

WELCOME BACK!

It's an enormous pleasure to welcome you to our continuing Centenary season, as Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra enters a new era of music-making.

There's no let-up on the excitement: we've invited world class soloists to Brighton – including tenor Mark Padmore, Leeds Piano prize winner Junyan Chen and Brazilian star Adriano Adewale – and we'll bask in masterpieces by Mahler, Mozart and Britten, as well as John Tavener's profound The Protecting Veil. The ethereal beauties of Vaughan Williams and Delius mingle with Stravinsky's Petrushka, one of the most glamorous and virtuosic scores of the 20th century.

BPO's fresh programming reaches out to new and young audiences with our LoveMusic and Under 30s schemes (see page 25). We're celebrating film scores by Michael Nyman, the delicate grooves of Max Richter, and Wynton Marsalis' fabulous jazz trumpet concerto. To turn the year, Alistair McGowan narrates A Christmas Carol, and BPO glitters with fairytales, nutcrackers and Ukrainian carols.

Brighton Philharmonic Orchestra has been serving audiences in Sussex for the last century, and our concerts are for everyone. Come and join us for this boldly entertaining season of music!

Joanna MacGregor CBE Music Director & CEO



28 September 2025	Page
A New World: Rachmaninoff, Ravel and Bartók	2
Radimannon, Raver and Bartok	
19 October	
The Romantics: Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Mahler	4
8 November Britten's Serenade:	
Dowland, Britten and MacMillan	6
7.0	
7 December A Fairytale Christmas:	
Delius, Ukrainian Carols and	
Tchaikovsky	8
18, 19 & 20 December	
Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol	10
24 January 2026	
The Draughtsman's Contract:	10
Wynton Marsalis and Michael Nyman	12
22 February	
Lonely Angel: Mozart and Pēteris Vasks	14
1 lozart and 1 etems vasks	, , ,
29 March	
The Protecting Veil: Vaughan Williams, Vivaldi and John Tavener	16
18 April Sounds of Brazil: Adriano Adewale,	
Percussion and Petrushka	18
Chamber Music	20
BPO Centenary Book	21
Join the BPO Family	22
Booking Information	24
Savings and Concessions	25

'Junyan Chen's vivacity and poetry was outstanding... vintage Rachmaninoff.' The Arts Desk

'An exhilarating and technically thrilling performance.' Gramophone

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- written in the white heat of a new, post-1918 landscape – while sensational pianist Junyan Chen plays the Everest of piano concertos.

For their opening concert, BPO performs three works pushing at the boundaries of psychological drama and storytelling, ushering in the early twentieth century.

There's nothing more spectacular than Rachmaninoff's mighty third piano concerto - a tour de force for any performer, and the pinnacle of the romantic concerto. Written while the composer faced his last years in Russia leading up to the Bolshevik Revolution, it radiates deep longing as well as

hair raising technical demands. The exciting piano stars in the firmament: the fame sweeping the prizes at the 2024 Leeds International Piano Competition. Expect bittersweet melodies, lush textures and magnificent virtuosity.

La Valse follows, to celebrate Ravel's 125th birthday. A chilling, brilliantly orchestrated social commentary on the Great War, it's an apocryphal take on the Imperial Viennese waltz, and an absolute showstopper for the orchestra. We finish with Bartók's equally exciting suite from The Miraculous Mandarin, banned after its scandalous first performance in Cologne in 1926 - music of brutal power, sexuality and energy, as well as ferocious majesty.

Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto no.3

La Valse

Bartók The Miraculous Mandarin Suite

Junyan Chen piano

Joanna MacGregor conductor

Tickets £39 / £34 / £28 / £20 / £13 Under 30s from £10 / £1 child 2

'It's hard to imagine a finer advocate for Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's Violin Concerto than Elena Urioste, who dispensed gleaming tone, flawless technique and generous expressivity.' The Dallas Morning News

THE ROMANTICS

Coleridge-Taylor's lyrical violin concerto and Mahler's 'Death in Venice' symphony combine in a passionate, heroic programme.

Mahler wrote wonderfully about his fifth symphony: 'This primeval music, this foaming, roaring, sea of sound,' he said. 'These dancing stars... these breathtaking, iridescent and flashing breakers...' His pivotal symphony premiered in 1904 - came at a time of turbulence and joy: serious health problems necessitating a break from conducting in Vienna, and his deep love affair with Alma Schindler, later his wife. The symphony's 70-minute, five movement-trajectory reflects this journey from mourning to triumph; the exquisitely beautiful and personal Adagietto, unforgettable in Visconti's

film Death in Venice, is a rapturous love episode before the blazing, brass-led finale. Mahler's fifth symphony is his testament to life, bridging romanticism and modernism: music that takes us to the edge of the abyss, offers us consolation, then passion.

