



LSO

BOULEZ 100

**The Boulez Effect:
Afternoon Symposium
Evening Concert**

Monday 27 January 2025
Milton Court Concert Hall

London Symphony Orchestra



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ENGLAND

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Resident Orchestra

Welcome



Welcome to this day of special LSO events at Milton Court Concert Hall, celebrating the life, music and legacy of Pierre Boulez in his centenary year. Pierre Boulez was a central figure in London's musical life throughout his career, and forged a close relationship with the LSO, conducting major retrospectives of his own music in London and on tour, and exploring landmark developments in 20th-century orchestral music with performances of Berg, Schoenberg, Webern, Messiaen, Debussy and Stravinsky.

Today's events continue our centenary celebrations, following a performance of *Éclat* with Sir Simon Rattle on 9 January, and yesterday's LSO Futures concert – *Homage to Pierre Boulez* – which featured Boulez's own *Notations*, alongside music by Debussy and three world premieres, including a new homage to the composer by Olga Neuwirth. Yesterday's performance was conducted by Maxime Pascal, and we are very pleased that he will join us for both of today's events.

In this afternoon's event, *The Boulez Effect*, chaired by Kate Molleson, we will hear insights from a range of guest speakers, many of whom worked with Boulez during his career. Our thanks to all of the contributors who have helped to shape this event, including panellists Laurent Bayle, Jonathan Cross, Christine Pendrill, Neil Percy, Caroline Potter, David Alberman, George Benjamin and Maxime Pascal.

We are delighted to welcome back Maxime Pascal for this evening's concert, featuring a survey of Boulez's imaginative music for smaller-scale forces, from the early *Sonatine* for Flute and Piano to the experimental *Anthèmes 2* for Violin and Live Electronics. The performances showcase the LSO's musicians, including soloists Benjamin Marquise Gilmore, David Cohen and Gareth Davies. We are also pleased to welcome pianist Joseph Havlat, Ian Dearden and Jonathan Green from Sound Intermedia for *Anthèmes 2*, and an ensemble of cellos from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama for *Messagesquisse*.

I hope you enjoy today's events, and that you will join us again soon for another LSO concert. We return to the Barbican in the first week of February for concerts with Daniel Harding and Sir Antonio Pappano; I hope we will see you there.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn McDowell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'K' and 'M'.

Dame Kathryn McDowell DBE DL
Managing Director

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Read & Watch Online

Hear insights into Boulez's music and career from the LSO's conductors and musicians on our website and YouTube channel.

Iso.co.uk/stories
youtube.com/Iso

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Photography and audio/video recording
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Pierre Boulez

1925 (France) to 2016 (Germany)



Contemporaries

Luigi Nono,
Henri Dutilleux

Key events

1955: Premiere of *Le marteau sans maître*, his best-known work

1976: Founds Ensemble intercontemporain

Listen to

Pli selon pli with Ensemble intercontemporain
[youtube.com](#)

With the LSO

1967: LSO conducting debut
2008: Conducts acclaimed series of concerts with the LSO

Composer profile
by **Jo Buckley**

Pierre Boulez belongs to a small and select group of musicians who have single-handedly altered the course of music history. His multifarious career as composer, conductor, teacher, mentor and polemicist left an indelible imprint on the way we listen to, write, perform, and even understand music. He was the founder of IRCAM, Ensemble intercontemporain and the Lucerne Festival Academy, and he held principal conducting positions with the New York Philharmonic and BBC Symphony Orchestra. But his transformation from fiery young renegade to much-loved pillar of the establishment was not without its controversies. This is a man who said we should ‘blow the opera houses up’ in pursuit of experimental new stages, and who believed that ‘a civilisation that conserves is one that will decay because it is afraid of going forward’.

If there is one constant that defines Boulez’s diverse output, it is the dogged pursuit of change. ‘I don’t want my statements to be frozen in time,’ he said. ‘Certainly, if you

take a picture of yourself 30 years ago, that same picture cannot be used as a picture of yourself today.’ How very true: his first 30 years as a composer trace a path from the fevered surrealism of his early works, through the total serialism of the 1950s, to the ‘controlled chance’ of the 1960s.

As his conducting career took flight in the years that followed, his composition output dipped and several long-planned projects (including a much-anticipated opera) never came to fruition; but instead Boulez the master revisionist emerged. Among the most notable of these transformations is his aphoristic collection of piano miniatures *Notations* (1945), which became a lifelong orchestration project, and the 45-minute *Dérive 2* (2006), which began life as a five-minute birthday piece for Elliott Carter and ended up becoming his last major work. How incongruous it is, that a composer who so fiercely insisted on pursuing the new, should conclude his career by revisiting the past.

Pierre Boulez

Timeline



Boulez (left) in rehearsal with LSO Leader, John Georgiadis, in 1969

1925

Born in Montbrison, France.

1943

Enters the Paris Conservatoire, where he studies harmony with Georges Dandelot and, later, Olivier Messiaen.

1946

Asked by Jean-Louis Barrault and Madeleine Renaud to play ondes martenot in the score for their production of *Hamlet*. Becomes the Musical Director of their company for ten years.

1950

First performances of his Second Piano Sonata and the cantata *Le soleil des eaux*.

