

# AN ORGAN RECITAL WITH ANNA LAPWOOD

22 & 28 MARCH 2026

Concert Hall,  
Sydney Opera House

“SYDNEY”  
“SYMPHONY”  
“ORCHESTRA”

Emirates  
Principal Partner

# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**PATRON** Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra's concerts encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, and collaborations with guest artists from all genres, reflecting the Orchestra's versatility and diverse appeal. Its award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, and the Orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program.

The Orchestra's first chief conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013, followed by David Robertson as Chief Conductor from 2014 to 2019. Australian-born Simone Young commenced her role as Chief Conductor in 2022, a year in which the Orchestra made its return to a renewed Sydney Opera House Concert Hall.

## WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS CONCERT

Expect to enjoy yourself! Maybe your heart will beat a little faster. Maybe your hair will stand on end. It's hard to predict or describe how the vast sound of a symphony orchestra will affect each of us. Just bring an open mind and engage with the music – close your eyes, watch the conductor and the musicians, or just sit back and let the music take you away.



### When do I clap?

Good question. Most pieces of music are broken up into different movements – usually, people only clap at the end of a piece, so there will be silent pauses between movements. On the next page you will see how many movements the pieces in this concert have, and the duration of each piece. But the simplest thing is to wait until the conductor turns around – or when everyone else starts applauding.

The conductor may leave the stage and come back on a few times, and acknowledge the different sections of the orchestra. You can keep clapping as long as you want to – and feel free to cheer and stomp your feet if you really enjoy the concert!



### Can I take photos or videos?

Yes, you can take photos and videos on your phone during the performance. **Please switch your phone to silent, make sure the flash is off and dim the brightness of your screen so you don't distract other audience members.** And if you share it to your socials, tag us in your posts! We love seeing what people have captured.

Please leave professional and semi-professional camera gear at home and limit yourself to a phone camera inside the venue.



### What happens at interval?

The interval will begin when the conductor leaves the stage and the lights go to their full brightness. You can choose to stay in your seat and wait, go to the bathroom, walk around or purchase food or drink from one of the foyer bars.

An announcement will play through the speaker system 10 minutes, 5 minutes and 1 minute before the concert resumes.

## 2026 CONCERT SEASON

# AN ORGAN RECITAL WITH ANNA LAPWOOD

PLAYING THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE GRAND ORGAN

**Anna Lapwood** organ

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**HANS ZIMMER** (born 1957) **arr. Lapwood**  
*The Da Vinci Code*: Chevaliers de Sangreal (2006)

**RACHEL PORTMAN** (born 1960)  
*Flight* (2020)

**OLIVIA BELLI**  
*Limina Luminis* (2023)

**HOWARD SHORE** (born 1946) **arr. Lapwood**  
*The Lord of the Rings Organ Symphony* (excerpts)

- i. Prologue
- ii. *A Knife in the Dark*
- iii. *Rivendell*
- iv. *The Ring Goes South*
- v. *The Three Hunters*
- vi. *The Grace of Undómiel*
- vii. *The Lighting of the Beacons*
- viii. *The Battle of the Pelennor Fields*
- xi. *The Return of the King*

INTERVAL

**JOHN WILLIAMS** (born 1932) **arr. Lapwood**  
*Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*: Duel of the Fates (1999)

**HANS ZIMMER** (born 1957) **arr. Lapwood**  
*Interstellar*: Cornfield Chase (2014)

**LUDOVICO EINAUDI** (born 1955) **arr. Lapwood**  
*Experience* (2013)

**EUGÈNE GIGOUT** (1844–1925)  
**10 Pieces for Organ**: IV. Toccata (1890)

**HANS ZIMMER** (born 1957) **arr. Lapwood**  
*Pirates of the Caribbean Suite* (2003)

- i. *Hoist the Colours/Davy Jones*
- ii. *Jack Sparrow*
- iii. *One Day*
- iv. *Drink Up Me Hearties*

**Sunday 22 March, 7pm**  
**Saturday 28 March, 2pm**

Concert Hall,  
Sydney Opera House

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### Pre-concert talk

By Miranda Ilchef in the  
Northen Foyer at 6.15pm  
on Sunday, and 1.15pm on  
Saturday.

