

LSO

# DEBUSSY

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Resident  
Orchestra

**London Symphony Orchestra**

**Sunday 25 March 2018**  
**Barbican Hall**

**7-9.30pm**

**LSO SEASON CONCERT**  
**DEBUSSY AND BEYOND**

**Boulez** Livre pour cordes  
**Bartók** Violin Concerto No 2

*Interval*

**Ewan Campbell** Frail Skies  
(world premiere, Panufnik Commission) \*

**Stravinsky** Chant du rossignol  
**Debussy** La mer

**François-Xavier Roth** conductor  
**Renaud Capuçon** violin

\* Panufnik commission generously supported  
by Lady Hamlyn and The Helen Hamlyn Trust

**5.30pm Barbican Hall**

**LSO Platforms: Guildhall Artists**

**Debussy** Danse sacrée et danse profane  
for harp and strings

**Debussy** String Quartet in G minor Op 10

# Welcome



Welcome to tonight's LSO concert, on the day that marks 100 years since the death of Claude Debussy. We began our celebration of the composer's work in January, when Principal Guest Conductor François-Xavier Roth presented two concerts of Debussy's early influences and greatest orchestral works. This evening we come full circle, with music from the 20th and 21st centuries that was influenced by Debussy's innovative style.

We are delighted to feature a world premiere in tonight's programme, *Frail Skies* by Ewan Campbell. This work was commissioned by the LSO following the 2015 Panufnik Composers Scheme, an LSO Discovery initiative that provides invaluable experience to six emerging composers each year, with generous support from Lady Hamlyn and The Helen Hamlyn Trust. François-Xavier Roth has been a key figure in the Scheme since its inception in

2005, acting as a mentor to participants during public workshops, which this year took place on 18 March. With his ongoing commitment to the scheme it is particularly special that he conducts the premiere of *Frail Skies* this evening.

It is also a great pleasure to be joined by regular LSO collaborator Renaud Capuçon, who brings his lyricism and energy to Bartók's Second Violin Concerto.

A pre-concert performance given by Guildhall School musicians also took place this evening. These recitals, which are free to ticket-holders, take place on selected dates throughout the season and provide a platform for the musicians of the future.

I hope that you enjoy tonight's concert and that you can join us again soon. François-Xavier Roth returns to Debussy in our next Half Six Fix concert on 28 March, an hour-long, informal performance with digital programme notes.

**Kathryn McDowell CBE DL**  
Managing Director

## LSO News

### THE LSO'S 2018/19 SEASON

The LSO's 2018/19 season is now on sale. Highlights include Music Director Sir Simon Rattle's exploration of folk-inspired music in his series *Roots and Origins*; Artist Portraits with soprano and conductor Barbara Hannigan and pianist Daniil Trifonov; and eight premieres across the season. Full listings are available at [Iso.co.uk/201819season](http://Iso.co.uk/201819season).

### GRUPPEN AT TATE MODERN

The LSO has announced two performances of Stockhausen's *Gruppen* in Tate Modern's Turbine Hall with Sir Simon Rattle on Saturday 30 June 2018. Tickets will go on sale in April; visit [Iso.co.uk/tate](http://Iso.co.uk/tate) for details.

### WELCOME TO TONIGHT'S GROUPS

Tonight we are delighted to welcome **EF Cultural Tours** and **Educational Travel Adventures**.

## Online

### DEBUSSY ON LSO PLAY

Watch François-Xavier Roth conduct Debussy's *Prélude à l'après midi d'un faune* in exquisite detail on our digital platform, LSO Play. Choose between multiple camera angles and learn more about the Orchestra and the music at [play Iso.co.uk](http://play Iso.co.uk).

### WATCH AGAIN: YOUTUBE LIVE STREAM

Missed our latest live stream on Sunday 11 March with Sir John Eliot Gardiner? Then head to our YouTube channel, where the whole concert is available to watch for free.

### INTERVIEW: ANN HALLENBERG

On the LSO Blog, mezzo-soprano Ann Hallenberg, our soloist on Sunday 11 March, tells us more about her mission to perform lost and forgotten pieces.

Read our news, watch videos and more

- ▷ [Iso.co.uk/news](http://Iso.co.uk/news)
- ▷ [youtube.com/Iso](http://youtube.com/Iso)
- ▷ [Iso.co.uk/blog](http://Iso.co.uk/blog)

# Tonight's Concert / by François-Xavier Roth



With 2018 being 100 years since the death of Debussy I wanted to find a way to celebrate this major figure in music history, whom many people believe was the first to really advance modern music. Although Debussy is an important composer for the orchestra he actually didn't create that many works for these forces – no symphonies and only one opera. I thought it would be great to have three different programmes that guide us through Debussy's music, from his influences through to whom he influenced. It's fantastic to be celebrating this most important of French composers with the LSO.

