



HOLD FOR RELEASE UNTIL 22 January 2015, 11am:

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's 2015/16 Southbank Centre Season: 30 years of breaking the rules



Co-principal Cello Luise Buchberger in an image from the OAE's new season
credit Eric Richmond / Harrison Agency

Celebrating its 30th birthday and thirty years of breaking the rules, the self-governing **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment** announces its **2015/16 Southbank Centre Season**. The Orchestra's season demonstrates the huge and daring breadth of repertoire it has become known for, spanning four centuries, from Baroque to Contemporary, as it continually seeks to innovate and break new ground.

In this anniversary year the OAE is joined by a remarkable roster of musicians including its Principal Artists **Sir Simon Rattle**, **Vladimir Jurowski**, **Sir Mark Elder**, Emeritus Conductor **Sir Roger Norrington**, and artists with whom the Orchestra has important relationships, including **Andr as Schiff**, **Rachel Podger**, **Sarah Connolly**, **Ian Bostridge**, **John Butt** and **Marin Alsop**.

"We are most proud of our period instruments and the colours of the sound world we inhabit, and in our anniversary season we showcase them, and some of our eminent players," says **Cecelia Bruggemeyer**, **Double Bassist** and co-curator. Trumpet and recorder feature in an all Bach

programme with David Blackadder and Rachel Becket (10 March); Mozart's Concerto for Flute and Harp star Lisa Beznosiuk and Frances Kelly (14 February) and Anthony Pay performs Mozart's clarinet concerto (7 May).

"Like restoring a work of art, we take away the patina, and show the music in a new way, helping people to hear it afresh. Our performance of Mahler's Symphony No 2 with **Vladimir Jurowski** (12 April) and Bruckner's Symphony No. 6 with **Sir Simon Rattle** (22 April) will be fine examples of this," says **Andrew Watts, Principal Bassoon** and co-curator of the season.

The programme content is rich and varied: OAE champions an 'endangered instrument', the bassoon, with a new composition by **Michael Gordon** who draws on popular culture for a raw and direct sound (7 May); plays a central role in the Southbank Centre's symposium **Altered Minds: Art, Health and Mental States** with **Schumann** (6 February); and reflects the Orchestra's long association with opera, with **Weber's Der Freischütz**, conducted by **Sir Mark Elder** (7 June), and text prepared by Welsh National Opera's David Poutney.

"One of the OAE's founders, **Principal Cello Timothy Mason**, had always wanted to programme a scene from *Der Freishütz*. In his memory the Wolf's Glen Scene was part of the Orchestra's 21st birthday concert – nine years later we complete the journey by performing the whole opera," says Bruggemeyer.

The Night Shift celebrates ten years of redefining concert formats, throwing out the rules, and bringing a new generation of audiences to the OAE, in May 2016, with events to be announced; and **The Works**, a guided tour around some of the greatest pieces of classical music, will continue to excite; whilst **TOTS** concerts bring the music to the very youngest listeners.

Away from its Southbank Centre home the Orchestra continues its busy touring schedule, with performances across the UK and overseas including Paris, Vienna and Brussels. At its King's Place Headquarters, the OAE explores its earliest repertoire, with a programme of works by Monteverdi in 2016. The Orchestra's prestigious Glyndebourne season features Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* and Handel's *Saul* in 2015.

The OAE also celebrates its 20th year as Resident at St George's, Bristol, presenting several programmes, and cements its relationship with the Anvil in Basingstoke where it is Orchestra in Association, with four concerts during the season.

— Ends

Highlights (please find full concert list attached)

10 November 2015

The OAE explores early romanticism, with the welcome return of **András Schiff** who made his debut with the Orchestra during the 2012-13 season. **Andrew Watts** comments:

"Mendelssohn's Overture *The Hebrides* has wonderful colours which benefit from the lighter and more delicate period orchestral palate. The ever-changing string textures, the woodwind solos and

the dramatic horn and trumpet calls evoke a romantic landscape seen through the magical light of the Western Isles. Schiff will bring out a true refinement in the Orchestra. His approach in rehearsal is understated but intense and he has a deep understanding and depth that will come across to the audience.”

