



LET THERE BE LIGHT

Friday 15 March 2024

The BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican

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

CONCERTS MARCH – APRIL

FRIDAY 8 MARCH 7.30pm

EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA

A Requiem in Our Time

AULIS SALLINEN Mauermusik

JOHANNES BRAHMS A German Requiem

Sakari Oramo *conductor*
Anu Komsis *soprano*
Christian Senn *baritone*
BBC Symphony Chorus

FRIDAY 15 MARCH 7.30pm

ARVO PÄRT Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten

BENJAMIN BRITTEN Sinfonia da Requiem

EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA Into the Heart of Light (Canto V)

SIR JAMES MacMILLAN Fiat lux *UK premiere*

Sir James MacMillan *conductor*
Mary Bevan *soprano*
Roderick Williams *baritone*
BBC Symphony Chorus

WEDNESDAY 20 MARCH 7.30pm

MICHAEL TIPPETT

The Midsummer Marriage – Ritual Dances

RAYMOND YIU Violin Concerto *BBC commission: world premiere*

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 7 in A major

Sir Andrew Davis *conductor*
Esther Yoo *violin*

WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 7.30pm

THE DEATH OF STALIN – IN CONCERT

Screening of Armando Iannucci's 2017 film satire with live accompaniment of Christopher Willis's orchestral score, followed by a Q&A with the film's director, producer and cast members, including Jason Isaacs and Michael Palin.

FRIDAY 19 APRIL 7.30pm

CAMILLE PÉPIN Les Eaux célestes *UK Premiere*

FRANCIS POULENC Gloria

HECTOR BERLIOZ Symphonie fantastique

Daniele Rustioni *conductor*
Sally Matthews *soprano*
BBC Symphony Chorus

FRIDAY 26 APRIL 7.30PM

NORMAL RULES DON'T APPLY: KATE ATKINSON AND THE BBC SO

Author Kate Atkinson joins the BBC SO for an evening of words and music.

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FRIDAY 15 MARCH, 2024

7.30pm, BARBICAN HALL

ARVO PÄRT Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten 6'

BENJAMIN BRITTEN Sinfonia da Requiem 21'

INTERVAL: 25 MINUTES

EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA Into the Heart of Light (Canto V) 15'

SIR JAMES MACMILLAN Fiat Lux *UK premiere* 30'

Mary Bevan soprano

Roderick Williams baritone

BBC Symphony Chorus

Sir James MacMillan 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.

Welcome to tonight's concert, for which the BBC Symphony Orchestra is joined by its Chorus and, on the podium, Sir James MacMillan.

Arvo Pärt had only recently discovered the music of Benjamin Britten when he heard of his death, and the resulting work, his *Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten*, has a simplicity and directness of utterance that are profoundly moving. From here to Britten himself, and his early *Sinfonia da Requiem*, a work commissioned by the Japanese government to mark the 2,600th anniversary of the Mikado dynasty but which turned into something much more personal – in effect a requiem for Britten's own parents.

We then travel to Finland for Einojuhani's Rautavaara's highly evocative *Into the Heart of Light*, one of his last works, and continuing a sequence of pieces for string orchestra. The concert culminates in the UK premiere of MacMillan's own *Fiat Lux*, a large-scale sacred choral work unveiled in California last year. While drawing on MacMillan's own deeply held faith, it also demonstrates his mastery of texture and colour. Joining the BBC forces we're delighted to welcome soloists Mary Bevan and Roderick Williams.

B B C

SOUNDS

Tonight's concert is available on BBC Sounds until 13 April.

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For the full range of BBC SO performances currently available – including Neil Brand's 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' – visit the BBC SO homepage and scroll to 'Watch and Listen'

ARVO PÄRT (born 1935) **Cantus in memoriam Benjamin** **Britten (1977)**

In the West, the late 1960s and early 1970s are perhaps chiefly remembered as a period of transition: from hedonism and permissiveness to a more sober reassessment of values. One of the strongest artistic manifestations of that process may be found among composers then in their thirties, many of whom regarded themselves as refugees from avant-garde abstraction and were now drawn in various degrees to musical traditions of the distant past, to a language of self-denying simplicity, and to a new spirituality.

Among those who successfully reinvented themselves in this way were Henryk Górecki in Poland, Giya Kancheli in Georgia, Avet Terterian in Armenia, Valentin Silvestrov in Ukraine and John Tavener in England. In no case was the period of reassessment more protracted and painful, or the emergent new style more radical and ultimately productive, than in that of the Estonian Arvo Pärt.

