

TONIGHT'S CONCERT

Gustavo Dudamel: Strauss and Ravel

Wednesday 14 May 2025
Barbican

7pm

Richard Strauss

Don Juan

Maurice Ravel

Shéhérazade

Interval

Maurice Ravel

Rapsodie espagnole

Richard Strauss

Der Rosenkavalier – Suite

Gustavo Dudamel conductor

Marina Rebeka soprano

London Symphony Orchestra

Concert finishes at approximately 9pm

Welcome



Welcome to this evening's performance, conducted by Gustavo Dudamel, with soprano Marina Rebeka. We are delighted to welcome them both to the Barbican stage for their London debuts with the LSO, following appearances with the Orchestra on tour in Barcelona and Madrid just a few days ago.

Strauss' *Don Juan* captures the legendary figure's restless energy with vivid orchestral writing. In contrast, Ravel's *Shéhérazade* explores themes of travel and yearning. With *Rapsodie espagnole*, in which Marina Rebeka joins as soprano solo, Ravel offers a vibrant take on Spanish musical idioms. Completing the programme, Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* Suite weaves lyrical charm and elegant Viennese waltzes, reflecting the spirit of his comic opera of the same name.

It is a pleasure to welcome guests from BMW this evening, the LSO's esteemed Principal Partner since 2012. Their generous support has made possible our annual BMW Classics concert in Trafalgar Square, enabling us to share the LSO's music-making with our largest audience – in the heart of London and online around the world – entirely free of charge.

This year's concert, conducted for the first time by Sir Antonio Pappano, LSO Chief Conductor, will take place on Sunday 15 June.

We hope you enjoy this concert and that you will be able to join us again soon. Later this week, Susanna Mälkki conducts Bartók's *Concerto for Orchestra* and Stravinsky's Violin Concerto, featuring violinist Leila Josefowicz. LSO Chief Conductor Sir Antonio Pappano returns later this month, conducting a programme that includes Szymanowski's Violin Concerto No 1 – the second concert in violinist Lisa Batiashvili's LSO Artist Portrait series – and Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. We hope to see you there.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn McDowell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dame Kathryn McDowell DBE DL
Managing Director

Coming Up

Sunday 18 May 7pm
Barbican

Perry, Stravinsky and Bartók

Showpieces for the orchestra by Julia Perry and Bartók meet a dazzling concerto brimming with characteristic Stravinsky flair and melody, performed by Leila Josefowicz. Susanna Mälkki conducts.

Thursday 22 May 7pm
Barbican

Szymanowski and Symphonie fantastique

Sir Antonio Pappano conducts a programme inspired by dreams and fantasies, from Szymanowski's enigmatic Violin Concerto No 1 (performed by Lisa Batiashvili) to Berlioz's most rock 'n' roll work, the *Symphonie fantastique*.

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Don Juan

Richard Strauss



Programme note by
Stephen Johnson

The first performance of *Don Juan*, in Weimar on 11 November 1889, was a sensation. Overnight, critics were talking of the 25-year-old Richard Strauss as the most important German composer since Wagner. Strauss himself had little doubt that the work was going to be a success. 'It will make a tremendous stir here,' he wrote to his father after one rehearsal. At the same time, he realised that the demands he had made on the players were fearsome:

'The orchestra huffed and puffed but did its job famously. One of the horn players sat there out of breath, sweat pouring from his brow, asking 'Good God, in what way have we sinned that you should have sent us this scourge!' We laughed till we cried!'

But Strauss knew the ways to the (in those days exclusively male) musicians' hearts. Conducting *Don Juan* some years later, he

told the orchestra, 'I would ask those of you who are married to play as if you were still engaged and then all will be well'.

It is tempting to sum up *Don Juan* as a simple (though musically highly sophisticated) expression of a young man's ardour – a young man, moreover, whose tempestuous love affairs were beginning to cause his parents a degree of concern. But there are aspects of *Don Juan* which suggest that Strauss had a more serious point in mind. In particular, there is the enigmatic ending. The tumultuous, passionate driving energy behind the music suddenly comes to a halt: bright major becomes shadowy minor, and in a few bars the life force seems to dwindle to nothing.

This sudden, drastic change of mood is underlined by the verses Strauss included at the beginning of the score. They are taken from a poem, *Don Juan*, by Nikolaus Lenau (1802–50). Lenau's poem is of epic length (1,094 lines in total), but Strauss selected only three short extracts, and his choice is significant. The first passage tells of 'the enchanted circle, the unmeasurable horizon of countless charming, beautiful women', which Don Juan is driven to conquer in a 'storm of pleasure'. But the next shows us not what he is drawn to, but what he is running away from:

'I fly from weariness and waning of joy.' Eventually comes the moment when the 'beautiful storm' dies out: 'And suddenly the world to me is empty, deranged, nothing – the oil is burnt out, and the hearth is cold and dark.' Despairing, Juan allows himself to be killed by the son of the man he has murdered.

