

# Dec 23

## Guide

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## Hello!

The festive season is a time of joy, and the Centre will be overflowing with it this month.

Revel in the delightful world of the record-breaking, five-star play *My Neighbour Totoro*. The stunning adaptation of the Studio Ghibli film by the Royal Shakespeare Company and Joe Hisaishi will transport you to a land of wonder, sprites and the delights of nature, while its heart-warming story will leave you feeling warm and fuzzy on these cold nights.

Or experience the madcap antics of theatre company Told by an Idiot, who return with their sketch show for all ages exactly ten years after it premiered on our stage. It's called *Get Happy* and, as we hear from director Paul Hunter, that's very much an instruction to audiences.

The musical gifts on display in our Hall will suit all tastes, from the cutting-edge compositions of Gavin Bryars to the dream-like music chosen by conductor Susanna Mälkki, who performs with the London Symphony Orchestra.

And don't miss our major exhibition, *RE/SISTERS*, a fascinating look at the systemic links between the oppression of women and the degradation of the planet. While you're here, visit The Curve, where poet, artist and filmmaker Julianknxx's *Chorus in Rememory of Flight* is a thought-provoking and moving multi-screen film installation reflecting on singers as a means of resistance to the eradication of difference.

Finally, as this is the season of giving, we'd love it if you would consider supporting our work by donating, becoming a Member, or joining our Patrons scheme. Your help means we can share the work of inspiring and visionary artists with the widest possible audience.

Happy festive wishes to you all!

**Claire Spencer**  
CEO, Barbican

# Artfully controlled chaos for Christmas

**Told by an Idiot bring their anarchic show for families to the Barbican again this month. We go behind the scenes of this madcap adventure.**



Told by an Idiot's *Get Happy* © Manuel Harlan

Named after a Judy Garland song, *Get Happy* combines physical comedy, live music, acrobatics, silly dancing and audience interaction to conjure a chaotic sketch show for all the family.

First performed at the Barbican ten years ago, it's returning to where it all began following a decade playing around the world for a special anniversary run.

Director and founder of theatre company Told by an Idiot, Paul Hunter, was inspired to create the show after watching his two-year-old son play. 'I was fascinated by him and how his imagination worked,' he remembers. 'I was taken by how he could be completely invested in something and immediately drop it and be interested in something else. I wondered if we could make a show that captured that experience. So we went into a room with some performers and a few influences, such as a Dr. Seuss book my son loved called *Go Dog Go*, a few moments from Pina Bausch shows, and a Charlie Chaplin film called *The Kid*'.

What emerged was a 'madcap little gem' (*Time Out*) that's kept people of all ages delighted and uplifted ever since. Key to its success is that it has a really broad appeal, says Hunter.

'I really liked a quote from the guy who set up Pixar films, who, when asked about who his target audience was, said, "basically anybody who breathes". I thought that's also what we're trying to explore. What emerged was a really anarchic family sketch show for the youngest member of the audience to the oldest.'

The new production features brand-new sketches for 2023, and the founding ideals are very much still in place. 'I didn't want the performances to in any way look like they were from a "kid's show",' says Hunter. 'It's like with Pina Bausch's work: the performers might be doing ridiculous things, but they look elegant.'

'*Get Happy* is consciously about different generations: we have two older performers and two younger performers. For example, I didn't want the older guy to look like Mr Tumble or one of those CBeebies characters; I wanted him to look relatable to the audience, like dads who wear a suit and work in the City. But he ends up diving off a stepladder into a paddling pool. Kids find it really funny because it looks like the kind of thing their dad shouldn't do.'

And he says he called it *Get Happy* not just because it is one of his favourite songs, but because it places fun and pleasure at the top of the agenda. Which is something we could all be reminded of from time to time.

**Told by an Idiot: *Get Happy***

7-19 Dec

See page 9 for details

There will be a special Members-only performance on 9 Dec. For more information, or to become a Member and enjoy all the exclusive benefits, visit [barbican.org.uk/membership](http://barbican.org.uk/membership) for details.

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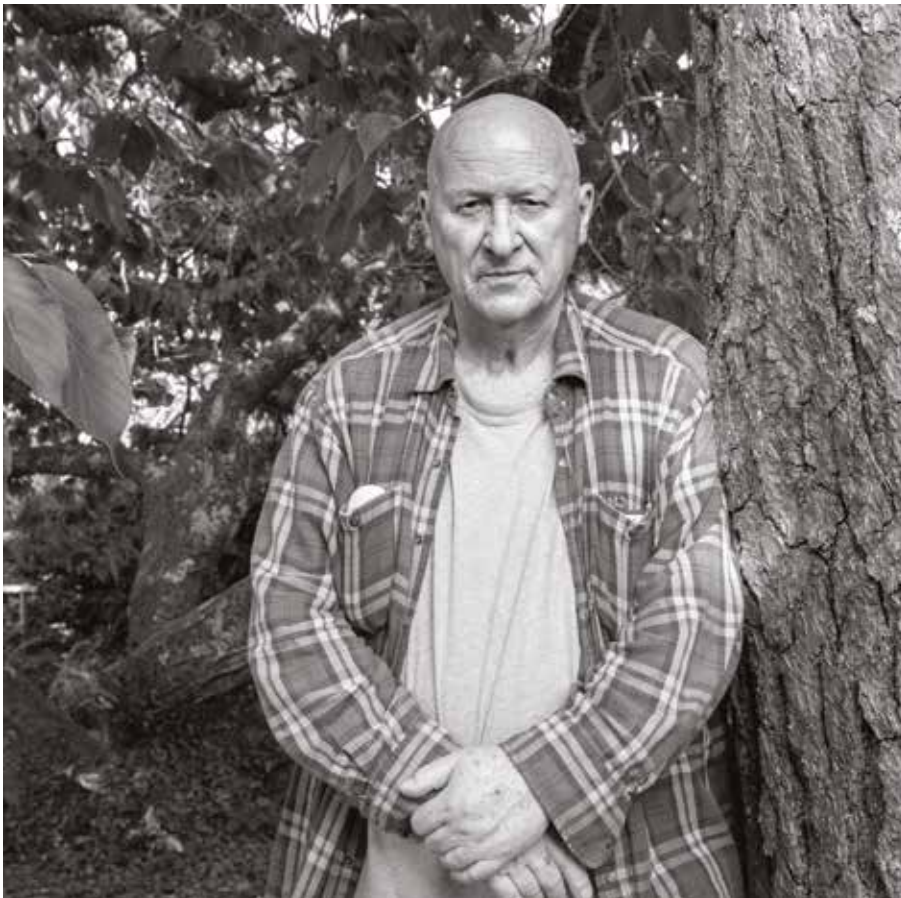
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# A lifetime of exceptional music

**As composer and double bassist Gavin Bryars prepares to mark his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with a concert showcasing the breadth of his prolific output, we talk to him about his incredible career and what music means to him.**



Gavin Bryars © Kate Mount

Experimental composer Gavin Bryars is regarded as one of his generation's most influential British musicians. A pioneer of free improvisation as a jazz bass player, he went on to work with the likes of John Cage and has written extensively for orchestras, his own ensemble, for theatre and dance (including five full-length operas) and has collaborated with performers outside the "classical music" world, such as Tom Waits, Natalie Merchant, Gavin Friday and Father John Misty.

