PRESS RELEASE
Tuesday 3 November 2026

ORCHESTRA'S 'ROAD TO JOY' BRINGS STARRY LINE-UP TO BRISTOL AND DORSET



Dame Evelyn Glennie, Jonathan Dimbleby, Samuel West, Sarah Walker and John Suchet joined musicians from the BSO and Chief Conductor Mark Wigglesworth on Saturday ©BSO

- Stars united with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra last weekend in Dorset and Bristol as it continued its two-year celebration of Beethoven: 'Road to Joy'.

- Actor **Samuel West**, musician **Dame Evelyn Glennie**, author **John Suchet** and broadcaster **Jonathan Dimbleby** joined **BSO musicians** and Chief Conductor **Mark Wigglesworth** for the first of three immersive weekends celebrating the composer.

- Beyond this week's symphonic performances [Poole – 4 Nov; Bristol – 5 Nov], the two-year musical marathon continues next March, with Beethoven's mighty Symphony No.3 'Eroica' and *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II* in Poole and Bristol.

- The BSO also recognises another composer anniversary in December: Benjamin Britten's music features in Poole and Exeter.

A host of stars travelled to Canford School, Dorset and Bristol Beacon this weekend as the BSO commenced its two-year landmark celebration of Beethoven – ahead of worldwide celebrations marking the bicentenary of the composer's death, in 2027.

Actor Samuel West, musician Dame Evelyn Glennie, author John Suchet and broadcaster Jonathan Dimbleby - together with a quartet of BSO musicians - took part in the speech-led events at Canford School [31 Oct] and Bristol Beacon [1 Nov]

The BSO's Chief Conductor Mark Wigglesorth featured, alongside broadcasters **Tom Service** in Bristol and **Sarah Walker** in Wimborne.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's milestone series 'Road to Joy' sees the Orchestra play all nine of Beethoven's symphonies over the next two years; as well as producing three in-depth weekends of discovery. Each one of the in-depth weekends - *Beethoven Now* - welcomes a new line up of key names and delves ever deeper into Beethoven's character and legacy.

This week, the Orchestra performs Beethoven's Second Symphony – at Lighthouse, Poole [4 Nov] and Bristol Beacon [5 Nov]. The next leg of the musical homage continues in March when Mark Wigglesworth conducts Beethoven's mighty Symphony No.3 'Eroica', and *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Joseph II* [17 Mar – Poole; 18 Mar - Bristol]. The cantata – written when the composer was 19 - was not premiered until 57 years after he died.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra's Chief Executive Officer, Dougie Scarfe OBE DL, said: *"We're thrilled to have set off on our 'Road to Joy'; a musical marathon unpacking Beethoven's unique legacy. What better way to continue the journey than by welcoming a line-up of stars and experts to the South West, to help us to understand Beethoven even further? Stay tuned for our next immersive events, which explore the musical and revolutionary sides of the endlessly intriguing composer. This December we'll also mark 50 years since the death of Benjamin Britten – one of our greatest British composers – and we'd love for you to join us to celebrate his music in Poole and Exeter."*

In December, the Orchestra pays musical tribute to another musical superstar: British composer Benjamin Britten, as the world reflects on his life. Mark Wigglesworth conducts *Sinfonia da Requiem* in a programme that includes Mahler's Symphony No.4 with soprano Alexandra Lowe [2 Dec – Poole; 3 Dec - Exeter]. The Orchestra's performance with Andrew Manze and Yeol Eum Son [25 Nov – Poole] also includes music by Britten.

The Orchestra's Beethoven 'Road to Joy' continues at Lighthouse, Poole [4 Nov, 17 Mar] and Bristol Beacon [5 Nov, 18 Mar]. The BSO also performs music by Britten at Lighthouse, Poole [25 Nov, 2 Dec] and University of Exeter [3 Dec]. For full What's On, see bsolive.com

[ENDS]

NOTES TO EDITORS

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1. Event listings – full details at bsolive.com

Wed 4 Nov 2026 (Poole, Lighthouse)
Mark Wigglesworth *conductor*
Boris Giltburg *piano*
Prokofiev – Symphony No.1 'Classical'
Schumann – Piano Concerto
Beethoven – Symphony No.2

