

Renaissance Moderns

11 May, 7:30pm
Milton Court Concert Hall

Britten Sinfonia
Thomas Gould leader
The Marian Consort
Rory McCleery Artistic Director
William Cole conductor
Huw Watkins piano
Ian Dearden / Sound Intermedia

| | | |
|--|---|----------------|
| Binchois (arr. for strings by Lisa Illean) | Chanson 1: <i>amours merchi</i> | 2'30 |
| Dunstaple | <i>Regina Caeli</i> | 5' |
| Thomas Adès | <i>Darknesse visible</i> | 7' |
| Binchois arr. Illean | Chanson 2: <i>adieu, adieu</i> | 2'30 |
| Lisa Illean | <i>arcing, stilling, bending, gathering</i> (European premiere) | 19' |
| | -Interval- | 20' |
| Lusitano | <i>Heu me Domine</i> <i>Allor che ignuda</i> | 5' 3' |
| Gesualdo | <i>Moro lasso</i> <i>Hei mihi Domine</i> <i>Sparge la morte</i> | 4' 4' 5' |
| Brett Dean | <i>Carlo</i> | 20' |

Pre-concert screening of Werner Herzog's Gesualdo: Death for five voices, 17:45.
Content warning: contains references to violence, murder and rape.

With thanks to Cockayne Grants for the Arts,
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COCKAYNE

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ON STAGE TONIGHT

BRITTEN SINFONIA

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Violin I | Cellos |
| Thomas Gould | Caroline Dearnley |
| Charles Mutter | Joy Hawley |
| Fiona McCapra | Raphael Lang |
| Katherine Shave | |
| | Double Bass |
| Violin II | Enno Senft |
| Miranda Dale | |
| Nicola Goldscheider | Piano & Guitar |
| Marcus Broome | Huw Watkins |
| Judith Stowe | |
| | Sampler & Electronics |
| Violas | Philip Moore |
| Sascha Bota | |
| Bridget Carey | |
| Rachel Byrt | |

THE MARIAN CONSORT

| | |
|---|------------------|
| Soprano | Tenor |
| Caroline Halls | William Wright |
| | David de Winter |
| Countertenor & Artistic Director | Bass |
| Rory McCleery | Christopher Webb |

No smoking in the auditorium.

If you have a mobile phone, please ensure that it is turned off during the performance. No camera, tape recorder, other types of recording apparatus, food or drink may be brought into the auditorium. It is illegal to record any performance unless prior arrangements have been made with the venue and Britten Sinfonia.

In accordance with the requirements of the licensing authority, persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways.

Welcome

At the other end of my working life, I had two formative encounters with the music of Gesualdo, and so the programme tonight flows from those earlier experiences. First, during my rookie stint managing The Hilliard Ensemble, this fine vocal group released on ECM New Series an acclaimed and influential album of Gesualdo’s remarkable *Tenebrae Responsories*. Then, living in Sydney a few years later, I was working for the Australian Chamber Orchestra when they premiered Brett Dean’s Gesualdo study, *Carlo*, in a New South Wales winery’s summer festival. Brett was still full-time in the Berlin Phil’s viola section, but it was clear from this early work that his composing life was destined to flourish.

The offer of co-commissioning a new work from Lisa Illean – like Brett, an Australian now living in the UK – for strings and electronics suggested the pairing with *Carlo* in this concert. And then I thought of The Marian Consort’s superb Gesualdo “concert drama” *Breaking the Rules* that I – alongside many other promoters – had presented at Cheltenham Music Festival in 2017. It’s a pleasure to welcome them into this meeting of the old and the new, this juxtaposition of voices and strings.

Tonight’s concert is the last in our Barbican Associate Ensemble season. In the Autumn, we are back with two further, very different collaborations: first, on October 8 in the Barbican Hall, with the Will Gregory Moog Ensemble; then, on 19 November in Milton Court as part of the London Jazz Festival, with Tim Garland’s Lighthouse Trio. In the meantime, a busy summer brings us a residency at the Nevill Holt Festival, recordings with Oxford and Cambridge chapel choirs, performances at Norfolk & Norwich, Aldeburgh and Peasmarsh Festivals, and a collaboration with Professor Brian Cox at the Royal Opera House.

Meurig Bowen
CEO and Artistic Director, Britten Sinfonia



PRE-CONCERT SCREENING: WERNER HERZOG’S GESUALDO: DEATH FOR FIVE VOICES (1995)

Over several decades, German filmmaker Werner Herzog has tended to be drawn to extreme situations. Three of his five legendary collaborations with actor Klaus Kinski took in the stories of Büchner’s Woyzeck, Bram Stoker’s Dracula (*Nosferatu*) and an attempt to establish both a rubber plantation and an opera house in the Peruvian jungle (*Fitzcarraldo*). He has made films about a plane crash survivor, tribes in the Sahara desert and extreme mountaineering in the Pakistani Himalaya. And in 2005, Herzog made a documentary on Timothy Treadwell, a man-gone-wild whose apparently close, benign relationship with grizzly bears ended with him being savaged and eaten by one.

