



ABO

ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS

ABO News
Winter 2023

Welcome to the latest **ABO News**, showcasing the impactful and innovative work of **ABO** member orchestras across the country, on and off the stage.

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Festive Orchestras

Liverpool Philharmonic are celebrating with their [Spirit of Christmas](#) concerts, opened by the Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Brass Band.

London Mozart Players present 'A [Very Croydon Christmas](#)' with a festive sing-a-long concert, featuring carols, readings, and performances by local choirs, school children and special guests.

Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment is collaborating with Masaaki Suzuki, the acclaimed founder of the Bach Collegium Japan, on a new production of Bach's great Christmas masterpiece, [Christmas Oratorio](#).

Orchestra of St John's will be seeing in the New Year at Dorchester Abbey with a selection of joyful overtures and dances by Stauass, Offenbach, Morricone, Puccini and many more. Find out more [here](#).

Welsh National Opera musicians are visiting patients in a range of care facilities over the festive period, including St David's Hospital in Cardiff on a weekly basis to entertain patients and staff members, with festive duets, opera, Christmas singalong, and festive fun. Find out more [here](#).

The Scottish Chamber Orchestra is celebrating the Viennese New Year with Prague-born conductor Jiří Rožeň. Read more about how the waltz conquered the world and book tickets [here](#).

Chineke! Orchestra released a rare recording of Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker Suite, arranged and released in the 1960s by Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn. The work takes themes from Tchaikovsky's beloved 1892 festive ballet with a jazz twist. Listen [here](#).



Chineke! Orchestra's artwork of Duke Ellington's Nutcracker Suite

Welsh National Opera's Cradle Choir at Christmas



Youth, Education & Development

Scottish Opera's Barber of Seville is offering free [Access Opera performances](#) for patrons with a wide range of additional support needs and secondary school pupils. With extra descriptive elements and the freedom to move, these performances are perfect for young audiences with access needs.

[Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Company](#) is the largest community of young musicians in the North West. It is comprised of a range of ensembles, choirs and projects created to develop young musical talent, offer career guidance, fostering a thriving and welcoming community of young people and world class professional musicians. Currently 400 talented and dedicated young musicians make up the Youth Company's ten ensembles and choirs.

The Red Note Ensemble have developed [An Easterhouse Children's Manifesto](#), a song series devised and performed by the children, in collaboration with Oakwood Primary School, Easterhouse communities and film-makers Dumbworld.

[Hallé Inspire](#) is a long-term partnership programme delivering creative music workshops with primary schools that aims to raise aspirations in communities across Greater Manchester.

Dunedin Consort's [School Workshops](#) will culminate in Children's Messiah performances around Scotland.

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's [Inspiration for All](#) project collaborates with schools across Scotland with young people of all ages, inspiring young people to get excited about music and creativity.

Manchester's **Chetham's School of Music & The Stoller Hall's** [Terra Musica](#) is the first of their new family series for Key Stage 1 students. These workshops, based on musical heritages and cultures, have been created in partnership with Olympias Music Foundation Migrant Voices artists.

[Musical Storyland with the BBC Philharmonic](#), based in Salford, reimagines traditional folktales, inspiring a love of music and singing, and an interest in musical instruments in the audience. The series is recorded and used in classrooms as a teaching resource.

The Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO) and **Scottish Chamber Orchestra (SCO)** are collaborating on a [Youth Assembly](#), a joint initiative to embed young voices into the heart of each organisation. The Youth Assembly serves in an advisory capacity for strengthening youth engagement in both organisations.

For graduates in the North of England, **Manchester Camerata's** new year-long training programme, [Camerata 360°](#), is built upon decades of excellence and diverse experience to train the next generation of musicians.



Spitalfields Music's flagship Trainee Music Leader Scheme has been equipping instrumentalists and singers with the skills need to pursue careers in music leading for 20 years. They are looking for organisations to join them as partners in delivering their 2024 scheme, starting in April 2024. See [here](#) to find out more about joining as a partner, and to sign up for an information session.

