

CHELTENHAM

Music
Festival

2023 CHELTENHAM MUSIC FESTIVAL PROGRAMME REVEALED

From world premieres at Cheltenham Town Hall and emerging talent in the Pittville Pump Room to a rule-free event in DEYA Brewery Taproom, the Festival once again brings together music from across the classical spectrum, in venues across town

8-15 July 2023

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Cheltenham Music Festival continues to spark musical curiosity and celebrate classical music's vivacity through its 2023 Festival line-up, announced today [7 March]. Across eight days (8-15 July), venues around Cheltenham will be filled with wide-ranging musical offerings from leading international artists and young up-and-coming talent. The 2023 line-up reflects the Festival's aim to bring high-quality classical and contemporary classical music to a wider audience, showcasing the vibrancy that classical music has to offer. Venues range from Cheltenham Town Hall and Pittville Pump Room to the DEYA Brewery Taproom, The Old Courthouse and historic Regency-era Cheltenham drawing rooms.

Michael Duffy, Head of Programming at Cheltenham Music Festival, commented: *"It's a pleasure to share this year's Cheltenham Music Festival programme, which is inspired by both our heritage and our future. The festival celebrates the vibrancy of classical music today. I'm delighted we're welcoming artists who are pushing the boundaries and innovating, alongside the very best of next-generation talent. We feature music by 40 living composers, including five Cheltenham Festivals commissions. I hope that audiences will indulge their curiosity and enjoy the wide range of experiences on offer, from music in the splendour of Cheltenham Town Hall and the Pittville Pump Room to an intimate musical tour of private drawing rooms and our popular Mixtape at DEYA Brewery."*

Highlights include:

- Championing new music with world premieres of works by **James B Wilson** [8 July], **Soosan Lolavar** [9 July] and **Aileen Sweeney** [9 July] plus performances of newly commissioned works by **James MacMillan** [9 July], and **Laurence Osborn** [14 July]
- **Byrdwatching**, an interactive and exclusive musical tour of Cheltenham's private drawing rooms, celebrating Byrd's 400th anniversary, including a newly commissioned work by **Aileen Sweeney**, an alumna/alumnus of Cheltenham's Composer Academy [9 July]
- A morning series at Pittville Pump Room featuring leading international artists including **Mark Simpson** [8 July] and **Pavel Kolesnikov** [15 July], as well as BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists **Hugh Cutting** [10 July], the **Leonkoro Quartet** (with pianist Elisabeth Brauß) [10 July], **Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha** [11 July], **Kunal Lahiry** [11 July], the **Mithras Trio** [12 July], and **James Newby** with Jan Philip Schulze [13 July].

- Platforming exciting young artists including the 2012 winner of BBC Young Musician **Laura van der Heijden** [14 July], and 2022 winner **Jordan Ashman** [11 July]
- A variety of electronic programmes, including two late-night sets at the Old Courthouse with **Laura Cannell** [8 July] and **Rakhi Singh** [14 July]; **Sound Voice**, a new audio-visual experience exploring voice loss [8-15 July]; and **Anna Meredith's ANNO**, a stunning reimagining of Vivaldi's Four Seasons featuring **Scottish Ensemble** and electronics [15 July]
- The Festival's popular, accessible and genre-bending **Mixtape** event returns in a brand-new setting at Cheltenham's innovative DEYA Brewery Taproom [12 July]
- A genre-crossing programme exploring unsettling film music and classical music fixation with death from **12 Ensemble** and **GBSR Duo**, featuring a co-commissioned 21st-century tombeau from **Laurence Osborn** and a brand-new arrangement of Brian Eno's *Ambient 2: The Plateaux of Mirror* [14 July]
- The 10th anniversary of the Cheltenham Music Festival **Composer Academy**, which supports composers taking their first steps into a professional career. This year's participants will work with course leader – and alumnus of the first Academy – **Daniel Kidane** and have their works premiered by **The Carice Singers** [13-14 July]

Extraordinary musical experiences

This year, Cheltenham Music Festival presents **Byrdwatching**, a brand-new promenade experience to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Byrd's death. Musicians from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire take audiences on an exclusive tour of Cheltenham's historic drawing rooms in a series of intimate performances exploring works from Byrd and his contemporaries and beyond – including a newly commissioned work from Composer Academy graduate **Aileen Sweeney** [9 July].

