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Barbican marks 40th birthday with an exciting programme of music, art, theatre, dance and cinema celebrating London and its many creative communities

On 3 March 2022, the Barbican will celebrate its 40th birthday with an eclectic and vibrant programme of events, exhibitions, films, concerts, dance and theatre showcasing the Barbican's unique role as an internationally-acclaimed multi-disciplinary venue, located in the heart of the City of London. Since 1982, the Barbican has welcomed millions of visitors and thousands of artists; been a home for artistic exchange and performance; a public place for discovery; a resource for local communities, and played a significant role inspiring and developing future artists.

Over the course of a long weekend (3-6 March 2022), the programme will highlight the important work of the Barbican's longstanding artistic residents and partners, including the **London Symphony Orchestra (LSO)**, resident orchestra since day one; and Artistic Associate hip hop dance company **Boy Blue**. Various elements of the programme will explore art and film created in the period the Barbican was conceived and built; and also bring **Bishopsgate Institute** to the Centre for the first time, who will guest curate an archive display highlighting 40 moments and stories in London's LGBTQ+ history.

Will Gompertz, Artistic Director, Barbican, said: *'To mark our fortieth birthday, we have an exciting programme that offers something for everyone, showcasing the variety and eclectic mix of art, artists, events and approaches that is uniquely possible at the Barbican. For forty years we have been a space for artistic exchange, learning, performance and debate and we are grateful to the many artists, funders, visitors and our employees who have made the Barbican a unique and successful venue for all the arts.'*

'As we look ahead, with a new artistic vision, our ambition is to ensure that we continue to be an international beacon for the arts where everyone feels welcome. We will put education, inclusion and access at the heart of the work we do from our creative programme to the renewal of our building to ensure we present the diversity of perspectives represented in our society and develop the creative energy of the future.'

Highlights from the 40th birthday programme include:

- The **London Symphony Orchestra** has been the Centre's resident orchestra since its opening and played the very first concert at the Barbican in 1982. The LSO will perform a special 40th birthday concert on 3 March (repeated on 6 March) conducted by **Sir Simon Rattle** and marking the exact anniversary with a performance of Haydn's *The Creation* featuring an all-star line-up of singers. The LSO also celebrates its vibrant community and will present work that has been made possible through the foundation of its Barbican residency: there will be specially commissioned birthday fanfares by **Cassie Kinoshi**, and a celebration of young composers, instrumentalists and community groups in the foyers pre-concert.
- ***Songs In The Key Of London***, an homage to London through song, was first commissioned by the Barbican in 2010 and will now be reprised as an anniversary project. Co-curated by songwriter **Chris Difford** of Squeeze and DJ and presenter **Nihal Arthanayake**, the concert features musicians such as **Brett Anderson**, **Marc Almond**, **Emmy the Great**, **Louise Marshall**, **Zara McFarlane**, **Nadine Shah**, and **Ruby Turner**. There will also be contributions from **Barbican Young Poets** and other guest artists.
- On 4 March, the Barbican's Associate Orchestra since 2000, **BBC Symphony Orchestra** marks 40 years of the Barbican, under the baton of chief conductor **Sakari Oramo**. Judith Weir's choral work *Concrete* pays homage to the Barbican – its idealism, its boldness, and the stories of the city from which it emerged. The BBC

Symphony Chorus join for Ravel's *Daphnis and Chloe*, and Elgar's cello concerto completes the programme: a work performed at the building's first public concert. Following the BBC SO's concert which starts at 7pm, the Barbican's Associate Ensemble since 2012, **Britten Sinfonia** performs Steve Reich's pulsating *City Life*, where samples of speech, heartbeats and sounds from urban life form part of the fabric of the composition, as well as the world premiere of a new co-commission for the occasion by Dobrinka Tabakova: *Barbican Glade*. Britten Sinfonia's concert begins at 9.30pm on 4 March.

