

TONIGHT'S CONCERT

BOULANGER, BARBER & RACHMANINOFF

Sunday 14 April 2024 7-9.05pm

Barbican

Lili Boulanger D'un matin de printemps

Samuel Barber Violin Concerto

Interval

Serge Rachmaninoff Symphony No 2

Sir Antonio Pappano conductor

Janine Jansen violin

London Symphony Orchestra

LSO Guardians' Supported Concert

Recorded for future broadcast on **medici.tv** (18 April) and **Mezzo**

medici.tv

mezzo

Welcome



Tonight's concert, conducted by Sir Antonio Pappano, Chief Conductor Designate, brings together sounds from the first half of the 20th century, with music by Samuel Barber, Lili Boulanger and Serge Rachmaninoff.

It is a pleasure to welcome Janine Jansen, a long-standing friend of the Orchestra, who has performed with the LSO both at our Barbican home and on tour multiple times since her debut in 2005. Tonight she performs Barber's Violin Concerto.

The concert opens with Boulanger's *D'un matin de printemps* (Of a Spring Morning), a glistening tone poem that was her last orchestral work, composed before her untimely death in 1918 at the age of 24. After the interval, we hear Rachmaninoff's Symphony No 2, a staple in the repertoire that brilliantly showcases the Orchestra.

At this evening's concert we are delighted to host the LSO Guardians, those within our community who have chosen to remember the LSO in their Wills. We are immensely grateful for the generosity of our Guardians, whose support helps to ensure that future generations have access to the very best in music-making.

The performance this evening is being recorded for future broadcast by our partners [medici.tv](#) (from 18 April) and Mezzo.

I hope you enjoy the concert and that you will be able to join us again soon. Next week Sir Antonio Pappano conducts two performances of Ralph Vaughan Williams' Symphony No 5, with pianist Bertrand Chamayou returning as soloist for Maurice Ravel's Piano Concerto in G major, at the conclusion of his Artist Portrait series.

Earlier this week we were pleased to announce the LSO's 2024/25 season, from September 2024 to July 2025 – Sir Antonio Pappano's first as Chief Conductor. Our LSO Patrons, Pioneers and Ambassador Friends can book now, with public booking open from Friday 19 April. You can browse the full season of some 70 concerts at the Barbican and LSO St Luke's at lso.co.uk/2425.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn McDowell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dame Kathryn McDowell DBE DL
Managing Director

LSO Guardians

Tonight's performance is an opportunity for us to celebrate and show our gratitude to the LSO Guardians, a special group of supporters who have chosen to remember the Orchestra in their Wills.

Leaving a legacy to the LSO is one of the most enduring commitments an individual could make, and ensures that future generations have access to the outstanding music-making of the Orchestra. Every contribution enables us to expand our outreach to adults and children from a wide range of backgrounds, through our concert season and our learning and community programme, LSO Discovery. Gifts in Wills are more important than ever as the Orchestra navigates through the ongoing challenges in the arts and music education sector.

Leaving a legacy helps us to commit to our mission to bring the greatest music to the widest possible audience, for generations of music-lovers to come. We are enormously grateful to all those who have chosen to remember the LSO in this way.

To find out more, or to tell us about a commitment you have already made, contact:

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the QR code to complete a short
survey about tonight's concert.



D'un matin de printemps

Lili Boulanger



1917–18



5 minutes

Programme note by
Leah Broad

In the final months of her life, 24-year-old Lili Boulanger conjured up the sounds of a spring morning from her sickbed. Headed by the instruction 'Quite lively, light, cheerful', Boulanger's spring is full of energy. Her vision of the morning starts with a propulsive pulsing in the strings, the sparkling triangle and celeste ringing out over the orchestra. The main theme that we hear on the flute is in three parts; a jaunty dotted rhythm, a rising scale, and then four falling notes. As the work continues, she isolates the theme's different elements to develop them separately, giving each section its distinctive character.

