

**CBSO**

City of  
Birmingham  
Symphony  
Orchestra

Season Finale: Kazuki Conducts  
Elgar's First Symphony  
Symphony Hall  
Wednesday 14 June, 2023, 7:30pm

CBSO.CO.UK



**SEASON FINALE:  
KAZUKI CONDUCTS  
ELGAR'S FIRST  
SYMPHONY**

Concert programme £4

## MEMBERS' RECEPTION

6:45pm in the Jennifer Blackwell Performance Space.

MEMBERS' AFTERNOON TEA



Principal Funders:

# PROGRAMME

**Howard** The Butterfly Effect 10mins  
*CBSO Centenary Commission, World Premiere*

**Britten** Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings 26mins

*Interval*

**Elgar** Symphony No.1 50mins

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**Kazuki Yamada** Conductor

**Elsbeth Dutch** French Horn

**Ian Bostridge** Tenor

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The Dani Howard Commission is kindly supported by Chris Oakley and Steven Christie.


We are very happy for you to take photographs at CBSO concerts, but please **do** be discreet to avoid disturbing other audience members. We would suggest dimming the brightness on your phone, taking pictures during applause breaks, and not using your flash. Please note that filming is not allowed.

We also regularly take photographs for promotional use, so you may see a professional photographer at our concerts. Please ask a member of the front of house team if you have any questions about this.

To ensure that everyone is able to enjoy performance, please make sure your mobile phone is switched off or **set to silent**.

# SEASON FINALE

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Wednesday 14 June 2023, 7:30pm  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham

# SEASON FINALE: KAZUKI CONDUCTS ELGAR'S FIRST SYMPHONY

What a fantastic way to end the season: a celebration of British music across over 100 years. Elgar's Symphony No.1 is bursting with energy and an endless supply of tunes. Britten's Serenade is a group of brilliant songs: by turn beautiful, haunting, and downright terrifying and British music is alive and well in the form of a brand-new piece by Dani Howard.

Dani Howard (b. 1993)

## THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

*The Butterfly Effect*: defined by the idea that a small action can have larger implications on a more complex system. The concept is imagined with a butterfly flapping its wings in one location, causing a hurricane elsewhere. Having contemplated this idea for some time prior to writing the piece, and upon noticing the rest of this programme (Britten and Elgar, both Royal College of Music alumni), Dani has reflected on the impact of that single decision to study there, onto every other part of her life, professionally and personally. It was upon hearing a performance of Joseph Horowitz's Clarinet Sonatina performed by Andrew Simon and Warren Lee as a teenager (of which you may hear quotations within the piece), and later meeting the wonderful

composer and professor of the Royal College of Music, of whom the piece is dedicated to, that was certainly one of the most influential moments in time, affecting so much that followed. The work begins with a small and simple idea, heard by the viola's and clarinet, that gradually expands and lengthens, pushing itself forward to create an almost 'chain reaction', into a much larger finale.

*The piece was commissioned by the CBSO, and generously supported by Chris Oakley and Steven Christie as part of the CBSO Centenary Commissions.*

Programme note © Dani Howard

Benjamin Britten (1913–1976)

## SERENADE FOR TENOR, HORN AND STRINGS, OP.31

Prologue

Pastoral

Nocturne

Elegy

Dirge

Hymn

Sonnet

Epilogue



BENJAMIN BRITTEN, 1968

In May 1939, Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears landed in North America, hoping to build a career in a new land of opportunity. It was not to be. War came in August that year, and stranded in a scorching California, Britten came to realise that English light, shade and even rain was at the very root of his creativity. He'd felt that first tug of homesickness in (of all places) a bookshop in Los Angeles, where he discovered George Crabbe's poem *The Borough* – the literary seed that would eventually grow into his opera *Peter Grimes*. For now, though (he recalled), "I suddenly realised where I belonged, and what I lacked". Britten and Pears took the decision to make the dangerous wartime Atlantic crossing and face censure as conscientious objectors in their own country. They arrived back in Britain in April 1942.

