

# Bayerisches Staatsorchester/ Vladimir Jurowski: Alpine Symphony

**Start time:** 7.30pm

**Approximate end time:** 9.45pm, including a 20-minute interval

## Programme

**Victoria Poleva** *White Interment* (UK premiere)

**Alban Berg** Violin Concerto

1. Andante

2. Allegro

**Richard Strauss** *Eine Alpensinfonie*

Night – Sunrise – The ascent – Entering the forest – Wandering by the brook – At the waterfall – Apparition – On the flowery meadows – On the mountain pasture – Lost in thickets and undergrowth – On the glacier – Precarious moments – On the summit – Vision – Mists rise – The sun is gradually obscured – Elegy – Calm before the storm – Thunderstorm, descent – Sunset – Epilogue – Night

**In the first of two concerts Vladimir Jurowski directs the Bayerisches Staatsorchester – which is celebrating its 500th birthday – in a claustrophobic vision of snow, an elegiac 20th-century violin concerto and a mighty Alpine tone-poem.**

Humanity's rich and complex relationship with nature is a theme that threads its way through this programme. Immersion in the natural world may elicit strangely contradictory emotions: a sense of our insignificance in its vastness; an awareness of mortality when the forces of nature are pitted against us; a sense of pride in 'conquering' the apparently unconquerable.

Ukrainian composer Victoria Poleva regularly addresses these themes in her scores. Her single-movement *White Interment* was composed in 2002 for oboe and strings before she arranged it for full orchestra, turning it into her Third Symphony. The work is founded on the rhythm of the words 'teper' vseгда snega', meaning 'now always snow', and evokes the sense of being trapped in an icy prison: drawn into a blizzard, buried beneath a snowdrift, succumbing to sleep as the surrounding space implodes. These claustrophobic impressions are conjured by Poleva using static effects designed to provoke an almost psychedelic response in the listener. Blocks of sounds are structured using classical allusions, including *circulatio* (the Latin for 'circle'), a whirling melody that evokes the infinity sign; *catabasis* (the Greek for 'descent'), represented by a falling shape; the ascending *anabasis* (the Greek for 'climbing'); and *aposiopesis* (the Greek for 'concealment' or 'disguise'), reflected by a general pause depicting death and eternity.

Death and eternity were at the forefront of Alban Berg's mind as he composed his Violin Concerto. The work was commissioned in 1935 by Ukrainian-American violinist Louis Krasner; soon afterwards, Manon Gropius, the 18-year-old daughter of Alma Mahler and her second husband Walter Gropius, died of polio. Berg was distraught and quickly composed the concerto in tribute, dedicating it 'to the memory of an angel'. Other figures inhabit the score: Berg's enduring affair with Hanna Fuchs-Robettin is represented by the notated equivalents of their initials, and a reference to a Carinthian folksong *A Bird in the Plum Tree* hints at an earlier dalliance with a woman on the staff of his family's summer residence in Carinthia. These elements soften the effect of the 12-tone serial procedures used by Berg in the work, based on a system pioneered by his teacher and fellow member of the Second Viennese School, Arnold Schoenberg. Other tonal allusions include a quotation of J S Bach's funeral chorale 'Es ist genug' from his Cantata BWV60 – the text of which describes a soul's journey from earth to heaven.

barbican

Whereas Berg included hidden programmes in other works, the message of this score was explicitly described by him to his first biographer Willi Reich. It is written in two movements, both of which are in two sections: the first movement portrays Manon, the second her illness and death. Berg's annotations on the score mention 'cries' and 'groans'; tragically, it was to become his own requiem, as he died not long after finishing the score and didn't live to hear it performed.

Strauss was working on his *Alpine Symphony* when he learned of the death of Mahler in 1911. He wrote in his notebook: 'the German nation will achieve new creative energy only by liberating itself from Christianity ... I shall call my alpine symphony: *Der Antichrist*, since it represents: moral purification through one's own strength, liberation through work, adoration of eternal, magnificent nature'. These ideals recall Friedrich Nietzsche, and musically there are also nods to Strauss's Nietzschean tone-poem *Also sprach Zarathustra*. In the end, Strauss rejected the 'Antichrist' idea in favour of a celebration of Nature.

The scoring of the *Alpine Symphony* was completed on 8 February 1915, and Strauss dedicated the work 'in profound gratitude' to Count Seebach, director of Dresden's Royal Opera House, where several of his operas had been premiered. The premiere was given on 28 October in Berlin by the Dresden Court Orchestra under the composer's direction. At the final rehearsal Strauss observed: 'At last I have learned to orchestrate. I wanted to compose, for once, as a cow gives milk.'