In the vigorous opening material, Boulanger passes the theme throughout the orchestra as though the instruments are calling to one another. At first the dotted rhythm dominates, but as the section progresses, the rising scale becomes more prominent, driving the orchestra to a climax that leads into the second, 'mysterious'

section. Boulanger slows the tempo, and an altered version of the falling fourth saturates the texture. Here she gives us a more lugubrious, enigmatic sound, the low timbres of the bass clarinet and bassoon standing out in the chromatic gloom. Listen out for the violin and cello solos; Boulanger gives them the job of leading the orchestra back towards more optimistic territory. With a flourish from the woodwinds, the third section begins, returning to the main theme's dotted rhythms and repeated chords. This time around Boulanger provides more long, melodic lines as the music moves to its conclusion, closing with a flurry of scales and blazing chords.

D'un matin de printemps (Of a Spring Morning) is a companion piece to the more melancholy *D'un soir triste* (Of a Sad Evening), and is among the final works Boulanger composed before her untimely death. Her sister Nadia helped her to write out the orchestrations.

Lili Boulanger

1893 to 1918 (France)



CONTEMPORARIES

Nadia Boulanger,
Francis Poulenc

KEY EVENTS

1913: Won the Prix de Rome

1918: Completed her final work, *D'un soir triste*

Composer profile by
Leah Broad

▷ **Impressionist**
music uses dots of orchestral colour to create a mood or atmosphere; rhythm, tempo and harmonies are all fluid.

Born into a musical family, Lili Boulanger grew up in the heart of French musical society. Her mother was a pianist, her father a composer, and family friends included leading musicians such as Gabriel Fauré and Charles Gounod. It is perhaps unsurprising that both Lili and her older sister Nadia occupied prominent positions in 20th-century musical culture: Lili as the first woman to win the prestigious Prix de Rome composition prize, and Nadia as one of the most important composition tutors of the last hundred years.

Both sisters received a musical education from a very young age. Lili had lessons in piano, violin, harp and voice, performing publicly for the first time on the violin in 1901, and completing her first dated work in 1910. It was an auspicious start, but she experienced ill health all her life after contracting bronchial pneumonia in 1895. She was often in immense pain, confessing to her diary in 1912: 'I cry and am ill ... I'm exhausted.' She died from intestinal tuberculosis in 1918, having been an active composer for only eight years. In that time, she wrote a small

but extraordinary body of music, including choral works such as the cantata *Faust et Hélène*, which won the Prix de Rome, instrumental pieces and songs.

Although Boulanger only lived to see her 24th birthday, her short life spanned a tumultuous period in French culture. Trying to find ways past Richard Wagner's musical influence, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel were exploring new avenues that became labelled musical **impressionism** ▷, while Igor Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* would cause uproar in 1913. Boulanger was very much part of this musical ferment, and her sound world is closely aligned with that of the musical impressionists. Many of her works use modes and extended harmonies, and have evocative titles like *Soleils de Septembre* (September Suns) and *D'un vieux jardin* (From an Old Garden). Even within a limited number of works, Boulanger demonstrates an impressive stylistic range, from intimate sensuality in choral pieces such as *Les Sirenes* (The Sirens), to the monumental and theatrical in her setting of Psalm 24.

Violin Concerto Op 14

Samuel Barber

Janine Jansen violin

- 1 **Allegro molto moderato**
- 2 **Andante**
- 3 **Presto in moto perpetuo**



1939



25 minutes

Programme note by
Kate Hopkins

▷ A **moto perpetuo** is a piece of music made up of multiple fast passages, often containing notes of equal length. The term literally means ‘perpetual motion’. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov’s *The Flight of the Bumblebee* is a famous example.

Success came early to Samuel Barber. In 1936, when he was just 26, his *Symphony in One Movement* received its successful premiere in Rome; the following year it became the first American symphonic composition to feature at the Salzburg Festival. In 1938, his *Adagio for Strings* was broadcast across the US by the NBC Symphony Orchestra under Arturo Toscanini to widespread acclaim. Then, in 1939, he received a major commission from the Philadelphia industrialist Samuel Simeon Fels: a violin concerto for the budding virtuoso Iso Briselli.

