



**City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's Song Festival  
with Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla  
Sunday 9 June 2019**

On 9 June 2019, the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO)** presents its first **Song Festival**, the culmination of a weekend of events that mark the opening of Green Heart, twelve acres of parkland space in the centre of the University of Birmingham campus. A day of mass singing open to everyone, it is inspired by **CBSO Music Director Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla's** first-hand experience of the Baltic song festivals, where thousands of people gather in the open air to celebrate their community in song.

The CBSO Song Festival will bring together the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and CBSO Chorus, CBSO SO Vocal, Birmingham Summer Festival Voices** and **guest choirs**, with amateur individuals, established choirs and choral societies across the country also encouraged to participate. Following a morning of rehearsals with Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla and **Chorus Director Simon Halsey**, the groups will take to the stage from 1.30pm to showcase the variety and talent of singing from across the UK, in a series of afternoon concerts compèred by CBSO regular **Tom Redmond**.

The celebrations will be brought to a finale in the evening, with all the singers coming together as a single massed choir to perform an exciting programme of British and Baltic music alongside Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla and the CBSO, with renditions of orchestral and choral favourites including Stravinsky's *The Firebird*, Handel's *Zadok the Priest* and Parry's *Jerusalem*.

CBSO Chorus Director Simon Halsey CBE commented "*The CBSO, indeed Birmingham itself, has been famous for choral singing for many years so it only seems appropriate that we should pioneer the introduction of a Baltic -style song Festival in our wonderful musical city. Singing crosses many boundaries and brings people together and we aim to have a memorable day in the handsome new open spaces at the University of Birmingham!*"

Singers and choir leaders are invited to book their tickets to participate by calling the THSH box office on 0121 780 3333. These tickets cost £13 and include all digital music learning materials sent in advance. Audiences can attend any part of the Song Festival for free.

The CBSO Song Festival is the closing event of the Baltic Way series in the CBSO's 2018-19 concert season; an exploration of the music and culture of the Baltic states on the centenary of their establishment and 30 years since their liberation.

**Full details of the event can be found at [www.cbsoco.uk/songfestival](http://www.cbsoco.uk/songfestival)**

For more information about the Green Heart visit: [tinyurl.com/greenheartfest](http://tinyurl.com/greenheartfest)

**For further press information please contact**

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## Listings

### Song Festival

The Green Heart, University of Birmingham  
Sunday 9 June from 11.00am

#### Featuring

Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, Simon Halsey – Conductors  
Tom Redmond – Presenter  
CBSO Chorus  
SO Vocal  
University of Birmingham Summer Festival Voices

#### Schedule

11am - 1pm: Singalong rehearsal  
1.30pm – 5.30pm: CBSO Chorus, SO Vocal and guest choirs perform  
7pm – 8pm: CBSO concert with massed choir

#### Evening Concert Programme

**Kutavičius** Tėviškės papartis  
**Peep Sarapik / Juhan Liiv** Ta lendab mesipuu poole  
**Jurjāns** Pūt Vējiņi  
**Traditional** Szła dzieweczka  
**Parry** Jerusalem  
**Handel** Zadok the Priest  
**Handel** The Hallelujah Chorus from The Messiah  
**Weinberg** Rhapsody on Moldavian Themes  
**Stravinsky** The Firebird Suite (1945) - Final Hymn

Singers are invited to book their tickets to participate, either as individuals or as part of an established choir or choral society by calling the THSH box office on 0121 780 3333.

Singer tickets: £13. Please book to receive music and resources in advance.  
Audiences can attend any part of the Song Festival for free.

## Notes to Editors

### About the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (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, four 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 99-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.

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**29 April 2019**



**City of Birmingham**  
**Symphony Orchestra**

Under the artistic leadership of Osborn Music Director\* Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla the CBSO continues 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.

\*The position of Music Director is generously supported by John Osborn.