

WIGMORE HALL 125

Saturday 25 July 2026
7.30pm

New Worlds

Ilumina

Liza Ferschtman violin
Uiler Moreira violin
Jennifer Stumm viola

Ami-Louise Johnsson viola
Bruno Lima cello
Cristian Budu piano

Improvisation

Gabriela Lena Frank (b.1972)

Clarisse Leite (1917-2003)

Thomas Adès (b.1971)

Jacob do Bandolim (1918-1969)

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959)

Bohuslav Martinů (1890-1959)

Kaija Saariaho (1952-2023)

Nina Simone (1933-2003) &
Dimitri Tiomkin (1894-1979)

Orlande de Lassus (c.1530-1594)

Brasílio Itiberê II (1886-1967)

György Kurtág (b.1926)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Angélica Negrón (b.1981)

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Chico Buarque (b.1944)

Aboio: Improvisation on wandering

II. Tarqueada from *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout* (2001)

Lendas... e Nada Mais

IV. Et... (tango mortale) from *Arcadiana* Op. 12 (1994)

Migalhas de Amor (pub. 1952)

Bailado Infernal (1920)

II. Poco andante from *3 Madrigals for violin and viola* (1947)

Cloud Trio (2009)

I • II • III • IV

Wild is the Wind (pub. 1966)

La nuit froide et sobre (pub. 1576) *arranged by Sini Simonen*

From *Suíte Litúrgica Negra* (1940)

I. Xangô • III. O protetor Exú

Virág az ember (pub. 2010)

IV. Adagio – Allegro from String Quintet in G minor K516 (1787)

Interval

Marejada (2020)

Piano Quintet No. 2 in A Op. 81 (1887)

I. *Allegro ma non tanto* • II. *Dumka. Andante con moto*

• III. *Scherzo (Furiant). Molto vivace – Poco tranquillo*

• IV. *Finale. Allegro*

Roda Viva (1967) *arranged by Bruno Lima*



UNDER 35S

Supported by the AKO Foundation
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This concert forms part of the UK/Brazil Season of Culture 2025-26, a year-long cultural exchange between the two countries that showcases the diverse and vibrant arts sectors of both nations.

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Ilumina's founder and artistic director, Jennifer Stumm, tells a touching story of a close-knit community of Brazilian coffee farmers. Their crop's fragility and slim profit margins led them to embrace sustainable organic farming. While it carried greater effort and risk than industrial production methods, it promised premium profits. She invited their leader to address her creative collective's mix of student and professional musicians, gathered for their annual coffee farm festival in the mountains near São Paulo. The farmer knew little about classical music but recognised the quality of Ilumina's work. 'I know that because quality is an energy,' he explained. 'It's like the energy of human dignity, which exists in how we grow our plants and see our community's health changing radically over time. I feel the same energy in your music.' His speech moved Stumm and her companions. 'If you dig, you'll always find connections between the pieces we play,' she says. 'But I really want people to join us on the ride and feel something, just like that farmer did.'

Ilumina's latest programme revolves around **Dvořák's** Second Piano Quintet and its fusion of Romantic lyricism, Classical form and echoes of Czech folk music. The work celebrates Bohemia's vibrant traditional culture, still alive when it was composed in 1887. 'I wondered whether we could reflect Dvořák's connection to folk and popular music by considering a major theme for our collective, where different worlds meet and music travels freely between them,' notes Stumm. Brazil's popular music, she adds, is valued highly throughout society. 'The relationship people there have with popular songs is like that which Wigmore Hall's audience has with Schubert Lieder.' Ilumina works to remove boundaries between musical genres and barriers that all too often stifle musical talent from under-served communities across Latin America.

