

TONIGHT'S CONCERT

Sir Antonio Pappano: The Dream of Gerontius

Sunday 19 & Tuesday 21 April
Barbican

7pm

Edward Elgar

The Dream of Gerontius

Sir Antonio Pappano conductor

Emily D'Angelo mezzo-soprano

David Butt Philip tenor

William Thomas bass

Mariana Rosas chorus director

London Symphony Chorus

London Symphony Orchestra

Concert finishes at approximately 8.55pm

Please note there will not be an interval

Welcome



Welcome to these London Symphony Orchestra concerts, conducted by Sir Antonio Pappano, LSO Chief Conductor, featuring Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* – a work that holds a special place in the choral repertoire. We are delighted to be joined by mezzo-soprano Emily D'Angelo, making her LSO debut, alongside tenor David Butt Philip, bass William Thomas and the London Symphony Chorus, who all return to perform with the LSO at the Barbican.

The Dream of Gerontius unfolds as a vast and deeply expressive meditation on life, death and the journey beyond. In setting Cardinal Newman's text, Elgar created a work of striking originality, combining moments of intimate reflection with passages of dramatic power. The music traces a path through doubt, anguish and consolation, revealing the full breadth of Elgar's musical imagination.

On Thursday 16 April, we were pleased to announce the LSO's 2026/27 season, our third with Sir Antonio Pappano as Chief Conductor. Our LSO Patrons, Pioneers and Friends can book now, with public booking opening on Friday 24 April.

We hope you enjoy these concerts. Next month, Sir Antonio Pappano returns to conduct a programme of Britten, Bernstein and Tchaikovsky on Sunday 10 May, with pianist Denis Kozhukhin as soloist in Bernstein's *The Age of Anxiety*. Nathalie Stutzmann conducts Beethoven, Wagner and Strauss the following week, with Leif Ove Andsnes as soloist in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 3. We hope to see you there.

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

Dame Kathryn McDowell DBE DL
Managing Director

Coming Up

Sunday 10 May 7pm
Barbican

Britten, Bernstein and Tchaikovsky

Tchaikovsky juggles beauty and suffering, Britten reflects powerfully on grief and conflict and Bernstein grapples with the modern world. Sir Antonio Pappano conducts, and pianist Denis Kozhukhin joins for Bernstein's fizzing 'symphonic concerto'.

Thursday 14 May 7pm
Barbican

Beethoven, Wagner and Strauss

Richard Strauss breathes dizzying life into 18th-century Vienna, Wagner recreates medieval Rome and Beethoven marries tenderness and high spirits. Leif Ove Andsnes, one of today's leading Beethoven performers, is the soloist in the composer's Third Piano Concerto, while Nathalie Stutzmann conducts.

Welcome to tonight's group bookers

Sir John Baker
Stuart Packford
Phill Ward

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The Dream of Gerontius

Edward Elgar

Emily D'Angelo
mezzo-soprano
David Butt Philip
tenor
William Thomas
bass

PART I

- 1 Prelude**
- 2 Jesu Maria**
– I am near
to death
- 3 Rouse thee, my
fainting soul**
- 4 Sanctus fortis,
Sanctus Deus**
- 5 Proficiscere,
anima
Christiana**

PART II

- 6 I went to sleep**
- 7 It is a member
of that family**
- 8 But hark! upon
my sense comes
a fierce hubbub**
- 9 I see not those
false spirits**
- 10 But hark! a grand
mysterious
harmony**
- 11 Thy judgement
now is near**
- 12 I go before
my judge**
- 13 Softly and
gently, dearly
ransomed soul**



1900



1 hour and 40
minutes

Today, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* is a national monument. That is both a blessing and a curse. Few English music lovers would contest its status, but there is a corresponding tendency to take it, and its content, for granted. There are some who still dismiss it as a more or less conventional expression of late-Victorian piety. So it's worth remembering that at its first performance, just over a century ago, *Gerontius* was thought by some to be outlandishly modern, while its subject matter was viewed in other quarters with suspicion verging on paranoia.

The text of *The Dream of Gerontius* – by the Roman Catholic convert Cardinal John Henry Newman – is full of doctrine which had been rejected by the Protestant churches during the Reformation. The sole human character, the dying Gerontius (the name derives from the Greek *geron*, meaning 'old man'), prays for assistance to the Virgin Mary and other saints; and, after his soul-searching encounter with God at the climax of Part II, doesn't simply pass into heaven, but is committed to purgatory for a long, and possibly painful process of purification.

For some Protestants, this would have been dangerous heresy. When *Gerontius* was proposed at the 1902 Three Choirs Festival, the Bishop of Worcester objected – and there were plenty who supported him. Performance in the Cathedral was only permitted once the text had been purged of 'popish' elements: the words

'Jesus', 'Lord' or 'Saviour' were substituted for 'Mary'; 'souls' for 'souls in purgatory'; 'prayers' for 'masses', and so on. It may seem faintly bizarre now, but in early 20th-century England, these were still acutely sensitive issues.

As for the music, Elgar was a Wagnerian; and for many English concert-goers in 1900, Wagner was still difficult modern music. Some of it was too much even for the experienced Birmingham Festival Choir: the 'Demons' Chorus' and much of the semi-chorus writing came over poorly at the Birmingham premiere (accusations of sabotage were levelled at some male members of the choir). The experience prompted one of Elgar's most bitter outbursts: 'I always said God was against art ... I allowed my heart to open once – it is now shut against every religious feeling and every soft, gentle impulse for ever.' But the work's fortunes soon began to change – especially when, after the 1901 German premiere of *Gerontius*, Richard Strauss publicly toasted Elgar as 'the first English Meister' – high praise indeed from the world's most celebrated Wagnerian. Elgar's close friend and musical confidant August Jaeger (the 'Nimrod' of the *Enigma Variations*) was also struck by the work's Wagnerian character and ambitions. While Elgar was still working on the score, Jaeger wrote: 'Since *Parsifal* nothing of this mystic, religious kind of music has appeared to my knowledge that displays the same power and beauty as yours. Like Wagner you seem to grow with your greater,

Programme note by
Stephen Johnson

more difficult subject and I am now most curious and anxious to know how you will deal with that part of the poem where the Soul goes within the presence of the Almighty. There is a subject for you!

... at its first performance, just over a century ago, *Gerontius* was thought by some to be outlandishly modern, while its subject matter was viewed in other quarters with suspicion verging on paranoia.