Pärt produced his *Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten* in 1977, the same year as his equally famous *Fratres*. In the composer's own words:

In the past years we have had many losses in the world of music to mourn [Stravinsky had died in 1971,

Shostakovich in 1975]. Why did the date of Benjamin Britten's death – December 4, 1976 – touch such a chord in me? During this time I was obviously at the point where I could recognise the magnitude of such a loss. Inexplicable feelings of guilt, more than that even, arose in me. I had just discovered Britten for myself. Just before his death I began to appreciate the unusual purity of his music – I had had the impression of the same kind of purity in the ballads of Guillaume de Machaut. And besides, for a long time I had wanted to meet Britten personally – and now it would not come to that.

To convey his lamentation, and his affinity with the 'purity' of Britten, Pärt chose a descending A minor scale, beginning in the high violins and reduplicated in longer note values through the lower strings. The scale curls back on itself as it descends and is supported by iterations of the tonic triad, while the eventual point of repose acquires a shade of defiance thanks to the steady crescendo that leads into it. This is a classic example of what Pärt dubbed his 'tintinnabuli' technique, the definitive outcome of his musical soul-searching during the previous decade or so (the Latin word *tintinnabulum* literally means 'little bell'). In this instance the bell-ringing metaphor is made manifest with three strokes on the tubular bell at the beginning of the piece and at intervals throughout it. Rarely has the distance between the simplicity of a technique

and the expressive potency of its effect been as great as in this haunting piece.

Programme note © David Fanning

David Fanning is a Professor of Music at the University of Manchester, the author of books on Nielsen, Shostakovich and Weinberg, and a critic for *Gramophone* and *The Daily Telegraph*.

ARVO PÄRT

The Estonian-born composer Arvo Pärt has one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary music, and his works are among the most performed and recorded. He studied composition at the Tallinn Conservatory under the influential teacher Heino Eller.

Although Pärt's current standing rests almost exclusively on the works he has composed since the crystalline beauty of the piano miniature *Für Alina* first announced his 'tintinnabuli' style in 1976, he had already become something of an *enfant terrible* after employing serialism, the first Estonian to do so, in his 1960 *Nekrolog* for orchestra, and thus incurring the wrath of the Soviet Composers' Union.

Using other avant-garde techniques such as pointillism and aleatoricism (chance principles), Pärt wrote a series of experimental works, including *Perpetuum mobile* (1963), *Symphony No. 1* (1963–4), *Diagrams* (1964) and *Musica sillabica* (1964). Having become dissatisfied with serial technique, he searched for another means

of furthering his musical development resulting in his incorporation of 'borrowed' tonal gestures and the adoption of Baroque and Classical forms in works such as *Quintettino* (1964), *Collage on B–A–C–H* (1964) and the cello concerto *Pro et contra* (1966). After the remarkable *Credo* (1968), which represented the culmination of his early style and the first work in which he set a religious text, Pärt fell silent for a number of years.

Following a chance encounter with plainchant, Pärt was creatively and spiritually reborn. He became engrossed in a study of medieval and Renaissance music and converted to the Russian Orthodox Church (he was originally Lutheran). Using plainchant and other early music as his source, he underwent a radical change of style, paring down and reconstructing both his musical ideas and technique.

It was at this point that he intuitively discovered his new 'tintinnabuli' style, at the core of which was a two-part unit: a generally stepwise melodic line accompanied by a triadic or 'tintinnabuli' harmony. An outpouring of works followed, including *Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten*, *Tabula rasa* and *Fratres*, three of the most enduring works of the new style, all dating from 1977 and each possessing its own self-contained concept and unique sound-world. The acme of the style came with the transcendent *St John Passion* (1982), with further new traits introduced in subsequent sacred works

such as the *Te Deum* (1984–5, rev. 1992), *Stabat mater* (1985), *Miserere* (1989, rev. 1992), *Litany* (1994, rev. 1996) and the imposing *Kanon Pokajanen* (1997).

Both the extreme flexibility of the ‘tintinnabuli’ style and its capacity to absorb new textural and harmonic approaches are highlighted in later works such as *Adam’s Lament* (2009), *Greater Antiphons* (2015), *And I heard a voice ...* (2017) and *O Holy Father Nicholas* (2021).

