



The International  
Music School founded  
by Yehudi Menuhin

Registered Charity 312010

## Welcome

This term has, once again, been a mix of the challenging and the extremely rewarding. As Covid-19 looms, again, over the horizon, our pastoral staff are doing sterling work, keeping spirits high, supervising the pupils and providing the much-needed listening, not to mention the additional workload posed as Covid-19 continues to loom. Having taken the decision to move online for the final stretch of term, we avoided an outbreak within the school community; our boarders who flew home early to avoid the risk of being stranded here over Christmas have arrived home safely and remain connected to the school's online provision. We have been in this situation before, and it was a source of considerable pride to see how quickly the staff and pupils were able to revert to online learning. The term has not been without its challenges, and I am immensely grateful to all my colleagues, who have stepped up time after time to cover staff shortages or fulfil new tasks imposed on us by the pandemic.

We continue, too, to put on events, both internally and externally, that would be the envy of many much larger establishments. Our showcase concerts; the masterclasses and talks from well-known and accomplished musicians; our excellent lunchtime concerts; the performances given by our own staff and pupils in many different venues – these continue to fly the flag for a school that, despite many of the challenges facing all educational establishments in these difficult times, continues to thrive and to be an example, we hope, to other schools of a similar type. Not only are we true to the spirit and the legacy of Yehudi Menuhin, but we are trying,

at all times, to extend our reach: to challenge ourselves and our pupils in a way that is both productive and rewarding.

Times will continue to be tough, and there will, of course, be various challenges along the way. But I know that we will be equal to them and we're very proud of the commitment and the work ethic of all of those who contribute to the ongoing success of the school. We're also exceptionally proud of our students. I'd like to take this opportunity to wish each and every member of our community a very happy Christmas and a safe and prosperous new year.



Ben Gudgeon  
Headmaster

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## Celebrating in Style

A recurring theme this term has been performances in grand surroundings. The Crystal Ballroom at St Ermin's Hotel was the venue for a wedding at which four of our youngest violinists (Anamaria Prendi, Inés Maro Burgos Babakhian, Milla Stevenson and Nicole Wang) performed Telemann's *Concerto in D Major*, along with a special

arrangement of *Somewhere Over The Rainbow*. Two weeks later we were welcomed at the Goring Hotel, where a senior quartet (Jelena Horvat, Ignacy Stefanowicz, Leon Sturdee and Rezi Khaindrava) played at a 50th wedding anniversary party; one of the highlights of that event was sitting in the bar afterwards and seeing that caviar was on the menu!



### Follow us!

If you are active on social media (or would like to be) please have a look at our various channels.

Please follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram for news, events and images, but best of all is our YouTube channel which we keep updated with awe-inspiring videos of our pupils playing Schubert, Poulenc, Vaughan Williams, Howells and more. Through this channel you can watch and listen to our pupils in the comfort of your own home whenever you like.

Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @menuhinschool



Find us on Facebook @yehudimenuhinschool



Subscribe to our YouTube channel by searching for The Yehudi Menuhin School



We also update the news section of our website regularly, so please visit [www.menuhinschool.co.uk/news](http://www.menuhinschool.co.uk/news) to see what we are up to.

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## Hurlingham Club Arts Festival

On 2 and 3 September the Tomita family (Yume and Coco) and the Lin family (Laura and Kingsley), respectively, gave lunchtime recitals at the newly created Hurlingham Club Arts Festival, which took place in the Palm Court at the Hurlingham Club in Fulham.



2021



## Arts Alive and Wimbledon International Music Festival

After half term there were some slightly more conventional performances, starting with a 30-minute recital for Arts Alive Mole Valley to mark the conclusion of their month-long festival (performances by Yamato Couchman, Dora Oliva Devoghel, Rebecca You and the Brahms Piano Quartet: Jelena Horvat, Leon Sturdee, Caterina Isaia and Julius Backer). Also, our annual lunchtime concert for the Wimbledon International Festival took place live this year, with performances by Inés Maro Burgos Babakhian and Mia Li, Caterina Isaia, Julius Backer and the Kodaly Quartet (Eva Ter-Sarkisova, Vadym Perig, Isla Forbes and Chris Liu).



## The Law Society

Another new venture was a performance given at the inauguration of the new President of the Law Society at its headquarters in Chancery Lane. Mariam Obolashvili, Henry Quan, Pendo Masote and Filippo Ramaciotti gave a rousing performance of the first movement of Mendelssohn's *Quartet in F minor*, which was received with cheers by an enthusiastic audience. Of course, food came into this event as well, with a buffet of Caribbean dishes.

## Winter Festival

The Family Day which kicked off the Winter Festival was a huge success, with the biggest audiences we have seen in the Hall since before lockdown. Two screenings of *The Snowman* were presented with a live string quartet version of Howard Blake's popular score, and the first of these was in the presence of the composer himself. He said afterwards that he had never actually heard a live performance of this version before and he

congratulated the students (including conductor Julius Backer) on their playing. The film was followed by four carols with string accompaniments arranged by the students – again, these proved very popular.