But at that crucial point in the story, Elgar's Wagnerian nerve temporarily failed him. 'Please remember that none of the 'action' takes place in the presence of God', he replied to Jaeger. 'I would not have tried that, neither did Newman. The Soul says 'I go before my God' – but we don't – we stand outside.' Fortunately, Jaeger was unimpressed, and began a campaign to get the composer to have another go: 'I have tried and tried and tried, but it seems to me the weakest page of the work! Do re-write it! ... It seems mere whining to me and not at all impressive.' At first, Elgar resisted, but eventually he gave in; could it be that an inner voice was also telling him that

Jaeger was right – that he'd been too timid? The end result is perhaps the most original moment in the whole score. As Gerontius goes to be 'consumed, yet quicken'd, by the glance of God', there is an awe-inspiring crescendo; then the full orchestra, with organ and four percussionists, delivers a lacerating *Parsifal*-like discord – but only for a split second: Elgar marks it *fffz-p*. The effect is like a blinding flash of light, infinitesimally brief, but leaving the eyes and brain reeling. Now we understand why Gerontius cries 'Take me away' – the music has made that quite clear.

Elgar learnt another important lesson from Wagner – though as with every influence on *Gerontius*, he digested it so thoroughly that the listener hears only authentic Elgar. Before Wagner, operas and oratorios tended to be arranged in 'numbers': arias, duets, ensembles, choruses – all more or less detachable from the larger dramatic context. Wagner found a way of making dramatic works evolve continuously, seamlessly, like huge symphonies.

Elgar achieves something very similar in *The Dream of Gerontius*. Some sections – like the Angel's beautiful lullaby 'Softly and gently' at the end of Part II – can be performed separately, with the help of a little surgery; but there are details (for instance, recollections of earlier themes) which only make complete sense if this music is heard in its proper place. And the sense of sustained symphonic current is essential

The Dream of Gerontius (continued)

Edward Elgar

to the work's message. Early in Part II, Gerontius' disembodied soul describes how 'a uniform and gentle pressure tells me that I am not self-moving, but borne forward on my way.' Elgar's music conveys the sense of that 'uniform and gentle pressure' with subtle power. We can feel that we too are 'borne forward', through the Demons' Chorus, through the angelic hymn 'Praise to the Holiest in the height', to the final, agonising yet transfiguring encounter with God.

That process – slow but inexorable – can be felt at the very beginning of the orchestral Prelude. Clarinets, bassoons and violas introduce a quiet, lamenting theme, at first unaccompanied, then continuing against a slow, heavy tread from double basses and low woodwind. Slow as it is, there is a sense, as in all great symphonies, that something could grow from this. The theme doesn't merely provide the impetus; it's also a melodic seed. The outline of the first four notes has an influence on many of the important motifs in *Gerontius*.

The Prelude leads without a break into Gerontius' first words: 'Jesu, Maria ...'. Elgar's music registers movingly the dying man's wavering between hope and dread. Other voices join with him: souls on earth and in heaven, praying for his deliverance. There is an impassioned declaration of faith ('Sanctus fortis'), more

choral prayers, then the moment of death: 'and I fain would sleep, the pain has wearied me'. The almost heart-breaking sadness of this passage may be a reflection of the dark, depressive side of Elgar's character. The critic Ernest Newman remembered how, not long after the premiere of *Gerontius*, Elgar's wife Alice 'tactfully steered the conversation away from the topic of suicide that had suddenly arisen; she whispered to me that Edward was always talking of making an end of himself'.

But this is not the end of Gerontius' journey. The words of the Priest ('Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul') mark the soul's passing into the next world. Then in Part II comes the meeting with the Angel, the encounter with demons, the angelic hymn, and the spiritual thunderbolt when Gerontius has his split-second encounter with God. With sure dramatic instinct, Elgar reserves the most beautiful of all the melodies of *Gerontius* – the Angel's consoling 'Softly and gently' – for the very end. More than a century after *Gerontius* was almost denied entry to Worcester Cathedral, this music is now loved by Christians of many denominations, as well as by music-lovers with no particular faith. Even without faith, one can still be moved by Elgar's heartfelt expression of loss and hope in the face of death: 'Farewell, but not for ever!'



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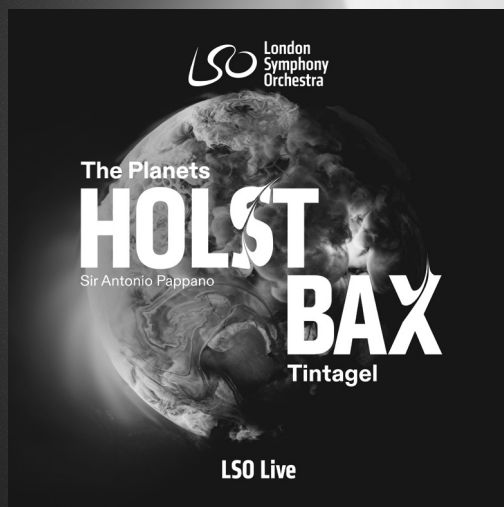
London Symphony Orchestra

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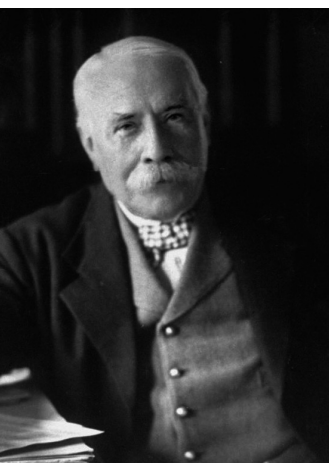
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Edward Elgar

1857 to 1934 (United Kingdom)



Contemporaries

Gustav Mahler,
Claude Debussy

Key events

1904: Receives
knighthood

1924: Made Master
of the King's Music

With the LSO

1905: World
premiere of *Pomp
and Circumstance*

1908: World premiere
of Symphony No 1

1910: World
premiere of
Violin Concerto

1911–12: Serves as
Principal Conductor
of the LSO

1919: World premiere
of Cello Concerto

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Composer profile by
Alexandra Wilson

Edward Elgar was one of the most acclaimed British composers of modern times. Receiving no formal conservatoire training, he worked as a jobbing musician as a young man, only gaining success as a self-taught composer as he approached middle age. In the late 1880s and 1890s, he wrote chamber and instrumental pieces of considerable charm, such as *Salut d'amour*, *Chanson de nuit* and *Chanson de matin*.

The orchestral 'Enigma' Variations (1899), with its movements cryptically named after Elgar's friends, marked the beginning of professional recognition. International fame arrived in 1900 with the composition of the Oratorio *The Dream of Gerontius* – a piece that spoke directly to Elgar's deeply held, if at times unconventional, Roman Catholic beliefs – and with a three-day festival devoted to his music at Covent Garden in 1904.

Thereafter, Elgar continued to write oratorios, most notably *The Apostles*, *The Kingdom* and *The Music Makers*, but also ventured into large-scale orchestral works, writing two symphonies (and sketching a third, completed by the composer Anthony Payne in

the 1990s), the Violin Concerto and the much-loved Cello Concerto. In later years, Elgar devoted himself to committing his compositions to record for the gramophone, and also composed a number of major chamber works, including his *Plano Quintet* and *String Quartet*.