1953

Founds the 'Domaine musical' series of concerts at the Petit Marigny Theatre.

1955

First experience as a conductor, with Arnold Schoenberg's *Serenade*.

1957

London debut, playing *Structures I* with Yvonne Loriod at Wigmore Hall.

1962

BBC Proms premiere of *Le marteau sans maître* with conductor Basil Cameron – the first time the LSO performs Boulez's music.

1963

Conducts 50th-anniversary performance and recording of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*.

1965

Celebrates 40th birthday, conducting first performance of *Éclat* in Los Angeles.

1967

Debut performance with the LSO at the Royal Festival Hall, conducting Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. Appointed guest conductor of Cleveland Orchestra.

Pierre Boulez

Timeline (continued)

1969

Becomes Principal Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, a position he holds until 1975.

1970

Conducts the LSO in the first British performance of Mahler's 'Waldmärchen' from *Das klagende Lied*.

1971

Becomes Chief Conductor of the New York Philharmonic.

1976

Founds Ensemble intercontemporain, an ensemble dedicated to the performance of contemporary music. Conducts centenary *Ring Cycle* at Bayreuth.

1977

Opening of IRCAM, an institute specialising in research into music and sound, of which Boulez is Director.

1979

Conducts the premiere of the three-act version of Alban Berg's *Lulu* at the Paris Opéra.

1980

Premiere of first four orchestral *Notations* by Orchestre de Paris under Daniel Barenboim, Paris.

1985

60th birthday festival at Baden-Baden. First performance of *Dérive* in London, conducted by Oliver Knussen.

1995

70th birthday tour with the LSO, including concerts in London, Paris, New York, Vienna, Linz and Tokyo. Co-founds La Cité de la Musique in Paris.

2000

Conducts world premieres of works by George Benjamin, Olga Neuwirth, Péter Eötvös and Salvatore Sciarrino with the LSO.



Boulez (left) with former LSO Leader Alexander Barantschik



Boulez (right) with LSO Members Robin Brightman and Nigel Broadbent

2002

Appointed composer-in-residence at the Lucerne Festival, later co-founding the Lucerne Festival Academy in 2004.

2004

Conducts a series of concerts at the Barbican, *Essential Boulez*, celebrating his long association with the LSO.

2008

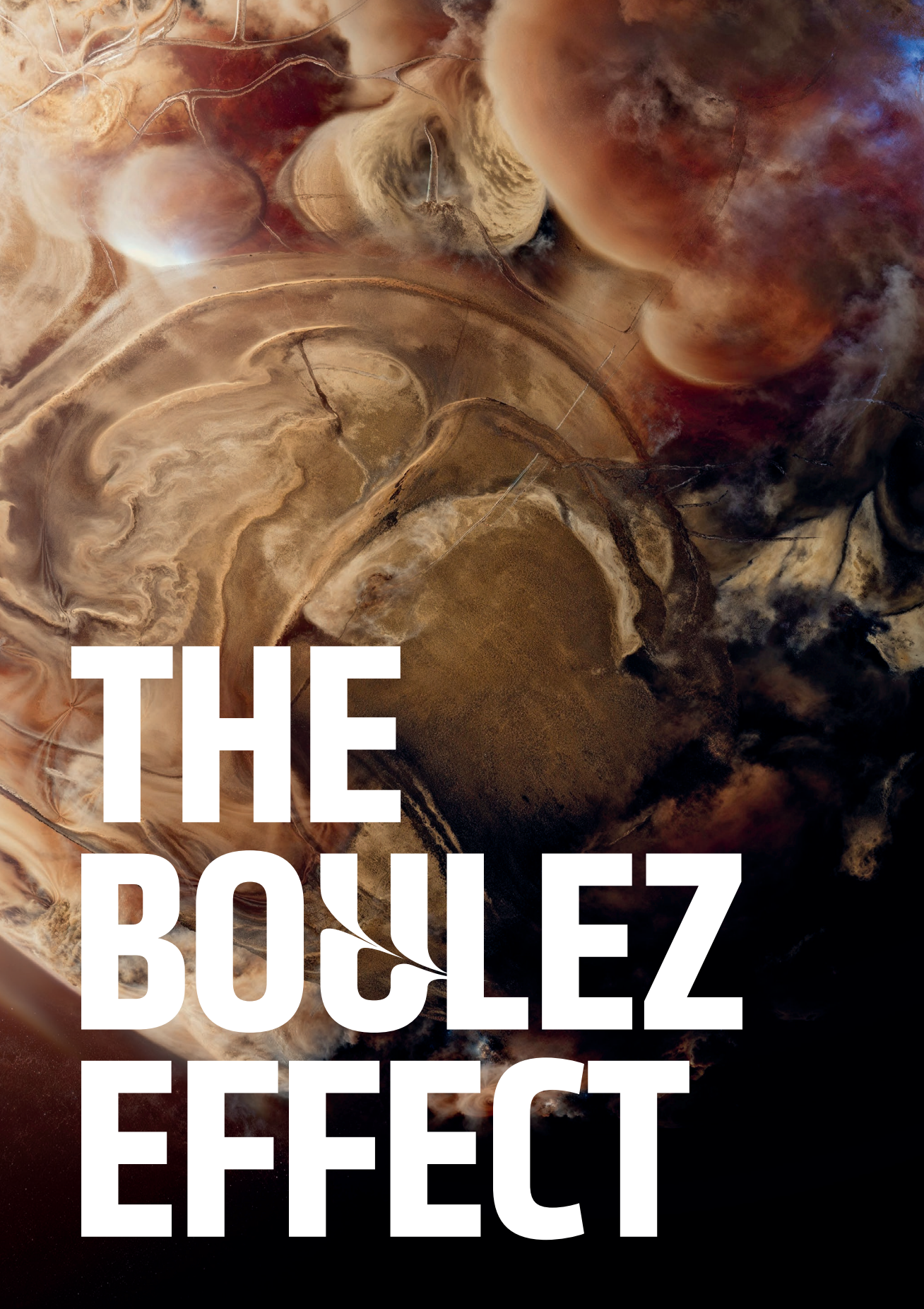
Final performance with the LSO, conducting *Towards Osiris* by Matthias Pintscher at the Barbican.

