



JAM on the Marsh
8-12 JULY 2026



WELCOME

John Frederick Hudson

Artistic Director

There is always a sense of excitement about returning to Romney Marsh each summer that never feels like repetition, but hints at something new. The summer light lingers longer into the evening sky, our audiences keep growing and there is always something new to discover in music and the arts. The 13th iteration of JAM on the Marsh is brimming with creativity and fresh ideas.

JAM's work runs all year round, in our community and with composers alike; the festival is the central gathering point of each year. Through community artwork with a focus on the over-50s, we have created over 24 original works now on display in a festival exhibition. This year we are also supporting nine composers across three residencies. We gathered for a residential weekend in April and held a week-long residency in Littlestone in May, led by JAM's President, Paul Meador LVO. Long before the first concert is performed or an exhibition displayed in this festival, the year was already full of creativity.

Bringing people together through music and the arts is at the centre of what we do. Across the festival you will find world-class concerts in medieval churches, art in steam railway carriages and Shakespeare in open gardens, all set against this evocative coastal backdrop. From emerging composers to internationally celebrated artists, this programme brings together innovation and artistic excellence, with seven world premieres given across the festival.

JAM is more than a festival. It is a community and a catalyst to inspire all. We need your support to keep commissioning, performing and sharing music and art that might otherwise go unheard and unseen. To everyone who supports us, thank you. Your generosity is what makes it all possible. Let us link arms and bring more people with us, honouring our heritage and impacting the future.

Welcome to JAM on the Marsh 2026.

Let the festival begin.

FESTIVAL OVERVIEW

Edward Armitage BEM
Festival Curator

Welcome to JAM on the Marsh 2026, my second and final year as Festival Curator. It has been a real joy to hold this position, following in the footsteps of such esteemed colleagues and friends.

Although this year's festival is more condensed than in previous years, I hope you will find it 'JAM-packed' with music, visual arts and theatre. As always, I am delighted to welcome back many friends of the festival, including the wonderful **Changeling Theatre**, celebrating its 25th anniversary tour this year. Congratulations to **Rob Forknall** and his brilliant team on this remarkable milestone. Returning artists include pianists **Thomas Kelly** and **John Frederick Hudson**, soloist **Cyrill Ibrahim** with the JAM Sinfonia, our community choir **The Sunflower Singers** with **Rebecca Lodge Birkebaek** and artist **Jillian Bain Christie**.

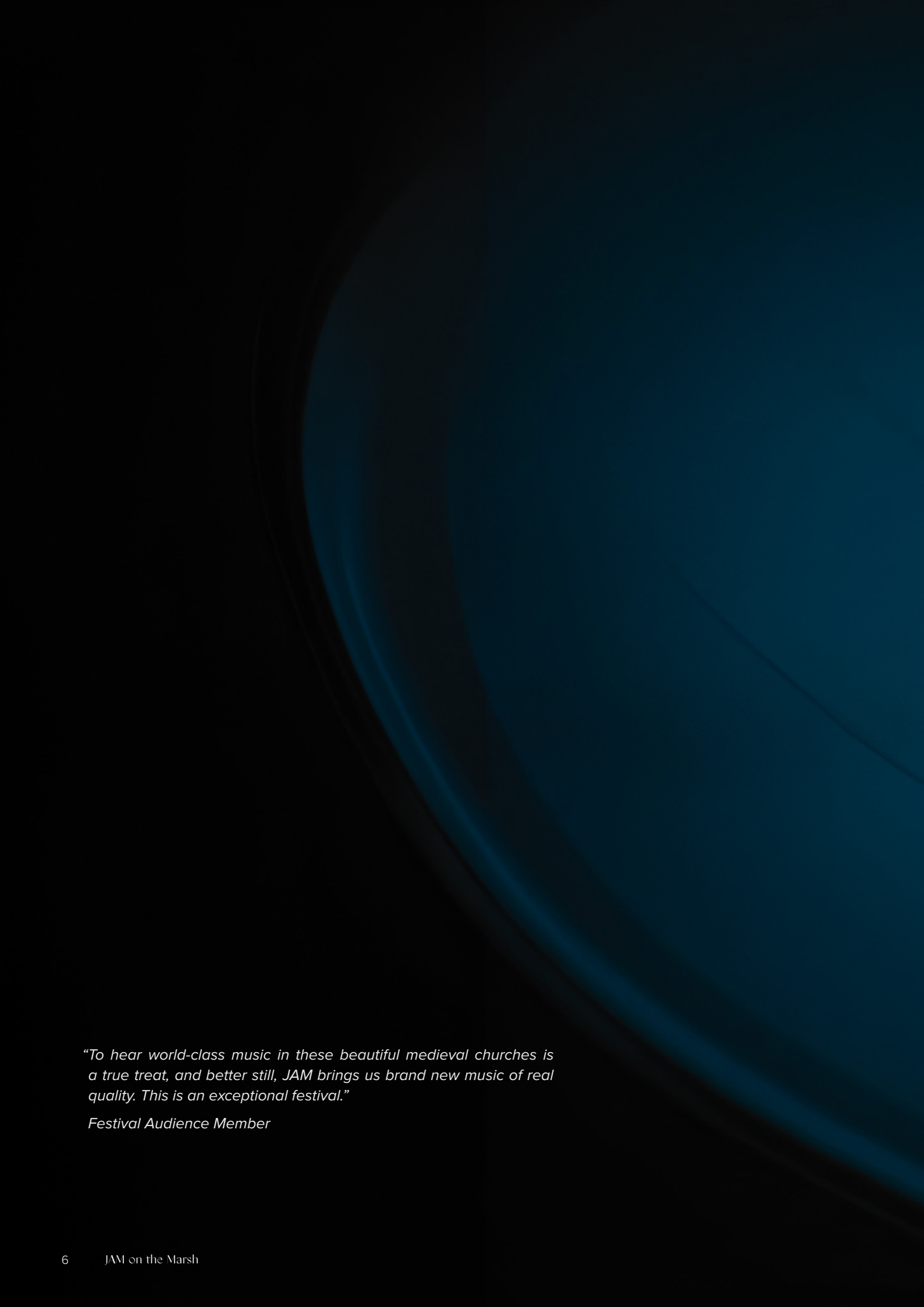
I am pleased to introduce some new faces, among them **Ryan Corbett** (accordion), **Alexander Armstrong** with **Madeleine Shaw** and **Andrew Matthews-Owen**, violinist **Fenella Humphreys**, and the internationally renowned **Black Dyke Band**.

I am not a great believer in themes, but certain threads run through this year's programme. These reflect JAM's long-held principles, my admiration for particular composers, the influence of jazz on classical music and a remarkable period of French composition. Reimagining existing works is one such thread. Four concerts feature new interpretations, including John Frederick Hudson's arrangement of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* for four hands at one piano, Julien Durand's version of Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G* and Timothy Jackson's reduction of Debussy's *La Mer* — the latter two commissioned by JAM.

The Marsh Academy remains a centre point of the festival, hosting three exhibitions at the Leisure Centre and two screenings of the **National Theatre Live** production of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* at Cinemarsh. We are also delighted to welcome Academy students undertaking work experience during the week.

Thank you for supporting JAM on the Marsh. I hope you enjoy this year's festival as much as I have enjoyed programming it.





"To hear world-class music in these beautiful medieval churches is a true treat, and better still, JAM brings us brand new music of real quality. This is an exceptional festival."

Festival Audience Member

2026 FESTIVAL GUIDE

8 JULY · WED



FESTIVAL LAUNCH

5pm · Assembly Rooms · New Romney



CHANGELING THEATRE

Much Ado About Nothing

7pm · Old School Garden · New Romney

9 JULY · THU



MEET the ARTIST

Jillian Bain Christie

1pm · Marsh Academy Leisure Centre



NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE

Les Liaisons Dangereuses

2:30pm · Cinemmarsh · New Romney



THOMAS KELLY & JOHN FREDERICK HUDSON

7pm · St Leonard · Hythe

10 JULY · FRI



SUNFLOWER SINGERS

11am · St Dunstan · Snargate



OPEN MASTERCLASS

with Ryan Corbett & Paul Mealor LVO

11am · Assembly Rooms · New Romney



JAM Sinfonia

Ravel & Debussy

7pm · St Nicholas · New Romney

11 JULY · SAT



INTO the BELLOWS

Composer Residency Concert

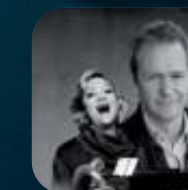
11am · St Nicholas · New Romney



NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE

Les Liaisons Dangereuses

2:30pm · Cinemmarsh · New Romney

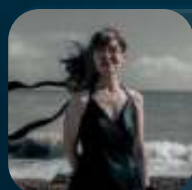


THE ROARING 20s

Alexander Armstrong

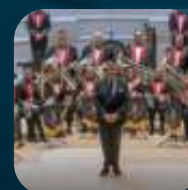
7pm · St Nicholas · New Romney

12 JULY · SUN



FENELLA HUMPHREYS

11am · St Clement · Old Romney



BLACK DYKE BAND

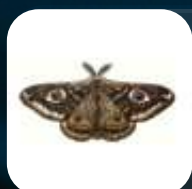
3pm · St Nicholas · New Romney



FESTIVAL FAREWELL

4:30pm · Old School Garden · New Romney

EXHIBITIONS · 8-12 July



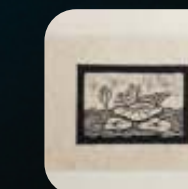
Micro Macro

Jillian Bain Christie
Marsh Academy Leisure Centre · New Romney



Lost and Found

Community Exhibition
Marsh Academy Leisure Centre · New Romney



Linocut

Community Exhibition
Marsh Academy Leisure Centre · New Romney



FESTIVAL LAUNCH

8 JULY · WED · 5PM

The Assembly Rooms · New Romney · TN28 8AS

FREE (booking required) · 75 min

The 13th JAM on the Marsh begins here. Join Festival Curator **Edward Armitage BEM** and JAM President **Paul Mealor LVO** at The Assembly Rooms in New Romney for an informal conversation delving into the thoughts and ideas shaping the 2026 programme.

