

Media Information  
March 30, 2015

## **BMW LSO Open Air Classics 2015 with Valery Gergiev and violinist Nicola Benedetti**

### **The London Symphony Orchestra in cooperation with BMW perform its fourth annual free concert in Trafalgar Square**

**London.** The London Symphony Orchestra with Principal Conductor Valery Gergiev will give their next free, open-air concert in London's Trafalgar Square on Sunday 17 May. They are delighted to be joined in the Square by the violinist Nicola Benedetti, who will perform movements from Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No 1. The event is the fourth annual concert in the BMW LSO Open Air Classics series, all of which have seen a capacity audience enjoying a free performance by the LSO in Trafalgar Square's iconic setting in the heart of London. BMW LSO Open Air Classics brings the experience of live orchestral performance out of the concert hall and makes it open to everyone.

The all-Shostakovich programme also features his Festive Overture and Symphony No 1. Young musicians from LSO On Track, the remarkable initiative for young instrumentalists from East London, will join members of the LSO and musicians from the Guildhall School on stage for a performances of Shostakovich's Jazz Suites in a special arrangement by Gareth Glynn. Paul Rissmann will present the concert, guiding the audience through the music; large screens mounted on either side of the stage will enable the whole audience to witness the concert close up.

Dr Ian Robertson (HonDSc), Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, said: "Classical music matters. Watching and listening to a world-class orchestra like the LSO playing in a stunning open-air environment like Trafalgar Square reminds us of how much we can achieve when we work together. This is the fourth year of our partnership with the Orchestra and it's really great to see how the BMW LSO Open Air Classics always attracts thousands of people – many from outside London and many, who have never experienced live classical music before. And what an experience it is! Speaking as a Brit, this makes me really proud; speaking on behalf of BMW, we are delighted to play our part in supporting this terrific event, which has become such an important part of London's cultural landscape."

Kathryn McDowell CBE DL, Managing Director of the LSO, said: "The London Symphony Orchestra is delighted to be returning to Trafalgar Square to perform the fourth annual BMW LSO Open Air Classics concert on Sunday 17 May. These concerts, the result of our unique partnership with BMW, have created thrilling musical experiences for many thousands of people of all ages in the audience, and for the Orchestra itself. This year we are delighted to be joined for the first time by a soloist, violinist Nicola Benedetti, and are again thrilled that our LSO On Track young musicians will be part of the event. The LSO is grateful to BMW for their continued commitment to this event, and to the Mayor of London for supporting this highlight in London's musical diary."

Munira Mirza, Deputy Mayor for Education and Culture, said: "I am delighted to welcome the LSO to Trafalgar Square for what has become a much-loved event in London's musical calendar. This year promises to be another unforgettable event with the LSO playing with their talented young musicians and guest soloist Nicola Benedetti, a young talent herself and Ambassador to the Mayor's Music Fund. I am deeply committed to championing music and music education and I look forward to the LSO and their aspiring young musicians sharing this free concert with Londoners."



## Media Information

Date March 30, 2015  
Subject BMW LSO Open Air Classics 2015 with Valery Gergiev and violinist Nicola Benedetti  
The London Symphony Orchestra in cooperation with BMW perform its fourth annual free concert in Trafalgar Square  
Page 2

The London Symphony Orchestra is widely regarded as one of the world's leading orchestras. The LSO has an enviable family of artists, including LSO Principal Conductor Valery Gergiev, Michael Tilson Thomas and Daniel Harding as Principal Guest Conductors and long-standing relationships with some of the leading musicians in the world – Leonidas Kavakos, Anne-Sophie Mutter and Mitsuko Uchida amongst others. The LSO also enjoys successful residencies in New York, Paris and Tokyo. Other regular tour destinations include the Far East, North America and all the major European cities.

Nicola Benedetti is one of the most sought after violinists of her generation; her ability to captivate audiences with her innate musicianship and dynamic presence, coupled with her wide appeal as a high profile advocate for classical music, has made her one of the most influential classical artists of today.

**For further questions please contact:**

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**About BMW's Cultural Commitment**

For more than 40 years now, the BMW Group has initiated and engaged in over 100 cultural cooperations worldwide. The company places the main focus of its long-term commitment on modern and contemporary art, jazz and classical music as well as architecture and design. In 1972, three large-scale paintings were created by the artist Gerhard Richter specifically for the foyer of the BMW Group's Munich headquarters. Since then, artists such as Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Olafur Eliasson, Jeff Koons, Zubin Metha, Daniel Barenboim and Anna Netrebko have co-operated with BMW. The company has also commissioned famous architects such as Karl Schwanzler, Zaha Hadid and Coop Himmelb(l)au to design important corporate buildings and plants. In 2011, the BMW Guggenheim Lab, a global initiative of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, the Guggenheim Museum and the BMW Group celebrated its world premiere in New York. The BMW Group takes absolute creative freedom in all the cultural activities it is involved in for granted – as this is just as essential for groundbreaking artistic work as it is for major innovations in a successful business.

Further information: [www.bmwgroup.com/culture](http://www.bmwgroup.com/culture) and [www.bmwgroup.com/culture/overview](http://www.bmwgroup.com/culture/overview)

**The BMW Group**

With its three brands BMW, MINI and Rolls-Royce, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 30 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2014, the BMW Group sold approximately 2.118 million cars and 123,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2014 was approximately € 8.71 billion on revenues amounting to € 80.40 billion. As of 31 December 2014, the BMW Group had a workforce of 116,324 employees.



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Date March 30, 2015  
Subject BMW LSO Open Air Classics 2015 with Valery Gergiev and violinist Nicola Benedetti  
The London Symphony Orchestra in cooperation with BMW perform its fourth annual free concert in Trafalgar Square  
Page 3

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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