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### Estimated durations

The concert will run for  
approx. 2 hours

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### Cover image

By Nick Rutter

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Anna Lapwood's performances  
with the Sydney Symphony  
Orchestra have been made  
possible with generous support  
from Associate Professor Keith  
Ong and Dr Eileen Ong.

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Sydney Symphony Orchestra  
acknowledges the Gadigal  
people of the Eora Nation,  
the traditional custodians of  
the land and water on which  
we work and perform. We pay  
our respects to their Elders  
past and present.

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### ABC Classic

Saturday's performance will be recorded by  
ABC Classic for delayed broadcast on  
11 April at 1pm, and streaming online.

## Emirates

Principal Partner



Photo by Andy Paradise

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### **ANNA LAPWOOD** organ

Anna Lapwood is one of the UK's most dynamic ambassadors for classical music. As the official organist of the Royal Albert Hall, she has broken down genre boundaries and introduced a huge new audience to the organ. She has reached millions via her devoted social media following and helped revitalise repertoire for the instrument through the dedicated commissioning and performing of new works. She is also an established conductor and broadcaster, and a fierce advocate for the advancement of female voices within her industry. The scope of her influence is demonstrated by her appointment as MBE in 2024's New Year's Honours list and her inclusion in the 2025 *Sunday Times* Young Power List, alongside the likes of Lando Norris, Bella Maclean and Molly-Mae Hague.

Anna is a graduate of Oxford University, where she was the first female Organ Scholar in Magdalen College's 560-year history. In 2016 she also became the Director of Music at Pembroke College, Cambridge – the youngest ever person to be appointed in that role at an Oxbridge college. She remained in the role until August 2025. Her time at Pembroke saw her found a much-lauded girls' choir, commission works from leading choral composers, and spearhead the release of five records, including 2020's *All Things Are Quite Silent*. Her tenure was rounded off with a performance at the BBC Proms, conducting the College Chapel Choir as part of an all-night concert that also featured cellist Anastasia Kobekina and pianist Hayato Sumino among other artists.

Among the works written for Anna are Max Richter's *Cosmology* for organ, chorus and orchestra, Kristina Arakelyan's *Toccata* for organ and orchestra and Olivia Belli's *Limina Luminis* for solo organ.

A composer and arranger in her own right, Anna is signed to Boosey & Hawkes and has published several choral compositions as well as numerous transcriptions of orchestral music for organ, many of which are top sellers on ArrangeMe. She has also curated and edited *Gregoriana*, an anthology of organ works based on Gregorian chant, all by contemporary women composers, which was Presto Music's 2022 Publication of the Year.

A keen collaborator, Anna is an Artist in Association with the BBC Singers and Featured Artist with the Hallé. Her relationship with Royal Albert Hall has resulted in some of her most memorable pop collaborations with artists including AURORA, Bonobo, Florence + the Machine and Raye, as well as actor Benedict Cumberbatch for *Letters Live*.

Her close relationship with the Hall has also led to the launch of a new annual Organ Scholar Programme. The scholarship is one of several initiatives demonstrating Anna's commitment to musical outreach and the fostering of young talent. She also leads regular workshops for young organists around the UK, has hosted BBC Young Musician for BBC Four, and established an annual Cambridge Organ Experience for girls aged 11 to 18. Her relentless encouragement of and support for female organists in particular has made her a role model within that community, neatly captured in the hashtag #playlikeagirl, which she first adopted after being told to 'play like a man' during an organ competition. Now with a four-million-strong social media following, she has helped bring the organ, and contemporary ideas of what an organist can be, to a whole new audience.



Photo by Nick Rutter

# ANNA LAPWOOD: A BRIGHT NEW STAR IN THE CLASSICAL SKY

*The brilliant English organist discusses genre boundaries, *The Lord of the Rings* and her growing confidence in her own programming ahead of her eagerly-awaited Sydney debut.*

**By Hugh Robertson**

Every now and again a new personality crashes through the classical music atmosphere like a comet, blazing across the sky and immediately catching everyone's attention. Nobody ever knows who it will be, but some strange alchemy of talent, charisma and timing combusts to create a brilliant new star.

Anna Lapwood is the newest phenomenon in classical music. The English organist, conductor, educator and composer has become a global superstar, with sold out concerts around the world, major commissions written for her by today's leading composers, a record deal with

Sony, hosting gigs on TV and radio and the TikTok account that started it all recently ticking over 1.5 million followers.

