

Benjamin Britten Centenary Celebration



Benjamin Britten

Throughout the 2013–2014 season, Carnegie Hall pays tribute to composer Benjamin Britten in celebration of the centenary of his birth. Born on November 22, 1913, Britten was one of the 20th century’s most prominent composers of opera and vocal music. His vast musical output extended to orchestral and chamber works with compositions for performers of every skill level, from world-renowned ensembles and soloists—such as Britten’s muse and subsequent life partner, tenor Peter Pears—to children and amateur musicians. Carnegie Hall’s 100th anniversary programming is part of *Britten 100*, a global celebration of this prolific composer, organized by the Britten-Pears Foundation. Concerts and special events at Carnegie Hall join major Britten performances by cultural partners throughout New York City, including BAM, The Metropolitan Opera, New York Philharmonic, and Trinity Wall Street to form a season-long citywide tribute to this master composer.

When war broke out in September 1939, what Britten and Pears had originally intended as a “short stay” in the United States was extended through March 1942. During his time in New York, Britten composed his Violin Concerto and *Sinfonia da Requiem*, which were premiered at Carnegie Hall in 1940 and 1941, respectively. While living on Long Island and in Brooklyn Heights, among other places, Britten’s professional relationship with Pears developed into a personal one, lasting nearly four decades. Many of Britten’s greatest vocal works were written with Pears in mind, including the title role in his opera, *Peter Grimes*, which will be performed in concert this season at Carnegie Hall by tenor Anthony Dean Griffey in the title role, with the St. Louis Symphony and Chorus conducted by David Robertson on November 22—the exact 100th anniversary of the composer’s birth.

Carnegie Hall’s Britten celebration also includes an October performance in Zankel Hall of the composer’s five Canticos, presented by renowned interpreters of his music: tenor Ian Bostridge, countertenor Iestyn Davies, baritone Joshua Hopkins, and pianist Julius Drake. Also that month, Mr. Bostridge joins French hornist Stewart Rose and the Orchestra of St. Luke’s, led by Pablo Heras-Casado, for Britten’s *Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings*. The Britain-based Endellion String Quartet performs

Britten’s *String Quartet No. 1 in D Major, Op. 25*, and *Three Divertimenti in Weill* Recital Hall in November. Author Paul Kildea, who has written extensively on Britten and 20th-century music, is the keynote speaker for a December Discovery Day on the composer, which also includes a video presentation and a full-length song recital with acclaimed pianist Malcolm Martineau and vocalists to be announced.

To conclude Carnegie Hall’s Britten centenary celebration in April, Robert Spano leads the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, The Gwinnett Young Singers, and a trio of eminent soloists—soprano Tatiana Monogarova, tenor Anthony Dean Griffey, and baritone Stephen Powell—in Britten’s towering *War Requiem* in Stern Auditorium / Perelman Stage. Written for the inauguration of Coventry’s new cathedral in 1962, Britten’s *War Requiem* is a deeply felt expression of the composer’s pacifism. By juxtaposing Latin texts from the Mass for the Dead with shocking depictions of battle by British poet Wilfred Owen (who died in World War I), Britten created a gripping musical statement about man’s inhumanity to man.

Britten Programming at Carnegie Hall

Sunday, October 20 at 7:30 PM | Zankel

Ian Bostridge, Tenor
Iestyn Davies, Countertenor
Joshua Hopkins, Baritone
Julius Drake, Piano

Leelane Sterrett, French Horn
Bridget Kibbey, Harp

BRITTEN: THE CANTICLES
PURCELL (realized Britten, Tippett, and Adès)
Selected Songs for Voice and Piano
BRITTEN Canticles (complete)

Wednesday, October 23 at 8 PM

Stern/Perelman

Orchestra of St. Luke's

Pablo Heras-Casado, Principal Conductor

Ian Bostridge, Tenor

Stewart Rose, French Horn

MENDELSSOHN Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
BRITTEN Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings
SHOSTAKOVICH Symphony No. 9

Sponsored by DeWitt Stern Group, Inc.

DeWitt Stern

Friday, November 8 at 7:30 PM | Weill

Endellion String Quartet

BRITTEN Three Divertimenti; String Quartet No. 1 in D Major, Op. 25
SCHUBERT String Quartet in D Minor, D. 810, "Death and the Maiden"

Sunday, November 17 at 1 PM | Zankel

Carnegie Hall Family Concert
Brooklyn Youth Chorus

Dianne Berkun, Artistic Director

BRITTEN'S YOUNG VOICES

Pre-concert activities at 12 PM.

