

I want music to be for everyone, says Rattle ahead of homecoming concert

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Arts Correspondent

SIR Simon Rattle today said he wants to share his passion for music “with as many people as possible” ahead of his homecoming concert with the London Symphony Orchestra.

The conductor’s debut at the Barbican on September 14 will be broadcast live on Radio 3 and across Europe on

classical music station Mezzo TV. The concert, a celebration of British music with a performance of Edward Elgar’s Enigma Variations and a new work by composer Helen Grime, marks the start of 11 days of concerts with further broadcasts on Classic FM and YouTube.

Sir Simon, the LSO’s new music director, said: “It is a huge moment in my life to be able to return to the UK and work with the orchestra I love. My

ambition is to open up the electrifying experience of music and share my passion for music-making with as many people as possible, whatever their age or whatever their background.”

The concert will be broadcast on a big screen in the Barbican’s Sculpture Court and via personal headsets there for a silent disco-style event. The programme also includes music by Sir Harrison Birtwistle and Benjamin Britten,

Stravinsky’s The Rite Of Spring, and performances by the BBC Singers, students from the Guildhall School and young musicians from east London.

Sir Simon has been principal conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic since 2002. His return to the UK has been tied up with wider plans for a proposed new £250 million concert hall near the Barbican.

He previously led the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, establishing it as a major force in the world of classical music, and was instrumental in the creation of the Birmingham Symphony Hall which became its home in 1991.

The Museum of London’s current base at London Wall has been earmarked as the site for the capital’s new Centre for Music, which would become home to the LSO. The museum is moving to a new home in West Smithfield.

Sir Simon is among the panel of judges considering potential architects for the project from a shortlist of six including Norman Foster and Renzo Piano, who designed The Shard. The development has been backed by funding from the City of London Corporation, which wants to create a cultural quarter in the Square Mile to rival the South Bank and South Kensington.

■ *For information and tickets go to lso.co.uk/thisisrattle*