

# Britten Sinfonia with Nicky Spence and Ben Goldscheider

Sunday 7 April 2024, 4pm  
Saffron Hall, Saffron Walden

Tuesday 9 April 2024, 7.30pm  
Milton Court Concert Hall, London

Britten Sinfonia  
Nicky Spence tenor  
Ben Goldscheider horn  
Max Baillie violin / director  
Michael Papadopoulos conductor\*

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Judith Weir	<i>Heroic strokes of the Bow*</i>	15'
Britten	<i>Serenade for tenor, horn and strings</i>	24'
INTERVAL		
Huw Watkins	Horn Concerto (world premiere, commissioned by Britten Sinfonia)*	20'
Mozart	Symphony No. 35 "Haffner"	17'

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WILLIAMS  
FOUNDATION

If you have a mobile phone, please ensure that it is turned off during the performance.

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

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.

No smoking in the auditorium.

# ON STAGE TODAY

## BRITTEN SINFONIA

### Violin I

Max Baillie

Marcus Barcham  
Stevens

Fiona McCapra

Cecily Ward

Michael Jones

Hannah Bell

### Violin II

Miranda Dale

Nicola Goldscheider

Judith Stowe

Anna Bradley

Paula Clifton-Everest

### Violas

Clare Finnimore

Lisanne Melchior

Bridget Carey

Laura Cooper

### Cellos

Caroline Dearnley

Ben Chappell

William Clark-Maxwell

### Double Basses

Stacey Watton

Alexander Verster

### Flutes

Thomas Hancox

Sarah O'Flynn

### Piccolo

Sarah O'Flynn

### Oboes

Nicholas Daniel

Emma Feilding

### Cor Anglais

Emma Feilding

### Clarinets

Joy Farrall

Oliver Pashley

### Bass Clarinet

Oliver Pashley

### Bassoons

Linton Stephens

Simon Couzens

### Contrabassoon

Simon Couzens

### Horns

Jo Withers

Richard Stroud

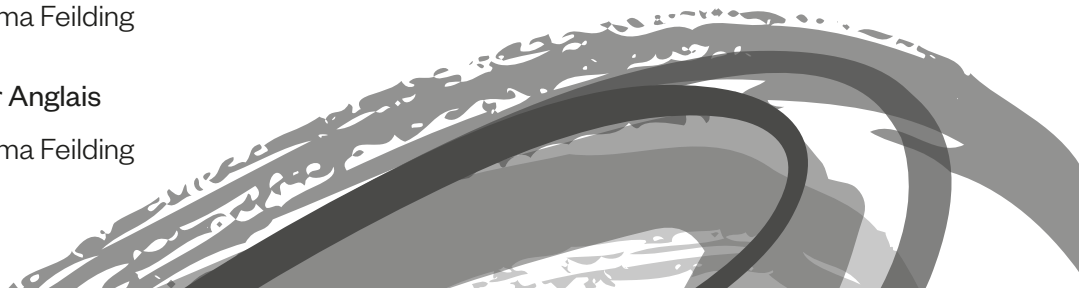
### Trumpets

Imogen Whitehead

Sarah Campbell

### Timpani

Bill Lockhart



# WELCOME

After a number of projects so far this year where our winds and strings have often gone off in different directions or in smaller groupings, it's good to bring them all together for this concert. You might say it's a programme that plays to the varied strengths of Britten Sinfonia: a core work from the classical canon, two works by living composers – one of them brand new – and a familiar favourite by Britten himself.

Huw Watkins has been associated with Britten Sinfonia for many years, bringing his uniquely incisive talents as pianist to chamber and orchestral projects, as well as commissioned composer. His new Horn Concerto is by far the most substantial work we have presented, and it is a particular pleasure that he has written it for one of the shining lights of the latest generation – who happens to be a son of one of our founder members, violinist Nicola Goldscheider.

In a crowded reception at the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards in London's Wigmore Hall a couple of years ago, I found myself introducing Ben Goldscheider to the tenor Nicky Spence. "You should do the Britten Serenade together some time," I said. It's nice to be in a position to make these potentially glib remarks actually come to something. And many congratulations to Nicky for winning the RPS 2024 Singer award a few weeks back.