Elgar travelled to Paris and Leipzig as a young man and took inspiration for his elegiac style from the leading German composers of the 19th century, including Mendelssohn, Wagner and Brahms. Nevertheless, his music came to be characterised as quintessentially English and bound up with Edwardian patriotic sentiment, not least because of the enduring success of the exuberant *Pomp and Circumstance* Marches, composed intermittently over the first three decades of the 20th century.

Like the Suffolk-born Benjamin Britten after him, Elgar is a composer closely associated with a specific English region. Periodically, he would reside in London, but he always found the atmosphere uncongenial. For a time, he lived in Hereford, but he repeatedly returned to his native Worcestershire, where he was born and would eventually die.

The Dream of Gerontius

Text

Part I

Gerontius

Jesu, Maria – I am near to death,
And Thou art calling me; I know it now,
Not by the token of this faltering breath,
This chill at heart, this dampness on my brow –
(Jesu, have mercy! Mary, pray for me)
'Tis this new feeling, never felt before,
(Be with me, Lord, in my extremity!)
That I am going, that I am no more.
'Tis this strange innermost abandonment,
(Lover of souls! great God! I look to Thee.)
This emptying out of each constituent
And natural force, by which I come to be.
Pray for me, O my friends: a visitant
 is knocking his dire summons at my door,
The like of whom, to scare me and to daunt
Has never, never come to me before;
So pray for me, my friends, who
 have not strength to pray.

Assistants

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison. Holy Mary, pray for him.
All holy Angels, pray for him.
Choirs of the righteous, pray for him.
All Apostles, all Evangelists, pray for him,
All holy Disciples of the Lord, pray for him.
All holy Innocents, pray for him.
All holy Martyrs, all holy Confessors,
All holy Hermits, all holy virgins,
All ye Saints of God, pray for him.

Gerontius

Rouse thee, my fainting soul, and play the man;
and through such waning span
Of life and thought as still has to be trod,
Prepare to meet thy God.
And while the storm of that bewilderment
Is for a season spent
And, ere afresh the ruin on me fall,
Use well the interval.

Assistants

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord,
Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him.

From the sins that are past;
From Thy frown and Thine ire;
From the perils of dying;
From any complying
With sin, or denying
His God or relying
On self, at the Last;
From the nethermost fire;
From all that is evil;
From power of the devil;
Thy servant deliver,
For once and for ever.
By Thy birth, and by Thy Cross
Rescue him from endless loss;
By Thy death and burial,
Save him from a final fall;
By Thy rising from the tomb,
By Thy mounting up above,
By the Spirit's gracious love
Save him in the day of doom.

Gerontius

Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Parce mihi, Domine.
Firmly I believe and truly
God is Three, and God is One;
And I next acknowledge duly
Manhood taken by the Son.
And I trust and hope most fully
In that Manhood crucified:
And each thought and deed unruly
Do to death, as He has died.
Simply to His Grace and wholly
Light and life and strength belong.
And I love, supremely, solely,
Him the holy, Him the strong.

Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Parce mihi, Domine,
And I hold in veneration,
For the love of Him alone,

Holy Church, as His creation,
And her teachings, as His own.
And I take with joy whatever
Now besets me, pain or fear,
And with a strong will I sever
All the ties which bind me here.

Adoration aye be given,
With and through the angelic host,
To the God of earth and heaven,
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Sanctus fortis, Sanctus Deus,
De profundis oro te,
Miserere, Judex meus,
Mortis in discrimine.

I can no more; for now it comes again,
That sense of ruin, which is worse than pain,
That masterful negation and collapse
Of all that makes me man.
... And, crueller still,
A fierce and restless fright begins to fill
The mansion of my soul,
And, worse and worse,
Some bodily form of ill floats on the wind,
with many a loathsome curse
Tainting the hallowed air, and laughs,
and flaps its hideous wings,
And makes me wild with horror and dismay.

O Jesu, help! pray for me, Mary, pray!
Some Angel, Jesu! such as came to Thee
In Thine own agony ...
Mary, pray for me. Joseph, pray for me.
Mary, pray for me.

Assistants

Rescue him, O Lord, in this his evil hour,
As of old so many by Thy gracious power:
Noe from the waters in a saving home;
(Amen).
Job from all his multiform and fell distress;
(Amen).
Moses from the land of bondage and despair;
(Amen).

David from Golia and the wrath of Saul;
(Amen).

... So, to show Thy power,
Rescue this Thy servant in his evil hour.

Gerontius

Novissima hora est and I fain would sleep,
The pain has wearied me ...
Into Thy hands O Lord, into Thy hands ...

Priest and Assistants

Proficiscere, anima Christiana, de hoc mundo!
Go forth upon thy journey, Christian soul!
Go from this world! Go, in the Name of God
The Omnipotent Father, Who created thee!
Go, in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord,
Son of the living God, Who bled for Thee!
Go, in the Name of the Holy Spirit,
Who Hath been poured out on thee!
Go in the name
Of Angels and Archangels; in the name
Of Thrones and Dominations; in the name
Of Princedoms and of Powers; and in the name
Of Cherubim and Seraphim; go forth!
Go, in the name of Patriarchs and Prophets!
And of Apostles and Evangelists,
Of Martyrs and Confessors, in the name
Of holy Monks and Hermits; in the name
Of holy Virgins; and all Saints of God.
Both men and women, go!
Go on thy course;
And may thy place today be found in peace,
And may thy dwelling be the Holy Mount
Of Sion: through the Same, through Christ
Our Lord.

The Dream of Gerontius

Text

Part II

Soul of Gerontius

I went to sleep; and now I am refreshed.
A strange refreshment for I feel in me
An inexpressive lightness, and a sense
Of freedom, as I were at length myself,
And ne'er had been before. How still it is!
I hear no more the busy beat of time,
No, nor my fluttering breath,
nor struggling pulse;
Nor does one moment differ from the next.
This silence pours a solitariness
Into the very essence of my soul:
And the deep rest so soothing and so sweet
Hath something too of sternness and of pain.
Another marvel: Someone has me fast
Within his ample palm;
... A uniform
And gentle pressure tells me I am not
Self-moving, but borne forward on my way,
And hark! I hear a singing; yet in sooth
I cannot of that music rightly say
Whether I hear, or touch, or taste the tones.
Oh, what a heart-subduing melody!

Angel

My work is done,
My task is o'er,
And so I come,
Taking it home,
For the crown is won, Alleluia. For evermore.

My Father gave
In charge to me
This child of earth
E'en from its birth,
To serve and save,
Alleluia,
And saved is he.
This child of clay
To me was given,
To rear and train
By sorrow and pain
In the narrow way,
Alleluia.
From earth to heaven.