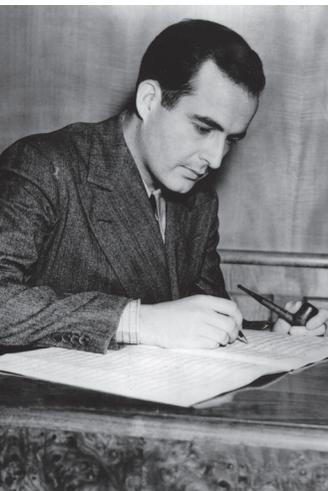
Barber set to work during his summer vacation in Switzerland. Although the outbreak of World War II and his return to the US hindered his progress, he was ready to send Briselli the first two movements by mid-October. The violinist was generally enthusiastic, though he requested a more virtuosic finale. Unfortunately, Barber’s teacher Albert Meiff was far less impressed, going so far as to declare that the Concerto required ‘a surgical operation’ (by him) to make it suitable for ‘a modern violinist’. Meiff’s disdain caused his pupil to lose faith in the work. When Barber sent him the finale in late November, Briselli rejected it as being both ‘inconsequential’ and too difficult, and soon after gave up his claim to the Concerto altogether.

Fortunately, the composer found an enthusiastic champion in the eminent violinist Albert Spalding, who gave the Violin Concerto its eventual premiere on 7 February 1941, with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. The piece has remained popular with players and audiences ever since.

The Violin Concerto is scored for relatively modest forces, without trombones or tuba, though the orchestra includes a piano and, in the finale, a military snare drum. The opening *Allegro molto moderato* movement has two principal themes. The first is introduced by the soloist – as in Felix Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto – and is lyrical and songlike; the second is introduced by the clarinet and has a playful, folklike character. Although the movement contains several impassioned full-orchestral outbursts, its mood is predominantly serene. The central *Andante* pays tribute to the *Adagio* from Johannes Brahms’ Violin Concerto in its wistful mood and opening oboe solo. In the closing section, Barber makes striking use of the violin’s ethereal high register. The finale is a complete contrast to the other movements: it is an invigorating **moto perpetuo** ▷, which the composer intended to highlight ‘the more brilliant and virtuoso characteristics of the violin’. Its vertiginous coda brings the work to an exhilarating conclusion.

Samuel Barber

1910 to 1981 (United States)



CONTEMPORARIES

Aaron Copland,
Leonard Bernstein

KEY EVENTS

1938: US-wide
broadcast of Barber's

Adagio for Strings

1958: Won the
Pulitzer Prize

LISTEN TO

Adagio for Strings

[youtube.com/iso](https://www.youtube.com/iso)

Composer profile by
Jo Kirkbride

Given the enormous success he enjoyed during his career, it is puzzling that Samuel Barber is now remembered primarily for just one work – his *Adagio for Strings* (1938). His catalogue of music, though not as extensive as some of his contemporaries, extends from solo piano music and instrumental chamber works to symphonies, concertos and operas. He was twice awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Music, in addition to the American Prix de Rome, and in 1966, he was commissioned to write a new opera, *Antony and Cleopatra*, to mark the opening of the Metropolitan Opera's new home at the Lincoln Center (the production was a flop, but this was largely due to Franco Zeffirelli's direction, rather than Barber's music).

Barber's relative neglect from the 20th-century canon probably owes much to his musical style.

While Arnold Schoenberg and the Second Viennese School forged new harmonic paths through atonality and serialism, and Igor Stravinsky explored bold new levels of dissonance, rhythmic vitality and texture, Barber seemed content to follow his own path, one which owed more to the dying strains of Romanticism than to the radical new sound world of the 20th century. That is not to say that Barber's music is not innovative and dramatic, nor that his often complex and dissonant harmonies can be considered ordinary, but the rich, full textures of his works, with their predilection for sweeping, generous melodies, sets them apart from many of the more experimental trends of his age.



INTERVAL – 20 MINUTES

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Symphony No 2 in E minor Op 27

Serge Rachmaninoff

- 1 **Largo – Allegro moderato**
- 2 **Allegro molto**
- 3 **Adagio**
- 4 **Allegro vivace**



1906–07



60 minutes

Programme note by
Andrew Huth

▷ **Contrapuntal:**
different musical
lines combined,
which fit together
harmonically.

