

ELGAR & HØLST

THURSDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2024 7PM

Edward Elgar
Violin Concerto

Interval

Gustav Holst
The Planets

Sir Antonio Pappano conductor
Vilde Frang violin
Sopranos and Altos from Tenebrae
London Symphony Orchestra

Concert finishes at approximately 9.20pm

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The Planets recorded for future release on LSO Live

Welcome



A very special welcome to the start of the London Symphony Orchestra's 2024/25 season with Sir Antonio Pappano, who joins us for his first Barbican concerts as Chief Conductor of the LSO – a set of programmes which reflect his musical passions and the virtuosity and sound of the LSO.

We are thrilled to mark this occasion with a new work by Sir James MacMillan, which was co-commissioned by the LSO with the generous support of the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation and written to celebrate the Orchestra itself as a *Concerto for Orchestra*. We are delighted to have again the opportunity to champion Sir James MacMillan's work after a long history of collaborations, and we look forward to giving the London premiere of his Second Violin Concerto with Nicola Benedetti in April of next year.

On 11 September, the world premiere of his Concerto for Orchestra, 'Ghosts' is paired with two Nordic works: Jean Sibelius' First Symphony and Carl Nielsen's *Helios* Overture, aptly reflecting the dawn of a new era. In celebration of this special occasion, we are partnering with the Barbican to invite all members of our audience to join us for a complimentary glass of Nyetimber sparkling wine before this concert or during the interval.

The season opening continues on 12, 15 and 19 September, as Sir Antonio Pappano celebrates his interest in British repertoire with Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, to which we are delighted to welcome Tenebrae to provide the ethereal wordless chorus. Hector Berlioz's colourful *Roman Carnival*, Karol Szymanowski's Concert Overture and Gustav Mahler's First Symphony, also feature across the week, each showcasing the musicians of the LSO.

A warm welcome to all the guest artists who join the Orchestra on stage throughout these concerts – including Vilde Frang as soloist for Elgar's Violin Concerto, with whom we were thrilled to share the stage on tour last month; Anna Lapwood, who makes her debut with the Orchestra in Saint-Saëns' 'Organ Symphony'; and Yuja Wang, who performs Rachmaninoff's First Piano Concerto and Chopin's Piano Concerto No 2. We look forward to taking these latter programmes on tour to Japan, South Korea and China later this month.

There are many opportunities to enjoy these concerts, both live at the Barbican or outside the concert hall: 11 September and 19 September will be recorded for future broadcast by Marquee TV and BBC Radio 3 and the 12 September performance will be recorded for future broadcast by Mezzo and medici.tv. Thanks to Classic FM for recommending the 12 September performances to their audiences. Sincere thanks to all our media and broadcast partners, who allow us to share the LSO's music-making with more people than ever.

The opening weeks of the season offer an opportunity to see different dimensions of the LSO's work. Before the concerts you can enjoy free foyer performances from a wide range of our LSO Discovery programmes – from young brass musicians to members of our LSO Create group, and more. There is also chamber music, with three BBC Radio 3

Stay In Touch

Lunchtime and Rush-Hour Concerts at LSO St Luke's on 12 and 19 September, each featuring alumni of the New Generation Artists scheme.

I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to our patrons and friends, corporate supporters, and trusts and foundations who so generously support the LSO and who play a key part in our success. We especially thank the Huo Family Foundation for their generous support of the concert on 15 September and across the year. We also welcome all those who join us for our Annual City Livery Concert on 19 September, and especially Alderman Sir Andrew Parmley and Graham Barker for championing this occasion. Thank you also to Arts Council England and the City of London Corporation for their support of the LSO's Residency at the Barbican Centre.

And thanks to all our audiences for being present at the start of this new concert season. I hope you enjoy these performances, and that you will be able to join us throughout the year ahead. Chief Conductor Sir Antonio Pappano returns in December for two concert performances of Giacomo Puccini's opera *La rondine*, with an all-star cast of soloists and the London Symphony Chorus. On 15 December, he continues his Ralph Vaughan Williams Symphonic Cycle with the Ninth, alongside Elgar's Cello Concerto, performed by LSO Principal Cello David Cohen. We round off the year with two festive concerts on the 18 and 19 December, featuring music by Tchaikovsky, Gershwin and Bernstein. We look forward to seeing you at many more concerts.



