



## JOIN OUR CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS!

22 September 2024 to 13 April 2025

Tickets on sale 19 June (BPO members), 1 July (general release)

View the brochure [here](#)  
[www.brightonphil.org.uk](http://www.brightonphil.org.uk)

**Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra** welcomes everyone into the BPO family to celebrate one hundred years of music-making in a season of blockbuster concerts and world class soloists across genres for all to enjoy. With her fresh, modern take on what an orchestra today can do, **Joanna MacGregor**'s ushers in an inspiring, significant new era for the BPO that places it firmly in the orchestral premier league. As the UK's only female Music Director of a professional symphony orchestra, and only the fourth Music Director and Principal Conductor of the BPO, Joanna brings her trademark imagination and creative flair to a programme that presents the orchestra at the very height of its game.

### Season summary:

- Music Director Joanna MacGregor conducts Stravinsky's explosive *Rite of Spring* to open BPO's ambitious, celebratory season
- World class soloists and BPO debuts feature throughout - Evelyn Glennie to Jess Gillam, Ruby Hughes to Gwilym Simcock
- BPO firsts and 20<sup>th</sup> century classics include Steve Reich, Duke Ellington and Górecki's *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*
- Major classical works by Elgar, Rimsky Korsakov and William Walton
- Cross-disciplinary concerts featuring works by Wayne Shorter to Yoko Ono, Gerhard Richter to Bernard Hermann
- Music for all with *LoveMusic* scheme, children & teens for £1 and season savings
- Festive favourite Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* stars Alistair McGowan
- Sian Edwards conducts Messiaen's epic, colourful *Turangalila Symphony* as closing Centenary Gala

*It's an enormous pleasure to welcome you to our celebratory centenary season. Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra has been serving audiences in Sussex for the last one hundred years, and our bold, colourful concerts – from classical and choral masterpieces to thrilling jazz and cutting-edge music – are for everyone. Come and join us for this wonderful, partying season!*

**Joanna MacGregor, BPO Music Director**

Experiencing the BPO in its current glory perfectly celebrates an illustrious past. A female led orchestra today, the BPO has roots in its very beginning. The orchestra's first leader was **Molly Paley** and in 1925 a staggering 75% of the orchestra were women. The orchestra went on to bring some of the greatest names in classical music to Brighton with **Thomas Beecham, Ralph Vaughan Williams** and **Benjamin Britten** as Presidents. The list reads like a who's who: **Sergei Rachmaninov, Yehudi Menuhin, Jacqueline Du Pré, Alfred Brendel, Andre Previn, Myra Hess, Slava Rostropovich** and many more.

The BPO's centenary programme brings a sense of celebration to each and every concert. The season gets off to a thrilling start with **Joanna MacGregor** conducting **Stravinsky's Rite of Spring**, an astonishing orchestral piece that famously caused a riot when premiered in Paris in 1913. Dutch wunderkind **Aidan Mikdad** opens the concert with his performance of **Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No 1 (22 Sep)**. A prize winner at many international piano competitions and recipient of the Queen's Commendation for Excellence in the UK, Aidan's BPO and Brighton Dome debut is also his first appearance with a UK orchestra.

World class soloists continue to visit Brighton throughout the centenary season. Superstar saxophonist **Jess Gillam** is blazing a trail as the first ever saxophonist signed to Decca, following a string of firsts - youngest ever soloist to perform at Last Night of the Proms and to present her own (award winning) show on Radio 3, *This Classical Life*. We're delighted she'll be giving her BPO debut on **13 October** with **Glazunov's Concerto for Saxophone**. Sharing the programme is the welcome return to the BPO of critically acclaimed soloist soprano **Ruby Hughes** who performs with the orchestra in **Górecki's heart-rending Symphony of Sorrowful Songs**.

Percussionist legend **Evelyn Glennie** celebrates Advent with the BPO in a performance of one of her signature pieces, **James MacMillan's Veni, Veni, Emmanuel** written for her as a tribute to her virtuosic flair and charismatic personality. The celebrated young conductor **Geoffrey Paterson** returns to conduct the BPO in a programme that also includes **Peter Maxwell Davies' An Orkney Wedding, with Sunrise** and **Rimsky-Korsakov's beautiful Scheherazade (1 Dec)**.