This month Lapwood makes her first trip to Australia for a two-week residency with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra – performing two solo recitals and two mainstage programs with the full Orchestra (one with Saint-Saëns' Organ Symphony, the other with two Australian premieres of works commissioned for her), as well as a masterclass, a workshop and a schools concert – an extraordinarily busy and broad schedule of events that reflects her boundless energy and desire to connect with audiences across the demographic spectrum.

## FEATURE ARTICLE

‘It’s going to be fun,’ she enthuses from a hotel room in Dresden. ‘I have been excited about this residency for months now. It’s all music that I adore playing. It all sort satisfies a different bit of my musical brain, I guess.

‘Playing the Saint-Saëns, you basically have the best seat in the house, and you get to sit and experience the orchestra making incredible music around you and then you get to bring it all together at the end all while enjoying the party.

‘Then the Max Richter is incredibly moving. I premiered it last year and I was crying by the end. I think what Max does so well is write tricky emotions into music – we’ve seen that with all the awards his score for *Hamnet* has picked up in the last month. And he’s done that in this piece as well in a really poignant way. The Arakelyan is like the total opposite – it’s this extrovert party, an explosion of joy and colour.

‘And for the solo recital I’m going to be doing some of my new *Lord of the Rings Organ Symphony*, which I am so excited about getting to play. So basically all of it is pieces I adore playing and getting to play at the Sydney Opera House on that organ. You can’t really complain, can you?’

Of course as is so often the case, Lapwood toiled for years before becoming an overnight sensation. She was a voracious and obviously gifted musician as a child, beginning with piano at four, picking up all of her older siblings’ instruments out of curiosity before narrowing her focus to the harp to the point that she was principal harpist for the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and the Junior Royal Academy of Music Symphony Orchestra.

‘Harp was my principal instrument for many years, and I was basically set on being a professional harpist,’ recalls Lapwood. ‘And then my mum said to me one day, “have you ever thought of taking up the organ?” And I was like, “don’t be ridiculous, it’s a silly instrument. No one likes the organ. I hate the organ.”

‘And then she told me that organ scholars at Oxford and Cambridge get a grand piano in their room at university. And I was like, “Okay, I’ve changed my mind. Organ is a great instrument.” And that was how I started.

‘It’s funny, I really didn’t warm to it at first. I found it so hard. I mean, I had taken up so many instruments by that point and like got to a high standard on five, six instruments, and this was by far the hardest I’d ever encountered. I felt kind of quite stuck with it at first. But then I think there was something about that that made me really determined to figure out how to overcome that sticking point and figure out how to do it.’

What a career it has been since. Lapwood did indeed win entry to Oxford, to Magdalen College, the first woman in the college’s 560-year history to be awarded an organ scholarship. In 2016, at just 21, she was appointed Director of Music of Pembroke College, Cambridge, the youngest person to hold an equivalent position of an Oxford or Cambridge university college. In 2022 she was appointed an associate artist at London’s Royal Albert Hall, then in 2025 was named the Hall’s first-ever official organist in its 150-year history.

Those are the headline appointments, but at the same time Lapwood has been growing an enormous following on social media, confounding traditional ideas about who the audience is for classical music and the organ. Clips of her playing with non-classical artists like Bonobo and Raye, or for a Ministry of Sound electronica concert, went viral, exposing millions to the unique power and impact of a grand pipe organ like that of the Royal Albert Hall. And that broad and diverse audience has given Lapwood a freedom she never imagined she would have as an organist and chorister.

## FEATURE ARTICLE

‘I increasingly am very suspicious of genre boundaries. And this generation, the young generation at the moment don’t really listen to genre boundaries. They might use them as a slightly helpful label occasionally, but they don’t care about them. They will listen to the music that they find interesting and exciting, no matter the genre.’

‘I think it’s a really exciting time for us in the classical camp – though we really should be thinking of it as the “this bit of music” camp. The audience is ready and waiting and wanting to discover what it is that we love about the music that we perform – we just have to find a way to make that initial connection.’