To mark his 80th birthday year, he's performing an extensive concert of his work, including some real rarities, such as the *Duets from Doctor Ox's Experiment*, which has only been played once since it premiered. 'It involves larger forces than I would normally use in my ensemble,' says Bryars, 'so it's quite tricky.'

There will also be an opportunity to hear the composer's best-known piece, *Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet*. Composed in 1971, the deeply moving work features a 26-second tape loop (culled from a 1971 documentary) of an elderly homeless man singing a few phrases from a hymn now long forgotten. His quavering, frail, yet tuneful voice is supported by Bryars' swelling and beautiful orchestral music that lifts and supports the sample without mawkishness. It brings a lump to the throat of almost anyone who listens to it.

Although he's performed it for more than 50 years, Bryars says he never tires of *Jesus' Blood* – saying he always finds something new to hear in the anonymous man's voice (the composer tried for a long time to track him down, to no avail).

The work has been performed in many different ways, from full orchestra to ensemble, 32-piece choir to novice violin players from a primary school in Dundee – and the Yorkshire-born composer says he reinvents it every time he plays it. 'What I always do is maintain the integrity of the voice and support it. In the early days, it was relatively simple, but it's become more and more complex over the decades.'

'But the essence of it is the old man's voice which, after all these years, still touches me. If I'm conducting an ensemble, we're just waiting at the beginning while his voice gradually fades in. And I'm still so touched by it. It's not a burden to perform this so many times; in fact, it's a pleasure to play.'

After the emotional journey of *Jesus' Blood...*, Bryars says he wanted to finish the concert with his Epilogue from *Wonderlawn*, featuring all four members of his family.

'I wanted to wind things down a little at the end. After *Jesus' Blood*, you're left in a bit of a state. So this is the equivalent of the sort of thing you get at a rave (although, I hasten to add that I've never been to one in my life), where they play other kinds of music to bring people down from their high. In fact, Aphex Twin did a remix of a piece of mine [*Raising the Titanic* – released by Aphex Twin in 1995] specifically for that purpose. So I was aware of that phenomenon.'

'This epilogue is a way of achieving some sort of equilibrium, of coming back into the real world.'

There's very much a family feel to this concert, not only with Bryars' four children performing but 'honorary member of the family', harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani (who will perform 1995's *After Handel's Vesper*) and longtime interpreter of his music David Wordsworth conducting.

'A feature of my ensemble – which has been on the go for over 37 years – was it was always about the people I wanted to play with, not necessarily the instruments I wanted. Obviously, they're great players, but I wanted to work with people who had the right musical sensibilities. Over the years, these people have become my friends and like family.'

## Gavin Bryars at 80

19 Dec

See page 14 for details



# Journey to worlds of dreams

**Music can transport us to new worlds through poetry and painting with sound, as conductor Susanna Mälkki's concert with the London Symphony Orchestra this month reveals.**



Susanna Mälkki will conduct the London Symphony Orchestra this month.

The centrepiece of this concert will be Alexander Scriabin's Symphony No 4, also known as *The Poem of Ecstasy*. The Russian-born composer is renowned for his musical symbolism and an obsession with mystical philosophy, and *The Poem of Ecstasy* certainly lives up to this reputation.

'It's an amazing piece,' says the globally-renowned conductor Mälkki. 'Absolutely gorgeous. And it's relatively rarely performed because it's so massive.'

She says she chose this work alongside music by French composers Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel because 'Scriabin's composing is both Russian and French in style. It's this time of the tonality collapsing or flowing over, which is something Debussy did a bit later. There's definitely a connection between Scriabin and

the French music in the tonality, which becomes so saturated we almost lose it.

'It's an incredible masterpiece that's so rich in colours and expression, and it also has a very dramatic curve.'

As someone who's performed with some of the world's greatest orchestras, Mälkki says this work needs an ensemble of the experience and size of the London Symphony Orchestra because the music is so rich, but it also needs considerable levels of refinement. 'It's a fascinating work because we have a massive orchestra for the [very dramatic] ending, but there also are many places where it's incredibly intimate and chamber music-like; it's exactly why we need an orchestra of the quality of the LSO, and I can't wait to do this piece with them.'

Before all that drama, pianist Kirill Gerstein who is Spotlight Artist with the LSO across four concerts in the 2023/24 season, will play Maurice Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*. Written in 1930 for Paul Wittgenstein, who lost his arm in the First World War, the composer manages to make one hand sound like two.

'It's a pearl,' smiles Mälkki. 'It's so original. It's incredible how, in this relatively short time, the music can guide us through so many different mental places. It's an incredibly satisfying challenge to solve the fact that you have the soloist playing with one hand, and then what the orchestra is doing is quite massive.'

'I love this piece because it has a triumphant feel to it, but of course, it's profoundly tragic; I like that combination of the two. I think it's a masterpiece. And I'm delighted to be doing it with Kirill and the orchestra.'

The Impressionist feel of Debussy's *Three Nocturnes* opens the concert. Three quite different movements paint beautiful and evocative mental images and are typical of the composer's desire to reject the traditional music gestures of the time.

'I think Debussy is one of the most misunderstood geniuses in the history of music because he's always so original,' says Mälkki. 'People raise their eyebrows a little bit, and there's this "Whoa, what is this?" response. In *Three Nocturnes*, the music doesn't have a pompous ending, you're left with a question mark. Personally, I love that because that's the magic through which he pulls us into his world. It's like symbolism in the way that you're given a lot of hints, but then it's up to you to make something out of them. If we were given the secret formula to crack the code, it wouldn't be the same. I find it fascinating that more than 100 years later, we're still perplexed about this music. And I find it absolutely magical.'

**London Symphony Orchestra/ Susanna Mälkki: *The Poem of Ecstasy* – Debussy, Ravel & Scriabin**

3 Dec

See page 13 for details

# A transformative energy

**Italo-German producer David August's new album *VIS* (Latin for energy or force) imagines an alternative evolution of mankind through sound. He tells us writing it had a significant effect on him.**



David August © Filip Preis

*VIS* is the result of a lengthy process of self-discovery, collaboration and research. A collaborative multi-disciplinary project, it incorporates an imaginary alphabet designed by Moroccan artist Hiba Baddou, as well as choreography and visual effects that come together for a kinetic live show that plays this month.

**It sounds like the process of making your new album *VIS* was a real transformation in terms of your artistic practice. Can you tell us about that?**

It's been a long process in the making, and I think I needed that time to bring this concept to life technically and spiritually, in the sense that when the vision behind it started, I wasn't really able to technically transform it into the sound that was in my mind.

