

The first concert (15 February) will include the world première of a new song cycle by Helen Grime about the joy and pain of parenthood, specially commissioned for soprano Ruby Hughes and pianist Joseph Middleton, and the second (23 February) is inspired by Shakespeare's reflections on the journey's major milestones. Programmed and accompanied by Graham Johnson, this concert will feature soprano Ailish Tynan, mezzo-soprano Anna Huntley, tenor Ilker Arcayürek and bass-baritone Stephan Loges, and will include the world première of a new Wigmore Hall commission by Joseph Phibbs, and songs by Brahms, Britten, Mahler, Poulenc, Schubert, Schumann, Haydn, Wolf, Gilbert and Sullivan, Duparc and Noël Coward.

wigmore-hall.org.uk/learning/learning-landing-page

► This year will see Ian Page and **The Mozartists** explore music written by the 12-year-old Mozart in 1768, placing it in the context of works written by his contemporaries.

The year will begin with the annual retrospective concert at Wigmore Hall, contextualising the musical scene 250 years ago and including performances of Haydn's Symphony No 26, Vanhal's Symphony in D minor, arias by Jommelli, Haydn, Hasse and Mozart, and JC Bach's flute concerto in D major.

It will continue with a rare performance of Haydn's *Applausus* at Cadogan Hall, showcasing associate artists Ellie Laugharne, David Shipley and Thomas Elwin, and

will also include a new concert staging of Mozart's *La finta semplice*, which the ensemble will present in Birmingham and for its debut performance at the newly-refurbished Queen Elizabeth Hall.

www.classicalopera.co.uk

► The theme for the 2018 **London Festival of Baroque Music** is Treasures of the Grand Siècle. The event, which will take place 11-19 May, will explore the music of the French baroque, with 22 events over nine days.

Highlights include a performance of Charpentier's *Te Deum* in Westminster Abbey; the UK premiere of *Le Concert Royal de la Nuit* with Ensemble Correspondances, representing the event that saw Louis XIV emerge as the Sun King; Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, featuring Iestyn Davies as Orfeo; a programme exploring the influence of the Orient on the French Court by Le Poème Harmonique; and a collaboration between Indian classical musicians and French baroque specialists in Paris-Madras.

Other performers will include Le Poème Harmonique and Vincent Dumestre, Capriccio Stravagante with Skip Sempé, and Douce Mémoire and Dennis Rasin Dadré. www.lfbm.org.uk

► The main evening operas for **Wexford Festival Opera's** 2018 season will be Saverio Mercadante's *Il bravo*, William Bolcom's *Dinner at Eight* (a co-production with Minnesota Opera), and a double-bill of Umberto Giordano's *Mala vita* and Franco Leoni's *L'oracolo*.

Creative teams, cast and details of other programme events will be announced in the coming months.

The 67th Wexford Festival Opera will run over 17 days, beginning on 19 October and running until 4 November 2018. General booking opens on 14 April. www.wexfordopera.com

► The **Piccadilly Chamber Music Series** will continue on 23 February, 23 March, 18 May and 29 June at the Church of St James.

Performers include CBSO leader Zoe Beyers, violinist Matthew Jones, Ilyoung Chae and Ruth Palmer, and cellists Pavlos Carvalho, Tim Lowe, Victoria Simonsen and Gabriella Swallow.

The inaugural series of five concerts began in January and features Beethoven's complete piano trios. Each programme will include at least two works by Ludwig van Beethoven, as well as a work by a living composer. For this opening season, works by Cecilia McDowall, Helen Grime, György Kurtág, Nico Muhly and Arvo Pärt have been included.

www.piccadillychamberconcerts.com/

► The second **Holy Week Festival**, presented by Tenebrae and St John's Smith Square, will take place 26 March - 1 April.

Nigel Short and Tenebrae will perform a sequence of devotional settings and responses on Spy Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, which will be free for the public to attend.

The festival will also include opportunities to participate in a workshop with Tenebrae, a come-and-sing event featuring *Messiah*, and performances from Ex Cathedra, Gabrieli, Polyphony and the Britten Sinfonia, the Gesualdo Six, the Temple Church Choir and the Tallis Scholars.

To mark the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Baltic states, programmes throughout the event will feature music by Ēriks Ešņvalds, Paweł Łukaszewski and Arvo Pärt, among other Baltic composers.

