

Welcome Kathryn McDowell



Welcome to tonight's LSO concert with pianist Yuja Wang – the second in her UBS Soundscapes: LSO Artist Portrait. Yuja Wang was first introduced to the LSO by Principal Guest Conductor Michael Tilson Thomas in the 2009/10 season. As well as this series at the Barbican over the next few weeks, the Orchestra will also tour with her to the Far East, taking in Beijing, Guangzhou, Taipei and Hong Kong. Tonight she performs Prokofiev's Second Concerto.

It is also a pleasure to welcome our conductor this evening, James Gaffigan, who is making his debut with the LSO. Born in New York and having studied in the US, he came to prominence when he won the Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition. Since, he has worked with Michael Tilson Thomas and the San Francisco Symphony, plus other US orchestras, he has become known on the European opera scene, and has conducted many major orchestras around the world.

I would like to thank UBS who support this series of concerts as part of UBS Soundscapes, and for their continued commitment to the Orchestra.

Please join us again on Sunday 16 February when Yuja Wang performs a solo recital featuring works by Chopin, Prokofiev and Stravinsky. I hope you enjoy this evening's performance.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn McDowell".

Kathryn McDowell CBE DL
Managing Director

TONIGHT'S CONCERT
FINISHES APPROX 9.40PM

Living Music In Brief

2014/15 SEASON LAUNCH

We're delighted to announce details of the LSO's brand new season of music-making, taking place at the Barbican between September 2014 and July 2015. The concerts are available to browse now on Iso.co.uk; online booking is now open, and telephone booking is available from 1 March.

Iso.co.uk/201415season

BBC RADIO 3 LUNCHTIMES CONTINUE

Pianists appearing at LSO St Luke's as part of our BBC Radio 3 Thursday Lunchtime Concerts over the next ten weeks include duo Cédric Tiberghien and Christian Ihle Hadland, Alexei Grynyuk, Nikolai Demidenko, Yevgeny Sudbin, Boris Giltburg and Denis Kozhukin.

Iso.co.uk/lunchtimeconcerts

A WARM WELCOME TO TONIGHT'S GROUPS

The LSO offers great benefits for groups of 10+ including 20% off standard ticket prices, a dedicated booking phone line and more for bigger groups. Tonight we are delighted to welcome:

James Madison University
Travel for Teens.com
Dewei Jia & Friends

Claude Debussy (1862–1918)

La mer (The sea): Three symphonic sketches (1903–5)

- 1 DE L'AUBE À MIDI SUR LA MER
(FROM DAWN UNTIL NOON ON THE SEA)
- 2 JEUX DE VAGUES (THE PLAY OF THE WAVES)
- 3 DIALOGUE DU VENT ET DE LA MER
(DIALOGUE OF THE WIND AND THE SEA)

Though we should not take very seriously his tongue-in-cheek remark that if he had not been a composer he would have liked to be a sailor, there is no doubt that Debussy felt a lifelong fascination for the sea.

The sea seems to have moved into the centre of his compositional thoughts in his previous orchestral work, the Nocturnes, a set of three evocative 'sound-pictures' of which the third and longest is a seascape, *Sirènes*. But here and in other pieces such as *L'île joyeuse* and *La cathédrale engloutie*, the sea remains a backdrop for mythological scenes; in *La mer* it comes into its own as the central and only character of the drama.

As Simon Tresize has observed, orchestral excerpts from Wagner were much more commonly performed in France at that time than the operas themselves, and may have inspired the highly original form of Debussy's three 'symphonic sketches' – particularly the first which unfolds as a succession of different evocative 'scenes'. Wagner's evocations of sea-storms and primeval rivers, forests and flames present gradually evolving textures of subtly layered orchestral sound. In his operas these serve as backdrops, though sometimes very important ones; Debussy made them the central focus of his work. For once the term 'impressionism', rarely very helpful when applied to music, makes some sense: as with Monet and his colleagues there is a desire to experience and capture a scene just for its own

sake, a loving attention to ever-changing qualities of texture, atmosphere and mood, and an ability through suggestive, unconventional touches to bring the scene alive.

The evocative power of *La mer* is uncanny: no other piece of music has so vividly recreated the sea in its infinite variety of moods and textures. The titles of the three movements suggest a progression which has been concisely summed up as 'the sea awakening; the sea at play; the wild sea', and within these simple outlines the music suggests a thousand details, utterly compelling and 'exact' even when it can be hard to put into words the sensation that has been so exactly recreated. But this paradox – music that is so strongly suggestive, and yet so evasive with regard to what is suggested – is at the heart of Debussy's achievement. When composing, he wrote, his 'innumerable memories [were] worth more than a reality which tends to weigh too heavily on the imagination'. So we should not be surprised to learn that much of the work was written far from the sea.

