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barbican

Barbican announces spring-summer 2025 classical music season



L to R: Sir Antonio Pappano, Jonathan Lemalu, Katia and Marielle Labèque, Wynton Marsalis, The Orchestral Qawwali Project, Seong-Jin Cho, Shiva Feshareki, Nadine Benjamin, Cassie Kinoshi, Elaine Mitchener, Khatia Buniatishvili, Semyon Bychkov. Photos and credits available below.

Today (9 October) the Barbican announces its spring and summer season of classical music for 2025. From February through to July next year, alongside its Resident Orchestra the London Symphony Orchestra, and Artistic Associates the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Academy of Ancient Music and Darbar, the Barbican will present a sweeping array of homegrown and international classical talent performing celebrated works, lesser-known treasures, boundary-pushing pieces, new commissions and premieres.

The season pivots around two key anniversaries – **Pierre Boulez**'s centenary, with celebrations and commemorations from our visiting artists, residents and associates, as well as performances marking fifty years since the death of **Dmitri Shostakovich**. The spring and summer season will also feature a host of guest ensembles, including the **Czech Philharmonic**, **Jazz at Lincoln Centre Orchestra**, **Australian Chamber Orchestra**, **Chamber Orchestra of Europe**, **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra**, **Hespèrion XXI**, **Il Pomo d'Oro** with **Joyce DiDonato**, and **The English Concert** joined by **Louise Alder**.

Khatia Buniatishvili continues her Artist Spotlight residency, while the recital series includes **Louis Lortie**, **Lang Lang**, **Seong Jin Cho** and **Evgeny Kissin**.

The season will also highlight the untold stories of marginalised figures, as bass baritone **Davóne Tines** presents an intimate theatrical portrait of singer and campaigner Paul Robeson, **Cassie Kinoshi** explores the life and work of Caribbean artist Boscoe Holder, **Nadine Benjamin** performs **Shirley J Thompson**'s love letter to the resilient women of the Windrush generation and **Elaine Mitchener** and **Dam Van Huynh** present a new sonic dance exploration of Julius Eastman.

Barbican-supported **premieres** include major new works by **Shiva Feshareki**, **Cassie Kinoshi** and **David Fennessy**, while UK premieres include those by **Wynton Marsalis**, **Luke Styles & Juste Janulyte**.

Helen Wallace, Head of Music, says: "Our season offers fresh perspectives on two giants of 20th century music: **Pierre Boulez**, who rebuilt a dazzling new musical world in post-War France, and **Shostakovich**, whose work continues to speak so powerfully against oppression today. I'm delighted to be presenting a host of new projects that bring untold stories to life, by **Davóne Tines**, **Cassie Kinoshi**, **Elaine Mitchener**, **Shirley J Thompson**, and **Jordi Savall**, and to welcome back long-term friends the **Czech Philharmonic** and the **Australian Chamber Orchestra**. This is also the first season that our brand-new Artistic Associate **Darbar** will present in the main programme. It's a privilege to work with such a rich variety of artists."

Devyani Saltzman, Director for Arts & Participation, says: "I'm excited to see the first Classical season since joining the Barbican. This new season is a vital part of the Barbican's vision, pioneering artistic practice and engaging with the world around us. Helen, her team, and our Artistic Associates have curated a season that features the best in local and international classical artistry, brings untold stories and underrepresented voices to the forefront, and, most importantly, challenges us. I can't wait to share it with everyone."

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Barbican Resident Orchestra the **London Symphony Orchestra** continues its first season with new Chief Conductor **Sir Antonio Pappano**, who opens spring and summer with four concerts, including two popular hour-long Half Six Fix concerts
- The Barbican, and its resident and associate orchestras mark **Boulez 100**, the centenary of composer **Pierre Boulez**, with a host of concerts and insight events
- The 50th anniversary of **Shostakovich's** death is marked across multiple events, including a full string quartet cycle by the **Carducci Quartet**
- Georgian piano sensation **Khatia Buniatishvili** completes her Artist Spotlight residency with two shimmering recitals including one with her sister **Gvansta Buniatishvili**
- Gramophone magazine's Orchestra of the Year 2024, the **Czech Philharmonic** and conductor **Semyon Bychkov** return for a two-day residency, joined by cellist **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** and pianists **Katia and Marielle Labèque**
- **Jazz at Lincoln Centre Orchestra** join forces with the **London Symphony Orchestra** to present a study of New York in Wynton Marsalis' Symphony No 4 '*The Jungle*'
- Bass baritone **Davóné Tines** presents **ROBESON** an intimate musical portrait of singer and campaigner Paul Robeson
- **Ensemble intercontemporain** present the world premiere of **Cassie Kinoshi's** new work inspired by Caribbean artist Boscoe Holder
- The Barbican presents **Luke Styles'** ambitious symphonic song cycle *No Friend but the Mountains* based on refugee Behrouz Boochani's account of his six year incarceration on Manus Island, with the **London Symphony Orchestra** and **Jonathan Lemalu**
- Barbican Associate Orchestra the **BBC Symphony Orchestra** present **Total Immersion: Symphonic Electronics** including a world premiere of **Shiva Feshareki's** *Bab-Khaneh*, a piece co-commissioned by the Barbican and the BBC - and inspired by the Barbican Hall
- The Barbican's newest Artistic Associate, **Darbar**, presents a day-long celebration of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak in his 555th birth year with a landmark Hall performance surrounded by films, workshops and lectures
- Qawwali music meets the orchestral in **Rushil Ranjan** and **Abi Sampa's** *The Orchestral Qawwali Project* as they join forces with the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra**
- Barbican Associate Ensemble the **Academy of Ancient Music** present a fresh take on Bach's *The Art of Fugue*, transformed into a theatrical experience by director Bill Barclay

Full details for the Barbican classical music programme for spring and summer 2025, with dates and links to event pages, as well as overviews of Barbican Resident Orchestra and Artistic Associate seasons, follow below.