Keelan Carew gave two workshops based around Grieg's piece *The Hall of the Mountain King* and the yells and cheers that could be heard in the foyer gave testament to the great enjoyment that the audience were feeling as they watched and listened to Keelan's

extraordinary presentation. All in all, there was a festive buzz in the Hall which provided an excellent start to the Christmas season.



# Community Engagement

## Chance to Play

Over the last term, our A3 students have been visiting Cobham Free School on a weekly basis to support the Chance to Play Scheme, an initiative that provides free violin tuition for every Year Three pupil in the school. For most pupils, it is their very first time holding a musical instrument. The A3s approached the entire programme with enormous enthusiasm: assisting each small group of pupils so that they held the violin and bow correctly and comfortably, learned the string names and played their first tunes on the instrument. In the spring term, the most capable pupils will move forward and be loaned a school violin permanently, and our A3s can help them with the best practice routines and begin to share the music they love. All A3s have been exceptional ambassadors and mentors on behalf of YMS.

Keelan Carew  
*Community Engagement Officer*



## Composition Workshops

14 October saw the inauguration of this year's composition workshops, where Head of Academic Music, John Cooney, gave an interactive lecture to A level and GCSE students from six local schools. In the second half of the day, one of our student string quartets performed and 'deconstructed' Prokofiev's *String Quartet No 2*, where John talked through Prokofiev's techniques alongside a live demonstration from the quartet. We were fortunate to have good weather that day, so all attendees could enjoy the school grounds over lunch (some students took the chance to play football with Menuhin School students), after which everyone made their way to The Menuhin Hall once again to listen to a lunchtime concert, featuring a Ravel violin sonata and a Mendelssohn quartet, which made a great impression on the young audience. Over the latter half term, I have been visiting all participant schools and working with students to develop their compositions. For me, this is the most exciting part of the job, as every individual presents unique, original ideas, and we cover everything, from Bach chorales to musical standards and from film scores to Beethoven sonatas. You never know what's going to be relevant! In spring, more visits will take place, with YMS students advising their composer peers on how to get the best out of string instruments.

Keelan Carew

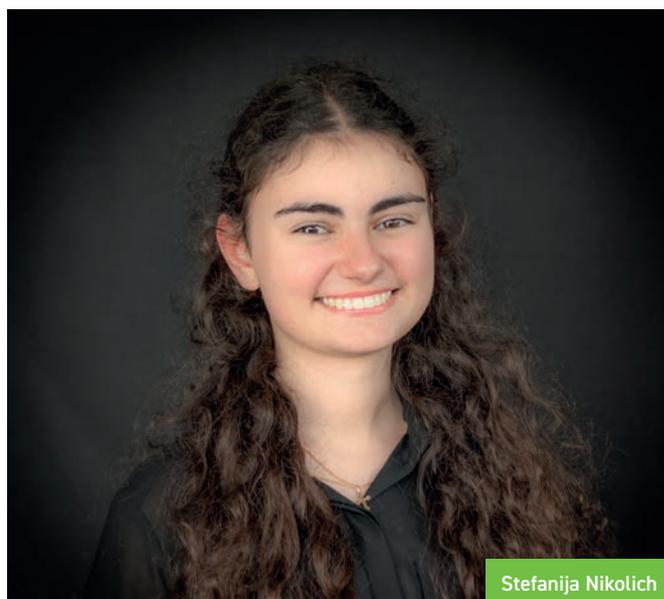


John Cooney

## Primary School Concert: West Byfleet Juniors

On Thursday 25 November, I travelled with five students out to West Byfleet Junior School to play a range of music for all 360 pupils over two back-to-back concerts. One of our students, Stefanija Nikolich, actually attended West Byfleet Juniors before starting at YMS – and was warmly greeted by a former (and very proud!) music teacher. The students put on a great show, and each spoke a little bit about the piece they were going to play, as well as introducing their instruments and talking about how they get the best out of them. The audience was bubbly and attentive, with many fingers tapping along to the études, waltzes and sonatas they heard.

Keelan Carew



Stefanija Nikolich

# Activities and trips

## Bodiam Castle

On Wednesday 10 November 2021, the C1s visited Bodiam Castle in Robertsbridge, South West England. It was roughly a one-hour drive to get there. We went with our English teacher, Naomi, and our history teacher, Sarah. Bodiam Castle is a very interesting landmark.

As soon as we arrived, we saw the looming castle towering over us. Before leaving the minibus, we had a quick snack – a packet of crisps and a carton of juice. As we headed towards the castle, we passed a pill box, which was used during World War II for cover. As we slowly neared the castle, I could see how age had torn it apart.

Immediately, I saw a sharp-ended gate, which I later learned was a portcullis. In ancient times, if an enemy came through, they would drop the gates and throw things like sand, water (preferably hot) and sometimes poo down the murder holes. The interior was enormous and very spacious. There used to be lots of bedrooms and toilets; a lot of people had to live there. There was the servant's side and the side where the powerful people such as the barons lived. These facts were all fascinating.

Later, we went round doing an I Spy sheet. We learnt many things such as where they stored water and how jousting helmets showed power, and we saw a video explaining how the castle was built. After that, we ate lunch as we were getting hungry – it was a very tasty baguette sandwich. After everyone had finished, we

headed towards the castle again, this time to look at the towers. For the first time, we realised the true towering height of the castle. As we entered again, we saw unique marks on the stone wall; I asked the guides about them and they explained that they were symbols to show how many stones the masons had carved. At the end of the day, they counted how many stones they had carved and they were paid their salary accordingly.

Slowly, we went up the winding staircases. When we got to the top, we found ourselves surrounded by a lovely view. Anyone who has stood on that tower will urge you to go to Bodiam Castle and not miss out. We took a few photos and headed outside. While descending, we stopped by a few spacious rooms with lovely views.

We exited the castle and headed back to the minibus. After that, we headed back to school. When we got back to school, we all had a good rest after a tiring day.

Joe Nezu, C1



## The Globe Theatre

On Thursday 16 September, a group of B1 and B2 students were taken to see a production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Globe Theatre. It was good to see a production of Shakespeare in what were, as far as possible, the original conditions and it was interesting to watch a production that tried to link the original text with modern issues and concerns. There was also modern music, which, judging by the reaction of our group, was a stimulatingly controversial decision. In the end, it was difficult to decide which was our favourite activity: the play itself or the ice cream by the Thames. I'd vote for the former, but it was a very close call.

Alan Humm  
Head of English

## Bonfire Night

Bonfire Night this year was an occasion for the whole Menuhin community – pupils, staff, friends, family, neighbours – to come together as one for the first time in 18 months. Steve and Brian organised an extravaganza of noise and sparkle as only they know how.

Happily, the original reason for this very British festival has long been

forgotten. Instead, the dazzling explosions echoing above our heads were an ecstatic expiation, a defiant rainbow-coloured celebration of our resilience in the face of a global pandemic. Leonore 3 would not have been out of place, but I would also have settled for Shostakovich 7. The hot dogs were nice too.

Robin Harskin  
*Head of Boarding*



## Remembrance Day

On a beautiful cold day we remembered those who fell in battle for peace and freedom. I was proud to be part of a day in which we read poems and where, later, in a special concert to mark this sad occasion, poems were interspersed with pieces of music. There were many memorable performances, among them a lovely piece by Debussy, but my highlights were Benedetta Fiechter playing Bach's *Adagio in G minor* from his first solo sonata and the choir at the end, who sang a piece entitled *They Are At Rest*. An apt and moving tribute, I thought.

Samuel Meller, B1

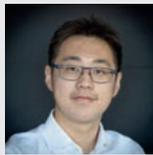


## New Pupils

**Alice** (14, Italy) plays the violin and enjoys Romantic music. She won the first prize in numerous international competitions such as the Clivis International Competition (Rome); the Crescendo International Competition (New York) and the Anemos International Competition (Rome). One day she wants to be part of an important orchestra and play around the world.



**Colin** (En) (16, USA) plays the double bass. He loves performing, including public speaking, debating and acting. Moreover, Colin has a passion for studying religion, philosophy and history, recently developing an interest in the history of China. His favourite composers are Schubert, Bach and Rachmaninoff. He is very interested in conducting and is a fan both of The Beatles and Pink Floyd.



**Ellie** (18, UK), is a cellist who particularly enjoys the Romantic period. As well as music, she enjoys art and swimming. She played in the NCO from the age of 10 up to 14. She wishes to do music therapy in the future and to travel around the world.



**Flavia** (14, Albania) plays the violin. What inspires her the most is the feeling that music gives her. The classical musician who she admires the most is David Oistrakh.



**Henry** (10, China) plays the guitar and loves to play Baroque music. He has a strong passion for history, for writing essays in English and for reading novels. He has a fervent wish to visit the Lake District again as it is where his favourite poet, William Wordsworth, spent most of his time.



**Joe** (11, Japan) plays the violin and loves Vivaldi and Mendelssohn. He wants to make people happy with the power of music and his performance. He won first prize at the 5th Danubia Talents Competition and the 3rd Violin Doc International Online Festival & Competition in his category last year.



**Lucrezia** (16, Italy) is a violinist and the winner of several international competitions. In 2017 she studied at the University of Performing Arts (Graz, Austria) with M. Silvia Marcovici, and, from 2018 to 2021, with M. Pavel Berman. She recently completed a three-year degree at Santa Cecilia Conservatoire in Rome, Italy. In 2019 she performed at Carnegie Hall. She would like to travel the world as much as possible.



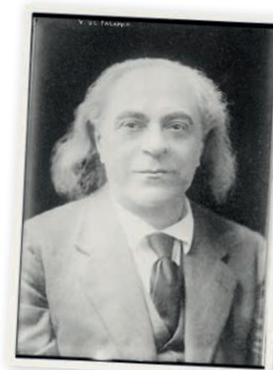
## Vladimir de Pachmann

*Alison Packman, our Assistant Bursar (Estates and Compliance), talks about her husband's heritage:*

When I told my father-in-law that I was coming to work at The Yehudi Menuhin School, he said he wasn't surprised. Not much that he says surprises me either but I couldn't help but ask why. 'Ah, well, of course we're related to the famous pianist Vladimir de Pachmann', he said. This was the first time I had heard this bit of family lore and so, resisting the urge to point out that I was related

only by marriage, I embarked on some research.

Vladimir de Pachmann was born on 27 July 1848 in Odessa, Ukraine. Initially a violinist, he had his first piano lesson from his father at the age of 10. With a one-hour lesson every day, it was soon apparent that Vladimir had an extraordinary gift for the piano and his violin playing went out of the window. His talent was 'discovered'



when a passer-by heard him playing a Handel fugue through an open window and spread word about the child prodigy to his friends in Odessa. Soon he became a frequent performer at soirées arranged by Princess Vorontsova for her rich and aristocratic friends. It was not long before he began to

travel the world, appearing in Vienna, London and Paris. In 1882 he played in a concert for the Royal Family, including the Prince of Wales, and was later commanded by the Queen to play before Her Majesty.

**Nathan** (16, London) is a double bassist. He has won prizes in the Watford Festival and in the Ruslip & Northwood Festival. He played in the NCO for four years and studied at the Royal College of Music for two years.



**Oisin** (11, Ireland) plays the piano and loves music from the Romantic period, especially. Besides music, Oisin has a passion for playing chess and has a wish to visit China, where his parents come from. He won first prize at the International Fryderyk Chopin Piano Competition for Children and Youth in Szafarnia.



**Peter** (14, Ireland) plays violin and piano and has won international prizes for both. While studying at the Royal College of Music, Peter was the winner of the Hugh

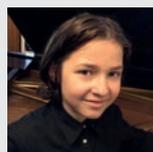


Bean Violin competition. Peter is the youngest ever member of the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland and was also chosen to play with Nicola Benedetti's Foundation Orchestra in the V&A Dundee. He is also a huge Lego enthusiast!

**Samuel** (14, Germany) plays the piano, and loves composing music and writing poetry and lyrics. Besides music, he likes literature, politics, philosophy and history. He would love to travel to Egypt and Greece, because of their history.



**Sasha** (13, USA) plays the piano and loves to compose music. Besides music, Sasha has a deep passion for mathematics, poetry writing and reading. He also has a fervent wish to visit Salzburg, the home of Mozart, his favourite composer.



**Sofia** (13, Bulgaria) plays the double bass. She has obtained numerous prizes in UK and in international competitions, including the Loughborough Piano Competition, the Stage for Kids Festival in Germany and the International Competition for Young Performers of Classical Music, 2017. She will, she hopes, gradually accumulate performing experience by attending a number of future concerts, master classes and competitions.



**Suyla** (16, Turkey) plays the guitar and loves to play Brazilian music and music from the Classical period. She started playing the guitar at the age of four with her dad, Haşim Polat, who was a guitar teacher. Other than music, she loves biology, drawing and sailing, and wishes to become a marine biologist while maintaining her music career in the future.



Pachmann was reportedly quite the showman and would often pause in the middle of a piece to speak with the audience, although there is also mention that this was in a bid to calm his stage fright. His eccentric behaviour both on and off the stage made him less popular with some but none could deny his ability. In 1916, Vladimir received the highest honour bestowed on a musician by the English when he received the Royal Philharmonic Society's gold medal, the Beethoven Medal, in recognition of all the years he had played in England. (The medal's 2021 winner is another Vladimir, conductor

Vladimir Jurowski.) Pachmann played numerous concerts in support of the Red Cross during the wartime years, including a duo recital with the Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe. Pachmann, reportedly short and squat, must have looked very odd next to the tall, burly Ysaÿe.

In his later years, Vladimir suffered pain in his fingers and could no longer produce the velvety tones he was famous for but it didn't stop him performing. Eccentric to the last, he talked through his performances, worrying the promoters who had promised him the enormous sum

of two million dollars (about 50 million dollars in today's terms) for a series of concerts in 1923. On 4 January 1933, Pachmann contracted pneumonia and he died two days later.

Investigation into the Packman family tree shows many possible connections. Whether or not there is a family link remains to be proven but learning about Vlad has been quite a journey!

*Material sourced from Chopin's Prophet: The Life of Pianist Vladimir de Pachmann by Edward Blickstein and Gregor Benko ISBN 978-1-4422-5279-0*

## Duke of Edinburgh's Award



The Silver and Bronze D of E students spent two or three days in the North Downs in September. Both groups very successfully completed their expeditions and we had an email from their assessor to say how well



prepared, confident and able the students were. Many of them have now gone on to complete their overall awards and will gain their certificates soon.

Jenny Dexter  
Science Teacher

During the summer holidays the Gold D of E group went to the beautiful Lake District to practice their navigational and hiking skills. They were blessed with the most gorgeous weather, and were slapping on the sun cream, which is unusual in Cumbria. They camped in the middle of nowhere by some isolated lakes and carried and cooked meals for three days. The next expedition will be in April in the Peak District, where it will probably be a few degrees colder.

Jenny Dexter



## Children in Need

Whilst the UK were all raising money for Children in Need on Friday 19 November, The Yehudi Menuhin School joined in by holding a pyjama day organised by the Gold D of E group. Both staff and pupils took part, spending the day not only in pyjamas but also in dressing gowns and in all sorts of colourful and, in some cases, over-size slippers. One pupil even brought a pillow! The boys held a very popular cake sale, selling cakes donated by all the staff, and overall we raised an amazing £215. The boys are hoping to hold many more fundraising events over the next year, including car washes, raffles and Valentine's Day celebrations.

Jenny Dexter



## Alumni News

**Nicola Benedetti** has received the Instrumental Award in the Royal Philharmonic Society Awards for her work as an artist, educator and advocate, creating inspiring online content for young musicians worldwide.

**Cheryl Frances-Hoad's** *Thinking I Hear Thee Call* for soprano, speaker and electronics has been nominated in the Vocal or Choral Composition category in the Ivor Composer Awards.

**Otoha Tabata** was a recent semi-finalist at the Cecil Aronowitz Viola Competition.

**Louisa Staples** was a finalist in 2021's Paganini International Violin Competition.

**SongHa Choi** came second and **Otoha Tabata** came third in the Windsor Festival International String Competition.

**Matthias Balzat** won the string section final at the 69th Royal Over-Seas League Annual Music Competition.

**Aleksey Igudesman** accompanied John Malkovich at Vatroslav Lisinski Hall in Zagreb on 4 December in *The Music Critic*, a comic performance insulting some of the great musical works.



SongHa Choi

**Alina Ibragimova's** performance of Shostakovich's violin concertos won an award in the Concerto category of The Gramophone Awards 2021.

**David Cohen** has been appointed Principal Cello of the London Symphony Orchestra.

**Tianyou Ma** has been awarded joint first prize at the 2021 Lillian and Maurice Barbash J.S. Bach String Competition in Stony Brook, Long Island.

## Staff news

We are proud to announce that one of our General Music staff, **Marco Galvani**, has recently signed with Birdsong Artist Management. Birdsong is an exciting new collaboration between international artist management agency Harrison Parrott and publishing company Faber Music, representing composers in both aspects of their careers. In the coming months Marco will be working with them on exciting new commissions and projects, while having more of his compositions published and available to purchase online. We wish Marco all the best with this new venture and congratulate him on his success!



Marco Galvani



On 27 September, Community Engagement Officer **Keelan Carew** and his team from the Royal Northern College of Music took on the University of Dundee on University Challenge!

**Angeline Gao** passed her ABRSM performance exam this summer. She writes: 'I was inspired by the beautiful music around me. I would never have achieved it without the support of YMS, who provided me with an excellent piano to practise on and the facilities to record myself playing.'

The Maxwell Quartet (with **Elliot Perks** on viola) has been included in *Classical Music* magazine's best albums of 2021.

On 22 November, our Director of Music, **Ashley Wass**, performed alongside **Maxim Rysanov** at the Wimbledon International Music Festival.

We are very sorry to see the following staff leave, all of whom we wish great success in pastures new:

- Stella Brooks** (Front of House Manager)
- Ioan Davies** (Chamber Music Coach)
- Jonathan Gabriel** (Hall: Front of House)
- Wendy Gabriel** (Hall: Front of House)
- Sian Gandhi** (Box Office)
- Evelyn Houseman** (Front of House Manager)
- Sarah McDonald** (Marketing Manager)
- Kevin O'Dwyer** (Front of House Manager)
- Valentina Palmadori** (Teacher of Italian)
- Beth Quartermaine** (Development)
- Selvathural Salvakymar** (Kitchen Porter)
- Clive Stevens** (Box Office)
- Barbara Thwaites** (Development)
- Ayla Turacli** (Teacher of Turkish)

## New Staff

**Melanie Bloor-Black** joined us in September as our new Director of Pastoral Care, Housemistress of Music House, and Designated Safeguarding Lead. She brings with her her family and Jack Russel, Monty. Before joining The Yehudi Menuhin School, Melanie was Director of Drama at Aiglon College in Switzerland and has had significant pastoral roles at Roedean School, Christ's Hospital School and The Royal Hospital School.

**Una Cho**, our new cello supporting tutor, also teaches at the Royal College of Music Junior Department. She studied with Sasha Boyarsky and Natalia Gutman and has recently recorded a CD of sonatas by Britten and Prokofiev with the pianist Sofia Kagan which will be available next year.

**Marion Chow**, Head of Individual Giving, was the Fundraising Officer at nearby charity The Grange Centre, which supports people with disabilities.

**Nikki Davies** previously worked here, at The Yehudi Menuhin School, in the laundry from 1999 to 2009. She made her way back here in September to take on the role of cleaning supervisor.

**Bertie Duncan**, our new Assistant Houseparent in Harris House, has worked in 'sterile services' (cleaning surgical instruments), as a trainee Project Manager in a translation company, as a resident tutor and as an EFL teacher, both in Seville and at a summer camp in the UK.

**Michelle Feeley**, Membership and Events Administrator, was previously the Deputy Head's Secretary at

the City of London Freeman's School following over 30 years in international and domestic banking.

**William Hallworth-Cook**, the new Menuhin Hall Technician, is currently studying on the Music and Sound Recording Tonmeister course at the University of Surrey. He has worked on many professional recordings over the past two years.

**Jonathan Hodgson**, our new Trusts & Foundations Manager, was formerly Assistant Director at Pro Corda, a chamber music school based in Suffolk. He is a trained pianist and organist and has toured nationally and internationally as an accompanist to soloists, choral ensembles and pop-opera group G4.

**Emily Howell** is covering a maternity leave in the Music Department. Previously, Emily was an Event Manager. This included working for The Queen at Buckingham Palace, where she planned Her Majesty's engagements nationally and internationally.

Our new Professor of Piano, **Dinara Klinton**, is a graduate of the Moscow State Conservatory and the Royal College of Music. She is also a piano professor at the Royal College of Music.

Our interim cello teacher, **Ashok Klouda**, is co-founder and co-director of the Highgate International Chamber Music Festival and has performed around the world in numerous musical settings.

**Rosie McCance**, our new Receptionist, previously worked for Nuffield Health in their HR Department. Prior to that, Rosie worked as a nanny and has also received many qualifications within sport.

**Nikki Sherman** is our new Science Lab Technician. She trained as a neuro-physiotherapist and worked most recently as a clinical case manager for catastrophic injuries.

**Christiane Wagner-Tree**, our new MFL teacher, has previously worked at Reeds School and Tormead. Prior to that she worked as cabin crew for British Airways while teaching at Reeds School. She also trained as a pastry chef at a patisserie in Germany.

After a series of one-off appearances over the years, **Ben Whitnall** has finally become a member of staff, working in the box office on a temporary basis, and also in the bar when needed. When he is not working at the school, he is fulfilling his dream of

being a professional music theatre performer, and will be touring the UK in the cast of *Singing in the Rain* next year.



Dinara Klinton

We also welcome

**Susan Eyre**, who has joined our cleaning team, **Anna Larson** and **Nic Belfrage**, who now work in our Box Office, **Juli-ann Sage**, our new lunchtime supervisor, and **Valeria Kucharsky**, who is working for us as a violin teacher.

## This term in The Menuhin Hall

There always used to be a time of year at The Menuhin Hall when the familiar aroma of coffee began mixing with the sweet scent of mulling spice. This shift in the olfactory profile of the foyer – induced, as I write this, by the joyous Christmas Concert of **The Grange** – signals a time of reflection, celebration and hope, and – most notably for us – a time when The Menuhin Hall carpet is transformed into a mince pie-covered mess.

As I Hoover away in this most modern and efficient form of meditation, I can't help but take a moment to wonder about the year behind us. After the shock of 2020, many of us were naïve enough to believe that 2021 would bring a swift return to normal. Yet any progress made also came with a generous helping of confusion, frustration and fatigue as we faced a new set of circumstances, seemingly every month. Live or virtual? Two metres apart or one? Masks on, masks off – why don't you have a mask on?! And yet, amidst all of this, for the first time in two years we have a season of events to write about and crumbs of Christmas to Hoover.

Last week we had the opportunity to meet the phenomenal **Dame Evelyn Glennie**, teaching us and the world how to listen. Earlier in the season we celebrated two artists' birthdays in concerts as we found ourselves spell-bound in September by **Iestyn Davies** (accompanied by lutenist **Thomas Dunford**), and later when **Charles Owen** returned to the Hall with



Dame Patricia Routledge



Alexander Sitkovetsky

a monumental programme for solo piano. Between these musical feasts were the roof-raising performances of the **Piccadilly Dance Orchestra** and **Harry the Piano**.

Then there is the greatest privilege of being at The Menuhin Hall: the chance to witness the musical and personal growth of some of the world's finest young musicians. Every Showcase is unique and fresh as any concert might introduce you to an unknown piece, to a performer you haven't yet heard, or to the interpretation of a young musician performing something for the first time. The experience is intensely personal yet always communal as we share in these unrepeatable moments.

Our **Remembrance Day Showcase**, with its mixture of music and poetry, was one good example. The culmination of our season in our **Winter Festival** brings many more such moments.

It is with these thoughts that we look ahead into the future. February will feature a **Debut Showcase**, introducing pupils who have not yet performed in a Showcase – a chance for us to start the journey with them. In March our pupils will be joined by members of staff and visiting artists for an early **Founder's Day** and many recent alumni will be coming back home for a series of celebrity concerts featuring **Sasha Sitkovetsky, Wu Qian, Coco Tomita, Maxim Calver** and **Kevin Loh**.

March will also feature one of the boldest events in the Hall's history, in which choirs from around the county will appear in a magnificent evening celebrating the work of local charity **Sight for Surrey**. The end of the month will bring us another **Family Day**, continuing a series of workshops and live music film screenings that started at our 2021 Summer Festival.

We look forward to welcoming **Dame Patricia Routledge** and **Edward Seckerson** for a rescheduled talk in April and it is with great pleasure that

## Spring/Summer season

### JANUARY

THU 20 JAN	7.30PM	ALEXANDER SITKOVETSKY AND WU QIAN
TUE 25 JAN	1.15PM	LUNCHTIME SHOWCASE

### FEBRUARY

THU 3 FEB	7.30PM	DEBUT SHOWCASE
THU 10 FEB	7.30PM	KEVIN LOH AND MAXIM CALVER
THU 24 FEB	7.30PM	SHOWCASE

### MARCH

THU 3 MAR	5.00PM 7.30PM	FRIENDS Q&A FOLLOWED BY COCO TOMITA AND SIMON CALLAGHAN
THU 10 MAR	1.15PM & 7.30PM	CHOIRS UNITE FOR SIGHT FOR SURREY
THU 17 MAR	7.30PM	SHOWCASE
SAT 19 MAR	7.30PM	SURREY MOZART PLAYERS
SUN 27 MAR	1.15PM & 3.45PM	FAMILY DAY
WED 30 MAR	7.30PM	FOUNDER'S DAY

### APRIL

SAT 9 APR	7.30PM	FRIENDS VIRTUAL SHOWCASE
SAT 30 APR	3.00PM	DAME PATRICIA ROUTLEDGE WITH EDWARD SECKERSON

### MAY

WED 4 MAY	7.30PM	SHOWCASE
SAT 7 MAY	7.30PM	IIMF: MODIGLIANI QUARTET (WITH PRE-CONCERT TALK AT 6PM)
THU 12 MAY	7.30PM	IIMF: GARY HOFFMAN AND WU QIAN
THU 26 MAY	7.30PM	SHOWCASE

### JUNE

SAT 11 JUN	1.15PM	LUNCHTIME SHOWCASE
SAT 18 JUN	6.00PM	FARNHAM YOUTH CHOIR
THU 23 JUN	7.30PM	ASHLEY WASS VIRTUAL MASTERCLASS

we can once again host the concerts of the **Surrey Mozart Players**, the **Investec International Music Festival** (this time for a pair of concerts featuring the **Modigliani Quartet** and **Gary Hoffman**), and the **Farnham Youth Choir**.

Before we can welcome the New Year, however, we do need to pause for some goodbyes. These past two years have resulted in changing circumstances for many and an opportunity to alter course and try new adventures for others. Earlier in the year we said our farewells to a number of our stewards,

as well as Box Office Assistants **Wendy Gabriel** and **Clive Stevens**, Front of House Managers **Kevin O'Dwyer**, **Stella Brooks** and **Evelyn Houseman**, all of whom have played crucial roles being the welcoming faces of the Hall for many years.

At the end of September we said goodbye to **Sian Gandhi** who helped run much of the Hall behind the scenes – a source of support, knowledge and superhuman patience who will be greatly missed. More recently we bid farewell to YMS'

## How to book

As before, we are encouraging all patrons to book online if possible.

If you need help with your booking, please do not hesitate to call the Box Office. Our opening times are **Monday to Friday 10am–3pm (lunch 12.15pm–12.45pm)**.

## Priority Booking

**MENUHIN CIRCLE OPENS 15 DEC**  
**BEST FRIENDS OPENS 15 DEC**  
**FRIENDS OPENS 4 JAN**

**GENERAL BOOKING OPENS 11 JAN**

Please keep an eye on our website for the latest updates and any changes to these plans.

[www.themenuhinhall.co.uk](http://www.themenuhinhall.co.uk)

Box Office: **01932 559400**

Marketing Manager, **Sarah McDonald**. Sarah's fingerprints were on every email we sent, every brochure and concert programme. Her office door was always open when one needed a good laugh or a space to rant – two key ingredients of pandemic survival! They were all part of a team who helped make the 'YMS experience' what it is. Their ways of working, care, dedication and sense of humour are the values that show us the way forward.