This concert kicks off a particularly busy few months for Britten Sinfonia – one that includes being in the pit for a double bill at the Royal Opera House's Linbury Theatre and in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* at the Nevill Holt Festival,

performances at the Brighton, Norfolk and Norwich, Aldeburgh and Peasmarsh Festivals, and performing with Professor Brian Cox and conductor Daniel Harding at the Royal Opera House.

**Meurig Bowen**

CEO and Artistic Director, Britten Sinfonia



## JUDITH WEIR (b.1954): HEROIC STROKES OF THE BOW



Ever since Mussorgsky wrote *Pictures at an Exhibition*, the idea of writing a musical composition inspired by a painting has been fairly commonplace. The work of one particular painter, the Swiss-born artist Paul Klee (1879-1940), has generated an extraordinary number of musical tributes; more than 550 to date have been catalogued by American scholar Stephen W. Ellis. Well known "Klee pieces" by Maxwell Davies, Birtwistle and Gunther Schuller readily spring to mind.

Klee's appeal to composers is easy to understand in biographical terms. The son of a music teacher, he became an accomplished violinist, and performed professionally in Berne's Municipal Orchestra. It is said that before starting to paint each day, he would practise the violin for an hour. His large output includes many paintings and drawings with musical titles. (A random

selection: *Fugue in Red; Recital by a Large Tenor; Masterly Playing amidst a Bad Orchestra.*)

The connection between the painting and the musical response of composers is harder to explain. My personal observation is that perhaps Klee himself was influenced in some of his work by the visual imagery of musical notation with which he was so familiar. To a musician's eye, Klee's geometrical shapes and regularly repeated simple patterns seem to release information directly into the mind; looking at a Klee picture feels like reading music.

The subject of my piece *Heroic Strokes of the Bow* (Klee's original title was *Heroische Bogenstriche*) is a blue and black painting on pink newspaper, dating from 1938, now in the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Said to be a tribute to the famous violinist Adolph Busch, whom Klee knew personally, it seems to show a simple pattern of violin bows and pegs against a hypnotic blue background. My piece is not principally meant as a depiction of the picture, but rather as a literal response to the title, with its suggestions of excessive physical energy applied to a small piece of wood. Accordingly, energetic violins predominate throughout the piece's 15-minute duration. The first part of the piece builds up a restless momentum; a twittering ensemble of lower woodwinds finally puts the brakes on, leading to a broad, spacious close.

*Heroic Strokes of the Bow* was commissioned by the Sekretariat für gemeinsame Kulturarbeit in Nordrhein-Westfalen, and first performed by the Westdeutsche Sinfonie and their conductor Dirk Joeres in Leverkusen, Germany in 1992.

© Judith Weir

Judith Weir (born in 1954 to Scottish parents in Cambridge) studied composition with John Tavener, Robin Holloway and Gunther Schuller. On leaving Cambridge University in 1976 she taught in England and Scotland, and in the mid-1990s became Associate Composer with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and Artistic Director of Spitalfields Festival. She was a Visiting Professor at Princeton (2001) Harvard (2004) and Cardiff (2006-13) and in 2014 was appointed Master of the Queen's Music. Since Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II died in September 2022, Weir is now Master of The King's Music. From 2015 to 2019 she was Associate Composer to the BBC Singers.

She is the composer of several operas (written for Kent Opera, Scottish Opera, ENO and Bregenz) which have been widely performed. She has written orchestral music for the BBC Symphony, Boston Symphony and Minnesota Orchestras. Much of her music has been recorded, and is available on the NMC, Delphian and Signum labels. She blogs about her cultural experiences at [www.judithweir.com](http://www.judithweir.com).



# BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913-1976): SERENADE FOR TENOR, HORN AND STRINGS

*Prologue*

*Pastoral*

*Nocturne*

*Elegy*

*Dirge*

*Hymn*

*Sonnet*

*Epilogue*

Two of Britten's finest choral works, the *Hymn to St Cecilia* and *Ceremony of Carols*, were composed or completed on the Swedish merchant ship Axel Johnson during his prolonged and hazardous crossing from New York to Liverpool in early 1942. The next composition of note, his *Serenade*, was mostly written while Britten was confined to a hospital bed with measles. Interestingly, for a composer we consider to have had such great facility (turning out masterpieces on boats and in hospital wards) there was a gap of nearly a year between these works. In the meantime, Britten had fulfilled various commissions of incidental music for the BBC; but the two main reasons for this lapse in productivity were his preparatory work on the libretto of *Peter Grimes* and what Britten acknowledged himself as depression.

