Classical Music

Concert programme

barbican

Ryoji Ikeda

Weekend

20 – 21 Feb

Ryoji Ikeda weekend FINAL.indd 1 16/02/2026 12:50

Ryoji Ikeda: music for strings
Ensemble Modern

Fri 20 Feb 8.00pm, Hall

Ensemble Modern:
Jagdish Mistry violin
Giorgos Panagiotidis violin
Rachel Koblyakov violin
Veronika Paleeva violin
Megumi Kasakawa viola
Victor Guaita Igual viola
Eva Böcker cello
Charles Watt cello
Paul Cannon double bass
Volker Bernhard sound engineering

Ryoji Ikeda *MIRROR* [one for two], Op 12
UK premiere
I for 2 violins
II for 2 violins
III for 2 violas

Ryoji Ikeda *PRISM* for string nonet, Op 14
UK premiere

Ryoji Ikeda REFLECTION for string nonet, Op 13 *UK premiere*

music for strings
commission of Ensemble Modern, Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ" and DTzM, Dresdner Tage der zeitgenössischen Musik

Produced by the Barbican
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Programme produced by Harriet Smith
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Ryoji Ikeda weekend FINAL.indd 2 16/02/2026 12:50

Ryoji Ikeda: music for percussion 1 & 2

Sat 21 Feb 3.00pm, Hall

Alexandre Babel percussion
Stéphane Garin percussion
Julien Garin percussion
Amélie Grould percussion

Ryoji Ikeda *BODY MUSIC* for duo, Op 4
I
II
III

Ryoji Ikeda *METAL MUSIC*, Op 5
I triangles [for duo]
II crotales [for duo]
III cymbals [for quartet]

Ryoji Ikeda *BALL MUSIC* for trio, Op 10
UK premiere
I marble
II ping-pong
III basketball

Ryoji Ikeda *BOOK MUSIC* for trio, Op 9
UK premiere

Ryoji Ikeda *RULER MUSIC* for trio, Op 11
UK premiere
I
II
III
IV

music for percussion 1
commission of Eklekto Geneva Percussion Center
co-production: Eklekto Geneva Percussion Center, Ryoji Ikeda Studio, La Bâtie Festival de Genève
music for percussion 2
commission of Musica, GRAME, La Muse en Circuit
co-production: Musica, La Muse en Circuit

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Ryoji Ikeda weekend FINAL.indd 3 16/02/2026 12:50

Ryoji Ikeda: op 2 + 3
Solem Quartet

Sat 21 Feb 5.00pm, St Giles Cripplegate

Solem Quartet:
Amy Tress violin
William Newell violin
Stephen Upshaw violin
Stephanie Tress cello

Ryoji Ikeda Op 2 for string quartet *UK premiere*
Ryoji Ikeda Op 3 for string quartet *UK premiere*

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Ryoji Ikeda weekend FINAL.indd 4 16/02/2026 12:50

Ryoji Ikeda: music for choir
Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir

Sat 21 Feb 8.00pm, Hall

Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir
Toñu Kaljuste conductor

Ryoji Ikeda *The Calling*, Op 15 *UK premiere*
Ryoji Ikeda *Panta Rhei*, Op 16 *UK premiere*
Ryoji Ikeda *Little Birds*, Op 17 *UK premiere*
I Blue Birds
II Green Birds
III Silver Birds
Ryoji Ikeda *Lux et Nox I* [variations in F sharp minor] Op 18 *UK premiere*
Ryoji Ikeda *Lux et Nox II* [variations in D minor], Op 19 *UK premiere*
Ryoji Ikeda *Vox Angelica*, Op 20 *UK premiere*

music for choir
commission of European Capital of Culture Tartu 2024

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Republic of Estonia
Ministry of Culture

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Ryoji Ikeda weekend FINAL.indd 5 16/02/2026 12:50

Over the course of a weekend we have the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the extraordinary output of Japan's leading electronic composer and visual artist Ryoji Ikeda. In four events we celebrate the sheer breadth of his acoustic compositions, which take us from works for strings, in performances by Ensemble Modern and the Solem Quartet, via breathtaking percussion to his newest love – the human voice.