Discover the strings that weave through the festival, hear about the world premieres ahead, and get a behind-the-scenes look at the artists, venues, and ambitions of the five days to come. Then raise a glass to a new season.

A relaxed opening and the perfect way to meet fellow audience members before Changeling Theatre takes over the evening in the Old School Garden at 7pm.

CHANGELING THEATRE 25TH ANNIVERSARY TOUR

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

8 JULY · WED · 7PM

Old School Garden · New Romney · TN28 8ER

£25 Standard · U18s Free · 180 min

The festival opens with Shakespeare in the garden. Changeling Theatre, celebrating 25 years of outdoor touring in 2026, bring their new production of *Much ADO About Nothing* to The Old School Garden in New Romney.

Directed by Robert Forknall, it's Shakespeare's ultimate romcom. Beatrice and Benedick swear they can't stand each other. Hero and Claudio seem picture-perfect until a little drama crashes their party. Lurking behind the cocktails and confetti is one deliciously devious Don John stirring up trouble.

It's sharp, it's funny, it's the ultimate party romcom full of twists, tunes and turns. There ain't no party like a Shakespeare party, and this is sure to be the perfect summer play full of laughter, love and mayhem.

Outdoor performance. Bring a picnic, a rug and layers for after sunset.

Company

Director · Robert Forknall
General Manager · Dawn Archer
Assistant to General Manager · Lucy Hegarty
Design · George P Martin
Graphic Design · Dan Bull
Brand and content · Jill Hogan
Music · Samuel Heron
Movement · Adam Haigh
Production Manager · James Keill
CSM · Androniki Koshi
Casting · Daniel Lobo Casting
Programme & Poster Design · David Waters

Cast

Don Pedro/Conrad · Zak Labiad
Leonarta/Sexton · Lucia McAnespie
Beatrice · Beth Burrows
Benedick · Freddy Williams
Claudio/Verges · Harry James Miller
Hero · Ella Boyes
Don John/Dogberry · Charlie Maddison
Borachio/Balthazar/Friar · Jalby Coe
Margaret · Sarah Brauner







National
Theatre
Live

LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES

9 JULY · THU · 2:30PM

11 JULY · SAT · 2:30PM

Cinemarsh · New Romney · TN28 8BB

Ticketing online through Cinemarsh · 150 min
(visit: <https://www.marshacademy.org.uk/600/home-1>)

One of the great plays of the modern era returns to the National Theatre, with two of the most striking actors of the moment leading. Forty years on from Christopher Hampton's celebrated adaptation of Pierre Choderlos de Laclos's eighteenth-century novel, Marianne Elliott — director of *Angels in America* and *War Horse* — brings it back to the National Theatre stage.

Lesley Manville (*Phantom Thread*) plays the Marquise de Merteuil: master of survival, mistress of the long game. Aidan Turner (*Rivals*, *Poldark*) is the Vicomte de Valmont — her former lover and chief weapon. Together they turn seduction into strategy and desire into a weapon. When their alliance collapses into rivalry, the battle between them threatens to destroy everyone in its orbit.

Filmed live at the National Theatre and screened at Cinemarsh in New Romney: JAM's second NT Live presentation, continuing a long-running partnership with the marsh's independent cinema.

**Please note: contains adult themes, sexual content and brief nudity. Recommended for ages 15+.*

9 JULY · THU · 7PM

St Leonard · Hythe · CT21 5DN

£25 Standard · U18s Free · 60 min

Thomas Kelly · piano

John Frederick Hudson · piano

Hudson: *Outside the Lines* (5') (world premiere)

Beethoven: *Sonata No.1 in F minor* (4')

Debussy: *Petite Suite* L.65 (12')

I. *En bateau* (Sailing): Andantino

II. *Cortège* (Retinue): Moderato

III. *Menuet*: Moderato

IV. *Ballet*: Allegro giusto

Hudson: *Variations on COVENTRY* (4')

Mussorgsky, Arr by Hudson: *Pictures at an Exhibition* (35') (world premiere)

Promenade

I. *Gnome*

Promenade

II. *The Old Castle*

Promenade

III. *Tuileries*

IV. *The Oxcart*

Promenade

V. *Ballet of the Chicks in their Shells*

VI. *Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuÿle*

VII. *The Marketplace in Limoges*

VIII. *Catacombs*

Con mortuis in lingua mortua

IX. *The Hut on Fowl's Legs*

X. *The Great Gates of Kiev*

The starting point for tonight's concert was to showcase music that first drew Thomas Kelly and John Frederick Hudson to the piano. Though the programme is mostly four hands at one keyboard, each performer will step out for one solo piece that shaped their formative musical selves. For Kelly, it is Beethoven's *Sonata No. 1 in F minor*; for Hudson, his own *Variations on COVENTRY*, written when he was fifteen.

Around these personal moments, the two trace the piano-duet tradition across three centuries, from a new world premiere by Hudson that opens the evening to the shimmering lyricism of Debussy's *Petite Suite*, one of the best-loved works in the four-hand repertoire.

The programme closes with Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a suite of ten movements bound together by a recurring and ever-changing *Promenade*. Written for solo piano in 1874, it is best known today through Ravel's celebrated 1922 orchestration. Hudson felt that Mussorgsky's original score already implies a range of colour all but impossible for one pianist's ten fingers to realise. This new version takes Ravel's orchestration as its material and draws that colour back to the keyboard, exploring the full range of the instrument across four hands, and twenty fingers.

THOMAS KELLY & JOHN FREDERICK HUDSON



THE SUNFLOWER SINGERS

10 JULY · FRI · 11AM

St Dunstan · Snargate · TN29 0EW

FREE (booking required) · 30 min

Rebecca Lodge Birkebaek · conductor

The festival highlights JAM's community choir, **The Sunflower Singers**, bringing a short, light coffee concert to Snargate. Based at Hub on the Beach in Greatstone, they meet every Friday for free, open singing sessions. Their repertoire spans folk songs and musical theatre, a cappella rounds and pop, with a few surprises along the way. Expect *You Raise Me Up*, *Wade in the Water*, *Mhairi's Wedding* and *Blackbird* among other favourites.

Enjoy a coffee and audience participation will be encouraged.



OPEN MASTERCLASS

10 JULY · FRI · 11AM

The Assembly Rooms · New Romney · TN28 8AS

FREE (booking suggested) · 120 min

Ryan Corbett · accordion

Paul Mealor LVO · composer and President of JAM

Have you ever wondered how a new piece of music comes to life? This May, three composers were in residence in Littlestone, each writing new works for solo accordion: Zhenyan Li, George W. Parris and Noah Max. Before their world premieres on Saturday, we are opening the doors on a working masterclass.

You will watch the brilliant accordionist Ryan Corbett play the new commissions while international composer Paul Mealor LVO, who guided the residency, shapes the music in real time. It is a rare look at the craft behind the concert. Whether you love music, make it yourself, or are simply curious, you are warmly welcome.

Please note: this masterclass was originally scheduled for 2pm and now begins at 11am. We are sorry for any inconvenience the change may cause.



RAVEL & DEBUSSY

WITH JAM SINFONIA

10 JULY · FRI · 7PM

St Nicholas · New Romney · TN28 8EU

£25 Standard · U18s Free · 60 min

Cyrill Ibrahim · piano soloist
Joshua Ballance · conductor
Emily Davis · violin I, leader
Joonas Pekonen · violin II
Matthias Wiesner · viola
Raphael Lang · violoncello
Ben Russell · double bass
Lorraine Hart · oboe & cor anglais
Ryan Linham · trumpet
Ryan Corbett · accordion
Alex Rider · harp
Ian Tindale · piano

Ravel: *Piano Concerto in G Major* (22')

Arr by Julien Durand (World premiere)

I. Allegramente

II. Adagio assai

III. Presto

Debussy: *La Mer* (25')

Arr by Timothy Jackson (World premiere)

I. De l'aube à midi sur la mer

(From Dawn to Noon on the Sea)

II. Jeux de vagues (Play of the Waves)

III. Dialogue du vent et de la mer

(Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea)

“Maurice Ravel’s *Piano Concerto in G Major* is a vibrant and dazzling work, infused with influences from Basque music and the jazz he encountered in Paris and during his tour of the United States in the late 1920s. One of his final major compositions, the concerto was conceived, in Ravel’s words, as ‘a genuine concerto’: a brilliant and entertaining work that would showcase the soloist’s virtuosity rather than seek to show profundity. In this respect, he cited Mozart and Saint-Saëns as important models.