This evening opens with an improvisation rooted in *Música Armorial*, offspring of the arts movement formed in 1970 in Northeast Brazil to explore the stories of the region's diverse ethnicities. The piece rises from an *aboio*, one of the melancholic chants sung by the *vaqueiros* or cattle-herders in the arid Brazilian backcountry. Western lands beckon in 'Tarqueada' from *Leyendas: An Andean Walkabout* (2001). **Gabriela Lena Frank's** work, conceived for string quartet and later arranged for string orchestra, blends Andean folk music and western classical traditions to show how different cultures can happily co-exist.

Cristian Budu understands the nature of that co-existence. The Brazilian pianist offers a selection of miniatures, including the three short movements of **Clarisse Leite's** *Lendas... e Nada Mais* (Legends...and nothing more) and two pieces based on Afro-Brazilian rhythms from the *Suíte Litúrgica Negra* (Black Liturgical Suite). The latter's creator, **Brasílio Itiberê II**, absorbed lessons from the diverse traditions of samba and other popular Brazilian genres. He became a professor of folk music at the Conservatório Nacional de Canto Orfeônico in Rio de Janeiro, the conservatory founded in 1942 by Heitor Villa-Lobos. **Jacob do Bandolim's** *Migalhas do*

Amor (Crumbs of Love), an evergreen hit from the 1950s, belongs to *choro*, a genre of popular instrumental music originally from Rio de Janeiro, often billed as 'Brazilian jazz'.

Ilumina's programme runs like a sequence of short films, complete with excursions to the borderlands between life and death. 'Et...' from **Thomas Adès's** string quartet *Arcadiana* (1994), a 'tango mortale' inspired by Nicolas Poussin's painting *Et in arcadia ego*, presents a nerve-shredding vision of an idyllic world confronted by death, while *Bailado Infernal* (1920), a fragment from **Villa-Lobos's** lost opera *Zoé*, conjures images of souls cast into hell's furnace. **Bohuslav Martinů's** *Madrigals for violin and viola* (1947), inspired by their composer's fondness for 16th-century English madrigals, includes the haunting *Poco andante*, music infused with nostalgia for a lost culture. A mercurial alpine cloudscape inspired **Kaija Saariaho's** *Cloud Trio* (2009), a study in the individuality of three instruments from the same family. *Wild is the Wind*, the title-track from **Nina Simone's** sixth studio album, was originally composed in 1957 by Dimitri Tiomkin for the eponymous film. Simone transformed the piece, creating a meditation on impermanence and loss that builds from simple beginnings to reach a heartrending conclusion.

The austere polyphony of **Lassus's** *La nuit froide et sobre*, first published in 1576, contemplates light's return after a 'cold and sombre night'. It prepares the way for **Brasílio Itiberê's** vivid portraits of Xangô, the great Afro-Brazilian deity, and the primordial protector Exú, bridge between the human and spirit realms. Clock time stands still in 'Virág az ember' (Flowers we are) from the eighth book of **György Kurtág's** *Játékok* pieces (2010), its sequence of translucent notes offering a foretaste of eternity. The felt sense of an infinite, mysterious universe touches the finale of **Mozart's** String Quintet in G minor. 'If you played that to young people who knew nothing about classical music, they'd say, dude, that's like trance music,' Jennifer Stumm suggests. 'And then Mozart suddenly opens the door to the most joyful, radiant light at the end of this huge work.'

Two evocative pieces frame Dvořák's quintet in Ilumina's second act. *Marejada* (2020) invites listeners to imagine being elsewhere in space and time. **Angélica Negrón** notes that her piece, a Kronos Fifty for the Future commission, was shaped by 'the desire to escape to a place that feels and sounds like home'. It combines live music with an ambient soundscape built from field recordings made in Puerto Rico and sounds created from objects found in each of its players' homes. *Roda Viva*, from **Chico Buarque's** 1967 musical about a rock star tormented by fame, confronts life's spinning wheel. Its laid-back bossa nova feel and pointed lyrics, including the line 'We want to make our voices heard', carried a veiled protest against Brazil's brutal military dictatorship and a reminder that it, too, was powerless against destiny.

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