

Jansen's Dubugnon Premiere, and Vaughan Williams's Antartica

Sunday, November 29, 2026 · 19:00 · Barbican
Antonio Pappano, conductor · Janine Jansen, violin · London Symphony
Chorus, choir

TONIGHT'S PROGRAMME		MIN
1	SIBELIUS 1865–1957 <i>The Swan of Tuonela, from 'Lemminkäinen Suite', Op. 22</i>	9'
2	DUBUGNON b. 1968 <i>Sonnenring for violin and orchestra (world premiere)</i>	30'
3	VAUGHAN WILLIAMS 1872–1958 <i>Sinfonia antartica (Symphony No. 7)</i>	40'
TOTAL MUSIC		79'

Jean Sibelius

1865–1957

9 minutes

The Swan of Tuonela, from 'Lemminkäinen Suite', Op. 22

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Listen, above all, for the cor anglais: its long, plaintive, song-like melody is the voice of the swan, and it threads through almost the entire piece. Around it, listen for the dark, muted strings that create the still, glassy surface of the river of the dead, for the soft tolling of harp and timpani, and for a brief swell of more impassioned feeling at the centre before the swan glides on. The whole piece moves slowly, in a hushed 9/4, conjuring an atmosphere of solemn, otherworldly calm. It is a few minutes of pure, dark enchantment.

Richard Dubugnon

30 minutes

b. 1968

Sonnenring for violin and orchestra (world premiere)

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Come to this premiere with open ears: there is no recording to anticipate. Listen for the relationship between the solo violin and the orchestra, how Jansen's line sings, soars and is coloured by the instrumental halo around it (the 'sun ring' of the title may well be reflected in shimmering, radiant orchestral textures). Dubugnon is a colourful, dramatic orchestrator, so listen for vivid instrumental effects and a strong sense of atmosphere and momentum. Above all, let Janine Jansen, one of the most charismatic and intense violinists before the public, guide you through this new music written to display exactly her kind of artistry.

Ralph Vaughan Williams

40 minutes

1872–1958

Sinfonia antartica (Symphony No. 7)

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR

Listen, from the very opening, for the great striding theme that represents heroic human endeavour, and then for the chilling sounds of the Antarctic itself: the wordless soprano and women's chorus (here the women of the London Symphony Chorus) keening over the orchestra, the eerie whistle of the wind machine, the glitter of celesta, harp, piano and tuned percussion evoking ice and snow. This blend of the human and the elemental is the symphony's whole world.

Follow the five movements as a journey: a grand, struggling Prelude; a Scherzo evoking the wildlife and the floes (listen for suggestions of penguins and whales); a vast, bleak central Landscape, its climax crowned by a terrifying organ entry depicting the immensity and menace of the ice; an Intermezzo of tenderness and human warmth; and a final Epilogue, in which the heroic theme returns and the explorers march bravely on. At the very end the music dissolves into the wind machine and the wordless voices alone, the indifferent landscape outlasting the men who dared it. It is one of the most atmospheric and moving of all twentieth-century symphonies.



CONCERT PROGRAMS

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