As a jazz musician, Ravel’s music has always resonated deeply with me, and I find this concerto to be far more than a virtuosic tour-de-force. Beneath its brilliance lies a remarkable emotional depth, from the exuberance of the outer movements to the lyricism of the *Adagio*. This concerto had already been arranged for reduced forces by Ravel himself ‘in order not to needlessly weigh down the orchestral texture’. Adapting it for this chamber ensemble presented an opportunity to re-examine Ravel’s orchestration on an intimate scale.

Throughout the arrangement, I sought to remain as faithful as possible to the colours and textures of the original score. The accordion proved particularly valuable in compensating for the absence of woodwinds, while the smaller ensemble allowed the harp’s delicate contributions to emerge with greater clarity. Lacking percussion, I included some elements of body percussion which also adds to the theatricality of the piece. More than anything, this process reinforced my admiration for Ravel’s mastery: his command of melody, texture and orchestral colour remains unmatched. I hope you enjoy this new rendition of a truly remarkable work.”

— Julien Durand

“Debussy worked on his ‘three symphonic sketches’ *La Mer* between 1903 and 1905, completing the final proofreading during a holiday at the Grand Hotel in Eastbourne, which he described as ‘a charming, peaceful spot: the sea unfurls itself with an utterly British correctness.’ The original piece is scored for large orchestra, but Debussy himself also produced an arrangement for piano four hands.

As a horn player, I have played the piece in the orchestra often enough to feel that I knew it well. However, as I began to study the score in preparation for beginning this arrangement, it quickly became clear that there was a wealth of inner detail that, even from inside the orchestra, I had never really been aware of. This then became the challenge and joy of writing for this new combination of instruments: trying to keep the opulent, luxurious sound of the original, but using the simpler texture to bring out lines that might have been hidden previously.

In this respect I was very much inspired by Sally Beamish and her wonderful version of *La Mer* for piano trio. Beamish describes how she avoided the temptation to try to represent every note from Debussy’s score but rather tried to rethink the material for the new medium, enjoying how lines would take on a different resonance when played by a single instrument rather than a full section.

For example, the inclusion in our ensemble of the accordion, with its enormous range of pitch and dynamic, brings the possibility of sounds that are not present in the original. Equally, the piano, although not part of Debussy’s own orchestration, feels like a familiar colour from his impressionistic imagination.”

— Timothy Jackson

This event is kindly supported by Orchestras Live.



INTO THE BELLOWS

Composer Residency Concert

11 JULY · SAT · 11AM

St Nicholas · New Romney · TN28 8EU

£15 Standard · U18s Free · 60 min

Ryan Corbett · accordion

Noah Max: *Blindness* (10')

Zhenyan Li: *The Tides, The Bones* (10')

George W. Parris: *Cockle* (12')

Into the Bellows is the festival's composer residency concert: the result of a three-month creative period.

This May, three composers swapped their usual routines for a week in a cottage by the sea at Littlestone, with the time and quiet that writing music really needs. What JAM gave them was something rare: time, and the chance to work hands-on with virtuoso accordionist Ryan Corbett, getting to know the sounds and possibilities of the instrument first-hand. With principal tutor Paul Mealor LVO and course director John Frederick Hudson alongside them, they spent the week trying things out and writing, before heading home with a few weeks to finish their scores. With opportunities for composers dwindling, this is one of very few residencies of its kind in the UK.

Today you hear the result: three brand new works for solo accordion, performed live by Ryan Corbett and receiving their world premieres. Each piece will be introduced by its composer, so you hear first-hand the thinking and the discoveries behind the music.

JAM has always believed that magical things happen when composers and performers work together. **Into the Bellows** is that belief made audible.

**Do join us in the Old School Garden after the concert, where you can meet the composers at a short reception. We would love to see you there.*

2026 RESIDENCY COMPOSERS



ZHENYAN LI



NOAH MAX



GEORGE W. PARRIS

THE ROARING 20s

with Alexander Armstrong

11 JULY · SAT · 7PM

St Nicholas · New Romney · TN28 8EU

£25 Standard · U18s Free · 60 min

Alexander Armstrong · actor & baritone

Madeleine Shaw · mezzo soprano

Andrew Matthews-Owen · piano

"The Twenties were drenched in melody." — Beverly Nichols

A century ago, a decade emerged from a pandemic, a financial crash and a war. It answered, in Zelda Fitzgerald's phrase, "with audacity and rouge", and with cocktails, new plays, new fashions and a wave of new music. Noël Coward, Ivor Novello, the Great American Songbook. Songs that have outlived almost everything else from the era.

Indulge in an evening of music, told and sung.

Alexander Armstrong, actor, baritone and Classic FM's weekday host, is joined by mezzo-soprano Madeleine Shaw (English National Opera, Glyndebourne, La Scala) and pianist Andrew Matthews-Owen, whose Paris 1913 was named The Times' Classical Recording of the Year 2025. Christine Croshaw's script carries the decade through the evening: the laughter, the love, the gossip, the intrigue. And the inevitable sense, as the Twenties closes, that the party's over now.

But what a decade it was.





FENELLA HUMPHREYS

An intimate violin recital

12 JULY · SUN · 11AM

St Clement · Old Romney · TN29 0HP

£15 Standard · U18s Free · 60 min

Fenella Humphreys · violin

J.S. Bach: *Adagio in G minor BWV 1001* (1720) (5')

Sally Beamish: *The Lone Seafarer* (1998) (5')

Heinrich Biber: *Passacaglia in G minor* (1676) (9')

Caroline Shaw: *In Manus Tuas* (2009) (6')

Nicola Matteis Sr: *Movimento Incognito & Passaggio Rotto* (1676) (5')

Anna Berg: *Twirling* (2024) (5')

J.S. Bach: *Chaconne in D minor BWV 1004* (1720) (15')

Seonaid Aitken: *Glasgow Reel Set* (2019) (5')

With music spanning almost 350 years, this programme explores the extremes of a solo violin from possibly the best known masterpiece (Bach's *Chaconne in D minor BWV 1004*), to freshly discovered gems new and old. Recent works feel timeless with Sally Beamish taking her inspiration from a 10th century poem full of birdsong, and Caroline Shaw's *In Manus Tuas* based around the music of Thomas Tallis. Bach and Biber take us to a world of deep reflection whilst Matteis Sr and Anna Berg whirl and flutter in music full of improvisatory magic. The programme closes with Seonaid Aitken's brilliant *Glasgow Reel Set*, music that will have everyone dancing in the aisles.



BLACK DYKE BAND

12 JULY · SUN · 3PM

St Nicholas · New Romney · TN28 8EU

£25 Standard · U18s Free · 60 min

Professor Nicholas J. Childs · conductor

Strauss arr. Banks: *Festmusic der Stadt Wien* (11')

Paul Mealar: *Fantasia on a Theme of Henry Purcell* (13')

- Soloist Showcase -

Mendelssohn arr. Baker: *Finale from Violin Concerto* (5')

Cornet Soloist Tom Hutchinson

Rodrigo arr. Bolton: *Concierto de Aranjuez* (4')

Flugel Soloist Phoebe Mallinson

W. G. Lemon: *Helter Skelter* (3')

Xylophone soloist Gareth Hand

Malcolm Arnold arr. Farr: *Four Cornish Dances* (10')

Respighi arr. Snell: *Pines of Rome*

Villa Borghese (2')

March of the Appian Way (4')



Black Dyke Band comes to New Romney on their way to the 2026 BBC Proms. It is a rare chance to hear one of the world's great brass ensembles up close, in the intimate setting of St Nicholas Church, before they take to the Royal Albert Hall stage.

Under Music Director Professor Nicholas Childs, today's programme moves from grand ensemble writing to a showcase for some of the band's finest soloists, and closes with two of the repertoire's most thrilling showpieces. It is a particular joy that the band performs *Fantasia on a Theme of Henry Purcell* by Paul Meallor LVO, JAM's President, who joins us in the audience today. One of Britain's most celebrated living composers, Paul has been part of the JAM family for many years, and to hear his music in the hands of Black Dyke is a real highlight.

Professor Childs will introduce each work, so you hear a little about the music and the band as the concert unfolds.

A world-class band, in a medieval church, closing the 2026 festival. We hope you enjoy it.



FESTIVAL FAREWELL

12 JULY · SUN · 4:30PM

Old School Garden · New Romney · TN28 8ER

FREE (wine available for purchase) · 60 min

The festival draws to a close the way it began: with music, friends and a glass in hand. Join Festival Curator **Edward Armitage BEM**, artists from across the week's programme and the audiences who made the festival what it was for a farewell and a first look ahead to JAM 2027.

Bring your programming ideas, your highlights and your questions.



