

**CONCERT
SEASON**

2026/27



 bournemouth
symphony orchestra

GREAT HALL, EXETER



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Geoffrey, BSO Member

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Welcome to the 2026/27 Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra Season at The Great Hall, Exeter

Our Artist-in-Residence this season is the phenomenal pianist, Boris Giltburg. You have already witnessed the extraordinary chemistry between him and Mark, so I know the concerts featuring the concertos of Schumann and Rachmaninov will be something special. Our Celebrated Composer is one of the most highly respected figures of our time, Thomas Adès. His works will be included in concerts across the season.

As always, highlights are just too many to list, so I invite you to browse through our wonderful selection and leave you to choose your favourites, whether it be Mark's performance of Mahler's Fourth Symphony, Richard Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* Suite, Stravinsky's *Firebird* or John Williams' iconic music from *Star Wars*.

This season sees the start of Chief Conductor Mark Wigglesworth's symphonic journey through the symphonies of Beethoven with the BSO to mark the 200th anniversary of his death. Road to Joy will see all nine symphonies performed chronologically over this season and next. All concerts will be broadcast as a BSO Digital Concert so you can join the journey wherever you live.

Our concerts are never complete without you, our wonderful audience. I urge you to come to as many concerts as you can and experience the thrill and positive well-being of taking part in a live concert – together for a few hours away from the tyranny of digital intrusion and the complexities of life. Your support has never been more needed. Every ticket you buy, including those for our fantastic BSO Digital Concerts, helps the BSO to continue to bring you great music, and if you would like to support further why not consider becoming a BSO Member.

I hope you enjoy a great season of concerts. I know I shall.

Dougie Scarfe OBE
Chief Executive

Tuesday
22 September
7.30pm

SYMPHONIC HORIZONS

Mendelssohn
The Hebrides Overture

Tchaikovsky
Piano Concerto No.1

Brahms
Symphony No.2

Mendelssohn's musical postcard is more of a tone poem than an overture in the traditional sense. It conjures up a whole seascape including the grandeur of Fingal's Cave, the swelling of the sea, the light on the water and the fury of the waves breaking on the monumental cliffs. Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto is an exuberant and passionate work filled with uninhibited virtuosity. The dramatic and lengthy first movement is based on the menacing-sounding Ukrainian folk tune titled *Song of the Blind* and is filled with extensive technical passages made up of lush chord sequences and scales. The finale is also based on a folk tune – a combination of hymn-like solemnity and more technical wizardry. The Second Symphony might be described as Brahms' 'Pastoral', a total contrast to his dramatic and very serious First. Its song-like melodies are imbued with a gentle quality – in their simple beauty the themes give the impression of having been written down as a result of spontaneous inspiration. In Brahms' own words, "a delightfully happy spirit" pervades the whole work.

Jamie Phillips
Conductor

Martin James Bartlett
Piano

In memory of Michael

Thursday
8 October
7.30pm

Rimsky-Korsakov
The Tsar's Bride Overture

Saint-Saëns
Piano Concerto No.5
'Egyptian'

Rachmaninov
Symphony No.1

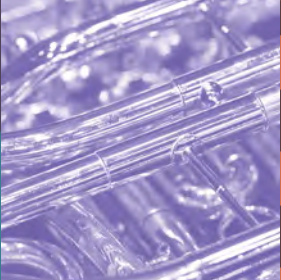
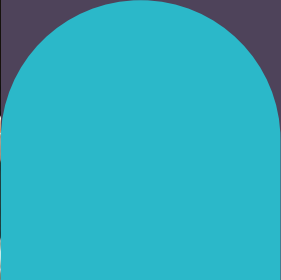
Chloé Van Soeterstède
Conductor

Javier Perianes
Piano

YOUTHFUL RACHMANINOV

A taut, realistic, and brutally human melodrama, Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tsar's Bride* was a shocking and brilliant departure from the composer best known for his magical, folkloric pageantry. A story of obsessive love, dark jealousy, and fatal revenge, the master orchestrator paints a dark, oppressive, and paranoia-filled world. Saint-Saëns composed his 'Egyptian' concerto in the temple town of Luxor. As well as the use of Middle Eastern traits, the music also displays influences from Javanese and Spanish styles. He said that the piece represented a sea voyage – the piano and orchestra produce impressionistic sounds emulating frogs and the chirping of Nile crickets. After a promising beginning as a talented composer and performer, Rachmaninov's confidence and momentum, if not his entire career, suddenly seemed to fizzle after the premiere of his First Symphony. The performance must have been appalling. For the next three years he wrote nothing and the symphony itself was never performed again in his lifetime. Strong, highly individual and self-assured – the work of a young talent overflowing with ideas – its four movements are unified by a single idea that echoes the shape of the *Dies irae* that would recur in his most important later works.

