



FANTASTIC VOYAGES

Friday 1 December 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*
Roderick Cox *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 co-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*

BOOK NOW
[bbc.co.uk/
symphonyorchestra](https://bbc.co.uk/symphonyorchestra)

FOLLOW US ON
Facebook, Instagram
and X (formerly Twitter)



SAKARI ORAMO CHIEF CONDUCTOR

FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER, 2023

7.30pm, BARBICAN HALL



ALICE MARY SMITH Overture 'Jason, or The Argonauts and the Sirens' 12'

MAURICE RAVEL Shéhérazade 17'

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, 'Eroica' 54'

Jennifer Johnston mezzo-soprano

Sakari Oramo 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.

Sakari Oramo returns to the BBC Symphony Orchestra to lead a programme picking up on the strands of voyaging and storytelling, two of the themes of the orchestra's current season at the Barbican.

Alice Mary Smith's overture follows the tale of the Greek mythological figure of Jason who, along with his heroic crew of Argonauts, went in search of the Golden Fleece. It is one of a pair of concert overtures by the Victorian composer inspired by literary themes (the other, *The Masque of Pandora*, being based on a poem by Longfellow).

With Ravel's song-cycle *Shéhérazade* – tonight sung by star mezzo-soprano and former BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist Jennifer Johnston – we are transported to what the composer saw as the exotic East: the 'magic land of nursery tales', as the first of its three songs tells us. With typical apparent effortlessness, Ravel conjures a world of sensuous allure and suggestion.

The story of Beethoven being inspired by the ideals of the French Revolution and dedicating his epic Symphony No. 3 to Napoleon is well known, as is the fact that the composer's hearing loss was almost complete at the time he composed it in 1803. Although no single narrative thread runs through the work, there's no doubt that it concludes in triumph.



SOUNDS

Tonight's concert is available on BBC Sounds until 31 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 Brahms's Symphony No. 4 – visit the BBC SO homepage and scroll to 'Watch and Listen'

ALICE MARY SMITH (1839–84)

Overture ‘Jason, or the Argonauts and the Sirens’ (1879)

William Morris’s epic poem *The Life and Death of Jason* (1867) recounts the story of how Jason, rightful prince of Iolcos, goes on a quest to find the Golden Fleece to reclaim his throne. He gathers a crew of heroes and sets sail aboard the *Argo*, completing extraordinary tasks along the way, including defeating an army born from the teeth of a dragon. Having procured the Fleece, Jason sets out on his return journey, enlisting Orpheus’s help to sail past the sirens that would otherwise lure the Argonauts to their deaths.

This poem forms the basis for Smith’s concert overture. The programme notes for the premiere explained that the gentle opening ‘happily suggests the prosperous and peaceful progress of the good ship “fifty-oar’d Argo”’, and the Allegro (after the slow opening) contains the warnings of the sorceress Medea, who, having helped Jason steal the Fleece, then helps him to navigate his way safely back to Greece. Elsewhere, the ‘bold and vigorous passages’ (alluding to the overture from Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman*) outline ‘the energetic action of Jason’, while the more contemplative material forms ‘the songs of Orpheus and the Sirens’. Smith omits the ending of the poem that details Medea’s revenge and Jason’s death, closing instead on a note of triumph.

Jason was performed twice in Smith’s lifetime: premiered in 1879 by the New Philharmonic, it was then performed again in May 1881 at the Crystal Palace, famous for its championing of new British music. It was, by all accounts, a success, the *Echo* saying that Smith had ‘soared above the conventionalities of her art, and dared to be original’.

Programme note © Leah Broad

Leah Broad is a Junior Research Fellow at Christ Church, University of Oxford, specialising in 20th-century music. *Quartet: How Four Women Changed the Musical World*, her group biography of Ethel Smyth, Rebecca Clarke, Dorothy Howell and Doreen Carwithen, was published in March by Faber & Faber.

ALICE MARY SMITH

Alice Mary Smith was a pioneer in a society that believed women were incapable of ‘great’ composition. She was, as far as we know, the first British woman to write a symphony and have it performed. Specialising in large-scale orchestral and choral composition, Smith was the first person who managed to make British critics take a woman seriously as a composer, paving the way for those who came after her such as Ethel Smyth and Dorothy Howell.

