



LSO

INEXTING UISHABLE

Thursday 10 January 2019 7.30-9.40pm
Barbican Hall

LSO SEASON CONCERT
BARBARA HANNIGAN: ARTIST PORTRAIT

Sibelius Symphony No 7

Hans Abrahamsen let me tell you

Interval

Nielsen Symphony No 4, 'Inextinguishable'

Sir Simon Rattle conductor

Barbara Hannigan soprano

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Welcome



Welcome to tonight's LSO concert at the Barbican, in which Music Director Sir Simon Rattle conducts symphonies by Nordic composers Sibelius and Nielsen, and Hans Abrahamsen's song cycle *let me tell you* with soprano Barbara Hannigan, for whom the work was written.

Tonight's programme includes two symphonies which re-imagined the genre for the 20th century: Sibelius' telescoped Seventh and Nielsen's 'Inextinguishable', written in response to World War I. Hans Abrahamsen's *let me tell you*, with a text by Paul Griffiths, reforms the words of Ophelia from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, inviting soprano soloist Barbara Hannigan to tell Ophelia's story from a new perspective.

This week's concerts mark the start of Barbara Hannigan's LSO Artist Portrait

series, which showcases every dimension of her career as both singer and more recently conductor. She will return to the LSO in March to lead the Orchestra in a programme of works by Berg and Ligeti, and rounding off with a suite from Gershwin's *Girl Crazy*.

We extend a warm welcome to the Keston MAX Fellows, musicians aged 18–27 from Santa Barbara's Music Academy of the West, who are working with LSO musicians this week, taking part in rehearsals for tonight's concert and 13 January, as well as coaching, education projects and concerts at LSO St Luke's on Friday 11 January. As part of the LSO's new partnership with Music Academy of the West, we look forward to the Orchestra's forthcoming visit to Santa Barbara in July, to perform side-by-side with the Academy Festival Orchestra under LSO Conductor Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas.

Thank you to our media partner BBC Radio 3, who will broadcast tonight's concert live. I hope you enjoy the performance, and that you will join us again throughout 2019.

Kathryn McDowell CBE DL
Managing Director

Latest News

BRITISH COMPOSER AWARDS

Many congratulations to LSO Soundhub Associate Liam Taylor-West and LSO Panufnik Composer Cassie Kinoshi for their success in the 2018 British Composer Awards. Prizes were awarded to Liam for his community project *The Umbrella* and to Cassie for *Afronaut*, a jazz composition for large ensemble.

FELIX MILDENBERGER JOINS THE LSO AS ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR

Following his success in the final of the 2018 Donatella Flick LSO Conducting Competition, 28-year-old Felix Mildenerger, currently Assistant Conductor of the Orchestre National de France, will join the LSO as Assistant Conductor. In this role, Felix will support and learn from the LSO's family of conductors, including Music Director Sir Simon Rattle.

Please ensure phones are switched off. Photography and audio/video recording are not permitted during the music.

On Our Blog

AN INTERVIEW WITH LAHAV SHANI

Recently appointed Music Director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Lahav Shani makes his debut conducting the LSO in February. Ahead of the concert, Lahav talks about growing up in Tel Aviv and why he's so excited to be bringing Kurt Weill's Second Symphony to London this year.

SCHUMANN AND HIS SYMPHONIES

As Sir John Eliot Gardiner completes his survey of Robert Schumann's symphonies with the LSO, we investigate the music that reveals a less familiar side of this Romantic composer par excellence.

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WELCOME TO TONIGHT'S GROUPS

At tonight's concert we are delighted to welcome **ATS International Travel**, **Institute for Global Studies** and **Linda Diggins & Friends**.

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The LSO & Music Academy of the West Partnership

2018/19 has marked the inaugural season of the LSO's partnership with Music Academy of the West, a summer school and festival training musicians aged 18–34 in Santa Barbara, California.

MUSIC
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JULY 2018 SANTA BARBARA

Five Principal players from the LSO travelled to Music Academy of the West's Summer Festival in Santa Barbara, where they coached the Academy's young musicians in preparation for a concert with former LSO Assistant Conductor Elim Chan; led masterclasses; performed chamber music; and oversaw auditions for the twelve Keston MAX Fellows. LSO Conductor Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas also made an appearance. The twelve Keston MAX Fellows were selected by audition, and the winners of the Academy's annual Solo Piano (Sophiko Simsive) and Marilyn Horne Song Competitions (Kelsey Lauritano and Andrew Sun) were announced.

'Over the summer I had the opportunity to work with LSO musicians, including Principal Clarinet Andrew Marriner. Not only is he an amazing musician, but he is also a fantastic teacher; I am really looking forward to learning more from him and the other LSO musicians while I am in London this January. It is such an honour to be able to perform alongside such accomplished musicians.'

