

The Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra announces Oxford Piano Festival 2021

Welcoming Stephen Kovacevich, Stephen Hough, Peter Donohoe, Kathryn Stott, Mishka Rushdie Momen and Barry Douglas



Sunday 25 July – Sunday 1 August 2021

"An international forum to turn piano lessons into performance art"
The New York Times

The **Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra** and Artistic Director **Marios Papadopoulos** announce the 23rd **Oxford Piano Festival** taking place from **25 July – 1 August 2021**. The Festival welcomes some of the world's most distinguished pianists and teachers for the week-long series of varied concerts and masterclasses. This year, concerts and masterclasses are given by Stephen Kovacevich, Stephen Hough, Peter Donohoe, Kathryn Stott, Mishka Rushdie Momen and Barry Douglas, while the faculty also includes Ian Jones, Helen Krizos, Peter Bithell and Vanessa Latache.

For the first time, three evening recitals and a number of masterclasses will be **live-streamed** to audiences worldwide, streaming free via the [Orchestra's YouTube Channel](#) and available for 24 hours on demand. All concerts and masterclasses will once more welcome live audiences in accordance with coronavirus restrictions.

Pre-eminent Mozartian **Stephen Kovacevich** is the soloist in the mysterious and passionate Piano Concerto No. 24 in C minor on Wednesday 28 July in the Sheldonian Theatre. Mozart is paired with Haydn's final symphony, No. 104 – the 'London' Symphony – in the hands of conductor Marios Papadopoulos and the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra, a concert that will additionally be live-streamed.

In a recital on 30 July, **Stephen Hough** brings the exquisite world of Catalan composer Federico Mompou to the hallowed walls of Christ Church Cathedral. In writing that prefigures the simplicity of Holy Minimalism, Mompou's *Música Callada* (*Music of Silence*) is an extraordinary mid 20th-century collection of contemplative miniatures inspired by the poetry of St John of the Cross, passing through pain and joy into transcendence. Hough's performance will be live-streamed.

The third evening of the Festival is devoted to **Mishka Rushdie Momen**, Classical Music nominee in the 'Breakthrough' category in this year's Sky Arts Awards, who brings an eclectic programme from Bach's Prelude and Fugue in C major from the Well-Tempered Clavier to Schubert's imposing 'Wanderer' *Fantasia*, with its unforgiving final fugue that the composer himself never managed to play, via Mozart, Ligeti and Schumann *Impromptus*. Mishka Rushdie Momen's recital (Tuesday 27 July; St John the Evangelist) will be live-streamed. Schubert also features in the programme of **Peter Donohoe** (Monday 26 July; St John the Evangelist), where the composer's effortless *Four Impromptus* are paired with Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*.

The 2021 Festival opens with **Kathryn Stott** performing pianistic dances by Satie, Bach, Grieg, Ravel, Villa-Lobos and Lecuona, from waltzes, siciliennes and gnossiennes to the Romanian Dances of Bartók and the 18th century dances revisited by Holst in his *Holberg Suite* (Sunday 25 July; St John the Evangelist).

The Festival closes with **Barry Douglas**, Gold Medal winner in the 1986 Tchaikovsky Competition, who performs excerpts from Tchaikovsky's *The Seasons*, with a movement for each month of the year (Saturday 31 July, Christ Church Cathedral). Douglas pairs Tchaikovsky with another illustrative Russian classic: Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, with Beethoven's mighty 'Appassionata' sonata as a centrepiece.

Throughout the week, a busy programme of masterclasses is given by the distinguished Festival recitalists and faculty of the Festival, including Ian Jones, Helen Krizos, Peter Bithell, Vanessa Latache, and Festival Director Marios Papadopoulos.

The Oxford Piano Festival concerts are held in some of Oxford's most atmospheric venues, including the **Christ Church Cathedral**, **St John the Evangelist Church**, and the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra's home, the 17th century **Sheldonian Theatre**, designed by Sir Christopher Wren. Recitals held in St John the Evangelist Church will be performed twice each evening to accommodate social distancing. The Festival is based in the **Jacqueline du Pré Music Building** at St Hilda's College, Oxford.

The **Oxford Piano Festival** creates a unique didactic environment for emerging young professionals to learn from some of the world's most esteemed pianists. The concept of the pianist as an all-round musician lies at the heart of the Festival: the various roles of the pianist – as virtuoso, chamber musician, accompanist, conductor, academic and teacher – are all explored. Participants are given the opportunity to take part in masterclasses, attend recitals, and showcase their talents following fresh guidance from these pillars of the piano world.