Ryoji Ikeda writes:

I have never been formally educated or trained as a composer. For years, writing classical music for acoustic instruments has been an enormous challenge for me, and the process has always been painstakingly difficult, despite the great opportunities I have had through commissions.

At the outset, I deliberately restricted myself by excluding my usual artistic tools – such as electronic audiovisual components and digital technologies – from my creative palette. This was an attempt to strip myself bare artistically: a long journey had begun.

Since then, I have worked hard to absorb and understand the language and grammar of classical music as much as I could, though it has never felt sufficient. I have endeavoured to weave sound textures into coherent musical structures. For me, it feels like writing a novel in an unfamiliar foreign language – similar to the experience I have had working with scientists and mathematicians to create visual artworks. Such a quixotic challenge pushes me to my limits, but at the same time, it invariably opens hidden artistic doors. I

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am deeply grateful to every presenter and all the performers for this opportunity.

Finally, I want to highlight that all of these concerts are purely acoustic, without any use of microphones or speakers. This decision was made to honour the richness of acoustic instruments and the artistry of human performance, without mixing in digital elements.

© Ryoji Ikeda

Concert 1:

music for strings (2020–23)

In 2016 I had a series of audiovisual concerts at a festival in Kyoto. Ensemble Modern from Frankfurt were there, performing a large-scale piece by Heiner Goebbels. The ensemble and I became friends and some years later, in 2021, they commissioned me to create a new piece for their 2023 season.

Through a workshop with their players, I decided to focus exclusively on strings.

For many years, I had ideas for *MIRROR* [one for two] that exists only as a dream. It seems simple, but it is extremely difficult to make sense of, due to its very restricted rule. At the start, I decided to tackle this piece.

Another dream of mine was to form a string ensemble arranged in linear fashion on stage. Usually players perform in a semicircular formation, enabling them to see each other. A linear formation, however, denies this visual connection. The challenge was implemented with two works for string nonet: *PRISM* and *REFLECTION*.

The linear formation was designed primarily to achieve clearer sound propagation and a stronger stereo image from the stage. Secondarily, it highlights the visual aspects and physical movements of the players, such as bowing actions and other gestures.

After close collaboration with the players during workshops and rehearsals in 2022–23, the pieces were born.

MIRROR [one for two], op 12 (2020–23)

A single staff notation is placed on a long, narrow table across the stage.

The staff notion is mirrored, allowing it to be read simultaneously from both the normal and opposite directions.

As a result, two players share the single notation, performing together while reading it in opposite directions.

Each player stands diagonally at one edge of the table. They begin playing and

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walking, crossing paths at the midpoint of the table, and finish at the opposite edge.

For the following two pieces, I arranged nine players symmetrically in a single line next to each other: a string quartet on each side, divided by the central double bass. This setup highlights the visual aspects and physical movements of the players, such as bowing actions and other gestures.

PRISM for string nonet, op 14 (2023)

A prism disperses white light into its spectral colours.

Inspired by this phenomenon, the compositional process for this piece was akin to creating a sonic sculpture – carving specific blocks of harmonic or inharmonic sounds (such as spectral colours) from a mass of all notes (analogous to the full spectrum of white light).

This composition spans the full spectrum of notes, ranging from F1 to C6, throughout its entirety.

REFLECTION for string nonet, op 13 (2022–23)

In this piece, the notes rhythmically counterpoint one other in 7/8 time throughout the composition – creating an effect as if the notes are responding to each other, akin to reflections of light or sound.

The linear, symmetrical set-up of nine players effectively enhances the movement of sounds and the visual shifts of bowing actions – from discrete motions to the integrated climax at the end.

Concert 2:

music for percussion 1 & 2 (2016–20)

In 2015 French percussionist Stéphane Garin, my long-term collaborator, introduced me to Alexandre Babel, who was then the director of the Swiss percussion ensemble EKLEKTO. This encounter marked the starting point for something new.

