

Bristol Beacon presents

# London Symphony Orchestra with Barbara Hannigan

Monday 13 March 2023, 7pm  
Bath Forum

## This evening's performance

**Barbara Hannigan** Conductor  
**Aphrodite Patoulidou** Soprano  
**London Symphony Orchestra**

**Olivier Messiaen** L'Ascension

Interval

**Gustav Mahler** Symphony No 4



## Welcome

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this concert with the London Symphony Orchestra and Barbara Hannigan at Bath Forum. This is the third time that we have presented this fabulous ensemble during Bristol Beacon's transformation period and it will be the final time before we reopen the venue at the end of November.

We're absolutely thrilled to be embarking on a close relationship with the London Symphony Orchestra. The Orchestra is set to become a mainstay of our orchestral programme when we reopen and will also be a key partner in our music education programme. We will be announcing the first orchestral season to grace our new stages in the coming months and we look forward to welcoming you all through the doors for many more concerts very soon.

I'd like to extend a particularly warm welcome once again to the many care homes, their staff and residents, who join us from around the country in a special live broadcast of tonight's concert, made possible by the generosity of Bristol Care Homes.

If you'd like to find out the latest on Bristol Beacon's transformation as we near completion and how you can get involved in our reopening, please visit [bristolbeacon.org](http://bristolbeacon.org).

Enjoy tonight's concert.

*Louise Mitchell*

**Louise Mitchell**

Chief Executive, Bristol Beacon



## Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992): L'Ascension

1. Majesté du Christ demandant sa gloire à son Père ('The Majesty of Christ Demanding His Glory of the Father')
2. Alléluias sereins d'une âme qui désire le ciel ('Serene Alleluias of a Soul that Longs for the Heavens')
3. Alléluia sur la trompette, alléluia sur la cymbale ('Alleluia on the Trumpet, Alleluia on the Cymbal')
4. Prière du Christ montant vers son Père ('Prayer of Christ Ascending Towards His Father')



No 20th century composer fulfilled the command 'aim high' more breathtakingly than Olivier Messiaen. There are many hymns of praise to God in Western music, but few have

dared to depict heaven, eternity, infinite love, and to declare their intention boldly in their titles. But that's exactly what Olivier Messiaen did, without any arrogance or sense of hyperbole, and in its utterly original way the music lives up to its expressed aims over and over again. This is all the more remarkable in the case of *L'Ascension* (*Ascension Day*, 1932-3), in that its composer was still in his mid-twenties and only just beginning to build a reputation for himself. While it is in some ways clearly an early work, so many features of Messiaen's mature style are already in place: the use of unusual scales to add 'unworldly' colouring, the complex, systematically organised rhythms, partly to convey the sense of intoxicating, abandoned dance, but also in the slower music to create a feeling of time itself being defied, even transcended.



Scan the QR code for full programme notes on tonight's pieces, complete artist biographies and orchestra credits.

## Gustav Mahler (1860-1911): Symphony No 4 (1899-1900, rev 1901-10)

1. Bedächtig. Nicht eilen [Deliberate. Not hurried] – Recht gemächlich [Very leisurely]
2. In gemächlicher Bewegung. Ohne Hast [At a leisurely pace. Without haste]
3. Ruhevoll [Restful]
4. Sehr behaglich [Very cosy]



In 1900, just after he'd finished his Fourth Symphony, Gustav Mahler wrote about how the work had taken shape. He had set out with clear ideas, but then the work had 'turned upside-

down' on him: 'To my astonishment it became plain to me that I had entered a totally different realm, just as in a dream one imagines oneself wandering through the flower-scented garden of Elysium and it suddenly changes to a nightmare of finding oneself in a Hades full of terrors ... This time it is a forest with all its mysteries and its horrors which forces my hand and weaves itself into my work. It becomes even clearer to me that one does not compose; one is composed.'

Mahler's remarks about 'mysteries and horrors' may be surprising. Writers often portray the Fourth as his sunniest and simplest symphony: an affectionate recollection of infant happiness, culminating in a vision of Heaven seen through the eyes of a child – with only the occasional pang of adult nostalgia to cloud its radiant blue skies. But Mahler was too sophisticated to fall for the sentimental 19th century idea of childhood as a Paradise Lost. He knew that children could be cruel, and that their capacity for suffering was often seriously underestimated by adults. In its final form, the first three movements of the Fourth Symphony prepare the way for the closing vision on every possible level: its themes, orchestral colours, tonal scheme, most of all that strange emotional ambiguity – blissful dream touched by images of nightmare. Far from being Mahler's simplest symphony, it is one of the subtlest things he ever created.