Following the performances in January 1906 of his two one-act operas – *The Miserly Knight* and *Francesca da Rimini* – Serge Rachmaninoff next turned to composing an opera on Maurice Maeterlinck's play *Monna Vanna*, but this ran into difficulties and remains a fragment. Then, in February 1907, he wrote to a friend about a rumour in the Russian press: 'It's true, I have composed a symphony. It's only ready in rough. I finished it a month ago, and immediately put it aside. It was a severe worry to me, and I am not going to think about it any more. But I am mystified how the newspapers got onto it.'

He was bound to be wary of announcing a new symphony, for the only performance of his First Symphony, in 1897, had been a disaster.

Rachmaninoff conducted the first performance of the Second Symphony in St Petersburg on 26 January 1908, and in Moscow a week later. He went on to conduct it several times in both Europe and the US over the next six years, but never conducted it after leaving Russia in 1918, and unfortunately never had the chance to record it.

Many listeners agree that the Second Symphony contains the very best of Rachmaninoff. Deliberately paced and rhythmically flexible, it is, above all, propelled by the wonderfully fertile melody of which he was such a master. The orchestral sound is full and rich, but unlike such contemporaries as Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler, Rachmaninoff is relatively modest in his orchestral demands.

Instead of the unmixed colour favoured by so many of his countrymen, from Mikhail Glinka to Dmitri Shostakovich, Rachmaninoff deals in varied shades and combinations, producing a full, sonorous orchestral blend, with horns and low woodwind (particularly in the melancholy cor anglais and bass clarinet) supporting the middle of the texture, and the tuba doubling the long-held bass notes that frequently underpin the music.

FIRST MOVEMENT

The slow introduction begins with an entire group of motto themes heard one after the other: the initial unison phrase on cellos and basses, ominous brass and wind chords, and the phrase passed from first to second violins. This introduction, as well as being a

rich mine of thematic material, also announces the scale of what follows. The Allegro moderato emerges organically from the introduction. Its yearning first theme is carried forward with the same sequential techniques that characterise the introduction, but the quicker tempo gives the music a more positive, striving character. The second theme is not designed to contrast strongly with the first, but rather to continue its melodic narrative into a different and lighter-sounding tonal area. The turbulent development, fragmenting motifs from the introduction and the first subject, spills over into the reprise of the first subject, which then leads to the movement's most intense climax. The return of the second theme suggests a more positive major-key conclusion to the movement; but, as the tempo quickens for the coda, the music darkens again and ends in a stormy E minor.

SECOND MOVEMENT

Although there is a great deal of activity in the Allegro moderato, its deliberate pacing and generally slow rate of harmonic change does not make it a truly fast movement. It is one of Rachmaninoff's most vigorous movements, rhythmically incisive and clear in design. The main horn theme is not only the source of the scampering **contrapuntal** ideas in the central section, but towards the end of the movement, it declares its own derivation from the sinister wind chords in the Symphony's first bars. The music dies away in an ominous murmur.

THIRD MOVEMENT

The Adagio turns from A-minor vigour to A-major lyricism. Its opening phrase, rising on

violins, comes again from the world of *Francesca da Rimini*, this time its ecstatic love duet. It is one of the three main melodic elements in the movement, the others being the rapt clarinet solo which follows immediately, and the third being the motto violin phrase from the Symphony's introduction. The presentation, and then the subtle combination of these three elements, is vocal throughout, and sustained by a rich variety of accompaniment figures.

FOURTH MOVEMENT

The breadth of scale is sustained in the finale, which is so balanced that reminiscences of the preceding movements are accommodated without losing momentum. It begins in a proud, boisterous style, and this is how the Symphony will eventually end. In the course of the movement, however, there is room for many shades of feeling and also for one of the very biggest of Rachmaninoff's 'big tunes', played both times by massed strings.

