

SUNDAY 8 MARCH

Heroines and Spells



CÉCILE LASTCHENKO

(SOPRANO)

Cécile Lastchenko, a Belgian mezzo-soprano, studied opera singing at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels with Marcel Vanaud, where she obtained a specialised Master's degree with the highest distinction. She continued her training at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London in Yvonne Kenny's class, obtaining a second Master of Music degree. From 2014 to 2019, she perfected her skills at the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel under the direction of José van Dam and Sophie Koch.

Winner of several international competitions, she performs regularly as a soloist at the Opéra Royal de Wallonie, the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels and Charleroi, the Théâtre Royal du Parc, Flagey, as well as the Opéra du Grand Avignon, the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris, the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon and Milton Court in London.

Her recent roles include Rosina in *The Barber of Seville* (Rossini), Laura in *Luisa Miller* (Verdi), Blondine in *The Enchanted Castle*, and Dorabella in *Così fan tutte* (Mozart) in 2025 in Belgium. Praised by the press, she is described as a revelation combining fiery temperament and vocal qualities, embodying memorable characters with grace and intensity, and asserting herself as a powerful and engaging artist.



ELINA BUKSHA

(VIOLIN)

Elina Buksha is a Latvian violinist renowned for her vivid imagination and storytelling skills, combined with remarkable technical agility and a strong musical personality. Winner of the Kulturkreis Gasteig Musikpreis in Munich in 2019, she joined the City Music Foundation's roster of artists in London in 2020.

She has performed in prestigious venues such as Wigmore Hall in London, the Louvre Auditorium in Paris, the Laeiszhalde in Hamburg, the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels and the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall in Moscow. She has been invited to numerous international festivals, including the Festival de Wallonie, the Yaroslav International Festival directed by Yuri Bashmet, the Rheingau Musik Festival, the Rencontres Musicales d'Évian and the Marvão International Festival.

As a soloist, she has collaborated with renowned orchestras such as I Virtuosi del Teatro alla Scala, the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonietta Riga, Sinfonia Varsovia, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of Liège, the Tatarstan National Symphony Orchestra and the Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra. She has recorded Saint-Saëns' violin concertos for the Alpha label.

A sought-after chamber musician, she shares the stage with Maria João Pires, Midori, Augustin Dumay and the Modigliani Quartet. Trained by Augustin Dumay, Christoph Poppen and Midori, among others, she plays a 1790 Gagliano violin.



JULIE DELBART

(PIANO)

Julie Delbart began studying music at the age of four and, at fourteen, was awarded first prize in music theory at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, where she continued her piano studies with renowned teachers. Winner of numerous prizes and scholarships (Fondation Horlait-Dapsens, Vocatio, Prix Maurice Lefranc, First Prize in the Concours des Concerti), she obtained her specialist Masters degrees with High Distinction in solo piano, accompaniment and teaching, before being hired as an accompanist at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels.

As a soloist, chamber musician and orchestra partner, she has performed in Europe, the United States, Asia and South America alongside artists such as José Van Dam and Marie-Christine Barrault. At La Monnaie, she has participated in numerous productions as a pianist, celestist and organist under the direction of prestigious conductors.

Very active in musical theatre, she is assistant musical director and pianist on major musicals (Cabaret, West Side Story, Evita, etc.) and is musical director for several productions, including Andromaque and L'Abattoir de verre in 2024. She also accompanies masterclasses given by international artists.