Tonight's programme, the final of the series, was conceived with music by those whom I consider to be Debussy's 'sons', the next generation influenced by Debussy. There's no doubt that Pierre Boulez was heavily influenced by his music, and you can hear it in so many of his works, including *Live pour cordes*. We have Bartók's Second Violin Concerto with Renaud Capuçon, Stravinsky's *Chant du rossignol* and, by Debussy himself, *La mer*. We will also hear a new work by Ewan Campbell from the LSO's Panufnik Composers Scheme. It's great to see the commitment for the next generation of composers, and it's something that every orchestra should take as seriously and as joyfully as the LSO. □

## PROGRAMME NOTE WRITERS

**Jan Smaczny** is the Sir Hamilton Harty Professor of Music at Queen's University, Belfast. A well-known writer and broadcaster, he specialises in the life and works of Dvořák and Czech opera, and has published books on the repertoire of the Prague Provisional Theatre and Dvořák's Cello Concerto.

**Jeremy Thurlow** is a composer; his music ranges from string quartets to video-opera, and he won the George Butterworth Award in 2007. The author of a book on Dutilleux, he broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 and is a Fellow of Robinson College, Cambridge.

**Jo Kirkbride** is a freelance writer on classical music, whose broad roster of clients includes the London Sinfonietta, Britten Sinfonia, Aldeburgh Productions, Cheltenham Festival and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. She holds a masters from Cambridge University and a doctorate from Durham University.

**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.

# Coming Up in April

Sunday 8 April 2018 7pm  
Barbican Hall

## SHOSTAKOVICH'S EIGHTH

Beethoven Piano Concerto No 4  
Shostakovich Symphony No 8

Gianandrea Noseda conductor  
Nikolai Lugansky piano

Sunday 15 April 2018 7pm  
Barbican Hall

## ELGAR'S CELLO CONCERTO

Patrick Giguère Revealing  
(world premiere, Panufnik Commission \*)

Elgar Cello Concerto  
Sibelius Symphony No 5

Susanna Malkki conductor  
Daniel Müller-Schott cello

\* The Panufnik Composers Scheme is generously supported by Lady Hamlyn and The Helen Hamlyn Trust

Thursday 19 & 26 April 2018 7.30pm  
Barbican Hall

## MAHLER'S NINTH

Helen Grime Woven Space \*  
(world premiere)  
Mahler Symphony No 9

Sir Simon Rattle conductor

\* Commissioned for Sir Simon Rattle and the LSO by the Barbican

26 April generously supported by Baker McKenzie

**Baker  
McKenzie.**

Sunday 22 April 2018 7pm  
Barbican Hall

## MAHLER'S TENTH

Tippett The Rose Lake \*  
Mahler comp Cooke Symphony No 10

Sir Simon Rattle conductor

\* Supported by Resonate, a PRS Foundation initiative in partnership with the Association of British Orchestras, BBC Radio 3 and the Boltini Trust

# Pierre Boulez *Livre pour cordes* 1968–88 / note by Jo Kirkbride

## 1a Variation

## 1b Mouvement

**F**ew works in Boulez's oeuvre are as instructive to an understanding of his music as *Livre pour cordes*. Its extended genesis, revision history and structural complexity make it one of the most unusual and – in terms of its ambition, at least – comprehensive scores that he ever put together. Boulez was just 23 when, in 1948, he began work on his First String Quartet. It was to be his first score without piano and, in a reference to French symbolist poet **Stéphane Mallarmé** ▷, it was conceived as a work with moveable parts. That is, its six movements were to be performed in whichever order the musicians might choose, perhaps even performed in isolation, with few other musical directions (tempo, dynamics) to aid the performers. But the complexity of the *Livre pour Quator* (Book for Quartet) meant that it was almost a decade before it was published, at last, in its entirety. Even then, performances of the complete quartet remained rare, thanks – as Boulez himself admitted – to its fiendish difficulty.

But Boulez's scores never stayed finished for long. A master of revision and redrafting, Boulez returned to the score in 1968 and revised two of its movements into the

*Livre pour cordes* (Book for Strings), the aim being to make it more palatable for performance. 'When I reread the *Quatuor à cordes*, which had long been finished', he said publicly, 'I saw that the performance problems for a quartet were very great and that a conductor would be necessary to resolve them. Yet a conductor in front of a quartet is not really convincing, so I thought, after having played Webern's Opus 5 several times, that the way to take this text and make it really give its maximum was to orchestrate it.'

For Boulez, however, re-imagining the work for orchestra meant re-thinking the music altogether, which resulted in *Livre pour cordes* becoming, in his words, 'practically a new piece'. 20 years later, he revised the work once more – and in doing so encapsulated 40 years of his creative thinking into a single ten-minute work. In 1948, Boulez had just met Cage and Stockhausen and made headlines for his blunt and polemical musings on music, many of which were directed towards anyone who disavowed the new serialism. Then a vehement anti-tonalist, by the time he recomposed the *Livre pour cordes* two decades later, a more expressive, perhaps even more relaxed voice had materialised.