By the end of March 1943, Britten was convalescing at his Mill home in Snape, and had finished six songs for tenor, horn and strings – what he described in a letter with typical, and slightly cloying self-deprecation as “not important stuff, but quite pleasant I think.” While working on one of his 1942 BBC commissions, he had encountered the extraordinary playing of the 22 year-old Dennis Brain, principal horn in the RAF Orchestra. It was

for him, and for his partner Peter Pears, that he wrote the *Serenade*, and the premiere was in October 1943 at the Wigmore Hall. The dedicatee was writer Edward Sackville-West, who had assisted Britten in selecting this nocturnal compendium of English poems.

With each poem, Britten takes maximum advantage of the possibilities for musical description: the “very little, little flock” in Cotton's *Pastoral* given tripping staccato lightness; the blowing bugle in Tennyson's sturdy Nocturne, a dialogue between voice and horn that dies so effectively each time; Jonson's Goddess, given *excellent brightness* with a coloratura run which would show off Pears's uniquely coloured agility.

If the outer pairs of poems inhabit a reasonably comfortable nocturnal world, the central pair is altogether darker. Blake's eloquent verse – just a single sentence of 34 words – and the 15th century *Lyke Wake Dirge* inhabit night's potential for uncomfortable rumination, focusing here on a “dark, secret love” and the dread of a damned soul's after-life. Britten solved the problem of the *Elegy*'s brevity by presenting it as a central point in a pained, throbbing representation of high fever (Britten in hospital...) from the horn and strings. The horn's sickly, sliding semitones at the end lead masterfully into the *Dirge*, a triumph of controlled structure and cumulative intensity. The medieval poet's mortal terror of judgment registers with each successive repetition of the singer's line – angular, unrelenting, with grotesque octave swoops and lying cruelly high for extra discomfort. Below this is a restless dance of death, growing from lower strings to a tutti climax with bellowing horn.

Britten's stylistic control in his instrumental writing is matchless throughout the *Serenade*. The bolt-upright world of Purcell is evoked in the dotted rhythms that open the *Nocturne*. Mozart's sprightly writing for the horn in his concertos comes alive in the *Hymn's* obbligato. And the parallel triads of the closing sonnet hint at Vaughan-Williams in Tallis *Fantasia* mode, but with more complex undercurrents of bitonality. Dennis Brain was consulted carefully about the horn's possibilities and limitations, resulting in some brilliantly varied effects and those distinctively out of tune notes in the *Prologue* and *Epilogue* – notes which may hint, perhaps, at those invisible worms on the bed of crimson joy.

© Meurig Bowen

## TEXTS

### Prologue

#### Pastoral

The day's grown old; the fainting sun  
Has but a little way to run,  
And yet his steeds, with all his skill,  
Scarce lug the chariot down the hill.

The shadows now so long do grow,  
That brambles like tall cedars show;  
Mole hills seem mountains, and the ant  
Appears a monstrous elephant.

A very little, little flock  
Shades thrice the ground that it would stock;  
Whilst the small stripling following them  
Appears a mighty Polypheme.  
And now on benches all are sat,  
In the cool air to sit and chat,  
Till Phoebus, dipping in the West,  
Shall lead the world the way to rest.

Charles Cotton (1630 – 1687)

### Nocturne

The splendour falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story:  
The long night shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory:  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Bugle, blow, answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O hark, O hear how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going!  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:  
Bugle, blow, answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river:  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Bugle, blow, answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.  
Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809 – 1892)

### Elegy

O Rose, thou art sick!  
The invisible worm  
That flies in the night,  
In the howling storm,  
Has found out thy bed  
Of crimson joy:  
And his dark secret love  
Does thy life destroy.

