

HARMONY

THE MUSICIANS' COMPANY

THE MUSICIANS' COMPANY – A PASTMASTER'S PERSPECTIVE

I have been overwhelmed by the enormous privilege of serving as last year's Master Musician. This has given me a unique insight into the historic heart of the City of London, opportunities to make many friends and to visit hitherto unknown churches and Livery Halls. I have experienced pomp and ceremony, splendid dinners, memorable speeches, emotion and laughter and, of course, much music. I've seen at first hand the contribution the City makes both to the wealth and tradition of our nation, and the support given to the many charities, schools and trades by the Mayor and Livery companies.

In all this I have enjoyed fulsome support from the Court, my predecessor and Senior Warden Graeme Knowles, our current Master Jeff Kelly and our Master designate Alun Hughes, to say nothing of our wonderful office staff led in my year by the redoubtable Hugh Lloyd. All have been incredibly helpful and only too willing to dig me out of self-dug holes!

Without losing sight of our ancient traditions, an ongoing objective has been to modernise. So I would particularly like to mention the sterling work of those who serve on the various committees and subcommittees. I would especially like to applaud the work of Court Assistants Tim Johns and Ben Costello, who are fearlessly embracing new media opportunities and proselytising for musical genres which are relatively new to the Company. There are simply far too many great people to mention, but one person I will single out is Professor John Harle OBE. Few have a deeper musical knowledge and understanding of the profession, and who could bring greater credibility to the Company through its grants and awards. All of us applaud his recent recognition in the New Year Honours List.

It is not, however, just those below the chair who contribute so much to the Company. I would also like to recognise the help of Pastmaster Nigel Tully, who has so generously taken on the popular music committee and is successfully developing our relationships with the BRIT School and the BIMM. It is more difficult to identify emerging talent outside the traditional graduate and postgraduate worlds of higher education, and indeed many popular artists achieve success in their teens and early twenties, which makes it all the more important to recognise early those likely to stand the test of time. Finally, I would like to acknowledge Michael Hockney for the time and expertise so willingly given to a comprehensive review of our charitable purpose; and of course Pastmaster and mentor Leslie East. Our Company is indeed fortunate to enjoy such width and depth of talent.

For me, a personal highlight has been the successful amendment of the Albert Hall Bill. The unanimous support of the Court, and particularly of Pastmaster Lady Brewer, has played a pivotal role in closing loopholes in the Hall's archaic constitution which, along with developments in the media landscape, have in recent years created a clear conflict of interest between

a small number of powerful investors and the Hall as a charity. The Bill was introduced to legitimise the Corporation's current practices and our intervention has already led to the withdrawal of one of its three clauses and the significant amendment of another. The necessary amendments were carried by a vote of 206 to 45 in the Upper House and, if not withdrawn, the Bill will now proceed to the Commons where it is likely to face further challenge. The need for reform is recognised not only by Government and the Charity Commission but particularly by musicians and audiences who, in the words of a *Times* leading article, are currently 'being exploited at the Nation's expense'.

In conclusion, the lasting recollection of my Master's year will not so much be the numerous events at which I was privileged to represent the Company but what I learned from my colleagues. The Musicians' Company encapsulates the true meaning of fellowship and the value of the art of music. I owe it a great debt of thanks and retire in the certain knowledge that the future is in safe hands and 'harmony will continue to be preserved'. I am now looking forward to being able to spend more time with numerous new friends and, with Romilly, to enjoy the fellowship and opportunities afforded by the Livery Club.

I very much hope to continue to contribute and assist my successors – but, as I hasten to add, ONLY WHEN INVITED!

Immediate Pastmaster **HON RICHARD LYTTELTON**



Hon Richard Lyttelton, with his great niece Annabel, representing the Company at Christ's Hospital, where she is a student



Editor Emeritus

Adrian Davis

Editor

David Wakefield

Magazine

co-founders

John Iles and

Adrian Davis

Design

John Hawkins

Clerk

Neil Constable OBE

Deputy Clerk

Amanda Ratcliffe

Company Accountant

Charlotte Harries

Young Artists

Programme Manager

Emily LaPlante

The Worshipful Company of Musicians
1 Speed Highwalk, Barbican, London EC2Y 8DX
T 020 7496 8980
E clerk@wcom.org.uk W www.wcom.org.uk
Registered numbers of the Charitable
Funds 310040 and 264303
VAT No. 162 1105 58

Published by The Worshipful Company of Musicians 2025.
Registered at Stationers' Hall. Printed by Perfect Imaging
Ltd. Views expressed do not necessarily reflect the
opinions of either the Court or the editor. London E3 3DA.
Unless otherwise stated, individual contributors retain
their copyrights, and no part of this publication may be
reproduced without prior written permission.

DIARY 2025

Tuesday 13 May

Festival Service of the Clergy Support Trust

St Paul's Cathedral, 5.00 pm

Wednesday 28 May

Freemen's Dinner

Aldermen's Dining Room, Guildhall, 6.30 for 7.00 pm

Thursday 19 June

Company Concert

Wigmore Hall, 1.00 pm

Tuesday 24 June

Election of Sheriffs

Wednesday 25 June

Midsummer Banquet

Fishmongers' Hall, 6.15 for 7.00 pm

Saturday 29 June

Young Jazz Musician Winner's Gig

Soho Jazz Club, 7.00 pm

Wednesday 16 July

July Court & Informal Lunch

Salter's Hall, 12.30 pm

Sunday 7 September

Tina May Jazz Award competition

Soho Jazz Club, 7.00 pm

Thursday 18 September

Bach Cantata Concert and Livery Club Lunch

St Bartholomew the Great and Côte St Paul's, 1.05 pm

Monday 29 September

Election of Lord Mayor

Wednesday 1 October

Company Evensong

St Paul's Cathedral, 5.00 pm

Tuesday 18 November

Installation Dinner

Goldsmiths' Hall, 6.15 for 7.00 pm

THE INSTALLATION DINNER NOVEMBER



I-r Nick Wraight, Junior Warden Adrian Mumford, Senior Warden Alun Hughes, Peter Westbury, The Master



Retiring Clerk Hugh Lloyd acknowledges receipt of the Company's Gold Medal

EMBER 2025 – A GOLDEN EVENING!



Jeff Kelly, Pastmaster Rt Revd Graeme Knowles CVO



Guest Speaker Richard Morrison

Liverymen and their guests assembled in the splendid Goldsmiths' Hall to witness the election of Jeff Kelly as Master for the second time, followed by the presentation of the Company's Gold Medal to our retiring Clerk, Hugh Lloyd, and then to hear a stirring speech by the eminent critic, journalist and musician Richard Morrison, stressing the importance of the arts and especially music, and the challenges faced in the current climate. The evening was completed with joyful renditions of pieces by Dukas, Bruckner, Piazzolla and Gershwin by the 'Funny Bones' trombone quartet and applause for the 2024 prizes and awards winners.

Editor



The Goldsmiths' Hall



St Paul's Choristers conducted by the Director of Music, Andrew Carwood MBE



Funny Bones l-r Jack Myles, Miguel Zoco Sesma, Amelia Lewis and Cameron Bahmaie



Fanfare Team of the RAF Regiment

YOUNG ARTISTS PROGRAMME

A Reflection on Musical Education with Joseph (Joe) Skypala

Photos: Emily LaPlante



Young Artists Joseph (Joe) Skypala, Jack Campbell and Issy Haley-Porteous working with SEND students at Linden Lodge

As part of the Young Artists Programme, we are privileged to work with musicians who not only excel in their craft but also dedicate themselves to inspiring others through education. One such artist is trumpeter Joseph (Joe) Skypala, whose journey in music is marked by both

remarkable achievements and a passion for sharing his talents with young people, particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Joe's musical journey began early when he earned a place in the National Youth Orchestra, an experience that set him on the path to the Royal

College of Music. Graduating with first-class honours in BMus, he went on to receive a Master's with Distinction from the Royal Academy of Music. Joe's talent and hard work soon earned him a position as co-principal trumpet with Southbank Sinfonia, where he performed at prestigious events, including the annual classical festival in Anghiari, Italy. His professional career has seen him collaborate with some of the UK's leading orchestras, including the London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, Philharmonia, and many others. Recently, he also had the honour of recording the world premiere of Ian Pillow's *Concerto for Trumpet*.