Both versions of Boulez emerge in the *Livre*, which in its rich swathes of string texture (more than 34 voices deep) is a world away from the quartet with which it originated. There are echoes here of the pointillist style Boulez inherited from Webern in many of his early works, but a lyrical thread runs through this fragmented landscape, at times almost Bartókian in its resplendence. Boulez, for his part, acknowledged that the work veers between 'intentionally austere bareness' and 'the most proliferating exuberance' – itself a neat summary of his career as a whole. □

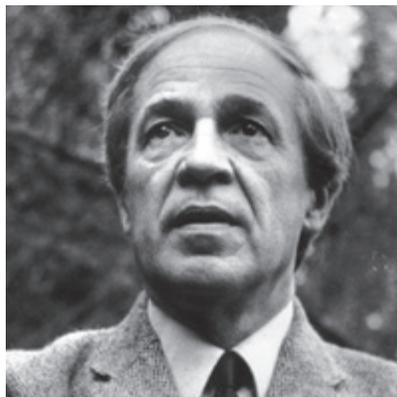
## ▷ BOULEZ AND THE LSO

Boulez first collaborated with the LSO in 1967, appearing regularly with the Orchestra as both conductor and composer. His programmes with the LSO focused on great works of the 20th century, the works of living composers and occasionally performances of his own compositions. Boulez was also involved with the Orchestra's education programme, LSO Discovery, giving conducting masterclasses and guided concerts exploring key works by Stravinsky, Webern and Bartók.

## ▷ STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ

Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–98) was a French symbolist poet and a major literary figure of the late 19th century. Spending much of his life as an English teacher, by the 1890s his poetry had gained recognition in literary journals and established his reputation. His work is known for its complexity and ambiguity, with importance placed on sounds rather than meaning and on the physical spacing of words on the page. His writing has inspired many musical interpretations, notably Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, Ravel's *Trois poèmes de Mallarmé*. The poet also inspired Boulez's *Livre pour Quatuor* and his *Pli selon Pli* (1957–62), a portrait of the poet for soprano and orchestra.

## Pierre Boulez in profile / by Benjamin Picard



**B**orn in 1925, Pierre Boulez's first compositions date back to the mid-1940s, when he had recently emerged from studies in Paris with Olivier Messiaen, who encouraged his curiosity about Asian, African and European music. At the same time, studies with René Leibowitz, a Schoenberg and Webern scholar, introduced him to twelve-note composition, which he adapted to his own purposes. His Second Piano Sonata (1947–48) marked his creative coming of age. The next step was an exhaustive examination of the basic elements of music in an attempt to make rhythmic values, loudness and nuances obey serial principles, evident in the first section of his *Structures I* for two pianos (1952).

Boulez's appointment in 1971 as Principal Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra in London had far-reaching effects on the musical life of Britain and Europe, while his acceptance of the Musical Director position of the New York Philharmonic had an equally stimulating effect on American music, posts he held until 1975 and 1977 respectively. In the mid 1970s until 1991, he concentrated on work at IRCAM, the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique, which he founded at the request of President Georges Pompidou. There his contact with computer technicians and musicians influenced *Répons* (1981–84) and ... *explosante-fixe* ... (1991–93).

In 1992 he signed a contract with Deutsche Grammophon, devoting a considerable amount of time to recording important works of the 20th century. His recordings have won more than 25 Grammy awards. At the same time, he continued his work as a composer throughout the late 20th and early 21st centuries writing *Incises* (1994), *Anthèmes 2* (1997), *Notations VII* (1998) and *Dérive 2* (2006), as well as assuming the Composer's Chair at Carnegie Hall. Pierre Boulez died in 2016 at the age of 90. □

## Béla Bartók in profile / by Andrew Stewart



**B**orn in 1881 in Nagyszentmiklós, Hungary (now Sînnicolau Mare, Romania), Bartók began piano lessons with his mother at the age of five. From 1899 to 1903 he studied piano and composition at the Royal Academy of Music in Budapest, where he created a number of works that echoed the style of Brahms and Richard Strauss.

After graduating he discovered Austro-Hungarian and Slavic folk music, travelling extensively with his friend Zoltán Kodály and recording countless ethnic songs and dances which began to influence his own compositions. His compositions were also influenced by the works of Debussy, to which

he was introduced by Kodály in 1907, the year in which he became Professor of Piano at the Budapest Conservatory. Bartók established his mature style with such scores as the ballet *The Miraculous Mandarin* (1918–19, completed 1926–31) and his opera *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* (1911, completed 1918). He revived his career as a concert pianist in 1927 when he gave the premiere of his First Piano Concerto in Mannheim.

Bartók detested the rise of fascism and in October 1940 he emigrated to the US. At first he concentrated on ethnomusicological researches, but eventually returned to composition and created a significant group of 'American' works, including the Concerto for Orchestra and his Third Piano Concerto.

Throughout his working life, Bartók collected, transcribed and annotated the folk-songs of many countries, a commitment that brought little recognition but one which he regarded as his most important contribution to music. He declined the security of a composition professorship during his final years in America, although he did accept the post of visiting assistant in music at Columbia University from March 1941 to 1942 until ill health forced his retirement. □

# Béla Bartók Violin Concerto No 2 BB 117 1937–38 / note by Jan Smaczny

- 1 **Allegro non troppo**
- 2 **Andante tranquillo**
- 3 **Allegro molto**

**Renaud Capuçon** violin

**B**artók's compositions of the 1930s are not noted for an air of compromise. The academic recognition he achieved by the middle of the same decade did nothing to blunt a mind which fed on the challenges offered by exploring and extending tonality. Despite success at home and a steady stream of commissions, nowhere in Europe in this period could be described as easy for those who worked at the frontiers of artistic endeavour, and Bartók came in for his share of opprobrium from the right-wing press. One of the silliest of criticisms was that Bartók's music was the product of 'a bleak and destructive soul'. None of the works composed in any period of Bartók's life would lend credibility to this sort of nonsense, least of all (of the works of the late 1930s) the Second Violin Concerto.