Stéphane was the performer of my audiovisual performance piece *superposition*, alongside another French percussionist, Amélie Grould. This work incorporated various digital technologies and assigned quite unusual tasks to the percussionists: operating telegraph keys, tuning forks, keyboard typing, using microscopic CCD cameras on light boxes, and more.

I worked with Stéphane and Amélie in this way for over a decade, and Alexandre was equally open-minded and enthusiastic about exploring a similar direction. We were very well matched in our approach to music for percussion.

Since then we have worked very closely together, leading to the creation of many miniature percussion pieces.

BODY MUSIC for duo, op 4 (2016)

The body itself serves as the instrument in this work. Two players sit on chairs and use their own hands to clap, their laps to strike, and their feet to stomp.

The compositional structure is entirely rhythmic and meticulously counterpointed, despite the absence of harmony.

The performance blurs the line between what we see and what we hear – at times challenging our perception, especially during complex passages.

Thanks to its simple setup, it can be performed anywhere.

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METAL MUSIC, op 5 (2016)

I triangles [for duo]

The triangle may seem simple, even dull – but it's not. It holds great potential with its purity, its rich resonance of frequencies and its often underestimated range of dynamics. The compositional structure is entirely based on microscopic counterpoint, allowing the metal objects to resonate with one another in unexpected ways. At its climax, the sound waves can fill even a large space, offering the audience an immersive sonic experience.

II crotales [for duo]

The crotales are a set of small metal discs tuned to specific pitches, usually played by being struck with hard mallets. After some experimentation with the players, I decided to have them played with string bows, which makes it possible to produce continuous pure tones – almost like sine waves, the building blocks of sound. The result is an eerie fabric of sound that fills the space.

III cymbals [for quartet]

The cymbal is a greatly underestimated instrument. Its possibilities are remarkably diverse and it can become a rich sonic sculpture depending on who plays it and how. Four players will perform on them in specific ways, and the compositional structure highlights not only the sonic fabric but also the choreographic movements of the players.

BALL MUSIC for trio, op 10 (2020)

Balls of differing kinds serve as the instruments for three players.

I marble

A meditative composition using marbles. Each player rotates marbles in a kitchen bowl, creating subtle trajectories. These delicate passages correspond and interact across the three bowls.

II ping-pong

A microscopic counterpoint for six ping-pong balls. Each player uses two balls to perform a complex yet playful rhythm. The performance becomes a precise choreography of tiny gestures for their fingers.

III basketball

A lighthearted composition for three basketballs. The players dribble their balls to create a polyrhythmic structure in which sport meets music.

BOOK MUSIC for trio, op 9 (2020)

Books serve as the instruments for three players, with all the pages left blank.

The players open, close, turn pages, slide, strike and bang the books. Everyday gestures are reimagined and reassembled within a counterpointed structure, replacing theatrical narratives with the essence of music.

RULER MUSIC for trio, op 11 (2020)

Rulers, pencils and paper serve as the instruments for three players.

In each of the four movements, the players draw lines, circles and figures, use slide rulers, bang rulers and tear up paper: representing the way we work in an office.

Everyday gestures are reimagined and reassembled within a contrapuntal structure, replacing theatrical narratives with the essence of music.

'Ruler' also has a double meaning: as a stationery tool and as a symbol of domination. How this is interpreted is left open to the audience.

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Concert 3:

op 2 (2001-02)

op 3 (2002)

My op 2 and op 3 were written many years ago during a workshop session with student players at the New National Theatre in Tokyo. At the time, I was supposed to write music for a contemporary dance piece, but the session went in a totally unexpected direction and I ended up experimenting with 'controlled chance operations'

In the piece, each player in the string quartet is given a specific musical scale and spontaneously chooses which notes to play. Each musician is also given a precise timeline that determines exactly how long he or she should play for. This means that every performance is different and the audience encounters a unique realisation every time.