London Sinfonietta is looking for four music creators to join the next round of Writing the Future, an opportunity to create a new work for an ensemble of up to six London Sinfonietta musicians and build working relationships with the ensemble. The [deadline for applications](#) is Monday 22 January 2024.

The Mozartists run an ambitious [outreach programme](#), which seeks to make classical music accessible to children across Ealing. To date they have worked with over 1200 children, including pupils in ARP schools through a new strand of SEND workshops. Alongside their education partner, Ealing Music Service, they engage with students and teachers across the borough, inspiring them through Mozart's music, getting them participating directly in their own music-making and fuelling their creativity.

The National Children's Orchestra's campaign Music Matters emphasises why music is important for health and wellbeing, especially in children's development. Find out more [here](#).

Red Note Ensemble's [An Easterhouse Children's Manifesto](#)



Diverse & Inclusive Orchestras

Scottish Ensemble's [Music for Wellbeing](#) is a part of a multi-year research partnership with cancer charity Maggie's, and in partnership with the Central and West Integration Network. The project has developed to support the New Scots community - refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers living in Glasgow, boosting mental wellbeing.

Black Lives In Music and the **Royal Opera House** have collaborated on [Overture: ROH Orchestral Mentorship 2023-24 season](#). Overture is open to applicants aged 18 –25 with a global majority or other unrepresented background who are based in the U.K. and play orchestral instruments. If you are selected, you will be partnered with a musician from the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House (OROH) of your instrument who will mentor you from October 2023 – July 2024.

The Glasgow Barons developed their [Musicians in Exile](#) programme to bring Glasgow's asylum-seeking and refugee musicians together to make the music of their homelands, with weekly sessions and gig opportunities. This programme won them the Lynn Connolly Achievement In Diversity Award at [The Herald and GenAnalytics Diversity Awards](#).

The world's first disabled-led national youth orchestra, **National Youth Open Orchestra** (NOYO), is giving some of the UK's most talented young disabled and non-disabled musicians a progression route. NOYO works alongside disabled and non-disabled musicians aged 11-25, who take part in monthly training sessions and 1-2-1 lessons, playing a range of acoustic and accessible music technology instruments at the Bournemouth [centre](#), run by the BSO.

Paraorchestra's new Artist Development programme, Modulate



Britten Sinfonia's [Music On Your Doorstep](#) residencies bring **Britten Sinfonia** musicians into culturally under-served parts of the region for performances, interactive workshops and activities for all ages.

Sinfonia Viva and **Orchestras Live** project working with asylum seeking young people, [Culture Café Makes Music](#), is a music workshop program developed with Learning Through Arts.

Paraorchestra have a new Artist Development programme, [Modulate](#). This a bespoke range of skills development courses, talks, residencies, funding and other development opportunities for disabled Paraorchestra musicians running in parallel with their existing artistic programme.

[Orchestras For All's Modulo programme](#) is designed to assist music leaders to set up an inclusive 'Modulo' ensemble within their school or local community. Modulo aims to create an environment where young people from any background can thrive and enjoy making music with others.

Orchestra of St John's have celebrated two decades of their programme [Music for Autism](#), which introduces young people with special educational needs to professionally performed classical music, in an informal and accessible environment where individual differences are celebrated.

The **Irish Association of Youth Orchestra's** have run their EDI workshops throughout Autumn, as an introduction to EDI issues and an opportunity to highlight areas where their members are championing inclusion.

The Glasgow Barons: Musicians in Exile programme



Sustainable Orchestras

Through a string of public performances, the **Royal Northern College of Music** brings a focus to climate change and the natural world with [The Future is Green](#). This special initiative provides opportunities for students, staff, audience members and the wider community to learn, understand and think about the role we all play, whilst also highlighting the sustainability measures in place across their Manchester estate.