Within weeks, Britten had a commission from the BBC – writing for the RAF Symphony Orchestra, in which a brilliant young horn player, Dennis Brain, rapidly caught his attention. Brain had just turned 21 and he played, noted Britten, "as flexibly and accurately as most clarinet players, and is a sweet and intelligent person as well". Brain wasted no time in asking Britten for a concerto. What actually emerged, in the spring of 1943, was a sequence of "six nocturnes" for horn, tenor and string orchestra. Pears, Brain and the conductor Walter Goehr gave the premiere at the Wigmore Hall on 15 October 1943. A fascinated audience heard a sort of joint song-cycle in which the horn embodies both the tenor's alter-ego, and the wild poetic spirit of the Serenade's real subject: night.

So Britten wrote the *Prologue* and *Epilogue* solely for the horn's "natural" notes (played without valves, and to modern ears, eerily off-key). They serve as a sort of summons – or a portal – to a nocturnal world both like and mysteriously unlike our own. In between

come six songs in which the horn and singer serve as each other's shadow, guide and *doppelgänger* as they explore different aspects of darkness and dream through six different poems, chosen by Britten with help from the *Serenade's* dedicatee, the critic and novelist Edward Sackville-West. As Sackville-West put it:

*The subject is Night and its prestigia [conjuring tricks]: the lengthening shadow, the distant bugle at sunset, the Baroque panoply of the starry sky, the heavy angels of sleep; but also the cloak of evil – the worm in the heart of the rose, the sense of sin in the heart of man. The whole sequence forms an Elegy or Nocturnal (as Donne would have called it), resuming the thoughts and images suitable to evening.*

The six songs range across poets from Shakespeare's contemporary Ben Jonson to the Victorian laureate Alfred, Lord Tennyson. The string orchestra rustles, shimmers and sighs in the background as Britten explores the many facets of night – tranquil, healing and majestic; sinister, melancholy and (in his setting of William Blake's *The Sick Rose*) disturbingly sensual. The final *Sonnet* does not include the horn – the soloist is moving offstage and into the distance, from where the final *Epilogue* echoes like the ghost of a dream.

## Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings

### Prologue (*solo horn*)

#### Pastoral

The Day's grown old; the fainting Sun  
Has but a little way to run,  
And yet his Steeds, with all his skill,  
Scarce lug the Chariot down the hill.

The shadows now so long do grow,  
That brambles like tall cedars show;  
Molehills seem mountains, and the ant  
Appears a monstrous elephant.

A very little, little flock  
Shades thrice the ground that it would stock;  
Whilst the small stripling following them  
Appears a mighty Polypheme.

And now on benches all are sat  
In the cool air to sit and chat,  
Till Phoebus, dipping in the West,  
Shall lead the World the way to Rest.

Charles Cotton (1630-87)

#### Nocturne

The splendour falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story:  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory:  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Bugle, blow; answer, echoes, dying, dying,  
dying.

O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, farther going!  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying;  
Bugle, blow; answer, echoes, dying, dying,  
dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river;  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying!  
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying,  
dying.

Alfred Tennyson (1809-92)

**Elegy**

O Rose, thou art sick;  
The invisible worm  
That flies in the night,  
In the howling storm,

Has found out thy bed  
Of crimson joy;  
And his dark, secret love  
Does thy life destroy.

William Blake (1757-1827)

**Dirge**

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,  
Every nighte and alle,  
Fire and fleet and candle-lighte,  
And Christe receive thy saule.

When thou from hence away art past,  
Every nighte and alle,  
To Whinnymuir thou com'st at last;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gav'est hosen and shoon,  
Every nighte and alle,  
Sit thee down and put them on;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

If hosen and shoon thou ne'er gav'st nane,  
Every nighte and alle,  
The whinnes sall prick thee to the bare bane;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Whinnymuir when thou may'st pass,  
Every nighte and alle,  
To Brig o'Dread thou com'st at last;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

From Brig o'Dread when thou may'st pass,  
Every nighte and alle,  
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

If ever thou gav'st meat or drink,  
Every nighte and alle,  
The fire sall never make thee shrink;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

If meat or drink thou ne'er gav'st nane,  
Every nighte and alle,  
The fire will burn thee to the bare bane;  
And Christe receive thy saule.

