

LSO St Luke's

LSO PANUFNIK COMPOSERS WORKSHOPS

Thursday 4 April 2024, Jerwood Hall, LSO St Luke's

Morning Workshop: 10am-1.30pm

Omri Kochavi gilufim

Sasha Scott Sly

Interval - 20 minutes

Geoffrey King how do i tell you this

Eden Lonsdale orrery

Afternoon Workshop: 2.30-6pm

Lara Agar suntime bedtime moontime

Marcus Rock Transmutation

Interval - 20 minutes

Isabella Gellis Lady Skimmington

Rafael Marino Arcaro invention in language of child

François-Xavier Roth conductor

London Symphony Orchestra

Colin Matthews composition director

Christian Mason composition support

The LSO Panufnik Composers Scheme is generously supported by **Lady Hamlyn** and **The Helen Hamlyn Trust**

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About the Scheme

The LSO Panufnik Composers Scheme offers six emerging composers each year the opportunity to write for a world-class symphony orchestra.

The Scheme is guided by renowned composer Colin Matthews, with support from Christian Mason. Together with additional tailored support, the Scheme enables composers to experiment with and develop their orchestral writing skills through creating a three-minute composition over twelve months.

The resulting compositions are performed and discussed by the LSO and Principal Guest Conductor, François-Xavier Roth, in a public workshop at the culmination of the scheme. Two of the compositions are then chosen to be developed further, with commissions given for five- and ten-minute works to be premiered by the Orchestra in an LSO concert at the Barbican.

The LSO Panufnik Composers Scheme was devised by the Orchestra in association with Lady Panufnik, in memory of her late husband, the composer Sir Andrzej Panufnik, and is generously supported by Lady Hamlyn and The Helen Hamlyn Trust.

lso.co.uk/panufnik

Programme notes written by Timmy Fisher, sub-editor within the BBC Proms Publications team, co-host of *The Classical Music Pod*, writer and journalist.

In accordance with the requirements of Islington Council persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any gangway.

The taking of photographs and the use of recording equipment are strictly forbidden without formal consent from LSO St Luke's.

Please make sure that digital watch alarms and mobile phones are switched off during the performance.

Welcome

Thank you for joining us for today's workshops, where we will hear six three-minute pieces for orchestra, developed by composers who were appointed to the LSO Panufnik Composers Scheme in 2023. We also hear the latest work from Lara Agar and Rafael Marino Arcaro, who, following last year's workshops, were commissioned to complete a five- and ten-minute piece respectively for performance in the LSO's 2024/25 Barbican season.

The experience of hearing a new work performed for the first time is a pivotal point in the composition process, and it is always a great joy to explore the diverse works created by our composers and to share that moment with an audience.

Today's workshops are conducted by François-Xavier Roth, LSO Principal Guest Conductor, who has been identified with this programme from the outset, and who has made such a great contribution to the development of the Scheme. On Sunday, François-Xavier Roth conducts our now annual LSO Futures concert, where we will hear world premieres of

works commissioned through the Scheme by Stef Conner and Christian Drew, plus the UK premiere of the Cello Concerto by Donghoon Shin, an LSO Panufnik alumnus. Tickets are available for the concert at lso.co.uk/whatson.

Our sincere thanks to Lady Hamlyn and The Helen Hamlyn Trust for their inspirational, long-term support of the LSO Panufnik Composers Scheme, creating the conditions in which the creative process can flourish; to Colin Matthews and Christian Mason in their roles of Composition Director and Composition Support; and to Lady Camilla Panufnik, for her commitment to the whole initiative.

I hope you enjoy the workshops, and that you can join us again at LSO St Luke's or the Orchestra's Barbican home soon.



Dame Kathryn McDowell DBE DL
Managing Director

Omri Kochavi



© Louisa Rosi

Omri Kochavi is a composer and guitarist based in London. His music draws its language from a broad range of influences, focusing on the reality of sounds, people, plants, and the interactions between them.

Recent highlights include a 2023 Ivors Classical Award nomination in the Best Choral Music category for *Kishtatos* (written for the BBC Singers), an orchestral commission from the Orchestra of Opera North, and a new string quartet for the Aestus Quartet commissioned by Britten-Pears Arts.