### Barbara Hannigan

LSO Associate Artist



Soprano and conductor Barbara Hannigan is an artist at the forefront of creation. Her artistic colleagues include Sir Simon Rattle, Sasha Waltz, Kent Nagano, Vladimir Jurowski, John Zorn,

Andreas Kriegenburg, Andris Nelsons, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Christoph Marthaler, Sir Antonio Pappano, Katie Mitchell, Kirill Petrenko and Krzysztof Warlikowski. The late conductor and pianist Reinbert de Leeuw greatly influenced her development as a musician. Hannigan has collaborated extensively with composers including Boulez, Zorn, Dutilleux, Ligeti, Stockhausen, Sciarrino, Barry, Dusapin, Dean, Benjamin and Abrahamsen.

The past two seasons presented both challenges and opportunities, and Hannigan continued at her own speed of light, premiering a new live video production of Poulenc's *La Voix humaine* in which she both sings and conducts and has since performed throughout Europe. She gave the world premieres of John Zorn's *Split the Lark* and *Star Catcher*, as well as Zosha di Castri's *In the Half Light* with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Hannigan performed across Europe with colleagues including Sir Simon Rattle and Orchestre philharmonique de Radio France, LSO, Danish Radio Symphony, Gothenburg Symphony and Munich Philharmonic, and at festivals in Ludwigsburg and Aix-en-Provence, and celebrated her 50th birthday at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

Originally from Nova Scotia, Hannigan resides in Finistère, on the northwest coast of France.

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### Aphrodite Patoulidou

Soprano



Born in Thessaloniki, Greece, Aphrodite Patoulidou is a celebrated soprano, songwriter, photographer, and passionate about painting and poetry.

As a soprano, Patoulidou appears for opera companies including Berlin State Opera, La Monnaie, Brussels, Teatro Real, Madrid and Greek National Opera; at concert halls

such as the Berlin Philharmonie, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Gothenburg Konserthuset and Snape Maltings; as well as at music festivals such as Ojai in California, Aldeburgh and Ludwigsburg. She has received international acclaim for her interpretations of the roles of Anne Trulove (Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*), Elle (Poulenc's *La voix humaine*), Susanna (Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*), Belinda (Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*), Sophie Scholl (Udo Zimmermann's *Weißer Rose*) and of Claude Vivier's *Lonely Child*. She has collaborated with conductors such as Kirill Petrenko, Barbara Hannigan, Christopher Moulds, Tito Ceccherini and Manuel Nawri, and with orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and the Southwest German Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Patoulidou was one of the first artists to take part in the Equilibrium Young Artists initiative led by Barbara Hannigan. She is also a guest artist in the company Sasha Waltz & Guests and studied at the Royal Flemish Conservatorium of Brussels and the University of the Arts Berlin.

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### The London Symphony Orchestra

The London Symphony Orchestra was established in 1904, as one of the first orchestras shaped by its musicians. Since then, generations of remarkable talents have built the LSO's reputation for uncompromising quality, and inspirational repertoires. The LSO is Resident Orchestra at the Barbican in the City of London. The Orchestra reaches international audiences through touring and artistic residencies – in cities including Paris and Dortmund, at the Aix-en-Provence Festival and with the Music Academy in Santa Barbara – and through digital partnerships and an extensive programme of live-streamed and on-demand online broadcasts.

Through a world-leading learning and community programme, LSO Discovery, the LSO connects people from all walks of life to the power of great music. LSO musicians are at the heart of this unique programme, leading workshops, mentoring bright young talent, performing at free concerts for the local community and using music to support adults with learning disabilities. LSO musicians also visit children's hospitals, and lead training programmes for music teachers.

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Tonight's concert is being broadcast to care homes nationwide, hosted by organist and journalist Oliver Condy, and organised thanks to sponsorship from Bristol Care Homes. This activity is part of our plan to help as many people as possible experience the joy of live music.

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