

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC

# DREAMS



there are images of ravishment  
and wonder here

music by John Adams, Henri Dutilleux, Toru Takemitsu, George Benjamin

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC

PRESENTS **A LAB PRODUCTION** CONDUCTOR **KAZUSHI ONO**

CHOIR **VLAAMS RADIOKOOR** VIOLIN **SAYAKA SHOJI**

COUNTERTENOR **BEJUN MEHTA**

WITH THE SUPPORT OF BESIDE TAX SHELTER AND THE BELGIAN TAX SHELTER



Vlaanderen  
verbeelding samen



flagey

V.J. GUNTHER BROUCKE - ONTWERP LIESBET LUTIN - FOTO © LIESBET PEREMANS

«I never dream but once or twice a year,  
hardly, my nights are dark, my days are  
full of meaning, I never dream but in the  
middle of the day, I dream by trade»

**MICHEL SERRES**

## **YOUR CONCERT NIGHT**

**19:00 MOUNT FUJI TIMELAPSE &  
SOUNDSCAPE STUDIO 2**

Stef Van Alsenoy (19:00 > 22u30)

**19:00 EXPO MOUNT FUJI FOYER 1**

Stef Van Alsenoy (19:00 > 22u30)

**19:30 INLEIDING FOYER 2**

Jasper Croonen & Kazushi Ono (EN)

**20:15 CONCERT STUDIO 4**

(without intermission → 21:45)

conductor: **Kazushi Ono**

preparation of the choir: **Bart Van Reyn**

stage director: **Fanny Gilbert-Collet**

sound design: **Stef Van Alsenoy**

artistic advisor: **Gerd Van Looy [Ictus]**

literary advisor: **Tom Van de Voorde**

soundscape voiced by **Jolien De Gendt,**

**Fanny Gilbert-Collet and Sandra Paelinck**

**JOHN ADAMS** The Chairman Dances  
(Foxtrot for Orchestra) (1985)

**HENRI DUTILLEUX**

Vioolconcerto « L'Arbre des songs » (1985)

Librement

Interlude

Vif

Interlude 2

Lent

Interlude 3

Large et animé

soloist: **Sayaka Shoji**, violin

**TORU TAKEMITSU**

Dreamtime (1981)

**George Benjamin**

Dream of the Song (2015)

The Pen

The Multiple Troubles of Man

Gazing Through the Night

Gacela del amor maravilloso

The Gazelle

My Heart Thinks as the Sun Comes Up

with **Vlaams Radiokoor**

soloist: **Bejun Mehta**, contre-ténor

**21:30 AFTERTALK HALL**

Jasper Croonen & Kazushi Ono (EN)

## **PROGRAMME NOTES**

From foxtrot to lullaby: Kazushi Ono, Brussels Philharmonic's new music director, will take you into a musical Alice in Wonderland dream world. A concert that starts where a raving party ends (to the swinging tones of John Adams' The Chairman Dances), catapulting you straight from the dance floor deep into dreamland - where Henri Dutilleux, Toru Takemitsu and George Benjamin take the helm of this alternative world. Music that makes you dream - and dreams that become music.

### **FOXTROT FOR ORCHESTRA**

John Adams (°1947) saw The Chairman Dances as a "warm-up" for his opera Nixon in China: "At that time, 1985, I was obliged to fulfill a long-delayed commission for the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, but having already

seen the scenario to Act III of Nixon in China, I couldn't wait to begin work on that piece. So *The Chairman Dances* began as a 'foxtrot' for Chairman Mao and his bride, Chiang Ch'ing [...]. In the surreal final scene of the opera, she interrupts the tired formalities of a state banquet, disrupts the slow moving protocol and invites the Chairman, who is present only as a gigantic forty-foot portrait on the wall, 'to come down, old man, and dance.'" Adams' swirling minimalist music depicts the couple's dance, and then sleep overtakes them. Their eyes fall shut and a musical dream world comes to life...

