

LSO ON FILM

The French Connection

Sunday 22 June 2025
Barbican

7pm

Georges Auric

Music from 'The Spider and the Fly'

Georges Delerue

Return to the Hill & Ashton's Son
from 'A Summer Story'

Vladimir Cosma

Schpountz Final from 'Le schpountz';
Le jaguar (Overture) from 'Le jaguar'

Philippe Sarde

Suite Cinema Romanesque;
Suite Symphonic from 'Tess'

Philippe Rombi

Aria from 'Joyeux Noël'

Jean-Claude Petit

To England, La fuite du Roi & Ship Fight
from 'The Return of the Musketeers'

Interval

Philippe Chany

Le jardin fantastique & Les Romains from
'Asterix & Obelix: Mission Cleopatra'

Philippe Rombi

The Centaur & Final from
'Asterix: The Secret of the Magic Potion'

Mathieu Alvaro

End Credits from 'Asterix & Obelix:
The Big Fight'

Guillaume Roussel

Mustang Spirit from 'Black Beauty'

Mathieu Alvaro

Duinlan's Theme & Ravik's Theme
from 'Ghost of a Tale'

Alexandre Desplat

Harry Potter and the Deathly
Hallows Suite (excerpts)

Michel Legrand

Music from 'Never Say Never Again'

Dirk Brossé conductor

London Symphony Orchestra

Concert finishes at approximately 9pm

RECOMMENDED BY

CLASSIC *fm*

Welcome



Welcome to this evening's LSO performance – the second in our three-concert series featuring film scores originally recorded by the LSO. Tonight, we celebrate the film music of French composers in a rich and diverse programme curated and conducted by one of today's finest conductors of film music, Dirk Brossé. He last joined the LSO at the Barbican in June 2024 for the first concert in this series, featuring film scores by composers living and working in the UK and US. Dirk Brossé returns in June 2026 for the final concert, conducting some of the most memorable blockbuster film scores that the LSO has been associated with over the last 70 years.

I would like to thank Classic FM for recommending tonight's concert, which features music by some of France's most acclaimed film composers. From the lush romanticism of Philippe Sarda's *Suite Symphonique* from *Tess* (1979) to the cinematic intensity of Alexandre Desplat's *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Suite* (2010), their work has shaped the soundscape of cinema across generations.

We hope you enjoy this concert and will join us again soon. Next week, Karen Ni Bhroin conducts the LSO Discovery Showcase, uniting performers from across our Discovery programmes to share the stage with the LSO. In July, Sir Antonio Pappano, the LSO's Chief Conductor, brings the 2024/25 season to a close with performances of Strauss' opera *Salome*, the first of his summer concert operas with the LSO, featuring Asmik Grigorian in the title role. We hope to see you there.

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

Dame Kathryn McDowell DBE DL
Managing Director

More Film Music

Wednesday 17 December 2025 7pm
Thursday 18 December 2025
Barbican

The Golden Age of Hollywood

Relive the golden age of Hollywood with music by some of cinema's most brilliant and influential composers, conducted by Sir Antonio Pappano.

Sunday 7 June 2026 7pm
Barbican

LSO on Film: Blockbusters

Dirk Brossé returns for the final concert in our *LSO on Film* series, conducting spectacular cinematic scores from some of the biggest and most celebrated movies of all time – all originally recorded by the London Symphony Orchestra.

Welcome to tonight's group bookers
Laura Keene

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Visit iso.co.uk/survey or scan the QR code to complete a short survey about tonight's concert.



Programme Note

Neil Brand

Georges Auric
Music from 'The Spider and the Fly'

Georges Delerue
Return to the Hill & Ashton's Son from 'A Summer Story'

David Cohen
Cello

The London Symphony Orchestra has a long and distinguished history as the orchestra of choice for great film composers around the world, and in this central instalment in a trilogy of concerts at the Barbican, we concentrate on its many and varied relationships with French composers. While many people's idea of French concert music is often reduced to the work of Impressionist greats like Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel and Erik Satie, the range and distinctiveness of the music tonight entirely gives the lie to that canard.

France is a nation of cinephiles, and the output of the French film industry (which, lest we forget, gave birth to cinema itself with the Lumière brothers' films of 1895) is always in the top five of international producing countries, regularly outperforming American product both in France and on the world stage. This is partially through its unique model of cultural exception, viewed enviously by creatives in other countries, particularly here in the UK.

Tonight's scores spring from every genre of cinema of the past 76 years, and although some of the films and names will be familiar to us, we also set out to celebrate scores and composers who deserve to be better known over here than they are. Tonight is a voyage of discovery which will yield up treasures of texture, melody and musicality, and hopes to send us out looking for more works by these great French artists and the films their scores have enhanced.

