# Bradford Progress to stage 36-hour musical odyssey blending genres and spaces



In an ambitious celebration of Bradford's rich musical tapestry, the upcoming event known as The Bradford Progress promises an extraordinary 36-hour odyssey that melds diverse genres in unexpected settings. Designed in collaboration between conductor Charles Hazlewood and Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller, this project is not merely a showcase of musical talent but a powerful storytelling vehicle reflecting the city's vibrant cultural landscape.

Set to take place across various iconic locations—from Ilkley Moor to bustling shopping arcades—the event aims to immerse the audience in a continuous flow of sound that captures the heart of Bradford. Hazlewood describes it as "organised chaos," inviting attendees to embrace the unpredictable nature of communal urban life. "You have to embrace the chaos," he remarked, indicating that this artistic approach mirrors the very essence of living in a diverse city. The performance will feature around 500 musicians and will blend a wide array of musical styles, including classical, bhangra, punk, and gospel, resonating with both local and international influences.

The grand opening begins at sunrise with a three-minute rendition of Handel’s music at the Cow and Calf Rocks, setting the tone for what will unfold. As the event progresses, participants will experience a metaphorical journey through the city, where music will serve as a guide to discovering its myriad stories. Deller expressed that "music is a great way of telling stories," and this performance aims to narrate the city's past, present, and future without overt exposition.

The creativity that marks this performance isn’t solely limited to genres but extends to unconventional venues. Hazlewood will lead the Paraorchestra in a unique rendition of Steve Reich’s The Four Sections in the Broadway shopping centre, challenging the traditionally formal confines of orchestral performances. By dissolving the invisible barrier separating the audience from the performers, this approach aims to cultivate a more intimate and engaging experience. "So much of our work is about rubbing out the fourth wall," he explained, suggesting that the experience will be about seeing the artists as part of the community rather than distant figures on a stage.

Even in spaces like cemeteries, where conventional access will be limited, this musical initiative intends to provide sound experiences that reach the surrounding streets. The inclusion of a wide array of musicians—from tabla players to brass bands—ensures that while each performance may stand alone, they collectively weave an intricate tapestry reflecting Bradford’s eclectic soundscape.

As part of the broader City of Culture initiative, which will involve over 1,000 events throughout 2025, The Bradford Progress stands as a significant milestone. Bradford's designation as the UK’s City of Culture reflects a long-standing commitment to cultural revitalisation and community engagement, showcasing not just local talent but also attracting artists from around the globe.

Moreover, other events scheduled during this celebration include innovative collaborations such as the Bassline Symphony, which will blend electronic music with orchestral elements to further celebrate the city's musical heritage. Deller's enthusiasm for the project encapsulates a desire for simplicity amidst complexity, urging attendees to "just enjoy it."

In essence, The Bradford Progress is much more than a musical marathon; it is a collective act of love and communication that aims to unite the people of Bradford through the universal language of music, thereby enriching the cultural fabric of the city in an unforgettable way.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1-3: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/16/bradford-progress-odyssey-sound-city-of-culture), [[2]](https://bradford2025.co.uk/event/the-bradford-progress/)
2. Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/16/bradford-progress-odyssey-sound-city-of-culture), [[3]](https://bradford2025.co.uk/)
3. Paragraph 5: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/16/bradford-progress-odyssey-sound-city-of-culture), [[2]](https://bradford2025.co.uk/event/the-bradford-progress/)
4. Paragraph 6: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/16/bradford-progress-odyssey-sound-city-of-culture), [[4]](https://www.itv.com/news/calendar/2024-12-31/bradford-becomes-uk-city-of-culture)
5. Paragraph 7: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/16/bradford-progress-odyssey-sound-city-of-culture), [[5]](https://www.itv.com/news/calendar/2025-01-08/uk-city-of-culture-2025-whats-on)
6. Paragraph 8: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/16/bradford-progress-odyssey-sound-city-of-culture), [[6]](https://www.tanyavital.com/news/bassline-symphony-a-bradford-city-of-culture-2025-celebration)
7. Paragraph 9: [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/16/bradford-progress-odyssey-sound-city-of-culture), [[7]](https://www.newmusicbiennial.co.uk/composers-and-commissions-2025/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/may/16/bradford-progress-odyssey-sound-city-of-culture> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://bradford2025.co.uk/event/the-bradford-progress/> - The Bradford Progress is a musical journey created by Paraorchestra, Charles Hazlewood, Jeremy Deller, and the people of Bradford. Scheduled for May 17 and 18, 2025, this event celebrates the diverse music made in Bradford, featuring a continuous 36-hour performance across various locations, including Ilkley Moor, canals, parks, cemeteries, the industrial museum, housing estates, and shopping arcades. The performance will encompass genres such as classical, bhangra, folk, punk, gospel, bassline, brass band, electronic, Sufi, Indian classical, and minimalist music.
3. <https://bradford2025.co.uk/> - Bradford 2025 is the UK's City of Culture for 2025, offering a packed programme of events throughout the year. The initiative aims to showcase the rich cultural heritage and diverse artistic talent of Bradford, featuring exhibitions, performances, and community projects that engage residents and visitors alike.
4. <https://www.itv.com/news/calendar/2024-12-31/bradford-becomes-uk-city-of-culture> - Bradford has officially been designated as the UK's City of Culture for 2025. Over the next 12 months, the city will host more than 1,000 events, including light shows, dance performances, music festivals, and film screenings. The celebrations will commence with an outdoor show called Rise, created by theatre director Kirsty Housley in collaboration with Bradford-born magician Steven Frayne, formerly known as Dynamo.
5. <https://www.itv.com/news/calendar/2025-01-08/uk-city-of-culture-2025-whats-on> - Bradford's City of Culture 2025 line-up promises a variety of events, including a reimagined journey of Mowgli through the eyes of a refugee, a screening of 'Bhaji on the Beach' with a live performance of the score by the Asian Dub Foundation, and a free drawing project called Draw, supported by David Hockney. The programme also features an adaptation of Emily Brontë's 'Wuthering Heights' by director Andrea Arnold, and a screening of 'Wallace & Gromit: The Wrong Trousers' with a live soundtrack by the City of Bradford Brass Band.
6. <https://www.tanyavital.com/news/bassline-symphony-a-bradford-city-of-culture-2025-celebration> - Bassline Symphony is an innovative collaboration between Bradford 2025, Opera North, and renowned artists such as Jamie Duggan, DJ Q, and TS7. The project aims to showcase the vibrancy of Bassline culture by fusing electronic music with orchestral performance. The event is scheduled to take place on May 9, 2025, at St George’s Hall, celebrating Bradford's rich musical heritage.
7. <https://www.newmusicbiennial.co.uk/composers-and-commissions-2025/> - The New Music Biennial 2025 will feature 20 new works selected through an open call, alongside pre-existing pieces premiered within the last four years. The festival will take place over two weekends: June 6–8 in Bradford and July 4–6 at London's Southbank Centre. Performances will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3’s New Music Show, with recordings available via all digital streaming platforms through NMC Recordings.