

A portrait of Igor Levit, a man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a black t-shirt. He is looking slightly to the right. The background is a textured, brownish-gold surface.

# **Igor Levit plays Messiaen and Shostakovich**

Thu 13 Feb 7.30pm  
Milton Court Concert Hall

Part of Igor Levit Featured Artist  
Part of Barbican Presents 2019–20

# barbican

# Important information



## When does the concert start and finish?

The concert begins at 7.30pm and finishes at about 9.30pm, with a 20-minute interval.



## I'm running late!

Latecomers will be admitted if there is a suitable break in the performance.



## Please...

Switch any watch alarms and mobile phones to silent during the performance.



## Please don't...

Take photos or recordings during the performance – save it for the curtain call.



## Use a hearing aid?

Please use our induction loop – just switch your hearing aid to T setting on entering the hall.



## Need a break?

You can leave at any time and be readmitted if there is a suitable break in the performance, or during the interval.



## Looking for refreshment?

Bars are located on Levels 1 and 2. Pre-order interval drinks to beat the queues. Drinks are not allowed in the hall.



## Looking for the toilets?

The nearest toilets, including accessible toilets, are located on the Ground Floor and Level 2. There are accessible toilets on every level.



## Carrying bags and coats?

Drop them off at our free cloakroom on Level -1.

# Welcome to tonight's performance

**A warm welcome to tonight's concert, the second in our Featured Artist series celebrating the extraordinary musicianship of pianist Igor Levit.**

Though still only in his early thirties, Igor Levit is already hugely acclaimed. He combines a fearsome intellect with an ease at the piano that allows him to tackle the most demanding of repertoire and, most importantly, bring it alive for his audiences. He first made his name as a Beethoven pianist (and last autumn released a complete cycle of the sonatas), but he's fascinated by a wide range of repertoire, and a firm champion of lesser-known pieces too.

Tonight's programme is typically thought-provoking, beginning with Messiaen's extraordinarily ambitious *Visions de l'Amen* for two pianos, written after the composer had encountered the playing of the teenage Yvonne Loriod, who would become his second wife. This is followed by Shostakovich's enigmatic final Symphony, which we'll hear in the chamber version made for piano, violin, cello and percussion.

On Wednesday Igor Levit returns for a concert of chamber music by Beethoven, Brahms and Bartók.

Tonight's concert promises to be a wonderful occasion. I hope you enjoy it.

**Huw Humphreys**

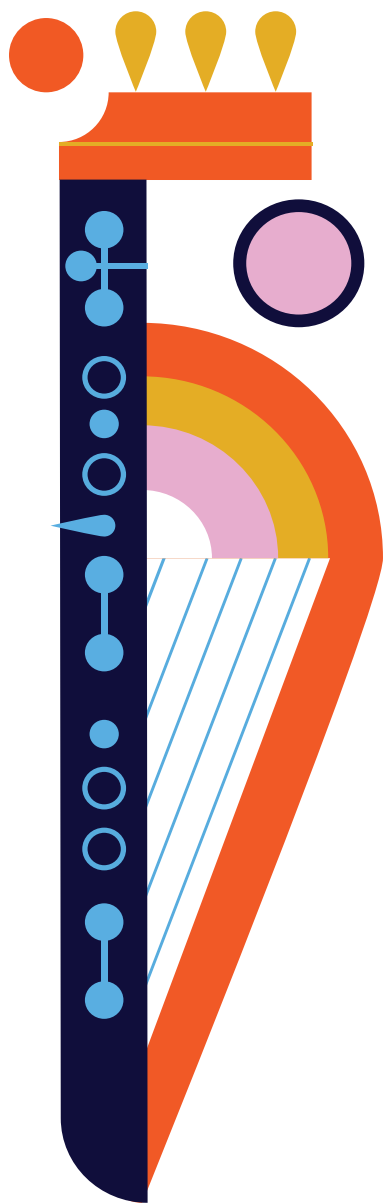
Head of Music

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# Igor Levit plays Messiaen and Shostakovich

