

Issue 8

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# LARK*music*

Perfectly tuned insurance

A close-up portrait of a woman with long, dark hair and bangs, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing a light-colored, patterned garment. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white.

## FOLLOW YOUR HEART

Featuring Aisa Ijiri



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Picture: John Davis

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# Foreward from the Editor

Follow your heart – quite a theme for this issue of LARKmusic which applauds people who each follow a unique path in our world of music.

We gasp in amazement in our cover story with pianist Aisa Ijiri, whose talents seem never ending!

Paul Bambrough also followed his heart to join the Purcell School and I am pleased to share his plans to lead the school into the future.

Violin-maker John Topham makes our pages; he is a world-renowned dendrochronologist, who, after making his own ‘kit’ can reveal if you have a Strad or a dud! We also welcome Julia Bell as our guest writer with her imaginative view on the relationship between art and contemporary music.

We congratulate the Endellion String Quartet on their 40th anniversary and introduce someone who is just starting out - our new Lark Scholar, Vera Beumer, who at 17 has the world at her feet.

Talking of youth, we also feature Talent Unlimited, a charity run by music lover Canan Maxton and the testimonies from the young musicians who benefit are really heart warming.

I hope you enjoy this new-look issue and the exclusive features. If you have a story please get in touch!

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# FOLLOW YOUR HEART

It wasn't until Aisa Ijiri came to Europe that the work of the great composers really touched her soul and she realised, in order to play Liszt and Chopin with true understanding, she would have to leave her Japanese homeland, writes Lesley Bellew

It might have been the feet of Aisa Ijiri which propelled her to international stardom. Instead, her lithe fingers, drawing mesmerising music from piano keys on the world's leading concert stages, have earned prizes, acclaim, the standing of becoming an official Steinway Artist and a tearful fulfilment of her dream of performing at Carnegie Hall.

How many of the thousands of concert-goers, enthralled each year by her playing, realise that the feet springing from pedal to pedal once sprinted along the athletics tracks of Japan with such speed that a career as an Olympic 100m runner was a very real possibility?

Also competing at national level in swimming and figure skating, and a keen skier, the young Aisa might have seemed destined for a life in sport – until music brought her to Europe, and set her on

course to honour advice from her beloved grandfather, who told her “Follow your heart”.

She recalls the chance, at the age of 12, to take part in a festival at the Liszt Academy in Budapest, Hungary, and says: “That trip changed my life. I visited where Liszt and Bartok had performed, and saw their pianos. I had masterclasses with a professor from the academy and a performance where Bartok had given his last concert.”

Already nurturing a special love for the music of Chopin, she had observed European culture through the internet and television, but she said: “There was this spirit, something in the air, something from the people. We have to be there and feel it. I felt I had touched the soul of Liszt and his soul was inside me.”

She is still friends with some of the gifted young Hungarian students who helped her to see music as a universal language, as they played duets as well as solo pieces.

“They were speaking Hungarian, German and a little bit of English. In rehearsals we didn't speak the same language but as soon as we started playing we understood we could connect and we were laughing so much. Many things in society divide us but music always pulls us together.

“A competitive athlete's career I might have had until I was 25, when the purpose is always winning. With music I can have a much richer life. That trip made it clear I should choose music.”

Music has led to Aisa working on children's programmes with Unicef and on a cultural project for the European Commission, based around the writings

of Byron and Shakespeare, which in turn brought a meeting with a director keen to make a film inspired by her life.

She has founded a music festival to offer opportunities for youngsters in concerts, masterclasses and workshops, which was first held in Tokyo in 2016, then in Belgrade with the support of the Serbian government. As artistic director, Aisa is now launching the Montecatini Piano Festival, in Tuscany, Italy, from August 16 in collaboration with Municipal Institution of Montecatini Terme and Steinway & Sons Italia.

All this is part of an ambition to grow as an artist after reaching her goal of performing at New York's Carnegie Hall in 2017.

“It was an opening to a new chapter,” she said. “I remember everything – a sold-out

concert, a standing ovation, which was more than I had dreamt about since I was seven years old. I played three encores and tears ran down my face.

“My parents, and close friends from Japan, Serbia, Sweden and London, who meant so much to me on my journey, had travelled to be there.

“At that moment I remembered words from my grandfather Isao Takei, who passed away when I was five. He was running quite a big company so I was proud of him. He had a driver who wore white gloves and people who opened his door for him. He was very tall and everybody in the company bowed to him.

“But the day before he died, from a stroke, he was running around in this big house with me. He told me that day: ‘If you go to school you may want to

“*I remember everything – a sold-out concert, a standing ovation, which was more than I had dreamt about since I was seven years old. I played three encores and tears ran down on my face”*





**TRACKS OF AISA'S LIFE:**  
Clockwise from top: The family home in Kyoto, Aisa in a 100m race, her first concert at Alti Hall, Kyoto; with her parents Katsumi and Yoko, and taking centre stage in Carnegie Hall, New York

be the best student or the prettiest girl but those things don't matter – whatever you go through just follow your heart.' I didn't understand, but I never forgot. At that moment in Carnegie Hall I thought I had followed my heart. This was it, the message he had been telling me."

The daughter of a piano teacher, Aisa had often shown individuality from an early age in largely conformist Japanese society, preferring black bags and kimonos to her girlfriends' pink, learning the unicycle with such skill that she could skip a rope with it, and enjoying risky adventures.

She says: "Most of the girls were into Barbie dolls – I like Barbie, too, but I needed more. I had great friends who were boys and we used to go to the river, climb up a rock and jump from a waterfall. It was quite high and really scary. I was about seven and I loved it."

The boys landed a punishment for climbing on the school roof, but Aisa escaped detection. "I was quite a good student so no teacher would think I was one of them, although I had been up there,

too! I loved adventure so much, I had no fear."

Neither did she have much rest in her busy childhood, reading music in the car as her parents drove five hours from their home in Kyoto for piano studies in Tokyo, then revising for school exams on the return journey. On one occasion she turned up for a piano competition with hair still wet from a swimming gala earlier the same day – and won both events.

As music took over, Aisa played at a Chopin festival in Warsaw and earned invitations to return. She said: "I loved so much about Chopin. The piano helped me share my most sensitive feelings."

The chance of a recital in Stockholm was another turning point, as it happened to attract the Swedish Government and other dignitaries attending the Nobel Prize ceremony, and was followed by the offer of a four-year scholarship to study in the city.

Aisa said: "I was 15 but, being Japanese, to Swedish people I probably looked much younger, maybe about eight or nine. They

thought I was so talented!"

Another happy coincidence was a close friend of her uncle had a flat in Östermalm, Stockholm's equivalent of South Kensington, providing delightful accommodation, and Aisa soon took to European life, having to learn Swedish quickly for essay and exam purposes.

She particularly enjoyed what she saw as a more encouraging approach to study than she had experienced with a previous, more critical, eastern European tutors, finally appreciating that her musical talent outstripped even her sporting prowess.

"I knew I was good at sports because I was winning. In eastern European teaching they follow traditions, which has worked so well for me technically. My eastern European teacher was wonderful but very tough, and I didn't feel I had a talent because of the criticism. In Sweden they are very open-minded for something new and gave me confidence in my ability."

