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Seven of the UK's leading mental health and music charities join *Classical Music* to call on leaders in the classical music industry to tackle mental health crisis in the sector

***Classical Music's* 'Harmony in Mind' campaign, launched today, aims to support musicians and lead the way in securing better mental health provision across the sector**

- A recent study by Help Musicians UK found that 71% of respondents experienced anxiety and panic attacks, while 65% reported they had suffered from depression (three times higher than in the general population)
- A report by the UK's Office of National Statistics found that between 2011 and 2015 the risk of suicide was 20% higher among men and 69% higher among women working in the culture sector than in rest of the workforce
- A 2018 report commissioned by the concert promoter Skiddle reported that 65% of its respondents reported 'an intense and unmanageable' level of pressure
- British Association for Performing Arts Medicine, Help Musicians UK, Incorporated Society of Musicians, Musicians' Union, Music Support, The Royal Society of Musicians, Help Musicians UK and 'Time to Change' support *Classical Music's* 'Harmony in Mind' campaign to urge the industry to change and to sign up to the Time to Change Employers' Pledge

Classical Music, the magazine which serves as the voice of the classical music industry, has today launched a major campaign to unite the sector in combatting mental illness.

Classical Music has been joined by seven of the leading mental health and industry charities working in the classical music business, including **British Association for Performing Arts Medicine, Help Musicians UK, Incorporated Society of Musicians, Musicians' Union, Music Support, The Royal Society of Musicians, Help Musicians UK** and **Time to Change**, the mental health anti-stigma movement led by **Mind** and **Rethink Mental Illness**.

Together they are calling on classical music industry leaders to engage in efforts to better support musicians and staff and deal proactively and holistically with the underlying causes of the crisis. They are urging more classical music organisations to sign up to the [Time to Change Employers' Pledge](#).

Led by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness, 'Time to Change' is working with employers in all sectors to change how they think and act about mental health in the workplace, enabling them to ensure that employees feel supported and working to end mental health discrimination.

Over the course of its year-long campaign, *Classical Music* magazine will provide a much-needed platform to share best practice, new research, advice and resources for musicians. It will also launch initiatives for the industry such as creating an online campaign room, a virtual forum for visitors to pledge their support, share experiences and information, and will create opportunities for the industry to come together to discuss and debate the issues and solutions.

The campaign is spearheaded by the dynamic new editor of *Classical Music*, **Lucy Thraves**, an Oxford music graduate who wrestles with mental health challenges herself. She seeks to drive systematic and institutional change in the industry.

'This wonderfully creative and enriching industry presents unusual challenges for its people, with high levels of stress around performance, job insecurity, widespread funding crises and sustained searching for an identity in modern society, conspiring to create unstable working environments for many. Stigma around mental health issues is still great, with constant anxiety and stress considered normal.'

'Through 'Harmony in Mind', I hope we can bring the industry together to foster an environment where people feel safe, supported and accepted and that we work together to promote a healthier atmosphere in the classical music profession.'

#HarmonyinMind @ClassicalMusic

www.harmonyinmind.co.uk

www.classicalmusicmagazine.org

-Ends-

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IMAGE ATTACHED:

Lucy Thraves, Editor, *Classical Music* magazine

Notes to Editors:

What the organisations say:

[British Association for Performing Arts Medicine](#), Director, Claire Cordeaux:

'The excellence of our classical music industry depends on hardworking professionals who need to be healthy to give great performances. BAPAM's clinical expertise has helped many musicians but much more needs to be done. We are calling on industry leaders and institutions to step up to the challenge and join us in delivering evidence-based mental health care support throughout the arts.'

[Help Musicians UK](#), Head of Health and Welfare, Joe Hastings:

'HMUK recognizes the stresses and pressures that exist within the orchestral music sector. Through our Health and Welfare service we have seen extensively the physical and mental challenges that many orchestral musicians experience. We believe that it's vital that musicians can access support when they need it, whether they are employed by an orchestra or working on a freelance basis. We are also committed to ensuring that through an evidence led approach we contribute to the learning that will ultimately reduce the impact of health challenges across the orchestral sector and the wider music industry. We look forward to working together to see a greater dedication within the orchestral world of the promotion of the health and welfare of players. This will enable them to continue to perform to the high standards required and enjoy healthy and rewarding careers.'