2015

Receives a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award.

2016

Dies at his home in Baden-Baden.



THE BOULEZ EFFECT



Afternoon Symposium

Monday 27 January 2025
Milton Court Concert Hall

4.30–6.30pm

Introduction Dame Kathryn McDowell
Symposium Chair Kate Molleson

Roundtable One: Boulez and Place

**Boulez's impact on cultural life in Paris,
London and working with the LSO.**

Speakers Laurent Bayle, Jonathan Cross,
Christine Pendrill, Neil Percy

Roundtable Two: Boulez and the Music

**A focus on the influences on Boulez's own music and conducting,
and his influence on the next generations of composers.**

Speakers David Alberman, George Benjamin,
Caroline Potter, Maxime Pascal

Symposium Curator Jane Williams

Kate Molleson

Symposium Chair



Writer and broadcaster Kate Molleson presents BBC Radio 3's *New Music Show* and *Composer of the Week*, and BBC Radio 4's *Front Row*.

Her writing has been published in the *Guardian*, the *New Statesman*, *Prospect*, *The Herald*, *BBC Music Magazine*, *Gramophone* and elsewhere. Her book *Sound Within Sound* (Faber & Faber, 2022) offers an alternative history of 20th-century classical music and inspired a new festival at London's Southbank Centre. Her documentaries (BBC Radio 4, BBC World Service) include features on music in Mongolia and Greenland, early Arabic recording archives and the Ethiopian pianist/composer Emahoy Tsegué-Maryam Guèbrou.

Kate teaches music journalism at the Darmstadt Summer Course. She grew up in Scotland and the north of Canada and studied clarinet performance at McGill University in Montreal and musicology at King's College London.

Laurent Bayle

Speaker



After starting his career as a manager in small theatre companies, Laurent Bayle founded the Festival Musica in Strasbourg in 1982, an event dedicated to contemporary music, which he managed until the end of 1986.

In early 1987, he was appointed Artistic Director of IRCAM (Institut de recherche et de coordination musique/acoustique) founded by Pierre Boulez, whom he succeeded in January 1992.

In 2001, he became General Director of the Cité de la Musique and CEO of the Salle Pleyel, a prestigious Parisian concert hall.

In 2006, in parallel, Laurent Bayle oversaw the construction of the major new concert hall, the Philharmonie de Paris. After its inauguration in 2015, he became CEO of the Cité de la musique – Philharmonie de Paris until the end of October 2021.

Currently Chairman of Les Arts Florissants – William Christie Foundation and of the Biennale de Lyon, he is also General Curator of the Boulez Year 2025 and has just written a book entitled *Pierre Boulez aujourd'hui*, published by Editions Odile Jacob.

Jonathan Cross

Speaker



Jonathan Cross is Professor of Musicology at the University of Oxford. He has written and lectured widely on issues in 20th- and 21st-century music. His publications include the acclaimed *The Stravinsky Legacy* (1998), *Harrison Birtwistle: Man, Mind, Music* (2000) and *Igor Stravinsky* (2015, also in Chinese and Turkish translations). He is currently completing a book centred on the music of Tristan Murail, in part the result of work undertaken at Boulez's Paris research centre IRCAM, where he was Research Associate 2015–16.

He speaks at a wide range of international public events and is a regular contributor to BBC Radio 3. He was Series Consultant to the Philharmonia Orchestra for the 2016 series *Stravinsky: Myths and Rituals*, which won the Sky Arts Classical Music Award. He was elected a Member of the Academy of Europe in 2015 and a Fellow of the British Academy in 2023.

Christine Pendrill

Speaker



After five years in the Philharmonia, Christine was invited to join the LSO as Principal Cor Anglais, becoming at the time only its fifth female Member. She played in the Orchestra for over 36 years until her retirement in 2022, her tenure in the LSO encompassing five Principal Conductors, one Chief Conductor Designate and six Principal Oboes!

In 1986, she was the first woman to be elected to the LSO's Board of Directors in its then 82-year history. Ten years later, she gave the world premiere of *The World's Ransoming*, a concertante work written for her and the LSO by Sir James MacMillan. She performed the piece many times around the UK and Europe and, in 2003, recorded it for LSO Live with Sir Colin Davis.

Although she has now fully embraced retirement from performing, Christine still teaches the cor anglais at the Royal College of Music.