Study visits to Berlin, Poland and Hungary followed but, having completed



**BACK TO FUTURE:** Film shooting in Florence for the film *AISA, Sonetto del Petrarca*, directed by Marco della Fonte

her Bachelor's degree, she moved to London after passing an audition for a Masters course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

Having observed Japanese cultural niceties, and adapted to social expectations in Sweden, she said: "London is a great place because there are people of so many nationalities and religious backgrounds. New York is a great, exciting city, but when I was there I missed the European culture."

Associating with drama students at the Guildhall was another stimulating and creative experience, and having obtained an Artist Diploma from the Royal College of Music Aisa is now an RCM ambassador, living in north London and enjoying making contacts in other spheres, especially fashion, while her performances have been broadcast on BBC television and radio, CNN Style and in Europe.

Steinway has been part of her life since she was a teenager, when her parents bought her a Model B classic grand – one

of three grand pianos in the home where her mother was a tutor – but her official association with the company was the silver lining to an initial mishap.

A performance she was due to give at the Royal College of Music had to be moved, because of building work, to Steinway Hall, where her rehearsal was heard by the company president, visiting on business from New York. Now she has a Steinway Model A of her own, bought from a warehouse clearance.

Aisa returns to Japan a few times each year to visit the family who gave her so much support, including her mother who made the dresses for her concerts.

She said: "My mother is a loving, wonderful woman, who is happy for me, but when I was 11 I asked why she never said she was proud of me. She said pride was not the point – 'I am supporting you to become a great woman. I want to see my daughter as an inspiring lady, who I can become friends with'."

And friends they are.



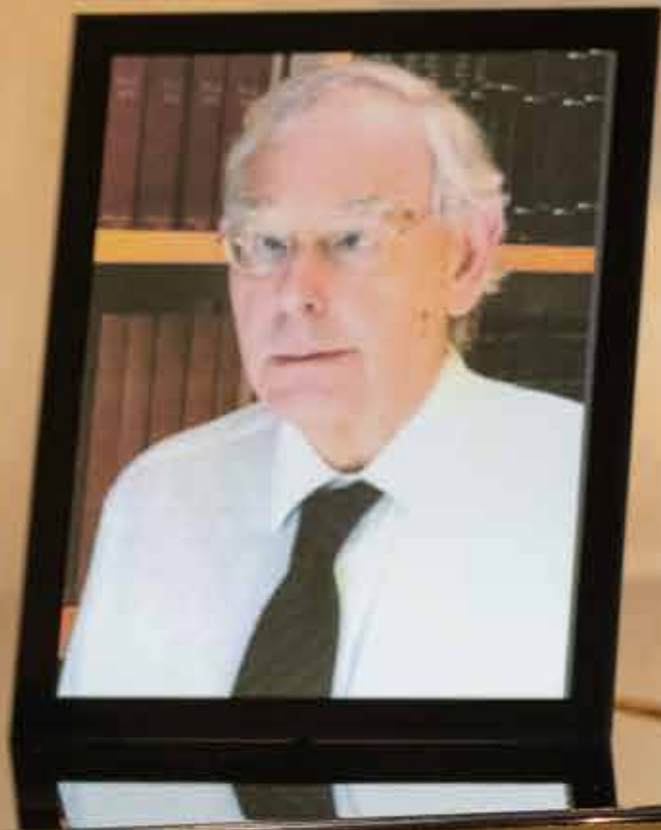
The first episode of the film *AISA, Sonetto del Petrarca*, directed by Marco della Fonte and presented by Lost Pictures, can be seen at <https://vimeo.com/321853662>

Montecatini Piano Festival, Tuscany, Italy, runs from August 16 - 20, 2019

Visit [montecatini pianofestival.com](http://montecatini pianofestival.com)



# CAN YOU HELP RUN TALENT UNLIMITED?



*FOUNDER: Canan Maxton established the charity Talent Unlimited in 2010 to support gifted young musicians Picture: Keoghan Bellew*



An appreciation for music is a given. Organisational skills are a must. And the ability to “nag” would be a useful attribute for anyone willing to help run the charity Talent Unlimited which aims to encourage the progress of exceptional young musicians.

Set up in 2010 by Turkish-born teacher Canan Maxton, Talent Unlimited provides support and financial aid to gifted students who lack the means to meet the level of fees at leading music schools and colleges.

Having established its success, Canan now wants to secure its future by ensuring that there are other leaders in place to build on her foundations.

She says: “I want to involve musicians in the running of Talent Unlimited. Apart from the website, I do 90% of the work so, if anything happens to me, there is nobody to fill my shoes.”

The charity, run entirely by volunteers, uses donations, concerts, conferences and other events to help the development of young musicians. Lark Music supported its January concert at Leighton House, Kensington.

Canan says: “My own business background is in education, literature and linguistics so I can communicate. In fact, I can nag people to death!”

“If we employ music professionals to run the charity, then we do not have the money to give the musicians. I prefer to run Talent Unlimited in such a way that we do not pay great sums for administration. It would be best if we reserve our money for the needs of our musicians. It is also excellent experience for them in their music and business life.”

Having attended Notre Dame de Sion High School in Istanbul, Canan – her name is Persian, pronounced “Janan” – studied at Bosphorus University, also in Istanbul, but left her home country in 1968 to study German at the Goethe Institute and went on to the USA for postgraduate work.

She moved to London in 1971, and married an Englishman, and one of the motivations for her charitable work came from her time as a teacher in Wimbledon. She says: “It was a ballet school where the students also had to follow a high school education, and I used to teach French, English, history and other subjects.

“The memory of a talented young ballerina who could not enter the Royal



*Emre Engin, one of the first Talent Unlimited musicians, said: “Talent Unlimited opened unimaginable doors into my career. If it wasn’t for their support I couldn’t have become one of the five violinists chosen by Pinchas Zukerman for the Manhattan School of Music*

*Picture: Ashley Chui*

Ballet School because her parents could not afford to pay for extra lessons always stuck in my memory. She was better than most of her classmates, but she was poorer. Not fair, is it, when young talent is wasted?”

Inspired to help young people in similar circumstances, she stresses that artistic talent and practice needs to be backed up with business acumen. Of Talent Unlimited, she says: “We never want to turn anyone away. Anyone who writes to us, receives a reply, guidance or a simple piece of advice even if we cannot take them into Talent Unlimited. We not only give young musicians a platform but an opportunity to network and run a business.

“After their studies not all musicians become soloists or orchestral players – many almost disappear, often because they do not have the experience to network and organise their own concerts. They learn a lot at college but they need to put it into practice to learn how to run their lives in the music business.

“Sometimes a musician who has come, say third, in a music competition can go on to become more famous than the winner. It is about how they promote themselves.”

Violinist Emre Engin was one of the first musicians to have received serious support from Talent Unlimited. He was at the Royal College of Music for four years, studying with Rashkovsky.

Canan said: “Emre asked me if he could video himself playing in my drawing room. He wanted to send the recording to Pinchas Zukerman for an audition to continue his studies at the Manhattan School of Music. I told him that Zukerman would not be impressed by the room but would listen to his playing. He replied ‘Ahh, but I will play so much better in that room!’

“Of course I let him play and record. That year Zukerman chose five students for his course and Emre received a full scholarship and was paid a good sum for his living expenses in New York. This says something about him. After his Master’s Degree Emre went to Yale where he is working on further studies with a scholarship as well. He has also been appointed lead violin for an orchestra set up by Maestro Gurer Aykal in New York.”

She gives the example of an “amazing” Talent Unlimited conductor Jack Wong, who set up an orchestra at the age of 19. “That is extraordinary and not easy if you do not have the money.

