

## **The Wilderness Pleases: Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment's dive into the natural world with 2021-22 Southbank Centre Season**

The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (OAE) joyfully return from the digital wilderness to present the fifth of their 'Six Chapters of Enlightenment' at Southbank Centre. In the final wave of the season announcement, the OAE reveal the complete series of concerts in their 2021/22 season, *The Wilderness Pleases*.

'Six Chapters of Enlightenment' are concert seasons at the Southbank Centre, where the OAE is Resident Orchestra. The series is inspired by the golden age of science and philosophy that gave the Orchestra its name. The Wilderness Pleases is inspired by one of the many influential pieces of work to come out of the Enlightenment era; Shaftesbury's *The Moralists*.

In the book, the main character, Theocles, describes the terror of encountering a group of crocodiles in an Egyptian desert. After escaping the monsters, he is overcome with a desire to admire them as wondrous creatures of the natural world. He says, 'let us fly to the vast deserts of these parts [...] ghastly and hideous as they appear they want not their peculiar beauties. Wilderness pleases.'

After the success of recording Brahms's piano concertos No.1 and 2 with the Orchestra (released June 2021), OAE Principal Artist Sir András Schiff re-joins the Orchestra for a three-night series of Beethoven's Piano Concertos. **(6, 8 and 9 June 2022)**. In this triple concert series, Sir Schiff will direct the OAE through all five of Beethoven's thrilling piano concertos in the same week for an immersive dive into the composer's sound-world. These concertos are complemented by a performance of Haydn's symphonies nos. 93, 99 and 103 respectively on each night.

Gramophone magazine describes the collaboration between the OAE and Sir Schiff as:

*'What he and the OAE offer is not so much to do with authenticity as with freshness and 'detoxification', something akin to letting the daylight into Miss Havisham's room and removing the cobwebs from her wedding cake.'*

– Michelle Assay in Gramophone's Recording of the Month

Bach's *St John Passion* has been at the forefront of the OAE's repertoire in recent years. For Easter 2021, the Orchestra collaborated with Marquee TV to present a new filmed realisation of this monumental production, recorded in Battersea Arts Centre with an all-star cast including Mark Padmore as Evangelist and Gerald Finley as Christus (OAE Player, April 2021). This Easter, Padmore resumes his iconic role as Evangelist as he guides the OAE on the journey of Christ to the cross with soprano Lucy Crowe, mezzo-soprano Paula Murrihy, tenor Hugo Hymas and bass Georg Nigl **(March 2022)**.

Other highlights in the OAE's season involve the Orchestra turning its focus to the pleasing wilderness in heaven in Mahler's Symphony no.4, joined by conductor Ádám Fischer **(March 2022)**. The OAE are also delighted to be joined by guest artist Isabelle Faust for Schumann's Violin Concerto **(15 February 2022)**. Leading the Orchestra through Schumann's enigmatic piece is conductor Antonello Manacorda.

For full details of the OAE's season, please visit [oea.co.uk](http://oea.co.uk).

## Notes to Editors

For more information, please contact Anna Bennett, [anna.bennett@oae.co.uk](mailto:anna.bennett@oae.co.uk)

### Faust plays Schumann

Tuesday 15 February 2022, 7pm

**Conductor** Antonello Manacorda

**Violin** Isabelle Faust

MENDELSSOHN The Hebrides Overture

SCHUMANN Violin Concerto in D Minor

SCHUMANN Symphony No. 2 in C Major

### Fischer conducts Mahler Symphony No. 4

Tuesday 8 March 2022, 7pm

**Conductor** Ádám Fischer

**Soprano** Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha

MAHLER Symphony No. 5 – Adagietto

MAHLER Des Knaben Wunderhorn Wer hat das Liedlein erdacht? Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen  
Rheinlegendchen

MAHLER Symphony No. 4

### St John Passion

Saturday 26 March 2022, 7pm

**Director and Evangelist** Mark Padmore

BACH St John Passion

### Sir Andrés Schiff plays Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 2 and No. 1

Monday 6 June 2022, 7pm

**Director and pianist** Sir Andrés Schiff

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 2

HAYDN Symphony No. 93

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 1

### Sir Andrés Schiff plays Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 3 and No. 4

Wednesday 8 June 2022, 7pm

**Director and pianist** Sir Andrés Schiff

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 3

HAYDN Symphony No. 99

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 4

### Sir Andrés Schiff plays Beethoven Piano Concerto No. 5, 'Emperor'

Thursday 9 June 2022, 7pm

**Director and pianist** Sir Andrés Schiff

BEETHOVEN Coriolan Overture

HAYDN Symphony No. 103

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No. 5, 'Emperor'