

WIGMORE HALL

Wigmore Hall announces 2019/20 Season

'We have a duty to expand audiences, nurture young artistic talent and provide a home for great artists, as we bring our unique chamber music to as many people as possible,' says John Gilhooly, the Hall's Artistic & Executive Director, as he launches his 2019/20 Season

- Season focus on the Three Bs: **Beethoven**, **Brahms** ...and **Britten**, with **Bach** staying very much in the picture
- More streaming of concerts than ever before with almost all Beethoven programming to be made available live and in perpetuity as part of **Beethoven 250**
- Centenary tribute to **Mieczysław Weinberg**, launching a full cycle of his 17 quartets, programmed alongside Shostakovich
- Composer in Residence for 2019/20 is **Vijay Iyer**, New York-based pianist, composer, bandleader, producer and Harvard professor
- Residencies and series from, among others: Belcea Quartet; Kristian Bezuidenhout; Jonathan Biss; Castalian String Quartet; Allan Clayton; Michael Collins; Iestyn Davies; James Ehnes; Ensemble Marsyas; Mahan Esfahani; Angela Hewitt; Stephen Hough; Christiane Karg; L'Arpeggiata; Elisabeth Leonskaja; Mark Padmore, Miklós Perényi & Dénes Várjon; Jonathan Plowright; Rachel Podger; Quatuor Danel; Sir András Schiff; Cédric Tiberghien; Vienna Piano Trio
- Renewed relationship with BBC Radio 3, broadcasting live every Monday lunchtime and regularly at evening concerts throughout the season
- Special partnership with Oxford Lieder Festival, for a day of Mahler Lieder

- Spotlight on the music of **Rebecca Clarke** with Raphael Wallfisch, Ailish Tynan and John York, as well as a focus on new works by Freya Waley-Cohen
- ***Musical Conversations*** is the theme of the season-long **Learning Festival**
- **Wigmore Hall/Independent Opera International Song Competition** in September offers a showcase for the finest young singers and pianists from around the world, and an invaluable opportunity for mentoring from an all-star jury
- Complete Haydn Opus 20 Quartets in one evening with the **St Lawrence String Quartet**, and a special Haydn day with **Roman Rabinovich** comprising solo piano works, chamber music and song
- 25,000 tickets available for younger audience members through Wigmore Hall's Under 35s Scheme, in partnership with Classic FM

As its programming for 2019/20 again affirms, the spirit of Wigmore Hall is exemplified by both continuity and renewal: artists who have enjoyed decades of association with the Hall and artists it has nurtured into the primes of their careers; the indispensable composers of the past and the innovators and improvisers of today; participatory projects for older people and for children; the irreplaceable immediacy of live concerts and their mediation through technology, bringing them to ever wider audiences via Wigmore Hall's own streaming service or via partners like the BBC.

'It is a great privilege to be entrusted with the artistic planning of Wigmore Hall,' says John Gilhooly. 'The 2019/20 Season adheres to our core beliefs – that music changes lives and that we all have a duty to expand audiences, nurture young artistic talent and provide a home for the great artists of our time. Through performances in the Hall, recordings, live-streams and a host of projects with local communities, Wigmore Hall fulfils its passion for bringing great music and artists to as many people as possible, wherever they might be. That would not be possible without our supporters, and I would like to thank them personally for their continued commitment to ensuring that Wigmore Hall continues to grow its audiences and to present more concerts than ever before.'

Composer focus: The Three Bs ... and beyond

2019/20 brings a special focus on the three Bs: Beethoven, Brahms ...and Britten. That other essential B, Bach, also makes his presence powerfully felt, and, in his

centenary year, Wigmore Hall salutes Polish-Jewish-Russian composer Mieczysław Weinberg.

- The 250th anniversary of **Beethoven's** birth falls in December 2020. Wigmore Hall builds towards that date with a season-long survey of his groundbreaking genius. Complementing Beethoven's works are explorations of such themes as music and disability and the composer's legacy in the creative life of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries.