Jack is a brilliant musician. Not many musicians are capable of setting up an orchestra at the age of 19 and making it work too.”

Canan says musicians need to be recognised for their efforts and should also be paid. She said: “It is not good enough for some people to say ‘we do not have a budget for musicians’ when they have a budget for waiters at a reception



**SOPRANO NAZAN FIKRET:**

*I’ve been part of the Talent Unlimited family for many years. They helped and believed in me at a very difficult time in my development as a young singer. I will never forget their kindness and endorsement.*



**JACK WONG:**

*As a conductor, concert violinist and pianist in my last year at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama I am extremely grateful for the kind support, in particular, for my ensemble Hornton Chamber Orchestra*

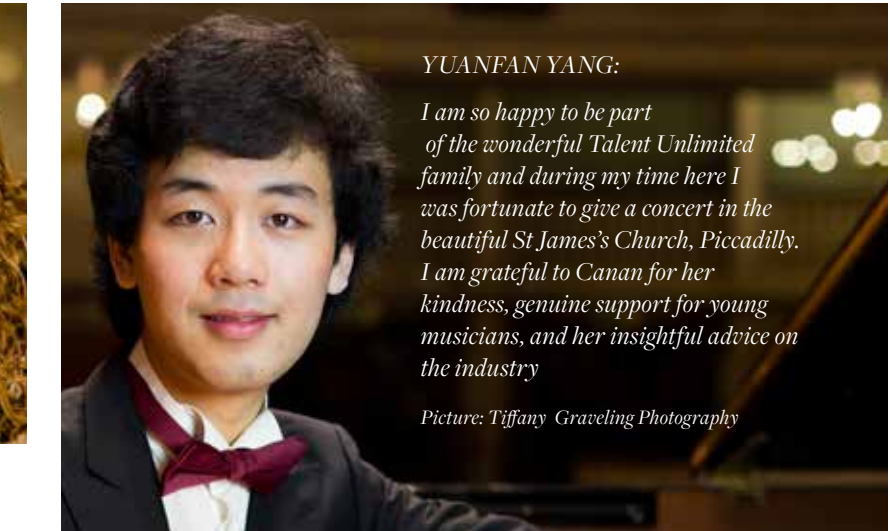
where the musicians are providing the music.

“I also tell our musicians to talk to people at the concerts and always ask for their business card.

“Don’t be shy. When you have the card write on it when and where you met them and then if you want to invite them to a concert you can remind them of that.”

Canan came from a music-loving family – her sister was a good pianist, her mother sang Turkish classical songs and her opera-loving father had a fine tenor voice. “He woke us up very early most mornings with opera arias.”

Like all upper-middle class girls growing



**YUANFAN YANG:**

*I am so happy to be part of the wonderful Talent Unlimited family and during my time here I was fortunate to give a concert in the beautiful St James’s Church, Piccadilly. I am grateful to Canan for her kindness, genuine support for young musicians, and her insightful advice on the industry*

*Picture: Tiffany Graveling Photography*

**ALEKSANDAR PAVLOVIC:**

*In a world where artificial intelligence is taking over, it is essential not to forget the importance of arts and human interaction and the strength we draw from them. It is reassuring to know there still are individuals who understand this and support young artists.*

*Such is Talent Unlimited, providing financial aid and all sorts of practical guidance. Being a pianist, I too benefit from their support. We are all grateful to Canan Maxton for her really tireless efforts and genuine help*



up in Istanbul she played the piano but, having decided her enjoyment of listening was greater than her natural ability, she exercised her organisational skills by setting up a music club at Bosphorus University.

Fast forward to 2010 when Talent Unlimited was launched at the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies and has attracted patrons like conductor Gürer Aykal, former British Ambassador to Turkey Sir Timothy Daunt and pianist Gülsin Onay.

The students in Talent Unlimited come from all over the world and at Leighton House, in London, the recent Lark Music-supported event featured violinist

Erzhan Kulibaev and pianist Alim Beisembayev, both from Kazakhstan. Their extraordinary ability astounded the audience and confirmed the very reason why Talent Unlimited must continue long into the future.

At LARKmusic, we think the extraordinary messages from the musicians in this feature pay testimony to Canan Maxton’s work and we hope the charity can continue to support talented and dedicated young musicians who devote their lives to performing wonderful music.

**If you are able give support or some time to the charity please visit [talent-unlimited.org.uk](http://talent-unlimited.org.uk)**



# It's all about looking to the future says music school's fifth head in six years

A warmth and sense of community convinced tenor and organist Paul Bambrough to become principal of the celebrated Purcell School for Young Musicians, where he has plans to enhance its reputation for world-class tuition, writes Lesley Bellew

He may be the fifth head in six years at Purcell School, which in the past has attracted headline descriptions such as 'troubled', but Paul Bambrough is focused on the excellence of an institution decorated with awards for its pupils and alumni and for its distinguished contribution to musical education.

He said: "This is all about the future. Whatever turbulence the school has been through in the past, one thing has remained consistent – that it has provided world-class musical tuition.

"What we are determined to do, particularly as a very new management team, is to look to the future, to not reinvent what the Purcell School is about but to reassert what the school has always been about and make people aware that what's going on here is absolutely unique and distinctive."

The Purcell School is Britain's oldest specialist music school, having been founded by violinist and teacher Rosemary Rapaport and her friend Irene Forster in London in 1962. Named since 1973 in honour of composer Henry Purcell, and relocated in 1997 to Bushey, Hertfordshire, the co-educational boarding and day school now has about 180 instrumentalists, singers and composers aged 10 to 18, as its students,



*FULL OF CONFIDENCE: Paul Bambrough says 'We have the advantage of having highly gifted, highly talented, motivated kids and it's easy to add value to that with the finest teachers, the finest musicians, the finest industry experts and they immediately lap that up'*

with almost a third from overseas.

Mr Bambrough, a tenor, pianist, organist and harpsichordist, who has performed at leading halls and cathedrals, including concerts with the likes of The Three Tenors and Sir Willard White, became

principal in September last year.

He had been vice-principal at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and, previously, director of music at Farnborough Sixth Form College, where his achievements in creating the country's



*BUILDING THE FUTURE: The Purcell School for Young Musicians, in Bushey, Hertfordshire, is Britain's oldest specialist music school*

largest A-Level music department were featured in a BBC Radio 3 documentary and earned the praise of the then Education Secretary Michael Gove.

He admits leaving Birmingham had not been an easy decision, but says of the Purcell School: "It's a place that's hard not to fall in love with.

"The thing that struck me most was a real warmth and sense of community, and openness about the way people interacted. I thought 'This is quite special'."

The school's accolades include the UNESCO Mozart Medal and being recognised as the first centre of excellence for piano tuition by Paolo Fazioli, founder of Fazioli Pianoforte – the school's four superb Fazioli Italian pianos are insured, like its other instruments, with Lark Music. It also has a series of Good Schools Guide awards and an excellent record for its pupils in the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition.

Ironically, Mr Bambrough describes his own musical journey, self-taught during a Wiltshire childhood and comprehensive school education, as the antithesis of that taken by most Purcell pupils.

"I woke up one morning when I was nine and I heard the church bells ringing and I

said to my mother 'I want to go to church this morning'." Amid 'great consternation in the house' his mother accosted the resident village nursing sister on her way to the service, and persuaded her to take the young Paul along.