Concert 4:

music for choir (2024)

In 2024 I held a large solo exhibition at the Estonian National Museum as part of the European Capital of Culture Tartu.

Years before receiving the commission from the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, I had wanted to collaborate them, being a huge fan! And I still remember our first meeting. As they rehearsed, I was blown away by the impact of their vocals – with an emormous range of dynamics from very soft to very loud. It inspired me a lot.

During the summer of 2024, I focused entirely on composing while staying in a remote part of the Alps. It was during this time that these songs were born.

The Calling, Op 15 (2024)

Panta Rhei, Op 16 (2024)

Little Birds, Op 17 (2024)

I Blue Birds

II Green Birds

III Silver Birds

Lux et Nox I, Op 18 (2024)

Lux et Nox II, Op 19 (2024)

Vox Angelica, Op 20 (2024)

The voice is one of the most primitive yet direct ways in which we humans can perform music. With its infinite possibilities for expression and nuance, working with the voice remains one of my greatest challenges.

The choir music on this programme was my first attempt at writing for voices. The results might come as a shock to those familiar with my work in electronic music and audiovisual art installations, as these pieces include melodies, harmonies and even lyrics. In fact, it was a shock for me as well!

Over decades of working with hundreds of computers and digital technologies, I gradually came to realise that my perception of the sound of voices – their sonority and frequencies – had evolved. Now, I see the great potential of vocal sounds from a vastly different perspective than before.

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For *music for choir*, I didn't take an avant-garde approach; instead, I sought to make voices effectively beautiful by studying and listening to numerous historic and classical works. And I incorporated a mathematical approach to counterpoint and canon, as well as a scientific approach to exploring sonority behind the harmony. The result might seem naive – and surely it is – but it was the best solution for a first attempt, and I learned a lot in the process. It was undoubtedly a starting point to for further exploration.

Voices carry deeper meanings and roles in any context of our contemporary culture(s). This is the next step I aim to tackle.

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Texts

The Calling, Op 15

In the river of time
All things flow and change
Moments drift away
Yet memories remain
A whisper from timeless sage

Seasons come and go
Winter turns to spring
In the dance of life
New beginnings sing
A path for us to take long

Through the tides of time
We are carried forth
In the stream of life
We find our true north
A journey through life's boundless space

In the face of change
We will find our way
In the heart of life
Love will light the day
In every heart, in every way

Panta Rhei, Op 16

Panta rhei, all is flowing
Ceaseless change, the world bestowing
Flux and flux, the endless dance
All is change, no permanence

Clouds adrift across the sky
Birth and death, the years fly by

All is transient, all we view

ebb and flow and ebb and flow this truth we view

Let our voices join the choir
Singing of this timeless fire
Celebrating life's great flow
Panta rhei, ebb and flow

From the mountains to the sea
Rivers flow eternally

Little Birds, Op 17

I Blue Birds

Little blue birds in the morning light,
Sing a song so pure and bright,
Spreading wings and taking flight,
Filling hearts with pure delight.

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Little blue birds, so free and high,
Soaring through the open sky,
With your song, lift our hearts,
Little blue birds, play your own parts.

Little blue birds in the morning light, *etc.*

II Green Birds

Green birds in trees above,
Singing notes of love,
Fluttering wings, so free,
Filling air with joy.

Perched on branch of pine,
Trilling tunes so divine.
Hopping, chirping, so pure,
Sweet music fills the air.

Innocent and free souls,
As the morning bell tolls.
Se-re-na-ding dawn's light,
Bringing happiness in sight.

Join your chorus, our voice,
In your simple song, rejoice.
Carefree, light and gay,
Sing life's sweet roundelay.

Bass
Green birds, blue sky
Green birds, free flight
Green birds, true light
Green birds, fully bright

Green birds, our teachers true,
Show us what we can do.
Live each day with joy and grace,
Sing with hearts aglow on face.

III Silver Birds

Silver birds in morning light,
Sing a song, pure and bright,
Spreading wings, take flight.