Dame Kathryn McDowell DBE DL
Managing Director

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Violin Concerto in B minor Op 61

Edward Elgar

Vilde Frang
violin

- 1 Allegro
- 2 Andante
- 3 Allegro



1910



46 minutes

Programme note by
Stephen Johnson

Sir Antonio Pappano biography
Read on page 70

Edward Elgar was at the highest peak of his reputation when he wrote his Violin Concerto (1909–10), with a string of internationally recognised masterpieces to his name. Inwardly he remained insecure, prone to depression and lacerating self-doubt, and after the initial satisfaction at finishing a major work, he would often dismiss it. But the Violin Concerto was a very different matter. ‘I have never heard Elgar speak of the personal note in his music except in regard to the concerto’, wrote one friend, ‘and ... say more than once, ‘I love it!’

Elgar said more about that ‘personal note’ to his confidante Alice Stuart-Wortley, placing the Concerto alongside his Second Symphony (1911) and Choral Ode *The Music Makers* (1912): ‘I have written out my soul in the Concerto, Sym II and the Ode and you know it ... in these three works I have ‘shewn’ myself.’ On the title page of the score Elgar placed a quotation from the novel *Gil Blas* by the 18th century writer Alain-René Lesage: ‘Aquí está encerada el alma de’ [‘Here is enshrined the soul of’]. The five dots could stand for Alice’s full initials, A.S.C.S.-W. Was Elgar in love with her? Perhaps, but if she was ever more to him than a muse, we’ll probably never know.

The striding opening theme suggests a self-portrait: Elgar the bluff, self-styled Edwardian man of action, striding confidently forward. But the violin’s entry takes us into a new world: meditative, soulful, tenderly fluid in tempo. Strikingly, the violin never plays the Concerto’s first theme in its

original form, rather responds to it, extending it lyrically or embellishing it with virtuoso fireworks. It’s tempting to think of Alice herself, subtly drawing out the music’s ‘personal’ potential.

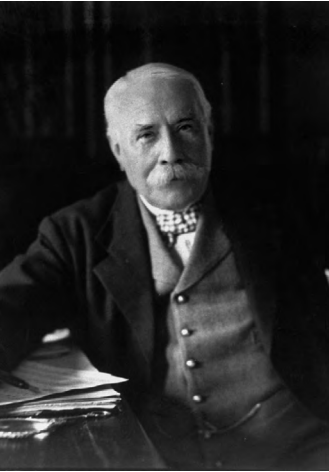
‘I have written out my soul in the concerto, Sym II and the Ode and you know it ... in these three works I have ‘shewn’ myself’

The Andante has something of the character of an Edwardian love-scene, with clearly marked ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ themes in intimate or dramatic conversation. If so, it is the feminine that eventually wins out: the closing pages have a rapt, sensuous beauty unusual even for Elgar.

The man of action takes the lead again in the finale, but memories of the slow movement increase, until a ghostly return of the first movement theme introduces the most original passage in the whole Concerto: a long, dream-like accompanied cadenza, during which the strings are instructed to strum their instruments with their fingers like guitars. The soloist rouses the orchestra again, leading to an exultant return of the Concerto’s first theme on horns and cellos. But is this a conventional romantic ‘triumph’, or does the unearthly vision of that cadenza linger enigmatically at the end?

Edward Elgar

1857 to 1934 (England)



Contemporaries

Gustav Holst,
Hubert Parry

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Symphonies 1 and
2 with Sir Colin
Davis on
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With the LSO

1910: Premiere of
the Violin Concerto
with Fritz Kreisler
as soloist

Coming up next

Cello Concerto with
Sir Antonio Pappano
and David Cohen
15 December
2024, Barbican

Composer profile

by Andrew Stewart

Elgar's father, a trained piano-tuner, ran a music shop in Worcester in the 1860s. Young Edward, the fourth of seven children, showed musical talent but was largely self-taught as a player and composer. During his early freelance career, which included work conducting the staff band at the County Lunatic Asylum in Powick, he suffered many setbacks. He was forced to continue teaching long after the desire to compose full-time had taken hold. A picture emerges of a frustrated, pessimistic man, whose creative impulses were restrained by his circumstances and apparent lack of progress. The cantata *Caractacus*, commissioned by the Leeds Festival and premiered in 1898, brought the composer recognition beyond his native city.