Thu 13 Feb 7.30pm  
Milton Court Concert Hall

**Messiaen** Visions de l'Amen

**interval** 20 minutes

**Shostakovich** Symphony No 15 (arr Victor  
Derevianko & Mark Pekarsky)

**Igor Levit** piano

**Markus Hinterhäuser** piano

**Ning Feng** violin

**Julia Hagen** cello

**Klaus Reda** percussion

**Andreas Boettger** percussion

**Moritz Wappler** percussion

**Jeremy Comes** percussion

Part of Igor Levit Featured Artist

Part of Barbican Presents 2019–20

# Olivier Messiaen (1908–92)

## Visions de l'Amen (1943)

- 1 Amen de la création
- 2 Amen des étoiles, de la planète à l'anneau
- 3 Amen de l'agonie de Jésus
- 4 Amen du désir
- 5 Amen des anges, des saints, du chant des oiseaux
- 6 Amen du jugement
- 7 Amen de la consommation

**One of the most significant first performances in Paris during the German Occupation was at the Concerts de la Pléiade on 10 May 1943: Messiaen's *Visions de l'Amen*.**

During the autumn of 1942, the organiser of these concerts, Denise Tual, went into the Trinité church one evening, and was overwhelmed by the music coming from the organ. She met Messiaen shortly afterwards:

*I was expecting to meet a very young trendy type ('zazou'). I was still imagining the prewar generation of musicians, the elegance of a Désormière or the eccentricity of a Varèse. I found myself in front of an ageless man of the church ... He asked me to sit beside him on the organ bench. Our conversation was in hushed tones and he seemed visibly frightened. His face lit up when I told him the purpose of my visit. A commission? He beamed.*

Messiaen confirmed the details of the commission in a letter to Tual on 26 December 1942, though as yet the work had no title:

*I will write for you a work for two pianos; you will put it on at your third concert. I will be paid 10,000 francs for it – and I have already received your cheque for 4,000 francs on account ... I am leaving Paris for eight days. I will not forget to take our work with me. On the contrary, I am taking my sketches to have a think about them.*

The first two months of 1943 were spent working on *Visions de l'Amen*. Messiaen needed access to a good piano (the ancient *pédalier* he had at home was inadequate), and much of his work on *Visions* was done in the apartment of André Dubois, an extraordinary man with a passion for

new music. Dubois became a director of police in 1940, before being relieved of his duties by the Vichy government. In 1954 he was appointed *préfet de police* and was subsequently *résident général*, then ambassador, to Morocco. He later became general administrator of *Paris-Match* and *Marie-Claire* and, in 1971, vice-president of *Le Figaro*. Dubois's interest in the arts was all-embracing: he was a regular visitor to Picasso during the Occupation, and was on friendly terms with the playwright (and sometime prison inmate) Jean Genêt.

Progress on *Visions de l'Amen* was swift. On 17 March 1943 Messiaen announced the completion of the work to Tual:

*My work is finished ... In 15 days I will have done a first fair copy which I will give to Mlle Loriod so that we can start rehearsing together as soon as possible ... The work is of considerable proportions: it lasts a total of 40 minutes, almost 45! ... Thank you for giving me the opportunity to undertake this huge project, and to complete it.*

The Piano I part of *Visions de l'Amen* was written for the 19-year-old Yvonne Loriod. Her part shows us what first caused Messiaen to be dazzled by her playing: sparkling passagework, complex rhythmic canons and cascades of chords. Loriod was in Messiaen's first class at the Conservatoire, in June 1941, and the teacher-pupil relationship is clear in a quite different way in *Visions de l'Amen*: in the opening 'Amen de la création', the high-register chords of Piano I are given life by the recurring 'creation' theme rising from the depths of Piano II – Messiaen's part – which controls the pacing of the music.

The middle section of No 5 ('Amen des anges, des saints, du chant des oiseaux') is a rare



'Messiaen's early sacred pieces ... are like Christian surrealism. They have something in common with those later paintings of Salvador Dalí in which Christ floats above the earth like an astronaut or superhero ... The *Visions de l'Amen* indulges in what Paul Griffiths calls "ever splashier paroxysms of cheapened harmony ... a further stage in Messiaen's abjuring of a sophisticated response to what is musically embarrassing".'