Serge Rachmaninoff

1873 (Russia) to 1943 (United States)



CONTEMPORARIES

Maurice Ravel,
Alexander Scriabin

KEY EVENTS

1901: Triumphant premiere of his Piano Concerto No 2

1917: Russian Revolution, forcing Rachmaninoff to leave his homeland

LISTEN TO

Symphony No 2
on LSO Live



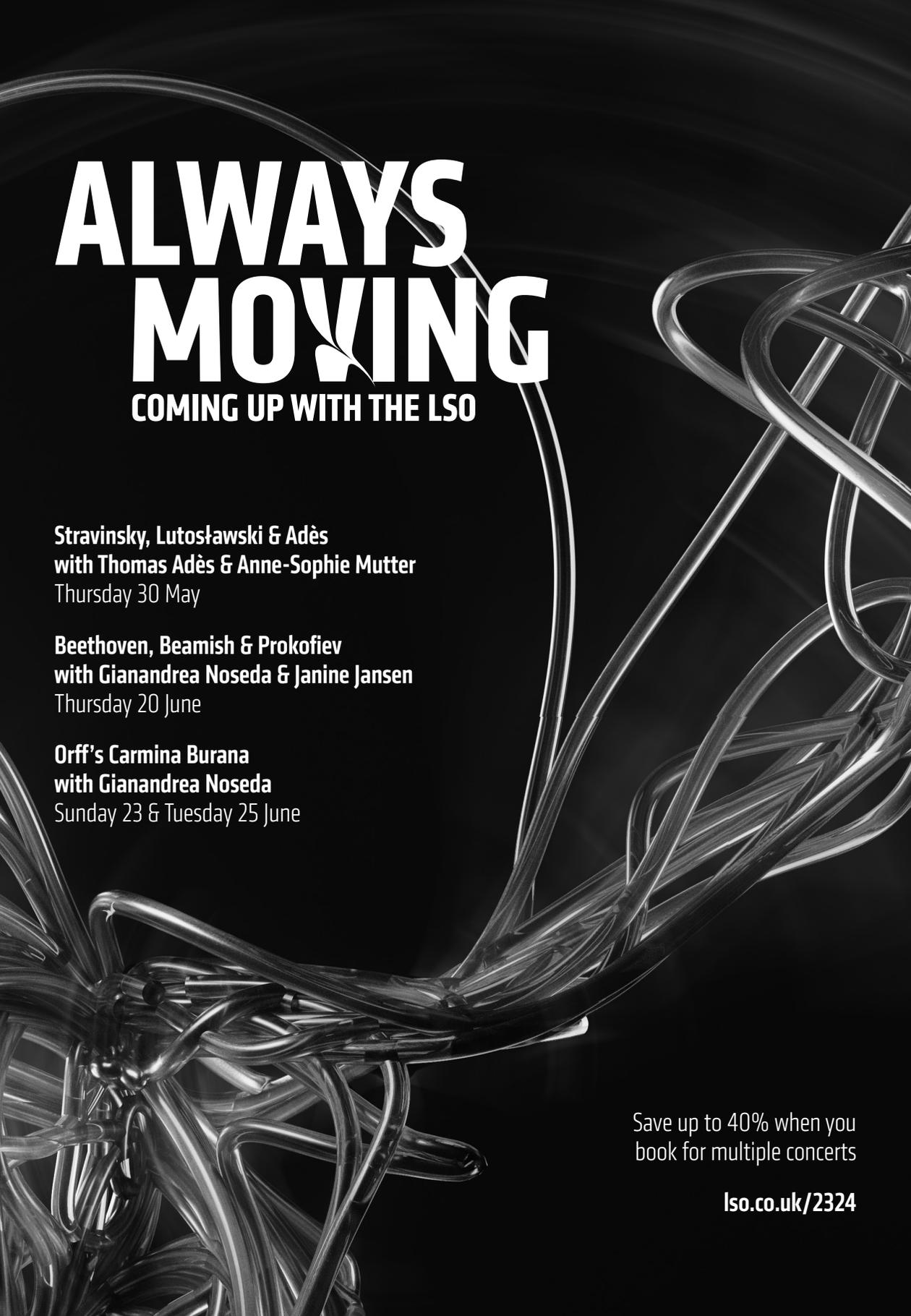
Composer profile by
Andrew Mellor

Serge Rachmaninoff's life can appear to straddle two worlds. He was born into an aristocratic family in Imperial Russia, but died in Beverly Hills surrounded by fast cars and movie stars. He was trained in the era of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, but died in age of the record industry which helped make him famous.