Soul

It is a member of that family
Of wondrous beings, who,
Ere the world were made,
Millions of ages back, have stood around
The throne of God.
I will address him,
Mighty One, my Lord,
My Guardian Spirit all hail!

Angel

All hail, my child!
My child and brother,
Hail! what wouldst thou!

Soul

I would have nothing but to speak with thee
For speaking's sake. I wish to hold with thee
Conscious communion; though
I fain would know
A maze of things, were it but meet to ask,
And not a curiousness.

Angel

You cannot now
Cherish a wish which ought not to be wished.

Soul

Then I will speak.
I ever had believed
That on the moment when the struggling soul
Quitted its mortal case, forthwith it fell
Under the awful Presence of its God,
There to be judged and sent to its own place.
What lets me now from going to my Lord!

Angel

Thou art not let but with extremest speed
Art hurrying to the Just and Holy Judge.

Soul

Dear Angel, say,
Why have I now no fear of meeting Him!
Along my earthly life, the thought of death
And judgement was to me most terrible.

Angel

It is because
 Then thou didst fear, that now thou dost not fear,
 Thou hast forestalled the agony, and so
 For thee the bitterness of death is passed.
 Also, because already in thy soul
 The judgement is begun.

A presage falls upon thee, as a ray
 Straight from the Judge, expressive of thy lot.
 That calm and joy uprising in thy soul
 Is first-fruit to thee of thy recompense,
 And heaven begun.

Soul

Now that the hour is come, my fear is fled;
 And at this balance of my destiny,
 Now close upon me, I can forward look
 With a serenest joy.
 But hark! upon my senses
 Comes a fierce hubbub, which
 would make me fear
 Could I be frightened.

Angel

We are now arrived
 Close on the judgement-court; that sullen howl
 Is from the demons who assemble there
 Hungry and wild, to claim their property,
 And gather souls for hell.
 Hark to their cry!

Soul

How sour and how uncouth a dissonance!

Demons

Low-born clods
 Of brute earth, They aspire
 To become gods,
 By a new birth,
 And an extra grace,
 And a score of merits,
 As if aught
 Could stand in place
 Of the high thought

And the glance of fire
 Of the great spirits,
 The powers blest,
 The lords by right,
 The primal owners,
 Of the proud dwelling
 And realm of light –
 Dispossessed,
 Aside thrust,
 Chucked down,
 By the sheer might
 Of a despot's will,
 Of a tyrant's frown,
 Who after expelling
 Their hosts, gave,
 Triumphant still,
 And still unjust
 Each forfeit crown
 To psalm-droners,
 And canting groaners
 To every slave,
 And pious cheat
 And crawling knave,
 Who licked the dust
 Under his feet.

Angel

It is the restless panting of their being;
 Like beasts of prey, who, caged within their bars,
 In a deep hideous purring have their life,
 And an incessant pacing to and fro.

Demons

The mind bold
 And independent
 The purpose free,
 So we are told,
 Must not think
 To have the ascendant.
 What's a saint?
 One whose breath
 Doth the air taint
 Before his death;
 A bundle of bones,
 Which fools adore,

The Dream of Gerontius

Text

Ha! Ha!
When life is o'er.
Virtue and vice,
A knave's pretence.
'Tis all the same;
Ha! ha!
Dread of hell-fire,
Of the venomous flame,
A coward's plea.
Give him his price,
Saint though he be,
Ha! ha!
From shrewd good sense
He'll slave for hire;
Ha! Ha!
And does but aspire
To the heaven above
With sordid aim,
And not from love.
Ha! ha!

Soul

I see not those false spirits; shall I see
My dearest Master, when I reach His throne!

Angel

Yes – for one moment thou shalt see thy Lord.
One moment but thou knowest not my child,
What thou dost ask: that sight of the Most Fair
Will gladden thee, but it will pierce thee, too.

Soul

Thou speakest darkly, Angel! and an awe
Falls on me, and a fear lest I be rash.

Angel

There was a Mortal, who is now above
In the mid glory: he, when near to die,
Was given communion with the Crucified –
Such, that the Master's very
wounds were stamped
Upon his flesh; and, from the agony
Which thrilled through body and
soul in that embrace,
Learn that the flame of the Everlasting Love
Doth burn ere it transform ...

Choir of Angelicals

... Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise:

Angel

... Hark to those sounds!
They come of tender beings angelical,
Least and most childlike of the sons of God.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise:
In all His words most wonderful:
Most sure in all His ways!

To us His elder race He gave
To battle and to win,
Without the chastisement of pain,
Without the soil of sin.

The younger son He willed to be
A marvel in His birth:
Spirit and flesh His parents were;
His home was heaven and earth.

The Eternal blessed His child, and armed,
And sent Him hence afar,
To serve as champion in the field
Of elemental war.
To be His Viceroy in the world
Of matter, and of sense;
Upon the frontier, towards the foe,
A resolute defence.

Angel

We now have passed the gate, and are within
The House of Judgement ...

Soul

The sound is like the rushing of the wind –
The summer wind – among the lofty pines.

Choir of Angelicals

Glory to Him, Who evermore
By truth and justice reigns;
Who tears the soul from out its case,
And burns away its stains!

Angel

They sing of thy approaching agony,
Which thou so eagerly didst question of.

Soul

My soul is in my hand: I have no fear –
But hark! a grand mysterious harmony:
It floods me, like the deep and solemn sound
Of many waters.

Angel

And now the threshold, as we traverse it
Utters aloud its glad responsive chant.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise;
In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!

O loving wisdom of our God!
When all was sin and shame,
A second Adam to the fight
And to the rescue came.

O wisest love! that flesh and blood
Which did in Adam fail,
Should strive afresh against the foe,
Should strive and should prevail;

And that a higher gift than grace
Should flesh and blood refine,
God's Presence and His very Self,
And Essence all divine.

O gen'rous love! that He who smote
In man for man the foe,
The double agony in man
For man should undergo;

And in the garden secretly,
And on the cross on high,
Should teach His brethren and inspire
To suffer and to die.

Praise to the Holiest in the height
And in the depth be praise:

In all His words most wonderful;
Most sure in all His ways!

Angel

Thy judgement now is near, for we are come
Into the veiled presence of our God.

Soul

I hear the voices that I left on earth.

Angel

It is the voice of friends around thy bed,
Who say the 'Subvenite' with the priest.
Hither the echoes come; before the Throne
Stands the great Angel of the Agony,
The same who strengthened
Him, what time He knelt
Lone in the garden shade, bedewed with blood.
That Angel best can plead with Him for all
Tormented souls, the dying and the dead.