In the trees and in the air,
Silver birds everywhere,
Bringing joy, dear.

Silver birds, fly so free and high,
Soaring through the open sky,
Bring us cloud nine.

Filling hearts with pure delight.
Sing a song, free and high,
With glorious shine.

When the sun begins to set,
In your song, hopes are met,
We won't forget.

Through the day and into night,
With your song, guide us bright,
Lead us to light.

Silver birds, loving you all,
With your song, we feel whole,
Bless our soul.

Lux et Nox I, Op 18

Light and dark,
Day and night,
Hope and fear,
Time unfolds tales
Stars will shine,
Moon will rise,
Sun will set,
Cycles never end.

Morning comes,
Darkness fades,
Hope renews,
In the light of dawn.
Lux et Nox,
Light and dark,
In our hearts.

Through the night, through the day,
Guiding light leads us ever on.
Lux and Nox, light shines bright
Lux and Nox, banishing night

Painting skies, golden rays,
Darkness fades, unveils its haze.
Lux and Nox, light and dark in our fate.

In the twilight's embrace,
Balance finds its place,
Embracing both sides,
Our journey abides.

Lux et Nox II, Op 19

Lux et Nox, interweaving,
Day and night, in harmony,
Radiant beams and shadows blending,
In timeless symphony.

Lux, the herald of the morn,
Gilds the world with golden glow,
Awakening life's vibrant song,
With warmth and hope, it bestows.

Nox, the mistress of the night,
Unveils a world of mystic dreams,
Stars ignite her sable might,
Guiding souls with gentle gleams.

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Bass
Light and dark,
Day and night,
Hope and fear,
Time unfolds its tale.

Lux paints the sky with hues divine,
A tapestry of colors bright,
Nox adorns with silver shine,
A tranquil lullaby of night.

Together, they dance in sacred embrace,
A ballet of celestial delight,
Their union, a celestial grace,
In concert, they harmonise the light.

Lux, the herald of the morn,
Gilds the world with golden glow,
Awakening life's vibrant song,
With warmth and hope, it bestows.

Nox, the mistress of the night,
Unveils a world of mystic dreams,
Stars ignite her sable might,
Guiding souls with gentle gleams.

Lux paints the sky with hues divine,
A tapestry of colours bright,
Nox adorns with silver shine,
A tranquil lullaby of night.

Together, they dance in sacred embrace,
A ballet of celestial delight,
Their union, cosmic traces,
In concert, their harmony.

Lux paints the sky with hues divine,
A tapestry of colours bright,
Nox adorns with silver shine,
A tranquil lullaby of night.

Lux et Nox, interweaving,
Day and night, in harmony,
Radiant beams and shadows blending,
In timeless symphony.

Vox Angelica, Op 20

Ebb and flow, the dance of fate,
Rising high, then sinking straight.
Life is a rhythm, strong and true,
Ebb and flow, we journey through.

ebb, flow, ebb, flow

Solo
Angelic voices, pure and clear,
Whispers of heaven for all to hear.

Solo
In the silence, their song resounds,
Healing echoes, love surrounds.
Vox Angelica, a gift of grace.

Seasons come and go,
Blossoms fade, new life grows.
Mountains rise, then erode away,
Constant motion.

ebb and flow and ebb and flow and ebb and flow

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Ensemble Modern

Ensemble Modern is one of the most highly regarded new music groups in the world. It was founded in 1980 and is based in Frankfurt am Main. The 18 musicians from Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, India, Japan, Switzerland and the USA jointly run it, deciding on both artistic and practical matters. Its output ranges from theatre, dance and multimedia projects to chamber music, ensemble and orchestral concerts.

It regularly tours to leading international festivals, as well as appearing at major national and international venues such as Berlin's Philharmonie, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Berlin Konzerthaus, Hellerau Dresden, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Cologne Philharmonie, Wigmore Hall, Southbank Centre and the Cité de la Musique in Paris.

