

LONDON SINFONIETTA 2020/21 SEASON

NEW MUSIC FOR NEW TIMES

“The world’s top new music ensemble” *The Times*

Fresh from its exciting BBC PROM, the London Sinfonietta now announces a season of world premieres and online new music events that reflect and engage with the world we live in. This coming season, the ensemble is committed to creating projects that unite onstage and online performances with our participation and learning programme involving schools, communities, early-career artists and audiences across the UK.

Resident Orchestra at Southbank Centre and Artistic Associates at Kings Place, the London Sinfonietta is finding its own way - through a live and online programme - to return to making music in the time of Coronavirus.

AUTUMN SUMMARY

- **Leading composer George Lewis curates evening of established and emerging black composers**
- **26 world premieres including major new work to celebrate James Dillon’s 70th birthday**
- **Performing the new opera *Violet* by Tom Coult and Alice Birch in association with Music Theatre Wales, Britten Pears Arts and Theater Magdeburg**
- **Community Commissions create new portrait works inspired by local individuals, groups or organisations during the pandemic**
- **Acclaimed schools *Sound Out* programme is moved online to reach more teachers and pupils with the inspiration to compose**
- **Opportunities for the public to create and perform new music alongside the London Sinfonietta**
- **New Digital Channel expands to include regular releases of live and as-live performances and other video and podcast series**
- **Diverse group of new composers and performers given opportunities to develop their professional work through Writing The Future, Blue Touch Paper, London Sinfonietta Academy programmes**

A NOTE FROM ANDREW BURKE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR:

We believe – especially now - that music matters to society, and the work of the London Sinfonietta with new music can act as a powerful catalyst for positive development in individuals and communities. Work with composers and artists can both reflect what is happening and, in some ways, influence change. As well as championing the power of new music as an art in itself, it is also important to us that we make a point of showcasing new work that engages with the way we live today. And, as always, we aim to give world-class performances that can be an inspiration to anyone who hears them.

NEW MUSIC FOR NEW TIMES

The London Sinfonietta's 2020/21 season proudly features many new works and UK premieres, a number of which engage with society today - encouraging thought and reflection about the world in which we live.

The last few months have seen the importance of community, and the positive impact this can bring. The London Sinfonietta celebrates this by commissioning a series of four new portrait works inspired by individuals, groups or organisations. Nominated by the public, each **Community Commission** is written by a different composer to reflect a local story. These new solo works will be premiered throughout October in each community setting to celebrate the importance of live performance, plus filmed and streamed via the London Sinfonietta Channel to be shared more widely online.

The Community Commissions will be composed by **Zoe Martlew**, **Yshani Peripanayagam**, **Trish Clowes** and **Cassie Kinoshi**.

The London Sinfonietta begins its Southbank Centre season with **Yet Unheard**, a varied and powerful programme of under-represented points of view co-curated by leading new music figures **George Lewis** and **Elaine Mitchener**. Conducted by **Vimbayi Kasiboni** and broadcast live from Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall on BBC Radio 3 (28 October, video relay to follow), the performance features **Hannah Kendall's** unsettling **Verdala** exploring the experience of the British West Indian Regiment in the First World War.

Other works include **Courtney Bryan's** haunting and emotionally fraught **Yet Unheard** which sets the voice of Sandra Bland, a young African-American woman found hanged in her jail cell three days after her arrest during a 2015 traffic stop in Texas. The exciting music of Cuban composer **Tania León** begins the programme, while **George Lewis' energetic Assemblage** provides a taste of what's to come in his upcoming commission for the London Sinfonietta.

Producer, writer and pioneering electronic musician **Matthew Herbert's** latest London Sinfonietta commission **more, more, more** is a comment on endless consumerism. Inspired by Gursky's *Untitled XIII*, a fascinating and unnerving photograph of a landfill site in Chimalhuacán, Mexico City, the ensemble originally commissioned and premiered the piece as part of the major Hayward Gallery's major Andreas Gursky exhibition (streamed live from Kings Place online, 6 November 2020 plus on London Sinfonietta Channel). It will sit alongside a new work co-created by Matthew Herbert and a group of young people, which will also explore the climate emergency, in partnership with the Antarctic Heritage Trust.