From avant-garde density to luminous simplicity – not to mention a return to the symphony in 2008 (Symphony No. 4, ‘Los Angeles’) after a gap of 37 years – Pärt’s journey has been one of the most fascinating in contemporary music.

Profile © Peter Quinn

Peter Quinn has written on classical music and jazz for *Tempo*, *Jazzwise*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *BBC Music Magazine* and *theartsdesk.com*, among others. He wrote his PhD on the music of Arvo Pärt.

BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913–76)

Sinfonia da Requiem, Op. 20 (1939–40)

1 Lacrymosa (Andante ben misurato) –

2 Dies irae (Allegro con fuoco) –

3 Requiem aeternam (Andante molto tranquillo)

‘To me it is so personal and intimate a piece that it is rather like those awful dreams where one parades about the place naked – slightly embarrassing!’ In a letter following the first performance of the *Sinfonia da Requiem* in New York in 1941, Benjamin Britten expressed what many listeners have since recognised – the peculiarly private, almost confessional emotions contained within its three brief movements.

While such intensity seems only natural in the composer of such later works as *Peter Grimes* and the *War Requiem*, it was a startling new colour in the work of a 27-year-old composer whom Auden had so recently accused of ‘playing the talented little boy’. This juvenile brilliance had been on full show in Britten’s first large-scale orchestral work, the brittle, virtuoso Piano Concerto, premiered at the BBC Proms, just three years before the first performance of the *Sinfonia da Requiem*.

Yet much had changed in three years. In 1939 Britten – a committed pacifist – had left England together with the tenor Peter

Pears, pre-empting the declaration of war by just a few months. Life in America, though filled with friends and professional opportunities, proved hard for the young composer, who yearned for home and suffered the censure of British critics and audiences (a scandal the music critic Ernest Newman punningly christened the 'Battle of Britten') for what they perceived as a clear dereliction of duty.

When a commission arrived in April 1940 from the Japanese government, requesting a piece to mark the 2,600th anniversary of their Mikado dynasty, Britten had little time to respond. 'I now find myself with the proposition of writing a Symphony in about 3 weeks,' he wrote to his sister. In the resulting *Sinfonia da Requiem*, perhaps owing to this unusually swift, instinctive composition process, the composer exposed himself to an unprecedented personal degree, revealing not only his private pacifist convictions but also his Christian faith.

With its three movements taking their titles – 'Lacrymosa', 'Dies irae' and 'Requiem aeternam' – from the Catholic Requiem Mass and its charged moods of fury and struggle, the *Sinfonia da Requiem* was rejected by the Japanese government as a musical and cultural insult. It was premiered instead on 29 March 1941 at Carnegie Hall by the New York Philharmonic under John Barbirolli, by which point all mention of the original commission had disappeared, leaving only a dedication: 'In memory of my parents'.

The work was described by the composer as 'a kind of requiem', and its musical gestures are intensified by its duality – private mourning for Britten's own parents (who had both died in the mid-1930s) cradled within a larger public mourning for the violence and loss of war. Yet, if this is indeed a requiem, it is one painted in abstract, taking on the spirit of the form but not its liturgy. A work of social conscience, the *Sinfonia da Requiem* also rejects any explicitly political affiliations, content to be, as the composer himself expressed it, 'just as anti-war as possible'.

The Lacrymosa is a 'slow marching lament' (according to Britten) of Mahlerian stature. It opens with a fretful theme in the cellos, a distortion of the traditional *Dies irae* plainchant with a nagging tritone at its core. Grasping upwards in ever wider and more desperate intervals, it is eventually taken up by the whole orchestra in a series of convulsive repetitions – the rituals of mourning that refuse to be fulfilled, refuse to be satisfied. This same unresolved tension also breathes through the second theme, which introduces the D minor/D major conflict on which the whole work hinges – the same key in which Britten would find redemption two decades later at the close of the *War Requiem*.

The central 'Dies irae' movement offers Britten's hellish vision of a dance of death. Flutter-tongued flutes summon desperately beating wings, crushed underfoot by mechanistic percussion

whirrings, while a lyrical saxophone theme – surely the ‘voice’ of intercession in this voiceless requiem – batters itself into oblivion against the pitiless advance of the brass.