As far as Bartók was concerned, the Second Violin Concerto was, effectively, his only such work for public consumption. It has been placed second since the composer's death in order to avoid confusion with a

much earlier work that had never been performed in Bartók's lifetime. This 'first' violin concerto was revived after Bartók's death and given its premiere in 1958.

The 'second' concerto was written for the Hungarian violinist **Zoltán Székely**▷, between 1937 and 1938 when, amongst other things, Bartók was engaged in writing *Contrasts* for violin, clarinet and piano. It seems that the composer had originally intended to write a series of variations for violin and orchestra, but Székely had insisted on the three movements of the standard concerto.

In the end, both artists had their own way: Székely was presented with a three-movement concerto in accordance with his wishes, but the slow movement is a set of free variations and the finale is a kind of variation fantasy on the opening *Allegro non troppo*.

As a whole, the musical language of the concerto is more immediately approachable than much of what Bartók wrote in the 1930s, yet this does not prevent moments of extraordinary harmonic ferocity, particularly in the outer movements.

The impression at the opening of the concerto, however, with its pulsing B-major

chord, is one of folk-inflected lyricism. For all the gentleness of its first entry, the part for the soloist is extraordinarily taxing: both musical tensions and virtuosity reach a climax in and around the cadenza. The relaxed outer sections of the slow movement surround a brief, athletic scherzando break led by the soloist. The broadly developed finale has unconcealed affinities with the first movement, not least in the cut of its opening solo theme, but never does the resemblance lead to pointless repetition; as ever, Bartók looks beyond one range of thematic and harmonic possibilities to discover a set of new ones. □

## Interval – 20 minutes

There are bars on all levels of the concert hall; ice cream can be bought at the stands on Stalls and Circle level. Visit the **Barbican Shop** on Level -1 and see our new range of **Gifts and Accessories**.

## ▷ ZOLTÁN SZÉKELY



Zoltán Székely (1903–2001) was a Hungarian violinist and composer. He studied composition under Kodály at the Franz Liszt Academy in Budapest, and mainly composed chamber music. In 1935 he became the leader of the Hungarian String Quartet, a position that he held until 1970, including during World War II, when the quartet were trapped in the Netherlands. At the age of 18, he began appearing in sonata recitals with Bartók (pictured with Székely above) and became an interpreter of the older composer's works, also arranging Bartók's *Romanian Dances* for violin and piano. In 1950 Székely and the Quartet moved to the US for a two-year residency at University of Southern California, LA. He died in 2001 in Banff, Canada, where he was the long-time artist-in-residence at the Banff Center.



# RENAUD CAPUÇON

Renaud Capuçon expands his wide-ranging concerto discography with Bartók's two violin concertos with the London Symphony Orchestra under its Principal Guest Conductor, François-Xavier Roth.

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Renaud Capuçon will be signing copies of his recordings in the Barbican Hall foyer level -1 following this evening's concert



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# Ewan Campbell *Frail Skies* (world premiere)

2017 / note by Jo Kirkbride



‘I have always loved the sky’, says Ewan Campbell. ‘I grew up surrounded by fields in Kent, and used to watch the sunset like it was TV every evening.’ It says much about Campbell’s musical style that these vivid childhood experiences have found their way into his music so many years later. For Campbell, composition is about bringing the world around him to the score, and opening up that score to the world. *Frail Skies* is a tribute to the sky in all its beauty and its volatility, but it is also a commentary on the political and environmental uncertainties of the times we live in – where people are fickle and views seem to change as quickly as the winds.

While Campbell reveals that his scores typically take shape quickly, their whole structural sequence charted out ‘before I actually write a single note’, *Frail Skies* was different. ‘I only had the first few minutes planned out when I began composing’, he says. ‘I then very roughly sketched most of the piece in notes directly onto the computer, but was continually editing and changing what I had already written long before the piece was finished.’ For someone fascinated – almost obsessed – with the physical, structural reality of a work, it led to a rather beautiful creative moment.

‘For the first time I felt like a sculptor adding and chiselling off parts as I gradually discovered the piece I wanted to write.’

Many of the ideas he scribbled down right at the outset are audible in the finished work. ‘An exquisite interference pattern’ over a low rumble at the opening, ‘string spiders’ that interweave and entangle as the texture thickens, the ‘woodwind strobe’ we hear as the orchestra reaches its zenith – all made the final cut, each seamlessly integrated into Campbell’s vast, sky-high canvas. The magnitude of this canvas is reinforced by the **tam-tams** placed either side of the orchestra, their deep, lustrous timbre framing the empty registral space of the opening.