Taylor Isberg, Keston MAX Fellow, Clarinet

JANUARY 2019 LONDON

The twelve Keston MAX Fellows travel to London for an intensive ten-day programme, giving them the chance to experience a week in the life of an LSO musician, through taking part in rehearsals conducted by LSO Music Director Sir Simon Rattle, performances, mock auditions, lessons with LSO musicians, chamber music and LSO Discovery projects. At LSO St Luke's, the winners of the Solo Piano and Marilyn Horne Song Competitions give free recitals.

'The process leading up to the Keston MAX Fellowship audition, working with LSO musicians and conductor Elim Chan, last summer was extremely exciting. The LSO members inspired me to demand something more from myself as a section player, as well as from those around me. I cannot believe that I will have the opportunity to play with such a great orchestra and such a renowned conductor in January – the individuality and spark that comes from each player reminds me that this is what I love to do.'

Stephanie Block, Keston MAX Fellow, Viola

Turn to page 16 for the full list of Keston MAX Fellows

Visit lso.co.uk/musicacademywest for more information about the partnership

Tonight's Concert In Brief



he programme opens with Sibelius' Seventh Symphony – his last, composed in 1924.

Formed in one continuous arc of music, the Symphony's musical materials accumulate like streams flowing into a river. With no distinct movements, its sections dovetail seamlessly until an abrupt Presto outbreak at the work's energetic peak.

At the heart of the concert, Hans Abrahamsen's *let me tell you* is a cycle of seven songs, which uses as its source Paul Griffiths' novel by the same name. The songs re-order and re-imagine the words of *Hamlet's* Ophelia, a literary character whose resonances in art and music go far beyond her role in Shakespeare's play.

Nielsen's Fourth Symphony was written in 1916, and its epithet 'Inextinguishable' reflects Nielsen's optimism for human goodness, which was cast in a new light during World War I. Played out across four interconnected movements, the symphony explores themes of hope and conflict. In the closing moments, a lyrical theme from the opening is renewed. However, it struggles to be heard against the war-like battery of timpani, and the symphony ends with ambivalence.

PROGRAMME NOTE WRITERS

Stephen Johnson is the author of *Bruckner Remembered* (Faber). He contributes regularly to *BBC Music Magazine* and *The Guardian*, and broadcasts for BBC Radio 3 (*BBC Legends* and *Discovering Music*), Radio 4 and World Service.

Andrew Stewart is a freelance music journalist and writer. He is the author of *The LSO at 90*, and contributes to a wide variety of specialist classical music publications.

Paul Griffiths has been a critic for nearly 40 years, including for *The Times* and *The New Yorker*, and is an authority on 20th- and 21st-century music. Among his books are studies of Boulez, Ligeti and Stravinsky. He also writes novels and librettos.

Coming Up

Sunday 13 & 20 January 7–8.50pm
Barbican

BRUCKNER SYMPHONY NO 6

Bartók Music for strings, percussion and celeste
Bruckner Symphony No 6

Sir Simon Rattle conductor

Thursday 7 February 7.30–9.45pm
Barbican

GARDINER'S SCHUMANN

Weber Overture: Euryanthe
Mendelssohn Concerto for violin and piano
Schumann Symphony No 3, 'Rhenish'

Sir John Eliot Gardiner conductor
Isabelle Faust violin
Kristian Bezuidenhout piano

Sunday 10 February 7–9pm
Barbican

GARDINER'S SCHUMANN

Schumann Overture: Manfred
Beethoven Piano Concerto No 1
Schumann Symphony No 1, 'Spring'

Sir John Eliot Gardiner conductor
Piotr Anderszewski piano

Sunday 17 February 7–8.50pm
Barbican

ARTIST PORTRAIT: DANIIL TRIFONOV

Rameau Les Indes galantes – Suite
Ravel Piano Concerto in G
Betsy Jolas A Little Summer Suite
Poulenc Les biches – Suite
Ravel La valse

Sir Simon Rattle conductor
Daniil Trifonov piano

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Jean Sibelius Symphony No 7 in C major Op 105 1924 / note by Stephen Johnson

**Adagio – Vivacissimo – Adagio –
Allegro molto moderato – Vivace –
Presto – Adagio**

Sounds of nature pervade Sibelius' orchestral works: the calls of swans and cranes, or wind rustling through leaves and screaming through pine-tops. But Sibelius looked deeper, to the very processes of the natural world, for inspiration. Rivers fascinated him: 'I should like to compare the symphony to a river,' he wrote in his diary in 1912. 'It is born from various rivulets that seek each other and in this way the river proceeds wide and powerful toward the sea.' 'But where do we get the water?'; he asks. Another entry provides an answer: 'The musical thoughts – the motives, that is – are the things that must create the form and stabilise my path.'

In jottings like this, Sibelius was clearly trying to define something that he had already begun to notice in his own music. In the slow movement of his Fourth Symphony (1911) his 'musical thoughts' had led him to create a new kind of form – one could call it 'variations in search of a theme'. Then in the Fifth (1914–19) he arrived at a still more original idea: a moderately paced first movement which builds up momentum like a river

approaching rapids, eventually boiling over into a thrilling accelerating scherzo. But it was with the Seventh Symphony (1924) that this process of fusing separate 'movements' into a single, organic unity was to reach its ultimate expression.