Omri graduated with a Masters degree in Composition in 2022 from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, where he was studying with Julian Anderson and Laurence Crane.

gilufim

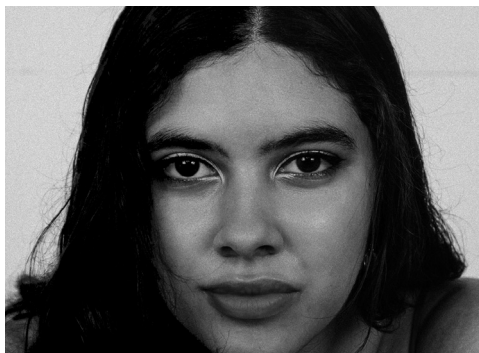
'Gilufim' is Hebrew for 'carvings', and the idea of wood carving informed the compositional process, structure and sound of Omri Kovachi's piece. 'I was drawn to the idea of creating shape and form out of taking away material rather than adding it up, revealing something that was always there through a process that is a combination of very gentle and more aggressive gestures', he says. In the event, the piece took a less linear shape than this as it came into focus. Nevertheless, almost everything that is in the final piece was carved out from Kovachi's original, much denser sketch.

The first half of the piece is contrapuntal and assertive in character, but as yet imprecisely defined: certain wind and brass instruments, plus harp, are detuned by a sixth of a tone, and melodies are often marked to be played in approximate rhythms. A continuum of vibraphone and marimba adds to the hazy atmosphere, as does the use of wooden mutes for the strings. Towards the end however, the winds switch to their normally tuned instruments and the music snaps into focus: 'This quite sudden emergence of this contrasting texture is somewhat akin to the moment in wood carving when the intended shape emerges from within the log', says the composer. It is as though the dust and chips accumulated from the work done so far are quickly blown away, revealing a shape that had until now been indistinct. Increasingly the orchestra works in unison from this point, until the last few bars, when a memory of the wood's pre-shaped form returns in the detuned trumpets.

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Sasha Scott



Sasha Scott is a composer, producer, and violinist born and based in London, currently studying composition with Mark-Anthony Turnage at the Royal College of Music. In 2019, she was the senior winner of 'BBC Young Composer of the Year', and since then has written works for the Aurora Orchestra, Sean Shibe, Beijing Music Festival, BBC Symphony Orchestra, and Her Ensemble.

Her works have been broadcast on BBC Radio 3, BBC Radio 6, NTS Radio. Sasha was previously a composer on the 'Britten Pears Young Artist programme 2022/23', and is also on the LSO Panufnik Composers Scheme 2023/24.

Sly

For many composers on the LSO Panufnik Composers Scheme, the brief for their workshop composition – to write a three-and-a-half-minute piece for full symphony orchestra – is a unique and difficult challenge. Sasha Scott approached it with an idea of the singular effect she wanted to create, a kind of gradually building frenzy, and then devised a clear structural shape that would best articulate it. 'I wanted to set the piece up to feel sly, slightly devious and shifting', she says, 'And then slowly wanted to introduce fragments of jittery motifs almost acting like flying sparks'.

That devious atmosphere is established from the start with sliding bass and timpani motifs and a hesitantly accelerating marimba rhythm. Harp and E-flat clarinet tip the music forward, causing it to rapidly build and unravel; the addition of further strings, brass and woodwind only makes things increasingly uncomfortable. As more elements are added, so the temperature rises and the motion of the particles bumping into each other increases. A climax is reached with an eruption of ricocheting brass and a state of maximum entropy: 'This is when I wanted the sparks to feel like they were flying out of control and wanted to convey a feeling of hysteria', says the composer. As those sparks flare and burn out, the devious sounds of the opening return, bringing the piece to a close.

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Geoffrey King



© Ash Mistry

I'm an American composer in London influenced by camp aesthetics, interpersonal relationships, and the nostalgic power of music.

I write music about people.

I always strive for musical clarity, disarming straightforwardness, and good storytelling.

Music making is really relationship making; more than anything else, I love making things with my friends.

how do i tell you this

Geoffrey King describes his music as being interested in 'camp aesthetics, interpersonal relationships and the nostalgic power of music'. The second of these is evident from his title alone: the increasing tension that can result from needing to tell someone something but being unable to find the right words.