At the end of March 1891 the Elgars were invited to travel to Bayreuth for that summer's festival of Wagner's operas, a prospect that inspired Edward immediately to compose three movements for string orchestra, the *Serenade*. The *Variations on an Original Theme 'Enigma'* (1898-99) and his oratorio *The Dream of Gerontius* (1900) cemented his position as England's finest composer, crowned by two further oratorios, a series of ceremonial works, two symphonies and concertos for violin and cello.

Elgar, who was knighted in 1904, became the LSO's principal conductor in 1911 and premiered many of his works with the orchestra. Shortly before the end of World War I, he entered an almost cathartic period of chamber-music composition, completing the peaceful slow movement of his String Quartet soon after Armistice Day. The Piano Quintet was finished in February 1919 and reveals the composer's deep nostalgia for times past. In his final years he recorded many of his works with the LSO and, despite illness, managed to sketch movements of a Third Symphony.



Interval – 20 minutes

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The Planets Op 32

Gustav Holst

Tenebrae choir

- 1 Mars, the Bringer of War
- 2 Venus, the Bringer of Peace
- 3 Mercury, the Winged Messenger
- 4 Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity
- 5 Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age
- 6 Uranus, the Magician
- 7 Neptune, the Mystic



1918



50 minutes

Programme note by
Stephen Johnson

When Gustav Holst was working on *The Planets* (1914–1917), he must have wondered whether he would ever hear it performed. Although his name wasn't exactly unknown, he'd failed to make the kind of impact his friend Ralph Vaughan Williams had with his *Sea Symphony* and *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis*. Now, as Europe collapsed into a long and devastating war, Holst was composing an ambitious work for an unusually large, colour-enhanced orchestra which would stretch the techniques of orchestral musicians to the limit. Thanks to the war, musicians were increasingly thin on the ground, and in any case, these weren't the kind of conditions in which concert managers would be inclined to take expensive risks.

In choosing the seven then-known planets of our solar system, Holst was owning up to his fascination with astrology – his 'private vice' as he called it. There was much more to this than a little private fortune telling. A remark Holst made at the time shows how astrology fitted in with his philosophy as a whole. What astrology confirmed for him, he said, was that 'everything in this world ... is just one big miracle. Or rather, the universe itself is one.'

Holst's view of the cosmos as a 'miracle', in which everything is mysteriously connected, fitted with his abiding interest in Indian religious thought, particularly Buddhist and ancient Hindu scriptures. The very composition of *The Planets* took on a quasi-mystical aspect: 'It grew in my mind slowly', he recalled, 'like a baby in a mother's womb'.

Then, when Holst had finished the score, something close to a miracle happened. The wealthy composer and new music promoter Balfour Gardiner saw the score of *The Planets* and was astonished by its boldness and imaginative power.

There was much in *The Planets* that was innovatory, even by the most advanced continental standards of the time.

Gardiner arranged a performance in London's Queen's Hall in 1918, with the young Adrian Boult conducting. Right from the outset it was clear that a new chapter in British music had begun: the inhuman martial violence of Mars, the complex rhythmic vitality of Mercury, the glacial stillness of Neptune – nothing like this had been heard from a British composer before. Holst wrote in Boult's copy of the score, 'This copy is the property of Adrian Boult who first caused *The Planets* to shine in public and thereby earned the gratitude of Gustav Holst.'

There was much in *The Planets* that was innovatory, even by the most advanced continental standards of the time. The terrifying, obsessive five-in-a-bar rhythm which dominates Mars is without parallel in music before 1914, and the glittering pianissimo textures of Neptune, with its

wordless, finally fading off-stage choral writing, is quite new. There are new effects too – like the two timpanists athletically pounding out all the notes of the main theme soon after the start of Jupiter, the weirdly tolling low flutes and harp harmonics that set Saturn in motion, or the stunning organ glissando at the climax of Uranus.