Born in the early 19th century to relatively wealthy middle-class parents, Smith was home-educated and received private tuition in composition from William Sterndale Bennett and George Alexander Macfarren, both tutors associated with

the Royal Academy of Music. Although Smith never attended the Academy herself, she too would maintain a loose association with the institution, becoming an Honorary Member in 1884.

Smith began her compositional career writing songs, publishing her first in 1857. She followed this with a number of chamber works, but it was large-scale composition where Smith was most at home. In 1863 Smith came to public attention when her Symphony in C minor was performed by the Musical Society of London. It received widespread acclaim, even if that was caveated by gendered considerations, the *Illustrated London News* deeming it 'striking proof of the sound studies and high attainments of the female votaries of the art in this country'. Smith later became a Professional Associate of the Royal Philharmonic Society.

Many musical women's careers were cut short by marriage, but in 1867 Smith married a lawyer called Frederick Meadows White who not only supported her work but actively encouraged her to compose. She took a break from writing to give birth to their children but, unusually for her time, returned to composition afterwards. She completed a second symphony, alongside string quartets, piano quartets, songs, a clarinet sonata, six orchestral overtures and a substantial number of choral works including large-scale cantatas. Her work continued to be well received in the press, and by

the 1880s Smith had an established reputation as one of Britain's more promising composers. Sadly, though, Smith just at the point that she was gaining a foothold in British musical life, contracting typhoid fever when she was only 45.

Profile © Leah Broad



FRIDAY 8 DECEMBER 7.30pm

Oramo conducts Sibelius

CARL NIELSEN An Imaginary Journey to the Faroe Islands

TEBOGO MONNAKOTLA Globe Skimmer
Surfing the Somali Jet (Violin Concerto)
BBC co-commission: UK premiere

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

Johan Dalene violin
Sakari Oramo conductor

High above the Indian ocean, a dragonfly catches the monsoon breeze. Carl Nielsen boards ship for a windswept journey to the Faroes, and Jean Sibelius writes music 'with the scent of the first snow' in a pair of monumental late symphonies.

BOOK NOW
bbc.co.uk/symphonyorchestra

barbican
Associate Orchestra

MAURICE RAVEL (1875–1937) *Shéhérazade* (1903)

1 **Asie** [Asia]

2 **La flûte enchantée**

[The Enchanted Flute]

3 **L'indifférent** [The Indifferent One]

Jennifer Johnston mezzo-soprano

The princess Scheherazade was surely destined to capture Ravel's imagination at one time or another. How many children must have fallen asleep to her *Tales of the 1,001 Nights*, originally told to the cruel sultan who had vowed to put to death all his wives after their first night of love? Awakening a make-believe world in children's imaginations, her stories were entirely in tune with Ravel's creative spirit: from an early age he was drawn to the exotic and never entirely grew out of the world of childhood fantasy. The erotic undertones in these tales might only slowly dawn upon the reader growing into adulthood.

Ravel's first project bearing Scheherazade's name was an abandoned opera, of which only an overture, composed in 1898, survives. The present set of three orchestral songs dates from 1903, springing from Ravel's friendship with the poet Léon Leclère, who adopted the overt but quaint Wagnerian pseudonym of Tristan Klingsor. Like Ravel, Klingsor was a salon habitué and the two became sufficiently well acquainted for the poet to pen a tribute to the composer, remarking

on the 'tender and ironic heart that beat below his velvet waistcoat'.

Klingsor's poems caught Ravel's imagination and at last the *Shéhérazade* embryo burst into life, the cycle being composed relatively quickly in a period when Ravel seems to have found his voice, inspired by Debussy, but quite distinct. It was Jane Bathori who premiered them and they were eagerly taken up by other sopranos, seduced no doubt by those wonderful calls to reverie: 'Asie, Asie, Asie!'