It is true that in his musical version of *Don Juan*, Strauss spends rather more time dwelling on the 'beautiful storm' than on the great womaniser's pathetic end. But carefully placed hints of the poem's darker message can be heard throughout. The beginning is a great upward surge of exultant feeling, from which emerges a splendid, forward-striding tune (high violins) against pulsating wind chords. At first, the energy and cascading invention seem limitless. Then comes a sudden hush: tremolo strings and glockenspiel, pianissimo with downward-sliding woodwind – a brief hint, perhaps, of the 'weariness and waning of joy' from which Juan flies. However, this is quickly dispelled by a vision of alluring femininity: liquid harp figures and a sweetly languishing solo violin. An ardent song theme (horn first, soon followed by violins) tells of the process of seduction. This builds to a luscious climax, but at its high point, the music is twice interrupted by the

'upward surge' figure from the opening (cellos, piano) – conquest is not enough; Don Juan's fear-haunted desire must drive him ever onwards.

These reminders of the opening figure lead once again to the forward-striding violin theme from near the start. The adventure begins again, leading in new directions. A troubled minor-key theme (violas and cellos, then by broken sighs on flute), followed by a warmer, more consoling oboe melody, suggests Don Juan using new tactics (being a shoulder to cry on?) to achieve his ends. This is followed by the most exultant theme of the work, sounded out gloriously by the whole horn section. 'Certainly the horns blew without fear of death,' Strauss wrote in delight after one rehearsal – he must have been thinking of this moment. There is a full recapitulation, surging onwards to more glorious conquests. But then comes the cut off – a bar of silence in mid-fortissimo – and the collapse. There is no attempt to elicit sympathy for Don Juan, no heart-rending pathos; just dissolving string tremolos and three final bare pizzicato chords: 'The oil is burnt out, and the hearth is cold and dark.'

Richard Strauss

1864 to 1949 (Germany)



Richard Strauss was born in Munich in 1864, the son of Franz Strauss, a brilliant horn player in the Munich court orchestra. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that some of the composer's most striking writing is for the French horn. Strauss had his first piano lessons when he was four, and he produced his first composition two years later, but surprisingly he did not attend a music academy; rather, his formal education ended at Munich University, where he studied philosophy and aesthetics, continuing with his musical training at the same time.

Following the first public performances of his work, he received a commission from Hans von Bülow in 1882 and two years later was appointed Bülow's Assistant Musical Director at the Meiningen Court Orchestra, the beginning of a career in which Strauss was to conduct many of the world's great orchestras, in addition to holding positions at opera houses in Munich, Weimar, Berlin and Vienna. While at Munich, he married the singer Pauline de Ahna, for whom he wrote many of his greatest songs.

Strauss' greatest achievements were his operas, songs and magnificent symphonic poems.

Scores such as *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Also sprach Zarathustra*, *Don Juan* and *Ein Heldenleben* demonstrate his supreme mastery of orchestration. The thoroughly modern operas *Salome* and *Elektra*, with their Freudian themes and atonal scoring, are landmarks in the development of 20th-century music, and his fifth opera *Der Rosenkavalier* (1911) has become one of the most popular operas of the century. His later operatic masterpieces include *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Arabella* and the 'conversation piece in music' *Capriccio*, his final opera.

From the final years of the war until 1948, Strauss experienced a remarkable late flowering, during which he composed works including *Metamorphosen* for strings, the Oboe Concerto and the much-loved *Four Last Songs*. From late 1945 until summer 1948, he and his wife lived in self-imposed exile in Switzerland, waiting to be officially cleared of complicity in the Nazi regime. In June 1948, they returned to their home in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, where Strauss died in 1949, shortly after his widely celebrated 85th birthday.