Georges Auric studied under Satie, becoming a member of the 1920s group of young, angry Parisian avant-garde composers known as Les Six, which included Francis Poulenc, Darius Milhaud and Germaine Tailleferre. By the 1930s, he had fallen under the spell of new artistic thinkers such as Jean Cocteau, for whom he wrote his first film scores, and went on to score over 100 movies in his long career. In 1945, he was contracted to compose for that most British of studios, Ealing, starting with the classic chiller *Dead of Night* (1945),

‘Tonight is a voyage of discovery which will yield up treasures of texture, melody and musicality.’

and going on to give vibrancy to their best-known classics, including *Passport to Pimlico* (1949) and *The Lavender Hill Mob* (1951).

Auric’s complex, passionate music gave inner emotional life to films famed for representing post-war Britain to the world; indeed, it is arguable that he expressed depths of emotion that the average post-war Briton simply could not. Robert Hamer’s 1949 European-tinged romantic crime drama **The Spider and the Fly** gave Auric wonderful opportunities. The story of a doomed love triangle – between a crook, a policeman and the woman they both love – set in the dark, crime-ridden streets of pre-World War 1 Paris, called for a dark, empathetic underscore which could embrace tense, drawn-out bank robberies, murderous pursuits and tragic heartbreak, mirrored by the grief of a country embarking on a devastating war.

Perhaps more surprisingly, Auric also provided gorgeous, mystical, romantic music to accompany

the film’s final Vienna-set showdown, full of shimmering vibraphone and glistening woodwinds and boasting a full-throated, string-led love theme.

Described by *Le Figaro* as ‘The Mozart of Cinema’, Georges Delerue composed over 350 scores for film and TV, winning an Academy Award for 1979’s *A Little Romance* and multiple Césars and Golden Globes in a distinguished career that embraced French, American and British movies. His best-known scores are for *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1969), *Julia* (1977) and *Agnes of God* (1985), all of which earned him Academy Award nominations. In 1988, he scored the British film **A Summer Story**, directed by Piers Haggard and starring James Wilby and Imogen Stubbs in a doomed, tear-jerking romance between a country girl and a sophisticated college boy, set in glorious 1920s Devon countryside. Delerue gave it a lush, string-led score of soaring melodies and quieter, rural idylls distinguished with solo flute and



Still from *The Return of the Musketeers* (1989)

Vladimir Cosma

Schpountz Final
from 'Le schpountz';
Le jaguar (Overture)
from 'Le jaguar'

Philippe Sarde

Suite Cinema
Romanesque;
Suite Symphonic
from 'Tess'

Philippe Rombi

Aria from
'Joyeux Noël'

Jean-Claude Petit

To England, La fuite
du Roi & Ship Fight
from 'The Return of
the Musketeers'

David Cohen

Cello

Benjamin

Marquise Gilmore
Violin

viola passages that perfectly encapsulated the passion of the young couple, and the despair of the boy over the cruelty he unwittingly unleashed on the innocent girl. In these excerpts, he returns to the farm after 20 years and is confronted with the consequences of his actions, including realising that the girl had died giving birth to his son.

Tonight's concert features two contrasting themes from a master of French cinematic scoring, Vladimir Cosma, originally from Romania, who studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris and made that city his home from 1963. He was fascinated by jazz and folk as well as classical music, and is probably best known here for his César-winning score for Jean-Jacques Beineix's *Diva* (1981). His forte, however, is comedy and his bright, often percussion-driven scores have graced the work of innumerable French comedies and, in the case of **Le jaguar**, the comic partnership of Jean Reno and Patrick Bruel.

Cosma's score for Gérard Oury's 1999 remake of Marcel Pagnol's **Le schpountz** (meaning 'village idiot') has all the hallmarks of a comic romp, a whirling 5/8 tempo with a *tarantella* feel. In contrast, his music for Francis Veber's *Le jaguar* (1996) boasts a broad epic theme underlying the comedy plotline, which describes the stunning beauty of the Amazonian jungle to which Patrick Bruel's Perrin finds himself transported as a shaman.

Possibly the pre-eminent composer of his generation, Philippe Sarde brings a unique imagination and musical texture to his more than 200 scores, none more so than the two performed here. Alain Corneau's 1984 **Fort Saganne** (featured in Sarde's *Suite Cinema Romanesque*) starred Gerard Depardieu, Philippe Noiret and Catherine Deneuve in a Foreign Legion epic that was France's biggest-budget film at the time. For the film, Sarde subverted the epic love theme, his strings soaring over complex harmonies

with dark-tinged romantic arias, a sonorous cello leading but always unpredictable.

