

# SOUTHBANK CENTRE

RESIDENT

# WELCOME

## to our 2024/25 season here at the Southbank Centre

The music that we love to play at the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment is a tangle of riddles and puzzles. Why did Bach choose the six concertos he did to become the Brandenburg Concertos? What is the secret theme hidden within the *Enigma Variations*? Why do certain works and composers achieve 'Greatness'? Why are others overlooked? Why did Beethoven scratch out the dedication to Napoleon of the 'Eroica' Symphony? Why did Bruckner never hear his Fifth Symphony? How does music decode human sentiment? Or express the ultimate enigma, humanity's relationship with the divine?

"I have come to believe that the whole world is an enigma, a harmless enigma that is made terrible by our own mad attempt to interpret it as though it had an underlying truth"

**UMBERTO ECO** 

These enigmas have always nourished the human imagination. The secret themes, lost manuscripts and broken celebrity crushes that tease us are all part of the thrill. The idea that we might solve the mystery drives us on. If we're honest, though, we can't promise to uncover all the answers for you. So that leaves us with a simple choice: go mad... or just decide to enjoy the music!

If there is an underlying truth to be found it is in the act of coming together to share this wonderful, messy cosmos of music – the gathering of the musicians of the OAE with our inspiring artistic partners and you, our audience. Together we might find the secret key: one that unlocks the door to joy, generosity and, of course, Enlightenment.

Thank you for being part of our enigmatic adventure.

# **About Fanny Mendelssohn**

Fanny Cäcilie Mendelssohn was born in 1805 in Hamburg. She was a little over three years older than her brother, Felix. The siblings remained close throughout their lives. Almost all accounts suggest that she matched his talents as a performer and he placed a high value on her advice in compositional matters.

In 1829 she married the painter Wilhelm Hensel – and she is often referred to as Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel or Fanny Hensel. She died of a stroke in 1847 – less than six months before Felix died of the same cause – aged just 41.

Not many people can list female composers of the 19th Century in Europe. Even with the desire to raise their profile, and recent research work that is broadening the canon, there's very little for us to draw on when putting programmes together. The commissioning structures of the time meant that women simply didn't get the opportunities to write for orchestras, or get published.

Fanny Mendelssohn is a prime example: she's an incredibly talented composer that had very little opportunity or encouragement to write orchestral music. She did, however, leave a legacy of over 400 pieces of chamber music and songs.

The piano cycle, Das Jahr, stands out as a particularly ambitious work and the idea came to us that we could work with living composers to reimagine it as a multi-movement work for our orchestra... a vision of what Fanny might have created in 1841 in a more equal world.

Read Jessica Duchen's article 'The trouble with Fanny' on page 4.

# Programme

Sunday 23 March 2025 7.00pm at the Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall

**FANNY MENDELSSOHN** (1805 – 1847)

Overture in C major 'January' and 'February from Das Jahr

**ELECTRA PERIVOLARIS** (b. 1996)

March (Ice melting, petals unfurling)

ERROLLYN WALLEN (b. 1958) April

**FANNY MENDELSSOHN** 

'May' from *Das Jahr* 

FREYA WALEY-COHEN (b. 1989)

After June

- Interval -

#### **FANNY MENDELSSOHN**

'July', 'August' and 'September' from Das Jahr Romanze from String Quartet in E flat major 'October', 'November' and 'December' from Das Jahr

**ROXANNA PANUFNIK** (b. 1968)

**Postlude** 

#### **ORCHESTRA OF THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT**

Kati Debretzeni leader

Olga Pashchenko fortepiano Natalia Ponomarchuk conductor

There will be a pre-concert talk at 6.00pm in the Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer with Roxanna Panufnik, Electra Perivolaris, Freya Waley-Cohen, Errollyn Wallen and Principal Viola Max Mandel.

# Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment

#### **Violins I**

Kati Debretzeni\* Rodolfo Richter **Andrew Roberts** Dominika Fehér **Huw Daniel\*** Henry Tona Rebecca Livermore Anna Curzon

#### **Violins II**

Margaret Faultless\* Alice Evans Claudia Delago-Norz **Deborah Diamond** Rachel Isserlis Kinga Ujszászi Jayne Spencer Rebecca Harris

#### **Violas**

Max Mandel\* Kate Heller Martin Kelly Lisa Cochrane Louise Hogan Hannah Shaw

#### **Cellos**

Catherine Rimer **Penny Driver** Richard Tunnicliffe Daisy Vatalaro

#### **Double basses**

Cecelia Bruggemeyer Carina Cosgrave Paul Sherman

#### Flutes / piccolo

Lisa Beznosiuk\* Neil McLaren

#### Oboes

**Daniel Bates\* Geoffrey Coates** 

#### **Clarinets**

Katherine Spencer\* Sarah Thurlow

#### **Bassoons**

Fergus Butt Sally Jackson

#### **Horns**

Roger Montgomery\* Martin Lawrence Nivanthi Karunaratne **Peter Moutoussis** 

#### **Trumpets**

**Neil Brough** Phillip Bainbridge

#### **Timpani**

Adrian Bending\*

\*OAE principal players









# The Trouble with Fanny

### Jessica Duchen



Portrait of Fanny Hensel 1842 by Moritz Daniel Oppenheim – Public Domain via wikicommons

whith the recent upswing of interest in history's neglected female composers, much extraordinary music has been brought back within earshot. Clara Schumann, Pauline Viardot and Lili Boulanger are among the figures rapidly becoming household names. Yet perhaps no music has proved quite such a revelation as that of Fanny Mendelssohn, also known by her married name, Fanny Hensel.

