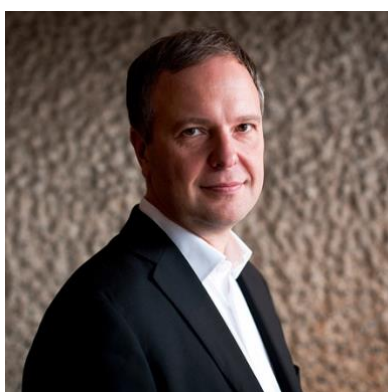




## Stories Told in Music

**Sakari Oramo's 2022-23 season includes BBC Symphony Orchestra explorations of Sibelius tone poems and the UK premiere of Kaija Saariaho's *Saarikoski Songs*, returns to the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra and the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary revival of August Everding's beloved production of *The Magic Flute* at Savonlinna Opera Festival**



Few conductors can match Sakari Oramo's record as champion of music by composers from both Britain and his native Finland. His deep commitment to both is reflected in a series of compelling programmes that run throughout the 2022-23 season. His schedule includes two Total Immersion concerts with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Centre, the first devoted to 'Sibelius the Storyteller' (9 October 2022), the second to the work of Kaija Saariaho (7 May 2023). Dame Ethel Smyth's delightful Concerto for violin, horn and orchestra is on the cards for his return to the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra in his new role as its Conductor Laureate (16 & 17 November).

Sakari Oramo's partnership with the BBC Symphony Orchestra has flourished in the nine years since he became its Chief Conductor. His contract was recently extended to the end of the 2025-26 season, a clear signal of the health and strength of their work together. "I don't think it's possible to find elsewhere a working environment that's as flexible, fair and positive as the BBC Symphony," he notes. "I'm so inspired by them. I hope we can enliven musical life after the pandemic in a way that could be more adventurous than it was before."

They launch their London season at the Barbican Centre on 5 October with a typically thought-provoking programme comprising the world premiere of *Sighs of Stars* by the French composer Sophie Lacaze, Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No.2, with Boris Giltburg as soloist, and Suite No.1 from Prokofiev's ballet *Cinderella*. "There are debates about programming Russian music at the moment, but I think these composers are part of the world's heritage," comments Oramo. "I believe they should be performed just as they were before the horrific events in Ukraine. Prokofiev was born in Ukraine and spent many of his formative years there, and both geniuses pursued their soloist careers outside Russia. To me Rachmaninov is a very deep composer, someone whose music contains eternal wisdom. His Second Piano Concerto may be well known but it contains hidden depths that seem to come from ancient cultures."

The first of this season's Total Immersion days (9 October) marks a departure from the BBC Symphony Orchestra's usual practice of focusing on the work of a living or little-known composer. "We decided to explore the theme of 'Sibelius the Storyteller', the composer of tone poems, songs and miniatures," notes Oramo. "These are less well known than his symphonic works but no less remarkable. Total Immersion will set these pieces in their literary and cultural contexts." The day's programmes contain no less than six of his tone poems: *En Saga*, *Pohjola's Daughter*, *Nightride and Sunrise*, *The Bard*, *Luonnotar* and *Tapiola*. "*Nightride and Sunrise* is a masterpiece but one that's elusive and difficult to capture," comments Sakari Oramo. "The pulse needs to remain the same throughout, yet the music completely changes when the sun rises, so to speak. Sibelius always advised that the details of his compositions should be allowed 'to swim in the sauce'; he wanted to hear this eternal line, but that's particularly difficult to achieve with *Nightride and Sunrise*. One should add that the sauce has to be well seasoned and contain the right balance of flavours!"

Kaija Saariaho, who turns 70 this October, is the subject of the BBC Symphony Orchestra's second Total Immersion day (7 May). "Total immersion in Kaija's music feels like a natural step, given the long trajectory of

excellence and development in her work, as well as the orchestra's, Anu Komsis, Anssi Karttunen's and my decade-long collaboration performing and commissioning her music," comments Oramo. "Soprano Anu Komsis will perform her new cycle of songs to poetry by Pentti Saarikoski, which was written for Anu. He was a radical voice in Finnish literature in the 1960s and 70s, not least in terms of caring for the environment. Kaija's settings are so strong and evocative. One of the poems has the line, 'The forest is an academy which the barbarians have destroyed'. It's the motto for this whole cycle. Anu premiered the new orchestral version of *Saarikoski Songs* with the Boston Symphony and Andris Nelsons in February 2022, and we will give the UK premiere at the Barbican as part of Total Immersion."