Neil Percy

Speaker



Neil Percy has been Principal Percussion of the LSO for over 35 years, and Head of the Timpani and Percussion Department at the Royal Academy of Music for 25 years. During this time, Neil has worked closely with many major artists and conductors, and as a soloist with Sir Colin Davis, Pierre Boulez, Steve Reich, Karl Jenkins, Ravi Shankar, Kent Nagano and Elgar Howarth.

Neil featured as a soloist on the Grammy-nominated recording of Bartók's Concerto for Two Pianos and Percussion (Deutsche Grammophon) conducted by Pierre Boulez. He has worked closely with many composers on recordings and performances of over 150 film scores, notably John Williams, James Horner, Patrick Doyle, Trevor Jones and Alexandre Desplat. Neil has also enjoyed working with many major pop and jazz artists including Herbie Hancock, Elvis Costello, Natalie Cole, Dave Brubeck, Joe Zawinul, Tony Bennett, Luther Vandross, Vince Mendoza and Laura Mvula.

Neil has given masterclasses at many leading conservatoires and percussion events in the UK, Europe, the US and Asia and has coached many of the world's leading youth orchestras, including the Pacific Music Festival Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra.

Neil is the Zildjian cymbals 'Artist in Residence', a Yamaha Drums and Keyboard artist and an artist for Evans Drumheads and Freer Mallets.

David Alberman

Speaker



Born in London, David Alberman received his LRAM diploma from the Royal Academy of Music at the age of 16. He studied the violin privately with Igor Ozim in Cologne, and then studied Classical Languages and Philosophy at Oxford University for four years. After playing with the Academy of St Martin's, and playing as guest concertmaster of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, a long-standing interest in contemporary music led him to join the internationally renowned Arditti Quartet, who specialise in new music. During his time with the Quartet, he played the world premieres of more than 200 works, and made a number of prize-winning recordings.

Having left the quartet, he joined the London Symphony Orchestra as Principal Second Violin and later Chair of the Board, where he remained until 2023. He has also been in-demand as a teacher and coach (for example at the New World Symphony Academy in Miami Beach, the Music Academy in Santa Barbara, the Chamber Music Academy of the Aix-en-Provence festival, and in 2025 will coach, among other places, at Domaine Forget in Quebec and at the Lucerne Festival).

George Benjamin

Speaker



Born in London in 1960, George Benjamin began composing at the age of seven. In 1976 he studied with Olivier Messiaen at the Paris Conservatoire and subsequently with Alexander Goehr at King's College, Cambridge. *Ringed by the Flat Horizon* was played at the BBC Proms when the composer was 20; Benjamin's music has been performed by major orchestras and conductors across the world. Numerous international retrospectives have celebrated his career: Paris, Aix-en-Provence, New York, Tokyo, Toronto, Berlin, Hamburg, Madrid, Lucerne, Stockholm, Helsinki and at London's Barbican, South Bank and Wigmore Hall. He is also a celebrated conductor and pianist.

Benjamin's first operatic work *Into the Little Hill*, written with playwright Martin Crimp, was commissioned in 2006 by the Festival d'Automne in Paris. Their celebrated follow-up *Written on Skin* premiered at the Aix-en-Provence festival in 2012. *Lessons in Love and Violence* was his third collaboration with Crimp; their fourth, *Picture a day like this*, premiered at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence in 2023.

Recent awards include the 2015 Prince Pierre of Monaco composition prize and the 2019 Golden Lion Award for lifetime achievement from the Venice Biennale. George Benjamin is Commandeur de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. He was knighted in the 2017 birthday honours and in 2022 was awarded the Grand Prix artistique by the Institut de France. In 2023 Benjamin was awarded the Ernst von Siemens Music Prize and in 2024 received the BBVA Foundation Frontiers of Knowledge Award.

Caroline Potter

Speaker



Caroline Potter is an award-winning author who specialises in French music since Debussy. Based in London, she is currently Visiting Reader in French Music at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. She gives guest lectures and pre-concert talks worldwide, including keynote lectures at Princeton University, Madrid Complutense University and for the Music Since 1900 international conference. Caroline has published books on the music of Pierre Boulez, Erik Satie, Nadia and Lili Boulanger and Henri Dutilleux and is a frequent broadcaster and programme note writer. She also reviews contemporary music for publications including the journal *Tempo* and the website *I Care If You Listen*.

Caroline's book *Erik Satie, a Parisian composer and his world* (Boydell Press, 2016) was the *Sunday Times* Classical Music Book of the Year, and *Pierre Boulez: Organised Delirium* (2024), also published by Boydell, was nominated by Paul Griffiths as a *Times Literary Supplement* Book of the Year 2024. On 26 March 2025 – Boulez's 100th anniversary – she will be presenting her book at the CBSO Centre in Birmingham alongside performances by the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire students.