MICRO MACRO

JILLIAN BAIN CHRISTIE

8-12 JULY

Marsh Academy Leisure Centre ·
New Romney · TN28 8BB

FREE

Micro Macro is a solo exhibition by artist **Jillian Bain Christie**, exploring the infinite possibilities of linocut printmaking.

This series of prints invites you to experience the intricacies and tactile qualities of relief mark making up close. Each finished image represents days, sometimes weeks, of intense work, where the relationship between the negative space and the inked surface is calculated with an almost meditative focus.

Meet the Artist: 9 July · Thu · 1pm

Come and meet Jillian at her exhibition. She will share the inspiration behind *Micro Macro* and the patient, painstaking craft behind each print. It is a lovely chance to look closely, ask your questions and discover the thinking and the many hours that shape every image. All are warmly welcome.



Lost and Found



COMMUNITY EXHIBITIONS

8-12 JULY

Marsh Academy Leisure Centre ·
New Romney · TN28 8BB

FREE

This year, JAM continued to run fun, free, art projects in collaboration with the Romney Marsh Community Hub, boosting creativity, skills and sociability across the Marsh. These projects are for people over 50 and of any ability to sign up, get involved and enjoy taking part. The projects resulted in two exhibitions.

LOST AND FOUND

Inspirational artist **Victoria Morris** led weekly sessions in mixed media and embroidery in the spring. Learning new techniques to combine threads, yarns, handmade recycled paper, beads, maps and postcards, the participants have created captivating collages, mounted in embroidery hoops. Discover each one, so different, telling a personal story, written below their work.

LINOCUT

By popular demand, in May-June, participants joined award-winning visual artist **Jillian Bain Christie** for an introduction to lino-cut and the relief printing process. The results can be quite graphic, detailed, or sculptural depending on the design. Inspired by their own images, be amazed at the participants' prints.

ASSOCIATE ARTISTS

Thomas Kelly · piano

Praised for his “outrageous virtuosity,” **Thomas Kelly** is an Associate Artist of JAM whose partnership with us runs throughout the year. This spring he led *Sound Under the Hand*, JAM’s composer intensive for piano, a weekend on the Kent coast where three composers wrote new works alongside him, testing every idea at the keyboard. At this year’s festival he steps into the spotlight himself, joining Artistic Director John Frederick Hudson for an evening of four-hand repertoire at a single piano, tracing the duet tradition across three centuries and closing with a new reimagining of Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

His year with JAM reaches its culmination in November, when he gives the London premiere of the three new piano works born from the intensive, professionally recorded. Mentor, collaborator and soloist, Thomas shows how an Associate Artist nurtures new voices and then brings their music to the public stage.

Ryan Corbett · accordion

A BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist and the first accordionist ever chosen for the scheme, **Ryan Corbett** is an Associate Artist of JAM whose work with us reaches well beyond this festival. This past May, he led *Into the Bellows*, JAM’s Composer Residency for accordion, spending a week by the sea at Littlestone guiding three composers as they wrote substantial new works for his instrument. The fruits of that partnership arrive here on the Marsh, where Ryan gives the world premieres of all three pieces.

He also joins the JAM Sinfonia, lending the accordion’s extraordinary range of colour to the orchestra. The journey continues beyond July: in November he takes these new works to London for their London premiere, professionally recorded. In a single year, he embodies what an Associate Artist can be, mentor, collaborator and performer, championing new music from the first sketch to the concert platform.



BIOGRAPHIES

Alexander Armstrong

Actor & Baritone

Alexander Armstrong is a broadcaster, comedian, actor, writer and singer, best known as one half of the comedy duo Alexander Armstrong and Ben Miller. Together they created and starred in the acclaimed TV series *The Armstrong and Miller Show*.

Since 2009, Armstrong has hosted the hugely popular BBC quiz show *Pointless* and remains a regular guest host on *Have I Got News for You*. In 2020, he succeeded John Suchet as presenter of Classic FM's flagship weekday mid-morning programme.

Alongside his broadcasting career, Armstrong has enjoyed success as a travel presenter with Channel 5's *Alexander Armstrong in...* series, exploring destinations including Sri Lanka, South Korea and Iceland. His screen credits include *Horrible Histories: The Movie – Rotten Romans*, while his live show *All Mouth and Some Trousers* toured the UK to great acclaim.

A prolific author, Armstrong has published several books, including *The A–Z of Pointless* (with Richard Osman) and *Land of the Midnight Sun*. In 2024 he published his debut children's novel, *Evenfall: The Golden Linnet*, the first title in the *Evenfall* series.

Joshua Ballance

Conductor

Joshua Ballance is a British conductor specialising in 20th and 21st century music. Ballance conducts Mad Song, an ensemble of “expert young players” (The Observer) dedicated to this repertoire. He is Artistic Director of the High Barnet Chamber Music Festival, where his programming has been praised as “seriously thoughtful” (Michael White).

Ballance has worked with ensembles around the UK and abroad, including as assistant conductor for the New London Orchestra, guest conductor for the City University Pierrot Players, Leicester Symphony Orchestra, and with Ensemble Modern, the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Orion Orchestra. He has held posts with the Hereford Symphony Orchestra and Burford Symphony Orchestra. Meanwhile, he has collaborated with soloists including Benedict Nelson, Bartholomew LaFollette, Jonathan Evers, and Rebekah Jones, and premiered works by composers including Katherine Balch, Rob Hao, Carol J. Jones, Ian Pace, Benjamin Lavastre and Anna Semple.

Ballance studied at the Schulich School of Music, McGill University, in the studio of Professor Alexis Hauser. Prior to this, he achieved a DPhil at Oxford, analysing the music of Webern. A committed educator, he teaches every year on the renowned Pro Corda courses.

www.joshuaballance.co.uk

Rebecca Lodge Birkebaek

Conductor

Rebecca Lodge Birkebaek is an experienced musician, singer and educator with more than three decades in music, broadcasting and live performance. A graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, she studied singing and piano, winning several prizes and building the foundation for a varied professional career in the arts.

As a soloist and ensemble musician, Rebecca has performed widely, including as a former member of the BBC Singers and as a staff member of the RBO Chorus. These roles have given her extensive experience in high-level professional choral music, working with leading conductors, composers and ensembles, alongside significant broadcasting and media work.

Rebecca is deeply involved in the choral world and music education. She works with Finchley Children's Music Group as Intermediate Choir Director, nurturing young singers and fostering strong musicianship and a love of ensemble singing. For the past four years she has also worked with the Sunflower Singers, a group for older singers, and loves the friendships that grow between them through making music together. She is delighted to be conducting in JAM on the Marsh and is very grateful for the ongoing support JAM gives the Sunflower Singers.

Black Dyke Band

In 1816 Peter Wharton founded a brass and reed band in the Yorkshire village of Queenshead – later to become Queensbury. John Foster, apart from being the founder of Black Dyke Mills, played French horn in this band. It has been said on many occasions that Black Dyke was formed from it; however, this is not strictly true, as “Peter Wharton's band went out of existence through loss of members”. In 1833 a new band was formed named ‘Queenshead Band’, which may well have contained players from the former band. It is reported that this Band reached its zenith from 1838 to 1843, at which time it consisted of 18 musicians.

Black Dyke Band is the most recorded band in the world with over 350 recordings and growing every year, in October 2020 the band's recording of music by John Rutter became the first by a brass band to reach no.1 in the classical music chart.

It is also the most successful contesting band in the world having won the European Championships thirteen times, most recently in 2015, the British Open no fewer than 30 times (most recently 2014) and the National Championships of Great Britain 24 times (most recently 2023). In 2009, and again in 2011, 2012 and 2013, the band became Champion Band at the English National Championships and were named English National Champions in 2014 by virtue of having won the National Brass Band Championships in October 2014.

In recent years, the band secured an unprecedented hat trick of wins at the Yorkshire regional championships in 2016, 17 and 18, which they followed up with further wins in 2020, 22, 23, 24 and 2025 creating history again being the first band to ever win the championship in five consecutive years (there was no contest in 2021 due to Covid-19).

www.blackdykeband.co.uk

Changeling Theatre

Changeling Theatre produces high quality, entertaining theatre in non-traditional locations for community audiences across South East England. Its productions range from re-interpretations of Shakespearean classics to working with new writers and composers to create innovative new theatre.

Changeling Theatre takes theatre beyond the stage, creating site specific performances in public locations such as Walmer Castle, Brighton Open Air Theatre, Margate beachfront and Boughton Monchelsea Place, as well as community parks, private homes and gardens.

Changeling Theatre is committed to nurturing young talent from all backgrounds, offering them the rare opportunity to work alongside established theatre professionals. It has helped launch the careers of numerous young writers, technicians, composers and performers.

www.changeling-theatre.com

Professor Nicholas Childs

Conductor

Professor Nicholas Childs has achieved the highest international reputation as a performer, teacher, conductor, interpreter and advocate of new music, and producer of pacesetting recordings. Nicholas has had phenomenal success with many bands, including highly acclaimed national titles and European championships. His current tenure as Principal Conductor and Director of Music of the famous Black Dyke Band has been marked with continued contest success, claiming both British Open and National Brass Band Championships of Great Britain, awarded the Harry Mortimer Maestro award for his outstanding ability as a conductor. His recordings with Black Dyke Band have been heralded as the very best in the brass band world including multiple CD of the Year awards.