The popular **Mixtape** concert returns once again for an evening of relaxed, rule-free classical music – taking place at DEYA Taproom for the very first time [12 July]. Audiences are invited to sit back and sample both drinks and short classical works, featuring top-class musicians such as the Manchester Collective and The Carice Singers, with more to be announced.

Exploring new electronic possibilities

This year, Cheltenham Music Festival presents two innovative late-night electronic sets at The Old Courthouse, a historic venue in the heart of Cheltenham. **Laura Cannell** combines recorder with electronics to embody the beauty of birdsong in a performance from her latest album, *Antiphony of the Trees* [8 July] and **Rakhi Singh's** set features music by **Alex Groves, Emily Hall, Edmund Finnis, Nicola Matteis** and more [14 July].

Throughout the Festival, audiences are invited to experience **Sound Voice at Cheltenham's Everyman Studio Theatre**, an interdisciplinary collaboration between professional musicians and individuals who have experienced voice loss. The project tells the stories of these individuals through an audio-visual journey that highlights their real-life experiences and sheds light on what it means to find a new voice. The project aims to create a thought-provoking space for discussion and reflection on the relationship between voice and identity [8-15 July].

To close the festival, the **Scottish Ensemble** will join forces with award-winning composer **Anna Meredith** for a performance of her work *ANNO*, a work originally written for the ensemble back in 2016 that reimagines Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* for string ensemble and electronics [15 July].

A destination for new music

Cheltenham Music Festival continues to be a champion of new music in the UK, commissioning and performing music by leading and emerging composers year after year. This year's opening concert with the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra** features the world premiere of a work by **James B Wilson** which is a response to Vaughan Williams's ideas and philosophies in works such as *The Lark Ascending* [8 July]. James B Wilson was himself a former participant of Cheltenham's long-running Composer Academy programme, underlining the Festival's commitment to developing and fostering contemporary composition.

The Carice Singers and their director **George Parris** also return to the Festival to perform the world premiere of a work by **Soosan Lolavar**, featured as part of a programme inspired by light and luminosity [9 July].

The Festival regularly collaborates with other festivals and venues both in the UK and internationally to co-commission new works. **Laurence Osborn's** *TOMB!* is a co-commission with the Norfolk and Norwich Festival and Kings Place, London, and will be performed by the **12 Ensemble** and **GBSR Duo** in a genre-crossing programme that brings together classical and non-classical music in an exploration of unsettling film soundtracks, moving from **Mica Levi** through to a new arrangement of **Brian Eno** and **Harold Budd's** *Ambient 2: The Plateaux of Mirror* [14 July]. Similarly, **James MacMillan's** *We Are Collective* is a co-commission alongside the Haddo Arts, Sound Festival and Spitalfields Music and will be performed at Cheltenham Music Festival by the **Maxwell Quartet** in a programme also featuring the quartet's own arrangements of Scottish folk music [9 July].

In addition to new commissions and premieres, previous commissions and other contemporary works also feature in the programme. **Laura van der Heijden** and **Jâms Coleman** perform **Michael Zev Gordon's** *Roseland*, which premiered at the Festival in 2008 [14 July]. Other contemporary highlights in the programme include works by **Thomas Adès**, **Jonathan Harvey**, **Cecilia McDowall**, **Caroline Shaw**, **Anna Meredith** and many more. In a mark of the Festival's commitment to contemporary talent, the programme features work by 40 living composers.