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,  
Every night and alle,  
Fire and fleet and candle-lighte,  
And Christe receive thy saule...

Anon. 15th cent.

**Hymn**

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,  
Now the sun is laid to sleep,  
Seated in thy silver chair,  
State in wonted manner keep:  
Hesperus entreats thy light,  
Goddess excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade  
Dare itself to interpose;  
Cynthia's shining orb was made  
Heaven to clear when day did close:  
Bless us then with wishèd sight,  
Goddess excellently bright.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,  
And thy crystal-shining quiver;  
Give unto the flying hart  
Space to breathe, how short so ever:  
Thou that mak'st a day of night,  
Goddess excellently bright.

Ben Jonson (1572-1637)

**Sonnet**

O soft embalmer of the still midnight,  
Shutting, with careful fingers and benign,  
Our gloom-pleas'd eyes, embower'd  
from the light,  
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:  
O soothest Sleep! If so it please thee, close  
In midst of this thine hymn my willing eyes,  
Or wait the 'Amen', ere the poppy throws  
Around my bed its lulling charities.  
Then save me, or the passèd day will shine  
Upon my pillow, breeding many woes, -  
Save me from curious Conscience, that  
still lords  
Its strength for darkness, burrowing  
like a mole;  
Turn the key deftly in the oilèd wards,  
And seal the hushèd Casket of my Soul.

To Sleep by John Keats (1795-1821)

**Epilogue (solo horn)**



Edward Elgar (1857-1934)

# SYMPHONY NO.1 IN A FLAT, OP.55

Andante nobilmente e semplice – Allegro

Allegro molto –

Adagio

Lento – Allegro

## HIGH HOPES AND BANKNOTES

At the end of 1907, Sir Edward Elgar, his wife Caroline Alice and their daughter Carice took a cross-channel ferry and headed for the Mediterranean – to spend the winter in a rented flat in Rome. “On my way to economise ‘In the South’” Elgar told a friend. It seems incredible today, but the man whose face until recently decorated our £20 notes simply couldn’t afford to live in Britain that winter. As a knight in Edwardian London, he’d have been expected to entertain and socialise on a scale commensurate with his social position. His musician’s income rendered that impossible.

But that wasn’t the only pressure Elgar was fleeing. He was 50 years old, and after a long struggle, was finally at the peak of his profession. Now the musical world was looking expectantly at him. In 1899 he’d rashly mentioned to his publisher that he was considering writing a symphony, and since then he’d been besieged with enquiries about this major new work. Conductors and promoters vied to be allowed the premiere; as early as 1901 the Leeds Festival even had a conductor (Henry Wood) lined up for it. Elgar never responded well to external pressure, and he knew that a symphony would be the supreme test of his skill. “When I see one of my own works by the side of, say, the Fifth Symphony [of Beethoven], I feel like a tinker may do when surveying the Forth Bridge” he told

the audience at his Birmingham University lectures in 1905. Sometimes he despaired: “I curse the power that gave me gifts, and loathe them now and ever”. If he was ever to write his own symphony, he needed privacy and time.