But perhaps most inspiring of all is Joe's commitment to education. As a Young Artist, Joe works with students across London schools, leading music workshops that allow students to experience the joy and transformative power of music. Most recently, Joe worked with Bedelsford and Linden Lodge SEND schools. These schools cater to students with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD), offering a unique and challenging yet incredibly rewarding environment for both Young Artists and pupils.

Joe describes the goal of these sessions as fostering a musical environment that is flexible, responsive, and entirely attuned to the needs and mood of each class, allowing the students'

LIVERY CLUB NEWS 2025/2026

Again our Livery Club Committee has changed, and we have said farewell to Liveryman Pippa Dutton and Court Assistant Stuart Barr, with our thanks for all their help. We are delighted to welcome Liveryman Simon Probert to the Committee.

We are looking forward to a full and varied programme for this year and planning is under way for 2026. Our main trip will be to Orkney on 20-23 June for the St Magnus International Festival, with an optional extra day for the island of Sanday on 23 June, visiting Peter Maxwell Davies' (Max's) cottage and his grave. Mihai Ritivoiu, Freeman and former Young Artist, will give a piano recital on Max's former piano at Sanday Community School.

We will enjoy at least one informal meeting at the Proms, and an afternoon at St Lawrence Stanmore (Whitchurch) for *A Tribute to the Musicians' Company* by renowned organist Dr Anthony Halliday on Sunday 6 July. The programme will include music composed by Pastmasters Herbert Howells, Lennox Berkeley and Frederick Bridge. Refreshments will be provided in the church hall following the recital.

There will be three events in September, starting with a trip to Glyndebourne on the 8th to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the John Christie Award. The annual Musicians' Company Bach Cantata

will take place on 18 September at 13.05 at St Bartholomew the Great, followed by lunch at Côte St Paul's. On 30 September, we will go to Windsor for the last event of this year's Windsor Festival, a concert with the Chapel Choir in St George's Chapel.

We will visit the Royal College of Music for the morning of 7 November to see and watch in action their unique Performance Laboratory. This will include a backstage tour and live student performance and will be followed by an informal lunch nearby.

Dr Matthew Green will lead us on an evening walking tour of the City on 26 November to explore Wine and Musicians of the Medieval City, stopping for wine at a tavern or two ...

For 2026 we have started to arrange visits to Gloucester, Cardiff and Cambridge. A showing of the inspirational documentary *Tapowa* is being arranged, detailing the work of the exceptional charity Brass for Africa, which provides life skills and music education to over 1,500 young people across Rwanda, Uganda and Liberia.

We will take a group of 30 to Leipzig on 15-18 June 2026. Further details will be provided as arrangements are finalised. Booking will be announced through the Company website later this year and places will then be allocated on a strictly first come first served basis.

A Musical Quiz Evening with Anna Tilbrook will be arranged, probably in September, and we are looking at an evening including the Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London in October or November 2026. We are also planning a trip to leading London drama school Mountview.

The Livery Club works to 'arrange social, educational and inspirational events' for all members of the Company. Please come and join us!

Liveryman **MANDY PEAT**
Livery Club President

LIVERY CLUB DATES

Saturday 17 May

Visit to Chichester

Friday 20-Tuesday 24 June

Visit to Orkney

Sunday 6 July

Visit to St Lawrence, Little Stanmore

Monday 8 September

Visit to Glyndebourne

Tuesday 30 September

St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle (tbc)

Friday 7 November

Visit to the Royal College of Music

Wednesday 26 November

Livery Club City Walk, time tbc

emotions and actions to shape the direction of the session, offering them a truly personalised and immersive musical experience. 'Working with SEND schools is a completely different experience', he explains. 'Students react in unique ways, but with the right approach, you can achieve amazing results'. A familiar 'hello' song helps set the tone, establishing safety and continuity. Sessions then explore different sounds, with Joe tailoring his responses to each individual, making music with and in response to pupils.

Reflecting on the experience, Joe highlights some of the most rewarding moments, such as when students recognise him and eagerly anticipate the music-making that follows. One of his proudest moments was when a student, who played the harmonica, perfectly copied a melody Joe had been playing and played it back to him – an impressive display of musical communication and connection.

Joe explains that these sessions are vital for more than just the students' musical development. 'The students are really motivated to get involved in every song and dance. The way this impacts their attitude and mood for the day is always amazing'. The most profound takeaway from Joe's experience in these SEND settings is the importance of relationship building. He explains that for many students, it can take time to engage and build trust.

'It takes longer for students in this environment to become involved, but by session three, they are really motivated to create music'.

Joe's work with SEND students reflects the heart of the Young Artists Programme, where art and education intersect to create transformative experiences. Music isn't just a career – it's a means of connection and communication that transcends words. The moments of joy, connection, and

creativity that emerge from these sessions leave a lasting impact, not only on the students but on Young Artists.

We are grateful to have Joe as part of the Young Artists Programme, where his dedication continues to make a meaningful difference.

Young Artists Programme Manager
EMILY LAPLANTE

Emily LaPlante – Young Artists Programme Manager



Originally from the United States, Emily LaPlante (she/they) is a theatre professional with a focus on inclusive, community-based arts projects. A 2021 graduate of the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama with a Master's in Applied Theatre, Emily specialises in working with young people and children, promoting accessibility and fostering the positive impact of the arts for underserved communities. They have experience as a freelance drama facilitator across various London-based charities, theatres, and community organisations.

Before joining the Musicians' Company, Emily held roles as Creative Learning Producer at Ambassador Theatre Group, Creative Engagement Producer at Attic Theatre Company, and Short Courses Administrator at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

Visit to National Youth Jazz Orchestra

On 19 October we had the privilege of a wonderfully well organised visit to the new National Youth Jazz Orchestra facilities in the Ropekeepers Studio in Woolwich. Woolwich Works, also known as Woolwich Creative District, now occupies part of the historic buildings at the Royal Arsenal. When The Arsenal ceased to be a military

establishment it was imaginatively repurposed as a creative incubator.

NYJO exists to empower and inspire young people across the UK through jazz. It has grown from a single jazz orchestra to a vibrant, varied organisation delivering participation projects and impactful performances throughout the United Kingdom.

When we arrived the session of about 15 young musicians, all under 18 years of age, was just starting, under the guidance of the award winning composer Olivia Murphy, who won the Company's 2024 Harvey Award for Arranging. Olivia is a NYJO alumna who was introduced to jazz ten years ago and now works as director of the Under 18s Ensemble. We saw her talking to the young musicians about what they wanted to achieve from the piece that they were about to create in a completely collaborative form. It was really starting with a blank sheet of paper and open minds. A wonderful example of experimenting with free form without any boundaries or

preconceived musical restrictions.

We also had the opportunity to follow the advice of Winston Clifford working with another group of Under 18s. Winston is one of the most in-demand jazz drummers of his generation. He was expressing to the musicians in his group how to be innovative and stylistic and encouraging them to be inventive.

The two sessions we experienced during our visit complemented each other very well: Olivia focused on repertoire, ensemble skills and the more technical aspects of improvisation, working with imagination to realise a vision. Winston was much more about musicianship, getting the musicians to be creative through the empathy that was generated amongst the group. It was wonderful to see the rapport between the musicians and the leadership of both groups.

It was a perfect example of creativity unfolding as we listened. It was also fascinating to understand better how someone such as Emma Rawicz, a NYJO alumna, to whom the Royal Academy of Music recently awarded our Musicians' Company Silver Medal for excellence and contribution to the institution, an award not previously given to a jazz student, learnt her creative jazz skills.

Senior Warden ALUN HUGHES



Jazz drummer Winston Clifford working with an Under 18 group

Celebrating Clonter Opera Theatre's 50th anniversary year

Clonter Opera Theatre, founded by Jeffery Lockett (Pastmaster 1990-1991) and his wife Anita in 1974, in the heart of the Cheshire countryside, celebrated its 50th anniversary last year, and to mark this milestone it pulled out all the stops.

