

Programme Notes



Tribute to the Earth

Thu 9 March 2023 • 20.15

Fri 10 March 2023 • 20.15

Sun 12 March 2023 • 14.15

Chœur des Éléments
La terre, Zoroastre
Décembre
1769



Earth, from the Chorus of Elements. Costume design by Louis-René Boquet (1769) for Rameau's opera Zoroastre

Thunder and lightning

Throughout time there have been earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and devastating monsoon rains. Composers from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries competed with each other to depict in music these forces of nature in the most poetic and striking ways possible.

Storm

Alcione by Marin Marais is one such spectacular piece that alongside elegant and almost folklore styles of French dance captures the frightening elements of nature with great effect through the orchestral sounds. This *tragédie en musique*, composed

in 1706 by the student of Jean-Baptiste Lully, is described as the last great opera from the reign of Louis XIV. The story, which sits entirely within the tradition of French opera, is based on a Greek myth recounted by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*. It depicts the quarrels that centre on Ceyx, King

of Trachis, and Alcione, daughter of Aeolus, Greek god of the wind, and ultimately turns out well through the divine intervention of Zeus himself. The fact that Marais was not just a brilliant viol player but also an inventive orchestrator is apparent from *Tempête*, the terrifying

PROGRAMME

conductor **Jordi Savall**
percussion **Daniel Garay**

Marin Marais (1656–1728)
From *Alcione* (1706): *Airs pour les Matelots et les Tritons*

- Prélude
- Marche pour les Matelots
- Air des Matelots I & II
- Tempête
- Ritournelle
- Chaconne pour les Tritons

Jean-Féry Rebel (1666–1747)
Les Élémens, symphonie nouvelle (1737–38)

- Le Cahos: L'Eau - L'Air - La Terre - Le Feu
- Loure I: La Terre
- Chaconne: Le Feu
- Ramage: L'Air
- Rossignolo
- Rondeau: Air pour l'Amour
- Loure II
- Sicilienne

- Caprice
- Premier Tambourin: L'Eau
- Second Tambourin

intermission

Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683–1764)

- Orages et Tonnerres: Suite
- Air pour les Zéphirs (from *Les Indes galantes*, 1735)
- Orage (from *Les Indes galantes*, 1735)
- Tonnerre (from *Hippolyte et Aricie*, 1733)
- Contredanse (from *Zoroastre*, 1749)

George Frederick Handel (1685 – 1759)

- Water Music* (1716): Suite
- Prelude: Allegro
- Minuet I & II
- Rigaudon I & II
- Minuet I & II
- Gigue I & II
- Bourrée

- Lentement
- Alla Hornpipe

Concert ends at around 22.00 / 16.00

Most recent performances by our orchestra:

Marais Alcione Suite: first performance
Rebel Les Élémens: Nov 1999, conductor Roy Goodman
Rameau Orages et Tonnerres: first performance
Handel Water Music: Feb 2017, conductor Jan-Willem de Vriend

One hour before the start of the concert, Jan-Willem van Ree will give an introduction (in Dutch) to the programme, admission €5. Tickets are available at the hall, payment by debit card. The introduction is free for Vrienden.

Cover: Photo Anirudh Ravichander

storm in which the ship Ceyx is wrecked. It includes a part written specially for the double bass, a first in French opera. This thunderstorm found its way in one of the instrumental suites that Marais compiled from the opera – to be performed during the lavish banquets at Versailles, where Marais served under both Louis XIV and Louis XV as 'ordinaire de la chambre du roy pour la viole'.