For the 1979 Academy Award-nominated **Tess** (based on Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*), Sarde found the perfect mix of English rural folk music, passionate romanticism and an earworm of a main theme that somehow encapsulated Nastassja Kinski's courageous Tess and the complexities of her story. In both cases, these are compositions that live and breathe magnificently in isolation from the films for which they were written, surely an indicator of a truly great film score.

The deeply emotional story of the 1914 Christmas Truce on the Western Front was the subject of Christian Carion's 2005 **Joyeux Noël**, which was nominated for an Academy Award as best foreign-language film. The event is depicted through the eyes of French, British and German soldiers, and takes us deep into the emotional lives of these doomed young men, for whom music was both an outlet and an expression of shared humanity. Philippe Rombi, best known for his collaborations with director François Ozon, including 2003's *Swimming Pool* and 2023's *The Crime is Mine*, provides a stunning violin aria – specially ascribed to solo violin when Rombi heard the LSO's leader playing it during the recording sessions – which serves as a poignant statement on the pity of war and is almost a requiem in itself.

Between 1973 and 1989, the great Richard Lester directed three knockabout adaptations of Alexandre Dumas' *Musketeer* novels, starring Richard Chamberlain, Oliver Reed,

Frank Finlay and Michael York.

The Return of the Musketeers

arrived 15 years after the previous two and was overshadowed by the death on set of beloved British comic actor Roy Kinnear. The two first *Musketeer* films were scored by Michel Legrand and Lalo Schiffrin respectively, but for this final outing, Jean-Claude Petit provided a fast-moving, quirky, classical score in the Erich Wolfgang Korngold tradition.

The music has all the joyful adventure movie tropes we heard with the previous films but adds a soulful element in keeping with the ageing cast. In 'Ship Fight', we hear the cartoonish underscore that suits the slapstick elements beautifully, the tension intertwining with jokey woodwind stabs before growing into a full-blown action cue. 'To England' is a helter-skelter chase to try to prevent the beheading of King Charles I. 'La fuite du Roi' moves from a regal anthem into tense cat-and-mouse, the whole score providing an intricate workout for the orchestra.



Interval – 20 minutes

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Philippe Chany

Le jardin fantastique
& Les Romains from
'Asterix & Obelix:
Mission Cleopatra'

Philippe Rombi

The Centaur &
Final from 'Asterix:
The Secret of the
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End Credits from
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Guillaume Roussel

Mustang Spirit from
'Black Beauty'

Mathieu Alvaro

Duinlan's Theme &
Ravik's Theme from
'Ghost of a Tale'

René Goscinny and Albert Uderzo's timeless creations Asterix the Gaul and Obelix, his enormous friend, first appeared in comic form in 1959, and in the intervening years have gone on to be amongst the all-time top-selling European comic creations. It is no surprise that French cinema took them up so avidly or that their adventures outfighting the Romans, in both animated and live-action ancient worlds, have given such inspiration to French film composers.

Philippe Chany's comic score for 2002's live-action **Mission Cleopatra**, starring Christian Clavier and Gerard Depardieu, gives us a magical ancient Egypt in 'Le jardin fantastique', contrasting with a comically overblown march for the pompous Romans mixed with sinister, low 'bad guy' counter melodies. Philippe Rombi's score for 2018's animated **Asterix: The Secret of the Magic Potion** is a firework display of orchestral imagination, treading more of the fantasy John Williams path in conjuring up The

Centaur, a giant robot created by Getafix, and losing no opportunities to underscore the movie mayhem with beautiful melodies, drawing us into the action by filling out the characters' inner lives as well as their comic interactions. And for the 2025 French 3D animated TV miniseries, **Asterix & Obelix: The Big Fight**, Mathieu Alvaro pays homage to the classic *Asterix* animated films, but also adds modern scoring elements, breaking up the very tuneful comedy romp with sensitive woodwind breaks, and providing a big quest theme for strings, folk fiddle and whistle.

Anna Sewell's 1877 novel about the life of a farm horse becoming a cab-horse, told by the horse itself and centring on the welfare of animals, has seen six film and many TV adaptations. The most recent was 2020's French/UK/US/German/South African co-production, which changed **Black Beauty** from a stallion to a mare, gave her Kate Winslet's voice, moved the action to the South African veldt

'Asterix and Obelix ...
have gone on to be
amongst the all-time
top-selling European
comic creations.'