**It brings together so many fascinating ideas and concepts. Can you tell us about the journey that you went on?**

There's a lot to talk about, but I'll try to condense it. I don't think this music could have been made at any other time in my life so far. It was written during the pandemic, which meant the global circumstances we found ourselves in, and my personal circumstances allowed me to look inwards. But by looking inward, I found myself as an observer of the world around me. I'd gone to Italy for what was going to be a three-week vacation but turned into a seven-month stay. My mother is from Italy, it's my second home, and I felt more comfortable in that environment because it's more connected to a natural habitat.

At the same time, I became very interested in Eastern philosophies, mysticism, and quantum physics. In the end, it was the journey through these topics that helped shape an approach to music that was different from before. Previously, I was more focused on myself, in terms of using music as a vehicle to transport my personal feelings. But this is the first time I used music to transport a feeling I

was perceiving from the outer world and not my own inner world. My intention was not to transmit my personal emotions into this music, but rather to present a balanced view of the world. It's neither melancholic nor happy, but I tried to find a space in between, which has its inspiration in the natural and cosmic balances of things. Humans perceive a world of duality: plus and minus, dark and light. But my aim was to tune myself to a balanced representation of all these things.

During this period, I'd been talking to mentors, composers of different generations, spiritual leaders and others, who all taught me a lot. I realised I had to get rid of my ego and put myself into an empty space, from where an idea would arise, and I would follow where the idea wanted to go, rather than forcing it where I wanted it to go. It was about taking a humble approach, of really abandoning ego and serving the purpose rather than interfering with my personal intention.

**What effect did this new approach have on you as an artist?**

I think I don't take music for granted anymore. It's such a precious language that needs to be respected and treated in a responsible way. That sounds very serious and very dogmatic, and I don't mean it that way. I don't mean to deny an intuitive, playful approach to music and art, but I think that it has a liberating feeling for me now because my ego was in the way before. Writing in this way enabled me to let go of my inner conflicts. I'm deeply grateful to have explored it because it's a more holistic approach, and I feel more connected to the medium and to this form of expression than before.

**Tell us about the audio-visual show you've created to present this work**

Visual inspiration has always been part of my creative process. And because this music is so theatrical and visual, I felt there had to be other elements to support it in order to attempt to transmit this vision. Movement and imagination have been two very important pillars of inspiration for me. There's a lot of ideas at play here, and I wanted to reflect all this abstraction back to the human body. So bringing in choreography by Franka Marlene Foth and scenography by MFO felt grounding. Light is the other important component of the show because *vis* is the Latin word for energy and power. In ancient Roman literature, it was used as a word to describe the energy that surrounds us. It's used in a very romantic and spiritual way, but the music is a homage to that idea, and I wanted to bring that together with the movement and the music.

**David August presents *VIS***

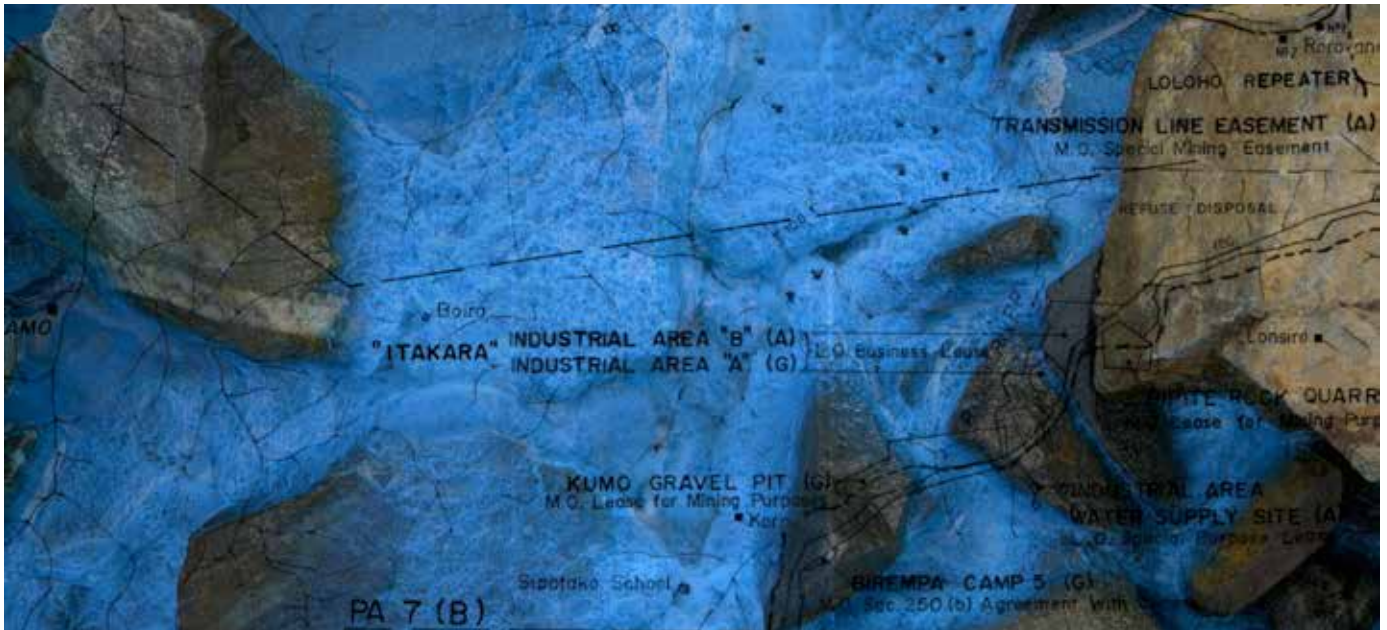
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now

# Documenting devastation

Artist Taloi Havini tells us how she made her incredible installation exploring the ecological and social devastation caused by a gold and copper mine in her homeland.



Taloi Havini, Still from *Habitat*, 2017.

Our major new group exhibition *RE/SISTERS: A Lens on Gender and Ecology* highlights the relationship between gender and ecology, highlighting the systemic links between the oppression of women and the degradation of the planet.

Among the works on display is *Habitat* by Taloi Havini. It documents the environmental destruction caused to her birthplace (the island of Buka in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville), by the Panguna mine. Local people were paid a tiny proportion of the profits from the mine but bore the brunt of the ecological costs. Told through three channels of film and photographs, it shows different perspectives – one dispassionate, the other embedded – offering a metaphor for the divergent agendas that have shaped the landscape.

## Tell us about the background to *Habitat*

*Habitat* is the title I've given a series of works documenting the changes that have taken place in Bougainville, where I was born. All these changes occurred as a result of the mining of gold and copper in the centre of the island. For many years that issue has dominated the identity of the Bougainville people and how they resisted – particularly the women, because in the majority of the island, ownership of land is passed down through the female line.

As a child we had to leave Bougainville because of the civil war triggered by the activities of the mine. My parents were active in the resistance movement. Growing up in Australia, I realised that matrilineal inheritance was not the norm in other cultures. Then it clicked: this is why the mine caused so much conflict – it was such a big issue for these huge giant companies who are run by men in patrilineal systems. They just didn't get that we had a different system.