Clonter is best known for its summer opera

productions offering rising operatic stars an opportunity to sing principal roles with orchestra in July but there was no single opera that was felt to be appropriate or affordable to put on in a style befitting Clonter's 50th anniversary; however two fully-staged gala performances of operatic arias and ensembles with orchestra in November seemed to fit the bill. A night club setting was created on the Clonter stage for a fully staged operatic cabaret of arias and duets performed by six singers with glorious orchestral accompaniment supplied by the Clonter Sinfonia. Clonter's new Patron, Sir Mark Elder CH CBE, was able to attend, giving a rousing speech from the stage highlighting the important role Clonter and its audiences have to play in supporting the next generation of operatic talent.

Clonter's other celebrations included a two night Jazz Extravaganza in June with Ronnie Scott's Artistic Director, James Pearson, and Friends, performing on the Clonter stage, preceded the night before by Polly Gibbons, performing her new album, accompanied by James Pearson, club style in one of Clonter's more intimate performance spaces.

In July Clonter presented its most daring and challenging project to date – a play with music about the life of Puccini – *The Butterfly House*, commissioned and developed by Clonter.

Clonter's 50th anniversary year programme started with their annual inter-conservatoire opera prize competition before an esteemed panel of judges, which included representatives from Glyndebourne and the Royal Opera House's Jette



The Butterfly House – Konstantinos Akritides (younger Puccini)



Jeffery Lockett MBE and Gordon Burns
2006 MEN Theatre Awards

The Lord Mayor's Composition Prize 2024

The Lord Mayor's Composition Prize was established by the Musicians' Company in 1912 for composers under the age of 35. It is held every 2-3 years, the winning composer receiving a cash prize and the winning work a performance organised by the Company. The 2024 winning piece was performed in a concert at St Lawrence Jewry on 14 January this year.

There have been six previous winners, each having written a work for a different instrument or small ensemble. The 2024 competition prize was – for the first time – for a solo piano piece. Chaired by Pastmaster Leslie East, the jury of Court Assistant Professor Vanessa Latache and Freeman Richard Blackford and Mihai Ritivoiu reported on the excellent standard of submission. Under the Company's voting system, the majority view was that the winner for 2024 should be Will Harmer.

Will is a London-based composer and pianist: he

studied in Oxford and has recently completed an MMus in composition at the Royal Academy of Music. He has worked with many significant ensembles as an accompanist and already won awards for composition, not least in the BBC Proms Inspire Competition, receiving a commission from the BBC Singers.

As well as acting as judge, Freeman and former Company Young Artist Mihai Ritivoiu gave the first performance of the winning piece, a remarkable interpretation of a complex and challenging work.

Mihai is a London-based

Romanian pianist, who is a top prize-winner of several significant awards, including the George Enescu International Competition. He has performed in venues across Europe, appeared on BBC Radio 3 on 'In Tune' and recently released his debut album.

Mihai gave a short concert on the Steinway piano, once owned by Sir Thomas Beecham, framing the winning work with two of Bach's *Preludes and Fugues*, crisply articulated in



The Lord Mayor, Alderman Alastair King DL,
with Will Harmer



Bethan Terry, Michael Gibson, Erin Rossington, Adam Jarman and Camilla Seale

Parker Programme. (Clonter's 2025 Opera Prize winner is coincidentally, the Musicians' Company's John Christie Award winner Henna Mun). This was followed by a chamber music concert – The Brodsky Quartet with Danny Driver at the piano – and then the May Masterclasses and a staged Spring Gala showcase concert for five singers.

The Butterfly House was co-written and co-directed by Geoffrey Dolton (who also acted the role of older Puccini and the narrator). Music director Philip Sunderland created a percussion and piano arrangement.

Having shared the life of Puccini on stage last year, it was felt the time was right for his most politically charged dramatic opera *Tosca* to debut at Clonter in July 2025, in a fully staged production with orchestra, alongside a rich and diverse programme spanning many other genres of live musical entertainment and educational outreach projects for over 2,000 children and teachers in the Northwest of England.

Clonter's enduring legacy owes a huge debt to the exceptional musicians, creative teams, experienced coaches, repetiteurs, directors and technicians who believe in and continue to dedicate so much of their expertise to nurture and showcase emerging talent. Many singers who have performed principal roles at Clonter have gone on to have successful international careers – Sir Simon Keenlyside, (Clonter's president) and Natalya Romaniw, to name just two.

Jeffery Lockett's diverse musical interests including jazz have been reflected in Clonter's eclectic musical programming since 1979 with the appearance of such eminent jazz musicians as George Shearing, John Dankworth, Cleo Lane, Elaine

Delmar, the Keith Nicholls trio and more recently James Pearson with the Ronnie Scott's All Stars and jazz singer Emma Smith, the 2013 winner of the Musicians' Bronze Medal. The Jazz Awards were originally endowed by Jeffrey and other members of the Livery.

Jeffery and Anita Lockett both celebrate their 85th birthdays this year and daughters Isabella Lockett, Amanda Harman and Sarah Farmer are continuing their legacy together with a dedicated team of staff and eight Board members (which sees the addition of three new Trustees this year). Isabella and Amanda are Joint Chief Executives of Clonter Farm Music Trust and Sarah is a Trustee.

Clonter is proud of its long association with the Worshipful Company of Musicians starting with Jeffery's father, Pastmaster Derek Lockett (1966) and mother mezzo-soprano, Betty Bannerman, and our shared mission to nurture talent and provide vital stepping stones for professional singers and musicians at key stages in their careers as we embark on the next 50 years.

Liveryman **AMANDA HARMAN**



Isabella Lockett and Amanda Harman Chief Executives of Clonter Farm Music Trust

the reverberant room, and four of Rachmaninoff's virtuosic *Opus 23 Preludes*, immaculately performed and benefiting from the warm glow of the acoustics. Central to the programme was Will Harmer's *Fire Dance*, for which the composer provided a helpful programme note. His inspiration for the piece was the 1910 primitivist painting *La Danse* by Henri Matisse; listeners were occasionally reminded of Stravinsky's *Rite* and Prokofiev's Piano Sonatas, *Fire Dance* having motoric driven ostinatos alternating with shorter more lyrical passages. It is a virtuosic, engaging and tremendously exciting piece that received generous applause from the audience.

To present the award to Will Harmer, the Master was delighted to welcome the Lord Mayor, Alderman Alastair King DL, accompanied by the Lady Mayoress. The Lord Mayor said how impressed he was with the Company's work to support young artists, and joined members of the audience afterwards for a glass of wine to meet and congratulate the artists.

Junior Warden **ADRIAN MUMFORD**



The Master wearing the new ribbon

The Company's New Travel Ribbon

While attending a Girdlers' luncheon last year, Immediate Pastmaster, the Hon Richard Lyttelton, met a new Girdler Liveryman, Gemma Murray, who is Studio Manager at the Royal School of Needlework. The RSN does a lot of work for livery companies as well as stitching items such as the Coronation robes and similar articles. In the course of conversation he decided to commission the Studio to make a new Master's travel ribbon for the Musicians in recognition of the support he received during his Master's year and it was presented to the new Master at the Installation Court immediately before the Dinner.

Editor

Shakespeare and Music

If music be the food of love....

Love and music come in all forms and sizes, and new ones are always interesting, often stimulating. With this in mind, a Festival of Shakespeare in Music was planned for audiences in Stratford-upon-Avon at the beginning of May.

Shakespeare is more than a man. He has become a legend, and his musical legacy is unique. No other author in any language has been so inspiring, or so adapted, or so exploited as Shakespeare. There are over four hundred operas, thousands of songs and instrumental works, plus musical theatre and film scores galore, all based on Shakespearean themes. Composers globally are inspired by Shakespeare.

Clearly this first Festival could not squeeze in more than a small selection from this musical cornucopia that runs from the Renaissance to Rap. It concentrated on small-scale works in evocative venues: Holy Trinity Church (where Shakespeare is buried), the Guild Chapel (where he sang as a schoolboy) and the Town Hall (where his bust, donated by Garrick, is on display).