[Incorporated Society of Musicians](#), Communications Manager, Francesca Treadaway:

'For mental health to be tackled, the industry must look at the underlying causes. The music sector has a high level of self-employed workers which makes them particularly vulnerable. The gig economy where short-term contracts or freelance work is prevalent has a lack of regulation with no job security or access to holiday, a pension scheme, sick pay or maternity cover and protection and support mechanisms which are to be found in more traditional employment. Another consequence is that musicians are left vulnerable to a worryingly high level of discriminatory behaviours and practices, including sexual harassment, inappropriate behaviour and discrimination relating to all nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010, in our music sector, and our research has shown that musicians do not report their experiences due to fear of being victimised and 'blacklisted'. The industry needs to tackle this. The first step is to make clear that all engagements are based on a 'contract personally to do work', to ensure that the musician is within the ambit of section 83(2) of the Equality Act 2010 to protect them from any discrimination. However this is not enough. It is also the responsibility of the entire music sector to change this toxic culture by signing up to the ISM-MU Code which sets standards in the workplace.'

[Music Support](#), Director, Eric Mtungwazi:

'Music Support is a hugely important support organisation within the music industry offering a wide range of help and services to individuals suffering from problems arising from mental health or addiction issues. We are encouraged to see the profile of the mental health agenda being raised across the sector; awareness growing and attitudes changing towards asking for help. However, there is still some way to go. We would like to see the conversation develop from 'How and where do people get help?' to 'How do we, as an industry, best support people who are in recovery from mental health or addiction issues so they can return to work and thrive while sustaining a career in the industry?'

[Musician's Union](#), Organiser for Orchestras, Jo Lavery:

'The very nature of an orchestral musician's job is undeniably stressful. The lack of control over the schedule, the inflexibility around time off, working unsociable hours, touring, noise levels, performance anxiety, maintaining artistic standards of excellence at all times, the possibility of injury, the precariousness nature of freelance work, low pay, the list goes on. Any individual would have to be pretty mentally robust to deal with all of these factors day in day out and this inevitably must take its toll. I am encouraged that more managers are proactively coming to the MU to talk about how they can provide support. We already have mental and physical wellbeing on the agenda for all our collective bargaining discussions and will continue to push that agenda and help guide the discussion. What we need to ensure is that it doesn't become a box-ticking exercise or a mental

health policy that sits in a drawer, we need action. Certainly there is a long way to go in making support for an individual's mental health an automatic right of employment.'

The Royal Society of Musicians, Head of Casework, Corinne Littlehales:

'The Royal Society of Musicians is the UK's oldest music charity and we provide vital financial assistance, advice and guidance to professional musicians who are unable to work due to accident, illness or old age. In our experience mental health issues can often be hidden beneath physical symptoms and musicians are frequently worried to seek help for fear of the stigma associated with mental health and the impact this could have on their careers. All applications to the Society are treated in total confidence. By developing and maintaining strong working relationships with associated organisations, we can ensure musicians who come to us receive the most appropriate help, for which the Society can provide funding where necessary.'

'Time to Change' Employer Manager Karen Shaw:

'At Time to Change, we know that stigma and discrimination can be as or more damaging than the symptoms of a mental health problems itself. In the classical musical industry where the stressors for mental health can be very high, it is essential that leaders, associations and employers of the sector actively encourage open conversations about mental health and help support those with whom they work. Often individuals will not speak about their poor mental health for fear of being stigmatised or discriminated against and as a result will often not seek help until they reach a crisis. We must change the culture of the music industry to show that it is ok not to be ok. '

'At Time to Change we now have over 1000 employers including the Royal Opera House who have signed the Employer Pledge and made a public commitment to end stigma and discrimination around mental health. We would love to see all organisations in the sector using the Employer Pledge and our support to create a foundation upon which they can build their wellbeing programmes.'

About Classical Music magazine

Classical Music is the UK's only insightful and entertaining current affairs magazine for the classical music industry. It aims to keep its readers up to date with the latest news from across the sector.

About Lucy Thraves

Lucy graduated from the University of Oxford in 2016 with a BA (Hons) in Music, specialising in music psychology. Through this, she developed an interest in the impact of music on mental health. Since joining the editorial team at *Classical Music* magazine, she has worked to foreground the importance of better mental health provision in the music industry and is looking forward to strengthening and developing this through the Harmony in Mind campaign.