Familial and financial breakdown saw Rachmaninoff raised by aunts and grandparents in rural Russia. The chants and bells of the Orthodox Church were among his formative musical influences, before his rocketing talents as a pianist led him to serious study in St Petersburg and Moscow. He made his name with an outstanding student opera after Pushkin, *Aleko*, shaped in part by his admiration for Sergei Taneyev (his teacher) and Tchaikovsky (his idol). From then on, composing, playing and conducting would jostle awkwardly for prominence in Rachmaninoff's career, despite his increasing international reputation.

After the Revolution of 1917, Rachmaninoff left Russia, never to return. He settled in America but kept a home on the shores of Lake Lucerne in Switzerland, while a distinctive, melancholic longing for his homeland – or his nostalgic view of it – came to saturate his music. He relished the bold, luscious sound of American symphony orchestras and forged a strong relationship with the Philadelphia Orchestra that, ultimately, kept him writing.

Among his works are four towering piano concertos, three symphonies, three operas, numerous songs, chamber music (lots for piano), unaccompanied choral works and a spectacular mystic oratorio, *The Bells*. Rachmaninoff was a reserved but generous man. But with his trademark cropped haircut and height, he could seem severe; Igor Stravinsky once described him as 'a six-foot scowl'.



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Sir Antonio Pappano

Chief Conductor Designate



One of today's most sought-after conductors, acclaimed for his charismatic leadership and inspirational performances in both symphonic and operatic repertoire, Sir Antonio Pappano has been Music Director of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden since 2002. He was Music Director of the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome from 2005 to 2023, and was previously Music Director of Norwegian Opera and Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2023 he became Chief Conductor Designate of the London Symphony Orchestra; he will take the full Chief Conductor title from September 2024.

Pappano appears as a guest conductor with many of the world's most prestigious orchestras, festivals and opera houses, including the Berlin and New York Philharmonic Orchestras,

the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Chicago and Boston Symphony Orchestras, Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras, Vienna State Opera, Metropolitan Opera New York and Teatro alla Scala Milan, the Salzburg and Verbier Festivals, and the BBC Proms.

Pappano has been an exclusive recording artist for Warner Classics (formerly EMI Classics) since 1995. His awards and honours include *Gramophone's* Artist of the Year in 2000, a 2003 Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera, the 2004 Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award, and the Bruno Walter Prize from the Académie du Disque Lyrique in Paris. In 2012 he was made a Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Republic of Italy, and a Knight of the British Empire for his services to music, and in 2015 he was named the 100th recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society's Gold Medal.

Pappano was born in London to Italian parents and moved with his family to the United States at the age of 13. He studied piano with Norma Verrilli, composition with Arnold Franchetti and conducting with Gustav Meier. He has also developed a notable career as a speaker and presenter, and has fronted several critically acclaimed BBC Television documentaries including *Opera Italia*, *Pappano's Essential Ring Cycle* and *Pappano's Classical Voices*.



NEXT ON STAGE WITH THE LSO

Thursday 18 April 7pm, Barbican
**Ravel Piano Concerto in G and
Vaughan Williams Symphony No 5**

Janine Jansen

violin



Violinist Janine Jansen has long-standing relationships with the world's most eminent orchestras and conductors. This season's highlights include tours with the London Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Sir Antonio Pappano, the Dresden Staatskapelle with Christian Thielemann, and the Oslo Philharmonic with Klaus Mäkelä. As part of her Artistic Partnership with Camerata Salzburg, Jansen will also join two major tours across Europe focusing on Mozart's violin concertos. In March 2024 the Concertgebouw Amsterdam hosted the first Janine Jansen Bach Festival, comprising a number of orchestral, choral and chamber concerts programmed, inspired and performed by Jansen and her musical partners.