Bringing world-class musicians to Cheltenham

The 2023 line-up once again spotlights leading musicians from around the UK. The **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra** perform the opening-night concert with violinist **Tamsin Waley-Cohen** and **Andrew Gourlay** conducting, and earlier in the day sees clarinettist and composer **Mark Simpson** perform a chamber recital with **The Doric Quartet** [8 July]. The **Chineke! Wind Quartet** explore twentieth-century woodwind works in a later recital at Pittville Pump Room [11 July].

Later on, the ground-breaking **Manchester Collective** build on their reputation for energetic musical explorations with a concert at Cheltenham Town Hall featuring works from exciting composers Wojciech Kilar and Pulitzer Prize-winning Caroline Shaw alongside monumental works by Strauss and Shostakovich [13 July].

A platform for emerging talent

The Festival continues its commitment to emerging young talent, spotlighting some of the most exciting up-and-coming artists of today in recitals at the Pittville Pump Room throughout the Festival.

This year's morning series hosts world-class talents including **Alasdair Beatson** and the **Maxwell Quartet** [9 July], **Laura van der Heijden** in recital with pianist **Jâms Coleman** [14 July] and a solo recital by **Pavel Kolesnikov** [15 July]. Countertenor **Hugh Cutting** also joins the line-up, with a double bill of Bach concerts with the **Dunedin Consort** which will be recorded for broadcast by BBC Radio 3 [10 July].

Musicians from the **BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists [NGA]** scheme will also perform morning recitals in partnership with BBC Radio 3, which will all be recorded for future broadcast. **The Leonkoro Quartet**, who recently won the Wigmore Hall's International String Quartet Competition, join previous NGA **Elisabeth Brauß** for a performance of Schumann's Piano Quintet in E flat Major [10 July], and **Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha** sings alongside **Kunal Lahiry** in a programme that features works from Rangwanasha's native South Afrika as well as Lieder, musical theatre and American spirituals [11 July]. The NGA recitals continue with the **Mithras Trio's** interpretation of Dvorak's Dumky Trio and the lyrical birdsong of Cecilia McDowall's *Cavatina* [12 July] and culminate with **James Newby's** programme exploring displacement with music from a range of composer including Hanns Eisler and others who left Germany and Austria in the 1930s to resettle in California [13 July].

Following his win at the 2022 **BBC Young Musician** competition, percussionist **Jordan Ashman** performs a recital at St Gregory's Church [11 July], and local talent features too with a recital from the winners of the 2023 **Gloucestershire Young Musician of the Year** competition and **Keith Nutland Award** [12 July].

Championing music education and mentorship

Music education remains an important staple in the Festival's programme, with multiple events for families and children. At the start of the Festival, musicians from the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra** present an interactive musical experience exploring Oliver Jeffers's *The Way Back Home* for children aged 4-7 [8 July], whilst musical storytellers **MishMash Ensemble** offer 7-11 year-olds and their families a guided exploration of woodwind instruments with five leading players [15 July].

The **Gloucestershire Youth Chamber Orchestra** perform in the Festival's annual **Concert for Schools**, aimed at Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils. The concert features engaging storytelling alongside live orchestral music to create an interactive journey through classical music [13 July]. The following day, the orchestra returns to perform the **Relaxed Concert for Schools**, an interactive event designed for young people with special educational needs and their caregivers [14 July].

2023 marks the 10th year of Cheltenham Music Festival's **Composer Academy**, which supports early-career composers who are looking for professional advice and mentorship. Part of the festival's Spotlight Talent Development programme, young composers aged 18+ will work with director and mentor **Daniel Kidane** to workshop, perform and record their works with **The Carice Singers**, culminating in two **Composium** showcases [13 and 14 July].