William Blake (1757 – 1827)



### Dirge

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,  
Every nighte and alle,  
Fire and fleete and candle-lighte,  
And Christe receive thy saule.  
When thou from hence away art past,  
Every nighte and alle,  
To Whinnymuir thou com'st at last;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gav'st hos'n and shoon,  
Every nighte and alle,  
Sit thee down and put them on;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

If hos'n and shoon thou ne'er gav'st nane,  
Every nighte and alle,  
The winnies shall prick thee to the bare bane;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Whinnymuir when thou may'st pass,  
Every nighte and alle,  
To Brig o' Dread thou com'st at last;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Brig o' Dread when thou may'st pass,  
Every nighte and alle,  
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gav'st meat or drink,  
Every nighte and alle,  
The fire shall never make thee shrink;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

If meat or drink thou ne'er gav'st nane,  
Every nighte and alle,  
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane;  
And Christe receive thy saule.  
This ae nighte, this ae nighte,  
Every nighte and alle,  
Fire and fleete and candle-lighte,  
And Christe receive thy saule.

Anon, 15th century

### Hymn

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,  
Now the sun is laid to sleep,  
Seated in thy silver chair,  
State in wonted manner keep:  
Hesperus entreats thy light,  
Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade  
Dare itself to interpose;  
Cynthia's shining orb was made  
Heav'n to clear when day did close;  
Bless us then with wishèd sight,  
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,  
And thy crystal shining quiver;  
Give unto the flying hart  
Space to breathe, how short so-ever:  
Thou that mak'st a day of night,  
Goddess excellently bright.

Ben Jonson (1572 - 1673)

### Sonnet

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,  
Shutting with careful fingers and benign,  
Our gloom-pleas'd eyes, embower'd from the light,  
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:  
O soothest Sleep! if so it please thee, close  
In midst of this thine hymn my willing eyes,  
Or wait the "Amen" ere thy poppy throws  
Around my bed its lulling charities.  
Then save me, or the passèd day will shine  
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes, -  
Save me from curious Conscience, that still lords  
Its strength for darkness, burrowing like a mole;  
Turn the key deftly in the oilèd wards,  
And seal the hushèd Casket of my Soul.

John Keats (1795 - 1821)

### Epilogue



# HUW WATKINS (b. 1976): HORN CONCERTO



I first met Ben in 2020, when he was playing my fiendishly difficult horn trio with two friends. He asked if I'd write him a new piece; a lament, for horn and piano, which we recorded that summer. I was struck not only by his effortless virtuosity, but by the beauty and lyricism of his sound; so when the opportunity to write him a concerto arose, I jumped at the chance. In the first movement, an athletic horn, full of octave leaps and extrovert activity is urged on by a bustling, fast-moving orchestra. The second movement is much more reflective, the horn's aching song introduced by a consoling oboe. The last movement begins quietly, with a sprightly clarinet setting up a lively dance in triple time. The horn enters, softly at first, but soon encouraging the whole orchestra to join in a riotous celebration.

© Huw Watkins

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." Watkins was born in 1976, in Pontypool, South Wales. He studied piano with Peter Lawson at Chetham's School of Music and composition with Robin Holloway, Alexander Goehr and Julian Anderson at Cambridge and the Royal College of Music. In 2001 he was awarded the Constant and Kit Lambert Junior Fellowship at the Royal College of Music, and he now teaches composition at the Royal Academy of Music. As a pianist, Watkins has performed with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, and the London Sinfonietta, as well as giving recitals at such venues as Wigmore Hall, the Smithsonian, and the Library of Congress. Watkins' ability to step into and enhance any musical endeavour is widely appreciated.

His duet and vocal partners include Alina Ibragimova, Daniel Hope and Carolyn Sampson, who recorded his *Five Larkin Songs* (with Joseph Middleton) in 2020. Sampson is just one of the leading British performers who have championed Watkins' compositions; others include the London Symphony Orchestra, which premiered his *London Concerto* to mark its 2005 centenary. 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 composed 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).

# MOZART (1756-1791):

## SYMPHONY NO. 35 IN D MAJOR, K.385, “HAFFNER”

I: *Allegro con spirito*

II: *Andante*

III: *Menuetto*

IV: *Presto*

Among the many travels Mozart enjoyed during his life, his years in Vienna were some of his happiest. Having just resigned from an untenable position with the Archbishop Colloredo, Mozart moved to Vienna in 1781 to pursue his freelance career as a composer and performer. This new career move began well, and he had soon established himself as “the finest keyboard player in Vienna”. He also enjoyed success as a composer, and the premiere of his opera *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* in July 1782 was greeted with great critical acclaim. This success did not go unnoticed, and Mozart was fortunate enough to enjoy the patronage of various members of the nobility. Among them, Mozart received a request via his father for a new symphony to celebrate the ennoblement of Sigmund Haffner, a long-term family friend and son of the previous mayor of Salzburg. Despite his busy schedule, Mozart was able to write the new work as requested, sending it off to his father one movement at a time for approval.

