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**Academy of St Martin in the Fields**

The Academy of St Martin in the Fields is one of the world’s finest chamber orchestras, renowned for fresh, brilliant interpretations of the world’s greatest orchestral music.

Formed by Sir Neville Marriner in 1958 from a group of leading London musicians, the ASMF gave its first performance in its namesake church in November 1959. Through unrivalled live performances and a vast recording output – highlights of which include the 1969 bestseller Vivaldi’s Four Seasons and the soundtrack to the Oscar-winning film Amadeus – the orchestra gained an enviable international reputation for its distinctive, polished and refined sound. With over 500 releases in a much vaunted discography and a comprehensive international touring programme, the name and sound of the ASMF is known and loved by classical audiences throughout the world.

Today the orchestra is led by Music Director and virtuoso violinist Joshua Bell, retaining the collegiate spirit and flexibility of the original small, conductor-less ensemble which is an ASMF hallmark. Under Bell’s direction, and with the support of Leader/Director Tomo Keller, ASMF continues to push the boundaries of player-directed performance to new heights, presenting symphonic repertoire and chamber music on a grand scale at prestigious venues around the globe.

ASMF has enjoyed a full 2023, including a European tour with Joshua Bell, a visit to the US with cellist Gary Hoffman and mandolinist Avi Avital, concerts across Germany and Italy with pianist Seong-Jin Cho, festival performances at Bravo! Vail, and features at multiple German summer festivals. A busy 2023/24 season has already included a tour of Australia with Joshua Bell & a live screening of Amadeus at the Royal Albert Hall, with a tour of Germany with Beatrice Rana and Adam Fischer, appearances in Spain with Julia Fischer, multiple visits to the US with our Chamber Ensemble, and an extensive tour of the USA with Joshua Bell to come.

Marriner 100 in April 2024, forms the centrepiece of our season in a series of special concerts and events to celebrate the life and legacy of our founder, Sir Neville Marriner, in his centenary year. At the heart of the festivities will be four concert performances.

The first of the concerts begins on the 100th anniversary of the conductor’s birth at the home of the ensemble’s first performances, St Martin-in-the-Fields (15 April). Conductor Jaime Martin and former members of the Academy Chorus join ASMF for a concert celebrating the ensemble’s rich history, from the first performances through to the present.

This is followed by an intimate concert led by Joshua Bell at Wigmore Hall (16 April) showcasing ASMF’s versatility as a chamber ensemble.

In a celebration of ASMF today, Music Director Joshua Bell leads the ensemble in a special gala concert at the Royal Festival Hall (18 April). The programme includes the UK premiere of a new work by American composer and conductor Vince Mendoza for violin, jazz drum kit and orchestra – featuring Joshua Bell on solo violin, and Douglas Marriner, Sir Neville’s grandson, performing the solo for jazz drum kit.

The final concert will see ASMF return to the beautiful setting of Lincoln Cathedral (24 April), in a celebration of the conductor’s birthplace and beginnings of his musical life.

The ASMF continues its dedication to Learning & Participation, taking the player-directed essence of the ensemble and working with communities across London and beyond to increase wellbeing, connectedness, and autonomy. This includes work with schools, people experiencing homelessness, and supporting the next generation of orchestral musicians through collaborations with Southbank Sinfonia.