The Barbican's Resident Orchestra is the **London Symphony Orchestra**, its Associate Orchestra is the **BBC Symphony Orchestra** and Associate Ensemble is the **Academy of Ancient Music**. Other musical artistic associates are Associate Producer **Serious** and newly announced new Barbican Artistic Associate **Darbar**.

Public booking opens on Fri 18 Oct, with advance priority booking for Principal and Premier Patrons from Thurs 10 Oct, to Barbican Patrons from Mon 14 Oct, Barbican Members Plus from Wed 16 Oct, and Barbican Members on Thurs 17 Oct.

Press images: A selection of images for the season [can be downloaded here](#). Photographer credit is included in image titles and on photo sheet.

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BARBICAN CLASSICAL MUSIC SPRING & SUMMER 2025 PROGRAMME

GUEST ORCHESTRAS AND ENSEMBLES

- **Martha Argerich with the Oxford Philharmonic** ([24 Feb](#)): Following concerts in Oxford and Germany last season, pianist **Martha Argerich** returns to perform with the **Oxford Philharmonic**. Presented by the Oxford Philharmonic.
- **Dunedin Consort – Reformations: Cantata** ([6 Mar](#)): **John Butt's Dunedin Consort** return to the Barbican with the second in a trilogy of projects, and another specially-commissioned world premiere. *Bog Cantata*, a new cantata by David Fennessy, explores loss, longing and lamentation and is inspired by the Fadden More Psalter – a medieval book of psalms discovered perfectly preserved in a County Tipperary bog in 2006. The concert will also feature soprano **Hilary Cronin**, alto **Jess Dandy**, tenor **Ed Lyon** and baritone **Roderick Williams**.
- **Czech Philharmonic/Bychkov/Kanneh-Mason** ([7 & 8 Mar](#)): Conductor **Semyon Bychkov** and the **Czech Philharmonic** return to the Barbican for a two-day residency of Shostakovich, Mozart and Mahler. Contributing to the programme of events marking 50 years since Dmitri Shostakovich's death, the Czech Philharmonic present the Russian composer's Symphony No 5 and are joined by **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** for Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No 1 – a piece with which Kanneh-Mason secured the title of BBC Young Musician of the Year in 2016. For their second concert, the orchestra are joined by pianists and sisters **Katia and Marielle Labèque** to perform Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos before a mighty finale of Mahler's Symphony No 5.
- **Jazz at Lincoln Centre Orchestra and London Symphony Orchestra: The Jungle** ([15 Mar](#)): Co-presented by the Barbican and the LSO, **Jazz at Lincoln Centre** Artistic Director and trumpeter **Wynton Marsalis** and **Sir Antonio Pappano** blend jazz, blues and classical music in the crossover collaboration as they present Wynton Marsalis' Symphony No 4 '*The Jungle*' - a wild and brilliant portrait of New York City in all its dazzling, high-pressure, cosmopolitan glory.
- **Hespèrion XXI: Ibn Batuta: The Traveller of Time with Jordi Savall** ([17 Mar](#)): Musical pioneer **Jordi Savall** assembles musicians from Europe and the Middle East, India, China and North Africa – alongside his own remarkable **Hespèrion XXI** early music ensemble – for a journey into the unknown with a man considered by many to be the greatest traveller of all time: Ibn Battuta. Born into a family of Islamic scholars in north Africa in the 14th century, Battuta travelled to the extremes of the then-known world, covering an estimated 120,000km. His writings provide fascinating glimpses into medieval life across the globe, as well as documenting the richness of music he encountered.
- **Australian Chamber Orchestra** ([21 Mar](#)): The **Australian Chamber Orchestra** and director **Richard Tognetti** return to the Barbican with a programme of Bach, Gubaidulina and Shostakovich – marking both the 50th anniversary of Shostakovich's death and also celebrating 50 years of this groundbreaking, boundary-crossing chamber ensemble. Across the performance, the orchestra will be joined by trumpeter **Jeroen Berwaerts**, pianist **Alexander Melnikov** and oboist **Ivan Podyomov**.
- **Chamber Orchestra of Europe and Sunwook Kim** ([12 Apr](#)): Comprised of eminent chamber musicians and section leaders, the **Chamber Orchestra of Europe** join with South Korean pianist and director **Sunwook Kim** in a programme of late classical and modern music, counterpointing Anna Clyne with Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Concertos No 4 and 5.
- **Il Pomo D'oro, Joyce DiDonato and Michael Spyres: Jephtha** ([7 May](#)): **Il Pomo d'Oro** return to the Barbican with conductor **Francesco Corti** joined by a star-cast of mezzo-soprano **Joyce DiDonato** and baritenor **Michael Spyres** alongside **Mélissa Petit**, **Cody Quattlebaum** and **Jasmin White** to perform Handel's 1751 valedictory oratorio *Jephtha*.
- **The English Concert – Giulio Cesare** ([11 May](#)): **Harry Bicket's The English Concert** return to the Barbican Hall with arguably Handel's most popular operatic creation. This performance is the latest instalment in their always eagerly anticipated annual tour and stars **Louise Alder** as Cleopatra and **Christophe Dumaux** as Cesare, alongside **Paula Murrihy**, **Beth Taylor** and **John Holiday**.