Alex Ross *The Rest is Noise*

instance of Piano I having the main thematic line: birdsong, accompanied by dancing rhythms on Piano II. A dance of a different kind occupies the centre of No 2 (the 'Amen des étoiles, de la planète à l'anneau'), with the pianos working in tandem in an extraordinary depiction of orbiting planets. In the 'Amen du désir' (No 4), after a slow opening, there is a fast solo for Messiaen himself (Piano II); this is repeated, with brilliant interjections on Piano I.

The final 'Amen de la consommation' is a *tour de force* with Piano I storming the heavens with dazzling virtuosity. The music transforms the monumental 'creation' theme into a procession towards paradise and glory, decorated by joyous peals of bells.

The copying of *Visions de l'Amen* was done by mid-April, and Messiaen's diary on 14 April noted that he would take 'Amen' to Mlle Loriod at her godmother's house. Loriod's godmother, Nelly Eminger-Sivade, did much to encourage her brilliant god-daughter, putting on recitals in her salon where the young Yvonne would play for guests: Honegger and Poulenc came to hear her play when she was 18, and she played works by Messiaen, Jolivet and others. Mme Sivade's husband worked as an engineer for the Parisian water company and the couple lived in a handsome apartment, with a balcony, at 53 rue Blanche, on the west side of the street, a few hundred metres from the Trinité. The first rehearsal for *Visions de l'Amen* took place there on 16 April, after dinner. Messiaen then left Paris for a short break in the Aube: on 18 April 1943 he wrote to Tual from his aunt's house at Fuligny:

*You will find enclosed a list of 50 names and addresses. These are the people I would like you to invite to the Concert de la Pléiade on 10 May. I have only included those that are strictly necessary among the numerous pupils and friends who want to come to the first performance, and who have already spoken to me about it several times. Perhaps the hall is going to hold a larger audience than for the previous concerts as the layout is different.*

*Since many of these people are friends of both of us, I hope you will be able to invite all of those on the list, and I thank you for doing that with all my heart.*

*I should also mention that my wife and son appear on the list – above all don't forget them! It will also need to be remembered that the two pianists (Mlle Loriod and myself) and the two page turners (because we must have two page turners) will also require passes to get in. I thought of this because your front-of-house arrangements are draconian – and I congratulate you on that!*

*Forgive me for troubling you with these mundane questions! I gave my manuscript to Mlle Loriod five days ago (my own copy is just finished) and we have had a first rehearsal: she already plays magnificently!*

The mention of 'draconian' front-of-house arrangements in this letter is the only reference in Messiaen's correspondence with Tual to the controls which were necessary to ensure, presumably, that neither undesirable Germans nor known collaborators were admitted. The first performance was originally scheduled to form part of the third Concert de la Pléiade, at the Galerie Charpentier on 3 May 1943, but a small printed invitation (which managed to misspell both Messiaen as 'Messian' and Loriod as 'Loriot'), announced the decision to perform the work on its own a week later, on 10 May at 5pm.

A private run-through took place at Mme Sivade's the day before, on Sunday 9 May, as Messiaen noted in his diary: '14h. rehearsal at Mme Sivade. Those present were Mme Tual, Gallimard, Poulenc, Jolivet, Samazeuilh, Honegger, Mme Messiaen.' Yvonne Loriod recalled that after this rehearsal, Messiaen took the guests down the rue Blanche to attend Vespers at the Trinité.

The premiere was attended by some distinguished figures in French cultural life: photographs show Marie-Blanche de Polignac, Christian Dior and Francis Poulenc among the

audience; others present included Paul Valéry, François Mauriac and Jean Cocteau. The page turners were Serge Nigg and René Hanicot (not Pierre Boulez as Tual claimed – he first encountered Messiaen in 1944). Such was the lustre of the audiences at these concerts that they were written about not only as musical events, but as social occasions enlivening an otherwise sombre time, as can be seen from Marcelle Auclair's column in *Marie Claire*:

*It is thrilling to comment on the Concerts de la Pléiade which take place at the Galerie Charpentier. During this time when we get butter from the butcher, meat from the hairdresser and sugar from the shoe repairer, these fashionable concerts take place in an art gallery. It is only possible to go to them by invitation and, of course, it's a personal affront not to be invited! Madame Colette arrives on her bicycle, in her sports outfit, wearing sandals and a boater. She has cycled from the Palais Royal because it's all on the flat, she confided to us.*

In the 11 Concerts de la Pléiade given during the Occupation, premieres included not only Messiaen's *Visions de l'Amen* but also Poulenc's Violin Sonata and *Chansons villageoises*, and Jolivet's *Poèmes intimes*; there were also performances of Stravinsky and early French music (notably Rameau's *Platée*).