To celebrate the 70th birthday of renowned Scottish composer **James Dillon**, London Sinfonietta give the world premiere of his **Pharmakeia**, the complete cycle of four

movements that began with his 2017 work *Circe* (BBC Radio 3 live broadcast from Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, 22 November, produced by London Sinfonietta in association with hcmf//). Known for his eclectic influences, *Circe* transformed the Greek goddess of magic into enchanting musical forms, with moments of suspense, playfulness and mysticism throughout. As a result listeners can expect an otherworldly, unnerving fairy-tale as they experience the full cycle.

Beyond the autumn highlights in 2021 include: **Laura Bowler's *Extinction*** (world premiere, Southbank Centre's Purcell Room, 30 April 2021) which addresses the ongoing challenge of climate change using public participation, while **Luke Bedford's *In the Voices of the Living*** featuring tenor **Mark Padmore** (world premiere, Southbank Centre's Purcell Room, 19 January 2021), has inspired an intergenerational community project running alongside, encouraging the young to hear from the life-experience of the elderly.

INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION FOR ALL

Providing access to new music for as many people as possible remains a core part of London Sinfonietta's mission with opportunities across the 20/21 season to take part and create alongside the ensemble.

Re:Assemble Online presents a festival day of new music streamed free to living rooms on 25 October via London Sinfonietta Channel. Across the afternoon and evening, a series of live streamed performances present exciting world premieres of solo and digital works including **Gavin Higgins**, **Shiva Feshareki** and **Hannah Kendall**. **Dai Fujikura's *Longing from Afar*** involves both public and professionals to create a moving work for lockdown, made especially to be performed over Zoom.

The festival also features the first opportunity to see **Richard Ayres' *The Garden*** online – a cautionary tale about our care of the planet. Discussions and audience Q&A's with composers such as **George Benjamin**, artists and London Sinfonietta players punctuate the day offering entry points for everyone from contemporary classical newbies to the mega fan.

As part of the ongoing European project **CONNECT** comes the next of the series of works commissioned for the public to appear on stage as artists with the London Sinfonietta. **Cathy Milliken's** new work ***Night Shift*** is inspired by Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and will feature two amateur choirs and contributions from members of the public and the audience on the night (world premiere, Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall, June 2021). The work is funded by the Art Mentor Foundation, Lucerne and created in partnership with Ensemble Modern, Asko Schoenberg and Remix Ensembles in Europe.

CONTEMPORARY COLLABORATIONS

London Sinfonietta continues to create fertile new collaborations between different art forms and organisations.

In February 2021, **Shabaka Hutchings**, **Elliot Galvin**, **Cassie Kinoshi** and **Laura Jurd** are just four of the composers from the world of jazz, pop, classical, and electronica who will be creating ***Notes about Now*** – songs that reflect the times we live in.

In May 2021, composer **Nicole Lizée** is creating a new music and video work, reflecting on the theme of isolation and the influence on her of composer Claude Vivier whose work is celebrated in the concert with performances of *Zipangu* and *Lonely Child*.

In December, students from **Central Saint Martins** will create new video pieces in response to the **Sinfonietta Shorts** series, which commissions solo works from an ever growing list of composers.

The London Sinfonietta's **World Premiere Wednesday** series continues through the season with short new solo works premiered live online. New works are included by jazz pianist **Robert Mitchell**, **Naomi Pinnock** and **Matthew Kaner** (broadcast on London Sinfonietta Channel throughout the season).

As part of its ongoing association with Music Theatre Wales, the London Sinfonietta is planning to premiere *Violet*, the new opera by Tom Coult and Alice Birch, at Snape Maltings in April 2021 and on tour.

LONDON SINFONIETTA DIGITAL CHANNEL

The London Sinfonietta's new digital channel at londonsinfonietta.org/channel continues to play a vital role in enabling the Ensemble to share the work of composers and artists with the public around the UK and the world, and particularly during the time of the pandemic.

