Sinfonia Cymru

Sinfonia Cymru is a young and innovative chamber orchestra from Wales. The orchestra is made up of professional musicians in the early stages of their careers and is the first and only orchestra of its kind to be revenue-funded by the Arts Council of Wales.

Founded in 1996 by Principal Conductor Gareth Jones and typified by excellence, flexibility and innovation, Sinfonia Cymru delivers a hugely diverse programme of activities each year. The orchestra has performed in major concert halls across the UK, including the Royal Albert Hall, Bridgewater Hall, Royal Festival Hall and Birmingham Symphony Hall, and gives regular performances in Wales in key venues including the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Wales Millennium Centre, Theatr Clwyd, The Riverfront and The Hafren. In recent years, Sinfonia Cymru has performed with an enviable rostrum of guest artists including Bryn Terfel, Alina Ibragimova, Benjamin Grosvenor, Rachel Podger, Carlo Rizzi, Paul Watkins, Llyr Williams and Catrin Finch.

Sinfonia Cymru features at music festivals every year and in 2016 performed with Bryn Terfel and Joseph Calleja at the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod, as well as several concerts as part of Wales Millennium Centre's Festival of Voice. The orchestra premiered the new work by Sir Karl Jenkins, Cantata Memoria, at Wales Millennium Centre in October 2016, alongside Bryn Terfel. In October 2015, Sinfonia Cymru performed at the Royal Albert Hall alongside Danielle DeNiese, Alison Balsom, Sting and Michael Sheen to celebrate Bryn Terfel's 50th birthday. In 2014, the orchestra played a major role in its first international collaboration that brought together a number of European partners from Sweden, Italy and Estonia, and culminated in Small Nations:Big Sounds festival, delivered in partnership with the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

The orchestra has recorded twice for Deutsche Grammophon: Blessing with Catrin Finch and Cantata Memoria by Sir Karl Jenkins, written to mark 50 years since the Aberfan disaster. Over the past 12 months Sinfonia Cymru has been broadcast on BBC One Wales and BBC Four, S4C, Sky Arts and Classic FM.

Sinfonia Cymru commissions new music with a particular focus on young composers. Recent commissions include Murmurations by Mark Boden, H20 by Gareth Moorcraft and Queen Concertante by Vlad Maistorovici. Sinfonia Cymru is also committed to performing new music. In 2016 the orchesta premiered Birdsong - Cân yr Adar, working with Gwilym Simcock and Kizzy Crawford on new music that fused jazz, classical and soul-folk. The project was a bilingual celebration of the natural world, inspired by the forests of Carngafallt in Powys, and also featured visual art projections by Ruby Fox.

Creative Learning and Health & Wellbeing projects are integral to the orchestra's activities. In 2016, Sinfonia Cymru worked in partnership with composer Liz Lane, film company AOTV, Chepstow School and Thornwell Primary School on Boats, Tunnels and Bridges, a multimedia composition and performance project which celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first Severn Bridge, the Brynglas Tunnel and the last Aust ferry crossing. In 2016 Sinfonia Cymru partnered with Mid Wales Music Trust on a project based on Shakespeare's The Tempest. School children from schools across Mid Wales worked with musicians to write music for a series of interactive performances. Futures projects include Sing-a-Story, a co-production with Mid Wales Music Trust, Wigmore Hall Learning and The Hafren, Newtown.

In 2013 Sinfonia Cymru established Curate, a collective of orchestral musicians, administrators and other young creatives who come together to express their artistic ideas and create their own projects. Since then, Curate has developed the flagship UnButtoned and Unease events in collaboration with BAFTA-Cymru winning musician Tom Raybould and Chapter Arts Centre, the orchestra's classical pub gig 'Quartet' and the hugely successful The Freddie Mercury Project with Vlad Maistorovici.