“A fiesta of Iberian music
provided the perfect antidote
to the winter gloom”
The Daily Telegraph, January 2026



Thursday
22 October
7.30pm

Tippett

Concerto for Double
String Orchestra

Vaughan Williams

The Lark Ascending

Adès

Märchentänze

Sibelius

Symphony No.5

Mark Wigglesworth

Conductor

Anthony Marwood

Violin

GLORIOUS HEIGHTS

Distinctive and eclectic, Tippett's works combine both traditional and modernist elements, often exploring themes of humanism, spirituality, and social justice. His orchestral concerto reflects the tumultuous period leading up to World War II and is marked by its expressive depth and intricate counterpoint, evoking a wide range of emotions. Vaughan Williams' intensely beautiful and idyllic tableau of English life opens almost imperceptibly, out of which the 'lark' takes wing, rising, undulating, falling. The music avoids any tonal centre, written without bars allowing the soloist an almost improvisatory freedom to describe the ethereal minstrel. Originally composed for violin and piano, Thomas Adès reworked his four *Dances from Fairytale* for full orchestra to accompany the solo violin. Full of sonic inventiveness and tonal colour, they draw from English folk sources and are at once light and energetic, and then melancholy and thoughtful. Sibelius was going through a difficult time in his life, despite his success and popularity, when he wrote the Fifth Symphony. However, he created one of the great late-Romantic symphonies displaying his ability to gather the mysterious world around him. The gorgeous opening sunrise is best described by Sibelius himself: "God opens His door for a moment and His orchestra plays". This was no boast!

Supported by
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Thursday
3 December
7.30pm

ETERNAL HEAVEN

Britten
Sinfonia da Requiem
Mahler
Symphony No.4

Britten registered his personal feelings about war by calling this symphony a requiem, and giving its three interlinked movements headings taken from the Roman Catholic Mass for the Dead. Cast in two sombre outer movements and an agitated centre, it covers a gamut of moods, from pity to passion. Showing influences from Mahler, Stravinsky and Vaughan Williams, it is distinctly written in his unique language. The last of Mahler's *Wunderhorn* symphonies, the Fourth is the sunniest, the final one without the brooding nature, intensity, size, and vastness of those yet to come. Displaying an innocence and congeniality throughout, it is an exploration of the idea of Heaven from the perspective of a child. The title of the poem used in the symphony's final movement is *There is not a cloud in the sky*. Elements from the song appear in the first three movements before it is heard in its entirety in the last movement.

Mahler's Fourth Symphony was the one Britten loved the most. The coupling of these two works is our way of acknowledging the 50th anniversary of Britten's death.

Mark Wigglesworth
Conductor
Olivia Boen
Soprano

With thanks to all those
who have remembered
the BSO in their Will



“Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra under Mark Wigglesworth gave the suite a sparkling performance that brought out all of its colourings – from gaudy circus marches to the faded watercolours of remembered childhood waltzes.”

Music OMH, July 2025



Friday
18 December
7.30pm

LAST NIGHT OF THE CHRISTMAS PROMS

Christmas just isn't Christmas without the BSO's Last Night of the Christmas Proms concert and this year we welcome back pianist and singer extraordinaire, Joe Stilgoe. Joe will perform a selection of pieces from his latest albums, and astound with his improvisation skills once again. A sprinkling of musical magic and sparkle will be added with a feast of favourite orchestral treats old and new.