In its hometown, Ensemble Modern has its own subscription series at the Alte Oper Frankfurt. It regularly produces musical theatre works in co-operation with Frankfurt Opera, as well as its renowned series of workshop concerts entitled 'Happy New Ears', which began in 1993. Together with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Modern has been presenting a festival for modern music since 2011. It's also one of the partner institutions of the Frankfurt LAB, a space for artistic experimentation and interdisciplinary exchange. Last year Ensemble Modern joined the International Ensemble Modern Academy and the Junge Deutsche Philharmonie in initiating the project 'Sound Port Frankfurt 2030 – Centre for Music and Experimentation', creating an innovative space for music.

Every year, Ensemble Modern performs around 70 new compositions, including about 20 world premieres, some of which it commissions itself. It has enjoyed long-term relationships with the music of John Adams, Mark Andre, Sir George Benjamin, Unsuk Chin, Peter Eötvös, Brian Ferneyhough, Heiner Goebbels, Hans Werner Henze, Heinz Holliger, Mauricio Kagel, György Kurtág, Helmut Lachenmann, György Ligeti, Cathy Milliken, Brigitta Muntendorf, Olga Neuwirth, Enno Poppe, Steve Reich, Wolfgang Rihm, Rebecca Saunders, Iris ter Schiphorst, Simon Steen-Andersen, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Frank Zappa, Hans Zender and Vito Žuraj, as well as leading figures from other artistic genres.

Among its commissions, there are also large-scale compositions written for its expanded group, Ensemble Modern Orchestra.

In 2000 it launched Ensemble Modern Media. This has seen collaborations with German public radio stations; it has also released around 150 albums on established labels such as Col Legno, ECM Records, NEOS Music, Sony Music and Wergo.

In 2003 Ensemble Modern founded the International Ensemble Modern Academy (IEMA), bringing together its existing education and further education projects under one roof. In 2024 its achievements were recognised when it was awarded the Silver Lion by the Venice Biennale.

Alexandre Babel

Alexandre Babel, a Laureate of the Swiss Music Prize 2021, is a percussionist, composer and curator involved in various contemporary arenas such as modern classical music, experimental music and performance art. He creates works that question the listener's expectations around conventional musical forms in new contexts. He is a founding member of the performance collective Radial with the artist Mio Chareteau and was solo percussionist in the contemporary music ensemble KNM Berlin (2009–19). In 2020 his music and curatorial work was featured in the Festival Les Amplitudes in La Chaux-de-Fonds. He was artistic director of the contemporary percussion collective Eklekto until 2022.

Stéphane Garin

Stéphane Garin is a versatile artist whose practice includes performance, improvisation, composition and healing. He can be found performing with the Dedalus ensemble, working with Ryoji Ikeda on electronic music and collaborating with singer Claire Diterzi and the Detroit-based Shua Group. In 2004 he co-founded Ensemble 0, a group he directs with Sylvain Chauveau, which has performed the work of Moondog, John Cage, Julius Eastman, Arthur Russell, Tristan Perich and Michael Pisaro, along with their own compositions. He has collaborated with Jean-Philippe Gross (Dénombrement) since 2017. In all of his activities, whether

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at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw or the Kyoto Experiment Festival, the priority lies not with disseminating art but sharing it.

Julien Garin

Percussionist Julien Garin graduated from the Geneva University of Music with a Master's degree in solo performance and teaching and has since developed an international career at the crossroads of Latin music, jazz, and classical and contemporary repertoires.

He is the principal timpanist/percussionist of the Basque Country Symphony Orchestra and performs regularly in a wide variety of settings. He is currently touring with the Nicolas Gardel Quartet 'Mano Figa', performing at numerous prestigious venues and festivals.

In the contemporary field, he is a member of Ensemble 0, with whom he performs internationally at leading venues and festivals, including the Wonderfruit Festival, Thailand, here at the Barbican Centre, Rewire in The Hague and Bogotá's Teatro Metropol. Together, they are currently working on a new proejct, to be premiered at the Philharmonie de Paris.