In his early *Shéhérazade* overture, Ravel had been particularly preoccupied with the orchestration: the desire to conjure up an imagined Orient through a lush concoction of sounds. This seems to have continued into the song-cycle. Low strings murmur beneath a grainy tapestry of woodwind, the oboe and cor anglais evoking exotic wind instruments with oriental-sounding arabesques, and the harp indulging in flashes of harmonic colour as the singer wings above, or recites her lines in swoony, curvaceous alternations of duplets and triplets. Ravel had been especially keen to preserve the spirit of recited poetry in this work and had got Klingsor to read the poems to him: they are, after all, stories and that seems to be how we are meant to listen to them.

...

'Asie' is a beautifully written 'voyage' poem that takes us across the sea to the imagined oriental land. Its various

stereotypes are evoked en route – dusky maidens, despotic sultans and sour-faced merchants. Ravel responds to the gentle rocking of the imagined boat with music that is never too obviously descriptive.

A delicious solo violin evokes the dark-eyed beauties, while a recurrent wind motif adapts itself well to its portrayal of the deadly scimitar. There is a gentle touch of chinoiserie for the mandarins but the poem ends less with indulgence in the pleasures of the harem than in the pleasure of tale-telling and daydreaming, coaxed a little by the poet’s ‘old Arab cup’. Ravel highlights this crucial coda by preceding it with a prolonged orchestral climax, followed by a whisper as the storytelling begins.

Magic flutes became fairly commonplace in French music after Debussy’s *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune* and Ravel several times introduced them into his work. In his ballet *Daphnis and Chloe* the flute resembles that of Debussy’s faun but here in ‘La flûte enchantée’ it is quite different: more of a languorous melody exploiting the sultry low register that French flautists had developed to a fine art. Only a tiny detail in the spelling, of which the listener is unaware, informs us that this poem tells of a woman whose distant male lover calls her on his flute. There is a suggestion of the irrelevance of gender.

‘L’indifférent’ is about a beautiful, androgynous youth with ‘eyes ... as gentle as a girl’s’ and the first down of

adolescence. This variation on the Adonis myth, like ‘La flûte enchantée’, contains a reference to music that Ravel responds to: in this case, the song of the adorable youth which, says the poem, is slightly ‘out of tune’. A mildly acidic woodwind chord echoes his song, all the more to highlight a further call to reverie: ‘Entre!’ sings the poet (who could be a man or a woman) to a deliciously sensual chord. But the passing youth refuses the proffered cup of wine, departing as he came with a weary, effeminate gait.

Programme note © Richard Langham Smith

Richard Langham Smith has written widely on French 20th-century repertoire and is a regular broadcaster. He is Academic Programmes Professor and a Doctoral Supervisor at the Royal College of Music.

English surtitles produced and operated by Damien Kennedy

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 from Berlioz to the present day. His books include studies of Debussy, Ravel, Messiaen and Poulenc. *From Berlioz to Boulez* was published last year (Kahn & Averill). In 2007 he was appointed chevalier de la Légion d’honneur.

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 55, ‘Eroica’ (1803)

- 1 **Allegro con brio**
- 2 **Marcia funebre: Adagio assai**
- 3 **Scherzo: Allegro vivace – Trio**
- 4 **Finale: Allegro molto – Poco andante – Presto**

In October 1803 Beethoven’s student Ferdinand Ries reported to the publisher Simrock that his teacher had just composed a new symphony: ‘In his own opinion it is the greatest work he has yet written. Beethoven played it for me recently, and I believe that heaven and earth will tremble when it is performed.’

The new symphony was given its first run-through in the palace of Beethoven’s patron Prince Lobkowitz in 1804 before the first public performances the following year. The title *Sinfonia Eroica* (‘Heroic Symphony’) first appeared in the 1806 publication of the orchestral parts, along with the additional description in Italian: ‘Composed to celebrate the memory of a great man.’ Although Beethoven did not identify the ‘great man’ in the published title, he had originally intended to title the work ‘Bonaparte’ after the First Consul of the French Republic. He apparently retracted this title shortly before the first performance in 1804, upon learning from Ries that Napoleon Bonaparte had just declared himself Emperor of France. Ries recounted that this news caused

Beethoven to snatch up the title-page of his manuscript score and tear it in two, crying out in a rage that Napoleon would now ‘trample on the rights of man and indulge only his ambition’. Beethoven’s autograph score of the symphony is now lost but the title-page of the surviving manuscript copy that was prepared for publication shows that the words ‘Intitolata Bonaparte’ (Titled Bonaparte) were violently scratched out to leave a hole in the paper.