Elder sister of the more famous Felix, she shared with him a prodigious talent and

an elite musical and literary education in Berlin. When she was 14, however, her father informed her that as a woman, she could not expect music to be more than an 'ornament' to domestic life. There were no such impediments to Felix's progress: he shot to fame, becoming an international superstar, conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, founder of the Leipzig Conservatory and a favourite of Britain's Queen Victoria.

Felix did not encourage his sister to make her music public; he allowed her simply to publish some songs under *his* name (the tactic famously backfired when Queen Victoria picked a favourite song to sing to his accompaniment; he had to confess that it was in fact by Fanny). A creatively minded woman of less mettle might have buckled under such conditions. She was different.

There could be no better spokesperson for Fanny today than her three-times-great-granddaughter, the filmmaker Sheila Hayman. Among her documentaries are *Mendelssohn*, *The Nazis and Me*, and more recently *Fanny: The Other Mendelssohn*, tracing the verification of Fanny's authorship of her Easter Sonata for solo piano, a work hitherto not only little known, but assumed to be by Felix.

Hayman points out that the private nature of Fanny's composing brought some perhaps unexpected artistic benefits. 'While Felix had to please everybody with very public compositions, Fanny, needing to please only herself, could write literally whatever she liked,' she says.

For orchestra, Fanny composed only a single Overture in C, which dates from 1830 – 32 and was designed for performance in the family's glittering salon. Two years after its premiere, Fanny conducted a second performance. As ever, she evinced modesty: "Had I not been so shy, and embarrassed with every stroke, I would have been able to conduct reasonably well," she told Felix.

Although the overture is relatively conventional, her String Quartet of 1834 pushed the boat out, embracing the potential of romanticism to an impressive degree. Felix disapproved of the work – which was only performed once in Fanny's lifetime – regarding its adventurous nature as undisciplined. But the lyricism and subtle darkness in the Romanze, its third movement, occupies a sphere that is wholly and unmistakeably Fanny's personal world.

Fanny found happiness in family life with Wilhelm Hensel, court painter to King Friedrich Wilhelm III. The couple were deeply and devotedly in love, but again her father threw a spanner in the works, making them wait seven years before marrying. Fanny, though, was no stranger to determination.

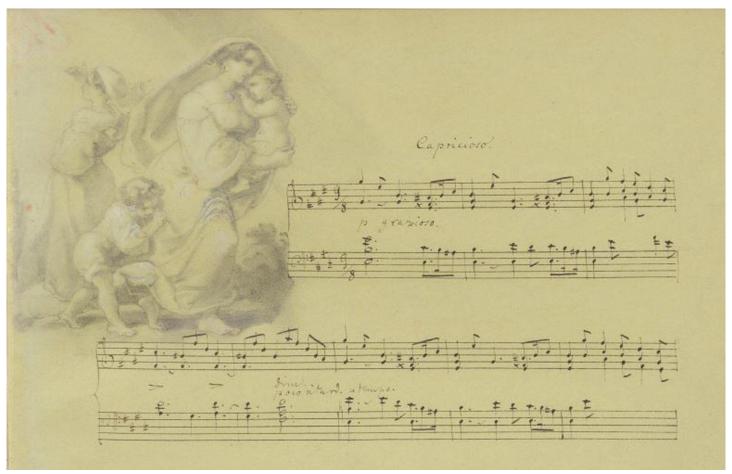
Wilhelm proved refreshingly supportive to her; he even provided her each morning with a fresh piece of blank manuscript paper to fill. Soon the couple had a son, Sebastian. But there were travails and tragedies in store: Fanny suffered at least one miscarriage and had a daughter who was stillborn. She also had to nurse her family through a cholera epidemic. Despite everything, she had music in her life every day. In her Berlin home, she rehearsed and conducted her own choir and put on weekly concerts in her salon.

She grew, meanwhile, into a powerful, uncompromising personality. 'Sebastian Hensel, her son, wrote a magisterial tome about the family Mendelssohn, from Moses Mendelssohn [the composers' grandfather, the Enlightenment philosopher] until the year of Fanny and Felix's death,' Hayman recounts. 'It's a fantastic pen portrait of her character and her absolute zeal.

'She was somebody completely incapable of disguising her feelings. If she liked people, she loved them; if she didn't like them, you saw it all over her face. She hated parties, formal gatherings of any kind, paying calls, giving cards and wearing hats because the veils got caught in her glasses. And she couldn't see the point of jewellery.' Once, she recounts, Wilhelm was obliged to give a painting to Queen Victoria. The monarch rewarded him with an enormous emerald ring. Back from London, he presented it to his wife. Her response? 'I can't play the piano in that!'

