

Press Release
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Academy of St Martin in the Fields announces celebration of Sir Neville Marriner's centenary

- *Marriner 100* to showcase legacy of ASMF's founder through a dedicated concert series, new commissions, special projects and community-focused events
- Celebrations include new music by multi-Grammy Award winning composer Vince Mendoza featuring ASMF Music Director Joshua Bell and Douglas Marriner, Sir Neville's grandson, on jazz drum kit alongside the orchestra
- Charitable fund for player-led projects and performances to be launched on 15 April 2024; the 100th anniversary of Marriner's birth
- Further 2023/24 Season performances to include international tours to Australia, North America and Europe



Sir Neville Marriner conducting at Royal Festival Hall. Photo by Mark Allan.

Academy of St Martin in the Fields (ASMF) is to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of its founder **Sir Neville Marriner** by welcoming friends and supporters around the world to enjoy a programme of special concerts and events in its 2023/24 Season, dedicated to his life and legacy. This season is inspired by Sir Neville's entrepreneurial founding of ASMF in 1958, and the many ways in which his musical achievements continue to influence the orchestra today and into its future.

Andrew Marriner, board member for ASMF and former member of the orchestra, says:

“As a five-year-old, I sat spellbound on the stairs outside our living room at home: furniture had been removed to allow like-minded string players to rehearse at length and purely for their own satisfaction. Who could have predicted that this embryonic Academy would one day receive a Queens Award for industry for its ability to captivate a global audience?”

25 years later I became a long-time player with the orchestra (1984-2008): I had the good fortune to enjoy the ride from within, witnessing my father’s ability to shape and guide the ensemble for the best part of six decades with his customary mix of stringent musical demands and boundless and infectious good humour.

We now have the opportunity to ensure the legacy of his vision and achievement by celebrating the centenary of his birth with a series of musical events. They will reflect his and the orchestra’s joint accomplishments and will energise support for the future of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields’ activities and wider musical activity in the country and beyond. I am particularly looking forward to the new concertante work that Joshua Bell has commissioned with my son [Douglas Marriner] as his musical partner; and to Chorus’s involvement led by the ASMF’s own Jaime Martin.

As a current member of the Board of Directors, it has been touching to be involved not only with the ongoing evolution of the Academy under its visionary leadership, but also with the Centenary planning that will underpin the continued success of the orchestra.

Dad would be thrilled to know that the future development of the orchestra is being ambitiously and excitingly curated with this wide-ranging celebration of his remarkable life.”

Annie Lydford, Chief Executive of ASMF, says:

“It is a tremendous privilege to work alongside the members of our orchestra, the Marriner family, and the many friends and supporters who have played their part in ASMF’s history to mark this important occasion.

Wherever we travel around the world, audience members love to share with us their experiences of growing up listening to the orchestra’s recordings with Sir Neville Marriner – an experience that I also share! It is impossible to celebrate the long and rich life of such an impactful figure in British musical history with just one season, but we are really very excited by the ambitious programme of concerts, initiatives and events we will share with our friends around the world.

Throughout the celebrations, audiences will hear this fantastic orchestra – founded, nurtured and made famous by Sir Neville – as it continues to perform to thousands of people around the world each year, at the top of its game. That, amongst so many other achievements, is truly a legacy to celebrate.”

Marriner 100 Celebrations

At the heart of the festivities will be three concert performances in April 2024, all of which celebrate Sir Neville.

The first of the three concerts begin on the 100th anniversary of the conductor’s birth at the home of the ensemble’s first performances, St Martin-in-the-Fields (15 April). Conductor **Jaime Martin** and former members of the Academy Chorus join ASMF for a concert celebrating the ensemble’s rich history, from the first performances through to the present.

In a celebration of ASMF today, Music Director **Joshua Bell** leads the ensemble in a special gala concert at the Royal Festival Hall (18 April). The programme includes the UK premiere of a new work by American composer and conductor **Vince Mendoza** for violin, jazz drum kit and orchestra – featuring Joshua Bell on solo violin, and **Douglas Marriner**, Sir Neville’s grandson, performing the solo for jazz drum kit.

The final concert will see ASMF return to the beautiful setting of Lincoln Cathedral (24 April), in a celebration of the conductor’s birthplace and beginnings of his musical life.

In addition to the dedicated concert series, ASMF will also channel the innovative spirit of its founder through the creation of a new charitable fund for player-led projects, which will be launched on 15 April 2024. Celebrating the legacy of the then-violinist's entrepreneurial founding of ASMF, the **Marriner Fund** is the first of its kind in the UK. The fund aims to empower ASMF's members by proactively putting the ideas and projects of its players at the centre of the orchestra's work, providing a space for creativity and innovation.

As well as commemorating the memory of Sir Neville's life through community and learning initiatives and concert performances, ASMF will look towards the future through two key commissions in the 23/24 season, with Vince Mendoza's work to premiere on 18 April and a further new work to be announced in due course.

In celebrating Sir Neville's legacy and vision for the orchestra and beyond, ASMF has brought together a committee of musical minds and voices from across the sector to help ensure that the celebrations have the greatest possible positive impact.

