



ST JOHN'S SMITH SQUARE

## Southbank Sinfonia at St John's Smith Square

# Building a Sound Future Together

**Frequently Asked Questions - last updated 6 April 2021**

### **1. Why has the merger taken place?**

Both organisations have complementary aims and coming together in a merger presents new and exciting opportunities to realise those aims from a more sustainable foundation.

### **2. What will the new organisation be called?**

Currently we are using the working name of 'Southbank Sinfonia at St John's Smith Square' and for the time being both of the existing brands will be used to describe particular areas of the organisation's activity. The overall branding of the organisation will be reviewed as we continue to work together.

### **3. How will the new organisation function?**

The new organisation will operate as a registered charity with a board of trustees (formed from members of the existing boards of each organisation). Co-directors Richard Heason and Simon Over will head up a staff team who will manage the development and operation of the overall organisation, including the orchestra fellowship programme, concert and festival activity, commercial and artistic hires, building maintenance and operations and catering.

### **4. Why is Southbank Sinfonia leaving St John's Waterloo?**

Southbank Sinfonia has long sought a permanent home from which to grow and deliver its fellowship programme for talented musicians. The merger and subsequent move to St John's Smith Square secures this long-term goal, providing a stable foundation on which to build a future with many exciting opportunities ahead.

### **5. What impact will the merger have on education & outreach work?**

The new organisation will expand Southbank Sinfonia's existing outreach and education work, retaining the meaningful relationships it has formed in Lambeth and building new relationships in Westminster, Greater London, and beyond in partnership with pre-existing education links at St John's Smith Square. The Southbank Sinfonia Family Concerts are a fundamental part of our orchestral activity and will remain central within the merged organisation.

## **6. Will Southbank Sinfonia only perform at St John's Smith Square?**

No - whilst St John's Smith Square will be the orchestra's permanent home, Southbank Sinfonia will continue to perform and work in various locations within the UK and abroad.

## **7. What will happen to the Southbank Sinfonia Rush Hour concerts?**

Southbank Sinfonia's Rush Hour concert series will continue, relaunching with our first ever livestreamed Rush Hour Concerts live from St John's Smith Square throughout April. The first in this series will take place on Thursday 15 April. Details of this and future Rush Hour concerts (which will be considered in step with changing Covid-19 guidance from the UK government) will be published on the Southbank Sinfonia and St John's Smith Square websites.

<https://www.southbanksinfonia.co.uk/events/>

## **8. How does the merger affect me as a supporter of Southbank Sinfonia, and will my donations continue to support the Southbank Sinfonia musicians?**

Your generous donations will continue to support and improve the lives of Southbank Sinfonia musicians. The merger will enhance the lasting impact of your support, offering our players improved facilities, an inspirational setting and concert hall, and new opportunities to learn from and work alongside international artists and ensembles. This in turn will enhance the experience offered to audiences and broaden our reach in the UK and beyond.

## **9. How does the merger affect me as a supporter of St John's Smith Square, and will my donations continue to support St John's Smith Square?**

Your support is still hugely important and will continue to be needed, both for the building and the artistic activity that takes place within it. Any existing donations given for a particular purpose will continue to be applied for that purpose. As the two organisations come together we will review our supporter schemes and contact you to let you know of new opportunities and campaigns that may be of interest to you.

## **10. Is my support still needed to the same extent?**

Yes! Now more than ever, we need your help to sustain our work and to realise the incredible opportunities ahead. We see so much potential in our future together and hope our new home similarly inspires you with optimism and great energy after everything lost due to Covid-19. We cannot wait to share in this adventure with you.

## **11. How will I book Southbank Sinfonia and/or St John's Smith Square concerts?**

To begin with, both Southbank Sinfonia and St John's Smith Square will retain their existing websites. You can find details of upcoming Southbank Sinfonia and St John's Smith Square performances and how to book tickets in the usual places:

[www.southbanksinfonia.co.uk/events/](http://www.southbanksinfonia.co.uk/events/), [www.sjss.org.uk/](http://www.sjss.org.uk/)

Over time our systems will become integrated and you will be informed about the best way to book your tickets.

**12. Will the Anghiari Festival continue as part of the new organisation?**

Absolutely! The Anghiari Festival will continue to be an important part of the Southbank Sinfonia experience. Because of Covid-19, the 2021 festival is uncertain, but we hope to mark the dates with a fitting musical tribute. This may be from St John's Smith Square if we are unable to travel to Anghiari.

**13. Will other artists still perform at St John's Smith Square?**

Yes - this is a key part of the new organisation's strategy and will continue, both in terms of own and co-promotions as well as hire activity. Additionally the merged organisation presents a particular opportunity for visiting artists, education and community partners to work together with the musicians of Southbank Sinfonia.

**14. How will the merger affect the concert programme at St John's Smith Square?**

As one organisation, our Co-Directors Richard Heason and Simon Over will work together with the rest of the team to form a cohesive programme for our audiences. St John's Smith Square's regular Christmas Festival, Holy Week Festival & London Festival of Baroque Music are very much at the core of our activity and will continue. As a merged organisation, we will continue to work with both St John's Smith Square and Southbank Sinfonia's artistic partners.

**15. What will happen to the Footstool Restaurant at St John's Smith Square?**

The Footstool Restaurant is currently closed due to the pandemic. It is our intention to return to a catering and bar service in the building when circumstances allow and further details of this will be released in due course.

**16. Will St John's Smith Square still be available to hire for public concerts and private events?**

Yes. Southbank Sinfonia musicians will be rehearsing and performing in the building on certain weekdays during their annual programme but they will also be working in other locations across the UK as they do currently. There will still therefore be a number of dates available for hire clients, private events and location filming, and we will be actively encouraging hire bookings throughout the year, alongside existing hire bookings which are already in the diary.