Fanny comes across as affectionate, clever, sharp-witted and sometimes scary. 'Everybody was frightened of her,' Hayman says. The composer William Sterndale Bennett was a case in point: 'He said that he had played for Felix often, but that having to play for Mrs. Hensel, and to think that this formidable person should be a woman, was absolutely terrifying.

'I was attracted to Fanny's balancing act between the urge to express yourself and to be the person that you feel that you should be, with a massive creative drive and artistic gift; but then, on the other hand, not wanting to be difficult or pushy. Fanny wanted to be a good wife, mother, sister and housekeeper, to do all the things that the family and society expected her to do. I think she found it difficult to achieve that balance. She struggled with it all her life.'



Beginning of April from the suite 'Das Jahr', music by Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel, artwork by Wilhelm Hensel.

Zoom Historical / Alamy Stock Photo

It seems that Wilhelm's support had its limits. 'He understood instinctively what her drives and her needs were, and absolutely supported her. But he had a cloth-ear for music. He couldn't hold a tune. It wasn't his thing at all, so he wasn't able to give Fanny the affirmation that she needed from another musician.' This was even more vital thanks to Fanny's intense critical facility: 'Up until late in her life, the only living musician whom she rated was her brother. She met Paganini, Chopin and Berlioz and she didn't think much of them at all!'

There was one other person she liked and felt supported by: the French composer Charles Gounod, whom she met in Rome in 1839. 'Gounod was in residence at the Academie Française. She decided that she could really respect him – and he was absolutely blown away by her. It seems that German music was not familiar in Italy at that point, or in France. According to what I've been told, Fanny brought Beethoven and Bach to Rome. She sat down and played five Beethoven sonatas in a row, to show Gounod what he'd been missing. Therefore she was admired and esteemed as much for the musical knowledge and tradition that she brought with her as for her own extraordinary gifts.

'That encouragement from Gounod helped to precipitate *Das Jahr* – probably because in that year in Rome, as she said herself, "I was never made so much of in my life, and it's really rather pleasant!"

'Your creativity blossoms when you feel confident in what you're doing and other people are confident in it as well. After a whole year of that, away from domestic responsibilities, she came back full of ideas and full of confidence that they were worth putting down. She wrote *Das Jahr*, but didn't publish it, and mentioned it only in one letter. That's what's so extraordinary: she writes an absolutely barnstorming piece of music, yet refers to it in a

casual way as a little bit of fun with which she's been amusing herself and that might perhaps entertain other people.'

Das Jahr is a cycle of 12 piano pieces, one for each month. It served, too, as a love letter. It was Fanny's present to her husband at Christmas 1841; she created a beautiful manuscript of it with space at the head of each movement for him to add his drawings. She also appended an extract of poetry to each piece, selected from Goethe. Uhland, Schiller and Tieck.

January is headed 'A Dream', illustrated with a portrait of Fanny, whom Wilhelm seems to portray (fittingly enough) as St Cecilia, the patron saint of music. February is for Carnival, an Italianate tarantella preceded by lines from Goethe's *Faust*. March, with another extract from the play, leans towards Easter with a quotation of the Lutheran chorale *Christ ist erstanden*. There is a light-hearted family scene for the spring sunshine of April, while May is entitled 'Fruhlingslied' – Spring Song, a heading used more than once by Fanny's brother. June's 'Serenade', is a deeply Mendelssohnian song without words, and July an evocation of summer heat, quoting from Schiller's 'Der Abend', before August presents a harvest parade.

September, 'The River', draws upon Goethe's melancholy poem 'An dem Mond' (To the Moon); in October, the huntsman's horn sounds through the green forest. November is a darker piece, hinting at the feast of All Soul's and a song of sorrow as winter approaches. Finally there is Christmas magic in December, with flurries of snow, a celebratory chorale and Wilhelm's portrait of a winged Fanny – an angel, attended by a cherub, probably little Sebastian. Not all the drawings are so exalted; one shows the first German train, on which Fanny and Wilhelm had travelled with much excitement between Berlin and Potsdam.

Das Jahr has been recorded several times, but scarcely often enough to have emerged from its status as buried treasure. Hayman thinks that it remains neglected because it is so difficult to play. Besides, it has been under the radar for the same reason that Fanny's other works have taken so long to come to light.

After a rehearsal in May 1847, Fanny was taken ill; hours later, she was dead, having suffered a stroke. Felix, devastated, died of the same condition that November. 'When all the family papers were divided up,' Hayman says, 'everybody wanted Felix's because they were considered valuable. Nobody wanted any of Fanny's; they were kept only for sentimental reasons. The new

critical edition of Fanny's Easter Sonata is the first time a work of hers has been put out by a major publisher.' She had left well over 400 pieces of music.

'Even women who were celebrated as composers in their lifetimes did not join the musical canon after their deaths in the same way as their male colleagues,' Hayman says. But for Fanny, it is not too late, even if it is later than her music deserves. With Hayman's film and now the OAE's *Das Jahr* project in the ascendency, this indomitable figure is gaining the limelight at long last. And she might indeed have found it 'really rather pleasant'.

