

Dear Musician,

British Fretted Orchestra Programme for 2025/26- Project No 9

We are delighted to inform you that the next Project of the British Fretted Orchestra (BFO) is going ahead in 2025/26.

Please Note this project will be different from previous years. After a gap of 8 years the international festival of mandolin and guitar music 'Eurofest' will be going ahead in Bruchsal, Germany in May 2026.

In order to maximise participation in the British Fretted Orchestra, Project 9 will consist of two stages.

Stage 1 - UK ONLY

The structure of stage 1 will follow the pattern of previous years. The programme will consist of two meetings plus online sectional rehearsals and technique development sessions.

Participants are encouraged to attend one or other of the regional rehearsals in November and *required* to attend the whole of the weekend **from 27 February -1 March 2026**, due to take place in

**Bosworth Hall Hotel & Spa,
The Park, Market Bosworth,
Leicestershire CV13 0LP**

Stage 1 Overview

Rehearsal of the *southern* BFO members (optional)

Date: 16 November 2025

Venue: Fitzrovia Community Centre, 2 Foley Street, London, W1W 6DL

Fitzrovia Community Centre

Time: Start time: 10.30 for 11.00am Finish: 16:00

Please bring your own lunch

Rehearsal of the *northern* BFO members (optional)

Date: 23 November 2025

Venue: East Hamilton, Venue to Be Confirmed

Time: Start time: 10 for 10:30am Finish: 15:30

Please bring your own lunch

Full Weekend Rehearsal

Date: 27 February- 1 March 2026

Venue: Bosworth Hall Hotel, Market Bosworth CV13 0LP

Time: Start time: After Dinner 27th February, Exact Time to Be Confirmed

Stage 1 Music

These pieces will form our programme for Eurofest.

Simon Meyor; **Buttermere Walz**

Kevin Poelking; **Restless Shadows**

David Sutton Anderson; **Kempton Tangos**

Other pieces may be added

Fees and Costs

These consist of:

- BFO fees
- Accommodation Costs

These payments can be made together or separately to the BMG using the payment details below

BFO Fees

Total BFO fees:

- £70 -members of the British BMG Federation
- £90 -non-members
- £40 for BMG Federation members in Full-time Education
- Please Note: - If you are not currently a BMG Federation member and wish to take advantage of the reduced rate, please contact the membership secretary Martyn Workman at bmgfederation@gmail.com

Bosworth Hall Hotel and Spa, The Park, Market Bosworth CV13 0LP

Getting There

The M1 and M69 are within 9.4 miles of the hotel. If you are travelling by car, the hotel offers free on-site car parking for residents. Public transport is available; Hinckley Train Station is 8.2 miles away and there are bus stops located a 2-minute walk away on the park.

Full board Accommodation for the weekend 27 February- 1 March 2026

£243pp for accommodation and all meals for the full weekend.

Day Delegate

If you do not need overnight accommodation the rate is £98pp which includes lunch and tea/coffee breaks on Saturday and Sunday. There is also the option to book an evening meal- charged separately.

Please Note It will be a requirement to participate in Stage 1 if you are intending to participate in Stage 2.

Stage 2- UK plus participation in the EUROFEST

Stage 2 will consist of a 2-day meeting in Edinburgh on 25-26 April 2026 and the travel and participation in the Eurofestival Zupfmusik in Bruchsal, Germany from the 14-17th May 2026.

Stage 2 Overview

Weekend Rehearsal and Concert (one overnight)

Date: 25-26 April 2026

Venue: Newbattle Abbey, Newbattle Road, Midlothian EH22 3LL [Home - Newbattle Abbey College](#)

Time: Arrive 13.00 -25 April 202.

Concert Performance: 16.00 -26 April 2026. St Giles, Marchmont, [1A Kilgraston Road, EH9 2DW](#)

[Marchmont St Giles Parish Church](#). Arrive 13.30 at St Giles for joint rehearsal with EMGO

This weekend will consist of a programme of rehearsals concluding with a joint concert with the Edinburgh Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra (EMGO) on Sunday afternoon. The Saturday rehearsal venue will be Newbattle Abbey College. Dinner, bed and breakfast for Saturday and Sunday are available if booked through the BMG. Additional nights bed and breakfast are bookable direct with Newbattle Abbey. You are welcome to make other arrangements if you prefer.

