
Welcome

Thank you for coming this evening – I hope we'll be welcoming you back often.

The Royal Festival Hall organ is more often than not just a stunning visual backdrop for our London concerts, but this evening we add its spine-tingling sound to that of a 90-strong orchestra – be prepared for music you experience with your whole body, not just your ears.

A great way to get to know the Orchestra even better is to become a Friend. Our Friends help us to make thrilling musical experiences available to all, and enjoy benefits including access to open rehearsals and priority booking. We'd love to welcome you to the Philharmonia family.

With my best wishes,



© Tommy Gucken Wain

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thorben".

Thorben Dittes
Chief Executive

Welcome to the Southbank Centre

We're the largest arts centre in the UK and one of the nation's top visitor attractions, showcasing the world's most exciting artists at our venues in the heart of London. We're here to present great cultural experiences that bring people together, and open up the arts to everyone.

The Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, Hayward Gallery, National Poetry Library and Arts Council Collection. We're one of London's favourite meeting spots, with lots of free events and places to relax, eat and shop next to the Thames.

We hope you enjoy your visit. If you need any information or help, please ask a member of staff. You can also write to us at Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX, or email hello@southbankcentre.co.uk

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**Santtu-
Matias
Rouvali**



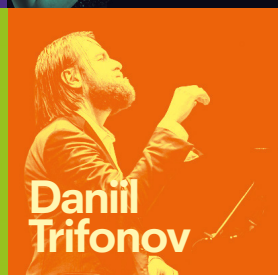
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**SOUTHBANK
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This evening's concert

Yamada conducts Saint-Saëns's Organ Symphony

Sunday 7 May 2023, 7.30pm
Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall

Kazuki Yamada – conductor
Baiba Skride – violin
Stephen Farr – organ

RAVEL Pavane pour une infante défunte (6 mins)

BERG Violin Concerto (28 mins)

Interval (20 mins)

SAINT-SAËNS Symphony No. 3, 'Organ' (38 mins)

This performance finishes at
approximately 9.15pm

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Free pre-concert performance

Music of Today: Composers' Academy

6pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall

Robin O'Neill – conductor
Nneka Cummins – composer
Jamie Man – composer
Arthur Keegan – composer

This event finishes at approximately 6.45pm

Programme notes

Maurice Ravel (1875 – 1937)

Pavane pour une infante défunte

(1899, arr. 1910)

(6 mins)

The *Pavane pour une infante défunte* began life as a piece for piano, written by Ravel in 1899 while he was still a student. He dedicated it to the Princesse de Polignac (née Winnaretta Singer), a great patron of the arts, and the first public performance was given in Paris in 1902 by Ravel's friend Ricardo Viñes. The piece became enduringly popular – so much so that several years later Ravel created an orchestral version. This received its premiere in Manchester in February 1911, conducted by Henry Wood.

The title alludes to a slow, processional dance that was very popular at European courts during the Renaissance. Ravel stated that the piece “is not a funeral lament for a dead child [as the word ‘défunte’ might imply], but rather an evocation of the pavane that could have been danced by such a little princess as painted by Velázquez at the Spanish Court”.

The music alternates between a serene recurring theme first heard as a horn solo, and contrasting episodes with prominent woodwind parts. The subtle orchestration – with no brass other than two horns – and subdued dynamics create an ambience of austere beauty.

Alban Berg (1885 – 1935)

Violin Concerto (1935)

(28 mins)

Andante – Allegretto

Allegro – Adagio – (Coda)

In February 1935, the Ukrainian-American violinist Louis Krasner commissioned Alban Berg to write him a violin concerto. Two months later, Manon Gropius, the daughter of the composer's friend Alma Mahler by her second husband Walter Gropius, died of polio. Berg had been devoted to Manon, and he decided to dedicate his concerto to her memory: ‘To the memory of an angel’. Thus inspired, he worked quickly: by 16 July he was able to tell Krasner that the piece was ready in short score, and by 12 August he had completed the orchestration.