Amidst these hazy, subterranean textures, only a floating, stratospheric solo cello pierces the gloom, its frailty signalled when it falters and disappears amidst the gathering woodwinds. This is just the start of a gathering storm: soon, clouds begin to grow and accumulate, and droplets start to fill the air. As the shrieking high strings and winds become ever more incessant, at last the storm breaks with a swell of thunder and a clatter of percussion. After the squall comes the sunshine, but even here the eerie

chromaticism of the strings maintains a sense of disquiet – the sky is never calm for long. □

## ▷ TAM-TAMS

The tam-tam is a percussion instrument, also known as a ‘chau gong’. It is a flat-faced gong with no dome at its centre, and has no definite pitch. The tam-tam has been used in western classical music since the late 18th century, but originated in China and can be traced back as far as the Han Dynasty (c 200 BC).

*Frail Skies* is an LSO Panufnik Composers Scheme commission, generously supported by Lady Hamlyn and The Helen Hamlyn Trust.

## ▷ PANUFNIK COMPOSERS SCHEME

Ewan Campbell was a participant of the 2015/16 Panufnik Composers Scheme, which offers six emerging composers each year the opportunity to write for the LSO. Guided by composer Colin Matthews, the scheme enables composers to experiment over time and develop their orchestral writing skills.

The Panufnik Composers Scheme was devised by the Orchestra in association with Lady Panufnik in memory of her late husband, the composer Sir Andrzej Panufnik, and is generously supported by Lady Hamlyn and The Helen Hamlyn Trust.

## STILL TO COME: PANUFNIK WORLD PREMIERES

Sunday 15 April 2018 7pm, Barbican Hall  
**PATRICK GIGUÈRE**  
Susanna Mälkki conductor

Sunday 24 March 2019 7pm, Barbican Hall  
**DONGHOON SHIN**  
François-Xavier Roth conductor

Sunday 9 June 2019 7pm, Barbican Hall  
**LIAM MATTISON**  
Elim Chan conductor

## Ewan Campbell in profile / by Jo Kirkbride



**F**or a composer of his stature, Ewan Campbell is remarkably self-effacing. Although he learned the cello and piano from a young age, taking up the double bass aged twelve, he didn't try his hand at composition until he started university several years later. He claims that he has always been 'a pretty poor pianist and had to learn every piece pretty much by rote', remembering with fondness the other musicians in his youth orchestra 'fiercely rehearsing their more difficult parts' as he looked on from the comfort of the double bass section. But any lack of facility at the piano has always been at odds with his fondness for improvisation, with which he feels much more at home. 'I realised it was much more satisfying to improvise in the style and with the motifs of whatever piece I happened to be learning', he says. 'The pleasure of making up my own music, quicker and more accurately than I could learn someone else's, first gave me the belief I might be able to become a composer.'

Still, the idea of becoming a professional musician was so far from his thoughts that he enrolled at university to study not music but maths, 'with the immodest hope to understand as much of everything as possible'. But by the end of his first week he had already made up his mind

to change direction and study music at King's College London. A Masters degree at Cambridge University followed and now he counts himself among the teaching staff there too. 'I think I had always wanted to be a composer', he says, 'and never quite admitted it to myself.'

For Campbell, composing is a visceral, instinctive artform. His creative process begins with words, visualising what the music will look like and feel like before he transforms these ideas into something audible. He takes inspiration from the everyday – the sound of geese in the sky, dogs barking, motors rumbling – and is keen to explore other ways in which music and the 'real world' can coincide. This fascination with music's structural, three-dimensional form has led him to develop an unusual collaboration with Ordnance Survey, through which he creates cartographic scores, transmuting maps into music and vice versa. 'In many ways cartography is to a landscape, what music notation is to sound', he explains. 'They both use two-dimensional visualisation to represent something which is multi-dimensional, and in the process create a beautiful pictorial format of their own.'

Over the years his distinctive style has earned him numerous high-profile accolades, including prizes at the New York-based Counterpoint Competition, the Forme uniche Competition in Adelaide and the Italian Mare Nostrum Competition. His music has been performed by ensembles including Britten Sinfonia, Küss Quartet, Fukio Ensemble, Lontano, Ensemble Matisse, Consortium 5, The Hermes Experiment, and Mercury Quartet.

And next? A new cartographic work for violinist Thomas Gould which will be written directly onto a map of Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh, its curves and contours allowing Campbell to explore the landscape through a three-dimensional virtual soundscape. After that, he says, he would love nothing more than to write another orchestral piece. 'They're such hard work, but so rewarding.' □

# Igor Stravinsky Chant du rossignol 1914–17 / note by Jan Smaczny

—  
It was the blend of fairy tale and allegory so beloved of the Russians that first drew Stravinsky to Hans Christian Andersen's story of *The Nightingale*.  
—

In the story, a nightingale sings to the Emperor before being temporarily displaced by a mechanical version. In the end, with the Emperor on his death-bed, the nightingale returns to restore the Emperor's health with his sweet song. Stravinsky saw potential in this story as the subject of his first opera and the oriental setting was an added attraction. The libretto and first musical sketches secured the approval of Stravinsky's teacher Rimsky-Korsakov, and the first act was completed in 1909.