The first day offered *Venus and Adonis*, the poem that first made Shakespeare's reputation, adapted and narrated by Christopher Kent, accompanied by Gamal Khamis at the piano with an aptly chosen selection of Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words*. The newly formed recorder consort from the Royal College of Music performed music from the age of Shakespeare, including Dowland and others,

whose music he would certainly have heard, and soloists from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire provided arias from English operas based on Shakespeare's plays.

The following day brought music by continental composers of the time, presented by the Linnarth Consort of Viols with soprano Héloïse Bernard, entitled *The Mermaid on the Dolphin*. Then more than a dozen madrigals from the Elizabethan court were sung by the Wells Madrigal Singers. In the evening Liz Kenny and Mark Padmore performed settings of traditional lute music newly fitted to Shakespeare's songs and sonnets.

The range of music on Sunday was more up-to-date and featured Charles Dibdin's music for David Garrick's 1769 Shakespeare Jubilee, *Jubilee* and *Queen Mab*, both newly arranged for three woodwind players from the Orchestra of the Swan, and sung by four members of VOCEs8, as well as Bel Comeau improvising at the Guild Chapel organ on *Brush up your Shakespeare*, and Royal Academy and Guildhall soloists illustrating the continental tradition of Shakespearean opera.

The final day included a new arrangement by John Macfarlane of sixteen of Roger Quilter's Shakespeare songs for string quintet with baritone soloist William Drakett, Vicar Choral from Wells Cathedral choir, and Stratford's own Chamber Choir closed the Festival with a moving selection of motets by perhaps the two most rewarding composers of the age, Byrd and Tallis,

A full review of the Festival will appear in the autumn *Preserve Harmony*.

Guest Contributor **MARTYN BOND**
Chairman Shakespeare in Music

Music Therapy and Batten's Disease

At the request of Liveryman Anne Wadsworth, who has also very generously provided the funding, I have been working with Dr Rebecca Atkinson of the Cambridge Institute for Music Therapy Research (CIMTR) on a project for music therapy for children suffering from Batten's Disease.

Batten's Disease is otherwise known as childhood dementia. Affected children can develop normally until parents or carers notice that something isn't quite right. Depending on the type of variant they have, this can happen from as young as 12 months up until children are in their teenage years.

Much like adult dementia, Batten's disease is a degenerative disease, meaning children gradually or without warning lose their vital skills. In most cases they firstly lose their sight, and thereafter their mobility, speech and ability to interact becomes severely limited. Life expectancy can vary for affected children, but most do not live beyond their young adult years. As a hereditary disease, if one child in a family is affected, there is a possibility that other siblings are also affected – with devastating consequences for the whole family.

Children with Batten's have the same ability to understand and communicate as other children in

New Elizabethan Award Showcase

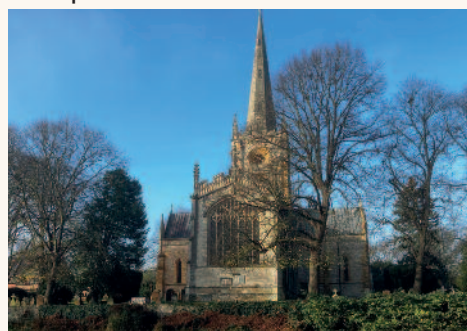
Whether it was by accident or design, the scheduling of the latest New Elizabethan Award Showcase was marvellous serendipity. On the eve of the anniversary of the first performance of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (2 February 1602), the Wigmore Hall was encouragingly filled with an enthusiastic audience to hear the 2024 winners of the New Elizabethan Award.

The 2024 Award, and thus the Showcase, was shared between guitarist Georgi Dimitrov and the Londinium Consort. Designed as it was to encourage the exploration of the rich musical heritage of the two Elizabethan eras, with the guitar and the lute at the centre of the explorations, the Award allows, indeed expects, the winners to seek out repertoire that may or may not be familiar but exemplifies the creative spirit of the respective ages. In particular, the burgeoning creation of works for guitar at the behest of Julian Bream in the second half of the 20th century is central to the ethos of the Award.

Georgi Dimitrov demonstrated this in his choice of three composers, only one of whom had a particularly close relationship with the guitar. Stephen Dodgson was a consummate composer in many genres but his understanding of the instrument's idiosyncrasies was unrivalled.



Christopher Kent and Gamal Khamis



Holy Trinity Church Stratford-upon-Avon



The Guild Chapel Stratford-upon-Avon



A Music Therapy session with Dr Rebecca Atkinson

the early stages of the disease. As their disease progresses, although their speech severely declines, their understanding is still intact. To some extent, the disease literally locks them behind a seemingly impenetrable wall. The research which Dr Atkinson is doing, with our financial and musical help, is ground-breaking, aimed at discovering whether music can penetrate that wall and offer relief to those suffering from the condition.

So far, four Young Artists, Heather Brooks, harp, Hope Cramsie, guitar, Charis Lai, oboe, and Issy Haley-Porteous, flute, have given one concert reaching ten children, five members of staff and four parents at Richard Cloudesley School in Islington. Based on this, Dr Atkinson is working towards publishing a paper for us and for Anglia

Ruskin University (who have also provided funding for the project) later this year. She has been interviewing parents and carers and will include quotes from the musicians. The children's visible reactions to the music were unmistakable: spontaneous joy, moving arms and hands in time, smiling and trying to sing.

We are working on setting up a second concert, and we are looking at the next stage of the research. The ultimate aim is to try to establish

whether playing music has measurable physical effects on the children – increased heart rate, reducing agitation and stress, etc. All those attending the concert saw the visual effects, but what is needed are data recording measurable effects. One day it may be possible to use such data to convince NICE to issue guidance on the importance of music therapy, and make meaningful changes at the policy level on how to treat the disease.

From my own experience in setting up the Company programme of music therapy for adults with dementia, I know that for adults, it is important to draw on their musical memories, playing them pieces which have had a significant emotional effect for them earlier in their lives, thereby helping re-establish the links in their minds

through their memories. This has been scientifically proven to be a very effective technique in re-activating the brain's connections and improving communication and memory. The difficulty, of course, with children, is that they do not necessarily have the musical memories that adults do – they have not heard so much music and that which they have heard may not be connected to significant emotional moments. One area of research interest could investigate the impact of familiar music for children with Batten's disease and other rare neurological diseases. Dr Atkinson's Doctorate focused on exactly these techniques, and her results showed that a daily music programme helped children's memory, speech and wellbeing.

We are hoping that in due course it might be possible to use technical means, if available, to record the measurable reactions from the children: such data could then be used for further research. We are also hoping that these techniques might be applicable for children suffering from other neurological diseases, such as Rett's syndrome, and we will be including such children in the programme if funds allow.

It goes without saying that research in this highly complex area is only at the beginning of what might be a very long road. But both Dr Atkinson and I would like to express our warmest thanks to Liveryman Anne Wadsworth for enabling the Musicians' Company to collaborate with CIMTR on this immensely valuable research project.

Pastmaster JOHN NICHOLS

Dimitrov's choice of Dodgson's *Fantasy-Divisions* thus not only showed off the composer's and guitarist's technical prowess but also linked nicely with Daniel Bachelor's divisions on *Mounsier's Almaine* that preceded it. In the first half, Dimitrov had contrasted Richard Rodney Bennett's *Five Impromptus* (1968) – based on a 12-note tone row – with Bennett's teacher Lennox Berkeley's *Theme and Variations* Op.77 – based on an original theme reminiscent of a funeral march. In these works, one was immediately struck by the radical difference in sound between Dimitrov's two instruments. His Abreu guitar is ideally suited to the Elizabethan and Jacobean repertoire, whereas the Dammann instrument used in the 20th-century works has greater tonal depth, which the player exploited with enormous skill and imagination.

At the centre of the Londinium Consort,



Photos SL Chai

The Londinium Consort I-r Özgür Kaya, Emanuele Addis, Rachel Allen, Otto Hashmi and Mikolaj Piszczorowicz

Emanuele Addis's lute is responsible for much more than the link with the first Elizabethan era. The Consort's approach is unusual and yet in many ways its linking of ancient and modern reaches a synthesis of the repertoire, spirit and ethos of the two eras in a way a standard juxtaposition of pieces sometimes struggles to do.