- **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra/Domingo Hindoyan (19 May)**: Under the baton of Chief Conductor **Domingo Hindoyan**, the **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra** bring a lively and impassioned programme to the Barbican Hall. An enthusiastic champion of the music of the Caribbean and his native South America, Hindoyan with the RLPO kick things off with Puerto Rican composer Roberto Sierra's *Fandangoes* before joining forces with **Pablo Ferrandez** for Elgar's Cello Concerto, rounding off the evening with Rachmaninov's *Symphonic Dances*.
- **VOCES8 20th Anniversary Celebrations: TWENTY! (8 Jun)**: **VOCES8** are twenty! Celebrating their 20th anniversary, the 2023 Grammy-nominated British vocal ensemble bring a host of events to the Barbican, performing there for the very first time to mark the occasion. From a *Big Sing* in the Barbican Foyers to a performance by sister ensemble **APOLLO5** who are celebrating their 15th anniversary in [St Giles Cripplegate](#), to a Barbican Hall performance of the music they have performed across their two decades, they will be joined by **VOCES8 Scholars**, former members of VOCES8 and the **BBC Singers**.
- **Classical Pride (4 Jul)**: Classical Pride will return for their third year, joined by Barbican Resident Orchestra the **London Symphony Orchestra**, who will be conducted by **Oliver Zeffman** and joined by soloists **Jamie Barton** and **Anthony Roth Costanzo** with further details and on-sale to be announced at a later date.
- **CBSO, Rushil Ranjan and Abi Sampa: The Orchestral Qawwali Project (20 Jul)**: East meets West and traditions are refashioned as the ground-breaking *The Orchestral Qawwali Project* – brainchild of composer **Rushil Ranjan** and singer **Abi Sampa** – continues its all-embracing mission to cultivate a rapturous space where cultures collude, rewarding dialogues are forged, and spiritual exaltation flourishes. Joined by a multitude of Indian classical musicians and dancer **Vidya Patel**, the project renews its relationship with the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra** and conductor **Melvin Tay**.

BOULEZ 100

Marking the centenary of French composer Pierre Boulez, born on 26 March 1925, the Barbican and its Resident Orchestra and Associate Orchestra present a collection of celebrations and commemorations across 2025.

- **London Symphony Orchestra**: Barbican Resident Orchestra the **London Symphony Orchestra** will mark the centenary of Pierre Boulez across the first half of the year, with Conductor Emeritus **Sir Simon Rattle** opening the proceedings with Boulez's *Éclat* ([9 Jan](#)), followed by **Maxine Pascal** conducting the annual LSO Futures concert ([26 Jan](#)) which celebrates the legacy and influence of Boulez with a programme of Debussy, Boulez's *Notations* 1,2,3,4 & 7 and the world premiere of **Olga Neuwirth's** response to Notations - *Homage à Pierre Boulez IX*. To complete the Boulez tribute Pascal leads a symposium on the life and works of Pierre Boulez at Milton Court in the day ([27 Jan](#)), concluding with a special chamber concert in the evening exploring a further five chamber works by the composer.
- **BBC SO Total Immersion: Pierre Boulez (30 Mar)**: The second Total Immersion of the season celebrates the work of Pierre Boulez, one of the most iconic Chief Conductor's in the **BBC Symphony Orchestra's** history, marking 100 years since his birth. The day of events includes a screening of two television documentaries: *Pierre Boulez at the BBC: Master and Maverick* and *Pierre Boulez at the BBC*, two talks led by Musicologist **Professor Jonathan Cross** and an evening concert of five Boulez works conducted by **Martyn Brabbins**, featuring soprano **Anna Dennis**, pianist **Tamara Stefanovich** and the **BBC Singers** alongside the BBC SO.
- **Quatuor Diotima: Boulez Anniversary Concert (18 May)**: One of the work's most outstanding interpreters, **Quatuor Diotima** present Pierre Boulez' *Livre pour quatuor* - the restless and inquisitive string quartet that, latterly, the ensemble worked on with Boulez himself. It's a work that embraces, in his own words, 'deliberate austere bareness' as well as 'the most proliferating exuberance' and is framed by music he particularly esteemed, in a centenary tribute that will also reference Webern, Bach, and Debussy.
- **Ensemble intercontemporain (27 May)**: Founded by French composer Pierre Boulez in 1976, **Ensemble intercontemporain** is France's flagship contemporary music group and returns to the Barbican for the first time in a decade led by conductor **Nicoló Umberto Foron**. Alongside a world

premiere by **Cassie Kinoshi** and Hannah Kendall's *shouting forever into the receiver*, the ensemble will perform their founder Boulez's riotously colourful three-harp, three-piano work *Sur incises* to mark his centenary year.