The most immediately striking feature of the Seventh Symphony – apart from its famous, noble trombone theme – is that it is in one continuous movement. Granted, Sibelius wasn't the first composer to attempt a symphonic structure in one movement; there was already a magnificent example in Schoenberg's First Chamber Symphony (1906). In the Schoenberg, however, it is easy to pick out sections that resemble the traditional symphonic first movement, scherzo, slow movement and so on. Sibelius' Seventh follows a different, much more river-like course. The speed and character of the music change frequently, but the different sections (if 'sections' is the right word) are so skillfully dovetailed that it is virtually impossible to say where one begins and another ends.

Arriving at this radical new kind of symphonic structure was a struggle. And when Sibelius had finished it, he was suddenly overcome with doubt: had he gone too far this time – was this really a

'symphony' at all? When the work first appeared in 1924, Sibelius cautiously gave it another title, *Fantasia Sinfonica*. But the work's success gave him courage, and he was soon referring to it as 'the Seventh Symphony.'

The Symphony's originality becomes obvious as soon as one tries to describe its form: one could say that three Adagio sections – each centred on the magnificent trombone theme mentioned above – merge into and emerge from two faster episodes. But even that is too simple. At the very beginning, after the expectant rising string scale that starts the process, the woodwind, horn and string phrases initially seem to be moving at slightly different speeds – like objects born along on the different currents and eddies of a great river. After the trombone theme makes its climactic appearance, the initial Adagio gradually mutates into a rapid, scherzo-like Vivacissimo. But then the dancing string figures begin to move more smoothly, and the trombone theme is heard again, now in the minor. The strings still seem to be moving quite fast, but the trombone theme retains its original monumental grandeur; to borrow an image from Sibelius' sketchbook, it is like seeing the moon through swirling storm clouds.

After this moment of vision, the music surges on into an Allegro molto moderato. This seems steady enough for a while, but then comes a pause, and a sudden gear change (the only one in the entire Symphony), leading to a long Presto crescendo powered by driving string figures and the rising scale that began the Symphony (now on horns). Through these the trombone theme returns in full, this time in the original sunlit C major. There is an elemental climax, then the clouds vanish and high strings initiate a slow, chorale-like winding down. A brief reminiscence of the trombone theme leads to a moment of hush (woodwind and strings), before the music settles firmly in C major for the rock-like final cadence. □

Jean Sibelius in Profile 1865–1957



Sibelius was swiftly adopted by Finns as a symbol of national pride. He loved nature, and the sweeping Finnish landscape often served as inspiration for his musical output. His most significant contributions are all orchestral in nature, including seven symphonies, a violin concerto and a large number of tone poems. Throughout his life, he was plagued by heavy drinking, illness, relentless self-criticism and financial problems, forcing his early retirement from composition at the age of 61. He was, however, honoured as a great Finnish hero long after he stopped composing, and his principal works quickly became established as an essential part of the orchestral repertoire. □

Profile by Andrew Stewart

1865 BORN

Hämeenlinna, Finland, then an autonomous part of the Russian Empire.

1890–91 ABANDONED THE VIOLIN

Sibelius later described the 'painful awakening when I had to admit that I had begun my training for the exacting career of a virtuoso too late'.

1885–89 STUDIES

He initially studied law before enrolling at the Helsinki Music Institute (now the Sibelius Academy) as a violinist.

1891–92 FIRST MAJOR WORK

His first major orchestral piece, *Kullervo*, eschewed traditional symphonic structure.

1898–99 FIRST SYMPHONY

At a time when Russia was attempting to restrict Finland's power to self-govern, the nationalistic First Symphony brought Sibelius considerable acclaim.

1901–02

SECOND SYMPHONY

Sketched in Italy, he described it as 'a confession of the soul!'

1892 MARRIAGE

Sibelius married Aino Järnefelt (pictured right), the daughter of a Finnish general, on 10 June 1892.



1904 SIBELIUS BY ALBERT ENGSTRÖM

He completed the Violin Concerto and moved to Järvenpää in the same year.



1907–08 HEALTH PROBLEMS

Overindulgence, heavy smoking and drinking forced Sibelius to cancel concerts, while Aino, suffering from exhaustion, was admitted to a sanatorium. Sibelius resolved to give up drinking and to concentrate on his Third Symphony, completed in 1907. He underwent surgery for throat cancer in Berlin in 1908.

1914 WORLD WAR I

While travelling from the US, news reached Sibelius of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo. During the War, the composer's foreign royalties dried up, and he focused on smaller pieces for the Finnish audience.

1919–20 RENEWED FORTUNES

Despite the onset of a hand tremor, Sibelius made his first trips abroad since 1915, began his Sixth Symphony and received a donation of 3,000 marks. He used the money to reduce his debts, but also spent a week celebrating in excess in Helsinki.



