

WIGMORE HALL 125

Saturday 6 December 2025
7.30pm

Barbara Hannigan soprano
Bertrand Chamayou piano

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)

Chants de terre et de ciel (1938)

Bail avec Mi (pour ma femme) • Antienne du silence (pour le jour des Anges gardiens) • Danse du bébé-Pilule (pour mon petit Pascal) • Arc-en-ciel d'innocence • Minuit pile et face • Résurrection (pour le jour de Pâques)

Aleksandr Skryabin (1872-1915)

Poème-nocturne Op. 61 (1911-2)

Vers la flamme Op. 72 (1914)

John Zorn (b.1953)

Jumalattaret (2012)

Proem – Opening invocation • Päivätär (Sun goddess) • Vedenemo (Mother of waters) • Akka (Queen of the ancient magic) • Louhi (Hostess of the underworld) • Mielikki (The huntress) • Kuu (Moon goddess) • Tellervo (Forest spirit) • Ilmatar (Air spirit) • Vellamo (Goddess of the sea) • Postlude



UNDER 35S

Supported by the AKO Foundation
Media partner Classic FM



Help us raise £125,000
for 125 years of music

To find out more visit wigmore-hall.org.uk/donate



Join & Support
Donations

Wigmore Hall is a no smoking venue. No recording or photographic equipment may be taken into the auditorium nor used in any other part of the Hall without the prior written permission of the management. In accordance with the requirements of City of Westminster persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any other gangways. If standing is permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be limited to the number indicated in the notices exhibited in those positions. Disabled Access and Facilities - full details from 020 7935 2141. Wigmore Hall is equipped with a loop to help hearing aid users receive clear sound without background noise. Patrons can use this facility by switching hearing aids to 'T'.



Please ensure that watch alarms, mobile phones and any other electrical devices which can become audible are switched off. Phones on a vibrate setting can still be heard, please switch off.

The Wigmore Hall Trust Registered Charity No. 1024838
36 Wigmore Street, London W1U 2BP • [Wigmore-hall.org.uk](https://wigmore-hall.org.uk) • John Gilhooly Director

Wigmore Hall Royal Patron HRH The Duke of Kent, KG
Honorary Patrons Aubrey Adams OBE; André and Rosalie Hoffmann; Louise Kaye; Kohn Foundation; Mr and Mrs Paul Morgan

Tonight's program is bold and witty, reflecting the musical connection I share with Barbara Hannigan.

We met at a concert at Radio France in 2016, and I remember spending the evening chatting as if we were old friends. We mainly talked about cooking that night.

We met up a few more times and the idea of working together began to take shape, although we can't quite remember how.

I remember a discussion with Didier Martin, the director of the Alpha label, asking me what I would ideally like to play with Barbara, and I spontaneously replied: Messiaen.

I imagine I wanted to be on familiar ground to approach our collaboration.

I initially thought of the epic cycle *Harawi*, a kind of modern *Tristan and Isolde*, no doubt with the idea that we were embarking on a vast epic.

After discussion, we decided to work on the two cycles, *Poèmes pour Mi* and its sequel, *Chants de Terre et de Ciel*.

These cycles speak of Messiaen's intimacy, through a description of domestic life, his wife, his son, their house in the country, but also of a relationship with the divine, as is almost always the case in his work, which is that of a fervent Catholic.

This fervour would lead him to write some of the most powerfully lyrical music ever composed.

This is particularly true of the sixth and final piece in *Chants de Terre et de Ciel*, 'Résurrection', a kind of immense incantation.

This transcendence is the central element of this programme.

Barbara introduced me to the world of John Zorn, whom I knew only from afar.

She was the one who revived the incredible *Jumalattaret* cycle in 2018, which until then had been considered unperformable.

It is a work of transcendence on all levels: because of its physicality and its approach of surpassing oneself, but also because of its very subject matter, inspired by the Kalevala, with each song praising a Finnish goddess.

Barbara and John have a deep connection, and I was personally quite nervous about inserting myself into that relationship, but luckily I received the composer's blessing during our performance of the work at the Park Avenue Armory in New York in December 2024.