Chaos

Jean-Féry Rebel, one of the most remarkable French composers of the late seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries, was undoubtedly familiar with the evocative music of Marais. For many years he led the prestigious ensemble, the '24 violons du roi' at Versailles, and wrote several 'symphonies' – a kind of symphonic poem before the term had even been coined – which were the accompaniment to dancing at court. However, he composed his true masterpiece in 1737 not for the royal court at Versailles, but for the Prince of Carignano, a visionary patron of the arts with a passion for new music. Rebel seized artistic freedom with both hands and titled his masterpiece *Les Élémens* a 'novelty symphony'. The most striking movement is the first, *Le Cahos*. Although Rebel argued that there was nothing new under the sun, and that he was following the prevailing rules of polyphony, the introductory chords are thunderous sound clusters that must have left the first listeners in a state of shock. Inspired by the scientific and philosophical developments of the Enlightenment, Rebel depicts in seven parts the Biblical description of the creation, and the elements of earth, air, water and fire from utter chaos. 'From confusion to their pre-ordained place in the order of nature' is how the composer described the

transformation. In Rebel's mind, the symbols he deployed were fully recognisable by the public of the time. The bass represents the earth, flutes imitate the gurgling of flowing water, the sustained notes and trills of piccolos depict the air, and violins represent fire. In the other movements, the more conventional dances that he had composed some time before *Le Cahos*, these four elements are also recognisable, albeit in a more harmonious environment.

Thunder

Jean-Philippe Rameau was only indirectly connected with the court of King Louis XV when in 1727 he became director of the private orchestra of Alexandre Le Riche de la Pouplinière, the King's steward. However, he was very familiar with the depictions of nature by court composers Marais and Rebel. His ballets and operas delight in creating gales, storms, thunder and lightning. In a suite comprising two pieces from the ballet *Les Indes galantes*, the thunder from the opera *Hippolyte et Arice* and the stormy *Contredanse* from the opera *Zoroastre*, Jordi Savall captures the musical paintings of Rameau beautifully. These are moments when the gods strike fear and awe into ordinary mortals through their power over all natural forces.


Open air

On 17 July 1717 George Frederick Handel's celebrated *Water Music* made an indelible impression on the public. Not so much because the elements are given free rein to rage through his fleet-footed music, but because of its grand performance on the Thames in London, during an excursion on the river by England's King George I. The English newspaper *The Daily Courant* describes a happening in which the whole river was covered with boats and barges, surrounding a boat on

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which as many as fifty musicians played. This was a large number of musicians for the time, but such numbers were needed to defy the elements. In the open air, on water, the music would simply not otherwise have been audible from any distance. The newspaper reports that the King was so taken with the spectacle that he had the entire work performed another three times. *Water Music* combines French court dances and English country dances such as the hornpipe, grouped into three suites. The sequence in which the pieces were performed at its premiere is no longer known; in all probability, Handel guided the orchestra to respond freely to what was being demanded, and what was happening in the moment. In a similar spirit, Jordi Savall has made his own selection for this concert from the military-sounding second suite in D, with its thundering timpani and trumpets, and the more intimate third suite in G. And although Handel – unlike Marais, Rebel and Rameau – did not create any musical thunderstorm or chaos, the overall effect of his music must have been overwhelming for the listener of the time. His music invoked awe, not for natural phenomena, but for its power, even for a short moment in time, to defy the elements.

Paul Janssen

A portrait of Jordi Savall, an elderly man with grey hair and a beard, wearing a dark blue traditional Chinese-style jacket. He is standing with his arms crossed against a black background.

Jordi Savall - conductor

Born: Igualada, Spain

Founder and musical leader: ensembles Hespèrion XXI (1974), La Capella Reial de Catalunya (1987), Le Concert des Nations (1989)

Education: first singing lessons at age six; Barcelona Conservatory (cello), Schola Cantorum Basiliensis (early music and viola da gamba) with August Wenzinger

Specialization: early music and world music

Honours: honorary doctorates at the universities of Barcelona (2006), Basel (2013) and Utrecht (2016), honorary member Royal Philharmonic Society (2022)

Activities: concerts and recordings with his own ensembles, guest conducting with symphony orchestras all over the world, musicological research, teaching at the Juilliard School of Music, New York

Cinematic: several soundtracks, among others *Tous les matins du monde* (1991), a film about Marin Marais