For listeners today it can be surprising to learn that Mars was completed before the outbreak of the World War I. The kind of warfare it seems to anticipate is the mechanised mass-destruction characteristic of the later 20th century, not the cavalry charges and hand-to-hand conflict most people still associated with military conflict. The luscious, otherworldly lyricism of Venus, the airborne, teasing brilliance of Mercury and the elemental good humour of Jupiter (source of the hymn, 'I vow to thee, my country') almost banish black memories; but then comes Saturn (Holst's favourite), with its desolate slow funeral march and grindingly dissonant climax, followed by the sinister, sometimes brutal humour of Uranus, and finally the world-renouncing, almost inhuman detachment of Neptune.

It is surely significant that Holst places Neptune, 'The Mystic', last. Holst's belief in the connectedness of everything is directly reflected in the music itself. In such connections – and there are plenty – perhaps we glimpse what it is that Holst's mystic seeks, through meditation, to transcend. It's hard to resist the impression that – more

than any other British composer at that time – Holst saw the shape of things to come and feared the worst. When some conductors opted to perform just the first four movements of *The Planets*, with Jupiter forming a reassuring 'happy ending', Holst reacted with uncharacteristic anger: 'In the real world the end is not happy at all!'

Gustav Holst

1874 to 1934 (England)



Contemporaries

Ralph Vaughan Williams,
Cecil Coles

Key events

1907: Appointed Musical Director of Morley College
1914: Rejected for military service in World War I due to poor eyesight

With the LSO

1923: First recording of *The Planets*, with the composer conducting.

Listen to

The Planets with Sir Colin Davis on LSO Live
[isolive.iso.co.uk](https://www.isolive.co.uk)

Composer profile

by Stephen Johnson

Gustav Holst's life didn't start well. Born in Cheltenham in 1874, to a busy musician father and an emotionally distant mother, he suffered from poor eyesight and a weak chest, while neuritis of the arm made playing piano and violin difficult – though he was able to become an accomplished trombonist. Holst later described his childhood as 'miserable and scared.' Music was his salvation, and like many lonely, imaginative children he became fascinated with mysticism.

Later, Holst gained entry to the Royal College of Music, where he studied with Charles Stanford and made a lifelong friendship with fellow-student Ralph Vaughan Williams. Both were politically left leaning, but Holst in particular became a fervent socialist, throwing himself into a variety of demanding educational and social activities, and into his formative field researches with Vaughan Williams into English folk music.

By the 1910s, Holst's music had begun to attract attention, but his breakthrough came with *The Planets* (1914–17), which scored a sensational success at its premiere in 1918. His more contemplative but equally innovative *Hymn of Jesus* (1917) was praised, as was the chamber opera *Savitri* (1916), a product of Holst's intensive studies in Indian religious philosophy. But pressure to provide a follow-up success to *The Planets* led him to withdraw and look increasingly inward for inspiration. Major works like the *Ode to Death* (1919), *Choral Symphony* (1924), the

Choral Fantasia (1930) and the atmospheric *Hammersmith* for military band (1930) were received coolly. But the half-lukewarm, half-hostile reaction to his unsettling *Egdon Heath* (1927) failed to shake his belief that this, not *The Planets*, was his orchestral masterpiece.

After Holst's death in 1934 his reputation went into decline, with only *The Planets* heard at all regularly. But 1974, the centenary of his birth, saw the beginning of a change in attitude. Now Holst is widely recognised as one of the most imaginative, searchingly original voices in all British music.

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Vilde Frang

violin



Born in Norway, Vilde Frang first performed at the age of twelve with Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra and made her debut with the Vienna Philharmonic under Bernard Haitink at the Lucerne Festival. Frang studied at Barratt Due Musikk institutt in Oslo, with Kolja Blacher at Musikhochschule Hamburg and Ana Chumachenco at the Kronberg Academy. She has also worked with Mitsuko Uchida as a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship winner 2007, and held a scholarship with the Anne-Sophie Mutter Foundation.

