
PARASITE
The Uninvited Dinner Guests
IV•X•MMXXV

DEAR GUESTS,

Parasite is the most ambitious project we've dreamed up so far, and seeing it come alive in Frogmore's dark chambers with you has been unforgettable.

Since I can remember, I've been fascinated by scary stories and horror movies. To place that energy alongside classical music felt natural. Both deal in tension and release. For me, bringing them together is a marriage made in heaven, or perhaps something more deliciously unsettling.

Most of the time, we listen to music without thinking much about who wrote it or why, consigning it to incidental music. The names of composers can become almost anonymous, attached only to the beautiful sounds floating in the air. But behind every piece is a human being; messy, complicated, sometimes deeply troubled. And out of that chaos, they forge beauty that still shakes us centuries later.

The composers selected for our table tonight all lived on a knife-edge between brilliance and destruction. They were flawed, scandalous, even murderous, and yet they created some of the most extraordinary, forward-looking music in history. It is a thrill to share their compelling stories with you, and as a result, I hope that their music will speak to you differently tonight.

Finally, thank you for being part of the performance itself – for being open-minded and allowing yourselves to experience classical music so far from its comfort zone. Your willingness to step into this world with us is what has made this evening truly come alive.





MENU Du PARASITE

Entrée du Sabbat

Modest Mussorgsky
Lullaby from Songs and Dances of Death
Night on a Bare Mountain

Trio de Delirium

Alexander Scriabin
Etude in C sharp minor

Edgard Varèse
Density 21.5

Erik Satie
Gnossienne No. 4

Service des Orages

Ludwig van Beethoven
Introduction from String Quartet No. 9 Andante con moto quasi Allegretto
String Quartet No. 11 Allegro con brio

Plat à Deux - Passion Toxique

Franz Liszt
Consolation No. 3 in D flat major

Richard Wagner
Im Treibhaus from Wesendonck Lieder

Désert de la Mort

Carlo Gesualdo da Venosa
O Vos Omnes



Mussorgsky
1839-1881

Scriabin
1872-1915

Varese
1883-1963

Satie
1866-1925



Beethoven
1770-1827

Liszt
1811-1886

Wagner
1813-1883

Gesualdo
1566-1613

MODEST MUSSORGSKY

Mussorgsky lived as though deadlines, decorum and even liver function were optional. A soldier-turned-civil servant, he wrote his greatest music between bouts of heavy drinking, convinced that music should sound like real life ... peasants stomping, witches shrieking, drunks slurring. Friends would find him unconscious beside unfinished scores, which others later "corrected" in his absence (he would not have thanked them). He died in hospital wearing a borrowed uniform, having just posed defiantly for a portrait. His music still staggers, sways and mutters to itself — but somewhere in those unruly steps is the heartbeat of a nation, raw and unvarnished.

ALEXANDER SCRIABIN

Scriabin began at the piano but quickly moved on to *trying to summon God*. Believing himself destined to trigger mass transcendence, he planned a week-long ritual in the Himalayas involving orchestra, choir, dancers, incense, and an enormous light display. The performance would end with the world dissolving, presumably mid-applause. He assigned colours to musical keys, wrote harmonies that hover like mirages, and claimed he could levitate through sound. He died from an infected pimple before he could end civilisation, which is probably for the best. His music remains less apocalypse, more shimmering, seductive and a touch hallucinogenic.

EDGARD VARÈSE

Varèse treated music like an experiment and the orchestra like raw material. While others polished melodies, he was wiring up sirens, hammering scrap metal and demanding his performers sound like machines learning to scream. Audiences were unsure whether to applaud or evacuate. He despised nostalgia, once declaring that *"music must be freed from the violins."* Even his friends found him alarming — he kept boxes of obscure instruments and spoke of sound as if it were a weapon (in his hands it often was). Nearly everything he composed before 1920 went into the fire. He preferred to start from scratch, preferably with explosives.

