Sir John Eliot Gardiner curates a 2019–2020 Perspectives series with his internationally acclaimed early-music ensemble Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, performing a complete cycle of Beethoven’s nine symphonies as well as the rarely heard score for the ballet The Creatures of Prometheus in five concerts over six days in February 2020. Grounded in Sir John Eliot’s exacting study of Beethoven’s original manuscripts, the symphonies will be performed as the composer would have experienced them, played on period instruments, including valveless brass, woodwinds without additional keys and levers, gut strings, and hide-covered timpani struck with hard sticks. For the series’ final concert—consisting of Beethoven’s symphonies nos. 8 and 9—soloists include soprano Lucy Crowe, contralto Jess Dandy, tenor Michael Spyres, and bass Tareq Nazmi, along with The Monteverdi Choir. As a prelude to the cycle, the maestro kicks off his Perspectives with a lecture in Weill Recital Hall, providing additional musical insights into these masterworks. The series is an integral part of Carnegie Hall’s celebration of the 250th anniversary of Beethoven’s birth.

Sir John Eliot Gardiner is founder and artistic director of The Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists, and Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique (ORR). A key figure in the early-music revival and a pioneer of historically informed performances, he is a regular guest with the world’s leading symphony orchestras, conducting works from the 17th through 20th centuries. The breadth of his repertoire is illustrated by his extensive catalog of award-winning recordings with his own ensembles and leading orchestras. Since 2005, the Monteverdi ensembles have recorded on their independent label, Soli Deo Gloria, established to release the live recordings made during Sir John Eliot’s Bach Cantata Pilgrimage in 2000. His many recording accolades include two Grammy Awards and more Gramophone Awards than any other living artist.

An authority on the music of J. S. Bach, Sir John Eliot is the author of Music in the Castle of Heaven: A Portrait of Johann Sebastian Bach, published in October 2013 by Allen Lane and awarded the Fondation Singer-Polignac’s Prix des Muses. Among the numerous awards in recognition of his work—including the Concertgebouw Prize in 2016—Sir John Eliot holds several honorary doctorates and was awarded a knighthood for his services to music in the 1998 Queen’s Birthday Honours List.

More recently, Sir John Eliot and the Monteverdi ensembles celebrated the 450th anniversary of Monteverdi’s birth with staged performances of his three surviving operas across Europe and in the US. Recordings in 2017 included two Bach releases on Soli Deo Gloria—the Magnificat in E-flat Major and St. Matthew Passion—along with the London Symphony Orchestra recording of Mendelssohn’s Symphony No. 2, “Lobgesang.” From its inception, Sir John Eliot and ORR have won plaudits internationally, notably for its interpretation of the works of Beethoven, which it performed extensively and recorded for Deutsche Grammophon in the 1990s. Sir John Eliot made his Carnegie Hall debut in 1988 conducting Orchestra of St. Luke’s. He returned in 2009 with Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique, and they have since made regular return visits to the Hall together, most recently in two acclaimed all-Berlioz performances in October 2018.
Sir John Eliot Gardiner on the Beethoven Symphonies

Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Speaker

Sir John Eliot Gardiner’s groundbreaking interpretations of Beethoven’s music have cast this magnificent body of work in a new light. In an illuminating spoken-word event, Gardiner enlightens us with insights into his approach to this immortal music.

Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique

Wednesday, February 19 at 8 PM | Stern/Perelman

Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique

Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Artistic Director and Conductor

ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM

Symphony No. 1

The Creatures of Prometheus

Thursday, February 20 at 8 PM | Stern/Perelman

Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique

Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Artistic Director and Conductor

ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM

Symphony No. 2

Symphony No. 3, “Eroica”

Friday, February 21 at 8 PM | Stern/Perelman

Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique

Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Artistic Director and Conductor

ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM

Symphony No. 4

Symphony No. 5

Sunday, February 23 at 2 PM | Stern/Perelman

Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique

Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Artistic Director and Conductor

ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM

Symphony No. 6, “Pastoral”

Symphony No. 7

Monday, February 24 at 8 PM | Stern/Perelman

Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique

Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Artistic Director and Conductor

Lucy Crowe, Soprano | Jess Dandy, Contralto | Michael Spyres, Tenor | Tareq Nazmi, Bass | The Monteverdi Choir

ALL-BEETHOVEN PROGRAM

Symphony No. 8

Symphony No. 9

This concert is made possible, in part, by an endowment fund for choral music established by S. Donald Sussman in memory of Judith Arron and Robert Shaw.