
BEST OF BOND

CONCERT MODE

PROGRAMME

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INTRODUCTION

A warm welcome to Symphony Hall as we celebrate the music of an iconic franchise. For me, a James Bond theme instantly transports you to a world of glamour and danger.

The first hint of that iconic trumpet sound and the drama begins, and every musical phrase feels as thrilling as a plot twist from the film it accompanies.

As a singer, this repertoire is the one I look forward to performing more than any other – and I do have my favourites.

Two themes in particular: Skyfall and Nobody Does It Better. Skyfall has an incredible sense of scale. It starts simply, just voice and piano, then simmers like a fuse being lit until the full orchestra kicks in and the climax hits. I love it.

Originally written for The Spy Who Loved Me, Nobody Does It Better is one of the rare Bond themes that feels more like a love song. It doesn't lean heavily into menace or espionage – it's warm, elegant, and completely sincere. And I always get to

sing it for someone special... but I won't give that one away!

I don't get to sing Live and Let Die, but when I hear Matt Ford perform it, I'm instantly transported back to watching the film at the cinema in 1973.

I was absolutely petrified of Jaws. I was a young girl, but I can still remember the sheer thrill of it... along with that lingering childhood fear.

With every new release, I'm fascinated by how the Bond sound evolves while still carrying that unmistakable musical DNA.

Tonight's programme celebrates the songs that have defined 007 across the decades. I'm especially delighted to be sharing the stage with Matt Ford and Stephen Bell. May our combined love of this music take you on a journey through Bond's world — bold, dramatic, and utterly unforgettable.

Alison Jear

Vocalist

JAMES BOND FUN FACTS

1. Roger Moore holds the record for the most official Bond films – he's featured in 7 in total.
2. Paul McCartney's Live and Let Die was the first Bond theme nominated for an Academy Award.
3. Ian Fleming, the author of the Bond series, joined the British Naval Intelligence Division during the Second World War. It is said that his experiences in the Royal Navy inspired the character of James Bond.
4. The iconic gun barrel opening scene actually features the silhouette of stuntman Bob Simmons and not the original actor who played Bond, Sean Connery.
5. Known best for his children's stories, Roald Dahl wrote the screenplay for 'You Only Live Twice' (1967). As an RAF pilot during the Second World War, Dahl used his own wartime experience to adapt the story.

6. The Bond films hold many Guinness World Records including: the most high-explosives detonated in a single film take (Not Time To Die), the largest film stunt explosion (Spectre), and the most cannon rolls in a car (Casino Royale).
7. The Skyfall theme sung by Adele was the first Bond song to win an Oscar.
8. Skyfall, starring Daniel Craig, was the first Bond film to cross \$1 billion at the global box office.

BIOGRAPHIES

STEPHEN BELL

Conductor

Stephen Bell studied at the Royal College of Music under the renowned conductor Norman Del Mar. February 2022 saw his appointment as Principal Guest Conductor of the RTÉ Concert Orchestra. Prior to this, he was appointed Artistic Director of the

City of Oxford Orchestra in 2009 and Associate Conductor of the Hallé in 2013, a position he still holds. Past highlights include conducting the Queen's Jubilee Concert at Chatsworth House, a gala event for Prince Charles at Windsor Castle, the memorial concert for Alistair Cooke at Westminster Abbey, the award-winning Pitch Perfect for BBC TV's Children in Need at Wembley with the BBC Singers, the televised Music Nation concert from the Clyde Auditorium in Glasgow, and pop legends Texas with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra at the Barrowland Ballroom, Glasgow, for BBC Music Day 2017. From 2005 to 2010, Stephen was invited to conduct the annual televised BBC Proms in the Park with the BBC Philharmonic, and since 2011, he has appeared every year on the live TV broadcasts of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's Last Night of the Proms celebrations.

MATT FORD

Vocalist

Matt Ford has built an acclaimed career at the forefront of Swing Era and orchestral music. Renowned for his warm tone and effortless phrasing, Matt has performed with many of the World's leading ensembles and conductors. Always in demand, Matt has appeared with the BBC Concert Orchestra & NOW, RTE CO, RPO, Halle Orchestra, RLPO, CBSO and Irish National Symphony Orchestra. Matt has made four BBC Proms appearances, as principle male vocalist with the John Wilson Orchestra in their 2011, 2013, 2016 and 2019 performances. His concert career has seen him perform at the Royal Albert Hall (on more than 25 occasions), Barbican, Royal Festival Hall, Bridgewater Hall, Symphony Hall, the Berliner Philharmonie, and extensively throughout Europe. Broadcast and recording credits include Friday Night is Music Night, BBC Big Band Special, Sunday Night is Music Night, and Sky Arts' 100 Years of Big

Bands. His studio work includes EMI Classics' That's Entertainment - and his album From Abbey Road, which debuted as No.1 on the iTunes Jazz chart and which gave Matt his first UK Official Top 40 Singles Chart hit.

ALISON JIEAR

Vocalist

Alison trained classically in voice and piano at The Queensland Conservatorium of Music in Australia. She moved to London in 1988 as a member of the girl group The Fabulous Singlettes, where they enjoyed three West End seasons, performed on countless UK variety shows, and had their own television specials on the BBC and ITV. Alison received an Olivier Award Nomination for Best Actress in a Musical for JERRY SPRINGER THE OPERA (Royal National Theatre / Cambridge Theatre) and reprised the role at The Sydney Opera House in Australia in 2009. Other West End credits include

Sister Mary Patrick in SISTER ACT (Dominion Theatre), XANADU, SHOES (Sadler's Wells), ON THE TOWN (English National Opera & Theatre du Chatelet, Paris), SMOKEY JOES CAFÉ, THE HOT MIKADO, GREASE, THREE LITTLE PIGS and LES MISERABLES. A sought after solo concert artist, Alison appears regularly with numerous orchestras throughout the UK. She has produced her one woman shows all over the world. She has released four solo CD's: Simply, Forgiveness' Embrace, In Your Eyes: Live at Pizza on the Park, Inspirational, and a fifth album with trumpet player, Adam Linsley.

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