

## This is City of London Sinfonia | Performances biography

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City of London Sinfonia (CLS) is the orchestral home to over 40 outstanding professional musicians who come together in the shared belief that music has the power to transform the lives of people across all areas of society. They bring a distinctive, seriously informal style to everything they do, breaking down the barriers between their musicians and audiences – whether performing on a world-famous music stage or sharing musical, creative experiences with residents in care homes and hospital schools.

Led by Creative Director and Leader Alexandra Wood, CLS conceives and delivers innovative artistic programmes with associate partners and artists, including project leaders with specialist skills, musicians in classical, jazz, folk and contemporary music, and artists in film, dance or visual art. The imaginative concepts and themes – often relating to science, nature, history or philosophy – influence and inform their wellbeing and education projects just as much as their concert series, bringing the adventure, intrigue and enjoyment of these programmes to all their audiences. In May 2019, their *Absolute Bird* programme culminated in sound installations of music created by the young people of Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School and the community at Headway East London, celebrating the participants' nature-driven work by giving their compositions a legacy beyond the creative sessions.

CLS's 2019–20 Season of concerts sees the Orchestra tour to nine cathedrals around the UK, from Truro to Bradford, to perform contemporary and meditative music in *The Fruit of Silence*, collaborate with Faber & Faber at Southwark Cathedral, in a special performance devoted to music and words by Benjamin Britten and TS Eliot; and offer a modern retelling of stories from *One Thousand and One Nights* with renowned writers – from diverse UK voices to the Arabic world – alongside Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* at Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall. The Orchestra also continues its *Comfortable Classical* series of relaxed performances, led by CLS musicians, appearing at several venues as part of the Albany Deptford's *Age Against the Machine Festival*.

The Orchestra enjoys its partnerships with a diverse range of artists, including Genevieve Lacey, Soumik Datta, Brett Dean, Sam Lee, Sian Edwards and Roderick Williams OBE, giving over 75 performances every year anywhere from an East London club to an international concert hall, and in its residencies at Opera Holland Park and St Paul's Cathedral. Special engagements in recent years have included tours to Mexico, Japan and Ireland, and recordings such as *King of Ghosts* with sarodist and composer Soumik Datta (Globe Music, 2017), Stuart Hancock's *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Sony Classical, 2017) and Hana Wa Saku's *Flowers will bloom* (Nimbus Alliance, 2016).

In 2018, CLS pioneered *Mindful Music*, a programme aiming to improve mental health and wellbeing in the workplace through a combination of live music and mindful meditation. The Orchestra also produces *We're Going on a Bear Hunt – Live in Concert*, a live orchestral screening of Lupus Films' animation and Stuart Hancock's award-winning score, in association with Intermusica.