

PRESS RELEASE
Tuesday 16 April 2024

BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES ENYI OKPARA AS 2024/25 CALLEVA ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR



Enyi Okpara becomes the BSO's 2024/25 Calleva Assistant Conductor ©BSO

- **Enyi Okpara from London** is announced as Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's **Calleva Assistant Conductor** ahead of its 2024/25 season.
- Two days of auditions took place at **Lighthouse, Poole** with **8 finalists** competing for the position. The winner was selected by a vote from the Orchestra's musicians.
- The **bursary-supported training position** is designed to provide a platform to launch a professional career through performance opportunities and mentoring, including from the Orchestra's world-leading guest conductors and musicians.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) announces Enyi Okpara as its Calleva Assistant Conductor for the 2024/25 concert season. The role, which received 120 applications, provides a platform to build professional experience and development, with mentoring from some of the world's leading names in classical music.

Enyi Okpara from London has today (16 April) been announced as **Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's 2024/25 Calleva Assistant Conductor**, having won a vote from the Orchestra's musicians at Lighthouse, Poole.

The bursary-supported training position is designed to offer a platform to build professional experience through performance opportunities and mentoring from the BSO's world-leading conductors and musicians, which include incoming Chief Conductor **Mark Wigglesworth**, Principal Guest Conductor **Chloé van Soeterstède**, and Associate Guest Conductor **David Hill**.

Currently based in London, Okpara studied an MA in Orchestral Conducting with Sian Edwards at the Royal Academy of Music, where he held the Derek Butler Award. He is Conductor-in-Residence with the London Schools Symphony Orchestra, alongside positions with Camden Youth Choir, Elysium Music, ARK Music, and Havant Symphony Orchestra.

The role was previously held by **Tom Fetherstonhaugh**, who is rapidly building an international career and has recently been signed to the Rayfield Allied agency.

Enyi Okpara, the BSO's 2024/25 Calleva Assistant Conductor said: *"I'm so looking forward to the year ahead and working with these amazing musicians, who have shown so much warmth towards all of us finalists this week. To have the opportunity to work regularly with a professional orchestra of this calibre is such an amazing experience — I can't wait!"*

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's Chief Executive, Dougie Scarfe OBE DL, said: *"We're thrilled to have welcomed yet another fantastic cohort of brilliant conductors to the platform at Lighthouse, Poole for this year's competition. Ensuring development opportunities for the next generation is hugely important to us at the BSO; we're deeply proud of the scheme and are grateful to The Calleva Foundation for their support of it. Throughout the two days, Enyi stood out as a talent to watch, as recognised by the musicians' vote, and we can't wait to share music together with him over the coming year."*

The Calleva Assistant Conductor programme in 2024-2030 is funded by The Calleva Foundation, in memory of Jack Butt.

[ENDS]

Notes to Editors:

For further information please contact: Claire Rawles 07860 776646

crawles@bsorchestra.co.uk or Rebecca Johns 07715 205196

rebecca.johns@premiercomms.com

1. [Images available here](#)
 - a) Enyi Okpara, the BSO's 2024/25 Calleva Assistant Conductor ©BSO
 - b) The BSO at Lighthouse, Poole ©Mark Allan
 - c) Dougie Scarfe OBE DL, Chief Executive of the BSO ©Corin Messer

2. **About Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra**

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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.