The **Brighton Festival Chorus** join the orchestra for **William Walton's** wicked, raucous and outrageously opulent **Belshazzar's Feast (9 Feb)**. This roller coaster score for large orchestra, two brass bands, double chorus and baritone features the BPO debut of bright American talent Cody Quattlebaum, coming to Brighton fresh from San Francisco Opera, Royal Danish Theatre and English National Opera. Young conductor **Ben Gernon** is a regular guest of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony and frequently performs at the Proms with BBC Symphony and Philharmonic. We're thrilled BPO features alongside Ben's other international debuts such as the Vienna Symphony and Royal Stockholm Philharmonic.

Film fans can enjoy a night of extremes with **Bernard Hermann's** unforgettable **Suite from Psycho** alongside works by **Schnittke, Piazzolla, Bach** and Ukraine's most famous living composer **Valentin Silvestrov**, performed and conducted by **Joanna MacGregor** and the **Brighton Philharmonic Strings** (16 November).

Music by living legend **Steve Reich** presents a feast for the eyes and ears with his elegant collaboration with artist **Gerhard Richter** on 23 March 2025. **Reich/Richter** sees Reich mirror the lines and textures of Richter and Corinna Belz's film *Moving Picture (1946-3)*. Described by Steve Reich as 'one of the greatest musicians in the world today', we're thrilled Scottish percussionist **Colin Currie** will conduct and perform music by Reich in this programme of New York groove including works by **Terry Riley** and **Yoko Ono**, also featuring the brilliant sound designer **Matthew Fairclough**.

Hailed as a 'creative genius' by jazz legend Chick Corea, jazz pianist/composer **Gwilym Simcock** and his trio lead an evening of classic cool performing works by **Wayne Shorter** and **Duke Ellington** alongside Simcock's own. We're delighted to welcome back American conductor and leading figure in contemporary and jazz music **Clark Rundell** for this concert, whose conducting has taken him from Boston Symphony to the Tokyo Philharmonic, Leonard Bernstein to Brad Mehldau (25 January).

The BPO is loved by many for its welcoming atmosphere and we hope this season will encourage many more to join the BPO family. To help widen access to the orchestra our **LoveMusic** schemes makes the best available seats are available for only £12, released two days before each concert for four selected concerts, saving up to £26 per person. These are: Rite of Spring 22 Sep, Evelyn Glennie / Scheherazade 1 Dec, Blue Notes: Ellington, Shorter, Simcock 25 Jan, Reich/Richter 23 March. Families can also bring up to two children and teenagers to any Dome concert in the season for **only £1**. There's a range of other season savings available, with ticket pricing offering outstanding value for money.

Fewer concerts in the BPO season have a warmer atmosphere than Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* which takes place in the atmospheric St George's, Kemptown. Enjoy mulled wine and a mince pie as acclaimed actor **Alistair McGowan** narrates this most Christmassy of tales with the **BPO Brass Quintet** and **Joanna MacGregor** on piano, directed by **Richard Williams** (6pm & 8pm, 14 December).

The BPO's centenary season closes with **Oliver Messiaen's** mind-blowing **Turangalila Symphony**, a concert of cosmic proportions (13 April). Leading conductor and BPO regular **Sian Edwards** conducts a colossal orchestra featuring **Cynthia Millar**, one of Messiaen's greatest living interpreters and the "*unchallenged sovereign of the Ondes Martenot*" *The Observer*, with **Joanna MacGregor** taking on the titanic piano role.

Currently in receipt of no funding, the BPO are launching **£100 for 100** to raise money for its Centenary Gala and to secure its future as one of the country's most exciting regional orchestras for the next 100 years. Come join the party!

**Tickets are available from 19 June (BPO members) and 1 July (general release) via the Brighton Dome box office [brightondome.org](http://brightondome.org), Brighton Dome Ticket office 01273 709 709, or in person at Church Street, Brighton BN1 1UE**

**Please note A Christmas Carol tickets are sold separately through [brightonticketshop.com](http://brightonticketshop.com)**

For full information on ticket prices please see page 14 of the brochure [here](#) or visit [www.brightonphil.org.uk](http://www.brightonphil.org.uk) .