Contemporaries

Gustav Mahler,
Claude Debussy

Key events

1889: Triumphant premiere of *Don Juan*

1905: First operatic success with *Salome*

1911: Premiere of his opera *Der Rosenkavalier*

1945–48: 'Indian Summer', during which he produces several masterpieces

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With the LSO

1953: UK premiere of *The Legend of Joseph*

Composer profile by
Andrew Stewart



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Creating Possible

Shéhérazade

Maurice Ravel

Marina Rebeka

soprano

- 1 **Asie**
- 2 **La flûte enchantée**
- 3 **L'indifférent**



1903



17 minutes

Programme note
by **Roger Nichols**

The great musical event in Paris in 1902 had been the first production of Debussy's opera *Pelléas et Mélisande*. The 27-year-old Ravel fell under its spell and found here, among other things, a new fluidity of word-setting that was nearer to the inflections of everyday speech. A year after that premiere, he read a book of poems called *Shéhérazade* just published by his friend Léon Leclère, under the inescapably Wagnerian name of Tristan Klingsor, and decided to set three of them to music. 'His choice,' Klingsor later recalled, 'was somewhat surprising. He did not light on those which, through their lyrical nature, could be set easily as songs. For him, to set a poem to music was to transform it into expressive recitative ... nothing square, no obvious repetition of rhythmic blocks, but a delicate equilibrium made up of imperceptible echoes.'

The opening song, 'Asie', is by some way the longest. The prevailing texture of low, soft strings under high, clear woodwind suggests the voluptuous flesh under sparkling jewellery that we see in Gustave Moreau's

many studies of Salome. The tranquillity of the poet's recollection is mirrored in the music.

The two shorter songs that follow are scored for a smaller orchestra. Both are 'private' songs of love. In 'La flûte enchantée', the master of the household sleeps with 'his long yellow nose in his white beard', but the slave girl hears her lover playing the flute outside. The flute therefore acts partly as a symbol of love, partly as an external event incorporated into the song.

'L'indifférent' ends in disillusionment. This seems to inhibit two gusts of passion in the violins which, like the climactic outburst in 'Asie', hint at profound depths of feeling. The question of the watcher's gender remains unanswered. A quarter of a century later, Ravel looked back on the work as one which had its faults, but which demonstrated a directness of expression and an unforced lyricism that no longer came easily to him. More than that, 'There is something in it,' he said, 'that I have never found again.'



Interval – 20 minutes

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Maurice Ravel

1875 to 1937 (France)



Contemporaries

Claude Debussy,
Manuel de Falla

Key events

1904: Has his first major successes with the orchestral song cycle

Shéhérazade and the String Quartet

1912: Premiere of his ballet *Daphnis et Chloé*

1929–31: Composes Piano Concerto in G and *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*, his last major compositions

Listen to

Daphnis et Chloé
and *Boléro*

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Composer profile
by **Jo Buckley**

Maurice Ravel himself knew that he was not the most prolific of composers. 'I did my work slowly, drop by drop. I tore it out of me by pieces,' he said. There are no symphonies in Ravel's *oeuvre*, and only two operas, and although we often think of his music as rich and picturesque – like that of, say, Claude Debussy – Ravel conceived most of it on the smallest of scales. Even his orchestral works and ballets often grew out of pieces for piano.

But from these small kernels, Ravel had the ability to create colour and texture like no other. He was a master of orchestration, with a fastidious eye for detail and a keen awareness of both the capabilities and the limitations of each instrument. Though

he is often categorised as an 'impressionist' (a label he disputed) thanks to the sweeping colours and textures of his scores – and their shifting, ambiguous harmonies – there is nothing vague or imprecise about his music.

Ravel drew his inspiration from the likes of Rameau, Couperin, Mozart and Haydn, and considered himself first and foremost a classicist, a master of precision and invention. He held melody in the highest regard, and whether in his grand orchestral masterpieces like *Daphnis et Chloé* and *Boléro*, the fiendishly difficult solo piano works such as *Gaspard de la nuit*, or the deceptively simple *Pavane pour une infante défunte*, this unswerving commitment to melody shines through.

Shéhérazade

Text & Translation

Original Text

Asie

*Asie, Asie, Asie,
Vieux pays merveilleux des contes de nourrice
Où dort la fantaisie comme une impératrice
En sa forêt tout emplie de mystère.*

*Asie,
Je voudrais m'en aller avec la goëlette
Qui se berce ce soir dans le port
Mystérieuse et solitaire
Et qui déploie enfin ses voiles violettes
Comme un immense oiseau
de nuit dans le ciel d'or.*

*Je voudrais m'en aller vers des îles de fleurs,
En écoutant chanter la mer perverse
Sur un vieux rythme ensorceleur.*

*Je voudrais voir Damas et les villes de Perse
Avec les minarets légers dans l'air.*

*Je voudrais voir de beaux turbans de soie
Sur des visages noirs aux dents claires;
Je voudrais voir des yeux sombres d'amour
Et des prunelles brillantes de joie
En des peaux jaunes comme des oranges;
Je voudrais voir des vêtements de velours
Et des habits à longues franges.*

