

ONDINE

LATE
WORKS

ELLIOTT CARTER

PIERRE-LAURENT AIMARD

COLIN CURRIE | ISABELLE FAUST | JEAN-GUIHEN QUEYRAS

BIRMINGHAM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC GROUP | BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

OLIVER KNUSSEN



ELLIOTT CARTER (1908–2012)

- | | | |
|----|--|--------------|
| 1 | Interventions (2007) for piano and orchestra* | 17:09 |
| 2 | Dialogues (2003) for piano and chamber orchestra | 13:05 |
| 3 | Dialogues II (2010) for piano and chamber orchestra* | 4:30 |
| 4 | Soundings (2005) for orchestra*
(Solo Piano: Pierre-Laurent Aimard) | 8:12 |
| | Two Controversies and a Conversation (2011)
for piano, percussion and chamber orchestra* | 10:25 |
| 5 | Controversy I | 1:44 |
| 6 | Controversy II | 1:55 |
| 7 | Conversation | 6:46 |
| 8 | Instances (2012) for chamber orchestra | 7:11 |
| | Epigrams (2012) for piano trio* | 13:58 |
| 9 | I. | 1:09 |
| 10 | II. | 1:40 |
| 11 | III. | 0:56 |

12	IV.	1:17
13	V.	1:12
14	VI.	0:48
15	VII.	1:00
16	VIII.	0:44
17	IX.	0:58
18	X.	1:27
19	XI.	1:17
20	XII.	1:30

Pierre-Laurent Aimard, piano (1-4, 5-7, 9-20)

Colin Currie, percussion (5-7)

Isabelle Faust, violin (9-20)

Jean-Guihen Queyras, cello (9-20)

Birmingham Contemporary Music Group (2, 3, 5-7)

BBC Symphony Orchestra (1, 4, 8)

Oliver Knussen, conductor

***Premiere Recordings**

Whether playfully ironic or unflinchingly tragic, Elliott Carter's music is always about life as we experience it: richly multi-layered, sometimes unpredictable, and beautiful in spite of everything. Beyond complexity, it is the thread of human connection running through all of Carter's work that continues to delight performers and listeners and ensure the music's ongoing relevance in an ever-changing world.

The earliest piece on this recording, *Dialogues* (2003) unfolds as a single movement, composed of short, clearly articulated phrases. In keeping with the title's Platonic allusion, piano and orchestra engage in a variety of exchanges – from argumentative vying for the floor, to supportive elaboration of the other's point of view. But they are preceded by an ingenious *coup de théâtre*. With soloist and orchestra at the ready, and the conductor poised to begin, the first sound is of an ungainly, plodding, and somewhat repetitious English horn. Resembling a janitor caught sweeping the stage when the curtain rises, this doleful Charlie Chaplin-esque anti-hero tacks uncertainly through the opening bars before it is abruptly overtaken by the piano's bravura entrance. The ensuing public dialog between piano and orchestra never quite displaces the quiet, internal drama of the opening solo. Just as the finale gets going, the English horn makes a last appearance – still halting, but ranging more widely against poignant string harmonies. Again, the piano interrupts, but quietly this time – transforming the narrow compass of the first English horn solo into a blur of motion, racing at the speed of thought. Although the English horn disappears altogether after this episode, it leaves its mark nonetheless. The piano's last descent seems to end with a falling fifth – unmistakable signal of tonal resolution. But then it falls a final step, and a gesture of quiet closure becomes the upbeat to an uncertain continuation.

Soundings (2005) was commissioned by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as a showcase for its Music Director at the time, Daniel Barenboim, who would lead the orchestra from the keyboard, as was common in the eighteenth century. Partly to minimize coordination problems, Carter cast the piano as a kind of Prologue. Appearing only in the introduction and coda, it provides an ambiguous frame for the piece's ten sections, which alternate between solo instruments (or small groups) and ensemble tutti, somewhat like a concerto grosso. As in many of Carter's late pieces, the

strings play an extended melody – regularly interrupted – that serves as a connecting thread. But the heart of the piece is an extended tuba solo. When it is overtaken by the last of the tutti, the interruption seems to signal the triumph of the orchestra’s most violent music. But the final climax is itself interrupted by the unexpected return of the piano. Armed only with a pair of staccato notes (B ♭ and D, representing Barenboim’s initials), the piano quickly turns the orchestral lion into a lamb. In its final solo, the piano picks up the grand rhetorical tone of the opening and builds to a decisive conclusion. But after a moment’s hesitation it quietly sounds a last staccato B ♭ subjecting its own rhetoric to the same curt dismissal it previously directed to the orchestra.