EUROFEST and performance (Festival starting on the 14th)

Date: 13-17th May 2026

Venue: Bürgerzentrum Bruchsal, Am Alten Schloß 22, 76646 Bruchsal

Hotel: Accommodation has been reserved at the Plaza Hotel, Am Mantel 1A D-76646 Bruchsal.

Travel: Because of the variety of starting locations and the different transport needs of our group, participants will have to make their own travel arrangements. There will be opportunities to collaborate on travel plans as the list of participants emerges.

Rehearsal: It is our current plan to have another short rehearsal on either Wednesday (13.05) evening or Thursday (14.05) morning.

The BFO will then go on to represent the UK at the International Eurofestival in Bruchsal, Germany on 14-17 May 2026. [Eurofestival plucked music \(zupfmusiker.de\)](#).

Bruchsal is well connected by train from major train stations (e.g. Mannheim). Travel time from both Frankfurt and Stuttgart international airports is about 1 hour 30 min.

Train from London is about 6-7 hours but some people might wish to drive or take a

coach from the UK.

Please note that it is the current plan is to meet on Wednesday to allow the orchestra to rehearse either on Wednesday evening or on Thursday morning.

Stage 2 Music

The music selections for the weekend in April will include the music from stage 1 and pieces from past repertoire to make up a concert programme.

Ravel; Pavane pour une infante défunte

Richard Charlton; Dances for the Mandolin and the Moon

together with EMGO

Bizet; Carmen Suite (selection)

Handel: Music from the Royal Fireworks: La Rejouissance

Our Conductor

The Orchestra will once again be conducted by **Michael Graham**.

Michael is a conductor and composer based in Edinburgh. He studied music at the University of Edinburgh, achieving both bachelor's and master's degrees, and was awarded the Ian-Pitt Watson Conducting Prize. Michael has studied under some of the UK's leading conducting teachers, including Alasdair Mitchell, Sian Edwards, Gary Walker and Denise Ham. In February 2020, he took conducting lessons with Andris Veismanis at the Latvian Academy of Music in Riga.

Michael has been Musical Director and Conductor of the Edinburgh Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra since 2017 and has thoroughly embraced the BMG world since. He has written articles for the BMG Federation Newsletter, lead a workshop on orchestral conducting at the 2022 BMG Festival in Edinburgh. He is delighted to be invited to conduct the British Fretted Orchestra for their 2026 rehearsal weekends and Eurofest concert and looks forward to working with the organising team, section leaders, and players.

In addition to EMGO, Michael is also Musical Director of the Bathgate Concert Orchestra, Falkirk Tryst Orchestra, Edinburgh Recorder Ensemble. He is organist and Director of Music at St Mark's Episcopal Church, Portobello and writes for several music magazines while also maintaining some output as a composer-arranger for chamber and orchestral forces. He has won numerous awards for conducting and artistic leadership, including the Wagner Society of Scotland's Bayreuth Scholarship in 2019, which funded a study tour of Germany.

Application

If you are intending to take part, please fill in the attached application form and return this to nicki.lewkow@gmail.com. The music will be sent as soon as I have your booking.

Looking forward to receiving your application soon.

Many thanks and best wishes
Nicki lewkow
Barbara Pommerenke-Steel
BFO Co-ordinators

BRITISH FRETTED ORCHESTRA PROJECT 9 (2025/26)

APPLICATION FORM

Please read the application form carefully.

Please tick the choices you would like to make.

The payment for the relevant sections needs to be received by the date stated.

Please return to nicki.lewkow@gmail.com

Personal Information

Name:	Surname:	Date of birth if under 18yrs:
Mobile number:		
E-Mail address:	Please indicate if you are happy to share your email address with other applicants in connection with this event.	
Offering Lifts	Would you be able to offer a lift(s) to BFO Rehearsals to other participants?	
Images	Do you have any objection to being photographed or recorded in connection with this event?	

Musical Background

Fretted Instrument(s):	Which instrument(s) do you play?
Musical experience/ exams/grade level:	What is your current standard?
Taking Part in the BFO	Which instrument will you play in the National Orchestra? (if possible, please list 2nd instrument). Please Note if there is a significant reduction in players for Stage 2 it may be necessary to rebalance the sections.
Ensemble Experience	Do you belong to a fretted instrument group? <i>if yes please name the group</i>
Other instrument(s)	Do you play any other instruments?

Accommodation, Costs and Fees Stage 1

Please Note Deadlines for Payment

Please tick the choices you would like to make.