When Stravinsky began work on *The Firebird*, *The Nightingale* was interrupted, and it was not until 1913 that Stravinsky returned to the opera. By that time, however, his style had passed through the watershed of *The Rite of Spring* and the composer was

deeply aware of the disparity between the first act and the remaining two. The work was first performed by the **Ballets Russes** in May 1914 in Paris, and although Stravinsky considered it one of his loveliest works from that period, he was worried by its lack of drama.

The composer's interest in the work received new impetus in 1917 when Sergei Diaghilev suggested turning it into a ballet. Instead, Stravinsky worked up a symphonic poem from the more recently composed second and third acts of the opera, and the new work was presented in 1920 under Swiss conductor Ernest Ansermet, with designs by Henri Matisse.

The story was divided into three sections: the fête in the Emperor of China's palace, the two nightingales, and the illness and recovery of the Emperor of China. The brilliant opening section, depicting the fête in honour of the nightingale, clearly benefits from the composer's experience with *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*. The latter in particular seems to hover in the middle distance during the 'Marche Chinoise', which announces the arrival of the Emperor and concludes the first part.

The singing of the real nightingale begins the middle section; the Japanese envoys arrive and present the artificial nightingale, whose song is played by the oboe against a mechanical rumble in the piano, celeste, harp, clarinet and lower strings. In the third section, Death, surrounded by his minions, sits on the Emperor's chest and wears his regalia. His fate seems sealed until the true nightingale comes and sings outside the window when the mechanical one will not. Each outpouring from the nightingale results in Death giving up one of the Emperor's ornaments until all have been surrendered. The work concludes with a funeral march for the courtiers (briefly reminiscent of Mussorgsky's opera *Boris Godunov*) who come to look at their dead Emperor. However, he is awake and greets them, having been saved by the true nightingale's song. □

## ▷ STRAVINSKY'S BALLETS

Among Stravinsky's best known works are his ballets, including *The Firebird* (1909–10), *Petrushka* (1910–11) and *The Rite of Spring* (1913). Written in the space of just a few years, these works gained notoriety through The Ballets Russes' lavish productions.

## ▷ THE BALLETS RUSSES (1909–29)



The Ballet Russes was a ballet company founded in Paris by Sergei Diaghilev. Through collaboration with the leading artists of the time, the company endeavoured to create a body of work that combined fearless aesthetic exploration with the highest artistic standards. They produced Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (pictured above), Satie's *Parade* with a libretto by Jean Cocteau and designs by Pablo Picasso, and their roster of artists included such diverse luminaries as Coco Chanel, George Balanchine, Joan Miró and Maurice Ravel.

## Igor Stravinsky in profile / by Andrew Stewart



**I**he son of the Principal Bass at the Mariinsky Theatre, Stravinsky was born at the Baltic resort of Oranienbaum near St Petersburg in 1882. Through his father he met many of the leading musicians of the day and came into contact with the world of the musical theatre. In 1903 he became a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov, which allowed him to get his orchestral works performed and as a result he came to the attention of Sergei Diaghilev, who commissioned a new ballet from him, *The Firebird*.

The success of *The Firebird*, and then *Petrushka* (1911) and *The Rite of Spring* (1913) confirmed his status as a leading young

composer. Stravinsky now spent most of his time in Switzerland and France, but continued to compose for Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes: *Pulcinella* (1920), *Mavra* (1922), *Renard* (1922), *Les Noces* (1923), *Oedipus Rex* (1927) and *Apollo* (1928).

Stravinsky settled in France in 1920, eventually becoming a French citizen in 1934, and during this period moved away from his Russianism towards a new 'neo-Classical' style. Personal tragedy in the form of his daughter, wife and mother all dying within eight months of each other, and the onset of the World War II persuaded Stravinsky to move to America in 1939, where he lived until his death.

From the 1950s, his compositional style again changed, this time in favour of a form of serialism. He continued to take on an exhausting schedule of conducting engagements until 1967, and died in New York in 1971. He was buried in Venice on the island of San Michele, close to the grave of Diaghilev. □

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# Claude Debussy *La mer* (The Sea): Three Symphonic Sketches 1903–5 / note by Jeremy Thurlow

- 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)

—  
'I was destined for the fine life  
of a sailor ... I still have a great  
passion for the sea.'  
—

**T**hough 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'isle 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 Trezise 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 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. □

## ▷ J M W TURNER



Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775–1851) 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.

# Claude Debussy in profile / by Andrew Stewart



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.

*Pelléas et Mélisande*, which was inspired by Mæterlinck's play. It was an immediate success after its first production in April 1902. In 1904 he met Emma Bardac, the former wife of a successful financier, and moved into an apartment with her; his wife, Lily Texier, attempted suicide following

—  
'Works of art make rules but rules do not make works of art.'  
—

## Claude Debussy

The gifted musician directed his talents towards composition, eventually winning the coveted 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.