# A 'Mendelssohn' piano

## **Nigel Scaife**



The piano heard in today's concert was originally built in London in 1832 by the French firm of Erard. Its founder, Sebastien Erard, was one of the most significant innovators in the history of the piano who in 1821 patented the ingenious 'double escapement' action that forms the basis of the modern design. This allows the pianist to rapidly repeat notes without the keys having to return to their point of rest – a feature which had a huge impact on Romantic and all later piano repertoire.

During the first half of the nineteenth century Erard pianos were widely considered to be the best available and were enthusiastically endorsed by most virtuosi in Europe, including Liszt, Hummel, Thalberg and Mendelssohn's teacher – Ignaz Moscheles. It was probably Moscheles who introduced the young Mendelssohn to Pierre Erard – Sebastien's nephew who had taken over the firm in 1832 following his uncle's death. In a letter to Moscheles dated July 1832 Mendelssohn refers to a gift from Pierre of a new piano to be shipped from London to his home in Berlin. It arrived in October and Mendelssohn wrote to thank Pierre: 'The piano arrived last night and since that moment I have almost not stopped playing it and admiring it; it seemed to me brand new and infinitely more beautiful than when I played it at your home the evening before my departure. Since that day I have not seen any instruments comparable to yours…'

The Erard here is numbered 161 and is the earliest surviving example of a grand piano made in their London factory. It is some 7'8" long and as a concert instrument is undoubtedly similar in style to Mendelssohn's piano.

It was relatively common during the 1840s for pianos to be to be returned to the factory and updated – something we know happened to Mendelssohn's piano. While much of the piano was updated, the soundboard – the soul of the instrument – was retained, as we know from the English writing and date on its ribs.

The most significant difference between this piano and a modern one is that the strings run parallel with the grain of the soundboard and do not cross over each other. As a result there is a greater variety of timbre between the different registers and a clarity of sonority that is quite distinct. In addition, the mahogany cover over the strings has an acoustic function as it reduces some of the harmonics and helps provide a more blended sound.

Pierre's gift clearly inspired Felix Mendelssohn's creativity and so it is fitting that his sister's music is to be played today in this inaugural concert of the restored 'Mendelssohn' Erard piano.

Read more about the history and Nigel Scaife's restoration (at The Piano Shop Kent) of this exceptional fortepiano on our blog at oae.co.uk/discover

# Composer notes





## **ELECTRA PERIVOLARIS**

## March (Ice melting, petals unfurling)

hen asked by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment to choose a month from Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel's 'Das Jahr' for solo piano to inspire a new work I would compose for Classical / early Romantic period orchestra, the month of March immediately stood out to me. The piece I have composed draws upon the dialogue between Winter and Spring which I felt when listening to Fanny's 'March', the almost capricious energy of Winter melting away with the ice as the joy and warmth of Spring start to take over, flower petals unfurling and the earth blooming and blossoming again. In this piece I have explored the contrasts between darkness and light which seem to characterise the month of March, the 'muffled bells' in the Goethe quotation at the start of Fanny's manuscript for 'March' heralding the world waking up to Spring once again.

Electra Perivolaris (b.1996) is a composer and pianist from Scotland of mixed British and Greek heritage, described as 'A Classical Star of the Future' by BBC Introducing and 'One of a new generation of female trailblazers' by BBC Radio 3. Recent commissions have included works for the London Sinfonietta, BBC Singers, BBC Concert Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Composers' Hub. Electra is a Doctor of Philosophy candidate in Composition at the University of Oxford, after completing Undergraduate studies at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and Masters studies at London's Royal Academy of Music. winning the DipRAM Award for an Outstanding Final Composition Portfolio and a RAM Fellowship. Electra was a 2022 – 2023 Royal Philharmonic Society Composer and has been awarded the Young Classical Artists Trust 2024 - 2025 Composer Fellowship. Her music draws inspiration from her mixed Scottish and Greek island heritages, focusing on human connections to nature. to our surrounding environments, and to each other. Electra has worked on co-creative projects with diverse groups of society in settings including schools, hospitals, homelessness shelters, dementia settings and adolescent psychiatric units for organisations such as Streetwise Opera, Wigmore Hall Learning, Glyndebourne Opera and the City of London Sinfonia.

### **ERROLLYN WALLEN**

## **April**

I spent a lot of time at the piano with Fanny Mendelssohn's 'April' from *Das Jahr* before beginning to compose my own *April*. In learning to play it I was able absorb its essence from both physically and intellectually. Mine has its own distinct considerations and challenges but I was able to move freely between Mendelssohn's musical world and my own, intentionally blurring the lines on occasion. I include some of the compositional material of the Mendelssohn and also quote from her 'April' directly at the end of my work by way of tribute to a wonderful composer.

Errollyn Wallen CBE is a multi award-winning Belize-born British composer named as one of the world's top twenty most performed living classical composers.

Her output includes over twenty operas and a large catalogue of orchestral, chamber and vocal works, which are performed and broadcast throughout the world. She has composed for the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilees, the Last Night of the Proms and BBC Radio 3 featured her as Composer of the Week. She is currently working on a new opera which will premiere at Aldeburgh in 2026. Recent premieres include a violin concerto for Philippe Quint, *Parade* for Academy of Saint Martin in the Fields and *Way of My Dreaming* Heart for the Commonwealth Day service at Westminster Abbey.

