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barbican

Barbican announces Ryoji Ikeda weekender and Jóhann Jóhannsson's Cinematic Suites – The Denis Villeneuve Scores

The Barbican today announces a number of classical and contemporary classical concerts by two pioneering composers.

The first celebrates the music of the late Icelandic composer **Jóhann Jóhannsson** from films directed by Denis Villeneuve. The performance on 18 February 2026 will include pieces from the original motion picture soundtracks to *Prisoners*, *Arrival*, and *Sicario*, performed by the **London Contemporary Orchestra**.

The second will be a weekend of classical compositions by **Ryoji Ikeda**, Japan's leading electronic music producer. Across four concerts, audiences will have the opportunity to see Ikeda's music in a completely new and acoustic setting, performed by **Ensemble Modern**, **Solem Quartet**, the **Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir** and special guest percussionists

More information about each event can be found below.

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**Jóhann Jóhannsson: Cinematic Suites
The Denis Villeneuve Scores
Wednesday 18 February 2026
Barbican Hall, 7.30pm
Tickets from £30 plus booking fee**

A special performance at the Barbican of late Icelandic composer **Jóhann Jóhannsson's** *Cinematic Suites*. Performed by the **London Contemporary Orchestra** and conductor **Anthony Weeden**, the concert will bring to life Jóhannsson's evocative musical landscapes for three acclaimed films by visionary director Denis Villeneuve: *Prisoners* (2013), *Arrival* (2016), and *Sicario* (2018), celebrating the remarkable collaboration between the two artists.

The suite of music will transport audiences through the haunting and emotive soundscapes that have become synonymous with Jóhannsson's genius, alongside sound design by Stars of the Lid founder Adam Wiltzie. Audiences will be given a unique visual experience too, as the performance is synchronized with imagery from the celebrated films.

This remarkable event not only pays homage to Jóhannsson's enduring legacy but also celebrates the transformative power of music in film.

Produced by the Barbican in association with Baba Yaga's Hut
[Find out more](#)

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**Ryoji Ikeda: Portrait
20-21 February 2026
Various venues
Tickets from £15 plus booking fee, multi-buys available**

Japan's leading electronic composer and visual artist **Ryoji Ikeda** presents a special Barbican weekend of his music for acoustic ensembles. While known for his minimalist and pioneering electronic music, with albums such as +/- (1996) and Matrix (2001), Ikeda has, over the years, experimented with acoustic composition and instrumentation throughout his career. Next year, his rarely heard acoustic works will take centre stage at the Barbican, showcasing these unique pieces across strings, percussion, and voice. Ikeda focuses on the essential characteristics of sound itself and that of visuals as light by means of both mathematical precision and mathematical aesthetics.

Speaking on his acoustic compositions, Ikeda has said: *"I have never been formally educated and trained as a composer. Writing classical music for acoustic instruments is an enormous challenge to me, the process of this project had been painstakingly tough. At first, I restricted myself to excluding my usual artistic language, such as electronic audiovisual components and digital technologies, from my own palette. It was to make myself naked artistically. Since then I found some ways to tackle the notions of "symmetry" and "spectrum" as a central motivation. I studied the language of classical music as much as I could, which couldn't be enough though, but somehow I completed all compositions. It was a long journey. This concert is purely acoustic without microphones and speakers. That is to respect the richness of acoustic instruments and human players without mixing the digital together."*

Ikeda has gained a reputation as one of the few international artists working convincingly across both visual and sonic media. He elaborately orchestrates sound, visuals, materials, physical phenomena and mathematical notions into immersive live performances and installations.

More details about each concert can be found below:

Ryoji Ikeda: music for strings with Ensemble Modern
Friday 20 February 2026
Barbican Hall, 8pm
Tickets from £20 plus booking fee

The first event of four concerts by pioneering visual and sound artist **Ryoji Ikeda** sees music written for strings in various forms, performed by the equally pioneering **Ensemble Modern** in a concert of both music and movement.

This concert of works for acoustic string instruments might also be entitled "Ryoji Ikeda unplugged". Ikeda came to international renown with his kaleidoscopic sound sculptures, in which electronics and new technologies play key roles. With mathematical precision, Ikeda artfully orchestrates sound, images, materials and physical phenomena into performances and installations. With these experiences as a starting point, he has now accepted the challenge of transferring his working methods to purely acoustic compositions which he is writing especially for Ensemble Modern. The presentation of these works is marked by a radically reduced aesthetic in the spatial implementation of the works. Ikeda creates a ritual experience merging sound, space and stage action.

Ensemble Modern is a curious loudspeaker for music of our times: courageous, uncompromising, energetic. An essential, aesthetically polyglot amplifier for trend-setting sound concepts. It is one of the most well-known, leading current music formations in the world. Founded in 1980 in Frankfurt am Main where they are based, 18 soloists currently determine the activities of this democratically organized ensemble.

Produced by the Barbican
[Find out more](#)

Ryoji Ikeda: music for percussion 1 & 2
Saturday 21 February 2026
Barbican Hall, 3pm
Tickets from £20 plus booking fee

The second of four concerts sees Ikeda's music for percussion 1 & 2 performed by percussionists **Alexandre Babel, Stéphane Garin, Julien Garin** and **Amélie Grould**.

