

Press Release

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Thomas Gould to become Leader of Britten Sinfonia, alongside Jacqueline Shave

Thomas Gould has been appointed Leader of **Britten Sinfonia**, sharing the position with **Jacqueline Shave**. In order to fulfill his increased role with Britten Sinfonia, Thomas will step down as Leader of Aurora Orchestra.

In his previous role of Associate Leader of Britten Sinfonia, Thomas led and directed the orchestra to critical acclaim, most recently at the BBC Proms conducted by Thomas Adès, and in the world premiere of James MacMillan's *Stabat Mater*, has directed various widely-acclaimed projects including performances and a recording of Sitkovesky's string arrangement of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, and world premieres by Nico Muhly, Thomas Coult and Joey Roukens. As a soloist with Britten Sinfonia, Thomas has performed Thomas Adès's *Violin Concerto* (conducted by the composer), the London premiere of John Woolrich's *Violin Concerto*, and Max Richter's *Vivaldi Recomposed* at the Barbican.

Jacqueline, described by her colleague, cellist Caroline Dearnley, as a "*musical force of nature*" has been a central part of Britten Sinfonia's development for ten years, as Leader, director and soloist. As one of the country's leading chamber musicians, she is also well known for her wide ranging musical interests and, following her successful 10th anniversary season with the orchestra, will now complement her role at Britten Sinfonia with other external projects.

This season, Thomas will lead the orchestra in concerts that include celebrations of Steve Reich at 80 (at the Barbican on 5 November and on tour) and John Adams at 70, Thomas Adès' Beethoven Symphony Cycle and as director, alongside soloist Mahan Esfahani, of a focus on music by De Falla and the world premiere of a new work by Francisco Coll. He has also directed Britten Sinfonia Academy, the orchestra's ensemble for outstanding teenage musical talent from the East of England. Jacqueline's Britten Sinfonia 2016/17 highlights include directing, with Mark Padmore, an Easter performance of Bach's *St John's Passion*, and leading the orchestra in the UK premiere of Gerald Barry's *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* (Barbican – 28 November), Thomas Adès' Beethoven Symphony Cycle and the premiere of new chamber works by Mark-Anthony Turnage and Brian Elias as part of the orchestra's At Lunch Series.

David Butcher, Britten Sinfonia Chief Executive comments:

"Without a principal conductor or music director, the role of Britten Sinfonia's Leader is pivotal and we are now very fortunate to have not just one, but two outstanding musicians to lead the orchestra. Jacqueline has been at the musical heart of Britten Sinfonia for a decade, as both leader and increasingly as an admired director of both orchestral and chamber repertoire. Thomas has also been a key component of Britten Sinfonia's musical success; his contribution is reflected in this new role and we are looking forward to Thomas expanding the range of his work with the orchestra. Both are distinctive, virtuosic and inspiring musicians, with a thirst to explore all aspects

of music and a rare ability to communicate this passion with their fellow musicians and audiences. We are incredibly fortunate to have two such inspiring musicians at the helm of the orchestra and look forward to the musical adventures to come.”

Further press information from:

Sophie Cohen on 020 7428 9850 07711 551 787 sophiecohen@blueyonder.co.uk