Thus the semi-improvised introduction of their first half group – sort of Dowland mixed with Terry Riley – the instrumentalists – lute, two bass viols and recorders – hinted at the song that was to follow. In *Can she excuse my wrongs*, Rachel Allen's pure, silvery voice was magically echoed by Otto Hashmi's decorative recorder embellishments.

The Consort's second-half group exemplified even more their ability to fuse many musical elements across the centuries, with Delyth Field's imaginative arrangement of the anonymous *Death and the Lady*, and more especially with Owen Spafford's intriguing setting of Brian O'Higgins's *Threshold*, receiving its world premiere.

In the words of Shakespeare in *Twelfth Night*, 'so full of shapes is fancy that it alone is high fantastical'. This concert, full of fancy, of extraordinary music and performances, truly was 'high fantastical'.

Pastmaster LESLIE EAST OBE

Georgi Dimitrov



A visit to the Museum of Music History

In April 2024 the Museum of Music History hosted a visit from members of the Musicians' Company Livery Club. In the museum's archive, then stored at Denbies Wine Estate, Dorking, we were excited to share our 'Worshipful Company of Musicians' box, which contains invitations, menus and programmes formerly belonging to Sydney Loeb.

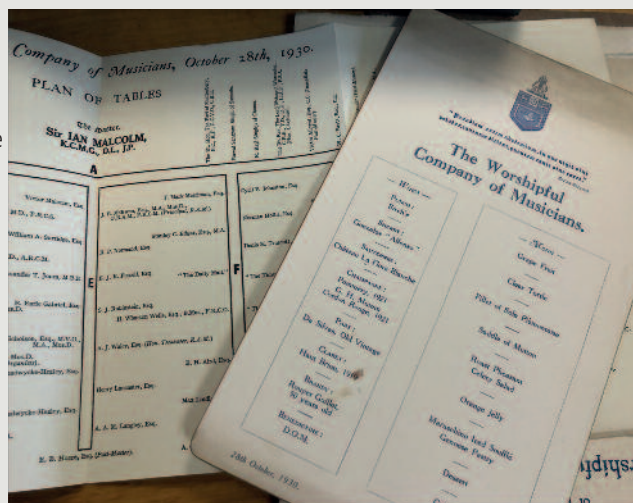
The Museum of Music History was founded by distinguished pianist, musicologist, and collector Oliver Davies FRCM (1938-2020) in 2003, under the patronage of Sir Charles Mackerras (1925 - 2010). The initiative for the museum came after

the late John Cruft, a former Music Director of the Arts Council of Great Britain, chaired a discussion on Britain's need for a comprehensive and fully accessible music and dance museum.

Today the Museum has two members of staff and a bustling office space in Haddenham, Bucks, where we are working hard to process (conserving, re-boxing and cataloguing) our collection as it moves from Denbies into museum-grade storage at Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire. We are working closely with a growing team of wonderful volunteers, who lend their expertise and time to catalogue the collection

and to fundraise for its long-term preservation.

The 'WCOM' box that was shown to visitors on the day of the Company's visit is a typical grey archive storage box. One of the first items in the box is an invitation to Sidney Loeb to a dinner in 1909 where he was to be admitted to the Livery. He became the Master Musician in 1951. The other items were kept by Loeb from dinners and



1930 Menu and Seating Plan

special events from 1909 up until the 1930s, and include menus, seating plans and programmes. It is fantastic to see evidence of the multi-course dinners and the wines drunk alongside, and to try to see reflections of world events (two world wars and global depression) in the activities of the Company.

As the team at the Museum of Music History conserves and catalogues the literal



Musicians' Cover 1932

Ashton and even possibly, Dame Margot Fonteyn, to name just a few of the great dancers associated with Rambert history.

We were led into a large airy studio where the dancers were warming up for their morning class. They were dressed in a variety of leotards, t-shirts,

wooden handrails that lined the stairs, which were made from the ballet barres from their old building in Chiswick, and an inspirational nod to recycling. I wondered which dancers' hands had held these barres during their daily morning class – from Dame Marie Rambert herself, to the great Sir Frederick



'At the barre'; Rambert dancers rehearse

Livery Club Visit to Rambert

On 4 March, a group of Liverymen, Freemen and their guests gathered at Rambert's Headquarters, near Waterloo. We were greeted by Daniel Albon, (head of Archive and Data Protection), who made us feel very welcome from the start.

This was my first visit to their wonderful purpose-built premises that have been their home since 2013 – their third in the long history of Ballet Rambert. Their previous premises were primarily Church Halls and a great mixture of spaces, including the old Mercury Theatre in Notting Hill Gate. The theatre was opened in 1933 by Dame Marie Rambert's husband, Ashley Dukes, and served as a centre for Ballet Rambert for many years. It was from this home that the company was able to grow and develop into the unique dance company it is today.

As we made our way into the building, I was struck by the feeling of spaciousness and light that welcomes and nurtures creativity, and felt we were in a very special environment, about to enjoy a great treat for the senses!

The first hint that this was a dance space was the

tonnes of documents, scores, photos, recordings and other material left to us by Oliver Davies and his large network of contacts, it is always fascinating to open one of these grey archive boxes and discover what's inside.

Sometimes it takes some detective work to

find out

what the

documents

are, from

whom they

came, or why

they are

significant.

Looking

through the

'WCOM' box

with members of

the Company was

therefore a real

treat. I would

encourage anyone

with an interest in

Invitation for Sydney Loeb to join the Livery

music history to visit us in Haddenham (by appointment) and help us open up more of these boxes so that we can catalogue our collection and share stories from our musical past more widely. W: momh.org.uk

DR ALICE LITTLE

Curator Museum of Music History

tights, shorts and track suits, all clearly chosen for individual needs of warmth and comfort for the day ahead. My memory took me back to the Royal Ballet School, where long, plastic bloomers were the choice of the time, and wool – lots of wool wrapped around legs, backs, necks and even heads to encourage warm muscles to give their best. I remember Rudolf Nureyev always wearing a woolly hat in class and rehearsals – it was a very different image to the hero I idolised in his princely costumes on stage!

Morning class is the beginning of every dancer's day; it is usually an hour and a quarter of technical exercises, not only for a thorough warm up for every muscle group in the body, but also for ongoing technical training and development of each dancer. This training never stops as there is always room for technical improvement and strength, which in turn gives freedom to artistry.

The class was taught by the rehearsal director Olivier Coeffard, and from the first simple exercise it was clear that he not only taught his class but also inspired them with his movements which were beautifully fluid, deep and sincere. The dancers stretched and strengthened their bodies to the beautiful music that poured out of the grand piano in the corner of the studio. The relationship between teacher and ballet pianist is a special

chemistry and a language all of its own, as simply a nod or subtle hand signal will change tempo and mood to make an *enchainment* (combination of steps) work best for the dancers.

We were transfixed to be so close to the dancers, while they practised the tiniest movement at the barre, to the impressive pirouettes and lyrical centre adage. The class finale was a fabulous Grand Allegro where the dancers jumped, turned in the air and flew around the studio with a weightless freedom that was a sheer joy to watch.

We floated from the studio and were escorted to the Archive Room to watch some incredible old footage of Dame Marie Rambert herself, dancing as a young woman. Although she is one of the greatest names in our dance history, she was known for her teaching and ability to bring out the best in dancers, rather than as a performer herself, so it was a treat to see her dance. We watched fascinating excerpts from many early pieces, including choreography from a young dancer, Frederick Ashton, whom Dame Marie had to persuade to create his first ballet. Little did she realise that this encouragement would have such an influence on British Ballet, as he went on to be the first, great, choreographer of the Royal Ballet as we know it today and played a vital role in putting our dance companies on the international stage.

We watched clips from the more modern ballets that established the Company we know today – including Christopher Bruce's *Rooster* and *Ghost*.

The Archive room was an Aladdin's cave of memorabilia, with many original programmes from the early days, including the fantastic works they performed during the war years. I was thrilled to handle a pair of Dame Marie's pointe shoes and had fun comparing their simplicity to the super engineered pointe shoes of today.

