



**MUSIKKSELKAPET  
HARMONIEN**



### **Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra appoints Sir Mark Elder as Principal Guest Conductor**



Sir Mark Elder has been appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, the latest stage in a close relationship with the critically acclaimed Norwegian institution. His initial term is set to run from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2025, during which he will conduct three or four programmes each season. The new appointment begins in autumn 2022 with landmark performances of *A Mass of Life*, Delius's monumental choral and orchestral work based on the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

Before beginning his new role, Sir Mark will conduct the orchestra in the final of the Queen Sonja International Music Competition (20 November), which will be streamed live on the orchestra's free Bergenphilive platform, as well as on radio station NRK Klassisk.

"I am delighted to join the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra at such an exciting time in its long and distinguished history," comments Sir Mark Elder. "It is a particular pleasure for me to be invited to take part in the orchestra's development under the guidance of its Chief Conductor, my friend Edward Gardner. Edward, who was my assistant at The Hallé in the early years of his career, has achieved remarkable things with the Bergen Philharmonic. I look forward to working again with this wonderful orchestra and bringing *A Mass of Life* to Bergen, a place Delius knew through his close friendship with Edvard Grieg, who was artistic director of the Bergen Philharmonic in the 1880s. This rarely performed masterwork, a celebration of the human spirit, is the ideal piece to mark the start of our new partnership."

Bernt Bauge, Chief Executive Officer of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, underlines the importance of Sir Mark's appointment. "This is a unique opportunity for us to gain a true Nestor, a man of wisdom and great experience, and a grand maestro in British musical life," he notes. "Sir Mark Elder is loved by the musicians in the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, and they are looking with joy to a close collaboration with this unique and distinctive artistic personality."

In welcoming Sir Mark Elder to Bergen, Edward Gardner reflects on their fruitful past collaboration and the special qualities that he will bring to his orchestra. "I'm thrilled that Mark will be joining us as Principal Guest Conductor," he says. "I've known Mark all my career; he was a wonderful support to me as a mentor at the beginning and now is a great colleague and friend. The Bergen Philharmonic will benefit so much from his brilliance and passion."

Sir Mark Elder attracted international attention early in his career as Music Director of English National Opera (1979-1993). He was appointed Music Director of The Hallé in 1999 and has enhanced the famous Manchester orchestra's reputation since taking up the post in September 2000, in concert and on record. In addition, he has served as Principal Guest Conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (1992-1995) and Music Director of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in the United States (1989-1994), held positions as Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the London Mozart Players, and been Principal Artist of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment since 2011.

His work as guest conductor includes performances with many of the world's leading orchestras, from the Berliner Philharmoniker, Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Boston Symphony Orchestra to the Orchestre de Paris, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and the London Symphony Orchestra. He is also in high demand as an opera conductor, a regular guest at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (where he made his debut in 1976), New York's Metropolitan Opera, the Opéra National de Paris, Lyric Opera of Chicago and Glyndebourne Festival. Other guest engagements have taken him to the Bayreuth Festival, the Bregenz Festival and the opera houses of Munich, Amsterdam, Zürich, Geneva and Berlin.

Sir Mark Elder was knighted in 2008, was awarded the CBE in 1989 and created a Companion of Honour in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2017. He won an Olivier Award in 1991 for his outstanding work at ENO, was named Conductor of the Year by the Royal Philharmonic Society in 2006, and received Honorary Membership of the Royal Philharmonic Society in 2011.

[Watch Queen Sonja International Music Competition final live on Bergenphilive on 20 November 7pm CET](#)

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