The conductor's season highlights also include debut dates with the Gürzenich Orchestra and Bochumer Philharmoniker, an eagerly awaited collaboration with the Royal College of Music Symphony Orchestra in London and the fiftieth anniversary revival of the Savonlinna Opera Festival's much-loved staging of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Sakari Oramo's encouragement of the next generation of musicians has deepened since his appointment in 2017 as professor of conducting at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki. It will develop further this autumn when he conducts the outstanding young players of London's Royal College of Music Symphony Orchestra in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No.4 and Shostakovich's Symphony No.10 (13 October). "I've crept into their concerts a few times and know just how good they can be," he comments. "It will be great to do these benchmark works with the RCM Symphony Orchestra. We discussed this project for many years and I was determined to make it happen. I work regularly with the Sibelius Academy's student orchestra in my new role in Helsinki and enjoy a lot pushing their boundaries ever further."

Having completed thirteen years as Chief Conductor of the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Oramo returns to its Konserhuset home to conduct Ethel Smyth's Concerto for violin, horn and orchestra and Franck's Symphony in D minor (16 & 17 November). "Smyth's double concerto is great fun, especially its final movement," he observes. "I performed Franck's Symphony for my professional debut in Tampere over thirty years ago but haven't done it since. It's like a synthesis of Wagner and Bruckner on one side and the French Romantics on the other. I'm delighted to be doing it again. My thirteen years as Chief Conductor of the Stockholm Philharmonic were very happy ones for me and I just love to see them thrive."

Sakari Oramo makes a return to the Orchestra of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in Rome on 1, 3 & 4 June to conduct Poulenc's Concerto for two pianos and orchestra and Ravel's ballet *Daphnis et Chloé*. "It's one of my favourite orchestras and I love working with them," he comments. "They're so full of emotion, and with them I often find my own ideas glorified with their collective gusto and warmth."

The conductor's season concludes with six performances of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* at the Savonlinna Opera Festival (4, 6, 8, 11, 19 & 21 July). It will be staged as a lightly revised version of one of the festival's favourite productions, first directed by August Everding at St Olaf's Castle in July 1973. "The production lives on and is very well loved by Finnish audiences," notes Sakari Oramo. "It treats the opera as a fairytale, complete with loads of magic. It's how so many people in Finland got to know *The Magic Flute*. And the natural acoustics of St Olaf's Castle are to die for! The cast for this production reads like a who's who of great Finnish singers, with Anu Komsis as Queen of the Night and Tuuli Takala, Tuomas Katajala and Mika Kares also in the line-up. It will be really special for us to do this fiftieth anniversary revival."

[www.harrisonparrott.com/artists/sakari-oramo](http://www.harrisonparrott.com/artists/sakari-oramo) - [Twitter](#)

**The information in this press release was correct at the time of sending. Please check the organisations' websites and social media for the latest updates.**

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**Wednesday 5 October 2022, 7.30pm**  
**Barbican Centre, London**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Boris Giltburg** piano | **BBC Symphony Orchestra**

**Rachmaninov** Piano Concerto No.2 in C minor  
**Sophie Lacaze** *Sighs of Stars* (world premiere)  
**Prokofiev** *Cinderella* Suite No.1

**SIBELIUS TOTAL IMMERSION**  
**Barbican Centre, London**

**Sunday 9 October 2022, 3pm**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Ólafur Darri Ólafsson** actor | **BBC Symphony Orchestra**

**Sibelius** *Scènes historiques* I, Op.25: *All'Overture*  
**Sibelius** *En saga*  
**Sibelius** *The Bard*, Op.64  
**Sibelius** *Pohjola's Daughter*

**Sunday 9 October 2022, 7.30pm**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Anu Koms**i soprano | **Ólafur Darri Ólafsson** actor | **BBC Symphony Orchestra**

**Sibelius** *Night Ride and Sunrise*, Op.55  
**Sibelius** *The Echo Nymph*  
**Sibelius** *Luonnotar*  
**Sibelius** *Tapiola*

**Thursday 13 October 2022, 7.30pm**  
**Amaryllis Fleming Concert Hall, Royal College of Music, London**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Thomas Kelly** piano | **RCM Symphony Orchestra**

**Beethoven** Piano Concerto No.4 in G major Op.58  
**Shostakovich** Symphony No.10 in E minor Op.93

**Saturday 5 November 2022, 7pm**  
**Kammermusiksaal, Berliner Philharmonie**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Sophie Pardatscher** clarinet | **Karajan Academy of the Berliner Philharmoniker**

