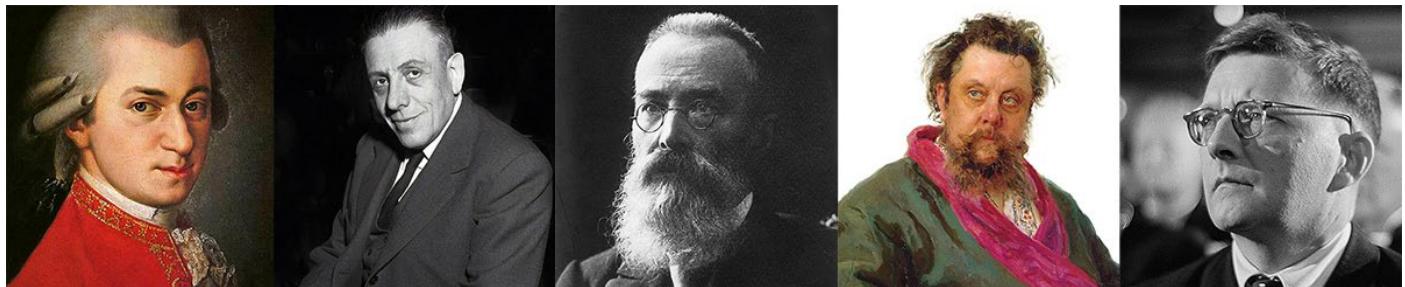


Sweet Memories

In our very last season, we look back—after 36 years—on the works we most loved to perform.



Van links naar rechts Mozart, Poulenc, Rimski-Korsakov, Moessorgski, Sjostakovitsj

Program

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Quintet in E flat major KV 452 (1784)

-Largo-allegro moderato

-Larghetto

-Allegretto

oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Sextuor opus 100 (1932/1939)

-Allegro vivace

-Divertissement, andantino

-Finale, prestissimo

flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Intermission

Nikolai Rimski-Korsakov (1844-1908)

From Quintet in B flat major opus posth.

-allegro con brio (1879)

flute-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Sergei Prokofjev (1891-1953)

Conte de la vieille grand'mère (1918)

piano solo

Dmitri Sjostakovitsj (1906-1975)

Three movements from 'The lady Macbeth from the Mtsensk District' (1932) Arr. Kees Olthuis

flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Modest Moessorgski (1839-1881)

From 'Paintings at an Exhibition' (1874) Arr. Kees Olthuis

-Promenade

-The Old Castle

-The Hut on Fowl's Legs (Baba-Yaga)

-The Great Gate of Kiev

flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Why the program Sweet Memories?

Of course, we love all the music we play. But in *Sweet Memories* we reveal our true colors. Each member of the ensemble has one absolute favorite.

Frank: "The enchanting, intimate piano piece *Conte de la vieille grand'mère* by Sergei Prokofiev is truly one of my darlings. So atmospheric and full of color – a whole universe packed into just a minute and a half!"

Arno: "Everything Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart ever wrote for clarinet is simply beautiful. He really put the instrument on the map, and for that we can be forever grateful. His Quintet in E-flat is a true highlight of lyrical refinement." And the others couldn't agree more.

Marieke: "There's more melancholic, dark music written than cheerful music. And although I love melancholy, it's a real treat to play Rimsky-Korsakov's quintet. The *Allegro con brio* is colorful, upbeat, and sometimes even jubilant, with every instrument taking its turn to shine."

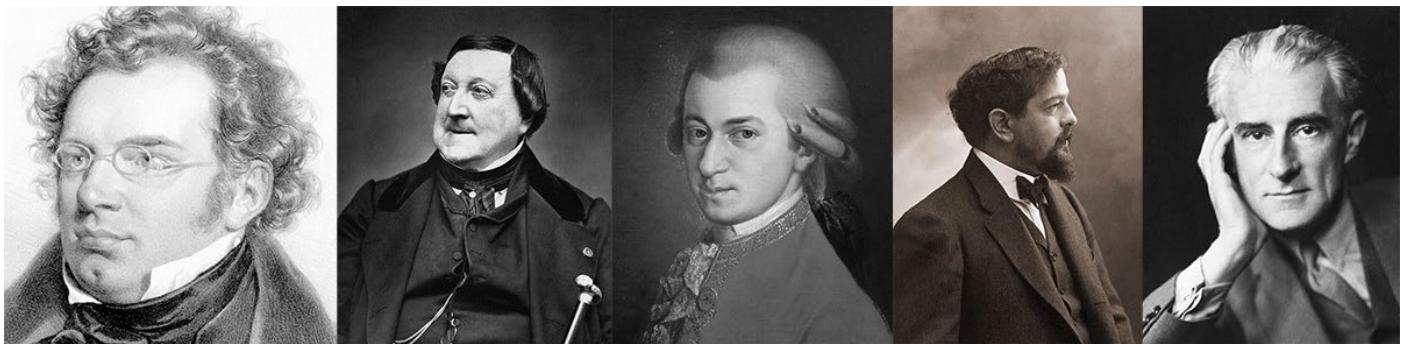
Ron: "What has always made playing in Hexagon so special is working directly with composers and premiering so many new pieces over the years. My personal favorite is *Pictures at an Exhibition* by Modest Mussorgsky, in the wonderful arrangement for us by composer and arranger Kees Olthuis. The horn part is tough and intense, but also so rewarding."