We looked through a wealth of photographs, including some from their trip to China in 1957, where they were the first British dance company to perform. It took them 27 flights and 3 days to reach their destination, which made me realise how the world of a touring company has changed!

In 2026, Rambert Dance Company will be the first British dance company to celebrate a 100th birthday, having given their first performances in 1926.

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit – great thanks to Mandy Peat for organising the event and to Daniel Albon for making it a truly special morning. Mandy's mother was a dancer in the early years of Ballet Rambert and would have been 100 years old this year, so it was a lovely way to honour her and brought a heartwarming, personal thread to the whole brilliant event.

Liveryman VANESSA GILBERT

Henry Lowther – Lifetime Achievement Award 2024



Jazz trumpeter Henry Lowther receives the Company's Lifetime Achievement Award from the Master

A veteran of the UK jazz scene, Henry Lowther has enjoyed a rich and varied career, which has included playing with many of the world's finest musicians, and he is without question one of the most highly respected musicians working today.

Born in Leicester, Henry's first musical experiences included playing in a Salvation Army band. Studies at the Royal Academy of Music followed, with Henry having originally been accepted there as a violinist. In 2011 the Academy honoured him with a Fellowship.

Henry burst onto the UK's jazz scene in the '60s as a member of the seminal Mike Westbrook Band and John Dankworth Orchestra, and he appeared in 1969's famous Woodstock festival. He was one of the first UK jazz musicians to experiment with total free improvisation.

Henry's collaborative work reads like a Who's Who, with an equally respected profile as a classical performer. He is featured on countless award-winning recordings, performing with a staggeringly diverse collective of distinguished artists including Graham Collier, John Dankworth, Mike Gibbs, Gil Evans, Stan Tracey, Kenny Wheeler, David Essex, Elton John, and Court Assistant Professor John Harle, to name but a few.

His sheer musical breadth has also seen him work with most of the major UK orchestras, and he is featured on numerous film and TV soundtracks.

Later years have seen major commissions for Henry as a composer, including from the BBC, work with his band Still Waters, and a typically busy diary of performing engagements, including an appearance in 2023's London Jazz Festival in a celebration of Bebop with fellow Lifetime Achievement Award-winner Stan Sulzmann. Henry also finds time to teach on the jazz programmes at Richmond and Hillcroft College.

Pastmaster NIGEL TULLY MBE

Photo: Emily LaPlante

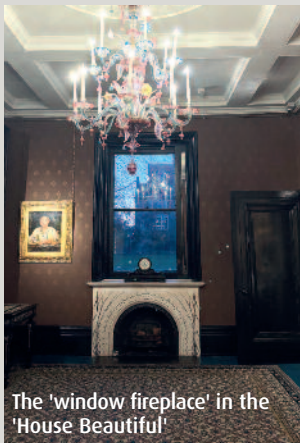
An evening of opera arias at 'House Beautiful' – Leighton House March 2025

"Music! How I yearn for music... Music that humanises the soul, that calls forth all that is refined and elevated and glowing and impassioned in one's breast and without which the very lake of one's heart stagnates and is congealed. I express myself extravagantly, but my words flow from my heart", wrote Leighton to his mother from Rome.

Leighton House was designed by architect George Aitchison (1825-1910) for his friend Frederic Leighton (1830-1896), the talented Victorian painter, sculptor, linguist, and draftsman who affectionately called it 'House Beautiful'.

Leighton was unmarried and his private life was and remains very private. His artistic abilities and legacy are, in contrast, well known and impressive. On our tour we learned that the house served as Leighton's art studio, gallery, and home, and more recently home to Kensington and Chelsea Music Society. Leighton himself hosted concerts and was known to sing. Performers included violinist Joseph Joachim, singer Pauline Viardot, and pianist Clara Schumann.

Our guide flagged up features such as the



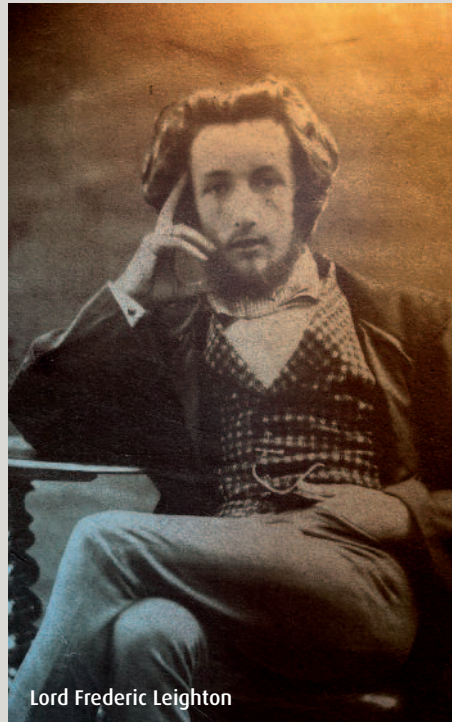
The 'window fireplace' in the 'House Beautiful'

fireplace with a window placed unusually directly above which, thanks to the ingenuity of Aitchison's design, gives an uninterrupted view of the garden. The winter studio, resembling a conservatory, with glazed roof and two sides, allowed Leighton to capitalise on natural light ahead

of exhibiting at the Royal Academy in March and April.

Every room, including the main studio, has a certain intimacy and individual style, while the high ceilings and flamboyant decoration leave an impression of sumptuous grandeur. Our group photo was, perhaps appropriately, taken in the Narcissus Room adjoining the grand staircase leading to the studio, which takes up much of the first floor. In March 1883, Queen Victoria wrote, 'The studio makes a perfect music room, and was hung with drawings and pictures of great beauty'.

Our 'evening at the opera' was an arresting and dramatic musical experience, the audience being only feet away from the opera singers rather than tens of feet in the Opera House. We were quickly reminded of the scale of highly trained operatic voices, adept at filling considerably larger spaces like nearby Opera Holland Park. The singers became increasingly animated as the repertoire grew in its



Lord Frederic Leighton

musical and emotional scope. Liveryman William Vann provided sensitive and perfectly synchronised accompaniment capturing the spirit of the orchestral writing.

The programme, sung by soprano Eleanor Dennis, mezzo-soprano Angharad Lyddon and bass Blaise Malaba, was:

Vien, la mia vendetta (*Lucrezia Borgia*)

Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848)

Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix (*Samson et Dalila*)

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Quando me'n vo' (*La bohème*)

Giacomo Puccini (1858-1924)

Là ci darem la mano (*Don Giovanni*)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Deh! ti ferma (*Semiramide*)

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868)

Ah, scostati!... Smanie implacabili, Come scoglio,

Prendero quel brunettino and

Soave sia il vento, (*Così fan tutte*) Wolfgang

Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

interval

When I am laid in earth (*Dido and Aeneas*)

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Embroidery in childhood (*Peter Grimes*)

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

Va! Laisse couler mes larmes (*Werther*)

Jules Massenet (1842-1912)

Ella giammai m'amò (*Don Carlo*)

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Come in quest'ora bruna (*Simon Boccanegra*)

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Pur ti miro (*L'incoronazione di Poppea*)

Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643)

Libiamo ne' lieti calici (*La traviata*)

Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901)

Purcell's 'When I am laid' was perhaps the most moving performance of the evening, and conveyed a heartfelt feeling of despair at the prospect of being forgotten after death. Each repeated phrase 'remember me' was flavoured with unique emotional intensity and a carefully crafted musical dynamic.

The programming was inventive in its use of solo, duo, and trio singing. The lack of surtitles was liberating but at times frustrating without text translations. The spoken programme notes suited the intimate setting and were delivered with humour.

We were very well looked after, with pre-concert drinks, sandwiches, and then interval drinks. Our capacity group of forty left nourished in every way; a particularly special experience for those visiting the house for the first time.

Thanks to Liveryman Antoinette-Rita Okoiye for planning the evening, Liveryman William Vann and Livery Club President Mandy Peat for arranging logistics.