1927 THE SILENCE OF JÄRVENPÄÄ

In the last 30 years of his life, Sibelius produced barely any new music and avoided talking publicly about his work, though there is evidence he worked on an Eighth Symphony.

1917 DRINKING AND DEBT

Sibelius' wayward habits resurfaced, leading to significant arguments with Aino. His debts increased, and his grand piano was almost repossessed by bailiffs.

1915

FIFTH SYMPHONY

Sibelius conducted the premiere at the Helsinki Stock Exchange, and revised it in 1916 and 1919.

1918 FINNISH CIVIL WAR

Sibelius supported the conservative 'Whites' (as opposed to the communist 'Reds') and during the first weeks of war several of his acquaintances were killed. Composer Robert Kajanus negotiated safe passage for Sibelius and Aino to leave Red-occupied Järvenpää for Helsinki.

1923–24 SEVENTH SYMPHONY

Following the premiere, Sibelius received the Knight Commander's Cross of the Order of the Dannebrog.

1957 DEATH

Sibelius died of a brain haemorrhage at his home aged 91.

1910–11 FOURTH SYMPHONY

His successful surgery and moderated indulgences brought renewal, as did the success of his Fourth Symphony.

1923 SIXTH SYMPHONY

Sibelius conducted the premiere with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra on 19 February.



Aionola (which translates to 'Aino's place'), Sibelius' countryside home on Lake Tuusula

Hans Abrahamsen *let me tell you* 2012–13 / note by Paul Griffiths

Part I

- 1 Let me tell you how it was
- 2 O but memory is not one but many
- 3 There was a time, I remember

Part II

- 4 Let me tell you how it is
- 5 Now I do not mind

Part III

- 6 I know you are there
- 7 I will go out now

Barbara Hannigan soprano

Composed in 2012–13, with tonight's soloist very much in mind, *let me tell you* is a half-hour dramatic monologue, voiced by a character who requires us to hear her. That character is not quite the Ophelia of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. She has the same words, her entire text being made up from words Ophelia speaks in the play, but she uses these words in different ways, and certainly to express herself differently.

She tells us of things to which there is little or no reference in the play, such as the nature of memory, or 'a time ... when we had no music,' or an explosive experience of love. Where Shakespeare's Ophelia descends into madness and watery death,

the protagonist of *let me tell you* comes to a different conclusion.

The words with which she has to recount her story – Ophelia's words – are barely adequate to her, but she has to make them serve, and she does. Her utterance is at once constrained and resolute, fragile and decisive, and its nature is realised at the opening by an adaptation of a technique used by Monteverdi, of rebounding on one note. What was an ornament 400 years ago becomes the means by which she can be at once hesitant and assertive.

Her entry into the piece comes early, but only after she has been summoned into a magical soundscape of piccolos, violin harmonics and celeste. The music – and this is true of the whole work – is at once familiar and strange, for the language of traditional tonality is present but fractured into new configurations. A high degree of consonance is coupled with harmonic states and progressions we have not heard before; the sense of a recognisable key comes only fleetingly; and melody here casts back to an ancient time of folk song – rather as Ophelia does in her derangement, or as Gertrude does in speaking of Ophelia's drowning, when, drifting down the stream, she 'chanted snatches of old tunes.'

There is familiarity and strangeness, too, in the rhythm. Generally the pulse is clear – it is picked out at the start in oscillating octaves from the celeste, passing later to other instruments – but the position of the strong beat is ambiguous. Time simultaneously ticks and floats.

Such music, beginning right away, not only prepares the protagonist's world but also foreshadows a crucial melodic element to be associated with her words, 'Let me tell you.' These words come three times in the piece, defining its three parts, the first recollective, the second set in the present, the third carrying a promise of what will happen in the future.

Having stated the inadequacy of words, the protagonist goes on, in two further songs, to wonder about the reliability of memory before she comes to a specific recollection – 'in limping time'; as the score has it – of that time without music. This makes her ponder on how music shifts and changes time, and we recognise that this music is doing so.

It achieves that at the opening of the second part by replaying and altering the opening of the first, to make a short introduction to the climactic fifth song, which plunges into the delirium of love.

The last part has an even shorter introduction, again going back to the beginning and taking it further, before arriving at the slow finale, marked *adagissimo*. Now microtonal tunings fold into the texture and, being derived from natural harmonics, re-root the music in a glistening new world of resonance. We are in the snow, in a white landscape where the erasure of detail and contour is the renewal of possibility.

Ophelia is one of those imaginary figures whose existence goes on beyond the work that gave them birth. She has appeared in paintings and in novels, including the one, also called *let me tell you*, that was the source for this piece. Now she speaks again through a performer on stage, in a mode that is intimate and demands attention. Her words come back to her transformed, and she has gained, as she herself might say, 'the powers of music.' □

Texts on Pages 10 & 11

Interval – 20 minutes

There are bars on all levels.