SHOSTAKOVICH 50 AT THE BARBICAN

Commemorating 50 years since the death of Dmitri Shostakovich, this season includes a suite of concerts performed by artists visiting the Barbican.

- **Commemorating Shostakovich: Kissin, Kniazev, Rysanov, Kremer (17 Feb)**: A glittering constellation of string players joins pianist **Evgeny Kissin** for an immersive dive into three sonatas that together span Shostakovich's creative evolution. Legendary violinist **Gidon Kremer**, cellist **Alexander Kniazev** and violist **Maxim Rysanov** will join Kissin to bring unique insights into Shostakovich's complex musical psyche across his sonatas for violin, viola and cello.
- **Czech Philharmonic/Bychkov/Kanneh-Mason (7 Mar)**: The first concert of the **Czech Philharmonic's** two-day residency at the Barbican will see them present Dmitri Shostakovich's Symphony No 5 preceded by the composer's Cello Concerto No 1 when they will be joined by cellist **Sheku Kanneh-Mason**. The piece holds a special significance for Kanneh-Mason, as it is the piece with which he secured the title of BBC Young Musician of the Year in 2016.
- **Australian Chamber Orchestra (21 Mar)**: Within the **Australian Chamber Orchestra's** programme of Bach and Gubaidulina are two works by Dmitri Shostakovich, the fiftieth anniversary of whose death they mark in this concert alongside the ensemble's own fiftieth anniversary: the Piano Concerto in C Minor, Op 35, and the Chamber Symphony Op 110a, repurposed by the composer from his devastating String Quartet No 8.
- **Carducci String Quartet: Shostakovich string quartet cycle (29 Jan, 28 Feb, 27 Mar, 29 Apr, 29 May)**: To mark the 50th anniversary of the death of Dmitri Shostakovich, the **Carducci String Quartet** present a full Shostakovich string quartet cycle, examining the great Russian composer's inner life, loves, friendships and his work through five *Intimate Portraits*. Across the cycle, Shostakovich's string quartets will be paired with works by composers who worked with, learned from and were inspired by him: Galina Ustvolskaya, Sofia Gubaidulina and Elena Firsova. Partnering with a trio of musicians from **Guildhall School of Music & Drama** as well as emerging quartets coached by the Carduccis, (including **Kyan Quartet**, chamber music fellows at Guildhall School **Elmore Quartet**, and 2023-24 ECHO Rising Stars **Sonoro Quartet**), the Carduccis also continue their mission to champion chamber music and to bring young performers into their programming.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: KHATIA BUNIATISHVILI

This 2024-25 classical music season, the Barbican's Artist Spotlight shines on Georgian piano sensation **Khatia Buniatishvili**, whose charismatic mastery of the piano will be on display across the year. Beginning in December 2024 in a collaboration with the **Academy of St Martin in the Fields (9 Dec 2024)**, Buniatishvili's residency will continue in full force with recitals in the newly announced spring and summer 2025 programme. Previous Artist Spotlights have included soprano Lise Davidsen, pianist Yuja Wang, violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja and cellist Abel Selaocoe.

- **Khatia and Gvansta Buniatishvili (2 Apr)**: In the second of her Artist Spotlight concerts for the full 2024-25 season, **Khatia Buniatishvili** is joined by her sister **Gvansta Buniatishvili** for a glittering evening of piano duo magic by the two sisters, who have been playing together since childhood. Together they present arrangements of beloved repertoire including Mozart's overture to *Die Zauberflöte*, to Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* to Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No 2.
- **Khatia Buniatishvili in recital (12 Jun)**: Following April's duo recital with her sister, Khatia Buniatishvili takes centre stage in a programme exploring the intense and often fractured relationship between Frédéric Chopin and prolific woman-of-letters George Sand.