*Habitat* uses a wide range of film formats to document the effects of the Panguna mine. It is a huge crater, but the effects ripple out from that: poisons were being dumped in the landscape and rivers; a whole valley has been transformed into a moonscape; a whole rainforest was dammed and turned into a swamp.

## Why did you choose to focus on the mine and its impact on Bougainville and its people?

The power of film and photography allows me to be an author in a visual sense, which was appealing because I wanted to tell a different story than the one people saw in the media. I'm also interested in how images and sound can conjure up feelings without the need for words.

I wanted to show the tension between caring for land and being forced by extractive methods to completely change the landscape.

What *Habitat* shows is that women – especially Indigenous women – have so much power to stand up to really harmful ways of behaving.

## Do you do you feel like Indigenous people are getting more of a voice, particularly on issues such as caring for the planet?

There's a movement happening in general against the ways men have been treating women. But for Indigenous women, that's not really the case. That's why *RE/SISTERS* is a really timely exhibition. It's important to share stories from all over the world.

## What role can art play in globally important issues such as the environment and gender justice?

I think art adds a dimension. Artists have that fearless ability to make a statement but also they're able to explore and spend hours thinking about these ideas deeply. These perspectives benefit society a great deal in that way.

## RE/SISTERS: A Lens on Gender and Ecology Until 14 Jan

See page 7 for details

This exhibition has been made possible with generous support from our lead sponsor Vestiaire Collective. We would also like to thank the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, Fluxus Art Projects, and The High Commission of Canada in The United Kingdom for their additional support.



# Why My Neighbour Totoro is so important to us

**Actors Mei Mac and Ami Okumura Jones (who play lead roles in the RSC's award-winning stage adaptation of the beloved Studio Ghibli film) tell us the story not only was important to their childhoods, but the play has changed them as adults.**

Telling the story of an extraordinary summer in the lives of sisters Satsuki and Mei as they are swept up in exciting adventures in the realm of spirits, sprites, and natural wonder, *My Neighbour Totoro* is a beloved film the world over.

Now a multi-award-winning stage adaptation by the Royal Shakespeare Company and original composer Joe Hisaishi in collaboration with Improbable and Nippon TV, the coming-of-age tale has come to life in our Theatre.

The film was made in 1998 by Japanese animation powerhouse Studio Ghibli and holds a particularly special place in the hearts of the actors playing the sisters.

Ami Okumura Jones (who plays Satsuki), and Mei Mac (who plays Mei) say it was an important part of their childhoods. 'I couldn't tell you when I first saw it, but I would have been tiny,' smiles Okumura Jones. 'My mother's Japanese so my sister and I grew up watching Studio Ghibli films. I must have seen *My Neighbour Totoro* at least 20 times, if not more, growing up. It was always part of my childhood.'

Her co-star adds: 'Lots of people in the Western world grew up with Disney in the same way we grew up with Studio Ghibli films. Growing up in Britain, I feel like I watched a lot more Ghibli films than maybe even kids in the Western world watching Disney because it was part of a way of connecting with our heritage – I used to watch them in Cantonese. They're totally ingrained in our childhoods.'

Mac says Ghibli films really shaped how she sees storytelling. 'The characters aren't binary in the sense there is a "good" and a "bad" character. As an adult, that's had a real effect on me. I'm not interested in telling stories or seeing stories that have binary sense of morality; morality is actually a spectrum, and it's subjective. It's quite different to Western storytelling, it's much more nuanced, which reflects more accurately what life is like.'

Reflecting on the opening run of the production last year, which played to incredible reviews, both actors say they're delighted to be returning to reprise their roles this winter. And they say the show has had a significant impact on them.



Ami Okumura Jones (Satsuki) and Mei Mac (Mei) in *My Neighbour Totoro*. Photo by Manuel Harlan © RSC, with Nippon TV

'It's not a word I use lightly, but the entire rehearsal process and the first production was life-changing,' says Okumura Jones. 'Playing this character, working with this company, this team, has forever changed the way I view performing, making theatre and – in a small but significant way – my outlook on life.'

Mac says as well as having an impact on her personally, the fact that the cast is all of Asian and South East Asian heritage, is important more widely in the Theatre world.

'This show, this company, it feels like we have been part of starting to chip away at the bamboo ceiling, both in the industry and hopefully across wider society because it's made such a splash with non-theatre goers. Change was happening quite slowly across the industry, but I've seen a lot of difference in the past five years [while the show was being made]. That's largely due to a lot of activist work by people in our community; I count ourselves as part of that, and I'm proud to be part of that movement.'

The fact that the whole cast and a large part of the production team is Asian was so important to the two. Okumura Jones says 'This production says irrefutably to anyone

who is still holding on to the excuses: there are no more excuses. This is an entirely East and Southeast Asian cast, many of the creative team are Asian too, and it's a huge success. There are no more excuses for not making space for us, not allowing us to represent ourselves on stage. It's been a really powerful thing.

'It's been amazing to see so many Asian faces in the Barbican, in the lobby, pouring out of the theatre after the show. That was really powerful.'

And Mac concludes: 'What this experience has reminded me and taught me is the power of community on a micro and macro perspective. The power of being in a company of so many East and Southeast Asian artists with a shared dream is profoundly moving. Because when you come from a diaspora that is so spread out, and has for so long been made invisible by media, it can be very isolating. To be held by such a huge company of artists with that shared dream with a shared heart, is healing.'

**My Neighbour Totoro**  
Until 23 Mar  
See page 9 for details

# Art & Design



Ranjani Shettar, *In the thick of the twilight*, 2023. Installation view of Ranjani Shettar *Cloud songs on the horizon*, Barbican Conservatory 2023

**Open now, Conservatory**

## **Ranjani Shettar: Cloud songs on the horizon**

A spectacular site-specific commission by the Indian sculptor, in her first major institutional show in Europe. Featuring handcrafted, large-scale sculptures suspended across the entire Conservatory, created using techniques adapted from traditional Indian crafts. (Free)

**Until Sun 11 Feb, The Curve**

## **Julianknxx: Chorus in Rememory of Flight**

Charting his year-long collaboration with Black choirs across European cities, Julianknxx's immersive film installation offers song and music as forms of resistance. A repeated refrain, 'we are what's left of us', transforms The Curve into a collective space, and the choir as a metaphor for community. (Free)

**Until Sun 14 Jan, Art Gallery**

## **RE/SISTERS: A Lens on Gender and Ecology**

This major new exhibition surveys the relationship between gender and ecology, exploring the link between the oppression of women and degradation of the planet. Uniting film, photography and performance by nearly 50 women or gender-nonconforming artists, RE/SISTERS uplifts a woman-centred vision of nature and underscores how woman-led activism is at the forefront of advocating and caring for the planet. (£16\*)

**Wed 6 Dec 6.30pm, Art Gallery**

## **BSL Tour with John Wilson**

**RE/SISTERS public programme**

A British Sign Language tour of the exhibition, exclusively for D/deaf and hard of hearing visitors, highlighting key artworks. (Free).