The Oxford Piano Festival is presented by the **Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra**, which, since being established in 1998 by Music Director and esteemed pianist **Marios Papadopoulos**, has grown steadily in stature. The Orchestra attracts some of the world's leading soloists and conductors, including Valery Gergiev, Sir Andrés Schiff, Lang Lang, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Martha Argerich and Maxim Vengerov. The musicians of the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra include some of the UK's finest players.

Please note that the programme and schedule are subject to change due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Full Concert Listings

Sunday 25 July, 18:00 & 20:30

St John the Evangelist Church

Satie *Gnossienne* No. 1

Bartók Romanian Folk Dances, Sz. 56, BB 68

Bach/Kempff *Siciliano* from Flute Sonata in E flat major, BWV 1031

Grieg *Holberg Suite*, Op. 40

Satie *Je te veux* (solo piano version)

Ravel *Valses nobles et sentimentales*, M. 61

Villa-Lobos *Valsa da dor*

Lecuona *Mazurka glissando*

Kathryn Stott piano

Monday 26 July, 18:00 & 20:30

St John the Evangelist Church

Mendelssohn *Lieder ohne Worte*, Op. 19b

Haydn Piano Sonata in E flat major, Hob. XVI:52

Schubert Four Impromptus, D. 899

Peter Donohoe piano

Tuesday 27 July, 18:00 & 20:30

St John the Evangelist Church
 & live-streamed on YouTube

Bach Prelude and Fugue in C major,
 BWV 846

Mozart Fantasia in C minor, K. 475

Schumann *Impromptus on a Theme of Clara Wieck*, Op. 5 (1850 Version)

Ligeti Étude No. 10, 'Der Zauberlehrling'

Schubert Fantasie in C major, D. 760,
 'Wanderer-fantasie'

Mishka Rushdie Momen piano

Wednesday 28 July, 20:30

Sheldonian Theatre
 & live-streamed on YouTube

Mozart Piano Concerto No. 24 in C
 minor, K. 491

Haydn Symphony No. 104 in D major,
 Hob. I:104, 'London'

Stephen Kovacevich piano

Marios Papadopoulos conductor

Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra

Thursday 29 July, 20:30

Jacqueline du Pré Music Building

Participants' Recital

Friday 30 July, 20:30

Christ Church Cathedral
 & live-streamed on YouTube

Mompou Música Callada

Stephen Hough piano

Saturday 31 July, 20:30

Christ Church Cathedral

Tchaikovsky *At the Fireside, Carnival*
 and *Autumn Song* from *The Seasons*,
 Op. 37a

Beethoven Sonata No. 23 in F minor,
 Op. 57, 'Appassionata'

Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition*

Barry Douglas piano

Full Schedule of Events

	9:30-12:30 <i>Masterclasses</i>	14:30-17:30 <i>Masterclasses</i>	20:30 only 18:00 & 20:30 * <i>Concerts</i>
25 July		Marios Papadopoulos	Kathryn Stott * <i>St John the Evangelist</i>
26 July	Vanessa Lata arche	Kathryn Stott	Peter Donohoe * <i>St John the Evangelist</i>
27 July	Vanessa Lata arche	Peter Donohoe	Mishka Rushdie Momen * <i>St John the Evangelist</i>
28 July	Peter Donohoe	Helen Krizos	Stephen Kovacevich <i>Sheldonian Theatre</i>
29 July	Stephen Kovacevich	Stephen Kovacevich	Participants Recital <i>Jacqueline du Pré</i>
30 July	Marios Papadopoulos	Peter Bithell	Stephen Hough <i>Christ Church Cathedral</i>
31 July	Stephen Hough	Ian Jones	Barry Douglas <i>Christ Church Cathedral</i>
1 August	Marios Papadopoulos		

Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra



Praised as 'excellent' by *Gramophone* magazine and 'thoroughly impressive' by *BBC Music Magazine*, the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra's reputation is based on the uncompromising artistic standards of its Founder and Music Director, Marios Papadopoulos, and maintained by some of the finest musicians in the UK.

Established in 1998 and formerly known as Oxford Philomusica, the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra occupies a unique position within the UK orchestral landscape. As an orchestra of the highest quality, the Oxford Philharmonic attracts some of the world's greatest artists to appear in its series, including Maxim Vengerov, Valery Gergiev, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Martha Argerich, András Schiff, Renée Fleming, Lang Lang, Nicola Benedetti, and Vladimir Ashkenazy.

