

PRESS RELEASE

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FESTIVE MAGIC FOR ALL AGES FROM BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA THIS CHRISTMAS



Players of the BSO in festive attire © BSO

- Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra brings seasonal music to **Exeter, Fareham, Marlborough, Poole, Portsmouth, Taunton and Weymouth** this Christmas.
- Family favourites include **Last Night of the Christmas Proms** and a screening of **The Snowman** accompanied live by the full orchestra.
- Traditional Christmas classics include **Handel's Messiah**, a traditional **Celebration of Christmas Carols**, and a series of **New Year's Gala** performances.

Join Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) for a host of magical music this festive season from *The Snowman* to Handel's *Messiah*, Christmas Carols, and a sparkling New Year's Gala...

There's something for everyone this yuletide as the BSO presents festive performances throughout the South West. From traditional choral classics to a screening of beloved classic *The Snowman* – and everything in between – the BSO has it all wrapped up for you this Christmas.

Anthony Brown, BSO Head of Marketing and Curator of BSO Pops Series, said: “The festive season marks such a special time in our calendar and we’re delighted to be able to bring joyful music to venues across the South West this year. From Last Night of the Christmas Proms with brilliant pianist and singer Joe Stilgoe, to Handel’s beloved Messiah and a screening of everyone’s favourite classic The Snowman alongside the full forces of the BSO, there really is something for everyone – we can’t wait to see you there!”

Popular Favourites

The Snowman, lights up the big screen in two performances at Lighthouse, Poole [14 Dec]. The animated film is accompanied live by community-based choir, BSO Voices, and the full might of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. A young soloist joins the Orchestra for ‘Walking in the Air’.

Star of BBC Friday Night is Music Night and aficionado of Christmas music, Joe Stilgoe, joins the Orchestra for **Last Night of the Christmas Proms in Exeter** [19 Dec], **Portsmouth** [20 Dec] and **Poole** [21 Dec]. Expect hits such as *Oh I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday*, *Sleigh Ride* and *Rockin’ Around the Christmas Tree* in an ever-popular festive event that will have you dancing in the aisles!

Musical traditions

Beloved classic of the Christmas calendar, **Handel’s Messiah**, to be performed with **Nicholas McGregan** and **Soprano Keri Fuge** in **Poole** [11 Dec] as they retell the story of Christ with beautiful arias such as *He was Despised and Rejected* and *I Know that My Redeemer Liveth* and rousing choruses like *For Unto Us a Child is Born* as well as the ever-popular *Hallelujah Chorus*.

Prepare to waltz into 2025 with a **BSO New Year Viennese Galas**, taking place across the South West in **Poole** [1 Jan], **Taunton** [3 Jan], **Weymouth** [8 Jan], **Fareham** [9 Jan] and **Marlborough** [12 Jan]. Soprano Soraya Mafi joins the BSO to welcome the New Year in with a flourish with music from Strauss such as *Fledermaus Overture*, *Thunder and Lightning Polka*, *The Emperor Waltz*, *Radetzky March* and, of course, *The Blue Danube!*

Raise your voice in song

A **traditional festive sing-along** takes place at Lighthouse, Poole [23 Dec] as Bournemouth Symphony Chorus and Youth Chorus unite with the Orchestra for favourite carols including *O Come All Ye Faithful*, *Good King Wenceslas*, *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, *The First Nowell*, *God Rest You Merry Gentlemen* and *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* and many more.

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS

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1. High-resolution images available [here](#)
 - a) Players of the BSO in festive attire ©BSO
 - b) Joe Stilgoe © Scott Rylander

2. Concert listings- full listings at [bsolive.com](https://www.bsolive.com)

Wed 11 Dec, 7.30pm (Lighthouse, Poole)

Handel's Messiah

Nicholas McGegan *Conductor*

Keri Fuge *Soprano*

Hugh Cutting *Counter tenor*

Thomas Hobbs *Tenor*

Callum Thorpe *Bass*

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus

Heaped full of beautiful arias, Handel's ever-popular oratorio returns to Lighthouse Poole to retell the story of Christ.

