

Media Information

19 March 2026

**BMW Classics 2026: London Symphony Orchestra to perform Holst's 'The Planets' at Trafalgar Square on 13 June 2026.**

Free open-air concert featuring an all-British programme conducted by Sir Antonio Pappano can be enjoyed from selected BMW models.

**London/Munich.** BMW Group and the London Symphony Orchestra present the fourteenth BMW Classics in London's iconic Trafalgar Square on Saturday 13 June at 4pm – a free open-air concert by the London Symphony Orchestra, also streamed worldwide on YouTube, Facebook, and into selected BMW cars.

This year's BMW Classics will be conducted by LSO Chief Conductor **Sir Antonio Pappano**, who leads a programme of selected highlights celebrating the Orchestra's long association with two great British masterworks: **Gustav Holst's 'The Planets'** and **Edward Elgar's 'Enigma Variations'**.

In 2026 and 2027, the LSO launches an ambitious multi-platform celebration of Holst's 'The Planets', with the BMW Classics concert serving as the project's largest live performance moment. This wide-ranging initiative will unfold across the two years, bringing digital, educational, and live experiences to audiences in the UK and internationally.

The series begins in March 2026 with a new album on LSO Live, pairing Holst's astrological suite with Arnold Bax's 'Tintagel'. This release marks the LSO's fourth major recording of 'The Planets', following the pioneering acoustic and electronic recordings conducted by Holst himself in the 1920s, and the acclaimed later versions led by André Previn and Sir Colin Davis. At BMW Classics on 13 June, audiences in Trafalgar Square and online will hear selected movements – **Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Uranus**.

The LSO's next live exploration of 'The Planets' takes place in January 2027 with two Barbican performances of **Symphonic Cinema**, created by Dutch film director **Lucas van Woerkum**. In these concerts, his film 'Loss' – featuring **Emma Thompson** and **Greg Wise**, and portraying a soul's farewell to earthly life – is synchronised with a live performance of Holst's score.

At the centre of this year's Trafalgar Square concert is the **world premiere** of a new work by **Louise Drewett** titled **'Four Dances'**, which has been specially commissioned for BMW Classics. Written for a mixed-ability orchestra, the piece brings together LSO musicians, Guildhall School students, and **55 young musicians from east London** participating through the LSO Discovery programmes. Each section is a distinct dance and each flows seamlessly into the next. The dances celebrate London itself and depict four striking public spaces.

From start to finish, travelling downriver, these are The Queen's Walk near London Bridge, Columbia Wharf in Rotherhithe, South Dock on the Isle of Dogs, and Greenwich Pier in Maritime Greenwich. These places are not far apart yet, as so often in London, evoke vastly different moods, from busy urban environments to tranquil, reflective landscapes.

For the finale, the Orchestra performs excerpts from **Edward Elgar's 'Enigma Variations'**. The LSO has held a profound connection with Elgar since its foundation in 1904, when the composer conducted the Orchestra during its inaugural season. Its first Principal Conductor, **Hans Richter**, was also a leading champion of Elgar's music in Britain and abroad.

The 2026 programme reflects the LSO and BMW's shared commitment to supporting ambitious, forward-looking cultural projects. As the LSO embarks on its multi-year exploration of Holst's 'The Planets', **BMW Classics serves as the flagship live moment**, bringing a major orchestral work into a fully public space – free, open, and accessible to all. The world premiere of 'Four Dances' further underlines the shared mission of BMW and the LSO to foster young talent and expand musical participation across generations.

For the streaming into select BMW models the content is made available via the Video App (DTS AutoStage Video Service Powered by TiVo™) in the latest infotainment systems of BMW and MINI\*. The Video App brings together a wealth of video content from a wide range of providers, including news and live or on-demand shows. A number of streaming services are available internationally, including Disney+, YouTube, Joyn, Bloomberg, TED, ARTE and Plex. These are accompanied by market-specific streaming services.