In addition to the video streams of each autumn performance the Channel will also continue its regular online video and podcast series such as ***The Composers Mind***, ***The Music That Made Me***, ***Turning Points*** and ***Introductions to Contemporary Instruments***.

SUPPORTING SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

The London Sinfonietta was the first ensemble in the UK to deliver an education programme and has pioneered activity in music education ever since. Today, its **Sound Out** programme works in different locations around the UK providing opportunities for young people to compose in the classroom. The programme culminates in its annual concert for primary school children where they can explore iconic repertoire and be inspired to compose.

As part of its response to the pandemic, the London Sinfonietta will be taking the whole of **Sound Out online**, creating a new resource to support composition in the classroom. The concert at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall on 24 March 2021 will be streamed live on the internet for the first time, enabling schools across the country to participate.

This music initiative for schools comes at a time when music and the arts are declining in the curriculum. The London Sinfonietta believes it must stand for their importance, and aligns itself with the campaign run by ISM to petition for their survival in the education of young people.

DEVELOPING COMPOSING AND PERFORMING TALENT

London Sinfonietta plays a key role in developing emerging composers and performers through a wide range of activity. The fourth edition of the composer development programme ***Writing the Future*** will come to a head in the 20/21 season, with pieces performed which have been created by diverse composers challenged to re-imagine the work of the ensemble. The composers for 20/21 are: **Alicia Turner**, **Nwando Ebize**, **Alex Paxton** and **Luke Lewis**.

The 12th and 13th edition of the **London Sinfonietta Academy** both take place this coming season. The 12th edition, delayed from July 2020, will now take place in December. The 13th edition is planned again for the summer of 2021. The projects provide coaching, rehearsal and performance opportunities in contemporary music for young musicians auditioned from around the UK, culminating in a concert given side-by-side with members of the London Sinfonietta. This season also sees the launch of the newly formed **London Sinfonietta Junior Academy** offers workshop days and performance opportunities linked to events in the main programme of the Ensemble for teenage musicians throughout the season, recruited from partners around London and from regional Music Hub partners also.

LISTINGS INFORMATION:

Autumn Season 2020

COMMUNITY COMMISSIONS

Solo works inspired by and dedicated to remarkable people in the local community

Broadcast on Wednesdays across October

Online

REASSEMBLE ONLINE

6-hour festival of new music relayed into people's frontrooms

Sunday 25 October 2020

Online

YET UNHEARD

George Lewis curates a concert of music by black composers, including many UK premiers

Wednesday 28 October 2020

Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall

Live on Radio 3, Video stream at a later date (tbc)

MORE MORE MORE

The premiere of a commission from Matthew Herbert

Friday 6 November 2020

Kings Place

Streamed live online

PHARMAKEIA

James Dillon's major new work *Pharmakeia*

Sunday 22 November 2020

Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall

Live on Radio 3, Video stream at a later date (tbc)

MUSICIANS OF TOMORROW

Culmination of 12th edition of the London Sinfonietta Academy

Tuesday 8 December 2020 – Live event

Online relay date tbc

MUSIC & VIDEO NIGHT

New music and video pieces by students from Central St Martins School of Art

Date tbc
Online

WORLD PREMIERE WEDNESDAYS

Short works for solo instruments
Wednesday 18 November – Robert Mitchell – work for solo piano
more dates (monthly) and composer details to be announced
Online

January 2021 onwards

Please note – all dates from January onwards may be subject to change, depending on negotiations with venues and / or the changing situation around the COVID 19 pandemic

LESSONS FROM THE PAST

World premiere of new piece *In the Voices of the Living* by Luke Bedford sung by Mark Padmore
Tuesday 19 January 2021
Southbank Centre's Purcell Room

NOTES ABOUT NOW

Songs about the way we now live
Date tbc
Southbank Centre's Purcell Room

SCHOOLS SOUND OUT

Fourth major schools creative music making concert
Thursday 24 March 2021
Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall
Online

TOM COULT/ALICE BIRCH: VIOLET

A co-production by Music Theatre Wales, Britten Pears Arts and Theater Magdeburg. Made in association with London Sinfonietta.
World Premiere planned for Snape Maltings in April 2021 then touring. For further details please visit www.musictheatre.wales/productions/violet

