

## **What is the value of digital art? Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment lets their audience decide the price of their new digital platform, *OAE Player***

On Thursday 22 October 2020, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (OAE) launches a digital platform, *OAE Player*, which will feature over thirty new and visually stunning music performance videos including a masterclass with Mark Padmore and solo performances by Nicola Benedetti and Alina Ibragimova. But what is it worth? The OAE invite you to help shape the future of digital art and decide what you'd like to pay for it.

The boldness of the OAE's decision to hand over the reins to the audience feeds into the timely discussion about what the value of digital art is. For the first 24 hours, a select number of performances on *OAE Player* will be available to watch on a 'pay-what-you-think-it's-worth' basis. After this day, a set price will be allocated to each video.

Crispin Woodhead, OAE Chief Executive, says:

“Arts institutions shouldn't have to be apologetic about asking people to pay for online content. Behind the screen, there is still a group of artists working as hard as they would have for a live concert. Great music has always needed and will always need the support of its audience, from the great patrons of the past to today's fan-base communities. We want people to look, listen, think and then decide what it is to be more than just culture surfers. Now, more than ever, musicians need *committed* listeners - people who have a stake in the arts they love, people who belong to the music as much as it belongs to them, people who will protect and preserve our great artistic traditions for future generations.”

The ultra high definition films on *OAE Player* will be shot in unique and visually stunning locations and presented as a cinematic experience, rather than a simple live stream.

Steven Devine is OAE's Principal Keyboard and has been heavily involved in the recordings of the first few videos for *OAE Player*. He comments:

“As the OAE is very much a “live” orchestra we can use all the digital skills we have accumulated during lockdown to enhance our live music experience – perhaps reaching audiences who may not be able to otherwise come to our live performances. I'm very excited that *OAE Player* will be adding value to everything we do in front of a live audience.”

While the internet is already a bustling hub of free art that is readily available at people's fingertips, the OAE is keen to emphasise the distinction between their free videos on YouTube and the paid content on *OAE Player*. The OAE YouTube channel will remain as the Orchestra's educational platform; viewers can learn about baroque instruments in the 'Introducing the Instrument' series and teachers and pupils can use the 'Illustrated Theory of Music' as a tool for learning the narrative behind the notes. *OAE Player* will include longer-length concerts and performances, as well as exclusive interviews and insights with renowned artists such as Nicola Benedetti, Roderick Williams, Alina Ibragimova and Mark Padmore.

Digital content is not here to replace live concerts. Instead, it is an exciting and fresh addition to music-making which has the potential to reach a much broader and more diverse audience than live music ever could. With this in mind, the OAE encourage their audiences to consider the value of digital art and recognise its place in a post-pandemic world.

The *OAE Player* launches on 22 October, but you can pre-purchase an annual pass today for just £99 at [oae.co.uk/OAEPlayer](http://oae.co.uk/OAEPlayer)