiev was never realised, and in fact it is largely through Mussorgsky's musical visions of Hartmann's designs that his name has survived at all.

Mussorgsky cunningly implants in our minds the idea of walking around an exhibition and lighting upon something that attracts our attention by means of the Promenades: one of them launches the entire suite, and there are variants of it following 'Gnomus' (No. 1), 'Il vecchio castello' (No. 2) and 'Bydło' (No. 4). Slightly ungainly of gait, this theme (striding out

boldly on the trumpet at the start of Ravel's version) represents, as Mussorgsky acknowledged, his own personality and bearing. This is the composer himself viewing his friend's designs and paintings, pausing from time to time to let them ignite his musical imagination.

The first one he comes across is 'Gnomus', a design for a bizarre (some might say tasteless) nutcracker representing a deformed gnome with crooked legs – legs which, as the music tells us (and which Ravel emphasises at one point with a bone-cracking snap on the whip), occasionally buckle under him before he manages to haul himself to his feet once more. 'Il vecchio castello', in which Ravel features the smoky shimmer of the saxophone, is a romantic scene of a minstrel serenading outside an old castle, songfully but with sadness. In 'Tuileries' the tempo changes for a caprice depicting children at play in the Parisian gardens, the predominant whining motif, heard at the start on the oboe, perhaps redolent of incessant infant pleas to nanny. Mussorgsky originally intended 'Bydło', based on a painting of a lumbering Polish ox-cart, to begin loudly – 'right between the eyes', as he said in a letter to Stasov in June 1874 – but Rimsky-Korsakov decided that it would be better to start softly so as to give the impression of the cart approaching from a distance: Ravel, allotting the main tune to the tuba, follows his example.

With the ‘Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks’ Hartmann returned to his favourite world of fantasy, designing costumes in the form of eggshells for the 1870 ballet *Trilby*. This image was interpreted by Mussorgsky with pianistic cheeping, perkily rendered by Ravel on the woodwind and harp. ‘Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuÿle’ depicts two Jews in contrasting circumstances, the one rich (as is implied by the imperious gestures on strings and woodwind), the other poor and identified with pleading motifs on the solo trumpet. We come next to Hartmann’s painting of Limoges’s Market Place, its hustle and bustle, triggered here by the horns, highlighting the scintillating colours of Ravel’s orchestral palette.

But then, as if a light has suddenly gone out, Mussorgsky plunges us into the darkness of the Paris catacombs. Stasov put it well in a letter to Rimsky-Korsakov of July 1874: ‘There are some unusually poetic moments ... in the music for Hartmann’s painting *The Catacombs of Paris*, which consists entirely of skulls. At first Mussoryanin [his affectionate version of Mussorgsky’s name] depicts a gloomy cavern (with long-held, purely orchestral chords with big pauses). Then, above a tremolo in the minor [in the section marked ‘Cum mortuis in lingua mortua’ – ‘With the Dead in the Language of the Dead’], comes the first Promenade theme; this is the glimmering of little lights in the skulls and here, suddenly, Hartmann’s enchanting, poetic appeal to Mussorgsky resounds ...’ Stasov’s description might

just as easily be applied to Ravel’s atmospheric representation.

‘The Hut on Hen’s Legs’ comes from Hartmann’s design for a whimsical clock in the shape of the hut supposedly inhabited by Baba Yaga, the evil witch of Russian legend, and the ‘Great Gate of Kiev’ inspired Mussorgsky to encapsulate in purely pianistic terms the clangour of Russian bells that had also coloured the Coronation Scene of *Boris Godunov*. Stasov, while acknowledging that there were weaknesses in this climactic ending, was again enthusiastic: ‘a beautiful, powerful, original piece ... There is a particularly beautiful church melody here, *Elitsy vo Khrista krestitesya* (‘As you are baptised in Christ’), and the sound of the bells is in an entirely new manner.’ Ravel deploys actual bells, but at the same time his orchestral textures, inspired by the techniques of Rimsky-Korsakov, whom he so admired, convey – not least in his writing for harps and strings – a palpable sense of sonorous, tumultuous tolling.

While he was writing *Pictures*, Mussorgsky told Stasov: ‘*Hartmann* [as he then called the piece] is seething as Boris seethed; sounds and ideas have been hanging in the air; I am nibbling and swallowing them – I barely have time to scribble them on paper.’ It is this very spontaneity that brings Hartmann’s images so vividly to life and that courses through Ravel’s orchestral version. Richter might have hated it, but his assertion that Mussorgsky’s original piano score

conjures up 'a whole world in its myriad contradictions' still rings true.