The Violin Concerto is in two movements, each divided into two sections. The piece is composed in the 12-tone (serial) system devised in the early 1920s by Berg's teacher, Arnold Schoenberg. However, it also incorporates elements of traditional tonality. These include direct quotes from the Carinthian folksong ‘A Bird in the Plum Tree’, and from JS Bach's chorale ‘Es ist genug’ (from the Cantata BWV 60). The chorale text describes a soul leaving earth for heaven.

While Berg wrote the piece primarily to honour Manon Gropius, scholars have noted that it also contains autobiographical elements. The Carinthian folksong may allude to the composer's adolescent affair with a maidservant at his family's summer home in Carinthia. There are also references to his long-term love affair with Hanna Fuchs-Robettin: her initials and

Berg's, along with numbers he associated with them both, are woven into the score.

The Violin Concerto's opening Andante section paints a tender musical portrait of the shy yet vibrant Manon. The music then evolves into a lively dance, featuring themes marked 'scherzando' (playful), 'wienerisch' (in a Viennese style) and 'rustico' (rustic). This dance is alternately playful and passionate. The lyrical Carinthian folksong makes its first appearance in the horn shortly before the movement's end.

The second movement's stormy opening Allegro section features wild, quasi-improvisatory passages for the soloist, and a repetitive rhythm symbolising fate. It culminates in a terrifying portrayal of Manon's death agonies, with the orchestra repeatedly hammering out the 'fate rhythm'.

The ensuing Adagio begins with a quiet rendition of the Bach chorale melody by the soloist; this is subsequently taken up and harmonised by the clarinets in imitation of a Baroque chamber organ. Two variations follow, during which the chorale is transformed into an intricate and intense lament. Calm is restored in the concluding coda, whose quiet reminiscences of earlier music close the Concerto in the same contemplative mood as it opened.

Sadly, the Violin Concerto proved to be the composer's own requiem – he died of septicaemia on 24 December 1935, without ever hearing it performed. Its premiere in April 1936 in Barcelona at the ISCM Festival was a resounding success, and it remains one of Berg's most popular works.

Interval (20 mins)

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835 – 1921)

Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78, Organ (1886)
(38 mins)

**Adagio – Allegro moderato – Poco adagio
Allegro moderato – Presto – Maestoso – Allegro**

In August 1885, London's Philharmonic Society (now the Royal Philharmonic Society) invited Camille Saint-Saëns to come to the city, "either to play one of your concertos, or to compose a new one and play it". They added enticingly that "we have the finest Orchestra in England."

After further correspondence, it was agreed that the new work would not be a concerto but a symphony. This was a brave move. In France, the symphony was regarded as essentially Austro-German, despite Berlioz's valiant efforts to prove otherwise, and Saint-Saëns's 1850s efforts in the genre had been coolly received. Small wonder, then, that he found the early stages of writing his new work "terrifying" and composed *The Carnival of the Animals* alongside it for light relief.

Nevertheless, Saint-Saëns made good progress, and completed the Symphony at the end of April 1886. Its premiere took place on 19 May at St James's Hall in London. The composer conducted, and demonstrated his virtuoso piano skills by playing Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto in the same concert. The reception was muted; by contrast, the Symphony's Paris premiere in January 1887 was a great triumph, and one that led Charles Gounod to dub his friend and peer "the French Beethoven". Its success paved the way for symphonies by Franck (1888), Chausson (1890) and Dukas (1896), among others. Saint-Saëns, however, never wrote

another, stating that “I have given all that I had to give... What I have done I shall never do again.”

The composer wrote of his two-movement Third Symphony that “it embraces in principle the four traditional movements, but the first is altered in its development to serve as the introduction to the Adagio, and the scherzo is connected by the same process to the finale.” He hoped thus to avoid “interminable reprises and repetitions”. His other innovation was to include prominent parts for piano (with two players required) and full-scale pipe organ, the latter of which has led to the Symphony’s nickname.

The work employs Liszt’s technique of thematic transformation, whereby a relatively simple theme is developed in various intricate ways across a large-scale composition. (Berlioz had also used this procedure, notably in the *Symphonie fantastique*.) Indeed, Saint-Saëns conceived the piece as a homage to his friend Liszt and, following the latter’s death in July 1886, dedicated it to his memory.