## **TREES OF DREAMS**

Henri Dutilleux' (1916-2013) *L'Arbre des songes* is the first musical dream to take the stage. The composer wrote his violin concerto on commission by Radio France, to celebrate the 60th birthday of the violinist Isaac Stern. The composer had no interest in a virtuoso piece, nor did he care much for the traditional four-part structure. He found a solution to the latter problem by sticking together the four movements with three interludes each with its own distinctive character: "the first is pointillist the next one monodic, and the last begins with a certain stillness. In these parts, the soloist is not merely passive; at the end of the second interlude, the violinist runs parallel to the orchestra. This parallel role becomes very clear in the central episode of the work (the slow movement), which the oboe d'amore and the solo violin imitate each other in an interplay of mirror images." The symmetric structure is typical of the entire work. The title alludes to both to the atmosphere and the structure and thematic development of the work: «All in all, the piece grows somewhat like a tree, for the constant multiplication and renewal of

its branches is the lyrical essence of the tree. This symbolic image, as well as the notion of a seasonal cycle, inspired my choice of *L'arbre des songs* as the title of the piece.»

Toru Takemitsu's (1930-1996) music sounds poetic, filled with rich chords and misty melodies. But behind each of these, there is a very precisely constructed web of sounds hidden. Like his great model, Debussy, he attaches great importance to the colours of sound and subtle effects, and he describes his own music as "an unfolding painting scroll". For *Dreamtime*, a commission by the Nederlands Dans Theater, he drew inspiration from the mythology of the Australian aboriginals. It is a world in which dream and reality blend with each other: «Just as a dream for the vividness of detail, points to an unanticipated, unreal whole, so in this work short episodes hang suspended in seeming incoherency to form a musical whole. The subtle variations in rhythm and tempo changes serve to emphasize a feeling of floating in the music.»

The music of George Benjamin (1960) is also rooted partly in the colourful language of impressionism. "Enchanting", "mysterious" and "sensual" are just a few of the descriptions that can be found in reviews of his song cycle *Dream of the Song* for orchestra, countertenor and women's choir. The sung texts – Hebrew poems by Samuel HaNagid and Solomon Ibn Gabirol and Spanish poems by Federico García Lorca – can all be traced back to Arabic poetry from 9th-century Andalusia. With the Hebrew poems sung in English translation by the countertenor, while the women's voices sing the original Spanish verses, Benjamin creates an unusual cohesion: "This is best expressed in the last movement, in which the

soloist and the choir offer two simultaneous visions of the dawn, conceived a millennium apart.”

Commentary by Aurélie Walschaert

## **KAZUSHI ONO, music director**

[www.kazushiono.com](http://www.kazushiono.com)

As of the 2022/23 season, Kazushi Ono is the music director of the Brussels Philharmonic. Ono’s musical personality was formed by the cultures of both Japan, where he was born, and Europe, where he studied. His work reflects both influences and crosses styles and forms, from Baroque to new commissions and from orchestral to opera. He has worked in opera houses and concert halls all over the world and recently took over as Music Director of Brussels Philharmonic while also serving as Music Director of Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra (TMSO) and Artistic Director of New National Theatre Tokyo.

For the Dreams project, Maestro Ono has a visual fantasy in mind. The programme has been carefully curated with four composition-al gems close to his heart, and the dramaturgy has been designed based on his personal vision and with his close collaboration.

## **SAYAKA SHOJI, violin**

[www.sayakashoji.com](http://www.sayakashoji.com)

Sayaka Shoji studied at Chigiana Musical Academy and Cologne University of Music and made her European debut with the Lucerne Festival Strings. Shoji has been supported by leading conductors such as Mariss Jansons, and worked with renowned

orchestras including London Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Symphony and the Mariinsky Orchestra. Alongside her usual concert activities, she created an experimental visual-music project named "Synesthesia" in 2007, and exposed oil-paintings and video-art works.