*Je voudrais voir des calumets
entre des bouches*

*Tout entourées de barbe blanche;
Je voudrais voir d'âpres marchands
aux regards louches,*

*Et des cadis, et des vizirs
Qui du seul mouvement de leur
doigt qui se penche*

*Accordent vie ou mort au gré de leur désir.
Je voudrais voir la Perse, et l'Inde,
et puis la Chine,*

*Les mandarins ventrus sous les ombrelles,
Et les princesses aux mains fines,
Et les lettrés qui se querellent
Sur la poésie et sur la beauté;*

*Je voudrais m'attarder au palais enchanté
Et comme un voyageur étranger
Contempler à loisir des paysages peints
Sur des étoffes en des cadres de sapin,*

Translated Text

Asia

Asia, Asia, Asia,
Old marvellous land from childhood tales
Where fantasy sleeps like an empress
In her forest filled with mystery.

Asia,
I wish to go away with the boat
Cradled this evening in the port
Mysterious and solitary
And that finally deploys her violet sails
Like an enormous night-bird
in the golden sky.

I wish to go away, toward the isles of flowers,
Listening to the perverse sea sing
Over an old, bewitching rhythm.

I wish to see Damascus and the cities of Persia
With their light minarets in the air.

I wish to see beautiful silk turbans
On dark faces with bright teeth;
I wish to see eyes dark with love
And pupils shining with joy
In skin yellowed like oranges;
I wish to see velvet robes
And clothes with long fringes.

I wish to see pipes in mouths

Surrounded by white beards;
I wish to see harsh merchants
with cross-eyed gazes,

And judges, and viziers
Who with a single movement
of their crooked finger

Grant life, or death, according to their desire.
I wish to see Persia, and India,
and then China,

The pot-bellied mandarins under their umbrellas,
And the princesses with dainty hands,
And the literary men who quarrel
Over poetry and over beauty;

I wish to linger in the enchanted palace
And like a foreign traveller
Contemplate at leisure painted countrysides
On fabrics in fir frames,

Avec un personnage au milieu d'un verger;

*Je voudrais voir des assassins souriant
Du bourreau qui coupe un cou d'innocent
Avec son grand sabre courbé d'Orient.
Je voudrais voir des pauvres et des reines;
Je voudrais voir des roses et du sang;
Je voudrais voir mourir d'amour
ou bien de haine.*

*Et puis m'en revenir plus tard
Narrer mon aventure aux curieux de rêves
En élevant comme Sindbad,
ma vieille tasse arabe
De temps en temps jusqu'à mes lèvres
Pour interrompre le conte avec art ...*

La flûte enchantée

*L'ombre est douce et mon maître dort
Coiffé d'un bonnet conique de soie
Et son long nez jaune en sa barbe blanche.
Mais moi, je suis éveillée encor
Et j'écoute au dehors
Une chanson de flûte où s'épanche
Tour à tour la tristesse ou la joie.
Un air tour à tour langoureux ou frivole
Que mon amoureux chéri joue,
Et quand je m'approche de la croisée
Il me semble que chaque note s'envole
De la flûte vers ma joue
Comme un mystérieux baiser.*

With a person standing in the
middle of an orchard;
I wish to see smiling assassins
The executioner who cuts an innocent neck
With his great curved Oriental blade.
I wish to see paupers and queens;
I wish to see roses and blood;
I wish to see death caused by
love or even by hate.
And then returning, later
Tell my story to the dreaming and curious
Raising, like Sinbad,
my old Arab cup
From time to time to my lips
To interrupt my tale with art ...

The enchanted flute

The shade is sweet and my master sleeps
Wearing a conical silk bonnet
With his long yellow nose in his white beard.
But I, I waken again
And hear outside
The song of a flute pour forth
By turns sadness and joy.
A song by turns languorous and frivolous
Which my dear lover plays,
And when I approach by the window
It seems to me that each note steals away
From the flute toward my cheek
Like a mysterious kiss.

Shéhérazade

Text & Translation

L'indifférent

*Tes yeux sont doux comme ceux d'une fille,
Jeune étranger,
Et la courbe fine
De ton beau visage de duvet ombragé
Est plus séduisante encor de ligne.
Ta lèvre chante sur le pas de ma porte,
Une langue inconnue et charmante
Comme une musique fausse.
Entre! Et que mon vin te reconforte ...
Mais non, tu passes
Et de mon seuil je te vois t'éloigner,
Me faisant un dernier geste avec grâce,
Et la hanche légèrement ployée
Par ta démarche féminine et lasse ...*

Text by Tristan Klingsor, the pseudonym
for Léon Leclère (1874–1966)

The indifferent one

Your eyes are soft, like those of a girl,
Young stranger,
And the fine curve
Of your handsome face with shadowed down
Is more seductive still.
Your lip sings, on the step of my door,
A tongue unknown and charming
Like dissonant music.
Enter! And let my wine comfort you ...
But no, you pass by
And from my door I watch you depart,
Making a last graceful gesture to me,
Your hip lightly bent
In your feminine and weary gait ...