Bram: "One undisputed masterpiece has to be Francis Poulenc's *Sextet*. It's one of the most important works ever written for our lineup, and for that reason alone it has become one of our signature pieces. Sometimes it even sounds like cartoon music, it's that lively and vivid. But it was the melancholy oboe solo in the second movement that made me, even as a child, suddenly realize: I want to play the oboe."

Wout: "Dmitri Shostakovich is all about the shrill, the monumental, the dark, and the deeply dramatic. And all four of those elements come together in his opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*. It's music that grabs you by the throat. And that's exactly what we as Hexagon Ensemble have always aimed for: to move our audience, to take them along on an unforgettable musical journey – one that leads through the full range of human emotions."



Una Donna, a program with Ekaterina Levental



Program

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Ariettes oubliées (1886/1887) *Arr. David Walter*

- C'est l'extase langoureuse
- Il pleure dans mon cœur
- L'ombre des arbres
- Chevaux de Bois
- Green (Aquarelle)
- Spleen (Aquarelle)

soprano-flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Albert Roussel (1869-1937)

Divertissement (1905)

flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Shéhérazade (1923) (*arr. Arie Boers*)

- Asie
- La flûte enchantée
- L'indifférent

soprano-flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Intermission

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Der Hirt auf dem Felsen D965 (1828)

soprano-clarinet-piano

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)

Cruda sorte! Amor tiranno! (1813) (*arr. David Walter*)

soprano-flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Four Aria's from opera's. *Arr. Arie Boers and David Walter*

- From Così fan tutte: Una donna
- From Don Giovanni: Batti, batti
- From Idomeneo: Se il padre perdei

soprano-flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

- From Die Zauberföte: Der hölle Rache

soprano-flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn



Ekaterina Levental (foto Eric Brinkhorst)

Ekaterina and Hexagon

Una Donna is a program that lavishly showcases the extraordinary talent of soprano Ekaterina Levental, a musician equally at home in a wide range of musical styles. In the first half, she enchants with impressionistic songs; in the second, she immerses herself in opera, revealing both her dramatic intensity and virtuosic brilliance.

With her charisma and unwavering dedication to music, Ekaterina is a beloved and frequent guest of the Hexagon Ensemble. She reflects on their collaboration:

“Working with the Hexagon Ensemble is always a joy. We rehearse in a spirit of warmth and camaraderie, yet we hold each other to the highest standards, because we all strive for beauty and excellence. Over time, our partnership has deepened. Knowing the music so intimately gives us the freedom to explore and interpret—and that, ultimately, is our true calling.”

About Una Donna

Ariettes oubliées is a song cycle for voice and piano by Claude Debussy, based on poems by Paul Verlaine. The poetry of Paul Verlaine had a profound influence on Debussy: both were inspired by subtlety and nuance. This collection of songs set the tone for all of Debussy's future vocal compositions in terms of rhythm, harmony, tone, color, and attention to poetic detail.

Unmistakably French and yet with an entirely unique and inimitable idiom is the music of **Albert Roussel**. His fresh *Divertissement* was premiered on April 10, 1906, by the Société des Instruments à Vent. The spirited opening carries the indication *animé*. This transitions into a *lent*, with a beautiful flute solo marked *dolce*. Once again the music revives into an *animé* and finally comes to rest in the closing *lent*. Roussel's *Divertissement* is the only instrumental work in this program.

Shéhérazade by **Maurice Ravel** was intended as a tribute to Rimsky-Korsakov and his symphonic poem *Sheherazade*. Ravel brought together three texts from a collection of poems by the writer Tristan Klingsor—himself inspired by *One Thousand and One Nights*—into three orchestral songs. These songs marked the composer's first major success. We perform this song cycle in a beautiful arrangement by David Walter.