ERIK SATIE

Three pieces in the form of a pear, Things Seen to the Right and to the Left (Without Glasses), Waltzes of a Fat Man are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Satie's bizarre composition titles. And it doesn't end there, as his scores are filled with instructions such as *"play like a nightingale with a toothache,"* or *"light as an egg"*. Self-labelled as *The Velvet Gentleman*, Satie owned seven identical grey velvet suits, one for each day of the week. He claimed to subsist only on *white foods... eggs, sugar, shredded bones, boiled chicken, mouldy fruit, rice and turnips*. He even founded his own religion with himself as its sole member. Minimalism meets metaphysical absurdism... always in velvet.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Beethoven's temper was as famous as his music. He frequently clashed with aristocratic patrons, poured water over slow waiters and once wrestled a nobleman over a misunderstanding involving a bread roll. He walked out on princes, tore up dedications when offended and insisted that artistic merit outranked noble birth. His patrons tolerated it not out of politeness but awe; even they seemed to recognise that Beethoven did not merely request respect... he demanded it.

FRANZ LISZT & RICHARD WAGNER

Liszt and Wagner formed one of music's most productive, volatile alliances. Liszt was Europe's first celebrity heartthrob, tearing across the continent, leaving a trail of broken pianos and broken hearts, tossing handkerchiefs to crowds like confetti. Women tore pieces off his gloves, stole his snapped piano strings, even kept his discarded coffee grounds in lockets. Yet behind the glamour, he donated generously to charity and even briefly became a monk in his later years.

Wagner, meanwhile, spent his life in debt, moving from patron to patron like a particularly lyrical parasite. He demanded complete devotion, loathed critics, insulted entire nations in essays longer than most operas, yet still convinced kings to fund his obsessions. His operas stretch past five hours, requiring massive orchestras and more doom, incest and fire than most Greek tragedies. Even Nietzsche, once his greatest disciple, couldn't cope and walked away. Liszt rescued Wagner from financial ruin more times than history cares to count. And Wagner's gratitude? He claimed Liszt's daughter, Cosima... pupil turned mistress turned wife. Yet for all his venom, his music hypnotises: colossal, intoxicating, impossible to ignore.

Admired, scandalous and inseparable, Liszt and Wagner remain music's most notorious double act... parasite and patron, bound by brilliance and betrayal.

Carlo Gesualdo di Venosa

The Italian prince whose legacy is split between scandal and innovation. In 1590, after catching his wife and her lover *in flagrante delicto*, he slaughtered them both, publicly displaying their bodies in the town square. He escaped punishment, but his later years were marked by isolation, insomnia and fits of self-inflicted violence. Accounts suggest he ordered servants to whip him daily in attempts at penance. His music reflects this torment, filled with piercing dissonances that sound centuries ahead of their time. He died alone at his estate, suffering from illness and, according to witnesses, convinced the ghosts of his victims had come to claim him.



ECHOR MUSIC

Echor was born out of a desire to bring world-class music to the Chilterns. Founded in 2021 by violinist Eva Þórarinsdóttir & violist Nicholas Bootiman, Echor has grown into a collective of some of the UK's finest musicians who share their passion for re-imagining the classical concert experience.

Eva & Nick believe music is more than performance, and finding ways to weave storytelling, history, place, and our community is at the heart of what Echor stands for. Each project they create is built around a theme, sometimes playful, sometimes dark – but always designed to bring audiences closer to the heart of the music.

Our first concerts took place not in concert halls, but in our local agricultural barns, which became the sowing seed for our passion for transforming unusual venues into immersive spaces for music and narrative. Over the years, we have celebrated Mozart in an intimate soirée, charted Ravel's transatlantic voyage, conjured Nordic landscapes with Grieg and Sibelius, and explored England's reawakening through Elgar, Vaughan Williams and Britten in *Albion*. Summers have sparkled with lighter French and American programmes, while darker journeys have led to *Standstill*, and an iconic *Nosferatu* original film screening at Dundrige Manor with a live orchestra and a brand new score.