Other orchestral highlights include engagements with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Antonio Pappano, Tonhalle Orchestra under Paavo Järvi, Rotterdam Philharmonic under Lahav Shani, and Orchestre de la Suisse Romande under Charles Dutoit. Jansen will perform the world premiere of Britta Byström's Violin Concerto, co-commissioned by the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, and returns

to the London Symphony Orchestra in June for Sally Beamish's Double Concerto *Distans* together with Martin Fröst.

Jansen records exclusively for Decca Classics. Her latest recording, *12 Stradivari*, is a unique exploration of twelve great Stradivarius violins and the repertoire these extraordinary instruments inspired. The chosen repertoire is specially curated by Jansen to showcase the unique qualities of each violin.

She is the Founder and Artistic Director of the International Chamber Music Festival Utrecht, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in December 2023. Together with Martha Argerich and Mischa Maisky, she gives a number of trio performances across Europe and continues her fruitful recital collaboration with pianist Denis Kozhukhin. Further chamber music projects are planned at Sion and Røros Festivals, as well as at London's Wigmore Hall, where she is Artist-in-Residence during the 2023/24 season.

Since 2019 she has been Professor of Violin at the HÉMU Valais – Wallis in Sion, Switzerland. Since November 2023 she has taught violin at Kronberg Academy. Jansen studied with Coosje Wijzenbeek, Philipp Hirshhorn and Boris Belkin.

Jansen plays the Shumsky-Rode Stradivarius from 1715, on generous loan from a European benefactor.



NEXT ON STAGE WITH THE LSO

Thursday 20 June 7pm, Barbican
Sally Beamish's *Distans*
with Martin Fröst

London Symphony Orchestra On Stage

Leader

Roman Simovic

First Violins

Noé Inui

Ginette Decuyper

Maxine Kwok

Elizabeth Pigram

Stefano Mengoli

Claire Parfitt

Laurent Quénelle

Harriet Rayfield

Sylvain Vasseur

Julian Azkoul

Richard Blayden

Dániel Mészöly

Djumash Poulsen

Shoshanah Sievers

Rhys Watkins

Second Violins

Julián Gil Rodríguez

Thomas Norris

Sarah Quinn

Miya Väisänen

David Ballesteros

Matthew Gardner

Alix Lagasse

Belinda McFarlane

Iwona Muszynska

Csilla Pogány

Andrew Pollock

Paul Robson

Caroline Frenkel

Ricky Gore

Violas

Gillianne Haddow

Malcolm Johnston

Matan Gilitchensky

Steve Doman

Thomas Beer

Robert Turner

Mizuho Ueyama

May Dolan

Hattie Quick *

Shiry Rashkovsky

Alistair Scahill

Martin Schaefer

David Vainsot

Cellos

Rebecca Gilliver

Alastair Blayden

Ève-Marie Caravassilis

Daniel Gardner

Amanda Truelove

Judith Fleet

Ghislaine McMullin

Desmond Neysmith

Yunxiaotan Pan *

Peteris Sokolovskis

Joanna Twaddle

Double Basses

Rodrigo Moro Martín

Patrick Laurence

Joe Melvin

Jani Pensola

Chaemun Im

Will Duerden *

Ben Griffiths

Evangeline Tang

Adam Wynter

Flutes

Gareth Davies

Julien Beaudiment

Chloé Dufosse

Piccolo

Sharon Williams

Oboes

Juliana Koch

Olivier Stankiewicz

Rosie Jenkins

Cor Anglais

Augustin Gorisse

Clarinets

Sérgio Pires

James Gilbert

Chi-Yu Mo

Bass Clarinet

Martino Moruzzi

Bassoons

Rachel Gough

Daniel Jemison

Joost Bosdijk

Contra Bassoon

Martin Field

Horns

Timothy Jones

Diego Incertis Sánchez

Angela Barnes

James Pillai

Jonathan Maloney

Trumpets

James Fountain

Imogen Whitehead

Adam Wright

Kaitlin Wild

Trombones

Peter Moore

Simon Johnson

Jonathan Hollick

Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

Tuba

Ben Thomson

Timpani

Nigel Thomas

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Neil Percy

David Jackson

Sam Walton

Patrick King

Harp

Bryn Lewis

Piano & Celeste

Catherine Edwards

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