**Sibelius** *Pelléas and Mélisande*, Suite Op.46  
**Copland** Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra  
**Ligeti** *Concert Românesc*  
**Ginastera** *Variaciones concertantes* Op.23

**Wednesday 16 & Thursday 17 November 2022, 7pm**  
**Konserthuset Stockholm**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Andrej Power** violin | **Martin Schöpfer** french horn | **Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra**

**Smyth** Concerto for Violin, Horn and Orchestra  
**Franck** Symphony in D minor

**Thursday 12 & Friday 13 January 8pm, Sunday 15 January 2023 4pm & 6.30pm**  
**Elbphilharmonie Hamburg**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Alina Pogostkina** violin | **NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester**

**Shostakovich** Chamber Symphony in C minor Op.11a  
**Prokofiev** Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No.1 in D major Op.19 (excluding 15 January)  
**Janáček** Sinfonietta Op.60

**Friday 3 February 2023, 7.30pm**  
**Barbican Centre, London**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Julie Price** bassoon | **BBC Symphony Orchestra**

**Bacewicz** Overture for Symphony Orchestra  
**Mozart** Bassoon Concerto  
**Elgar** Bassoon Romance  
**Dvorák** Symphony No.8

**Friday 10 February 2023, 7.30pm**  
**Barbican Centre, London**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Johan Dalene** violin | **Timothy Ridout** viola | **BBC Symphony Orchestra & Chorus**

**Bacewicz** Symphony No.4  
**Mozart** Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat major for Violin and Viola  
**Szymanowski** Symphony No.3

**Sunday 5 March 2023 11am, Monday 6 & Tuesday 7 March 2023 8pm**  
**Kölner Philharmonie**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Anu Komsı** soprano | **Gürzenich-Orchester Köln**

**Lindberg** *Accused: Three Interrogations for soprano and orchestra*  
**Sibelius** Symphony No.5 in E-flat major Op.82

**Thursday 9 & Friday 10 March 2023, 8pm**  
**Anneliese Brost Musikforum Ruhr, Bochum**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Anu Komsı** soprano | **Bochumer Symphoniker**

**Sibelius** *The Bard*, Op.64  
**Debussy** *Chansons de jeunesse* (orchestrated by Sakari Oramo)  
**Brahms** Symphony No.1 in C minor Op.68

**Saturday 15 April 2023, 7.30pm**  
**Barbican Centre, London**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Inmo Yang** violin | **BBC Symphony Orchestra**

**Bacewicz** Concerto for Large Symphony Orchestra  
**Dvorák** Violin Concerto  
**Bartók** Concerto for Orchestra

## **KAIJA SAARIAHO TOTAL IMMERSION**

**Sunday 7 May 2023, 7.30pm**

**Barbican Centre, London**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Anssi Karttunen** cello | **Anu Koms**i soprano | **BBC Symphony Orchestra**

**Saariaho** *Du Cristal* 1989

**Saariaho** *Notes on Light* 2006

**Saariaho** *Saarikoski Songs* 2020 (UK premiere)

**Saariaho** *Circle Map* 2012

**Thursday 1 June 7.30pm, Saturday 3 & Sunday 4 June 2023 6pm**

**Auditorium Parco della Musica Ennio Morricone, Rome**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **Stefano Bollani**, **Hyung-ki Joo** piano | **Orchestra e Coro dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia**

**Poulenc** Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra

**Ravel** *Daphnis et Chloé*

## **SAVONLINNA OPERA FESTIVAL**

**4, 6, 8, 11, 19, 21 July 2023, 7pm**

**Olavinlinna Castle**

**Sakari Oramo** conductor | **August Everding** director | **Erik Söderblom** Revival Director and Dramaturgy | **Tuuli Takala** (4-8 July) / **Iris Candelaria** (11-21 July) *Pamina* | **Johan Krogius** (4-8 July) / **Tuomas Katajala** (11-21 July) *Tamino* | **Anu Koms**i *Queen Of The Night* | **Mika Kares** (4-8 July) *Sarastro* | **Markus Schwartz** (4-8 July) / **Walteri Torikka** (11-21 July) *Papageno* | **Silja Aalto** *First Lady* | **Olga Heikkilä** *Second Lady* | **Maiju Vaahtoluoto** *Third Lady* | **Jussi Juola** speaker, elderly priest | **Savonlinna Opera Festival Orchestra and Choir**

**Mozart** *The Magic Flute* (sung in Finnish, 50th anniversary of the production)