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Rapsodie espagnole

Maurice Ravel

-
- 1 **Prélude à la nuit**
 - 2 **Malagueña**
 - 3 **Habanera**
 - 4 **Feria**



1907–08



17 minutes

Programme note
by **Jan Smaczny**

Images of Spain have long been an important part of the French musical consciousness. Perhaps as an antidote to the sophistication of Paris, the lure of the exotic within easy reach of the Pyrenees evoked a powerful response across several generations of French composers to the extent that many of the ‘Spanish’ compositions of the repertoire were composed by Frenchmen. Some of the most famous of these were by Ravel, who had recurrent bouts of ‘Spanish fever’ throughout his career, although none surpassed the Iberian heyday of 1907, when he wrote the *Vocalise-Etude*, and embarked on the opera *L’heure espagnole* and the *Rapsodie espagnole*.

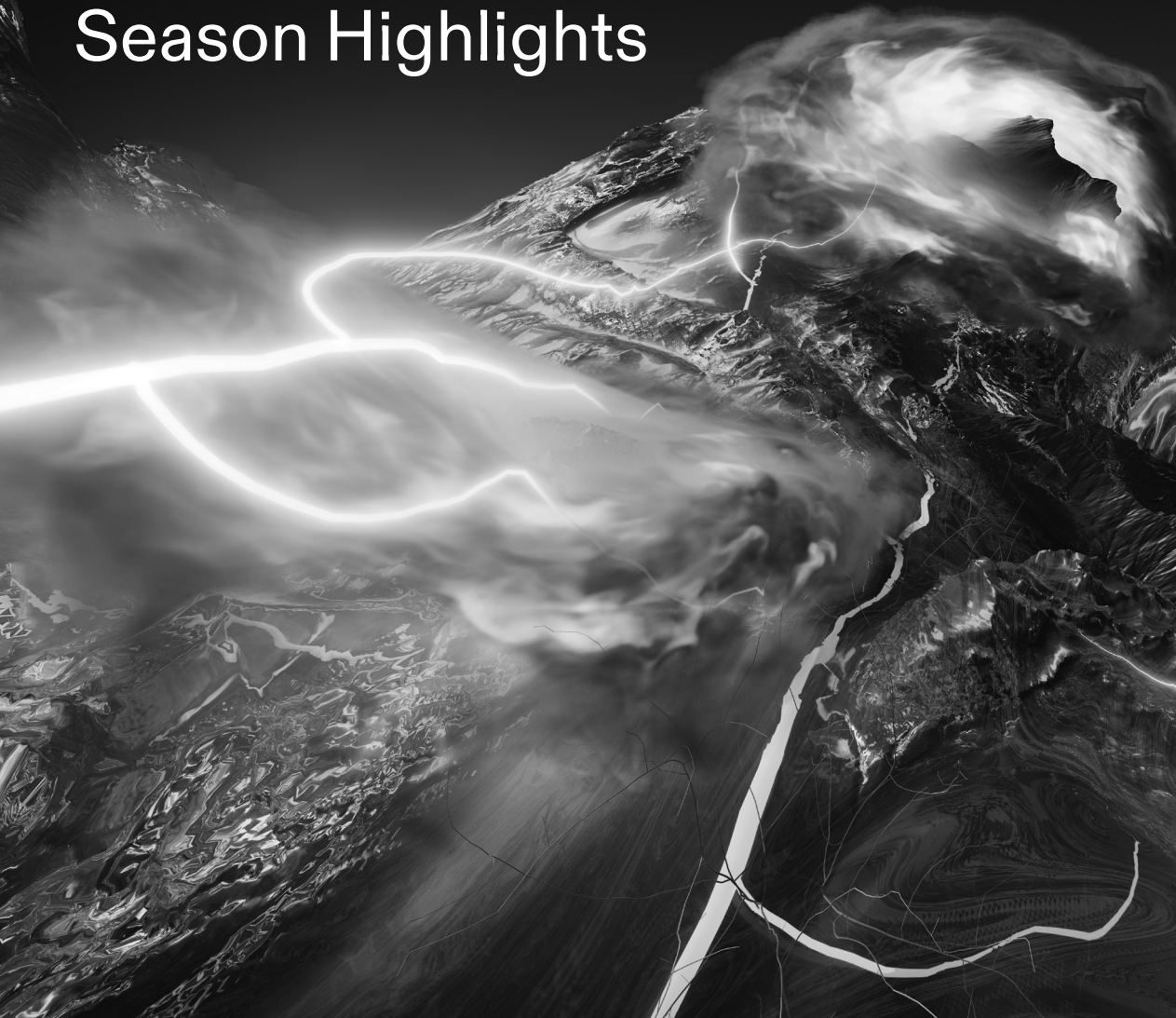
Despite partisan criticism from the critic and composer Michel-Gaston Carraud, who called it ‘slender’ and Pierre Lalo, who declared it ‘pedantic’, critical opinion was, in general, favourably impressed by the *Rapsodie* at its first performance in March 1908. It was also the composer’s first