Before that, the trail-blazing American violinist Elena Urioste performs Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's richly lyrical violin concerto, first performed in 1912. The son of an English mother and Sierra Leonian father, Coleridge-Taylor's gifts as composer and conductor were cut short at 37, leaving us iconic, popular works like Hiawatha's Wedding Feast. His music is imbued with romantic melody and glittering virtuosity. Don't miss this gorgeous concerto, delivered by its most celebrated interpreter.



BRITTEN'S SERVINADE

Legendary tenor Mark Padmore joins Brighton Philharmonic Strings for a dazzling programme: haunting English poetry, jazzy John Dowland and a wild Scottish ceilidh.

We're thrilled the wonderful tenor Mark Padmore is joining us to perform arguably Britten's greatest work for his life-long companion and muse, Peter Pears: his Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, premiered at London's Wigmore Hall in 1943. Britten had a superb knowledge and deep love of English poetry, and his settings of Tennyson, Blake, Keats and medieval lyric remain unsurpassed in their drama,

insight and intensity. The virtuosic horn part, composed for the masterful Dennis Brain, is performed by BPO's young principal horn Alexei Watkins.

Wrapped around this masterpiece are Britten's exhilarating Young Apollo, Joanna MacGregor's dreamy, jazzy arrangements of Dowland, and Britten's favourite composer, Purcell. To finish, James MacMillan's concerto for piano and strings: part love letter to Scottish folk music and part satire on political hypocrisy, it ends with the wildest imaginable ceilidh, replete with drumming, stamping and hooting.



Sunday 7 December 2025 2.45pm Brighton Dome

FAIRYTALE CHRISTMAS

The Kingdom of Sweets and the Sugar Plum Fairy, fairy tales and Christmas carols from Ukraine: a magical, delicious programme.

A mouthwatering confection of fairytales and magic, carols and Christmas treats opens with Delius' rarely performed tone poem Eventyr (Once Upon a Time), an irresistibly atmospheric evocation of Norway's giants and hobgoblins, caves and dark forests. Folklore continues in Václav Trojan's charming Fairy Tales concerto, performed by the prizewinning Latvian accordionist Alise Siliņa. Each movement narrates a Czech fairytale character, including The Bleary-Eyed Princess, The Tale of the Acrobat and

The Naughty Roundabout. Colourful, sharply exuberant music designed for children – of all ages!

The Ukrainian composer Thomas de Hartmann, who fled from Nazis but found himself writing under occupation in Paris, is undergoing a serious revival and his beautifully orchestrated Ukrainian Christmas Carols (1940) exemplifies his shimmering, effervescent voice. It provides the perfect arc to Tchaikovsky's timeless Nutcracker Suite – the story of Clara, the Nutcracker Prince and their journey to The Kingdom of Sweets. Who could resist the Sugar Plum Fairy, dances from Russia, China and Arabia, and the Waltz of the Flowers?

'Delectable, witty and glorious, Václav Trojan's concerto is a marvellous showpiece for soloist and orchestra.' BBC Music Magazine Delius

Eventyr (Once Upon a Time)

Václav Trojan

Fairy Tales:

A Concerto for Accordion

De Hartmann

Ukrainian Christmas Carols

Tchaikovsky

The Nutcracker Suite

Alise Siliņa accordion

Joanna MacGregor

conductor

Tickets

£39 / £34 / £28 / £20 / £13 Under 30s from £10 / £1 child Thursday 18 December 2025 6pm & 8pm St George's Church, Kemptown

Friday 19 December 2025 6pm St Mary's Church, Petworth

Saturday 20 December 2025 6pm St Anne's Church, Lewes 'Alistair McGowan's vocal virtuosity is extraordinary: razor-sharp in marrying words to music, and split second timing in transforming from narrator to character.'
Reviewsqate

CHARLES DICKENS' HCHARLES DICKENS' HCCHARLES DICKEN

10

Christmas arrives early with four festive performances of Charles Dickens' classic A Christmas Carol, with acclaimed actor Alistair McGowan and the BPO Brass Quintet.

We're delighted to welcome back the actor, writer and musician Alistair McGowan to narrate this most Christmassy of tales, this year touring to three Sussex churches. Directed by Richard Williams, the much-loved story of Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim and the spirits of Christmas Past, Present and Future is for absolutely everyone. Sparkling brass arrangements of Ding Dong Merrily on High, God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen, I Saw Three Ships

Come Sailing In, Coventry Carol, O Come O Come Emmanuel – and many more – support this seasonal tale of redemption and good cheer.