So it is perhaps not surprising that in 1995, Herzog made a documentary for German television on Carlo Gesualdo, music history’s most notorious double, possibly even triple murderer.

A world away from other, more slick televisual presentations of classical music, *Death For Five Voices* is characteristically eccentric, a little bit out-there. Perhaps almost deliberately wayward and undisciplined, it seems to be trying to get inside the strangeness of Gesualdo’s life and music through its own intrinsic strangeness.

Even the “normal bits” of such a music documentary turn out to be a little bizarre. The Gesualdo Consort appear to be auditonees for *The Addams Family: The Musical*. And its director, Gerald Place, awkwardly reads his pieces to camera from a spiralbound notebook, like the under-prepared giver of a pre-concert talk.

And then there are the strange bits. Like the severely disabled Italian child being ridden on a horse by his carers in an indoor paddock. Or the scene in Gesualdo’s ruined castle, where a deranged, generously-endowed redhead

claims to be the reincarnation of his wife and sings along to a ghetto-blaster. Equally zany, but much more successful, is a delightfully mad exchange between two ageing cooks, man and wife, ruefully discussing the 125 course menu Gesualdo concocted for his wedding. “He was the devil incarnate,” the woman barks repeatedly as she stirs one of the banquet’s exotic, re-created ragù.

Herzog seems as much interested in what might be termed “folk-musicology” as any conventional musicological correctness from Il Complesso Barocco’s Alan Curtis or Gerald Place. The stories we get from his cast of real-life locals are doubtless in some cases no more than that – embellished tales, Gesualdo folklore. Did the guilt-ridden Prince really spend three months deforesting an entire valley singlehandedly? Did he really kill his second child, thinking he was not the father, by swinging it to death over three days and three nights, accompanied by a choir? But these time-shifted testimonies are rich and real, as present now as the 400 year old uxoricidal bed, proudly owned by an ancestor, or the preserved skeletal-corpses of wife and lover in a Neopolitan church.

A black cat skulks down the back of a beaten-up VW Beetle as the janitor of Gesualdo’s Naples palazzo recounts, in the foreground and with a little too much relish, how a passing monk raped the discarded, 28-times stabbed corpse of the composer’s wife. A moment as strange and startling as any Gesualdo chord shift.

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CHANSONS, MADRIGALS AND MOTETS

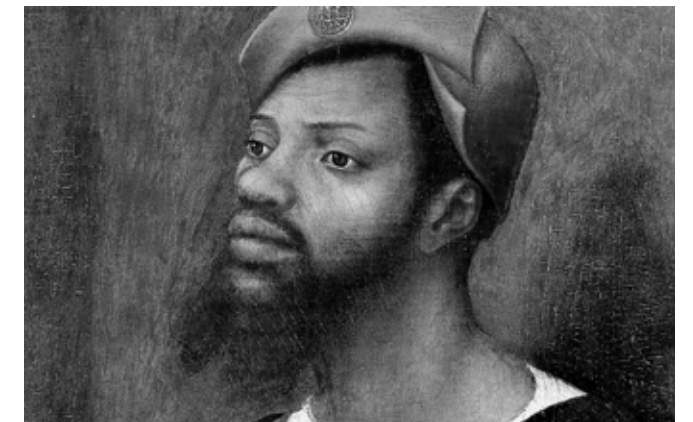
English composer **John Dunstaple** (c1390-1453) was arguably England’s most important musical figure in the first half of the fifteenth century. The *contenance angloise* (English style) described by writer Martin le Franc, of which Dunstaple was chief exponent, would be hugely influential on the music of contemporary French composers including Guillaume Dufay and Gilles Binchois, and Dunstaple’s reputation would not only persist but grow in the centuries after his death, with one later music theorist describing him hyperbolically as the “inventor of counterpoint”. Typical of his style, Dunstaple’s three-voice *Regina caeli* carries an ornamented version of the plainchant associated with the text in the highest part.

Often seen alongside Dunstaple and Dufay as one of the three major musical figures of the early fifteenth century, the music of **Gilles Binchois** (c1400-1460) is the basis for two new arrangements by Australian composer Lisa Illean. As Illean writes: “*Chansons* adapts songs by the early 15th-century composer Gilles Binchois, recorded in the MS Canon Misc. 213. The first song, *amours merchi*, is translated for an ensemble of 12 string instruments. The second, *adieu, adieu*, diffracts and collages Binchois’ exquisite descending lines in cascades, creating a sonorous recollection (a literal ‘re-membering’) of this song. The string ensemble is for this adaptation dispersed into three string quartets that augment and illuminate one another.”