**7–8 Dec, Frobisher Auditorium 2**

## **Conference—Resist, Persist: Gender, Climate and Colonialism**

**RE/SISTERS public programme**

Bringing together artists, scholars and curators, this symposium explores the themes raised by RE/SISTERS, looking at the bonds between gender and environmental justice. Keynote speakers include Prof Astrida Neimanis, and a ticket to the exhibition is included. (£20\*)



For full programme information, including opening times, please visit [barbican.org.uk](https://barbican.org.uk)

Members and Corporate Members get free entry to our Gallery. Join Young Barbican and get tickets for just £5

\*Booking fees apply. Please see website for info. No fees on Young Barbican or in-person bookings.



# Contemporary Music



Jockstrap

All concerts take place in the Hall unless otherwise stated

**Sat 2 Dec 8.30pm**

## **David August presents VĪS**

The Italian-German electronic music producer, label-owner, multi-instrumentalist and DJ, David August brings us a kinetic audiovisual live experience following the release of his album, *VĪS*.

**Mon 4 Dec 7.30pm, Milton Court**

## **Guildhall Jazz Orchestra & Choir**

### **Songs of the Auvergne**

Drawing on Joseph Canteloube's song collection *Chants d'Auvergne*, this evocative suite will be directed by Scott Stroman and feature world-famous British jazz singer Norma Winstone.

**Wed 13 –Thu 14 Dec, 8pm**

## **Jockstrap**

Electronic pop duo Jockstrap perform their distinctive mix of timeless songwriting and innovative electronic production.

**Mon 18 Dec 7.30pm**

## **GEDDY LEE My Effin' Life**

### **An evening of conversation including audience Q&A**

An evening of conversation with Rock icon Geddy Lee about his new book, *My Effin' Life*.



For full programme information, including artist line ups, please visit **barbican.org.uk**

Members and Corporate Members receive 20% off selected events. Join Young Barbican and get tickets on selected gigs for just £5, £10 or £15

\*Booking fees apply. Please see website for info. No fees on Member, Young Barbican or in-person bookings.

# Theatre & Dance



Told by an Idiot: Get Happy © Manuel Harlan.

**Until Sat 23 Mar, Theatre**

## **Royal Shakespeare Company / Joe Hisaishi: My Neighbour Totoro**

Hailed as 'a tender and remarkably beautiful show' (*Financial Times*), the five-star, award-winning production continues. Don't miss this 'jaw-dropping' (*Metro*) staging of the celebrated 1988 animated feature film.

**7–19 Dec, The Pit**

## **Told by an Idiot: Get Happy**

Enter a world of artfully controlled chaos for the whole family at this show, featuring physical comedy, live music, acrobatics, silly dancing and audience interaction.



For full programme information, including opening times, please visit **barbican.org.uk**

Members and Corporate Members receive 20% off selected shows  
Join Young Barbican and get tickets for selected shows for just £5, £10 or £15

\*Booking fees apply. Please see website for info. No fees on Member, Young Barbican or in-person bookings.

# A love letter to a little-known Caribbean nation

**Our Cinema Restored strand offers the chance to see a gem of global cinema.**

This month we have the rare opportunity to see a landmark in Caribbean filmmaking. Restored some ten years ago, *Wan Pipel* (1976) is set against the vibrant backdrop of Suriname and follows the lives of Roy, a young Afro-Surinamese man studying in the Netherlands, and Rubia, an Indo-Surinamese woman struggling with societal expectations.

Roy returns to his homeland to reconnect with his cultural roots but is faced with the challenges of adapting to a world he left behind. As he becomes entangled in a passionate affair with Rubia, their love is put to the test by cultural differences and the weight of tradition.

The film will be accompanied by a Q&A with film curator and writer, Jonathan Ali and filmmaker Ananta Khemradj, who was born in the Netherlands and grew up in Suriname.

'I first saw this film about 10 years ago, not long after it had been restored,' says Ali. 'Suriname is a country that many people don't know – it's a Caribbean country, but it's in South America, and it has a Dutch colonial history, although it was British before it was infamously swapped for an island called Manhattan.'

'*Wan Pipel* is a work of political allegory. It doesn't hide its nationalism – it's a work of great patriotic pride, yet it doesn't have those overtones of chauvinism in the classic sense when you think about nationalism – it doesn't seek to exclude people. Even the title *Wan Pipel*, speaks to the multiple races and ethnicities and cultures of Suriname. The filmmaker Pim de la Parra had a great desire for all these groups that were disunited by a colonial system to finally come together.'

'Actually, the more I learned about him, the more fascinated I became. De la Parra left Suriname as a young man and went to the Netherlands, where he was phenomenally successful. At the time that he made this film, he was the most popular filmmaker in the Dutch film industry. But he ended up slipping into obscurity and this film is one of the reasons why that happened; the story is absolutely fascinating and I can't wait to talk about it at this screening.'



Ali says *Wan Pipel* is accessible but undeniably political. It's one he particularly loves because it showcases for the very first time, a country that no one had really seen in cinema before. 'It's a film that really evinces a love for the landscape of Suriname, for its people, for its language,' he smiles. 'It's also got a wonderful pan-Caribbean music soundtrack. I don't think it's been screened anywhere in the UK for a very long time, if at all, so this is a wonderful chance to see it in all its restored glory.'

**Cinema Restored: *Wan Pipel* + Q&A with Jonathan Ali and Ananta Khemradj**

11 Dec

See page 12 for details



Most new releases have a captioned and audio-described screenings. There are also two relaxed screenings every month. See online for details





Fallen Leaves

## New Releases

Please note the new release schedule is subject to change. Titles marked # are yet to receive classification.

From Fri 1 Dec

### The Bikeriders #

Austin Butler, Jodie Comer and Tom Hardy star as members of a Midwestern motorcycle club in the golden age of riding, inspired by the 1967 photo-book.

From Fri 1 Dec

### Fallen Leaves #

The Cannes Jury Prize winning comedy drama by Aki Kaurismäki about the chance meeting of two lonely souls, who try to make love work later in life.

From Fri 1 Dec

### Eileen #

Thomasin McKenzie (Last Night in Soho) stars as Eileen in this thriller by William Oldroyd (Lady Macbeth). In a 1960s New England prison, a glamorous new counsellor (Anne Hathaway) changes Eileen's life.

From Fri 8 Dec

### Wonka #

Timothee Chalamet stars as a young Willy Wonka, one of the most beloved of all Roald Dahl's characters, in Paul King's (Paddington) magical fantasy. Also starring Oliva Colman, Hugh Grant and Sally Hawkins.

From Fri 8 Dec

### Anselm #

Wim Wenders (Wings of Desire, Paris, Texas) directs this immersive 3D documentary on German artist Anselm Kiefer, one of the most innovative and important painters and sculptors of our time.

