

Will Duerden, Double Bass

Will comes from a musical family and started playing the double bass at the age of 7. Two years later he was awarded a full scholarship to the Yehudi Menuhin School, studying with Caroline Emery. Experiences there included solo, chamber and orchestral work at Wigmore Hall. Will also won a number of competitions, including the Haslemere String Competition, RCM Bass Competition and the Peter Morrison Concerto Competitions. Other appearances as soloist included the Horsham Symphony Orchestra, the European Youth Summer Music Symphony Orchestra and the Waverley Ensemble. Awarded the ABRSM scholarship to the Royal College of Music, Will has been invited to do a significant number of recitals – unusual for a bassist! He has worked closely with conductors including Sir Antonio Pappano, Sir Andrew Davis and Vasily Petrenko. Will was given special permission by Edgar Meyer, the bassist and composer to perform two of his works at the Wigmore Hall. Aside from his studies, Will pursues an active freelance career in the field of chamber music, working with Lawrence Power, the Sitkovetsky Trio, and the Echea Quartet and the LGT Ensemble. He is also a regular performer with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, Aurora Orchestra, and the Royal Northern Sinfonia. He is currently on trial for the Philharmonia Orchestra. Future plans include numerous recitals, solo and orchestral performances with the LGT Young Soloists in tours of Italy, Singapore, Bangkok and Tokyo, performances with the RPO, SCO, and Philharmonia. Recent highlights include performing solo with the LGT Young Soloists in the Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, and progressing to the final round of the Royal Overseas League where he was awarded the Yorke Double Bass Prize. Will enjoys all aspects of double bass. He has a passion for everything from baroque to jazz. When not engaged with his bass, Will enjoys cooking and is dedicated to extending, through practical research, his knowledge of wine and winemaking.

Louisa Staples, Violin

Berlin-based British violinist Louisa Staples was born in 2000 and has performed in some of the world's most prestigious concert venues, including the Berlin Philharmonie, Southbank Centre, L'Auditorium de Radio France, Konzerthaus Berlin, Zeneakademie Budapest and the Concertgebouw Amsterdam. She is a major prize winner in multiple international competitions including the Long-Thibaud-Crespin International Competition, Louis Spohr Violin Competition and the Carl Flesch International Competition, where she was awarded 4 prizes. In 2021 she was a finalist in the prestigious Premio Paganini Violin Competition in Genoa. Louisa has appeared in festivals including Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Sommets Musicaux de Gstaad, Harrogate International Festival and the Hamburg International Chamber Music Festival and has performed with orchestras including the City of London Sinfonia, Hauptstadt Sinfonie Orchester, Savaria Symphony Orchestra, London International Orchestra, Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire and the Brandenburg Symphonika. Aged eight, Louisa was awarded a place at the Yehudi Menuhin School where she was a student of Professor Natasha Boyarsky. She is currently pursuing her masters degree at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler in Berlin, where she is a student of Professor Antje Weithaas. Louisa performs on a 1774 Lorenzo Storioni violin loaned to her by the Deutsche Stiftung Musikleben.

Nina Kiva, Cello

Ukrainian British cellist Nina Kiva has performed extensively at many venues across the UK and internationally. She has performed alongside renowned artists such as Steven Isserlis, Maxim Vengerov and Rebecca Gilliver. Last Summer, Nina took part in the Yellow Barn Festival in the USA where she performed with Donald Weilerstein, Natasha Brofsky and John Myerscough. This year, she was also invited to join Steven Doane's Class at IMS Prussia Cove. Nina regularly performs with orchestras throughout the UK, and has performed as principal cellist of the English National Opera and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. She has also sat as co principal cellist with BBC Symphony Orchestra and London Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2022 she was selected by Ivan Fischer to be an academist of the Budapest Festival Orchestra. Nina recently graduated from the Royal College of Music with an Artist Diploma Degree, where she was studying with Melissa Phelps.

Edgar Francis, Viola

Edgar Francis is a Welsh violist with an eclectic musical life. As 1st Prize Winner at the 2021 Cecil Aronowitz International Viola Competition, his debut album will be released on Champs Hill records. He has performed in leading venues such as The Royal Albert Hall, Wigmore Hall and The Royal Festival Hall, as well as playing with groups such as Sinfonia of London and the jazz trio Enemy. Edgar started his musical journey with Sheila Nelson, before studying with Matthew Souter at Wells Cathedral School. He is currently studying for a Masters at the Royal Academy of Music with H el ene Clement. While at RAM he has won 1st Prize in the Wilfrid Parry Prize, as well as receiving a Regency Award, the Sir John Barbirolli Memorial Prize and the Olwen Doreen Leyshon Prize. Edgar's real passion lies in chamber music. He has played at festivals such as Mendelssohn on Mull, North Norfolk Music Festival, Southwell Music Festival and Kinnordy Chamber Music Festival, and has performed on BBC Radio 3. Edgar has also led orchestras under the baton of some of the world's leading conductors such as John Wilson, Edward Gardener, Fran ois-Xavier Roth and Jac Van Steen, including multiple performances at the BBC Proms. Also in demand as a soloist, he has played solo recitals at venues such as Powderham Castle and the Millennium Centre. Edgar plays on a 2012 Mario Miralles viola, generously on loan from RAM through the Calleva Foundation and is supported by a Countess of Munster Musical Trust Derek Butler Award, Harold Craxton Memorial Trust and The Stephen Bell Charitable Trust.