When he was asked to write a piece for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, to be conducted by James Levine with Daniel Barenboim as piano soloist, Carter faced an interesting problem. Realizing that his composition would be received as a dual showcase for two giants of the music world, Carter had to find a way to let piano and orchestra share top billing. His solution – *Interventions* (2007) – is a combination of piano concerto and orchestral tone poem, with two trios of oddly assorted instruments that sometimes accompany the piano and sometimes melt back into the orchestra.

To celebrate the musicians for whom he was writing (and perhaps to tease them a little), Carter created a tongue-in-cheek “clash of Titans” opening. A dramatic tuning ‘A’ (= La, for Levine) is ardently corrected to B ♭ (= the German B, for Barenboim) by the piano and trios. The opposition presages contradiction rather than dialog. Piano and orchestra are featured in alternation, each one interrupting the other to re-take the floor, and each time picking up the thread of its own music right where it left off. For much of the piece, the piano cultivates a decisive public style that stands apart from the orchestra’s more ruminative mood. The piano’s movements form a succession of character pieces, while the orchestra’s music forms a single large-scale continuity, dominated by an ebbing and flowing melody in the violins that is often interrupted mid-phrase. The dramatic peaks in the last third of the piece all point toward the climactic return of A against B ♭ in the coda. Like a good novelist, Carter lets his characters’ contrasting temperaments act as the force that gradually draws them together, creating suspense and revealing ironic similarities. But the ending posed a tricky problem: who

should prevail, conductor or pianist? After the final orchestral climax, the piano loudly affirms a sustained B ♭. But the orchestra will have none of it and, in a reversal of the opening, sternly corrects the B ♭ to A. In the back and forth that follows, piano and orchestra play a comic scene of unanticipated public disagreement. After several attempts to keep up appearances, they finally explode in exasperated trills – A to B ♭ (or is it B ♭ to A?) – a blur of comic conflict that somehow also sounds like a ringing affirmation.

In the pieces he wrote after his 100th birthday, Carter uses brevity and fragmentation to tell surprisingly rich and nuanced stories. *Dialogues II* (2010), composed for Daniel Barenboim's 70th birthday, inherits from *Dialogues* both its instrumentation and its antiphonal textures. Winds, brass, and strings are treated largely as homogeneous groups, playing mostly regular pulses, and the piano is a livelier and more variable foil. After its initial solo is opposed by a low and grumpy outburst from the brass, the piano mocks them with its own low-register thundering. The strings enter warily, then take up what might have been a singing melody, but play it mechanically and without expression, accompanied by disjunct chords in the winds. The central section is an uneasy slow movement, with sometimes impatient commentary by the piano. The brief return of grumbling brass triggers the piano's fleet toccata, punctuated by periodic tutti chords that build to an enormous roar from the full ensemble, held for a shockingly long time. Forced to relent, the piano reiterates its parodic thunder, and the orchestra (perhaps thinking that's an end to the matter) makes a last clomping descent. But the piano has the last word, resisting the orchestra's heaviness with a final sparkle of wit.

In 2010, Carter composed the seven-minute *Conversations*, a mini-concerto for piano and percussion requested by Colin Currie. The following year, at the suggestion of Oliver Knussen, Carter added two brief prefatory movements and retitled the piece *Two Controversies and a Conversation*. The controversies both develop a straightforward but richly suggestive conceit: each piano phrase slows down while each phrase in the percussion speeds up. In the first controversy, percussion gains a partner in the bass clarinet, but for most of the movement the principal argument is between the two protagonists, with the orchestra playing an accompanimental role. The string tremolos

that sporadically punctuate the first controversy spread to the other instruments in the second, and the orchestra becomes a crowd of whispering bystanders, who increase the tension but give the contending soloists a wide berth. A long accelerating phrase for marimba at the end of the first controversy is opposed in the second by a final piano *ritardando*, and the balance sets the stage for the final conversation.