**Dame Kathryn McDowell, Managing Director of the London Symphony**

**Orchestra:** "It is a great pleasure to be celebrating some of Britain's greatest and most popular orchestral music this summer at BMW Classics. The Orchestra has a long association with both 'The Planets' and 'Enigma Variations', and we particularly remember the stirring moment during the Opening Ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic Games, when the LSO and young musicians in our LSO Discovery programme performed 'Nimrod' as the ceremony's emotional climax – a moment we are delighted to bring to audiences in Trafalgar Square. Alongside these two great classics, we are thrilled to present the world premiere of British composer, Louise Drewett's 'Four Dances', commissioned especially for BMW Classics.

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On behalf of the LSO and our audiences both in Trafalgar Square and around the world online, I extend our sincere thanks to our esteemed partner BMW and to the Mayor of London for making this event possible."

**Ms Ilka Horstmeier, Member of the Board of Management of BMW AG, People and Real Estate** said: "For 15 years, BMW Classics has stood for the idea that extraordinary music should be open to everyone. This year's programme – from Holst's 'The Planets' to a new commissioned work created for young musicians – shows how powerful cultural experiences can be when barriers are removed. I am especially excited that audiences around the world can join us digitally and, for the second time, directly from selected BMW vehicles. Our partnership with the LSO continues to demonstrate how technology, creativity and youth engagement can come together to inspire entire communities."

**The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan:** "I'm delighted that the London Symphony Orchestra will be returning to Trafalgar Square for another special open-air concert this summer. The BMW Classics brings outstanding, free classical music to the heart of the capital for Londoners and visitors to enjoy. It's also a wonderful opportunity for talented young musicians to perform alongside this world-renowned orchestra, helping to inspire the next generation of talent as we continue to build a better London for everyone."

"I am grateful to the London Symphony Orchestra for commissioning this new work. It has been an incredible opportunity to write for so many wonderful musicians of different ages at the one time – the LSO, Guildhall School students and the LSO Discovery young musicians. I'm excited to hear this extraordinary orchestra perform at this year's BMW Classics. It feels particularly special for the orchestra to perform new work outside the concert hall, publicly in the heart of London in Trafalgar Square," said **Composer, Ms Louise Drewett**.

**BMW Classics**

London Symphony Orchestra  
Conductor Sir Antonio Pappano  
Saturday 13 June at 4.00pm  
Trafalgar Square, London

**Gustav Holst** The Planets (Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Uranus)  
**Louise Drewett** Four Dances (world premiere), with young musicians from LSO Discovery

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**Edward Elgar Enigma Variations (excerpts)**<https://www.lso.co.uk/bmwclassics/>

For audiences around the world, the concert will be live streamed on the London Symphony Orchestra's YouTube channel: [www.youtube.com/lso](http://www.youtube.com/lso) and Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/londonsymphonyorchestra](http://www.facebook.com/londonsymphonyorchestra) and will be available to watch on demand from 14 days after the concert for up to 90 days.

For press material, please visit <https://lso.co.uk/more/press.html>

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/londonsymphonyorchestra](http://www.facebook.com/londonsymphonyorchestra)Instagram: [www.instagram.com/londonsymphonyorchestra](http://www.instagram.com/londonsymphonyorchestra)

@londonsymphonyorchestra

#LSOBMWClassics

The BMW Group's Cultural Engagement, with exclusive updates and deeper insights into its global initiatives can be followed on Instagram at [@BMWGroupCulture](https://www.instagram.com/BMWGroupCulture).

\*In vehicles with BMW Operating System 8.5 in conjunction with Connected Package Professional (Not available in the BMW 2 Series Coupé, 3 Series, and 4 Series including M4); with BMW Operating System 9 in conjunction with BMW Digital Premium. With BMW Operating System X, the standard digital equipment already includes this content via Wi-Fi/tethering. BMW Digital Premium also gives you data connectivity for this content. MINI Operating System 9: In conjunction with MINI Connected Package.

If you have any questions, please contact:

**Corporate Communications**

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**London Symphony Orchestra**

The London Symphony Orchestra believes that extraordinary music should be available to everyone, everywhere – from orchestral fans in the concert hall to first-timer listeners all over the world.