There are more relationships in the form of a musical reference to the Nick Cave song *Bright Horses*, from his album *Ghosteen*, an almost impossibly painful memorial to Cave's teenage son. King borrowed the idea of a mournful triple-time chord sequence, with accents on the second beat. Over this he added layers, beginning with a plaintive oboe melody, that gradually build up the tension implied by his title. Yet even though *how do i tell you this* arrives at an energetic tutti, the thing that needs to be said is still held back by mutes on the strings, which increase the audible effort required to hit the triple fortissimo marked in their parts.

There is a camp element too. King likes one possible definition of camp as 'pretending to do something while actually doing it', and in this piece he says that is what is happening in his 'fairly uncritical' use of the full power of the orchestra. But at the same time, he notes, 'players are people with bodies and feelings, even in a big group', and so he makes sure they all have fun, even when they might not be heard. 'I still want the players to know that I care about them', he says.

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Eden Lonsdale



Eden's music focuses on exploring the various ways that movement and stasis can co-exist, as well as the interconnectedness of harmony, timbre and melody. Using limited materials and clear architectonic forms, his pieces attempt to draw the ear into the smallest details and hope to inspire the listener's self-guided exploration into the music's manifold layers.

He has written concert music for and with soloists such as Satoko Inoue, Toby Hughes, Anton Lukoszevics and Heather Roche as well as ensembles including EXAUDI, Apartment House, Riot Ensemble, ICTUS, Ensemble Linea, Ensemble Intercontemporain and Plusminus Ensemble. Recent works have been broadcast on BBC's Radio 3 *The New Music Show* and *Night Tracks* as well as BBC Radio 6's *The Freak Zone* and in 2023 his debut album *Clear and Hazy Moons* was released by another timbre.

Eden studied Composition at the Guildhall School of Music in London, with Malcolm Singer, Cassandra Miller and Julian Anderson as well as at the Kunstuniversität Graz with Klaus Lang.

orrery

An orrery is a mechanical model, usually powered by clockwork, of the solar system. Although examples have been found that date back to ancient Greece, the first example in the modern era was made in 1713 for Charles Boyle, Fourth Earl of Orrery, from whom it took its name.

What partly attracted Eden Lonsdale to this refined symbol of Enlightenment ingenuity is the relationship between movement and stasis that it illustrates: the continuous motion of the planets versus the stability of their orbits and their relations to one another. This co-existence of opposites is a recurring feature of his music, which he realises here in the form of two alternating melodic cycles – one for woodwind, the other for trumpets – alongside a harmonic cycle given to horns, violas and cellos. Tying them together is a drone, sustained predominantly by the first violins, which, like the sun, acts as a fixed spindle at the centre. As the concentric rings of melody and harmony rotate, they are periodically eclipsed by the drone or by each other, and move closer and further away from our viewpoint.

But Lonsdale was also drawn to the image of the orrery by the assignment itself. So large are the distances between planets of the solar system, for practical reasons an orrery must compress and distort their true relationships, even as it pretends to act as a scientific model. For the composer, this discrepancy resonated with the idea of writing a very short piece for very large forces: a universe of instrumental colour squeezed into a miniature form.

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Lara Agar



© Fred Thomas

Lara's work is rooted in contemporary classical and experimental music making, writing for acoustic instruments and often blending electronics, found sounds and sampling. Lara is a frequent collaborator in cross discipline art, most notably dance. Lara's interests lie in the accidental, the found, indeterminacy, messiness of stuff and collaborative music making.

Lara has recently worked with Juliet Fraser + Mark Knoop, the LSO, the Plus Minus Ensemble, EXAUDI and Quatuor Bozzini in venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Barbican, Sadler's Wells and at festivals such as Music We'd Like to Hear and Oxford Lieder Festival. Lara was a Junior Fellow (2019/20) at the Guildhall School, having studied with Paul Newland, Cassandra Miller and Laurence Crane. Lara was nominated for an Ivor Novello award in 2022.

suntime bedtime moontime

Lara Agar generates musical ideas and solutions through found objects, accidents and improvisation. Although writing for orchestra does not easily offer opportunities for such experiments, when she composed her original three-minute version of *suntime bedtime moontime* for last year's Panufnik workshops, Agar introduced unpredictability by selecting and editing fragments of material as she composed, setting things against each other to see what happened. 'I like this way of working', she said at the time, 'because then it's not mine, as in, it feels like I didn't make it up, which is way more exciting'.

