

Press Release

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Britten Sinfonia 2016-2017 season announced

Barbican – Saffron Hall – Cambridge – Norwich – UK and overseas tours

- **Adès, Beethoven, Barry:**
Launch of a new three-year Beethoven Symphony Cycle, conducted by Thomas Adès, with each symphony played alongside works by Gerald Barry and Adès.
 - **New residency at Saffron Hall from October 2016**
 - **New collaborations with the Barbican (as Associate Ensemble):**
 - Steve Reich at 80
 - John Adams at 70
 - European premiere of Britten Sinfonia co-commission, **Gerald Barry's** *Alice's Adventure's Under Ground*, with Barbara Hannigan in the title role.
- plus
- Acclaimed Barbican/Britten Sinfonia production of Britten's *Curlew River*, with **Ian Bostridge** and directed and designed by **Netia Jones**: on tour to Madrid and Hamburg
 - Aldeburgh performance of Olivier-award nominated production of Britten's *Phaedra*, with **Richard Alston Dance Company**.
- **Mark Padmore explores Bach's *St John's Passion***
 - **World premiere of James MacMillan's *Stabat Mater*, with Harry Christophers and The Sixteen**
 - **'At Lunch' music with real bite:**
World premieres of new commissions from **Mark-Anthony Turnage, Brian Elias, Elena Langer** and Britten Sinfonia OPUS competition-winner, **Sohrab Uduman**.
 - **Mahan Esfahani** plays Scarlatti and de Falla, plus world premiere of new work by **Francisco Coll**.
 - **Family Concert:** Britten Sinfonia joined on the big screen by musical feline friend, **Max the Brave**, with live illustration from award-winning children's writer and illustrator, **Ed Vere**.

Plus

Cambridge Music Festival: *The Dream of Gerontius* at Ely Cathedral
Special concert to unveil the **new organ at King's College Chapel**

Britten Sinfonia Creative Learning:

- New Creative Learning partnership with Saffron Hall as Resident Orchestra
- Britten Sinfonia Academy in concert with James MacMillan at Saffron Hall and the Barbican
- Premiere of OPUS2016 competition winner Sohrab Uduman commission
- 30 date primary school tour brings Britten Sinfonia music-making to 3,000 children

Britten Sinfonia 2016-2017 is a season of firsts. It includes:

The launch of a three-year Beethoven Symphony Cycle conducted by Thomas Adès (with Beethoven's music interleaved with the wondrously idiosyncratic music of Gerald Barry and Adès himself).

In October 2016, Britten Sinfonia becomes Resident Orchestra at Saffron Hall; the meeting between a pioneering hall, and a pioneering orchestra offers an unprecedented opportunity to develop a residency from the ground up. Britten Sinfonia gave the inaugural professional concert at Saffron Hall in November 2014, and the residency has developed from this initial relationship. Alongside a series of concerts featuring outstanding guest artists, the focus is on developing with Saffron Hall a new model for community engagement over the coming seasons; from the outset, Britten Sinfonia is throwing open the doors to rehearsals to the pupils of Saffron Hall County High School (home to Saffron Hall) and the Saffron Walden Centre for Young Musicians and providing opportunities for young musicians to work side-by-side with the orchestra from September 2016, with further musical encounters planned throughout the season.

In its first four years as Associate Ensemble at the Barbican, Britten Sinfonia and the venue have collaborated closely on a number of bespoke projects, exploring an intriguing range of music in concert at the Barbican concert hall, through dance and theatre at the Barbican theatre and on tour internationally. The 2016-17 season continues to develop this fruitful relationship, and includes the European premiere of Gerald Barry's *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, co-commissioned by Britten Sinfonia, the Barbican and the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association ; **Barbara Hannigan**, in the title role, leads a cast that **includes Allan Clayton, Hilary Summers and Allison Cook** . The orchestra also plays a major role in the Barbican's celebrations of Steve Reich at 80 and John Adams at 70, and opens its season at the Barbican by joining **Harry Christophers** and **The Sixteen** in the world premiere of **James MacMillan's Stabat Mater** (part of a Barbican day celebrating MacMillan's music). Two Britten Sinfonia/Barbican collaborations that featured in the 'Barbican Britten' festival in 2013 take to the road, with Netia Jones' acclaimed production of the *Curlew River*, featuring **Ian Bostridge**, travelling to Madrid and Hamburg, and Britten Sinfonia and Richard Alston Dance Company's dance/music production of *Phaedra* at Snape Maltings Concert Hall, Aldeburgh.

The orchestra's residency seasons, with concerts at the Barbican, at Saffron Hall and in Norwich, also includes an evocative Easter performance of Bach's *St John's Passion*, explored and curated by one of the composer's finest interpreters, tenor **Mark Padmore**, and harpischordist **Mahan Esfahani** (who recently toured to China with Britten Sinfonia) directing from the keyboard works by Scarlatti and de Falla.

