

PRESS RELEASE

6 June 2016



City of Birmingham
Symphony Orchestra

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Qatar Airways launch competition to select schools for landmark education project

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Qatar Airways are inviting Birmingham primary schools to apply for the chance to be part of a landmark education project which will enable children to explore what the city means to them through the creation of a new musical theatre song.

To apply, schools are asked to submit pupils' responses to the question 'What does Birmingham mean to you?' in any format they like – a poem, a piece of art, a video, song or dance – the more creative the better! A panel of experts will then judge the final entries and select a number of schools to take part in the project.

One lucky Key Stage 2 class from each selected school will have the opportunity to work with award-winning composer Eamonn O'Dwyer and musicians from the CBSO to create a new piece of music that celebrates the 'Spirit of Birmingham'. Each school will contribute towards the narrative, lyrics and music of the piece, which will receive its world premiere at Symphony Hall in a performance sung by children from all participating schools with CBSO musicians.

The project has been made possible as a result of generous financial support from Qatar Airways, which has signed up as a major supporter of the CBSO and as the Orchestra's Official Airline Partner to celebrate the launch of its new route from Birmingham Airport.

Lucy Galliard, Director of Learning and Engagement, CBSO, said, "We are urging everyone to encourage their local primary schools to enter. Children are so creative, and able to generate the most original and imaginative pieces of work. . Thanks to Qatar Airways' we have a unique opportunity to give primary school children a platform to showcase their creative talent through the development of a new piece of music with an award-winning composer, and to perform the world premiere in the spectacular surroundings of Symphony Hall, accompanied by professional musicians."

Qatar Airways UK and Ireland Country Manager, Richard Oliver, said: "This exciting initiative will provide local primary school children with the amazing opportunity to learn and work with the CBSO including the once in lifetime opportunity to sing with the musicians during a special performance at Symphony Hall. Qatar Airways is proud to be the Official Airline Partner of the CBSO and to be part of making the dreams of young children in the area come true."

To enter the competition schools should download an application form from the CBSO website, and submit their entries **by Monday 27th June** to 'Qatar Airways Spirit of Birmingham Project' CBSO Centre, Berkley Street, Birmingham, B1 2LF or by email to education@cbsoco.uk.

For full terms and conditions, further information and the submission form please see www.cbsoco.uk/spiritofbirmingham

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About the CBSO

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra is one of the world's great orchestras, and the flagship of musical life in Birmingham and the Midlands.

Based at Birmingham's spectacular Symphony Hall, the orchestra and its ensembles give over 150 concerts each year in the UK and worldwide, playing a wide range of music including everything from Wagner operas to world premieres, film music and family concerts. With a far-reaching education and community programme, six choruses and a Youth Orchestra, it is involved with every aspect of music-making in the Midlands. But at its heart is a team of 90 superb professional musicians, and a 95-year tradition of making the world's greatest music.

The orchestra was founded by future Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in 1920, and Elgar conducted its inaugural concert. But it was when it discovered the young British conductor Simon Rattle in 1980 that the CBSO became internationally famous, and showed how the arts can help give a new sense of direction to a whole city. Rattle's successors Sakari Oramo and Andris Nelsons cemented that global reputation, and continued to build on the CBSO's distinguished tradition as one of the UK's leading musical ambassadors.

Under the artistic leadership of newly-appointed Osborn Music Director Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla the CBSO will continue to do what it does best – playing great music for people in Birmingham and beyond. As it approaches its centenary in 2020, the CBSO remains one of the most vibrant cultural organisations in the UK.

About Qatar Airways

Qatar Airways, the national carrier of the State of Qatar, is one of the fastest growing airlines operating one of the youngest fleets in the world. Now in its 19th year of operations, Qatar Airways has a modern fleet of 185 aircraft flying to more than 150 key business and leisure destinations across six continents.

Qatar Airways won Airline of the Year, Best Business Class Airline Seat and Best Airline in the Middle East at the 2015 Skytrax Awards. This is the third time the airline won the accolade of Airline of the Year.

Qatar Airways is a member of the **oneworld** global alliance. The award-winning alliance was named the World's Best Airline Alliance 2015 by Skytrax for the third year running. Qatar Airways was the first Gulf carrier to join global airline alliance, **oneworld**, enabling its passengers to benefit from more than 1,000 airports in more than 150 countries, with 14,250 daily departures.

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Qatar Airways launched Oryx One in 2015, an enhanced interface for its inflight entertainment system, increasing the number of movies and TV shows on board from 950 to up to 3,000. Passengers flying on Qatar Airways flights served by its B787, A350, A380, A319 as well as select A320 and A330 aircraft can also stay in touch with their friends and family around the world by using the five-star airline's on-board Wifi and GSM service.

Qatar Airways Cargo, the world's third largest cargo carrier, serves more than 50 exclusive freighter destinations worldwide via its Doha hub and also delivers freight to more than 150 key business and leisure destinations globally on 185 aircraft. The Qatar Airways Cargo fleet now includes eight Airbus 330, nine Boeing 777 freighters and two Boeing 747 freighters.

For more information, visit our homepage www.qatarairways.com or our sites on Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, and YouTube.

For Qatar Airways corporate images, please click here:

<http://www.qatarairways.com/corporateimages>

About Eamonn O'Dwyer

Eamonn trained at the Royal Academy of Music and has worked as a musician in theatres all over the world. As a composer he has written original music for *Stones in his Pockets* (Dukes Theatre Lancaster); *Five Children & It* (Tristan Bates); *Portia Coughlan* (Old Red Lion); *Around the World in Eighty Days & The Glass Menagerie* (Chipping Norton Theatre); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Stockholm English Speaking Theatre); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Barakura Festival Theatre, Japan); *The Massacre* (Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds); *Liquorice & Smokerings* (New Wolsey, Ipswich); and *Frankenstein* (Dorset Corset Theatre Company). He is a frequent musical collaborator at Sir Peter Hall's Rose Theatre in Kingston, where he has written scores for *The Lion*, *The Witch & The Wardrobe*, *Our Town*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Hamlet*, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *Arabian Nights & Alice in Wonderland*. His original musical *The House of Mirrors & Hearts* won the Musical Theatre Matters Award for Best New Musical Score at the Edinburgh Festival in 2010, and after a critically acclaimed run at London's Arcola Theatre, will receive its US premiere in July 2016.

Eamonn is currently working on *Fanny & Stella*, a new musical adaptation of Neil McKenna's award-nominated book of the same name.