In fact, Debussy was buffeted by storms of a different kind, for the years 1903–5 in which he wrote *La mer* also saw the attempted suicide of his wife Lily, his elopement with singer Emma Bardac, later to become his second wife, and the ensuing scandal (which included the rapid appearance of a highly successful play, closely and obviously modelled on the affair). While we should avoid imputing any direct correspondence, the tumult of the third movement might be felt to bear a trace of Debussy's own personal melodrama. But perhaps the most important stimulus here came from the visionary sea paintings of J M W Turner, described by Debussy as 'the finest creator of mystery in the whole of art!'. In its originality of expression and range of feeling, however, Debussy's musical

Claude Debussy Composer Profile

seascape stands alone, encompassing the majesty and delicacy, fury and stillness, effervescence and power of the sea in one of the great masterpieces of 20th-century music.

Programme Note © Jeremy Thurlow

Jeremy Thurlow is a composer; his music ranges from chamber and orchestral music to video-opera and he won the George Butterworth Award 2007. Author of a book on Henri Dutilleux, he broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 and is a Fellow of Robinson College, Cambridge.

JMW TURNER (1775–1851) and the SEA PAINTINGS

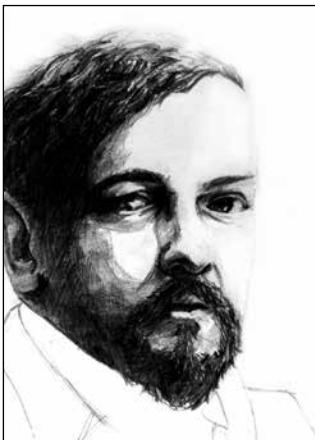


Dutch Boats in a Gale (1801)

James Mallord William Turner was an English Romantic landscape and watercolour painter. He became known as the 'painter of light' because of his increasing interest in using brilliant colours for his land and seascapes. Marine art accounts for over two thirds of Turner's works, he was so obsessed with the ever-changing and dramatic nature of the sea that he is said to have lashed himself to a mast, so that he could record the effects of a gale that blew up the North Sea as he left Harwich Docks.

The first ever full-scale exhibition of his marine art is on display at the **NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM** in Greenwich until **21 APRIL 2014**.

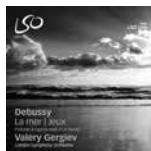
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Debussy was born in Saint-Germain-en-Laye in 1862. Despite an insecure family background (his father was imprisoned as a revolutionary in 1871), Debussy took piano lessons and was accepted as a pupil of the Paris Conservatoire in 1872, but failed to make the grade as a concert pianist. The gifted musician directed his talents towards composition, eventually winning the Prix de Rome in 1884 and spending two years in Italy. During the 1890s he lived in poverty with his mistress Gabrielle Dupont, eventually marrying the dressmaker Rosalie (Lily) Texier in 1899.

Debussy infused his work with musical influences from around the world. His *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, although regarded as a revolutionary work at the time of its premiere in 1894, soon found favour with concertgoers and the French press. Late in the summer of the previous year he had begun work on the only opera he completed, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, inspired by Meaterlinck's play. It was an immediate success after its first production in 1902. In 1904 he met Emma Bardac and moved into an apartment with her; his wife, Lily Texier, attempted suicide following their separation. The composer's troubled domestic life did not affect the quality of his work, with such magnificent scores as *La mer* for large orchestra and the first set of *Images* for piano written during this period. Debussy's ballet *Jeux* was first performed by Diaghilev's Ballets Russes in May 1913, a fortnight before the premiere of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. Although suffering from cancer, he managed to complete the first three of a projected set of six instrumental sonatas. He died at his Paris home in 1918 and was buried at Passy cemetery. His daughter, affectionately known as 'Chouchou', lived but one year after him, succumbing to the diphtheria epidemic that swept Paris in 1919.