From Fri 8 Dec

### The Red Shoes PG

A young dancer is torn between the man she loves and her pursuit to become a prima ballerina, in this stunning piece of classic, Academy Award-winning cinema from Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger.

From Wed 27 Dec

### The Boy and the Heron #

In this psychological journey, a teenage boy enters a magical realm in which he meets a talking heron. Written and directed by renowned Studio Ghibli creative Hayao Miyazaki.

From Fri 29 Dec

### Next Goal Wins #

Taika Waititi presents his latest comedy on the story of the infamously awful American Samoa football team, who lost 31-0 in a 2001 FIFA match. Starring Michael Fassbender, Oscar Kightley and Kaimana.

From Fri 29 Dec

### Ferrari #

Adam Driver, Penélope Cruz, Hugh Jackman and Shailene Woodley star in this thriller biopic of Enzo Ferrari, from legendary director Michael Mann (Heat, Manhunter).

From Fri 29 Dec

### The Taste of Things #

This sumptuous French period drama from Tran Anh Hung (The Scent of Green Papaya, Norwegian Wood) follows a romance between a cook and her boss. Nominated for the Palme d'Or 2023 and starring Juliette Binoche and Benoît Magimel.

## Special Events and Seasons

24 Nov – 3 Dec, Cinemas

### London International Animation Festival

The festival celebrating the best of world animation returns with premieres, family-friendly shorts programmes and exciting events, including the closing Best of Fest Gala screening.

Sat 9 Dec, 5.55pm, Cinema 1

### MET Opera Live: Florencia en el Amazonas <sup>12A</sup>

Sung in Spanish and inspired by the magical realism of Gabriel García Márquez, we follow opera diva Florencia Grimaldi. Florencia returns to her native Brazil to search for her lost lover, who has vanished into the jungle.



For programme information and dates and times of new release films visit [barbican.org.uk](http://barbican.org.uk)

Members and Corporate Members receive 20% off cinema tickets. Join Young Barbican and get tickets on selected screenings for just £5, £10 or £15

\*Booking fees apply. Please see website for info. No fees on Member, Young Barbican or in-person bookings.

Sun 10 Dec, 1.50pm, Cinema 1

### Adrian Wootton Presents... Sergio Leone & Once Upon a Time in the West<sup>15</sup> (4K Restoration)

Adrian Wootton, CEO of Film London and Italian film aficionado explores the legacy of filmmaking genius Sergio Leone and the making of his masterpiece Once Upon A Time In the West.

Mon 11 Dec, Cinema

### Cinema Restored: Wan Pipel<sup>15\*</sup> + Q&A with curator Jonathan Ali and Ananta Khemradj

A compelling drama set in the vibrant backdrop of Suriname. The story follows the lives of Roy, a young man studying in the Netherlands, and Rubia, a Surinamese woman struggling with societal expectations.

Sat 16 Dec, 2.30pm, Cinema 2

### NT Encore: The Book of Dust<sup>12A</sup>

Set twelve years before the epic His Dark Materials trilogy, this gripping adaptation revisits Philip Pullman's fantastical world. We follow two young people and their daemons, who find themselves at the centre of a terrifying manhunt.

Sat 17 Dec, 2pm, Cinema 1

### Royal Opera House Live: The Nutcracker<sup>12A</sup>

Discover the enchantment of ballet with this sparkling festive treat for the whole family. Marvel at the brilliance of Tchaikovsky's score and attend a delightful Christmas Eve party that becomes a magical adventure once everyone else is tucked up in bed.

Tue 2 Dec, 6:15pm, Cinema 2

### Orlando, My Political Biography In partnership with Fitzcarraldo Editions

Writer Paul C Preciado brings together 26 contemporary trans and non-binary people, aged 8 to 70, for a re-imagining of Virginia Woolf's 1928 novel Orlando: A Biography.

## Regular Screenings

Learn more about all of our regular screenings by visiting [barbican.org.uk/cinema](http://barbican.org.uk/cinema)

### Family Film Club

11am on selected Saturdays in December and January, Cinema 2  
Enjoy family films for £2.50-£3.50, plus show and tell introductions and free monthly workshops.

### Parent and Baby Screenings

New releases every Saturday and Monday morning.  
Sign up to the mailing list at [barbican.org.uk/parentandbaby](http://barbican.org.uk/parentandbaby)

### Relaxed Screenings

One Friday and one Tuesday per month, we show a film in a tailored environment for adults on the autistic spectrum, have Tourette Syndrome, anxiety, sensory or other learning difficulties.  
(£6\*; a companion/carer free)

### Pay What You Can Screenings

Each Friday, one of our new release film screenings is PWYC. Simply pick the price you can pay. (£3-15)

### Senior Community Screenings

Every other Monday 11.45am, Cinema 2  
New release screenings for 60+ cinema goers and those who matter to you most.

### Members' Screenings

11am every Sunday, Cinema 2  
New release screenings just for Members (£6)



## See more art, music, film and theatre for less with Membership

Save with free entry to all exhibitions, 20% off\* tickets, no booking fees and deals in our Shops, cafés and restaurants. Plus, enjoy priority booking, Member-only events and our Members' Lounge.



## Get even closer as a Patron

Enjoy the benefits of Membership, plus advanced priority booking, tickets for sold out performances and Patron events.

[barbican.org.uk/support](http://barbican.org.uk/support)

\*Subject to availability, exclusions apply.



Most new releases have a captioned and audio-described screenings. There are also two relaxed screenings every month. See online for details

# Classical Music

All concerts take place in the Hall unless otherwise stated

30 Nov–5 Dec, Silk Street Theatre

## Guildhall Autumn Opera Scenes

Outstanding performers from the first year of Guildhall School's Opera course present classical and contemporary operatic excerpts.

Fri 1 Dec 7.30pm

## BBC Symphony Orchestra/ Oramo: Fantastic Voyages

**Alice Mary Smith** *Jason, or The Argonauts and the Sirens Overture*  
**Maurice Ravel** *Shéhérazade*  
**Ludwig van Beethoven** Symphony No 3, *Eroica*

Beethoven's *Eroica*, Ravel's *Shéhérazade*, and the adventures of the Argonauts: mezzo Jennifer Johnston joins Sakari Oramo and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, and no emotion is off-limits.

Fri 1 Dec 7.30pm, Milton Court

## Songs from the Shows with BBC Singers

The BBC Singers, BBC Concert Orchestra and conductor Owain Park kickstart the festive season with a night of show songs, with classics from Rogers and Hammerstein to Lionel Bart.

Sun 3 Dec 4pm, Milton Court

## Anthony McGill and Michael McHale

Includes:

**Leonard Bernstein** Sonata for Clarinet and Piano  
**Jessie Montgomery** *Peace*  
**Aaron Copland** Clarinet Sonata

Clarinetist Anthony McGill, Milton Court's Artist-in-Residence, offers an intimate insight into his artistry in an exhilarating all-American programme with pianist Michael McHale.