## THE WAND OF YOUTH

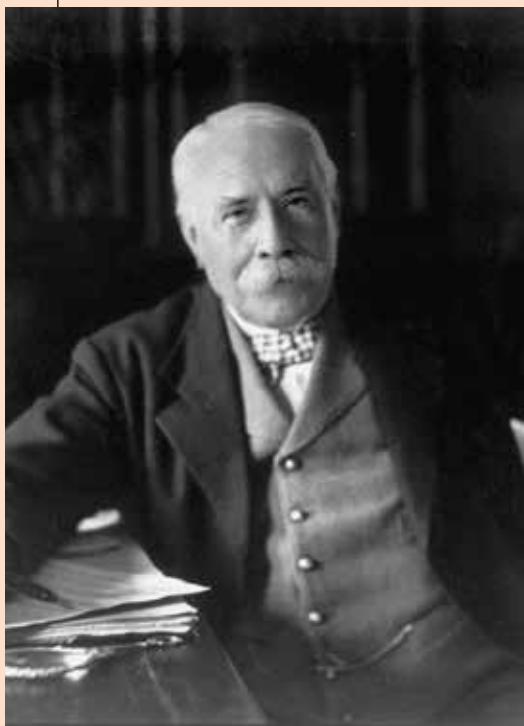
That winter, unknown to the public, something had gelled in Elgar’s creative mind, and the symphony was finally under construction. Nor was this the symphony (a programmatic work inspired by the life and death of General Gordon) that he’d been toying with since the 1890s. Back at his Hereford home, Plas Gwyn, he’d spent the summer of 1907 revisiting music he’d sketched in his childhood; polishing it up, orchestrating it, and finally publishing it as the delightful first *Wand of Youth* suite. And a few days later, on 27 June, Caroline Alice heard him at the piano playing for the first time “a great, beautiful tune”. It was the *nobilmente e semplice* (noble and simple) melody that opens the First Symphony, and goes on to become the guiding spirit of the whole piece. To the Edwardians, that theme may have sounded patriotic in character; even reminiscent of *Land of Hope and Glory*. For Elgar, it emerged from his most personal and private inspiration – and meant something very different.

## PUBLIC TRIUMPH

Not that you’d know it from the Symphony’s early history. There’s no getting round the fact that Elgar’s First – when it premiered in Manchester on 3 December 1908, with the Hallé Orchestra, under Hans Richter – became the first British symphony ever to enter the international repertoire. The audience erupted, and the critics were bowled over. “That this work is the noblest ever penned for instruments by an English composer we are quite certain” wrote the *Manchester Guardian*. Four days later, Richter introduced it to the London

Symphony Orchestra with the words “Let us now rehearse the greatest symphony of modern times – and not only in this country”.

It was the greatest success of Elgar’s career, and the symphony was performed over 100 times in its first year; in the USA, Canada, Vienna, Berlin, St Petersburg, Munich, Budapest, Rome and even Australia. “After that superb finale the audience seemed to rise at E when he appeared” wrote Caroline Alice in her diary “I never heard such frantic applause after any novelty, nor such shouting... People stood on their seats to get a view”. Elgar dedicated the symphony to its first interpreter: “To Hans Richter, Mus. Doc., true artist and true friend.”



EDWARD ELGAR, 1931

## “A GREAT, BEAUTIFUL TUNE”

There’s no doubt, the symphony is an enormously stirring work. The tune with which it opens (after a quiet drumroll) is arguably Elgar’s very finest. Yet this great melody prevails only for a mere page of music before it’s plunged into the turmoil of the first *Allegro*. There’s a lifetime’s worth of emotion between that point and the symphony’s final triumph; some of it idyllic, some of it nostalgic, much of it passionate and occasionally very dark indeed. Throughout, that opening theme appears at crucial moments as a distant memory or a fleeting glimpse (at one point in the first movement, Elgar has it played by the back desk of second violins alone). When it finally returns at the end of the symphony, it’s proud and grand – but it’s still battling its way through a crashing, surging full orchestra. The initial calm never returns again.

## SECRETS AND MEMORIES

Because the First Symphony is about private, not public emotions. True, it’s full of the little musical games that Elgar loved – you’d never guess that the serene, glowing *Adagio* begins with exactly the same sequence of notes as the tense, bristling *Allegro molto* that precedes it. And musicians’ folklore has it that Elgar wrote the symphony in response to a bet with a friend that he couldn’t write a symphony in two keys at once! (Large stretches of the first movement are in a turbulent D minor – far removed from the calm A flat major with which the symphony opens and closes).