Following the concert, Messiaen wrote to Denise Tual, thanking her not only for arranging the concert, but also for 'the opportunity to write a long and serious piece'.

Programme note by Nigel Simeone

**interval** 20 minutes

# Olivier Messiaen

## (1908–92)



Messiaen was born in Avignon; his father taught English, his mother was a poet. During the First World War the family moved to Grenoble in the French Alps – a landscape to which Messiaen would constantly return throughout his life in order to compose. The other constant in his life was a deep Catholic faith, which he found early and which never left him.

In 1919 Messiaen entered the Paris Conservatoire, where his teachers included Marcel Dupré (organ and improvisation) and Paul Dukas (composition). There he discovered the key elements of his composing technique: Indian rhythmic cycles, and ‘modes of limited transposition’ (exotic scales constructed differently from the traditional Western major and minor ones). *Le banquet céleste* (1928) for organ, a set of piano *Préludes* (1928–9) and the orchestral *Les offrandes oubliées* (1930) already show the trademark features of Messiaen’s mature style: slow meditation in richly refracted chord sequences (as an image of eternity), bounding dances of despair or joy, and irregular, objectively unfolding rhythmic sequences (another image of timelessness in musical time).

In 1931 Messiaen was appointed organist at the church of La Trinité in Paris, a post he held until his death. Major statements from this period were *La nativité du Seigneur* (1935) and *Les corps glorieux* (1939) for organ, and the song-cycles *Poèmes pour Mi* (1936) and *Chants de terre et de ciel* (1938). When the Second World War broke out, Messiaen was called up as a medical orderly, captured, and sent to a prison camp near the Polish–German border. There he met up with the three musicians for whom he wrote the *Quartet for the End of Time* (1940–41). The premiere took place, in freezing conditions and with the composer playing a decrepit upright piano, before an audience of fellow prisoners in Stalag VIIIa.

Repatriated to France, Messiaen taught at the Paris Conservatoire, where his pupils included Yvonne Loriod, his future second wife. Her dazzling pianism helped to inspire the cascade of works that followed – among them *Visions de l’Amen* (1943) for two pianos, the solo piano cycle *Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus* (1944) and the *Turangalila Symphony* (1946–8, rev. 1990) for large orchestra, piano and ondes martenot. Stimulating contact with the European avant-garde engendered more piano and organ music (notably *Livre d’orgue*, 1951) and the orchestral *Chronochromie* (1959–60). And Messiaen’s love of birdsong – for him, a symbol of the resurrected soul in flight – flowered in the piano cycle *Catalogue d’oiseaux* (1956–8).

*Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum* (1964) for wind and percussion introduced a monumental, apocalyptic element that pointed towards Messiaen’s later works. These included huge, multifaceted proclamations of his faith that drew together every aspect of his style: the choral and orchestral *La transfiguration de notre Seigneur Jésus-Christ* (1965–9); *Des canyons aux étoiles ...* (1971–4) for piano, horn, xyloimba, glockenspiel and chamber orchestra; an immense opera-as-fresco, *Saint Francis of Assisi* (1975–83); and the orchestral cycle *Éclairs sur l’au-delà ...* (1988–92).

Profile by Malcolm Hayes



# Dmitry Shostakovich (1906–75)

## Symphony No 15 (1971),

### arr Viktor Derevianko & Mark Pekarsky

1 Allegretto • 2 Adagio – Largo – Adagio – Largo  
3 Allegretto • 4 Adagio – Allegretto – Adagio – Allegretto

Shostakovich's 15th Symphony, composed at speed in 1971, is the work of a gravely ill man yet ranks among his most precisely imagined orchestral works. Often surprisingly translucent in texture, its chamber-like scoring lends itself to the transformation spearheaded by one of the pianists invited to play it to representatives of the Union of Composers (in a two-piano transcription) prior to its public unveiling in January 1972. Prepared with the composer's full approval and the assistance of expert percussionist Mark Pekarsky, Viktor Derevianko's arrangement for smaller forces was premiered in the concert hall of Moscow's Gnessin Institute on 23 September 1972. The percussion parts preserve the music's sonic skeleton, with string lines allocated mainly to violin and cello, the pianist standing in for the brass and woodwind.