As is frustratingly often the case with Renaissance musicians, much remains unknown about the life of **Vicente Lusitano** (even his surname simply means “Portuguese”). We can, however, be reasonably confident that he was the first published Black composer (he is described in one mid-seventeenth century source as “pardo”, a term used to denote a mixed-race person of European and African parentage). Lusitano’s ethnicity may

also explain the sparsity of surviving biographical detail. Better known in his own time as a theorist than a composer, his treatise *Tratado de canto de organo* contains perhaps his best-known work, *Heu me, Domine*. Less a fully-fledged composition and more an intellectual curio, it is closely related to his writings on improvisation and is designed to demonstrate polyphonic writing using melodic subjects made of chromatic scales. The striking nature of the resulting soundworld, prefiguring Carlo Gesualdo, seems well-suited to the penitential text, although this piece in isolation gives a skewed impression of Lusitano as a composer as compared to the more nuanced writing found elsewhere, including his three-voice madrigal *Allor che ignuda*, published in a Venetian collection in 1562.

Lusitano was involved in one of the most notorious events in sixteenth-century music history, his widely-reported debate with Nicola Vicentino, which took place throughout June 1551 in Rome. Although Lusitano was declared the winner by a panel of eminent Roman musicians, this was something of a Pyrrhic victory, as Vicentino’s revisionist version of events, alongside musical ideas taken from



Lusitano, were presented in his widely-disseminated 1555 treatise *L'antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica* ("ancient music adapted to modern practice"). This book would go on to shape the historical narrative against Lusitano and to influence generations of Italian composers.

Carlo Gesualdo (1566-1613), Prince of Venosa and Count of Conza, is remembered chiefly today for the eccentricities of both his life and of his surviving musical compositions. The former in particular have captured the imaginations of generations of biographers and admirers, and no single event has served to inform perceptions of the Renaissance nobleman and his music more powerfully than the gruesome murder of his first wife, Donna Maria D'Avalos, and her lover Fabrizio Carafa, the Duke of Andria.

Gesualdo's compositional style is undeniably the result of a variety of influences, and while his personality, disposition and societal status are undoubtedly important, arguably more so is the Ferrarese musical milieu into which he married in 1594, and the figure of Luzzasco Luzzaschi, himself influenced by his predecessor Vicentino. Gesualdo's later madrigals, published after this date, make heavy use of the word painting techniques of chromaticism (both melodic and harmonic) and rhythmic dynamism, learnt from Ferrarese composers such as Luzzaschi, Cipriano de Rore, and Giaches de Wert and developed to extremes. They also see a preoccupation with texts centred around death, and all of these facets are to be found in abundance in both *Sparge la morte* from his fourth book of madrigals, and *Moro lasso*, from his sixth and final book. Such preoccupations are also found in Gesualdo's sacred music, although his five-voice motets combine with an often more mellifluous approach to polyphonic writing more akin to the *prima prattica* of Palestrina.

While the concept of importing the gestural approach to text setting of the madrigal into the realm of sacred composition was not a new one (and indeed had been pioneered by the previously mentioned Ferrarese composers of an earlier generation), Gesualdo invests his

motets with a sense of immediacy and pictorialism through the discriminating employment of chromaticism, melodic word painting, melisma and homophony: this is evident in *Hei mihi, Domine*, where the polyphony of the plaintive opening "sighing" motif, alternately rising and falling, gives way to the doubting chordal questions at "*quid faciam, miser?*", before the palpable sense of flight at "*Ubi fugiam*" and the poignant chromatic twists of "*Miserere mei*".

© Rory McCleery
Artistic Director, The Marian Consort



THOMAS ADÈS (b.1971): DARKNESSE VISIBLE

Thomas Adès' *Darknesse Visible* for piano solo (1992) is a 7-minute explosion of John Dowland's lute song *In Darknesse Let Me Dwell* (1610). No notes have been added; indeed, some have been removed. Patterns latent in the original have been isolated and regrouped, with the aim of illuminating the song from within, as if during the course of a performance.

Adès transforms the piano into an instrument that's alchemically capable of sustaining a continuous line of melody; the technique of ceaseless tremolo that he demands of the player conjures a ghostly shimmer from the instrument.

In darknesse let mee dwell,
the ground shall sorrow be,
The rooffe Dispaire to barre
all cheerful light from mee,
The wals of marble blacke
that moistned still shall weepe,
My musicke hellish jarring sounds
to banish friendly sleepe.
Thus wedded to my woes,
and bedded to my Tombe,
O let me living die
till death doe come.



Born in London in 1971, Thomas Adès studied piano at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, and read music at King's College, Cambridge. A prodigious composer, conductor and pianist, Adès was described by the *New York Times* in 2007 as one of today's "most accomplished overall musicians."

Adès's chamber opera *Powder Her Face* (1995) has been performed worldwide whilst *The Tempest* (2004) was commissioned by London's Royal Opera House and has since been taken up by international houses including New York's Metropolitan Opera, where it was recorded for a Deutsche Grammophon DVD which subsequently won a Grammy Award. Adès's third opera, after Luis Buñuel's *The Exterminating Angel*, premiered at the Salzburg Festival in July 2016 before travelling to London, New York and Copenhagen.