He recalled: "I was completely transfixed by the sound of the organ, although I didn't realise at that stage how terribly it was being played. I remember going up to the organ console at the end of the service and being fascinated with all the buttons and the keys."

Impressed by his enthusiasm, the vicar allowed him to spend hours in the church, as he taught himself to play the organ and read music.

At just 13, having enjoyed seeing a production of HMS Pinafore, he recruited and conducted older villagers in their own Gilbert and Sullivan opera, effectively founding a company which is still running, and three years later he was heard playing at a concert and referred to John Marsh, director of music at the renowned church of St Mary Redcliffe in Bristol.

He said: "There began probably the most important musical influence of my life. John became a mentor and friend. He had this incredible charisma and ability to

motivate the most unlikely people."

Along with a new bursar, Adam Wroblewski, new director of music, former Rambert dance company music director Paul Hoskins, and two longer-serving managers, he is now seeking to introduce his own educational philosophy at the Purcell School.

He says: "One of the controversial things I said in my first meeting with staff was that describing us as a specialist music school does sort of suggest that you do the music very well and pay lip service to the rest. I'm much more comfortable with our name, the Purcell School for Young Musicians, so that the whole school experience is as important.

"We have the advantage of having highly gifted, highly talented, motivated kids and it's easy to add value to that with the finest teachers, the finest musicians, the finest industry experts and they immediately lap that up. The harder part is to tackle everything else and to make them understand they will be far better artists eventually if they are better historians, mathematicians and scientists, because art is only ever a comment on our existence.

"Being a musician is about being human and being human is about having an understanding of the world."





The Purcell School's past pupils include pianist Martin James Bartlett, harpist Anne Denholm and jazz pianist Jacob Collier

► He replies to parents concerned about the academic side in case their children 'can't play one day' by saying: "The question should be what happens if they do play one day and they've got nothing to say?"

"It's the great artists who have this incredible intellectual curiosity that asks questions, who read politics and philosophy. That informs their art."

As well as the orchestral disciplines, the school offers voice, composition and jazz tuition, with ensembles including orchestras, chamber groups, choirs, a big band and a jazz band, while students often form folk, rock or electronic groups and barbershop quartets.

The school, whose patrons are HRH the Prince of Wales and Sir Simon Rattle, also takes pride in its outreach programme, with students delivering music workshops for other youngsters or collaborating on projects with other schools, while Purcell musicians perform at venues including the Royal Festival Hall, Cadogan Hall and Wigmore Hall, and at events including the Deal Festival, in Kent.

Entry is based upon musical ability, with bursaries available from the school and, for UK pupils, through the government's Music and Dance Scheme, and another of Mr Bambrough's ambitions is a fundraising campaign.

He says: "We're incredibly grateful for what the government makes available but,

*"It's the great artists who have this incredible intellectual curiosity that asks questions, who read politics and philosophy. That informs their art."*

like anything that is politically controlled, it's not a guarantee. It's quite possible that a future government might say 'We've got better uses for this money'."

With past pupils including pianist Martin James Bartlett – BBC Young Musician of the Year 2014 – the official harpist to the Prince of Wales Anne Denholm, Grammy award-winning jazz pianist Jacob Collier and Oscar and BAFTA nominated film composer Mica Levi, the school has a lot of positive history to live up to.

Re-emphasising his commitment to avoiding "false barriers" between music tuition and the other arts, science and maths subjects, Mr Bambrough says: "No child lives in a vacuum. Education is about people and everyone has different strengths and weaknesses.

"What's really exciting is when you try to merge all of those. Who knows, maybe at the Purcell School we can foster a completely new educational model."

**For more information and concert dates visit [purcell-school.org](http://purcell-school.org)**

# BREXIT UPDATE

News from David Foster

Private Client Director

We all now wish for a resolution so we can get on with our lives



At the time of writing, Brexit remains a cause of uncertainty for businesses throughout Europe, with the UK unsure and divided over the nature of its future relationship with the EU.

As you can imagine Lark Music has been planning for the Brexit contingency for sometime, and we were recently delighted to complete the purchase of Dublin based broker Robertson Low.

This is great news for our business as it means that irrespective of the outcome of Brexit, Lark Music remains able and committed to look after our clients in the European Union.

If the UK does eventually leave the EU, we will look after our EU clients

from our Dublin office. However, if as seems likely there is a transition period following a deal, we will continue to handle business from London until such time as Brexit happens.

As part of our planning, I've had a couple of trips to Dublin to start building our team, and meet new colleagues at Robertson Low.

Despite mainly seeing the inside of a recruitment office, taxi and an airport, we did find the time to catch up with our new colleagues over a pint of Guinness and dinner!

As well as the business community, those that work in the musical arts have faced a

prolonged period of uncertainty in terms of what post Brexit life will look like and the ways in which it will affect musicians travelling and working throughout Europe.

Whatever your view of the rights or wrongs of Brexit, I think we all now wish for a resolution to the various issues, so that we can all get on with our lives and talk about something else!

Having an office in Dublin is an exciting opportunity for the wider Aston Lark business, and we see many opportunities to expand our presence in Ireland and the EU.

So Slainte !





# Meet violinist Vera, our talented Aston Lark Scholar, age 17

Vera Beumer is so thrilled by being at the Royal College of Music (RCM) that she can barely contain her excitement.

Life at the RCM has not matched the hopes of violinist Vera Beumer – it has considerably exceeded them.

“I had high expectations of the RCM, but it is so much better,” enthuses the teenager from the Netherlands, who has been awarded this year’s Aston Lark Insurance Scholarship.

“Everything they do has a personal touch, even though they have such massive projects. What has really impressed me is the care – the college cares about you personally. I did not expect that in a big school where everyone is so good.”

Vera, who started playing the violin at the age of seven, is emerging as no small talent herself, having already won the Dutch national Princess Christina prize and, in the UK, the Benjamin Britten International Violin Competition.

At the RCM she is studying with violin

professors Gabrielle Lester and Daniel Rowland, the latter, by neat coincidence, having spent childhood years in the Netherlands, with periods studying in Amsterdam and Brussels.

She says: “It is amazing to have two teachers, two influences, so I can take the best from both of them.”

Vera was concertmaster with the Dutch Youth String Orchestra for two years from September 2016, and keeps in touch with old friends, admitting that it was a heart-breaking decision to leave in search of what she saw as an opportunity for an even better musical education in London.

“As a concertmaster I tried to not nag. That’s only necessary when someone keeps making a wrong note!” she says. “Here, if I was a concertmaster, I would not need to say anything, everyone is too good!”

“The music world is so big, it scares me a bit, but there are so many nationalities at

the college. I have met three other Dutch students, violinists and a cellist.”

Vera, who plays a 1760 Landolfi violin on loan from a Dutch foundation, previously studied at the University of the Arts Utrecht and was featured in a documentary as a pupil of distinguished violinist Emmy Verhey.

Vera has also performed as an orchestral soloist – the first time at the age of 11 – and as first violinist in a string quartet.

As for the future, despite insisting she is not a fan of competitions, she intends to enter more for the sake of experience and setting goals. She said: “I want to go outside the college, after all, you have to know the real world, and I may be doing a recording soon. I would like to be in an orchestra and, eventually, a concertmaster.”

Where would she aim? She laughs: “The London Philharmonic Orchestra!”