The Glasshouse ICM has pledged to be net-zero by 2030, part of that is offering their audiences free travel on the Metro (Tyne and Wear's light transport rail system) . Read more about their pledge [here](#).

London Sinfonietta has commissioned [Houses Slide](#) by Laura Bowler, to address the climate emergency, through the story of one woman's intimate psychological journey to figure out her response to the climate crisis.

Opera North has just completed its [Green Season](#), its first season where all three productions are sustainable, both onstage using second-hand set props and costumes, and promoting sustainable travel for audiences.



RNCM Symphony Orchestra: The Future is Green series

Community & Healthcare

Scottish Chamber Orchestras [Reconnect](#) programme provides a series of music sessions for people with dementia and their carers and family members

Celebrating its 15th year, [Liverpool Philharmonic's Music and Health programme](#) uses music to improve the health of people across the Liverpool City region. It is one of the longest continuously running Music and Health programmes working in partnership with the NHS.





Scottish Opera's Memory Spinners



Halle 's Relaxed Concerts

Scottish Opera's Memory Spinners provide a series of music sessions for people with dementia and their carers and family members

Manchester's **Chetham's School of Music & The Stoller Hall** work with community day centres and carer networks to perform Relaxed Lunchtime Concerts. These are designed to welcome people with a learning disability or sensory and communication conditions, or anyone that would benefit from a more relaxed performance environment.

One of the **Liverpool Philharmonic's** community programmes is Music Mondays, free informal interactive music sessions, aimed at those aged 18+ combatting low mood and isolation. These are part of Liverpool Philharmonic's Social Prescribing programme, and are open to adults in the Liverpool City Region.

Manchester Camerata's *Music in Mind* series brings together different communities - including people with dementia still living at home and in care homes; children in schools and in after school organisations; Deaf School Northwest; and carers - as part of their 10-year Social Impact Plan around Greater Manchester. Watch a short film about the project and for more information click [here](#).

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) works with the youngest and oldest members of communities across the South West, BSO has already hosted 35 dementia-friendly events and engaged with over 1,200 people living with dementia. Find out more [here](#).

The Hallé works with a number of care homes that specialise in caring for the elderly and those suffering from dementia and similar health conditions. Hallé players are trained the impact of dementia on both patients and carers and deliver sessions in Care Homes around Greater Manchester as part of their Care Home Projects.

Two **Hallé** musicians in residence with national learning disability charity Seashell Trust work with children and young people with complex and severe learning disabilities, which include little or no language abilities at a national centre of excellence in Cheadle Hulme.

Welsh National Opera's programme Cradle is an intergenerational project designed to enrich the lives of people affected by dementia and raise awareness of the disease within school children.





Orchestral appointments

Helen Wallace has been appointed the new [Head of Music at the Barbican](#). Helen will take up her new role in February 2024. Helen joins the Barbican from Kings Place, where she has been Executive & Artistic Director.

[Joanna Baker](#) CBE has been appointed as new Chair of the **Scottish Chamber Orchestra's** Board.

Bill Chandler has been appointed Director of the **BBC Symphony Orchestra & Chorus** and Adam Szabo has been appointed Director of the **BBC Philharmonic**. Read more [here](#).

Welsh National Opera has announced the appointment of Christopher Barron as Interim General Director, who will take up the role in early January 2024.

The Hallé announced that [Kahchun Wong](#) will become Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of Manchester's iconic symphony orchestra from September 2024.





Orchestras making change

The **London Philharmonic Orchestra's** program [Crisis Creates](#) is a project offering creative performance opportunities to adults who have experienced or are at risk of homelessness. Working with national charity Crisis UK, they aim to improve participants' wellbeing and confidence through self-expression, collaboration and developing creative skills.

Inclusive Folk, which started in 2020, is an **English Folk Dance and Song Society** programme which sets out to improve access to folk music making and dance opportunities for learning disabled young people. The programme was evaluated by Andrea Spain, and her report can be found [here](#).