Nicholas gives important emphasis to the development of the brass band movement. He currently serves as Professor of Music at the Royal Northern College of Music, where he has taught for many years. He also enjoys being Professor and Guest Conductor at Senzoku Music College, Tokyo, Japan.

Jillian Bain Christie

Visual Artist

Jillian Bain Christie is an award-winning Scottish visual artist and soprano currently based in Norfolk. She is a graduate of the Glasgow School of Art and Trinity Laban Conservatoire, London.

Jillian's current practice encompasses printmaking, paper cut, and mixed media collage, frequently taking inspiration from Nordic and Scottish landscape, history and nature. Her work, often featuring intricate detail, employs paper as both a medium and metaphor, reflecting the fragility and transience of the natural world.

Recent exhibitions and events have featured multidisciplinary works incorporating electroacoustic composition and installation as well as more traditional 2D works on paper.

Jillian has been shortlisted for the 2026 Ironbridge Printmaking Competition, and will be featured in this year's exhibition. Other projects include artist residencies in Iceland, Aberdeenshire and the North Wales International Music festival; and a solo exhibition at the Barbican Library, London. Jillian's sound sculpture *An Gleann Sámhaichte* was shortlisted for the 2023/24 Scottish Landscape Awards, and was premiered at the City Arts Centre, Edinburgh. Her work is held in public and private collections across the world.

Ryan Corbett

Accordion

Praised for his "immense virtuosity and musicality," Ryan Corbett is one of the leading performers of his generation. A BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, Royal Over-Seas League Gold Medallist, and Classic FM Rising Star, he is the first accordionist ever selected for the prestigious BBC scheme.

Ryan has appeared as a soloist at major venues including Konzerthaus Berlin and London's Wigmore Hall, with further performances across Europe, Mexico and China. In the United Kingdom, he is a frequent guest at major festivals such as Cheltenham, Bath, Lammermuir, Ryedale, and Norfolk & Norwich. He has also given more than sixteen hours of radio broadcasts on Radio 3, Radio 4, BBC World Service, Classic FM and Scala Radio, and was featured in BBC television coverage of the Scottish Coronation of HM King Charles III.

Ryan collaborates widely with leading ensembles and artists, including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Berlin Symphony Orchestra. He was nominated for the 2024 Royal Philharmonic Society Young Artist Award and has been highlighted by BBC Music Magazine, The Scotsman, and Scala Radio as "one to watch".

Ryan studied at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland with Djordje Gajic. He performs on a Bugari Spectrum classical piano accordion, made in Castelfidardo, Italy. This was made possible by private sponsors, the John Mather Trust, and Dewar Arts Awards.

www.ryanorbett.com

Emily Davis

Violin

Emily Davis enjoys a vibrant and international career as an orchestra leader, director, soloist, chamber musician and teacher.

She combines her role as Leader of the Hallé Orchestra with guest leading orchestras elsewhere in the U.K. and internationally. Orchestras she has been invited to as Concertmaster include the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Britten Sinfonia and the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra.

Emily has performed as a soloist in festivals and venues across the world. Highlights have included Arvo Pärt's, *Fratres* with conductor Vasily Petrenko at the Pärnu Festival in Estonia; Piazzolla's, *Four Seasons* at the Bergen International Festival; *The Lark Ascending* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; Szymanowski's *Concerto No.2* with the Ålesund Symphony Orchestra (Norway) and the Oxford Symphony Orchestra, and multiple performances of concerti by Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev across the U.K. She has broadcast live as a soloist on British (BBC), Estonian, Romanian, Cuban, Norwegian (NRK) and Irish (RTÉ) radio stations.

Driven to share her wide-ranging musical experiences, she has been appointed a Violin Professor at Trinity Laban Conservatoire in London. Emily plays on a Ferdinand Gagliano violin kindly loaned to her through the Beare's International Violin Society.

www.emilydavisviolinist.com

Julien Durand

Composer

Julien Durand is a French composer, arranger, guitarist, producer and educator currently studying for an MMus in Composition at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Originally from Paris, he moved to the UK in 2018 to study Jazz at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, graduating in 2022.

As a composer, Durand's work draws on a wide range of influences, blending his background in jazz and improvisation with contemporary classical music, progressive rock, Brazilian music, electronic sound worlds and experimental practices. His music is characterised by a strong emphasis on texture, atmosphere and narrative, often exploring

the intersection between composition and improvisation. Recent projects include works for chamber ensembles, strings, choir, electronics and large jazz ensembles.

As a performer and bandleader, he is a founding member of the post-fusion collective DREAMSCAPES, whose immersive and exploratory approach combines jazz, psychedelia and free improvisation. He has performed at venues and festivals across the UK, including Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club, Royal Albert Hall and the Cheltenham Jazz Festival.

In 2023, Durand was awarded an Arts Council England Develop Your Creative Practice grant to undertake research in Brazil, studying with leading Brazilian musicians and developing a body of new work inspired by the country's rich musical traditions. This ongoing project forms the basis of a series of collaborations with musicians, singers and composers from both Brazil and the UK, culminating in a forthcoming album of original music.

John Frederick Hudson

Composer and Piano

John Frederick Hudson is an American composer, pianist and conductor based in London whose work is heard on major stages worldwide. At the core of his artistic identity as a composer-performer is a commitment to shaping not only new repertoire, but the cultural and artistic frameworks through which contemporary classical music is created and experienced.

Hudson's large-scale works reflect a composer drawn to breadth and narrative ambition. Among his recent works is the 42-minute composition *Wild Earth Blazing*, written for internationally acclaimed tenor Mark Padmore CBE, horn soloist Ben Goldscheider (BBC Young Musician of the Year 2016) and the London Mozart Players. His choral writing has been heard on international stages, including at the World Choral Games, the largest global choral festival, in Auckland, New Zealand, where *I Sing the Body Electric* was performed by the Delaware Choral Scholars, who were then crowned Choir of the World.

His work has featured in major national ceremonial contexts, including the Scottish Coronation Service for Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla, where he created a new arrangement for international mezzo-soprano Karen Cargill, broadcast live on BBC One and BBC Radio 3. He has written and performed for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at Balmoral Castle in celebration of her as the longest reigning monarch, as well as for King Charles III, then Prince of Wales, at a private event in Buckingham Palace marking the tenth anniversary of Dumfries House.

Hudson is currently the Artistic Director of JAM (John Armitage Memorial Trust).

www.johnfrederickhudson.com

BIOGRAPHIES

Fenella Humphreys

Violin

Fenella Humphreys, winner of the 2025 and 2023 BBC Music Magazine Premiere Recording Award, has attracted critical admiration and audience acclaim with the grace and intensity of her remarkable performances. Throughout the 2025/26 season, Fenella is resident at Wigmore Hall as part of a three-concert series where she is exploring a variety of solo and chamber violin repertoire.

With her playing described in the press as “alluring”, “unforgettable” and “a wonder”, Fenella is one of the UK’s most established and versatile violinists, having also won the 2018 BBC Music Magazine Instrumental Award. She enjoys a busy career combining chamber music with solo work, performing in the most prestigious venues around the world and is frequently broadcast on the BBC, Classic FM, Scala Radio and international radio stations.

Fenella performs widely as a soloist. Her album of Sibelius’ solo works with BBC National Orchestra of Wales and George Vass has been featured in BBC Radio 3’s Building a Library, Gramophone Magazine’s Guide to the Concerto, and was Album of the Week on Scala Radio. Fenella has given the first performances of scores by a vast range of composers, most notably Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sally Beamish, Gordon Crosse, Cheryl Frances-Hoad and Freya Waley-Cohen.

For the launch of Apple Music Classical in April 2023, Fenella was one of a handful of artists invited to record a ‘Classical Session’ at home, alongside Daniel Barenboim, Beatrice Rana and Gautier Capuçon.

www.fenellahumphreys.com/home

Cyrill Ibrahim

Piano

Cyrill Ibrahim is a concert pianist hailed by The Daily Telegraph as “one of the most exciting pianists of his generation.” A graduate of the Royal College of Music, he has performed at leading international venues including the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, St John’s Smith Square in London and the Philharmonie in Berlin.

Cyrill played a central artistic role in the Sky Arts documentary *Mozart: A Genius for Hire*, released in December 2025, contributing to the film’s narrative and intellectual framework alongside internationally renowned artists and cultural figures.

His performances have included a collaborative concert for Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla at Balmoral. He has also been invited to perform in private cultural settings, including a high-profile birthday celebration in London for Kim Kardashian.

His debut album, *Dialogue*, has been broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM, and he has appeared on BBC One’s The One Show and BBC Radio 3’s In Tune. He has been profiled extensively by Tatler, which described him as “a new kind of classical figure - serious about the art form, yet completely fluent in the language of modern culture,” and featured by Attitude magazine as part of its culture section. He has also appeared on the cover of Gentleman’s Journal, which described him as “the future of British music.”