For more than 180 years, A Christmas Carol continues to be relevant:
Dickens created a fable that cut through materialism and rekindled the delight and generosity of Yuletide, along with plum pudding, goose, and roasted chestnuts. We've created our own Christmas tradition – come and join us!

Each performance lasts 70 minutes. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served.

Alistair McGowan

Joanna MacGregor conductor/piano

BPO Brass Quintet

Richard Williams
director

Tickets

£20 £10 Under 30s / £2.50 child brightonphil.org.uk/whats-on



trumpet concerto, add up to an evening of sassy cool.

Opening with the call of a wild elephant - nature's first trumpeter - jazz supremo Wynton Marsalis' Trumpet Concerto is nothing less than a dizzying history of the instrument. Travelling through fanfares and ceremonial music. Louis Armstrong and New Orleans blues, Paris conservatoire-playing and Mexican flaring trumpet, its thirty-five minutes is a feat of classical and jazz, stamina and technical prowess for both soloist and orchestra. The fabulously gifted Nigerian-Scottish trumpeter Aaron Azunda Akuabo is the star of

In the second half, Brighton Philharmonic presents two classic film scores from one of Britain's finest - and most multifaceted - living composers and writers, Michael Nyman. His translucent, alchemical suite from Peter Greenaway's 1991 film Prospero's Books complements four movements from his 1982 rollicking hit, The Draughtsman's Contract: jazzy, punchy re-imaginings of Henry Purcell, sounding as fresh (and provocative) as the day they were written.



'Ruth Rogers must be one of the most gifted young violinists in Britain: her playing not calculated in any sense, her performance style and technique so assured that the music flows as a natural consequence of innermost understanding.' Musical Opinion

LONELY

Two of Mozart's greatest concertos
– one stormy, one sunny – enfold
Bartók's riotous folk dances and
Pēteris Vasks' floating angel.

The genius of Mozart is at the heart of this concert. His Sinfonia Concertante, a double concerto, bursts with joy at discovering new horizons; there is a remarkable partnership between the violin and viola, which laugh, sigh and sing together. The viola was Mozart's instrument: he loved 'playing in the middle,' and the two soloists are our own brilliant Leader, Ruth Rogers, and the elegant Romanian violist Sascha Bota. Bartók's spry folk dances

counterbalance Peteris Vasks' vision of an angel 'who hovers over the world, observing the state of the ravaged earth... an almost imperceptible touch of his wings brings comfort and healing.'

We finish with one of Mozart's most powerful orchestral works, the Piano Concerto in D minor, played by BPO's Music Director Joanna MacGregor. Mirroring the supreme drama of his opera Don Giovanni and Mozart's complex relationship with his father, this dark work troubles, consoles, then finally delights.



Sunday 29 March 2026 2.45pm Brighton Dome

1

'Guy Johnston captures Tavener's wistful, yearning quality to perfection, surfing the music's impassioned dynamic range with a beguiling, velvet sonority that opens out thrillingly in moments of special intensity.' The Times

Prener's spiritual most

John Tavener's spiritual masterpiece
– both ecstatic and contemplative
– is paired with Vaughan Williams'
most haunting, enduring work,
along with Max Richter's fine-boned
homage to Vivaldi.

This programme focuses on the power and lyricism of a large string orchestra, climaxing with John Tavener's 45-minute cello concerto The Protecting Veil. Led by star cellist Guy Johnston, winner of BBC Musician of the Year and the Classical Brits, the listener is taken on a profound journey – serene, disruptive, joyful – bringing authenticity and mediation to a secular world. 'I have tried to capture the cosmic power of the Mother of God,' Tavener said, explaining the 'protecting

veil' of the Virgin Mary; 'the cello never stops singing throughout.' It topped the classical charts after its premiere at the Proms in 1992 and was nominated for the Mercury Prize; a later Tavener work, Music for Athene, was sung at Princess Diana's funeral.

Before that, Vaughan Williams' sublime homage to his 16th century forebear, Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis – one of his most loved works – gives way to two of Vivaldi's Seasons: fittingly Spring and Winter. Vivaldi's superb Venetian virtuosity is subtly, and mesmerizingly, reimagined by the influential composer Max Richter from his 2014 hit album, Vivaldi Recomposed.





Our final concert is a kaleidoscopic carnival for young people: a tour of the orchestra, hot Brazilian percussion, flying witches and Petrushka's Shrovetide fair.