Although they emerge as a blur from the third movement's opening chords, the soloists quickly separate to engage in rapid-fire exchanges with the orchestra and with each other. The piano proposes slow music, but is diverted by auto-horn-like blasts in the orchestra, which lead to a pointillist scherzando. Undaunted, the piano returns to its rhapsodic music, speeding up and slowing down in long phrases that enact a would-be reconciliation of the conflicting rhythmic behaviors in the controversies. But with the return of the scherzando, then the gong and brass chords, the form becomes a palindrome – moving in reverse order through textures heard earlier. The final gesture leaves the two conversationalists both far apart and exactly together.

Instances (2012), for chamber orchestra, is dedicated to Ludovic Morlot, Music Director of the Seattle Symphony. Carter describes the piece as “a series of short interrelated episodes of varying character.” Insistent chords for the full ensemble open the piece and return to articulate the major turning points in the form. A hushed chorale for brass, flowing music for winds and strings, and a comical texture of staccato fragments all take turns in the spotlight. But comedy is left behind in the coda. Lasting nearly a third of the piece's length, it is perhaps the most affecting passage in all of Carter's late music. Against the slow ticking of the piano, long arching phrases in the strings stretch across increasingly portentous silences. The mood is briefly leavened by a solo flute – a memory perhaps – but time, which served Carter so richly throughout his career as a source of inspiration, here points in an unavoidably ominous direction. Bringing the *grande ligne* of Carter's late music to an end, the final gesture of descent is both disconsolate and resolute.

Epigrams (2012) is Carter's last composition, dedicated to Pierre-Laurent Aimard. “To amuse myself” (as he put it), he began writing very short pieces that could be completed quickly and later assembled into a suite. It is characteristic of his temperament

that he chose as a model for the piece a short form of great and literary prestige, and one with roots in antiquity. By the third century BCE, epigrams – which originated as short inscriptions on grave markers or monuments – had become a popular Greek literary genre, meant to be recited and published rather than carved in stone. Brevity, density of allusion, and ingenuity in playing on the memorial origin of the genre are among its hallmarks. Carter, who studied Greek poetry as an undergraduate at Harvard, was clearly drawn to the concision, surprising turns, and wit of the literary genre to which his twelve short *Epigrams* allude. Many start out by developing one conceit then make an unexpected shift, as in number eight, when a lively, bustling texture culminating in a suddenly expanding wedge is followed unexpectedly by a serene coda. Others suggest a playful return to the kind of archetypal characters Carter favored in his earlier music. While the individual epigrams are clever and charming, their internally fragmented construction reflects their role as fragments of the larger continuity of the piece as a whole. As the movements proceed, discontinuity gives rise to a sense of familiarity as harmonies, textures, and gestures first heard earlier are developed at greater length, or in another context. That they do so in the service of whimsy as well as poignant fragmentation is one of the triumphs of Carter's last work.

John Link

William Paterson University

Excerpted from *Elliott Carter's Late Music*
(Cambridge University Press, forthcoming)

for Pierre-Laurent Aimard
EPIGRAMS
 for Violin, Violoncello, and Piano

I.

Elliott Carter
 (2012)

$\text{♩} = 72$

Violin

p < *mp*

p *con leggerezza* *mf* *f* *mf*

Violoncello

p < *mf* *f*

con leggerezza

Piano

$\text{♩} = 72$

mp *mp*

4

poco *mf* > *mp* *p* *mf*

mf > *mp* *p*

mf < *mp* *mf*

Composer **Elliott Carter's** prolific career spanned over 80 years and more than 150 pieces, ranging from chamber music to orchestral works to opera, often marked with a sense of wit and humour. He was hailed as 'America's great musical poet' by Andrew Porter and noted as 'one of America's most distinguished creative artists in any field' by his friend Aaron Copland. Born in New York City on 11 December 1908, Carter was encouraged towards a career in classical music by his friend and mentor Charles Ives. He studied under composers Walter Piston and Gustav Holst while attending the Harvard University, and later travelled to Paris, studying with Nadia Boulanger. Following his studies in France, he returned to New York and devoted his time to composing and teaching, holding posts over the years at St. John's College, the Peabody Conservatory, Yale University, Cornell University and the Juilliard School, among others.