EXTINCTION

World premiere of Laura Bowler's new piece which addresses climate change
Friday 30 April 2021
Southbank Centre's Purcell Room
Live and online

LONG SONG OF SOLITUDE

Focus on the music of Claude Vivier, including his masterpiece *Lonely Child*
Thursday 13 May
Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall
Live (pending the situation around Coronavirus)

NIGHT SHIFT

World premiere of new work by Cathy Milliken, with public participation from amateur choirs
Date in June tbc

Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall
Part of the Connect – Audience As Artist Series

MUSICIANS OF TOMORROW

Annual showcase and celebration of the best early-career performing talent
Wednesday 7 July 2021
Southbank Centre's Purcell Room
Live and online

FOR FULL UPDATED EVENT LISTINGS PLEASE VISIT

[LONDONSINFONIETTA.ORG.UK/WHATS-ON](https://londonsinfonietta.org.uk/whats-on)

FOR FURTHER PRESS INFORMATION AND IMAGES: Maija Handover / Sound UK,
maija@sounduk.net

NOTES TO EDITORS

The London Sinfonietta is one of the world's leading contemporary music ensembles. Formed in 1968, our commitment to making new music has seen us commission over 400 works and premiere many hundreds more.

Our ethos today is to constantly experiment with the art form, working with the best composers and performers and collaborating with artists from alternative genres and disciplines. We are committed to challenging perceptions, provoking new possibilities and stretching our audiences' imaginations, often working closely with them as creators, performers and curators of the events we stage.

Resident at Southbank Centre and Artistic Associate at Kings Place, with a busy touring schedule across the UK and abroad, the London Sinfonietta's core 18 Principal Players, are some of the finest musicians in the world. As well as our commitment to reaching new audiences with world-class performances of new music, and developing the talent of composers and musicians, the organisation holds a leading position in education work. We believe that arts participation is transformational to individuals and communities, and that new music is relevant to all our lives.

These values are enacted through primary and secondary school concerts across the UK, interactive family events, and the annual London Sinfonietta Academy; an unparalleled opportunity for young performers and conductors to train with our Principal Players. The London Sinfonietta has also broken new ground by launching its own new digital Channel, featuring video programmes and podcasts about new music. We also created Steve Reich's Clapping Music App for iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch, a participatory rhythm game that has been downloaded over 400,000 times worldwide. Recent recordings include George Benjamin's opera *Into the Little Hill* (Nimbus; 2017), Benet Casablanca's *The Art of Ensemble* (Sony Classical; 2018), David Lang's *Writing on Water* (Cantaloupe Music; 2018) and Philip Venables' debut album *Below the Belt* (NMC; 2018) and Marius Neset's *Viaduct* (ACT; 2019).

About Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre and one of the UK's top five visitor attractions, occupying a 17 acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. We want to take people out of the everyday, every day.

The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is made up of Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to four Resident Orchestras (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) and four Associate Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra and National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain).. For further information please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk

About Music Theatre Wales

Music Theatre Wales creates new opera and music theatre that is bold and adventurous, that explores what opera can be and how it can reach out to audiences. We work with many of the most acclaimed composers of our time, and we also invite provocation and challenge from composers and writers who are new to this form. Our aim is to ensure that opera and music theatre remain relevant and vibrant contemporary means of expression, with the capacity to touch the heart and open the mind, and giving audiences powerful and memorable experiences. Music Theatre Wales is delighted to work in association with the London Sinfonietta. www.musictheatre.wales

VENUE PARTNERS

This London Sinfonietta is a proud Resident Orchestra at Southbank Centre where it has been giving pioneering new music performances since 1968, and has been Artistic Associate at Kings Place for over 10 years, collaborating on innovative new concert formats and education work.

**SOUTHBANK
CENTRE**
RESIDENT

**Artistic Associate at
KINGS PLACE**

SUPPORTERS

The London Sinfonietta is grateful to **Arts Council England** for its continuing support of the ensemble's work through its National Portfolio Funding, and to its Corporate Partners **Lark Music**.



LARKmusic



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**