The LSO was established in 1904 as one of the first orchestras shaped by its musicians. Since then, generations of remarkable talents have built the LSO's reputation for quality, ambition and a commitment to sharing the joy of music with everyone. The LSO performs some 70 concerts every year as Resident Orchestra at the Barbican, with its family of artists: Chief Conductor Sir Antonio Pappano, Conductor Emeritus Sir Simon Rattle, Principal Guest Conductors Gianandrea Noseda and François-Xavier Roth, Conductor Laureate Michael Tilson Thomas, and Associate Artists Barbara Hannigan and André J Thomas. The LSO has major artistic residencies in Paris, Tokyo and at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, and regularly tours to Asia and the USA.

Through LSO Discovery, the LSO's learning and community programme, 60,000 people each year experience the transformative power of music. The Orchestra's musicians are at the heart of this unique programme, leading workshops, mentoring bright young talent, and visiting schools, hospitals and community spaces. The home of much of this work is LSO St Luke's, the LSO's venue on Old Street. In late 2025, following a programme of improvements, the LSO reopened the venue's facilities with new state-of-the-art recording facilities, enhanced acoustics, and new flexible spaces for LSO Discovery activities.

The LSO's record label LSO Live is a leader among orchestra-owned labels, bringing to life the excitement of a live performance in a catalogue of over 200 acclaimed recordings, and reaching millions through streaming services and online broadcasts. The LSO has been prolific in the studio since the infancy of orchestral recording, and has made more recordings than any other orchestra – over 2,500 projects to date – across film, video games and bespoke audio collaborations.

Through inspiring music, learning programmes and digital innovations, the LSO's reach extends far beyond the concert hall. And thanks to the generous support of The City of London Corporation, Arts Council England, corporate supporters, trusts and foundations, and individual donors, the LSO is able to continue sharing extraordinary music with as many people as possible, across London, and the world.

[www.lso.co.uk](http://www.lso.co.uk)

**BMW Group Cultural Engagement**

State Opera for all Gerhard Richter **CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP** Kochi-Muziris Biennale  
BMW Art Cars Ólafur Elíasson Art Basel Max Hooper Schneider Städel Invites Frank Stella  
BMW Art Club **INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE** Art D'Égypte Cao Fei Esther Mahlangu  
Zaha Hadid Les Rencontres d'Arles Jeff Koons India Art Fair **LONGEVITY** Julie Mehretu  
**PARTNERSHIP** BMW Open Work by Frieze Andy Warhol Lu Yang Preis der Nationalgalerie  
Samson Young Bavarian State Opera **CREATIVE FREEDOM** BMW Young Artist Jazz Award  
Ken Done **INTERACTION** Premio de Pintura Gallery Weekend Berlin Art Market Budapest  
Paris Photo Leelee Chan Art Dubai **SUSTAINABILITY** BMW Photo Award Leipzig  
Teatro alla Scala BMW Classics Jenny Holzer BMW Art Guide by Independent Collectors

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Driven by Culture. Culture is knowledge, a sanctuary of beauty and depth, of meaning and peace. An inspiring escape. Tranquil at best, even unsettling sometimes. As a corporate citizen, the BMW Group takes social responsibility seriously, as part of which it has been involved in hundreds of cultural initiatives worldwide for over half a century, in the fields of contemporary art, music and film as well as in design. As a long-term partner, creative freedom is key – and as essential for groundbreaking works as it is for major innovations within a business enterprise like ours.

Further information: [www.bmwgroup.com/culture](http://www.bmwgroup.com/culture) and [www.bmwgroup.com/overview](http://www.bmwgroup.com/overview)Instagram: [@BMWGroupCulture](https://www.instagram.com/BMWGroupCulture)YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@bmwgroupculture>

#BMWGroupCulture

**The BMW Group**

With its four brands, BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial services. The BMW Group production network comprises over 30 production sites worldwide; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2025, the BMW Group sold 2.46 million passenger vehicles and more than 202,500 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2025 was € 10.2 billion on revenues amounting to € 133,5 billion. As of 31 December 2025, the BMW Group had a workforce of 154,540 employees.

The economic success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. Sustainability is a key element of the BMW Group's corporate strategy and covers all products – from the supply chain through production to the end of their useful life.

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