



*From the deep end of darkness — Issue 178, February 2024*

Nilufar Habibian's song cycle *Az nahāyate tāriki* (From the deep end of darkness), a 2023 Three Choirs Festival commission, has been shortlisted for a Royal Philharmonic Society award. Its three songs set Persian language poems by the female Iranian modernist poet Forough Farokhzad, inspired by the 'Woman, Life, Freedom' movement in Iran. Nilufar Habibian is a London-based composer, kanun player and improviser from Iran. One of her aims is to introduce Persian music to a wider audience by performing solo with new interpretations. [The image above shows the settlement of Gilan in Iran in 2020, photographed by Amirreza Zarghami.]



Nilufar Habibian



Anatol Ugorski

On 31 January 2024 **Halida Dinova** took part in a concert dedicated to her teacher **Anatol Ugorski** (1942-2023) at Detmold Conservatory in Germany. She played music by **Scriabin**: the Sonata No 4, two preludes and the Étude Op 42 No 5. Halida Dinova says: 'Ugorski was a genius pianist and an incredibly kind parent-like mentor for so many years. It will be lonely now ... but his spirit and art is always living in our minds.'

American-Japanese pianist Tamami Honma's new recordings of the complete 35 Beethoven Piano Sonatas, based on Barry Cooper's meticulously researched edition, will be released on **Divine Art Recordings** on 9 February 2024. [READ MORE](#)



TAMAMI HONMA, piano

Ludwig van Beethoven:  
Complete 35 Piano Sonatas.  
Tamami Honma, piano.  
© 2024 Divine Art Ltd

Intermusica Artists' Management Ltd has signed French conductor Swann van Rechem for worldwide general management. Born in Lille and currently living in Weimar, van Rechem came to international attention in September 2023, when he won the Grand Prize, Audience Prize and Orchestra Prize at the fifty-eighth Besançon International Competition for Young Conductors. Previous winners have included Seiji Ozawa, Osmo Vänskä, Yutaka Sado, and more recently, Kazuki Yamada, Jonathan Heyward and Ben Glassberg. Swann van Rechem studied orchestral conducting with Jean-Sébastien Béreau, and at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam with Antony Hermus, Karel Deseure, and Ed Spanjaard. Passionate about contemporary music, van Rechem has founded his own ensemble Les Parnassiens, which specialises in early twentieth century repertoire for chamber orchestra. He has been shortlisted in the 'Revelations, chef d'orchestre' category for the 31èmes Victoires de la Musique Classique alongside Marie Jacquot and Léo Margue to be held in Montpellier in February 2024.



BMF 2024 Concerto Competition poster

The application and preliminary round video deadline for the Bella Music Foundation's International Concerto Competition for the Blind and Visually Impaired is 1 March 2024. Winners will have the unique opportunity to showcase their talents as soloists, performing a concerto with the foundation's full professional orchestra, the BMF Symphony Orchestra, during the BMF International Music Festival for the Blind on 28 April 2024 at the Barrymore Film Center in Fort Lee, New Jersey, USA. Further information: [bellamf.org](http://bellamf.org)

The Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra has announced a major creative project which sees the orchestra collaborate with choreographer Wayne McGregor and visual artist Ben Cullen Williams to create a reimagined concert production of *Szymanowski's* ballet score *Harnasie* called *A Body for Harnasie*, a co-commission with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The project will see McGregor use digitally enhanced choreographic storytelling with technological interventions and visuals by Williams. Through the use of human and digital intelligence, a sculptural video installation will be suspended above the orchestra on the stage, reimagining how dance can be created and experienced. The Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra will give the first performance in Katowice on 26 February 2024 with London Philharmonic Orchestra principal conductor Edward Gardner, before Gardner takes the production to London UK to perform it

with the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Southbank Centre on 6 March 2024 and at Concertgebouw Bruges in Belgium on 9 March 2024. Further information: [nospr.org.pl](http://nospr.org.pl)

