

# The London Sinfonietta Announces a Season of Adventurous Performances

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A rich mix of new original commissions, groundbreaking world premieres and inventive, theatrical presentations are hallmarks of the 2021–22 season.

- The UK's most influential new music ensemble returns in 2021 and 2022 with an exciting and eclectic collection of concerts including world premiere performances, new ways of looking at modern masterworks and major retrospectives of contemporary composers.
- There's an exploration of the permeable border between new classical music and cutting-edge jazz with *London Third Stream*, featuring some of the undisputed stars of the new British jazz scene.
- Another world premiere, *Night Shift*, fuses ideas derived from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with elements of audience participation.
- A ground-breaking double bill, *Then & Now*, pairs new music created from the speech rhythms of Welsh miners with a visceral theatrical exploration of the fear of walking alone at night.

- A major highlight is the hotly anticipated new opera **Violet** which comes to Hackney Empire following its world premiere at Aldeburgh Festival.
- A celebration of **modern Catalan music** is grouped around the work of visionary composer Roberto Gerhard, recalling the London Sinfonietta's earliest days.
- A composer focus explores the music and influence of legendary Canadian composer **Claude Vivier**.
- Shining a light on new music out of Poland, **Leaning East** features works by Penderecki, Wojciech Błazejczyk and Paweł Mykietyn.

Chief Executive and Artistic Director Andrew Burke said: "New music for an ensemble like the London Sinfonietta is defined today by its range of styles made by a diverse set of music creators. We are excited to be able to plan concerts with live audiences again and proud to present a season which features 24 new commissions and also celebrate the repertoire that the Ensemble has championed in the past. We continue to produce performances in which young people compose the music for us, and public participants perform alongside us. And we sustain our projects which train composers, conductors and musicians for a career in creating and performing new music. With a new series of filmed performances we will continue releasing our digital content for the wider online audiences who have discovered the excitement and passion of contemporary new music over the past months in lockdown."

## LIVE EVENTS

### BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE

#### Stone Nest

November. 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.  
plus November 6, 7, 13 & 14 at 4:00 p.m.

Premiering a new chamber orchestration, players from the London Sinfonietta accompany all fourteen performances of an intimate production of *Bluebeard's Castle* by Béla Bartók, reimagining the piece as a love story between a long-married couple coming to terms with living with dementia. The inaugural production by Theatre of Sound stars soprano **Susan Bullock**, bass-baritone **Gerald Finley**, baritone **Michael Mayes** and soprano **Gweneth Ann Rand**, sharing the roles of Bluebeard and Judith, under the direction of **Daisy Evans** (director and translator), and conducted by **Stephen Higgins** (musical director, arranger and concept).

Presented by Theatre of Sound, co-produced by Opera Ventures and in partnership with Stone Nest

## LONDON THIRD STREAM

Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre

Wednesday 17 November, 2021, at 7.30pm

The London Sinfonietta joins forces with four stars of the British jazz scene to present new commissions which blur the boundary between classical and jazz in an event titled **London Third Stream**. Of **Shabaka Hutchings**, the Guardian says “it’s hard to overstate the significance of (the) saxophonist whose relentless energy and pioneering spirit have been key to the development of the British jazz scene over the past decade.” Well known for her work with her large ensemble Seed alongside bands Kokoroko and Nérija, **Cassie Kinoshi** is a Mercury Award nominated and Ivors Academy Award winning composer, arranger and alto-saxophonist. **Laura Jurd** is a trumpeter, composer and improviser, leading the Mercury-nominated band Dinosaur, for which she collaborates with **Elliot Galvin**, described by BBC Radio 3, as a ‘vital and significant part of our contemporary and jazz scenes. Evoking the “third stream” which lies between classical and jazz, these four genre-defying ensemble commissions combine the explosive unpredictability of improvisatory jazz with the rich, classical virtuosity of the London Sinfonietta. **Geoffrey Paterson** conducts.

*A London Sinfonietta production as part of the EFG London Jazz Festival*

## A CATALAN CELEBRATION

The Legacy of Roberto Gerhard

St Paul's Hall, Huddersfield

Wednesday 22 November, 2021, at 9.00 p.m.

Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre

Wednesday 1 December, 2021, at 7.30p.m.