Amélie Grould

Amélie Grould initially studied recorder before turning to percussion as a teenager, winning several awards. She has collaborated with a variety of composers, including Ivo Malec, Yann Maresz, Philippe Hurel, Bruno Giner, François Paris, Martin Matalon, Thierry De Mey, Philippe Leroux and Tom Johnson. She founded Trio Troika in 2009 and has been a member of Aum Grand Ensemble since 2010, performing improvised music and contemporary jazz. In 2013 she founded Phonochrome with saxophonist Safia Azzoug – an association whose aim is to promote contemporary and experimental arts – and the duo Les Discordantes, which has commissioned works from a variety of composers.

Since 2012 she has performed in Ryoji Ikeda's *Superposition* project – a unique sensory experience where sounds, images, physical phenomena, mathematical concepts, human behaviour and random elements combine. More recently, she has joined the *INVU* project (a site-specific sound performance and installation exploring refrain and voice as fluid forms that circulate and are transmitted through time and space) and *Hypertemps* (a sound installation and performance project exploring the notions of time, rhythm, and cycles) by composer and sound artist Clément Edouard.

Solem Quartet

The Solem Quartet has established itself as one of the most innovative and adventurous quartets of its generation. Since winning the Royal Over-Seas League Ensemble Competition in 2014, it has built a strong following and now enjoys a busy schedule, ranging from international tours in Asia and Europe to performances at major UK venues, including Wigmore Hall and the Royal Festival Hall.

The group takes pride in creating original and exciting work, bringing the string quartet genre to unexpected places. It has also worked closely with many of today's leading composers, including Thomas Adès, Anna Meredith, Edmund Finnis, William Marsey and Bushra El-Turk. Recent highlights include the world premieres of Ryan Latimer's *Spinfall*; *LENCTEN* by Master of the King's Music Errollyn Wallen; and Laurence Osborn's L*akes, Mists, Bats, Daggers and Fountains* at Wigmore Hall.

Between 2020 and 2023, the Solem's 'Beethoven Bartók Now' series featured six major commissions from British composers, alongside the complete Bartók quartets and Beethoven's late quartets. The project also featured a wealth of digital content and educational activity, including 'Writing for Quartet' workshops for composers of all backgrounds, which won an award from the RPS.

The quartet has worked with artists from a wide range of genres, including vocalist/composer Alice Zawadzki, filmmaker Jessie Rodger, clarinettist/composer Mark Simpson and cellist/composer Philip Sheppard. The musicians were also featured artists on Jamie Philokyprou's 2024 release *Nostalgia*, and the BAFTA-nominated *Blue Jean* (2022), performing a score by composer Chris Roe.

The quartet's latest album, *Painted Light*, features 20th-century and contemporary

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music linked by light, shade and perspective (Delphian Records). Its critically acclaimed debut album, *The Four Quarters* (Orchid Classics), took Thomas Adès's eponymous work as a framework to incorporate other music ranging from Bartók to Kate Bush.

The Solem Quartet takes a keen interest in educational work. From 2015 to 2017 it held the Junior Fellowship in Chamber Music at the Royal Northern College of Music and from 2016 to 2024 it was Quartet-in-Residence at the University of Liverpool. The group's immersive concerts and workshops have taken it to mainstream and special needs schools through Live Music Now and it has performed or given seminars at Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham and Cardiff Universities.

Tõnu Kaljuste

Tõnu Kaljuste has gained international recognition with his diverse repertoire, which ranges from operas and classical symphonic works to contemporary music. He has worked with major modernist composers of Northern and Eastern Europe, such as Alfred Schnittke, György Kurtág, Krzysztof Penderecki, Giya Kancheli and Einojuhani Rautavaara, and is recognised as an expert interpreter and advocate of Estonian composers, including Arvo Pärt, Erkki-Sven Tüür, Tõnu Kõrvits, Veljo Tormis and Heino Eller.