MODEST MUSSORGSKY

Born into a prosperous land-owning family on a country estate 300 miles south of St Petersburg, Modest Mussorgsky first appeared on the Russian musical scene as an elegant 17-year-old army officer with a dilettantish interest in the arts. A year later, in 1857, he was taken under the wing of Mily Balakirev, an ardent proponent of a genuinely Russian art as well as a fanatical admirer of Berlioz and Liszt. Like the other composers who joined Balakirev's circle and became known collectively as 'The Mighty Handful' (*Moguchaya kuchka*) – Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin and César Cui – Mussorgsky gained from the master's enthusiasms yet missed out on a systematic training in harmony and counterpoint, a deficiency which his idiosyncratic genius turned to good use but which was always to be held against him.

Mussorgsky's early works, written under Balakirev's influence, already show a striking ability to give a visual image a strong musical form; the *Intermezzo in modo classico* for piano of 1862, later orchestrated, was inspired by a winter scene with a group of peasants plunging and tumbling through snow drifts. Yet it was not until he came into contact with other artists from non-musical spheres that Mussorgsky began to focus his

thoughts upon creating 'an independent Russian product, free from German profundity and routine ... grown on our country's soil and nurtured on Russian bread'. He regarded his 1866–7 tone-poem *A Night on the Bare Mountain* as exactly that, although both Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov found it too unorthodox.

Even more significant was Mussorgsky's determination to render an artistic reproduction of Russian speech and intonation. It began with a highly original sequence of songs, progressed with his unfinished attempt to set every word of Gogol's play *The Marriage* as an opera and reached its high-water mark in the original 1869 version of *Boris Godunov*; a thorough revision of *Boris* in 1872 inclined more to conventional modes of operatic song and aria, making it more acceptable for presentation on the Imperial Russian stage.

With the successful premiere of *Boris Godunov* in 1874, Mussorgsky's future might have seemed assured. Yet the heavy drinking that dated back to his army days, severe bouts of depression and an impoverished lifestyle following the loss of the family fortunes with the emancipation of the serfs militated against a steady output. His highly original piano tribute to an architect friend who died in 1873, *Pictures at an Exhibition*, was a masterpiece unacknowledged in his lifetime. He also took his individual art of song-writing to new heights with the cycles *Sunless* (1874) and *Songs and Dances of Death* (1875–7); but his operatic

ambitions were compromised by a desire to relax with another Gogol comedy, *Sorochintsy Fair* (1874–80), alongside work on another ‘national music drama’, *Khovanshchina* (1872–80). Neither was completed by the time of a fatal stroke in March 1881. Just before his death Ilya Repin painted the tragic image that we always associate with Mussorgsky; the works, whether in their incomparably vivid original form or in the well-meaning revisions by Rimsky-Korsakov and others, tell a different story.

Programme note and profile © David Nice

David Nice is a writer, lecturer and broadcaster who contributes regularly to BBC Radio 3’s *Record Review* and *BBC Music Magazine*. He is also the classical/opera editor for theartsdesk.

MAURICE RAVEL

Maurice Ravel was born on 7 March 1875 in Ciboure in the French Basque region, his mother being Basque while his father was from the Jura in eastern France. In 1889 Ravel entered the Paris Conservatoire but he had to leave in 1895, having won no major prizes. In 1898 he entered Fauré’s composition class and in 1901 wrote his first important piano piece, *Jeux d’eau*. The String Quartet (1902–3) and the song-cycle *Shéhérazade* (1903) brought him general notice and a brief friendship with Debussy, although both men were annoyed by press insistence on the similarities of their music. From 1900 he made five attempts to win the Prix de

Rome, but his final failure in 1905, causing a scandal, was in no small measure due to the inclusion of ‘modernisms’ – signs of a persistent awkward streak in his character.

The decade before the First World War was for him a happy time during which he enjoyed both health and inspiration. If *Miroirs* (1904–5) brought new harmonic audacity to so-called ‘Impressionist’ piano music, *Gaspard de la nuit* (1908) gave evidence of a dark side to his art, touching on black magic and loss. Meanwhile, in 1907 a conservative, middle-class audience had been shocked by the ‘vulgar’ word-setting in his song-cycle *Histoires naturelles*, which also served as preparation for his first completed opera, *L’heure espagnole* (1907–9), itself part of a Spanish period that included the brilliantly orchestrated *Rapsodie espagnole* (1907–8). Four works then gave a taste of Ravel’s diverse talents: spellbinding simplicity in the original piano-duet version of *Ma mère l’Oye* (‘Mother Goose’, 1908–10), orchestral mastery in the ballet *Daphnis and Chloe* (1909–12), further harmonic audacity in *Valses nobles et sentimentales* (initially written for piano in 1911 and orchestrated the following year) and hitherto unsuspected power in the Piano Trio (1914).