2025 sees the release of both her violin concerto (PENTATONE) and *Errollyn Wallen: Orchestral Works* on the Resonus label.

Errollyn Wallen's book, *Becoming a Composer*, published by Faber in 2023, has been translated into Spanish. The paperback is published this August.

Her recordings have travelled 7.84 million kilometers in space, completing 186 orbits around the Earth on NASA's STS-115 mission.

In August 2024 Errollyn Wallen was appointed Master of the King's Music.

electraperivolariscomposer.com



### FREYA WALEY-COHEN

#### After June

There are two different versions of Das Jahr's 'June: Serenade', the first version is found in the StaatsBibliotek manuscript, and the other in the facsimile edition illustrated by Wilhelm Hensel. They're quite strikingly different, with the facsimile edition being much simpler. Both are beautiful and elegant, but something of the virtuosity and depth of the StaatsBibliotek manuscript seems to be smoothed out of the facsimile edition, which is the one that can be found in the Mendelssohn archives in Berlin. I have the pianist Sarah Rothenberg to thank for pointing me towards the difference in the editions.

After June opens with the rising notes that begin the StaatsBibliotek version, here, growing out of a swirling string and wind texture, ornamented and floating upwards, before shifting off into other musical spaces. Elsewhere in the piece are remembrances of the 'February: Scherzo', fragmented and reformed into their own playful figurations. This was the movement I was originally drawn to and had planned to respond to, before discovering the earlier version of June.

The main theme of Fanny Mendelssohn's 'June', most clearly heard in the second Hensel illustrated facsimile edition, finally makes an appearance, but in my *After June*, her lilting yearning serenade has become the bass notes newly harmonised with a counter melody on top that adds a teasing smile to the original. Here, the influence of the scherzo remains, and this transformed melody first appears in pizzicato strings, before spreading across the orchestra. At the end, we return briefly to the first version of 'June's' opening melody.

In between the moments that more clearly refer to either the 'June: Serenade' or the 'February: Scherzo' the music is just what I felt was needed in my own writing – I wasn't strict with myself in always using direct material or references to *Das Jahr*. Sometimes, it is just what I wanted to hear.

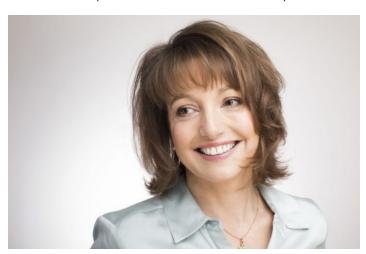
Described as 'at once intimate and visionary' (BBC Music Mag), Freya Waley-Cohen is a British-American composer whose music is characterised by 'an instinct for colour' (Arts Desk) which 'opens the doorway to somewhere just outside of most people's normal perceptions' (Arts Review Edinburgh)

Her music has been commissioned by institutions and ensembles including the London Philharmonic Orchestra, LA Philharmonic, BBC Proms, Wigmore Hall, Philharmonia Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, and The King's Singers.

Recent highlights include *Mother Tongue*, a symphonic work for the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Ed Gardner, a Manchester Collective concert at the Barbican's Milton Court devoted to Waley-Cohen's works, including the premieres of two newly commissioned works to complete her dramatic song cycle *Spell Book*, her orchestral work *Demon*, commissioned by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, and a new work for the Colin Currie Percussion Quartet co-commissioned by the Wigmore Hall and Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival.

Waley-Cohen's first opera, WITCH, was commissioned to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Royal Academy of Music in 2022, directed by Polly Graham and conducted by Ryan Wigglesworth, and was shortlisted for an Ivors Composer Award. She has created a number immersive works and installations including *Permutations*, an interactive architectural artwork created during an Open Space Residency at Snape Maltings from 2015 – 2017.

Freya was the 2019 – 20 Associate Composer of the Wigmore Hall, composer in residence with the London Chamber Orchestra for the 2021 – 2022 season, and associate composer of St. David's Hall's contemporary music series, Nightmusic. In 2024 NMC released a portrait album of her works titled *Spell Book*.



#### **ROXANNA PANUFNIK**

#### **Postlude**

Although *Das Jahr* reflects on the twelve months of the year it was the 'Nachspiel' (Postlude) that I fell in love with – at only 2.5 minutes it covers a huge range of emotion and stylistic intrigue. The music alternates quickly between what to me sounds like a wistful melody in A minor and then solemn but majestic phrases of a circular, Bach chorale. Fanny would have heard and played organ improvisations between chorale phrases at church.

My fantasy on this piece starts, as does Fanny's, with Wistful 1 and a solo 'A' but I take it further, with the piano building on that note until Chorale 1 bursts into life. The melody of the first chorale phrase becomes a jaunty accompaniment and the chorale goes through several transpositions (as does Fanny's) before woodwinds and strings take up the Wistful 2 yearning, dream-like melody.