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Hans Abrahamsen composer b 1952 / profile by Paul Griffiths



The music of Hans Abrahamsen has the freshness of something untouched, and it's no wonder Hans is a composer of so much music about snow. Snow shapes itself on something familiar and offers the possibility of something new, such as in his piece *Schnee* (2006–8), scored for two pianos and percussion with contrasting trios and justly esteemed as one of the first classics of 21st-century music. In *Schnee*, gradually crystallising canons, playing for close on an hour, are also musical portraits of snow: its flurries, its delicacy, its cold.

An early beginner, Abrahamsen first had his work published when he was 16. By the age of 30 he had produced a sizeable output: several orchestral works (*Nacht und Trompeten*, a luminous and dramatic nocturne commissioned by the Berlin Philharmonic), two string quartets and numerous other pieces, mostly instrumental, including another fine example of wintry musical poetry, *Winternacht*.

In 1984 came a set of seven piano studies, which strikingly anticipated Ligeti's of the following year. Ligeti, briefly his teacher, had been one of his first heroes, for exactness and beauty, along with Steve Reich.

After the piano studies, Abrahamsen's productivity slowed, as he found a new outlet as an arranger, notably of pieces by Bach and Nielsen. Of original pieces, only a brief Rilke setting, *Herbstlied*, interrupted his silence between 1990 and 1998.

He then produced his first extended work in a decade and a half, the Piano Concerto, completed in 2000, with its turbulent ostinatos and contrasting stillnesses, and polyphony which looks back to *Winternacht*. The concerto is at once intimate and tightly crafted, as close to Schumann as it is to Stravinsky.

In 2004, Abrahamsen remade his piano studies as Four Pieces for Orchestra. Rivalling Ravel or Boulez for orchestral transformation, these movements discover in the keyboard originals bewitching sounds and expressive power.

Abrahamsen's work as an orchestrator has continued with a reduction of Nielsen's last symphony and an arrangement of Debussy's *Children's Corner*.

Microtonal tunings return in *Wald* for 15 players (2009), which evokes shadowy forests and hunting calls in an elaborate

musical structure. The ominous yet captivating misaligned world of *Wald* returns in Abrahamsen's Double Concerto for violin, piano and strings (2011).

Each composition joins its companions as a sibling, related but distinct. Abrahamsen's Fourth Quartet (2012) begins in a glacial world of high harmonics and ends with rhythmic intricacy. His piano concerto for left hand, *Left, alone* (2015), is a story of conflict, solitariness and communal exhilaration, and proves him ready for the next challenge he has set himself, an opera based on Hans Christian Andersen's *The Snow Queen*. □

Hans Abrahamsen let me tell you / text by Paul Griffiths, after the novel *let me tell you* (2008)

Part I

1

Let me tell you how it was.
I know I can do this.
I have the powers:
I take them here.
I have the right.

My words may be poor
but they will have to do.
There was a time when I could not do this:
I remember that time.

2

O but memory is not one but many –
a long music we have made
and will make again,
over and over,

with some things we know and some we do not,
some that are true and some we have made up,
some that have stayed from long before,
and some that have come this morning,

some that will go tomorrow
and some that have long been there
but that we will never find,
for to memory there is no end.

3

There was a time, I remember, when we had no music,
a time when there was no time for music,
and what is music if not time –

time of now and then tumbled into one another,
time turned and loosed,
time bended,

time blown up here and there,
time sweet and harsh,
time still and long?

Part II

4

Let me tell you how it is,
for you are the one who made me more than I was,
you are the one who loosed out this music.

Your face is my music lesson
and I sing.

5

Now I do not mind if it is day, if it is night.
If it is night,
an owl will call out.
If it is morning,
a robin will tune his bells.
Night, day: there is no difference for me.

What will make the difference is if you are with me.
For you are my sun.

You have sun-blasted me,
and turned me to light.

You have made me like glass –
like glass in an ecstasy from your light,
like glass in which light rained
and rained and rained and goes on,
like glass in which there are showers of light,
light that cannot end.

Part III

6

I know you are there.
I know I will find you.
Let me tell you how it will be.

7

I will go out now.
I will let go the door
and not look to see my hand as I take it away.

Snow falls.
So: I will go on in the snow.
I will have my hope with me.

I look up,
as if I could see the snow as it falls,
as if I could keep my eye on a little of it

and see it come down
all the way to the ground.
I cannot.