As well as Barry's *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, other Britten Sinfonia premieres and commissions this season include a new by **Francisco Coll**, and a series of chamber commissions for the orchestra's 'At Lunch' concerts by **Mark-Anthony Turnage, Elena Langer, Brian Elias** and the winner (from over 500 applicants) of Britten Sinfonia's OPUS competition for unpublished composers, **Sohrab Uduman**.

Britten Sinfonia Creative Learning works with up to 10,000 participants each year to discover, explore and celebrate music in families, schools and communities. 2016-2017 season highlights include **Britten Sinfonia Academy's** mainstage performances in Saffron Hall with James MacMillan for the launch of Britten Sinfonia's season as Resident Orchestra and side by side with the main orchestra on the Barbican Hall stage in John Adam's 70th Birthday Concert. The Academy features outstanding Secondary school age musical talent from the East of England and offers developmental musical experiences, including concerts and tailored workshops with Britten Sinfonia players. OPUS composition competition for undiscovered talent will premiere a new work by 2016 winner **Sohrab Udumann** as the search begins for remarkable talent with OPUS2017.

David Butcher comments:

“Britten Sinfonia’s 2016-2017 season bears the fruits of close artistic collaboration and as ever, features concerts that offer intriguing musical connections through wonderful music from across the centuries. Once again, we welcome an outstanding roster of guest artists to offer fresh perspectives on seminal musical works: Adès, Barry and Beethoven; Padmore and Bach’s St John’s Passion; Esfahani and Scarlatti... and a host of world premieres from both distinguished composers and newer musical voices.

The close artistic collaboration with the Barbican (as Associate Ensemble) continues to flourish, with the focus this season on the music of leading contemporary composers, including the co-commissioning of new works for performance at the Barbican and beyond.

This autumn also marks the start of Britten Sinfonia’s new residency at Saffron Hall. It’s not often that you have the chance to start with a clean sheet, and this is a fantastic opportunity to develop a new residency model, so that together we might explore the challenges and share the excitement of music making with new audiences and the next generation, on and away from the concert platform. There are exciting times ahead.”

Sponsors

Britten Sinfonia is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, and is supported by a range of Trusts and Foundations, Statutory bodies, individual donors and corporate partners.

Reflecting its commitment to championing new music, Britten Sinfonia also runs Musically Gifted, a scheme that enables music lovers to contribute towards commissioning a new piece of music. As well as the pleasure of helping to create a new work, donors receive a range of additional benefits (dependent on the level of donation) with all donors credited in the score.

New website and online media centre at www.brittensinfonia.com

Britten Sinfonia has launched a new, easy to navigate website, with full what’s on concert information, news (including press releases), views, blogs and biographies, facts and films. The site, designed by Newmarket based agency, Cubiqdesign, includes a special media centre, accessible via a password, including press information about the orchestra and photos for press use. Visit www.brittensinfonia.com, and register for the media centre in the ‘contact’ section.

Further press information from:

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Diary Dates

2016

15, 18 and 28 October

James MacMillan: Stabat Mater (world premiere) – with The Sixteen
Barbican, St Andrew's Hall, Norwich; Manchester Bridgewater Hall

16 October

Inaugural Resident Orchestra Concert – Saffron Hall, Saffron Walden

21 & 22 October

Phaedra with Richard Alston Dance Company – Snape Maltings Concert Hall, Aldeburgh

5, 6 and 14 November

Steve Reich at 80 – Barbican Hall; Saffron Hall; Colston Hall, Bristol

11-19 November

Independent Opera: Hartmann's *Simplicius Simplissimus* – Lillian Baylis Studio, Sadler's Wells

12 November

Dream of Gerontius – Ely Cathedral (part of Cambridge Music Festival)

28 November

Gerald Barry: Alice's Adventures Under Ground – Barbican Hall

4 December

The movie music of Spike and Terence Blanchard – Philharmonie Paris

9, 13 and 14 December

Britten Sinfonia At Lunch 1 – Sohrab Uduman world premiere
Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Cambridge West Road Concert Hall; Wigmore Hall

2017

3 & 4 February

Mahan Esfahani directs – Milton Court Concert Hall, London; Saffron Hall

8, 10 & 14 February

Britten Sinfonia at Lunch 2 – Mark-Anthony Turnage premiere
Wigmore Hall; Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Cambridge West Road Concert Hall

17, 18 & 19 February

Family Concert – Max the Brave
Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Saffron Hall; Barbican Hall

25 February

John Adams at 70 – Barbican Hall

1 & 4 March

Curlew River – Elbphilharmonie Hamburg; Teatro Real Madrid

13 & 14 April

Bach's St John Passion, with Mark Padmore
Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Barbican Hall

19,21 and 25 April

Britten Sinfonia at Lunch 3 – Brian Elias premiere

Wigmore Hall; Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Cambridge West Road

27 May & 2 June – Adès Beethoven Symphony Cycle 1 – Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Saffron Hall; Barbican Hall

30 May – Adès, Barry and Beethoven – Milton Court Concert Hall, London

6 June – Adès Beethoven Symphony Cycle 2 – Barbican Hall

13 & 14 July – At Lunch 4 – Britten Sinfonia Academy – Elena Langer premiere

Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Cambridge West Road Concert Hall