Sun 3 Dec 7pm

## London Symphony Orchestra/ Mälkki

**Claude Debussy** *Three Nocturnes*  
**Maurice Ravel** *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*  
**Alexander Scriabin** Symphony No 4, *The Poem of Ecstasy*

Enchanting nocturnes and a magic trick of a Piano Concerto with Kirill Gerstein, before an ecstatic, high-drama masterpiece from Scriabin.

Wed 6 Dec 6.30pm

## LSO/Nosedá: Half Six Fix

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** Symphony No 6, *Pathétique*

Gianandrea Nosedá conducts and introduces a 60-minute concert. A torrent of music, an outpouring of one man's soul into a symphony. The meaning remains a secret, the emotion is clear.

Wed 6 Dec 7.30pm, Milton Court

## Natalie Dessay and Philippe Cassard: Women's Words

Includes:

**Fanny Mendelssohn** *Suleika*  
**Clara Schumann** Romance in A minor, Op 21  
**Alma Mahler** *Laue Sommernacht*

Soprano Natalie Dessay guides us through a gallery of unforgettable women, from composers Alma Mahler, Clara Schumann and Fanny Hensel-Mendelssohn to great operatic heroines.

Thu 7 Dec 7pm

## LSO/Nosedá: Passion and Secrets

**Johannes Brahms** Piano Concerto No 1  
**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** Symphony No 6, *Pathétique*

Deeply private, deeply felt: Tchaikovsky and Brahms poured out their emotions into music. Simon Trpčeski is soloist in a concert of tenderness and intimacy.

Fri 8 Dec 7.30pm

## BBC SO/Oramo: Globe Skimmers and Nordic Winters

**Carl Nielsen** *An Imaginary Journey to the Faroe Islands*  
**Tebogo Monnakgotla** *Globe Skimmer*  
*Surfing the Somali Jet* (BBC co-commission, UK premiere)  
**Jean Sibelius** Symphony No 6  
**Jean Sibelius** Symphony No 7

From the elemental grandeur of Sibelius to the miracle of a globe-skimming dragonfly, Sakari Oramo joins violinist Johan Dalene to explore new horizons and old.

Sat 9 Dec 6pm, Milton Court

## Junior Guildhall Symphony Orchestra & String Ensemble

This performance by talented youngsters includes two much-loved works of English orchestral music: Edward Elgar's *Cockaigne Overture* and Eric Coates' *London Suite*, under the baton of Julian Clayton.

Sun 10 Dec 7pm

## LSO/Nosedá: The Thrills of Prokofiev

**Sergei Prokofiev** Symphony No 4  
**Johannes Brahms** Piano Concerto No 2

A symphony thwarted by history, and a concerto from a composer at his peak. Prokofiev brings dark, ambivalent grandeur, and Brahms moves from distant horns to a thunderous, satisfying finale.

Tue 12 Dec 7.30pm

## Britten Sinfonia: Messiah

**George Frideric Handel** (arr Mozart) *Messiah*

Enjoy a rare chance to hear this seasonal masterpiece in Mozart's compelling re-orchestration, abundant in rich brass and wind textures but faithful to every note of Handel's original.



Visit our website for full programme information, including concerts from the Barbican Presents series, London Symphony Orchestra and our other associate orchestras, or contact the Box Office to be posted our current Classical Music brochure.

**LSO** Resident Orchestra



Fri 15 Dec 7.30pm

## BBC SO/Wigglesworth: Heaven, Earth and the Human Heart

**Monteverdi** (arr Ryan Wigglesworth) *Lamento d'Arianna*

**Ryan Wigglesworth** Magnificat

**Robert Schumann** Symphony No 2

Ryan Wigglesworth conducts the BBC SO and Chorus in music from four centuries that aims directly at the human heart, including his own gorgeous, typically uninhibited setting of the Magnificat.

Tue 19 Dec 7.30pm

## Gavin Bryars at 80

Includes:

**Gavin Bryars** Duets from *Doctor Ox's Experiment*

*Jesus' Blood Never Failed Me Yet*  
Epilogue from *Wonderlawn*

Celebrate the composer's 80th birthday with some of Gavin Bryars's most iconic works, performed by the Gavin Bryars Ensemble.

## Raymond Gubbay Christmas Festival

Sat 16 Dec 7.30pm

## Christmas at the Movies

Join the London Concert Orchestra for great music from some of your favourite festive films, including *Elf*, *Frozen*, *The Grinch*, *Home Alone*, *Love Actually*, *The Chronicles of Narnia* and more.

Sun 17 Dec 2pm & 5.15pm

## Christmas Carol Singalong

Jonathan Cohen and soprano Louise Dearman join the London Concert Orchestra and Choir for some festive family fun with a selection of the very best Christmas songs and seasonal classics.

Wed 20 Dec 7.30pm

## Christmas with King's College Choir

**Johann Sebastian Bach** Opening Chorus 'Jauchzet, frohlocket' from *Christmas Oratorio*, Part 1

**Arcangelo Corelli** 'Allegro' and 'Pastorale' from *Christmas Concerto*

**Engelbert Humperdinck** *Hansel and Gretel* Overture

**Giacomo Puccini** 'O soave fanciulla' from *La bohème*

The Choir of King's College, Cambridge heralds the Christmas season, joined on stage by the superb Crouch End Festival Chorus.

Thu 21 Dec 7.30pm

## Love Actually<sup>15</sup> with Live Orchestra

Enjoy a screening of the star-studded Christmas favourite *Love Actually*, accompanied by a full orchestra performing Craig Armstrong's captivating score.

Fri 22 Dec 7.30pm

## Candlelit Carols

Includes:

**Anon** (arr Mark Cullen) *Joy to the World*

**George Frideric Handel** Christmas Sequence from *Messiah*

**Trad** Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

The Mozart Festival Orchestra and guest speaker Mark Williams present a sublime concert of carols and seasonal classics, staged in an evocative candle-lit style setting.

Sat 23 Dec 2.30pm

## All I Want for Christmas...Live

A spectacular blend of festive pop hits and traditional favourites, featuring a dazzling live ensemble band and four headline singers plus dancers, fireworks and lights.

Wed 27 Dec 7.30pm

## The Best of John Williams

An awe inspiring concert celebrating the iconic scores of John Williams, including music from *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars*, *Jurassic Park*, *Indiana Jones* and many more.

Thu 28 Dec 7.30pm

## Beethoven's Ninth

**Ludwig van Beethoven** Piano Concerto No 5, *Emperor*  
Symphony No 9, *Choral*

An unforgettable all-Beethoven programme featuring the monumental *Choral* Symphony with its climactic 'Ode to Joy' performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Fri 29 Dec 2pm & 4.30pm

## Horrible Histories: Horrible Christmas

Horrible Histories proudly presents the terrific tale of Christmas. Embark on a hair-raising journey through the history of Christmas with Charles Dickens, Oliver Cromwell, King Henry VIII and St Nicholas.

