

Five world premieres due to take place at this year's Aldeburgh Festival rescheduled for Autumn/Winter 2020

Highlights

- Mahan Esfahani gives the world premiere of Michael Berkeley's *Insects* for solo harpsichord
- Posthumous world premiere of one of John Tavener's last works, *La Noche Oscura*
- Colin Matthews' *Seascapes* is an Aldeburgh Festival commission performed by the Nash Ensemble, Claire Booth and Martyn Brabbins
- World premiere of Mark Anthony Turnage's new song cycle *Silenced* written for Allan Clayton
- The Piatti Quartet gives the world premiere of Gavin Higgins' *Ekstasis*
- World premiere of *Violet*, a new opera by composer Tom Coult and playwright Alice Birch in 2021
- Cassandra Miller's installation *Tracery* created with Juliet Fraser will be presented in 2021

Britten Pears Arts is delighted to announce that five world premieres that should have taken place at this year's cancelled Aldeburgh Festival will be performed in concerts in October, November and December.

Live music-making resumed at Snape Maltings Concert Hall on 21 August and continues throughout the autumn and winter with regular concerts for live audiences. Bringing together some of the musicians who would have performed during this year's Aldeburgh Festival and Snape Proms, in addition to other star performers, Britten Pears Arts continues to offer short concerts on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. There are usually two performances per day, at 3pm and 7pm.

To give as many people as possible the opportunity to enjoy the return of live music at Snape Maltings, Britten Pears Arts is offering an innovative ticket approach for its afternoon concerts. Every afternoon performance across the weekends is 'Pay What You Can', so that audiences can hear 45 minutes of high-quality live music at a price they feel they can afford. All evening performances are priced at £15 per ticket.

World Premieres

On Sunday 18 October harpsichordist **Mahan Esfahani** gives a solo recital including the world premiere of **Michael Berkeley's** *Insects*. Especially written for Esfahani, *Insects* follows on from Berkeley's birds-inspired *Haiku* for piano. Works by Bach make up the rest of the programme.

The opening concert of this year's Aldeburgh Festival was due to feature the posthumous world premiere of one of John Tavener's last works, *La Noche Oscura*, scored for oboe, countertenor and strings. Soloists **Nicholas Daniel** and **Andrew Watts** join **Britten Sinfonia** on Friday 13 November for *La Noche Oscura's* first performance.

The **Nash Ensemble** performs part of a programme that was scheduled for the opening weekend of the Festival including the world premiere of **Colin Matthews' Seascapes** on Saturday 14 November. In this Britten Pears Arts commission, the **Nash Ensemble** is joined by soprano **Claire Booth** and conductor **Martyn Brabbins**. *Seascapes* sets words by Sidney Keyes, the English poet who died in action during the Second World War.

Tenor **Allan Clayton** is one of the world's most exciting singers and would have been one of four Artists in Residence at this year's Festival. **Mark-Anthony Turnage's** new song cycle, *Silenced*, is a Britten Pears Arts commission written for Clayton and he will give the world premiere on 20 November.

The Piatti Quartet is joined by friends to give the world premiere of Gavin Higgins' sextet *Ekstasis* on Sunday 6 December. Higgins' music has been described as having 'streaks of menace as well as mischief'. The composer writes vibrant, highly characterised works that bring a strong sense of theatre to the concert hall. The programme also features Beethoven's String Quartet Op.18 No.1.

Coming in 2021

Violet was due to receive its world premiere on the opening weekend of Aldeburgh Festival 2020 and will now be presented in 2021. Playwright **Alice Birch** and composer **Tom Coult** are amongst the most compelling voices in their respective fields and their first opera, developed at Snape Maltings as part of its Jerwood Opera Writing Programme, is an exciting prospect. *Violet* is set in an isolated community controlled by the regularity of the town clock. Suddenly the clock begins to skip time and an hour is lost – every day. As the hours disappear, long-held hierarchies evaporate and ordered society falls into disarray. While the men in charge lose control, Violet begins to imagine a different future. Trapped and stifled in an unhappy marriage, she senses there's a new life to be discovered and sets out to find it. *Violet* is co-commissioned and co-produced by Music Theatre Wales, Aldeburgh Festival and Theater Magdeburg.