In 1999, Shoji's career was awarded with the first prize at the Paganini Competition, in 2012, she was named "one of the 100 most influential people for Japan in future" by Nikkei Business, and in 2016 she received the Mainichi Art Award.

## **BEJUN MEHTA, countertenor**

[www.bejunmehta.com](http://www.bejunmehta.com)

Bejun Mehta is a regular guest at the world's major opera houses, including La Scala, Bavarian State Opera, and the Metropolitan Opera. He also appeared in the context of festivals like the Salzburger Festspiele. His recordings – solo and opera – have been distinguished with many prizes, including the Echo Klassik, the Diapason d'Or (twice), and the Gramophone Contemporary Award. In recent years, Mehta has successfully made a name for himself as a conductor, working with orchestras including the Hr Symphony Orchestra and the Dresden Philharmonic, among others.

George Benjamin wrote his Dream of the Song specifically for Bejun Mehta. The composition saw its premiere with the Netherlands Chamber choir and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, conducted by Benjamin himself in 2015.

## **FANNY GILBERT-COLLET, stage director**

[www.fannygilbertcollet.com](http://www.fannygilbertcollet.com)

Fanny Gilbert-Collet completed her Masters in Fine Arts in Theatre Directing at the University of Ottawa in 2011. Part of the Yulanda Faris Young Artists Program, she was assistant stage director for the 2013-2014 season of the Vancouver Opera, she was also assistant director in Dortmund for two seasons, and since the 2016/17 season, she joined the artistic team of the Opera Ballet Vlaanderen in Antwerp as assistant stage director.

Gilbert-Collet is the prize-winner of awards for Outstanding Production of the Year and New Creation of the Year at the Rideau Awards in 2013, and in 2016, her work was rewarded with the prestigious Richard Wagner Verband grant to go to Bayreuth

## **STEF VAN ALSENOY, sound design**

[www.stefvanalsenoy.com](http://www.stefvanalsenoy.com)

Stef Van Alsenoy is a sound designer and photographer. He created surround soundscapes for photographer Stephan Vanfleteren and theatre maker Kris Verdonck, among others.

Minimalism and the use of 'found' sounds are the core of his soundscapes, where the emphasis is not on a compelling musical accompaniment.

## **VLAAMS RADIOKOOR**

[www.vlaamsradiokoor.be](http://www.vlaamsradiokoor.be)

The Vlaams Radiokoor (Flemish Radio Choir) was founded in 1937 by the Belgian public

broadcaster of the day. Today, the Vlaams Radiokoor is renowned for vocal music in Flanders and Europe, and is counted among the top ensembles both at home and abroad.

The young Belgian conductor Bart Van Reyn is the musical director of the Radiokoor. A shared passion for baroque and contemporary repertoire, the belief that the voice is the ultimate interpreter of our emotions, and the commitment to make our vocal heritage accessible to singers and audiences alike are what binds the ensemble together.

The Vlaams Radiokoor is an institution of the Flemish Community.

## **BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC**

[www.brusselsphilharmonic.be](http://www.brusselsphilharmonic.be)

**“The world needs symphonic music. And symphonic music needs the world.”**

That is the firm belief of the Brussels Philharmonic. As a symphony orchestra founded in 1935 under the auspices of the Belgian public broadcaster, unveiling the symphonic world as best we can is deep in our DNA. By innovating while maintaining full respect for the value of the past, we keep the symphonic music of the past, present and future relevant and inspiring – for ourselves and all of society. We do this from the historic Studio 4 at Flagey in Brussels, together with our music director Kazushi Ono: he shares our open and adventurous spirit and our rock-solid belief in the need for cross-fertilization between art, life and society.

Brussels Philharmonic is an institution of the Flemish Community.