Alongside his performing career, Cyrill curates innovative concert and education projects that bring together music, storytelling, and visual culture. He is the founder of The Classical Music Collective and serves on several boards. Based in London, he performs and collaborates internationally.

www.cyrillibrahim.com

Timothy Jackson

Composer

Timothy Jackson was born in Preston and studied horn and composition at the University of Manchester and the Royal Northern College of Music. He was a member of the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and the Philharmonia Orchestra, before becoming Principal Horn of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in 2011.

Timothy is Composer-in-Association with Onyx Brass and, as a composer and arranger, he has received commissions from groups including the Academy of Saint Martin-in-the-Fields Chamber Ensemble, the Alison Balsom Ensemble, BASBWE, Birmingham Royal Ballet, the CBSO, Ensemble 360, the Hallé, John Armitage Memorial, the Philharmonia Orchestra, the RLPO, the St. Florian Bruckner Festival, and the Royal Opera House’s “Chance to Dance”.

Timothy has a particular interest in writing music for young musicians. He has written numerous pieces for the ABRSM, which have appeared on the exam syllabus list for instruments ranging from piano to tuba. *Eeyore’s March*, for example, has gone on to sell over 300,000 copies worldwide, before being chosen to be a part of Faber’s anthology of the 20 best pieces ever to appear on the ABRSM Grade 1 Piano Syllabus.

Thomas Kelly

Piano

Thomas Kelly is a British pianist, and an alumnus of the Royal College of Music where he currently holds the Benjamin Britten Fellowship. In January 2026, Thomas won the 2nd prize at the Liszt Utrecht competition.

In the next season, international performances will include Seoul Arts Centre, the Baerum Kulturhus in Oslo, Washington Opera House in Maysville USA, EuroLiszt Festival

in Lithuania and the Fazioli Hall in Sacile, Italy. Recent debuts include a solo recital at Wigmore Hall, London and a performance of Beethoven’s *Piano Concerto No.5* at the Philharmonie Berlin, Kammermusiksaal. He has also appeared as soloist in Messiaen’s *Turangalila-Symphonie* with the RCM Symphony Orchestra at London’s Royal Festival Hall, conducted by Jac van Steen.

Thomas Kelly has performed with conductors including Sakari Oramo, Rory MacDonald, Andrew Manze, Toby Purser, Moritz Gnann, Igor Budinstein and Robert Max and collaborates regularly with conductor Daniel Hogan in concerts and workshops. He has been heard on BBC Radios 3’s *In Tune* and was featured in the BBC Arts *In Motion* documentary series in a masterclass with Yuja Wang.

Between 2015 and 2021 Thomas studied with Professor Andrew Ball and more recently he has worked intensively with Professors Dmitri Alexeev and Vanessa Latache. Thomas has been amongst the top prizewinners in a wide range of international competitions including 5th prize at the 2021 Leeds International Piano Competition, 2nd prize at the 2022 Hastings International Piano Competition. In 2024 Thomas was awarded the Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother Rose Bowl upon graduation from the Royal College of Music, London.

www.thomaskellypiano.com

Zhenyan Li

Composer

Zhenyan Li is a London-based Chinese composer and Dizi (Chinese flute) player whose music is shaped by the traditions of East Asian theatre. Drawing on its storytelling of contrast, ambiguity, and illusion, she brings theatrical sensibilities into her compositions.

Recent commissions include commissions from a multidisciplinary orchestral project *The Exoplanets* by the City of London Sinfonia, *Rough* for Opera and the Beijing Music Festival, with performances by the Ensemble Modern, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, and at festivals such as Lucerne Festival and Tête-à-Tête Festival. Additional projects include works for the International Guitar Foundation, Central School of Ballet, Psappha Ensemble, Theorbo Today, and Leeds Lieder Festival. As an active collaborator, Li has worked with institutions such as the Architectural Association, London Film School, Leeds Lieder Festival, and SOAS University of London, and with artists including Lulu Wang, percussionist Beibei Wang, and conductors Naomi Woo, Martin Rajna, Charlotte Politi and Jessica Cottis.

As a Dizi player, she is a member of the London Chinese Opera Studio and leads the Silk & Bamboo Ensemble at SOAS University of London.

www.zhenyanli.com

Andrew Matthews-Owen

Piano

Andrew Matthews-Owen has been described by BBC Music Magazine as “an immaculate accompanist” and is recognised as one of the UK’s leading collaborative pianists. Specialising in vocal accompaniment, he has partnered many of today’s foremost singers, including Patricia Bardon, Susan Bickley, Lucy Crowe, Natalya Romaniw, Nicky Spence and Sir Willard White, appearing regularly at venues including the Wigmore Hall and Southbank Centre. In 2025 he curated and performed the Wigmore Hall Pride concert.

His acclaimed discography includes award-winning recordings for Naxos, NMC, Nimbus, RTF Classical and Ty Cerdd. Most recently, *Paris 1913: L’Offrande lyrique* with soprano Claire Booth was named a Classical Recording of the Year 2025 by The Times. His recordings are frequently broadcast on Classic FM and Radio 3 where Andrew often appears as a performer or commentator.

A passionate advocate for contemporary music, he has collaborated with and premiered works by composers including Jonathan Dove, Alun Hoddinott, Hannah Kendall and Dobrinka Tabakova.

Andrew studied at the Royal Academy of Music and is now Professor of Collaborative Piano at Trinity Laban where he leads the conservatoire’s chamber music programme. He is an Honorary Associate of the Royal Academy of Music and recipient of the Leo Abse and Cohen Award for his contribution to music in Wales.

www.andrewmatthews-owen.com

Noah Max

Composer

Noah Max creates from scratch in a variety of mediums. He is the writer of more than 70 works for the opera stage and concert hall which have been performed at venues including the Royal Festival Hall, Wigmore Hall and the Royal Albert Hall’s Elgar Room in London, as well as New York’s Carnegie Hall, Vienna’s Musikverein, Altalena Festival in Budapest and the Paderewski Academy in Poland. Performances in 2026 take place at Paris’ Salle Cortot and in Aarhus, Denmark.

In 2021 Max was awarded the Clements Prize. His debut album *Songs of Loneliness* was released on Toccata Classics in 2022; *String Quartets No.1–4* with the Tippet Quartet followed to critical acclaim in 2025, featuring narration from Sir Michael Morpurgo. Recent commissions have included new works for Aarhus Sinfonietta, the London Mozart Players and Imogen Whitehead; forthcoming projects include collaborations with Ian Bostridge, Hugo Ticciati and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Noah Max’s music is published worldwide by Birdsong (a Harrison Parrott-associated company) and by United Music Publishing. In addition he self-publishes a variety of pieces. Max has been interviewed for BBC Music Magazine, Classical Music and Opera Today; his music has featured on BBC Radio 3’s *In Tune*, *The New Music Show*, RTE Radio 1 Arena and RTE Lyric Radio.

www.noahmax.net

George W. Parris

Composer

George W. Parris is a London-based composer and musical director with a particular interest in choral music and music for theatre. His work has been performed across the country at prestigious festivals such as The Leeds Lieder Festival, Cheltenham Festivals, The Southwell Music Festival and Tête à Tête: The Opera Festival, and by a variety of ensembles including Inchant, VOCES8, the Carice Singers and the BBC Singers. George’s style combines his love for early 20th century French Impressionism with influences from both the traditional and contemporary worlds of choral music to create a sound and style of composition with story-telling at its heart.

George’s work for theatre *The Shadow*, a collaboration with playwright Rebekah King, premiered at the Susie Sainsbury Theatre in Marylebone and was praised for its innovative use of music ‘mirroring, echoing, highlighting, partnering the text in such a completely natural and interdependent way.’

George’s choral music has seen recognition from a variety of sources including St Paul’s Cathedral where he was finalist of their 2023 composition competition, and JAM on the Marsh where he was both a participant in their

2022 Masterclass Series and a successful applicant of their 2024 Call for Music. George has also worked with the ORA Singers as a 2024 ‘graduate composer’.

George studied music as an undergraduate at the University of Manchester, graduating with a first-class degree in 2022 and as a postgraduate at the Royal Academy of Music, graduating with distinction in 2024.

www.georgeparris.co.uk

Madeleine Shaw

Mezzo Soprano

Mezzo-soprano Madeleine Shaw is a former member of the Young Singers Programme at English National Opera (ENO) and enjoys a distinguished career on both the opera and concert stage. She made her ENO debut as the Beggar Woman in *Death in Venice*, later reprising the role at La Monnaie, Dutch National Opera and La Scala, Milan.

Recent and forthcoming engagements include returns to Glyndebourne as Marcellina (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and Hippolyta (*A Midsummer Night’s Dream*), appearances with ENO as La Badessa (*Suor Angelica*) and roles with Welsh National Opera, Staatsoper Hamburg, Longborough Festival Opera and the Opéra national du Rhin. She has also created leading roles in contemporary works by Jonathan Dove and Elena Langer.