The scale of the *Alpine Symphony* is unparalleled in the composer's output, calling for an orchestra of over 140 players including eight horns, 12 offstage horns, wind and thunder machines, cowbells, celesta, quadruple woodwind and organ. The work portrays 24 hours in the mountains through a series of tableaux. The sense of place is vivid, with Mahlerian cowbells leaving us in no doubt as to the setting; and the music exudes a pastoral grandeur reminiscent of Bruckner's Alpine evocations. The opening, recalled at the end, is particularly striking, involving a descending succession of sustained pitches built up until every degree of the scale is heard simultaneously. But although Strauss lived in the Alpine town of Garmisch for over three decades, it seems this ambitious and exhaustive account of the Alps was all he needed to say on the subject. Apart from quoting the *Alpine Symphony* in a couple of songs, he never again attempted so specific a tribute to the spectacular beauty of his surroundings.

## Performers

**Vladimir Jurowski** conductor

**Vilde Frang** violin

### Bayerisches Staatsorchester

violin I

**David Schultheiss**  
**Arben Spahiu**  
**So-Young Kim**  
**Cécilie Spross**  
**Dorothea Ebert**  
**Michael Durner**  
**Susanne Gargerle**  
**Corinna Desch**  
**Rita Kunert**  
**Ginshi Saito**  
**Yon Joo Kang**  
**Clara Scholtes**  
**Dasol Yun**  
**Clemens Flieder**  
**Geoffroy Schied**  
**Daniela Preimesberger**

violin II

**Matjaž Bogataj**  
**Hanna Asieieva**  
**Sylvie Heymann-Seidel**  
**Traudi Pauer**  
**Markus Kern**  
**Immanuel Drissner**  
**Isolde Lehrmann**  
**Sylvia Eisermann**  
**Anna Heichele-Paatz**  
**Heimhild Wolter**  
**Anna Maija Hirvonen**  
**Gyujeen Han**  
**Verena Kurz**  
**Miloš Stanojević**

viola

**Adrian Mustea**  
**Stephan Finkentey**  
**Clemens Gordon**  
**Tilo Widenmeyer**  
**Florian Ruf**  
**David Ott**  
**Wiebke Heidemeier**  
**Johanna Maurer**  
**Ruth Schindel**  
**Anna Lysenko**  
**Elisabeth Buchner**  
**Andreas Grote**

cello

**Yves Savary**  
**Benedikt Don Strohmeier**  
**Rupert Buchner**  
**Roswitha Timm**  
**Dietrich von Kaltenborn**  
**Clemens Müllner**  
**Darima Tcyrempilova**  
**Sarah Moser**  
**Gerhard Zank**  
**Stefan Trauer**

double bass

**Florian Gmelin**  
**Alexander Rilling**  
**Alexandra Hengstebeck**  
**Thomas Jauch**  
**Reinhard Schmid**  
**Thorsten Lawrenz**  
**Thomas Herbst**  
**Alexander Önce**

flute

**Herman van Kogelenberg**  
**Christoph Bachhuber**  
**Edoardo Silvi**  
**Lisa Batzer**  
**Magdalena Bogner**  
**Chaeyeon You**

oboe

**Giorgi Gvantseladze**  
**Simone Preuin**  
**Marlene Gomes**  
**Jeonghun Heo**  
**Zurab Gvantseladze**  
**Klidi Brahimi**

clarinet

**Andreas Schablas**  
**Jürgen Key**  
**Martin Fuchs**  
**Lea Heilmaier**

saxophone

**Christian Segmehl**

bassoon

**Holger Schinköthe**  
**Martynas Šedbaras**  
**Katrin Kittlaus**  
**Gernot Friedrich**

horn

**Johannes Dengler**  
**Pascal Deuber**  
**Franz Draxinger**  
**Éva Lilla Fröschl**  
**Maximilian**  
**Hochwimmer**  
**Christian Loferer**  
**Stefan Böhning**  
**Casey Rippon**

trumpet

**Andreas Öttl**  
**Johannes Moritz**  
**Andreas Kittlaus**  
**Frank Bloedhorn**

trombone

**Sven Strunkeit**  
**Thomas Klotz**  
**Matthias Kamleiter**  
**Uwe Füssel**

tuba

**Stefan Ambrosius**  
**Steffen Schmid**

timpani

**Ernst-Wilhelm Hilgers**  
**Pieter Roijen**

percussion

**Dieter Pöll**  
**Claudio Estay**  
**Carlos Vera**  
**Tomàs Toral Pons**

harp

**Gaël Gandino**  
**Julie Palloc**

organ

**Johannes Berger**

celesta/piano

**So-Jin Kim**

off-stage musicians

conductor

**Gabriella Teychenné**

horn

**Timothy Ellis**  
**Pip Eastop**  
**Nick Korth**  
**Alexei Watkins**  
**Alex Willett**  
**Kristina Yumerska**

trumpet

**Ryan Linham**  
**Simon Cox**

trombone

**Duncan Wilson**  
**Merin Rhyd**

## With thanks to

### Founder and Principal Funder

The City of London Corporation

### Major Supporters

Arts Council England  
Calouste Gulbenkian  
Foundation (UK Branch)  
Kiran Nadar Museum of Art  
SHM Foundation  
Sir Siegmund Warburg's  
Voluntary Settlement  
The Terra Foundation for  
American Art