Maxime Pascal

Speaker & Conductor



Maxime Pascal is a passionate advocate for French, 20th-century and new music. His conducting appearances in opera include the world premiere of Sciarrino's *Ti vedo, ti sento, mi perdo* at La Scala, Milan, Brecht and Weill's *Die Dreigroschenoper* at the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, *Lulu* at the Vienna Festival, Stockhausen's *Donnerstag aus Licht*, *Samstag aus Licht*, *Dienstag aus Licht*, *Freitag aus Licht* and *Sonntag aus Licht* with his ensemble Le Balcon at the Paris Philharmonie and Martinů's *The Greek Passion* at Salzburg Festival. He also regularly collaborates with the Opéra de Paris, conducting works such as Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, *Boléro* and *L'heure espagnole* and Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*. Other appearances include Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* at Malmö Opera in 2016, Bizet's *Carmen* for Theater Basel and, recently, Péter Eötvös' *Sleepless* in Berlin, and Sivan Eldar's *Like Flesh* in Lille.

Pascal is a founding member of the multi-faceted artistic group Le Balcon, which performs a wide range of repertoire, integrating music with advanced sound and lighting systems. Their projects so far have included *Ariadne auf Naxos*, staged by Benjamin Lazar; a video spectacle on *Pierrot Lunaire* created by the Colombian

artist Nieto; and Stockhausen's *Donnerstag aus Licht* at London's Southbank Centre in 2019. This led to a seven-year collaboration with the Philharmonie de Paris where the ensemble is performing Stockhausen's whole *Licht* cycle, staging one opera per year. In lockdown, Pascal and Le Balcon performed and streamed unique programmes featuring works by Pierre Boulez, Carlo Gesualdo and Gérard Grisey, and Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*.

Maxime Pascal and Le Balcon have collaborated with Pierre Boulez, George Benjamin, Péter Eötvös and Michaël Lévinas, and in September 2016 released their debut album featuring a loose adaptation of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* (Le Balcon & BMedia/distributed by Outhere).

Alongside his operatic engagements, Pascal is establishing himself as a leading symphonic conductor. In 2019 he made his BBC Proms debut with Berlioz's *L'Enfance du Christ* with the Hallé, Britten Sinfonia Voices and Genesis Sixteen. In the same season, he conducted a Debussy/Stravinsky programme with the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra in Caracas. He regularly works with the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra and Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa. Recent engagements have included his debut at the Enescu Festival with Le Balcon in Messiaen's *Saint François d'Assise*, followed by debut performances with the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra and with the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and the violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja. Forthcoming appearances include concerts with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra and the RAI National Symphony Orchestra, Kaija Saariaho's *Innocence* for Semperoper Dresden, and Eötvös' *Three Sisters* and a concert with Le Balcon at Salzburg Festival.

COMING UP IN 2025

Season Highlights

Sunday 9 February 2025 7pm

Walton Cello Concerto

Maconchy and Vaughan Williams

Sir Antonio Pappano and Rebecca Gilliver

Thursday 20 March 2025 7pm

Haydn Symphony No 39

Debussy, Sibelius and Bartók

Barbara Hannigan

Thursday 10 April 2025 7pm

Beethoven Piano Concerto No 1

Schubert and Prokofiev


Gianandrea Noseda and Alice Sara Ott

Sunday 25 May 2025 7pm

Mozart Violin Concerto No 5

Strauss Ein Heldenleben

Sir Antonio Pappano and Lisa Batiashvili



CHAMBER CONCERT

Monday 27 January 2025
Milton Court Concert Hall

7.30pm

Pierre Boulez

Initiale

Messagesquise

Dérive 1

Sonatine for Flute and Piano

Anthèmes 2 for Violin and Live Electronics

Maxime Pascal conductor

Benjamin Marquise Gilmore violin

David Cohen cello

Gareth Davies flute

Joseph Havlat piano

Ian Dearden & Jonathan Green

(**Sound Intermedia**) live electronics

Guildhall School Cellos

LSO Chamber Ensemble

Programme Notes

Pierre Boulez

Initiale

Many of the titles of Pierre Boulez's works have double meanings. *Initiale* (1987), scored for seven brass instruments, which opens this concert, makes play on the ornate 'initials' or drop-caps found in medieval manuscripts. A short, energetic fanfare, it was commissioned for the inauguration of Houston's Menil Collection and conceived as a correspondingly ornate 'initiale' for the newly built museum. (As it happened, *Initiale* also opened the inaugural concert at Berlin's Pierre Boulez Saal in 2017.) Inevitably, it became the 'initial' version of another work in progress: in 1992 he expanded and repackaged it as an 80th-birthday surprise for conductor Georg Solti.

Initiale is a good example of the huge demands Boulez places on performers. The score is a mass of imitation and counterpoint. There are precise rhythms and articulation, sudden shifts in metre and long, elaborate statements that cover a vast expressive range. The combined effect, however, is hypnotic. And Boulez's grouping of instruments into two 'choirs' lends itself well to experiments with spatialisation, heightening that sense of contrapuntal interplay, as he had already done to great effect in the orchestral work *Figures—Doubles—Prismes* (1957–8).

Pierre Boulez

Messagesquisse

For much of his life, Boulez was preoccupied by the idea of a work being continually 'in progress'. So many of his compositions exist in multiple versions that those which

don't – his early masterpiece *Le marteau sans maître* (1953–5), for example – are the exceptions that prove the rule. And while *Messagesquisse* (1976) is one of those exceptions, it also represents the first link in a chain of pieces that stretches over several decades.