In Chorale 2, again the piano turns the next chorale phrase into a leisurely semi-quaver accompaniment, alternating with heartbeat-like clusters of the same notes. Each orchestral section takes their turn with the chorale. In Wistful 3 I take Fanny's love of transposition onto a new level, with a sneaky

side-step from A minor into D flat major. The brass takes her original theme over chromatic woodwind sighs. In Chorale 3, we return to the safe haven of E minor, the strings have the chorale melody as a 7/8 quaver accompaniment. The chorale appears in cross-rhythm and yearning counter-melody emerges from brass and strings.

Wistful 4 is a retrograde Wistful 2, a little sadder but Fanny's wistful melody optimistically moves higher and higher until we enter the forest, in Chorale 4. This movement is inspired by Fanny's songs on the theme of the German Romantic Forest and the birds she might have heard in those woodlands. Again, the chorale melody becomes a running quaver accompaniment as brass and upper woodwind provide ornithological embellishment, with the original chorale down in the lower strings and winds.

As do Fanny's and Bach's original, Wistful 5 and Chorale 5 refer back to the beginning but in a mightier and more elaborate way. We finish with Fanny's wistful opening A minor theme made happy with an additional major 3rd.

I am hugely grateful to OAE and its wonderful principals and pianist Olga Pashchenko who have all collaborated intensively and patiently with me – it has been quite a steep but intriguing learning curve and has left me wanting to write more for these fabulous instruments.

Roxanna Panufnik (b.1968) is one of the most versatile and beloved British composers working today. She studied composition at the Royal Academy of Music and since then has written works for opera, ballet, choirs, orchestras and chamber music as well as for film and television that are seen and heard around the world. She is probably best-known for her 'Coronation Sanctus' commissioned by King Charles III for his Coronation service. Thanks to her hybrid heritage, she has a great love of music from a variety of cultures and different faiths. Her mission to build musical bridges between the three Abrahamic faiths has resulted in commissions from The World Orchestra for Peace in Jerusalem and the BBC Last Night of the Proms.

In 2021, she was awarded the Gloria Artis Merit to Culture Bronze Medal (from the Polish Minister of Culture, National Heritage and Sport) and in 2023 a Coronation Medal by the UK Nation for her services to the Coronation. In 2024 Roxanna received the Ivor Novello Award for Outstanding Works Collection.

Her works are published by Peters Edition Ltd/Wise Music Classical and recorded on many labels including Signum, Decca, Warner Classics, Chandos, and EMI Classics. roxannapanufnik.com



## Discover more...

Watch the new video in our 'Story of Women Composers' series, which also includes Hildegard of Bingen and Rebecca Clarke, as well as our 'Take a Beat' videos with tonight's composers and members of the Orchestra and much more on our YouTube channel.



Join Club OAE + our YouTube membership channel to enjoy exclusive films of performances and support us in making access to music part of everyday life for the students at Acland Burghley School and beyond. youtube.com/@oae



Read and listen to more about the music of Fanny Mendelssohn and tonight's four composers, including a Das Jahr playlist and the full 'Mendelssohn' piano blog by Nigel Scaife. You'll also find loads of content about other music in our season, episodes of our Tea with Netty podcast and the latest news. oae.co.uk/discover

# Biographies





## **OLGA PASHCHENKO Fortepiano**

From Bach and Beethoven on historical instruments to Ligeti on contemporary piano, Netherlands based Olga Pashchenko is one of today's most versatile performers internationally. She enjoys a busy and eclectic concert career as a soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician. This variety is expressed in her concert programs – from recitals with Alexander Melnikov at Musikfest Berlin or Georg Nigl, to tours with Clara Schumann's piano concerto with the Orchestra of the 18th century as well as Mozart's Piano Concerto No.24.

She is a regular guest at early and contemporary music festivals, including the Jordi Savall Festival, Utrecht Early Music Festival, the Radio France Festival in Montpellier, the Maggio Musicale Florence, and such halls as Concertgebouw Amsterdam, AMUZ Antwerpen and the Cité de la Musique.

As a concerto soloist Olga has performed with the Orchestra of the 18th Century, the Amsterdam Sinfonietta, the Collegium 1704, the Finnish Baroque Orchestra as well as under the direction of Teodor Currentzis. Her chamber music partners include Giovanni Antonini, Evgeny Sviridov, Dmitry Sinkovsky, Avi Avital and Erik Bosgraaf.

Highlights of the 2022 / 23 season included solo recitals at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Beethoven-Haus Bonn and the Fundacion Juan March. She performed with Georg Nigl at Elbphilharmonie and continued her cooperation with II Gardellino. An exclusive recording artist for Alpha Classics, Olga has released several critically acclaimed recordings including Mozart's Piano Concerti Nos 9 & 17 and 20 & 23 with the Ensemble II Gardellino.

Olga studied forte- and modern piano with Alexei Lubimov as well as organ at the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory. She completed her studies in harpsichord and fortepiano at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. In 2017, she was appointed as a Professor at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam and Royal Conservatory of Ghent.