Yannick Fi , Piano

Yannick Fi  is 15 years old. He began studying the piano at the age of 4, and he took part in the 'Youth makes music' competition when he was just 6 years old. As the youngest contestant, he gained the highest possible score! In 2015 he started lessons with pianist Christiane Behn, professor of piano at the Hamburg Conservatoire. He is sponsored by the Hans Kauffmann Foundation for gifted and talented young people. Yannick is now an experienced soloist and chamber musician. He is a finalist in the Steinway competition, gaining 2nd prize in the Chamber Music Section of 'Youth Makes Music'. He also won the Irino Foundation/Tokyo prize for the best interpretation of Modern repertoire. In his spare time in Germany, Yannick takes part in the enrichment programme of the Junior Academy for talented musicians. He has chosen to spend this year abroad, and is currently attending Wells Cathedral School, Somerset.

Finn Anderson-Hendra, Cello

Finn is 14 and has studied the cello since she was 3. She is taught by Ben Davies at the Junior Royal Academy of Music. Last year she achieved her ATCL performance diploma with distinction. She is a keen performer: a finalist in this year's Haslemere International String Competition and a prize winner at local festivals for several years, including being awarded the Suzanne Beer Cello Foundation Prize at North London Festival 2022 and Young Musician of the Year 2023 at Stratford and East London Festival. Finn takes an active musical part in her local community, singing in Hackney Children's Choir and performing cello regularly alongside a local community choir, the Dissenters Chorus, and as a soloist with their orchestra, most recently performing Elgar's Cello Concerto. As well as solo performance, Finn is the principal cello of the National Youth String Orchestra and plays with the Symphony Orchestra and SSCO at Junior RAM. Finn also enjoys playing folk music on cello, accordion, and whistles, experimenting with loop pedals and multi-track recording, and loves to combine her music with other passions of creative writing and photography.

Sofia Demetriades, Violin

Sofia is the top prize winner of several international violin competitions including Leonid Kogan in Brussels and Ilona Feher in Budapest (2018), Lipinski-Wieniawski in Lublin and the Nutcracker in Moscow (2021), Siaulius Sondeckis in Siauliai and Piccolo Violino Magico in San Vito (2022). Sofia performed as a soloist with Anima Musicae Chamber Orchestra (Budapest), the Baroque Ensemble (London), Bardi Symphony Orchestra (Leicester), the Academic Symphony Orchestra (Moscow), Accademia d'Archi Arrigoni Orchestra and Friuli Venezia Giulia Region Orchestra (San Vito) and Camerata Tchaikovsky (London). Sofia was selected as one of five "Mini Violini" showcase concerts, including performing with the Orchesre de l'Agora, during the Concours Musical International de Montreal in Canada in April 2023. Sofia's violin studies are supported by Leventis Foundation with Maestro Papadopoulos and the UK government. Sofia is the student of Prof Zakhar Bron at the Interlaken Academy and of Prof Valentina Korolkova at the Gnessine music school. Sofia studied with Anna-Liisa Bezrodny at Junior Guildhall School of Music and Drama and now attends the Junior Academy at the Royal Academy of Music in London and studies with Suzie Collier.

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwGR-nYYolfMGcBbV1FsHXg>

Instagram: [sofiademetriadesviolin](https://www.instagram.com/sofiademetriadesviolin)

Johann Bellmann, Tenor

Johann Bellmann began his musical journey at the age of 5, when he started learning the piano. He joined the Hamburg Boys Choir when he was eight years old, and also began singing lessons. As a soloist and choir member he gathered early experiences with performances in Japan, Korea and Italy—revealing a very special vocal talent. He is in constant demand as a tenor with renowned choirs and has participated in several special projects. These include Mahler's 2nd Symphony at the Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg, and a tour of Brazil last year. Successful recitals in Hamburg are currently paving the way for exciting future engagements.

Yui Matsuura, Piano

Yui Matsuura, born in Tokyo in 1997, started playing piano at the age of three. She went to a music high school and studied piano in Japan. Due to her great interest in German classical music culture she chose to continue studying in Germany, Hamburg under the guidance of Christiane Behn. She won the first prize at the North Germany Music Competition in 2018 and received the highest possible grade at her bachelor's graduation concert in 2023.

Andrew Wickes, Reader

Andrew started his career in 1974 with Kent Opera. Since then, he has divided his time between acting, directing, writing and coaching. As an actor, he has appeared in plays in London's West End, at Chichester, and all over the country. He has directed operas for Kent Opera, Northern Opera and Opera North, and has worked with The Royal Opera, Welsh National Opera and Scottish Opera. He has directed musicals in Ireland, and new productions for the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company. Andrew's writing includes six stage adaptations. He has taught acting and stagecraft at all the London Conservatoires, and his work has taken him to Tokyo, Athens and Chicago.

