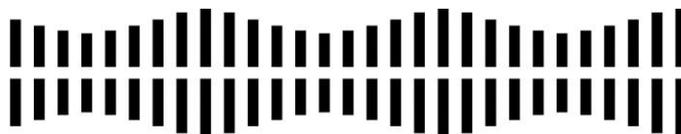


PRESS RELEASE

18 December 2015



Aldeburgh Music

Aldeburgh Festival 2016: 10 – 26 June

Highlights include:

- **Artistic Director Pierre-Laurent Aimard performs Messiaen's *Catalogue d'Oiseaux* over four concerts from sunrise to midnight at Snape Maltings and RSPB Minsmere**
- ***Illuminations*: a 75-minute devised staging for soprano, string orchestra and circus performers**
- **Grade 1 piano challenge**

The 69th Aldeburgh Festival takes place from **10 – 26 June 2016** and is a 17 day celebration with birds, circus and pianos at its heart. The Festival centrepiece sees **Pierre-Laurent Aimard**, in his last year as Artistic Director, performing Messiaen's *Catalogue d'Oiseaux* over four concerts from sunrise to midnight on **Sunday 19 June**, set against the panoramic backdrops and teeming wildlife of Snape Maltings and RSPB Minsmere. Birdsong fascinated French composer Olivier Messiaen all his life. *Catalogue d'Oiseaux* is his largest work inspired by birds, a 150-minute piece for solo piano which creates a rich musical language from the depictions of 77 species of bird that Messiaen heard in his native Camargue region of south-west France. One of the world's leading interpreters of Messiaen's piano music, Pierre-Laurent Aimard creates a day that animates the piece as never before. Hear the birds evoked by the piano alongside the myriad real birds of the Suffolk coast amidst the region's unspoilt expanses of reedbeds, marshy waters and sky.

The festival opens on **Friday 10 June** with *Illuminations*: a staging for soprano, string orchestra and circus performers. Inspired by the surrealism of the poems by Rimbaud set in Britten's song cycle *Les Illuminations*, director **Struan Leslie** creates a newly-commissioned staging fusing music and contemporary circus performance. Soprano **Sarah Tynan** joins an ensemble of international circus performers, the **Aurora Orchestra** and conductor **Nicholas Collon** in a 75-minute devised piece which includes Britten's *Les Illuminations* and *Young Apollo*, and music by Debussy and John Adams.

Aldeburgh Music and the Britten-Pears Foundation invites anyone of any age to join the **Grade 1 Challenge** before the Festival. Always wanted to learn the piano? Why not make it your New Year's resolution and goal for 2016! Sign up at www.aldeburgh.co.uk/gradeone to join a piano learners group and receive support over the next six months. Participants will have the opportunity to make their Aldeburgh Festival debut on the main stage at Snape Maltings Concert Hall on the final day of the Festival.

www.aldeburgh.co.uk

Full programme to be announced on Thursday 14 January.

Priority booking will open from 18 January.

General booking will open on 23 February.

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