Inaugurating the 2019/20 Season is a Beethoven Festival Weekend, which opens with a recital by Steven Isserlis and Robert Levin. The festival also welcomes such artists as Alina Ibragimova and Cédric Tiberghien, the Škampa Quartet, Elisabeth Leonskaja (performing the final three piano sonatas) and the chamber ensemble O/Modernt.

A mighty pillar of the season is formed by complete Beethoven cycles: Jonathan Biss in the piano sonatas, James Ehnes in the violin sonatas, Miklós Perényi and Dénes Várjon in the cello sonatas, the Belcea Quartet in the quartets, the Trio Shaham Erez Wallfisch in the piano trios, and, in the string trios, Jean-Guihen Queyras, Daniel Sepec and Tabea Zimmermann. Cédric Tiberghien initiates a series devoted to Beethoven's piano variations that will continue into 2020/21 and Philippe Cassard and Cédric Pescia perform the Ninth Symphony in Liszt's arrangement for two pianos. The final three piano sonatas are both discussed and played by Sir András Schiff, Sir Simon Keenlyside sings *An die ferne Geliebte* and Michael Collins, one of the Hall's resident artists for 2019/20, is heard in chamber works.

The vast majority of the season's Beethoven programming will be available in perpetuity on Wigmore Hall's streaming service. It will include a series of discussion sessions with pianist Jonathan Biss, with friends and colleagues such as Brett Dean and Sally Beamish, and audiences will also have the opportunity to meet with Biss at the Hall, in events drawing on his celebrated Beethoven Coursera lectures.

- At the heart of Wigmore Hall's **Brahms** programming for 2019/20 is the Castalian String Quartet, recipient of the inaugural MERITO String Quartet Award, the Valentin Erben Prize and a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship Award in 2018. The ensemble is joined by violist Isabel Charisius and cellist Ursula Smith to launch the Hall's Brahms Series in October 2019 and returns for further exploration of the composer's chamber music, including collaborations with Michael Collins in the clarinet quintet and Stephen Hough in the piano quintet. Like Collins, Hough is a resident artist in the 2019/20 Season and the two come together to perform Brahms's clarinet sonatas. Brahms also features in the concerts that Hough gives with Renaud Capuçon and Steven Isserlis and in four concerts by the Vienna Piano Trio.

Further landmarks of the season are the three concluding concerts of Brahms Plus, Jonathan Plowright's survey of the composer's piano music, and a series of

Brahms study events led by musicologist Katy Hamilton, who publishes a major new book on the composer, co-edited with Natasha Loges, in 2019.

- Wigmore Hall has close historical links with **Benjamin Britten**, having hosted premières of a number of his works in the 1930s and 40s, including the *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo*, the *Serenade for tenor, horn and strings* and the Second String Quartet.

Over the 2019/20 Season, the Hall presents nine concerts and a number of Learning events centred on Britten's life and music. The opening concert of the season is a Britten Gala in which singers Louise Alder, Christine Rice, Allan Clayton and Christopher Maltman are joined by pianist James Baillieu. Fittingly, it will include a performance by Clayton of the *Seven Sonnets of Michelangelo*; the tenor's association with Wigmore Hall now extends over more than a decade and he appears in six concerts in the Britten Series. On 4th December, in the company of Sophie Bevan, the Aurora Orchestra and Ryan Wigglesworth, Clayton will mark the 43rd anniversary of Britten's death. This will follow a celebration of the composer's birthday (November 22nd, also St Cecilia's Day) in the form of a concert by the Doric String Quartet. Other singers appearing in the Britten series include Iestyn Davies, James Newby and the choral group Vox Luminis.