Written for solo cello and an ensemble of six cellos, it was conceived as a 70th-birthday present for the Swiss conductor and new-music patron Paul Sacher. Along with eleven other composers, Boulez was asked to write a work using only six notes, each corresponding to a letter from Sacher's surname: E-flat ('Es' in German notation), A, C, B ('H' in German notation), E and D ('ré' in the French system). Typically, Boulez took this idea a step further, adapting the name, via morse code, into a series of rhythmic motifs so that 'S', for example, is denoted by three semiquavers. The title, meanwhile, is a portmanteau of the words 'messages' and 'esquisse' ('sketch') – their shared syllable ('es') providing a further nod to the dedicatee.

Pungent, snappy and virtuosic, *Messagesquisse* dances adroitly between various opposing forces. Large-scale order, imposed by the ciphers, is tempered with small-scale freedoms – an approach Boulez described as 'local indiscipline'. He also delights in contrasting passages of furious, moto perpetuo energy – deliberately evoking the 'insane virtuosity' of Chopin's B minor Piano Sonata – with thick, stagnant chords and inquisitive pizzicato statements. This tension between attack and stasis, violence and seduction, is one of the core

Pierre Boulez

Initiale

Pierre Boulez

Messagesquisse

David Cohen

solo cello

Guildhall School Cellos

Gabriel Francis-Deqhani

Kosta Popovic

Nathanael Horton

James Conway

Theo Bently Curtin

Seth Collin

Programme Notes

by **Timmy Fisher**

Programme Notes (continued)

Pierre Boulez

Dérive 1

Pierre Boulez

Sonatine for Flute
and Piano

Gareth Davies flute

Joseph Havlat piano

tenets of Boulez's output. As is his fascination with resonance and patterns of decay – beautifully illustrated in *Messagesquisse's* opening statement, as each note of the cipher is picked out by the soloist and sustained by an ensemble cello.

Pierre Boulez

Dérive 1

Boulez would return to the Sacher Hexachord – as the cipher came to be known – again and again, weaving it into *Répons* (1982), *Incises* (1994) and the next work on tonight's programme, *Dérive 1* (1984). Scored for violin, cello, clarinet, flute, vibraphone and piano, this piece was written as a gift for another new-music champion, William Glock, ahead of his retirement as Artistic Director of the Bath Festival. (Thirteen years earlier, in his capacity as Controller of Music at the BBC, Glock had invited Boulez to become Chief Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, providing some establishment heft to Boulez's very particular vision of modern music.)

Dérive 1 displays Boulez's expert command of sound and texture. The music ripples and shimmers deliciously – 'a new-music lollipop', as one commentator described it. After the opening piano gesture – an inversion of the Sacher cipher – we are launched into a dazzling sequence of chords built (mostly) from the same six notes. Harmonies spray and overlap like waves, propelled from within by trills and flutter-tongues. After a final burst – the work's central climax – Boulez presents the same

harmonies on their side, spelling them out in a series of timid statements, before a return of the opening material. *Dérive 1* is wholly atonal, but its sumptuous facade makes it the perfect gateway for the atonally sceptic, leaning as it does towards the influence of Messiaen, Boulez's harmony teacher at the Paris Conservatoire, and Debussy, whose music – in particular his writing for flute – Boulez revered and recorded extensively.

Pierre Boulez

Sonatine for Flute and Piano

Up until this point we have heard works from Boulez's middle and later periods. The next piece in tonight's concert, the **Sonatine for Flute and Piano** (1946, rev 1949), is one of his earliest. Noisy, unruly, full of compressed rage and savagery, the Sonatine is a homage to Schoenberg and his 12-tone technique, whereby the notes of a piece are governed by a pre-determined row of pitches. Boulez first encountered this 'serialism' in 1945, at a concert featuring Schoenberg's Op 26 Wind Quintet (1923–4). 'It was a revelation,' he later said. 'In it I found a harmonic and contrapuntal richness and a capacity for development and extension I have never found anywhere else.'

In the Sonatine the 21-year-old Boulez pushes Schoenberg's method to its limits. Seldom is his row announced squarely as a melody. More often he piles up fragments in thick counterpoint, or explodes them across octaves like shattered glass. Indeed, the rhythmic intricacy and

constant shifts in register make the Sonatine a staggeringly difficult piece to perform. And so it wasn't – at least not by its original dedicatee, the flautist Jean-Pierre Rampal, who was put off by its complexity (Boulez had also vetoed Rampal's regular performance partner as pianist). The premiere eventually took place in 1947, part of a Brussels concert series which brought together early and contemporary music. Boulez didn't attend, though André Souris, the conductor who instigated the performance, gleefully wrote to inform him of the 'vociferous protests' it caused.

In a further nod to his hero, Boulez copied the structure of Schoenberg's First Chamber Symphony (1906), squeezing four 'movements' into one: after a slow introduction we hear a lively 'first movement', whose second theme develops into a mock scherzo; the slow 'middle movement' sees the flute dance atop a trilling piano melody; then a ferocious, toccata-like finale. Like the work's title – denoting a short, light sonata – this design invokes a tradition seemingly at odds with the uncompromising modernism that Boulez came to represent. This is, after all, the man who later wrote: 'All the art of the past must be destroyed.' It points to a puzzle at the heart of the Sonatine: does its symphonic model hark back, dewy-eyed, or do the structural boundaries in fact make Boulez's act of tonal vandalism more visible? Perhaps it's both: a paradoxical fusion of adherence and antagonism.