Mass for the Dead, a source of fascination for composers including Liszt.

Saint-Saëns described the ensuing Adagio as “very quiet and contemplative”. It begins with a solemn, quasi-ecclesiastical dialogue between strings and organ, but becomes increasingly sensual and romantic.

The second movement’s opening Scherzo is a wild, almost demonic dance. Its central Trio section is more playful, and features cascading figures in the piano. A restless fugal passage for brass (fugues feature a recurring theme accompanied by increasingly elaborate counter-melodies) leads to a plangent string episode.

A blazing C major organ chord then announces the work’s final section. The sombre minor-key ‘Dies irae’ theme is transformed into a gloriously affirmative major-key chorale for organ and strings, with accompanying piano and brass fanfares. From here on the music becomes increasingly elaborate and exuberant, bringing the Symphony to a triumphant close.

Programme notes by Kate Hopkins
© Philharmonia Orchestra/Kate Hopkins

Kate Hopkins is English-language editor for Salzburg Festival’s concert programmes. She has written programme notes for organisations including Salzburg Festival, the Royal Opera House and the London Symphony Orchestra.



Royal Festival Hall organ © Tim Cochrane

The Symphony’s brooding introduction is followed by an agitated Allegro moderato, notable for its dramatic changes in textures and dynamics. Here, we first encounter the work’s main theme: it bears a distinct resemblance to the medieval ‘Dies irae’ plainchant from the

Meet William McVicker

Dr William McVicker has been Organ Curator at the Southbank Centre since 1999, and oversaw the restoration of the Royal Festival Hall organ when the building was refurbished in 2007. The work to the organ was completed in 2013. Read the full interview on our website.



© William McVicker

What does your job as Organ Curator involve?

My role is to look after the pipe organs at the Southbank Centre and to keep them in good order. There's the big one in the Royal Festival Hall, of course – but did you know there's one in the Queen Elizabeth Hall as well? It lives under the stage in a kind of garage. It comes up on a lift, moves on a railway track and is the only pipe organ I know with a handbrake!

What will you be doing in preparation for this evening's concert?

I aspire to have made sure that the organ is in tip-top condition. We have 7866 pipes in the Royal Festival Hall organ and they all need to be in tune. We can't tune them all in one session, so looking after the organ is a bit like painting the Forth Bridge. I work with our expert tuners from Harrison & Harrison Ltd to develop a plan on what to tackle through the year.

What's distinctive about the Royal Festival Hall organ?

When the organ was built in 1954 it was the first instrument in England to follow the philosophy of the so-called Organ Reform Movement. Albert Schweitzer encouraged musicians and organ builders to look back into history to

find the sounds that composers such as Bach encountered. The Royal Festival Hall instrument is designed around enabling a wide range of repertoire to be played. Its size means it is also capable of meeting a symphony orchestra and winning – as it is sometimes supposed to do in Saint-Saëns's Organ Symphony.

How much detail does Saint-Saëns give in this score about the sounds he wants from the organ?

Saint-Saëns doesn't say too much about the stops he had in mind for the various musical textures he writes. He notes that he wants the Voix célestes ('Heavenly voices') in the slow movement – it's a specific set of stops which gently undulate together and have a string-like sonority. Of course, when the composer says *fortissimo*, it usually means 'pull out all the stops'!

How would you advise an aspiring composer to learn to write well for the organ?

Organs are somewhat peculiar in that no one example is the same as another. It can be exciting for a composer to stretch the boundaries of what is considered possible on any instrument – and the pipe organ is no exception. But a mistake that is sometimes made is that composers write pitches below the range of the organ pedals!

Which concerts in the rest of the Philharmonia's season catch your eye?

There's so much to choose from! I love Prokofiev; his music is paired with Stravinsky's *Firebird* (18 May) and *Petrushka* (21 May) – what's not to like? The Poulenc Organ Concerto can be heard on 25 May at the Bach Choir concert. If you don't know it, it's worth hearing: the Keystone Cops meet church architecture. It's bonkers!