Sat 30 Dec 2.30pm

## Glenn Miller Orchestra

Includes:

**Glenn Miller** *Opus One*

*Moonlight Serenade*

*Chattanooga Choo Choo*

The UK's most celebrated big band returns, swinging you back in time with Glenn Miller's own arrangements of favourite wartime chart toppers and hits from the forties.

Sat 30 Dec 7.30pm

## The Music of Lord of the Rings, Game of Thrones and Beyond

Epic music from *Lord of the Rings*, *The Hobbit*, *Game of Thrones* and beyond are brought to life by a full symphony orchestra and choir.

Sun 31 Dec 2.30pm

## The Music of Zimmer vs Williams

It's time to settle the scores, as the London Concert Orchestra performs the best scores from two of the greatest film composers of all time in one fabulous programme.



For full programme information, including artist line ups, please visit [barbican.org.uk](http://barbican.org.uk)

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# soon

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The Milk Carton Kids © David McClister.

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**19 Jan, Hall**

## **The Milk Carton Kids**

Three-time GRAMMY-nominated folk duo The Milk Carton Kids have created a sound that's both nostalgic and contemporary. Their return to our Hall, exactly five years after they last performed here, will see them perform songs from their seventh album, *I Only See The Moon*, released earlier this year, as well as music from their extensive back catalogue. With over a decade together, Kenneth Pattengale's virtuosic fingerpicking and Joey Ryan's incredible rhythm guitar are the bedrock of their heartache-infused singing, which touches on universal issues of love, loss and longing.



4 Jan, Hall/Online

## NYO: Ascent

See the musical stars of the future as 'the world's greatest orchestra of teenagers' perform their annual, talent-filled concert in our Hall. Cast off the wintry feels of January as The National Youth Orchestra play Claude Debussy's vibrant anthem to spring, *Rondes de Printemps*, before taking us to the heights of mountaintops with Richard Strauss's 'tone poem' *Alpine Symphony*. The programme, which also includes a new work by Dani Howard, will showcase the orchestra's breadth of capabilities, taking you on a musical journey like no other. What a treat.



Teresa Margolles, *American Juju for the Tapestry of Truth*, 2015. © Courtesy the artist and Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich/ Paris.

14 Feb–26 May, Art Gallery

## Unravel: The Power and Politics of Textiles in Art

Explore the transformative and subversive potential of textiles in our major new exhibition. Bringing together over 100 artworks by a diverse range of international practitioners, the show examines the ways in which artists working with fabric, fibre and thread challenge power structures and reimagine the world. Artworks from the 1960s to today communicate multi-layered stories about lived experience, addressing gender, sexuality, colonialism, the movement and displacement of people, ancient forms of knowledge, and more. Spanning intimate hand-crafted works to large-scale sculptural installations, the exhibition presents works that are radical in their form and politics, revealing how textiles have been forces of resistance and repair.



28 Jan, Cinema

## Häxan with Live Score by Nick Carlisle

See the startling 1922 silent film by Benjamin Christensen featuring a haunting new score composed and performed live by Nick Carlisle. The new score was written to coincide with the film's centenary and is performed on Prophet 5 synthesizer, Mellotron and MacBook Pro.



28 & 31 Jan

## Hope, Faith and Courage – Mendelssohn's Elijah

One of the greatest works for orchestra and voices, Felix Mendelssohn's *Elijah* tells the life story of the biblical prophet from the drought-stricken desert of Palestine, to encounters with ministering angels and the vengeful queen Jezebel. Full of drama, fiery chariots and more, it's a rousing experience. Chief Conductor Designate Sir Antonio Pappano and the London Symphony Orchestra are joined by four electric soloists: soprano Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha and mezzo-soprano Dame Sarah Connolly; tenor Allan Clayton and bass Gerald Finley for what will be a monumental show.





## Members' events

Sat 9 Dec, The Pit

### Told by an Idiot: Get Happy Members-only Performance

Members are invited to a special performance of this laugh-out-loud physical comedy by critically-acclaimed theatre company Told by an Idiot.

Sun 10 Dec, Barbican Kitchen

### Italian Panettone Workshop

Get in the Christmas spirit and take home a holiday favourite at this workshop in making the Italian Panettone.

# The Barbican Gift Guide

Looking for some gift inspo for the arts lover in your life this festive season? We've got you covered.



### Barbican prints

Bring a touch of brutalist beauty to any wall with one of these three litho prints inspired by the Barbican. Designed by Dorothy, they celebrate the iconic buildings that make up the estate. Choose from the famous towers, the stunning curve of Frobisher Crescent, or the Barbican Centre itself.

### BRUTAL candle

Bring some Barbican brightness to the festive period, with this brutal slogan candle. The UK-made unscented grey block text candle is hand-poured with soy wax and designed to stand out. With a burn time for up to 60 hours, it will create a focal point for any room. Our Brutal range also includes a neon T-shirt and tote bag, or a very festival black bauble.



## Cat Sims Conservatory range

Everyone loves our Conservatory, and you can share that love through a unique range of gifts designed by illustrator Cat Sims. The Cactus House Tea Towel has bold-colours that evoke the joys of this memorable space; the koi carp keyring is a lovely memento of the fish in the Conservatory pond; and the T-shirt features some of the huge plants this oasis in the heart of the City is famous for.



## My Neighbour Totoro

The record-breaking stage show of *My Neighbour Totoro* has won fans far and wide. Bring some of its joy home with one of our range of gifts inspired by the tale, including pop-up notecards, a Catbus plush journal, a beautifully-illustrated Totoro weekly planner or a bright set of erasers.

## Membership and Patrons

Giving someone a Barbican Membership is a gift they can enjoy for a whole year. With free entry to the Gallery all year round, priority booking, discounts, exclusive events and more, this is the present that they'll be grateful for every time they come to the Centre. It also makes a superb last-minute gift because the gift membership voucher is sent on the date you choose. See [barbican.org.uk/membership](http://barbican.org.uk/membership) for details.

Want to get even closer to the Barbican? Make a memorable gift for that special someone to become a Barbican Patron. This is a present to cherish, offering access to sold-out performances, special events, receptions, and backstage access. Our Patrons make a lasting difference to our work, enabling us to be a catalyst for creativity, and spark creative possibilities for more people.

## The Barbican sparks creative possibilities and transformation for artists, audiences and communities – to inspire, connect, and provoke debate.

As a not-for-profit, we need to raise two thirds of our income through fundraising, ticket sales, and commercial activities. With the help of our generous supporters, we are able to share the work of some of the most inspiring and visionary artists and creatives, enabling the widest possible audience to experience the joy of the arts.

There are many ways you can support the Barbican, including by making a donation, joining our programme as a sponsor, or becoming a Member. To find out more and join our community, please visit [barbican.org.uk/supportus](http://barbican.org.uk/supportus) or contact [development@barbican.org.uk](mailto:development@barbican.org.uk)

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## Booking

Book online at [barbican.org.uk](http://barbican.org.uk)

## Stay in touch

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Help us make a difference and support today using the QR code below. Thank you.



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