- On 5 March, the Barbican presents *The Future is Female*, a free immersive celebration of piano music by powerful women across the centuries. The performance takes place in the tranquil surroundings of the Barbican Conservatory, where pianist and curator **Sarah Cahill**, together with pianists from Guildhall School of Music & Drama, performs a 6-hour programme in one afternoon, featuring music by female composers from the last 300 years, including new commissions by Arlene Sierra and Errollyn Wallen. Audience members will be welcome to sit, stand or stroll around, as they prefer.
- A major new exhibition **Postwar Modern: New Art in Britain 1945-1965**, opening on 3 March, will explore the visual arts created in a unique period of reconstruction after the Second World War when the Barbican was being conceived to repopulate and bring culture to a large area of London damaged in the Second World War.
- From 28 February – 21 March, **Bishopsgate Institute** will be staging a take-over of The Curve with an archive installation of objects, ephemera and media highlighting 40 moments and stories in London's LGBTQ+ history. In response to the exhibition, a group of Young Creatives will create new creative work as part of a free programme that will see the group engage with archives, collections and LGBTQ+ themes, unveiled at a **Young Barbican Night** on 17 March. Also, Barbican Cinema will present a rare screening of the landmark gay sex ed documentary, *The Gay Man's Guide to Safer Sex* (UK, 1992, dir David Lewis) on 1 March followed by a ScreenTalk with producer **Tony Carne** and film curator Selina Robinson, who will discuss the film's legacy.
- On 5 and 6 March, a family-friendly celebration of hip hop dance for all to enjoy in the Theatre from the Barbican's longstanding Artistic Associate **Boy Blue** who celebrate their 21st anniversary in 2022; and on 4 and 5 March, a mixed-bill showcasing **The PappyShow's** own work and other outstanding artists using dance, physical performance, spoken word and a live DJ set in The Pit. Audiences will be able to see both shows in one evening on Saturday 5 March.
- From 3 March and throughout the month, cinema celebrates global modernist cinema with the season **Other Modernisms, Other Futures: Global Art Cinema 1960-80**. The season showcases an array of cinematic modernisms – innovative and risk-taking films – by filmmakers who thought of their films as interventions in contemporary social, political, or ideological debates, as a contribution towards new possibilities, new futures and new worlds.
- **Family Film Club** will celebrate the upcoming International Women's Day with a specially curated programme of children's shorts made by female filmmakers from all over the world, including Evgenia Golubeva's award winning comedy *The Witch and the Baby*.

Full programme information for the above and more is detailed below

The Barbican believes in creating space for people and ideas to connect through its international arts programme, community events and learning activity. To keep its programme accessible to everyone, and to keep investing in the artists it works with, the Barbican needs to raise more than 60% of its income through ticket sales, commercial

activities and fundraising every year. Donations can be made here: barbican.org.uk/donate.

MUSIC

[London Symphony Orchestra/Rattle - Haydn The Creation](#)

Thu 3 / Sun 6 Mar 2022, Barbican Hall

On 3 and 6 March the LSO marks the 40th anniversary of the opening of the Barbican with a performance of Haydn's *The Creation*, conducted by **Sir Simon Rattle** and featuring **Lucy Crowe** (soprano), **Andrew Staples** (tenor), **Roderick Williams** (baritone) and the **London Symphony Chorus** directed by **Simon Halsey**. A celebration of young composers, instrumentalists and community groups takes place in the foyers pre-concert.

[BBC Symphony Orchestra/Oramo - Elgar's Cello Concerto](#)

Fri 4 Mar 2022, 7pm, Barbican Hall

On 4 March, in a concert where brutalism meets orchestral beauty, the Barbican's Associate Orchestra, **BBC Symphony Orchestra** marks 40 years of the Barbican under the baton of chief conductor **Sakari Oramo**. **Judith Weir's** choral work *Concrete* pays homage to the Barbican – its idealism, its boldness, and the stories of the city from which it emerged, and Elgar's seminal work for cello and orchestra completes the programme performed by cellist **Senja Rummukainen**, a piece performed at the building's first public concert.

[Britten Sinfonia - City Life](#)

Fri 4 Mar 2022, 9.30pm, Milton Court Concert Hall

On 4 March, as part of the Barbican's 40th anniversary celebrations, Barbican's Associate Ensemble **Britten Sinfonia** performs **Steve Reich's** pulsating *City Life* (1995), where samples of speech, heartbeats and sounds from urban life are part of the fabric of the piece. The concert also features Brett Dean's *Pastoral Symphony* and the world premiere of *Barbican Glade*, a new co-commission for the occasion by Dobrinka Tabakova.

[The Future is Female: Sarah Cahill](#)

Sat 5 Mar 2022, 12pm, Barbican Conservatory, free entry

The Future is Female is a free immersive celebration of piano music by powerful women across the centuries performed by Sarah Cahill. The performance takes place in the tranquil surroundings of the Barbican Conservatory, where pianist and curator Sarah Cahill performs a 6-hour programme in one afternoon, featuring music by female composers from the last 300 years, including new commissions by Arlene Sierra and Errollyn Wallen. Audience members will be welcome to sit, stand or stroll around, as they prefer. Sarah Cahill is joined on stage by pianists from Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

[Songs In The Key Of London](#)

Sat 5 Mar 2022, Barbican Hall

First commissioned by the Barbican in 2010, this special project – *Songs In The Key Of London* – is reprised to coincide with the Barbican's 40th birthday weekend in March 2022. Featured guest artists so far confirmed include: **Brett Anderson**, **Marc Almond**, **Zara McFarlane**, **Nadine Shah**, **Graham Gouldman**, **Ruby Turner**, **Emmy the Great**, **Kathryn Williams**, **Ayanna Witter-Johnson**, **Matt Deighton**, **Sarah Cracknell** and **Debsey Wykes** (Saint Etienne), **Louise Marshall** and her choir 'Sound Creators', **Boo Hewerdine** and **Komal**. Musical Directors for the concert will be **Kate St John** and **Neill MacColl**. The evening will also feature contributions from **Barbican Young Poets**.