THE THEATRE OF MUSIC

- **UK PREMIERE – Davóne Tines: ROBESON (15 Feb):** From the stage of Carnegie Hall to the floor of a Moscow hotel room, from funk to Fauré, gospel, and Bach. All collide in bass-baritone **Davóne Tines and The Truth's** enthralling portrait of the great American singer, actor, campaigner, and conscience of a nation: Paul Robeson. For this **UK Premiere**, and ahead of a forthcoming residency at the Barbican in its 2025-26 season, Tines will be joined by his band The Truth - pianist **John Bitoy** and sound artist **Khari Lucas** - to perform the work (released on Nonesuch, 2024) that looks to understand this icon through connecting to his vulnerability.
- **Shirley J Thompson - Women of the Windrush with Nadine Benjamin (20 Feb):** Composer Shirley J. Thompson's one-woman, one-act opera weaves together filmic documentary and song in a heart-warming love letter to the life-affirming resilience of the Windrush migrants, performed at the Barbican by British soprano **Nadine Benjamin** with pianist **Caroline Jaya-Ratnam**.
- **LONDON PREMIERE - Hespèrion XXI: Ibn Batuta: The Traveller of Time with Jordi Savall (17 Mar):** Musical pioneer **Jordi Savall** assembles musicians from Europe and the Middle East, India, China and North Africa – alongside his own remarkable **Hespèrion XXI** early music ensemble – for a journey into the unknown with a man considered by many to be the greatest traveller of all time: Ibn Battuta. Born into a family of Islamic scholars in north Africa in the 14th century, Battuta travelled to the extremes of the then-known world, covering an estimated 120,000km. His writings provide fascinating glimpses into medieval life right across the globe, as well as documenting the richness of music he encountered.
- **LONDON PREMIERE - Moving Eastman: Elaine Mitchener, Dam Van Huynh & The Rolling Calf (3 & 4 Apr):** Acclaimed vocal and movement artist **Elaine Mitchener** has collaborated with choreographer **Dam Van Huynh** to create a new dance and sonic performance taking inspiration from the intersectional life and practice of Black American composer Julius Eastman. Eastman, who died in 1990 aged just 49, is a key figure in late 20th century American music but was marginalised during his lifetime. A black, gay, contemporary music composer, he lived every aspect of his identity to its fullest. Mitchener will be joined by **Jason Yarde, Neil Charles** and **Xhosa Cole** of her long-time collaborators **The Rolling Calf** for this **London premiere** performance.
- **WORLD PREMIERE - Cassie Kinoshi x Ensemble intercontemporain (27 May):** Founded by Pierre Boulez, **Ensemble intercontemporain** is France's flagship contemporary music group and returns to the Barbican with a programme exploring slavery and the Caribbean experience. The group, who will perform at the Barbican for the first time in a decade will be led by conductor **Nicoló Umberto Foron** to perform the **world premiere** of Mercury Award nominated saxophonist and composer **Cassie Kinoshi's** multi-disciplinary new work. The work unites dance, electronics, turntables, and visuals to interrogate the folklore and culture of the West Indies, set against a backdrop of paintings by Trinidadian-born artist Boscoe Holder. The work will resonate powerfully with Hannah Kendall's meditation on the creation of the plantations, *shouting forever into the receiver*, before the ensemble perform their founder Pierre Boulez's *Sur incises* to mark his centenary year. Cassie Kinoshi's new work is generously supported by Trevor Fenwick and Jane Hindley.
- **UK PREMIERE: Luke Styles - No Friend but the Mountains with London Symphony Orchestra (19 Jun):** Kurdish-Iranian writer, journalist and former refugee Behrouz Boochani wrote his multi-award-winning book *No Friend but the Mountains* on a mobile phone while in prison. Charting his hazardous refugee journey and subsequent six-year-long incarceration on Manus Island, it inspired composer Luke Styles to create a heart-stopping symphonic song-cycle, here given its **UK premiere** by Barbican Resident Orchestra the **London Symphony Orchestra** and baritone **Jonathan Lemalu**. Conceived for chorus, soloist, and large orchestra, his richly imagined score unfolds across 12 impassioned songs and interludes, faithfully shadowing the trajectory of Boochani's ordeal.

ECHO RISING STARS AT 30: CHAMBER MUSIC WEEKENDER (7 & 8 June)

A weekend of chamber music by Europe's finest young performers takes place across two historic gems in the heart of the City of London. The medieval church of St Giles Cripplegate, located just across the Barbican Lakeside, and the medieval Great Chamber of the nearby Charterhouse are the venues for this 30th anniversary celebration of the ECHO Rising Star programme. The programme, which provides a platform for rising talent in the classical music industry boasts many celebrated musicians among their

alumni, including Janine Jansen, Patricia Kopatchinskaya, Sean Shibe, Igor Levit, Belcea Quartet and current Barbican Artist Spotlight Khatia Buniatishvili.

Performers will include:

St Giles Cripplegate ([7 Jun](#)): **Lukas Sternath** (piano), **Carlos Ferreira** (clarinet), **Quatuor Agate**, **Sao Soulez Lariviere** (violin)

The Great Chamber, Charterhouse ([8 Jun](#)): **Benjamin Kruihof** (cello), **Matilda Lloyd** (trumpet), **Rakhi Singh & Friends**

RECITALS

- **Louis Lortie plays Chopin Études** ([27 Feb](#)): Renowned Chopin interpreter and one of the world's most versatile pianists **Louis Lortie** revisits Chopin's complete Études – ground-breaking, multi-faceted works that mingle hair-raising virtuosity with poetic profundity.
- **Khatia and Gvansta Buniatishvili** ([2 Apr](#)): In the second of her Artist Spotlight concerts for the full 2024-25 season, **Khatia Buniatishvili** is joined by her sister **Gvansta Buniatishvili** for a glittering evening of piano duo magic by the two sisters, who have been playing together since childhood. Together they present arrangements of beloved repertoire including Mozart's overture to *Die Zauberflöte*, Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* and Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No 2.
- **Lang Lang** ([17 Apr](#)): Returning to the Barbican Hall, one of the most influential pianists of the 21st century plays music by Fauré, Schumann and Chopin. Superstar pianist **Lang Lang** performs the solo piano version of Fauré's Pavane in F-sharp minor, followed by Schumann's eight-movement masterpiece *Kreisleriana* – a staple of the Romantic repertoire that the composer once called his favourite, before culminating in an array of Chopin Mazurkas and the Polonaise in F# Minor, Op. 44.
- **Seong-Jin Cho in recital** ([2 May](#)): A sold-out hall greeted South Korean pianist **Seong-Jin Cho**'s Barbican debut in 2023. Winner of the 17th Warsaw International Chopin Piano Competition and currently the Berlin Philharmonic's Artist-in-Residence, Cho's much-anticipated return navigates an all-Ravel programme celebrating the composer in his 150th anniversary year.
- **Mahan Esfahani in recital** ([3 May](#)): Blending choice Baroque repertoire with a reminder that the Harpsichord is far from a museum piece, harpsichordist **Mahan Esfahani** has opened up inspiring new territories for the instrument. A typically enlightening programme shows just what the harpsichord is capable of with music by Werner, Rameau, Berio, Buxtehude, Alexander, Couperin and Applebaum.
- **Khatia Buniatishvili in recital** ([12 Jun](#)): Following April's duo recital with her sister, **Khatia Buniatishvili** takes centre stage in a programme exploring the intense and often fractured relationship between Frédéric Chopin and prolific woman-of-letters George Sand.
- **Evgeny Kissin in recital** ([25 Jun](#)): The second performance by Evgeny Kissin in this Barbican season sees one of the world's most sought-after pianists return with more Shostakovich, preluded by works by Chopin and Bach. In February, Kissin was joined by friends and colleagues to perform Shostakovich's Violin, Viola and Cello Sonatas, and now presents the Piano Sonata No 2 in continued tribute to the great composer, fifty years on from his death.