The snow flowers are all like each other
and I cannot keep my eyes on one.
I will give up this and go on.
I will go on.

let me tell you

Composed by Hans Abrahamsen
Text by Paul Griffiths

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LSO Artist Portrait: Barbara Hannigan



Sunday 17 March 2019 7-9pm, Barbican

LSO SEASON CONCERT ARTIST PORTRAIT: BARBARA HANNIGAN

Ligeti Concert Romănesc

Haydn Symphony No 86

Interval

Berg Lulu - Suite

Gershwin arr Hannigan & Elliot Girl Crazy - Suite

Barbara Hannigan conductor/soprano

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Carl Nielsen Symphony No 4 Op 29, 'Inextinguishable' 1916 / note by Stephen Johnson

- 1 **Allegro**
- 2 **Poco Allegretto**
- 3 **Poco Adagio Quasi Andante**
- 4 **Allegro**



Denmark remained neutral throughout the upheaval of World War I, but its citizens have always been acutely sensitive to the activities of its large and powerful neighbour to the south. For Nielsen there was an added dimension of philosophical crisis. It may be hard to believe now, but many European artists initially welcomed the prospect of war: here was a grand opportunity for 'spiritual cleansing', and a celebration of the traditional masculine virtues of courage, loyalty and devotion to one's country. Before the hostilities Nielsen had been an enthusiastic nationalist. But as he began to realise the horrors men could inflict on each other, his faith was rocked to the core. Nationalism, he wrote not long after the war, had been transformed into a 'spiritual syphilis,' the justification for the expression of 'senseless hate.'

Nielsen's faith in humanity may have suffered a setback, but rather than give in to despair he was driven to make some kind of affirmative statement: belief, if not in

human beings (still less in nationhood), then perhaps in life itself. This is an important clue to the meaning of the title of his Fourth Symphony. Nielsen added an explanatory note at the beginning of the score:

'The composer has tried to indicate in one word what music alone is capable of expressing to the full:
The elemental Will of Life.
Music is life, and like it, inextinguishable.'

The motion of that elemental will can be felt throughout this symphony. Although the broad outlines of the four conventional symphonic movements can be made out, the 'Inextinguishable' is really conceived in a single sweep. Nielsen normally identifies the movements of his symphonies with numbers, but here it would be difficult to know exactly where to put them.

It isn't always easy to see where one movement ends and another begins. And while each movement has its own themes, the more one gets to know the symphony the more the family resemblances begin to reveal themselves. One senses that the basic thematic material presented in the symphony's early stages is in a state of continual evolution.

The Fourth Symphony begins in chaos, violence and tonal instability, with massed woodwind and string figures clashing aggressively. But as the fury subsides a calm, singing woodwind tune emerges that will be lifted up magnificently in the bright key of E major at the end of the work. After many upheavals, the initial Allegro claws its way to a massive anticipation of that final outcome (only based on the tune's final phrase – the full glory is yet to come). But this fades into a gentle, intermezzo-like Poco Allegretto, dominated by woodwind. This has plenty of folkish charm, yet it also has its moments of mystery.

This too seems to fade, then a sudden anguished outburst from strings and timpani begins the Poco Adagio. After more fraught struggles this heaves itself up to another massive anticipation of the symphony's final E major triumph. A moment of wonderfully atmospheric, pregnant stillness (oboe and high strings), and a hurtling string passage lead – after a dramatic pause – into the final Allegro. This music seems determined to sing of hope, yet it meets powerful opposition, as a second timpanist joins the first to lead a destructive onslaught. After a quiet but tense section, the timpani begin their attack

with redoubled energy, but somehow the first movement's hopeful tune manages to reassert itself through the turmoil, now in full E-major radiance. And yet the timpanists are not silenced. Their final hammer blows suggest that the struggle to affirm must go on – there can be no final, utopian resolution. □

Carl Nielsen in Profile 1865–1931



N Nielsen is often described as a nationalist, and his role in Denmark's rise to musical nationhood is without parallel. Indeed, many of the songs Danish school children are still taught today were composed by Nielsen. After World War I Nielsen turned against nationalism, and having hymned nationhood in his Third Symphony (1911) he portrayed its decline from the 'high and beautiful' into 'senseless hate' in the strutting march rhythms of the Fifth (1922).

Nielsen's national consciousness was of a very different kind from that of most late 19th- and early 20th-century composers. His family were Danish peasants on the island of Funen (Fyn) and his father was leader of a village band. Young Carl soon joined as a violinist, and his first compositional efforts were dance tunes. Thus, unlike the vast majority of nationally inclined composers, Nielsen didn't have to 'discover' his country's indigenous culture: it was in his blood.

At 14 Nielsen enrolled in the army as a trumpeter, making himself useful in military bands by learning a wide range of instruments. How and when he first encountered classical music isn't clear but by the age of 19 he had become

accomplished enough as performer and composer to attend the Copenhagen Conservatory. Throughout his life Nielsen retained a fascinating mixture of earthy simplicity and intellectual sophistication, reading widely and keeping up to date with musical innovations. Initially he reacted against Wagner's modernism, but in later years he was fascinated by what progressive-minded composers like Bartók, Schoenberg and Hindemith were doing. His very last works show him as keen as ever to extend his musical horizons, though without sacrificing the rootedness. □

MUSIC ACADEMY OF THE WEST AT LSO ST LUKE'S

Friday 11 January

1–2pm

FREE LUNCHTIME CONCERT: SOLO PIANO COMPETITION WINNER

J S Bach Italian Concerto BWV 971
Elizabeth Ogonek
Orpheus Suite (after Rilke) (world premiere)
Chopin Préludes Op 28