London Sinfonietta returns to two virtuosic pieces which were given their European premieres by the ensemble in 1968, its first year of existence. Catalan visionary **Roberto Gerhard**, one of the most prominent Spanish composers of the 20th Century, is known for the multidisciplinary influences on his compositional oeuvre and creative thinking. His creative output encompasses works influenced by Catalan folk music, serialism, pieces for dance, film and the theatre as well as electronic sound composition. The two pieces chosen by the London Sinfonietta are named for zodiacal symbols: *Libra*, the composer’s own sign, draws together a colourfully rhythmic folk-like melody with 12-tone influences, while *Leo*, written for his wife, contrasts the lion’s lazy peacefulness with awe-inspiring outbursts when roused.

Presented alongside these works are complementary pieces by **Lisa Illean** (*Januaries*), and fellow Catalan composers; **Joan Magrané Figuera** (*Faula*) and **Raquel García Tomás** (*aequae*). Renowned interpreter of Gerhard’s work, **Edmon Colomer**, conducts.

In association with Institut Ramon Llull

## THEN & NOW

An immersive culmination of the new music scheme, *Writing the Future*

**Purcell Room, Southbank Centre**

Sunday 6 February, 2022, at 7.45pm

For **Luke Lewis'** *The Echoes Return Slow*, the composer has used special speech transcription software to draw out the natural musical cadences from historic recordings of speech, and map them into melody. This innovative process is used to explore the sometimes sad, sometimes jovial songs and tales of old Welsh miners, telling of national identity, striking for better pay and conditions, unemployment, gender roles, language and culture. The work is inspired by the great American ethnomusicologist and song collector Alan Lomax who visited the valleys of South Wales in the 1950s.

**Alicia Jane Turner's** *Tell me when you get home* is a theatrical and sensory piece for solo soprano (**Ella Taylor**) and ensemble that explores gendered experiences of walking alone at night. Conducted by **Sian Edwards** and directed by **Lucy Bailey**, the immersive staging – influenced by Turner's background in sound and lighting design – incorporates patriarchal representations of femininity in mythology and horror to take us on a subversive journey into our fear of the dark.

*Please note that this concert contains instances of strong language and description of sexual violence (age rating 18+)*

*The world premieres of these two new commissions are part of the London Sinfonietta's *Writing the Future* programme, supporting composers at the beginning of their careers, allowing them to work with the ensemble over a two-year period to create new pieces of music that expands the chamber music format.*

## CoMA FESTIVAL

**Queen Mary University of London**

Sunday 6 March, 2022, time tba

The London Sinfonietta is delighted to be part of Contemporary Music For All's (CoMA) biennial event in which CoMA and its partners celebrate the joy of participating in contemporary music making. Full details to be announced soon.

## NIGHT SHIFT

**Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre**

Thursday 10 March, 2022, at 7.30pm

**Cathy Milliken's** new work takes inspiration from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to blur the line between dreams and reality, rehearsal and concert, and audience and performer. *Night Shift* is a new kind of concert, blending an immersive theatre experience where audience participation is central to its concept. Featuring an

amateur choir alongside the London Sinfonietta and two soloists (**Helena Rasker** and **Michael Schiefel**), the course of the piece will be determined by contributions from the audience who will also be equipped with a variety of percussion instruments to add a special sonic layer to the work. **Jonathan Stockhammer** conducts.

Part of the “Connect – Audience as Artist” series of commissions, supported by the Arts Mentor Foundation Lucerne

### **SOUND OUT LIVE**

**Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre**

Thursday 24 March, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

The London Sinfonietta’s annual concert for young people explores iconic works of contemporary classical music and inspires a new generation of composers to get creative. Composers guide children aged 7 – 13 through the building blocks of composition, helping them to gain the tools to give writing music a go for themselves in this participatory concert, conducted by **Patrick Bailey**.

The London Sinfonietta was the first ensemble in the UK to deliver an education programme and has pioneered activity in music education ever since. Its Sound Out programme – which works in different locations around the UK – includes creative classroom projects for primary schools where children can explore classic contemporary repertoire and be inspired to compose. Sound Out Live is the culmination of London Sinfonietta’s Sound Out Online work with schools and young people that continues throughout the season with Composition Challenges, inspiring and enabling composition in the classroom.

In 2020, the live stream of Sound Out Live reached over 12,000 young people throughout the country, including 88 schools in London, Southampton and the Isle of Wight, and Gloucestershire.

### **TAPESTRIES**

**Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre**

Thursday 31 March, 2022, at 7.30pm

Inspired by the vast canvases of Bruegel and Ody Saben, as well as Grayson Perry’s Walthamstow Tapestry, *Writing the Future* composer **Alex Paxton’s** kaleidoscopic new piece is a busy and sensually colourful tapestry that depicts all aspects of society. Written to include the sound from a series of improvisatory workshops with local schoolchildren, the piece is a riot of colour in sound.

Alongside this is the world premiere of an important new co-commission by London Sinfonietta and Southbank Centre from leading American composer, performer, and scholar of experimental music, **George Lewis**. As the New Yorker states, “any new piece by Lewis is cause to celebrate, both for the fecundity of his imagination and for the way his ingenious conceptions bring out the best in his collaborators.”

*Paxton is part of the London Sinfonietta’s Writing the Future programme, supporting emerging composers.*

## LEANING EAST

**Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre**

Wednesday 27 April, 2022, at 7.30pm

The London Sinfonietta celebrates contemporary musical life in Poland. Alongside **Krzysztof Penderecki's** *Sinfonietta per archi* (1992), two new pieces of music will have their world premieres: the reorchestrated version of **Wojciech Błajczyk's** Concerto for Electric Guitar and String Orchestra (originally written in 2016) and now scored with the addition of percussion and live electronics; and **Paweł Mykietyń's** playful concerto for chamber orchestra *Prank*. Both are commissions of the newly launched International Centre for Contemporary Music. **Jessica Cottis** conducts.

## LONG SONG OF SOLITUDE

**Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre**

Friday 6 May, 2022, at 7.30pm

To celebrate the music and influence of Canadian composer **Claude Vivier**, the London Sinfonietta presents his masterwork, *Lonely Child*, interpreted by soprano **Claire Booth**, who *The Times* has fittingly referred to as “the stunning voice of operatic isolation”. **Ilan Volkov** (“classical music’s super collider” *The Guardian*) conducts. The evening also boasts the world premiere of a work by **Nicole Lizée** addressing personal isolation in contemporary society that draws inspiration from Vivier’s work. Her style blends video, soap opera plots and electronics to create new music that provides a commentary on daily life.

The London Sinfonietta extends its role as a training organisation in this concert by playing side-by-side with the next generation of exciting musicians to emerge from the **Royal Academy of Music**.

## TURNING POINTS

**KINGS PLACE**

May, 2022, date and time tba

A concert exploring composers whose output was so distinctive that it influenced the course of music history, in an immersive and alternative music experience. Full details to be announced soon.

## VIOLET

**Aldeburgh Festival**

Friday 3 & Sunday 5 June, 2022, time tba.

**Hackney Empire**

Thursday 23 June, 2022, at 7:30 p.m.

**Buxton International Festival** (date tba)

**Wales** (venues and dates tba)

*Violet* is a new opera set in a community which runs on a strict schedule dictated by the village clock, and managed by the men in authority. As the clock inexplicably begins to lose one hour each day, order turns into chaos. And as everything and everyone starts to fall apart, and time itself begins to collapse, Violet senses there is a new life to be discovered and sets out to find it.

The much anticipated new work combines the acclaimed talents of writer **Alice Birch** (TV adaptations include *Normal People*; film *Lady Macbeth*; stage *Anatomy of a Suicide*) and rising star composer **Tom Coult** (commissioned by First Night of the Proms; currently resident composer at the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra)

*Violet* is a co-commission and co-production by Music Theatre Wales and Britten Pears Arts, presented in association with the London Sinfonietta; The London performance is co-produced and presented by The Royal Opera in association with Hackney Empire

## **MUSICIANS of TOMORROW**

### **KINGS PLACE**

11 July, 2022, time tba

The culmination of this year's London Sinfonietta Academy programme, a side-by-side performance by early-career performers. Full details to be announced soon.

## **NEW MUSIC FOR NEW AUDIENCES**

### **Commissions**

Commissioning new music is at the heart of all that the London Sinfonietta does, and since 1968 the ensemble has commissioned more than 450 new works. The London Sinfonietta's 21/22 Season includes 24 world premiere performances of new work commissioned by and for the ensemble by composers including: **Tom Coult, Elliot Galvin, Shabaka Hutchings, Laura Jurd, Cassie Kinoshi, George Lewis, Luke Lewis, Cathy Milliken, Nicole Lizée, Benjamin Oliver, Alex Paxton, Ailis ni Riain** and **Alicia Jane Turner**.

### **Digital content: London Sinfonietta Channel**

The London Sinfonietta expands the content of its digital Channel with regular video and audio releases. Across the season, a series of specially edited Performance Films of individual works from the 20th and 21st century and new commissions will include **Toru Takemitsu's *Rain Coming*, Tania Leon's *Toque*, Mica Levi's *Greezy* and Steve Reich's *Violin Phase***. A podcast series exploring the experiences of black composers, *Yet Unheard*, hosted by **Jumoké Fashola** will begin a new set of audio programmes about the contemporary classical music that the London Sinfonietta performs.

The London Sinfonietta's **World Premiere Wednesday** series continues from January 2022 with new commissions released online monthly. Each premiere will be followed

by a conversation with the composer as they delve further into their piece with insights into the compositional process. This season, each of the short pieces will reflect on the theme of climate change.

## MUSIC IN SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

### Sound Out Schools Composition Programme

The 20/21 season sees the Sound Out Schools Programme set new video Composition Challenges to teachers and pupils online and free to access. Young peoples' pieces will be performed online by musicians from the London Sinfonietta. Supported by teacher CPD sessions and in-school creative workshops and residencies, the Sinfonietta extends its reach across the UK – in London (Enfield, Haringey and Waltham Forest) as well as Southampton and the Isle of Wight and Gloucestershire. Our annual Sound Out Schools Concert (24 March) will once again welcome a live and online audience of around 8,000 budding young composers to experience live music at close hand and hear their works performed.

### Music in the Community

A new series of Community Commissions features Southampton and Coventry based composers sharing the stories of members of the public from their local area. **Judith's Castle**, a project focusing on the musical memories of an elderly couple living with dementia, will see composer **Electra Perivolaris** collaborate with participants to create a new work in collaboration with Live Music Now and Theatre of Sound.

### Public Participation in main-stage performances

People of all ages perform on stage with the London Sinfonietta - **Alex Paxton's** new work (31 March) will also involve a chorus of young voices from a local primary school, while **Cathy Milliken's** new work *Night Shift* (10 March) will include two community choirs who will write part of the piece to explore themes of identity and barriers. The London Sinfonietta also continues to support Contemporary Music for All (CoMA, 6 March) in their bi-annual festival of new music delivering practical music making workshops and opportunities for amateur musicians to perform alongside members of the ensemble.

## DEVELOPING TALENT

### Training for Musicians & Conductors

The London Sinfonietta **Junior Academy** (ages 12-18) and London Sinfonietta **Academy** (ages 18-26) will support young musicians to develop their skills and explore contemporary classical music supported by our musicians. The Junior Academy offers a programme of live workshops throughout the year with opportunities to learn from musicians and rehearse and perform contemporary repertoire. LS Academy will see a new group of young professional musicians and conductors embark on a six-month



experience with the ensemble opening-up contemporary music, offering opportunities to work with the musicians and engage with the Sinfonietta's work. The course will culminate in a public concert at Kings Place on 11 July.

### Support for Composers

Three **Writing the Future** projects will culminate this year with performances of new works developed by **Alicia Turner, Luke Lewis (4 Feb)** and **Alex Paxton (1 April)**. These composers have benefitted from close contact with London Sinfonietta musicians as well as from mentors and consultants who have helped inspire and shape their ideas into these new works. The London Sinfonietta's **Blue Touch Paper** research and development programme will commission three composers to make new digital film and audio commissions for streaming on the London Sinfonietta Channel.

### Work with students

More broadly the London Sinfonietta will work with Higher Education students through a music video creation project with **Central Saint Martins** culminating in a public sharing, sessions with the **Institute of Education** to support trainee music teachers and regular student ticket offers throughout the season, open to students across London.

For images and videos relating to the whole season, please [visit here](#)



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