Angel of the Agony

Jesu! by that shuddering dread
which fell on Thee;
Jesu! by that cold dismay which sickened Thee;
Jesu! by that pang of heart which thrilled
in Thee;
Jesu! by that mount of sins which crippled Thee;
Jesu! by that sense of guilt which stifled Thee;
Jesu! by that innocence which girdled Thee;
Jesu! by that sanctity which reigned in Thee;
Jesu! by that Godhead which was one with Thee;
Jesu! spare these souls which
are so dear to Thee;
Souls, who in prison, calm and
patient, wait for Thee,
Hasten, Lord, their hour, and
bid them come to Thee,
To that glorious Home, where they
shall ever gaze on Thee.

Soul

I go before my Judge ...

Voices on Earth

Be merciful, be gracious; spare him, Lord.
Be merciful, be gracious; Lord, deliver him.

The Dream of Gerontius

Text

Angel

... Praise to His Name!
O happy, suffering soul! for it is safe,
Consumed, yet quickened, by the glance of God.
Alleluia! Praise to His Name.

Soul

Take me away, and in the lowest deep
There let me be,
And there in hope the lone night-watches keep,
Told out for me.
There, motionless, and happy in my pain,
Lone, not forlorn –
There will I sing my sad perpetual strain,
Until the morn,
There will I sing, and soothe my stricken breast,
Which ne'er can cease
To throb, and pine, and languish, till possess
Of its Sole Peace.
There will I sing my absent Lord and Love: –
Take me away,
That sooner I may rise, and go above,
And see Him in the truth of everlasting day.

Souls in Purgatory

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge:
in every generation,
Before the hills were born, and the world was,
from age to age Thou art God.

Bring us not Lord, very low; for Thou hast said,
Come back again, ye sons of Adam.
Come back, O Lord! how long; and
be entreated for Thy servants.

Angel

Softly and gently, dearly ransomed soul,
In my most loving arms I now enfold thee,
And o'er the penal waters, as they roll,
I poise thee, and I lower thee, and hold thee.
And carefully I dip thee in the lake,
And thou, without a sob or a resistance,
Dost through the flood thy rapid passage take,
Sinking deep, deeper, into the dim distance.
Angels, to whom the willing task is given,
Shall tend, and nurse, and lull thee, as thou liest;
And Masses on the earth, and prayers in heaven,
Shall aid thee at the Throne of the Most Highest.
Farewell, but not for ever brother dear,
Be brave and patient on thy bed of sorrow;
Swiftly shall pass thy night of trial here,
And I will come and wake thee on the morrow.

Souls

Lord, Thou hast been our refuge, etc. Amen.

Choir of Angelicals

Praise to the Holiest, etc. Amen.

Text by Cardinal John Henry Newman (1801–90)

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London Symphony Chorus

The Dream of Gerontius with the LSC



With the LSO

Fifteen of the LSC's 26 performances of *The Dream of Gerontius*, including three of their four recordings

Key dates

1971: Decca recording at Snape Maltings with Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears, Yvonne Minton and John Shirley-Quirk and the LSO

1983: Four performances with Yevgeny Svetlanov (two with the LSO in London and two with the USSR SSO in Moscow)

1988: Chandos recording with the LSO and Richard Hickox, LSC Chorus Director for 15 years, from 1976 to 1991

2005: LSO Live recording with Sir Colin Davis – President of the LSC from 2007 to 2013

Article by
Roger Blitz

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the London Symphony Chorus, originally founded to complement the work of the LSO. We look back at their long association with Elgar's choral masterpiece.

April 1983. At Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport, 120 members of the London Symphony Chorus disembark for a week of rehearsals with the USSR State Symphony Orchestra, culminating in two performances of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* and one of Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* at the Conservatoire, near Red Square. The LSC has funded a chartered Aeroflot plane plus the fees for UK soloists (paid in sterling), and have brought with them all the orchestral parts – borrowed from the London Symphony Orchestra – in two holdalls.

They are greeted by a British embassy official, who warns not to talk to the press, and a Russian state apparatchik who tells then LSC chairman Peter Sedgwick the choir must stay together as a group. 'They won't take any notice of me,' Peter replies.

These are the first performances of *Gerontius* in Russia, underlining how infrequently *Gerontius* has been heard abroad. The irony is that after a calamitous premiere at the Three Choirs Festival in Birmingham in 1900, it is its favourable reception abroad – first in Dusseldorf, which was feted by Richard Strauss, then in New York, Chicago and Sydney – that helps establish the reputation of the work (Elgar disdained from calling it an oratorio).

Those LSC performances in Moscow only happened because of Yevgeny Svetlanov, at the time principal guest conductor of the LSO. 'He didn't speak a word of English, but he was bowled over by the piece as a young musician and had a burning desire to conduct it,' Peter recalls. 'He saw it as a gem of late-Romantic music.'

Despite Elgar's standing in Europe as a composer heavily influenced by Wagner and other German classical masters, *Gerontius* still gets only the occasional international airing. Maybe to European minds, *Gerontius* is deemed to be quintessentially British. Strauss, in toasting the piece, called its composer 'the first English Progressivist, Meister Edward Elgar'.

LSC Chorus Director Mariana Rosas, who comes to *Gerontius* for the first time, finds in the piece shades of *Parsifal* and *Tristan and Isolde*. 'It's in the orchestration, in the characters, the leitmotifs,' she says. 'What happens to me with the opening of the second half, and the angels, is similar to what happens with Mahler 2 – I start crying. Some melodies are heartbreaking.'

Peter remembers how members of the USSR orchestra were 'gobsmacked by the pianissimo of the semi-chorus, saying they had never heard a choir singing

so softly and quietly. I think the Moscow audiences had a yearning for something different. They simply didn't know the music.' (*Belshazzars' Feast* merited an encore and a 23-minute ovation.)

Mariana acknowledges that *Gerontius* is instantly recognisable as 'the core of the British repertoire'. This work, and the choral masterpieces of Vaughan Williams and Walton, are 'the pillars of the musical history of this country'. At the same time, 'I find there are things in this piece that are relatable and that transcend the concept of British. Why it hasn't travelled, I don't know.'

Gerontius, is a 'very taxing' vocal demand, requiring the chorus to sing like angels, then like demons, and back again. 'You need to be aware of who you are at each moment. You have to activate the right colours and articulation, that's a very refined demand for singers, to go from one extreme to the other.'

Gerontius is seared in the LSC's collective memory. In its 60-year history, the choir has performed the work 26 times. Among its four recordings is a landmark Snape Maltings production with Benjamin Britten, Peter Pears, Yvonne Minton and John Shirley-Quirk.

But each latest *Gerontius* project needs to be treated afresh. 'When you're singing, you need to use your voice in a way that's not exactly the same as when you are speaking. If you're singing in the language which you speak, there's that differentiation, you have to remind yourself. If you are singing

in a language that is not your own, you are approaching the line from a singing point of view,' says Mariana.

'Singing in our native language can make it harder to achieve the right colour and to organise the instrument. In the case of English, there are certain vowels, certain syllables and how to organise them when you are singing that are particularly key.'