important orchestral piece to come before the public and, for the most part, his only composition for orchestra not based on piano music or designed with some extramusical framework in mind.

If Ravel did not use actual Spanish melody, his command of the melodic and rhythmic idioms of the style leave no doubt at all as to the setting. The contrast between dark sensuousness and the cumulative vitality of the dance can be felt immediately in the first three movements. Apart from its unforgettable colouring, the ‘Prélude’ makes use of a descending four-note figure which recurs in all the movements apart from the ‘Habanera’. Although it does not partake of this unifying element, and indeed was composed some twelve years earlier as the first of the two-piano collection *Sites auriculaires*, the ‘Habanera’ in no way fractures the composition. Rather, it provides the ideal foil for the extended ‘Feria’ movement, which sums up and transcends the moods evoked earlier.

COMING IN 2025

Season Highlights



UP



**Bartók Concerto for Orchestra
plus Stravinsky and Perry**

with Susanna Mälkki
and Leila Josefowicz
Sunday 18 May 7pm

**Mozart Violin Concerto No 5
Strauss Ein Heldenleben**

with Sir Antonio Pappano
and Lisa Batiashvili
Sunday 25 May 2025 7pm

LSO On Film: The French Connection

with Dirk Brossé
Sunday 22 June 7pm

Strauss Salome

concert performance with surtitles
with Sir Antonio Pappano
Friday 11 & Sunday 13 July 7pm

Der Rosenkavalier – Suite

Richard Strauss

- 1 **Prelude (Act 1)**
- 2 **Presentation of the Rose (Act 2)**
- 3 **Baron Ochs' Waltz (Act 2)**
- 4 **Trio (Act 3)**
- 5 **'Ist ein Traum' (Act 3)**
- 6 **Waltz (reprise)**



1945



21 minutes

Programme note by
Stephen Johnson

In the first decade of the 20th century, Richard Strauss was probably the world's most notorious musical modernist. His operas *Salome* (1905) and *Elektra* (1908) were both colossal and scandalous successes, their violence and dark sensuality delighting some, disgusting others. Indignation spread far beyond the opera houses. After the American premiere of *Salome*, a newspaper ran the headline: '4,000 survive the most appalling tragedy ever shown on the musical stage.' And according to Sir Thomas Beecham, a performance of a suite from *Elektra* by the Band of the Grenadier Guards elicited this response from King George V: 'His Majesty does not know what the Band has just played, but it is never to be played again.'

Strauss' next opera, *Der Rosenkavalier* (The Cavalier of the Rose) came as a very different kind of shock to the musical world. At the first performance in 1911, there were one or two complaints concerning the action – especially in the opening scene, where the Marschallin (the wife of the Field Marshal) and her 17-year-old lover Octavian are discovered in bed together. But musically, Strauss now appeared to have turned his

back on the modernism of *Salome* and *Elektra*. *Der Rosenkavalier* was a sophisticated comedy, set in aristocratic mid-18th-century Vienna, its music richly, nostalgically romantic. This time, it was the modernists who protested. Strauss had let them down – deserted the cause. Those who knew Strauss well were not so surprised. It seems he had been getting bored with what he called his earlier 'green horror' vein. 'Next time,' he told a friend after the 1909 Viennese premiere of *Elektra*, 'I'll write a Mozart opera.'

If *Der Rosenkavalier* rarely sounds like Mozart, one can still see what Strauss meant. Something of the spirit of *The Marriage of Figaro* can be felt in its witty exposure of the absurdities of old-fashioned class distinction, and in the warmth and tender pathos of the music for the Marschallin. Such was the opera's success that Strauss eventually bowed to pressure and gave his blessing to two concert suites based on the opera: the 1944 Waltz Sequence (which he arranged himself) and the 1945 Suite performed here. Some doubt remains as to who compiled the Suite. According to Boosey & Hawkes, who published the score, the arranger was

probably the American conductor Artur Rodziński, a much-admired interpreter of Strauss' operas and orchestral works. The Suite has come in for some criticism, but for listeners who don't know *Der Rosenkavalier*, it paraphrases the story effectively (though not quite in the order set out in the opera), as well as managing to include a fair amount of the score's best-loved moments.