Carter's early works, such as his Symphony No. 1 (1942) and *Holiday Overture* (1944), are written in a neoclassical style, influenced by his contemporaries Copland, Hindemith and Stravinsky. After the Second World War, in works such as his Cello Sonata (1948) and String Quartet No. 1 (1950-51) he began to develop a signature rhythmic and harmonic language, which he continued to refine to the very end of his life. Igor Stravinsky hailed his Double Concerto for Harpsichord, Piano and Two Chamber Orchestra (1961) and Piano Concerto (1967) as 'masterpieces'.

Carter wrote many pieces on literature throughout his career, setting texts by acclaimed American poets such as John Ashbery, Elizabeth Bishop, E.E. Cummings, T.S. Eliot, Robert Frost, John Hollander, Robert Lowell, Marianne Moore, Ezra Pound, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams and Louis Zukofsky.

A creative burst of imagination began in earnest during the 1980s with works such as *Night Fantasies* (1980), *Triple Duo* (1982-83), *Penthode* (1985) and major orchestral essays such as his Oboe Concerto (1986-87), *Three Occasions for Orchestra* (1989), Violin Concerto (1990), and *Symphonia: sum fluxae pretium spei* (1993-96). Carter's

only opera, *What Next?* (1997–98), with a libretto by Paul Griffiths, was introduced by Daniel Barenboim, a champion of the composer's music, in Berlin in 1999, and has since been produced at Tanglewood, in Munich, New York, Vienna, Melbourne, Montpellier, and Stuttgart. Carter's remarkable late-career creative burst continued at an astonishing rate, encouraged by commissions from Pierre Boulez and the Ensemble InterContemporain, Oliver Knussen and the BBC Symphony Orchestra, James Levine and the Boston Symphony, the Aldeburgh, Lucerne, and Tanglewood Festivals, and ensembles from Boston to Seattle, and London to Ljubljana. Carter composed more than sixty works after the age of ninety, including his Cello Concerto (2000), *Of Rewaking* (2002), *Dialogues* (2003), *Three Illusions for Orchestra* (2004), *Mosaic* (2004) and *In the Distances of Sleep* (2006).

In his final years, Carter continued to complete works with astounding frequency, including *Interventions* for piano and orchestra (2007), Flute Concerto (2008), *What are Years* (2009), Concertino for Bass Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra (2009), and *The American Sublime* (2011). Carter's last completed orchestral work, *Instances* (2012), was premiered by the Seattle Symphony in February 2013. His final work, *Epigrams* (2012) for piano trio, was premiered at the Aldeburgh Festival in June 2013.

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Widely acclaimed as a key figure in the music of our time and as a uniquely significant interpreter of piano repertoire from every age, **Pierre-Laurent Aimard** enjoys an internationally celebrated career. He has been awarded the 2017 International Ernest von Siemens Music Prize in recognition of a life devoted to the service of music.

Aimard performs throughout the world each season with major orchestras under conductors including Esa-Pekka Salonen, Peter Eötvös, Sir Simon Rattle and Vladimir Jurowski. He has been invited to curate, direct and perform in a number of residencies, with projects at Carnegie Hall, New York's Lincoln Center, Vienna's Konzerthaus, Frankfurt's Alte Oper, the Lucerne Festival, Mozarteum Salzburg, Cité de la Musique in Paris, and London's Southbank Centre. Aimard was the Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh Festival from 2009 to 2016, his final season was marked by a performance of Messiaen's *Catalogue d'oiseaux* with the concerts programmed from dawn to midnight.

This season sees Pierre-Laurent continue his trio partnership with Mark Simpson and Antoine Tamestit, and the development of an innovative programme of concerts for Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris. He also performs with The Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen and Paavo Järvi in Taiwan. As well as engagements with Los Angeles Philharmonic and The Cleveland Orchestra, Aimard joins the Philharmonia Orchestra and Esa-Pekka Salonen for a series of concerts, entitled 'Inspirations'. He continues his life-long association with the music of Messiaen, performing his works worldwide. Aimard is also a member of the Bayerische Akademie der Schönen Künste.