I was warming up at the piano and studying *Jumalattaret* and didn't hear John slip into the room when he suddenly jumped on me and hugged me warmly as if we were brothers.

His world is totally unique, made up of free jazz, trash metal, hardcore punk, contemporary music and noise music.

Jumalattaret is a true epic, mysterious, tender, ecstatic.

Between these two monuments that are the pieces by Messiaen and Zorn, there are two poems for solo piano by Skryabin, another great mystic, but whose inspiration here is esoteric.

Music with a poisonous charm, bordering on eroticism and black magic, I will play two pieces in succession: the fragile and fleeting *Poème-Nocturne*, followed by the emblematic *Vers la Flamme*, a feverish work if ever there was one.

© Bertrand Chamayou 2025

Reproduction and distribution is strictly prohibited.

Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992)

Chants de terre et de ciel (1938)

Olivier Messiaen

Due to copyright reasons we are unable to reproduce the original texts for this cycle online.

Bail avec Mi (pour ma femme)

Ton œil de terre, mon œil de terre, nos mains de terre, ...

Songs of Earth and Heaven

A lease with Mi (for my wife)

Your eye of earth, my eye of earth, our hands of earth, to weave the atmosphere, the mountain of the atmosphere.

Star of silence for my heart of earth, for my lips of earth, little ball of sun complementary to my earth.

The lease, sweet companion of my bitter shoulder.

Antienne du silence (pour le jour des Anges gardiens)

Ange silencieux, écris du silence dans mes mains, alleluia. ...

Anthem of silence (for the feast of guardian angels)

Silent angel, inscribe some silence in my hands, alleluia. That I might breathe the silence of heaven, alleluia.

Danse du bébé-Pilule (pour mon petit Pascal)

Pilule, viens, dansons. ...

Dance of my little one (for my little Pascal)

Come little man, let's dance, Malonlanlaine, ma. Strings of the sun, Malonlanlaine, ma.

It's the alphabet of laughter on your mother's fingers. Her perpetual Yes was a peaceful lake Malonlanlaine, ma, ma.

Sweetness of stairs, surprise behind doors. All the light birds fluttered from your hands. Light birds, pebbles, refrains, light cream. Shaped like blue fish, like blue moons, haloes of earth and water, a single lung in a single reed. Io, io malonlanlaine, ma, malonlanlaine etc. . . A disarmed eye, an angel on your head, your little nose lifted up towards the low blue which is swallowed up, edging with golden cries the glass horizons, you held out your heart so pure. To sing, to sing, to sing, ah! to sing, gleaners of stars, tresses of life, could you have sung more deliciously? The wind over your ears, malonlanlaine, ma, is playing leap-frog, malonlanlaine, ma. And the green presence and your mummy's eye. Shedding the hour of its petals around my smile. Malonlanlaine, ma. Around my smile, Malonlanlaine, ma, ma, ma, ma, io! Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Io, io!

Please do not turn the page until the song and its accompaniment have ended.

Arc-en-ciel d'innocence

Pilule, tu t'étires comme
une majuscule de vieux
missel, ...

Rainbow of innocence

Little man, you stretch
like an old missal's
initial letter.
You are tired; look at your
hand.
Unbreakable toy, the
springs are still
working;
but you can't discard this
one
like some pretty
rag-doll.
Dream of the folds in the
hour;
weave, weave vocalises
around silence:
the sun will write to you on
the shoulder of morning
to cast birds into your
toothless mouth.
Smile, smile, what you are
singing, sing, sing,
has taught you to smile.
Could you dream what
you don't see?
Come, let me catapult
you into day
like an aviator-dragonfly!
There you are, higher than
me:
how lovely to dominate all
these giants!
Tie to your little wrists
rainbows of innocence
that have fallen from your
eyes,
make them quiver in the
crannies of time.
Very distant, very near;
let's play the game a
hundred times over!
Where is he? So high he
cannot be seen?
Jump, my cup-and-ball
little man!
You jump around like the
clapper of a paschal bell.
Hello, little man.

Minuit pile et face

Ville, œil puant, minuits
obliques, ...