Sat 14 Dec, 3pm & 7pm (Lighthouse, Poole)

The Snowman

BSO Voices

Teresa Barlow *Conductor*

The Snowman lights up the big screen at Lighthouse Poole with the full forces of the BSO.

Thurs 19 Dec, 7.30pm (Exeter University Great Hall, Exeter)

Fri 20 Dec, 7.30pm (Portsmouth Guildhall, Portsmouth)

Sat 21 Dec, 7.30pm (Lighthouse, Poole)

Last Night of the Christmas Proms

Joe Stilgoe *Piano/Singer*

Join the BSO for all your favourite Christmas hits, alongside pianist and singer extraordinaire Joe Stilgoe!

Monday 23 Dec, 7pm (Lighthouse, Poole)

Celebration of Christmas Carols

Gavin Carr (conductor)

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus

Bournemouth Symphony Youth Chorus

Come along to raise your voice in song with the BSO and friends, and some of the best traditional carols ever written.

Wed 1 Jan, 3pm (Lighthouse, Poole)

Fri 3 Jan, 7.30pm (Taunton Brewhouse)

Wed 8 Jan, 7.30pm (Weymouth Pavilion)

Thurs 9 Jan, 7.30pm (Fareham Live)

Sun 12 Jan, 3pm (Marlborough College Memorial Hall)

New Year Viennese Galas

Tom Fetherstonhaugh *Conductor*

Soraya Mafi *Soprano*

Swing into the New Year with all Strauss' favourite waltzes and Polkas in this traditional Viennese New Year celebration.

3. **ABOUT BOURNEMOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** | [bsolive.com](https://www.bsolive.com)

Chief Conductor – Mark Wigglesworth | Artist-in-Residence — Alena Baeva

Principal Guest Conductor — Chloé van Soeterstède | Associate Guest Conductor – David Hill MBE

Conductor Laureate & Artistic Director, Voices from the East – Kirill Karabits

Conductor Laureate – Andrew Litton | Conductor Emeritus – Marin Alsop

Calleva Assistant Conductor – Enyi Okpara

One of the UK's best-loved orchestras, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is known for championing the role of culture in people's lives. Based at Lighthouse, Poole, the Orchestra is resident in Bristol, Exeter, Portsmouth, Southampton, and Yeovil, and performs in towns and villages across the region. It is the largest cultural provider in the Southwest of England, serving one of the biggest and most diverse regions in the UK.

Celebrated globally for his outstanding musicianship, extraordinary interpretations, and breadth of repertoire, **Mark Wigglesworth's appointment as Chief Conductor** (from autumn 2024) builds on the BSO's reputation for the highest quality music-making. The Orchestra boasts an enviable list of named conductors, including Principal Guest Conductor Chloé van Soeterstède, Marin Alsop, David Hill MBE, Kirill Karabits, and Andrew Litton.

Highlights of the season include concerto and chamber performances from Artist-in-Residence, the violinist **Alena Baeva**, and collaborations with Calleva Assistant Conductor, **Enyi Okpara**, who performs a broad mix of repertoire across the year. Guest artists include conductors Adam Hickox and Kevin John Edusei; pianist Nicholas McCarthy; and accordionist Ksenija Sidorova — and the Orchestra's celebrated Digital Concert series continues into its fifth year, with 17 live performances broadcast globally from Poole.

Committed to new music, the BSO has presented premiere performances of works by Franghiz Ali-Zadeh, Jonathan Dove, Magnus Lindberg, Anna Korsun, Elizabeth Ogonek, Shirley J. Thompson OBE, Mark-Anthony Turnage and Kate



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Whitley in recent years — and its Voices from the East series has been recognised for unearthing lost symphonic works from eastern Europe and central Asia.

The BSO is known for championing access to high-quality music for all and leads hundreds of community-based events each year, from its award-winning work in health and care settings to partnerships with schools and music education hubs. In the 2024/25 season, it deepens its reach into local communities, including: a new residency in partnership with NHS Dorset; an expansion of its creative health work; and the extension of the BSO Young Associates community music training scheme. 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.