CHAMBER SERIES

- **Britten's Canticles - Betts-Dean/Ramgobin/Way** ([16 Apr](#)): Interspersed with late Schubert and the balladry of Errollyn Wallen, love, loss, and remembrance are entwined in five haunting canticles that Benjamin Britten composed over three decades for his partner Peter Pears. On the cusp of the release of their recording of the Britten Canticles, three outstanding young singers, tenor **James Way**, mezzo **Lotte Betts-Dean** and baritone **Ross Ramgobin**, come together for a tantalising live preview. They will be joined by pianist **Natalie Burch**, harpist **Alis Huws** and horn player **Annemarie Federle**.

- **Her Ensemble: Three Dancers with Jess Gillam and Laura Van Der Heijden (7 May)**: Founder and violinist **Ellie Consta**'s crusading **Her Ensemble** return with a programme of 21st century works inspired by the visual arts. The works, all by female composers and performed by a group that seeks to address the gender gap and gender stereotypes in the music industry, will include Caroline Shaw's *Thousandth Orange* inspired by Van Gogh, Elena Katz-Chermin's *The Three Dancers* inspired by Picasso, and Dobrinka Tabakova's *Insight* which grapples with the notion of visualising sound. Her Ensemble will be joined by saxophonist **Jess Gillam** and cellist **Laura Van Der Heijden**.
- **Ligeti Quartet: Nuc (21 Jun)**: Joyful, occasionally furious, never too serious, energetic and restful, *Nuc* is a collection of tracks composed by Anna Meredith and arranged by the **Ligeti Quartet**'s viola player **Richard Jones** and which was named by The Guardian as a Top Ten Contemporary Album of 2023. The quartet will be joined by trumpeter **Lucy Humphris** in the Barbican Cinema for this audiovisual performance.
- **Quatuor Diotima: Boulez Anniversary Concert (18 May)**: One of the work's most outstanding interpreters, **Quatuor Diotima** present Pierre Boulez' *Livre pour quatuor* - the restless and inquisitive string quartet which, latterly, the ensemble worked on with Boulez himself. Part of the Barbican's *Boulez 100* celebrations.
- **ECHO Rising Stars Festival (7 & 8 June)**: A weekend of chamber music by Europe's finest young performers takes place across two historic gems in the heart of the City of London. The medieval 14th century church of St Giles Cripplegate, located just across the Barbican Lakeside, and the medieval Great Chamber of the nearby Charterhouse are the venues for this 30th anniversary celebration of the ECHO Rising Star programme.
- **Carducci String Quartet: Shostakovich string quartet cycle (29 Jan, 28 Feb, 27 Mar, 29 Apr, 29 May)**: To mark the 50th anniversary of the death of Dmitri Shostakovich, the **Carducci String Quartet** present a full Shostakovich string quartet cycle to examine the great Russian composer's inner life, loves, friendships and his work through five *Intimate Portraits*. Across the cycle, Shostakovich's string quartets will be paired with works by composers who worked with, learned from and were inspired by him: Galina Ustvolskaya, Sofia Gubaidulina and Elena Firsova.

BARBICAN RESIDENT ORCHESTRA AND ASSOCIATE ENSEMBLES AUTUMN AND WINTER 2024 HIGHLIGHTS:

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (RESIDENT ORCHESTRA)

February 2025 sees Chief Conductor **Sir Antonio Pappano** continue his opening season with four evenings, beginning with a popular Half Six Fix 6.30pm concert of Walton's Symphony No 1 ([5 Feb](#)). The Walton is then joined by George Walker's *Sinfonia No 5 'Visions'*, and Bernstein's *Serenade* the next evening ([6 Feb](#)). This is followed by an all-British programme with Walton's Cello Concerto with guest soloist LSO Principal **Rebecca Gilliver**, and Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* with guest soprano **Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha** and baritone **Will Taverman**, with Elizabeth Maconchy's *Nocturne for Orchestra* as an opener ([9 Feb](#)). *A Sea Symphony* is also the focus of a Half Six Fix concert ([12 Feb](#)).

