

PRESS RELEASE

MUSICAL PARTNERSHIP TO CHRONICLE HISTORIC MOMENT

**Composer Shirley J. Thompson to write for disabled-led ensemble BSO Resound
as Allianz Musical Insurance marks unique anniversary year**



Composer Shirley J. Thompson partners with BSO Resound

Allianz Musical Insurance has commissioned a new work to mark its 60th anniversary partnering two radical figures in modern British music: composer Shirley J. Thompson and disabled-led ensemble BSO Resound.

It is anticipated the new work will reference modern British life as the nation looks inward during a chapter of compassion and care. Reflecting on 60 years of the Independent Living Movement, the work will explore the pioneering spirit of the Movement while the performers of BSO Resound epitomise how far the independent living for disabled people has progressed over six decades.

The new piece is due to be performed by BSO Resound later in the year.

Allianz Musical Insurance is the supporting partner of BSO Resound. **Clarice Goff of Allianz** said of the project, ***“From overseas tours to new technology, the ways in which we use musical instruments has changed so much in 60 years. It’s fascinating to look back on six decades of music history, especially in parallel with the development of the Independent Living Movement,***

which like our insurance cover began in the 1960s. We're proud to be marking our anniversary with this new piece: both BSO Resound and Shirley J. Thompson are ambassadors of such positive change in music, we can't wait to hear the result of their partnership."

A visionary artist and cultural activist, **Shirley J. Thompson's** music is often described as 'beautiful and powerful' (*Le Figaro*). Fusing musical elements representative of modern Britain, Thompson's work has featured in numerous national events, with highlights including the powerful 2018 anthem, *Psalm to Windrush: to the Brave & Ingenious*, to mark the Windrush 70th Anniversary at Westminster Abbey, and a symphony for 200 instrumental and choral performers to celebrate London's 1,000-year history as part of the 2002 Golden Jubilee. Thompson's music has been performed by orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic, BBC Concert Principals, and the Philharmonia at venues such as the Southbank Centre, Sydney Opera House, and Mariinsky Theatre. Always driven by the belief in the transformative power of music to affect social, cultural and political change, she has also composed extensively for opera, contemporary dance, TV and film.

Composer **Shirley J. Thompson**, said of the partnership, ***"I am very excited about the commission to highlight the great and historic work of the Independent Living Movement. It is an honour to be chosen by BSO Resound to commemorate how far society has come in terms of its attitudes to disabled people. I am looking forward to exploring the instrumental sonorities offered by the wonderful performers of BSO Resound in this year of the 60th Anniversary of Allianz Musical Insurance. It's a fascinating moment in time and a real opportunity to chronicle the changes that we see around us."***

BSO Resound is known for spearheading change — it is the world's first professional disabled-led ensemble and is a core part of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. In 2019, the six-piece chamber group won the Royal Philharmonic Society Impact Award for its part in improving opportunities for disabled musicians. It also made a high-profile debut at the 2018 BBC Proms as the first disabled-led group to perform at the festival's illustrious 125-year history.

Dougie Scarfe, Chief Executive of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, said of the news, ***"The BSO has played a key part in bringing contemporary music to the fore since its inception and we're really excited that Shirley has agreed to write for BSO Resound. As the country looks at the way it cares for the most vulnerable in society, we are certain Shirley's music will empower and inspire"***

BSO Resound will perform the new work by Shirley J. Thompson later in 2020 to mark the 60th anniversary of Allianz Musical Insurance. Visit bsolive.com for further details.

[ENDS]

Notes to Editors:

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1. Images available [here](#):
 - a) Composer Shirley J. Thompson © Joy Gregory
 - b) Players of BSO Resound ©BSO
 - c) BSO Resound win the RPS Impact Award ©Mark Allan

2. About Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and BSO Resound www.bsolive.com

Empowering lives through music remains at the core of all that Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra does. In 2019 this was marked with the Royal Philharmonic Society's Impact Award for the Orchestra's work in improving outcomes for the next generation of disabled musical talent. The Orchestra was Alzheimer's Society's 'Dementia Friendly Organisation of the Year' in 2017, before presenting the world's first professional disabled-led ensemble, BSO Resound, at the 2018 BBC Proms.

BSO Participate, which works with all ages off the stage, is internationally recognised as an act to follow: over 650 community workshops and events take place each year across the Orchestra's 10,000-square-mile region, enhancing thousands of lives each year.

As a registered arts charity the BSO is increasingly reliant on the support of individuals, charitable trusts and companies. The income earned from ticket sales, commercial activity and grants from public funding sources help the Orchestra greatly and is increasingly invaluable in supporting BSO's on-going mission to enrich and inspire the cultural lives of many.

bsolive.com

3. About Shirley Thompson <https://shirleythompsonmusic.com/>

A visionary artist and cultural activist, Shirley J. Thompson's music is often described as 'beautiful and powerful' (*Le Figaro*). Fusing musical elements representative of modern Britain, Thompson's work has featured in numerous national events with highlights including the powerful the 2018 choral work, *Psalm to Windrush: for the Brave & Ingenious*, to mark the Windrush 70th anniversary at Westminster Abbey, and *New Nation Rising: A 21st Century London Symphony* for 200 performers to celebrate London's 1,000-year history as part of the Queen's 2002 Golden Jubilee. Thompson's music has been performed by the Royal Philharmonic, BBC Concert, and Philharmonia orchestras and at the Southbank Centre, Sydney Opera House, and Mariinsky Theatre.

Dr Thompson is Reader in Composition and Performance at the University of Westminster and has also composed extensively for TV/film, theatre and dance production. She is considered to be "...an artist who draws on a range of influences from the classical tradition to modern urban sounds, and in many senses her work is archetypal of the renewed interest in the possibilities and potential of the genre." *RESONANCE FM*

4. About Allianz Musical Insurance www.allianzmusic.co.uk

This year Allianz Musical Insurance is celebrating the 60th anniversary of their musical insurance cover. They're proud to have been providing cover for musicians of all types since 1960 – longer than any other insurer. They insure all kinds of musical instruments, equipment and accessories, and today insure over 70,000 musicians with over 357,000 instruments.

Richard Jennings, Head of Allianz Musical Insurance, said: "As we look back across our history, we're proud to have always been a team of music experts who offer a product that supports musicians in everything that they do. We're especially proud of our ability to take care of our customers at their time of need and our commitment to the music industry."

Allianz Musical Insurance covers all kinds of musical instruments and equipment, from rare makes to everyday classics. It covers musicians of all levels and ages, from students and hobbyists to professional touring artists. And it also covers teachers, retailers, repairers, DJs and studio producers, orchestras and bands.

5. Further information about the Independent Living Movement

The Independent Living Movement developed in 1960s America: it presented the perspective that people living with disabilities are the best experts on their needs, and therefore, must feel empowered to take the initiative – both individually and collectively – to create positive change. It is a worldwide movement working toward equal opportunities, self-determination and self-respect.

6. Allianz Musical Insurance is a supporting partner of BSO Resound.
7. The BSO's Principal Broadcast Partner is BBC Radio 3
8. The BSO is Classic FM's Orchestra in the South of England.