

# TURNER SIMS Southampton

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 10am on Tuesday 23 June 2020**

## Mayflower 400 music commission composer announcement

Turner Sims Southampton and its project partner Southampton City Council is delighted to announce that composer and musician **Tunde Jegede** has been chosen to create the music for a special project as part of Southampton's Mayflower 400 anniversary.

Tunde Jegede is a world-renowned composer, producer, cellist and kora virtuoso whose work has changed the face of classical and contemporary music in Europe and Africa. The Southampton project, which is supported by funding from Arts Council England, Southampton City Council and the University of Southampton, will see Tunde Jegede create a set of choral pieces based on pre-existing and new oral histories of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) and migrant communities.

Southampton's Mayflower 400 programme is focusing on the themes of journeys, migration and sanctuary. The commission will be inspired by the stories of Southampton's migrant communities, collected through the City Archive and a new National Lottery Heritage Fund supported oral history project. The final pieces will be premiered at a performance at Turner Sims scheduled for November 2020. After the project is completed, the pieces will be rearranged by Tunde, to enable them to be made available online for free use by local choirs, as well as for schools' use.

To launch the partnership, Turner Sims will be providing an opportunity for BAME and migrant community musicians in Southampton to workshop with Tunde Jegede ahead of activity planned later in the year with musicians and local singers. Details of the workshop, and how musicians can get involved will be announced in July.

Speaking of his appointment Tunde Jegede said "I am honoured to have been selected as the composer for the Mayflower 400 music commission at Turner Sims. I am also very excited about working with the singers and musicians of Southampton to create this new piece and sharing my music with the city."

Kevin Appleby, Concert Hall Manager at Turner Sims Southampton said: "I'm delighted that we are able to bring Tunde to Southampton to work on this important and significant commission. He is a hugely respected performer

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and composer whose personal journey has given him a wide range of insights and experience from which to draw on.”

Caterina Loriggio, Mayflower 400 Southampton Anniversary Director said “Funding from Arts Council England, Southampton City Council and The National Lottery Heritage Fund has enabled a unique programme of Mayflower 400 events in Southampton which will creatively uncover the City’s hidden histories. Securing an artist of Tunde’s calibre is a great boost to the programme. I am excited to see the results of this exciting collaboration between him, local musicians and community performers”.

- Ends -

## **Editor’s notes**

**Tunde Jegede (<http://www.tundejegede.org/>)**

World-renowned composer, producer, cellist and kora virtuoso Tunde Jegede brings a new vision to contemporary African and Western classical music. A renaissance man of the harp-lute with over twenty years’ experience, his work is a unique synthesis of classical, jazz and traditional music and embodies the legacy of the idiom African Classical Music.

Tunde Jegede’s work has changed the face of classical and contemporary music in Europe and Africa. He is one of the only composers in the world to be steeped in both Western and African music who is rooted in two cultural musical legacies. Tunde Jegede studied both Western classical music and the Griot Tradition of West Africa from a very early age, attending the Purcell School of Music in London and learning from a Master of the kora in the Gambia, Amadu Bansang Jobarteh.

This unique cultural inheritance has since informed his work as a composer and multi-instrumentalist, creating links between European classical music and that of Africa. With his music he has created a set of mirrors between the old and new world, between compositions for solo cello and kora. Tunde Jegede is, in himself, a dialogue between contemporary classical music and a renewed vision of an oral tradition rooted in Malian culture - the Griot vision. He is truly a C21 renaissance man.

Tunde Jegede is the founder of several ensembles including the Art Ensemble of Lagos and the African Classical Music Ensemble. He is also the curator of Living Legacies, Gambia's first traditional music archive, and the director of New Horizons, an educational initiative to develop young musicians in Nigeria. Over the last few years Tunde has been the Artistic Director of the MUSON Centre, one of West Africa's only music conservatoires that specialises in classical music. He consequently set up the NOK Foundation, a charitable organisation dedicated to raising consciousness through music, arts and culture.

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**Mayflower 400 Southampton**  
(<https://visitsouthampton.co.uk/mayflower-400>)

Southampton's Mayflower 400 is led by Southampton City Council and is delivered with cultural, corporate and community partners all across the City. The year will focus on the themes of journeys, migration, maritime heritage and innovation. It seeks to celebrate the city and those who live and work here, it will explore the stories of all the people of the world, including the Mayflower passengers, who have come to, or through, Southampton in search of a new life.

Matching grassroots activity with major projects, the city's creativity and heritage will be showcased through a series of culture, learning and community programmes. The programme is delivered with the financial support of Arts Council England, The National Lottery Heritage Fund, Barker Mills Foundation, GO! Southampton and Paris Smith.

Originally planned for June to November, plans are currently being reshaped so that (subject to Public Health England/ Government guidance) there is still an exciting and engaging programme of activities between August 2020 and February 2021.

Go to <https://visitsouthampton.co.uk/mayflower-400> for further information on events and stories.

Further press information on Mayflower 400 Southampton available from Nick Upton, Senior Communications Officer, Southampton City Council:  
Nicholas.Upton@southampton.gov.uk

**Turner Sims Southampton** (<https://www.turnersims.co.uk/>)

Turner Sims Southampton is a nationally renowned concert hall and live music producing organisation. With over 75 promoted concerts a year, some of them devised and programmed exclusively by Turner Sims with the artists involved, the venue plays a significant role in the creative scene in the South of England. Built for chamber music, the 350-seat venue based on the University of Southampton's main campus now hosts a wide-ranging programme with particular focus on classical, jazz, folk, and world music.

Presenting new music is integral to Turner Sims' programming with recent world premieres by Peter Edwards (for jazz big band as part of the national New Music Biennial 2017), Jonathan Dove (for clarinettist Emma Johnson and massed recorder players), and Sally Beamish (for the Endellion String Quartet).

Turner Sims is part of the University of Southampton (<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/uni-life/arts.page>), and gratefully acknowledges the support of Arts Council England as one of its National Portfolio Organisations. Since 2018, Turner Sims has hosted and led the jazz development programme Jazz South.

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Our media partners are leading magazines Gramophone, Jazzwise and Songlines. We are proud to be a member of the British Association of Concert Halls (BACH), Europe Jazz Network and Jazz Promotion Network.

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**Arts Council England ([www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk))**

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. By 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. Between 2018 and 2022, we will invest £1.45 billion of public money from government and an estimated £860 million from the National Lottery to help deliver this vision.

Following the Covid-19 crisis, the Arts Council has developed a £160 million emergency response package, with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. Find out more at [www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19)

## Project partners and funders

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### **Press contacts**

Turner Sims Southampton - Joanna Roberts [J.F.Roberts@soton.ac.uk](mailto:J.F.Roberts@soton.ac.uk) and Daniela Gerstmann [mail@danielagerstmann.com](mailto:mail@danielagerstmann.com) | 023 8059 2504