Gerontius is seared in the LSC's collective memory. In its 60-year history, the choir has performed it 26 times.

As for the text itself, based on a poem by the Catholic theologian John Henry Newman about a man's journey from death to the judgment of God, one of the 1983 soloists was told by then chorus director Richard Hickox: 'What you have to remember with Svetlanov is he doesn't understand the words. So you can't assume he knows what you're singing about.'

The LSC are performing at a special 60th Anniversary Concert on 23 May at Milton Court. Full details can be found at lsc.org.uk/events

Sir Antonio Pappano

Chief Conductor



One of today's most sought-after conductors, Sir Antonio Pappano is renowned for his charismatic leadership and inspiring performances across both symphonic and operatic repertoires. He is Chief Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, Conductor Laureate of the Royal Opera and Ballet, Covent Garden, and Music Director Emeritus of the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome, having held the position of Music Director at both institutions from 2002 to 2024 and 2005 to 2023, respectively. He 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 Philharmonics, the Staatskapelle Dresden, the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Bavarian Radio Symphony and Czech Philharmonic Orchestras, the Orchestre de Paris and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, as well as with 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*.

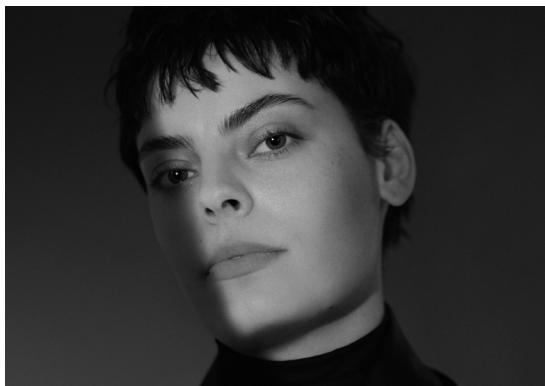


Coming up with the LSO

Sunday 10 May 7pm, Barbican
Britten, Bernstein and Tchaikovsky

Emily D'Angelo

mezzo-soprano (Angel)



Hailed by the *New York Times* as 'one of the world's special young singers', Canadian mezzo-soprano Emily D'Angelo has rapidly become one of the most exciting and critically acclaimed artists of her generation. Since her professional operatic debut at age 21 as Cherubino in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Spoleto Festival dei Due Mondi, she has appeared at many of the world's leading opera houses and on major concert stages. Following the release of her second album *freezing* on Deutsche Grammophon, she was named the 2025 recipient of Opus Klassik's Female Singer of the Year award.

In the 2025/26 season, D'Angelo has returned to Royal Ballet and Opera in the title role of Handel's *Ariodante* under Stefano Montanari and to the Vienna State Opera as Sesto in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* conducted by Pablo Heras-Casado. Concert highlights have included Mahler's Symphonies Nos 2 and 3 in Spain, and Handel and Mozart arias at Salzburg's Mozart Week. In May, she sings Octavian in a concert performance of Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* at Baden-Baden's

Whitsun Festival, and in June, she makes her debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra in Bernstein's Symphony No 1, 'Jeremiah', conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

D'Angelo is a Deutsche Grammophon exclusive artist. Her debut album *energeia* – featuring works by Hildegard von Bingen, Hildur Guðnadóttir and Missy Mazzoli – was named one of NPR's 50 Best Albums of 2021 and received both JUNO and Gramophone Awards. Her 2024 follow-up, *freezing*, features music by Dowland, Purcell, Kodály, Philip Glass, Randy Newman and Jeanine Tesori, among many others.

A graduate of the University of Toronto and the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Development Program, D'Angelo is a multiple prizewinner at major international competitions including Operalia, Neue Stimmen and the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and is the only singer ever to receive the Leonard Bernstein Award from the Schleswig-Holstein Festival.

David Butt Philip

tenor (Gerontius)



The British tenor David Butt Philip is a firm favourite on the major international stages. He has recently received critical and public acclaim in the title role of Wagner's *Lohengrin* and as Walther von Stolzing in Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* at the Vienna State Opera, as Florestan in Beethoven's *Fidelio* and the Prince in Dvořák's *Rusalka* for Royal Ballet and Opera, as Bacchus in Richard Strauss' *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Edinburgh International Festival and Bavarian State Opera, and in the title roles of Zemlinsky's *Der Zwerg* and Wagner's *Lohengrin* at Deutsche Oper Berlin.

Recent and future highlights of the 2025/26 season include his company and role debut as Siegmund in Wagner's *Die Walküre* in David McVicar's new production at La Scala, a return to the Vienna State Opera as Florestan in a new production of *Fidelio* and Bacchus in Laurent Pelly's new production of *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Glyndebourne Festival. Recent appearances also include his company debut as Prince in *Rusalka* at the Royal Swedish Opera and Apollo in Strauss' *Daphne* with Seattle Opera. Recent and future concert appearances include *Das Lied von der Erde* at Deutsche Oper Berlin and at the Palau de les Arts Reina Sofía under Mark Elder, Erik in concert performances of Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*, *Gurre-Lieder* and a Liederabend with James Baillieu at the Tokyo Spring Festival, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at the Royal Albert Hall and Mahler's Symphony No 8 with the Danish National Symphony Orchestra under Fabio Luisi.

Opera highlights in recent seasons (in addition to those already mentioned) have included Florestan at the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Emperor in Strauss' *Die Frau ohne Schatten* at Deutsche Oper Berlin and for San Francisco Opera, Don José in Bizet's *Carmen* at the Vienna State Opera, Boris in a new production of Janáček's *Katya Kabanova* for the Salzburg and Glyndebourne Festivals, Hamlet in Brett Dean's *Hamlet* in Cologne and Froh in Wagner's *Das Rheingold* and Essex in Britten's *Gloriana* at the Teatro Real Madrid. In the UK, he has sung with The Royal Opera, English National Opera, Opera North and at Glyndebourne.

Concert highlights have included Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* and Maher's Symphony No 8 with the Czech Philharmonic, the title role of Bernstein's *Candide* at Semperoper Dresden, Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Huddersfield Choral Society and Orchestra of Opera North, Mahler's Symphony No 8 with the Staatskapelle Dresden, Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* with the Berlin Philharmonic and Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Butt Philip studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, the Royal Academy of Music and the National Opera Studio, and in 2011, won the John Christie Award. He is a former Jette Parker Young Artist with The Royal Opera.

William Thomas

bass (Priest/Angel of the Agony)



British bass William Thomas is fast making a name for himself as one of today's most promising young singers. Recent and forthcoming operatic roles in the 2025/26 season include Hebrew in Saint-Saëns' *Samson et Dalila* and Sparafucile in Verdi's *Rigoletto* for Royal Ballet and Opera, Colline in Puccini's *La bohème* for Teatro dell'Opera di Roma, Mr Flint in Britten's *Billy Budd* for the Glyndebourne Festival and Ormonte in Handel's *Partenope* for the English National Opera.