Still from *Asterix & Obelix: Mission Cleopatra* (2002)

and awarded the scoring duties to Guillaume Roussel. Roussel distinguished himself in both classical and jazz composition before joining Hans Zimmer's Remote Control Productions in 2010, going on to score movies on both sides of the Atlantic, including the recent, hugely popular *Three Musketeers* films and *Expendables 4*. His piano-led 'A Mustang's Spirit' underscores both the scenic beauty of the horse's home and its strength and grace galloping at full speed.

Ghost of a Tale is a hugely successful 2016 fantasy role-playing game developed by ex-Dreamworks animator Lionel Gallat, in which Tilo, a courageous little minstrel mouse, has to take on a medieval world of animal creatures and an undead army to regain his home. For the game's 2018 console release, Gallat commissioned a full orchestral score from Mathieu Alvaro, which was recorded by the LSO. Alvaro has already featured in this concert, not only as composer for *Asterix & Obelix: The Big Fight* but also for sterling orchestrations

on Guillaume Roussel's *Black Beauty*. His score here is fully cinematic, a distinguished set of compositions that give genuine emotional depth to the gameplay and features some beautiful melodies. 'Duinlan's theme' gives us the thoughtful, timeless spirit of a heartbroken lady Warrior Rat who challenges Tilo on his quest. Ravik's chirpy, mischievous Theme belongs to the leader of the Magpies of Myhglar, a truth-teller who, after some thought, decides to advise Tilo rather than eat him.

The phenomenally successful *Harry Potter* dynasty of eight movies, released between 2001 and 2011, featured scores by Patrick Doyle, Nicholas Hooper and, first and most famously, John Williams. The latter actually created the iconic, celeste-led 'Hedwig's Theme' for a promotional short for director Christopher Columbus before seeing anything of the film! By the time of 2011's two-part final chapter **Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows**, the epic story had been moving into ever darker

Alexandre Desplat
Harry Potter and
the Deathly Hallows
Suite (excerpts)

Michel Legrand
Music from 'Never
Say Never Again'

territory with the rise of Voldemort and his Death Eaters. Harry, more mature and challenged by ever stronger forces of darkness, was dealing with the loss of his mentor and increasing threats to his friends and loved ones.

The score for the final chapters was entrusted to Alexandre Desplat. An Academy-, BAFTA-, Golden Globe- and Grammy-Award-winning French composer, Desplat is a real chameleon of film composition, scoring a bewildering range of French, British and American movies, always with a unique fluidity and individuality that embraces all genres. This year alone, he is responsible for the scores for Wes Anderson's *The Phoenix Scheme*, *Jurassic World Rebirth* and Guillermo del Toro's *Frankenstein*. His score for *Deathly Hallows* is dark and exciting, full of quirky gems and memorable themes for all the major characters, as well as layering a depth of emotional maturity beneath the closing chapters of Harry's story. It is also a showpiece for every section of the LSO, who originally recorded Williams, Doyle and Desplat's scores and whose players obviously love the driving pyrotechnics of Desplat's writing.

In 1983, Sean Connery starred in a James Bond film that was not produced by Eon Productions, who had made all his previous Bond outings and were currently making *Octopussy* with Roger Moore. Producer Jack Schwartzman and director Irvin Kershner, still riding high from directing

The Empire Strikes Back three years before, used executive producer Kevin McClory's filming rights to Connery's 1965 Bond hit *Thunderball* for the new film. **Never Say Never Again's** story replicated and updated the plot of the previous movie, with Blofeld's SPECTRE masterminding the theft and deployment of two nuclear missiles, much of the action happening underwater. John Barry was approached to compose the score, but passed on it out of loyalty to Eon Productions, and James Horner was also considered. Eventually, Academy Award-winning composer Michel Legrand was tasked with composing the score, including a catchy title song which, although not to the gold standard of his great tunes for *Summer of '42* and *The Thomas Crown Affair*, including 'The Windmills of Your Mind', is enough of an earworm and sets the style for the film as a whole.

Although the score has come in for a good deal of criticism over the years, one could argue it works on the same level as Sean Connery himself. His very presence wearing Bond's tuxedo and carrying the Walther PPK harks back to an earlier time when his James Bond first landed with a splash in an early 1960s, jazz-driven world, representing a retro glamour that Legrand's cool stylings are also there to invoke. Action, languid romance and even a tense tango feature in a jazzy score which, though unusual for Bond, is the natural home of the legendary Michel Legrand.

Dirk Brossé

conductor



Next on stage with the LSO

Sunday 7 June 2026 7pm, Barbican
LSO on Film: Blockbusters

Dirk Brossé, an internationally acclaimed conductor and award-winning composer, is currently Music Director of the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia and Music Director of the Ghent Film Festival. He is also professor of composition and conducting at the School of Arts/Royal Conservatory of Music in his hometown of Ghent, Belgium.