Her operatic repertoire includes Fricka (*Das Rheingold*), Annina (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Maddalena (*Rigoletto*), The Mayor’s Wife (*Jenůfa*), Aufseherin (*Elektra*) and Roßweisse (*Die Walküre*). She has appeared at the BBC Proms, the Edinburgh International Festival and the Opéra national de Paris.

A sought-after concert soloist, Madeleine has performed with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Hallé Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Boston Philharmonic Orchestra. She is also acclaimed for her Baroque repertoire and recordings with La Nuova Musica and David Bates.

How to Book

Online: jamconcert.org



Standard Ticket
£15 · £25: Unreserved Seating

U18s free (*please reserve*)

How to Get Here

Just one hour from London's St Pancras

Take a Southeastern train to Ashford International. From the station, our travel partner **Airport Cabs Direct** will drive you the final 25 minutes to your venue. Mention JAM on the Marsh for 10% off.

Booking ahead is advised.

07809 361089 · mail@airportcabsdirect.co.uk





Romney Marsh Historic Churches Trust

The Romney Marsh Historic Churches Trust helps preserve and protect fourteen medieval churches and four ruined churches across Romney Marsh.

This year, JAM on the Marsh performances take place in three remarkable churches:

St Nicholas, New Romney: When this church was first built, New Romney was one of England's most important ports. Its great Norman tower once guided ships into harbour before the catastrophic storm of 1287 left the town stranded inland. New Romney retains its historic Cinque Port status to this day.

St Dunstan, Snargate: An atmospheric church, famous for its medieval ship mural and long associated with local smuggling legends. Richard Harris Barham, who wrote the Ingoldsby Legends under the pen name Thomas Ingoldsby, served here as rector, while the later British Impressionist painter Harold Gilman lived at Snargate Rectory.

St Clement, Old Romney: A Norman church on the site of an earlier Saxon settlement, with fine box pews, a surviving west gallery and the famous pink interior created for Disney's *Dr Syn* film series. The unusual position of its tower gives the church a distinctive character.

Since 1982, over £1.9 million has been raised and invested in conserving the Romney Marsh churches for future generations. Historic churches do not maintain themselves - every repair to stone, timber, roofs or glass helps safeguard centuries of heritage, craftsmanship and community life. The Trust's work is only possible with support through memberships, donations and the wider community.

To explore the churches, purchase guidebooks or support the Trust, please visit:
www.romneymarshchurches.org.uk

LOOKING BACK OVER 26 YEARS AT JAM

Edward Armitage BEM

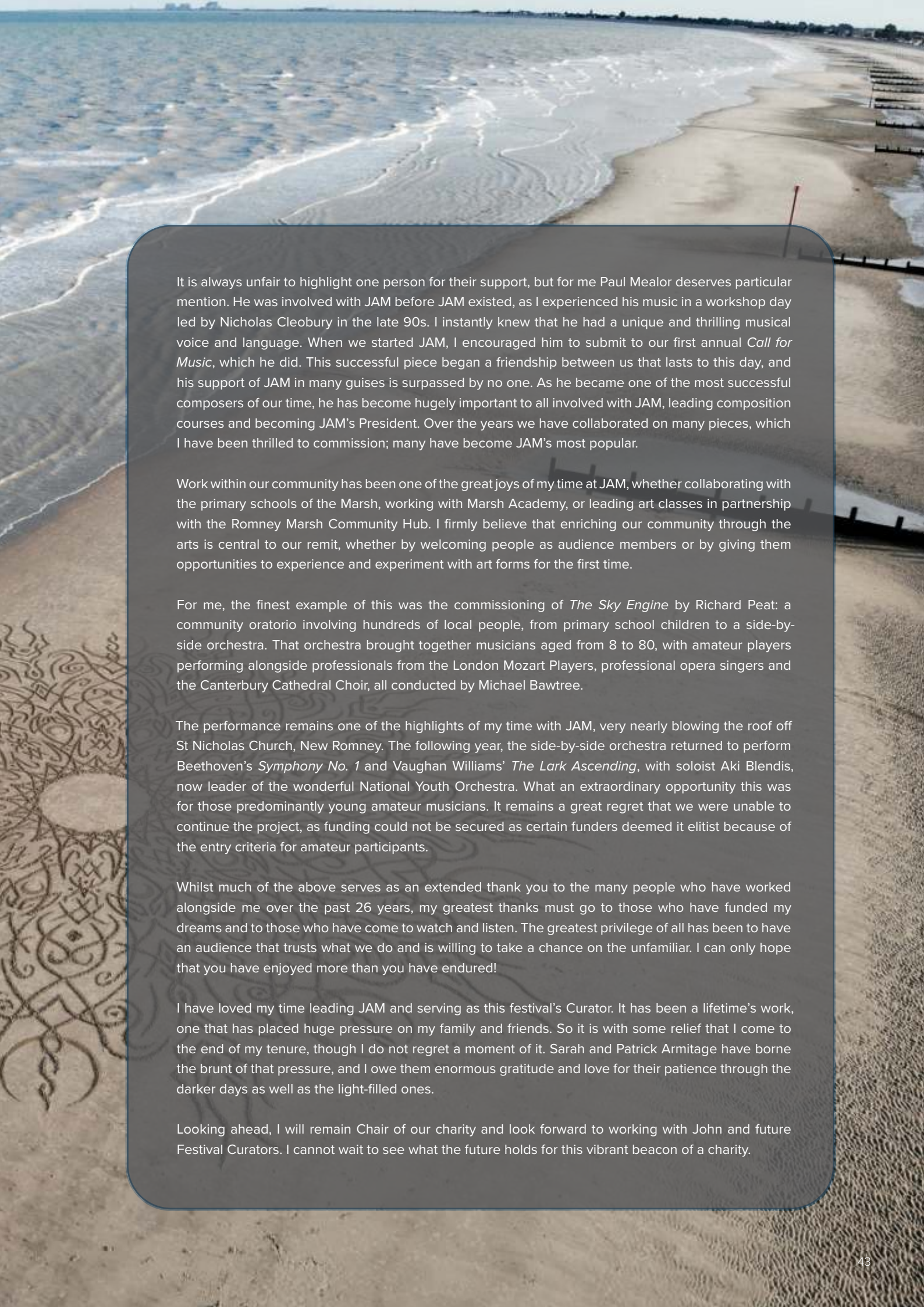
At the end of this year's festival, I will step back from the day-to-day running of JAM, leaving it in the hugely capable hands of John Frederick Hudson. He replaced me as Artistic Director in July 2024, taking over the reins and becoming my boss as I began my two years as Festival Curator. This has been an incredibly easy transition for me, and I am grateful to John for allowing the 'old guard' to peer over his shoulder while he stepped up to run our charity. Few would have done so with such grace.

It's hard to believe what JAM has become since I first dreamed up the idea of supporting composers back in 1998 with my father, John Armitage. Just months after we discussed the idea, Dad died, and in 2000 I formed the charity JAM – the John Armitage Memorial Trust. From that acorn grew an annual concert in March of new music, based at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, which continues to flourish today as *Music of Our Time*. In 2014, JAM on the Marsh was born, a festival that stands proudly within our magnificent Romney Marsh landscape.

BBC Radio 3 has broadcast concerts from both London and the Marsh, and some of the finest musicians and composers have graced our stages, from the BBC Singers, London Mozart Players and Britten Sinfonia to Lucy Crowe, James Gilchrist, Mark Padmore and Ben Goldscheider, and this year stars such as Alexander Armstrong and the great Black Dyke Band. The first 26 years have been quite a journey. It's hard to look back over this long journey and pick highlights; there have been so many! Our commissioning programme has been an absolute thrill to lead – not many people have the opportunity to work with luminaries of the composition world like: Judith Bingham, Jonathan Dove, Gabriel Jackson, John McCabe, Paul Mealar, Thea Musgrave and Paul Patterson to name but a few; all of whom have become close friends.

Revisiting commissions gives me a particular thrill: *No Answer* by Timothy Jackson at last year's 25th anniversary concert at St Brides, Paul Mealar's *The Farthest Shore* in Hythe, again last year, and looking forward to next year, Paul Patterson's *The Fifth Continent*, celebrating Patterson's 80th birthday. Learning of performances of commissions across the globe; pieces taken on by others in the US, Canada and New Zealand is amazing; joint commissioning with other festivals is a thrill. Next year such a commission will be made with our friends at the North Wales International Music Festival and Leamington Music. This will enable a new work for string quartet and accordion which will receive three performances between April and September; the funding for this coming from within each festival's supporter network. Amazing generosity at a time when funding for the arts is so tough. A Commissioning Circle is born!

Throughout my time at the helm, I and JAM have had incredible support from many: Trustees past and present including Sarah Armitage, Charles Cochrane, Marah Dickson-Wright, Timothy Jackson, Patricia Rolfe and Martin Young, have trusted me and my dreams, when many would have questioned them. JAM on the Marsh Festival Curators that have put their names and ideas on show for us: Judith Bingham, Paul Mealar, Daniel Cook, Michael Bawtree, Anna Tillbrook and Nicholas Cleobury have all delivered remarkable programmes of vision and joy.