One of **Schubert's** final songs, written in 1828 just a month before his death, is *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen* (The Shepherd on the Rock). The song is written for soprano, piano, and clarinet. It combines texts by two different poets, Wilhelm Müller (the first four stanzas) and Karl August Varnhagen von Ense (the final stanzas). Unlike most of Schubert's other songs, here a second instrument—the clarinet—is added alongside the piano. The first part of the song depicts a lonely shepherd atop a mountain. The second part expresses solitude, lost love, and despair. The third part opens a window of hope toward a new life.

The aria “**Cruda sorte!**” comes from Rossini's opera *L'Italiana in Algeri*. This opera belongs to the genre of so-called rescue operas—operas that tell the story of a beautiful young woman who is abducted and imprisoned, facing torture and death, until her heroic lover arrives to save her. In the aria *Cruda sorte!*, she laments her dreadful fate.

In the final part of the program, four of **Mozart's** best-known arias are heard, showcasing the genius of this operatic composer. The program concludes with *Der Hölle Rache*, the famous and breathtakingly virtuosic coloratura aria from *Die Zauberflöte*.

Connection

Ekaterina about her connection with the works in this program

In this program of iconic works for the voice, the central theme is longing. Each piece is a landmark in the vocal repertoire, technically groundbreaking and theatrically demanding. At the same time, they all portray a woman, *Una Donna*, and her longing for something essential in her life.

The sensual, symbolic poetry of Verlaine inspired Claude Debussy to create one of the most beautiful song cycles in vocal literature: *Ariettes oubliées*. This cycle would become the model for many of his later songs. In each of these works, longing is expressed and made tangible in all its depth, subtlety, and nuance. For its time, it was revolutionary to paint with sound so intensely.

Maurice Ravel's *Shéhérazade* is a cornerstone of the vocal repertoire, though it originated from plans for an

orchestral work. Ravel, a master of orchestration, knew better than anyone how to let the voice bathe in an exotic dream world of fantasy, oriental color, and intensity.

“Franz Schubert carried a ‘Divine Spark,’” said Beethoven. That spark is unmistakably present in one of Schubert’s last songs. In *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*, performers are given the opportunity to express a wide range of emotions and feelings through sound.

Our program concludes with a vivid array of well-known opera arias by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Gioachino Rossini. Destiny, longing for love, pain, hope, rage, and vengeance pass in gripping succession. The program culminates in the most famous and feared aria of all time: *Der Hölle Rache*—a breathtaking finale for both audience and performer.

For Ekaterina, this program is a true *tour de force*. With joy she throws herself into the challenge, in search of herself, her own desires, her motives, her expression, and her connection with the compositions, the composers, and the audience.

And... you are a witness to this symbiosis.



Meerkind, our new and latest family program

Meerkind

Meerkind is a family program that toured the country in the 2025/2026 season. Set to the music of Grieg's Peer Gynt, it tells the story of Jule, a growing girl—a female 'Peer'—who learns, through trial and error, to find her own way.

Along her journey, Jule discovers that 'more' isn't always 'better', and that 'small' can be just as wonderful. The acclaimed actress Julia van der Vlugt takes the lead role, while theater-maker Lotte van Dijck writes and directs the entire production, including the playful theatrical contributions of the Hexagon Ensemble. By seamlessly blending music, language, and stagecraft, Meerkind creates an intimate form of musical theatre that speaks to audiences of all ages.

Lotte Van Dijck explains: 'This story is for anyone who is growing up. Our seemingly simple show fits perfectly on any concert stage, but also in a church or even in a forest. Its magic doesn't come from spectacle, but from the poetry that arises when different art forms come together. Julia van der Vlugt moves among the audience as both actress and storyteller—and she sings as well. With such incredible music, very little is needed to ignite the imagination.'

What and Why

Until now, Peer Gynt has been told as a classic story from a male perspective, often feeling like a boys' adventure. The Hexagon Ensemble is excited to give it a fresh, female perspective. Peer Gynt becomes Jule: an adventurous girl who grows, learns, and—through trial and error—finds the courage to follow her own path, always reaching for the

Story: Lotte van Dijck
Arrangements: Gijs Philip van Schaik
Actress/Narrator: Julia van der Vlugt
Musicians: Hexagon Ensemble
Direction: Lotte van Dijck
Design: Femke Ratering
Technical Support: Eelco Vellema

horizon. Along the way, she discovers that more doesn't always mean better, that small can be wonderful, and that sometimes you have to travel far to truly feel at home. This is the story the Hexagon Ensemble brings to life with actress Julia van der Vlugt, written and directed by Lotte van Dijck.

