

Press Release

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Britten Sinfonia - Spring 2017 Highlights

Thomas Adès begins a three year Britten Sinfonia Beethoven Symphony Cycle, **Mark Padmore** reimagines Bach's *St John's Passion*, and **Mahan Esfahani** goes to town with Scarlatti and De Falla... just three highlights from Britten Sinfonia's Spring 2017 season.

Also on the menu: three new lunchtime commissions by **Mark-Anthony Turnage**, **Brian Elias** and **Elena Langer**; a Barbican celebration of composer **John Adams at 70**, including a new work by **Timo Andres**; the world premiere of a harpsichord concerto by **Francisco Coll**; a performance of Britten's *Curlew River* in Hamburg, with **Ian Bostridge**; family concert, *Max the Brave*, with live illustration from award-winning children's author, **Ed Vere**.

Britten Sinfonia is Associate Ensemble at the Barbican and Resident Orchestra at Saffron Hall.

See below for month-by-month listings of Britten Sinfonia's Spring 2017 concerts.
Full details at: <http://www.brittensinfonia.com>

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The concerts

3 & 4 February

Mahan Esfahani directs – Milton Court Concert Hall, London; Saffron Hall

Following a recent tour to China with the orchestra, **Mahan Esfahani** returns to Britten Sinfonia for a Mediterranean flavored concert, featuring the world premiere of **Francisco Coll's Harpsichord Concerto**, alongside a selection of Scarlatti sonatas, and works by De Falla including his *Harpsichord Concerto* and the ballet score, *El amor brujo*. With contralto **Claudia Huckle**.

8, 10 & 14 February

Britten Sinfonia at Lunch 2 – Mark-Anthony Turnage premiere

Wigmore Hall; Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Cambridge West Road Concert Hall

Col, a tribute to composer Colin Matthews by **Mark-Anthony Turnage**, his first commission for the orchestra's At Lunch series, features alongside works by Stravinsky, Oliver Knussen and Ravel, in a programme curated by Turnage.

17, 18 & 19 February

Family Picture Book Concert – Max the Brave

Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Saffron Hall; Barbican Hall

Britten Sinfonia's sell-out Family Picture Book concerts return with a new adventure, as **Ed Vere's** vivid children's book comes alive with music. With live illustrations from the author, younger audiences (recommended age 3-7) are invited to join fearless kitten, Max, Britten Sinfonia musicians and composer/presenter **Hannah Conway** on an unexpected musical journey.

25 February

John Adams at 70 – Barbican Hall

In a concert that both looks to the future, and reflects on the work and influence of John Adams, one of America's most influential and original composers, Britten Sinfonia gives the world premiere of **Timo Andres's** *Steady Hand* alongside two of Adams' most popular works, *Chamber Symphony* and *Grand Pianola Music*, and Philip Glass's *Music in Similar Motion*. Part of the Barbican's *The Sounds that Changed America*.

28 February

Curlew River – Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg

Ian Bostridge revisits Britten's *Curlew River* in a concert performance at Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, reuniting with Britten Sinfonia (Netia Jones's acclaimed production of the work, with Britten Sinfonia and Bostridge, was a highlight of the Barbican's Britten 100 celebrations and subsequently toured to the USA).

13 & 14 April

Bach's St John Passion, with Mark Padmore

Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Barbican Hall

Evangelist in Bach's *St John's Passion* is a role that **Mark Padmore** has made his own. He has sung the part numerous times, describing Bach's music as "an endless journey of discovery". His ceaseless exploration continues in this concert, in which he both sings and directs Britten Sinfonia, with Bach's masterwork presented alongside poetry by TS Eliot and sacred texts.

19, 21 and 25 April

Britten Sinfonia at Lunch 3 – Brian Elias premiere

Wigmore Hall; Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Cambridge West Road

Brian Elias' new work for Britten Sinfonia's At Lunch series, an oboe quintet, features alongside Mozart's *String Quintet in C Minor 406/516b* and Finzi's *Interlude*.

26, 27 May & 2 June – Adès Beethoven Symphony Cycle 1

Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Saffron Hall; Barbican Hall

The launch of a three-year Beethoven Symphony Cycle conducted by **Thomas Adès** with Beethoven's music interleaved with the wondrously idiosyncratic music of **Gerald Barry**. The opening concert pairs Beethoven's witty first symphony with the virtuosic second. These are complemented by Gerald Barry's powerful setting of Beethoven's love letter to his '*immortal beloved*'.

30 May – Adès, Barry and Beethoven – Milton Court Concert Hall, London

Ludwig van Beethoven was music's ultimate revolutionary whilst Gerald Barry smashes every rule of new music. For Thomas Adès, they're '*volcanic*', '*galvanising*' creative spirits, and he takes to the piano for a concert of chamber works by the two composers, including Beethoven's Septet, and Piano Trio no. 2 in E flat, and Barry's Five Chorales from the Intelligence Park.

6 June – Adès Beethoven Symphony Cycle 2 – Barbican Hall

In the second Beethoven Symphony Cycle concert, Thomas Adès conducts Beethoven's 3rd Symphony and Gerald Barry's *Chevaux de Frise*.

13 & 14 July – At Lunch 4 – Britten Sinfonia Academy – Elena Langer premiere

Norwich St Andrew's Hall; Cambridge West Road Concert Hall

The young players from Britten Sinfonia Academy, which features outstanding musical talent from the east of England, premiere a new work written specially for them by **Elena Langer**, in a programme that also includes a fanfare by teenage Academy composer member, **Morgan Overton**.

Website links for venues

www.barbican.org.uk

www.saffronhall.com

www.westroad.org

www.wigmore-hall.org.uk

www.elbphilharmonie.de/en/whats-on/benjamin-britten-curlew-river/7115