

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra – Ensemble 10:10
February 25 programme complementary content

Clark Rundell

Conductor [Clark Rundell](#) needs no introduction to Ensemble 10:10 audiences. With a repertoire spanning centuries, continents and styles, he has established himself as a champion of music ranging from the 18th Century to the current day, from jazz to Kora, tango to European modernism and from large, multidimensional projects to music of complexity and intricacy.

He works regularly with orchestras and ensembles including all the BBC Orchestras, Britten Symphonia and Royal Northern Sinfonia as well as the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and, of course, its contemporary music group Ensemble 10:10.

Deeply committed to new music, he has given world premieres of works by composers such as Steve Reich, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Django Bates, James MacMillan, Tansy Davies, Gary Carpenter, Grace-Evangeline Mason, Julia Wolfe, Wayne Shorter and Gwilym Simcock.

He has also conducted extensive orchestral projects with artists including Elvis Costello, Abel Selaocoe, Toumani Diabate and Tim Garland, and as a highly versatile musician has performed with artists like John Dankworth, Cleo Laine, Andy Sheppard and Victor Mendoza.

Rundell is passionate about working with young people and is Professor of Conducting at the [Royal Northern College of Music](#).

He studied conducting at Northwestern University in Chicago with John Paynter and trombone with Frank Crisafulli and was subsequently awarded a Junior Fellowship to study conducting with Timothy Reynish at the RNCM.

Mahan Esfahani

Former Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra Artist in Residence [Mahan Esfahani](#) returns to the city in his latest collaboration with members of the Orchestra. Since making his London debut in 2009, the Iranian-American has established himself as the first harpsichordist in a generation. His work spans virtually all the areas of classical music-making, from critically acclaimed performances and recordings, to working with the leading composers of the day to pioneering concerto appearances with major symphony orchestras.

He was the first and only harpsichordist to be a BBC New Generation Artist (2008-2010), a Borletti-Buitoni prize winner (2009), a nominee for Gramophone's Artist of the Year (2014, 2015, 2017), and on the shortlist as Instrumentalist of the Year for the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards (2013, 2019). As a soloist he has worked with leading conductors, and with major symphony and chamber orchestras and contemporary music ensembles.

Esfahani's work with new and modern music is particularly acclaimed, with high-profile solo and concertante commissions forming the backbone of his repertoire, including Gary Carpenter's *Mondrian* which was premiered by Esfahani and Ensemble 10:10 in [March 2019](#).

His commitment to exploring the contemporary voice for the harpsichord is reflected in his 2020 release *Musique?* – a compilation of electronic and acoustic works including the modern revival of Luc Ferrari's 1974 *Programme commun for harpsichord and tape*.

His varied discography has been acclaimed in the English and foreign-language press and has garnered one Gramophone award, two BBC Music Magazine Awards, a Diapason d'Or and 'Choc de Classica' in France, and an ICMA plus numerous editor's choices in a variety of publications.

He can be frequently heard as a commentator on *BBC Radio 3* and *Radio 4* and is a regular contributor of cultural commentary and reviews for such publications as *The Critic*, *Engelsberg Ideas*, *The New Yorker*, *Guardian*, and *Times*.

Born in Tehran in 1984, [Esfahani](#) grew up in the United States. He studied musicology and history at Stanford University, and worked as a répétiteur and studied in Boston with Peter Watchorn before completing his studies in Prague with the celebrated Czech harpsichordist Zuzana Růžičková. Following several years spent in Milan, Oxford and London, he now makes his home in Prague. In recognition of his contributions to the classical music field, Esfahani was awarded the 2022 Wigmore Hall Prize.

Ryan Latimer

British composer Ryan Latimer's music has been described as 'anarch and cartoonishly fun' by *BBC Radio 3* and 'deliciously playful' (*Classical Music Magazine*). [Latimer](#) studied with Joe Cutler and Michael Wolters at the Birmingham Conservatoire where he received the Musicians' Union Bill Warman Award, Bachelor of Music Award and Composition Prize, and for a PhD at the Royal Academy of Music.

His work has been performed both nationally and internationally by leading ensembles including the London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony, London Sinfonietta, China National Symphony Orchestra and Brno Philharmonic. Many of his solo works have also featured in international festivals. In 2014 he composed and co-directed his first chamber opera, *Three Tall Tales of Dr Monsieur Façade*, for ensemble, singers, actors and mimes, and he is a regular collaborator with contemporary dance group Cohan Collective.