Nowhere is that philosophy clearer than in the repertoire Lapwood will be performing in Sydney. Saint-Saëns’ Organ Symphony is one of the cornerstones of the repertoire for organ with orchestra, while two brand-

new works commissioned for Lapwood – by Max Richter and by Kristina Arakelyan – will receive their Australian debuts. Her solo recital program captures her attitude even more clearly, with music by 19th century French organist-composer Eugène Gigout sitting alongside contemporary classical works and transcriptions of film soundtracks by John Williams and Hans Zimmer.

‘I feel like I’ve got more confident with just programming the music that I want to play,’ says Lapwood when asked to describe how she builds a program. ‘I don’t mean that to sound arrogant or cocky. But I used to always be worried about pleasing the critics, pleasing the people who probably wouldn’t like what I was doing anyway. But now I’m just going to program the music that I feel really passionate about at the moment and hope that is what my audience wants to hear.’



Photo by Charlotte Levy

## FEATURE ARTICLE

‘And I feel very lucky that actually, in terms of my main audience – which is a lot of people who maybe haven’t heard the organ before, or maybe haven’t been to a classical concert before – I feel very lucky that they really love my programs, because it’s the music that I adore playing.’

‘What I try to do in my concerts is, yes, there will be film music in there, but I try and use that as bit of sort of stepping stone. I will always include some contemporary music by female composers: there’s a piece of Olivia Belli that I play in almost all of my concerts. And often it’s the piece that people say is their favourite when they leave.’

‘I know there are always going to be people with strong opinions about programming. Often people are ask why I don’t play Bach – but there are so many organists who play Bach so incredibly well, better than I can play it, and that is not music where I feel I have something different and authentic to say at this point in time.’

‘I think audiences can tell what your relationship is with a piece of music and their experience of it is impacted by that. If they feel like you are trying to prove your way through a piece of music, I think they then listen with a kind of nervousness. Whereas the thing with the film scores – and it’s not that they’re easier at all, they are blooming hard, let me tell you that – I feel a sense of ownership over them, and I feel like my relationship with the instrument is now defined through those transcriptions. And that is how I fell in love with the instrument.’

‘So when I go out on stage performing them, it’s not that I’m not kind of having to work really hard while performing them, it’s that there isn’t a sense of *proving*. I am just so excited to share this music with this group of people, and I think that means that people are much more likely to then fall in love with the music because they can feel it from you.’

**Hear Anna Lapwood in Sydney this March, performing Saint-Saëns’ Organ Symphony (19-21 March), a solo recital (22 & 28 March) and Australian premieres by Max Richter and Kristina Arakelyan (25-28 March).**

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

The organ in the cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris in 2024 was 'reawakened' in a rebuilt and refurbished space newly filled with light and colour. Organists such as Oliver Latry, improvising, used the full gamut of the restored organ's possibilities to fill the restored cathedral with ecstatic and literally awe-inspiring sound. Some felt that the music chosen should have been nice and familiar, but in fact the organists were upholding the great and long-established tradition, especially in French music, of exploiting the instrument's ability to transport listeners to worlds radically different from the everyday.

That can work in a secular setting as well, and the organ has long had a role in cultural entertainment both high and low – how many vampires or mad scientists played Bach's D minor Toccata and Fugue in ancient horror films? – and there was a time when any cinema that could afford it had a Wurliitzer organ complete with literal bells and whistles. As we hear today, the organ lends itself to the various emotional atmospherics of recent film, alternately enhancing sublime images of the natural world and scenarios of the rich and strange.

**Hans Zimmer's** music for *The Da Vinci Code*, Ron Howard's 2006 film of Dan Brown's 2003 bestseller, is a case in point. The story grows out of the legend, explored in the 1993 book *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* (by Bagniet, Leigh and Lincoln) that the Holy Grail of legend was actually the royal blood (*sang real*) of Jesus, passed on to his progeny with Mary Magdalene, whom he married and who was said to have sailed to Marseilles after Jesus' death. '**Chevaliers de Sangreal**' is heard in the final scenes of the film, where – spoiler alert! – Robert Langdon has a sudden revelation; he runs through the darkened streets of Paris to the Louvre where he has a vision of the last resting place of Mary Magdalene beneath the glowing glass *Pyramide inversée*.

Zimmer frames the music with softly pulsing semiquavers over slow-moving chords, progressively adding the film's main theme in the bass, adding more intricate ostinato patterns, and swelling majestically as we too see the tomb beneath the pyramid.