Midnight heads or tails

City, stinking eye, oblique
midnights,
rusty nails driven into the
corners of oblivion.
Lamb, Lord!
They dance, my sins
dance!
Carnival of disillusion of
death's cobblestones.
The streets a great rotting
corpse, beneath the
lantern's harsh light.
Crossroad of fear!
Blanket of madness and
pride!
Laughter, grow more
shrill! laughter, swallow
yourself!
These torches are
mountains of night.
Tightly pulled knots of
anguish.
Unheard-of beast that eats,
that slobbers in my breast.
Head, head, such sweat!
And I'll be left alone to
enveloping death?
Father of lights, Christ,
Vine of love,
Spirit, Comforter,
Comforter of the seven gifts!

Bell, my bones vibrate, a
sudden cypher,
ruins of error and circles
on the left,
nine, ten, eleven, twelve.
Ah! To fall asleep a little one!
Beneath the too broad
air, in a blue bed,
my hand beneath my ear,
with a tiny night-shirt on.

Résurrection (pour le jour de Pâques)

Alleluia, alleluia. ...

Resurrection (for Easter Day)

Alleluia, alleluia.
He is the first, the Lord
Jesus.
He is the first-born of the
dead.
Seven stars of love for the
pierced one,
put on your garment of
light.
'I have risen again, I have
risen again;

I sing: for Thee, my
 Father, for Thee, my
 God, alleluia.
 . I pass from death to life.'
 An angel.
 He has alighted on the
 stone.
 Perfume, gate, pearl,
 unleavened bread of
 Truth.
 Alleluia, alleluia.
 We have touched Him,
 we have seen Him.
 With our hands we have
 touched Him.
 A single stream of life in
 His side,
 put on your garment of
 light.
 'I have risen again, I have
 risen again.
 I ascend: to Thee, my
 Father, to Thee, my
 God, alleluia.
 I pass from death to light.'
 Bread.
 He breaks it and scales
 fall from their eyes.
 Perfume, gate, pearl, wash
 yourselves in Truth.

Aleksandr Skryabin (1872-1915)

Poème-nocturne Op. 61 (1911-2)

Vers la flamme Op. 72 (1914)

John Zorn (b.1953)

Jumalattaret (2012)

Traditional, compiled by Elias Lönnrot

Proem – Opening invocation

Mieleni minun tekevi, aivoni
 ajattelevi lähteäni
 laulamahan, saa'ani
 sanelemahan, sukuvirttä
 suoltamahan, lajivirttä
 laulamahan. Sanat
 suussani sulavat, puhe'et
 putoelevat, kielelleni
 kerkiävät, hampahilleni
 hajoovat. ylistykseksi
 jumalalattaret!

Mastered by impulsive
 desire, by a mighty
 inward urging, I am now
 ready for singing, ready
 to begin the chanting in
 praise of the
 goddesses!

Päivätär

Sun goddess

Vedenemo

Mother of waters

Akka

**Queen of the ancient
 magic**

Viel' on muitaki sanoja,
 ongelmoita oppimia:

There are other words of
 magic, incantations I
 have learned:

Louhi

**Hostess of the
 underworld**

siitti siivet sulkinensa
 kuuhuen käsin tavoitti

made a pair of feathered
 wings, with her bare
 hands by her magic

Mielikki

The huntress

Kuu

Moon goddess

Tellervo

Forest spirit

Keksi piirtämän kivessä,
 valeviivan kal

secret sign drawn on the
 rock

Ilmatar

Air spirit

Parempi olisi ollut ilman
 impenä elää,

better had it been for me
 to have stayed the airy
 virgin

Vellamo

Goddess of the sea

Postlude

Ellös täältä ilman
 pääskö,nousko, kuu,
 kumottamahan, pääskö,
 päivä, paistamahan, kun en
 käyne päästämähän, itse
 tulle noutamahan yheksän
 orihin kanssa, yhen
 tamman kantamalla!

Moon of gold and Sun of
 silver, Hide your faces
 in the caverns Of
 Pohyola's dismal
 mountain; Shine no
 more to gladden
 Northland, Till I come to
 give ye freedom, Drawn
 by coursers nine in
 number, Sable coursers
 of one mother!