# MUSICIANS

## CONDUCTOR

Kazushi Ono

## SOLOIST

Vlaams Radiokoor, koor

Sayaka Shoji, viool

Bejun Mehta, contratenor

## CONCERTMASTER

Henri Raudales

## VIOLIN 1

Bart Lemmens <sup>(2)</sup>

Olivia Bergeot, Annelies Broeckhoven,

Stefan Claeys, Cristina Constantinescu,

Justine Rigutto, Kristina Rimkeviciute,

Elizaveta Rybentseva, Anton Skakun,

Sviatoslava Semchuk, Alissa Vaitsner,

Gillis Veldeman

## VIOLIN 2

Mari Hagiwara <sup>(1)</sup>, Samuel Nemtanu <sup>(1)</sup>

Alexis Delporte, Francisco Dourthé Orrego,

Aline Janeczek, Eléonore Malaboef, Sayoko

Mundy, Naoko Ogura, Eline Pauwels, Julien

Poli, Stefanie Van Backlé

## VIOLA

Mihai Cocea <sup>(1)</sup>, Griet François <sup>(2)</sup>

Philippe Allard, José-Miguel Almeida Freitas,

Marina Barskaya, Hélène Koerver, Agnieszka

Kosakowska, Barbara Peynsaert, Stephan

Uelpenich, Patricia Van Reusel

## CELLO

Karel Steylaerts <sup>(1)</sup>, Kristaps Bergs <sup>(1)</sup>

Kirsten Andersen, Julius Himmler, Inés

Iglesias Walch, Sophie Jomard, Emmanuel

Tondus, Elke Wynants

## DOUBLE BASS

Jan Buyschaert <sup>(1)</sup>, Elias Bartholomeus,  
Luzia Correia Rendeiro Vieira, Thomas  
Fiorini, Daniele Giampaolo, Simon Luce

## FLUTE

Wouter Van den Eynde <sup>(1)</sup>, Sarah Miller,  
Jill Jeschek <sup>(2)</sup>

## OBOE

Joris Van den Hauwe <sup>(1)</sup>, Maarten Wijnen <sup>(1)</sup>,  
Lode Cartrysse <sup>(2)</sup>, Saartje Kemp

## CLARINET

Maura Marinucci <sup>(1)</sup>, Anne Boeykens <sup>(1)</sup>,  
Danny Corstjens <sup>(2)</sup>, Midori Mori <sup>(2)</sup>

## BASSOON

Marceau Lefèvre <sup>(1)</sup>, Alexander Kuksa,  
Jonas Coomans <sup>(2)</sup>

## HORN

Hans van der Zanden <sup>(1)</sup>, Claudia Rigoni,  
Luc van den Hove, Mieke Ailliet <sup>(2)</sup>

## TRUMPET

Ward Hoornaert <sup>(1)</sup>, Rik Ghesquière,  
Luc Sirjacques

## TROMBONE

David Rey <sup>(1)</sup>, William Foster <sup>(2)</sup>, Tim Van  
Medegael <sup>(2)</sup>

## TUBA

Jean Xhonneux <sup>(2)</sup>

## TIMPANI

Gert D'haese <sup>(2)</sup>

## PERCUSSION

Titus Franken <sup>(2)</sup>, Simon Florin, Stef Hesters,

**Stijn Schoofs, Miguel Sánchez Cobo**

**CIMBALOM**

**Tom De Cock <sup>(2)</sup>**

**HARP**

**Eline Groslot <sup>(2)</sup>, Emma Wauters <sup>(2)</sup>**

**PIANO & CELESTA**

**Anastasia Goldberg <sup>(2)</sup>**

**VLAAMS RADIOKOOR**

**SOPRANO**

**Annelies Brants, Jolien De Gendt,  
Hannah Ely, Kelly Poukens**

**ALTO**

**Victorina Eeckeloo, María Gil Munoz, Sandra  
Paelinck, Noëlle Schepens**

<sup>(1)</sup> principal / <sup>(2)</sup> soloist