Hans Zimmer in 2018. Source: ColliderVideo, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

**Rachel Portman** became interested in writing music for student films and theatre productions at Oxford, and gained experience composing for drama in BBC and Channel 4 films. She was the first female composer to win an Academy Award, which she received for the score of *Emma* (2001). She was also the first female composer to win an Emmy, which she received for the film *Bessie* (2015).

She has scored over a hundred films and written an opera on Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince* for Houston Grand Opera and a musical of *Little House on the Prairie*.

She has written concert music for the BBC Proms, National Centre for the Performing Arts, Beijing, the BBC Singers, and recently *Tipping Points*, a violin concerto for Niklas Leipe with WDR Orchestra Germany/Noorlands Operan, Sweden.

*Flight* was composed for Portman's first solo album *Ask the River* where it is scored for violin and piano, the violin unspooling a long, ornate and faintly Celtic melody over simple piano figures that gently work against the prevailing 3/4 time. The endless breath of the organ in this transcription adds to the piece's inherent weightlessness.

## ABOUT THE MUSIC



Rachel Portman. Photo by Gregor Hohenberg.

**Olivia Belli** is a pianist and composer based in Italy's Marche region. Her repertoire as a performer ranges from Bach and Chopin to Glass and Pärt, and is complemented by a rich catalogue of instrumental, chamber and orchestral works, created in collaboration with leading international performers and ensembles. One such work is *Limina luminis* (Boundaries of Light) which, as Anna Lapwood writes,

Olivia Belli wrote...for my first solo recital at the BBC Proms in 2023. It has been a favourite of mine ever since. It has featured in almost every concert I have given as I feel such a strong emotional connection to it. When I'm performing this piece I have in mind the emotional journey an astronaut makes when preparing for a flight to space; it feels as if we are inside their mind, feeling all their conflicting emotions as they prepare to make such an extraordinary journey. It begins with a mixture of excitement and nervousness rippling away, building as the flight gets closer and mixing with confidence and pride in the form of melodies that pass between the hands and the feet. There's a moment in the middle of the piece where the texture

intensifies and the volume suddenly increases; this, in my mind, is the moment the rocket takes off, triggering a huge crescendo as our astronaut is completely surrounded by noise and power. And then, just when it feels as if it couldn't possibly get any louder, everything goes quiet and drops back to that single C, the noise slowly clearing to reveal a melody. This is the moment our astronaut has reached orbit, everything has gone quiet, and they have turned to see the earth from space for the first time.



Olivia Belli. Photo by Chiara Mirelli

JRR Tolkien wrote of the process of 'subcreation' in his works, whereby he imagined an entire, coherent world in which his story would take place. In writing the score for Peter Jackson's films of *The Lord of the Rings*, Canadian composer **Howard Shore** responded to Tolkien's totalising vision with a musical world that is as varied, complex but ultimately coherent as Tolkien's Middle Earth. The score was so successful as to earn him several major industry awards as well as honours from the governments of France and Canada. As author Doug Adams has noted:

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

Styles, instruments and performers were collected from around the world to provide each of Tolkien's cultures with a unique musical imprint. The rural and simple hobbits were rooted in a dulcet weave of Celtic tones. The mystical Elves touched upon ethereal Eastern colours. The Dwarves, Tolkien's abrasive stonecutters, received columns of parallel harmonies and a rough, guttural male chorus. The industrialized hordes of Orcs earned Shore's most violent and percussive sounds, including Japanese taiko drums, metal bell plates and chains beaten upon piano wires, while the world of Men, those flawed yet noble heirs of Middle-earth, was presented with stern and searching brass figures. In operatic fashion, these musical worlds and their themes commingled, sometimes combining forces for a culminated power, other times violently clashing...and always bending to the will of the One Ring and its own ominous family of themes.

Shore later created a multi-movement symphony for concert use, involving huge orchestra and chorus. Anna Lapwood's *Lord of the Rings Organ Symphony* reimagines several scenes for organ: Prologue, A knife in the dark, Rivendell, The Ring Goes South, The Three Hunters, The Grace of Undómiel, The Lighting of the Beacons, The Battle of the Pelennor Fields and The Return of the King. She will introduce selections that she has transcribed.



Howard Shore. Photo by Benjamin Ealovega.