### Leading Supporters

Trevor Fenwick and Jane Hindley  
Marcus Margulies

### Programme Supporters

Marie-Laure de Clermont-  
Tonnerre (Spirit Now London)  
Sayeh Ghanbari  
Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery  
Elizabeth and J Jeffrey Louis  
Pat and Pierre Maugüé  
Hugh Monk

### Barbican Patrons

#### Director's Circle

James and Louise Arnell  
Farmida Bi  
Jo and Tom Bloxham MBE  
Philippe and Stephanie Camu  
Cas Donald  
Alex and Elena Gerko  
Trevor Fenwick and Jane Hindley  
SHM Foundation  
Sian and Matthew Westerman  
Anonymous (1)

#### Principal Patrons

Martin and Celestina Hughes  
Ian Rosenblatt  
Viscount Strathallan

### Premier Patrons

Abdullah B S Al-Saud  
Tim and Catherine Cox  
Robert Glick OBE  
Soo Hitchin  
John and Angela Kessler  
Sir William and Lady Hilary Russell  
Romilly Walton Masters Award  
Anonymous (1)

### Patrons

Matt Astill  
Shahzain Badruddin  
Sam and Rosie Berwick  
Nicholas Berwin  
Lynn Biggs  
Professor Geraldine Brodie  
Gwen and Stanley Burnton  
Tony Chambers  
Tim and Caroline Clark  
Dr Gianetta Corley  
Erica Cosburn  
Ian S Ferguson  
Barbara and Michael Gwinell  
Julian Hale and Helen Likierman  
Brian Harasek  
Richard Hardie  
Malcolm Herring  
Hollick Family Foundation  
Richard Hopkin  
Sajid Hussein  
David Kapur  
Colin Kirkpatrick  
Neil and Tracy Lawson-May  
Robert McHenry and Sally  
Lloyd-Bostock  
Tracey, Eloise and Max Mayerson  
Wendy Mead  
Sir Paul Morgan  
Professor Dame Linda Partridge and  
Mr Michael Morgan  
Jeremy and Angela Palmer  
Mark Page  
Cressida Pollock  
Oliver Pauley  
Ben and Christina Perry  
Jens Riegelsberger  
Keith Salway  
Nicola Sawford and Michael Hadi  
Carlos and Devy Schonfeld

Richard and Elizabeth Setchim  
Mary Tapissier and family  
Philip and Irene Toll Gage Foundation  
Steven Tredget  
Richard Williams  
Irem Yerdelen  
Anonymous (6)

### Corporate Supporters

Campari  
Google Arts & Culture  
Sotheby's  
Taittinger  
Vestiaire Collective

### Corporate Members

Audible  
Bank of America  
Bloomberg  
Bolt Burdon Kemp  
Linklaters LLP  
Norton Rose Fulbright  
Osborne Clarke  
Pinsent Masons  
Slaughter and May  
Standard Chartered  
UBS

### Trusts, Foundations and Public Funders

The Austin and Hope  
Pilkington Charitable Trust  
Art Fund  
Bagri Foundation  
CHK Foundation  
Cockayne – Grants for the Arts  
Fluxus Art Projects  
Goethe-Institut London  
John S Cohen Foundation  
Helen Frankenthaler Foundation  
Italian Cultural Institute in London  
Korean Cultural Centre UK  
Kusuma Trust UK  
London Community Foundation  
Mactaggart Third Fund  
Maria Björnson Memorial Fund  
Peter Sowerby Foundation  
The Polonsky Foundation  
Rix-Thompson-Rothenberg Foundation  
US Embassy London

If you're interested in supporting the Barbican Centre Trust, visit [barbican.org.uk/supportus](http://barbican.org.uk/supportus) or contact us on 0207 382 6185 or [development@barbican.org.uk](mailto:development@barbican.org.uk)

The Barbican Centre Trust, registered charity no 294282

## **Barbican Board**

Tom Sleigh *chair*  
Sir William Russell *deputy chairman*  
Tobi-Ruth Adebekun *deputy chairman*  
Randall Anderson  
Munsur Ali  
Stephen Bediako OBE  
Farmida Bi CBE  
Tijs Broeke  
Zulum Elumogo  
Wendy Mead OBE  
Mark Page  
Alpa Raja  
Dr Jens Riegelsberger  
Professor Jane Roscoe  
Irem Yerdelen  
Despina Tsatsas  
Michael 'Mikey J' Asante MBE

## **Directors Group**

Claire Spencer *CEO*  
Will Gompertz *artistic director*  
Natasha Harris *director of development*  
Ali Mirza *director of people and inclusion*  
Sarah Wall *head of finance & business administration*  
Jo Daly *senior executive assistant to CEO and artistic director*



The City of London  
Corporation is the founder  
and principal funder  
of the Barbican Centre