

Brand new music venue creates buzz on Birmingham's music scene

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The official launch of the University of Birmingham's brand new music building will be celebrated with a two-week calendar of concerts and events starting from 25 November.

The Bramall Festival of Music celebrates the completion of the £16 million Bramall Music Building, home to state-of-the-art, 450-seat Elgar Concert Hall and new residence for the University's world renowned Department of Music.



Providing the University's renowned [music department \(http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/lcahm/departments/music/index.aspx\)](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/lcahm/departments/music/index.aspx) with a permanent home at the heart of the University, the Bramall Music Building has state-of-the-art teaching, research, performance and rehearsal facilities appropriate to its international reputation and top-two UK research ranking. The facilities will be used by everyone involved in the University's music-making and performance community, as well as being available for use by the wider city and regional community and the University's regional cultural partners.

The building completes Joseph Chamberlain's original vision for the iconic red brick Aston Webb semi-circle and continues the long, rich and proud history of private generosity to the University.

Highlights from the Bramall festival include:

- Internationally acclaimed soprano and University of Birmingham alumna Carolyn Sampson returns to celebrate the official opening of the Bramall Music Building on Sunday 25 November. She is joined by the Philharmonic Orchestra, one of the University Music Society's many student ensembles.
- The Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Eastwood, delivers an illustrated lecture on Edward Elgar, the University's first Professor of Music, on Tuesday 27 November.
- Join us for a free behind the scenes tour of the new Bramall Music Building on Friday 30 November.
- Sampad: Play Out by recent MOBO winner Zoe Rahman on 29 November explores the improvisational nature of Indian and Jazz music through fascinating creative partnerships that cross musical and geographical borders.
- BEAST (Birmingham ElectroAcoustic Sound Theatre) celebrates its 30th birthday and the opening of the new Bramall Music Building by deploying its 90-channel loudspeaker system in the Elgar Concert Hall for an unforgettable immersive listening experience on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 December.
- On Wednesday 5 December the University Music Society Brass Band joins forces with the Midlands Championship section band, Sovereign Brass, for a performance of some of the most popular Brass Band music ever written, celebrating the 15th anniversary of the hit British film Brassed Off!
- Birmingham Contemporary Music Group (BCMG) performs two classics of 20th century music – Schoenberg's 'Pierrot Lunaire' and Messiaen's 'Quatour pour la fin du temps' on 7 December.
- Ex Cathedra perform Padilla's Missa Ego flos campi, complemented by stunning, seasonal music from Renaissance Spain and Latin America in the first half of an intimate concert on Saturday 8 December, performed by candlelight.

Professor Andrew Kirkman, head of the music department said 'the Bramall Building is a fantastic shot in the arm for our music programmes, which are rapidly going from strength to strength. It provides us with a platform to build a fine music department into one of the world's best: we are very excited about what the future holds.'

We now have what must be one of the best music teaching, research and performance spaces in the UK; it is certainly unique in universities in this country. The University's students and staff are thrilled, but it is not just for them. It is a community facility. We urge everyone to take a look for themselves.

The building is part of the University's Circles of Influence fundraising campaign, and has been named the Bramall Music Building to reflect the University's enduring gratitude to the Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation. 260 students, staff, alumni and friends gave more than £6m in gifts ranging from £2 to millions to name more than 235 seats, rooms and pieces of equipment.

Nick Blinco, Director of Development & Alumni Relations, said, 'we are incredibly grateful to the many individuals and foundations whose investment, combined with University funding, has helped us to do something extraordinary. If anyone wonders what impact their personal giving can have at the University, I urge them to visit this stunning building. Thank you to everyone who has helped to make this possible.'

Notes to Editors

- To find out more about the Circles of Influence Campaign please visit: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving/circlesofinfluence/oldindex.aspx> (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/alumni/giving/circlesofinfluence/oldindex.aspx%E2%80%99>)
- Circles of Influence supports research that saves the lives of children and adults in the West Midlands and around the world. It funds scholarships that open the University to talented young people who might otherwise feel university is not for them. It ensures internships are available to hundreds of students. It provides fellowships to outstanding researchers who will become the next generation of academic leaders. It provides outstanding facilities that attract the best students and staff to the region, and that open our campus to the communities in which we live. It will shortly help us to provide a 21st-century Library, and an outstanding new Sport Centre that will contain the region's first 50m pool.
- The Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation was set up in 2007 to support, through grants, charitable organisations which promote Christian faith in accordance with the beliefs of the Church of England; promote urban or rural regeneration in areas of social/economic deprivation for the benefit of the public; enhance the lives of those with illness; promote the arts for the public benefit; and promote the advancement of education for the public benefit. Terry Bramall is a Civil Engineering alumnus of the University of Birmingham and the former chairman of leading community regeneration specialists Keepmoat plc.

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