*Anna Lapwood writes:*

Just like *The Hobbit*, the story of *The Lord of the Rings Organ Symphony* begins with a small creature. A couple of years ago I was doing a show in New York, and the day before bumped into a little girl named Catherine (and her mother) in a coffee shop. My concert was Catherine's birthday present, and so I asked her what her favourite pieces was: she replied, 'Concerning Hobbits' from Howard Shore's incredible score for *The Lord of the Rings*.

I didn't play that in my concerts at the time, but as I quickly cobbled together a version to play for Catherine I wondered why I hadn't thought about it before. You see, I'm a massive *Lord of the Rings* nerd. I must have watched those films 50-60 times, and listened to the soundtracks as much again. And as I thought about perhaps writing a couple of movements, the idea kept growing and growing until it was all I could think about.

It consumed me. I had a big spreadsheet and on any flight I would listen through the extended soundtracks and make copious notes about which bits would be important to include. I knew that I wanted to create something which followed the structure and the narrative journey of the films and wasn't just a random selection.

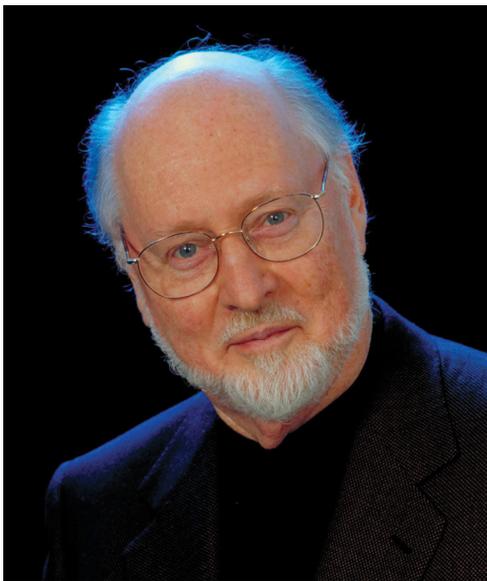
Then one day, after seven months of thinking about it, my brain just went *whoosh* – and I was ready to write. I wrote a movement immediately then performed it in concert the next day. And that went on for weeks, until I had twelve movements and was ready to record it. But there was one final twist in the journey, and I realised it needed one final thing to tie it together – so there I was, at 3.30 in the morning in Trondheim Cathedral with my laptop, writing overnight before our last recording session. And it was exactly what it needed to finish it off.

I also had the privilege of having Howard Shaw's input: he and his team looked through all the scores and listened to everything and offered their thoughts, and I am so fortunate to have had that.

This is without a doubt the biggest thing I've ever done, the hardest transcription I've ever written and the most in-depth I've ever gone into a project. And now I get to share it with you – and I can't wait.

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

**John Williams** is arguably the most famous composer in the world thanks to his career in film. For George Lucas' *Star Wars* series of films Williams revived the kind of properly symphonic score that had been developed by the likes of Erich Wolfgang Korngold (derived ultimately from Wagner's operas) in the 1930s and 40s, with themes or shorter motifs that tag a character or situation, and which can be modified as required as character or situation changes. **'Duel of the Fates'** comes from *The Phantom Menace*. There it accompanies a protracted and skilfully choreographed light-sabre fight between Qui-Gon Jinn (with a little help from the young Obi-Wan Kenobi) and the evil Darth Maul. Its driving energy owes much to models in the work of Russian composers such as Prokofiev, and the original scoring involves a choir chanting Sanskrit syllables.



John Williams. Photo courtesy LucasFilm.

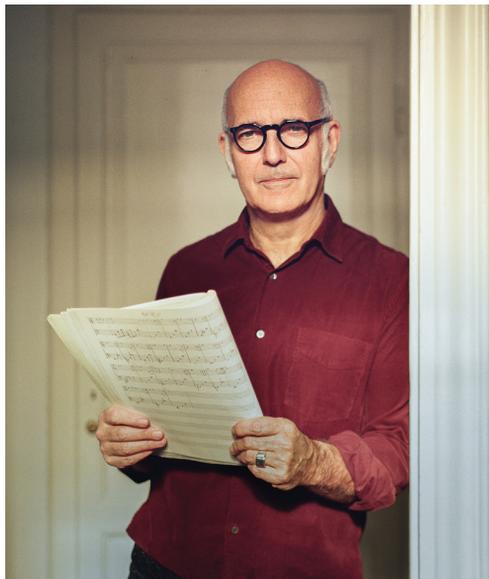
Hans Zimmer was asked to write the score to Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar* – a story of interstellar travel to find a new home for humans as the earth is to become uninhabitable – and together the pair cast about for a new way to approach the music of a space epic. As Zimmer says, 'We'd done the big drums. We'd done the brass. We'd done the ostinatos. So Chris said, "You know, we've never tried a pipe organ."' Zimmer became fascinated by this machine that to him resembled space-ship afterburners and that, like a human, has to breathe, and used it as the central instrument in an orchestra of strings, winds and pianos. In the **'Cornfield Chase'**, Zimmer generates musical excitement through four-chord patterns linked by sequential motifs as astronaut-turned-farmer Joseph Cooper and his children speed through a cornfield in their pickup truck while tracking and downing a drone.