Echoes of Ravel’s brief service as a lorry driver in the First World War survive in the terrifying *La valse* (1919–20). In the enchanting (and enchanted) opera *L’enfant et les sortilèges* (1920–25) and the song-cycle *Chansons madécasses*

(1925–6) he turned the latest techniques, including bitonality, to his own purposes. The obsessional character of *Boléro* (1928) not only marked it as unique in its time, but went on to inform the style of the Minimalists. But, diverse as ever, he completed his orchestral works with the Piano Concerto for the Left Hand (1929–30) and the Piano Concerto in G major for both hands (1929–31), embodying respectively the great, powerful 19th-century tradition and the lighter one of Mozart and Saint-Saëns, even if both are infused with jazz idioms. For the last four years before his death on 28 December 1937, a progressive brain disease prevented this most lucid of men from further composition.

Profile © Roger Nichols

Roger Nichols is a writer, translator and critic with a particular interest in French music. His books include studies of Debussy, Ravel, Messiaen and Poulenc. *From Berlioz to Boulez* was published in 2022 (Kahn & Averill). In 2007 he was appointed Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur.



FRIDAY 24 MAY 7.30PM

A Sea Symphony

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 Pearse baritone

Vilde Frang violin

Lawrence Power viola

BBC Symphony Chorus

Sakari Oramo conductor

Full sail for new shores: Sakari Oramo conducts Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony*, Britten's Double Concerto and the London premiere of Oliver Knussen's exquisite *Cleveland Pictures*.

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Associate Orchestra

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.

ERIKA BAIKOFF
SOPRANO

Russian-American soprano Erika Baikoff is a graduate of Princeton University, the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, where she performed mainstage roles including Xenia (*Boris Godunov*) and Barbarina (*The Marriage of Figaro*) and where she has since returned as a guest artist.

Her recent orchestral highlights include the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra's tour of *Das Rheingold* under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Mahler's Symphony No. 4 with the Ulster Orchestra under Daniele Rustioni and with the Taipei Music Academy & Festival under Kent Nagano, and her debut with the Metropolitan Orchestra, Montreal, in Bach's Mass in B minor. Last season she made debuts at the Schubertiada in Barcelona, the Bayerische Staatsoper and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Operatic highlights include roles with Lyon National Opera, including Fire/Princess/Nightingale (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*), Juliet (Blacher's *Romeo and Juliet*) and Anna (*Nabucco*). She also sang Musetta (*La bohème*) at the 2022 Verbier Festival.

This season's highlights include role and house debuts as Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*) at Houston Grand Opera, *Jenůfa* with the London Symphony Orchestra and recitals at the Teatro Zarzuela, Palau de la Música Catalana and Alice Tully Hall.

MARTA FONTANALS-SIMMONS

MEZZO-SOPRANO

British-Spanish mezzo-soprano Marta Fontanals-Simmons is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. She recently made critically acclaimed house and role debuts at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, as Siébel (Gounod's *Faust*), at the Royal Concertgebouw as Amando (Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre*) and at the Aldeburgh Festival in the title-role of Gavin Higgins's *The Faerie Bride*.

This season's highlights include returns to the Royal Opera covering Storgè in *Jephtha*, Madrid's Teatro Real as both Vlasta in Weinberg's *The Passenger* and Kate Pinkerton in *Madame Butterfly*, and the Three Choirs Festival for Stanford's *Stabat mater*. She continues to work with conductors Martyn Brabbins, Brian Kay, Jac van Steen and Hilary Davan Wetton and gives recitals with her Erda Ensemble.

Recent operatic highlights include the world premiere of David Matthews's *Anna* at the Grange Festival, Matriosha in Prokofiev's *War and Peace* at Geneva's Grand Théâtre, Jack in *The Wreckers* at Glyndebourne and her house and role debut at English National Opera as Eurydice Woman in Birtwistle's *The Mask of Orpheus*. Recital highlights include performances at the Wigmore Hall, at the Oxford Lieder and Aldeburgh festivals, and with the Royal Philharmonic, Philharmonia, BBC and City of Birmingham Symphony orchestras.