DEBUSSY on LSO LIVE



La mer; Jeux;
Prélude à
l'après-midi
d'un faune
£7.99

Editor's choice

Gramophone magazine

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The Sunday Times

Editor's choice

Classic FM magazine

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Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Piano Concerto No 2 in G minor Op 16 (1912–13, rev 1924)

- 1 ANDANTINO-ALLEGRETTO
- 2 SCHERZO: VIVACE
- 3 INTERMEZZO: ALLEGRO MODERATO
- 4 FINALE: ALLEGRO TEMPESTOSO

YUJA WANG PIANO

Prokofiev was a formidable pianist, and his piano concertos (apart from the Fourth, for the left hand) were designed to display his own wonderful technique: sharp, accurate, with a steely brilliance and great sense of rhythmic excitement. The concerto form also suited his dramatic sense, with striking images of contrast and confrontation, strange juxtapositions of mood, powerful rhetoric followed by shy or tender reflection. The First Concerto, which he introduced in 1912, caused something of a scandal and, with the Second, composed the following year, he clearly intended to expand on its style, dimensions and emotional range. In the summer of 1913 he went on a European holiday with his mother, practising the new concerto whenever possible, and confessing that it 'has turned out to be incredibly difficult and mercilessly tiring'. Prokofiev gave the first performance on 23 August 1913 at a concert in the grounds of the 18th-century palace of Pavlovsk near St Petersburg. The audience, no doubt expecting soothing entertainment for a summer evening, was thoroughly shaken by what it heard.

Prokofiev himself suggested that the Second Concerto was 'more interesting for the soloist, less for the orchestra' than the First. By 'interesting' he perhaps meant difficult, for its length alone requires great stamina and the piano writing is as demanding as anything in the repertory. The sequence of movements is unusual. The first, containing some of the most massive writing for keyboard in Prokofiev's

output, is only moderately paced. It is followed by the short scherzo, a very fast *moto perpetuo* where the soloist's left and right hands scamper away in semiquavers in octaves throughout, without a single moment's rest. The third movement is a march, now brutal, now sinister, oddly titled 'Intermezzo', though it has nothing restful or in-between about it. This foreshadowing of Prokofiev's mechanistic music of the 1920s was probably the movement that caused most offence at the Concerto's premiere. The finale, after a whirling piano-and-orchestra flourish, launches into a percussive, leaping texture for the piano. But in the centre of the movement there appears a theme which is very Russian in its initially simple texture, limited compass and repeated phrases, an acknowledgement of the tradition that is the backbone of Prokofiev's art.

When Prokofiev abandoned Russia early in 1918 the orchestral score of the concerto was left behind, and in 1923 he learned that it had been destroyed: apparently the new tenants in his apartment had 'burned it to cook an omelette'. This was no thoughtless vandalism but evidence of the terrible conditions in Petrograd during the Civil War when people were dying of cold and hunger. Prokofiev reconstructed the orchestral score from memory, and took the opportunity to revise the whole concerto. In this new form, he introduced it in Paris on 8 May 1924.

Programme Note © Andrew Huth

Andrew Huth is a musician, writer and translator who writes extensively on French, Russian and Eastern European music.

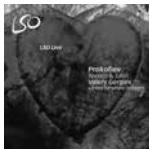
INTERVAL – 20 minutes

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Sergei Prokofiev Composer Profile



PROKOFIEV on LSO LIVE



Prokofiev
Romeo & Juliet
Valery Gergiev
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Prokofiev was born in the Ukraine and from an early age showed a prodigious ability both as composer and pianist. He gained a place at the St Petersburg Conservatory at the age of 13 and shortly thereafter acquired a reputation for the uncompromising nature of his music. According to one critic, the audience at the 1913 premiere of his Second Piano Concerto were left 'frozen with fright, hair standing on end'.

Prokofiev left Russia after the 1917 Revolution but returned to Moscow with his wife and family 19 years later, apparently unaware of Stalin's repressive regime. Before he left for exile, he completed his 'Classical' Symphony, a bold and appealing work that revived aspects of 18th-century musical form, clarity and elegance. He received commissions from arts organisations in the US and France, composing his sparkling opera *The Love for Three Oranges* for the Chicago Opera Company in 1919–20.

Engagements as a recitalist and concerto soloist brought Prokofiev to a wide audience in Europe and the US and he was in great demand to perform his own Piano Concerto No 3. The ballet *Romeo and Juliet* and the score for Feinzimmer's film *Lieutenant Kijé* were among Prokofiev's first Soviet commissions. Both scores were subsequently cast as concert suites, which have become cornerstones of the orchestral repertoire.

'The Fifth Symphony was intended as a hymn to free and happy Man, to his mighty powers, his pure and noble spirit.' Prokofiev's comments, written in 1944 as the Russian army began to march towards Berlin, reflected his sense of hope in the future. Sadly, his later years were overshadowed by illness and the denunciation of his works as 'formalist' by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1948.