**Ludovico Einaudi** studied in Turin and Milan before working with major figures like Luciano Berio and Karlheinz Stockhausen. He learned much from Berio in particular, notably that there is 'a sort of dignity inside music', but ultimately Einaudi turned away from the experiments of that avant-garde generation, cultivating a meditative ambient style.

**Experience**, one of the most beloved works of the world's most streamed musical artist, was composed by Einaudi initially for a 2019 documentary, entitled *Experience*, about the exiled South African singer Miriam Makeba. In its original version, Einaudi's piano was augmented by traditional African instruments, and it was subsequently issued on the four-vinyl collection *Elements*.

The short work is derived from repeated four-chord patterns, usually presented in fast-moving broken chords that support melodic fragments, building towards climaxes that often prove evanescent.

## ABOUT THE MUSIC



Ludovico Einaudi. Photo by Alexey Kalganov & Alina Palto.

Mid-19th century France saw a revival of interest in church music and architecture. Composers of the 19th century looked back to the Baroque, but, often through the prism of a typically French fascination with instrumental colour, aided by the huge strides in instrument-building technology that made much larger instruments, new sounds, and newly imagined volumes of sounds, possible. Organ builders of the age such as Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, whose instruments included those of the vast churches of Saint-Sulpice and Notre Dame in Paris, reconfigured the console so that the whole organ could be activated from a single manual or keyboard, developed the English idea of the swell box, whereby shutters can open or shut to create a real crescendo and diminuendo, and refined the mechanism whereby a player can ‘store’ different combinations of stops and recall them at the touch of button, rather than requiring extravagant choreography and/or a team of assistants.

**Eugène Gigout** was one of the many great French organist-composers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries who exploited these instruments. He studied, as did Saint-Saëns, at the École Niedermeyer (a legendary trainer of church musicians) and from 1911 was Professor of organ and composition at the Paris Conservatoire.

His 1889 collection of Ten Pieces contains this Toccata – a genre dedicated to virtuosity – which begins in Baroque manner, the harmony distributed in fast moving broken chords that pick out a melody in the top voice. The pattern of each bar is identical, but the chords themselves change as the music moves far away from its original key and from the work’s climax a new, fully-scored and powerful texture drives it to its ringing conclusion.

The ***Pirates of the Caribbean*** franchise was another huge success for Disney with five films, scored by Hans Zimmer, from 2003 on, that track the adventures of the charming pirate Jack Sparrow, his love Elizabeth Swann, and enemies both human (such as Lord Cutler Beckett) and supernatural (Davy Jones). Anna Lapwood’s suite is a medley of five numbers from the films, beginning with ‘Hoist the Colours’, a song on which Zimmer collaborated with Gore Verbinsky, and which is used to heartbreaking effect at the start of *At World’s End*, the third film in the sequence, and to cover the films end credits. There follows ‘Davy Jones’, depicting the no-longer human, literally heartless archenemy of Sparrow, and captain of the Flying Dutchman, a ship conveniently fitted out with a pipe organ, which suits his theme music well. Sparrow himself is given a cocky and amusing march that gathers strength as it goes and is heard in numerous guises throughout the series. ‘One Day’ brings together a theme associated with Sparrow and the three love themes that Zimmer created for the films, while the rolling metre of ‘Drink Up Me Hearties’ evokes the sea shanty.

**Gordon Kerry © 2026**

# ORCHESTRA CHAIR PATRONS

## **Andrew Haveron**

Concertmaster  
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