

PRESS RELEASE  
Monday 18 March 2024

## NEW ARTISTIC TEAM AT BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: MARK WIGGLESWORTH BECOMES CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND CHLOÉ VAN SOETERSTÈDE PRINCIPAL GUEST CONDUCTOR



*Chloé van Soeterstède and Mark Wigglesworth ©Mark Allan*

- Conductors **Mark Wigglesworth** and **Chloé van Soeterstède** become Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's new Chief Conductor and Principal Guest Conductor respectively from the start of the Orchestra's 2024/25 season, each for a four-year term.
- One of the world's leading conductors, **Mark Wigglesworth** is recognised for his outstanding musicianship, extraordinary interpretations, and breadth of repertoire. Having held a titled role since 2021, his appointment heralds a period of the highest quality music-making as he deepens his connection with the BSO's musicians, audiences, and communities.
- **Chloé van Soeterstède** has built global recognition for her commanding and intuitive approach. A former Fellow of the Taki Alsop programme, van Soeterstède builds on recent guest appearances, having won praise from the BSO's musicians and audiences alike.
- **Kirill Karabits**, who celebrates a remarkable 15-year tenure at the close of the season, becomes **Conductor Laureate & Artistic Director, Voices from the East**.

**Mark Wigglesworth and Chloé van Soeterstède join Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's line-up of named conductors on becoming Chief Conductor and Principal Guest Conductor this autumn. Outgoing Chief Conductor Kirill Karabits becomes Conductor Laureate & Artistic Director of Voices from the East, alongside Associate Guest Conductor David Hill MBE, Conductor Emeritus Marin Alsop, and Conductor Laureate Andrew Litton.**

Mark Wigglesworth's opening BSO performance was described by the Daily Telegraph as "electrifying" and he has built a strong relationship with the Orchestra's musicians and audiences since becoming its Principal Guest Conductor in 2021. Wigglesworth becomes the BSO's **Chief Conductor from autumn 2024** – the first British conductor to hold the role in over 60 years. He is expected to conduct five weeks in his first season, with this number increasing to nine weeks from 2025/26. Wigglesworth's performances have been celebrated globally: he has worked with the Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony, New York Philharmonic and Royal Concertgebouw orchestras and performed at the world's most prestigious opera houses.

Chloé van Soeterstède was appointed the Taki Alsop Fellow 2019-21 by former BSO Principal Conductor Marin Alsop and was also a Dudamel Fellow with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in its 2021/22 season. Her 2022 BSO debut was an instant hit with musicians and audiences alike, with Bachtrack saying: "she's clearly someone to watch [...] a return visit from van Soeterstède could not be soon enough". Van Soeterstède has built global recognition for her commanding and intuitive approach, with regular appearances in Europe, the US and Australia. A passionate advocate for music education, she trained as a viola player before launching a career as a conductor.

Audiences in Poole, Bristol, and Truro will hear the Orchestra under the baton of its incoming Chief Conductor Mark Wigglesworth this week. The performances mark a reunion with pianist **Ethan Loch** – the former BBC Young Musician finalist, who made a televised performance alongside Wigglesworth in 2022. Loch performs Chopin's Second Piano Concerto in a programme that also includes Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and Verdi's *Force of Destiny* Overture at **Lighthouse, Poole** [Wed 20<sup>th</sup>], **Bristol Beacon** [Thurs 21<sup>st</sup>] and **Hall for Cornwall, Truro** [Fri 22<sup>nd</sup>].

**Mark Wigglesworth, incoming Chief Conductor of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, said:** "The BSO embraces the role of a twenty first century orchestra with talent, experience, passion, and care. The commitment the entire organisation shows to the many thousands of music lovers across the entire South West of England is inspirational and I am extremely excited to be joining them at a time when classical music's undeniable force for good has never been more vital to the quality of the communities we live in."

**Chloé van Soeterstède, incoming Principal Guest Conductor of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, said:** "I will always remember my first concert with the BSO musicians. Their commitment to every note, their continued support through our weeks together, and their trust and dedication to my musical ideas were greatly exciting and fulfilling. I am truly humbled and

*honoured to deepen my relationship with them, and to embark on a special journey together with our audiences in the South West of England."*

**Matt King, Principal Percussion and Musician Trustee, said:**

*"Concerts with Mark are a highlight in the schedule, and we're delighted at his appointment as Chief Conductor; we have enjoyed a broad mix of repertoire together in recent years, with music from Mahler and Mozart to Sibelius, Shostakovich, and Wagner – it will be exciting to continue this journey. Chloé has been a real revelation and brings energy and fresh insight to the podium; we are looking forward to the next few years together."*

**Andrew Flockhart, Chair of the BSO's Board of Trustees, said:**

*"The appointment of Mark and Chloé, who each bring extraordinary expertise and energy, is wonderful news for the BSO and its vitality in the future. The entire Board is enthusiastic about the appointments which strengthen the Orchestra's ability to bring brilliant music to audiences in communities right across the South West."*

**Dougie Scarfe OBE DL, Chief Executive of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, said:**

*"We're excited to share the truly world-class live performances that both Mark and Chloé will undoubtedly bring to people throughout the South West over the coming years – and audiences in Poole, Bristol, and Truro will get a further sense of that this week. Life-empowering live music is at the core of what we do, and we're thrilled Mark and Chloé share our vision for how an orchestra can proudly serve communities in and beyond the concert hall. We can't wait to welcome them both in their new roles this autumn."*

[ENDS]

#### **Notes to Editors:**

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1. Images available [here](#)
  - a) Conductors Mark Wigglesworth and Chloé van Soeterstède ©Mark Allan
  - b) Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at Lighthouse, Poole ©Mark Allan
  - c) BSO's Chief Executive, Dougie Scarfe OBE DL ©Corin Messer

2. **About Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra**

[www.bsolive.com](http://www.bsolive.com) | @BSOrchestra

One of the UK's best-loved orchestras, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is a professional ensemble known for championing the role of culture in people's lives. Based at Lighthouse, Poole, it has residencies in Bournemouth, Bristol, Exeter, Portsmouth, Southampton and Yeovil — and is the largest cultural provider in the South West, serving one of the biggest and most diverse regions in the UK.

The Orchestra is known for pushing artistic boundaries and during Kirill Karabits' 15-year tenure as Chief Conductor its series of music from former Soviet states, Voices from the East, has continued to gain praise. Boasting an enviable list of principal conductors, including Marin Alsop, the first female principal conductor of a major UK orchestra, the BSO has given memorable performances worldwide.

The Orchestra's Digital Concerts have cemented its reputation for presenting live music of the highest quality, and in 2023/24 guest artists have included Artist-in-Residence Alexander Malofeev, Alina Ibragimova, and Awadagin Pratt. It reunited with Seeta Patel Dance in a Bharatanatyam interpretation of The Rite of Spring and gave world premieres by Jonathan Dove and Mark-Anthony Turnage on returning to its residency at Bristol Beacon.

The BSO leads hundreds of community-based events each year, from award-winning work in health settings to partnerships with education providers — and in 2023/24 it welcomed its second cohort of BSO Young Associate music leaders. Following international attention for igniting change, BSO Resound — the world's first professional disabled-led ensemble at the core of a major orchestra, and winner of the 2019 Royal Philharmonic Society's Impact Award — continues to challenge perceptions.

3. The BSO's Principal Broadcast Partner is **BBC Radio 3**
4. The BSO is **Classic FM's** Orchestra in the South of England.