She has performed as a soloist with countless orchestras world-wide, with conductors such as Herbert Blomstedt, Renee Jacobs, Teodor Currentzis, Daniel Harding, Vladimir Jurowski, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Paavo Järvi, Gustavo Dudamel and Sir Simon Rattle. She regularly appears at international festivals all over Europe, and is a returning guest at the BBC Proms. As soloist and in recital, Frang has performed at the world's most prestigious venues, including Wigmore Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, Tchaikovsky Hall, in Vancouver Recital Series, Boston Celebrity Series, San Francisco Performances, and Carnegie Hall.

Frang is an exclusive Warner Classics artist and her recordings have received numerous awards, including the Grand Prix du Disque, Edison Klassiek Award, Deutsche Schallplattenpreis, *Diapason d'Or* and *Gramophone Award*.

Frang plays the 1734 'Rode' Guarnerius, on generous loan by a European benefactor.

Tenebrae

choir



Described as 'phenomenal' (*The Times*) and 'devastatingly beautiful' (*Gramophone* magazine), award-winning choir Tenebrae is one of the world's leading vocal ensembles, renowned for its passion and precision.

Under the direction of Nigel Short, Tenebrae performs at major festivals and venues across the globe, including the BBC Proms, Wigmore Hall, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Rheingau Musik Festival and Sydney Festival. The choir has earned international acclaim for its interpretations of choral music from the Renaissance through to contemporary masterpieces, and has commissioned new music from composers including Judith Bingham, Joanna Marsh, Owain Park, Josephine Stephenson, Joby Talbot and Roderick Williams.

Tenebrae has enjoyed collaborations with some of the UK's leading orchestras, including the London Symphony Orchestra, Aurora Orchestra, the Academy of Ancient Music and Britten Sinfonia. The choir also undertakes regular session work, having contributed the vocals for Max Richter's *Voices* (2020), Jean-Jacques Annaud's *Notre Dame brûle* (2022) and blockbuster sci-fi movie *Avatar: The Way of Water* (2022), among others. Its extensive recording catalogue comprises a wide range of music on labels including Signum, LSO Live and Warner Classics, and has earned the choir two *BBC Music Magazine* Awards and a Grammy nomination.

Alongside its performance schedule, the choir runs a thriving Learning and Connection programme encompassing partnerships with Music Centre London and London Youth Choirs, Tenebrae Effect workshops with amateur choirs, and regular classroom singing for local primary schools through its Singing Schools initiative. Through its Associate Artist programme, Tenebrae also provides talented young professional singers with vital experience and support in the early stages of their careers.

Through its continued dedication to performance of the highest quality, Tenebrae's vision is to inspire audiences around the world through dramatic programming, flawless performances and unforgettable experiences.

Tenebrae

On Stage

Sopranos

Jennifer Clark
Elizabeth Drury
Anna Grieve
Susannah Hill
Catriona Holsgrove
Sarah Keating
Marie Macklin
Laura Newey
Áine Smith
Emma Walshe
Rosanna Wicks
Clover Willis

Altos

Amy Blythe
Tara Bungard
Harriet Hougham
Slade
Martha McLorinan
Christopher Mitchell
Melanie Marshall
Miranda Ostler
Lorna Price
Anna Semple
Olivia Shotton
Elena Stamp
Joy Sutcliffe

Sir Antonio Pappano

Chief Conductor



One of today's most sought-after conductors, acclaimed for his charismatic leadership and inspirational performances in both symphonic and operatic repertoire, Sir Antonio Pappano is Chief Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra and was Music Director of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden from 2002 until 2024. He is Music Director Emeritus of the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome (having served as Music Director from 2005–2023) and was previously Music Director of Norwegian Opera and Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, Brussels, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

Pappano is in demand as an opera conductor at the highest international level, including with the Metropolitan Opera New York, the State Operas of Vienna and Berlin, the Bayreuth and Salzburg Festivals, Lyric Opera of Chicago and the Teatro alla Scala. He has appeared as a guest conductor with many of the world's most prestigious orchestras, including the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras, the Staatskapelle Dresden, the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, the Bavarian Radio, the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orchestre de Paris and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, as well as the New York Philharmonic Orchestra,