Aimard has had close collaborations with many leading composers including Kurtág, Stockhausen, Carter, Boulez and George Benjamin and had a long association with Ligeti, recording his complete works for piano. He has made many highly successful and award-winning recordings. His recordings for DG 'The Liszt Project' in 2011 and Debussy *Préludes* in 2012, were joined by a new recording of Bach's *Das wohltemperierte Klavier* Book 1 in 2014.

www.pierrelaurentaimard.com



Pierre-Laurent Aimard

“Her sound has passion, grit and electricity but also a disarming warmth and sweetness that can unveil the music’s hidden strains of lyricism ...” (New York Times). **Isabelle Faust** captivates her listeners through her insightful and faithful interpretations, based on a thorough knowledge of the historical context of the works as well as her attention to current scholarship.

At an early age, Isabelle Faust won the prestigious Leopold Mozart and Paganini competitions and was soon invited to appear with the world’s leading orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the NHK Symphony Orchestra Tokyo, the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. 2016 marks her first year as „Artistic Partner“ for the Mahler Chamber Orchestra.

Isabelle Faust performs a wide-ranging repertoire, from J. S. Bach all the way through to contemporary composers such as Ligeti, Lachenmann and Widmann. To highlight this versatility, in addition to her mastery of the great symphonic violin concertos, Isabelle Faust also performs works such as Kurtág’s “Kafka Fragments” with the soprano Anna Prohaska, or Schubert’s Octet on historical instruments. She will premiere several new works for violin and orchestra during the next seasons, including concerti by the composers Ondrej Adamek, Marco Stroppa, Oscar Strasnoy and Beat Furrer.

Over the course of her career, Isabelle Faust has regularly performed or recorded with world-renowned conductors including John Eliot Gardiner, Philippe Herreweghe, Daniel Harding, Bernard Haitink and Andris Nelsons. During recent years Isabelle Faust developed a close relationship with the late Claudio Abbado and performed and recorded under his baton. Their recording of Beethoven’s and Berg’s violin concertos with the Orchestra Mozart received a Diapason d’Or (France), Echo Klassik (Germany), Gramophone Award 2012 (UK) as well as a Record Academy Award (Japan).

Faust has recorded many discs for Harmonia Mundi with her recital partner Alexander Melnikov. These include their latest album with the Brahms Sonatas for violin and piano, as well as Schumann’s piano trios. Her recording of Mozart’s violin concerti with Il Giardino Armonico and Giovanni Antonini, as well as Bach’s harpsichord sonatas with Kristian Bezuidenhout will be released in 2016/17.



Isabelle Faust

Curiosity, diversity and a firm focus on the music itself characterize the artistic work of **Jean-Guihen Queyras**. His approaches to early music – as in his collaborations with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin and the Concerto Köln – and to contemporary music are equally thorough. He has given world premieres of works by, among others, Ivan Fedele, Gilbert Amy, Bruno Mantovani, Michael Jarrell, Johannes-Maria Staud and Thomas Larcher. Conducted by the composer, he recorded Peter Eötvös' Cello Concerto to mark his 70th birthday in November 2014.

Jean-Guihen Queyras is a founding member of the Arcanto Quartet and forms a celebrated trio with Isabelle Faust and Alexander Melnikov. The versatility in his music-making has led to many concert halls, festivals and orchestras inviting Jean-Guihen to be Artist in Residence, including the Concertgebouw Amsterdam and the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, Vredenburg Utrecht, De Bijloke Ghent and Wigmore Hall London. Jean-Guihen Queyras often appears with renowned orchestras such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Orchestre de Paris, the NHK Symphony Orchestra, the Gewandhausorchester and the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, working with conductors such as Iván Fischer, Philippe Herreweghe, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Jiří Bělohlávek, Oliver Knussen and Sir Roger Norrington.

Jean-Guihen Queyras' discography is impressive. His recordings of cello concertos by Edward Elgar, Antonín Dvořák, Philippe Schoeller and Gilbert Amy have been released to critical acclaim. As part of a Harmonia Mundi project dedicated to Schumann, he has recorded the complete piano trios with Isabelle Faust and Alexander Melnikov and at the same time the Schumann cello concerto with the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra under Pablo Heras-Casado. "THRACE - Sunday Morning Sessions", his latest recording, was released in August 2016.

Jean-Guihen Queyras holds a professorship at the University of Music Freiburg and is Artistic Director of the "Rencontres Musicales de Haute-Provence" festival in Forcalquier. He plays a 1696 instrument by Gioffredo Cappa, made available to him by the Mécénat Musical Société Générale.

www.jeanguihenqueyras.com



Jean-Guihen Queyras

Hailed as “the world’s finest and most daring percussionist” **Colin Currie** is a solo and chamber artist at the peak of his powers, acclaimed for his virtuosity and musical integrity. Championing new music at the highest level, Currie is soloist with the world’s leading orchestras, including the Philharmonia, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Philadelphia, Cleveland and London Philharmonic orchestras.