“*I had high expectations of the RCM but it is so much better. Everything they do has a personal touch, even though they have such massive projects*”



# Play safe in the gig economy

Assistant Account Handler **Charlotte Barrett** explains how musical instrument insurers are changing to meet needs of the gig economy

With the bonus of a neat pun, the 'gig economy' – now handy jargon for politicians and financial pundits – is an idea that would have been recognised by musicians throughout the ages.

The term, coined at the height of the financial crisis in early 2009, refers to workers in casual or part-time jobs without healthcare assurance, pensions or paid holiday – sound familiar?

Certainly, the flexibility and freedom of such a lifestyle has its attractions, but it does have risks for musicians which can be addressed with help from insurers.

Oddly, the origin of the word 'gig' in its musical sense is unknown, though according to the Oxford English Dictionary it may have its roots in gigue, a lively dance form of Italian origin, or from the Old French term giquer, to dance.

It was not until 1926 that the British music magazine Melody Maker made the first use of 'gig' referring to a 'musical engagement', where it is used by jazz musicians in the story "One Popular Gig Band Makes Use of a Nicely Printed Booklet".

Today's usage has become more associated with the business models of companies such as Uber and Airbnb, and it is estimated that five million people in the UK are employed in the gig economy.

With so many musicians playing gigs in public areas, including bars or smaller locations that may not traditionally have been used as venues, it is becoming more important they cover themselves for any injury or damage that may be caused in the hubbub of loading equipment, sound-checking and performing.

Lark Music provides clients with the ability to quickly buy affordable Public Liability cover of up to £5 million, providing essential protection for legal liability arising from injury or damage, which could result from someone tripping over a wire or stand, or a musician accidentally dropping an instrument.

'Millennials' choosing to opt out of the traditional workforce expect quick and easy online access to insurance, and Lark Music offers a quote and buy system that gives them the ability to buy, renew and

manage their insurance policies from anywhere, on any device and at any time.

Lark Music can provide online cover for a wide range of instruments, up to a value of £500,000, while insurance for anything valued at more than this can be arranged by phone. The team takes pride in adapting personalised advice to clients interested in today's more technologically driven and globalised form of freelancing.

When J.S. Bach was asked how he had mastered music to such a high degree, his response was: "I was obliged to be industrious. Whoever is equally industrious will succeed equally well".

Not only does this quotation point to the diligence and discipline engendered by musicians, but it also serves as a reminder that insurers must continue being industrious in their efforts to provide flexible and wide-ranging coverage for their musical clients, so that they remain up to date with the modernised world of music.

**For more information contact Charlotte at [charlotte.barrett@larkmusic.com](mailto:charlotte.barrett@larkmusic.com)**



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# MUSICAL NOTES

News from Julie Webb

Private Client Director



*WHEN OPERA MET INSURANCE: At Lloyd's of London: Clockwise from top: Clare Hyland and Netty Isserlis; Nick Sears with Katy Thomson and Harry Thatcher; the students take an encore; Gillian Newson with Joel Williams; Michael Rosewell, Josephine Goddard and Timothy Edlin*

*NOW and THEN: The Endellion String Quartet in 1979, starting out with original member Louise Williams and now – Andrew Watkinson, Ralph de Souza, Garfield Jackson and David Waterman. The 40th anniversary cake was presented after the Wigmore Hall concert*

Music – breakfast, lunch and dinner, that's been my story and it was at a garden party with Nick Sears, Head of Opera at the Royal College of Music, that we toyed with idea of how to combine opera with insurance.

A little seed of an idea soon saw 70 guests attend a concert in the Lloyd's of London Old Library with a dazzling performance by the RCM Opera Studio.

Guests were not only surprised by the historic panelled room inside architect Norman Foster's iconic 1970s stainless steel structure but impressed by the students' unique and polished extracts from *Marriage of Figaro*.

Led by Nick Sears and working under the artistic direction of Sir Thomas Allen, students Theodore Platt, Julieth Lozano, Harry Thatcher, recently graduated Josephine Goddard, Lauren Joyanne Morris, Katy Thomas, Thomas Edlin, Joel Williams and accompanist Joseph Ramadan were nothing short of amazing and I extend my thanks for such a thrilling performance.

## The Gift of Music

Milein Cosman was an eminent and prolific artist, who died at the end of 2017 aged 96. She worked on many commissions for publishers, magazines and newspapers, sketching mostly from life and her many subjects included

Benjamin Britten, Yehudi Menuhin and Sir Thomas Beecham. She definitely 'had a thing' for Stravinsky!

Many of her works have been gifted to the RCM and it was a lovely evening to see some of the works and to hear pieces of the period. Thank you for the invitation!

## Nicky's masterclass

I popped over to see Nicola Benedetti's masterclass at Menuhin School and sat with the students in the Hall which was a joy. Three early teens performed in front of their peers and learnt from alumni Nicky who made them feel comfortable and made them consider not just perfect notes but presence and communicating to an audience.

## Congratulations!

It was a wonderful evening celebrating the Endellion String Quartet's 40th anniversary and their Wigmore Hall concert featured superb renditions of Haydn, Bartok and Beethoven – all pieces they included in their repertoire in the early years.

I loved the encore, Happy Birthday Ramble, by Netty Isserlis. It was commissioned by the Endellions for their fifth birthday, and I bet they didn't think, at that time, they would be be playing it again for their 40th.

The concert programme featured a picture of the quartet 40 years ago at

Prussia Cove with Louise Williams who played 2nd violin. Louise and I have been connected via the Harrison-Frank Family Foundation but I had not realised the Endellion connection until this concert. What a small circle this music world is.

## More celebrations

I saw Louise Williams again at the Harrison-Frank Family Foundation fifth anniversary concert, hosted by Elisabeth and Bob Boas in their London home. It was a real treat – and the first time that Richard Harrison had watched the musicians play on instruments loaned by the foundation. In our last issue of LARKmusic we highlighted how Richard's Harrison-Frank Family

Foundation supports young musicians who need fine instruments to continue their career.

A concert by those young players was rather moving so thank you and congratulations to the young players who put on such a tremendous concert.

Here are the name checks – Hatty Haynes, Joana Ly, Lieve Starker, Shi Ling Chin and Boglarka Gyorgy, violin; Alice Earll, baroque violin; Heather Stuart and Christopher Cohen, violin Antoine Picton, piano; Ionel and Djumash Poulsen, violin and Henrietta Hill, viola; Agata Daraskaite and Magdalena Loth-Hill, violin; The Maxwell String Quartet, Scott Lowry, Emma Pantel, Oscar





# MUSICAL NOTES

News from Julie Webb Private Client Director

## ▶ Perks and Katherine Waller, violin.

Richard said he was overwhelmed by the occasion and the quality of the music performed by the musicians, many of whom are becoming well-established UK and international soloists.

## London Sinfonietta

Lark Music sponsored the Steve Reich: Music for 18 Musicians at Royal Festival Hall. And what a night it was and so great to see our banner in front of a full capacity crowd.

The Clapping music was a little taster and I found it amazing how the two guys 'doing the clapping' didn't get distracted.

Reich's Music for 18 Musicians has become one of the most iconic works of American minimalism and we experienced this absorbing music of pulsating rhythms, cyclical chords and shifting harmonics performed by some of his finest interpreters in the world.

## Ryan at Snape Maltings

Our relationship with Snape Maltings continues to blossom and as part of the Aldeburgh Festival, Ryan Wigglesworth will conduct the Knussen Chamber Orchestra at an Aston Lark-supported concert on June 11.