Liveryman **MARK JAMES**

Livery Club Vice President



l-r Mark James, Blaise Malaba, Angharad Lyddon, William Vann, Eleanor Dennis, Mandy Peat and Antoinette-Rita Okoiye

Liveryman Judith Rich OBE

Judith Rich OBE (née Gardner) was born in April 1935 and died this past November 2024. She was a remarkable woman, described variously as formidable, full of energy and infectious enthusiasm, a great spirit, sexy, sassy, and a force of nature; I think those who knew her would fully agree.

Judith was an early promoter of equal opportunities for women at work, becoming one of the first female pursers with the Union Castle shipping line back in the late 1950s, serving on ships such as the 'Warwick Castle' and 'Rhodesia Castle' on the Round-Africa Service. In the 1960s, for the Alfred Marks Bureau, she ran the first agency specialising in senior secretaries and women executives. It was probably in these activities that she honed her phenomenal memory for names and faces and established her famous 'contacts book'.

It was later, however, at 'Cards for Good Causes' (still going strong every Christmas), where Judith really made her mark, selling Christmas cards for some 300 charities. Her powers of persuasion came into their own as, in the weeks before Christmas, she placed charity cards in over 350 churches, libraries and shops, visiting most of them and racking up significant mileage. With the help of 8,500 volunteers, she returned 81p in every pound to the charities and had built turnover to over £6m when she retired 22 years later. It was at least in part this record which earned her the label of 'Grand Dame of Fundraising', and she was still advising charities and card producers long after her official retirement.

Judith always said that she was 'not a fundraiser' but understood how groups and charities could raise funds. She was one of the



original team that set up the Institute of Charity Fundraising Managers in 1983, (now the Chartered Institute of Fundraising), and she served as Honorary Secretary for its first ten years.

All these activities led to her being awarded the OBE in 1993 for her services to fundraising, and she was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the UK Charity Industry in 2006, when she had raised money for more than 30 charities as a fundraiser or board member. She also received a Humanity Award from the British Red Cross, and was active in the Diabetes Foundation. She became a specialist in charity governance and advised many charities over the years, and she was immensely proud of all her awards.

Judith thoroughly enjoyed her London activities, but her membership of the Musicians' Company was especially important to her. She was proposed by Pastmaster Malcolm Troup and seconded by Pastmaster Adrian Davis, and clothed in 2000. She loved the music, the tradition, and the lovely people she met at events both formal and informal, and she had a number of special friends in the

Company. Within a short time of being clothed she had joined the PR Committee and eventually became involved with the annual preparation of the Yearbook, a valuable publication for us all, and she remained on this Committee until 2023. In 2006 she welcomed nearly 40 members of the Livery Club to her home in Winchester, supporting Pastmaster Andrew Morris's term as President of the Club and providing useful contacts for the day out, which included tours of the Cathedral and Bishop's Palace, and time with the Bishop.

Judith was a Steward from 2006-7, and wrote an article in *Preserve Harmony* about the experience, and indeed one of her last outings in London was the 25-year celebration dinner of the Stewards at the Oxford and Cambridge Club in September, a very special occasion with many WCOM friends.

The Company awarded the Silver Swan to Judith in 2009 for distinguished service to the Company.

Judith joined Bishopsgate Ward Club in 1999 and in 2007 became President; she later joined Broad Street Ward Club, where she was Honorary Secretary for over ten years, and became Chairman in 2023-4; the highlight of her year was hosting the Civic Lunch with the Lord Mayor at Mansion House. She was a member of the United Wards Club and the City Livery Club, and for many years a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Her activities in Winchester included being a Trustee of St John's Winchester, and active roles in the Winchester National Trust Association, the City of Winchester Trust, and her local residential companies.

Judith leaves her daughter Catriona, son Alexander, and grandson Tucker.

"...her innovative approach, determination and creativity (that) has seen her make a real difference and impact in the world around us".

Liveryman MARGOT MOUAT

The Company's Gold Medal

"Music is the art of all the things we can't see or touch..."

Nicola Benedetti CBE, 2019

The Court of the Musicians' Company resolved unanimously in 2020 that the high honour of the Gold Medal should be presented to Nicola Benedetti. For a number of practical reasons, it has taken five years before the Medal could actually be presented in person and this was finally achieved before a rehearsal for a recent LSO Barbican concert.

The Gold Medal is one of Company's most prestigious honours and it is awarded to distinguished musicians and members of the Livery who have made a significant contribution to British musical life. Past recipients include Lord Harewood, Judith Weir, Alfred Brendel, Sir David Willcocks, Lord Berkeley, Sir John Dankworth, Richard Rodney



The Master presents the Company's Gold medal to Nicola Benedetti CBE

Bennett, Sir Charles Mackerras, Ruggiero Ricci and Sir Hubert Parry (who was one of the first).

Nicola Benedetti has established an illustrious reputation of international status based on her exceptional talent. Her dedication to the Art of Music and remarkable interpretation skills have also embraced different music genres and the creation of new works. Since its inception in 2019, through the extensive activities of the Benedetti Foundation, many thousands of young people have gained access to the benefits of music in their lives, their education and their personal development.

With her appointment in October 2022 as Festival Director of the Edinburgh International Festival, Nicola Benedetti became both the first Scottish and the first female Festival Director since it began in 1947. For the Musicians' Company, this provided a happy connection with the

Company as our late Liveryman, Lord Harewood, held the same post many years ago.

Nicola Benedetti is, without doubt, a most distinguished musician who has made, and continues to make, a significant contribution to British musical life.

The Master JEFF KELLY

Celebrating Dame Myra Hess DBE

As many members will know, the Musicians' Company supports the lunchtime concert series at St Bartholomew the Great in West Smithfield presented by the City Music Society (CMS). The series starts in September with the annual Bach Cantata given by the Musicians' Company Consort, conducted by Adrian Butterfield, and always features several Musicians' Company Young Artists and Award winners. CMS was founded in 1943 by Ivan Sutton, inspired partly by the weekday lunchtime concerts in the National Gallery promoted by Dame Myra Hess (1890-1965). Between 1939 and 1945, she presented 1,698 concerts attended by 824,152 people; herself a

notable pianist she played in 150 of them. She was created a Dame by George VI in 1943 for her contribution to maintaining the morale of the London populace and awarded the Walter Willson Cobbett Medal by the Musicians' Company in 1944 for services to the art of chamber music.

The 2,058th CMS Concert, on Thursday 27 February 2025, commemorated the 50th anniversary of Dame Myra's death, with the launch of a new biography. The first since her death, it was written by Jessica Duchon and published by Kahn & Averill, and the concert featured two major works which she frequently played herself. It was given by Musicians' Company Young Artist Nikita Burzanitsa,

who was awarded the Company's Beethoven Medal in 2022. Born into a family of musicians in Donetsk, he began piano lessons aged 7 and subsequently studied at Wells Cathedral School, Donetsk State Conservatory and the RCM. CMS Chairman, Pastmaster Leslie East, welcomed the near capacity audience and said a few words about the biography, then introduced the pianist, who launched into an accomplished rendition of Beethoven's *Sonata*

No.32 in C minor, Op.111, which took up the first half of the concert (24 mins). The composer's last piano sonata, written in 1821-2, it comprises a stormy 'Maestoso – Allegro con brio ed appassionato' and a simple 'Arietta', with a set of variations, initially fast, almost jazzy, finishing expansive and reflective.

To lighten the mood after this dramatic work, Nikita chose a sprightly five minute piece by Ukrainian composer and pianist Myroslav Skoryk (1938-2020), whom he first met aged 10, although Skoryk is from the opposite side of Ukraine, having been born and studied in Lviv. His *Prelude and Fugue in F* is the last in a set of six published in 1988, all lively, with catchy themes and unexpected contrasts. Skoryk described the subject as reminiscent of 'a playful children's song', its light-footed, rhythmic, jazzy nature a link with the third variation of Beethoven's sonata whose stomping, dance-like rhythm and heavy syncopation has often been compared to jazz or ragtime.