In whatever form, the music is at once accessible and elusive. The composer quotes without explanation from Wagner, Rossini, Glinka and a host of his own works, not least the long-suppressed Fourth Symphony. As he told Isaak Glikman, 'I don't myself quite know why the quotations are there, but I could not, could not, not include them.'

Given Shostakovich's bitterly contested reception history it's no surprise to discover wildly disparate responses to the music's character. In the most recent English-language biography of the composer, Pauline Fairclough is keen for us to recognise its playful aspects where others find only a raw coming to terms with death.

There are the classic four movements. During the Soviet era it was thought politic to locate the first in a metaphorical toy shop but, in any half-decent performance, the sense of childlike innocence is tainted. The impudent 'Lone Ranger' quotations from *William Tell* may or may not raise a chuckle. What the conductor Kurt Sanderling heard is 'soullessness composed into

music, the emotional emptiness in which people lived under the dictatorship of the time'. Kirill Kondrashin, whose reading of the symphony was 20 per cent faster overall, favoured manic intensity. Might Shostakovich have intended to write a work of youthful exuberance only to find reality getting in the way?

The elegiac slow movement offers a procession of funereal archetypes from the most withdrawn to the most violent. The extended 'interiorised' solo lines adapt well to the reduced forces. Allusions to Shostakovich's musical signature (DSCH in German musical notation) are less easily caught in the sardonic scherzo that follows.

The finale opens with Wagner: *Die Walküre's* death-haunted suspensions interrupted by the menacing timpani of 'Siegfried's Funeral March' from *Götterdämmerung*. Next the opening gesture of *Tristan und Isolde* morphs into what Gerald McBurney has identified as 'a garbled version' of a Glinka song to words by Yevgeny Baratynsky:

*Do not tempt me needlessly  
By returning to your former tenderness.  
To a disillusioned man  
All the old seductions are alien.*

At the movement's core the last of Shostakovich's great passacaglias of protest may or may not derive from the 'war' theme from his 'Leningrad' Symphony. And the most mesmerising invention is still to come. Sanderling again: 'At the end when the percussion starts twittering and chirping, I always think of the intensive-care ward in a hospital: the person is attached to various contraptions and the dials and screens indicate that heartbeat and brain activity are gradually expiring. Then comes a vast convulsion and it's all over. The listeners feel this too, or something like it, and are very shaken.'

Programme note © David Gutman

# Dmitry Shostakovich

## (1906–75)



Few composers' music bears the imprint of its times more tellingly than that of Dmitry Shostakovich. He was born in St Petersburg in 1906, the year after the brutal repression of a massed popular uprising. He was 11 when the October Revolution of 1917 broke out, and he marked it in his first composition, *Funeral March for the Victims of the Revolution*. His rapidly developing talent was soon recognised, and at just 13 he was admitted to the city's Conservatory. He wrote his First Symphony as a graduation piece at 19. Within a year it was an international success.

In the early heady years of the Communist republic Shostakovich's style grew wildly experimental, delighting some but enraging others. But his part-satirical, part-tragic opera *The Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, premiered in 1934, was another stunning success, putting him at the forefront of Soviet artistic life. Two years later, however, the Soviet dictator Stalin saw *Lady Macbeth*, and almost immediately a vicious attack followed in the state newspaper *Pravda*. Shostakovich suddenly found his career, and possibly his life, in peril. In response he wrote his Fifth Symphony (1937), superficially more

conservative than previous major works, and furnished with an outwardly optimistic conclusion. Official approval followed, yet some at the time also detected a note of impassioned dissent in the music.