His *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, although regarded as a revolutionary work at the time of its premiere in December 1894, soon found favour with concertgoers and the habitually conservative French press. Late in the summer of the previous year he had begun work on the only opera he completed,

their separation. Debussy and Emma had a daughter and were subsequently married in January 1908. 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 produced 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 and was buried at Passy cemetery. □

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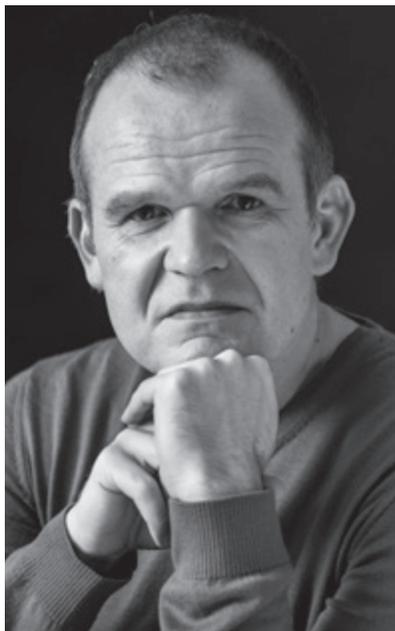
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# François-Xavier Roth conductor



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**F**rançois-Xavier Roth is one of today's most charismatic and enterprising conductors. Since 2015 he has been General Music Director of the City of Cologne, leading both the Gürzenich Orchestra and the Opera. This season he took up the position of Principal Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra.

With a reputation for inventive programming, his incisive approach and inspiring leadership are valued around the world. He regularly works with leading orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic and Staatskapelle, Royal Concertgebouw, Boston Symphony, Munich Philharmonic and Zurich Tonhalle.

In 2003 he founded Les Siècles, an innovative orchestra performing contrasting and colourful programmes on modern and period instruments, often within the same concert. With Les Siècles, he has given concerts in France, Italy, Germany, The Netherlands, Belgium, England and Japan. Recent highlights with Les Siècles include recreating the original sound of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* in its centenary year at the BBC Proms and Alte Oper, Frankfurt and, subsequently, with the Pina Bausch and Dominique Brun dance companies.

His third Cologne opera season features new productions of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* and *Die Soldaten* by Bernd Alois Zimmermann, marking the centenary of the composer's birth in Cologne. With the Gürzenich Orchestra, he continues a focus on the composer Philippe Manoury, from whom the orchestra has commissioned a trilogy of works, the second of which, a Flute Concerto, will receive its premiere with Emmanuel Pahud.

As Principal Conductor of the SWR Sinfonieorchester Baden-Baden & Freiburg (2011-16), Roth recorded the complete tone poems of Richard Strauss. His recordings of the Stravinsky ballets, *The Firebird*, *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring* with Les Siècles have been widely acclaimed, the latter being awarded a German Record Critics' Prize. Together they embarked on a complete Ravel cycle for Harmonia Mundi. The first release, *Daphnis and Chloé*, was a *Gramophone* magazine Editor's Choice and CD of the month in *Rondo* magazine. They have also recently released *Mirages*, a vocal recital with Sabine Devieilhe for Erato, winner of a Diapason d'Or and Victoires de la Musique Classique Recording of the Year, a *Gramophone* Editor's Choice and *Sunday Times* Album of the Week. His first recording with the Gürzenich Orchestra, Mahler's

Fifth Symphony, premiered in Cologne by the orchestra under Mahler in 1904, was released in December.

Engagement with new audiences is an essential part of François-Xavier Roth's work. With the Festival Berlioz and Les Siècles, he founded the Jeune Orchestre Européen Hector Berlioz, a unique orchestra-academy with its own collection of period instruments. Roth and Les Siècles devised *Presto!*, a television series for France 2, attracting weekly audiences of over three million. The Gürzenich Orchestra's Ohrenauf! youth programme received a Junge Ohren Produktion Award in February 2017. A tireless champion of contemporary music, he is conductor of the groundbreaking LSO Panufnik Composers Scheme. Roth has premiered works by Yann Robin, Georg-Friedrich Haas and Simon Steen-Anderson and collaborated with composers like Pierre Boulez, Wolfgang Rihm, Jörg Widmann and Helmut Lachenmann.

For his achievements as musician, conductor, music director and teacher, François-Xavier Roth was made a Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur on Bastille Day 2017. In January 2018, he was appointed the first ever Associate Artist of the Philharmonie de Paris. □

# Renaud Capuçon violin



**F**rench violinist Renaud Capuçon is firmly established as a major soloist and chamber musician, working with the top international orchestras and conductors and performing in the most prestigious venues.

Born in Chambéry in 1976, Renaud Capuçon began his studies at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris at the age of 14, winning numerous awards during his five years there. Capuçon then moved to Berlin to study with Thomas Brandis and Isaac Stern, and was awarded the Prize of the Berlin Academy of Arts. In 1997, he was invited by Claudio Abbado to become concert master of the Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester, which he led for three summers, working with conductors such as Pierre Boulez, Seiji Ozawa, Daniel Barenboim, Franz Welser-Moest and Abbado himself.

Since then, Capuçon has played concertos with orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic under Bernard Haitink, the Boston Symphony under Christoph von Dohnányi, the Orchestre de Paris under Christoph Eschenbach and Paavo Järvi, Philharmonique de Radio France and Filarmonica della Scala orchestras with Myung-Whun Chung, Orchestre National de France with Daniele Gatti and Valery Gergiev,

and the Simón Bolívar Orchestra and Los Angeles Philharmonic with Gustavo Dudamel.