Although Beethoven suppressed the Napoleon dedication, the symphony also alludes to another heroic figure: namely Prometheus, the creator of mankind in Greek mythology. Prometheus stole fire from the gods for the benefit and civilisation of humans, and was thus an important symbol of the Enlightenment. The main theme of the symphony’s finale is a *contredanse* melody that Beethoven had first used in his ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus*, which had created a stir in Vienna during its successful first run in 1801. While the theme itself is simple and naive, Beethoven imbues it with profundity in the symphony by using it as the basis of a monumental set of variations. He had already explored the theme’s potential in his ‘Eroica’ Variations and Fugue for piano, Op. 35 (1802).

While the *Prometheus* reference would have been obvious to the symphony’s first listeners, its significance in the work’s overall design was more difficult to grasp, and indeed continues to be

a matter of debate among academics. Various commentators have posited that Beethoven had a particular hero in mind as the subject of the symphony, and the candidates have included not only Napoleon and Prometheus but also contemporary figures including Admiral Nelson and Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia. Whether or not Beethoven intended to allude to a specific individual in the 'Eroica' Symphony, he was evidently drawn to the idea of heroism and self-made greatness, as exemplified by Napoleon as First Consul. The notion of struggle in the face of adversity also had personal importance for Beethoven around this time as he came to terms with the progressive loss of his hearing, which he now realised would be irreversible.

...

The 'Eroica' is on a much grander scale than Beethoven's two previous symphonies. Its heroic aspect is perhaps most obvious in the first movement, whose originality lies in its epic dimensions and dramatic trajectory. The movement launches straight into an *Allegro con brio* ('with energy') with two full-voiced chords, but tension is introduced almost immediately into the opening theme, when the cellos temporarily veer off course towards an unexpected dissonant note. The tension reaches its peak in the central development section, particularly in a passage that culminates in a sustained, shattering dissonant chord hammered out by the full orchestra. Ries may have had this portion of the symphony in mind when

he wrote to Beethoven's publisher Simrock that 'heaven and earth will tremble when it is performed'.

The second movement is a funeral march of enormous gravity. The opening theme begins *sotto voce* (in an undertone) in the violins, accompanied by muffled drum-beat figures in the lower strings. A contrasting middle section turns to the major key, but the tragic tone returns with a majestic double fugue that rises to a climax punctuated by solemn cries from the brass. At the close of the movement the main theme fragments and dissipates in the same hushed tones as at the opening.

The Scherzo is full of boisterous energy, which is initially kept under the surface as the whole orchestra plays *pianissimo* and the solo oboe plays only snatches of melody. The main theme has the rustic character of a folk song, and the Trio section features hunting calls from a trio of horns.

The Finale follows a similar structure to the one Beethoven had used in the 'Eroica' Piano Variations. Rather than introducing the theme straight away, he first presents its bass line, which is elaborated through a series of variations until the theme finally appears in the oboe. After further variations the melody is gradually transformed, eventually taking the form of a spiritualised hymn. The transcendent mood is shattered by

the return of the violently energetic passage first heard at the movement's opening, and an affirmative coda leads to a triumphant conclusion.

Programme note © Erica Buurman

Erica Buurman is Director of the Ira F. Brilliant Center for Beethoven Studies and Assistant Professor in the School of Music and Dance at San José State University, California. She is the author of *The Viennese Ballroom in the Age of Beethoven* (CUP, 2022) and has appeared on BBC Radios 3 and 4. She is editor of *The Beethoven Journal* and *The Beethoven Newsletter*.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Ludwig van Beethoven was at the forefront of the major developments that took place in the musical world during his lifetime. He began his career in the employment of the Archbishop-Elector of Cologne in Bonn at a time when professional music-making was primarily cultivated within the courts of the European aristocracy. By the end of his life Beethoven had achieved great public success with works that posed unprecedented challenges for both performers and listeners, and lived as an independent artist – a status that was unimaginable for previous generations of musicians.