The Suite opens with the opera's orchestral prelude – the ardent, voluptuous music that depicts the Marschallin and Octavian's lovemaking. After this comes the Presentation of the Rose, in which Octavian offers a silver rose to Sophie, daughter of the socially ambitious Faninal. The rose is intended as a token of her engagement to the boorish Baron Ochs, but Octavian falls in love with Sophie himself. An exquisitely scored chordal figure for flutes, celeste, harps and three solo violins symbolises both the rose and the sweetness of young love. Next, Octavian, defending Sophie's right to choose her own suitor, wounds Ochs. It's only a graze, but we hear Ochs' roars of pain and anger; then his pride gradually returns, accompanied by *Rosenkavalier's* most delicious

waltz. A backward glance to the lively prelude to Act 2 leads to the climax of the opera: the great Act 3 Trio in which Sophie and Octavian are united, while the Marschallin takes leave of her young lover and slips away unnoticed. Ochs' defeat is celebrated in the return of his waltz tune, then the anonymous arranger brings the Suite to a close with Octavian's theme from the Act 1 Prelude sounding triumphantly in the full orchestra.

Gustavo Dudamel

conductor



Gustavo Dudamel is committed to creating a better world through music. Guided by an unwavering belief in the power of art to inspire and transform lives, he has worked tirelessly to expand education and access for underserved communities around the world, and to broaden the impact of classical music to new and ever larger audiences. His rise, from humble beginnings as a child in Venezuela to an unparalleled career of artistic and social achievements, offers living proof that culture can bring meaning to the life of an individual and greater harmony to the world at large. He currently serves as the Music & Artistic Director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela and in 2026, he becomes the Music and Artistic Director of the New York Philharmonic, continuing a legacy that includes Gustav Mahler, Arturo Toscanini and Leonard Bernstein.

Throughout 2025, Dudamel will celebrate the 50th anniversary of *El Sistema*, honouring the global impact of José Antonio Abreu's visionary education program across five generations, and acknowledging the vital importance of arts education. Dudamel will tour internationally with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra and the National Children's Symphony of Venezuela, and continue to work directly with teachers and students on the ground in Venezuela and in satellite programs around the world.

Dudamel's advocacy for the power of music to unite, heal and inspire is global in scope. In appearances from the United Nations to the White House and the Nobel Peace Prize Concert, Dudamel has served as a passionate advocate for music education and social integration through art, sharing his own transformative experience in Venezuela's *El Sistema* program as an example of how music can give a sense of purpose and meaning to a young person and help them rise above challenging circumstances. In 2007, Dudamel, the LA Philharmonic and its community partners founded YOLA (Youth Orchestra Los Angeles), which now provides more than 1,700 young people with free instruments, intensive music instruction, academic support and leadership training. In 2012, Dudamel launched the Dudamel Foundation, which he co-chairs with his wife, actress and director María Valverde, with the goal of expanding access to music and the arts for young people by providing tools and opportunities to shape their creative futures.

As a conductor, Dudamel is one of the few classical musicians to become a bona fide pop-culture phenomenon and has worked tirelessly to ensure that music reaches an ever greater audience. He was the first classical artist to participate in the Super Bowl halftime show and the youngest conductor ever to lead the Vienna Philharmonic's New Year's Day Concert. He has performed at global mainstream events from the Academy Awards to the Olympics, and has worked with musical icons like Billie Eilish, Christina Aguilera, Ricky Martin, Gwen Stefani, Coldplay and Nas. Dudamel conducted the score to Steven Spielberg's new adaptation of *West Side Story*, and at John Williams' personal request, he guest conducted the opening and closing credits of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*. His film and television appearances include *Sesame Street*, *The Simpsons*, *Mozart in the Jungle*, *Trolls World Tour* and *The Nutcracker and the Four Realms*. In 2019, Dudamel was honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Marina Rebeka

soprano



Latvian soprano Marina Rebeka is one of the world's leading opera singers, praised by audiences and critics for her beautiful timbre, musicality and impeccable technique. Since her international breakthrough at the Salzburg Festival in 2009 under the baton of Riccardo Muti, Rebeka has been a regular guest at the world's most prestigious concert halls and opera houses, such as the Metropolitan Opera and Carnegie Hall, Royal Opera House, Opéra de Paris, Concertgebouw, Bavarian State Opera, Vienna State Opera and Zurich Opera House. She collaborates with leading conductors such as Riccardo Muti, Zubin Mehta, Sir Antonio Pappano, Fabio Luisi, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Daniele Gatti, Marco Armiliato, Michele Mariotti, Thomas Hengelbrock and Lorenzo Viotti.