The ‘Requiem aeternam’, Britten’s ‘final resolution’, sees a return of the original plainchant, barely recognisable in its new D major guise. Few composers can endow a major key with more anguish than Britten (nor a minor with more hopefulness), and here, as two flutes wring their hands in an elegant musical dance, we find the *Sinfonia*’s first promise of hope. The doubting tritones and sevenths of the start are still present but transfigured, their blades dulled by the certainty of the movement’s ground bass.

Programme note © Alexandra Coghlan

Alexandra Coghlan writes regularly for *Prospect*, *The Spectator*, *Gramophone* and *Opera* magazine; she is the author of *Carols from King’s* (Ebury, 2016).

1937 he not only attracted international attention with his *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge* at the Salzburg Festival, but also met the tenor Peter Pears, who would remain a lifelong partner (musically and romantically) and vocal interpreter. Britten revitalised English opera with his first stage triumph *Peter Grimes* (1945), launching the Aldeburgh Festival three years later. He performed often as a conductor and pianist, and though he wrote a significant number of chamber and choral works (among them three string quartets, and the *War Requiem*, 1961) it is principally for his vocal and especially opera output that he continues to be remembered.

Profile © Edward Bhesania

BENJAMIN BRITTEN

Born in Suffolk on 22 November 1913 (propitiously, the feast day of St Cecilia, patron saint of music) Britten began piano lessons aged 5, composing songs for his mother by the age of 10. At 13 he began composition studies with Frank Bridge before entering the Royal College of Music in 1930. His documentary scores for the GPO (General Post Office) Film Unit brought him into collaboration with W. H. Auden, a liberating force, and in

INTERVAL: 25 MINUTES

EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA (1928–2016)

Into the Heart of Light (Canto V) (2011)

This piece for string orchestra belongs to Rautavaara's last period, which also includes, among others, *Into the Heart of Life*'s sister work, the second cello concerto *Towards the Horizon* (2008–9), and *A Tapestry of Life* (2007), all of them composed after his miraculous recovery from an aortic rupture in 2004. Rautavaara spent over five months in hospital resisting death, his beloved wife Sini by his side. Immediately after getting back home, he resumed composing, though his daily working hours remained reduced compared to his previous routine.

Of the composition process, Rautavaara recounted how small musical ideas had begun coming to him – which made him curious: 'After Juha Kangas and the Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra commissioned a work from me, I decided that it was now time to start finding out what these ideas wanted to become. When I worked with them, it was more and more obvious that they would belong together; that they would play together. When the piece progressed, some kind of light began to emerge. It was towards its heart that this music was gradually heading.'

Virtually throughout the piece, the texture is divided into three layers: warm, slowly changing bass line, melodious cantilena and fast arabesque-like figurations. The

melody heard in the beginning reappears in various guises, sometimes in passages of dissonant additional tones. There are no actual breaks in the piece: when one thematic reservoir begins to get exhausted, another emerges to sustain its melodic flow.

At the very end, the cello soloist reiterates the thematic fragment in a high register (as it does in *Towards the Horizon*), after which all the strings join in for the final chord, fusing the textural layers of the piece.

This work is not thematically linked to previous *Cantos*; what is common to all of them is the scoring for string orchestra and their being in a single movement.

Programme note © Anne Kauppala

Anne Kauppala is a professor of music performance research at the Sibelius Academy/Uniarts. She has published many articles on Rautavaara as well as a book, *Narrating with Twelve Tones: Einojuhani Rautavaara's First Serial Period (c.1957–1965)*.

EINOJUHANI RAUTAVAARA

One of the proudest possessions of the Finnish composer Einojuhani Rautavaara was a fading scrap of paper, framed and hanging in his study. It is dated 18 May 1955, and declares:

Sibelius suggests to you the Koussevitzky Scholarship for study in Tanglewood US six weeks from July 1 STOP possibility to continue at Juilliard for a year STOP.

Photos on the piano of Rautavaara with Olga Koussevitzky and with Roger Sessions testify to his response.

Rautavaara's life was a rich tapestry. Music archivist, rector and professor of composition at Helsinki's Sibelius Academy (1976–90), he justified Sibelius's faith in him in an ever-evolving life of composition, which moved from neo-Classicism to avant-garde constructivism and serialism, and on through a period of unashamed Romanticism to the mysticism which soft-focuses his Seventh Symphony, 'Angel of Light'. This 1994 work marked Rautavaara's international breakthrough. After an energetic marketing campaign in the 1990s by the record company Ondine, angels became the musical icon of the decade. Works such as *Angels and Visitations*, *Angel of Dusk* and *Playgrounds for Angels* were already in Rautavaara's oeuvre and it needed only the final seal of renaming his Seventh Symphony (it was originally called 'The Bloomington Symphony', after the city in which it was premiered in 1995) to make Rautavaara one of the most frequently performed of all Finnish composers after Sibelius. Rautavaara – by turns shrewd, canny, gentle and darkly laconic – relished the recognition, but declared that his were angels *à la* Rainer Maria Rilke: 'go-between, emissaries, yes; but, in the end, *schrecklich*, terrible ...'