- Tribute is paid to **Bach** with the final three concerts of Angela Hewitt's Bach Odyssey, with three further concerts in Mahan Esfahani's Bach Harpsichord series, and with Rachel Podger's six-date season residency, entirely devoted to the composer.
- Born in Warsaw on 8th December 1919, **Mieczysław Weinberg** is best known for his Holocaust-themed opera *The Passenger*, but chamber music holds a significant place in his impressive canon of works. Over the 2019/20 and 2020/21 seasons at Wigmore Hall, all 17 of his quartets will be performed by Quatuor Danel in a series of 11 concerts. In October 2019, the Hall will host a Weinberg Focus Day, led by violinist Linus Roth, and it will also be the venue for the launch of a new book on Weinberg by Daniel Elphick, an expert in music of the Soviet era. This major Weinberg focus is supported through a new partnership between Wigmore Hall and the Adam Mickiewicz Institute.

Early Music

Historically informed performance has become a mainstay of Wigmore Hall's programming. The resident artists for the 2019/20 Season are Christina Pluhar's group L'Arpeggiata and Edinburgh-based Ensemble Marsyas, which specialises in 18th-century wind music. A group that pioneered authentic performance is Concentus Musicus Wien, founded in 1953 by the late Nikolaus Harnoncourt and his wife Alice and finally making its debut at Wigmore Hall. Other artists appearing over the season include Jordi Savall, The Sixteen, Orfeo 55 and Nathalie Stutzmann, Le Concert d'Astrée and Emmanuelle Haïm, La Serenissima and Adrian Chandler,

Fretwork, Tenebrae, Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, and Collegium Vocale Gent with Philippe Herreweghe.

Song

Celebrating his 40th birthday with The English Concert during the first week of the season (16th September) is countertenor Iestyn Davies, a frequent presence at Wigmore Hall over the past decade. Davies will also be awarded the Wigmore Hall Medal at this concert, in recognition of peerless artistry and commitment to the Hall. As a resident artist he takes the lead at three further concerts and also appears in the season's Britten Series. Malcolm Martineau continues his Schumann series with Sir Simon Keenlyside, Sasha Cooke, Catriona Morison and Thomas Oliemans, while Mark Padmore and Kristian Bezuidenhout perform Schubert's Song Cycles in three concerts.

Among the other recitalists over the season are, in alphabetical order, Anna Caterina Antonacci, Ilker Arcayürek, Jamie Barton, Dame Sarah Connolly, Alice Coote, Marianne Crebassa, Stéphane Degout, Franco Fagioli, Gerald Finley, Christian Gerhaher, Matthias Goerne, Thomas Hampson, Philippe Jaroussky, Christiane Karg (in a three-concert residency), Jakub Józef Orliński, Christoph Prégardien, Brenda Rae, Max Raabe, Sir Bryn Terfel, Ailish Tynan and Roderick Williams. Thomas Quasthoff returns to Wigmore Hall for a masterclass and special interview to mark his 60th birthday, and Sunday afternoons will continue to introduce exceptional young singers, bringing Wigmore Hall debuts for, among others, Operalia winner Elsa Dreisig.

In July 2020, Sholto Kynoch's Oxford Lieder Festival makes a visit to Wigmore Hall for a Mahler Day comprising four recitals, at John Gilhooly's invitation.

Piano

The season's wealth of Beethoven is shared between Jonathan Biss, Sir Andrés Schiff (who also offers a Schubert lecture-recital) and Elisabeth Leonskaja (who in addition continues her series devoted to Mozart and the Second Viennese School), while the Brahms strand is sustained by Jonathan Plowright.

Among the other artists appearing in the London Pianoforte Series are Inon Barnatan, Christian Blackshaw, Bertrand Chamayou, Kirill Gerstein, Nelson Goerner, Richard Goode, Benjamin Grosvenor, Marc-André Hamelin, Pavel Kolesnikov, 2018 Leeds Competition winner Eric Lu, Garrick Ohlsson, Francesco Piemontesi (launching a Schubert cycle) and Beatrice Rana. Leif Ove Andsnes gives a solo recital and also performs with musicians from the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Paul Lewis and Steven Osborne team up for duets, and Imogen Cooper celebrates her 70th birthday in October 2019 with Schubert's three last sonatas.