Currie has forged a pioneering path in creating new music for percussion, premiering works by Reich, Carter, Andriessen, HK Gruber, MacMillan, Clyne, Rautavaara, Ross Edwards, Higdon, Aho, Wallin, Schwertsik, Holt, Goehr, Norman, Maric, Julia Wolfe and Nico Muhly. Currie’s unrivalled commitment to commissioning and creating new music was recognised in 2015 by the Royal Philharmonic Society who awarded him the Instrumentalist Award.

He is Artist in Association at London’s Southbank Centre, where in 2014 he was the focus of a major festival, “Metal, Wood, Skin”, featuring a number of premieres and performances. Currie is also Artist in Residence with Oregon Symphony Orchestra 2015/16–2017/18. He also performs widely with his critically acclaimed Colin Currie Group, formed in 2006, specialising in the music of Steve Reich.

Currie has recorded many concerto, recital and chamber works; his recording of Rautavaara’s *Incantations* with the Helsinki Philharmonic/Storgårds (Ondine) was released to critical acclaim and won a 2012 Gramophone Award.

Elliott Carter’s *Two Controversies and a Conversation* came into being as the result of a suggestion by Currie of a work for these forces by the composer. Currie felt that it would tickle Carter’s imagination and enduringly inventive spirit, which indeed it did. The two met for the first time in 2010 in New York City, and collaborated closely on how the percussion writing could work.

www.colincurrie.com



Colin Currie

Formed in 1987 from within the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, **Birmingham Contemporary Music Group** has a reputation for exciting performances, innovative audience-building and learning initiatives and a central commitment to composers and new work.

BCMG has premiered 200 works, many commissioned through its pioneering Sound Investment scheme, with a host of individuals helping commission each new piece. In addition to its concert season at the CBSO Centre in Birmingham, England, the ensemble tours regularly in the UK and overseas, with recent appearances at the BBC Proms and Wigmore Hall in London, and abroad at the US Library of Congress, Washington DC and Mexico's El Cervantino Festival.

BCMG's extensive Learning and Participation Programme supports young people as composers, performers and listeners through an exciting range of projects in- and out-of-school. BCMG is committed to talent development and the BCMG/Sound and Music Apprentice Composer-in-Residence scheme provides access for emerging composers to the full range of the Group's work.

Through BCMG's Artist-in-Association Oliver Knussen, BCMG was privileged to give world and UK premieres of several of Elliott Carter's late works, including first performances of *Two Controversies and a Conversation* and *On Conversing with Paradise* as well as Carter's final work, the piano trio *Epigrams*. BCMG gave the UK premiere of *Dialogues II* with Knussen and Pierre-Laurent Aimard, and has performed *Dialogues* with both Aimard and Nicolas Hodges.

BCMG features on numerous CDs, including an ongoing series of NMC discs devoted to British composers, with recent recordings of music by Charlotte Bray, Oliver Knussen, Tansy Davies, Alexander Goehr and Richard Causton. The Group has two Artists-in-Association, Oliver Knussen and John Woolrich, and Sir Simon Rattle is the Group's Founding Patron.

www.bcmg.org.uk

The **BBC Symphony Orchestra** has played a central role at the heart of British musical life since it was founded in 1930. It provides the backbone of the BBC Proms, performing around a dozen concerts in the festival each year. Highlights of the 2015 Proms season include celebrations of Sibelius and Nielsen in their 150th anniversary years and the First and Last Nights, conducted by Sakari Oramo and Marin Alsop respectively.

The BBC SO has a strong commitment to 20th-century and contemporary music, with recent performances including commissions and premieres from Unsuk Chin, Brett Dean, Wolfgang Rihm, Christopher Rouse, Albert Schnelzer and Ryan Wigglesworth.

It performs an annual season of concerts at the Barbican, where it is Associate Orchestra. The 2015-16 season includes six concerts conducted by Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo including symphonies by Mahler and Elgar, Total Immersion days devoted to the music of Henri Dutilleux, Henryk Górecki and Louis Andriessen (including Andriessen's opera La commedia), and the rarely-performed operas by Leoncavallo and Bellini.