Beethoven moved from Bonn to Vienna at the age of almost 22, initially to study composition with Joseph Haydn (Mozart having died the previous year), and soon made his name as a virtuoso pianist and

composer in all the major instrumental genres. A high point in his career was the public concert organised for his own benefit in December 1808, which included the premieres of his Fifth and Sixth Symphonies and his Fourth Piano Concerto with himself as soloist.

Beethoven's performing career was cut short by the onset of deafness, which began when he was in his late twenties and grew increasingly severe until the end of his life, leading him to focus his creative energies on composition. His seriousness of purpose with regard to his art is demonstrated by his laborious process of composing: he could devote upwards of six months to a single symphony, whereas Haydn sometimes produced six such works for a single season. His only opera, *Fidelio*, underwent two major revisions before achieving its final form in 1814, and his monumental *Missa solemnis* (completed in 1823) was the product of several years' work.

Much of Beethoven's music has remained in the core performing repertoire since the 19th century, particularly the 32 piano sonatas and the nine symphonies. Among his most influential and celebrated works are those in his so-called 'heroic' style, characterised by their expanded scale, an emphasis on thematic development and dramatic overall trajectory leading to a triumphant conclusion. Such works are mostly concentrated in Beethoven's middle period, exemplified by the odd-

numbered symphonies from No. 3 (the 'Eroica', 1803) onwards, the *Egmont* overture and the Fifth Piano Concerto. Nevertheless, an immense variety of expression is found across Beethoven's works, from the lyrical and introspective, notably the 1816 song-cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* ('To the Distant Beloved'), to the comical and bombastic (as in the Symphony No. 8 of 1812). His late style grew increasingly esoteric, and works such as the five late string quartets (1824–6) appealed mainly to musical connoisseurs, being considered incomprehensible by some early listeners.

Profile © Erica Buurman

“ I was the first to bring him the news that Bonaparte had proclaimed himself emperor, whereupon he flew into a rage and cried out: 'Is he too, then, nothing more than an ordinary human being? Now he, too, will trample on the rights of man, and indulge only his ambition!' Beethoven went to the table, took hold of the title-page by the top, tore it in two, and threw it on the floor.

The recollection of Ferdinand Ries – Beethoven's student and early biographer – of how the composer defaced the dedication of his 'Eroica' Symphony after becoming disillusioned by Napoleon

SAKARI ORAMO
CONDUCTOR

Finnish conductor Sakari Oramo is Chief Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Conductor Laureate of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, following 13 years as Chief Conductor. He was Music Director of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (1998–2008), Chief Conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra (2003–12; now Honorary Conductor), Principal Conductor of West Coast Krokola Opera (2004–18) and Principal Conductor of the Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra (2013–19).

Highlights this season include his debut with the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra and returns to the Czech Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, alongside his ongoing collaboration with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. In previous seasons he has appeared with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Berlin and New York Philharmonic orchestras, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig and Staatskapelle Dresden.

Recent additions to his award-winning discography include Rued Langgaard's Symphony No. 1 with the Berlin Philharmonic, joining complete symphonies by Sibelius, Nielsen and Schumann and many works by Kaija Saariaho and Magnus Lindberg.

JENNIFER JOHNSTON
MEZZO-SOPRANO

Jennifer Johnston studied at Cambridge University and the Royal College of Music. She was a BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist (2011–13) and won the Royal Philharmonic Society Singer Award in 2021. She is particularly associated with the Bavarian State Opera, where she has sung roles in operas by Britten, Puccini, Rossini and Wagner. She has also appeared at Glyndebourne, La Scala, Milan, and the Salzburg and Aix-en-Provence festivals in similarly wide-ranging repertoire.

A prolific concert performer, she has appeared with many of the world's leading orchestras and conductors. Highlights of this season include performances with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (Amsterdam) under Klaus Mäkelä, Bavarian State Orchestra under Kirill Petrenko and NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra under Semyon Bychkov.