Recent works include *Dawn*, a chacony for orchestra at any distance (2020), *Shanty – over the Sea for strings* (2020) and *Märchentänze* for solo violin and piano/orchestra (2021). *Air – Homage to Sibelius* for violin and orchestra was premiered at the 2022 Lucerne Festival, where Adès was Composer-in-Residence.

Adès has won numerous awards, including the 2015 Léonie Sonning Music Prize, the Leoš Janáček Award, and the Grawemeyer Award (2000), of which he was the youngest ever recipient. He was awarded a CBE in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours. Adès was Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh Festival from 1999 to 2008 and coaches piano and chamber music at the International Musicians Seminar, Prussia Cove.

LISA ILLEAN (b.1983): ARCING, STILLING, BENDING, GATHERING (European premiere)

October, 2012: At an exhibition in Jeu de Paume, Paris, I encounter two small films by Sergei Eisenstein. The films capture fleeting reflections in glass shop windows. They are equally mundane, intimate and mesmeric. I begin to imagine music with a similar interplay of chance collisions and transparent layers.

April, 2014: I am listening to a lot of pedal steel music, immersed in complex, warm sounds which seem to draw away with blurred edges; an ungraspable articulation of space in sound.

August, 2016: I have two images on my desk: a photograph of my childhood garden extending into bushland (as viewed from our family piano) and another from the Blue Mountains in 2015. The horizons are indiscernible, but the eye seeks nonetheless to reach beyond. My gaze doesn't settle.

July, 2022: I have a small fragment of music, the strands of which have been unpicked and rewoven to create many different sonic impressions – diffractions of the original. I am contemplating curved forms: the arcing movement of the spheres and the tender elliptical embrace of a mother gathering a child into her arms.

arcing, stilling, bending, gathering opens sparsely and quietly. The ensemble is arranged into smaller groups – satellites or layers – of sound heard only in part. Glacial chords and floating tapestries of sound mingle, the focus keeps shifting. *arcing, stilling, bending, gathering* is composed entirely out of different sonic impressions of the first few bars of its final movement, converging for a moment in ever-evolving combinations. It is a very personal contemplation of the moments of kinship and tenderness that balance the immensity of the world we inhabit.

© Lisa Illean



Lisa Illean is a composer based in the UK, where she has worked with BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic and Philharmonia Orchestras, and young soloists of the highest calibre. Her music has been described as “exquisitely quiet shadows shaded with microtunings” (*The Sydney Morning Herald*) and “a compelling exercise in stillness and quietude” (*The Australian*), and her work for soprano and ensemble, *Cantor*, was named Instrumental Work of the Year at the 2018 Australian Art Music Awards.

Illean composes for orchestral and chamber forces, new, prepared or adapted instruments, and writes sound works conceived for unique spaces. Her music has been performed worldwide, with recent commissions from Ensemble Intercontemporain, Radio France's Festival Présences, Donaueschinger Musiktage/Experimental Studio des SWR, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, BBC Proms, London Sinfonietta, Juliet Fraser/Explore Ensemble and Ukaria Cultural Centre/Finding Our Voice. Many of Illean's compositions arise out of working with non-tempered tuning systems, playing close attention to sonority, subtly unfolding harmonic forms, auditory phenomena and perspective. In recent years she has oriented her practice as a composer to include making long-form pieces with both performed and pre-recorded material, in close development with one or two others. She is published by Faber Music.

Commissioned by Finding Our Voice for Ukaria Cultural Centre, and Britten Sinfonia. First performed at the Australian National Academy of Music, April 2023.

BRETT DEAN (b.1961): CARLO

With the ever increasing interest in “early music” throughout the 20th century, Carlo Gesualdo – Prince of Venosa, mid-way between Naples and Bari – has been a source of fascination for many. Part of that interest, for sure, was Gesualdo's status as music history's most notorious double murderer; his wife, Maria d'Avolos and her lover Don Fabrizio Carafa were caught in flagrante by Gesualdo, and suffered gruesome deaths of multiple stabbings on the night of 26 October 1590. But musicians have been even more drawn to the consequence of that crime of passion – a compositional output, late in life, ridden with guilt and remorse (so the story goes), and exhibiting in the chromatic harmony an outrageous daring that was well ahead of its time.

The 18th-century writer Charles Burney, ahead of his own time in an appreciation of renaissance-period repertoire, was not a fan: Gesualdo's music was characterised by “harsh, crude and licentious modulation...extremely shocking and disgusting to the ear.” But in more recent times, Gesualdo has been regarded by some as modernism's outrider from an earlier age. Peter Warlock's alter-ego Philip Heseltine co-wrote a Gesualdo biography in 1926. Stravinsky marked the 400th anniversary of his birth in 1960 with three madrigal “re-compositions” for orchestra, the *Monumentum pro Gesualdo*. Frank Zappa was a fan. And Brett Dean composed this appropriately unsettling work for strings, sampling keyboard and recorded choral interpolations for premiere by the Australian Chamber Orchestra at the Huntington Winery, New South Wales, in December 1997.