Looking ahead, *The Door* will take us into Kafka's unsettling world of transformation, blending chamber music with dance and theatre. Alongside these major productions, Eva & Nick continue to plot our future concert seasons, ensuring that the joy of music is shared as widely as possible.



Parasite is a bold start to our fifth season, and we hope that Echor continues to grow a reputation for daring, imaginative concerts that blur the line between performance and theatre, and to continue to bring them to life for audiences here in the Chiltern Hills and beyond.

Musicians

VIOLIN	EVA ÞÓRARINSDÓTTIR
VIOLIN	NATALIE KLOUDA
VIOLA	CLEMENT PICKERING
CELLO	ELLA RUNDLE
CELLO	ARIANA KASHEFI
DOUBLE BASS	LEWIS REID
TROMBONE	PAO HERNÁNDEZ
TUBA	NATHAN MANSELL
SOLO FLUTE	ANNA KONDRASHINA
SOLO PIANO	VIV MCLEAN
MR MUSSORGSKY	HARRISON CHÉNÉ-GRATION
MRS WESENDONCK	HELENA PAISH

The Gesualdo Table

SOPRANO	KATHERINE GREGORY
ALTO	HELENA PAISH
TENOR	TOM LAW
TENOR	TIM BURTON
BASS	HARRISON GRATION

Our Host



PAUL RYAN

Paul began as a child actor when he played The Artful Dodger in the West End production of Oliver. Since then, his most favorite parts and productions include Harry in Mamma Mia (West End), Kenneth Williams in Round The Horne (West End and National Tour), Mr Greenfelt in Debbie Does Dallas (Edinburgh Festival), Cleante in The Miser (Young Vic) David in Torch Song Trilogy. Mrs Bouncer in Cox and Box (Scarborough SJT) and Gary Le Jeurn in Noises Off, Satan in The Mystery Plays and Les in Bouncers (Liverpool Playhouse).



His TV credits include playing Nigel Farage in Channel 4's Brexit - A Very Civil War, Ghosts, The Trial of Christine Keeler, The Real Charlie Chaplin, Waffle the Wonder Dog, Grantchester, The 5, Casualty, Hollyoaks, and EastEnders. Most recently, he played President George W. Bush in 'Debriefing the President, ' soon to be seen on Netflix.

His side hustles include being a speaker trainer, an executive coach, and a clinical psychotherapist through his company, Improve On You.

Paul wrote the book and lyrics for the musical Sadly Solo Joe which premiered at The Greenwich Theatre. His play, 'Come To Papa', was performed at The Jermyn Street Theatre.

In the world of classical music Paul played Monostatos in Mozart's The Magic Flute, El Duende in Astor Piazzolla's Maria De Buenos Aires, Major General Stanley in the Pirates Of Penzance and The Narrator in Stravinsky's The Soldier's Tale in The Barn theatre at Dartington Hall – the venue where it was first ever performed in the UK, conducted by Stravinsky himself!

HISTORY OF FROGMORE

Welcome to Frogmore Paper Mill, the birthplace of the paper revolution.

It was here, in 1803, that **Henry & Sealy Fourdrinier** installed the world's first successful paper machine, built by Bryan Donkin and based on a French patent by Nicolas-Louis Robert. For the first time, a continuous reel of paper could be made by machine. This invention, known everywhere today as the *Fourdrinier machine*, changed the world.

Within just a few years, John Dickinson perfected his own Cylinder Mould Machine at nearby Apsley Mill. Between them, these two breakthroughs created the blueprint for papermaking as we still know it. Machines of this kind are responsible for the vast majority of the world's paper today.