When that first version made contact with the Orchestra itself, however, Agar found another source of unpredictability: that the work could breathe more than she had expected. The opportunity to return to the LSO with a longer version of her piece allowed her to engage with another interest in her music: stretching the momentary feelings that may be prompted by coincidences and accidents. 'Music can do this thing where with stasis, you can stay in a world', she has said. 'Unlike visual arts, where you can look at a painting, but then you choose to look away at any moment'. *suntime bedtime moontime* follows the cycle of a day, but an unexceptional one, with an almost childlike simplicity of routine. And that is the point: to concentrate not on the reality or stimulus of a particular experience, but instead to dwell on the sensations that might arise from it, and so create something else from its outline.

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Marcus Rock



With a background in film, Marcus Rock began composing in 2018 at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire on a scholarship. He has since maintained an active schedule, having been commissioned to write for many of Britain's most prestigious musicians and festivals such as the Aldeburgh, Cheltenham and Norfolk festivals. He also engages in mentoring work with younger generations, one example being with the Wecompose scheme, and maintains international connections, having work performed and giving seminars on his work in China and South Korea. Marcus will continue his studies in New York, pursuing a PhD in Composition at Columbia University in 2024.

Transmutation

Marcus Rock places all of his music into one of two categories: external and internal. That is, works that are connected to or prompted by external life events and experiences, and works whose origins are internally intellectual or emotional. *Transmutation* falls into the latter category, being inspired by an image Rock had, while thinking of how he would approach the orchestra, of an object or mass continually morphing in response to its own characteristics. Those changes could take place over any number of parameters, but the object would always remain active and in motion: a steady state of self-generating transformation.

Similarly, the music Rock came to write is constantly reshaping itself. Under the force of intuition, the piece was composed by what Rock calls a process of 'osmosis', whereby 'as soon as something became too highly concentrated, it sought to rebalance itself and then subsequently loses balance and repeats that search for equanimity'. In this way, jagged polyphony gives way to accelerating tremolos, gives way to delicate glissandi. Yet despite the sometimes dense orchestration, every sound has been carefully worked out: Rock began work by creating pages of possible instrumental combinations and textures. By extracting and magnifying these in turn, he was able to create a rotating kaleidoscope of colours and relationships that maintained a sense of flow in which what comes after is related to what comes before. The title *Transmutation*, rather than 'Transformation', for example, highlights that the 'ingredients' of the changing characteristics are just as important – and musically defined – as the process of change itself.

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Isabella Gellis



© Ella Pavlides

Isabella Gellis is a British-Canadian composer of acoustic music.

This year will see the premiere of her opera *The Devil's Den* at the Nevill Holt Festival (Shadwell Opera commission), a new orchestral work for Aspen Music Festival, a piano quintet, and the release of her debut album, *The Dissolute Society Comprised of All Sorts*, a solo piano piece for Joseph Havlat.

She studied at the Royal Academy of Music, graduating with a Bicentenary Prize for all-round excellence, the Postgraduate Composition Prize, and the Musicians' Company Priaulx Rainier Prize.

Lady Skimmington

'Gentle rough music for orchestra' is how Isabella Gellis subtitled her piece, *Lady Skimmington*. 'Gentle' because, on the whole, the music is fragile and delicately tactile, starting from the percussive air sounds and key slaps of the wind, and barely audible harmonic glissandos of the strings with which the piece begins. 'Rough', after the folk custom of 'charivari' – also known as 'lewbellin', 'ran-tanning' or 'rough music' – a type of discordant, mocking parade used to shame members of the community, often for infidelity or inappropriate marriage.

Gellis features a charivari in her opera, *The Devil's Den*: a climactic, hysterical ruckus in the midst of which a moment of tenderness is achieved. This moment is the source for *Lady Skimmington* (rather than the unruly noise and clamour), although the orchestral piece is not so much a direct extract from the opera as a second look at the same sentiment.

Another name for a charivari was 'skimmington riding' – a skimmington being a large wooden ladle with which a wife might beat her husband. 'Lady Skimmington' was a name (and means of disguise) adopted by leaders of the Western Rising of the 17th century, in response to the disafforestation and enclosure of Gillingham Forest, Braydon Forest and the Forest of Dean that took them out of common use. Although these events do not appear as such in Gellis' opera, nor are they portrayed here, the image appealed to her and inspired the idea of a 'gentle rough music'.