Sophiko Simsiye piano

Friday 11 January

6.30–7.30pm

FREE EVENING RECITAL: MARILYN HORNE SONG COMPETITION WINNERS

A selection of songs by Schubert,
Ravel, De Falla and a world premiere
by Ricky Ian Gordon

Kelsey Lauritano mezzo-soprano
Andrew Sun piano

MUSIC
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OF THE WEST

Sir Simon Rattle conductor



Sir Simon Rattle was born in Liverpool and studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London. From 1980 to 1998, he was Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and was appointed Music Director in 1990. He moved to Berlin in 2002 and held the positions of Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic until he stepped down in 2018. Sir Simon became Music Director of the London Symphony Orchestra in September 2017.

Sir Simon has made over 70 recordings for EMI (now Warner Classics) and has received numerous prestigious international awards for his recordings on various labels. Releases on EMI include Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms* (which received the 2009 Grammy Award for Best Choral Performance); Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*; Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges*; Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker – Suite*; Mahler's *Symphony No 2*; and Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. From 2014 Sir Simon recorded the Beethoven, Schumann and Sibelius symphony cycles on the Berlin Philharmonic's new in-house label, Berliner Philharmoniker. His most recent recordings include Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Turnage's *Remembering*, and Ravel, *Dutilleux and Delage* on Blu-Ray and DVD with the LSO on LSO Live.

Music education is of supreme importance to Sir Simon. His partnership with the Berlin Philharmonic broke new ground with the education programme *Zukunft@Bphil*, earning him the Comenius Prize, the Schiller Special Prize from the city of Mannheim, the Golden Camera and the Urania Medal. He and the Berlin Philharmonic were appointed International UNICEF Ambassadors in 2004 – the first time this honour has been conferred on an artistic ensemble. Sir Simon has also been awarded several prestigious personal honours, which include a knighthood in 1994, becoming a member of the Order of Merit from Her Majesty the Queen in 2014, and being given the Freedom of the City of London in 2018.

In 2013 Sir Simon began a residency at the Baden-Baden Easter Festival, conducting Mozart's *The Magic Flute* and a series of concerts with the Berlin Philharmonic. Subsequent seasons have included performances of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, Peter Sellars' ritualisation of Bach's *St John Passion*, Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier*, Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust*, Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* and, most recently, *Parsifal* in 2018. For the Salzburg Easter Festival, Rattle has conducted staged productions of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Mozart's *Così fan tutte*, Britten's *Peter Grimes*, Debussy's *Pelléas*

and *Mélisande*, Strauss' *Salome* and Bizet's *Carmen*, a concert performance of Mozart's *Idomeneo* and many concert programmes.

Sir Simon has long-standing relationships with the leading orchestras in London, Europe and the US, initially working closely with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Boston Symphony Orchestra, and more recently with The Philadelphia Orchestra. He regularly conducts the Vienna Philharmonic, with whom he has recorded the complete Beethoven symphonies and piano concertos with Alfred Brendel, and is also a Principal Artist of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Founding Patron of Birmingham Contemporary Music Group.

During the 2018/19 season Sir Simon will embark upon tours to Japan, South Korea, South America and Europe with the London Symphony Orchestra. He will conduct the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra for the first time in Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde* and will return to the Deutsche Staatsoper Berlin, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the Berlin Philharmonic. In March 2019 he will conduct Peter Sellars' revival of Bach's *St John Passion* with both the Berlin Philharmonic and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. □

Barbara Hannigan soprano



Embodiment of music with an unparalleled dramatic sensibility, soprano and conductor Barbara Hannigan is an artist at the forefront of creation. Her artistic colleagues include directors and conductors Christoph Marthaler, Sir Simon Rattle, Sasha Waltz, Kent Nagano, Vladimir Jurowski, John Zorn, Andreas Kriegenburg, Andris Nelsons, Reinbert de Leeuw, David Zinman, Sir Antonio Pappano, Katie Mitchell, Kirill Petrenko and Krzysztof Warlikowski.

As a singer and conductor – or both simultaneously – the Canadian musician has shown commitment to the music of our time, and has given world premiere performances of over 85 new creations. Hannigan has collaborated extensively with such composers as Boulez, Dutilleux, Ligeti, Stockhausen, Salvatore Sciarrino, John Barry, Pascal Dusapin, Brett Dean, George Benjamin and Hans Abrahamsen.

Hannigan opened her 2018/19 season singing the title role in the world premiere of Michael Jarrell's *Berenice* at Paris Opera, conducted by Philippe Jordan and directed by Claus Guth. She will give performances of Abrahamsen's *let me tell you* – which she has now performed with eleven orchestras worldwide – this season with four more European orchestras.