Brighton Philharmonic ends its orchestral season with a programme designed to show off the orchestra in every way imaginable! Benjamin Britten's irrepressible tour around each section of the orchestra – a journey of character, wit and variety ending in a mind-blowing fugue – is followed by a brand-new concerto for the Brazilian percussionist Adriano Adewale and Joanna MacGregor. Prepare to have your socks knocked off by Adriano's

amazing array of instruments, the sheer brilliance of his playing, explosive Latin rhythms and unbridled orchestral partying.

The second half flies in Mussorgsky's fabulist witches – made famous by Disney's Fantasia – followed by Stravinsky's orchestral carnival, the story of the loveable, lovelorn puppet Petrushka, surrounded by the hurlyburly of Shrovetide Fair. A colourful, fantastical score that that will thrill listeners of all ages.

Join us for an incredible experience and become part of the BPO family!



CHAMBER MUSIC

We're thrilled to announce a new collaboration with Brighton College, extending our concerts to young people. As part of the College's Autograph Concert Series, Joanna MacGregor and BPO principals present three full length recitals, with a short masterclass for students in the afternoon. For full details visit www.brightonphil.org.uk/whats-on

Wednesday 10th September 2025 7pm

Philip Glass Opening

Knee Play no.4

Etude no.6

Rameau Le Rappel des Oiseaux Couperin Les Fauvétes Plaintives

Rameau La Poule

Liszt St Francis and the Birds

Funérailles

Mussorgsky Pictures at an Exhibition

Joanna MacGregor opens with a scintillating piano recital, from cool Phillip Glass and fiery Liszt in the first half to Mussorgsky's monumental Pictures at an Exhibition in the second. A tour de force of fantastical tales – linked by the famous Promenade – ends with The Great Gate of Kyiv.

Wednesday 25th February 2026 7pm

Haydn Trio no.39 in G major: Gypsy Frank Martin Trio on Popular Irish

Melodies

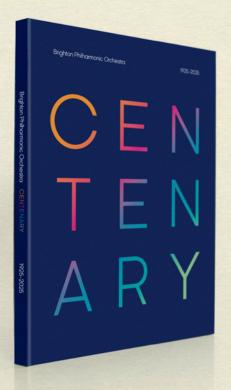
Dvořák Piano Quintet no.2

in A major

Principal string players join Joanna in Dvořák's celebrated, radiant Piano Quintet, paired with Haydn's wild Gypsy Trio and Frank Martin's gorgeous, foot stomping homage to Irish folk music.

Wednesday 15th April 2026 7pm

The sensational Brazilian percussionist Adriano Adewale and consummate cellist Adrian Brendel join Joanna and BPO principals in an evening of Tom Jobim and Egberto Gismonti, Piazzolla tangos and Villa-Lobos dances, as well as Adriano's wonderfully jazzy Afro Brazilian music.







On sale now: The Centenary Book

'BPO's biography reads like a thriller with a cliffhanger ending.' — Joanna MacGregor

With a wealth of rarely-seen archive material, this beautifully produced book charts the BPO's history from their first concert at Hove Town Hall in May 1925. Featuring press cuttings, programmes and posters, and an in-depth study of BPO's Music Directors and orchestral leaders.

Order your copy today at brightonphil.org.uk or using the QR code.



Available for mail order or collection from the BPO office on Queens Road, Brighton.



WELCOME

Welcome to the BPO: we are proud to be Brighton's resident symphony orchestra with a rich 100-year history of music-making across the city. We provide world-class orchestral playing, and fresh, exciting concerts for audiences of all ages and backgrounds in the heart of Brighton.

We want as many people as possible to experience the magic of live performance. We're committed to reaching young audiences at the start of their musical discovery – each concert has £1 children's tickets, and this year we've launched a new Under 30s club, alongside our LoveMusic scheme. We're working closely with local schools and youth groups, and our Music Director and Principal players are supporting musicians at the start of their professional career, working with some of the UK's brightest new talent.



22

The BPO would like to thank its Patrons and Sponsors: Chris Allan, Keith Armitage, Ian Birksted, Clare Bowskill, Jonathan Bridgen and Marnie Middlemiss, Laurie Cearley, Auriol and Nicolas Chisholm MBE, John and Frances Colban, James Findon, Janet Foster, Gavin Henderson CBE, Oliver Homewood, David and Caroline House, Tony Hyde and Vaughan Rees OBE, Simon Keane, Elizabeth Lamb, Frances Lindsay-Hills, Mark Linford, Peter and Jackie Lythell OBE, Nicholas Menges, Julian Pelling, Susan Pigden, Kenneth Richardson, Robert and Pamela Stiles, Paul Tofts, Hans Georg and E Wagner, Natasha Warburton, Stuart and Ann Watson, Jane Wilford and those who wish to remain anonymous.

