



London Symphony Orchestra – Full Biography, 2026/27

The London Symphony Orchestra believes that extraordinary music is for everyone, everywhere. It's a belief rooted in creativity, collaboration and determination – values that have shaped the LSO since 1904, when a group of musicians set out to create and run an orchestra of their own.

Since then, generations of remarkable talents have built the LSO's world-renowned reputation for excellence, innovation and sharing the joy of music. The Orchestra performs a wide-ranging repertoire in front of nearly 200,000 people every year, commissions new composers and living artists to push new boundaries, and connects with millions more online through creative collaborations, and education and community programmes.

In London, the LSO has been the Resident Orchestra at the Barbican since its opening, performing around 70 concerts each year. These performances feature the Orchestra's internationally recognised family artists: Chief Conductor Sir Antonio Pappano, Conductor Emeritus Sir Simon Rattle, Principal Guest Conductor Gianandrea Noseda, and Associate Artists Barbara Hannigan and André J Thomas. Further afield, the LSO has major residencies in Paris, Tokyo and at the Aix-en-Provence Festival, with in-demand tours taking the Orchestra across the UK, Europe, Asia and North America.

LSO Discovery, the Orchestra's education and community programme, is about changing lives through music. Each year, the LSO connects with more than 60,000 people through workshops, events and performances – opening doors for performers and communities from every background. The programme began nearly 40 years ago as an idea from LSO musicians, who remain at its heart today. Alongside performing, they lead workshops, mentor emerging instrumentalists, composers and conductors, and shape the programme, sharing their expertise directly with the people they work with. Much of this happens at LSO St Luke's, the Orchestra's venue and LSO Discovery's home on London's Old Street – an open, welcoming space where anyone can experience live music and get involved.

LSO Discovery focuses on three areas: schools and young people, communities, and emerging artists. That could mean visiting hospitals, playing concerts for families, and creating projects with neurodiverse adults. Or it could be supporting young musicians, designing teaching resources for schools, and running teacher training programmes. Whatever the project, the goal is constant: to help people find confidence, community and a voice through music – today and for the future.

The LSO's record company, LSO Live, is one of the largest independent classical labels. With over 200 recordings – including Grammy-winning, and critically acclaimed albums – it combines a musician-led approach with digital innovation. The label captures the energy of live LSO concerts, from standout new releases like Holst's *The Planets* and Bax's *Tintagel* with Sir Antonio Pappano, to timeless favourites such as Handel's *Messiah* with Sir Colin Davis and Stravinsky's *Ballets* with Sir Simon Rattle. These performances reach millions of people around the world every month through streaming, radio and on-demand services. And in 2026, LSO Live was named Label of the Year at the International Classical Music

Awards – recognition for producing music true to live performance and the LSO's artistic spirit.

For over a century, the LSO has been the orchestral power behind moments that define global culture. The Orchestra has recorded music for iconic films, video games, theme parks – and albums in almost every genre. Anyone who's watched *Star Wars*, listened to Rosalía's album *Lux*, or visited Disney or Universal Studios resorts has heard the LSO. You'll see the Orchestra performing in *Maestro*, the Oscar-nominated Leonard Bernstein biopic. And hear the LSO join forces with RAYE on the album *This Music May Contain Hope* – or with Floating Points and jazz legend Pharoah Sanders on the album *Promises*. The LSO's live performances have made international headlines, featuring artists from Cypress Hill to Frankie Valli, Wynton Marsalis to Yuja Wang.

The LSO wants to continue to inspire and connect with everyone – now and for generations to come. We're able to keep sharing extraordinary music with the world thanks to the generosity of our supporters: the City of London Corporation, Arts Council England, our corporate supporters, trusts and foundations, and individual donors.

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