

Press Release: 5 March 2019

Booking now open for Britten Sinfonia's 2019-20 Season as Associate Ensemble at the Barbican

A strong season for new music includes premieres from Steve Reich/Gerhard Richter, Mark-Anthony Turnage, James MacMillan, Emily Howard, John Woolrich and Shiva Feshareki

Featured guest artists include: Alison Balsom, Ian Bostridge, Allan Clayton, Lucy Crowe, Colin Currie, Benjamin Grosvenor Nicholas Mulroy and Roderick Williams

Public booking has now opened for **Britten Sinfonia's** 2019-20 concerts at the Barbican, where the orchestra has been an Associate Ensemble since 2012. Tickets are available at www.barbican.org.uk Barbican Box Office: 0207 638 8891

Britten Sinfonia's Barbican season is studded with premieres by leading international composers, including:

- The European premiere of a new collaboration between **Steve Reich** and celebrated German visual artist **Gerhard Richter**, the first time Richter has collaborated in this way. The new work examines the intersection between Richter's formula for his *Patterns* series, which divides, mirrors and repeats a single painting, and Reich's repeating musical structures in a genre-crossing film, with **Britten Sinfonia** conducted by percussionist **Colin Currie**. Britten Sinfonia and the Barbican are amongst the work's international co-commissioners. (Barbican Hall, 23 October 2019)
- The UK premiere of **Mark-Anthony Turnage's** *Refugee* for chamber orchestra and tenor (close Britten Sinfonia artistic collaborator **Allan Clayton**). Based on poems by Benjamin Zephaniah, Emily Dickinson, Warsan Shire, Brian Bilston and WH Auden, *Refugee* is performed alongside works by Turnage's mentor and close friend, **Oliver Knussen**. **Andrew Gourlay** conducts. (Milton Court Concert Hall, 20 September 2019)
- Trumpeter **Alison Balsom** leads a concert featuring the world premiere of **John Woolrich's** *Hark! The echoing air* (after Purcell) in a concert that showcases composers' fascination with other composers' music, including Purcell arranged by **Luciano Berio** and **Peter Maxwell Davies**, Scarlatti arranged by **Woolrich** and Ligeti's *Mysteries of the Macabre*, arranged for trumpet and small orchestra by **Elgar Howarth**. Alison Balsom is Milton Court Artist-in-Residence throughout the 2019/20 Barbican season. (Milton Court Concert Hall, 14 May 2020)
- Following their acclaimed collaboration on **James MacMillan's** *Stabat Mater* at the Barbican in 2017, and subsequently in an historic performance at the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican, Britten Sinfonia joins **The Sixteen** for the London premiere of the composer's *Symphony No.5 Le grand inconnu*, commissioned for The Sixteen by the Genesis Foundation, and give the London Premiere of MacMillan's *And The Sun Danced*, for chamber orchestra. (Barbican Hall, 14 October 2019)
- Composer **Emily Howard**, who has a background in mathematics and computer science, curates a day of events celebrating the visionary Victorian mathematician Ada Lovelace, and exploring the intersection between Artificial Intelligence and

music. The day features the Barbican commissioned world premieres of new works by composers **Shiva Feshareki**, **Patricia Alessandrini** and Howard herself, as well as music generated by artificial intelligence. (Milton Court Concert Hall, 2 November 2019 – part of the Barbican's *Life Rewired* season)

Further highlights include:

- **Ian Bostridge** reprises his performance as Madwoman in a concert performance of Benjamin Britten's *Curlew River*, a 2013 Britten Sinfonia and Barbican co-production which has toured on both sides of the Atlantic to great acclaim. The cast also features **Ashley Riches** as Ferryman and **Neal Davies** as Traveller, with **Britten Sinfonia Voices**. **Martin Fitzpatrick** directs. (Milton Court Concert Hall, 26 March 2020)
- Two of the UK's most admired young musicians, **Benjamin Grosvenor** and Britten Sinfonia leader **Thomas Gould** in a programme featuring Bach's Keyboard Concerto in F minor and Mozart's Piano Concerto no 9. The programme also features the world premiere of a new William Alwyn Foundation commission by **Robin Haigh**, alongside **Dobrinka Tabakova's** *Fantasy Homage to Schubert* and arrangement of Schubert's *Fantasie in F minor for strings*. (Milton Court Concert Hall, 26 November 2019)
- A Good Friday performance with **Britten Sinfonia Voices** of JS Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, with an outstanding cast including **Nicholas Mulroy**, **Roderick Williams** and **Lucy Crowe**, directed by leader **Jacqueline Shave**. (Barbican Hall, 10 April 2020)

Full details at www.brittensinfonia.com. Further events will be announced later this year.

David Butcher, Chief Executive of Britten Sinfonia comments:

'There's a strong synergy between the Barbican and Britten Sinfonia, and this season, several events - including a major collaboration between Steve Reich and Gerhard Richter, and projects with Alison Balsom and Emily Howard, are presented in partnership with the Barbican. Since 2012, this close collaborative relationship has resulted in a striking body of original work across all Barbican venues and on tour, created with leading international musicians as well as choreographers, directors and designers, including the internationally acclaimed Curlew River, which makes a welcome return in a concert performance for 2019/20.'

At the root of Britten Sinfonia's work is a simple desire; to make the best possible music for the widest possible audience, and to take people to musical places that they may not have previously considered, and enjoy going there. Our Barbican 2019-20 concerts should be something to savour.'

ENDS

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The Barbican's 2019-20 classical season runs from September 2019 – July 2020. www.barbican.org.uk/classical1920

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NOTES TO EDITORS

About Britten Sinfonia

Just over 25 years ago, Britten Sinfonia was established as a bold reimagining of the conventional image of a chamber orchestra. A flexible ensemble of some of the UK's leading soloists and chamber musicians came together with a unique vision: to collapse the boundaries between old and new music, to collaborate with composers, performers and guest artists across artforms and genres; and to create involving, intelligent music events that both audiences and performers experience with an unusual intensity.

Britten Sinfonia is an Associate Ensemble at the Barbican in London and Resident Orchestra at Saffron Hall, with residencies in Norwich and Cambridge and performs a chamber music series at Wigmore Hall. The orchestra has a busy international touring schedule, appearing throughout Europe, the USA and Asia and its 2018 performance with The Sixteen at the Sistine Chapel reached more than a million people worldwide.

www.brittensinfonia.com twitter @brittensinfonia

About the Barbican

A world-class arts and learning organisation, the Barbican pushes the boundaries of all major art forms including dance, film, music, theatre and visual arts. Its creative learning programme further underpins everything it does. Over 1.1 million people attend events annually, hundreds of artists and performers are featured, and more than 300 staff work onsite. The architecturally renowned centre opened in 1982 and comprises the Barbican Hall, the Barbican Theatre, the Pit, Cinemas 1, 2 and 3, Barbican Art Gallery, a second gallery the Curve, foyers and public spaces, a library, Lakeside Terrace, a glasshouse conservatory, conference facilities and three restaurants. The City of London Corporation is the founder and principal funder of the Barbican Centre.

The Barbican is home to Resident Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra; Associate Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra; Associate Ensembles the Academy of Ancient Music and Britten Sinfonia, Associate Producer Serious, and Artistic Partner Create. Our Artistic Associates include Boy Blue, Cheek by Jowl, Deborah Warner, Drum Works and Michael Clark Company. The Los Angeles Philharmonic are the Barbican's International Orchestral Partner, the Australian Chamber Orchestra are International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra are International Associate Ensemble.

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