The Marriner Centenary Committee includes:

- Lady Marriner (President)
- Simon Haslam (Chair), former Chair of ASMF
- Joshua Bell, ASMF Music Director
- Alfred Brendel, Pianist and friend of Sir Neville
- Sally Beamish, former member and composer-in-residence of ASMF
- Dr Carol Colburn Grigor CBE, pianist, philanthropist and trustee of Dunard Fund
- Peter Dart, former Trustee of ASMF, Chair of the Royal Choral Society
- Sam Jackson, Controller of BBC Radio 3
- Anne-Marie Minhall, broadcaster, journalist and presenter on Classic FM 12pm-4pm weekdays
- Gillian Moore CBE, Artistic Associate at Southbank Centre
- Trevor Moross, Non-executive Director and charity trustee, former Chair of ASMF
- Philip Noyce, Managing Editor, Classic FM
- Petroc Trelawny, Presenter, BBC Radio 3

The celebrations will also include an exhibition of Sir Neville's life, which will be hosted digitally by ASMF and at St Martin-in-the-Fields during April 2024.

2023/24 Season

This season ASMF will demonstrate its collegiate spirit and masterful interpretation to audiences around the world. The season includes tours to Australia, North America and Europe, in addition to an increased presence in the UK with performances across the country.

International Performances

ASMF will give concerts in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane in October 2023, performing with Music Director Joshua Bell. The tour is the ensemble's first to the country since 2017 and includes a three-concert residency at the Sydney Opera House; before reuniting with Joshua for 16 performances across North America in March and April.

The ensemble joins pianist **Beatrice Rana** and conductor **Adam Fischer** for a tour across Germany and Poland in January, followed by a Spanish tour with long-time ASMF collaborator **Julia Fischer** in January and February.

ASMF Chamber Ensemble will also embark on tours to North America this season, with performances in Carmel, Charlottesville, Costa Mesta, Davis and Columbus in October, and in Palm Beach, Sanibel, Danville, Durham, Asheville, New Haven, Washington DC and Richmond in February.

UK Performances

Beloved and award-winning film *Amadeus* – the fictional story of a tortuous rivalry between world-renowned composers Mozart and Salieri – returns to the Royal Albert Hall on 24 October. This special screening will see ASMF reprise its musical role in the film, performing the soundtrack with the **London Philharmonic Choir**.

Further highlights of the season include: performances with horn soloist **Stephen Stirling** (7 September); ASMF's first collaboration with the **Royal Choral Society** for a performance of Mozart's *Requiem* and *Clarinet Concerto* at The Anvil, Basingstoke (10 February); a return to its spiritual home of St Martin-in-the-Fields for Christmas concerts with St Martin's Voices (22 December, 4pm & 7:30pm); and an increased UK presence from the orchestra throughout May, June and July 2024, with concerts across the country to be announced.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Images of Sir Neville Marriner can be found [here](#) and images of Academy of St Martin in the Fields can be found [here](#).

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About Marriner 100

Throughout the 23/24 season, the Academy of St Martin in the Fields will celebrate the life and legacy of its founder, Sir Neville Marriner (15 April 1924 – 2 October 2016), in his centenary year. Born in Lincoln, Sir Neville Marriner studied at the Royal College of Music and the Paris Conservatoire. He began his career as a violinist and chamber musician, before joining the London Symphony Orchestra. It was during this period that he founded the Academy of St Martin in the Fields (ASMF), with a vision of an ensemble of independent musicians, with collegiate spirit and empowered musicians at the heart of the ensemble's music making. In commemorating his memory, legacy and vision for the orchestra and beyond, ASMF has formed a committee comprising Lady Marriner, Simon Haslam, Sally Beamish, Anne-Marie Minhall and Petroc Trelawny, amongst others to help ensure the greatest possible positive impact. The Marriner 100 celebrations include a special concert series, new commissions, an ambitious learning and participation project, an exhibition on Sir Neville Marriner's life, and the launch of a significant charitable fund to support projects and performances masterminded and led by its players.

About the Academy of St Martin in the Fields

The Academy of St Martin in the Fields is one of the world's finest chamber orchestras, renowned for fresh, brilliant interpretations of the world's greatest orchestral music. Formed by Sir Neville Marriner in 1958 from a group of leading London musicians, the Academy gave its first performance in its namesake church in November 1959. Through unrivalled live performances and a vast recording output – highlights of which include the 1969 best-seller Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* and the soundtrack to the Oscar-winning film *Amadeus* – ASMF quickly gained an enviable international reputation for its distinctive, polished and refined sound. With over 500 releases in a much-vaunted discography and a comprehensive international touring programme, the name and sound of the Academy is known and loved by classical audiences throughout the world. Today, ASMF is led by Music Director and virtuoso violinist Joshua Bell, retaining the collegiate spirit and flexibility of the original small, conductor-less ensemble which has become an Academy hallmark. Under Bell's direction, and with the support of Leader/Director Tomo Keller and Principal Guest Conductor Murray Perahia, ASMF continues to push the boundaries of play-directed performance to new heights, presenting symphonic repertoire and chamber music on a grand scale at prestigious venues around the globe. The orchestra celebrated its 60th anniversary in the 19/20 season with exciting projects in the UK and beyond. Complementing a busy international schedule, the Academy continues to reach out to people of all ages and backgrounds through its Learning and Participation programs. Find out more about the Academy of St Martin in the Fields at asmf.org