Although not tracking any particular narrative, it feels like a tone poem – a static, psychological one, a haunting investigation of despair and guilt. Dean, in his own programme note for *Carlo*, makes it clear how much this piece is musical, psychological biography: “...I believe that with Carlo Gesualdo one shouldn't try to separate his music

from his life and times. They are intrinsically interrelated. The texts of his later madrigals, thought to be written by Gesualdo himself, abound with references to love, death, guilt and self-pity. Combine this with the fact that I've always found Gesualdo's vocal works to be one of music's great and most fascinating listening experiences and you have the premise of my piece.”

Carlo is all about the tension and contrast between choral Gesualdo and Dean's own string writing, itself a commentary on and deconstruction of the Gesualdo material. From the outset, with the sinking, sighing chorale from Gesualdo's celebrated madrigal *Moro lasso*, two ages clash and conjoin. Pure Gesualdo quickly merges with disturbed instrumental utterings, and Dean smudges Gesualdo's chromatic chord progressions further with successive semitonal transpositions in the pre-recorded vocal collage. From a preset keyboard sampler, further snatches of Gesualdo are triggered alongside the CD vocals. Some of these samples, such as the “*Tu Piangi*” whispers (also from Gesualdo's Book 6 of madrigals) and “*e non vuoldar*” clusters, are set in time. Others, such as the lamenting sighs of solo voices at the work's climax, are more the results of *ad libitum* triggers by the sampler player.

Dean's writing for strings is confident and eloquent for someone so relatively new to composition back in 1997. Subtle, pointillistic detail contrasts with agitated, jagged scurrying. The full range of string effects – from slap pizzicato, tremolandi and glissandi to on-the-bridge ostinato – makes for a richly atmospheric orchestral texture. Over a through-composed span of 20 minutes, Dean draws the listener to the principal climax by way of earlier sections of climax and repose – the initial *Moro lasso* exposition, a quicker, strings-based agitato, a hushed, muted section based around the descending semitones of “*e non vuoldar*”, and the pre-recorded, rhythmicised exhalations that lead to the disquieting, almost schlock-horror climax.

A desolate coda is set off by contrabass “*moro lasso*” chantings, and after lyrical string solos lain over sampled

Moro Lasso chords, Dean introduces a short passage from Gesualdo's remarkable six-part settings of the Responsories for Holy Week. With the words “...*et ego vadam immolari pro vobis*” (“...and I shall go to be offered up for you”), Dean's choice from the second Responsory for Maundy Thursday strikes home with valedictory melancholy. As this recorded passage proceeds, each string instrument inconspicuously joins the texture. And then, as Gesualdo's final chord settles, the full creepiness of the cluster that Dean has created dawns on the listener. Its dissonant tendrils wrap around the Gesualdo, and throttle it with a horrifying, crescendo-induced silence.

© Meurig Bowen



Brett Dean studied in his hometown, Brisbane, before moving to Germany in 1984 where he was a member of the Berlin Philharmonic for fourteen years, during which time he began composing. His music is championed by many of the leading conductors and orchestras worldwide, including Sir Simon Rattle, Vladimir Jurowski, Simone Young, Daniel Harding, Andris Nelsons, Marin Alsop and Sakari Oramo. Much of Dean's work draws from literary, political, environmental or visual stimuli, including a number of compositions inspired by artwork by his wife Heather Betts.

Brett Dean began composing in 1988, initially concentrating on experimental film and radio projects and as an improvising performer. Dean's reputation as a composer

continued to develop, and it was through works such as his clarinet concerto *Ariel's Music* (1995), which won an award from the UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers, and *Carlo* (1997) for strings, sampler and tape, that he gained international recognition.

Dean won the 2009 Grawemeyer Award for music composition for his violin concerto *The Lost Art of Letter Writing* and was awarded the 2016 Don Banks Music Award by Australia Council, acknowledging his sustained and significant contribution to Australia's musical scene. In June 2017 his second opera *Hamlet* was premiered at Glyndebourne Festival Opera to great acclaim, winning both the 2018 South Bank Sky Arts Awards and International Opera Awards for Best New Opera. Other major works by Dean include a Piano Concerto for Jonathan Biss, a Cello Concerto for Alban Gerhardt and a Trumpet Concerto for Håkan Hardenberger. In 2022 Dean was awarded the Ivor Novello Award for Chamber Ensemble composition for *Madame ma bonne sœur*, written for mezzo-soprano Lotte Betts-Dean and the Armida Quartet. Brett Dean is Composer in Residence at Wigmore Hall for the 2023/24 season.