Latimer's debut album was released in 2021, receiving a five-star review from *BBC Music Magazine* and reaching number two in the UK official charts. In 2024 he was nominated for an Ivor Novello Award for his witty and playful chamber work *Pound of Cure*, a Britten Sinfonia commission. He is also a recent recipient of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award for Artists and has been supported by the PRS Foundation Open Fund for Music Creators. Other chamber works for large ensemble include *Hocket Box* (2011), *Moby Dick* (2014) and *Mills Mess* (2015).

Latimer is an [Associate Professor of Composition](#) at the University of Birmingham and an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.

Enjoy a performance of [Mills Mess](#).

Tansy Davies

Tansy Davies' vital, visceral music embraces a wide range of influences, from the classical to avant-garde, funk and experimental rock, and encompasses classical, choral and stage work.

[Davies](#) – who has a background as a horn player, electric guitarist and vocalist – was born in Bristol in 1973 and studied composition at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and Royal Holloway, University of London. A former BBC Young Composer, in 2009 she was presented

with a prestigious Paul Hamlyn Foundation Award, designed to give artists the freedom to develop their own creative ideas.

Brilliantly imaginative, and often wonderfully offbeat, [Davies](#) has been described as one of the most distinctive voices in British music today, one whose music is ‘sleek, hot, earthy, physical’. Along with composing works for many leading orchestras, her work is also championed by ensembles worldwide and at a host of international festivals. Ensemble 10:10 has performed several works by Davies previously including *Iris* for soprano sax and chamber ensemble at St George’s Hall in 2019 and *inside out 2* at The Tung Auditorium in 2023. In 2022, Ensemble 10:10 gave the premiere of [Davies’ glider](#) for bass clarinet and seven instruments, with the solo part taken by the Orchestra’s clarinetist Ausias Garrigós Morant.

Listen to Tansy Davies’ [Dune of Footprints](#).

Gary Carpenter

You wait for one of your pieces to be performed during a Liverpool season – and then several come along over the course of a few months. That is precisely what has happened to Gary Carpenter. And given the London-born, West Kirby-based composer likes to attend ‘home’ performances, it’s going to be a busy spring of concertgoing.

Last month, Mark Simpson and the Orchestra’s wind ensemble (plus double bass) performed his delightful *Pantomime for 13 Winds* at The Tung Auditorium, the event being extra special as it came the day after Carpenter’s 75th birthday. They repeated the performance in Barrow the following evening. His *Discouri for two cellos* got an outing on March 9, and then Simpson will play his *Clarinet Sonata* on May 11. And now, Ensemble 10:10 and soloist Mahan Esfahani present Carpenter’s *Mondrian - Concerto for harpsichord and ensemble* which he wrote for the keyboard virtuoso as a Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra commission during his tenure as Composer in Residence in 2018-19.

Carpenter and Esfahani met around 15 years ago, and he recalls how they had been talking about working on something together ‘for ages’ when the opportunity arose. Esfahani was keen to play it on a harpsichord he had recently built, which, Carpenter explains: “Had certain features unique to it, which he wanted employed, but obviously they had to be employed in such a way in that if you didn’t have those features you could still play the piece.”

The work is named after Dutch painter Piet Mondrian whose artistic technique inspired Carpenter, the composer having seen many of his paintings in the Hague while living in the Netherlands. “Although it looks geometric, and it’s all straight lines and limited palette of colours, the funny thing about it is, in fact, they are all actually intuitive, they don’t follow a pre-conceived notion,” he says of Mondrian’s artworks.

“And if you go from the very beginning of his paintings from when he was young, which like artists of his generation are technically brilliant, in a conventional way, you can see him gradually paring away absolutely everything until he ends up with something that looks as if it’s repetitive and yet it isn’t. In other words, it’s the same material most of the time but in fact it’s never the same, it’s never predictable. And if you look at the paintings you can see how he changes his mind about what’s going to be white and what’s going to be coloured, because you can still see what was there before. I was interested in that aspect of it, that and repetition which isn’t quite repetition which I think is one of the features of the composition.”

If it had to be encapsulated by just one of the artist's works, he adds, it would probably be his 1942-3 painting *Broadway Boogie Woogie*.