British Fretted Orchestra Fee *To be paid by the 1st of November*

(This includes the music, conductor's fees and the venue hire)

BMG Member
Non- BMG Member
BMG Member in Full Time Education

£70
£90
£40

☐
☐
☐

Accommodation or Day Delegate Fees *To be paid by the 1st of December*

Please Note: - accomodation fees will not be refundable if you cancel later than 31 January 2026

Bosworth Hall full board accommodation

Are you willing to share?
Yes ☐
No ☐

Double Room
Twin Room
Single Room

£243pp
£243pp
£243pp

☐
☐
☐

Day Rate

Lunch and Breaks only (no overnight accommodation)

Day Rate for both days

£93pp

☐

Dinner (optional)

Book only if you are booking the day rate.

Friday dinner
Saturday dinner_

From
£32
£32

☐
☐

Any Dietary Requirements?

Do you require level access?

Accommodation, Costs and Fees Stage 2

Please Note Deadlines for Payment

Please tick the choices you would like to make.

I will not be attending Stage 2

0

I will be attending Stage 2- Please complete sections below

0

Edinburgh Accommodation or Day Delegate Rate To be paid by the 28 February 2026

Please Note: - accommodation fees will not be refundable if you cancel later than 20th March

Are you willing to share?	Single Standard Room	£108pp	0
Yes <input type="radio"/>	Twin ensuite	£126pp	0
No <input type="radio"/>	Single ensuite	£134pp	0

Dinner Saturday Evening	No accommodation	£16pp	0
-------------------------	------------------	-------	---

British Fretted Orchestra Eurofest Festival

Ticket To be paid by the 30th April. All active musicians must purchase or have a Festival Ticket

The festival ticket is available for €175 (adults) or €120 (pupils, students with proof of eligibility). The festival ticket grants free admission to all concerts, workshops, and exhibitions, as well as six meals in the festival's communal catering from Thursday to Saturday. Participants agree to a possible price increase of up to 15% of the festival ticket price until the festival takes place

175€ 0
120€ 0

Adult 0
Student in Full Time Education 0

Accommodation To be paid by the 30 March 2026

Please Note: - accommodation fees will not be refundable if you cancel later than 10 April 2026

Plaza Hotel Bruchsal			
<u>Prices are per room per night. We are likely to stay for 4 nights</u>			
Are you willing to share?	Double Room -2 people	124€	0
Yes <input type="radio"/>	Double Room -Single	104€	0
No <input type="radio"/>	Person		

I would like to borrow an instrument?

If yes, please state the type of instrument (mandolin bowl back, Mandola semi round back, double bass 3/4 size)

Edinburgh			0
Germany			0

Payment methods -- Please Note as long as payments are made by the deadlines indicated you are welcome to make payments in stages

bank transfer:

account name: British BMG Federation,

sort code: 40-35-34,

account number: 34376781,

quote your name and BFO as reference

Pay Pal to bmgfederation@gmail.com

Pay Pal via the BFO page of our website www.bbmng.org.uk

I will pay the sum of _____ using the following method _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Payment Schedule	Amount £	Paid	Due By	Cancellation Deadline
Handy Summary for you to keep				
Participation Fee	Per person			
BMG Member	70		1 November 2025	
Non-BMG Member	90		1 November 2025	
BMG Member in full time education	40		1 November 2025	
Stage 1 Leicestershire				
Accommodation	Per person			
Double	243		1 December 2025	31 January 2026
Twin	243		1 December 2025	31 January 2026
Single	243		1 December 2025	31 January 2026
Day delegate x 2 Days	98		1 December 2025	31 January 2026
Dinner Saturday	From 32		1 December 2025	31 January 2026
Dinner Sunday	From 32		1 December 2025	31 January 2026
Stage 2 Edinburgh				
Accommodation	Per person			
Single standard	108		28 February 2026	20 March 2026
Twin ensuite	126		28 February 2026	20 March 2026
Single ensuite	134		28 February 2026	20 March 2026

Dinner Saturday	16		28 February 2026	20 March 2026
Stage 2 Germany				
Accommodation	per room			
Double	496€		30 March 2026	10 April 2026
Single	416€		30 March 2026	10 April 2026
EUROFest Festival Ticket	175€- Adult		30 April 2026	Not refundable
	120€- Student		30 April 2026	Not refundable