Full festival details can be found at www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/music

Members' Priority Booking opens on 24 March 2023

General public sale opens on 31 March 2023

Images are available [here](#)

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Notes to Editors

Cheltenham Music Festival



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Cheltenham Music Festival is one of the UK's leading classical music festivals, bringing together eight days of live music in the Regency spa town of Cheltenham each July. Founded in 1945, the Festival prides itself on encouraging a spirit of curiosity and welcoming bold performances. It is renowned for presenting world-class musicians in magnificent venues around Cheltenham and Gloucestershire. The festival is a champion for new music from UK composers and supports the incubation of new talent, and also operates extensive education programmes.

Cheltenham Music Festival is part of Cheltenham Festivals, an arts charity that creates experiences which bring joy, spark curiosity, connect communities and inspire change. Its year-round learning and participation and talent development programmes culminate in four world-class Festivals, offering everyone an opportunity to explore and create culture. Over 225,000 visitors a year are inspired by its Literature, Science, Jazz and Music Festivals.

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Cheltenham Festivals has signed up to the Keychange programme which aims for a 50:50 gender balance across the Festival line-up.

Programme of events

8-15 July | Cheltenham Town Centre | Hourly between 10.00am – 8.00pm

Sound Voice

Hannah Conway *music*

Hazel Gould *words*

Luke Halls *video design*

David Sheppard *sound design*

8 July | Cheltenham Town Hall, Pillar Room | 10.00am-10.50am & 11.30am– 12.20pm

Musical Storytime: The Way Back Home

Musicians from the **City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra**

8 July | Pittville Pump Room | 11am– 1pm

Mark Simpson *clarinet*

Doric Quartet

Alban Berg: *String Quartet Op. 3*

Thomas Adès: *Alchymia*

Andrea Tarrodi: *String Quartet No.3 'Light Scattering'*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: *Clarinet Quintet, K581*

8 July | Cheltenham Town Hall, Main Hall | 7– 9pm

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra

Tamsin Waley-Cohen *violin*

Andrew Gourlay *conductor*

James B Wilson: *New work (world premiere – Cheltenham Music Festival commission)*

Richard Rodney Bennett: *Partita*

Ralph Vaughan Williams: *The Lark Ascending*

Ludwig van Beethoven: *Symphony No. 6 'Pastoral', Op. 68*

8 July | The Old Courthouse | 9.30– 10.45pm

Laura Cannell: Antiphony of the Trees

Laura Cannell *recorder*

8-9 July | Various Venues | Times TBC

...Around Town pop-up performances

Music and Mindfulness with quietnote/Will Crawford

Song Surgery with soprano Bibi Heal

Sensory Moments with Bittersuite and Phaedra Ensemble

9 July | Pittville Pump Room | 11am– 1pm

Maxwell Quartet

Alasdair Beatson *piano*

James MacMillan: *We Are Collective* (Cheltenham Music Festival co-commission)

Maxwell Quartet: *Gather* (Folk music from Scotland)

Eleanor Alberga: *String Quartet No. 2*

César Franck: *Piano Quintet in F minor*

9 July | Cheltenham College Chapel | 4–5.15pm

The Carice Singers

George Parris *director*

Ralph Vaughan Williams: *A Prayer to the Father of Heaven*

Galina Grigorjeva: *'O gladsome light'* from *Vespers*

Arvo Pärt: *Nunc Dimittis*

Valentyn Silvestrov: *A Prayer for the Ukraine*

György Ligeti: *Lux aeterna*

Soosan Lolavar: *New work* (world premiere)

Jonathan Harvey: *Plainsongs for peace and light*

William Byrd: *O lux Beata Trinitas*

9 July | Cheltenham drawing rooms | 6–8pm

Byrdwatching

Musicians from **Royal Birmingham Conservatoire**

Music by William Byrd and a new work by Aileen Sweeney (Cheltenham Music Festival commission)