THE MARIAN CONSORT



The Marian Consort is a vocal ensemble that presents bold and thrilling performances across the UK, Europe, North America and Asia. Led by founder and director, Rory McCleery, the group is composed of the very best singers in a flexible, intimate ensemble, allowing clarity of texture and subtlety of interpretation that illuminates the music for performer and audience alike. TMC features regularly on BBC Radio 3, and has released fifteen recordings to critical acclaim, praised for “precision and pellucid textures” (*The Times*).

The Marian Consort performs music from the twelfth century to the present day, with a focus on bringing to light and championing marginalised and lesser-known composers such as Vicente Lusitano, Raffaella Aleotti, and Jean Maillard. TMC has premiered over 30 works to date, and in recent years it has commissioned Dani Howard, Marcus Rock, David Fennessy and Electra Perivolaris. TMC regularly collaborates with soloists and ensembles including Daniel Piro, Britten Sinfonia, and Illyria Consort.

The Marian Consort is a pioneer of projects which move beyond the confines of the traditional concert, most notably “Breaking the Rules”, a staged concert-drama based on the life and crimes of Carlo Gesualdo called “daring and vivid” by *The Guardian*; and “Lusitano Remixed”, a surround sound installation made with Roderick Williams. Recent highlights include a concert at the BBC Proms; performances in the Bascule Chamber inside London's Tower Bridge; the premiere of a major new commission by Laurence Osborn at Wigmore Hall; and tours of the US and Japan. The Marian Consort is ensemble in residence with Music at Oxford across 2023 and 2024.

WILLIAM COLE conductor



William Cole is a conductor with a repertoire from Baroque opera to music by today's leading composers. He works regularly with leading orchestras, ensembles and opera companies in the UK and across Europe.

Recent highlights include series of concerts with Britten Sinfonia, Hans Abrahamsen's *Schnee* with the Royal Northern Sinfonia, his debut with Red Note Ensemble at Sound Festival Scotland, his German debut conducting Grisey's *Vortex Temporum* with musica assoluta Hannover, and Philip Venables' *4.48 Psychosis* at the Prototype Festival New York. Active in the opera house as well as the concert stage, he has enjoyed engagements with leading companies including Royal Opera Covent Garden, English National Opera, Opera North, Operá National du Rhin, Theater Aachen, Music Theatre Wales and Snape Maltings' Jerwood Opera Programme, and the Glyndebourne, Garsington, Aldeburgh, Lammermuir and Grange Festivals.

A committed exponent of new and experimental work, he is Music Director of Filthy Lucre, an immersive mixed-genre collective with whom he has worked with artists from dance, sculpture, and film in music from Xenakis to The Clash.

William studied at the University of Cambridge and Royal Academy of Music, where he was a Repetiteur Fellow and is now a visiting coach.

THOMAS GOULD leader



Thomas Gould enjoys a twofold career as a soloist with an emphasis on contemporary repertoire, and as a leader and director of chamber orchestras. His forays into the diverse worlds of jazz improvisation, historical performance and electric violin have made him a highly sought-after collaborator working in a wide array of roles and genres. Recent engagements have included a tour of Australia performing Philip Glass's Violin Concerto No. 2 with Omega Ensemble, the premiere of Johannes Berauer's Double Concerto for Violin and Percussion with the Bruckner Orchester Linz (in the Vienna Musikverein), and performances of Thomas Adès's Violin Concerto with the Wayne McGregor Dance Company.

As leader of Britten Sinfonia he has made an acclaimed recording of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. Gould also enjoys a longstanding relationship with Sinfonietta Riga, with whom he recorded Beethoven's Violin Concerto and Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending* on the album Live in Riga. He was formerly the leader and a founding member of Aurora Orchestra.

In the field of jazz he has performed with Burt Bacharach, Jacob Collier, Hiromi, Brad Mehldau and Marius Neset, and enjoys ongoing collaborations with saxophonist Tim Garland and pianist Gwilym Simcock. Gould studied at the Royal Academy of Music where he is now a Fellow.

HUW WATKINS piano



Huw Watkins is notable for his equal renown as a pianist and composer. Andrew Clark of the *Financial Times* describes him as "one of the most rounded composer-musicians in the UK." As a pianist, Watkins has performed with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, and the London Sinfonietta, as well as giving recitals at top venues such as Wigmore Hall, the Smithsonian, and the Library of Congress. Watkins' ability to step into and enhance any musical endeavour is widely appreciated; *The Telegraph* described him aptly as an "unfailing dependable and musical pianist who seems to be everywhere".