The concert also features soprano Claire Booth and tenor Mark Padmore.

Music will include Oliver Knussen's last work O Hototogisu! which was premiered at the 2017 Aldeburgh Festival, its seven haiku settings interspersed with the bird-like song of a solo flute.

There are more miniatures from Knussen (transcription of Scriabin piano pieces) and music by Britten, plus the composer's great friend Takemitsu.

The programme is completed by a new tribute from composer-conductor Ryan, and Schubert's elegant and high-spirited symphony No 5 28'.

Well, I just can't wait and if you are interested in joining me email charlotte.barrett@larkmusic.com

*Julie*



Ryan Wigglesworth will conduct at Snape Maltings on June 11

Picture: Benjamin Ealovega

# 'Delight' as Lark Music joins the Worshipful company of Musicians

We are proud to announce that Lark Music has joined the Worshipful Company of Musicians, the only City of London Livery Company representing the performing arts.

We feel that becoming part of a 500-year-old Livery Company, whose members are all connected with music through performance, instrument-making, teaching, publishing, law and finance means and we fit very nicely in to this world.

The Worshipful Company of Musicians was formed in 1500, as the Musicians' Company, and gained its Royal Charter from King James I in 1604.

One of its leading aims is to encourage talent through schemes such as the Collard Fellowship, which offers financial grants for young professionals facing difficulties, and Glyndebourne's John Christie Award – whose winners include Alfie Boe – while its service awards recognise lifetime contributions to music.

The Company also promotes musical education through concerts and outreach programmes, covering classical to jazz, brass and pop, supported by income from endowments, gifts and legacies.

A range of concerts organised annually by the company include Bach cantatas, summer jazz and a carol service, while Elgar's Elegy is one of the manuscripts in its extensive historic archives.

Private Client Director Julie Webb said: "We are passionate about music and music education so Lark Music's corporate membership will go towards supporting an Outreach Programme our Yeomen Young Artists provide and in particular, the work that the programme does with special needs schools in Ealing and Swiss Cottage."



Joe Shiner inspires pupils at Hargrave Park School in, London

Picture Adrian Mumford

The Clerk of the Worshipful Company of Musicians, Hugh Lloyd, said he was 'delighted that having been a long-standing customer of Lark Insurance, Aston Lark Limited was joining the Musicians' Company as Corporate Members'.

Hugh added: "Every year the Company gives more than £250,000 for a range of awards, scholarships and medals. The awards make a real difference to the lives of outstanding young singers, composers and instrumentalists as they make the transition from study to a professional career ranging from Classical Music to Jazz, Music Theatre, Popular Music, Brass Bands and the Military Schools of Music.

"In addition to their award, our winners join the Company on a Young Artists programme for five years. This entitles them to be considered for a range of performance opportunities, a top priority as they seek to become known.

"This year our Yeomen will give more than 75 performances at venues from the Wigmore Hall, where the Company organises its own concerts every year, to major music festivals across the country.

"Our Young Artists also take part in an Outreach Programme, taking music into primary schools mainly in the inner London boroughs that have little or no music provision and include some special needs schools. In 2017/18, 40 of our young artists made 166 visits to 46 London state primary schools reaching 8,500 children."

Under the motto Preserve Harmony – and based since 2013 at Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the company has developed partnerships with schools, colleges, universities and conservatoires, fulfilling the philanthropic ambitions of a leading member in the 19th century, the music publisher William Chappell.



# Lord of the rings

When John Topham considers a Ring Saga, the works of Wagner may not be at the forefront of his mind, writes Julie Webb

As a researcher into the creation of the world's finest violins, he has pioneered the use of computer analysis with dendrochronology – the science of tree-ageing – in helping to determine the history of instruments.

In particular, his examinations of growth rings in violin wood has led to more authoritative attributions of instruments thought to have been crafted by the Italian master Antonio Stradivari.

The highlight so far of his work, as what might be termed a 'ringing detective' was the affirmation that a violin in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and known majestically as The Messiah, is almost certainly a Stradivarius, despite some experts' doubts over its origins.

John said: "Charles Beare, who is one of the most respected violin experts in the world, was sure this particular violin was a Strad."

His conclusion was detailed in a report published in the Journal of Archeological Science, with violin maker Derek McCormick, in which he said: "The date of the front of The Messiah is entirely consistent with the attributed date of manufacture."

"The front of the Messiah strongly cross-matches the wood of two other undisputed Stradivari violins of the same period."

John learned to make violins at Germany's prestigious Mittenwald School when, at 17, he was the only student from the UK.

He said: "In the late 1960s, it was possible to get in to that school but now there are hundreds of applicants for each place. I



*IT'S ALL ABOUT PRECISION: John Topham explains his painstaking work to Julie Webb and right, a copy of his pattern and examples of violins he has examined*

didn't even speak German, although at that young age, after about three months, I picked up enough of the language to get by.

"Carpentry was an attractive option for me – I was good at woodwork, maths and science – but there was music in my family, too. My mother studied at the Royal College of Music and played the violin, viola and keyboards.

"At Mittenwald you pass your exams to become a qualified apprentice and I came back to the UK to work at Withers. For about six years I made viola da gambas and repaired violins for six years and then became self-employed."

In the mid-1980s, John studied with the Open University for the maths and science degree which gave him the skills to develop his own computer program. He said: "I had my own console, learned the basic language and how to analyse data. I had written this rather crude software and thought it would never work, or it would all go wrong."

However, when John began examining the growth rings on the bodies of wooden instruments, his system proved invaluable in analysing the results and producing graphs which compared the ageing processes revealed.

John's achievements quickly led to his reputation spreading, resulting in research commissions from all over the world. He has now analysed more 100 Stradivari violins from the period 1666-1736, most of the maker's working life.