10 July | Pittville Pump Room | 11am–12.15pm

Leonkoro Quartet

Elisabeth Brauß *piano*

Anton Webern: *Slow Movement for String Quartet (1905)*

Erwin Schulhoff: *Five Pieces for String Quartet*

Robert Schumann: *Piano Quintet in E flat major, Op. 44*

10 July | Pittville Pump Room | 6–7pm

Hugh Cutting *countertenor*

Dunedin Consort

John Butt *director*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Suite No. 2 in B Minor, BWV 1067*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Cantata Widestehe doch der Sünder, BWV 54*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D major, BWV 1050*

10 July | Pittville Pump Room | 8–9pm

Hugh Cutting *countertenor*

Dunedin Consort

John Butt *director*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Violin Concerto in A minor BWV 1041 (20')*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Cantata Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust, BWV 170 (22')*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G major, BWV 1049 (16')*

11 July | Pittville Pump Room | 11am–12.15pm

Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha *soprano*

Kunal Lahiry *piano*

Franz Schubert: *Gretchen am spinnrade*

Franz Schubert: *Du bist die Ruh*

Franz Schubert: *Nacht und Träume*

Franz Schubert arr Franz Liszt: *Des Mädchens klage*

Earl Wild (after George Gershwin): *Virtuoso Etude No.3 'The Man I Love'*

Jerome Kern: *'Can't help lovin' dat man of mine' from Show Boat*

Frederick Loewe: *'I could have danced all night' from My Fair Lady*

Mzilikazi Khumalo: *Sengiyeza*

B P Tyamzashe: *Isthandwa Sam*

American Spirituals: *Medley: Deep River – Bless this house O Lord we pray – He's got the whole world in his hands*