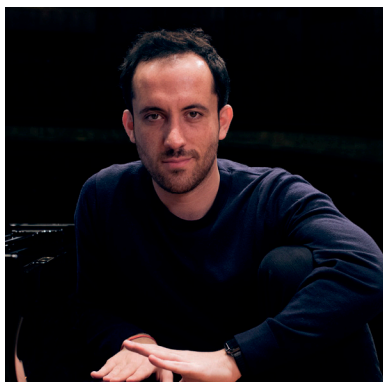
During the Second World War, Shostakovich again achieved hero status with his 'Leningrad' Symphony (No 7), partly written during the devastating siege of his native city. It was performed all over the world, including, remarkably, in besieged Leningrad (St Petersburg) itself. But after the war Shostakovich again found himself under attack, a process that culminated in his official denunciation in 1948 by the Soviet Central Committee secretary Andrey Zhdanov. For the next few years, until after the death of Stalin in 1953, Shostakovich survived by writing propaganda pieces, while keeping more serious, potentially dangerous compositions such as the First Violin Concerto and the 10th Symphony closely hidden.

During the political 'thaw' of the later 1950s, Shostakovich found himself rehabilitated. Then in 1960, to the surprise of many, he joined the Communist Party. To what extent this was the result of coercion is still debated, but it seems he felt this was a capitulation too far, and according to some he considered suicide. It is said that the composer described his patently autobiographical Eighth Quartet (1960) as composed 'in memory of myself'. In later years Shostakovich's position in Soviet cultural life seemed unassailable, but his health failed drastically, and in his later works there's a tendency to brood on mortality. Yet despite the dark character of much of his finest music, many of his fellow Russians found comfort and encouragement in it and since his death in 1975 increasing numbers across the world have felt the same. His status as one of the 20th-century's most important composers is now secure.

Profile by Stephen Johnson

# About the performers

Felix Broede/Sony Classical



## Igor Levit piano

Hailed by the *New York Times* as 'one of the essential artists of his generation', Igor Levit was named the 2018 Gilmore Artist and that same year won the Royal Philharmonic Society's Instrumentalist of the Year. He is the Artistic Director of the Chamber Music Academy and the Standpunkte Festival at the Heidelberg Spring Festival and last year was appointed professor at his alma mater, the University of Music, Drama and Media in Hanover.

In September 2019 Sony Classical released Igor Levit's highly anticipated first recording of the complete Beethoven sonatas. This season also marks the start of a series of three Beethoven sonata-cycles at the Lucerne Festival, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg and Stockholm's Konserthuset. The end of the season will see him on tour in the USA with an all-Beethoven sonata programme – appearing at, among others, New York's Carnegie Hall, Princeton University, the Kennedy Center in Washington DC and San Francisco's Davies Symphony Hall.

This season he is also the Featured Artist here at the Barbican. The residency comprises a solo recital plus two chamber concerts, with repertoire ranging from Beethoven to Messiaen.

Orchestral engagements will see him on tour in Europe with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Manfred Honeck, and returns among others to the Cleveland Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhausorchester and London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Highlights of past seasons include his debuts with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, as well as international tours with the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.

Born in Nizhny Novgorod in 1987, Igor Levit moved to Germany with his family at the age of 8. He completed his piano studies at the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media in 2009 with the highest academic and performance scores in the history of the institute.

He has an exclusive contract with Sony Classical and his debut disc of Beethoven's last five sonatas won the *BBC Music Magazine* Newcomer of the Year Award and the Royal Philharmonic Society's Young Artist Award (both 2014). His second recording featured the complete Bach *Partitas*, while his third, featuring works by Bach, Beethoven and Rzewski, won *Gramophone's* Instrumental Award and Record of the Year in 2016.

In Berlin, where he makes his home, Igor Levit plays a Steinway D Grand Piano, kindly given to him by the Trustees of Independent Opera at Sadler's Wells.

Lydia Gorges



### Markus Hinterhäuser piano

Markus Hinterhäuser was born in La Spezia in Italy. He studied piano at the Vienna University of Music and the Performing Arts and at Salzburg's Mozarteum University and attended masterclasses with Elisabeth Leonskaja and Oleg Maisenberg, among others.

He has performed as a soloist and chamber musician at the world's leading concert halls, including Carnegie Hall, the Vienna Musikverein and Konzerthaus and La Scala, Milan, and the Salzburg, Lucerne, Wien Modern, Holland and Berlin festivals, among others. In the field of lieder, he enjoyed a longstanding collaboration with Brigitte Fassbaender; he recently toured *Winterreise* with Matthias Goerne in a production conceived in cooperation with the South African artist William Kentridge, performing it in Europe, Asia and the USA.