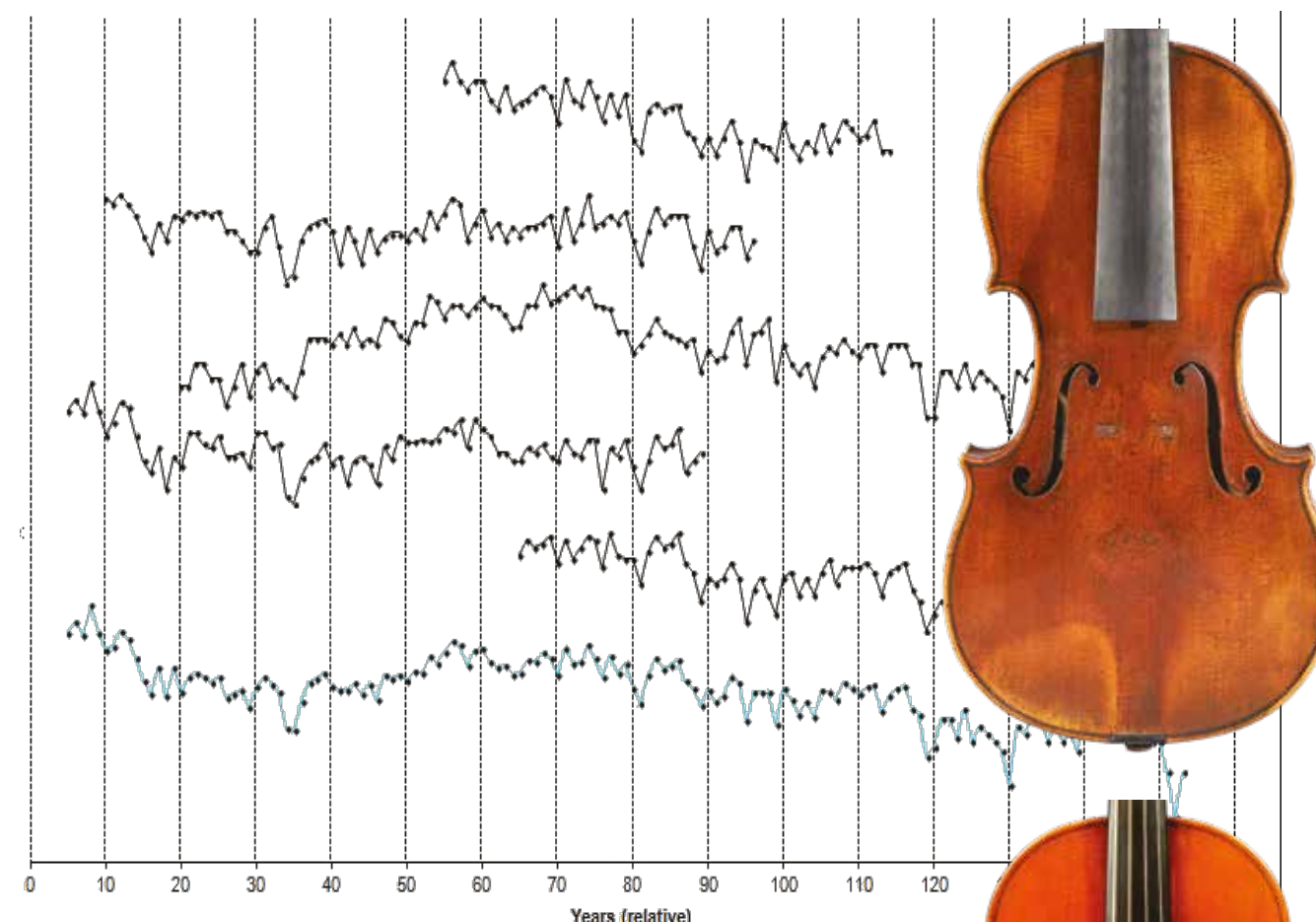
He said: "It is something that has always fascinated me and every year, when I go to Cremona, I ask the same question: 'Why are Antonio Stradivari's violins so superior?'"

"Of course, there are many contributing factors for the quality – craftsmanship, perhaps the varnish recipe, the treatment of the wood or perhaps the characteristics of the spruce, picea abies, he used for the front.

"Were those trees supplied during the mini-Ice Age, in the 15th to 19th centuries, and so have unique structural properties?"

His research suggests that while some violin makers were consistent in their choice of wood, others, including Stradivari, were less predictable, and the quality of their instruments depended at least as much on craftsmanship than any particular characteristics of the timber.

In compiling his database of musical dendrochronology, he explains: "You have to start off being as consistent as possible,



making sure of your data and labelling the sequences you measure precisely, so then they become references for future work."

Reading research papers on violin dendrochronology published from Hamburg University, and a query from a dealer, inspired him to explore the subject further, combining his violin-making and maths skills, and his general love of woodwork.

"I just became really interested," he said. "I built my own 'kit' to measure the lines in wood. It's simply a measuring table with a device that measures the distance and moves precisely up to 100ths of a millimetre and has a x16 magnification.

"I place the violin rest against the machine and shine a light on the surface to see the grain, pattern and lines. I then use the computer to analyse the results and print them into a series of measurements. I am always looking at matches and looking for consistent patterns."

Basic assumptions are that a tree ring is formed once a year – at the beginning of a year's growth the tree produces cells. The first period, from March, produces full-width cells, then from autumn the

late wood's growth is narrower, but John suspected that previous researchers who had examined the direction of growth from the outside to the middle were wrong – and when he reversed the data it matched his own.

He and collaborators like Derek McCormick, and violin restorer Peter Ratcliff, are careful to stress the limits of dendrochronology, in particular for detecting fakes, and warn that future forgers might try to source wood from, for instance, old Alpine chalets, to try to match that used in genuine masterpieces.

However, Ratcliff did tell Nature magazine in 2014 that the technique had detected at least two violins, previously attributed to Stradivari, which could not have been made before 1920, while others had soared in value after their soundboards were matched to trees known to have been used by the master.

John also observes that the technique is more precise than carbon dating and, in a 1997 article headed The Ring Saga he and McCormick wrote: "If a positive dendrochronological dating of a piece of wood is achieved it is absolute ... there is no plus or minus, or margin of error."

*"I just became really interested. I built my own 'kit' to measure the lines in wood."*



# Music meets modern art



ART ADVISORY: Paraphrased Director Julia Bell

## Guest writer Julia Bell considers the relationship between art and music

The relationship between art and music has always been intertwined and the source of inspiration on both sides but in particular for contemporary artists.

The ability to create emotive experiences that embrace the viewer through the reference of music within contemporary art enables artists to tap into our senses in multiple ways. Music and art draws on similar creative sensibilities and therefore the boundaries between the two are often blurred. The tension between composition and creative chance also makes for fertile ground and this isn't just something that applies to the contemporary.

In 1913 Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) collaborated with his sisters to produce a musical composition with notes drawn from a hat called Musical Erratum. This piece created through random selection had a performative process that

surrendered control into the hands of chance.

Duchamp's friend John Cage (1912-1992) known for his avant-garde percussion and electroacoustic compositions also pushed the boundaries between art, music and performance. One of his most celebrated works was his performance of Variations VII as part of 9 Evenings: Theatre and Engineering at the 69th Regiment Armory in New York in 1966.

This live unpredictable performance was inspired by the principle of randomness in selecting materials for it. These widely sourced sounds were brought together at once from locations outside of the venue, transistor radios intercepted shows and interference between stations and 10 telephone lines picked up noise across New York alongside Geiger counters whose signals were converted into sounds and microphones amplified the

noises performers created via a range of domestic and mechanical appliances.

The sounds already present in the Armory were also amplified with those sourced from radio and telephone communications and the brainwaves of Cage's collaborators on stage and sounds triggered by performers walking by the photocells under the parallel platforms in the Armory where sculpture also served as part of the set. All created an unfiltered cacophony of live noises all deemed of equal importance. (This pioneering work was recreated in February 2008, with the UK Premiere performance of John Cage's Variations VII which took place as part of AV Festival).

The composition of sound, as an audio installation experience as opposed to a visual one, was also the basis of a work by Janet Cardiff, commissioned by BALTIC Centre for Contemporary as part of its

pre-opening programme and revisited as part of its 10th Anniversary programme in 2012. The work entitled The Forty Part Motet recreated 'Spem in Alium' (Hope in Any Other), a renaissance choral piece composed by Thomas Tallis in 1570.

This piece is considered to be one of the greatest pieces of early English music and originally involved eight choirs of five voices each. Cardiff's recreation consisted of 40 loudspeakers placed in an oval arrangement within an empty minimal space with no visual distractions, the emphasis being on the audio experience.

Each speaker plays back a recording of each of the 40 voices covering bass, baritone, tenor, alto and soprano from the Salisbury Cathedral Choir singing 'Spem in Alium'. With 40 speakers the boundary between performers and audience diminishes so the visitor can experience the piece from within the performance,

hear individual voices and understand the layers and complexity in greater nuance.