In 2008, he made his first appearance at the Royal Albert Hall in London, conducting the London Symphony Orchestra, and in 2016, he made his debut at Carnegie Hall, New York. He has guest conducted many top orchestras, among them the Vancouver Opera, Opéra de Lyon, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and many more across the world.

Brossé is also an award-winning composer, whose body of some 400 works includes concertos, oratorios, lieder, chamber music and symphonic pieces, as well as scores for cinema, television and stage, such as the Emmy-nominated score for the BBC/HBO series *Parade's End*. Other scores include *Prince of Africa*, *Sacco & Vanzetti*, *Tintin*, *Rembrandt*, *Ben X*, *Pauline & Paulette*, *14–18* and *Scrooge*.

Brossé is a versatile and creative performer with a keen interest in cinematic music; he is an early advocate of bringing movie scores to orchestral venues. He was chosen by John Williams

to conduct the 'Star Wars in Concert' World Tour in 2009, the first world tour of its kind. He is also director of The World Soundtrack Academy at the prestigious Ghent Film Festival. He has made more than 100 CD recordings and has collaborated with world-class artists, including Julian Lloyd Webber, Alison Balsom, Toots Thielemans and Hans Zimmer. Brossé has also worked with directors Stijn Coninx, Frank Van Laecke, Susanna White and Roland Joffé, and with writers Gabriel García Márquez, Seth Gaaikema and Didier Van Cauwelaert.

He has been awarded the title Cultural Ambassador of Flanders, the Flemish Parliament's Gold Medal for Merit, the Achille Van Acker Prize, the Joseph Plateau Honorary Award and the Global Thinkers Forum Award for Excellence in Cultural Creativity.

In 2013, he was elevated to Belgium's hereditary nobility, with the personal title of Ridder (Sir). He is a member of the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts and, since 2018, also a Fellow in Arts and Humanities at the Brussels University VUB. His Majesty King Philippe of Belgium recently awarded Brossé the Belgian monarchy's highest honour: Commander in the Order of Leopold.

London Symphony Orchestra

On Stage

Leader

Benjamin Marquise
Gilmore

First Violins

Sini Simonen
Clare Duckworth
Ginette Decuyper
Laura Dixon
William Melvin
Stefano Mengoli
Claire Parfitt
Elizabeth Pigram
Laurent Quénelle
Harriet Rayfield
Olatz Ruiz de
Gordejuela
Caroline Frenkel
Victoria Irish
Grace Lee
Julia Rumley

Second Violins

Thomas Norris
Sarah Quinn
David Ballesteros
Matthew Gardner
Naoko Keatley
Alix Lagasse
Belinda McFarlane
Iwona Muszynska
Andrew Pollock
Paul Robson
Momoko Arima
Francisca Brito
Ingrid Button
Cindy Foster

Violas

Gillianne Hadow
Malcolm Johnston
Thomas Beer
Julia O'Riordan
Sofia Silva Sousa
Robert Turner
Mizuho Ueyama
Sally Belcher
Michelle Bruil
Stephanie Edmundson
Fiona Dalglish
Nancy Johnson

Cellos

David Cohen
Laure Le Dantec
Salvador Bolón
Ève-Marie Caravassilis
Daniel Gardner
Amanda Truelove
Henry Hargreaves
Silvestrs Kalniņš
Desmond Neysmith
Peteris Sokolovskis

Double Basses

Patrick Laurence
Chaemun Im
Joe Melvin
Josie Ellis
Matthew Gaffney
Lars Radloff
James Trowbridge
Adam Wynter

Flutes

Michael Cox
Daniel Shao
Clare Findlater

Piccolo

Patricia Moynihan

Oboes

Olivier Stankiewicz
Imogen Davies

Cor Anglais

Maxwell Spiers

Clarinets

Sérgio Pires
Chi-Yu Mo

Bass Clarinet

Ferran Garcerà Perelló

Bassoons

Rachel Gough
Joost Bosdijk

Horns

Diego Incertis
Sánchez
Timothy Jones
Angela Barnes
Jonathan Maloney

Trumpets

James Fountain
Adam Wright
Richard Blake
David Geoghegan
Christian Barraclough

Trombones

Jonathan Hollick
Gemma Riley

Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

Tuba

Ben Thomson

Timpani

Patrick King

Percussion

Neil Percy
David Jackson
Rachel Gledhill
Matthew Farthing
Mark McDonald

Harps

Heidi Krutzen
Anneke Hodnett

Synth

Mark Etherington

Guitar

Huw Davies

Drum Kit

Matthew French

Dulcimer

Jordan Murray