But more important are Elgar’s emotional clues to the work’s inner narrative. He was always prone to depression; the middle of the first movement, and the sinister opening of the finale are moments of black despair. Yet listen out for the sweet interludes and moments of quiet amidst the crashing waves of the first movement – like sudden

glints of light or pangs of nostalgia. There's a wonderful example, for solo violin and glinting harp, at the centre of the second movement's fierce march. Elgar told one orchestra to play this passage "like something you hear down by the river". The rural dream of Elgar's distant youth was never far behind his greatest music.

### FAITH, HOPE AND MELODY

So what is this Symphony about? 100 years on, it should hardly need saying that it's emphatically not about Empire, about the Edwardian era, or about Pomp and Circumstance – though all these things were part of Elgar's world, and find distant echoes in the Symphony. Elgar gave us one crucial hint: "There is no programme beyond a wide experience of human life with a great charity (love) and a massive hope in the future". It's about idealism, it's about life, and it's about hope – hope in the face of great adversity. There's deep consolation on the way, nowhere deeper than in the *Adagio*, which rises from the ashes of the second movement to become a rapturous, sunset-hued meditation comparable in emotional intensity to *Nimrod*. (Elgar's publisher Augustus Jaeger – the original "Nimrod" himself – wrote to Elgar that it was "one of the greatest slow movements since Beethoven").

But the Symphony's final message is that of the great tune from the opening, after a long struggle, striding through the final bars no matter what's thrown at it – head high. "A massive hope in the future". No British composer had ever written a symphony that lasted, and Elgar the man was uncertain, cash-strapped and insecure. But genius finds a way.

"There is no programme beyond a wide experience of human life with a great charity (love) and a massive hope in the future".

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# KAZUKI YAMADA

THE POSITION OF CHIEF CONDUCTOR IS SUPPORTED BY JOHN OSBORN CBE

As the new Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Kazuki Yamada builds upon the deep musical bond formed with players during his time as Principal Guest Conductor of the orchestra, a role held by him since 2018. Alongside his commitments in Birmingham, Yamada is also Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo. Having already worked with the two organisations in partnership, conducting collaborative performances of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in Monaco in 2019, Yamada's new appointment sees a continuing link forged between Monaco and Birmingham, with the CBSO Chorus set for a return to Monaco in 2023 for a performance of Orff's *Carmina Burana*. Time spent under the close supervision of Seiji Ozawa served to underline the importance of what Yamada calls his "Japanese feeling" for classical music. Born in 1979 in Kanagawa, Japan, he continues to work and perform in Japan as Principal Guest Conductor of the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra.



© SASHA GUSOV

# ELSPETH DUTCH



Elspeth Dutch is the CBSO's Section Leader Horn. She started to learn the violin when she was six years old but decided she wanted to learn another instrument too. She says "I liked brass instruments because they were loud and shiny" and after her mum found a local teacher, Simon de Souza, she began to study the horn when she was nine years old. Elspeth studied with Simon until she went to the Guildhall School of Music & Drama where she studied with Richard Bissill, Hugh Seenan and Jeff Bryant. She was on trial for 1st horn at Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra at the same time as her trial with CBSO during her last term at GSMD. She says "these trials were my first professional work along with a concert with the LSO playing offstage for about six bars!" Elspeth's CBSO highlights to-date include playing *Ein Heldenleben* at the Lucerne Festival with Simon Rattle as part of her trial – "a pretty special concert".

Elspeth is supported by Isabel, Peter and Christopher in loving memory of Ernest Churcher.

# IAN BOSTRIDGE

Ian Bostridge's international recital career takes him to the foremost concert halls of Europe, Southeast Asia, and North America. His operatic appearances have included Aschenbach in *Death in Venice* for the Deutsche Oper, Peter Quint in *The Turn of the Screw* for the Teatro alla Scala, Handel's *Jeptha* for Opéra National de Paris, Don Ottavio in *Don Giovanni* for the Wiener Staatsoper, Tamino in *Die Zauberflöte* and Jupiter in *Semele* for the English National Opera and Caliban in *The Tempest* for the Royal Opera House. He appeared this season as Renaud in *Armide* for Opéra Comique and undertook a tour of *St Matthew Passion* with Les Talens Lyriques. His multitude of concert performances include Zender's *Winterreise* with Pappano at La Monnaie, *War Requiem* with San Francisco Symphony and with Sinfonica di Milano and *Les Illuminations* at the MITO festival. Ian's many recordings have won all the major international record prizes and been nominated for 15 Grammys. His book *Schubert's Winter Journey: Anatomy of an Obsession* was published by Faber and Faber in the UK and Knopf in the USA in 2014, and his most recent book *Song and Self* was released in 2023. He was made a CBE in the 2004 New Year's Honours.