However, the work did not begin life as a symphony. Mozart originally penned the work as a serenade (not to be confused with the “Haffner Serenade” (K. 250) of 1776, which was written for a Haffner family wedding), in keeping with the spirit of the occasion. The serenade has its roots in simple song and free, unstructured instrumental works, which were often performed in honour of a lover or friend. Since these compositions were often performed ad hoc, perhaps at a lover’s window or to greet a returning friend at their door, the accompaniment was often simple –

usually in the form of a lute or guitar. By the Classical era, the serenade had combined the various features of its long history to assume an elevated genre unto itself: typically written in someone’s honour (usually a patron or court figure), the eighteenth-century serenade constituted a multi-movement work that was somewhat lighter in tone than the symphony, with melodic invention prioritised over structural complexity. The Haffner’s request was therefore perfectly answered with Mozart’s composition of a serenade, but it was not long before he asked his father for the return of the score so that he could make some alterations. A few minor cuts and retouches of orchestration later, Mozart had turned his serenade into a symphony, of which he wrote to his father: “My new Haffner symphony has positively amazed me, for I had forgotten every single note of it. It must surely produce a good effect.”

The symphony was premiered in its new guise in March 1783 to great acclaim. Set in the bright key of D major, the opening movement is truly befitting of its regal associations, drawing out the brilliance of the natural trumpets and the reverberant open strings. Plunging leaps and dramatic counterpoint characterise this opening *Allegro*, which Mozart said should be played “with fire.” After this vivid start to the symphony, the central slow movement and minuet return the work to its serenade origins with elegant, soulful melodies that distance themselves from the complexity of the opening. But Mozart once again whips up a storm in the closing *Presto*, which is permeated by dramatic moments of silence, surprising dynamic shifts, witty transitions and a dizzying array of virtuosic melodies.

## NICKY SPENCE tenor



An artist of great integrity, Nicky Spence's unique skills as a singing actor and the rare honesty in his musicianship have earned him a place at the top of the music profession. He was made an OBE in the 2023 King's Birthday Honours, and is the winner of the RPS Singer Award 2024.

The 2023/24 season sees him return to the Opéra national de Paris as Edmundo, Marquès de Nobile in Adès' *The Exterminating Angel*, and to La Monnaie as Loge in *Das Rheingold*. In concert he sings Števa in *Jenůfa* with the London Symphony Orchestra/Sir Simon Rattle, *The Dream of Gerontius* with the Beethoven Orchester Bonn/Thomas Guggeis, Tippett's *New Year* with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra/Martyn Brabbins, Britten's *Serenade for tenor, horn and strings* with Ben Goldscheider and the Britten Sinfonia and *Das Lied von der Erde* with the Orquesta Sinfonica del Principado de Asturias/Nuno Coelho.

Recent highlights include Laca in Claus Guth's new production of *Jenůfa* for the Royal Opera, Siegmund in Richard Jones' new production of *The Valkyrie* for the English National Opera, Albert Gregor for the Deutsche Staatsoper, Tichon in Damiano Michieletto's new production of *Káťa Kabanová* at the Glyndebourne Festival and Erik *Der fliegende Holländer* for Grange Park Opera.

Nicky gives recitals internationally, and records prolifically. In 2020, he won the BBC Music Magazine Vocal Award and Gramophone's Solo Vocal Award for his critically acclaimed recording of Janáček's *The Diary of One Who Disappeared*. The BBC Music Magazine awarded him "Personality of the Year" in 2022.

Nicky is President Elect of the Independent Society of Musicians, and will take up the position in the 2024/25 season.

## BEN GOLDSCHIEDER horn



Nominated by the Barbican as an ECHO Rising Star for the 2021/22 season, Ben Goldscheider has given recitals at major concert halls across Europe including at the Concertgebouw, Musikverein, Pierre Boulez Saal, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg and Koln Philharmonie and Wigmore Hall amongst others.