VISUAL ARTS

[Postwar Modern: New Art in Britain 1945-1965](#)

Thu 3 Mar—Sun 26 Jun 2022, Art Gallery

Postwar Modern: New Art in Britain 1945-1965 is an ambitious and timely reassessment of art produced in Britain during the twenty years after the Second World War. This major exhibition brings together around 200 works of painting, sculpture and photography by 48 artists. *Postwar Modern* focuses on the 'new' in this period: work created by artists who were shaped by their direct experiences of the war, its global impact and aftershocks, at a formative stage in their development. These very conditions – of past horror, continued anxiety and future promise – gave rise to an incredible richness of new imagery, forms and materials as artists in Britain sought to establish meaning and purpose and to reimagine the world around them.

Out and About!: Archiving LGBTQ+ History at Bishopsgate Institute
Mon 28 Feb – Mon 21 Mar 2022, The Curve

Bishopsgate Institute will be staging a take-over of The Curve with an archive installation of objects, ephemera and media highlighting 40 moments and stories in London's LGBTQ+ history.

Bishopsgate Institute has been collecting the lived experiences of everyday people for over a century, and their unique special collections and archives present the stories of individuals, collectives and organisations who fought for social, political, and cultural change.

The archive installation includes items documenting areas of pride, protest, performance and art; from the gay rights movement to the everyday celebrations and struggles of LGBTQ+ Londoners.

The installation will be accompanied by a programme of informal talks and conversations hosted inside the gallery by the individuals whose stories are on display.

Barbican Members will enjoy exclusive after-hours access to *Postwar Modern* and *Out and About!*, be able to listen to exclusive curator talks, take part in a range of creative workshops with Artizine, and have a chance to explore the Conservatory with a drink from our bar. Tickets will be £5 and more information how to become a member can be found [here](#).

THEATRE AND DANCE

[The PappyShow Pit Party](#)

Fri 4 & Sat 5 March 2022, The Pit

Press performance: Sat 5 Mar 2022, 6pm

Join us for an evening of radical joy, celebrating bold and beautiful dance, music and the best of vibes curated by **The PappyShow**.

The playful ensemble company host this exciting mixed-bill of performances that showcase their own work and other outstanding artists they love. Dance, laugh and celebrate as they introduce the best of dance, physical performance, spoken word and a live DJ set; all with collaboration, community and showcasing marginalised identities at the heart of the night.

Founded by **Kane Husbands** in 2013, The PappyShow is a theatre company of ten core friends that brings people together to move and create room for people to play and celebrate their voice. As well as their critically-acclaimed productions – such as *BOYS*, Winner of the Origins Outstanding New Work Award at VAULT Festival and OFFIE nominated *GIRLS* – they lead diverse workshops that centre training for everybody and all bodies.

[Boy Blue – A Night with Boy Blue](#)

Sat 5 & Sun 6 March 2022, Barbican Theatre

Press performance: Sat 5 Mar 2022, 8pm

Mixing exuberant hip-hop dance, a joyful sense of community and the heart-thumping

rhythms of an electronic score, **Boy Blue's** biennial showcase always culminates in uproarious applause.

Hosted by **Michael 'Mikey J' Asante** and **Kenrick 'H2O' Sandy**, these performances assemble the entire company from the youngest pupils to professional dancers. Seventy performers flood the stage in ensembles that match taut choreography with empowering movement and irresistible musicality.

This family-friendly show celebrates the pioneers of hip-hop dance theatre and their creative mission to educate, enlighten and entertain. 2022 marks the company's 21st birthday, as they look back and pay it forward.

After Saturday's performance, over 18s are invited to dance the night away at the [BSI Jam: Beats, Streets & Inspiration – After Party](#). Boy Blue's Michael 'Mikey J' Asante and guests play the best in R&B, hip hop, funk, house and old skool music until late in the Barbican foyer.