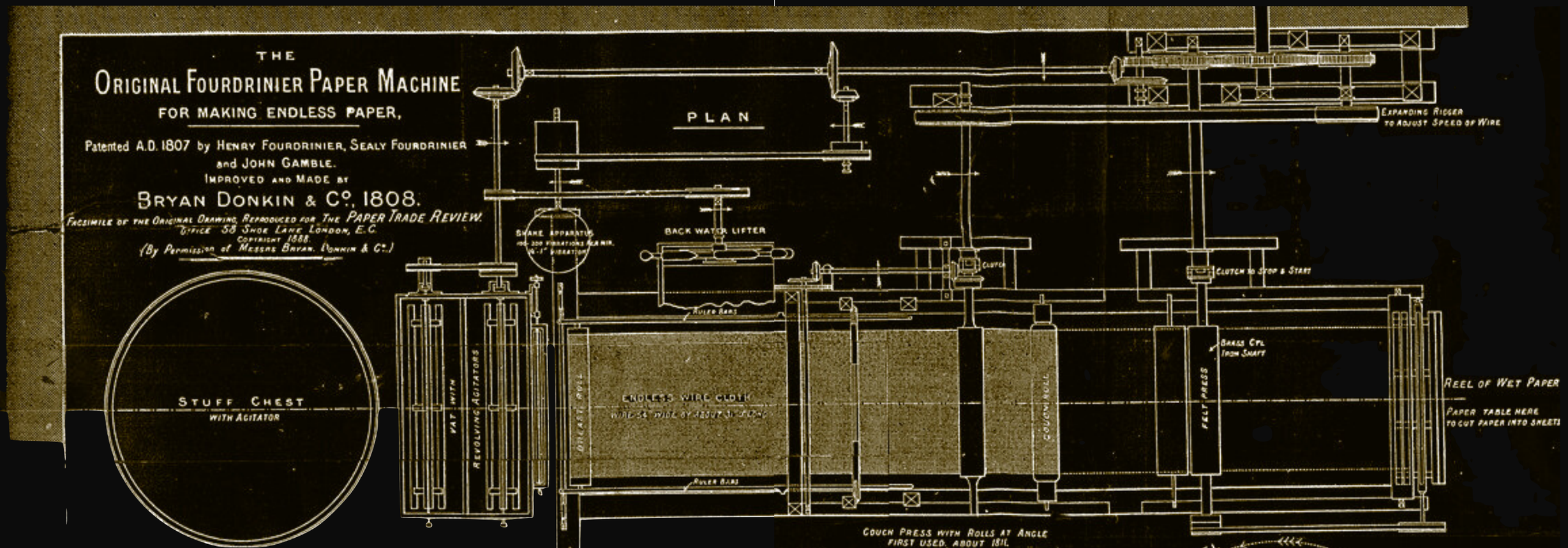
The impact was seismic. By the mid-19th century, the combination of industrialised papermaking and mechanised printing had made paper cheap and abundant, paving the way for universal education, mass communication, political debate, scientific discovery, and cultural revolutions. In many ways, the modern world began here, on the banks of the River Gade.

The story of Frogmore goes back even further. The earliest records of a mill standing on this site date back to 1264, and paper has been made here since 1774, first by hand, and later by machine. Today, the team produces beautiful artisan papers with recycled fibres and decorative inclusions such as petals, various seeds and even elephant poo!

Since 2002, the site has been cared for by *The Apsley Paper Trail*, a charity dedicated to preserving this industrial heritage, conserving the historic equipment, and keeping the craft of papermaking alive for visitors from around the world. Every sheet of artisan paper they sell supports this important work.

In January 2022, tragedy struck when a large fire devastated the southeast end of the mill. The site has been closed to the public ever since, but the trust has been working tirelessly to restore, rebuild, and reimagine. Soon, an all-new visitor centre will open its doors, celebrating not just Frogmore's remarkable story, but the wider industrial heritage of the Gade Valley, also known as *Paper Valley*.

