



## City of London Sinfonia biography 2021–22 Season | 50th Anniversary

City of London Sinfonia (CLS) is rooted in the belief that music and creativity are for anyone and everyone. It puts responsive, in-the-moment music-making and musician development at the forefront of all its activities, engaging audiences in shared, meaningful music experiences wherever they may be.

CLS is an orchestra that approaches audiences as individuals who can connect with the concert experience in their own way. As such, with Creative Director and Leader Alexandra Wood, its musicians bring a uniquely collaborative approach to everything they do, utilising the skills developed through its participation programme to encourage audiences to engage more fully in the concert experience in a way that feels comfortable for everyone. Should they wish to, audiences can often speak directly to musicians before and after a concert, move around the space, or engage with interactive sound sculptures and soundscapes.

The Orchestra is leading the way in creative, collaborative practice in health and social care through its participation programme – the driver of everything the Orchestra does. In the 2020 Royal Philharmonic Society (RPS) Awards, CLS received the Impact Award for its Sound Young Minds project, which provides opportunities to young people in psychiatric hospitals to work with each other and to express themselves. Other core projects include Room to Room Music with residents in care homes, Music for Children in London hospitals, and social prescribing with the new Tessa Jowell Health Centre. Its Comfortable Classical series of relaxed concerts, adapted for online during 2020, features regularly in the Albany (Deptford) and Canada Water Theatre's events calendar.

CLS continues to enjoy its partnerships with a diverse group of artists, creating innovative artistic programmes that spark adventure, intrigue, and enjoyment, with concepts often relating to science, nature, history, or philosophy. Recent themes include Bach and the Cosmos (2018), exploring J.S. Bach and his love for mathematics; Absolute Bird (2019), featuring medieval to contemporary music influenced by birdsong, and Storytelling (2019), a Faber & Faber collaboration of spoken word and music. Its Restore and Revive series in 2020–21 brought a smile back to many people's faces, online and in person, with live performances of its musicians' favourite classical repertoires.

In the 2021–22 Season, CLS celebrates its 50th anniversary through its 'Origin' concert series at Southwark Cathedral, offering colourful programmes that bring together themes established in its Richard Hickox days, such as British music and music for voice; continuing its rich tradition of new commissions, while embodying the very best of who the Orchestra is today. The series will see premieres of new works by Cheryl Frances-Hoad, Donghoon Shin, Dobrinka Tabakova and Huw Watkins, and collaborations with Jonathan Cohen (cello), William Morgan (tenor), Geoffrey Paterson (conductor), Roderick Williams OBE (baritone), and emerging countertenor Hugh Cutting.

City of London Sinfonia gives over 75 performances each year, performing regularly at the Albany (Deptford), Canada Water Theatre, Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southwark Cathedral, and St Paul's Cathedral. It is also proud to be Resident Orchestra at Opera Holland Park, since 2004. Tours in recent years have included Japan, Ireland, and cathedrals around the UK. Recordings include *King of Ghosts* with sarodist Soumik Datta (Globe Music, 2017) and Stuart Hancock's *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (Sony Classical, 2017).

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