Forthcoming concerto engagements include concerts with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe with Jaap van Zweden, Detroit Symphony Orchestra with Leonard Slatkin, Los Angeles Philharmonic with Matthias Pintscher and Camerata Salzburg with Robin Ticciati.

Capuçon also tours extensively as a solo recitalist and will play-direct groups including Camerata Salzburg, Festival Strings Lucerne and Basel Chamber Orchestra.

Capuçon has a great commitment to chamber music and has worked with artists including Martha Argerich, Nicholas Angelich, Daniel Barenboim, Yefim Bronfman, Yuja Wang, Khatia Buniatishvili, Hélène Grimaud and Maria João Pires, as well as with his brother, cellist Gautier Capuçon. These collaborations have taken him to the festivals of Edinburgh, Berlin, Lucerne, Verbier, Aix-en-Provence, Roque d'Anthéron, San Sebastian, Stresa, Tanglewood and Salzburg, among others.

He is the Artistic Director of the Easter Festival in Aix-en-Provence, which he founded in 2013, and was appointed

Artistic Director of the Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad in 2016.

Recording exclusively with Erato/Warner Classics, Capuçon has built an extensive discography. Recent releases include Bach and Vasks Concertos as conductor and soloist with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and Brahms and Berg Concertos with the Vienna Philharmonic under Daniel Harding. His latest chamber music recording is a disc of Franck, Grieg and Dvořák sonatas with Khatia Buniatishvili. His recording of Fauré's complete chamber music for strings with Nicholas Angelich, Gautier Capuçon, Michel Dalberto, Gérard Caussé and the Ebène Quartet won the ECHO Klassik Prize for chamber music in 2012. His compilation *Le Violon Roi* received the Disque d'Or and his latest recording of contemporary concertos by Rihm, Dusapin and Montovani was nominated the best recording by French Victoires de la Musique 2017 and awarded the ECHO Klassik Prize in 2017.

Renaud Capuçon plays the Guarneri del Gesù 'Panette' (1737) that belonged to Isaac Stern. In June 2011 he was appointed Chevalier dans l'Ordre National du Mérite and in March 2016 Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur by the French Government. □

# London Symphony Orchestra on stage tonight

## Leader

Roman Simovic

## First Violins

Carmine Lauri  
Lennox Mackenzie  
Ginette Decuyper  
Gerald Gregory  
Claire Parfitt  
Laurent Quenelle  
Harriet Rayfield  
Colin Renwick  
Sylvain Vasseur  
Julian Azkoul  
Morane Cohen-  
Lamberger  
Laura Dixon  
Shlomy Dobrinsky  
Alain Petitclerc

## Second Violins

David Alberman  
Thomas Norris  
Sarah Quinn  
Miya Väisänen  
Matthew Gardner  
Julian Gil Rodriguez  
Naoko Keatley  
Belinda McFarlane  
William Melvin  
Iwona Muszynska  
Andrew Pollock  
Paul Robson  
Daniele D'Andria  
Jan Regulski  
Helena Smart

## Violas

Edward Vanderspar  
Malcolm Johnston  
Anna Bastow  
Julia O'Riordan  
Robert Turner  
Heather Wallington  
Jonathan Welch  
Fiona Dalgliesh  
Cynthia Perrin  
Shiry Rashkovsky  
Alistair Scahill  
Martin Schaefer

## Cellos

Tim Hugh  
Alastair Blayden  
Jennifer Brown  
Noel Bradshaw  
Eve-Marie Caravassilis  
Daniel Gardner  
Hilary Jones  
Amanda Truelove  
Victoria Harrild  
Deborah Tolksdorf

## Double Basses

Ander Perrino  
Colin Paris  
Patrick Laurence  
Matthew Gibson  
Thomas Goodman  
Joe Melvin  
Jani Pensola  
Emre Ersahin

## Flutes

Gareth Davies  
Alex Jakeman

## Piccolo

Patricia Moynihan

## Oboes

Olivier Stankiewicz  
Rosie Jenkins

## Cor Anglais

Christine Pendrill

## Clarinets

Chris Richards  
Chi-Yu Mo

## Bass Clarinet

Francois Lemoine

## Bassoons

Rachel Gough  
Joost Bosdijk  
Shelly Organ

## Contra Bassoon

Dominic Morgan

## Horns

Timothy Jones  
Angela Barnes  
Alexander Edmundson  
Jonathan Lipton  
Stephen Craigen

## Trumpets

Gerald Ruddock  
Niall Keatley  
David Elton  
Robin Totterdell  
David Geoghegan

## Trombones

Peter Moore  
James Maynard

## Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

## Tuba

Peter Smith

## Timpani

Nigel Thomas

## Percussion

Neil Percy  
David Jackson  
Sam Walton  
Tom Edwards  
Paul Stoneman

## Harp

Bryn Lewis  
Eluned Pierce

## Piano

Elizabeth Burley

## Celeste

John Alley

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Performing in tonight's concert are Liza Tyun (Second Violin), Nathalie Green-Buckley (Viola) and Joel Siepman (Cello).

## Editor

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