Kazuki Yamada

Conductor



© Zuzanna Special

Kazuki Yamada is Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO), a role he commenced in spring 2023, building upon the deep musical bond formed with players during his time as Principal Guest Conductor of the orchestra.

Alongside his commitments in Birmingham, Yamada is also Artistic and Music Director of the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo. Having already worked with the two organisations in partnership, conducting collaborative performances of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in Monaco in 2019, Yamada's new appointment sees a continuing link forged between Monaco and Birmingham, with the CBSO Chorus returning to Monaco in 2023 for a performance of Orff's *Carmina Burana*.

Time spent under the close supervision of Seiji Ozawa served to underline the importance of what Kazuki Yamada calls his "Japanese feeling" for classical music. Born in 1979 in Kanagawa, Japan, he continues to work and perform in Japan as Principal Guest Conductor with the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra. Shortly after assuming his position in Birmingham, Yamada will give a series of concerts on tour around Japan with the CBSO in summer 2023.

Yamada's passionate and collaborative approach to conducting means he commands a busy international diary of concerts, opera and choral conducting. The current season began with his debut at the BBC Proms with the CBSO in summer 2022. He has continued regular guesting commitments with the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, also returning to the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Luxembourg.

He makes debut appearances with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Camerata Salzburg, Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood Festival. He also returns to Opéra de Monte-Carlo for a production of Saint-Saëns's *Déjanire* and Berlioz's *La damnation de Faust*. Other guesting dates include with the Swedish Radio Symphony, Oslo Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, Orquesta y Coro Nacionales de España and Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin.

Yamada performs with soloists such as Emanuel Ax, Leif Ove Andsnes, Seong-Jin Cho, Isabelle Faust, Martin Helmchen, Nobuko Imai, Alexander Kantorow, Evgeny Kissin, Daniel Lozakovich, Maria João Pires, Baiba Skride, Arabella Steinbacher, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Krystian Zimerman and Frank Peter Zimmermann.

Strongly committed to his role as an educator, Yamada appears annually as a guest artist at the Seiji Ozawa International Academy Switzerland. Yamada studied music at Tokyo University of the Arts. He first achieved international attention upon receiving first prize in the 51st Besançon International Competition for Young Conductors in 2009. After living in Japan for most of his life, he now resides in Berlin.

Baiba Skride

Violin



© Marco Borggreve

Baiba Skride performs regularly with orchestras such as the Berliner Philharmoniker, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Boston Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Concertgebouworkest, Orchestre de Paris, London Symphony Orchestra and Oslo Philharmonic. She enjoys close collaborations with conductors such as Marin Alsop, Christoph Eschenbach, Edward Gardner, Susanna Mälkki, Andris Nelsons, Santtu-Matias Rouvali, Tugan Sokhiev, John Storgårds and Kazuki Yamada.

Highlights of the 2022/23 season include Shostakovich's Violin Vconcerto No. 2, which she will perform and record on the Deutsche Grammophon label with Andris Nelsons and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Gubaidulina's *Offertorium* with the NHK Symphony Orchestra. She appears for the first time with the Karajan-Akademie der Berliner Philharmoniker and Brucknerorchester Linz.

She returns to the Iceland Symphony Orchestra to give the Iceland premiere of Gubaidulina's Triple Concerto with Harriet Krijgh (cello) and Elsbeth Moser (bajan), to the Dresdner Philharmonie with Dima Slobodeniouk, and other orchestras such as the Philharmonia Orchestra and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

Stephen Farr

Organ



© Andrew Prior

Stephen Farr has an established reputation as one of the leading keyboard players of his generation, with an extensive discography to his credit. Recent and pending releases have included JS Bach's *Clavierübung 3*, *Orgelbüchlein* and Chorale Partitas, the complete organ works of James MacMillan, a new commission by Francis Grier, works by Praetorius, 17th-century English repertoire, works by Judith Bingham and the complete organ works of Kenneth Leighton (in a project described as a "towering triumph" by *The Guardian*).