His triptych of operas inspired by the great compilation of Finnish myths, the *Kalevala*, is, by comparison, little known outside Finland. But his subsequent operas – on

the lives of Vincent van Gogh, Alexis Kivi and Rasputin – have travelled to Germany, Austria, Sweden, Italy and the USA.

A considerable body of chamber, choral and vocal works filled out a work-list that continued to increase apace in Rautavaara's later decades, with compositions including the orchestral pieces *Book of Visions* and *Manhattan Trilogy* (both 2004), *A Tapestry of Life*, which received its premiere in 2008 in New Zealand, the percussion concerto *Incantations*, premiered by Colin Currie in London in 2009, the *Missa a cappella* (2010–11) and a song-cycle *Rubáiyát* written for Gerald Finley and premiered at the Wigmore Hall in London in 2014.

Both Rautavaara's *Fantasia* for violin and orchestra, composed for Anne Akiko Meyers, and the short orchestral work *In the Beginning* (both 2015), received posthumous premieres following the composer's death in 2016, at the age of 87.

In a characteristic pronouncement, Rautavaara let it be known that 'it is my belief that music is great if, at some moment, the listener catches "a glimpse of eternity through the window of time" ... This, to my mind, is the only true justification for art. All else is of secondary importance.'

Profile © Hilary Finch

Hilary Finch was a music critic for *The Times* for 35 years, and has broadcast regularly on BBC Radio 3. As a freelance writer, she has specialised in the field of song, and in the music and literature of the Nordic countries.

SIR JAMES MACMILLAN

(born 1959)

Fiat Lux (2020)

UK premiere

Mary Bevan soprano

Roderick Williams baritone

BBC Symphony Chorus

This large work for chorus, orchestra, organ and soprano and baritone soloists was commissioned for the Pacific Symphony Orchestra in California and to mark the consecration of Christ Cathedral Garden Grove, California. It is in one single through-composed movement made up of five sections based on a poem by Dana Gioia.

In the Beginning

The work opens with wispy shimmering in the string section and the sound of wind blown through brass instruments. A deep rumbling starts some sonorous horn calls, leading to biblical resonances for the two soloists, one in Latin, one in English.

Chorus

This is a substantial section where we hear the large chorus for the first time, in Latin, repeating the title text – ‘Let there be light’. The music rises from the depths and grows to a climax, giving way to an exuberant, fast passage for the orchestra.

Litany of Light

This begins with soprano soloist alone. The music is more tentative and introspective, and this carries on into the choral writing. This third section

culminates in a massive, loud climax with joyous fanfares in the brass, underpinned by rich homophonic string chords.

Light of the World

Delicate touches for celesta and strings lead to an *arioso* for the solo baritone, followed by a fast, rhythmic interlude for the orchestra, setting up an ecstatic outpouring for soprano soloist, accompanied by pulsating, dancing strings. Energetic drumming and blaring wind round off this episode before the final section.

Hymn: Cathedral of Light

The choir sings a unison chorale over a tread of gongs and drums, accompanied by the organ. This acts like a recurring refrain, between which more sprightly music is carried by the two soloists with delicate, light woodwind accompaniment. The final refrain is a huge Amen which grows and slows to a monumental conclusion.

Programme note © Sir James MacMillan

Surtitles produced and operated by
Damien Kennedy

SIR JAMES MACMILLAN

Directly communicative and emotionally affecting, the music of Sir James MacMillan often has a strong sense of narrative, inspired by history or theology. Born in Kilwinning, Ayrshire, in 1959, he grew up in Cumnock and, after reading Music at Edinburgh University, studied

composition with John Casken at Durham University. Returning to Scotland in 1988, he settled in Glasgow, seeking the means of achieving a creative synthesis in music of his Roman Catholic faith, socialist ideals and relationship with his homeland.

