



NEWS RELEASE

St George's Bristol officially launches its 'Building a Sound Future' development project

Friday 30th January 2015: [St George's Bristol](#) today launches the public phase of 'Building a Sound Future' a £5.5 million development project to build a new extension to the world class music venue. St George's celebrates the launch with an eye catching musical event/performance from the roof of the Grade II* listed former church.

Acclaimed violinist and leader of Aurora Orchestra, Thomas Gould will perform the well known and rousing Hungarian folk tune Csárdás by Vittorio Monti as an example of the world class live music that is performed inside St George's every week, though on this special occasion from the dizzying height of 20m (safely rigged in a full body harness).

At the same time, to celebrate the launch of the public appeal and reach out to new visitors, the event is accompanied by a balloon release with free tickets for concerts at the venue attached to each balloon.

The St George's Bristol 'Building a Sound Future' appeal was kick started by an initial pledge of £1.95 million from Arts Council England and reached the halfway point towards the end of 2014 following grants of £300,000 from the [Garfield Weston Foundation](#) and £50,000 from the [J.Paul Getty Jr. Charitable Trust](#).

A recent generous donation from Sir Siegmund Warburg's Voluntary Settlement takes the total to £2.75 million raised.

Suzanne Rolt, director, St George's Bristol said:

"We already have a world class hall loved by artists and audiences, but we've run out of the space to accommodate the thousands of people who come through our doors each year. Our project is about creating an inspiring new space with the world class facilities we need to ensure everyone has a great experience when they come here. We are delighted with the support we have already received from Arts Council England and our new funding partners".

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St George's Bristol 'Building a Sound Future' appeal events and activities across 2015 include:

- 30 January - Thomas Gould 'Fiddler on the Roof' performance
- 24 February – 120 Years of the Steinway
- 03 March – Meet the Architects at St George's Bristol
- 20 May – Aurora Orchestra Jitterbug Flash Mob
- 12 June – Carnevale Veneziano Fundraising Gala

The 'Building a Sound Future' appeal will deliver the first extension to St George's since it was designed by Sir Robert Smirke (architect of the British Museum) and built in 1823. The new contemporary glass and stone extension by award winning architects, [Patel Taylor](#) will greatly improve facilities and provide full access to the venue for the first time.

Key features of the project are:

- A bold new contemporary extension to the core building, providing new visitor entrances
- Comprehensive remodelling of all backstage and artist facilities
- New garden facing café and bar
- New education and workshop spaces
- New ramped access directly into the main hall for the first time

Of the total £5.5m required to fully realise the project, £2.75m has now been secured. Further major public and private sources of funds are currently in active negotiation and any interested parties should contact Simon Farley, head of fundraising, St George's Bristol.

Initial ground works for the construction of the new extension will begin in spring 2016, with St George's Bristol remaining open throughout the majority of the build. Completion is scheduled for autumn 2017.

Ends

Notes to editors:

Photo caption: 'Fiddler on the Roof' Thomas Gould, performs Csárdás by Vittorio Monti to launch St George's Bristol's 'Building a Sound Future' fundraising appeal to raise £5.5 million to extend the world class music venue.

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.../3

About Thomas Gould

Thomas Gould performs as soloist with major orchestras worldwide including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, LA Phil New Music Group, Orchestre Nationale de Bretagne, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and West Australian Symphony Orchestra, collaborating with conductors such as John Adams, Nicholas Collon, Paul Daniel, Clark Rundell, John Rutter, Robin Ticciati and Garry Walker.

A long-term collaboration with American composer Nico Muhly led to Thomas giving the première of his concerto for electric violin *Seeing is Believing* and recording it for Decca Classics with Aurora Orchestra and Nicholas Collon.

"I've always loved performing at St. George's, blessed as it is with magical acoustics ideal for everything ranging from solo violin recitals to chamber orchestra programmes. But a hall counts for nothing without an audience, and that's where St. George's really scores: its regular audience is knowledgeable, receptive, appreciative, and not scared of a challenge!"

St George's Bristol

St George's Bristol is a world leading performance venue in an intimate Georgian setting. The exceptional acoustics of the hall are particularly loved by classical/chamber musicians but also suit contemporary music. The acoustic properties in the hall are so good that the BBC regularly records LIVE at St George's. Notable performances include BBC Radio 3's Brahms Experience as well as 'in conversation' events and musical ceremonies.

The concert hall attracts an array of world class artists representing a multitude of genres, cultures and continents. All artists have their excellent musicianship in common; from gamelan to guitar, piano to piccolo, tabla to tuba St George's plays host to diverse performance talent.

We actively seek out exciting new, as well as established, artists and curate festivals with key partners to add to the already colourful cultural life of the city of Bristol. For example, the Festival of Ideas, Bristol New Music Festival, Bristol Americana Festival and Bristol Folk Festival. In addition, St George's presents inspiring performances and workshops for children and young people and the education department reaches out across the city to engage with local schools and communities.

Connect with St George's:

Twitter: @stgeorgesbris #buildasoundfuture

Facebook: St George's Bristol

www.stgeorgesbristol.co.uk

www.buildingasoundfuture.co.uk [goes live Friday 30 January]

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