Boulez himself later grouped the works written around this time into his 'Classical period', a naïve prelude to the real revolution, in which he and others pushed Schoenberg's innovations to their ultimate conclusion. *Structures 1A* (1952) would prove the *ne plus ultra* of this 'total serialism', which extended the principle to every domain of music. But the breakthrough was short-lived. Almost immediately Boulez changed tack, pursuing a more flexible style – one he called 'organised delirium' – that placed greater emphasis on musical intuition: 'I like to give myself rules for the pleasure of breaking them,' he later quipped.

Pierre Boulez
Anthèmes 2 for Violin
and Live Electronics

The final work on tonight's programme, **Anthèmes 2 for Violin and Live Electronics** (1997) relates clearly and happily to a musical tradition. 'In choosing this title I was influenced by a childhood memory of the psalms that were sung during Holy Week,' Boulez explained, '... and by their clear strophic [verse and refrain] structure.' Indeed, *Anthèmes 2* obliquely captures the plaintive, ritualistic atmosphere of Gregorian plainchant. Its six sections (or verses) are linked and bookended by a refrain labelled 'free'. And as the dialogue unfolds between violin and electronics – the latter manipulating the former in real time – Boulez creates the sense of a solo voice in multiple parallel with itself – a new-age organum.

Pierre Boulez
Anthèmes 2 for
Violin and Live
Electronics

**Benjamin Marquise
Gilmore** violin
**Ian Dearden &
Jonathan Green**
(**Sound Intermedia**)
live electronics

Programme Notes (continued)

Maxime Pascal Biography

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The word '*Anthèmes*' also makes play on the phrase 'en thèmes' (in themes), pointing to two melodic ideas that develop with each repetition of the refrain. That Boulez returned to composing with themes and developments – ideas he once railed against – shows a further softening of his image as the Angry Young Man of modernism. (Not long after writing *Anthèmes 2*, while giving the Edinburgh Festival Lecture, he suggested that 'perhaps we [the Darmstadt generation of the 1950s and 1960s] did not take sufficiently into account the way music is perceived by the listener'.)

Still, the actual musical language of *Anthèmes 2* remains consistent with Boulez's central concern of pushing innovation, drawing as it does from techniques developed at IRCAM, the state-of-the-art computer music research centre that Boulez founded in 1977.

And, of course, all the classic 'Boulezian' traits persist, with its alchemical fusion of idea and sound. Predictably, *Anthèmes 2* is also derived from an earlier work, *Anthèmes 1*, itself derived from ... *explosante-fixe ...* (1972–4). Boulez had plans to rework *Anthèmes 2* as an orchestral concerto for the violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter. These were never fully realised – a sad but appropriate loss: it will forever be a work in progress.

David Cohen

LSO Principal Cello



David Cohen has established a reputation as one of the most charismatic and exciting cellists of today. He has been hailed by critics as 'magnificent' (*Gramophone*), a musician who 'demonstrates total commitment, combining vitality with expressive feeling in the most spontaneous manner' (*The Strad*), and 'an individual, and an exceptionally gifted one' (*New York Stereo Review*).

David made his solo debut with the Belgian National Orchestra at the age of nine. He studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School and then at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama where he studied under Oleg Kogan. He has won more than 25 prizes in international cello competitions including the Gold Medal of the GSMD in London, the Geneva International Cello Competition, J S Bach International Competition and many others. His international career as a soloist soon flourished with invitations from the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the London Soloists Chamber Orchestra, l'Orchestre Philharmonique de Liège, l'Orchestre Symphonique de la VRT, the Beethoven Academy Orchestra, l'Orchestre National de Lille, the Zurich Chamber Orchestra, l'Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, l'Orchestre Royal de Chambre de Wallonie, l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, l'Orchestre Symphonique de Grenoble, the Polish Philharmonic Orchestra, the Sinfonia Varsovia, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Seoul Philharmonic and the NHK Symphony Orchestra, as well as the BBC Concert Orchestra.

David has worked as a soloist with some of the most distinguished conductors in the industry such as Yehudi Menuhin, Mstislav Rostropovich, Walter Weller, Sir Charles Mackerras, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Christoph von Dohnányi, Pedro Halffter and Martyn Brabbins among others. His triumphant solo debut in Japan with the NHK Symphony Orchestra and Vladimir Ashkenazy, performing Tchaikovsky's *Rococo Variations* in June 2007, led him to be immediately re-invited for the 2009/10 season. David recently performed Elgar's Cello Concerto to a sold-out audience at the Barbican with the LSO and Sir Antonio Pappano.

In March of 2001, David was appointed as the Principal Cello of the Philharmonia Orchestra, becoming the youngest Principal Cello in its history, before joining the LSO as Principal Cello in 2021. During the 2002/03 season, he was nominated as an ECHO Rising Star by the Royal Philharmonic Society of Belgium and the Concertgebouw.

David is the Artistic Director of the Melchoir Ensemble and the founder and Artistic Director of the chamber music festival Les Sons Intensifs in Lessines, Belgium. He is also a professor at the Conservatoire Royal de Musique de Mons in Belgium, a position he has held since 2000, and at Trinity Laban in London. David plays the Ex-Pergamenschikow cello, a magnificent Dominicus Montagnana circa 1735, thanks to the kindness and generosity of Mrs Pat Morton and the help of the Razumovsky Trust.