For all press enquiries contact: [majja@sounduk.net](mailto:majja@sounduk.net) / 07939 568053. Press images available [here](#)

**Quotes about BPO:** “New, dazzlingly extended repertoire, performed with rejuvenated sparkle from the orchestra: everything is possible with talent, imagination and energy. The audience loved it, and roared applause.” **Louise Dumas**

“Joanna MacGregor is a brilliant light in the music world.” **Classical Review**

## **EVENT LISTINGS INFORMATION**

### **Sunday September 22 2024 2.45pm Brighton Dome**

#### **The Rite of Spring**

Tchaikovsky *Piano Concerto no.1 Op.23*

Stravinsky *The Rite of Spring*

Joanna MacGregor conductor

Aidan Mikdad piano

### **Sunday October 13 2024 2.45pm Brighton Dome**

#### **Jess Gillam and Symphony of Sorrowful Songs**

Sibelius *Finlandia Op.26*

Glazunov *Concerto for Saxophone Op.109*

Górecki *Symphony no.3: Symphony of Sorrowful Songs Op.36*

Alpesh Chauhan conductor

Jess Gillam saxophone

Ruby Hughes soprano

### **Saturday November 16 2024 7.30pm Brighton Corn Exchange**

#### **The Madness/Lightness of Being**

J.S. Bach *Keyboard concerto in F minor BWV 1056*

Alfred Schnittke *Tango in a Madhouse*

*Concerto for Piano and String Orchestra*

Valentin Silvestrov *Silent Music for Strings*

Bernard Herrmann *Suite from Psycho*

Astor Piazzolla arr. MacGregor *Oblivion; Michelangelo; Milonga del Angel; Libertango*

Joanna MacGregor conductor/piano

Brighton Philharmonic Strings

### **Sunday December 1 2.45pm 2024 Brighton Dome**

#### **Evelyn Glennie and Scheherazade**

Peter Maxwell Davies *An Orkney Wedding, with Sunrise*

James MacMillan *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel*

Rimsky-Korsakov *Scheherazade Op.35*

Evelyn Glennie percussion

Geoffrey Paterson conductor

### **Saturday December 14 2024 6pm & 8pm St George's Kemptown**

#### **Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol**

Alistair McGowan narrator

Joanna MacGregor conductor/piano

BPO Brass Quintet  
Richard Williams director  
Duration: 70 minutes. Mince pies and mulled wine served.

**Saturday January 25 2025 7.30pm Brighton Dome**  
**Blue Notes: Duke Ellington, Wayne Shorter, Gwilym Simcock**

Gwilym Simcock Trio Solo set  
Duke Ellington Harlem  
Wayne Shorter Causeways; Prometheus Unbound  
Gwilym Simcock Columns; Industrial  
Clark Rundell conductor  
Gwilym Simcock piano  
Conor Chaplin bass  
James Maddren drums

**Sunday February 9 2025 2.45pm Brighton Dome**

**Belshazzar's Feast; Enigma Variations**

Elgar *Enigma Variations Op.36*  
Walton *Belshazzar's Feast*  
Ben Gernon conductor  
Cody Quattlebaum baritone  
Brighton Festival Chorus

**Sunday March 23rd 2024 7.30pm Brighton Dome**

**Reich/Richter**

Steve Reich *Music for Pieces of Wood*  
Lou Harrison/John Cage *Double Music*  
Terry Riley *Half-Wolf Dances Mad in Moonlight (Salome Dances for Peace)*  
Yoko Ono *Pieces for Orchestra*  
Steve Reich *Runner*  
Steve Reich *Reich/Richter*  
Colin Currie conductor/claves  
Joanna MacGregor piano  
Matthew Fairclough sound projection

**Sunday April 13 2025 2.45pm Brighton Dome**

**Centenary Gala: Turangalila Symphony**

Messiaen *Turangalila Symphony*  
Sian Edwards conductor  
Joanna MacGregor piano  
Cynthia Millar ondes martenot

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Joanna MacGregor**

One of the world's most innovative musicians, Joanna MacGregor CBE is only the fourth Music Director in the history of the Brighton Philharmonic, which celebrates its centenary in May 2025. Described as '*a brilliant light in the music world,*' Joanna has appeared as concert pianist, curator and conductor in over eighty countries. As a soloist she has worked with eminent conductors including Pierre Boulez, Colin Davis, Simon Rattle and Michael Tilson Thomas; in 2024-25 she will tour Europe, Scandinavia, Australia, Canada, the US and China.