The UK's Royal Opera will tour Japan from 22 June until 2 July 2024 - the company's first tour of Japan since 2019. In his final appointment as music director of The Royal Opera, Antonio Pappano will be conducting two spectacular casts in Oliver Mears' darkly elegant production of Verdi's *Rigoletto* and Andrei Șerban's classic staging of Puccini's *Turandot*. There will be two performances of *Rigoletto* at Kanagawa Kenmin Hall in Yokohama on 22 and 25 June, and a further two at the NHK Hall in Tokyo on 28 and 30 June. The four performances of *Turandot* will take place at the Tokyo Bunka Kaikan on 23, 26 and 29 June, and 2 July 2024. Further information: [roh.org.uk](http://roh.org.uk)

Scottish conductor Donald Runnicles (born 1954) will become the new chief conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic in 2025. Runnicles will take up the post in the 2025/26 season, but will already lead the Dresden Philharmonic as chief conductor designate in the 2024/25 season.



Donald Runnicles. Photo © Simon Pauly



Susanna Fairbairn singing *Messiah* with Worcester Festival Choral Society. Photo © 2023 Michael Whitefoot

Worcester Festival Choral Society presents Beethoven's Mass in C at Worcester Cathedral, Worcester, UK at 7.30pm on Saturday 16 March 2024. Featuring a hundred and forty singers, a thirty-three-piece orchestra and internationally acclaimed soloists whose credits include The Royal Opera, English Touring Opera and Opera North, this major concert will feature around a hundred and eighty performers. Containing some of Beethoven's most sublime music for voices, Mass in C major was commissioned by a Hungarian prince in 1807 and today is regarded as one of Beethoven's most moving works. The concert also includes Richard Blackford's beautiful 1996 cantata, *Mirror of Perfection*, expressively set to poems by St Francis of Assisi. The evening's soloists are soprano

Susanna Fairbairn, mezzo-soprano Samantha Price, tenor Gwilym Bowen and baritone Dominic Sedgwick. Accompanying will be the Meridian Sinfonia, with Worcester Cathedral's director of music, Samuel Hudson, conducting. Further information: [wfcs.online](http://wfcs.online)



Worcester Festival Choral Society's 16 March 2025 Beethoven concert

The TELUS original documentary feature *The Lake* has been recently released and is available to audiences across Canada free on demand and online, worldwide. This unique film is a musical work of cross-cultural collaboration and discovery centering on a journey to decolonize a 1950s Canadian opera about the sylix people and first settlers in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley. The feature has ties to the Okanagan, Vancouver, music and focus on decolonization in the arts. [READ MORE](#)

Simone Young is set to become the first Australian conductor to perform at Germany's Bayreuth Festival and the first woman to conduct Wagner's *Ring* there. [READ MORE](#)

Roderic Dunnett writes about British horn player Claire Marsden's appearances in Loughborough and Warwick. [READ MORE](#)

The UK's Thaxted Festival announces its 2024 Festival from 21 June to 14 July, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the birth of local composer **Gustav Holst**. The festival features soprano Nadine Benjamin, The Joanna Eden Band, The Nash Ensemble and pianist Iyad Sughayer, alongside VOCES8, Mozart's *Magic Flute* with Wild Arts, the English Chamber Orchestra and The Festival's resident ensemble, the London Mozart Players. There will be a first performance of Symphony No 1 by Noah Max, who is composer in residence in 2024. [READ MORE](#)

British conductor, horn player, researcher and former soldier Dwight Pile-Gray recently won a claim of racial harassment against the UK's Ministry of Defence at an employment tribunal. [READ MORE](#)

Applications are now open for the NZ Composer Sessions 2024, closing on 4 March 2024. [READ MORE](#)

British conductor Jan Latham-Koenig was arrested on 10 January 2024 in London, UK and charged with 'arranging or facilitating an offence and sexual communication with a child'. [READ MORE](#)

We mark the passing of Albert Mayr, Romana Vaccaro, Peter Schickele, Bruno Ducol, Romuald Twardowski, David Lumsdaine, Tamara Milashkina, Rashid Khan, Karel Janovický, Phill Niblock, Victor Ekimovsky, Ruy Mingas, Oldřich Semerák and Alice Parker. [READ MORE](#) [LATEST CLASSICAL MUSIC NEWS](#)

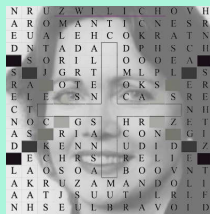
## SEARCH TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF CLASSICAL MUSIC ARTICLES

Use *Classical Music Daily's* search feature to search twenty-five years of features, reviews, news and other articles. There's now a search box on most of our pages, and the search facility can also be found [here](#).