JOIN US

Our work is only possible with the generous support of our BPO community – our Friends, Patrons and Sponsors. Our various membership schemes offer you the chance to be part of the BPO family, with invitations to talks from our Music Director and private recitals performed by our section principals, exclusive behind-the-scenes rehearsal access, interval drinks receptions and priority booking. Find out more and join us today at brightonphil.org.uk/support-us.

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Sponsor an orchestral seat

We have an opportunity for sponsoring the orchestral seats of our talented players, providing direct support to our performers. Sponsors are given an opportunity to meet their player and are recognised in our programmes.

Corporate sponsorship

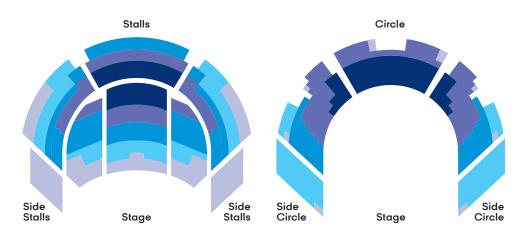
We are looking for local businesses who want to partner with as corporate sponsors, with an opportunity for print advertising in our programmes, digital promotion, corporate hospitality for invited guests and ticket savings for employees.





Images from BPO Centenary Gala Concert at the Dome. BPO is generously supported by the John Carewe Brighton Orchestra Trust For more information on our sponsorship packages, please contact Gill Davies on gill.davies@brightonphil.org.uk.

BOOKING INFORMATION



Brighton Dome Concert Hall pricing (£)	А	В	С	D	Е
Single ticket	39	34	28	20	13
3 Concert Saver 20% off any 3 concerts (exc. 8 Nov.*)	93	81	66	48	30
Season Saver 25% off all 7 concerts (exc. 8 Nov.*)	204	178	147	105	65
Child Under 30s and Low-Income Concession tickets available. See apposite					

Child, Under 3Us and Low-Income Concession tickets available. See opposite.

All Brighton Dome concerts are bookable with the venue:

By phone **01273 709 709**

In person

Brighton Dome Ticket Office, Church Street, Brighton, BN1 1UE

Online

brightondome.org

BPO members' presale opens Thursday 3 July, 10am (phone/in-person only). General sale opens Friday 11 July, 10am. There is a £3.50 charge for bookings made online or by phone. All tickets are subject to their general terms and conditions.

A Christmas Carol

Our Christmas concerts at St George's Kemptown, St Mary's Petworth and St Anne's Lewes are all bookable online at brightonphil.org.uk/whats-on. See p10.

Join our mailing list:



SAVINGS AND CONCESSIONS

Book any three Brighton Dome Concert Hall concerts and **save 20%**. Book all seven and **save 25%**

Bring the family with £1 child (under 18) tickets; up to two bookable with each adult ticket.

We offer a **Low-Income Concession** of 50% off for students and anyone receiving means-tested benefits or disability support, including Universal Credit, DLA, PIP and ESA. You may be asked to provide proof.

Brighton Dome's Access Scheme ensures that disabled audience members can book the best seats for their access needs, along with a complimentary personal assistant ticket if required. Find out more and apply at brightondome.org/access.



BPO will endeavour to run events as planned during the season but reserves the right to adapt or even cancel events due to circumstances beyond our control.

UNDER 30?

We're introducing tickets from £10 for all Under 30s.

Join our new **Under 30s club** for more offers, invitations and behind-thescenes access. **Sign up for free at brightonphil.org.uk/under-30s**.

LOVE MUSIC BUT NEVER SEEN AN ORCHESTRA BEFORE?

With tickets from just £13 (£10 if you're under 30!), we hope you're already tempted to try your first BPO concert. But be quick: the best seats go fast.

If you miss out on the lowest prices, keep an eye out for **LoveMusic**, our last-minute offer for first-time bookers. It extends our £13 price to the best available seats, announced via our socials in the final days before a concert.

LoveMusic will only be available for selected performances, so we always recommend booking early where you can.

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^{*}Britten's Serenade, 8 Nov. takes place at **Brighton Dome Corn Exchange** and has different pricing. See p6.

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'Brighton Philharmonic – its members drawn from the principal players of London's orchestras together with young musicians – played with terrific panache and commitment. Heady stuff, beautifully done.'