She will conduct Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, the Cleveland Orchestra, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Münchner Philharmoniker and the LSO, in music by Haydn, Sibelius, Strauss, Berg, Bartók and Gershwin. This season also sees the launch of her groundbreaking mentorship scheme, 'Equilibrium Young Artists'. With over 20 performances with four partner orchestras, Equilibrium's first season sees Hannigan conduct her first opera, Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*. Barbara will also be Music Director of the prestigious Ojai Festival in California in summer 2019, and in 2019/20 begins her tenure as Principal Guest Conductor of Gothenburg Symphony in Sweden.

Unforgettable operatic lead-role performances at the world's leading opera companies include the title role in Berg's *Lulu* in productions at La Monnaie and at Hamburg Staatsoper; *Mélisande* in Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* at the 2016 Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and in Krzysztof Warlikowski's 2017 production at the Ruhrtriennale; and Marie in Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten* at the Bayerische Staatsoper, for which she won Germany's Faust Award. Further recent operatic world premiere incarnations include Ophelia in Brett Dean's *Hamlet* at Glyndebourne Festival 2017; and

Isabel in George Benjamin's *Lessons in Love and Violence* at Royal Opera House Covent Garden in 2018.

Hannigan's first album as singer and conductor, *Crazy Girl Crazy* (Alpha Classics, 2017) – featuring works by Berio, Berg and Gershwin – won her the 2018 Grammy Award for Best Classical Solo Vocal album, the 2018 Opus Klassik award for Best Solo Vocal Performance and the 2018 JUNO Award for Classical Album of the Year. She continues her relationship with Alpha Classics and with her long-time collaborator and mentor, Dutch pianist Reinbert de Leeuw, for the 2018 album *Vienna: Fin de Siècle*.

Further awards include Singer of the Year (Opernwelt, 2013); Musical Personality of the Year (Syndicat de la Presse Française, 2012); and the Rolf Schock Prize for Musical Arts (2018), the multi-disciplinary prize across science and the arts which recognises trailblazing and brilliant figures within their respective fields. Barbara Hannigan holds honorary doctorates from the University of Toronto and Mt Allison University, and was appointed to the Order of Canada in 2016. □

London Symphony Orchestra on stage tonight

Guest Leader

Julien Szulman

First Violins

Carmine Lauri
Clare Duckworth
Ginette Decuyper
Laura Dixon
Gerald Gregory
Maxine Kwok-Adams
William Melvin
Claire Parfitt
Elizabeth Pigram
Laurent Quenelle
Harriet Rayfield
Colin Renwick
Sylvain Vasseur
Rhys Watkins
Julian Azkoul

Second Violins

David Alberman
Thomas Norris
Sarah Quinn
David Ballesteros
Matthew Gardner
Julian Gil Rodriguez
Alix Lagasse
Belinda McFarlane
Iwona Muszynska
Csilla Pogany
Miya Väisänen
Andrew Pollock
Paul Robson
Louise Shackelton

Violas

Edward Vanderspar
Gillianne Haddow
Malcolm Johnston
Anna Bastow
German Clavijo
Lander Echevarria
Carol Ella
Robert Turner
Philip Hall
Jennifer Lewisohn
Rachel Robson
Alistair Scahill

Cellos

Rebecca Gilliver
Alastair Blayden
Jennifer Brown
Noel Bradshaw
Eve-Marie Caravassilis
Daniel Gardner
Hilary Jones
Amanda Truelove
Laure Le Dantec
Simon Thompson

Double Basses

Burak Marlali
Colin Paris
Matthew Gibson
Thomas Goodman
Patrick Laurence
Joe Melvin
Jani Pensola
Simo Väisänen

Flutes

Gareth Davies
Amy-Jayne Milton

Piccolo

Patricia Moynihan

Oboes

Juliana Koch
Rosie Jenkins

Cor Anglais

Christine Pendrill

Clarinets

Chris Richards
Chi-Yu Mo

Bass Clarinet

Christelle Pochet

Bassoons

Rachel Gough
Joost Bosdijk

Contra Bassoon

Martin Field

Horns

Alexander Edmundson
Angela Barnes
Mark Vines
Jonathan Lipton
Andy Budden

Trumpets

Dave Elton
Toby Street
Paul Mayes

Trombones

Mark Templeton
James Maynard

Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

Tuba

Owen Slade

Timpani

Nigel Thomas
Erika Ohman

Percussion

Neil Percy
David Jackson
Sam Walton

Harp

Bryn Lewis

Celeste

Catherine Edwards

MUSIC ACADEMY OF THE WEST:

KESTON MAX FELLOWS

Violins

Agnes Tse
Alan Snow

Viola

Stephanie Anne Block

Cello

David Bender

Double Bass

Nina Bernat

Flute

William Cedeño

Clarinet

Taylor Isberg

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Bassoon

Quinn Delaney

Trumpet

Francis Lawrence LaPorte

Horn

William Loveless

Bass Trombone

Lisa Stoneham

Percussion

Joe Desotelle

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Details in this publication were correct at time of going to press.