

# Usher Hall 100 years old in 2014



**And how best to celebrate that milestone? Well have a concert of course!**

**USHER HALL PRESENTS 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY CONCERT A Centenary Celebration : Thursday 6 March 2014**

For one night only Edinburgh's Usher Hall will celebrate 100 glorious years of music and entertainment by presenting a selection of music from the three original opening concerts which took place a century ago.

The programme features the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Edinburgh Royal Choral Union and the magnificent Usher Hall organ that has played a big part in the Hall's heritage since it was installed in 1913.

Directing this special concert will be two eminent conductors, who know the Usher Hall very well, RSNO Principal Guest Conductor Thomas Søndergård, and conductor Michael Bawtree. The programme features some much-loved classics from the time that are still very much part of today's popular repertoire; music from Wagner, Rachmaninov, Mendelssohn, MacCunn, Bach, Parry and Beethoven's famous Fifth Symphony. Edinburgh's popular City Organist, John Kitchen, will also perform.

Originally built with a separate entrance for the rich and with the Temperance movement ensuring no alcohol was served, there was no hint at that time of the social turmoil that was to take place over the coming century. Despite many new styles of music evolving during that time, the music of the

original concert maintains its appeal and will be seen to have transcended the years.

Over the course of the last hundred years the Usher Hall has played host to performers, musicians and conductors a wide variety of music by great artists, and they have also observed a centenary of enormous social change.

Some of the world's greatest artists have graced the Usher Hall's stage: Ella Fitzgerald, Johnny Cash, Oscar Peterson, The Rolling Stones, Adele and Michael Bublé to name a few.

Richard Lewis, the council's Convener of Culture and Sport said: "The Usher Hall's centenary year begins with a wonderful concert of memories. The venue was a marvellous gift from Andrew Usher for the people of Edinburgh and for 100 years it has been a great source of enjoyment and many thousands have entered its doors. Join us, on what promises to be, a memorable and uplifting occasion."

RSNO Principal Guest Conductor Thomas Søndergård said: "Since coming to Scotland my experiences of the Usher Hall have been full of excitement, joy and thrilling music-making. It is a wonderful venue with a venerable history and I am honoured to play a part in its centenary celebrations. Both myself and the musicians of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra wish our Edinburgh home another successful 100 years!"

The concert takes place on Thursday 6 March at 7.30pm and tickets are on sale now from [www.usherhall.co.uk](http://www.usherhall.co.uk) or 0131 228 1155.

In 1896, Andrew Usher made his historic gift of £100,000 to The City of Edinburgh to found a concert hall. The building officially opened on 6 March 1914.

Edinburgh Royal Choral Union performed at the original concert in 1914.

The Usher Hall is owned and run by The City of Edinburgh Council and the venue hosts around 200 events each year. 25% of concerts are programmed by the venue.

The Usher Hall is Edinburgh's key venue for visiting national and international orchestras and has been a core venue for the Edinburgh International Festival since 1947.

It is Edinburgh's home to The Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

The organ dates back to 1913 and was built by Norman & Beard at a cost of £4000 and is still used in concerts today.

The venue embraces the widest range of music and events, including rock, pop, jazz, world, comedy, school concerts, conferences, award ceremonies and recording sessions.

Forthcoming concerts at the Hall include; **Madeleine Peyroux, Eddi Reader, Texas, The Sixteen, James Arthur, Tom Odell, Academy of St Martin in the Fields and Gareth Malone : The Live Tour**

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