



1 January 2022

ABO Chief Executive Awarded OBE in New Year's Honours

Today (1 January 2022), **Mark Pemberton**, Chief Executive of the **Association of British Orchestras** (ABO) has been awarded **The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire** (OBE) in the New Year's Honours list.

Pemberton has been Chief Executive of the ABO since 2007, during which time he has represented the interests of the UK's professional orchestras and the wider classical music industry, championing them to the highest levels of government.

Key achievements include leading campaigns on the public value of orchestras, and growing its membership (including expanding to include youth orchestras). He has developed the ABO's annual conference into Europe's largest orchestral gathering, attracting delegates from across the globe.

He has enhanced the ABO's reputation internationally, including developing a productive relationship with the British Council, including the UK-Brazil Transform Orchestra Leadership programme and has been an ambassador for the UK's orchestral sector, speaking at international conferences across the world.

He led negotiations with the Treasury over the implementation of Orchestra Tax Relief, securing a new and vital income stream for the orchestral sector, and with HMRC over repeal of the Social Security regulations for entertainers. He worked with parliamentarians to establish the All Party Parliamentary Group on Classical Music, and led the celebrations of the ABO's 70th anniversary in 2018, which included parliamentary receptions in the House of Commons and the Scottish Parliament.

Most recently he has worked closely with DCMS on the development of Covid-19 protocols for the performing arts and on the roadmap for lifting Covid-19 restrictions, and has worked tirelessly to keep his members informed and to secure a viable future for the orchestral sector post-pandemic. To help support ABO members to recover from the pandemic, he secured an increase in Orchestra Tax Relief in the Budget in October 2021.

In 2018, he was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance.

Mark Pemberton said: 'I am delighted to have been awarded an OBE in the New Year Honours. It has been an incredibly tough two years for the ABO and its members, with the Covid-19 crisis followed hot on the heels by Brexit. I am grateful to the UK Government for recognising not only the hard work I have put in to help the orchestral sector weather the storm, but other achievements not least securing Orchestra Tax Relief as a vital new income stream. But I see this as a tribute too to the rest of the ABO team, who have worked tirelessly alongside me on behalf of our members, and to the amazing work done by orchestras in our concert halls, schools and community settings across the UK.'

The Association of British Orchestras is the national body representing the collective interests of professional orchestras, youth ensembles and the wider classical music industry throughout the UK. Its 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 re-build resilience out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Current priorities include the impact of Brexit, and creating a platform for a more diverse and inclusive orchestral sector. These and other issues will be discussed at its next annual conference in Glasgow and online, 9-11 February 2022.

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

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