In recent years he has focused on contemporary music, in particular works by Nono, Stockhausen, Feldman, Ligeti and Ustvolskaya. Alongside numerous recordings for radio and television, he has also recorded the complete piano works of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern, as well as compositions by Feldman, Nono, Scelsi, Ustvolskaya and Cage.

Markus Hinterhäuser has participated in music drama productions staged by Christoph Marthaler, Johan Simons and Klaus Michael

Grüber, including *Schutz vor der Zukunft* at the Vienna Festival and elsewhere and Janáček's *Diary of One Who Disappeared*.

Markus Hinterhäuser has won international acclaim as the co-founder and artistic director (together with Tomas Zierhofer-Kin) of the *Zeitfluss* series presented from 1993 to 2001 at the Salzburg Festival. The two of them also co-founded and co-directed the *Zeit-Zone* series, which formed part of the Vienna Festival from 2002 to 2004. From 2007 to 2011, he was concert programmer at the Salzburg Festival. He was Artistic Director of the Vienna Festival from 2014 to 2016. In October 2016 he became Artistic Director of the Salzburg Festival and his contract was recently extended to 2026.

Felix Broede



### Ning Feng violin

The Berlin-based Chinese violinist Ning Feng is recognised internationally as an artist of great lyricism, innate musicality and stunning virtuosity. He performs internationally with major orchestras and conductors, as well as giving recitals and chamber concerts.

Recent highlights have included a return to the Budapest Festival Orchestra under Iván Fischer in Budapest and on tour to China; tours with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra under Jaap van Zweden to Europe, Asia and Australia; a tour to China with the Konzerthausorchester

Berlin under Lawrence Foster; and debuts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Xian Zhang, National Symphony Orchestra, Washington DC, under Gianandrea Noseda and BBC Philharmonic under Simone Young. He performs regularly with Igor Levit.

Highlights of this season include returns to the Budapest Festival Orchestra, the City of Birmingham and New Jersey Symphony orchestras and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. He makes debuts with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the Amsterdam Sinfonietta. He will also perform the Goldmark Concerto with the China and Royal Philharmonic orchestras and Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. Chamber music highlights include his return to the Schubertiade Festival with Igor Levit and concerts in Cologne and here at the Barbican Centre. He will also be performing solo Bach at the Hong Kong Festival and elsewhere.

Ning Feng records for Channel Classics; his latest disc *Virtuosismo* was released last autumn.

He was born in Chengdu, and studied at the Sichuan Conservatory of Music, the Hanns Eisler School of Music in Berlin with Antje Weithaas and the Royal Academy of Music with Hu Kun, going on to win a number of international competitions,

Ning Feng plays the 'MacMillan' Stradivari of 1721, on private loan, kindly arranged by Premiere Performances of Hong Kong.

Neda Navvaz



## Julia Hagen cello

Aged just 24, Julia Hagen is already one of the most sought-after young cellists. Over the past two years she has made acclaimed debuts in the world's leading venues, attracting international attention.

This season she participates in the Vienna Konzerthaus's 'Great Talent' series, giving four concerts. She also performs at the Zurich Tonhalle, the Rudolf-Oetker-Halle Bielefeld, in the Schloss Mannheim and here at the Barbican Centre, as well as at the Salzburg Festival; orchestras with which she performs include the Kurpfalz and Vienna Chamber orchestras, Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra and European Union Youth Orchestra; she also gives chamber concerts with Khatia Buniatishvili, Yevgeny Chepovetsky and Igor Levit.

Last season she made debuts with the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra and the Konzerthausorchester Berlin and collaborated with the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra. In January last year she released her first CD, with the pianist Annika Treutler, on Hänssler Classic. The two of them gave concerts in Berlin, Lörrach and Vienna, among others.

She was born in Salzburg and studied in her home city and later in Vienna, Berlin and, most recently, Kronberg. She was one of six



young cellists chosen for Gautier Capuçon's 'Classe d'Excellence de Violoncelle' between 2014 and 2016. She has also participated in masterclasses with Gábor Takács-Nagy, Pamela Frank, Lawrence Power, Nobuko Imai, Torleif Thedéen, Laurence Lesser and Claudio Bohórquez, as well as taking part in the Ozawa Academy and Verbier Festival Academy.