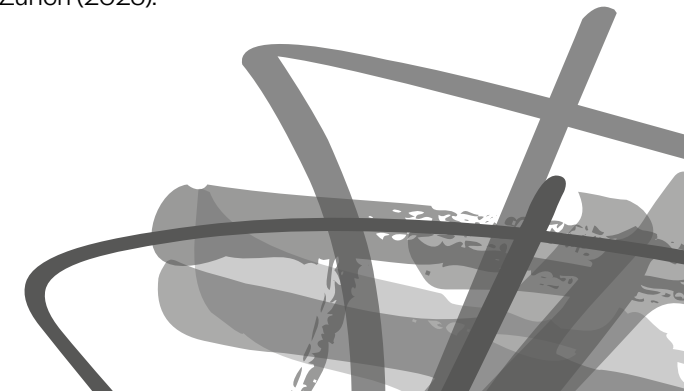
Watkins' chorus and orchestra work *The Moon* premiered at the 2019 Proms in London, and his *Dawning* was performed in early 2020 by the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra. Watkins has written numerous chamber works, including string quartets for the Carducci and Calidore quartets, and a piano quintet for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Watkins has a large catalogue of vocal works including a pair of song cycles, *Remember* (2014) and *Echo* (2017), for soprano Ruby Hughes; the latter was co-commissioned by Carnegie Hall. He has recorded for several prominent classical music labels, often performing his own works; notably Mendelssohn's cello and piano works with his brother Paul Watkins (Chandos) and a disc dedicated to his work entitled *In my craft or sullen art* (NMC).

IAN DEARDEN / SOUND INTERMEDIA

Trained as a musician and composer, Ian is an advocate for new and experimental music, focussing his expertise where live music and new technology meet in performance. Over four decades he has worked with some of the most important artists and creators of the last 75 years – including Boulez, Berio, Stockhausen, Lucier, Reich, Glass, Harvey, and Saariaho. His sound design partnership Sound Intermedia was formed in 1997.

Ian's experience is also sought by projects which require sensitive sound designs for established repertoire, performed in unusual locations. His work in opera includes an outdoor performance of Britten's *Peter Grimes* on Aldeburgh beach (Aldeburgh Festival 2013), Monteverdi's *Orfeo* and *The Return of Ulysses* performed in the round in the legendary Camden Town Victorian steam-engine repair shed (Royal Opera House at the Roundhouse 2015/18) and immersive sound with car radios and live PA for Drive and Live, *La bohème* in a car park during the pandemic (English National Opera 2020).

Working as a producer he has recently made highly acclaimed albums of the music of Steve Reich with the Colin Currie Group, and *Saintboy* with violinist Daniel Pioro. Current projects include sound designs for *Songs of Wars I have Seen*, by the composer/director Heiner Goebbels for the BBC Proms (2024) and a new ballet work by Danish Choreographer Kim Brandstrup for Ballett Zürich (2025).



Britten Sinfonia concerts: Upcoming | Newly on sale



MAHAN ESFAHANI
8 June | Saffron Hall
12 June | Wigmore Hall

The 21st century's leading champion of the harpsichord joins Britten Sinfonia in the last of their three concerts performing the complete cycle of Bach's keyboard concertos alongside music by Bach's contemporaries and forebears.

Mahan Esfahani has been hailed as one of the most remarkable harpsichordists of his generation, pushing against boundaries to become the first and only harpsichordist to be a BBC New Generation Artist (2008-2010), and most recently, the winner of the 2022 Wigmore Hall Prize for contributions to the classical music field.



**WILL GREGORY MOOG
ENSEMBLE**
8 Oct | Barbican Hall
11 Oct | Saffron Hall
More dates to be announced.

Experience a unique concert that brings together maths and music, synths and soundtracks, with composer and keyboardist Will Gregory – one half of electropop duo Goldfrapp.

In a concert of synthy, sci-fi movie soundtracks and of Moog-overdubbed Bach arrangements, Britten Sinfonia also gives the London premiere of Will Gregory's suite for synths and orchestra, featuring one of the world's great popularisers of maths, Matt Parker, presenting his trademark mix of stand-up comedy and maths demystification.



**TIM GARLAND'S LIGHTHOUSE
TRIO**
19 Nov | Milton Court, London
20 Nov | West Road, Cambridge

Thomas Gould violin/director
Yazz Ahmed flugelhorn
Esra Kizir Gokcen artwork projections
The Lighthouse Trio:
Tim Garland saxophone/conductor,
Gwilym Simcock piano
Asaf Sirkis drums

A giant of the jazz improv world, Tim Garland brings together his eclectically-minded trio and Britten Sinfonia for the most ambitious project of his stellar career, at the EFG London Jazz Festival.

This special concert includes a new orchestral piece from Tim Garland, *The Forever Seed*, resulting from the unique and longstanding relationship between Britten Sinfonia's leader Thomas Gould and Gwilym Simcock and Tim Garland.