MacMillan's powerful orchestral elegy *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie*, premiered at the 1990 BBC Proms to an ecstatic reception, launched his international career. The exultant percussion concerto *Veni, veni, Emmanuel*, first performed by Dame Evelyn Glennie at the 1992 Proms, promptly entered the repertoire. Other notable orchestral pieces include five symphonies (1997, 1999, 2002, 2014–15 and 2018) and concertos for piano (1990, 2003 and 2007–8), cello (1996), violin (2009 and 2021), oboe (2009–10), viola (2013), trombone (2016) and saxophone (2017), and a second percussion concerto (2014).

A deep love of the human voice resulted in the song-cycle *Raising Sparks* (1997) and several major choral works, such as the cantata *Seven Last Words from the Cross* (1993), the *St Luke Passion* for chorus and chamber orchestra (2012–13), *A European Requiem* (2015), commissioned by the Oregon Bach Festival, and *Christmas Oratorio* (2019), first performed at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw in 2021.

Among various instrumental and chamber pieces, *Tuireadh* (1991) for clarinet and string quartet is dedicated to the victims of the Piper Alpha disaster and their families, and exploits the composer's

experience of Scottish folk music. By contrast, *Kiss on Wood* (1993) for violin and piano has a private, devotional atmosphere that connects with his liturgical works.

A natural facility for developing ideas on a substantial scale enhances MacMillan's music for the stage. *Inés de Castro* was premiered by Scottish Opera at the 1996 Edinburgh Festival and in 2007 Welsh National Opera produced *The Sacrifice*. A one-act chamber opera, *Clemency*, made its debut at the Royal Opera House's Linbury Theatre in 2011.

Recent compositions include *Heart Speaks to Heart*, for string quintet (2021), *Timotheus, Bacchus and Cecilia*, for choruses and orchestra (2022), *We Are Collective*, for piano quintet (2022) and *Composed in August*, for chorus and orchestra (2023).

MacMillan has also been active as a conductor. He was the BBC Philharmonic's Composer/Conductor (2000–09) and Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Chamber Philharmonic 2010–13). In 2014 he founded the Cumnock Tryst, a festival which takes place annually in Ayrshire. He was appointed CBE in 2004 and knighted in 2015.

Profile © Paul Conway

Paul Conway is a freelance writer specialising in contemporary and 20th-century British music. He has reviewed for *The Independent*, *Tempo* and *Musical Opinion* and his book *Moorland Symphonies: an Introduction to the Music of Arthur Butterworth* was published by Lyrita in 2023.

SIR JAMES MACMILLAN
CONDUCTOR

Sir James MacMillan is one of today's most successful composers and performs internationally as a conductor. His musical language combines influences from his Scottish heritage, Catholic faith, social conscience and close connection with Celtic folk music, blended with those from Far Eastern, Scandinavian and Eastern European music. He first became internationally recognised after the premiere of *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* at the 1990 Proms. His prolific output has since been performed around the world.

He enjoys a successful career as conductor of his own music alongside a range of contemporary and standard repertoire. He has conducted orchestras such as the Bergen, Munich, Netherlands Radio and Rotterdam Philharmonic orchestras and Baltimore, Danish Radio, Frankfurt Radio, Gothenburg, New Zealand, NHK and St Louis Symphony orchestras.

Highlights of this season include the Scottish premiere of his *Christmas Oratorio* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. A number of new works receive premieres, including *Ordo Virtutum* with the MDR Radio Choir in Leipzig, a new work for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, and – commissioned to celebrate Sir Mark Elder's final concerts as Music Director – *Timotheus, Bacchus and Cecilia* is given its European premiere by the Hallé.

MARY BEVAN
SOPRANO

British soprano Mary Bevan is internationally renowned in Baroque, Classical and contemporary repertoire, and appears regularly with leading conductors, orchestras and ensembles around the world. She was awarded an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list in 2019.

Her engagements this season include her house and role debut as Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*) with the Opera di Roma, Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*) in Denmark and her debut with Zurich Opera as La Folie (*Platée*).

Her many recent concert appearances have included her Carnegie Hall debut as Dalinda (*Ariodante*) with The English Concert, *The Creation* at the Barbican with the Academy of Ancient Music, Sally Beamish's *The Judas Passion* with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Bach's Mass in B minor at the 2022 BBC Proms. She has toured extensively across Europe, Australia, Asia and the US with the Kammerorchester Basel, Australian Chamber Orchestra and The English Concert.

