

Press Release

For release: 13 October 2017

Britten Sinfonia @ 25

Britten Sinfonia 'At Lunch' concert series resumes service for 2017-2018 season

Featuring new commissions by Nik Bärtsch, Leo Chadburn, Pulitzer Prize-winning American composer Caroline Shaw, Tom Coult and Mark Bowler, winner of Britten Sinfonia's OPUS2017 competition for unpublished composers.

Series begins 17 November 2017

Wigmore Hall London, Cambridge and Norwich

Britten Sinfonia's award winning 'At Lunch' series returns in 2017-2018 with concerts that marry new commissions with adventurously curated programmes of chamber works drawn from across four centuries. This season the orchestra has commissioned new works from distinctive voices of a new generation of international composers, and for the first time, jazz and electronics feature on the lunchtime menu. All concerts start at 1pm, last an hour and serve up a musical feast without breaking the bank, with commissioned composers discussing their work in free pre and post-concert events in London (12.15pm) and Cambridge (2.15pm).

David Butcher, Britten Sinfonia Chief Executive comments:

"The artistic sensibility of chamber music is at the heart of everything Britten Sinfonia does; we choose not to have a Principal Conductor or Music Director, instead preferring a collaborative approach with outstanding guest artists on individual projects. Our Principals, led by joint Leaders Thomas Gould and Jacqueline Shave, are amongst the country's finest chamber musicians, and the lunchtime series offers a chance to hear them in more intimate repertoire. Expect to hear music making of the highest order and some surprising juxtapositions."

This season Britten Sinfonia has invited five distinctive composers from both sides of the Atlantic to write new works for the series. **Nik Bärtsch** is a leading jazz composer, producer and pianist; **Leo Chadburn**, whose new "At Lunch" work will combine string trio and electronics, is also a self-styled "transgressive, investigatory pop" performer under his alter-ego Simon Bookish; American composer **Caroline Shaw**, the youngest ever winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Music in 2013, is a solo violinist, chamber musician, vocalist in the Grammy Award-winning ensemble Roomful of Teeth, and has collaborated with superstar rapper Kanye West; **Tom Coult's** 'St John's Dance', a musical reflection on mass hysteria, opened this year's BBC Proms. Coult will write for and act as a mentor to the young musicians of Britten Sinfonia Academy, with special 'at lunch' Academy performances in July 2018. **Mark Bowler** completes the lunchtime line up. Winner of the orchestra's OPUS2017 competition for unpublished composers, he has strong roots in both classical and folk tradition. His new work will feature in the first concert of the At Lunch season.

AT LUNCH – PROGRAMME 1 17-24 NOVEMBER 2017

Britten Sinfonia's 'At Lunch' season begins in November with a programme led and curated by Swiss pianist, composer and producer **Nik Bärtsch** as part of the EFG London Jazz Festival. Bärtsch sets his latest work, commissioned by Britten Sinfonia in partnership with the EFG London Jazz Festival, alongside pieces by two emerging New York-based composers **Sarah Kirkland Snider** and **Judd**

Greenstein. The programme is completed by a new commission for flute, clarinet and double-bass by **Mark Bowler**, the winner of OPUS2017, Britten Sinfonia's popular competition for unpublished composers. Bowler has written for orchestra, chamber groups and vocal ensembles and is a founding member of folk collective Tribe of Tinkers. The Ligeti Quartet recently recorded his *Quartet for Strings*, a four-movement work that explores folk traditions of the British Isles and Eastern Europe. He was chosen as the winner of this year's OPUS competition following a weekend of intensive workshops with Bärtsch and Britten Sinfonia players.

www.nikbeartsch.com www.markbmusic.co.uk

Friday 17 November – Wigmore Hall, London

Tickets - £13 (£5 under 18s and students)

www.wigmore-hall.org.uk

Tuesday 21 November – West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

Tickets - £9, £3 under 18s and students

www.cambridgelivetrust.co.uk/tickets

Friday 24 November – St Andrew's Hall, Norwich

Tickets - £9, £3 under 18s and students

www.theatreroyalnorwich.co.uk 01603 630 0000

AT LUNCH – PROGRAMME 2 JANUARY 2018

A new work by **Leo Chadburn**, co-commissioned with Wigmore Hall, is on the menu in the second 'At Lunch' concert in January 2018. Scored for electronics and string trio – the outstanding line up features Britten Sinfonia Principals **Jacqueline Shave** (violin), **Caroline Dearnley** (cello) and **Huw Watkins** (piano) – Chadburn's new work features alongside music spanning 350 years: **Biber's Anunciation Sonata**, **Mozart's Piano Trio in B flat**, **Arvo Pärt's Spiegel im Spiegel** and **Philip Glass's Orbit**. www.simonbookish.com

Tuesday 23 January – West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

Wednesday 24 January – Wigmore Hall, London

Friday 26 January – St Andrew's Hall, Norwich

AT LUNCH – PROGRAMME 3 APRIL 2018

Britten Sinfonia leader **Thomas Gould** (violin), Principals **Clare Finnimore** (viola), **Caroline Dearnley** (cello), and **Tom Poster** (piano) perform **Caroline Shaw's** new piano quartet (co-commissioned by Wigmore Hall) alongside Brahms's expansive *Piano Quartet No. 1 in G minor Op. 25*. www.carolineshaw.com

Tuesday 17 April – West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

Wednesday 18 April – Wigmore Hall, London

Friday 20 April – St Andrew's Hall, Norwich

**BRITTEN SINFONIA ACADEMY AT LUNCH – PROGRAMME 4
THURSDAY 12 JULY & FRIDAY 13 JULY 2018**

Britten Sinfonia Academy (BSA) is a dynamic chamber orchestra for talented secondary school-aged musicians from the east of England. Mirroring the adventurous programming and musical integrity of its parent orchestra, BSA works without a conductor, playing side-by-side with Britten Sinfonia musicians who nurture and challenge Academy members, developing their musical and leadership skills.

Each season BSA embarks on a series of intensive weekend courses and the orchestra has chances to perform alongside Britten Sinfonia professionals and internationally renowned guest artists in venues including the Barbican, Saffron Hall, West Road Concert Hall Cambridge and St Andrews Hall in Norwich.

This season, **Tom Coult** is working as a mentor to the Academy and its composer members, and will write a new work to be premiered at the Academy's summer 2018 lunchtime concerts in Norwich on 12 July and Cambridge on 13 July. www.tomcoult.com

Full details www.brittensinfonia.com

Further press information from:

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WATCH THE TRAILER FOR BRITTEN SINFONIA'S COMPLETE 2017-2018 SEASON AT
<https://vimeo.com/231839756>