© KALPESH LATHIGRA

Composer

# DANI HOWARD



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Dani Howard is a British composer and orchestrator who is quickly gaining international recognition with regular performances across Europe, the US and Asia. In 2021 she received, with acclaimed reviews, the premiere of her Trombone Concerto with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and soloist Peter Moore. The piece received a Royal Philharmonic Society Award in the Large-Scale Composition category, and has since seen performances with the London Symphony Orchestra and Ulster Orchestra. 2019 saw her debut with the London Symphony Orchestra (a new commission for Cheltenham Festival conducted by Elim Chan), BBC Symphony Orchestra and a return to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic with a new commission for the opening of their 2019-20 season. Her debut opera with *The Opera Story* premiered in 2019. She is currently Composer-In-Residence with the London Chamber Orchestra (2022-24). Born and raised in Hong Kong, she graduated with first class honours from the Royal College of Music as a Rose Williams Scholar.



# 2023-24 REMASTERED CBSO



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2023-24: CBSO Remastered  
New Season of music announced!  
#CBSOMakeSomeNoise

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We've come from all over the world, but we're at home right here in Birmingham. See us at Symphony Hall playing some of the greatest symphonic music of all time, at pop-up performances around the city, at the CBSO Centre performing intimate small-scale gigs or in schools, community centres, libraries and even the occasional pub!

We're musicians, but we're also parents, teachers, runners, gardeners, writers, sports fans, foodies and so much more. We're part of your city, and we couldn't be happier to be here to play, share, write, sing, live and breathe music with you!

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Andrew Harvey  
Patrick Curlett  
Stefano Mengoli \*  
Richard Thomas  
Nathan Bomans  
Colette Overdijk \*  
Bathan Allmand  
Kirsty Lovie \*  
Mark Robinson #  
Wendy Quirk  
Catherine Chambers  
Katharine Gittings  
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Cohen-Lamberger  
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Catherine Arlidge \*\*  
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Georgia Hannant \*  
Tam Mott  
Bryony Morrison \*  
Timothy Birchall \*  
Gabriel Dyker \*\*  
Agnieszka Gesler  
Chihiro Ono  
Adam Hill  
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Michael Jenkinson \*\*  
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Jessica Tickle \*  
Amy Thomas #  
Daichi Yoshimura  
Sarah Malcolm  
Henrietta Ridgeon  
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Julian Walters \*\*  
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Tom Neil

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Zupancic \*\*  
Veronika Klírová \*

## PICCOLO

Helen Benson \*

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## COR ANGLAIS

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## BASSOON

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## TUBA

Stephen Calow

## TIMPANI

Matthew Hardy \*

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Katherine Thomas \*  
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# CBSO MEMBERSHIP

From a closer insight into the music and rehearsals, to hearing about life as a musician, CBSO members can get more from their concert-going experience by getting to know the people behind the instruments.

From priority booking to members' events and behind-the-scenes information, there are plenty of reasons to join the CBSO. But it is the people themselves who are at the very heart of our membership. CBSO members can enjoy the chance to share the company of musicians and artists and meet new like-minded friends. In addition, through their annual donation, they help to provide vital support towards our Sound of the Future Campaign, a fundraising campaign launched to help the orchestra recover from the pandemic and reinvigorate its future, giving musical experiences to even more people.

To join us as a CBSO member, simply visit [cbsoco.uk/membership](https://cbsoco.uk/membership) to sign up online or call Rachel Cooper on **0121 616 6510**. We look forward to welcoming you to the family!



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