Joanna is Dame Myra Hess Chair of Piano at the Royal Academy of Music and runs two annual piano festivals for young musicians as well as a year-round series at the Wigmore Hall; she has

been Artistic Director of Dartington Summer School, Bath International Festival and Deloitte Ignite at the Royal Opera House, as well as a curator for the BFI and festivals around the world.

She has released over forty solo recordings - many of them on her own award-winning record label SoundCircus - ranging from Chopin and Piazzolla to Bach and John Cage. Joanna has commissioned and premiered many landmark works, and is a regular broadcaster on TV and radio, appearing many times at the BBC Proms. Her collaborative and composition projects encompass jazz, film, visual art, contemporary dance and electronica, with artists including Brian Eno, Nitin Sawhney, Andy Sheppard and Wayne McGregor. From 2015-2021 she chaired the Paul Hamlyn Composers Awards and has been a Booker Prize Judge. Her bestselling series of books for children, *PianoWorld*, is hailed as 'a new series for the Millenium.'

Under Joanna MacGregor's direction, the BPO has tripled its ticket sales and created diverse, excited audiences for classical music. The 2024-25 freshly-programmed concerts embrace orchestral music by Stravinsky, Elgar and Walton as well as Messiaen, Duke Ellington and Steve Reich. We are looking forward to the orchestra's next one hundred years.

For Joanna MacGregor's full biography and forthcoming events and performances:  
[www.soundcircus.com](http://www.soundcircus.com)

## **Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra**

The Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra is a professional orchestra based in Brighton & Hove. The orchestra was formed by Herbert Menges in May 1925 as the Symphonic String Players with the purpose of becoming "a large and powerful String Orchestra, and to give periodical concerts of a high standard in Brighton and Hove" initially in Hove Town Hall. By 1928 it had already moved into the Brighton Dome and become the fully orchestral Symphonic Players. Menges remained as Principal Conductor and in 1932 Sir Thomas Beecham was appointed as the orchestra's first President (a position later held by Ralph Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten). The orchestra became the fully-professional Southern Philharmonic in 1945, with annual seasons in Hastings and Portsmouth, before becoming the Brighton Philharmonic in 1958.

In 1972, after 47 years as Principal Conductor and having conducted more than 300 concerts, Herbert Menges died at the age of 69. His successor was John Carewe, whose first concert as Principal Conductor marked the start of the orchestra's 50th Anniversary season.

In 1989 Barry Wordsworth was appointed as the orchestra's Music Director and Principal Conductor. His distinguished tenure at the helm was marked by a series of notable performances of both well-known and more unfamiliar works together with a roster of accomplished and distinguished soloists.

When the Brighton Dome closed for refurbishment in 1989, the BPO returned temporarily to Hove Town Hall, and presented a series of Mozart Piano Concerto concerts in the Theatre Royal Brighton with its then President, John Lill.

The Dome re-opened in 2002, since which time nearly 250,000 tickets have been sold for the BPO's concerts in its home venue.

Over the last decade, the BPO has performed a varied repertoire including well-loved symphonic works alongside newer pieces. In 2012 it gave one of the first performances of Moeran's *Symphony No.2*, conducted by Martin Yates (who had recently reconstructed the piece). Recent seasons have also seen premieres of new works by Will Todd, Richard Rodney Bennett, Martin Butler and Howard Goodall, as well as regular collaborations with Brighton Festival Chorus and Brighton Festival Chorus Youth Choir. 2014/15 was the orchestra's 90th concert season and to celebrate the occasion Schubert's *Marche Militaire* was included, a piece that was performed at the very first concert given by the Symphonic String Players,

conducted by Herbert Menges, in May 1925. At the end of that season Barry Wordsworth stepped down after 26 years as Music Director and Principal Conductor, becoming the orchestra's first Conductor Laureate.

Today, the orchestra continues to attract noted players of the very highest calibre from around the country, many of whom regularly work with some of the finest orchestras in the world. With Joanna MacGregor CBE as only the fourth Music Director in the BPO's 100-year history, we look forward to the orchestra evolving under her direction in this its centenary year in 2025.