with
Joe Stilgoe



Thursday
21 January
7.30pm

Bizet

Carmen Suite No.1

Rachmaninov

Piano Concerto No.4

Rachmaninov

Rhapsody on a
Theme of Paganini

R Strauss

Der Rosenkavalier Suite

KISSED BY A ROSE

Mark Wigglesworth
Conductor

Boris Giltburg
Piano

Bizet's opera *Carmen* is a treasure trove of unforgettable melodies, vibrant rhythms, and gripping drama. Its dazzling instrumental numbers quickly captivated audiences beyond the theatrical stage: the suite brings together six iconic movements, offering a brilliant concert distillation of the opera's spirit. The Fourth Piano Concerto displays much of the spacious style and the demanding virtuosity of Rachmaninov's earlier concertos but also incorporates the remnants of late Romanticism with some up-to-date sounds of Ravel and Gershwin. Wit, charm, romance, rhythmic verve and masterly orchestration combine in Rachmaninov's Rhapsody – an extroverted and immensely technical demonstration of pianistic wizardry. Opening with the main Paganini theme, after moments of romantic outpourings, the music hurtles towards a typical grandiose conclusion, before ending impishly with an echo of the introduction. Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* was an instant success with its Mozart-like farce and flurry of sweet and saucy waltzes set in the golden age of Viennese high society. Overflowing with melodic splendour and harmonic richness, orchestras had long enjoyed playing selections before a more established suite emerged, capturing the most celebrated and voluptuous moments from the original score.

Thursday
4 February
7.30pm

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Nielsen's musical depiction of the Greek sun god's chariot ride across the sky begins with a serene sunrise that almost imperceptibly grows from darkness, building to a vigorous depiction of the brilliance of the Aegean summer day, and ending with the gentle waning of the day into night. From its explosive, dramatic opening, Grieg's dazzlingly original Piano Concerto communicates with fiery passion, sustaining interest and excitement throughout. The music is imbued with a Nordic quality echoing traditional Norwegian dances and instruments. For his depiction of sunrise, Adès' *Dawn* is imagined as a constant event that moves continuously around the world. The *Symphonic Dances* proved to be Rachmaninov's last work, and the music suggests a new direction he might have pursued had fate granted him more time. In contrast to the lush harmonies and sweeping melodic lines that pervade his earlier style, it offers a more modern sound of leaner textures and sharper harmonies together with a wondrous kaleidoscope of instrumental colours. With its incisive dance rhythms inspired by folk and jazz, the work finally explodes with visceral energy.

Nielsen

Helios Overture

Grieg

Piano Concerto

Adès

Dawn – Chacony for
orchestra at any distance

Rachmaninov

Symphonic Dances

Chloé Van Soeterstède
Conductor

Eva Gevorgyan
Piano

In memory of
Gillian Emerson

Thursday
18 February
7.30pm

Bernstein

Symphony No.2
'Age of Anxiety'

Ravel

Valses nobles et
sentimentales

Stravinsky

The Firebird (1919)

Alexandre Bloch

Conductor

David Fray

Piano

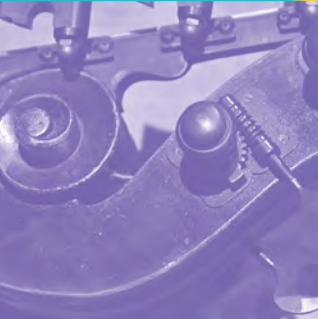
FROM THE FLAMES

Though titled as such, *The Age of Anxiety* bucks the traditional form of a symphony. Bernstein scored it for solo piano and orchestra and split it into two parts that are performed without pause, further divided into six subsections that mirror the text of Auden's "fascinating and hair-raising" poem. The narrative is of four anxious New Yorkers seeking meaning amid post-World War II disillusionment. Ravel greatly admired Schubert's collection of *Valses nobles* and *Valses sentimentales*, inspiring him to write his own cycle of eight solo piano waltzes which he later orchestrated – each a sparkling jewel. One of the most impressive calling cards in the history of music, *The Firebird* is a work of such brilliance that it could only have been written by Stravinsky, mixing the orchestral mastery of his Russian mentors with the rhythmic vitality of the revolutionary about to burst out of his shell. The musical language shifts between exotic, chromatic gestures to illustrate the supernatural dimension and the sing-song simplicity of folk song for the mortals creating a dazzling, evocative atmosphere.