London Symphony Orchestra

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Sun 21 Sep 2014 7.30pm
UBS SOUNDSCAPES: LSO ARTIST PORTRAIT
DENIS MATSUEV
Tishchenko Dante Symphony No 1 ('Among the Living')
Prokofiev Piano Concerto No 3
Shostakovich Symphony No 10
Valery Gergiev conductor
Denis Matsuev piano

Tue 23 Sep 2014 7.30pm
UBS SOUNDSCAPES: LSO ARTIST PORTRAIT
DENIS MATSUEV
Prokofiev Symphony No 1 ('Classical')
Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No 2
Prokofiev Symphony No 5
Valery Gergiev conductor
Denis Matsuev piano



Plus concerts on 11 & 13 Nov 2014,
19 Feb 2015, and 12 May 2015.

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Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

Daphnis et Chloé: Suites I & II (1911–13)

SUITE NO 1

- 1 NOCTURNE
- 2 INTERLUDE
- 3 DANSE GUERRIERE

SUITE NO 2

- 4 LEVER JU JOU
- 5 PANTOMIME
- 6 DANSE GENERALE

‘Not only Ravel’s best work but one of the most beautiful products in all of French music’.

Igor Stravinsky

Ravel’s biggest and most lavish score was composed for Sergei Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes. After two seasons in Paris presenting mixed programmes of orchestral music, ballet and opera, the Russian impresario decided in 1909 that ballet was the medium of the future and began the inspired series of commissions that included Stravinsky’s *Firebird*, *Petrushka* and *Rite of Spring*, Debussy’s *Jeux*, and Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloé*.

The subject, apparently suggested by the choreographer Mikhail Fokine, comes from a Greek pastoral romance in verse from the second century: the goatherd Daphnis and the shepherdess Chloé undergo jealousy and abduction by pirates before their final reconciliation and idyllic union. Fokine had in mind a style of dancing inspired by figures on ancient Greek vases. Ravel, as usual, saw the subject through the perspective of his own sensibility. He knew the story from a 16th-century French translation, and later stated that his intention was ‘to compose a vast musical fresco in which I was less concerned with archaism than with reproducing faithfully the Greece of my dreams, which is very similar to that imagined by French artists at the end of the 18th century’.

Differences of opinion between composer and choreographer were compounded by all sorts of backstage squabbling and, although Ravel had prepared a piano draft within a year, *Daphnis* didn’t reach the stage until 8 June 1912. The titles roles were danced by Nijinsky and Karsavina, Léon Bakst designed the décor and the orchestra was conducted by Pierre Monteux. Such a combination of names should have guaranteed a wild success but the production failed to make a great impression at the time. The music, however, soon became central to the orchestral concert repertory, particularly in the form of the two suites.

The full ballet is in twelve sections, divided into three parts that play continuously. In contrast to the sectional character of many ballet scores, *Daphnis et Chloé* has an organic unity achieved by the manipulation of a small number of recurrent ideas fully justifying Ravel’s own description of it as a ‘choreographic symphony’. The abiding impression of the ballet, though, is not so much its structure as the gorgeous range of sounds that Ravel draws from the subtle and masterly use of a large orchestra.

The first of the suites comes from the end of Part One and the transition to Part Two (the interlude features a wordless chorus in the original); the second consists of virtually the entire Part Three, and the two together make up just over half of the entire ballet, which Stravinsky described as ‘not only Ravel’s best work but one of the most beautiful products in all of French music’.

Programme Note © Andrew Huth

Maurice Ravel

Composer Profile



LSO PLAY: RAVEL'S BOLÉRO

Explore the Orchestra, watch Valery Gergiev conduct Ravel's *Boléro* from different camera angles and experience the view from a player's seat on LSO Play.

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Although born in the rural Basque village of Ciboure, Ravel was raised in Paris. First-rate piano lessons and instruction in harmony and counterpoint ensured that the boy was accepted as a preparatory piano student at the Paris Conservatoire in 1889. As a full-time student, Ravel explored a wide variety of new music and forged a close friendship with the Spanish pianist Ricardo Viñes. Both men were introduced in 1893 to Chabrier, who Ravel regarded as 'the most profoundly personal, the most French of our composers'. Ravel also met and was influenced by Erik Satie around this time.

In the decade following his graduation in 1895, Ravel scored a notable hit with the *Pavane pour une infante défunte* for piano (later orchestrated). Even so, his works were rejected several times by the backward-looking judges of the Prix de Rome for not satisfying the demands of academic counterpoint. In the early years of the 20th century he completed many outstanding works, including the evocative *Miroirs* for piano and his first opera, *L'heure espagnole*. In 1909 Ravel was invited to write a large-scale work for Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, completing the score to *Daphnis et Chloé* three years later. At this time he also met Stravinsky and first heard the works of Arnold Schoenberg.

