

PRESS RELEASE

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MALTINGS

Aldeburgh Festival announces 2019 Artists in Residence: Barbara Hannigan, Thomas Larcher and Mark Padmore

- **Thomas Larcher's** acclaimed first opera *The Hunting Gun* receives its UK premiere and pianist **Paul Lewis** gives world premiere of Larcher's Aldeburgh Festival commission
- **Mark Padmore** explores the relationship between words and music with leading poets
- **Barbara Hannigan** conducts Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*

The 72nd Aldeburgh Festival takes place **7-23 June 2019** and features three **Artists in Residence** – composer **Thomas Larcher**, tenor **Mark Padmore** and soprano and conductor **Barbara Hannigan** – who have each curated parts of the Festival. Thomas Larcher's opera *The Hunting Gun* receives its UK premiere and opens the Festival. Mark Padmore explores the relationship between poetry and music and Barbara Hannigan conducts singers from her Equilibrium Young Artist programme in a performance of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, an opera in which she sang one of her first major roles.

Thomas Larcher

Thomas Larcher's first opera *The Hunting Gun* received great acclaim at its world premiere at the 2018 Bregenz Festival. *The Hunting Gun* receives its UK premiere on 7 June, opening Aldeburgh Festival 2019 with two performances across the first weekend. With a libretto by **Friederike Gösweiner** and directed by Austrian actor and film director **Karl Markovics**, the story is based on Yasushi Inoue's best-selling 1945 Japanese novella. A poet passes a hunter while climbing a mountain and publishes a poem about the hunter's lonely, haunted countenance. The Hunter happens to read the poem and recognise himself in it. He sends the author three letters: from his wife, his lover and her daughter. Three letters, by three women to one man, become a gripping fable retold in language of stark poetic simplicity as the central figure helplessly observes the unfolding tragedy, all the while clasping his gun that 'presses the whole burden deep into the lonely man's body and soul.' The cast includes tenor **Sam Boden** as Dichter (Narrator), baritone **Peter Schöne** (Josuke), soprano **Sarah Aristidou** (Shoko), soprano **Giulia Peri** (Midori) and mezzo-soprano **Olivia Vermeulen** (Saiko), under the baton of **Ryan Wigglesworth**.

Larcher's residency also features the composer's four string quartets performed by the **Albion Quartet** (*Cold Farmer*, **11 June**), the **Ardeo Quartet** (*IXXU*, **13 June**), the **Heath Quartet** (*Madhares*, **15 June**) and **Quatuor Diotima** (*Lucid Dreams*, **20 June**). Larcher's music is heard throughout the Festival, with pianist **Paul Lewis** giving the world premiere of the composer's Aldeburgh Festival commission on **8 June**; the orchestral work *Red and Green* is performed by the **BBC Symphony Orchestra** on **15 June**; and as part of the closing concert of the Festival on **23 June**, cellist **Alisa Weilerstein** joins the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra** and conductor **Edward Gardner** for a performance of *Ouroboros* for cello and orchestra.

Mark Padmore

Tenor Mark Padmore believes that musicians and audiences can gain a richer experience of songs and opera by thinking more closely about the words they set. Over the course of four Poetry & Music events, writer, broadcaster and performer **Dr Kate Kennedy** is joined by leading poets to discuss the texts set by Britten in his song cycles *Winter Words* (Thomas Hardy), *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne*, *Songs and Proverbs of William*

Blake, and *Who are These Children?* (William Soutar). The discussions are followed by performances from Padmore, Roderick Williams and pianist Andrew West.

Padmore's residency also includes a recital of **Thomas Larcher's** *A Padmore Cycle*, accompanied by the composer on **9 June**. On **13 June**, Padmore is joined by baritone **Roderick Williams**, pianist **Julius Drake** and actor (to be announced) for an evening of spoken word and songs evoking the sea as captured by Britten, Coleridge, Elgar, Eliot, Fauré, Shakespeare and Tippett, among others. On **17 June**, Padmore and Williams recreate a special event which took place in 1828: the only known concert with an all-Schubert programme to have taken place during the composer's lifetime.

Barbara Hannigan

As part of Aldeburgh Festival's collaboration with the Ojai Festival in California where she is the 2019 Festival Music Director, soprano and conductor Barbara Hannigan curates concerts in the final four days, performing three events with the Ludwig Orchestra from the Netherlands. On **20 June**, Hannigan returns to one of her first major operatic roles, Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*, but this time as conductor rather than singer. It will be the first opera production to feature Hannigan as conductor and she has hand-picked the cast from her Equilibrium Young Artist programme. They are joined by the Ludwig Orchestra and the Chorus of Opera Holland Park. On **21 June** Hannigan conducts Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht* and sings Grisey's *Quatre chants pour franchir le seuil*. On **22 June**, she conducts Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* and Haydn's Symphony No.49 before directing and singing Gershwin's Suite from *Girl Crazy*.

Full programme announcement:

Aldeburgh Festival 2019 will be announced on Thursday 20 December.

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Priority booking will open from 15 January

General booking will open on 19 February

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Notes to Editors

Snape Maltings is a unique place of energy and inspiration and one of the world's leading centres of music, hosting outstanding concerts and festivals throughout the year, from the flagship Aldeburgh Festival – one of the world's most significant classical events – to the broad range of music including folk, world music and jazz of the Snape Proms. Set in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the Suffolk coast, it is the realisation of Suffolk-born composer Benjamin Britten's vision of a creative campus where musicians of all ages, backgrounds and career stages are given the time, space and support to develop their work and create new work surrounded by the natural environment. Snape Maltings is a remarkable collection of Victorian industrial buildings, redeveloped to house world-class concerts and events, distinctive independent shops, cafes, galleries and walks. It has abundant wildlife and is set against a breath-taking expanse of reeds, water and sky. The proposed site developments will expand this vision by providing more accommodation and additional music studios to allow for a growth in residencies as well as the significant advancement of Snape Maltings as a central hub for the UK's work in music and wellbeing. snapemaltings.co.uk