With thanks to all our BSO
Members and Supporters



“An evening of enthralling music and world-class playing: the finest I have heard from Wigglesworth and the BSO. I can hardly wait for an opportunity to hear them again.”
Seen and Heard International,
November 2025



Wednesday
7 April
7.30pm

STAR WARS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Pete Harrison
Conductor

Can you believe it's been 50 years since Princess Leia, Han Solo and Luke Skywalker first graced our screens? The Force will be with all of us as we play the iconic tracks that accompanied George Lucas' epic space opera. Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra presents a magnificent celebration of John Williams' timeless music from the entire film saga since the original *Episode IV: A New Hope* in 1977. All performed spectacularly by the full forces of the orchestra and conducted by Pete Harrison, it surely will be an event not to be missed – an evening of some of the best movie music ever written.



THE BEETHOVEN SYMPHONIES

2026/27/28

road to JOY

One of the great musical journeys – the genius of Beethoven, from his Symphony No.1 written at the age of 29 to Symphony No.9 composed just 3 years before his death. A life of challenge and courage, love and loss, resulted in music that inspires millions wherever and whenever it is played. Marking the bicentenary of Beethoven's death in March 1827, 8 concerts span the 2026/27 season and the first half of 2027/28.

Beethoven Now

In addition to the performances of the symphonies, the journey includes a series of special events engaging with Beethoven beyond the music – through performance, discussion, and debate. The first explores Beethoven the man, the second looks at his music, and the third asks what role Beethoven plays in society today.

Beethoven: the Man

Saturday 31 October 2026
Assembly Hall, Canford School
from 1.30pm, £12

Beethoven's life will be illustrated by readings from his letters accompanied by excerpts from his string quartets; percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie will help us understand more about the musical and social implications of deafness; there will be a performance by

BSO Resound, our disabled led ensemble; and the afternoon will end with an 'Any Questions' debate chaired by Jonathan Dimbleby. Hosted by Sarah Walker, the afternoon will offer unique insights into why Beethoven has such universal appeal and timeless significance.

Beethoven: the Music

Saturday 2 October 2027

Beethoven: in Society

Saturday 19 February 2028

To find out more and to book tickets online visit bsolive.com/beethoven or scan below.



Do join Mark and the BSO for this remarkable musical journey.



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symphony orchestra

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2026/27



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Why not make a visit to Poole and enjoy a concert that isn't coming to Exeter? Your series discount is also applicable to any concerts in our Poole season. Or join us online for a digital concert.

Wednesday 30 September ∞

Adventurous Journeys

Beethoven

Symphony No.1

Wagner

The Ring: An Orchestral Adventure

Mark Wigglesworth

Wednesday 7 October ∞

Youthful Rachmaninov

Rimsky-Korsakov

The Tsar's Bride Overture

Saint-Saëns

Piano Concerto No.5 'Egyptian'

Rachmaninov

Symphony No.1

Chloé Van Soeterstède,

Javier Perianes

Wednesday 14 October ∞

Romantic Transitions

JC Bach

Symphony in G minor Op.6 No.6

Mozart

Concerto for Bassoon

CPE Bach

Sinfonia in B minor Wg.182/5

Haydn

Symphony No.104 'London'

Peter Whelan, Tammy Thorn

Wednesday 21 October

Glorious Heights

Tippett

Concerto for Double

String Orchestra

Vaughan Williams

The Lark Ascending

Adès

Märchentänze

Sibelius

Symphony No.5

Mark Wigglesworth,

Anthony Marwood

∞ = BSO Digital Concert

All start times 7.30pm unless marked otherwise.

Wednesday 28 October ∞

Eastern Odyssey

Mozart

Don Giovanni Overture

Saint-Saëns

Piano Concerto No.2

Rimsky-Korsakov

Scheherazade

Charlotte Corderoy, Junyan Chen

Wednesday 4 November ∞

Sunshine Symphonies

Prokofiev

Symphony No.1 'Classical'

Schumann

Piano Concerto

Beethoven

Symphony No.2

Mark Wigglesworth, Boris Gilburg

Saturday 7 November

Elvis: Viva Las Vegas!