Next came Brahms' *Variations on a Theme by Paganini (Book 1), Op.35*, written in 1862-3. Opening with Paganini's *Caprice No. 24 in A minor*, followed by fourteen variations, it is famous for its harmonic depth and extreme technical and physical difficulty, which Nikita mastered with apparent ease. He finished the recital with a serene performance of a transcription made by Hess in 1920s of a chorale appearing twice in Bach's *Cantata BWV 147 (1723)*, the second time to a text translated as *Jesu, joy of man's desiring*, with a nod to Skoryk's *Prelude and Fugue* inspired by Bach's *Well Tempered Clavier* and learned especially for the occasion. Visit <https://www.citymusicociety.org/> for more information about upcoming concerts.

Liveryman SIRI FISCHER HANSEN



Young Artist Nikita Burzanitsa

A New Company Award for Video Game Music

As discussed in the previous edition of *Preserve Harmony*, video games are a rapidly maturing art form, in both the commercial and artistic capabilities of the medium and the demographic of its players. Much as in film and television, video game music plays a significant role in shaping the emotional impact of these works, with London and other centres of excellence contributing heavily to both homegrown and international productions of the highest calibre.

Given the increasing number of students and young people hoping to become professional video game composers, the Company is uniquely positioned to promote the future talents of this young industry while encouraging respect for the quality and traditions of this craft. It is thus particularly exciting to report that the Company's Popular Music Committee (PMC) has recently supported the creation of a new award for the

composition and realisation of video game music.

The call for submissions is as follows: entrants are invited to submit an audiovisual showreel (video with music) presenting their original composition(s) for video games. The video should consist of gameplay footage from existing or self-created games and should be no longer than two minutes in duration. The entrant can determine the number of pieces: single examples or a montage of multiple works will be accepted, providing the video remains within the two-minute limit – standard practice in the industry. Only one video per entrant will be considered, and a notated score is not required.

In line with the Company's aim of nurturing excellent young musical talent, eligibility is restricted to current undergraduate or postgraduate students at a university, conservatoire, or art school in the United Kingdom. Convened by a Court Assistant and including Alexander Horowitz as representative of the PMC, the judging process will feature a jury of professional video game composers representing the core elements of video game music, including direction, composition, orchestration, conducting, virtual ensembles, and education.

The judging criteria of the award are as follows:

The original composition in this submission supports, enhances, and elevates the onscreen action. The instrumentation is well chosen and utilised, the emotional tone resonates with the scene, and the score demonstrates an understanding of pacing and the narrative arc. This is a clear example of creativity and originality in video game composition. Based on these criteria, the jury will eventually determine a Winner and a Highly Commended entry.

The greatest hurdle for aspiring composers and audio specialists hoping to work on large-scale commercial titles is the lack of appropriate connections in the industry. In addition to a £750 cash prize – funded by Alexander Horowitz and the PMC – the winner will be offered mentoring time with professionals in this field by the members of the jury. The Company's endorsement will undoubtedly help the recipient stand out amongst their peers in a particularly competitive environment, while giving us a foothold in the ever-growing field of music for the video games industry.

Freeman DR ALEXANDER HOROWITZ
[Creative Craft Director, Electronic Arts]
Pastmaster NIGEL TULLY MBE

2024's Dankworth and Harvey Jazz Awards

As the great Lee Konitz put it, "Jazz tunes are great vehicles. They are forms that can be used and reused. Their implications are infinite". Well, the talented young players in the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Jazz Orchestra seemed to take Konitz's statement to heart in what proved to be an outstanding evening at the atmospheric Eastside Jazz Club on 31 March, an event in which the performance was mostly given over to showcasing the entries of 2024's two Dankworth Awards for Jazz Composition, and the Eddie Harvey Jazz Arranger Award.

Such was the quality of submissions for these three awards that this year's judges felt that the runner-up entries should also be performed alongside the winning entries. Jeremy Price, the indefatigable Head of Jazz at the RBC, was happy to oblige, and was also MC and conductor for the evening, bringing out the best from his highly talented students. Tautness of ensemble was a given, but the sheer warmth and expression that shone through every single item in the three sets was to be commended.

Established by the Company in association with the late Sir John Dankworth and the Wavendon Foundation, and originally springing from an initiative from an unsung hero of British jazz, Art Mead, the Dankworth Awards encourage young composers to create original works. There are two annual prizes for original compositions in arrangements for big band and small ensemble.

The Dankworth Awards were joined in 2014 by the Eddie Harvey Jazz Arranger of the Year Award. This was established to perpetuate the memory of the late, great, Eddie Harvey, renowned jazz pianist, trombonist, arranger, and father-figure in jazz education. This annual award most importantly serves to honour Eddie's expressed wish to try to ensure that *arrangers* of jazz compositions receive due acknowledgement of the importance of their contribution.

Both Dankworth and Harvey would, I feel, have been proud of this year's submissions. Challenging works for the performers to be sure, but all the works made a considerable impact at this gig and are certainly deserving of future performances.



Alec Dankworth presenting the Dankworth Small Ensemble Composition Prize 2024 to Lewis Sallows

Following a brief speech, I was delighted to be joined on stage by the Senior Warden Alun Hughes, Liveryman John Levett, Peggy Harvey, Alec Dankworth, and the Master, who made the presentations.

Court Assistant BEN COSTELLO
Chairman of the Jazz Committee

Dankworth Big Band Composition Prize 2024

Winner: Scottie Thompson – *Skyline*
(Not able to be present at the Gig)

Runner-up: Jonny Ford – *Wheeler Lane*

Dankworth Small Ensemble Composition Prize 2024

Winner: Lewis Sallows – *Maritime*

Runner-up: Joe Evans – *The Absolute State of You*

Harvey Award for Arranging 2024

Winner: Olivia Murphy – *You Are There*

Runner-up: Finn Genockey – *Go*



The Master, Senior Warden and Alec Dankworth look on as Peggy Harvey presents the Harvey Award for Arranging 2024 to Olivia Murphy



Sophie Gilbert singing with the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Big Band conducted by Jeremy Price

Photos: John Levett

AND FINALLY



Clerk, Beadle and Liveryman Sarah Beddows at the Pikemen and Musketeers Blessing of Colours and 100th anniversary celebrations



Clerks Old and New. Hugh Lloyd hands over to Neil Constable OBE



Judith Rich OBE at the Lord Mayor's Show



The Lord Mayor's Show: l-r Senior Warden Alun Hughes, Clerk Neil Constable OBE, Hugh Lloyd, Junior Warden Adrian Mumford

Photo: Marcus Jamieson-Pond

COURT NEWS

NEW LIVERYMEN

Nicholas Baumgartner
Sarah Beddows
Susan Hind Woodward
Jonathan Kingston
Elizabeth Rantzen
Mark Salkeld

NEW FREEMEN

Stefanie Adami
Jonatan Bought
Louise Camby
George Coates
Vivienne Monk
Charles Owen
Claire Pocock
Laurence Watt
Robert Wills

CORPORATE MEMBERS

ABRSM
Boosey & Hawkes
Music Sales Group
Naxos UK
Victoria College Examinations

AWARDS

COBBETT MEDAL
Sally Beamish OBE *composer*
SANTLEY AWARDS
Marie McLaughlin
Jonathan Lemalu
ILES MEDAL
Paul Holland
MORTIMER MEDAL
Louise Renshaw

CHORAL DIRECTOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

David Hill MBE

LAMBERT JUNIOR FELLOWSHIP

Maria Linares Molero *piano*

HARRIET COHEN BACH PRIZE

Luke Mitchell

RAM BRASS ENSEMBLE PRIZE

FiveBy5: Ellinor Bengtson, Sigrid Bengtsson, Volodymyr Bykhun, Sasha Canter, Malte Sunding *trumpets*

DANKWORTH PRIZES FOR JAZZ COMPOSITION

Big Band: Scottie Thompson
Small Ensemble: Lewis Sallows

EDDIE HARVEY JAZZ ARRANGERS' AWARD

Olivia Murphy

IN MEMORIAM

We record with regret the deaths of the following members of the Company

Liveryman Eric Banks OBE
Liveryman John Borron
Liveryman Philip Caine
Liveryman Eva Greenspan
Liveryman Laurence Holloway
Liveryman Christopher Kent
Freeman Dorothy Kirkman
Liveryman Simon Lindley
Liveryman John Marks
Liveryman John Norman
Liveryman Geoffrey Norris
Liveryman Judith Rich OBE