Mondrian was premiered by Ensemble 10:10 in March 2019, and while it has also been performed in Cologne and Hamburg, this is the first time it has found its way back to a concert programme in Liverpool.

Carpenter has been based in Merseyside for many years and is a professor at the [Royal Northern College of Music](#). He was born in Hackney and studied composition at the Royal College of Music with Humphrey Searle, Thea Musgrave and John Lambert. He also took part in masterclasses with the legendary Nadia Boulanger.

His career has been a catholic one (catholic with a small 'c'), encompassing orchestral works and concert music, operas, ballets, musicals – including *The Streets of London* and *Goodnight Mr Tom* – and a radio music-drama *This One Alone* with Iris Murdoch. His *Azaleas for harp trio* won him a 2006 British Composer Award. Then there is his work in film and on stage as a musical arranger/orchestrator, notably on the chilling cinematic cult classic [The Wicker Man](#).

“I don't quite buy into the idea that there's a great deal of difference from one type of music to the other,” he says. “And I've also always been curious about trying out different sort of working within certain genres without actually...I don't want to be a tourist ever; I want to become fully engaged.”

His latest project has reunited him with the surviving members of Magnet, the band whose music was used on *The Wicker Man* score. They have just recorded what Carpenter calls a 'dark folk album' of new pieces co-written with Matthew Dayton and called *Ballad*. It's not yet in the public sphere but Carpenter is hopeful of some live performances in the near future – perhaps including here in Liverpool.

In the meantime, he has *Mondrian* to look forward to. The work is part of a long and fruitful association with Liverpool Philharmonic that has included performances or premieres of compositions like *Closing Time*, [One Million Tiny Operas About Britain](#), and [Sonatinas](#), a concerto for alto sax and chamber orchestra. He also did the orchestrations for the 2008 Capital of Culture opening ceremony.

“It's been lovely,” he says of the connection. “It always feels like it's a sort of...it has a home team feel about it. I've worked with a lot of orchestras over the years and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra is easily one of the easiest to get on with and most supportive and friendly. And good! It's just a wonderful orchestra to work with and just to be around.”

Composer's note on *Mondrian - Concerto for harpsichord and ensemble*

There are four movements:

Inquieto is restless and unsettled. The ensemble colours the harpsichord's material but becomes increasingly active. There are three long form repetitive lines that interleave in a largely irrational fashion.

Andante is a gentle A-B-A-B-C-A form. The harpsichord leads whilst lyrical woodwind lines predominate.

Scherzando begins with a hyperactive harpsichord solo. The ensemble gradually usurps the soloist's predominance but gives way to a contemplative middle section for harpsichord alone which in turn leads to a scherzo da capo (of sorts!).

Agitato begins with no real sense of pulse and references Mondrian at his most abstract – indeed the opening held chord is a brief realisation of Mondrian’s description of what, for him, the future music would be. The ‘agitato’ however is a virtuosic tour de force ever more extreme and unrelenting in its demands for both soloist and ensemble!

© Gary Carpenter 2025

Mark-Anthony Turnage

[Mark-Anthony Turnage](#) is one of the most significant creative figures to have emerged in British music of the last three decades. His first opera, *Greek* – based on Steven Berkoff’s play of the same name and premiered in 1988 – established his reputation as an artist who dared to forge his own path between modernism and tradition by means of a unique blend of jazz and classical styles.

Turnage was Composer in Association at Simon Rattle’s CBSO between 1989 and 1993, during which time works including *Three Screaming Popes*, *Kai*, *Momentum* and *Drowned Out* were created. They were followed by *Blood on the Floor*, his unique score written for jazz musicians John Scofield and Peter Erskine, and Martin Robertson. His opera, *The Silver Tassie*, was premiered by English National Opera in 2000, winning both the South Bank Show and the Olivier Awards for Opera. He has also seen great success on the opera stage with *Anna Nicole* and his work for family audiences *Coraline*, and has written scores for both the Royal Ballet and Sadler’s Wells. His new operatic adaptation of [The Railway Children](#) was staged by Glyndebourne in 2025.

Turnage has been resident composer with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra and London Philharmonic Orchestra. Other works premiered over the past decade include *Testament*, setting Ukrainian texts for soprano and orchestra; the orchestral work *Time Flies* celebrating the cities of London, Hamburg and Tokyo; *Up for Grabs* matching orchestral music to film highlights of a title-winning football match by his beloved team Arsenal; and a series of song cycles for artists including Gerald Finley, Allan Clayton and Sarah Connolly.