## PROFILE – INSPIRING JOY

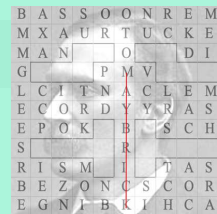


**Ron Bierman** talks to American opera director and dancer Kyle Lang. **Roderic Dunnett** and **Keith Bramich** mark the centenary of the birth of British composer **Gerard Schurmann**. **Jeffrey Neil** talks to Jenny Wei about the use of new technologies. [READ MORE](#)



## CLASSICAL MUSIC WORD-SEARCH PUZZLES

Canadian composer **Allan Rae's** classical music word-search puzzles, including the latest, *Zwlich* and *Maybrick*, are [here](#).



## SPOTLIGHT – THE BIRD IS AN ALPHABET

**Geoff Pearce** listens to recently released recorded music by Berkeley, Boulanger, Chaminade, Grieg, Pounds, Ravel, Smyth and Tailleferre on Chandos, to music by Christopher Brown on Lyrita and to the playing of Piotr Anderszewski on Warner Classics.

**Gerald Fenech** listens to two albums of music by Puccini on Signum Classics, and to Daniel Hope's album *DANCE!* on Deutsche Grammophon. He listens to Lalo, Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn and Stravinsky on Chandos and to Mozart early keyboard concertos from the Academy of Ancient Music.

**John Dante Prevedini** recommends song cycles by contemporary American composer Douglas Boyce on New Focus Recordings.

**Keith Bramich** listens to music by Cergio Prudencio on Buh Records and to Schubert lieder sung by Harriet Burns on Delphian Records.

Our reviews of recorded music are worth exploring in more detail than shown here. They are all illustrated with short sound samples, usually chosen by the author of each review, and each review has a detailed information page about the album under scrutiny. We also publish a long list of new releases, normally once each month.

[LATEST CD REVIEWS](#)

[CD INFORMATION PAGES](#)

[NEW RELEASES](#)

## PLEASE CONSIDER SPONSORING A FEATURE OR MAKING A DONATION

*Classical Music Daily* has been completely free to read, with a new item every day, since we rebranded and re-launched in January 2019. Please consider helping us in a practical way by sponsoring a feature. [FIND OUT MORE](#)

You could also help us by making a donation, of any amount. [FIND OUT HOW TO MAKE A DONATION](#)

## ENSEMBLE — BRIGHTLY DELIVERED

**Ron Bierman** listens to live performances of three Mozart symphonies from Raphael Payare and the San Diego Symphony. **Mike Wheeler** listens to Grieg and Chopin played by pianist Alexander Ullman, to a concert by the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and to Nigel Short's Tenebrae choir. [READ MORE](#)

## NEXT NEWSLETTER — CLASSICAL MUSIC AND POLITICS

Our next newsletter will be an edited recording of an online discussion on the subject of *Classical Music and Politics*, partly inspired by Jeffrey Neil's recent article *The Political Symphony*.

Other inspirations are **Ron Bierman's comments** at the start of his recent review, and today's rather strange political climate and the effects of this on the classical music scene. The discussion, chaired by **John Dante Prevedini**, will be recorded on Tuesday 20 February 2024. All welcome. Please join us if you can. [READ MORE](#)

This newsletter is an occasional PDF taster for our high quality and colourful online classical music magazine, published every day since January 1999.  
Founded by the late **Basil Ramsey** and current editor Keith Bramich.

All rights to the material in this newsletter are reserved, and nothing contained here should be re-published elsewhere without the consent of the copyright holder — usually the author — and of *Classical Music Daily*.

Read us every day at [www.classicalmusicdaily.com](http://www.classicalmusicdaily.com)

[Contact us](#)

[Your privacy](#)

[Newsletter archive](#)