As a soloist he has played throughout Europe, in North and South America and in Australia, and has appeared in the UK in venues including the Royal Albert Hall (where he gave the premiere of Judith Bingham's *The Everlasting Crown* in a solo recital in the BBC Proms, and appeared with the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Sakari Oramo as a concerto soloist); the Royal Festival Hall; Symphony Hall, Birmingham; Westminster Cathedral; St Paul's Cathedral; King's College, Cambridge; and Westminster Abbey.

He gave the Scottish premiere of James MacMillan's organ concerto *A Scotch Bestiary* in the 2019 Edinburgh International Festival. Ensemble work has included engagements with the Philharmonia, the Berlin Philharmonic, the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the London Symphony Orchestra.

About the Philharmonia



© Luca Migliore

The Philharmonia Orchestra was founded in 1945, and has worked with a who's who of 20th- and 21st-century music. Finnish conductor Santtu-Matias Rouvali took up the baton as Principal Conductor in September 2021.

Herbert von Karajan, Otto Klemperer, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Arturo Toscanini, Carlo Maria Giulini, Riccardo Muti and Esa-Pekka Salonen are just a few of the great artists to be associated with the Philharmonia, and we have premiered works by Richard Strauss, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Errollyn Wallen, Kaija Saariaho and many others.

The Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, in the heart of London, has been our home since 1995. We also have residencies at venues and festivals across England, each embracing a Learning & Engagement programme that empowers people to engage with, and participate in, orchestral music.

In the 2022/23 season, cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason is our Featured Artist, performing in all our residency venues. Anna Clyne is our Featured Composer, and musician and climate campaigner Love Ssega is our Artist in Residence.

Our international reputation is built in part on our extraordinary 76-year recording legacy, which in the last ten years has been built on by pioneering work with digital technology. The Orchestra's installations and VR experiences have introduced hundreds of thousands of people to the symphony orchestra.

The Philharmonia is the go-to orchestra for many film and videogame composers in the UK and Hollywood, and its music-making has been experienced by millions of cinema-goers and gamers. We have recorded around 150 soundtracks, with film credits stretching back to 1947.

We have over 2m listeners each month on Spotify, and a vibrant YouTube channel with over 130,000 subscribers. The channel features free performances; instrument guides; interviews with artists; and in-depth documentaries. The Philharmonia is Classic FM's Orchestra on Tour and we broadcast extensively on BBC Radio 3. Throughout our history, the Orchestra has toured across Europe, Asia and America. In the 2022/23 season we perform in Denmark, Finland, Italy, Spain, Germany and Switzerland.

Our Emerging Artists Programme aims to increase diversity within the classical music industry, and develop the next generation of instrumentalists, composers and conductors. The Philharmonia is a registered charity, proud to be supported by Arts Council England, many generous individuals, corporate supporters and Trusts and Foundations.

A team of 80 outstanding musicians from 16 countries, the Orchestra looks forward to bringing music into your life, through great concerts and ground-breaking projects, for many years to come.



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Natalya Romaniw as Mařenka in
The Bartered Bride, 2019 © Clive Barda

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For the full list of Philharmonia
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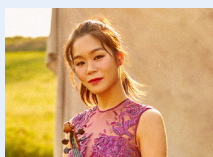


Santtu-Matias Rouvali
© Mark Allan

Santtu conducts Stravinsky I: The Firebird

Thursday 18 May 2023, 7.30pm
Royal Festival Hall

Santtu opens a two-concert focus on Stravinsky and Prokofiev with music from Stravinsky's first major ballet and Prokofiev's fiendish Piano Concerto No. 2 with soloist Behzod Abduraimov.



Esther Yoo © Je Won Kim

Santtu conducts Stravinsky II: Petrushka

Sunday 21 May 2023, 7.30pm
Royal Festival Hall

Santtu is joined by sensational violinist Esther Yoo as he continues his two-concert focus on Stravinsky and Prokofiev with the captivating ballet score *Petrushka*, and Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto.

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