11 July | St Gregory's Church | 5.30–6.30pm

Platform: BBC Young Musician

Jordan Ashman *percussion*

Anna Meredith: *Flex*

Iannis Xenakis: *Rebonds B*

Anna Ignatowicz: *Toccata*

Alexej Gerassimez: *Asventuras*

Gary Burton: *Chega de Saudade*

Pius Cheng: *Etude in E minor*

Keiko Abe: *Dream of the Cherry Blossoms*

Gene Koshinski: *Caleidoscópico*

11 July | Pittville Pump Room | 7.30–9.30pm

Chineke! Wind Quartet

György Ligeti: *Six Bagatelles*

William Grant: *Still Summerland*

Paquito D'Rivera: *Lecuoneras*

Paul Hindemith: *Klein Kammermusik*

Arturo Marquez: *Danza de Mediodía*

Maurice Ravel (arr Jones): *Le Tombeau de Couperin*

Gilles Silvestrini: *Le Ballet Espagnol*

Valerie Coleman: *Red Clay and Mississippi Delta*

12 July | Pittville Pump Room | 11am –12.15pm

Mithras Trio

Cecilia McDowall: *Cavatina at Midnight*

Frank Bridge: *Miniatures for Piano Trio, Set I, H.87*

Antonín Dvořák: *Piano Trio No.4 'Dumky', Op. 90*

12 July | St Gregory's Church | 5.30–6.30pm

Platform: Gloucestershire Young Musicians

12 July | DEYA Brewery Taproom | 8– 10pm

Mixtape

Manchester Collective

Carice Singers

Plus further artists to be announced

13 July | Cheltenham Town Hall, Main Hall | 10.30-11.30am

Concert for Schools

Gloucestershire Youth Chamber Orchestra

Glynn Oxley *conductor*

Musicate Music Leaders

13 July | Pittville Pump Room | 11am – 12.15pm

James Newby *baritone*

Jan Philip Schulze *piano*

Franz Schubert: *Der Wanderer an den Mond*

Robert Schumann: *In der Fremde*, Op. 39

Fanny Mendelssohn: *Das Heimweh*

Hugo Wolf: *Heimweh*

Henri Kowalski: *Der Panther*

Vítězslava Kaprálová: *Waving Farewell*

Hanns Eisler: *Excerpts from Hollywood Songbook*

Valentyn Silvestrov: *Excerpts from Silent Songs*

Arnold Schoenberg: *Der genügsame Liebhaber*

Walter Jurmann: *You and the Waltz and I*

Alexander von Zemlinsky: *My Ship and I*

Erich Korngold: *My Mistress' eyes*

Kurt Weill: *September Song*

13 July | Francis Close Hall Chapel | 5.30– 6.30pm

Composium 1

The Carice Singers

George Parris *director*

Music by Composer Academy participants

13 July | Cheltenham Town Hall, Main Hall | 7–9pm

Manchester Collective

Wojciech Kilar: *Orawa*

Dmitri Shostakovich: *Chamber Symphony*

Caroline Shaw: *Plan & Elevation*

Richard Strauss: *Metamorphosen*

14 July | Cheltenham Town Hall, Main Hall | 11.15am–12pm

Relaxed Concert for Schools

Gloucestershire Youth Chamber Orchestra

Glynn Oxley *conductor*

Musicate Music Leaders

14 July | Pittville Pump Room | 11am– 12.15pm

Laura van der Heijden *cello*

Jâms Coleman *piano*

Alfred Schnittke: *Suite in the Old Style*

Anton Webern: *Two Pieces (1899)*

Elizabeth Maconchy: *Divertimento for Cello and Piano*

Michael Zev Gordon: *Roseland*

Claude Debussy: *Sonata for Cello and Piano*

14 July | Francis Close Hall Chapel | 5.30–6.30pm

Composium 2

The Carice Singers

George Parris *director*

Music by Composer Academy participants

14 July | Cheltenham Town Hall, Main Hall | 7–9pm

The 12 Ensemble

GBSR Duo

Mica Levi: *Lonely Void* (from *Under the Skin*)

Mica Levi: *Love* (from *Under the Skin*)

Fausto Romitelli: *Flowing down too slow*

Laurence Osborn: *TOMB!* (Cheltenham Music Festival co-commission)

Brian Eno/Harold Budd: *Ambient 2: The Plateaux of Mirror*

14 July | The Old Courthouse | 9.30–10.45pm

Rakhi Singh

Featuring music by Alex Groves, Emily Hall, Edmund Finnis, Nicola Matteis and Bang on a Can's Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe.

15 July | Pittville Pump Room | 11am – 1pm

Pavel Kolesnikov: Celestial Navigation

Pavel Kolesnikov *piano*

Louis Couperin: *Pavanne in F sharp minor*

Olivier Messiaen: *'Regard de l'étoile'* from *Vingt regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus*

Frédéric Chopin: *Nocturne No. 8 in D flat Op. 27 No. 2*

Olivier Messiaen: *'La colombe'* from *Préludes pour piano Frédéric Chopin Nocturne in E minor, Op. 72 No. 1*

Olivier Messiaen: *Prélude (1964) Frédéric Chopin Nocturne in C sharp minor, Op. 27 No. 1*

Maurice Ravel: *Une barque sur l'océan*

Thomas Adès: *Darknesse Visible*

Franz Schubert: *Four Impromptus, Op. 142, D935*

15 July | Cheltenham Town Hall, Pillar Room | 11–11.50am & 2– 2.50pm

MishMash Ensemble

15 July | Cheltenham Town Hall, Main Hall | 7.30–9.30pm

Scottish Ensemble: ANNO

Scottish Ensemble

Jonathan Morton *leader*

Anna Meredith *electronics*

Astor Piazzolla: *'Primavera Porteña'* from *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*

Caroline Shaw: *'Moss'* from *Evergreen*

Jessie Montgomery: *Starburst*

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky arr. D Matthews: *'Autumn Song'* from *The Seasons*

Fredrik Sjölin: *Shore*

Trad. Swedish arr. Danish String Quartet: *Polska* from *Dorothea*

Joanna Marsh arr. J Azkoul: *In Winter's House*

Anna Meredith: *ANNO*