CINEMA

[The Gay Man's Guide to Safer Sex](#) (18) + ScreenTalk with producer Tony Carne and film curator Selina Robinson (UK 1992, 50 mins)
Tues 1 Mar, Cinema 2, 8.30pm

To complement the *Out and About! Archiving LGBTQ+ history at Bishopsgate Institution* exhibition in The Curve, Cinema will show a rare screening of the landmark gay sex ed documentary, *The Gay Man's Guide to Safer Sex*, to mark its 30th anniversary. Made in association with the Terrence Higgins Trust, when the age of consent for gay and bi men was 21, *The Gay Man's Guide to Safer Sex* was a vital sex educational doc that offered safe sex advice (which had been absent from information communicated by Margaret Thatcher's government) in an artistic and unashamedly erotic piece of cinema. This film was filmed for a home video audience and the picture and audio quality reflect the time it was made.

[Other Modernisms, Other Futures: Global Art Cinema 1960-80](#)
Thu 3 – Thu 31 Mar, Cinema 2

The Cinema season, **Other Modernisms, Other Futures: Global Art Cinema** looks at the period between 1960-80 when filmmakers adopted new, innovative, risk-taking approaches to cinema. Typically considered to be a movement defined by Western cinema, this season features six films made by modernist directors from across the world. They conceived of their films as interventions in contemporary social, political, or ideological debates, as a contribution towards the creation of new possibilities, new futures, new worlds. Manifestoes were written; 'new' cinemas emerged; directors crafted an authentic cultural identity for their country on screen. *Other Modernisms, Other Futures: Global Art Cinema (1960-80)* samples a cross-section of this filmmaking, including: *July Rain* by *Marlen Khutsiev* (USSR, 1967); *Downpour* by Bahram Beyzaie (Iran, 1972); *Interview* by Mrinal Sen (India, 1971), *Blood of the Condor* by *Jorge Sanjinés and the Ukamau Collective* (Bolivia, 1971); *Fad'Jal* by Safi Fay (Senegal, 1971) and *De Cierta Manera* by Sara Gómez (Cuba, 1971).

Family Film Club celebrating International Women's Day
Sat 5 Mar, Barbican Cinema 2

Family Film Club will celebrate the upcoming International Women's Day with a specially curated programme of children's shorts made by female filmmakers from all over the world, including **Evgenia Golubeva's** award winning comedy *The Witch and the Baby*. The screening, with HOH captions, will be preceded by a Show and Tell introduction by director, writer and character designer Evgenia Golubeva, with BSL interpretation.

[Adrian Wootton Presents... The Godfather \(15\) 4K Restoration](#)
Sun 6 Mar 2022, Barbican Cinema 1

Frequently regarded as one of the greatest films of all time, Francis Ford Coppola's era defining crime drama, *The Godfather* (US 1972) was nominated for 11 Academy Awards and won 3 for Best Picture, Best Actor and Best Adapted Screenplay. Screening at the Barbican in a stunning 4K restoration, the film will be followed by a special presentation from Film London CEO, **Adrian Wootton OBE**, who will delve into the behind the scenes drama and the making of this Hollywood classic.

CREATIVE LEARNING

Part of the Barbican's 40th birthday celebrations, the Barbican's Creative Learning team will organise *The Archive is Permanently Under Construction*, a free programme running from 22 February – 22 March and open to Young Creatives between the ages of 18 and 25 interested in critically engaging with archives, collections, LGBTQ+ themes and are excited to create new work in collaboration with others.

This Young Creatives group will work with a lead facilitator and the Barbican's Creative Learning and Marketing teams to exchange ideas, with guest artist sessions to explore new ways to unlearn established norms, roles, and relations in order to produce visibility and an alternative body of work. The project will culminate with a **Young Barbican Night** on 17 March 2022, with the group creating a series of original creative responses to the upcoming exhibition in *The Curve: Out and About!: Archiving LGBTQ+ History at Bishopsgate Institute's* archive collection.

This opportunity is being recruited through an open call and more information can be found [here](#).

RETAIL

Barbican Shop will be stocking a range of items to mark the 40th birthday, including a special [40 Years of Barbican](#) print by illustrator **Daniel Clark**, and more to be announced soon.

Barbican Shop offers an exciting selection of design-led gifts, inspired by the Barbican's artistic programme and dynamic architecture, and purchases made at the shop directly support the arts and learning activities of the Barbican. The Barbican Shop can be found on Level G of the Centre, and online at shop.barbican.org.uk

ENDS

Notes to Editors

Press Information

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Public information

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Barbican newsroom

All Barbican Centre press releases, news announcements and the Communications team's contact details are listed on our website at www.barbican.org.uk/news

Read, Watch & Listen

Digital content is available via the Barbican's website through [Read, Watch & Listen](#), [Cinema on Demand](#), [Concerts On Demand](#), [Live from the Barbican](#) and its social channels. In addition, podcasts can also be accessed by subscribing to the Nothing Concrete podcast via [Acast](#), [Spotify](#) or wherever you get your podcasts.

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 a 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, public spaces, a library, the 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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