An aerial photograph of a beach. The ocean is on the left, with waves washing onto the shore. The sand is light-colored and features intricate, dark, swirling patterns, possibly from a sand artist. A wooden walkway or pier extends from the right side of the frame towards the water. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent dark blue rounded rectangle in the center of the image.

It is always unfair to highlight one person for their support, but for me Paul Mealor deserves particular mention. He was involved with JAM before JAM existed, as I experienced his music in a workshop day led by Nicholas Cleobury in the late 90s. I instantly knew that he had a unique and thrilling musical voice and language. When we started JAM, I encouraged him to submit to our first annual *Call for Music*, which he did. This successful piece began a friendship between us that lasts to this day, and his support of JAM in many guises is surpassed by no one. As he became one of the most successful composers of our time, he has become hugely important to all involved with JAM, leading composition courses and becoming JAM's President. Over the years we have collaborated on many pieces, which I have been thrilled to commission; many have become JAM's most popular.

Work within our community has been one of the great joys of my time at JAM, whether collaborating with the primary schools of the Marsh, working with Marsh Academy, or leading art classes in partnership with the Romney Marsh Community Hub. I firmly believe that enriching our community through the arts is central to our remit, whether by welcoming people as audience members or by giving them opportunities to experience and experiment with art forms for the first time.

For me, the finest example of this was the commissioning of *The Sky Engine* by Richard Peat: a community oratorio involving hundreds of local people, from primary school children to a side-by-side orchestra. That orchestra brought together musicians aged from 8 to 80, with amateur players performing alongside professionals from the London Mozart Players, professional opera singers and the Canterbury Cathedral Choir, all conducted by Michael Bawtree.

The performance remains one of the highlights of my time with JAM, very nearly blowing the roof off St Nicholas Church, New Romney. The following year, the side-by-side orchestra returned to perform Beethoven's *Symphony No. 1* and Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*, with soloist Aki Blendis, now leader of the wonderful National Youth Orchestra. What an extraordinary opportunity this was for those predominantly young amateur musicians. It remains a great regret that we were unable to continue the project, as funding could not be secured as certain funders deemed it elitist because of the entry criteria for amateur participants.

Whilst much of the above serves as an extended thank you to the many people who have worked alongside me over the past 26 years, my greatest thanks must go to those who have funded my dreams and to those who have come to watch and listen. The greatest privilege of all has been to have an audience that trusts what we do and is willing to take a chance on the unfamiliar. I can only hope that you have enjoyed more than you have endured!

I have loved my time leading JAM and serving as this festival's Curator. It has been a lifetime's work, one that has placed huge pressure on my family and friends. So it is with some relief that I come to the end of my tenure, though I do not regret a moment of it. Sarah and Patrick Armitage have borne the brunt of that pressure, and I owe them enormous gratitude and love for their patience through the darker days as well as the light-filled ones.

Looking ahead, I will remain Chair of our charity and look forward to working with John and future Festival Curators. I cannot wait to see what the future holds for this vibrant beacon of a charity.

JAM COMMISSIONS

2002-2026

Chronological by date
→

2002
No Answer
Timothy Jackson
20' · choir · brass · organ

2003
**The Far
Theatricals of Day**
Jonathan Dove
20' · choir · brass · organ

2004
**Songs of the
Garden**
John McCabe
25' · choir · brass · organ

2005
The Fifth Continent
Paul Patterson
25' · choir · brass · organ

2006
**My Heart
Strangely Warm'd**
Judith Bingham
17' · choir · brass · organ

2007
**Thoughts Scribbled
on a Blank Wall**
Adam Gorb
25' · choir · brass · organ

2008
**The Spacious
Firmament**
Gabriel Jackson
20' · choir · brass · organ

2009
Darwin
Steve Martland
17' · choir · brass · organ

2010
Fundamental
Hannah Kendall
10' · choir · brass

2010
The Night's Untruth
Tarik O'Regan
15' · choir · brass · organ

2010
**Now Sleeps the
Crimson Petal**
Paul Mealor
12' · choir

2010
Fiery the Angels
Richard Peat
10' · bass · brass

2011
Tallis's Light
Rory Boyle
12' · brass · organ

2011
**All Things
Wear Silence**
Philip Cashian
20' · choir · brass · organ

2012
The Hythe
Judith Bingham
11' · strings

2012
Body of Water
Julian Phillips
17' · choir · brass · organ

2012
The Hazel Wood
Phillip Cooke
12' · choir · brass · organ

2013
The Farthest Shore
Paul Mealor
35' · choir · brass · organ

2014
Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo
Giles Swayne
20' · choir · brass · organ ·
percussion

2014
**Oboe Concerto:
The Angel of Mons**
Judith Bingham
11' · strings · oboe

2015
**Voices of Our
Ancestors**
Thea Musgrave
25' · choir · brass · organ

2015
**To Seek Where
Shadows Are**
Paul Mealor
10' · choir

2016
O Great Beyond
Thomas LaVoy
10' · choir · soprano

2016
**The Shadows
of War**
Paul Mealor
20' · choir · strings ·
percussion

2017
Voices of Vimy
Tom Harrold &
Stuart Beach
35' · choir · cello

2018
**Songs of
the Marshes**
Rory Boyle
20' · choir · brass · organ

2019
Soliloquy
Daniel Saleeb
20' · choir · brass · organ

[48]

JAM Commissions

[26]

Years of JAM

[19+]

Hours of Music

2020

Piano Concerto

Paul Mealor

20' · strings · percussion · piano

2021

Between the Stormclouds and the Sea

Jack Oades

20' · choir · brass · organ

2022

Up in the Morning Early

Janet Wheeler

7' · brass

2022

Concerto for Clarinet

Judith Bingham

11' · strings · clarinet

2023

The Song I Came to Sing

Tara Creme

11' · choir · brass · organ

2023

Evening Star

Christopher Churcher

7' · choir

2023

The Sky Engine

Richard Peat

55' · orchestra · choir · soloists · narrator

2023

Love's Labour's Lost

James Aburn

90' · orchestra
(Changeling Theatre)

2023

The School for Scandal

James Aburn

90' · orchestra
(Changeling Theatre)

2024

Wild Earth Blazing

John Frederick Hudson

40' · strings · piano · perc
horn · tenor

2023

Onyx 30

Mark -Anthony Turnage

10' · brass

2024

Murmurations

Jago Thornton

12' · strings

2024

Illumination

Isabelle Thornton

7' · organ · two trumpets

2025

A Humble Light

Paul Mealor

4' · choir

2025

Seven Songs of Nature

Joseph Phibbs

20' · choir · brass · organ

2025

- ligand tendon -

Marisse Cato

5' · 7 strings

2026

Debussy La Mer

Arr Timothy Jackson

25' · chamber orchestra

2025

Aurora

Steve Richer

7' · choir

2025

Violin Concerto

Stephen McNeff

20' · strings · harpsichord · percussion · violin

2026

Ravel Piano Concerto

Arr Julien Durand

22' · chamber orchestra

JAM DIGITAL

Opening access to new music – for composers everywhere

In 2020, as live performance paused, JAM responded by creating a digital platform to share its work more widely. What began as a practical response has since become a vital part of our mission: expanding access to knowledge, creativity and new music beyond the concert hall.

Today, **JAM Digital** reaches a global audience. Our growing library of films, created in collaboration with leading performers and composers, has now been viewed over **150,000 times**, supporting composers at every stage of their development.

Building on this success, we are now entering a new phase. Through our Composer Intensive, Composer Residency and a new series of filmed sessions, we are creating an integrated pathway for composers: from learning and experimentation to performance and wider dissemination. Upcoming releases include a new series on writing for piano, led by John Frederick Hudson and Thomas Kelly, continuing our commitment to sharing practical insight and craft at the highest level.

[54]

Education Videos

[80]

Performance Videos

[150k+]

Global Views

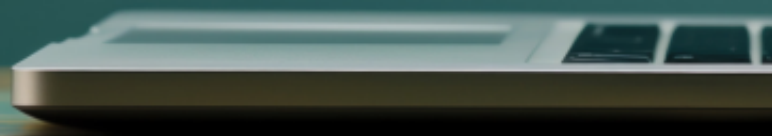
These Educational Videos were created in partnership with:

The VOCES8 Foundation: Writing for Voice

Sacconi Quartet: Writing for Strings

Onyx Brass: Writing for Brass Quintet

Francesca Massey: Writing for Organ



Among our most-watched resources include:

11,000 views on “Pedals on the Organ” – a guide to writing for organ pedals

7,000 views on “Problematic Ending Consonants” – a masterclass on choral diction with VOCES8

These films are freely available to composers worldwide, removing barriers to high-level learning and supporting the next generation of artists.

As we expand JAM Digital, every new commission, intensive and residency feeds into this growing resource, thus ensuring that the work created here continues to reach far beyond the concert hall.



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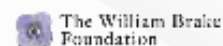
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The Lost Boy

A New Opera by Jago Thornton

Premiered at the North Wales International Music Festival

Friday, 11 September 2026

Performances in London and Romney Marsh follow

Music of Our Time

JAM's Season Opening Concert

Tuesday, 23 March 2027

St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, London

JAM on the Marsh Festival

14-18 July 2027

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