ROSS RAMGOBIN

BARITONE

Ross Ramgobin trained at London's Royal Academy of Music and the National Opera Studio. Highlights of his career have included Mamoud (*The Death of Klinghoffer*) at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Gaveston (*Lessons in Love and Violence*) at the Stars of the White Nights Festival, Protector (*Written on Skin*) at the Vienna Konzerthaus, Moralès (*Carmen*) for Welsh National Opera, Demetrius (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and the title-role in *The Marriage of Figaro* for Israeli Opera, and Gamekeeper (*Rusalka*) and Schaunard (*La bohème*) for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden.

He has also sung Prince Arjuna (*Satyagraha*) and Schaunard for English National Opera, Pallante (*Agrippina*) at the Göttingen Festival, Figaro (*The Marriage of Figaro*) and Marcello (*La bohème*) for Opera Holland Park, Yuri (*The Ice Break*) and Alberich (*Das Rheingold*) for Birmingham Opera Company and Second Brother (*The Seven Deadly Sins*) with the London Symphony Orchestra. During lockdown he appeared as Papageno (*The Magic Flute*) in the Royal Opera House Christmas Concert and made two films for Grange Park Opera, singing the title-role in *Owen Wingrave* and Ramiro (*L'heure espagnole*).

His recordings include *Agrippina* from the Göttingen Festival and Stanford's *Requiem* with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

JOSHUA STEWART

TENOR

American tenor Joshua Stewart attended the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts and Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music, and is a former member of Munich's Bavarian State Opera Studio.

His recent operatic appearances include Elijah/Street (Davis's *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*) and the title-role in Parker's *Yardbird* at Seattle Opera, and Valcour (Bologne's *L'amant anonyme*) and Jonah (Defoort's *The Time of Our Singing*) at the Theater St Gallen. Past highlights include debuts as Rodolfo (*La bohème*) with the Columbus Symphony, Son (Tesori's *Blue*) at Seattle Opera, the title-role in *Albert Herring* at the Princeton Festival, Zinoviy (*The Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*) and Lazarus (Battistelli's *Wake*) at Birmingham Opera Company, Trin (*La fanciulla del West*) at Hamburg State Opera, Belmonte (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*) at Fribourg and Lausanne Opera, Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*) at Toledo Opera and the Shepherd (*Oedipus rex*) at the Baltic Sea Festival, Aix-en-Provence Festival and Royal Festival Hall.

His concert highlights include George Walker's *Mass* and Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri* with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra under Sir Simon Rattle.

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.

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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
Stephen Bryant *Leader*
Philip Brett
Jeremy Martin
Jenny King
Celia Waterhouse
Colin Huber
Shirley Turner
Ni Do
Molly Cockburn
James Wicks
Stuart McDonald
Elizabeth Partridge
Thea Spiers
Liu-Yi Retallick
Joanne Chen
Sophie Belinfante

Second Violins
Rose Hinton
Danny Fajardo
Lucy Curnow
Rachel Samuel
Tammy Se
Caroline Cooper
Victoria Hodgson
Lucica Trita
Nihat Agdach
Alice Hall
Kate Cole
Julian Trafford
Cindy Foster
Jamie Hutchinson

Violas
Steve Burnard
Joshua Hayward
Nikos Zarb
Natalie Taylor
Michael Leaver
Carolyn Scott
Mary Whittle
Peter Mallinson
Alistair Scahill
Claire Maynard
Mark Gibbs
Rebecca Breen

Cellos
Louisa Tuck
Tamsy Kaner
Mark Sheridan
Clare Hinton
Gilly McMullin
George Hoult
Jane Lindsay
Chris Allan
Molly McWhirter
Sophie Gledhill

Double Basses
Nicholas Bayley
Richard Alsop
Anita Langridge
Michael Clarke
Beverley Jones
Lucia Polo Moreno
Alice Kent
Cathy Colwell

Flutes
Daniel Pailthorpe
Tomoka Mukai

Piccolo
Kathleen Stevenson

Oboes
Tom Blomfield
Imogen Smith

Cor Anglais
Sarah Harper

Clarinets
Richard Hosford
Jonathan Parkin

Bass Clarinet
Thomas Lessels

Alto Saxophone
Martin Robertson

Bassoons
Julie Price
Graham Hobbs

Contrabassoon
Claire Webster

Horns
Nicholas Korth
Nicholas Hougham
Jack Pilcher-May
Jonathan Bareham
Mark Wood