Ben has performed with the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sakari Oramo and made his BBC Proms concerto debut in 2022 performing the Ethel Smyth Concerto for Horn and Violin with Elena Urioste and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kazuki Yamada. Ben has also appeared as soloist with the Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg, Ulster Orchestra, Aurora Orchestra, Britten Sinfonia, Royal Philharmonic, London Mozart Players, Lucerne Symphony, Tapiola Sinfonietta, Musikkollegium Winterthur, Manchester Camerata, Prague Philharmonia and Sinfonie Orchester Berlin.

In the 2023/24 season, Ben will premiere multiple new commissions for horn including concerti, solo and

chamber works. Highlights include debuts and the world premiere performances of Gavin Higgins' Horn Concerto with BBC National Orchestra of Wales in collaboration with Philharmonie Zuidnederland and the London Chamber Orchestra, in addition to Huw Watkins' Horn Concerto premiering with Britten Sinfonia in collaboration with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen at the Koln Philharmonie. In recital, Ben will make his Lucerne Festival debut including a new commission for natural horn and keyboards by Sara Cubarsi, his debut at the Purcell Room (Southbank Centre) featuring horn, electronics and live lighting design with commissions by Zoe Martlew and Mark Simpson, and two appearances at the Wigmore Hall, London. Ben will also commission new works by Nicola Lefanu (Lammermuir Festival), Victoria Kelly & Georgina Palmer (At World's Edge Festival, New Zealand) and Joseph Phibbs (Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival).

## MAX BAILLIE violin / director



A graduate of the Yehudi Menuhin School, Cambridge University, and Berlin's UdK, British-German violinist and violist Max Baillie is sought after as soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral leader in the UK and abroad.

Max's musical life reflects his interest in the cross-pollination of musical styles. Artists he has worked with include Steve Reich, Mischa Maisky, Björk, John Williams, Abel Selaoe, Thomas Adès, Bobby McFerrin, Zakir Hussain, Max Richter, Anoushka Shankar, James Thierrée, and many more. From folk tunes in the Welsh hills to major festivals across the world, Max leads a dynamic life which embraces classical, improvisation, contemporary, and experimental music.

As regular guest-director of Swiss chamber orchestra CHAARTS, he has toured with artists including Mischa Maisky and Fazil Say, in Switzerland, Germany, and China, and has recorded for Sony and Berlin Classics. He has also guest-directed other ensembles including Scottish Ensemble and is a regular guest-leader of the UK's trail-blazing Manchester Collective.

Max founded Lodestar Trio with stars of the Scandinavian folk scene Erik Rydvall and Olav Mjelva, exploring Baroque music through the meeting of violin, Swedish nyckelharpa, and Norwegian hardanger fiddle. Their debut disc *Bach to Folk* was released last year to critical acclaim.

Max plays in ZRI, a quintet drawing together the folk and gypsy influences in works by Brahms, Schubert, and Janacek, ZRI will release its fourth album this Autumn. He is also one half of Sonnen, an experimental electronic music duo with Vahakn Mattosian.

Max was taught and mentored by the legendary violinist Ivry Gitlis. He graduated from Christ's College, Cambridge, with a first class degree in Political Philosophy. He is proud to be supported by the Royal Philharmonic Society as part of their Enterprise Fund towards his project re-visualising Bach's solo works for violin and cello.

Max plays on an 1845 J.B Vuillaume violin and a 2009 viola by Stephan von Baehr. He also plays the mandolin.

## MICHAEL PAPADOPOULOS conductor



British-Cypriot conductor and pianist Michael Papadopoulos is an alumnus of the Royal Opera House's prestigious Jette Parker Young Artist Programme and a former BBC Music Magazine Rising Star. During his time at the Royal Opera, he played and assisted on a variety of productions, working closely with conductors such as Mark Wigglesworth, Daniele Rustioni, Mark Elder, Harry Bicket, and Antonio Pappano. In 2022 he conducted Britten Sinfonia in a production of *Mavra* and *Pierrot Lunaire* in the Royal Opera's Linbury Theatre, described in The Times as "immaculately conducted". With the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House he conducted a critically-acclaimed double bill of Kurt Weill's *Die Sieben Todsünden* and *Mahagonny Songspiel* as well as several other performances in concert and on the main stage.