A month later, following a two-week tour of the west and east coasts of the US, the LSO's first full US tour for over ten years, Sir Antonio will collaborate with trumpeter and bandleader **Wynton Marsalis** and **Jazz at the Lincoln Centre Orchestra** for Marsalis' Symphony No 4 '*The Jungle*' ([15 Mar](#)) in co-production with the Barbican. Next, Sir Antonio turns to two great choral works: Tippett's secular oratorio *Child of Our Time*, and Beethoven's Symphony No 9 Choral Op 125 featuring the **London Symphony Chorus**. This concert marks the bicentenary of the commission by the Philharmonic Society of London in 1817, with its premiere in Vienna in 1824 ([23 Mar](#)).

Sir Antonio's concerts will continue with collaborations with **Lisa Batiashvili** ([21](#) & [22 May](#)) and will round off his first season as Chief Conductor with Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel* and *Ein Heldenleben* ([25 May](#)) before two performances of Strauss' opera *Salomé* with **Asmik Grigorian** in the title role and **Michael Volle** as Jochanan ([11](#) & [13 Jul](#)).

The LSO also marks the centenary of Pierre Boulez this season, with Conductor Emeritus **Sir Simon Rattle** opening the proceedings ([26 Jan](#)) with Boulez' *Éclat*, followed by **Maxine Pascal** conducting the annual LSO Futures concert (26 Jan) which celebrates the legacy and influence of Boulez with a programme of Debussy, Boulez's *Notations 1,2,3,4 & 7* and the world premiere of **Olga Neuwirth's** response to *Notations - Homage à Pierre Boulez IX* plus two LSO commissions from the Panufnik composers' scheme by **Rafael Marino Arcaro** and **Lara Agar**.

To complete the Boulez tribute Pascal leads a symposium on the life and works of Pierre Boulez at Milton Court during the day ([27 Jan](#)), concluding with a special chamber concert at Milton Court exploring a further five chamber works by the composer.

Sir Simon Rattle will also continue his series of Janáček operas conducting two performances of his comic opera *The Excursions of Mr Brouček* ([4 & 6 May](#)).

Principal Guest Conductor **Gianandrea Noseda** conducts four LSO concerts during the first half of April 2025, completing his cycles of both Shostakovich and Prokofiev symphonies, joined variously by **Nicola Benedetti**, **Alice Sara Ott**, and **Lisa Batiashvili** ([3](#), [9](#), [10](#) & [13](#) Apr).

LSO Associate Artist **Barbara Hannigan** returns to conduct and sing George Benjamin's *Lessons in Love and Violence Suite*, also exploring Haydn Symphonies, Ravel, Roussel, Britten as well as Claude Vivier and Iranian composer Golfam Khayam. She will be joined by guest baritone **Stéphane Degout** on 13 March. ([13](#), [19](#), [20](#) Mar).

LSO GUEST CONDUCTORS: Dudamel, Brossé, Harding, and Mälkki,

Daniel Harding returns to the LSO to conduct a concert featuring guest pianist **Daniil Trifonov** with a double-bill of Schumann's Piano Concerto and Mahler's Symphony No 7 ([2 Feb](#)).

Gustavo Dudamel makes his Barbican conducting debut with the LSO ([14 May](#)). The programme is Richard Strauss' *Don Juan* and *Der Rosenkavalier* Suite, as well as Ravel's *Shéhérazade* and *Rapsodie espagnole*.

Susanna Mälkki, a regular collaborator with LSO, delivers a programme which comprises Julia Perry's *A Short Piece for the Large Orchestra*, Stravinsky's Violin Concerto in D with guest soloist **Leila Josefowicz** and Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra ([18 May](#)).

Dirk Brossé curates and conducts a second concert ([22 Jun](#)) which looks at great movie scores that the LSO has recorded. This concert will feature French film music by composers such as Georges Auric, Maurice Jarre, George Delerue, Michel Legrand, Claude Petit, Philippe Sarde, Vladimor Cosma, Philippe Rombi, and Alexandre Desplat.

BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA (ASSOCIATE ORCHESTRA) AND CHORUS

The **BBC Symphony Orchestra** opens the spring season with an exciting debut, as **Marie Jacquot** conducts the BBCSO for the first time. Expect grand passions and big tunes from Mendelssohn, Korngold and Augusta Holmès, with **Paul Huang** performing Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor ([7 Feb](#)). Another BBCSO debut follows from **Domingo Hindoyan** who conducts three musical salutes to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, including Copland's monumental Third Symphony and the London premiere of Gabriela Ortiz's *Kauyumari*, and **Tessa Lark** makes a welcome return to the BBCSO for Barber's Violin Concerto ([13 Feb](#)).

Total Immersion, the orchestra's deep dive into landmark composers and musical movements, explores the world of symphonic electronics. The day of events will include talks with composers and creative sound engineers led by Radio 3's **Tom Service**, a concert with the **BBC Singers** performing Juste Janulyte's *Irridescence for 12 Voices and Tape*, and two orchestral concerts: an afternoon concert conducted by **Ilan Volkov** with works by Steven Daverson, Misato Mochizuki and Tristan Murail and an evening concert conducted by **Jack Sheen** featuring the world premiere of **Shiva Feshareki's** new work for orchestra, turntables and bespoke ambisonic sound system designed especially for the Barbican Hall and co-commissioned by the BBC and the Barbican. ([23 Feb](#)). Conductor **Elim Chan** and pianist **Benjamin**

Grosvenor join the BBC Symphony Orchestra for an evening of Shostakovich, Britten and the UK premiere of Elizabeth Ogonek's ravishing *Moondog* ([28 Feb](#)).

