



Press Release

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Britten Sinfonia becomes Associate Ensemble at the Barbican from 2012/13 season

From September 2012, Britten Sinfonia joins the Barbican's outstanding roster of international performance partners when it becomes an Associate Ensemble at the Barbican, alongside the Academy of Ancient Music.

From 2012/13 season, Britten Sinfonia will perform its London subscription series exclusively at the Barbican. The orchestra will also feature in work produced in collaboration with the Barbican's artistic team on projects that embrace a wide range of music.

Britten Sinfonia will launch its new association at the Barbican on Saturday 27th October 2012, with concerts and free stage events to celebrate the orchestra's 20th birthday. Journeying through 400 years of music, the birthday celebrations feature close artistic collaborators including **Alina Ibragimova**, **Mark Padmore**, **Nico Muhly**, **Pekka Kuusisto**, **Joanna MacGregor** and the orchestra's two newest ensembles, **Britten Sinfonia Voices** and **Britten Sinfonia Academy** for young musicians, plus special guest appearances.

Britten Sinfonia's 2012/13 Barbican season also features Beethoven Piano Concertos directed from the keyboard by **Angela Hewitt**, the world premiere of a new work by **Eriks Esenvalds** as part of a 'Baltic Nights' programme directed by **Alina Ibragimova**, a performance of **Oliver Knussen's** *Where the Wild Things Are* in a double-bill with *Higglety Pigglety Pop*, Philip Glass's *Koyaanisquatsi* and acclaimed tenor **Ian Bostridge** performing works by Britten and Schubert.

David Butcher, Chief Executive of Britten Sinfonia comments:

"It's a great honour for Britten Sinfonia to be the Barbican's Associate Ensemble from the 2012/13 season. The Barbican's wide ranging and pioneering arts programmes sit well with our own artistic outlook. We look forward to presenting and developing projects in partnership with one of the world's finest Arts centres and to welcoming new audiences as well as our existing supporters at this auspicious time in our history."

Angela Dixon, Head of Music at the Barbican comments:

"It is with great pleasure and excitement that we welcome Britten Sinfonia to the Barbican's family of ensembles. Britten Sinfonia stands for excellence and diversity and these shared goals make this a partnership of limitless possibilities. I am delighted that this new venture will start with the orchestra's 20th birthday celebrations; this promises to be an eclectic journey featuring many of the strong relationships the orchestra has forged with some of the world's most exciting artists. We look forward to seeing Britten Sinfonia and their audiences at the Barbican this season."

Helen Lax, Regional Director, Arts Council England, East said: *'These high profile roles for the Academy of Ancient Music and Britten Sinfonia confirm the orchestras' positioning in the top echelon of international ensembles. These positions will unlock exciting new opportunities for artistic collaborations, audiences, donors and sponsors, and the Barbican's collaborative approach towards artistic planning will hugely benefit both orchestras. We are very proud to support these orchestras and the exceptional work they produce.'*

Full details of Britten Sinfonia's 2012/13 Barbican season, including a downloadable brochure, will be available at www.brittensinfonia.com from January 30 2012 when all public concert bookings for 2012/13 season open at the Barbican. Details of the Barbican's complete 2012/13 classical music season can be seen at www.barbican.org.uk/classical1213

Britten Sinfonia at the Barbican - March

Mendelssohn's *Elijah* – 7 March

World premiere of Nico Muhly's *Cello Concerto* and Owen Pallett's *Violin Concerto* – 16 March

Prior to the new season, Britten Sinfonia will take to the Barbican stage in March for two concerts that give a flavour of the ambition and scope of the new association:

Britten Sinfonia's newest ensemble, **Britten Sinfonia Voices**, made its acclaimed debut under Mark Elder in Berlioz's *L'enfance du Christ* in December 2011. It returns to the stage, alongside the orchestra and an outstanding quartet of soloists - **Simon Keenlyside, Andrew Kennedy, Lucy Crowe, Catherine Wyn-Rogers** – in Mendelssohn's enduringly popular oratorio *Elijah* as part of the Barbican's series of English oratorios. (7 March)

Nico Muhly was composer in residence with Britten Sinfonia at the start of 2009, during which time the orchestra commissioned him to write two new works. They join forces again for world premiere performances of Muhly's new *Cello Concerto*, featuring **Oliver Coates**, and **Owen Pallett's** violin concerto, featuring Britten Sinfonia regular collaborator **Pekka Kuusisto**. The concert, on 16 March, also includes music by **Missy Mazzoli** and a reprise of Muhly's recent, collaborative 802 Tour featuring **Sam Amidon** and **Thomas Bartlett** aka Doveman amongst the special guests.

Tickets, available from Barbican Box Office: 0845 120 7550 www.barbican.org.uk

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Notes to Editors

Britten Sinfonia is one of the world's most celebrated and pioneering ensembles, renowned for the quality of its performances and an intelligent approach to concert programming that is centred on the development of its players. Unusually it does not have a principal conductor or director but chooses to collaborate with a range of the finest international guest artists from across the musical spectrum as suited to each particular project. Founded in 1992, the orchestra is inspired by the ethos of Benjamin Britten through world-class performances of the highest quality, illuminating and distinctive programmes where the old meets the new, and projects in the local community as well as in the world's finest halls. Britten Sinfonia is Associate Ensemble at London's Barbican Centre, has residencies in Cambridge (where it is the University's Orchestra-in Residence), Norwich and Brighton, and makes regular guest appearances at UK festivals including the BBC Proms. Its blossoming international profile has recently included acclaimed tours to Mexico and South America, and to Europe. In February 2012, Britten Sinfonia makes its New York debut at the Lincoln Center. Britten Sinfonia is a BBC Radio 3 broadcast partner, and records regularly for Harmonia Mundi and Hyperion. www.brittensinfonia.com