
CBSO FAMILY CHRISTMAS CONCERT MODE PROGRAMME

CONCERT MODE PROGRAMME

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INTRODUCTION

Christmas is a time for family and friends, whether that is attending Midnight Mass, sitting around the dining table together or letting your hair down at a Christmas Party. This year will be a special Christmas for me as I will be spending it with my CBSO “family and friends” in three concerts at Symphony Hall that cater for all musical tastes and styles.

There is nothing quite like the sound of a choir at Christmas and we have four of them: CBSO Chorus, Youth Chorus, Children’s Chorus and CBSO SO Vocal. Across three concerts we aim to transport you to the Christmas of your choice. Nothing lifts the heart more than an evening full of carols and choral singing. But you might prefer to sit around the fire with loved ones and cherish the warmth of a Family Christmas. Or maybe, after a long and tiring year, you just want to go wild at a Christmas Party?

Having been attached to the CBSO in some way or another for the last 33 years, I have seen traditions come and go. I think I am correct in saying that it was the Second

Violins that started the tradition of wearing something “Christmassy” for Leroy Anderson’s Sleigh Ride, the section I used to be a member of. Since then, the fancy dress has somewhat “snowballed” and every time I come back to the CBSO at Christmas, I cannot wait to see who is wearing what.

Ever since I put down the violin bow and picked up a baton, I have been asked to dress up to conduct Christmas concerts across the UK. In the past I have been a Christmas pudding, a Christmas tree, a snowman and even a turkey. As for this year, my lips are sealed!

Michael Seal
Conductor

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

1. What is Frosty the Snowman's nose made of?
2. Which reindeer is missing from this list: Rudolph, Dasher, Prancer, Blitzen, Dancer, Cupid, Vixen, Comet?
3. In which country did the tradition of having a Christmas Tree originate?
4. Which Christmas song was the first ever song to be played in space in 1965?
5. What is the name of the Grinch's dog?
6. What did my true love give to me on the seventh day of Christmas?
7. What date is Christmas Day celebrated each year?
8. In Frozen, what does Olaf the snowman love, even though he might melt?

Answers: 1 = A button. 2 = Donner. 3 = Germany. 4 = Jingle Bells. 5 = Max. 6 = Seven swans-a-swimming. 7 = 25th December. 8 = Warm hugs (and summer).

BIOGRAPHIES

MICHAEL SEAL

Conductor

Michael Seal is a dynamic British conductor known for his deep understanding of orchestras, shaped by his early career as a violinist with the CBSO. His insider perspective fosters strong rapport with musicians, earning him a reputation for inspiring performances and impressive results on tight rehearsal schedules. Since 2005, he has conducted the CBSO over 300 times as Assistant or Associate Conductor, including his conducting debut at the BBC Proms in 2023 with the Proms' first Bollywood concert. He is a regular guest conductor with all five BBC orchestras, as well as the Philharmonia, London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Royal Scottish National, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Bournemouth Symphony, and Ulster Orchestra. Internationally, Michael has conducted

major ensembles such as the Brussels Philharmonic, WDR Funkhausorchester Köln, Münchner Rundfunkorchester, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Kuopio Symphony and the Norwegian Radio Orchestra. His podcast “a mic on the podium”—launched during the global pandemic—has received critical acclaim and is now archived in the British Library. Upcoming debuts include the Beethoven Orchestra Bonn (2026) and the Belgian National Orchestra (2027).

STEPHEN MANGAN

Presenter

After graduating from Cambridge University and then RADA, Stephen Mangan began his acting career in the theatre. In 2008 he played the title role in *The Norman Conquests* at The Old Vic and then on Broadway. Stephen was nominated for a Tony Award and the play won Best Revival. Other theatre credits include, *Birthday* and *The People Are*

Friendly (Royal Court Theatre), Jeeves and Wooster (Duke of York's Theatre), Hayfever (Savoy theatre), Midsummer Nights Dream (RSC) and Rules For Living (National Theatre). His most recent theatre credits include Sean Foley's The Man in the White Suit (Wyndham's Theatre), Michael Longhurst's Private Lives opposite Rachael Stirling (Donmar Warehouse) & Mike Bartlett's Unicorn at (Garrick Theatre) alongside Nicola Walker and Erin Doherty. Stephen has an extensive list of television credits that include BAFTA-winning British sitcom Green Wing, Free Agents, Dirk Gently, in which he played the title role, Houdini & Doyle, Episodes, opposite Tamsin Greig and Matt LeBlanc, the lead role of Richard Pitt in the comedy Hang Ups alongside Richard E. Grant and Katherine Parkinson and BBC's The Split which ran for 4 seasons. Stephen's film credits include Billy Elliot, Birthday, Postman Pat: The Movie (Voice), Rush, Beyond The Pole, Confetti, Festival and Basil Khalil's A Gaza Weekend.

ELESHA PAUL MOSES

Vocalist

Elesha Paul Moses is an award-winning British vocalist, actress, creative director and producer, celebrated for her powerhouse vocals, electrifying stage presence and remarkable versatility across stage and live music. Rising to prominence as the leading lady in the West End production of Tina The Tina Turner Musical, for which she won the BBTA Award for Best Lead Female in a Musical. Touring internationally as the star of Whitney Queen of the Night and Tina: What's Love Got To Do With It. Collaborating with global icons such as Lionel Richie, Tom Jones, will.i.am, and Mathew Knowles, performances at major venues including the Royal Albert Hall, London Palladium, Leeds Castle, Co-op Live Manchester, and multiple orchestral concerts across Europe. Elesha leads Infinity Creative Productions and EPM Entertainment, producing original shows such as The Private Tour, Higher Love,

Wicked-er, and the international debut of K-Pop Infinity, launching into Europe in 2026. As well as several creative development workshop projects, including the STEPS “Here & Now” Workshop and the ICE Workshop.

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