Recent and forthcoming appearances on the concert stage include Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette* with Robin Ticciati and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Hérode in Berlioz's *L'enfance du Christ* at Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia in Valencia, a tour of J S Bach's *St John Passion* with il Pomo d'Oro, and Handel's *Messiah* and Mozart's *Requiem* with the Monteverdi Choir and Orchestra.

Other recent appearances include his debut at the Bavarian State Opera in Munich as Colline, a return to the English National Opera as

Sparafucile, his Carnegie Hall debut in Bach's *St John Passion* with the Orchestra of St Luke's under Bernard Labadie, Second Soldier in Strauss' *Salome* with the London Symphony Orchestra under Sir Antonio Pappano and a return to the Salzburg Festival for Bruckner's Mass No 3 in F minor with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under Riccardo Muti. Thomas has also performed at the Vienna State Opera, the Opéra national de Paris, La Scala, the BBC Proms and the Glyndebourne, Edinburgh and Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festivals.

A graduate of the opera course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Thomas has been awarded a number of major prizes, including the Kathleen Ferrier Award, John Christie Award and the Veronica Dunne International Singing Competition.

London Symphony Chorus

President

Sir Simon Rattle OM CBE

Vice President

Michael Tilson Thomas

Patrons

Sir Simon Russell

Beale CBE

Howard Goodall CBE

Chorus Director

Mariana Rosas

Associate Directors

Jack Apperley

Hilary Campbell

Daniel Mahoney

Director Emeritus

Simon Halsey CBE

Chorus Accompanist

Benjamin Frost

Vocal Coaches

Norbert Meyn

Anita Morrison

Rebecca Outram

Chair

Chris Straw

lsc.org.uk

The London Symphony Chorus was founded in 1966 to complement the work of the London Symphony Orchestra.

The LSC has performed with many leading orchestras: frequently with the LSO, and also with the Berlin Philharmonic, Vienna Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic and, more recently, with Les Siècles, the SWR Symphony Orchestra and with the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela.

Last season's concerts included Puccini's *La rondine* and *Suor Angelica*, Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony*, Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony under Sir Antonio Pappano; Shostakovich's Second Symphony and Brahms' *Schicksalslied* under Gianandrea Noseda; Mahler's Second Symphony under Michael Tilson Thomas; *Symphonic Gospel* under Dr André J Thomas; Mahler's Third Symphony under Gustavo Dudamel; Mahler's Eighth Symphony with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir under Edward Gardner; and the UK premiere of *No Friend But the Mountains* under Joseph Young.

In recent seasons, the LSC has performed Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Britten's *War Requiem* under Sir Antonio Pappano; Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Shostakovich's Symphonies Nos 3 and 13 under Gianandrea Noseda; Janáček's *Katya Kabanova*

and *Jenůfa* under Sir Simon Rattle; Schubert's *Mass in A flat* and Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe* under François-Xavier Roth; Bruckner's *Te Deum* under Nathalie Stutzmann; Holst's *The Planets* under Jaime Martín; Debussy's *Nocturnes* under Susanna Mälkki; *The Dante Project* under Thomas Adès and Koen Kessels at the Royal Opera House; Howard Goodall's *Never to Forget* (online during lockdown and, subsequently, in St Paul's Cathedral); and Duruflé's *Requiem* under Lionel Sow (Chorus Director of the Chœur de l'Orchestre de Paris).

The LSC tours extensively in Europe. Recent tours have included Paris, Baden-Baden and Luxembourg under Sir Simon Rattle with the LSO; Monte Carlo and Aix-en-Provence under Kazuki Yamada with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo; and Stuttgart, Berlin, Freiburg, Dortmund and Hamburg under Teodor Currentzis with the SWR Symphony Orchestra. With the LSO, the LSC performed Mahler and Bernstein in *Maestro*, the 2023 Oscar-nominated biopic of Leonard Bernstein, starring Bradley Cooper and Carey Mulligan, with Yannick Nézet-Séguin as music advisor.

The LSC is an independent charity run by its members and it engages actively in the musical life of London and further afield. In addition to seeking new members and audiences, it also commissions and performs new works. The LSC is an international ensemble, with members from over 25 countries.

On Stage

Sopranos

Georgie Bateman
Francesca Calori
Alana Clark
Alice Dee
Esther Elbro
Amy Fidler
Joanna Gueritz
Isobel Hammond
Cora Hardy
Emma Harry
Claire Hussey
Debbie Jones
Alice Jones
Frankie Mosely
Andrea Navarro Lovera
Alexandra Ollendorff
Maggie Owen
Janina Pescinski
Eleanor Sterland
Jessica Villiers
Franziska Bräumer
Elise Crambes
Harriet Crawford
Maja Dabagh
Emily Dick
Dandy Freeman
Sophie Hill
Sally Ho
Denise Hoilette
Caddy Kroll
Marylyn Lewin
Feldman Lucy
Gill O'Neill
Deborah Staunton
Hilary Todd
Eleri Williams
Rachel Wilson

Altos

Kate Aitchison
Enid Armstrong
Lauren Bagge
Nicola Bedwin
Gina Broderick
Jo Buchan
Sherae Callum
Sheila Cobourne
Linda Evans
Amanda Freshwater
Sophie George
Rachel Green
Yoko Harada
Edda Hendry
Emily Hoffnung
Catherine Hulme
Elisabeth Iles
Carolyn Jarvis
Cristina Jerney
Jill Jones
Vanessa Knapp
Anna Korbel
Gosia Kuzmicz
Gilly Lawson
Anne Loveluck
Sarah McCartney
Liz McCaw
Aoife McInerney
Jane Muir
Dorothy Nesbit
Helen Palmer
Beth Potter
Susannah Priede
Natalia Riley
Ellie Saipe
Lis Smith
Ali St-Denis
Karen Taylor-Paul
Linda Thomas
Rafaela Tripalo
Kathryn Wells
Zoe Williams

Tenors

Paul Allatt
Matteo Anelli
Erik Azzopardi
Joaquim Badia
Kyle Berry
Philipp Boeing
Tom Bracewell
Oliver Burrows
Kevin Cheng
Conor Cook
James David
Michael Delany
Colin Dunn
Matthew Fernando
Andrew Fuller
Simon Goldman
Jude Lenier
Tim Lloyd
Alastair Mathews
Olwyn McCollin
Daniel Owers
Davide Prezzi
Diego Richardson
Nishikuni
Chris Riley
Michael Scharff
Peter Sedgwick
Chris Straw
Richard Street
Malcolm Taylor
James Warbis
Robert Ward
Leonard Wong

Basses

Joseph Al Khalili
Roger Blitz
Ian Boughton
Gavin Buchan
Greg Callus
Andy Chan
Steve Chevis
Matthew Clarke
Damian Day
Douglas Jones
Robert Garbolinski
Gerald Goh
John Graham
Bryan Hammersley
Robert Hare
J C Higgins
Anthony Howick
Alex Kidney
Gregory Love-Storkan
Hector Macandrew
Alex Mackinder
Owen Hanmer
Alan Rochford
Jesús Sanchez Sanzo
Rob Sanders Hewett
Matthew Smith
Rod Stevens
Richard Tannenbaum
Dan Tarbuck
Johannes Thom
Gordon Thomson
Philip Townley
Graham Voke
Anthony Wilder

Mariana Rosas

LSC Chorus Director



Mariana Rosas is an Argentinian conductor based in the UK, and Chorus Director of the London Symphony Chorus. In this role, she has collaborated with Sir Antonio Pappano, Gianandrea Noseda, Michael Tilson Thomas, Gustavo Dudamel and Dr André J Thomas, among others.