Rebeka was nominated as the first ever artist-in-residence with the Munich Radio Orchestra, Best Female Singer of the Year at the International Classical Music Awards, and was awarded the Order of the Three Stars, the highest award of the Republic of Latvia, for her cultural achievements. She is a regular guest at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, where she has recently sung Mimì in Puccini's *La bohème*, the title role in Massenet's *Thaïs*, Elena in Verdi's *I vespri siciliani* and the title role of Cherubini's *Médée* in a new production

by Damiano Michieletto. She has also recently returned to the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and to the Bavarian State Opera as Leonora (Verdi's *Il trovatore*), sung the title role of Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* for Dutch National Opera, returned to Salzburg Festival as Amelia in a new production of Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* and made her role debut in the title role of Verdi's *Aida* in a new production by Calixto Bieito at the Berlin State Opera.

Rebeka recorded for several labels including Warner Classic, Deutsche Grammophon and BR Klassik before creating her own record label, Prima Classic, with which she has released full recordings of *Norma*, *Il pirata* and *La traviata* and five solo albums. Her recordings have won awards, including the ICMA Award as Best Opera Recording of 2022 and the Diapason d'Or and the Diamant from France's *Opéra Magazine*, and have been given five stars in *BBC Music Magazine*.

Engagements in the 2024/25 season have included Cio-Cio-San in Puccini's *Madame Butterfly* for Vienna State Opera and Zurich Opera, Elisabeth de Valois in *Don Carlos* for the Opéra national de Paris and the title role of *Norma* for La Scala.

London Symphony Orchestra

On Stage

Leader

Benjamin Marquise
Gilmore

First Violins

Alice Ivy-Pemberton
Clare Duckworth
Ginette Decuyper
Laura Dixon
Maxine Kwok
William Melvin
Stefano Mengoli
Claire Parfitt
Laurent Quénelle
Harriet Rayfield
Olatz Ruiz de
Gordejuela
Sylvain Vasseur
Caroline Frenkel
Mitzi Gardner
Savva Zverev

Second Violins

Julián Gil Rodríguez
Thomas Norris
Miya Väisänen
David Ballesteros
Helena Buckie
Matthew Gardner
Alix Lagasse
Belinda McFarlane
Iwona Muszynska
Csilla Pogány
Andrew Pollock
Louise Shackelton
Djumash Poulsen
Jan Regulski

Violas

Eivind Ringstad
Gillianne Hadow
Malcolm Johnston
Anna Bastow
Thomas Beer
Germán Clavijo
Steve Doman
Julia O'Riordan
Sofia Silva Sousa
Robert Turner
Mizuho Ueyama
Elisabeth Varlow

Cellos

David Cohen
Laure Le Dantec
Alastair Blayden
Salvador Bolón
Ève-Marie Caravassilis
Amanda Truelove
Judith Fleet
Henry Hargreaves
Young In Na
Peteris Sokolovskis

Double Basses

Rodrigo Moro Martín
Patrick Laurence
Chaemun Im
Thomas Goodman
Joe Melvin
Jani Pensola
Harry Atkinson
Simon Oliver

Flutes

Gareth Davies
Imogen Royce
Clare Findlater

Piccolo

Patricia Moynihan

Oboes

Juliana Koch
Olivier Stankiewicz
Rosie Jenkins

Cor Anglais

Clément Noël

Clarinets

Chris Richards
Chi-Yu Mo
Sonia Sielaff

Bass Clarinet

Ferran Garcerà Perelló

Bassoons

Rachel Gough
Daniel Jemison
Elena Comelli

Contrabassoon

Martin Field

Horns

Diego Incertis
Sánchez
Alexander Edmundson
Angela Barnes
Sarah Pennington
Jonathan Maloney

Trumpets

James Fountain
Niall Keatley
Adam Wright
Richard Blake

Trombones

Simon Johnson
Jonathan Hollick

Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

Tuba

Ben Thomson

Timpani

Nigel Thomas
Patrick King

Percussion

Neil Percy
David Jackson
Sam Walton
Patrick King
Tom Edwards
Paul Stoneman

Harps

Bryn Lewis
Suzy Willison-Kawalec

Celeste

Siwan Rhys