Your presence here tonight helps keep that story alive.



BE PART OF OUR STORY

We are beyond grateful to our Echor Friends and Sponsors, who are the only reason Echor exist today. In line with all other arts organisations in the U.K., our ticket sales only cover 40% at each event on average, so your support means absolutely everything to us to continue bringing music to our communities.

If you are interested in supporting Echor, we would be over the moon. There are four sponsorship tiers to choose from, offering different benefits.
Please visit our website, www.echormusic.com/support, for more information.

ECHOR FRIENDS
£30 SOLO - £50 DUO

Our Friends programme has become one of our proudest achievements, creating a growing family of supporters, many of whom have become personal friends of ours along the way.

DREAMERS
£100 - £299

The 'Dreamers' are our visionaries, who help bring our ideas to life. Without them, there is less scope for storytelling, one of the most important aspects of our concerts.

MOVERS & SHAKERS
£300 - £999

Our 'Movers & Shakers' give us a chance to brave our more daring artistic ideas and help us cover the vital costs of our performances, changing our approach to season planning.

THE MUSIC MAKERS
£1000 +

Our 'Music Makers' ensure the future of Echor and are the reason we exist today. A donation of this kind keeps the music alive and our imagination running, and for that, we couldn't be more grateful.

Echor Music Registered Charity 1196352

We are the music makers,

And we are the dreamers of dreams...

...we are the movers and shakers

Of the world forever, it seems

THE MUSIC MAKERS

ALAN CANTRELL
HUGH GUILFORD
ANTHONY & WENDY SMITH
THE COMMON HUMANITY ARTS TRUST
ANONYMOUS

MOVERS & SHAKERS

THE ASKEW FAMILY
LIONEL & SYLVIA AVERY
GILL & PATRICK HUDGELL
ALASDAIR & ALISON MURRAY

DREAMERS

WENDY DRINKWATER
PATTY GRIFFITHS
DAVID & SANDRA HALL
HILARY & IAN NEEDLEMAN
MARION TURNER
+ 2 ANONYMOUS

+
Our 105

ECHOR FRIENDS

A FINAL TOAST!

Parasite could not have come to life without the generosity, patience and boldness of so many wonderful people.

To Alan, Sue and the entire Frogmore team, thank you for opening your extraordinary space to us and meeting our increasingly deranged requests with nothing but enthusiasm and support. We couldn't have done it without you!

To our friends, Steve and Sergio, who did not have a say in morphing into professional audience wranglers for the night, guiding our guests through every corridor without losing a single one to the shadows. Thank you for travelling a long way to be here to support us, it means the world.

To our brilliant musicians, who said yes to the unknown and stepped willingly into this project with us, your passion and cooperation made this project a lot more fun.

I cannot go without a special thanks to Chris Honey at Orbitpress, who continuously turns panic into print so beautifully, with an alarming level of calm. Thank you!

And finally, to you, our audience. An idea is nothing without those willing to walk with it. Thank you for your fearless participation.

May this be the first of many feasts!

THE PARASITE TEAM

ARTISTIC/CREATIVE DIRECTOR	EVA ÞÓRARINSDÓTTIR
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR	NICHOLAS BOOTIMAN
SCRIPTWRITER	EVA ÞÓRARINSDÓTTIR
LIGHTING TECHNICIAN	TOM WALL/TWEVENTS.UK
VENUE COORDINATORS	ALAN BANTON & SUE WOOLNOUGH
PIANO HIRE	CHILTERN PIANOS
VIDEOGRAPHER	TIM HAND
PHOTOGRAPHER	OSKAR CHU
PROGRAMME DESIGN	EVA ÞÓRARINSDÓTTIR
PRINTERS	ORBITPRESS

GUIDES

STEVEN PROCTOR & SERGIO CASTELLÓ LÓPEZ

USHERS

DAVD LATTIMER & SARAH SEALY



ECHOR MUSIC