Turnage is Research Fellow in Composition at the Royal College of Music. He was awarded a CBE in the 2015 Queen's Birthday honours.

Listen to Mark-Anthony Turnage’s [Lullaby for Hans](#).

Hans Werner Henze

The music of German composer and teacher [Hans Werner Henze](#) was shaped by a wide range of influences including serialism, atonality, Arabic music and jazz. Born in North Rhine-Westphalia in 1926, he received his early music training at the Braunschweig Staatsmusikschule and after seeing service in the Second World War, aged 20 he began to study with Wolfgang Fortner at the Heidelberg Institute for Church Music.

Discovering serialism in the late 1940s, Henze also attended three successive Darmstadt Summer Courses for New Music. He moved to Italy in 1953, living there for the best part of six decades, while in the 1960s he taught a composition masterclass at the Salzburg Mozarteum. Teaching also led him to the US, where he was a composer-in-residence at Tanglewood, and to Cuba.

Henze was particularly connected with the stage – he often emphasised his music came ‘from theatre’ – and he composed music-theatre and 15 operas including *Der Prince von Homburg*, *The Bassarids* and *Boulevard Solitude* which won an Olivier for best new opera production. His ballets included *Ondine*, choreographed by Frederick Ashton for the Royal Ballet in 1958, and [The Idiot](#). He was Capell-Compositeur at the Dresden Staatskapelle until the end of his life. However, he was also a prolific producer of orchestral works including no fewer than ten symphonies over the course of half-a-century, and [his catalogue of pieces](#) contains music of a multitude of genres including concertos, sonatas, serenades, chamber and keyboard works, and choral and vocal pieces.

Henze also established two music festivals – Cantiere Internazionale d’Arte Montepulciano and Biennale – Münchener Internationales Festival für Neues Musiktheater which both promoted young talent. Among the accolades bestowed on him was the Sibelius Gold Medal, Japanese emperor’s Praemium Imperiale, the Grand Cross with Star of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Chevalier de la Légion d’honneur. He received various honorary doctorates and was honorary citizen of Montepulciano and Marino. He received the 2021 Cannes Classical Award for Best Living Composer. Henze died in Dresden in 2012 [at the age of 86](#).

Caroline Shaw

[Caroline Shaw](#) is an American musician who can adapt to several genres without limitations. She is a composer, violinist and singer who became the youngest musician to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2013 for her acapella composition *Partita for 8 Voices*. Shaw has also won a Grammy Award in 2022 for Best Classical Composition for her song cycle *Narrow Sea* and is a composer in residence for Wigmore Hall. Her versatility as a musician reflects on her works as she is drawn to a variety of influences.

Speaking to *Oregon ArtsWatch* about the piece *Concerto for Harpsichord and Strings* in 2025, Shaw said:

“I started by just going back and listening to the Bach harpsichord concertos and Baroque music in general, and to some of Byron’s recordings of various pieces from the 17th and 18th century and let myself just run. If I’m writing a piece that is for such a specific environment—the early music instruments feel like a specific environment both sonically and also in the context of a concert like that—then I go into a place of deep immersion in that music. I’m familiar with a lot of it already but listening to it—the Bach harpsichord concertos in particular—and trying to suss out what are the really salient, exciting elements for me. Not with a sense of specific analysis but, like, “what do I like about this? What’s thrilling? What moves me? And what would I want to hear in that world that I haven’t heard yet before?”

And then starting the piece, finding lots of chords and unusual chord sequences that *feel* like you might hear them in Vivaldi, but then they turn off in an unusual way. I do remember talking to Danni Lee about this. I feel like she gets responsibility for the beginning of the second movement. I was like, “Danni, what would you want to hear?” And I played her a little bit of something I was working on, and she was like, “what if it sounded like birds?” So the beginning of the second movement is really something that she designed that I just made. And the other parts, I wanted to make something that’s in a really traditional structure, first, second, third movement. With a fast-ish first movement, slow second, and then rip-roaring third. And the cool thing about writing for harpsichord is that it’s such an unusual sound, it’s just so of its time. And also you associate it with this period of 1960s, ‘70s, Baroque rock.”