In addition to the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra's annual concert season in Oxford, touring performances across the UK, family concerts, annual Oxford Piano Festival, and Chamber Music Series, it boasts a growing list of international engagements including the Orchestra's debut at the Tivoli Festival in Copenhagen in June 2019, and an upcoming US debut at Carnegie Hall in June 2022. Acclaimed recordings include works by Nimrod Borenstein for Chandos, cello concertos by Shostakovich and Mats Lidström (Solo Cello of the Oxford Philharmonic), both conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy, on the BIS label, *A Merton Christmas* with Merton College Choir, Haydn's *The Creation* with the Choir of New College, and the Handel/Mendelssohn *Acis and Galatea* with Christ Church Cathedral Choir. The Orchestra's disc *The Enlightened Trumpet* with soloist Paul Merkelo was released on Sony Classical in Autumn 2019.

Following his remarkable debut with the Orchestra in 2013, Maxim Vengerov became its first Artist in Residence. Over an unprecedented four-season collaboration, Vengerov and the Oxford Philharmonic performed across the UK, recorded the violin concertos of Brahms and Sibelius as well as Mendelssohn's Octet. In July 2018 Vengerov appeared at Cheltenham Music Festival and Saffron Hall with the Soloists of the Oxford Philharmonic - a tight-knit group of musicians described by *The Times* as the ensemble's 'glorious individual players' and by Jessica Duchon as 'a line-up to match any top-notch international chamber ensemble and probably beat them on their own turf'. As part of the Orchestra's 20th anniversary celebrations in the 2018/19 season, Vengerov joined the Orchestra at the Barbican in a performance of the Bach 'Double' with Anne-Sophie Mutter, in a gala concert also featuring Martha Argerich.

The Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra has been firmly committed to outreach work from its earliest days, with projects taking music to areas of social and economic disadvantage, including hospitals, special schools, and partnerships with Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council. In 2002, the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra was appointed the first ever Orchestra in Residence at the University of Oxford, and frequently collaborates with the Faculty of Music in educational programmes. In the 2019/20 season, the Orchestra launched its Side-by-Side scheme for school and University students, which provides an opportunity for young musicians to perform within the ranks of a professional orchestra.

The Orchestra and its Music Director were awarded the City of Oxford's Certificate of Honour in 2013, in recognition of their contribution to education and performance in Oxford.

The continual search for excellence underpins the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra's reputation, and is reflected in an Orchestra that strives to create bold musical statements with every concert it presents.

Marios Papadopoulos



Described by The Times at his 1975 recital debut as 'having all the attributes of one of the world's greatest players', Marios Papadopoulos has enjoyed an international career both as pianist and conductor. He has worked with a host of eminent musicians including Vladimir Ashkenazy, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Maxim Vengerov, Renée Fleming and Lang Lang. His recordings of the Beethoven sonatas have been set on a level with Schnabel, Brendel, Barenboim, and Kempff (Daily Telegraph, Classic FM Magazine).

With vast experience directing from the keyboard, Papadopoulos has conducted the complete cycles of Beethoven symphonies and piano concertos. In 2006, Papadopoulos directed the Mozart's complete piano concertos from the keyboard, and in 2018, he performed a mini-cycle of the concertos in China with the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra. In March 2019, he conducted a new production of The Marriage of Figaro at the Greek National Opera. The Orchestra's Oxford Beethoven Festival 2020 sees him conduct all of Beethoven's piano concertos from the keyboard.

Papadopoulos's recording catalogue includes his critically acclaimed Beethoven sonatas and works by Stravinsky (with the RPO), Mozart, Mussorgsky, Franck and Shostakovich. He and Maxim Vengerov have recorded the complete Brahms violin sonatas and performed them at Vienna's Musikverein in September 2016.

Papadopoulos is dedicated to nurturing young talent and through his vast experience is able to impart knowledge to young artists, particularly during the prestigious Oxford Piano Festival, which he founded in 1999. In 2015, he served on the jury of the Leeds International Piano Competition.

Marios Papadopoulos holds a doctorate in music from City University and is a member of the Oxford University Faculty of Music and Fellow by Special Election of Keble College. Papadopoulos was awarded an MBE in 2014 for services to music.

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