Stephen Bell, Lee Memphis King

Wednesday 18 November ∞

Imperial Majesty

Walton

Crown Imperial March

Beethoven

Piano Concerto No.5 'Emperor'

Tchaikovsky

Suite No.3

Andrew Litton, Jonathan Biss

Wednesday 25 November

Flower Power

Mahler/Britten

What the Wild Flowers tell me

Mozart

Piano Concerto No.22 K.482

Schumann

Symphony No.1 'Spring'

Andrew Manze, Yeol Eum Son

Wednesday 2 December ∞

Eternal Heaven

Britten

Sinfonia da Requiem

Mahler

Symphony No.4

Mark Wigglesworth, Olivia Boen

Wednesday 9 December ∞

Winter Warmers

Corelli

Concerto Grosso in G minor

Op.6 No.8 'Christmas Concerto'

Vivaldi

Autumn & Winter from

The Four Seasons

Mussorgsky

A Night on the Bare Mountain

Tchaikovsky

The Nutcracker Suite

Michal Oren,

Maria Włoszczowska

Wednesday 16 December 7pm

Messiah

Handel

Messiah

Paul McCreesh, Anna Dennis,

Anna Harvey, Thomas Walker,

Matthew Brook, BSC

Saturday 19 December

Last Night Of The Christmas Proms

Joe Stilgoe

Tuesday 22 December 11am, 7pm

The Snowman

Teresa Barlow, BSO Voices (7pm only)

Wednesday 23 December 7pm

Celebration Of Christmas Carols

Gavin Carr, BSC and Youth Chorus

Friday 1 January 3pm

New Year's Day Viennese Gala

Tom Fetherstonhaugh, Claudia Boyle

Friday 15 January 7pm

Saturday 16 January 3pm

How To Train Your Dragon In Concert

Ellie Slorach

Wednesday 20 January ∞

Kissed By A Rose

Bizet

Carmen Suite No.1

Rachmaninov

Piano Concerto No.4

Rachmaninov

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

R Strauss

Der Rosenkavalier Suite

Mark Wigglesworth, Boris Giltburg

Wednesday 27 January ∞

Mozart's Masterpiece

Duparc

Lénore – Symphonic Poem

Mozart

Clarinet Concerto

Franck

Symphony in D minor

Jac van Steen, Carlos Ferreira

Wednesday 3 February ∞

Let There Be Light

Nielsen

Helios Overture

Grieg

Piano Concerto

Adès

Dawn

Rachmaninov

Symphonic Dances

Chloé Van Soeterstède, Eva Gevorgyan

Wednesday 10 February

Haydn's Creation

Haydn

The Creation

David Hill, Anna Devin, Benjamin

Hulett, Christopher Purves, BSC

Saturday 13 February 7pm

Julie Andrews: A Celebration

Richard Balcombe, Katie Birtill,

Kelly Mathieson, Graham Bickley

Wednesday 17 February

From The Flames

Bernstein

Symphony No.2 'Age of Anxiety'

Ravel

Valses nobles et sentimentales

Stravinsky

The Firebird (1919)

Alexandre Bloch, David Fray

Wednesday 24 February ∞

Soulful Epitaph

Butterworth

A Shropshire Lad: Rhapsody

Bridge

Oration – Concerto Elegiaco

Tchaikovsky

Symphony No.5

Mark Wigglesworth,

Jesper Svedberg

Wednesday 3 March ∞

Roman Snapshots

Khachaturian

Spartacus Suite

Berio

Folk Songs

Respighi

Pines of Rome

Kirill Karabits, Rihab Chaieb

Saturday 6 March

Star Wars 50th Anniversary

Pete Harrison

Wednesday 10 March ∞

Boris Giltburg Recital

Prokofiev

Visions fugitives Op.22

Schumann

Carnaval Op.9

Mussorgsky

Pictures at an Exhibition

Boris Giltburg

Wednesday 17 March ∞

Beethoven Ascending

Beethoven

Coriolan Overture

Cantata on the Death of

Emperor Josef II

Symphony No.3 'Eroica'

Mark Wigglesworth, Nardus Williams,

Kitty Whately, Anthony Gregory,

Andrew Foster-Williams, BSC

Wednesday 14 April ∞

Coming To America

L Boulanger

D'un soir triste

Barber

Violin Concerto

Dvořák

Symphony No.9 'New World'