The performance blends musical theater with a concert experience. Music is at the heart of the story, but acting, narration, and music lift and support each other, flowing seamlessly together. The musicians are not actors, yet they draw the audience into the world of the story, transforming into characters when the moment calls for it. Julia guides the audience as both actress and narrator, moving among the musicians and the audience, while singing and speaking the shared language of music.

The staging is deliberately simple, allowing the performance to adapt to a variety of spaces—forests, churches, concert halls, or theaters—bringing the story close to a diverse audience. But simplicity also reflects a belief at the core of this production: when music is this vivid and expressive, and combined with Julia's storytelling, it takes very little to make the story come alive.

The Story

Jule is a girl who grows up in a small village by the edge of a lake, living with her mother, Åse. The villagers are proud of their lake, but Jule finds it dull—a tiny patch of water, far too small for someone like her.

One day, she hears whispers of the horizon. It calls to her, tugging at her heart, and she cannot resist. There must be a sea somewhere where the sun sinks into the waves each evening!

Determined, Jule sets out on a secret journey in search of that endless horizon, without telling her mother. At eight years old, she considers herself old and wise enough to go alone.

Along the way, she meets strange and enchanting characters—brought to life by musicians—who try again and again to tempt her to stay. But Jule is resolute; she keeps moving, guided by the pull of the horizon.

At last, she reaches the sea. Yet what she finds surprises her. Unlike the calm, clear reflection of her familiar lake, the sea shows only gray clouds and rippling waves, making her appear old rather than the young girl she is. The sun is so far away on the horizon that its rays barely touch her. She only feels warmth when she remembers her mother, whose embrace is so comforting and strong.

Jule longs for home, for her mother, and for the lake—a lake that is so much more than the sea, because there she can see herself exactly as she is. She decides to return. Her worried mother awaits her, but the pride in her heart is greater than any anger, for her daughter has dared what she herself never could.

And next time they dream of traveling to the horizon, they know—they will go together.



From left to right: Julia van der Vlugt, Gijs Philip van Schaik and Lotte van Dijck



Christmas and New Year 2026/2027

In this festive program, we once again collaborate with soprano Ekaterina Levental. The program can also be adapted into a one-hour version without intermission. In that case, one or more program elements will be omitted in consultation.

Program Notes

A Christmas concert is all about warmth and immediacy, and the Hexagon Ensemble's joyful program delivers just that. Highlights include music from **Tchaikovsky's** *The Nutcracker*—the quintessential Christmas classic—and two works by audience favorite **Mozart**: his celebrated quintet and the iconic concert aria *Ch'io mi scordi di te?*, performed by the versatile soprano Ekaterina Levental. With her rich, expressive voice, she will also bring to life **Willem Pijper's** *Noëls de France*—French Christmas carols specially arranged for the Ensemble—alongside seven charming, easy-to-enjoy songs by the lesser-known yet brilliant French composer **Canteloube**.

Program

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Quintet KV 452 in E flat major (1784)

-largo-allegro moderato

-larghetto

-Rondo. allegretto

oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Marie-Joseph Canteloube (1879-1957)

From: *Chants d'Auvergne* (1923-1930/1955) (arr. David Walter)

-Au près de ma blonde

-La délaissée

-Obal din lou Limousin

-Baïlero

-Au pré de la rose

-Pastourelle

-La fileuse

soprano-flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Intermission

Willem Pijper (1894-1947)

Noëls de France (1919) (arr. Simon van Prooijen)

-La messe de Minuit

-Dans les ombres de la nuit

-Noël des Bourgeois de Châtre

-Noël pour l'amour de Marie
-l'Appel des Bergers
-Entre le boeuf et l'âne gris
soprano-flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Pjotr Iljitsj Tsjaikovski (1840-1893)
Uit de Notenkraker Suite (1891/1892) (arr. Shaura Sagitova)
-Ouverture
-Mars
-Dans van de rietfluiten
-Bloemenwals
flute-oboe-clarinet-bassoon-French horn-piano

Pjotr Iljitsj Tsjaikovski (1840-1893)
Uit de Notenkraker Suite (1891/1892) (arr. Shaura Sagitova)
-Overture
-March
-Dance of the Reed Flutes
-Waltz of the Flowers
fluit-hobo-klarinet-fagot-hoorn-piano

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Concert Aria KV 505 'Ch'io mi scordi te ?... Non temer, amato bene' (1786) (arr. Arie Boers)
sopraan-fluit-hobo-klarinet-fagot-hoorn-piano