Principal Guest Conductor **Dalia Stasevska** conducts the orchestra for Janáček's Sinfonietta, Bartók's Cantata Profana with the **BBC Symphony Chorus** and Ravel's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand, with pianist **Jean-Efflam Bavouzet** ([12 Mar](#)). The second Total Immersion of the season celebrates the work of Pierre Boulez, one of the most iconic Chief Conductors in the BBCSO's history, marking 100 years since his birth. The day of events includes a screening of two television documentaries: *Pierre Boulez at the BBC: Master and Maverick* and *Pierre Boulez at the BBC*, two talks led by Musicologist Professor Jonathan Cross and an evening concert of five Boulez works conducted by **Martyn Brabbins**, featuring soprano **Anna Dennis**, pianist **Tamara Stefanovich** and the **BBC Singers** alongside the **BBC Symphony Orchestra** ([30 Mar](#)).

Poetry unlocks the imagination, as **Mark Wigglesworth** and soprano **Sophie Bevan** plunge into the wild, wondrous universe of Charles Baudelaire through the music of Claude Debussy and Alban Berg ([4 Apr](#)). Berg's Three Pieces from Lyric Suite and *Der Wein* are performed alongside Debussy's *Le livre de Baudelaire* and *Nocturnes* with the upper voices of the **BBC Symphony Chorus**. **Sakari Oramo**, Chief Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, explores British masterpieces – both the well-loved and the rarely heard – by Vaughan Williams, Doreen Carwithen and Malcolm Arnold in an evening featuring the **BBC Singers** and pianist **Alexandra Dariescu** ([11 Apr](#)). **Sakari** conducts Mahler's playful Fourth Symphony – and plays the violin too, as Kurt Weill retells the myth of Orpheus and Dorothy Howell's *Lamia* tells the tale of a shape-shifting serpent in a concert that features soprano **Anu Komsu** ([16 Apr](#)). **Sakari** continues his Mahler symphony cycle with the epic First Symphony, and Sir Stephen Hough plays Beethoven Piano Concerto No.3 in C minor ([25 Apr](#)).

In May, conductor **Dima Slobodeniouk** pairs Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet with Lili Boulanger's dark, heartfelt plea for hope, Psalm 130 – *From the depths of the abyss* ([16 May](#)). **Sir Mark Elder** conducts Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*, featuring mezzo-soprano **Alice Coote** and tenor **David Butt Philip**, as the BBC Symphony Orchestra brings its season to an unforgettable close ([23 May](#)).

ACADEMY OF ANCIENT MUSIC (ASSOCIATE ENSEMBLE)

Barbican Associate Ensemble, the **Academy of Ancient Music**, and **Laurence Cummings** celebrate the transformative power of music, from the familiar to the unexplored.

The season opens in February with a journey through Georgian London, as soprano **Anna Devin** discovers the profound impact of Italian musical styles on the city's vibrant cultural scene ([7 Feb](#)). In March, AAM brings to life some of the first modern performances of works by Brazilian composer **José Maurício Nunes Garcia** ([13 Mar](#)). For Easter, Academy of Ancient Music presents a moving rendition of Bach's *St John Passion*, with **Nicholas Mulroy** as Evangelist and **Dingle Yandell** as Christus, supported by a talented ensemble of soloists ([18 Apr](#)).

In May, the season continues with a fresh take on Bach's *The Art of Fugue*, transformed into a theatrical experience by **Bill Barclay** ([15 May](#)). The finale in June marks a rare departure into the romantic repertoire, pairing Beethoven's Symphony No 5 and Haydn's Trumpet Concerto, with **David Blackadder**, bringing the season to a thrilling close ([27 Jun](#)).

DARBAR ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE ORGANISATION (ARTISTIC ASSOCIATE)

Barbican's newest Artistic Associate, **Darbar Arts, Culture and Heritage organisation**, whose annual festival of Indian Classical Music will take place at the Barbican between [24-27 October 2024](#), continue their exploration of the rich world of Indian Classical Music and its associated cultures through educational events and virtuosic performances.

In February, sitar star **Niladri Kumar** brings his dazzling playing to the Barbican Hall, uniting with tabla player **Satyajit Talwalkar** for an evening of ragas and talas ([11 Feb](#)).

The partnership continues in April with a special one-off, day-long celebration for Sikhism founder Guru Nanak's 555th birth year ([6 Apr](#)). As well as a landmark performance in the Hall, consisting of kirtan,

qawwali and bhajans (performed for the first time under the same roof), the day will include a series of films, workshops and lectures across the Barbican. Audiences can expect to hear global Sikh leaders and teachers such as **Bhai Sahib Bhai Mohinder Singh Ahluwalia OBE KSG** exploring Guru Nanak's timeless teachings on peace and forgiveness.

ENDS

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About the Barbican

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), and a London base of the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#). We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our other associates and partners including the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [the BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Britten Sinfonia](#), [Cheek by Jowl](#), [Darbar](#), [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [Drum Works](#), [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), [Serious](#), and [Trafalgar Theatre Productions](#).

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