

SPECTACULAR YEAR OF EVENTS PLANNED TO CELEBRATE SIR KARL JENKINS AT 80



Sir Karl Jenkins © Rhys Frampton

“As a composer he recognises no boundaries – musical, commercial, geographical, or cultural. His is a way of thinking and composing that is perfectly in tune with the spirit of the times.”

Classic FM

Sir Karl Jenkins, one of the world’s most performed living composers, is set to celebrate his 80th birthday in February 2024 with an array of events that showcase the enduring impact of his evocative, memorable and emotionally powerful music on music lovers around the globe.

The milestone year celebrates a musical legacy that has resisted categorisation, moving through jazz with *Soft Machine*, to film and advertising to large-scale choral and orchestral works which have graced historic occasions ranging from the 10th anniversary of 9/11 in New York to the King’s Coronation in May 2023. His career boasts 17 gold and platinum albums, over 1 billion streams, high prominence in Classic FM’s Hall of Fame and nearly 3,000 performances worldwide of *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*, a work that has remained in the UK Classical Chart for more than 18 years.

As well as an opportunity to reflect on a truly inspiring career, the year also features world and UK premiere performances of new works by Sir Karl.

Sir Karl conducts the world premiere performance of his latest work *One World* at [Brucknerhaus, Linz, on 19 November](#). The work, commissioned by **World Orchestra for Peace** and **World Choir for Peace** who lead the performance, brings together more than 600 performers from more than 30 countries. Sir Karl has dedicated the work 'to UNESCO - in recognition and appreciation of more than 75 years of advocacy, through culture, for dialogue, peace and reconciliation.' In keeping with the themes of the work, the concert has been designated **UNESCO Concert for Peace 2023** and will be available to watch worldwide via [livestream](#) and the [Classic FM website](#). The performance also includes world-class soloists such as soprano **Ruby Hughes**, as well as mezzo-soprano **Kathryn Rudge** and baritone **Roderick Williams** who both featured on the *One World* recording which reached Number One in the UK Classical chart.

March 2024 sees the UK premiere of his saxophone concerto *Stravaganza*, written for and performed by star saxophonist **Jess Gillam**. The piece was commissioned by **BBC Radio 3** and the **Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester** and explores themes of carnival and extravagant fantasy, inspired by Gillam's experience of learning the saxophone at a carnival. Gillam gave the world premiere performance of the work in June 2023 in Berlin. Due to be performed in Cardiff with the **BBC National Orchestra of Wales** under conductor **Nil Venditti** on St David's Day [1 March - tbc], the concert also features Sir Karl's work *Dewi Sant*, performed by the **BBC National Chorus of Wales** and **National Youth Choir of Wales**.

Another brand-new work from Sir Karl, *Fragile Earth*, receives its world premiere performance on 6 April 2024 from the **National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain** at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff, of which Karl is an Honorary Fellow.

The centrepiece of Sir Karl's 80th birthday year celebrations is a major [6-date UK concert tour](#), conducted by the composer himself. Touring across the UK in March and April 2024, the concerts feature some of his most beloved works including *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*, *Adiemus* and *Palladio*, as well as the UK premiere of music from *One World*. Starting at the **Royal Albert Hall** in London on 10 March with the **Philharmonia Orchestra** and **Crouch End Festival Chorus**, the tour then travels to Glasgow [17 March], Birmingham [30 March], Nottingham [6 April], Cardiff [13 April] and Manchester [14 April].

The opening event of the 80th birthday year at **Carnegie Hall** in New York encapsulates Sir Karl's truly international reach and his power to bring people together. *The Music of Sir Karl Jenkins (80th Birthday Celebration)* takes place on 15 January 2024 (Martin Luther King Day), featuring choirs from all over the world to perform his music and to meet the composer. Organised by Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY), performances of Sir Karl's music have taken place on Martin Luther King Day in New York every year since 2008, excluding the pandemic.

Classic FM, which has long championed Sir Karl and his music, is planning to celebrate the birthday with exclusive programming in 2024 and, for the first time Sir Karl will be the subject of BBC Radio 3's flagship programme 'Composer of the Week' in February 2024.

Further performances, recordings and events will be announced in due course.

www.karljenkins.com/

-ENDS-

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Notes to Editors

Please find images of Sir Karl Jenkins [here](#).

About Sir Karl Jenkins

A global survey in 2011 showed Sir Karl Jenkins to be among the most performed living composers. In 2023 his music was played at the Coronation of King Charles III while his recording of *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* gained the unique status of having achieved “1000 Weeks” in the UK Classical chart. This year saw the work ranked fifth in the Classic FM Hall of Fame – the highest position for a living composer – and placed fifth in a list of Great British Classics. *The Armed Man* was also selected to represent the decade 2000-2009 in BBC Radio 3’s *Soundscape of a Century*.

Karl Jenkins read music at Cardiff University and the Royal Academy of Music, London. Resisting categorization, his style and integrity have transcended musical boundaries over the years: jazz at Ronnie Scott’s Club; first prize at the Montreux Jazz Festival with Nucleus, jazz fusion with Soft Machine, award-winning advert soundtracks (Levis, British Airways, Audi); scoring a Kiefer Sutherland movie; the Freedom of the City of London, BBC Desert Island Discs, ITV South Bank Show and, in the distant past, recording sessions with many: Elton John, George Harrison, Andrew Lloyd Webber...

Together with his global ‘cross-genre’ phenomenon *Adiemus* (1995), his best-known work is *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* (2000), which has received close to 3000 performances around the globe since its millennium premiere, including a particularly memorable performance in New York on the 10th anniversary of 9/11. In 2018 Karl Jenkins conducted *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* at the Mercedes Benz Arena in Berlin with the World Orchestra for Peace and a choir of 2000 from 30 countries, commemorating 100 years since the end of World War II.