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Rafael Marino Arcaro



© Jonas Holthaus

Rafael Marino Arcaro is a Brazilian composer based in London. In his work, he hunts for music that brings an original insight into Brazilian artistic identity with compositions often inspired by the impressions of his rural childhood. He composes in sharply-defined aesthetic ideas striving for clarity and restraint. Rafael's *infanthood of clouds* for orchestra was performed in the Sala São Paulo hall, in Brazil, at the closing concert of South America's largest music festival, to an audience of 1400 people. His Violin Concerto premiered with the London Philharmonic Orchestra in 2022. His new chamber work *lobo* was funded by the Vaughan Williams Foundation and premiered in early 2024.

Rafael has a Masters from the Royal Academy of Music and is finishing his PhD at King's College London under the mentorship of George Benjamin.

invention in language of child

A participant in last year's LSO Panufnik Composers Workshop, Rafael Marino Arcaro was invited by the LSO to return this year with a ten-minute composition for the Orchestra. Rather than expand his workshop piece, *i swallow clouds*, he opted to write a new work that built on his experiences. *invention in language of child* is based on a childhood memory of playing late at night on Arcaro's grandmother's farm outside São Paulo. His parents were away and his grandmother forgot that he was outside; as a result, Arcaro had a unique chance to play all night until sunrise, 'with ants and bats and making friends with shadows'.

i swallow clouds made reference to the poetry of Manuel de Barros (1916–2014) – whose poems invoke the playful and free-form creativity of children – and what Arcaro calls a fundamentally Brazilian spirit of 'serious unseriousness'. While those references are not quite as overt in *invention in language of child*, the music still casts a curious and playful eye, like a child uncovering the possibilities of an imaginative game. The use of high registers throughout – with important parts for piccolo, high oboe, high violin and the highest end of the piano – conveys the floating, ungrounded feeling of an unexpected night of magic, and around two-thirds of the way through a swelling A major chord awakens the memory of that morning's sunrise. The spell now broken, the music fades into fragments beneath a farewell melody from the piccolo.

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On Stage

Leader

Benjamin Gilmore

First Violins

Clare Duckworth

Ginette Decuyper

Stefano Mengoli

William Melvin

Laurent Quénelle

Harriet Rayfield

Iona Allen

Richard Blayden

Gerald Gregory

Catherine Haggo

Alexandra Lomeiko

Lyrít Milgram

Bridget O'Donnell

Second Violins

David Alberman

Thomas Norris

Miya Väisänen

Matthew Gardner

Naoko Keatley

Alix Lagasse

Iwona Muszynska

Cindy Foster

Juan Gonzalez

Hernandez

Izzy Howard

Dmitry Khakhamov

José Nuno Matias

Violas

Eivind Ringstad

Malcolm Johnston

Anna Bastow

Thomas Beer

Julia O'Riordan

Robert Turner

Mizuho Ueyama

May Dolan

Annie-May Page

Cellos

David Cohen

Laure Le Dantec

Daniel Gardner

Ghislaine McMullin

Desmond Neysmith

Lavinia Rae

Peteris Sokolovskis

Joanna Twaddle

Double Basses

Rodrigo Moro Martín

Patrick Laurence

Chaemun Im

Joe Melvin

Simon Oliver

Evangeline Tang

Flutes

Gareth Davies

Patricia Moynihan

Piccolo

Sharon Williams

Oboes

Olivier Stankiewicz

Henrietta Cooke

Cor Anglais

Maxwell Spiers

Clarinets

John Bradbury

Ivan Rogachev

Bass Clarinet

Kenny Keppel

Bassoons

Rachel Gough

Joost Bosdijk

Contra Bassoon

Martin Field

Horns

Diego Incertis

Sánchez

Jonathan Maloney

Phillippa

Koushk-Jalali

Flora Bain

Trumpets

Angela Whelan

Adam Wright

Katie Smith

Trombones

Peter Moore

Jonathan Hollick

Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

Tuba

Sasha Koushk-Jalali

Timpani

Patrick King

Percussion

Neil Percy

David Jackson

Harps

Bryn Lewis

Piano/Celeste

Elizabeth Burley