Recent conducting credits include *Dido and Aeneas* (Ustinov Studio) and *Acis and Galatea/Dido and Aeneas* (Waterperry Opera Festival), as well as numerous productions at Opera North, Scottish Opera, Garsington Opera, and The Royal Opera House as assistant

conductor. This season he makes his debut with English Touring Opera, conducting several performances of *Manon Lescaut* and *The Rake's Progress*, before conducting performances of *Acis and Galatea* at Opera Holland Park in the summer. From September, he will join the conducting staff at Vienna's Volksoper, conducting many performances throughout the season.





# Britten Sinfonia

## First Violins

**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**

*Supported by Penelope Robson*

## 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**

*Supported by William & Judith Bollinger*

## Violas

**Clare Finnimore**

*Supported by Anna & Kamal Ahuja*

**Sascha Bota**

**Bridget Carey**

**Rachel Byrt**

## Cellos

**Caroline Dearnley**

*Supported by Elizabeth Goodchild*

**Ben Chappell**

*Supported by Caroline Jarrold*

**Joy Hawley**

*Supported by Elizabeth Goodchild*

## Double Basses

**Stephen Williams**

*Supported by Dr & Mrs Jerome Booth*

**Roger Linley**

**Benjamin Russell**

## Flutes

**Emer McDonough**

*Supported by Delia Broke*

**Thomas Hancox**

*Supported by Richard Plaskett*

**Sarah O'Flynn**

## Oboes

**Nicholas Daniel**

**Peter Facer**

**Emma Feilding**

## Clarinets

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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](mailto:support@brittensinfonia.com)

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### **Play On Appeal**

We are very grateful to the many hundreds of individuals and organisations who have donated to our Play On appeal, launched in March 2023 and aimed at raising £1 million over three years to fill the gap left by the loss of Arts Council England National Portfolio funding. If you would like to donate, please visit [playon.brittensinfonia.com](https://playon.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 through our Learning and Participation work. 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 be able to access them.



## 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 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 of any age 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 market towns across the East of England towns including Diss, Bourne, Stowmarket, Thetford and Wells-next-the-Sea.

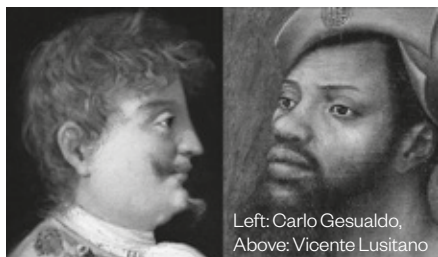
## Bringing relief and joy

Our Music on Your Doorstep programme brings outstanding performances and participatory music workshops to people of all ages in rural towns

and villages across the East of England, while our Thetford Community Residency involves leisure-time ensembles, nurseries, schools, and care homes in a shared community-led celebration.

Britten Sinfonia musicians are also active throughout the year on the wards and waiting rooms of Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, bringing musical relief to patients, visitors and NHS staff. Our Musical Memories sessions in care homes give opportunities to join in with familiar live music, aiming to create positive connections and empower people to use music to enhance their lives.

# Next Britten Sinfonia concerts



Left: Carlo Gesualdo,  
Above: Vicente Lusitano



Mahan Esfahani

## BRITTEN SINFONIA AND THE MARIAN CONSORT: RENAISSANCE MODERNS

Saturday 11 May  
Milton Court | London

With The Marian Consort we perform music by Gesualdo, Lusitano and Binchois from the early Renaissance which today still sounds exciting and surprisingly modern. We also hear Brett Dean's darkly dramatic Carlo, and Lisa Illean's haunting and mesmeric new work arcing, stilling, bending, gathering, offering fleeting glimpses of transparent tapestries of sound.

## BRITTEN SINFONIA AND MAHAN ESFAHANI

Saturday 8 June  
Saffron Hall | Saffron Walden

Wednesday 12 June  
Wigmore Hall | London

Britten Sinfonia and the harpsichord's outstanding 21st-century champion perform two of Bach's most most exciting keyboard concertos alongside music by his cousin Johann Bernhard Bach and a composer from the previous generation, Johann Rosenmüller.

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