



**MUSIKKSELKAPET
HARMONIEN**



Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra announces tour to Barcelona, Ljubljana and Paris (3-7 December 2021)



In December, the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra will embark on its first international tour in over two years, performing three concerts in Barcelona, Ljubljana and Paris. Under the baton of Chief Conductor Edward Gardner, whose relationship with the orchestra has just been renewed until July 2024, the orchestra will open the tour on Friday 3 December performing for the first time in Barcelona, at the Palau de la Música Catalana, followed by welcomed returns to Ljubljana's Cankarjev Dom on Sunday 5 December and La Seine Musicale in Paris on Tuesday 7 December.

The repertoire for the tour will showcase the orchestra's reputation for stylistic diversity and rich colour palette and feature Ligeti's *Melodien*, Wagner's overture to *Tannhäuser*, Tchaikovsky's Symphony No.4, and Strauss's *Vier letzte Lieder* with acclaimed Swedish soprano Malin Byström as the soloist.

Richard Strauss's exquisite last four songs are a masterpiece and a moving farewell from an aging composer: Joseph von Eichendorff's poem "Im Abendrot" inspired Strauss to a cycle of five songs, four of which were completed. György Ligeti's *Melodien*, which will open the performances in Barcelona and Ljubljana, were composed on the occasion of the five-hundredth anniversary of the German painter Albrecht Dürer in 1971; Paris audiences will hear the orchestra in the overture to Wagner's *Tannhäuser* instead. The concert ends with Tchaikovsky's dramatic and fateful Fourth Symphony, one of his most popular works.

Lyric-dramatic soprano Malin Byström, who will join the orchestra on all dates, performs regularly in concert as well as at the world's top opera theatres, from the Metropolitan Opera to the Wiener Staatsoper and Teatro Real in Madrid and the Aix-en-Provence festival. She received the Female Singer of the Year prize at the International Opera Awards 2018 for her performances of the title role in Strauss's opera *Salome*.

"I'm thrilled to be leading the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra on tour," Chief Conductor Edward Gardner commented. "Some of our greatest shared experiences have been in the great concert halls of Europe, and I look forward to being in these three major cities hugely, with an intense program which will show off the orchestra's passion and virtuosity."

The orchestra's CEO Bernt Bauge commented: "The Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra's last international concert was our hugely successful performance of Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes* at the Royal Festival Hall in London in November 2019. For almost two years the pandemic has made touring impossible, but I'm glad that we are now finally able to play our vital part on the international music scene. I am delighted that our Chief Conductor Edward Gardner will lead the orchestra, and while being the first Norwegian orchestra going on tour after Covid-19, we all look forward to visiting exquisite venues and meeting new audiences in Barcelona, Ljubljana and Paris."

www.harmonien.no | www.bergenphilive.no

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Friday 3 December 2021

Palau de la Música Catalana, Barcelona, 8pm

[Event link](#)

Sunday 5 December 2021

Cankarjev Dom, Ljubljana, 8pm

[Event link](#)

Tuesday 7 December 2021

La Seine Musicale, Paris, 8.30pm

[Event link](#)

Edward Gardner conductor | **Malin Byström** soprano | **Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra**

Ligeti *Melodien* (Barcelona, Ljubljana) / **Wagner** *Tannhäuser* Overture (Paris)

Strauss *Vier letzte Lieder*

Tchaikovsky Symphony No.4

NOTES TO EDITORS

Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra

Founded in 1765, the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra is one of the oldest orchestras in the world. Composer Edvard Grieg had a close relationship with the orchestra and was Artistic Director in 1880-82. Since October 2015, Edward Gardner has been the orchestra's Chief Conductor, succeeding Andrew Litton, who was Chief Conductor in 2003-2015. Recent tours saw the Bergen Philharmonic and Gardner perform in venues including Concertgebouw Amsterdam and Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, and return to the UK for concerts at the Edinburgh International Festival and the BBC Proms. Every season, selected concerts are livestreamed for free on the orchestra's [Bergenphilive](#) platform, and they remain available on the website's archive after being broadcast; its scope and reach dramatically expanded during the Covid-19 pandemic, allowing audiences worldwide to enjoy live performances online. Gardner and the orchestra were awarded the *Gramophone* Opera Recording of the Year and Recording of the Year 2021 for their recording of Britten's *Peter Grimes*.

Edward Gardner

Among the most talented conductors of his generation, Edward Gardner has been Chief Conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra since October 2015, following his tenure as Principal Guest Conductor in 2013-2015. For eight years (2006-15) Gardner was Music Director at the English National Opera, receiving the Royal Philharmonic Society Award for Best Conductor in 2008 and a prestigious Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera in 2009. In addition to his work in Bergen, Gardner has recently taken up the position of Principal Conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra.