

Thames Concerts 2024/25 Series – Artistic Director's notes



It gives me great pleasure to present this series of concerts, showcasing a vibrant mix of talent. Our concerts continue to take place in the wonderful home of the series, St Andrew's Church, Surbiton. Thames Concerts' position as the premier long-term promotor and organiser of high-quality chamber music performances in the Borough since 1961 remains unrivalled. Our attractive ticketing options and incentives continue of course, and the 10% discount scheme on the concert days continues at nearby establishments. All evening concerts start at 7.30pm, with doors (and the excellent value bar) opening at 6.45pm.

Regular supporters will notice a gentle expansion to the series, which now houses seven evening and four morning concerts. This allows me to broaden the range of genres we offer and increase our capacity to showcase the excellent work from the local schools and colleges.

The series begins on **Saturday 5 October** with the award-winning **Kleio Quartet**. Violinists Yume Fujise, Katherine Yoon, violist Jenny Lewisohn and cellist Eliza Millett present a programme of quartets by Haydn, Walton, Webern and Schulhoff. I am particularly pleased that the remarkable music of Erwin Schulhoff, a victim of the Nazi's *Entartete Musik* purge, will be featured in this concert.

Saturday 19 October sees renowned harpist **Mary Reid** making a long-overdue return to the series, with music by Bach, Bax, Jongen and other dazzling contemporary works. Known for her thoughtful and inspiring programming, Mary studied at the Royal Academy of Music, and was at school here in Surbiton.

Also on **Saturday 19 October, 10.30am**, we will enjoy an admission-free morning concert given once again by the fine brass ensemble **Freedom Pulse**. Formed by highly-regarded Ukrainian musicians now living and working locally, as well as undertaking regular national tours, they are a dynamic and entertaining ensemble, as anyone who was at their well-attended gig last year will doubtless testify.

On **Saturday 9 November** we welcome guitarist **Gonçalo Maia Caetano** to give the first *solo* guitar recital in the series for over ten years. The winner of the Musicians' Company's prestigious Prince's Prize, Gonçalo plays classics by Rameau, Brouwer, Bach, Rodrigo and others.

Saturday 7 December will see the first performance in a Thames Concerts series of the **Natrio Ensemble**. Talented young trumpeters Nick Budd, Joe Skypala and Will Thomas present an exciting contemporary programme for brass, combined with classics and a seasonal theme. The acoustics of St Andrew's will complement this programme from the off.

An organ recital has long been a feature of every series, and taking us into 2025 is the esteemed concert organist, broadcaster and Head of Organ at the Birmingham Conservatoire, **Daniel Moul**, on **Saturday 18 January** in a programme of Bach, Saint-Saëns, Schumann, Reubke and others.

The sixth evening concert in the series on **Saturday 8 February** is taken by the **Mithras Piano Trio**. Violinist Ionel Manciuc, cellist Leo Popplewell and pianist Dominic Degavino play trios by Haydn, Mendelssohn, Piazzola and Turina.

The series will close on **Saturday 15 February** with the Musicians' Company Young Jazz Musician of the Year 2023, **Emile Hinton** and his colleagues Toby Yapp (bass) and Kai MacRae (drums). They play a delightful mix of standards and contemporary repertoire.

Thames Concerts enjoys a reputation for supporting young up-and-coming musical talent in the local community. This includes those from disadvantaged backgrounds, those who experience other barriers to participation, and students from the local schools and colleges. In 2015 I introduced admission-free Surbiton Farmers' Market Day coffee concerts, running parallel to the main evening series, intended to

showcase this work. Those involved are free to present a programme of their choosing from any musical styles and genres. So far, many hundreds of students from over 15 local schools have taken part, and audiences are continually impressed by the high standard of performance they present.

This season, in addition to **Freedom Pulse's** performance on **19 October**, we will be treated to performances from students studying with **Kingston Music Service** on **Saturday 21 December, 10.30am**, students from **Surbiton High School** on **Saturday 18 January, 10.30am**, and post-graduate Music students from **Kingston University** on **Saturday 15 February, 10.30am**.

On behalf of my fellow trustees, we look forward to meeting you at some point during the series. More details may of course be found as usual at www.thamesconcerts.com.

Ben Costello

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