Mary Bevan's wide-ranging discography ranges from Handel to lieder by Schubert, Haydn and Wolf with Joseph Middleton, and, most recently, *Visions Illuminées*, an album of French song.

RODERICK WILLIAMS

BARITONE

Roderick Williams is one of the most sought-after baritones of his generation with a wide repertoire spanning the Baroque to contemporary music. He enjoys relationships with all the major UK and European opera houses and also performs regularly with leading conductors and orchestras throughout the UK, Europe, North America and Australia. Festival appearances include the BBC Proms, Edinburgh, Cheltenham, Aldeburgh and Melbourne. As a recitalist he is in demand around the world and appears regularly at venues including Wigmore Hall, Amsterdam Concertgebouw and Vienna Musikverein and at song festivals including those at Leeds, Oxford and Ludlow.

Roderick Williams was awarded an OBE in 2017 and was Artist-in-Residence with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra from 2020 to 2022, Artist-in-Residence at the 2023 Aldeburgh Festival and Singer-in-Residence at Music in the Round. He was also one of the featured soloists at the coronation of King Charles III in 2023.

As a composer he has had works premiered at Wigmore Hall, the Barbican, Purcell Room and on national radio. In 2016 he won Best Choral Composition at the British Composer Awards and in the 2022/23 season he took up the position of Composer-in-Association with the BBC Singers.

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. The BBC SO also 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 de 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

Conductor Laureate
Sir Andrew Davis

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
James Wicks
Stuart McDonald
Charlotte Reid
Anna Smith
Sophie Phillips
Zanete Uskane
Emma Purslow
Gaia Ramsdell

Second Violins

Heather Hohmann
Rose Hinton
Vanessa Hughes
Danny Fajardo
Lucy Curnow
Tammy Se
Caroline Cooper
Victoria Hodgson
Lucica Trita
Nihat Agdach
Kate Cole
Maya Bickel
Miranda Allen
Jamie Hutchinson

Violas

Ben Roskams
Philip Hall
Joshua Hayward
Nikos Zarb
Natalie Taylor
Michael Leaver
Carolyn Scott
Mary Whittle

Peter Mallinson
Matthias Wiesner
Daisy Spiers
James Flannery

Cellos

Tim Gill
Tamsy Kaner
Graham Bradshaw
Mark Sheridan
Clare Hinton
Michael Atkinson
Morwenna Del Mar
Gilly McMullin
Anna Beryl
Jane Lindsay

Double Basses

Nicholas Bayley
Gareth Sheppard
Richard Alsop
Anita Langridge
Josie Ellis
Beverley Jones
Elen Pan
Lewis Reid

Flutes

Daniel Pailthorpe
Tomoka Mukai

Piccolo/Alto Flute

Fergus Davidson

Oboes

Alison Teale
Helen Vigurs

Cor anglais

Henrietta Cooke

Clarinets

Adam Lee
Jonathan Parkin

Bass Clarinet

Anthony Pike

Alto Saxophone

Martin Robertson

Bassoons

Guylaine Eckerstey
Graham Hobbs

Contrabassoon

Steven Magee

Horns

Nicholas Korth
Michael Murray
Timothy Doyle
Nicholas Hougham
Jonathan Bareham
Paul Cott

Trumpets

Philip Cobb
Joseph Atkins
Martin Hurrell

Trombones

Helen Vollam
Dan Jenkins

Bass Trombone

Robert O'Neill

Tuba

Sam Elliott

Timpani

Grahame King

Percussion

David Hockings
Alex Neal
Fiona Ritchie
Joe Cooper

Harp

Elizabeth Bass

Organ

Richard Pearce

Piano/Celesta

Elizabeth Burley

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

Director

Bill Chandler

Planning Manager

Tom Philpott

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-ordinator
Naomi Faulkner

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
Geraint Heap

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 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 Trainees
Dylan Barrett-Chambers
Sofia Heustice

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 appearances in the 2023 season 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 Brahms's *A German Requiem* with BBC SO Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo. It also takes

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 Sir Andrew Davis.

Forthcoming 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.