Chamber Music

Chamber music is of the essence in the season's Beethoven, Brahms and Weinberg programming, but further highlights of the season are provided by such artists as Leonidas Kavakos, Martin Fröst, Isabelle Faust, Miloš Karadaglić, Janine Jansen and Wigmore Hall Associate Artists the Takács Quartet. In September, the St Lawrence String Quartet surveys the complete Opus 20 Quartets by Haydn in one evening, and later in the season Roman Rabinovich marks Haydn's death day with three concerts of solo piano works, chamber music and song.

The Nash Ensemble, Wigmore Hall's Chamber Ensemble in Residence, explores great works by Schubert in the context of Weber, Haydn, Schumann, Rossini and others, in its 'Around Schubert' series. Musicians from Chineke!, Europe's first majority-BME orchestra, also make a welcome return to the Hall, continuing a run of landmark Wigmore performances in recent seasons, and the Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective under the direction of pianist Tom Poster makes its debut in February with two concerts.

Contemporary and Jazz

Committed to renewing and expanding the repertoire, Wigmore Hall continues its commissioning programme with a new work from Huw Watkins, composed for percussionist Colin Currie. The season also features the UK première of *Taivaanvalot* (Heavenly Lights) by pianist Olli Mustonen, who will be joined for the occasion by Ian Bostridge and Steven Isserlis. Among the other leading artists presenting today's music during the season are JACK Quartet and Birmingham Contemporary Music Group.

The 70th birthday of South African-born, German-trained composer Kevin Volans is celebrated with a concert and a study day, and British composer Freya Waley-Cohen reflects on Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge* in a work for string trio. Following his jazz residency at the Hall in 2017, Vijay Iyer is the 2019/20 Composer in Residence. Based in New York, he is a pianist, composer, bandleader, producer and a professor at Harvard University. In the context of the Beethoven programme, he will examine the nature of improvisation and, in conjunction with anthropologist Professor Georgina Born, of innate musicality.

GRAMMY award-winning jazz vocalist Dianne Reeves returns following an acclaimed debut in 2018, and Django Bates brings his irrepressible style to the Hall in summer 2020.

BBC Lunchtime Concerts

Wigmore Hall's evening concerts are regularly relayed on Radio 3, but the network's Monday lunchtime concerts are part of the fabric of the Hall's programming with its ever-refreshing balance of established names and rising talent. Among the artists appearing between mid-September and mid-July are: Nelson Freire; Bertrand Chamayou; Alexander Melnikov; Jennifer Pike and Martin Roscoe; Giuliano Carmignola and Riccardo Doni; Jean-Guihen Queyras and Alexandre Tharaud; Daniel Müller-Schott and Annika Treutler; Jess Gillam and Zeynep Özsuca; Christian

Lindberg and Roland Pöntinen; Borodin Quartet and Barry Douglas; Jerusalem Quartet; Meta4; Brentano String Quartet; Stuart Skelton and Richard Peirson; Benjamin Appl and Kristian Bezuidenhout, and Louise Alder and Joseph Middleton.

Learning events

Wigmore Hall's Learning programme is dedicated to giving people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities the opportunity to participate in creative music-making. In collaboration with a range of community, education, arts, health and social care organisations, the programme engages a broad and diverse audience through projects, concerts, workshops and online resources.

In 2019/20, the theme of the Learning Festival, which runs throughout the season, is *Musical Conversations*. Goethe compared a string quartet to 'four rational people conversing among themselves', and this makes an apt analogy for the activities of the Learning programme, which encourages co-creation in a spirit of equality, creativity and collaboration. The Learning team's work is defined through conversations with such partners as schools, care homes, hospitals and refuges. The team responds by producing creative musical programmes, which enhance and even change the lives of children in hospital and of people who are living with dementia, who have experienced homelessness, or who simply face barriers when it comes to their experience of the arts.

Full information and booking information at wigmore-hall.org.uk

SEASON IMAGES can be downloaded [HERE](#).

A SEASON PREVIEW brochure can be downloaded [HERE](#).

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