The London Philharmonic Orchestra's [Open Sound Ensemble](#) courses run three times a year in school holidays and develop musical skills in a supportive and creative environment. Using a mixture of traditional and accessible digital instruments to explore sounds, rhythms and melodies they use these techniques to make music together.

The **Scottish Chamber Orchestra** created [Soundbox](#), an artist development programme offering a platform for music creators from any musical or cultural background to experiment with the chamber music format, expand their creative practice and explore new ideas, new sounds and new music.





Digital Orchestras

The Sixteen will be included in [Apple Music Classical's 2023 Classical Carols Covered Playlist](#). They have joined forces with jazz musicians Lizzie Ball (violin) and James Pearson (piano) for a mesmerising arrangement of Peter Warlock's Bethlehem Down.

Orchestras Live has collaborated with **Sinfonia Viva** and [ARCADE](#) to create [Love Stories](#), is a digital audio trail that takes listeners on a journey through the recently restored South Cliff Gardens. It features real-life love stories with music created with and performed by the people who experienced them.

The Academy of Ancient Music has launched the AAMbition Fund, which includes the AAM A-list, a new catalogue of high-quality films that will be made available for free online, with repertoire to include much-loved favourites by Bach, Handel, Mozart and Beethoven alongside lesser-known works. Find out more about AAMbition [here](#).

The Royal Scottish National Orchestra's [digital care packages](#) are concert recordings. These are available for free to anyone living or working in care homes, hospices, healthcare settings or homecare, and part of a three-part series of recorded performances.

The **BBC National Orchestra of Wales** have developed [digital programme notes](#) for their Playing Picasso Concert, making programmes free to access for all.



News from the ABO

24 - 26 January 2024: ABO Conference - The next ABO conference, our major annual event and gathering of the classical music sector, will take place in Bristol, hosted by Bristol Beacon. **Offering a rich and diverse programme, bookings are now open [here](#).**

During the **Political Party Conference Season**, the ABO showcased some of the **impactful and innovative work of our member orchestras** on and off the stage, in and around the cities where the Conferences took place, in [Bournemouth](#), [Liverpool](#), [Manchester](#) and [Aberdeen](#).

New ABO Chair - We're delighted to welcome Sophie Lewis, CEO of the National Children's Orchestras of Great Britain, as new ABO Chair. To read the full announcement of Sophie's appointment, click [here](#).

Inclusive Recruitment Practice - In partnership with **Black Lives In Music** and the **Musicians Union**, the ABO held five Working Group meetings in the Autumn to explore inclusive recruitment practices in orchestras.

Positive Sector Impact and Development - The ABO were pleased to input into a number of initiatives, events and reports highlighting sector best practice and the positive value and impact of the UK orchestral sector - including the Policy and Evidence Centre for the Creative Industries (**Creative PEC**) Arts, Culture and Heritage launch event; the **McKinsey & Company report on the [Impact of the UK Arts Sector](#)**; feeding into the **Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA)**; and presenting at the **Future Global Music Economy** event, hosted by the Department for Business and Trade (DBT).

Orchestra Tax Relief Reforms - Further to the successful case made by the ABO to HM Treasury and HMRC, the Government has agreed to make amendments to some of the proposed changes to OTR, announced as part of the November 2023 Budget Statement. We continue to [raise concern](#) about the proposal to remove the eligibility of EEA expenditure from the qualifying criteria for OTR claims, and to call for the permanent extension to the 50% OTR rate.

Orchestral Connections 2023 - Health and Wellbeing - UK - Australia - New Zealand Symposium - The ABO convened an online symposium in partnership with Symphony Services Australia. Featuring speakers from both Australasia and the UK, the panel focused on the work of orchestras in healthcare and other settings, and the health and wellbeing of the musicians themselves. For more information click [here](#).





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