President

Sir Andrew Davis

Chorus Director

Neil Ferris

Accompanist

Paul Webster

Chorus Manager

Wesley John

Vocal Coach

Katie Thomas

Sopranos

Katharine Allenby
Sofia Correia Bagulho
Anna Bailey
Karen Benny
Asia Bonuccelli
Kate Chudakova
Erin Cowburn
Tanya Cutts
Josceline Dunne
Elizabeth Fletcher
Stella Guardi
Cathy Hall
Bev Howard
Lizzie Howard
Karan Humphries
Jackie Hunt
Valerie Isitt
Helen Jeffries
Rei Kozaki
Sue Lowe
Sarah Mainwaring
Katie Masters
Olivia Middleton
Rose Miller
Julia Neate
Ellie Parker
Hannah Savignon-Smythe
Madelon Shaw

Altos

Sarah Barr
Stella Baylis
Hannah Bishay
Helen Brice
Catherine Chapman
Sue Daniels
Danniella Downs
Alison Grant

Kate Hampshire
Mary Hardy
Jane Heath
Rosie Hopkins
Teresa Howard
Pat Howell
Ruth James
Ruth Marshall
Miranda Ommanney
Anja Rekeszus
Hilary Sillis
Mary Simmonds
Elisabeth Storey
Jayne Swindin
Helen Tierney

Tenors

Christopher Ashton
Xander Bird
Andrew Busher
Robert Carlin
Jamie Foye
Stephen Horsman
Simon Lowe
James Murphy
Simon Naylor
Jim Nelhams
Ernie Piper
Philip Rayner
Bill Richards
Fionn Robertson
Tobias Schneider
David Willcock
Jonathan Williams

Basses

Mike Abrams
Malcolm Aldridge
David Allenby
Dominic Beazer
Alex Britton
Sam Brown
David England
Quentin Evans
Mark Graver
Alan Hardwick
William Hare
Michael Harman
Kevin Hollands
Alan Jones
Andrew Lay
Robert Little
John McLeod
Michael Martin

Tim Miles
Andrew Money
Nigel Montagu
Amos Paran
Andrew Parkin
John Russell
Richard Steedman
Robin Wicks

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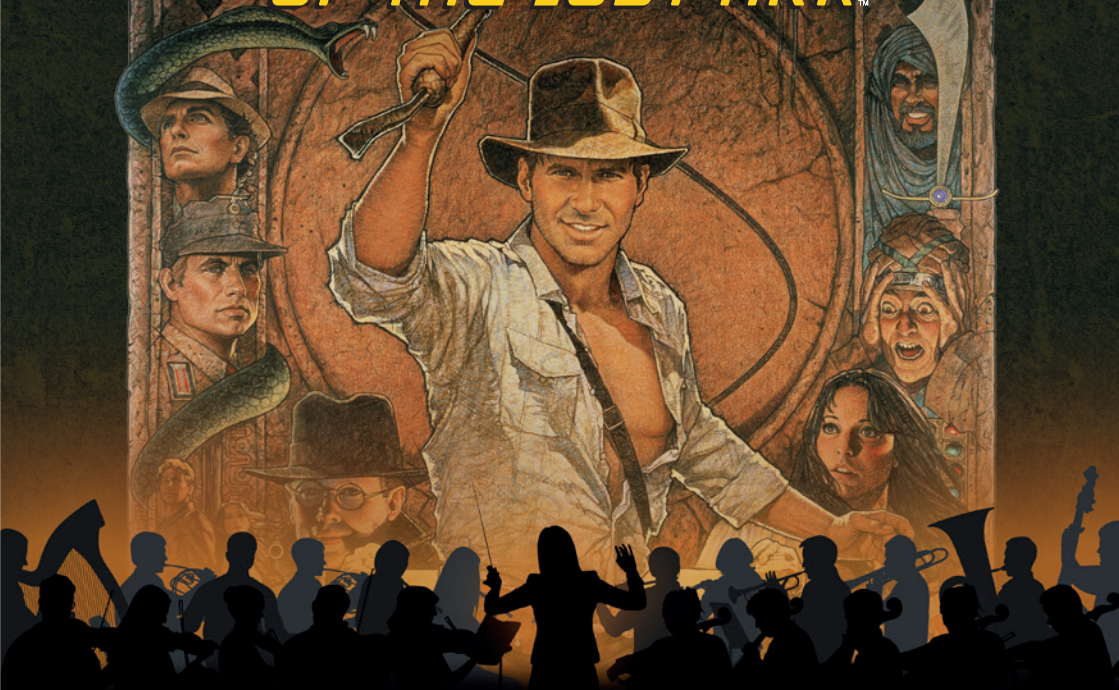
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