The event will conclude on 1 April with a performance of Bach's Mass in B minor with Gabrieli and Paul McCreech. www.sjss.org.uk/news/holy-week-festival-2018

► The 25th Al Bustan Festival of Music and the Performing Arts will take place 13 February - 21 March at the Al Bustan Hotel in Beirut, Lebanon. This year's event is a celebration of Bach, with concerts ranging

▼ Focus on 1768: Ian Page and the Mozartists



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from a jazz-themed performance by The Swingles to a recital by Mahan Esfahani.

The festival includes performances of core works such as the Magnificat, *St John Passion*, the *Goldberg Variations* and the B Minor Mass, as well as programmes placing his music alongside that of his contemporaries and selections of favourite works.

Other highlights include a performance of the third cello sonata by Gautier Capuçon; a varied programme from Stephen Isserlis, Maggie Cole and the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra; an Arabic poetry evening, with readings interspersed with extracts of the composer's cello suites; and selections of cantatas featuring Andreas Scholl and the Accademia Bizantina Baroque Orchestra.

The festival also explores how Bach's works sound when filtered through different genres, with concerts dedicated to indie, jazz and techno interpretations.

Tickets cost £22-£86.

albustanfestival.com/

Bachtrack releases 2017 statistics

American orchestras were the busiest in 2017, according to Bachtrack.

The classical music events website has released statistics based on the 32,000 events listed on the website in 2017.

Analysis of these events revealed that five of the ten busiest orchestras in the world were American. Germany and the UK were also represented strongly, each with two orchestras in the top ten.

The data also revealed that more female conductors are gradually gaining more engagements. In 2013, there was only one woman in Bachtrack's top 100 busiest conductors, but that number has now risen to five.

Other findings include:

- ▶ The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra was the busiest UK orchestra, having given 103 concerts

- ▶ The Hungarian State Opera was the busiest opera house, with 239 events listed
- ▶ The most programmed opera was Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, which received 361 performances
- ▶ The programming of music by American composers has risen by 5% since 2016
- ▶ Yannick Nézet-Séguin was the busiest concert conductor, with 80 concert engagements, and Philippe Jordan was the busiest conductor across all genres, with 97
- ▶ Mozart was the most programmed composer
- ▶ Arvo Pärt remains the most popular contemporary composer, ranking 44th in the top 100 most programmed composers

bachtrack.com

OBITUARIES

ROBERT MANN

19 JULY 1920 – 1 JANUARY 2018



American violinist Robert Mann, a founding member of the Juilliard String Quartet, has died aged 97.

Born in Portland, Oregon, Mann took

up the violin aged nine, and began to study with Portland Symphony concertmaster Edouard Hurlimann at the age of 13.

Aged 18, he moved to New York to enrol in the Juilliard School. He won the Naumburg Competition in 1941, making his New York debut later that year.

Following army service in world war two, he was invited by Juilliard president William Schuman to form the Juilliard String Quartet in 1946 with violinist Robert Koff, violist Raphael Hillyer and cellist Arthur Winograd. Mann retired from the quartet in 1997, having been its first violinist for more than five decades.

Mann taught at Juilliard and the Manhattan School of Music, and mentored members of the Cleveland, Emerson, Tokyo, Brentano and St Lawrence quartets. From 2012 he presented the Robert Mann String Quartet Institute.

As a conductor he led ensembles such as the New York Chamber Symphony, MSM Symphony, and groups at the Ravinia, Tanglewood and Aspen music festivals.

Mann was also active as a composer; his written oeuvre included more than 30 works for narrator, a string quartet and a Concerto for Orchestra.

He was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in April 1996.

The Juilliard String Quartet issued a statement paying tribute to its former member: 'Through his passionate artistry and teaching, he inspired generations and touched us all. It is hard to find the words to do justice to the life of Mr Mann. We in the quartet will always remember him.'

WALTHER DÜRR

27 APRIL 1932 – 6 JANUARY 2018

German musicologist Walther Dürr has died aged 85.

A Schubert specialist, Dürr edited the 14-volume series of the composer's songs for Bärenreiter's *Neue Schubert-Ausgabe*, the complete scholarly-critical edition of the composer's works.

From 1965 to 1997, Dürr was a full-time member of editorial board of the *Neue Schubert-Ausgabe*, and continued to serve as a project manager even after his retirement. In his final days, he worked on a part-time basis as a member of the editorial board and volume editor.

His writing focused on the relation between words and music. In 1977 he was made an honorary professor of Tübingen University; he also taught at the universities of Stuttgart, Trossingen, Bern and Freiburg.

Bärenreiter issued a statement saying that 'musicology has lost one of its towering figures, and the House of Bärenreiter a friend and sterling editor.'