



THE CLASSICAL MUSIC INDUSTRY GATHERS FOR 2021 ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS CONFERENCE THIS WEEK

CONFERENCE THEME OF 'AFTERSHOCK' INCLUDES SESSIONS ON COVID RECOVERY, BREXIT, AND INEQUITY

The **2021 Association of British Orchestras Conference** is to take place online from **Wednesday to Friday (10-12 March)**, hosted in partnership with **Classic FM**, **Help Musicians**, **Classical Music** and the **British Council**, and featuring speakers and panellists including **Caroline Dinenage MP**, Minister of State for Digital & Culture and **Sir Nicholas Serota**, Chair, Arts Council England.

Centred on the theme of 'Aftershock', the three-day online forum will bring together delegates from all areas of the classical music industry, both within the UK and beyond, to examine the seismic issues that have sent shockwaves through the sector over the past twelve months – from the devastating impact of the global pandemic to the reignited call for action on diversity and inclusion in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement. It will also be an opportunity to champion the invention and resilience shown by so many orchestras and musicians during this unprecedented year and to discuss how the sector can continue to adapt to the new post-Covid and Brexit landscape and build recovery. Presented in partnership with the ABO's Principal Media Partner **Classic FM** and Online Media Partner **Classical Music**, the recipients of the **2021 ABO/Classical Music Awards** and **ABO Award** will also be announced.

Mark Pemberton, Director, Association of British Orchestras (ABO):

This past year has seen the classical music industry buffeted by storm winds as never before, but through it all our members have shown resilience and ingenuity. But it's by no means plain sailing from here on, with the challenge of Brexit added to continued Covid-19 restrictions. The conference provides a chance to pause and reflect, embed an action plan for recovery and diversity, and emerge ready to return to business.

The ABO's Charity Partner **Help Musicians**, with additional support from the **Musicians' Union**, will open the conference on Wednesday with sessions free to attend for managers and musicians. Topics include a discussion chaired by **Roger Wilson**, Director of Operations, Black Lives in Music, on the efforts being made to address racial inequity in UK orchestras today, where he will be joined by **Chichi Nwanoku OBE**, founder and Artistic & Executive Director, Chineke! Orchestra, **Victoria Sayles**, violinist, London Mozart Players, and **Linton Stephens**, bassoonist and Chair, Musicians Union EDI Committee. In another session, **Alex Laing**, senior consultant at Hillombo LLC and principal clarinet, The Phoenix Symphony, and **Justin Laing**, founder and principal of Hillombo LLC, will share ideas on antiracist Adaptive Leadership, the ways in which orchestras participate in systemic racism and what musicians might do to disrupt this participation.

During the conference, Help Musicians along with **Susanna Eastburn MBE** and **Jane Williams** will lead a session to discuss the findings of Help Musicians research project **'The Future of Classical Music: building a sustainable career in classical music'**, and a fundraising quiz will also take place to raise proceeds for the charity.

Hosted by the ABO's Principal Media Partner and the UK's most popular classical music station, **Classic FM**, the Minister for Digital & Culture, **Caroline Dinenage MP**, will open Thursday's sessions with a keynote speech followed by a Q&A facilitated by Classic FM presenter **Anne-Marie Minhall**, before **Sir Nicholas Serota**, Chair, Arts Council England, shares his vision for rebuilding the arts and delivering on ACE's 10 year strategy *Let's Create*. Other sessions include a discussion on the economic and political landscape post-Covid and Brexit with **Katy Balls**, Deputy Political Editor, The Spectator, **Chris Giles**, Economics Editor, Financial Times and **Jamie Njoku-Goodwin**, Chief Executive, UK Music, as well as a conversation between **Cathy Graham OBE**, Director of Music, British Council, **Juan Antonio Cuéllar**, Manager, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia, **Nathaly Ossa**, Spanish Association of Symphony Orchestras and **Simon Woods**, President and Chief Executive, League of American Orchestras examining how other countries and their orchestras have coped with the pandemic. Delegates will also hear from colleagues in the USA about the steps American orchestras are taking to embed change for improved diversity in a session chaired by **Simon Woods** with **Sakurako Fisher**, former Chair, San Francisco Symphony, **Aaron Flagg**, DMA Chair, Associate Director, Juilliard Jazz Studies Program, and **Anthony McGill**, Principal Clarinet, New York Philharmonic.

Following the recently published **'Orchestras in Healthcare'** report from the **ABO**, **Orchestras Live** and **City of London Sinfonia** – the first comprehensive survey of UK orchestras' work in the health and social care sectors – a session led by **Sarah Derbyshire MBE**, Chief Executive, Orchestras Live and **Matthew Swann**, Chief Executive, City of London Sinfonia, will explore the implications for the 'social prescribing' agenda and the role orchestras can play to restore the health and wellbeing of the nation with panellists **Natalie Ellis**, Head of Arts, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, **Gay Palmer**, Link Worker, Tessa Jowell Health Centre, NHS South East London Clinical Commissioning Group, **James Sanderson**, Director of Personalised Care, NHS England and NHS Improvement and CEO, National Academy of Social Prescribing, and **Katherine Spencer**, Principal Clarinet, City of London Sinfonia.