Thurs 5 Nov 2026 (Bristol Beacon)
Mark Wigglesworth *conductor*
Boris Giltburg *piano*
Prokofiev – Symphony No.1 'Classical'
Schumann – Piano Concerto
Beethoven – Symphony No.2

Wed 25 Nov 2026 (Poole, Lighthouse)
Andrew Manze *conductor*
Yeol Eum Son *piano*
Mahler/Britten - *What the Wild Flowers tell me*
Mozart - Piano Concerto No.22 K.482
Schumann - Symphony No.1 'Spring'

Wed 2 Dec 2026 (Poole, Lighthouse)
Thu 3 Dec 2026 (Exeter, University Great Hall)
Mark Wigglesworth *conductor*
Alexandra Lowe *Soprano*
Britten - *Sinfonia da Requiem*
Mahler - Symphony No.4

Wed 17 Mar 2027 (Poole, Lighthouse)
Mark Wigglesworth *conductor*
Nardus Williams *soprano*
Anthony Gregory *tenor*
Kitty Whately *mezzo*
Andrew Foster-Williams *bass*
Bournemouth Symphony Chorus
Beethoven – *Coriolan* Overture
Beethoven - *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Josef II*
Beethoven - Symphony No.3 '*Eroica'*

Thu 18 Mar (Bristol Beacon)
Mark Wigglesworth *conductor*
Nardus Williams *soprano*
Anthony Gregory *tenor*
Kitty Whately *mezzo*
Andrew Foster-Williams *bass*
Bournemouth Symphony Chorus
Beethoven - *Cantata on the Death of Emperor Josef II*
Beethoven - Symphony No.3 '*Eroica'*

2. **High resolution images available here.**
   a) Beethoven Now at Canford School, Dorset © BSO
   b) Beethoven Now at Bristol Beacon © BSO
   c) BSO Chief Executive, Dougie Scarfe OBE © Corin Messer

3. **About Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra | bsolive.com**

One of the UK's best-loved orchestras, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) 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. A registered charity, it is the largest performing organisation in the South West of England, serving one of the biggest and most diverse regions in the UK.

Mark Wigglesworth became the Orchestra's Chief Conductor in 2024, and his opening seasons have magnified 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 alongside Marin Alsop, David Hill MBE, Kirill Karabits, Andrew Litton and new Calleva Assistant Conductor, Michal Oren.

In 2026/27, the BSO welcomes Thomas Adès as its Celebrated Composer in a series that shines a spotlight on new British music. The Orchestra shares eight performances, including one that Adès conducts – and local pupils will interact with his music through further events.

The Orchestra's two-year Beethoven celebration: Road to Joy runs from October 2026. Alongside symphonic performances, the series provides three immersive Beethoven Now weekends, delving deeper into the enduring legacy of the composer's music and humanity.

The BSO welcomes pianist Boris Giltburg as Artist-in-Residence, with five performances across the season. Further highlights include debut performances from conductor Charlotte Corderoy, pianists Junyan Chen, Eva Gevorgyan, Isata Kanneh-Mason, and violinist Johan Delane. The BSO's celebrated Digital Concert series continues into its seventh year, with 18 live performances broadcast globally from Poole – this year, supported by Digital Concert Sponsor, Lark Music.

Celebrated for its pioneering community-based BSO Participate work, the Orchestra brings music into people's lives beyond the concert hall thanks to a network of partnerships spanning health, care and music education; with a unique team of dynamic BSO Associate and Young Associate Musicians living in the heart of communities across the South West, it delivered more than 58,000 experiences last year. Its creative health programme continues to expand, with regular sessions at Dorset County Hospital, Dorset HealthCare sites, and Southampton Hospitals Charity. Several Community and Wellbeing Orchestras support a range of needs across the region from Bodmin, Boscombe and Bristol to Chard, Exeter, Newquay and Wincanton.

Following international attention for igniting change, BSO Resound, the world's first professional disabled-led ensemble at the core of a major orchestra, continues to challenge perceptions. The group joins conductors Tom Fetherstonhaugh and Enyi Okpara in 2026/27.

A National Portfolio of Arts Council England, the BSO is a registered charity and relies on generous philanthropic support from individual donors, gifts in wills, corporate partners, and charitable trusts and foundations.

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