6 February 2016

Cecelia Bruggemeyer says: “The OAE and Marin Alsop have a strong affinity, especially when performing Schumann. Following the success of Symphony No. 4 at the Proms in 2013, we are delighted to be part of Southbank Centre’s symposium, **Altered Minds: Art, Health, and Mental States** to perform his Symphony No.3, Rhenish, and excited to be joined by celebrated violinist **Patricia Kopatchinskaja** who debuts with the Orchestra.”

Schumann suffered from mental health issues himself. The Violin Concerto was written in 1852, two years before his self-committal to an asylum where he spent the rest of his days. The work was never performed publicly by Joachim for whom it was written, and being deemed the work of a madman, its publication was suppressed by his wife Clara and the young Brahms. It wasn’t performed until the 1930s.

“His music was misunderstood; only in modern times do we have a better appreciation of his illness and the impact on his work”, comments Watts. “Schumann was best known as a pianist and song writer, but his orchestral sounds, considered by many to be experimental and daring, deserve exploring, as we will show in his Symphony No 3. in E flat.”

The concert also features Brahms’ Variations, a challenging piece, which shows the composer looking back to the classical period: the heart of the OAE’s repertoire.

11 February 2016

“Paris was the Hollywood of 18th century music – if you wanted to make it as a composer, your music had to be performed there,” says Watts. The OAE is examining the way music was composed, performed and listened to in the city from the 1780s to 1830.

The OAE performs one of Haydn’s Paris symphonies, subtitled *La poule*, and Mozart’s concerto for flute and harp, also commissioned for Paris. Beethoven’s symphonies at first divided opinion and later became fantastically popular, having a huge impact on cultural life in the city. This concert provides the context to compare and contrast Beethoven’s Symphony No. 2 with other works being performed in Paris at the time.

10 March 2016

Watts says “To have our 30th birthday and not invite Bach would be downright rude!” The OAE explores Bach with leading scholar and musician **John Butt**, launching a five year focus on the composer, and refining its period style with Butt’s knowledge of the latest research and

performance practice.

Bach's Sinfonia from Cantata No. 42 has flowing solo lines for oboe and bassoon, and his Lutheran masses feature fine choral writing, for which the OAE is joined by the **Choir of the Enlightenment**. Stars of the OAE **David Blackadder**, Principal Trumpet and **Rachel Beckett**, Principal Recorder, will shine in Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 2.

12 April 2016

"When the OAE was founded and period instrumentalists were exploring a new way of thinking and performing, no one would have believed we would get as far chronologically, as Mahler. It has been an incredible journey. In 2012 we performed *Totenfeier* with Vladimir Jurowski, a standalone tone poem which Mahler later used as the basis of the first movement of his Symphony No.2. Performing the complete symphony is a hugely ambitious project and will be a great occasion," says Bruggemeyer.

Mahler's music draws on orchestral writing of the earlier 19th century, as techniques and instruments around in the 1880s were similar to those of the 1840s. However, he produces extraordinary orchestral effects that were completely new, and the OAE is very interested to explore how he uses those instruments in a completely revolutionary way. In the start of a five year focus on the composer, Mahler's Symphony No. 2 will be performed with **Vladimir Jurowski**, **Adriana Kucerova**, **Sarah Connolly** and the **Philharmonia Chorus**.

22 April 2016

Sir Simon Rattle has been conducting the OAE since its formation. He said: "The OAE has made me a lot freer – they think so much in shapes and phrases, they are interested in the content rather than the style, what does it mean, not what is right. That's why it is so deeply satisfying to work with them." He returns to conduct a large-scale orchestral repertoire chosen by him – Brahms' *Tragic Overture*; the rarely performed Hans Rot, and Bruckner's Symphony No. 6, all composed in the same year.

7 June 2016

Der Freischütz by **Carl Maria von Weber** is a quintessential part of the early German Romantic movement, with magic, melodrama, and the gothic. It will be a spectacular finale to the OAE's birthday season, conducted by **Sir Mark Elder** in a semi-dramatised performance.

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