The concert begins with *music for percussion 1*, commissioned by Eklekto Ensemble Geneva in 2016. It consists of 4 distinct pieces performed one after the other. *Body Music* features the hands and the legs of two percussionists engaging a virtuosic counterpoint of 'body claps'. The second piece *Metal Music I* is performed as a duet and uses one of the most iconic orchestral percussion instruments, the triangle. The third piece *Metal Music II* brings onstage two sets of crotales. These small bronze discs are played with violin bows to create a polyphony of sinus-like high frequencies. Finally, *Metal Music III*, a piece featuring 4 percussionists evolving in a landscape-like installation of 12 suspended cymbals, closes the first half. The second half presents pieces for three performers, from *music for percussion 2* (2020) that use non-musical objects as books, tables, rulers and balls.

music for percussion 1 was commissioned by Eklekto Genève and co-produced by Eklekto Geneva Percussion Centre, Ryoji Ikeda Studio and La Bâtie Festival de Genève; *music for percussion 2* was commissioned by Musica Strasbourg, GRAME Lyon, La Muse en Circuit Alfortville and co-produced by Musica, La Muse en Circuit. Touring: Epidemic (Richard Castelli, Florence Berthaud).

Produced by the Barbican

[Find out more](#)

Ryoji Ikeda: op. 2 + 3 with Solem Quartet

Saturday 21 February 2026

St Giles Cripplegate, 5pm

Tickets from £15 plus booking fee

The third of four concerts takes place in the Medieval church of St Giles Cripplegate, across from the Barbican Lakeside terrace in which Ikeda's worked *op. 2 + 3* will be performed by **Solem Quartet**.

Rarely performed live, *op. 2 + 3* appear on Ikeda's 2003 album *op. (Touch)*, an album of music for strings from which, for this concert, Solem Quartet will play both string quartets. Praised for their "immaculate precision and spirit" (The Strad) and "cultured tone" (Arts Desk), the Solem Quartet has established itself as one of the most innovative and adventurous quartets of its generation. A 2020 awardee of the Jerwood Arts Live Work Fund, one of 33 artists or ensembles selected from more than 1200 applicants, the Solem Quartet takes its place amongst some of the UK's brightest artistic voices. As proud advocates of new music, the Quartet have worked closely with many of today's leading composers, including Thomas Adès, Edmund Finnis, Anna Meredith and Colin Matthews.

Produced by the Barbican

[Find out more](#)

Ryoji Ikeda: music for choir with Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir

Saturday 21 February 2026

Barbican Hall, 8pm

Tickets from £20 plus booking fee

In 2024, **Ryoji Ikeda** created *music for choir* for the **Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir**, as part of the European Capital of Culture Tartu 2024, and, together with the ensemble, brings its UK premiere to the Barbican to round off the *Portrait Weekender*.

A unique collaboration sparked by acclaimed Japanese artist and composer Ryoji Ikeda, the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir and conductor Tõnu Kaljuste, *music for choir* is a choral work that saw Ikeda, an enigmatic force in the electronic music scene, create his first composition for the human voice. Inspired by the rich and distinctive nature of the Estonian language, the celebrated oratorio will be given new life with a 27-piece ensemble in the Barbican Hall.

The Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir is one of the best-known Estonian music ensembles in the world. The repertoire of the choir extends from Gregorian chant and baroque to the music of the 21st century with a special focus on the work of Estonian composers, such as Arvo Pärt, Veljo Tormis and Erkki-Sven Tüür.

Produced by the Barbican

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LISTINGS – BARBICAN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PROMOTIONS COMING UP IN 2025

- Actress x Suzanne Ciani present *Concrète Waves + Natural Wonder Beauty Concept* ([Fri 30 May 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Moin ([Sat 31 May 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Cat Power Sings Dylan '66 ([Sun 1 Jun 2025, Barbican Hall, 8pm](#))
- Sada (Echo): Music from Palestine ([Fri 6 June 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- A Warp Happening ([Sat 14 June 2025, Various, from 12pm](#))
- Naseer Shamma ([Sun 15 June 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Tigran Hamasyan (Summer Jazz Series) ([Mon 16 Jun 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- RAMPAGE: Carnival Classics 2 ([Fri 20 Jun 2025, Barbican Hall, 8pm](#))
- Brad Mehldau Trio (Summer Jazz Series) ([Tue 24 Jun 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Take Me To The River All-Stars: Memphis Soul Revue (Summer Jazz Series) ([Sat 12 Jul 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Herbie Hancock (Summer Jazz Series) ([Thu 24 – Sat 26 Jul 2025, Barbican Hall, 8pm](#))
- ganavya: Daughter of a Temple ([Thur 4 Sep 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Whatever The Weather - Loraine James ([Sat 6 Sep 2025, Milton Court Concert Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Balimaya Project x Discos Pacífico All Stars ([Sat 27 Sep 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- JAMBINAI with London Contemporary Orchestra - K-Music Festival 2025 ([Sun 5 Oct 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- The Divine Comedy: Rainy Afternoon ([Sat 11 - Sun 12 Oct 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Hayden Thorpe: Song of Ness with Robert Macfarlane and Propellor Ensemble ([Thu 16 Oct 2025, Milton Court Concert Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Public Service Broadcasting with London Contemporary Orchestra (Saturday 1 November, Barbican Hall)
- Hania Rani – Non Fiction: A Piano Concerto in Four Movements ([Tue 25 – Weds 26 Nov, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- Carlos Alomar presents: The D.A.M. Trilogy ([Fri 28 Nov 2025, Barbican Hall, 8pm](#))
- GoGo Penguin + special guest Daudi Matsiko ([Wed 3 Dec 2025, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- **NEW** - Jóhann Jóhannsson: Cinematic Suites ([Wed 18 Feb 2026, Barbican Hall, 7.30pm](#))
- **NEW** - Ryoji Ikeda Weekender: Portrait ([Fri-Sat 20-21 Feb 2026, Various Venues](#))

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All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team's contact details are listed on our website at www.barbican.org.uk/our-story/press-room

About the Barbican

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), and a London base of the. We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our other associates and partners including the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Darbar Festival](#), [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [Drum Works](#), [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), [Serious](#), and [Trafalgar Theatre Productions](#).

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