Chicago and Boston Symphonies and the Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras. He maintains a particularly strong relationship with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

Pappano has been an exclusive recording artist for Warner Classics (formerly EMI Classics) since 1995. His awards and honours include *Gramophone's* Artist of the Year in 2000, a 2003 Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera, the 2004 Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award, and the Bruno Walter Prize from the Académie du Disque Lyrique in Paris. In 2012 he was created a Cavaliere di Gran Croce of the Republic of Italy, and a Knight of the British Empire for his services to music, and in 2015 he was named the 100th recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society's Gold Medal.

Sir Antonio Pappano was born in London to Italian parents and moved with his family to the United States at the age of 13. He studied piano with Norma Verrilli, composition with Arnold Franchetti and conducting with Gustav Meier. He has also developed a notable career as a speaker and presenter, and has fronted several critically-acclaimed BBC Television documentaries including *Opera Italia*, *Pappano's Essential Ring Cycle* and *Pappano's Classical Voices*.

London Symphony Orchestra

On Stage

Leader

Benjamin Gilmore

First Violins

Cellerina Park
Clare Duckworth
Ginette Decuyper
Maxine Kwok
William Melvin
Stefano Mengoli
Claire Parfitt
Elizabeth Pigram
Laurent Quénelle
Harriet Rayfield
Sylvain Vasseur
Julian Azkoul
Caroline Frenkel
Emma Lisney
Dániel Mészöly

Second Violins

Julián Gil Rodríguez
Sarah Quinn
Thomas Norris
Miya Väisänen
David Ballesteros
Matthew Gardner
Alix Lagasse
Belinda McFarlane
Iwona Muszynska
Csilla Pogány
Sabrina Bradford
Juan Gonzalez
Hernandez
Olatz Ruiz de
Gordejuela
Chelsea Sharpe

Violas

Eivind Ringstad
Malcolm Johnston
Thomas Beer
Germán Clavijo
Steve Doman
Sofia Silva Sousa
Robert Turner
Mizuho Ueyama
Nancy Johnson
Cynthia Perrin
Annie-May Page
David Vainsot

Cellos

Rebecca Gilliver
Alastair Blayden
Salvador Bolón
Daniel Gardner
Amanda Truelove
Ève-Marie Caravassilis
Henry Hargreaves
Ken Ichinose
Silvestrs Kalniņš
Joanna Twaddle

Double Basses

Rodrigo Moro Martín
Patrick Laurence
Thomas Goodman
Chaemun Im
Joe Melvin
Jani Pensola
Toby Hughes
Hugh Sparrow
Adam Wynter

Flutes

Gareth Davies
Amy Yule
Imogen Royce

Piccolos

Sharon Williams

Oboes

Juliana Koch
Olivier Stankiewicz
Imogen Davies

Bass Oboe

Adrian Rowlands

Cor Anglais

Maxwell Spiers

Clarinets

Sérgio Pires
Chris Richards
Chi-Yu Mo
Sarah Thurlow

E-flat Clarinet

Chi-Yu Mo

Bass Clarinet

Ferran Garcerà Perelló

Bassoons

Rachel Gough
Daniel Jemison
Joost Bosdijk

Contra Bassoons

Martin Field

Horns

Diego Incertis
Sánchez
Timothy Jones
Angela Barnes
Olivia Gandee
Jonathan Maloney
Lindsay Kempley
Jonathan Durrant
Jake Parker

Trumpets

James Fountain
Gareth Small
Adam Wright
Imogen Whitehead
Kaitlin Wild

Trombones

Vicente Climent
Calatayud
Byron Fulcher
Jonathan Hollick

Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

Euphonium

Byron Fulcher

Tuba

Ben Thomson

Timpani

Nigel Thomas
Patrick King

Percussion

Neil Percy
David Jackson
Sam Walton
Benedict Hoffnung

Harp

Bryn Lewis
Daniel De-Fry

Piano

Elizabeth Burley

Celeste

Catherine Edwards
Elizabeth Burley

Organ

Richard Gowers