Chloé Van Soeterstède, Stella Chen

Saturday 24 April

Classic FM Hall Of Fame

Bernstein

Candide Overture

On The Town: Times Square, 1944

West Side Story:

Symphonic Dances

Gershwin

Piano Concerto in F

Piazzolla

Libertango

Márquez

Danzón No.2

Tom Fetherstonhaugh,

Isata Kanneh-Mason

Wednesday 28 April ∞

Lyricism and Drama

Brahms

Piano Concerto No.2

Adès

Three-piece Suite from

Powder Her Face

Beethoven

Symphony No.4

Mark Wigglesworth, Sunwook Kim

Wednesday 5 May

Homage To Sibelius

Sibelius

En Saga

The Swan of Tuonela

Symphony No.7

Rautavaara

Deux Sérénades

Adès

Air – Homage to Sibelius

Thomas Adès, Johan Dalene

Wednesday 12 May ∞

Elgar's Dream

Elgar

The Dream of Gerontius

Mark Wigglesworth, Nicky Spence,

Katie Bray, Marcus Farnsworth, BSC

Saturday 15 May

Guitar Superstars

Stephen Bell, Emma Kershaw,

Steve Trowell, Mick Wilson, Alex

Voysey, Adam Martin

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The BSO offers the following concessions to most concerts. Please note that only one concession applies per ticket and that concessions are not available retrospectively.

Proof of status is required at the time of collection. All concessions and discounts are subject to availability.

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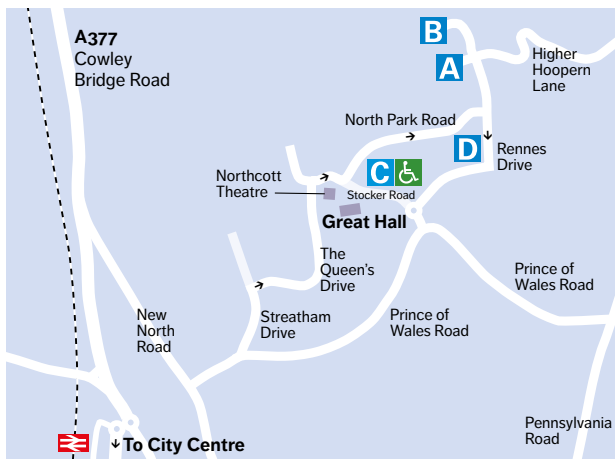
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Group discounts are applicable for tickets purchased for the same concert. Tickets must be paid in full one month in advance of the concert date, otherwise they will be released for resale.



Great Hall
University of Exeter
Stoker Road
Exeter EX4 4PY

Getting there

The Great Hall is situated on the main Streatham campus of Exeter University, adjacent to the Northcott Theatre which is signposted from Exeter City Centre. SATNAV use postcode EX4 4QJ

Bus routes with nearest stops adjacent to campus are the 5, 55, 315, 355, 369, 647, 649 and F. The Uni bus has stops on North Park Road and Prince of Wales Road.

Exeter St David's Rail Station is a 1km walk downhill from the hall. Taxis are available.

Parking

Car parking is available on campus. We advise that you allow plenty of time to find a space as it is often very busy. Car parks A and D are open to visitors free from 6pm; car park B is open to visitors with Pay & Display from 4pm. Limited on-road parking is also available - please make sure you park legally. Blue Badge holders can use Car Park C on a first come, first served basis.

Access

There is level access to the Great Hall stalls, the bar/restaurant and toilets (via a lift). Assistance dogs are welcome. A sound enhancement system which transmits enhanced audio to visitor's hearing aids, or specially provided headphones is available.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, 2 Seldown Lane, Poole, BH15 1UF
A registered charity no.208520 and a registered company limited by guarantee no.538351 in England.

All information is correct at the time of going to press - however artists are subject to availability and the BSO reserves the right to make any necessary changes from the advertised programmes.

This brochure is available in large print and electronic formats. Call 01202 669925 or email hello@bsorchestra.co.uk

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“Mark Wigglesworth put his stamp on the rest of the concert with the BSO playing tautly and often thrillingly throughout... which featured some exceptional woodwind playing.”
The Times, November 2025