Samuel Hollis, Double Bass

Samuel is an English bassist based in London and a friend of the Pimlott Foundation. Whilst specialising in improvised music, recent credits include a Snape Maltings summer residency with Frazer Merrick's trio, a UK tour with Modern Nature and a recent cassette release 'Ephemera' recorded live at Cafe OTO w. Jack Cooper, Jeff Tobias and bassist John Edwards.

Robin Danaher, Saxophone

Originally from the south west of England, Robin was born and raised in Somerset. Robin began playing classical guitar and saxophone aged 9. Moving to Bristol to study a musicology undergraduate at the University of Bristol, he first encountered great live music, and immersed himself in the jazz scene there. Captured by the prospect of improvisation, Robin relocated to Berlin after graduation. He went on to study at the Jazz Institute Berlin, under Prof. Peter Weniger amongst many others. Since completing this degree, Robin is an active member of the Berlin music scene, collaborating with artists such as Zuza Jasinska, the band Fred Garden, writing and arranging for his own quartet, while also freelancing with many other musicians in a wide variety of genres.

Tara Cunningham, Guitar

Tara Cunningham is an instrumentalist and composer based in London. Her work as a band member, collaborator and improviser has been described as having a "distinctive style that draws on both jazz and avant-rock... genuinely impressive" (Ian Mann).

Daniela Bechly, Soprano

Daniela Bechly, established her career as a Lyrical Soprano in Opera Houses throughout Germany, Austria and Switzerland, with roles such as Susanna, Pamina, Elvira, Agathe, Gretel and Cherubino. She appeared as Rhinemaiden in Wagner's Ring Cycle at Covent Garden, performed as Malvina in Marschner's Vampyre and The Goosegirl in Humperdinck's Königskinder at the International Opera Festival Wexford, Ireland. Concert work includes Beethoven's Ah Perfido, Mahler songs, Wagner's Wesendonck Lieder, Mozart Concert Arias with the Lavenham Sinfonia, Verdi Requiem at St John's Smith's Square. She toured California performing Strauss' Four Last Songs, appeared at the Bach House in Tokyo, performed and gave recitals and masterclasses at the International Festival in Mexico. Recordings include Scottish, Irish and Welsh folk songs with the Trio Kairos, Hamburg, Flower maiden in Parsifal under Daniel Barenboim for Decca, Matthias Ronnefeld Song Cycles for Da Capo records Denmark, and Mahler 2nd Symphony arranged for two pianos and Chamber Choir for Musicaphon Kassel. Recent engagements include a recital with Christiane Behn, Piano on poems by Theodor Storm for the Hamburg Conservatoire, Germany and Nielsen's Symphony No3 Espansiva, Vaughan William's Pastoral Symphony with the Suffolk Sinfonia, Die Winterreise with George Ireland, Piano in Bielefeld. Future plans, Daniela has recently performed Mahler's Rückert Songs with the Lavenham Sinfonia under Michael Coleby, and Bach's Christmas Oratorio under Chris Borrett in Dedham. She established the Pimlott Foundation in the name of her late husband, which involves young aspiring performers with professionals, on the concert platform, in workshops as well as within their educational programme.

Christiane Behn, Piano

Christiane Behn was born in Hamburg, Germany, into a highly musical family, and had her first piano lesson with her grandfather at the age of five. Studying under Yara Bernette, Elgin Roth and Conrad Hansen, she completed her studies at Hamburg Hochschule for Music and Theatre with Prokofieff's 3rd Piano Concerto. Since becoming a concert pianist, Christiane has been in great demand, working as a soloist, chamber musician and accompanist for singers including Daniela Bechly and Iris Vermillion. She has played in Frankfurt's Alte Oper, Berlin Philharmonie, Hamburg Laeiszhalle, and at the Schleswig-Holstein music festival. She performed Brahms 2nd Piano Concerto in Hamburg Laeiszhalle and Schubert's Winterreise in St. Michaelis Church, Hamburg with Iris Vermillion. Christiane's work has taken her beyond Europe, with concerts and masterclasses in the USA, Brazil, Chile, Panama, Mexico and Nepal. Together with her duo partners, she has performed transcriptions of Mahler's 2nd Symphony, arranged by her ancestor Hermann Behn, and also his extracts from Wagner's Tristan and Isolde at the Festival Liszt en Provence, and in Bayreuth. Since 2010, Christiane has delivered her own piano classes as professor at the Hamburg Conservatory. Christiane's students come from Germany, but she also teaches many international students from as far afield as Asia. Christiane currently works with talented students from the Hans-Kauffmann Charity Foundation and the Youth Chamber Music Initiative Feldtmann Kulturell. Her teaching success has been reflected in the recent performances of her students who have played in the Laeiszhalle, and in 2019 in the Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg. When at home in Hamburg, Christiane plays on two 1912 Steinway grand pianos, originally belonging to her great-grandfather. Broadcasts for radio and television: SWF, NDR, Deutschlandradio Berlin, Deutschlandfunk, ZDF and NDR Hamburg Journal.