

Aural Diversity Concerts

Conventions

These conventions take account of the fact that both performers and audience will include a range of hearing types, from hyperacusis to profound deafness with many variations in between. They are therefore designed to offer as rewarding and comfortable a musical experience to all groups as possible.

1. The concert space will be laid out in a salon feel, with some room also for standing
2. The concert will be “relaxed”, with ample time between each performance to allow people to change location and prepare for the next piece
3. Lighting will be dim and there will be an absolute minimum of spoken conversation and ambient noise in the performance spaces
4. Audience members may choose to leave the room quietly at any time during a performance, possibly to continue to experience the music in another way
5. The concert programme will provide precise details of what audiences can expect during a given piece, including such information as: duration, sound intensity, loudness, contrasts, sound types, general character, etc.
6. There will be no applause, but audiences may express their appreciation using the BSL convention of hand waving
7. Signed commentary, surtitles and video evocations will be provided both before and during the music as appropriate
8. The auditorium will include a main communal chamber but also break-out spaces, and outdoor spaces as available, where the music may be experienced in user-controlled ways
9. Audiences may change their ways of listening from piece to piece, following the recommendations in the programme

Ways of Listening

1. In the same space as the musicians without any mediation
2. In a break-out space or outside, but without any mediation
3. Through streaming to hearing aids or via a loop system
4. Through streaming to bluetooth headphones with user control of levels
5. Via haptic devices, either located in the main auditorium or breakout spaces
6. Via bespoke listening devices, e.g. trumpets
7. By watching descriptive and evocative video and/or signing
8. Conceptually i.e. without cochlear input but using imagination

Programme

The programme will be laid out like a menu in restaurant, giving information about each piece in order for listeners to decide how they would like to listen. The information could cover:

1. Title
2. Composer(s)
3. Performer(s)
4. Notes
5. Character of the music
6. Genre
7. Instrumentation
8. Duration
9. Pace
10. General loudness levels
11. Contrasts and intensities
12. Recommended ways of listening