### **NATALIA PONOMARCHUK Conductor**

Sought after for her emotionally charged interpretations and dynamic presence, Natalia Ponomarchuk is one of the most prominent Ukrainian orchestra conductors. She has been the Chief Conductor of the Kyiv Chamber Orchestra (part of the National Philharmonic of Ukraine) since 2018. Previously she served as the resident conductor at the Ukrainian National Radio Company (1996 – 1998), Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Dnipro Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Dnipro Philharmonic of Ukraine (2003 – 2020), Principal Conductor of the Ukrainian Academic State Symphony Orchestra (2006 – 2009) and the National Ensemble of Soloists "Kiev Camerata" (2007 – 2009), and the Resident Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine (2009 – 2011). She regularly appears with the National Odesa Philharmonic Orchestra and the Lviv Academic Philharmonic Orchestra.

Ponomarchuk regularly appears with top orchestras all over the world, including the London Philharmonic Orchestra (UK), the Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin (Germany), Kiel Philharmonic (Germany), Istanbul State Symphony Orchestra (Turkey), Estonian National Symphony Orchestra (Estonia); Lithuanian National Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonietta Riga (Latvia) and orchestras in USA, Brazil, Greece and China.

Upcoming highlights include a debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra in London, a return to the London Philharmonic for concerts including tour dates in Belgium, and appearances with the Calgary Philharmonic, Slovenian Philharmonic, and George Enescu Philharmonic orchestras.

In 2001, she was named an Honored Artist of Ukraine. In March 2022, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, she managed to escape from Kyiv and is now residing in London, regularly guest conducting and travelling back to Kyiv to conduct her orchestra there.

# **DOUBLE YOUR MONEY**



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We are taking part in the national Arts for Impact campaign. Until 26 March you can donate any amount to the OAE and have your donation doubled. As well as performing here at Southbank Centre and on stages across the world, we run programmes at Acland Burghley School and in schools across the country.

Musical Connections is our National Education Programme dedicated to transforming the lives of hundreds of students with special educational needs and disabilities. We collaborate with students, helping them build confidence, enhance concentration and improve social skills.

Funded entirely through donations, it takes £250,000 to run our Musical Connections programme each year. Donate today and help us to work with young people through this programme over the next twelve months.



Visit oae.co.uk/arts-for-impact to double your impact and make a difference. Simply scan the QR code to access the page.





In 1986, a group of inquisitive London musicians took a long hard look at that curious institution we call the Orchestra, and decided to start again from scratch. They began by throwing out the rulebook. Put a single conductor in charge? No way. Specialise in repertoire of a particular era? Too restricting. Perfect a work and then move on? Too lazy. The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment was born.

nd as this distinctive ensemble playing on period-specific instruments began to get a foothold, it made a promise to itself. It vowed to keep questioning, adapting and inventing as long as it lived. Residencies at the Southbank Centre and the Glyndebourne Festival Opera didn't numb its experimentalist bent. A major record deal didn't iron out its quirks. Instead, the OAE examined musical notes with ever more freedom and resolve.

That creative thirst remains unquenched. The Night Shift series of informal performances are redefining concert formats. Its former home at London's Kings Place has fostered further diversity of planning and music-making. The ensemble has formed the bedrock for some of Glyndebourne's most ground-breaking recent productions.

In keeping with its values of always questioning, challenging and trailblazing, in September 2020, the OAE became the resident orchestra of Acland Burghley School, Camden. The residency – a first for a British orchestra – allows the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment to live, work and play amongst the students of the school.

Now nearly 40 years old, the OAE is now part of the UK's musical furniture. It has even graced the outstanding conducting talents of John Butt, Elder, Adam Fischer, Iván Fischer, Vladimir Jurowski, Sir Simon Rattle and Sir András Schiff with a joint title of Principal Artist. But don't ever think the ensemble has lost sight of its founding vow. Not all orchestras are the same. And there's nothing quite like this one.

**Andrew Mellor** 

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3 April

**BACH: ST MATTHEW PASSION** with Jonathan Cohen (conductor)

22 May

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with Sir András Schiff (fortepiano / director)

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for 2 – 5 year olds with their parents or carers at the Southbank Centre

28 June ENCHANTED TOTS

## THE NIGHT SHIFT Chamber music down a local pub

**23 April, Islington**The Old Queen's Head

## BACH, THE UNIVERSE AND EVERYTHING at Kings Place

Mission: to explore our place in the cosmos guided by the intergalactic genius of JS Bach. Each monthly event features one of Bach's cantatas, and other choral and instrumental works, alongside a talk by an eminent astronomer.

New season coming in Autumn 2025



## **Welcome to the Southbank Centre**

We're the UK's largest centre for the arts and one of the nation's top five visitor attractions, showcasing the world's most exciting artists at our venues in the heart of London. As a charity, we bring millions of people together by opening up the unique art spaces that we care for.

The Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, Hayward Gallery, National Poetry Library and Arts Council Collection. We're one of London's favourite meeting spots, with lots of free events and places to relax, eat and shop next to the Thames.

We hope you enjoy your visit. If you need any information or help, please ask a member of staff. You can also write to us at Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX, or email hello@ southbankcentre.co.uk

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# PATRONS OF THE PAST

Joanna Wyld explores how the composers in our season were supported by a cast of generous and often quirky patrons.