From 1932 until his death, he suffered from the progressive effects of Pick's Disease and was unable to compose. His emotional expression is most powerful in his imaginative interpretations of the unaffected worlds of childhood and animals, and in exotic tales such as the Greek lovers *Daphnis et Chloé*. Spain also influenced the composer's creative personality, his mother's Basque inheritance strongly reflected in a wide variety of works, together with his liking for the formal elegance of 18th-century French art and music.



London Symphony Orchestra

Music in colour

The complete Scriabin symphonies

Sun 30 Mar 7.30pm

Scriabin Symphony No 1
Liszt Piano Concerto No 2
Scriabin Symphony No 4
(‘The Poem of Ecstasy’)

VALERY GERGIEV CONDUCTOR
DENIS MATSUEV PIANO
LONDON SYMPHONY CHORUS

Thu 10 Apr 7.30pm

Messiaen L'ascension
Scriabin Symphony No 5
(‘Prometheus, Poem of Fire’)
Scriabin Symphony No 2

VALERY GERGIEV CONDUCTOR
DENIS MATSUEV PIANO
LONDON SYMPHONY CHORUS

Supported by LSO Patrons

Sun 13 Apr 7.30pm

Messiaen
Les offrandes oubliées
Chopin
Piano Concerto No 2
Scriabin Symphony No 3
(‘The Divine Poem’)

VALERY GERGIEV CONDUCTOR
DANIIL TRIFONOV PIANO

Thu 3 & 10 Apr 1pm,
LSO St Luke's

BBC Radio 3 Lunchtime
Concerts: Scriabin Sonatas

Scriabin's Sonatas
Nos 3, 5 & 9 performed
by Russian pianists
Yevgeny Sudbin and
Boris Giltburg.

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James Gaffigan Conductor

'This is an absolute knockout ... James Gaffigan's conducting is thrilling in its precision and control.'

The Guardian



Chief Conductor

Lucerne Symphony Orchestra

Principal Guest Conductor

Netherlands Radio Philharmonic

Principal Guest Conductor

Gürzenich Orchestra, Cologne

Hailed for the natural ease of his conducting and the compelling insight of his musicianship, James Gaffigan continues to attract international attention and is one of the most outstanding young American conductors working today. In January 2010, he was appointed Chief Conductor of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and in September 2013 he took up the position of Principal Guest Conductor of the Gürzenich Orchestra, Cologne.

In addition to these titled positions, Gaffigan is in high demand working with leading orchestras and opera houses throughout Europe, the US and Asia. In recent seasons, Gaffigan's guest engagements have included the Munich, London and Rotterdam Philharmonics, Dresden Staatskapelle, Deutsches Symphony Orchestra (Berlin), Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, RSO Berlin, BBC Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Czech Philharmonic, Zurich Tonhalle, Bournemouth Symphony, Camerata Salzburg, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Leipzig and Stuttgart Radio Orchestras, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony, Sydney Symphony and the Qatar Philharmonic. In the US, he has worked with the Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, San Francisco and Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago, St Louis, Cincinnati, Minnesota, Dallas, Detroit, Baltimore and National Symphony Orchestras and the St Paul Chamber Orchestra.

Tonight, Gaffigan makes his debut with the London Symphony Orchestra, and also this season debuts with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Oslo Philharmonic and Dresden Philharmonic Orchestras. He will also return to the MDR Leipzig, Sydney Symphony, Bergen Philharmonic, Czech Philharmonic and Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestras.

As an opera conductor, James Gaffigan made his Vienna State Opera debut in 2011/12 conducting Puccini's *La bohème* and was immediately invited back to conduct Mozart's *Don Giovanni* last season. Gaffigan continues his relationship with the Glyndebourne Festival – in 2012 he conducted a production of Rossini's *La Cenerentola* and returned for performances of Verdi's *Falstaff* in 2013. He made his professional opera debut at the Zurich Opera in 2005 conducting *La bohème*. In the US, he has conducted Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Aspen Music Festival and *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Houston Opera.

Born in New York City in 1979, James Gaffigan attended the New England Conservatory of Music and the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in Houston, where he earned his Masters of Music in conducting. He was also chosen to study at the American Academy of Conducting at the Aspen Music Festival and School, and was a conducting fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center.

In 2009, Gaffigan completed a three-year tenure as Associate Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony where he assisted Michael Tilson Thomas, and led subscription concerts and was Artistic Director of the Orchestra's summer festival. Prior to that appointment, he was the Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra where he worked under Music Director Franz Welser-Möst from 2003 to 2006. James Gaffigan's international career was launched when he was named a first-prize winner at the 2004 Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition. He lives in Lucerne with his wife, the writer Lee Taylor Gaffigan, and their daughter Sofia.