Music played a strong part in the creative processes of American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988). Not only did he listen incessantly to jazz as he created work, he also created music himself through his Noise rock band GRAY, named after the book, Gray's Anatomy (a gift from his mother as a young child) that was a constant source of inspiration within his paintings.

The music Basquiat created blended ambient and jazz and a form of avant-garde music called No Wave that developed within the downtown New York City art and music scene during the late 70s. Artists and musicians experimented with funk, free jazz, noise, atonality and dissonance to create work in reaction to punk rock.

The soundtrack to Glenn O'Brien's film Downtown 81 featured music by Basquiat and his band GRAY.

In 1983 a 12-inch single containing two versions of the same track "Beat Bop" was produced by Basquiat and featured hip hop artists Rammellzee and K-Rob. One side had vocals and the other instrumental.

A limited press and the single's cover featuring artwork by Basquiat ensured these editions were highly sought after by collectors. Around a similar period, punk rock band Black Flag was formed by the brother of artist Raymond Pettibon. Pettibon was bass player and designed the band's logo and his artwork continued to appear on Black Flag's album covers and merchandise. He also designed an album cover for Sonic Youth and transitioned successfully into the contemporary art scene.



Janet Cardiff  
Forty Part Motet 2012  
Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art  
Picture courtesy of Colin Davidson and Baltic



➤ This transition to contemporary art also applied to John Cage in the last 15 years of his life and extended to how he designed the layout of his work in exhibitions. Cage's art was the focus of Hayward Touring Exhibition John Cage: Every Day is a Good Day in 2010.

Visual and musical collaborations so prevalent during the days of vinyl continues in new ways. Music forms a personal soundtrack to our lives, it can have a particular resonance to specific times in our life, giving us an alternative religion, which is why it, too, is so often a source of inspiration for artists.

Over the last 15 years British artist Graham Dolphin has explored fandom through his work, producing beautifully crafted works in drawing, sculpture, sound and video.

This intimate relationship fans have with popular music, which moves into idolatry once the artist is deceased, provides rich source material for his artistic practice. In 2016 his work was the focus of a major survey by Northern Gallery for Contemporary in Sunderland where alongside his work a soundtrack was composed about Dolphin for the exhibition created by musician Jad Fair.

Fair responded to the request by Dolphin who issued a brief description of himself to the musician from which to create a new song encouraging the act of fandom to himself.

In 2018 an exhibition at London's National Portrait Gallery, Michael Jackson: On the Wall explored the impact singer had on artists, starting with Andy Warhol who referenced Jackson as early as 1982. Since then and even in death, Jackson features in many contemporary artists' work.

Graham Dolphin was one of the artists who was commissioned to create works for this exhibition. One of the works based on the original white Hugo Boss suit worn by Jackson on the cover of his 1983 album Thriller. A version was produced by Boss to Dolphin's exact measurements and turned into a new artwork by Dolphin painstakingly handwriting them across the entire suit.

Julia Bell is founder and Director of Parapluie. The company guides and connects clients to contemporary art through a range of professional services.

Visit [parapluieart.com](http://parapluieart.com)



ABOVE and BELOW: Graham Dolphin's Thriller BOSS Black, Ink on material, dimensions variable  
Courtesy of the artist and Hugo Boss



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# In tune with history

## Steal a Skull, Examine a Genius; Stories from the Bate Collection

by Assistant Account Handler **Charlotte Barrett**

An association might seem unlikely between Haydn's skull, Oliver Cromwell's trumpeter, the Battle of Waterloo, and Handel's harpsichord, yet all have contributed significantly to the remarkable Bate Collection of Musical Instruments, part of the Faculty of Music at the University of Oxford.

The collection displays more than 1,000 period instruments, many of which are still played by students, plus there are portraits and interesting miscellaneous items. However, while the earliest surviving English trumpet, made by Cromwell's state trumpeter, a military serpent played at Waterloo, and Handel's harpsichord could be viewed as typical, if intriguing, exhibits in such an environment, the plaster cast of Haydn's skull brings to mind the title of his 1775 opera *The Unexpected Encounter*.

The morbid story behind the real skull's journey around Austria was revealed by Andrew Lamb, the manager of the collection, when I visited. He explained that several plaster copies of Haydn's skull had been sent to centres of musical excellence, including Oxford, in the 1920s.

When Joseph Haydn died on May 31, 1809, Austria was at war and Vienna was occupied by Napoleon's troops, and thus his funeral was a rather simple affair, and his burial took place in the modest Hundsturm cemetery in Gumpendorf, his local parish. Shortly after, two men contrived to sever and steal the dead composer's head by bribing the gravedigger, Jakob Demuth.

The two men were Johann Nepomuk Peter, governor of the provincial prison of Lower Austria, and Joseph Carl Rosenbaum, former secretary of the Esterházy family, Haydn's employers. The motive behind the theft was their keen interest in phrenology, a scientific movement that endeavoured to find a relationship between mental capacities and aspects of cranial anatomy. Haydn's skull was of particular fascination to them, given that it was held that the



*THE BATE COLLECTION: It is the most comprehensive in Britain with more than 2,000 European woodwind, brass and percussion instruments – half are on display. Philip Bate gave his collection of European woodwind musical instruments to the University of Oxford in 1968 with a condition that they can be played by students*  
Picture: Stuart Bebb

genius of great men could be explained by phrenology – 18 years later, a similar attempt was made on the body of Ludwig van Beethoven.

Haydn's head was stolen by the gravedigger on June 4, but due to the hot weather the head had decomposed considerably in the few days it had been underground. Fortunately, after maceration of the head and bleaching of the skull, Peter and Rosenbaum were able to confirm their theory on Haydn's 'bump of music' on his cranium.

Peter kept it in his private collection at his home for several years, on proud display to his visitors, before bestowing his entire skull collection on Rosenbaum.

In 1820, Haydn's old patron, Prince Nikolaus Esterházy II, decided to have Haydn's remains moved from Gumpendorf to the Esterházy family seat in Eisenstadt. Yet when the corpse was exhumed, the Prince was furious to find the skull was missing, and quickly deduced that Peter and Rosenbaum were responsible.

When confronted, Rosenbaum managed to avoid returning the skull to its rightful owner by hiding it in his straw mattress, and making his wife Therese lie on the bed and pretend she was menstruating – ensuring no one went near the mattress!

Eventually, Rosenbaum foisted a different skull on Prince Esterházy. Rosenbaum left the real skull to Peter in his will; Peter gave it to his physician Karl Heller, from whom it went to a Professor Rokitsky. In 1895 the professor gave it to the Vienna Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (Society of the Friends of Music). The musicologist Karl Geiringer, who worked at the Society before Hitler's coming to power, would on occasion proudly bring out the relic and show it to visitors.

It was not until 1954 that the skull finally made its way back to the resting place of Haydn's remains, 145 years after it had originally been taken. The skull was transferred in a splendid ceremony from the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde to a marble tomb in the Bergkirche in Eisenstadt, built by Prince Paul Esterházy, Nikolaus' descendant. Eisenstadt seemed a fitting place for Haydn's remains, given it was where some of the masses that Haydn wrote for the Esterházy family were premiered. When the composer's skull was finally restored to the rest of his skeleton, the substitute skull was not removed. Haydn's tomb now contains two skulls!

**See the Bate Collection at the Faculty of Music, St Aldate's, Oxford, OX1 1DB.**

**Charlotte.Barrett@larkmusic.com**



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