Lead support for Carnegie Hall Family Concerts is provided by The Irene Diamond Fund.

Carnegie Hall Family Concerts are also made possible, in part, by endowment gifts from The Irene Diamond Fund, Mr. and Mrs. Lester S. Morse Jr., and the Henry and Lucy Moses Fund.

Friday, November 22 at 7 PM

Stern/Perelman

St. Louis Symphony

David Robertson, Music Director and Conductor

St. Louis Symphony Chorus

Amy Kaiser, Director

Anthony Dean Griffey, Tenor (Peter Grimes)

Susanna Phillips, Soprano (Ellen Orford)

Additional soloists to be announced

BRITTEN *Peter Grimes*
(concert performance)

Saturday, December 14 at 1 PM | Weill

Discovery Day:
Benjamin Britten

Paul Kildea, Keynote Speaker

Malcolm Martineau, Music Director and Pianist
Vocalists to be announced

English composer, conductor, and pianist Benjamin Britten has long been regarded as one of the central figures of 20th-century British classical music. This immersive afternoon includes a dynamic video presentation, a full-length song recital, and a keynote lecture that spotlights Britten's influence in celebration of the centenary of his birth.

Discovery Day: Benjamin Britten is made possible, in part, by the Britten-Pears Foundation.

Wednesday, April 30 at 8 PM

Stern/Perelman

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

Robert Spano, Music Director and Conductor

Tatiana Monogarova, Soprano

Anthony Dean Griffey, Tenor

Stephen Powell, Baritone

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chorus

Norman Mackenzie, Director

The Gwinnett Young Singers

Lynn Urda, Music Director

BRITTEN *War Requiem*

This concert is made possible, in part, by an endowment fund for choral music established by S. Donald Sussman in memory of Judith Arron and Robert Shaw.

Britten Programming at Cultural Partners in New York City

The **Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM)** presents the Glyndebourne Festival Opera production of Britten's 1951 opera *Billy Budd* in the Howard Gilman Opera House from February 7–13, 2014. This lauded production, directed by Michael Grandage and featuring Mark Padmore (Captain Vere), Jacques Imbrailo (Billy Budd), and Brindley Sherratt (Claggart) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Mark Elder, will be seen in its US premiere as part of BAM's 2014 winter/spring season.

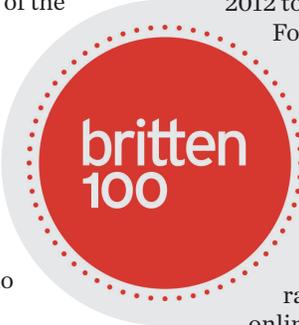
In October 2013, **The Metropolitan Opera** will present a rare revival of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as part of the composer's centennial celebration. James Conlon will conduct a cast that includes Kathleen Kim as Tytania and Iestyn Davies as Oberon. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will open October 11 with later performances on October 15, 19, 23, 26, and 31.

The **New York Philharmonic's** 2013–2014 season includes performances of both Britten's Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings and the composer's *Spring Symphony* with a group of outstanding soloists—soprano Kate Royal, mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke, tenor Paul Appleby, and Principal French Horn Philip Myers—joining the orchestra, conducted by Alan Gilbert on November 21–23, 2013. In addition, *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* will be performed on a Young Person's Concert in January 2014.

Trinity Wall Street's extensive *Celebrating Benjamin Britten* programming encompasses more than 20 concerts from September through December 2013, including performances of *Curlew River*, *The Little Sweep*, *Noye's Fludde*, *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne*, and *Hymn to St. Cecelia*, among other presentations of Britten's choral, vocal, and children's works.

Britten 100—encompassing over 1,500 performances in more than 140 cities around the world from September 2012 to August 2014—is coordinated by the Britten-Pears

Foundation, an organization dedicated to promoting the music of Benjamin Britten and his work with tenor Peter Pears from the home that they shared, The Red House, in the coastal town of Aldeburgh, England. This worldwide celebration is formed through extensive collaboration by leading organizations from the worlds of the performing arts, broadcast, film, academia, and heritage. It includes music, books, recordings, radio and television programming, exhibitions, online initiatives for children, and more. For more information, including other *Britten 100* performances held throughout the United States, please visit britten100.org.



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