Gareth Davies

LSO Principal Flute



Gareth Davies is one of the flautists of his generation. He studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and shortly after graduating was appointed Principal Flute in the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at the age of 23. In 2000 he was invited to become Principal Flute with the London Symphony Orchestra. Over the last 25 years, he has played and recorded with many of the great conductors of our time, including Colin Davis, Haitink, Previn, Jansons, Rostropovich and, of course, Pierre Boulez.

He has recorded concertos by Nielsen, Karl Jenkins and Douglas Knehan and can be heard with the LSO on many recordings, movie soundtracks (including *Harry Potter* and *Star Wars*), video games and TV series.

As well as performing, Gareth is in demand as a teacher. He is visiting professor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and regularly coaches woodwind students on the Orchestral Artistry Postgraduate course. He teaches and performs every summer at the James Galway Flute Festival in Lucerne and is one of the team of international coaches for YMCG in Hong Kong and Guanzhou, with director Daniel Harding.

Gareth also works as a writer and presenter. He has written for the LSO and for *BBC Music Magazine*, and has also written and presented programmes on Radio 3 as well as a documentary for Classic FM. His first book,

The Show Must Go On – On Tour With The LSO, published by Elliott and Thompson, was chosen as a book of the year in the *Financial Times* and *Classical Music* magazine.

Gareth is passionate about music and has written several concerts for children with his collaborator Victor Craven, which have been performed by the LSO in London and on tour in the US. They feature a wide variety of challenging repertoire which children take in their stride. During the pandemic, they wrote an online guide to the orchestra, *Where's Simon?*. Featuring Sir Simon Rattle and the whole LSO performing at home on their mobile phones, the film has recently been included in the British Film Institute Archive for posterity.

Gareth is a Wm. S Haynes Artist.

Joseph Havlat

piano



Joseph Havlat is a pianist and composer from Hobart, Australia, based in London. Working as a soloist and chamber musician for music very new, very old and some things in between, he has performed in major concert venues around the UK, Europe, America, Japan and Australia.

Joseph is a leading interpreter of new music, having collaborated with such composers as Hans Abrahamsen, John Adams, Thomas Adès, Gerald Barry, Brett Dean, Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Michael Finnissy and Thomas Larcher. As a chamber musician he has performed with William Bennett, James Ehnes, Steven Isserlis, Katalin Károlyi and Jack Liebeck, alongside regular duo partners Lotte Betts-Dean and Charlotte Saluste-Bridoux. He is also a member of the LSO Percussion Ensemble, with whom he has released a CD on the LSO Live label, featuring the premiere recording of John Adams' two-piano work *Roll Over Beethoven*.

As a composer his music often explores the sounds of the natural world, imbued with the harsher shapes of human modernity. He has written music spanning from solo voice to large ensemble, including for Ensemble x.y, of which he was a founding member.

Joseph studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London under Professor Joanna MacGregor between 2012 and 2018, where he received his BMus and MMus with distinction, including awards for exceptional merit in studentship and the highest recital mark for a postgraduate pianist. He has been a Young Artist of St John's Smith Square, the Oxford Lieder Festival and Kirckman Concert Society, and was a first prize winner of the Royal Overseas League Music Competition.

Joseph teaches at the Royal Academy of Music, and enjoys growing ferns.

Benjamin Marquise Gilmore

LSO Leader



Benjamin Marquise Gilmore enjoys a busy life as an orchestral and chamber musician, joining the LSO as Leader in August 2023. He was concertmaster of the Philharmonia Orchestra between 2019 and 2023, and has been a member of the Navarra Quartet since 2021. He is also a member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and from 2016 to 2019 was leader of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, to which he continues to return as guest leader and director. A lover of opera, he is also a frequent guest concertmaster with the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House.

Benjamin studied with Natalia Boyarskaya at the Yehudi Menuhin School and with Pavel Vernikov in Vienna, and received further guidance and inspiration from Julian Rachlin and Miriam Fried. He won prizes at the Oskar Back, Joseph Joachim and Salzburg Mozart competitions, and has participated in festivals such as Kuhmo, Prussia Cove and Ravinia. Benjamin's father was the musicologist Bob Gilmore, his grandfather is the conductor Lev Markiz, and his mother Maria Markiz has variously been a musicologist, interpreter, equestrian and data analyst. He is married to Hannah Shaw, a violist, and enjoys cooking and cycling, in both of which disciplines he makes up in enthusiasm what he lacks in proficiency.

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On Stage

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Cellos

Gabriel Francis-Deqhani
Kosta Popovic
Nathanael Horton
James Conway
Theo Bently Curtin
Seth Collin

LSO Chamber Ensemble

On Stage

Violin

Benjamin Marquise Gilmore

Cello

David Cohen

Flute

Gareth Davies

Clarinet

Chris Richards

Horns

Diego Incertis Sánchez

Angela Barnes

Trumpets

James Fountain

Adam Wright

Trombones

Jonathan Hollick

Paul Milner

Tuba

Ben Thomson

Percussion

Neil Percy

Piano

Joseph Havlat