Julia Hagen made her debut at the age of 14 as a soloist with the Vienna Youth Orchestra. She has won prizes at a number of international competitions and plays a cello made in 1684 by Francesco Ruggieri, on private loan.



#### **Klaus Reda** percussion

Klaus Reda studied at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague and later with Andreas Boettger at the Freiburg University of Music.

As well as being Principal Timpanist of the NDR Radiophilharmonie in Hanover, he is also a keen chamber musician.

He has worked with, among others, the piano duos Paratore, Reine Elisabeth and Silver-Garburg, the Nomos Quartet, Arte Ensemble, Ensemble Modern, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and the Merlin Ensemble Wien.



#### **Andreas Boettger** percussion

Andreas Boettger received his first percussion lesson in 1968 in Guinea, West Africa. He subsequently studied with Bernhard Wulff at the Freiburg University of Music, after which he became a member of Ensemble Modern. During this time, he took part in a range of projects, including a 1982 South American tour and Frank Zappa's 1992 *Yellow Shark* album. In 1983 he joined the Karlheinz Stockhausen Ensemble, performing internationally with the composer, including many world premieres and opera productions such as 'Montag' and 'Dienstag' from *Licht*.

As a concert percussionist, he has performed works by Boulez, Cage, Henze, Helmut Lachenmann, Nono and Takemitsu at international festivals. He has been Professor of Percussion and Timpani at the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media since 1994.



### **Moritz Wappler** percussion

Percussionist Moritz Wappler studied at the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media and last year completed his Masters in Percussion at the Bern University of Arts.

He has worked with the North German Radio Symphony Orchestra, Hanover, Düsseldorf Symphony Orchestra, Hamburg and Hanover State operas, Lucerne Festival Strings and the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra and is a regular with the Stairwell Orchestra.

He has performed at the Heidelberg Spring Festival, the Mecklenburg-Western-Pomerania Festival, Beethovenfest Bonn, Grafenegg Festival, Oranjewoud Festival, Pyhäjärven Chamber Music Festival and BOZAR Brussels.

He plays regularly as a soloist with PODIUM and recorded a CD with the North German Radio Big Band in 2017.



### **Jeremy Cornes** percussion

Jeremy Cornes studied at the Royal College of Music with Alan Cumberland, Michael Skinner and Kevin Hathway. While still at college he appeared with the Bournemouth Sinfonietta, Chamber Orchestra of Europe and the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

He has since been much in demand as a freelance musician, working with most of the major symphony orchestras in the UK and performing regularly with the London Philharmonic and London Symphony orchestras and Britten Sinfonia. He has been Principal Percussion of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe since 1983 and Principal Timpanist of the John Wilson Orchestra for the past six years. He has been Principal Percussion with Sinfonia Viva since its inception and was recently appointed Principal Timpanist of the City of London Sinfonia.

He has featured on many recordings of orchestral and operatic music, as well as on a wide range of soundtracks, including all three *Lord of the Rings* films and the first in the *Hobbit* trilogy.

Jeremy Cornes is Drum/Percussion Co-ordinator at the London College of Music.

# We hope to see you again soon

If you enjoyed today's performances, we can recommend the following concerts:

Robbie Lawrence



## Igor Levit plays Beethoven, Bartók and Brahms

Wed 19 Feb 7.30pm, Hall

Igor Levit and friends perform Beethoven's iconic *Grosse Fuge* in a two-piano version, Brahms's *Haydn Variations* and Bartók's gleefully anarchic *Sonata for two pianos and percussion*.

Mark Allen



## BBC Symphony Orchestra/Oramo

Fri 3 Apr 7.30pm, Hall

If you enjoyed tonight's performance of Shostakovich's profound final symphony in its revelatory chamber state, you won't want to miss it in its full form with the BBC SO and its Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo.

## Discover the Barbican

From the sunken depths of the theatre to the soaring heights of the Barbican towers, tours are a great introduction to the history of our iconic Brutalist architecture. You can also visit Level G, a vibrant space where you can see installations, commissions and events. It's always open and always free, whatever time you choose to visit.