The BBC Symphony Orchestra also works regularly with Semyon Bychkov, who holds the Günter Wand Conducting Chair, and Conductors Laureate Sir Andrew Davis and Jiří Bělohlávek. Brett Dean is the orchestra's Artist in Association.

Central to the orchestra's life are studio recordings for BBC Radio 3 at its Maida Vale home, some of which are free for the public to attend and the BBC SO also performs throughout the world. The vast majority of concerts are broadcast on BBC Radio 3, streamed online and available for 30 days after broadcast via BBC iPlayer.

The BBC SO is committed to innovative education work and ongoing projects include the BBC's Ten Pieces, BBC SO Plus Family scheme, which introduces families to classical music with pre-concert workshops and discounted tickets, and the BBC SO Family Orchestra and Chorus.

www.bbc.co.uk/symphonyorchestra

One of the pre-eminent composer-conductors in the world today, **Oliver Knussen** was born in Glasgow in 1952, grew up near London (where his father was principal Double Bass of the London Symphony Orchestra) and now lives in Suffolk. He is presently Artist-in-Association with the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group and Richard Rodney Bennett Professor of Music at the Royal Academy of Music.

The recipient of many honours and awards, including the Nemmers Prize in 2006, the RPS Conductor Award in 2009 and The Ivors Classical Music Award in 2016, he has served as Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh Festival (1983-98), Head of Contemporary Music at the Tanglewood Music Center (1986-93), Principal Guest Conductor of the Hague Residentie Orchestra (1993-97), Music Director of the London Sinfonietta (1998-2002), and Artist-in-Association with the BBC Symphony Orchestra (2009-2014). He was appointed a CBE in 1994 and received the Queen's Medal for Music 2015.

Together with Colin Matthews he founded the Composition and Performance Courses at the Britten-Pears School in 1992 and in recent years has been invited for residencies at the Royal Academy of Music, the New England Conservatory, the Eastman School of Music, and the Library of Congress in Washington DC.

Among his best-known works are the operas *Where the Wild Things Are* and *Higglety Pigglety Pop!*, written in collaboration with the late Maurice Sendak, as well as three symphonies, concertos for horn and violin, and smaller-scale works including *Ophelia Dances*, *Coursing*, *Flourish with Fireworks*, *Songs without Voices*, *Two Organa* and *Songs for Sue*.

His 60th birthday was celebrated with special events in Aldeburgh, Amsterdam, Birmingham, London and Tanglewood and he has recorded more than 50 CDs for labels including Deutsche Grammophon, Decca, Virgin and NMC.



Oliver Knussen



Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Isabelle Faust and Jean-Guihen Queyras at the recording sessions of *Epigrams*

Publisher: Hendon Music Ltd. / Boosey & Hawkes Music Publishers Ltd. (BMI)

Recordings:

Dialogues, Dialogues II, Two Controversies and a Conversation recorded
December 13 & 14, 2015, CBSO Centre, Birmingham, UK
Interventions, Soundings, Instances recorded July 5 & 6, 2016;
Maida Vale Studio 1, London, UK
Epigrams recorded December 20, 2016; Teldex Studio Berlin; Berlin, DE

Interventions, Instances, Soundings produced in association with the
BBC Symphony Orchestra and BBC Radio 3.



Executive Producer: Virgil Blackwell

Producer: Andrew Keener

Editor: Stephen Frost (*Interventions, Dialogues, Dialogues II, Soundings,
Two Controversies and a Conversation, Instances*) & Ian Watson (*Epigrams*)

Mastering Engineer: Stephen Frost

Recording Engineers: Simon Eadon (*Dialogues, Dialogues II,
Two Controversies and a Conversation*), Neil Pemberton (*Interventions,
Soundings, Instances*) & Sebastian Nattkemper (*Epigrams*)

Piano Technicians: Peter Salisbury (Birmingham and London sessions) and
Takuro Hanada (Berlin sessions)

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Mark Allan (Oliver Knussen), Virgil Blackwell (recording session)

Design: Santi Tanalgo

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Yamaha CFX piano for the recording sessions in Birmingham and London.

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Yamaha CFX piano is used exclusively on this recording.



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