His Pärt album *Adam's Lament* won a Grammy for Best Choral Performance in 2014. He has also received Grammy nominations for albums ranging from opera to symphonic music. In 2019 he won the International Classical Music Award for his recording of Pärt's symphonies with the NFM Wrocław Philharmonic Orchestra. Other prizes include a Cannes Classical Award (1999), Diapason d'Or (2000), Edison Musical Award (2000), Classic BRIT Award (2003) and Prix Caecilia (2023). He has recorded for ECM Records, Virgin Classics, BIS and Caprice Records.

In 1981 Tõnu Kaljuste founded the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir, and, after a 20-year break, returned as its artistic director in August 2021. He founded the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra in 1993 and returned as its artistic director between 2019 and 2024. He is the founder and artistic director of the project theatre Nargen Opera (established in 2004) and has led the Nargen Festival since 2006.

Tõnu Kaljuste has conducted operas by Haydn, including *L'isola disabitata*, *Il mondo della luna* and *Armida*, and Beethoven's *Fidelio*. He received the Estonian theatre award for the best musical production in 2024 for Philip Glass's *Hydrogen Jukebox*.

Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir

The Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir is one of the best-known Estonian music ensembles, performing all around the world. The choir was founded in 1981 by Tõnu Kaljuste, who was its artistic director for 20 years. He was succeeded by Paul Hillier, Daniel Reuss and Kaspars Putniņš. In August 2021 Kaljuste returned to the role.

The choir's repertoire ranges from the Baroque to music of the current century, with a special focus on Estonian composers such as Arvo Pärt, Veljo Tormis and others. The choir has received two Grammy Awards, 16 Grammy nominations, a *Gramophone* Award, Diapason d'Or and a Prix Caecilia, among others. It has also been named as one of the top 10 choirs in the world by *BBC Music Magazine* and Classic FM.

Each season the choir gives about 70 concerts in Estonia and internationally. It has collaborated with many eminent conductors and orchestras, including Claudio Abbado, Sir Simon Rattle, Gustavo Dudamel, Marc Minkowski, the London

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Symphony Orchestra, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Philip Glass Ensemble, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Concerto Copenhagen.

It has appeared at prestigious festivals, including the BBC Proms, Aix-en-Provence Festival and Mozartwoche. The choir has performed at venues such as the Sydney Opera House; Wiener Konzerthaus; Philharmonie de Paris; Prague Rudolfinum; Hamburg Elbphilharmonie; Hong Kong City Hall; Kennedy Center in Washington DC; Carnegie Hall, Metropolitan Museum and the Lincoln Center in New York; and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, among many others.

The Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir has recorded more than 80 albums for labels including ECM, Virgin Classics, Carus, Harmonia Mundi, Ondine and BIS Records.

The Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir is grateful for the generous support from public funders and individual donors, who have made the choir's performance at the Barbican Hall possible. The choir would particularly like to thank Anna Gustafson, the British Council, Mr Erki Kilu and LHV Bank Limited, Ambassador H.E. Mr Sven Sakkov, Marika Goldman and the Ministry of Culture of Estonia, Michael Holley, the Exmet Group, and Nordnet for their contribution to the realisation of the choir's concerts in the United Kingdom this season.

Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir

artistic leader and chief conductor
Tõnu Kaljuste

choir master
Mai Simson

soprano
Yena Choi
Annika Lõhmus
Laura Štoma
Marie Roos
Mirell Jakobson
Eleri-Kristel Kuimet
Birke Elisabeth Jakobson

alto
Ave Hännikäinen
Marianne Pärna
Anni Marie Rea
Annely Leinberg
Kristel Marand
Cätly Talvik

tenor
Danila Frantou
Kaido Janke
Raul Mikson
Miguel Gonçalves Silva
Toomas Tohert
Kaarel Telgmaa
Zhizhong Xie

bass
Henry Tiisma
Kim Sargsyan
Geir Luht
Rainer Vilu
Kristjan-Jaanek Mölder
Aarne Talvik

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