Alan Davey CBE, Controller of BBC Radio 3 and Classical Music, opens the final day of the conference to give his take on what recovery looks like to the BBC in a post-Covid world in conversation with journalist and BBC Radio 3 presenter **Kate Molleson** before BBC Radio 3 presenter **Georgia Mann** leads a session featuring **Angela Dixon**, Chief Executive, Saffron Hall, **Kathryn McDowell CBE**, Managing Director, London Symphony Orchestra and **John Summers**, former Chief Executive, The Hallé, to discuss the financial and environmental sustainability of orchestras' reliance on international touring. Delegates will also hear from the **ABO's 2020-21 Find Your Way** cohort who will reflect on the innovations that have inspired them over the past year whilst a session chaired by **Ellen Gallagher**, Associate, Hamlin LLP, will tackle the topic of contracts in the wake of the pandemic with **Lorna Aizlewood**, Chief Operating Officer & General Counsel, Harrison Parrott, **Donagh Collins**, Chief Executive, Askonas Holt and **Stephen Maddock OBE**, Chief Executive, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. The opportunities and challenges of digital performance will be explored by **Susannah Simons**, Director of Partnerships, Marquee TV, digital consultant **David Taylor** and **Crispin Woodhead**, Chief Executive, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment in a session chaired by **James Murphy**, Chief Executive, Royal Philharmonic Society, and the future of orchestral programming and repertoire will be debated in a discussion chaired by **Vanessa Reed**, President & CEO, New Music USA with composer and flautist **Valerie Coleman**, composer and multi-

instrumentalist **Angélica Negrón** and **Matías Tarnopolsky**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Philadelphia Orchestra.

The **British Council**, in its role as ABO's International Partner, will also host networking meetings for delegates throughout the conference, and is supporting attendance by delegates from developing countries.

Bringing the 2021 Conference to a close, the recipients of the **ABO/Classical Music Awards** will be announced by Classic FM presenter **Margherita Taylor**. An opportunity to celebrate colleagues' vital contribution to UK orchestral life, the awards will champion those who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to bring music to audiences and into our communities over the past year whilst navigating the unprecedented and critical impact of the pandemic. The recipient of the annual **ABO Award** will also be announced by Chair of the ABO, **Simon Webb**.

For further information about the ABO and the 2021 ABO Conference, visit www.abo.org.uk.



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NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Association of British Orchestras (ABO)

The ABO is the national body representing the collective interests of professional orchestras, youth ensembles and the wider classical music industry throughout the UK. The ABO's mission is to enable and support an innovative, collaborative and sustainable orchestral sector by providing advice, support, intelligence and information to the people who make British orchestras a global success. Recent initiatives include Resonate in association with PRS Foundation and BBC Radio 3, which supports the best orchestral music of the last 25 years, and Find Your Way which identifies and offers training to future sector leaders. The ABO campaigned successfully for Orchestra Tax Relief and continues to campaign for the sector at the highest levels, to help build resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

www.abo.org.uk

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About Classic FM

Classic FM is the UK's most popular classical music station, reaching 5.5 million listeners every week. Classic FM's programmes are hosted by a mix of classical music experts and household names including Alexander Armstrong, John Suchet, Moira Stuart, Myleene Klass, Bill Turnbull, Alan Titchmarsh, John Humphrys, Charlotte Hawkins, Aled Jones and Margherita Taylor. Since its launch in 1992, Classic FM has aimed to make classical music accessible and relevant to everyone and in doing so, introduce an entirely new audience to the genre. ClassicFM.com is the UK's biggest classical music website and has 3.5 million unique monthly web and app users. Classic FM is owned by Global. It is available across the UK on 100-102 FM, DAB digital radio and TV, the Classic FM app, at ClassicFM.com and on Global Player. Source: *RAJAR / Ipsos-MORI / RSMB Q1 2020*.

About Classical Music

Classical Music is a one-stop hub for the classical music industry, providing news, opinion, resources and practical advice for music professionals all those who have an interest in classical music, from practitioners to managers, service providers and general enthusiasts. Our website offers daily news updates from our in-house editorial team, regular commentary from specialist contributors, and advice and analysis from respected figures in the music industry and beyond.

About Help Musicians

Help Musicians is a charity that loves music and for 100 years has been working hard to make a meaningful difference to the lives of musicians across the UK. We want to create a world where musicians thrive. A musicians' life can be precarious with ups and downs throughout a career. Opportunities must be hard-won, whilst challenges come along all too easily, with unsteady income and physical and mental health concerns common issues to navigate. In addition, training can take many years and, along with investing in instruments and other equipment, puts up financial barriers to creative progression. Help Musicians offers a broad range of help to support music creators in times of crisis and opportunity - ensuring musicians across the UK can achieve their creative potential and sustain a career in music.

Sadly, the impact of the pandemic means the charity is needed more than ever in 2021, its centenary year. Last year we were able to provide financial hardship support to over 19,000 music creators and increase access to our mental health services by 40%. In 2021, this ongoing need will continue at scale while the music sector recovers and rebuilds.

Love Music: Help Musicians

About the British Council

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We build connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language. Last year we reached over 80 million people directly and 791 million people overall including online, broadcasts and publications. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body. We receive a 15 per cent core funding grant from the UK government. www.britishcouncil.org