Trumpets
Philip Cobb
Joseph Atkins
Martin Hurrell
Niall Keatley

Trombones
Helen Vollam
Ryan Hume

Bass Trombone
Robert O'Neill

Tuba
Sam Elliott

Euphonium
Becky Smith

Timpani
Mark McDonald

Percussion
David Hockings
Alex Neal
Fiona Ritchie
Erika Ohman
Joe Cooper

Harp
Elizabeth Bass
Tamara Young

Celesta
Elizabeth Burley

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

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Planning Manager
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 London Orchestras Marketing and Learning

Head of Marketing, Publications and Learning
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Communications Manager
Jo Hawkins

Publicist
Freya Edgeworth

Marketing Manager
Sarah Hiron

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 Trainee
Dylan Barrett-Chambers

BBC SYMPHONY CHORUS

Founded in 1928, the BBC Symphony Chorus is one of the UK's leading choirs. It performs, records and broadcasts a distinctive range of large-scale choral music with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and internationally acclaimed conductors and soloists.

The chorus's early performances included Mahler's Symphony No. 8, Stravinsky's *Persephone* and Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* and, under Director Neil Ferris, this commitment to contemporary music remains at the heart of its performances today.

The BBC Symphony Chorus makes regular appearances at the BBC Proms, with performances last summer including the First and Last Nights plus *Belshazzar's Feast* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Klaus Mäkelä and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Ryan Wigglesworth. In addition to tonight's concert, highlights of the current BBC SO season of concerts at the Barbican include Sir James MacMillan's *Fiat Lux*, Brahms's *A German Requiem* and Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony*. The chorus has also taken

part in a performance at Hackney Empire featuring the BBC Singers and community choirs from across East London.

Most of the chorus's performances are broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and, with Neil Ferris, it recently performed music by composers including Jonathan Dove and Reena Esmail in Maida Vale Studios, for future broadcast. The chorus has also made a number of commercial recordings, including a Grammy-nominated release of Holst's *First Choral Symphony* and a *Gramophone* Award-winning disc of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* conducted by the late Sir Andrew Davis.

Recent releases include premiere recordings of Vaughan Williams's *The Future* and *The Steersman* conducted by Martin Yates and Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* conducted by Davis.

Director

Neil Ferris

Deputy Director

Grace Rossiter

Accompanist

Michael Higgins

Vocal Coach

Katie Thomas

Sopranos

Anna Bailey

Helena Ballard

Asia Bonuccelli

Georgia Cannon

Sofia Correia Bagulho

Erin Cowburn

Tanya Cutts

Natalie Dalcher

Rebecca Daltry

Elizabeth Fletcher

Cathy Hall

Lizzie Howard

Karan Humphries

Helen Jeffries

Margaret Jones

Makenzie Kavanagh

Sarah Mainwaring

Louisa Martin

Bridget McNulty

Francesca Mosley

Ellie Parker

Ruth Potter

Rebecca Rimmington

Nathalie Slim

Elizabeth Ullstein

Imogen Vinning

Altos

Hannah Bishay

Helen Brice

Theresa Browne

Kate Chudakova

Rachael Curtis

Joanna Dacombe

Sue Daniels

Danniella Downs

Jule Eckhart

Susannah Edwards

Alison Grant

Elizabeth Hampshire

Rosie Hopkins

Matilda Jackson

Katie Mason

Miranda Ommanney

Mary Simmonds

Jayne Swindin

Helen Tierney

Kate Hampshire

Ruth Marshall

Charlotte Senior

Elisabeth Storey

Charlotte Tomlinson

Tenors

Justin Althaus

Christopher Ashton

Xander Bird

Jamie Foye

David Halstead

Stephen Horsman

Simon Lowe

James Murphy

Simon Naylor

Jim Nelhams

Tony Ottridge

Ernie Piper

Philip Rayner

Greg Satchell

Tobias Schneider

David Willcock

Jonathan Williams

Basses

Malcolm Aldridge

James Barker

Laurence Beard

Paul Bodiam

David England

Quentin Evans

Mark Graver

Richard Green

Alan Hardwick

Alex Hardy

William Hare

Kevin Hollands

Alan Jones

Robert Little

Christopher MacKay

Edgar Marquez

Andrew Money

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HARDENBERGER**

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FEDERICO COLLI

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