She gives recitals regularly on BBC Radio 3, most recently 'Woman: Interrupted' with Malcolm Martineau at Wigmore Hall and 'All About the Girl' with James Baillieu at City Halls, Glasgow. Her extensive discography includes her debut solo album *A Love Letter to Liverpool* (2019), a personal tribute to her native city; and a Grammy-nominated disc of Anthony Payne's arrangement of Vaughan Williams's *Four Last Songs* with the BBC SO under Martyn Brabbins.

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 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 Monnagotla, 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 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.

facebook.com/BBCSO X (formerly Twitter): @BBCSO Instagram: @bbcsymphonyorchestra

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

Igor Yuzefovich *Leader*
Cellerina Park
Philip Brett
Jeremy Martin
Jenny King
Celia Waterhouse
Colin Huber
Shirley Turner
Ni Do
Molly Cockburn
James Wicks
Stuart McDonald
Alexandra Lomeiko
Rasa Zukauskaite

Second Violins

Heather Hohmann
Dawn Beazley
Rose Hinton
Patrick Wastnage
Danny Fajardo
Lucy Curnow
Rachel Samuel
Tammy Se
Caroline Cooper
Victoria Hodgson
Lucica Trita
Nihat Agdash

Violas

Scott Dickinson
Philip Hall
Joshua Hayward
Nikos Zarb
Natalie Taylor
Michael Leaver
Carolyn Scott
Mary Whittle
Matthias Wiesner
Alistair Scahill

Cellos

Richard Harwood
Tamsy Kaner
Mark Sheridan
Clare Hinton
Michael Atkinson
Morwenna Del Mar
Nina Kiva
Sophie Gledhill

Double Basses

Nicholas Bayley
Gareth Sheppard
Richard Alsop
Anita Langridge
Michael Clarke
Beverley Jones
Elen Pan

Flutes

Michael Cox
Tomoka Mukai

Piccolo

Rebecca Larsen

Oboes

Tom Blomfield
Imogen Smith

Cor Anglais

Maxwell Spiers

Clarinets

Andrei Caval
Jonathan Parkin

Bassoons

Julie Price
Graham Hobbs

Horns

Martin Owen
Kathryn Saunders
Mark Wood
Phillippa Koushk-Jalali
Eleanor Blakeney

Trumpets

Niall Keatley
Martin Hurrell

Trombones

Helen Vollam
Dan Jenkins

Bass Trombone

Robert O'Neill

Tuba

Sam Elliott

Timpani

Antoine Bedewi

Percussion

David Hockings
Alex Neal
Fiona Ritchie
Joe Cooper

Harps

Alison Martin
Victoria Lester

Celesta

Elizabeth Burley

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-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

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

B B C

RADIO 3

IN CONCERT

Immerse yourself in the best live
classical music from across the UK

Listen on  **SOUNDS**

**Give them a gift they
will never forget.
Give them the gift of a
Guildhall Short Course.**

Guildhall School of Music & Drama offers a range of online and in-person Short Courses for all ages and abilities, across music, drama, production arts and creative writing.

Short Courses in 2024 include:

- Acting Summer School
- Creative Writing for Live Performance, Level 1
- Film Music Composition for Beginners
- Jazz & Rock Week
- Prop Making
- The Secrets of Stagecraft
- Vocal Summer School for Classical Singers

Find out more and book at
gsmd.ac.uk/shortcourses



**GUILD
HALL
SCHOOL**

WRITE YOUR OWN STORY

Ignite your curiosity today with
a visit to Habs Schools.

MAKE A PROFOUND IMPACT

Habs

HABERDASHERS'
BOYS' SCHOOL | GIRLS' SCHOOL



SCAN FOR
HABS BOYS



SCAN FOR
HABS GIRLS

RSC

ROYAL
SHAKESPEARE
COMPANY

SWAN THEATRE
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON
21 FEBRUARY – 6 APRIL 2024



**BEN
& IMO**
MARK RAVENHILL

BOOK NOW
rsc.org.uk

TikTok | £10 TICKETS
FOR 14-25s

New Work at the RSC is generously supported by The Druce and H.J. Heinz II Charitable Trust
Presented in association with Michael Grandage Company



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**