Felix Mendelssohn – the German composer playing the piano to Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, 1842. Lebrecht Music Arts / Bridgeman Images

lyrical about his patroness, Lady Catherine de Burgh. In music history, the dynamic between patrons and those they support is usually more nuanced, often resulting in real friendship. Even so, composers sometimes had to resort to similar tactics: JS Bach showed Mr Collinsesque levels of flattery in the dedication of his Brandenburg Concertos to Christian Ludwig, Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt, in which he referred modestly to his own 'little talents'. Barbara Strozzi, meanwhile, was determined to make a living for herself, and did so by dedicating compositions to patrons including Ferdinand II of Austria and Eleanor of Mantua.

Handel's royal patrons made some elaborate requests: his Water Music was written for George I's boat party on the Thames, while the Music for the Royal Fireworks was for George II's display in Green Park. The music went well, the fireworks less so: some were rained on, some flew off, and others set fire to the stage.

Felix Mendelssohn was a favourite with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, writing vivid accounts of visiting them and their pet parrot: 'It was a delightful day! Just as the Queen was going to sing she said: "The parrot must be taken out or he will scream louder than I can sing". Some of Beethoven's patrons even knew each other; Count Razumovsky said of Prince Lobkowitz: 'He played music from dusk to dawn and spent a fortune on musicians. Innumerable musicians gathered in his house, whom he treated regally.'



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Clockwise from top left: Young producer training session; greeting patrons and distributing programmes at an OAE performance at the Southbank Centre; filming at *The Fairy Queen: Three Wishes* at the Southbank Centre.

# **Dreamchasing Young Producers**

Now in its third year, the Dreamchasing Young Producers has evolved into an influential programme at the school, equipping young people with professional skillsets in project management, filmmaking, lighting, sound, set and costume design. The graduates from the first years now serve as tutormentors for new recruits and return regularly to support the OAE as valuable project support when life gets busy. The programme also supports the roll out of the T-level qualification in a new state of the art media centre at the school. This qualification, in Media, Broadcast and Production, is the equivalent of a conventional set of A levels, and prepares students for entry to work and higher

education in this important sector of the UK economy. The OAE is a proud corporate partner in this innovation.

You will see Dreamchasing Young Producers support front and backstage life at our Southbank Centre series, but this is the tip of the iceberg which, alongside routine training from OAE staff, players and guest experts, sees students from Year 7 onwards working on a range of challenging enterprises: a new podcast channel for the OAE, original film work for YouTube and Marquee TV, professional production values at school based events and new concept work with OAE partners for forthcoming seasons.

## **Musical Connections**



Musical Connections is a three-year arts-based learning project, bringing together students with additional needs and mainstream students in London and Ipswich to work together creatively. Across the four schools involved in the project – two in London and two in Ipswich – we have consistently found that music breaks down barriers, while working across year groups enables students to build both skills and friendships.

"It's been an absolutely amazing experience. [...] I've seen the children grow in confidence, I've seen them learn new skills, I've seen them throw out ideas to make compositions that you would never ever expect them to do that kind of thing. They've just gained so much from it."

#### TEACHER (IPSWICH)

"Musical Connections was absolutely the highlight. Seeing such a varied group of students, who would be invisible or neglected in many schools, take centre stage with a world-renowned orchestra, in front of their parents and peers to perform good quality music, exceptional in some cases, was truly magnificent." – Staff member (London)

In Ipswich, Thomas Wolsey Ormiston Academy and Northgate High School students recently took part in a culmination performance to peers and family members. "Thank you for amazing songs and jams on piano. Helly Shumray is my favourite song. It's overwhelming. Thank you for brilliant sessions. I want to do more songs and sing songs with Alice and James and John-Henry. Please do more songs. Thank you." – **Student (Ipswich)** 

## "Thank you for the music. When I play music I feel happy and free."

#### STUDENT (IPSWICH)

At Swiss Cottage School, this term we have been using Vivaldi's Four Seasons as our inspiration for new compositions that will be performed in two concerts at the school in late March alongside composer Raph Clarkson. We are also preparing a piece for the Camden Celebration concert at the Royal Albert Hall 'Music Brings Us Together' by James Redwood which will feature our Musical Connections students and Swiss Cottage school choir on stage with a choir of 1,000 primary voices – something which we hope will raise the roof!

## "He absolutely adored it. We loved it too but he adored it."

PARENT (IPSWICH)



## Read our Education 2023/24 Review

Over the past 25 years, the OAE's Education department has grown in stature and reach to involve thousands of people nationwide in creative music projects.

The programme takes inspiration from our repertoire, instruments and players. This makes for a vibrant challenging and engaging programme where everyone is involved; players, animateurs, composers, participants, teachers, partners and stakeholders all have a valued voice.

From our base in Acland Burghley School in north London, we travel the length of England to deliver our work. In 2023 / 24 we

visited County Durham, East Riding, Yorkshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Wiltshire, Somerset, Plymouth and Brighton and Hove as well as the London boroughs of Brent, Camden, Ealing, Greenwich, Harrow, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Merton, Newham and Wandsworth.



Read the review on our website at oae.co.uk/discover or scan the QR code

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