The two works were pivotal to his future oeuvre over 30 years, as he continued to progress ideas seen in those pieces; peace, multiculturalism and the inclusion of global instrumentation and text, often set alongside the traditional sacred Latin: *Requiem, Stabat Mater, Gloria, Te Deum, Miserere, The Peacemakers*.

Karl Jenkins has 17 ‘gold and platinum’ discs for his output overall. Alongside his solo recordings, he has written music for Sir Bryn Terfel, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Dame Evelyn Glennie, Leslie Garrett, Rolando Villazon, Milos Karadaglic, Jess Gillam and the London Symphony Orchestra.

His reach as a composer is global, with concerts at The Royal Albert Hall, Zaryadye Concert Hall Moscow, Carnegie Hall, The Forbidden City Concert Hall Beijing, the NCPA Mumbai and Buckingham Palace and he has been personally decorated by the Presidents of Hungary and Kosovo.

Following a CBE in 2010, Karl Jenkins was awarded a Knighthood in the 2015 Queen's Birthday Honours and his autobiography *Still with the Music* was published by Elliott & Thompson. His music is published exclusively by Boosey & Hawkes and he is a Decca Records recording artist.

His most recent work is *One World*, conducted by the composer and performed by the World Choir for Peace and the World Orchestra for Peace. It was released by Decca Records in summer 2023,

going straight to number one in the UK Classical chart and its concert premiere is scheduled at the Brucknerhaus in Linz in November 2023.

His recent saxophone concerto *Stravaganza* was premiered by Jess Gillam and the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester at the Berlin Philharmonie in June 2023.

“As a composer he recognises no boundaries – musical, commercial, geographical, or cultural. His is a way of thinking and composing that is perfectly in tune with the spirit of the times.” (Citation on receiving CFM’s ‘Red f ‘award for ‘outstanding service to classical music’)

September 2023

Sir Karl Jenkins – performance details

19 November 2023 – Brucknerhaus, Linz

Ruby Hughes | Soprano

Kathryn Rudge | Mezzo-soprano

Roderick Williams | Baritone

World Choir for Peace Stay at Home Choir Hard-Chor Linz Choir of the Musische BORG Linz, singers from the state youth choirs of Austria and from all over the world

World Orchestra for Peace

Karl Jenkins | Conductor

Jenkins: *One World* for chorus, orchestra, and soli (composed 2021-22) (World Premiere)

A cooperation of Brucknerhaus, Linz and World Orchestra for Peace (Austria) GmbH, with additional support from the Federal Republic of Austria, the Province of Upper Austria, the City of Linz and Würth Gruppe. The UNESCO Concert for Peace 2023 is under the patronage of UNESCO.

15 January 2024 – Carnegie Hall, New York

The Music of Sir Karl Jenkins (80th Birthday Celebration)

Hochschulchor Sankt Georgen, Frankfurt/Collegium Vocale Bad Homburg

The Village Singers

Karl-Rehbein School Choir

Grand Union Community Choir

Mosaique Musicale Malouine

Pensbury Choirs

Jonathan Griffith | Conductor

Jenkins: *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*

Jenkins: *Adiemus* from *Songs of Sanctuary*

Jenkins: ‘Dies Irae’ from *Requiem*

Jenkins: ‘Paradisi Gloria’ from *Stabat Mater*

1 March 2024 – date and venue tbc, Cardiff

BBC National Orchestra of Wales

BBC National Chorus of Wales

National Youth Choir of Wales

Jess Gillam | Saxophone

Nil Venditti | Conductor

William Mathias: *Holiday Overture*
Jenkins: *Stravaganza* (UK premiere)
Jenkins: *Dewi Sant*

10 March 2024 - Royal Albert Hall, London

Philharmonia Orchestra
Crouch End Festival Chorus
Karl Jenkins | Conductor

Jenkins: *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*
Jenkins: *Adiemus* from *Songs of Sanctuary*
Jenkins: *Palladio*
Jenkins: *One World*

17 March 2024 - Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow

Scottish Concert Orchestra
RSNO Chorus
Karl Jenkins | Conductor

Jenkins: *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*
Jenkins: *Adiemus* from *Songs of Sanctuary*
Jenkins: *Palladio*
Jenkins: *One World*

30 March 2024 - Symphony Hall, Birmingham

London Concert Orchestra
Canzonetta
Karl Jenkins | Conductor

Jenkins: *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*
Jenkins: *Adiemus* from *Songs of Sanctuary*
Jenkins: *Palladio*
Jenkins: *One World*

6 April 2024 – Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama

National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain

Jenkins: *Fragile Earth* (world premiere)

6 April 2024 - Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham

Manchester Concert Orchestra
Canzonetta
Karl Jenkins | Conductor

Jenkins: *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*
Jenkins: *Adiemus* from *Songs of Sanctuary*
Jenkins: *Palladio*
Jenkins: *One World*

13 April 2024 – Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff

London Concert Orchestra
Cor Caerdydd
Karl Jenkins | Conductor

Jenkins: *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*

Jenkins: *Adiemus* from *Songs of Sanctuary*

Jenkins: *Palladio*

Jenkins: *One World*

14 April 2024 - The Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

Manchester Concert Orchestra

Manchester Chorale

Karl Jenkins | Conductor

Jenkins: *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*

Jenkins: *Adiemus* from *Songs of Sanctuary*

Jenkins: *Palladio*

Jenkins: *One World*