As well as her work with the LSC, Rosas is an Associate Artist with Birmingham Opera Company, Conductor at National Youth Choir and Director of Choirs at the University of Birmingham, a role that involves conducting as well as teaching. She has collaborated with the Royal Opera House, Glyndebourne, the Berlin Radio Choir, BBC Symphony Chorus, City of Birmingham Symphony

Orchestra Chorus, London Voices, West Midlands Inclusive Choir, the Royal College of Music and WDR Radio Choir Cologne.

Rosas was educated in Italy and Argentina, where she studied at the National University of Arts of Argentina and the Conservatoire of the City of Buenos Aires 'Manuel de Falla'. In 2018, she moved to the UK to study at the University of Birmingham with Simon Halsey CBE.

Prior to her move to the UK, she was Assistant Professor of Choral Practice at the National University of Arts in Buenos Aires. She has worked as a guest conductor in Denmark, Canada, Italy and Switzerland.

Retirement Wishes

Paul Robson, LSO Second Violin



This month we say a fond farewell to Paul Robson, LSO Second Violin, who retires after 35 years, having become a Member of the Orchestra in 1991. Fellow Members shared some stories and well wishes for the future.

Julián Gil Rodríguez, Principal Second Violin

Paul – from the cycle rides to the memorable concerts we shared, I want to thank you for your welcoming and easy-going nature. You are a true rock of the Second Violin section and your presence will be truly missed. I will be personally grateful for your encouraging words when needed – cycling overnight to Dunwich or trying to survive late concerts in the south of Spain. Enjoy the next ride wherever it takes you!

Belinda McFarlane, Second Violin

It really is the end of an era, as we mark Paul's final concert as a Member of the LSO. Paul is a fantastic violinist, musician and colleague. I have happily shared a desk with him in our Second Violin section for many a memorable concert, and it is always a joy due to his wonderful musicianship and collaborative performance style – quite simply a joy! Paul has a wide range of interests outside orchestral playing; chamber music, folk music (and baking!) to name a few. His mince pies and 'special recipe' chocolate cake are always the first to be greedily demolished at the infamous LSO Second Violin Christmas parties. He will be sorely missed for so many reasons, and we wish him continuing joy with his family, and in his musical – and culinary! – adventures going forward. Thanks for everything Paul.

Andrew Pollock, Second Violin

A fine violinist with a wealth of experience both as an orchestral principal and quartet player, Paul was a great addition to our section in the early 1990s. We soon discovered that we had a lot in common, being the same age and fellow Northerners with a similar sense of humour. We both enjoy walking and on tour always found time for this, whatever continent we were on, followed by refreshment from our carefully curated global directory of locals' restaurants and bars. What have we talked about for 35 years? Most things, but quite a lot of football and beer!

Amanda Truelove, Cello

Paul joined the LSO from the intimacy of the string quartet. Over many years, I have enjoyed the pleasure of playing chamber concerts with him at LSO St Luke's. I will treasure these memories, alongside many more with him as a devoted and focused member of the Orchestra. His sense of commitment has been second to none and he can certainly look back over his career with a huge sense of pride and satisfaction.

London Symphony Orchestra

On Stage

Leader

Benjamin Marquise
Gilmore

First Violins

Leah Meredith
Clare Duckworth
Ginette Decuyper
Maxine Kwok
Stefano Mengoli
Laurent Quénelle
Harriet Rayfield
Sylvain Vasseur
Ricky Gore
Dmitry Khakhamov
Grace Lee
Djumash Poulsen
Julia Rumley
Shoshanah Sievers

Second Violins

Julián Gil Rodríguez
Thomas Norris
Miya Väisänen
David Ballesteros
Helena Buckie
Alix Lagasse
Belinda McFarlane
Iwona Muszynska
Andrew Pollock
Paul Robson
Louise Shackelton
Ingrid Button
Juan Gonzalez
Hernandez
Chelsea Sharpe

Violas

Malcolm Johnston
Anna Bastow
Germán Clavijo
Steve Doman
Thomas Beer
Julia O'Riordan
Sofia Silva Sousa
Robert Turner
Mizuho Ueyama
Sally Belcher
Fiona Dalglish
Scott Dickinson

Cellos

David Cohen
Laure Le Dantec
Salvador Bolón
Daniel Gardner
Amanda Truelove
Anna Beryl
Niccolò Citrani*
Henry Hargreaves
Orlando Jopling
Simon Thompson
Joanna Twaddle

Double Basses

Rodrigo Moro Martín
Patrick Laurence
Joe Melvin
Axel Bouchaux
Johane Gonzalez
Simon Oliver
Lars Radloff
Adam Wynter

Flutes

Amy Yule
Imogen Royce

Piccolo

Sharon Williams

Oboes

Olivier Stankiewicz
Rosie Jenkins

Cor Anglais

Sarah Harper

Clarinets

Chris Richards
Chi-Yu Mo

Bass Clarinet

Ferran Garcerà Perelló

Bassoons

Daniel Jemison
Joost Bosdijk

Contrabassoon

Martin Field

Horns

Timothy Jones
Angela Barnes
Tommaso Rusconi
David Sztankov
Kiersten Gustafson

Trumpets

Sérgio Pacheco
Adam Wright
Katie Smith
Imogen Whitehead
Richard Blake
Gideon Brooks

Trombones

Jackson Howard
Jonathan Hollick

Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

Tuba

Ben Thomson

Timpani

Nigel Thomas
Ryan Hepburn

Percussion

Sam Walton
David Jackson
Mark McDonald
Benedict Hoffnung

Harps

Bryn Lewis
Suzy Willison-Kawalec

Organ

Richard Gowers

* Member of the LSO String Experience Scheme

Established in 1992, the Scheme enables young string players at the start of their professional careers to gain work experience by playing in rehearsals and concerts with the LSO. The musicians are treated as professional 'extras', and receive fees in line with LSO section players. Kindly supported by the Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust, the Idlewild Trust and The Thriplow Charitable Trust.