Britten Sinfonia

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Thomas Gould Leader
Supported by Jill Rawlinson
Marcus Barcham Stevens Co-Leader
Supported by Barry & Ann Scrutton
Clara Biss
Beatrix Lovejoy
Supported by Janis Susskind OBE
Fiona McCapra
Katherine Shave
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Second Violins
Miranda Dale
Supported by an anonymous donor
Nicola Goldscheider
Supported by Andrew & Rosemary Tusa
Alexandra Caldon
Supported by Patrick Meehan
Anna Bradley
Marcus Broome
Suzanne Loze
Judith Stowe
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Violas
Clare Finnimore
Supported by Anna & Kamal Ahuja
Sascha Bota
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Cellos
Caroline Dearnley
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Stephen Williams
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Emer McDonough
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Nicholas Daniel
Peter Facer
Emma Feilding

Clarinets
Joy Farrall
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Sarah Burnett
Simon Couzens

Horns
Martin Owen
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Alex Wide

Trumpet
Imogen Whitehead
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Timpani
William Lockhart

Harp
Lucy Wakeford

Piano
Huw Watkins

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THANK YOU

Britten Sinfonia is proud to acknowledge the support of numerous individuals, trusts and foundations, corporate partners and public funders who enable us to play outstanding concerts to audiences across the UK and the rest of the world.

Everything we do – each and every concert, project, collaboration and partnership – benefits from the vision and generosity of all those listed and those who wish to remain anonymous.

For more information about giving to your orchestra, please contact the Development Team on 01223 558501 or email support@brittensinfonia.com

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Play On Appeal

In March 2023 we launched the most urgent fundraising appeal in our history, aiming to replace a £1million cut in funding from Arts Council England. We have been overwhelmed by the generosity of the response, and to date more than 700 donors have contributed to raise over £450,000 - nearly half of our £1million target.

But we still have a long way to go. Please donate to help this remarkable orchestra PLAY ON...



LEGACIES

A Legacy gift will have a real and lasting impact. Leaving a gift in your Will to Britten Sinfonia will help ensure that we can bring our unique brand of music making to future generations of audiences, and the thousands of children, emerging musicians, and members of local communities who benefit from our Learning & Participation programmes every year.

Arts funding is increasingly under pressure, and we rely on the generosity of donors to make what we do possible. We are passionate about the role that music plays in nourishing young and older minds alike, and the wider benefits it brings to society.

"My father loved music; he loved excellence and he particularly loved new things. We were more than delighted that he left a legacy to Britten Sinfonia - which embodied his loves and which he thoroughly enjoyed over many years - to help it, in a modest way, to continue to thrive and grow."

- Jason Streets

There are numerous ways to recognise a loved one, such as concert sponsorship, event naming rights, acknowledgment in our recordings, bursary programmes etc. We would also be delighted to discuss a bespoke event to honour the memory of a loved one. You may of course want your decision to leave Britten Sinfonia a gift private, but if you are comfortable sharing this information, we would be delighted to hear from you as it will give us an opportunity to express our gratitude.

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nick.brealey@brittensinfonia.com

BRITTEN SINFONIA BEYOND THE CONCERT HALL

Britten Sinfonia is deeply committed to the task of bringing exceptional musical experiences to communities across the East of England. We believe in the transformative power of music and take this responsibility seriously, nurturing the next generation of artists, and providing opportunities to people who would not otherwise benefit.

Inspiring children and young people

Over the last decade, Britten Sinfonia has worked with over 150 schools across the East of England, and each year we bring inspiring classical music into the lives of more than 5,000 primary school children. Our interactive school concerts combine music, storytelling, and singing, with the participation of young people. We work with partners such as Orchestras Live, Suffolk Archives, and with Music Hubs to provide inspiring workshops, mentoring, and creative opportunities, as well as supporting music leaders with teaching composition and the music curriculum.

Nurturing composing talent

Britten Sinfonia is renowned for its track record of supporting and commissioning composers. We run two annual development schemes for composers: Opus 1 for aspiring composers looking for a "first step on the ladder", and Magnum Opus for those ready to take on a substantial commission and be embedded within the orchestra for a season. Both programmes provide bespoke mentoring, networking opportunities and the space to explore ideas and create new music with our world-renowned chamber musicians.

Reaching under-served communities

We bring outstanding performances and participatory music-making workshops to people of all ages in towns including Thetford, Diss, Bourne, Stowmarket and Wells-next-the-Sea.

Bringing relief and joy

Our *Music on Your Doorstep* programme brings outstanding performances and participatory music workshops to people of all ages in rural areas across the East of England. In care homes, our *Musical Memories* sessions give opportunities to join in with familiar live music, aiming to create positive connections and empower people to use music to enhance their lives.

Britten Sinfonia musicians are also active throughout the year in the wards and waiting rooms of Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, bringing musical relief to patients, visitors and NHS staff.

Join our e-list to stay in touch

As the venues where we perform usually own the data for our concerts, it's difficult for us to keep in touch with our audience members. If you'd like to hear from us, please sign up to our e-list to receive occasional emails from us about our events, activities and opportunities.

brittensinfonia.com/sign-up