Debut Rotterdam: 2019

Agenda

Fri 17 March 2023 • 20.15

Sun 19 March 2023 • 14.15

conductor **Timur Zangiev**

violin **Kristóf Baráti**

Gubaidulina Fairytale Poem

Prokofiev Violin Concerto No. 1

Rachmaninoff Symphony No. 2

Sat 25 March 2023 • 21.00

Sev7n

conductor **Frans-Aert Burghgraef**

spoken word **YMP**

gospel choir **G-roots**

Sun 26 March 2023 • 10.30

Music for Breakfast No. 4

with **Julien Hervé** (Clarinet), **Noëmi**

Bodden (Violin), and colleagues

from the orchestra

Chamber Music by **Ravel**, **Fauré** and

Debussy

Thu 6 April 2023 • 19.30

Fri 7 April 2023 • 19.30

Sat 8 April 2023 • 19.30

conductor **Peter Dijkstra**

soprano **Jeanine De Bique**

countertenor **Maarten Engeltjes**

tenor (Evangelist) **Maximilian**

Schmitt

tenor **Fabio Trümpy**

baritone **Thomas Oliemans**

bass (Christ) **Thomas Stimmel**

chorus **Laurens Collegium**,

Nationaal Kinderkoor

Bach St Matthew Passion

Thu 20 April 2023 • 20.15

Fri 21 April 2023 • 20.15

Sun 23 April 2023 • 14.15

conductor **Maxim Emelyanychev**

harpischord **Jean Rondeau**

Debussy Prélude à l'après-midi d'un

faune

Poulenc Concert Champêtre

Rossini Overture 'Il barbiere di

Siviglia'

Mendelssohn Symphony

No. 4 'Italian'

Musicians

Chief Conductor

Lahav Shani

Honorary Conductor

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Principal Assistant Conductor

Bertie Baigent

First Violin

Igor Gruppman,

leader

Marieke Blankestijn,

leader

Quirine Scheffers

Hed Yaron Meyerson

Saskia Otto

Arno Bons

Mireille van der Wart

Cor van der Linden

Rachel Browne

Maria Dingjan

Marie-José Schrijner

Noëmi Bodden

Petra Visser

Sophia Torrença

Hadewijch Hofland

Annerien Stuker

Alexandra van

Beveren

Koen Stapert

Second Violin

Charlotte Potgieter

Cecilia Ziano

Frank de Groot

Laurens van Vliet

Tomoko Hara

Elina Staphorsius

Jun Yi Dou

Bob Bruyn

Letizia Sciarone

Eefje Habraken

Maija Reinikainen

Wim Ruitenbeek

Babette van den Berg

Melanie Broers

Viola

Anne Huser

Roman Spitzer

Galahad Samson

Kerstin Bonk

Lex Prummel

Janine Baller

Francis Saunders

Veronika Lénártová

Rosalinde Kluck

León van den Berg

Olffe van der Klein

Cello

Emanuele Silvestri

Joanna Pachucka

Daniel Petrovitsch

Mario Rio

Gé van Leeuwen

Eelco Beinema

Carla Schrijner

Pepijn Meeuws

Yi-Ting Fang

Double Bass

Matthew Midgley

Ying Lai Green

Jonathan Focquaert

Robert Franenberg

Harke Wiersma

Arjen Leendertz

Ricardo Neto

Flute

Juliette Hurel

Joséphine Olech

Désirée Woudenberg

Flute/Piccolo

Beatriz Da Baião

Oboe

Remco de Vries

Karel Schoofs

Anja van der Maten

Oboe/Cor Anglais

Ron Tjhuis

Clarinet

Julien Hervé

Bruno Bonansea

Clarinet/ Bass Clarinet

Romke-Jan Wijmenga

Bassoon

Pieter Nuytten

Lola Descours

Marianne Prommel

Bassoon/ Contrabassoon

Hans Wisse

Horn

David Fernández

Alonso

Wendy Leliveld

Richard Speetjens

Laurens Otto

Pierre Buizer

Trumpet

Alex Elia

Simon Wierenga

Jos Verspagen

Trombone

Pierre Volders

Alexander Verbeek

Remko de Jager

Bass Trombone

Rommert Groenhof

Tuba

Hendrik-Jan Renes

Timpani

Danny van de Wal

Percussion

Ronald Ent

Martijn Boom

Adriaan Feyaerts

Harp

Charlotte Sprenkels