Cassandra Miller was due to be one of the four Artists in Residence at this year's Festival. Known for her 'bold, kind-hearted', 'profoundly haunting' and 'miraculously beautiful' music, Miller is one of the most distinctive living composers. Her new piece *Tracery* is a multi-speaker, split-screen 60-minute installation made with soprano **Juliet Fraser** as a way to create an intimate space for deep listening and will now be shown in 2021.

Coming Next at Snape Maltings Concert Hall

This Weekend

On 2 October soprano **Elizabeth Llewellyn** and pianist **Simon Lepper** give an intimate recital of songs written at the turn of the 20th century including a selection by Strauss, Mahler's *Rückert Lieder* and Coleridge-Taylor's *6 Sorrow Songs*. On 3 October violinist **Tai Murray** and pianist **Martin Roscoe** perform two much-loved violin sonatas – Mozart's E minor, No.21 K.304 and Beethoven's 'Spring' No.5, Op.24. Bartók's six *Romanian Folk Dances* to complete the programme. **Nigel Short** directs leading vocal ensemble **Tenebrae** on 4 October in a programme that includes Elgar's *O Wild West Wind*; Vaughan Williams' *Three Shakespeare Songs*; Richard Rodney Bennett's *The Season of his Mercies* and Bob Chilcott's *Before the Ice* and *The Modern Man I Sing*. Concerts at 3pm and 7pm each day at Snape Maltings Concert Hall.

9 – 11 October

Acclaimed for his performances of classical works, on 9 October pianist **Christian Blackshaw** plays Schubert's Impromptu in G-flat and the Sonata in D, inspired by the beauty of mountain landscapes. On 10 October baritone **Roderick Williams** sings songs from Schubert's *Winterreise* cycle, interspersed with songs sung by mezzo soprano **Kitty Whately**. They are joined by pianist **Gary Matthewman**. On 11 October **Imogen Cooper** contrasts Beethoven's characterful *Bagatelles* with the reflective mood of Schubert's Sonata in G D894 and Britten's haunting and most substantial solo piano piece, *Notturmo*. Concerts at 3pm and 7pm each day at Snape Maltings Concert Hall. Tickets go on sale on **Saturday 3 October at 10am**.

16 – 18 October

Pianist **Steven Osborne** is renowned for his performances of Russian music and returns to Snape on 16 October for an all-Rachmaninov programme including *Prelude in D minor*, *Oriental Sketch*, *Fragments* and Piano Sonata No. 1. On 17 October **Alina Ibragimova** performs JS Bach's Sonata No. 2 in A minor and Partita No. 2 in D minor in Snape's rich acoustics. On Sunday 18 October harpsichordist **Mahan Esfahani** gives a solo recital including the world premiere of **Michael Berkeley's** *Insects* (see above in world premieres).

The safety of Britten Pears Arts' audience, artists and staff is its top priority, and this may mean that line-ups, capacity and pricing may change at short notice.

Full listings and tickets at www.snapemaltings.co.uk | Tel: 01728 687110

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Notes to Editors

Key changes to concerts

- **Reduced capacity** in the Concert Hall to prioritise audience safety and to ensure there is enough space around everyone
- **Shorter performances** of around 45 minutes with no interval which will allow time for cleaning between each performance
- **Face coverings** required for all audience members during the performance unless they are exempt as per the government guidelines
- **No printed materials** and this includes tickets, programmes and programme notes

About Britten Pears Arts

Britten Pears Arts is a pioneering music, arts and heritage charity based on the Suffolk coast at two popular, historic visitor destinations: The Red House and Snape Maltings. Britten Pears Arts emerged from the creative partnership of Benjamin Britten, one of the greatest composers of the 20th century, and his professional and personal partner, singer Peter Pears. Britten and Pears shared a progressive vision for music and the arts to be useful, helping people enhance and bring joy into their lives. Britten and Pears' vision inspires all our activity, from work with the local communities to our national leadership roles in the fields of talent development and music, health and wellbeing. Britten Pears Arts was created through the merger of the Britten–Pears Foundation and Snape Maltings in 2020.

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