



‘Rebound’ – Association of British Orchestras Announces Conference 9 – 11 February 2022

- **ABO Conference will take place in-person and online from 9 – 11 February 2022 in Glasgow**
- **Classic FM will return for the 20th year as Principal Media Partner**
- **Additional partnerships include Classical Music magazine, Help Musicians, and British Council together with conference supporters British Association of Concert Halls, Incorporated Society of Musicians, Musicians’ Union and Orchestras Live**
- **ABO conference will focus on the theme of ‘Rebound’ looking to the future with confidence through a blend of debates, workshops, networking, and music**
- **The conference will be a unique hybrid event with exclusive content featured separately online and in-person**
- **A concert from the joint forces of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra will be broadcast live BBC Radio 3 and BBC Sounds on 9 February**
- **The event will also see the presentation of the long-standing ABO/Classical Music Awards presented in partnership with the ABO’s Online Media Partner Classical Music, alongside the annual ABO Award**

Announced today (Tuesday 30 November 2021), the annual **Association of British Orchestras (ABO)** Conference, the UK’s leading classical music forum, will take place in-person and online from Wednesday 09 February – Friday 11 February 2022 in Glasgow hosted by the **Royal Scottish National Orchestra** and the **BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra**.

Following the success of the digital conference in 2021, the ABO makes a welcome return to gathering in-person in February 2022 where **Classic FM**, the UK’s most popular classical music station which celebrates its 30th birthday next year, returns for its 20th year as Principal Media Partner. With other partners including **Classical Music** magazine as Digital Media Partner, **Help Musicians** as Charity Partner, and the **British Council** as International Partner, the conference will bring together speakers, panellists and delegates from across the UK and abroad to examine the critical issues facing the

classical music sector and to discuss the support and innovation needed to forge an ambitious and sustainable future for the industry. The ABO will also be working with conference supporters **British Association of Concert Halls (BACH), Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM), Musicians' Union** and **Orchestras Live**.

Through a series of keynote speeches and panel discussions the conference will look to the future with confidence as it focuses on the theme of '**Rebound**'. As the economy begins to rebound from the worst of the pandemic, it is time to look at whether the same applies to the classical music sector and how British orchestras and other partners within the industry can work to come back stronger than ever with positive actions towards improving inclusivity, diversity, and sustainability.

Amongst the speakers, **Angus Robertson** MSP, Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture will give a keynote speech, while author, musician, and social commentator **Darren McGarvey**, will discuss the influence of class in the Arts and together with **Gillian Moore** CBE, Director of Music at Southbank Centre, looking at the struggles of working-class musicians in a seemingly affluent sector. The conference's closing keynote speech will be given by **Courtney Harge**, CEO for OF/BY/FOR ALL and will look at practical ways to engage with bias, oppression, and prejudice and how the obsession with excellence limits our potential.

The question of how much digital offering orchestras should retain in both performance and in Learning & Participation rises to the fore following the return to live events after the pandemic; the fall-out from Brexit; the continued importance of inclusivity and diversity; and the impact of the COP26 Conference on the sector are amongst the many other topics that will be discussed with speakers including: **James Ainscough**, Chief Executive, Help Musicians; **Claire Mera-Nelson**, Director, Music, Arts Council England; **Lord Mendoza**, DCMS Commissioner for Cultural Recovery & Renewal; **Iain Munro**, Chief Executive, Creative Scotland; **Phil George**, Chair, Art Council of Wales; and **Cathy Graham OBE**, Director of Music, British Council.

On Wednesday 9 February, a concert will be given at the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall performed by members of the **BBC Scottish Symphony** and **Royal Scottish National Orchestras** under the baton of **Kevin John Edusei**. This concert is presented in association with the Association of British Orchestras and will be **broadcast live on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Sounds** featuring music by **Dimitry Shostakovich**, **John Adams** and the Scottish Premiere of *Elysium* by **Samy Moussa**.

Mark Pemberton, Director, Association of British Orchestras said: 'Rebound: it is the word of the moment. As the UK Government proclaims a rebound to the economy from the worst of the pandemic, it is time to look at whether the same applies to our sector. Are we going to see a boost to our business and resilience? Can we break through the barriers of Brexit? What will stick from the shift to digital? And after Glasgow hosts COP26, how do we become more sustainable? But we need

to keep our focus on the issue of diversity too. With funding agencies putting inclusivity at the heart of their decision-making, we will take a look at the systemic challenges for our sector, from socio-economic to disability and gender. With a host of headline speakers, panels and moderated conversations, it's time to join the debate, in-person and online.'

Philip Noyce, Managing Editor of Classic FM said: "As the UK's most popular classical music station, we're very proud to have supported the Association of British Orchestras for two decades now. The 2022 conference offers an inspiring range of sessions and discussions and we're thrilled that, once again, Classic FM is Principal Media Partner. Together with our live broadcasts and concert streams on our Facebook and YouTube channels, Classic FM continues to make classical music accessible and relevant to everyone and to support the vital work that the ABO and its members do for the UK's musical landscape."

Nominations for the long-standing ABO/Classical Music Awards presented in partnership with the ABO's Online Media Partner Classical Music are open until 10 December 2021 with the winners announced at the conference alongside the annual ABO Award. An opportunity to champion those who work tirelessly behind the scenes, ABO members are encouraged to nominate colleagues who have gone above and beyond to bring music to audiences and into our communities.

The ABO Conference is open to members and non-members. For further information on the schedule and how to purchase online tickets, visit www.abo.org.uk.

For further information and images please contact
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Notes To Editors:

About the Association of British Orchestras (ABO)

The ABO is the national body representing the collective interest of professional orchestras, youth ensembles and the wider classical music industry throughout the UK. Our 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.
www.abo.org.uk @aborchestras

About Classic FM

Classic FM is the UK's most popular classical music station, reaching 5.1 million listeners every week. Classic FM's programmes are hosted by a mix of classical music experts and household names including Alexander Armstrong, Moira Stuart, John Suchet, 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, on Global Player on your smart speaker, iOS or Android device and at ClassicFM.com. Source: RAJAR / Ipsos-MORI / RSMB Q3 2021.

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 musician's 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

For further information about the ABO visit www.abo.org.uk.

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