And it is forward that we must go. We have learned the lesson of 2021. Life can be confusing and messy, but there is a better future in sight – even if we can't always see it from our fogged-up spectacles and medical grade, 3-ply face masks. There is a way forward and every crumb of carpet-bonded mince pie is a step in the right direction.

**Tamas Reti**  
*Hall Manager*

# Development News

It was all change in the Development Team this term as we waved a sad goodbye to Beth Quartermaine and Barbara Thwaites, but a very warm welcome to Marion Chow, Michelle Feeley and Jonathan Hodgson (See page 13).

It has been such a joy to finally be able to meet in person with our family of Friends and supporters this term. After months of what felt like hibernation, we rather went into overdrive to make up for lost time, with a whole host of events and the launch of a new match-funding campaign in support of bursaries.

As the year draws to a close, we wish you all a peaceful and restorative holiday season and look forward to seeing many of you in the New Year. From all of us here, a huge thank you for your ongoing support, which is quite literally life-changing for our pupils.

Alix de Mauny  
External Relations Director

## Match-funding campaign: help us reach our £200,000 target!

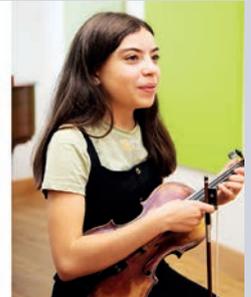
Once again we were fortunate to receive the backing of an extremely generous local donor, who offered to match donations to our Bursary Fund £1 for £1 between mid-October and 24 December. When we reached our original

target of £100,000 after a few weeks, they challenged us to aim even higher and have now set the bar at an astonishing £200,000. At the time of writing, we still have around £50,000 to raise to reach that ambitious goal, and we are determined to do all we can to get there, for our pupils' sake. The need for such support is very real – this year alone we have disbursed nearly £700,000 in Bursary Funding and are projecting an even higher level for the forthcoming academic year. The sad reality is that, without such support, some talented pupils face having to turn down their place at YMS.

**A huge thank you to all those of you who have already contributed to this campaign, and, if you have yet to do so, please do consider making a donation before 24 December by visiting [www.menuhinschool.co.uk/donate](http://www.menuhinschool.co.uk/donate).**

### YOUR GIFT, THEIR FUTURE

Until 24 December,  
your donation to our Bursary Fund  
will be worth **twice as much**.



## Loseley House

We were honoured to have been given the opportunity to hold a private fundraising concert in support of our match-funding campaign at Loseley House, the home for generations of the More-Molyneux family. Our host for the evening, HM Lord Lieutenant of Surrey Michael More-Molyneux, told guests about hearing Yehudi Menuhin perform at Loseley when he was a teenager, which opened his eyes and ears to the world of classical music. Our guests were then treated to performances by current pupils alongside YMS alumnus Maxim Calver, who was a BBC Young Musician of the Year grand finalist in 2010 and is now studying cello at the Royal College of Music.



## Fundraising concert hosted by new governor Hilary Cowan

Our new governor, Hilary Cowan, and her husband Michael generously hosted an evening for us in their home at the start of our match-funding

campaign. The stars of the evening – alongside our pupils – were their gorgeous labradors, who enjoyed the music every bit as much as our guests!



Rebecca You



## Opening of our new Health Centre

We were delighted to welcome Mrs Audrey Wilson to open our new Health Centre at the start of term, as she generously supported its refurbishment over the summer months. Our new Director of Pastoral Care, Melanie Bloor-Black, and our nurse, Polly Richardson, showed Mrs Wilson round the facilities, which have been highly appreciated by our pupils since the start of term.



## Menuhin Circle evening in London

Members of the Menuhin Circle were treated to a very special evening in the home of Bob and Elisabeth Boas, in Mayfair. Five of our pupils performed pieces by Mozart, Liszt and Paganini, after which there was a presentation on our new sister school in China, YMS Qingdao. David Buckley and Mark

Stringer, who has been appointed as Deputy Head of the new school, talked about the reasons for setting up the school, based on Yehudi Menuhin's ethos, and explained how it would be run. Guests also saw some of the blueprints for the school, which is set to open in September 2022.

## Join the Menuhin Circle!

The Menuhin Circle brings together passionate supporters of our vision and mission, who commit to making an annual donation between £1,000 and £5,000 for at least three years. In return, members receive exclusive invitations to events as well as gaining a closer insight into the life and plans of the School.

To join The Menuhin Circle, or find out more, please contact Marion Chow on [marion.chow@menuhinschool.co.uk](mailto:marion.chow@menuhinschool.co.uk) or 01932 584744.

# Meet our Donors!

***The Yehudi Menuhin School would simply not survive without the support of our amazing donors, many of whom come from within our local community. Meet Epsom solicitor Lionel Blackman, who is helping to sponsor the role of Professor of Piano.***

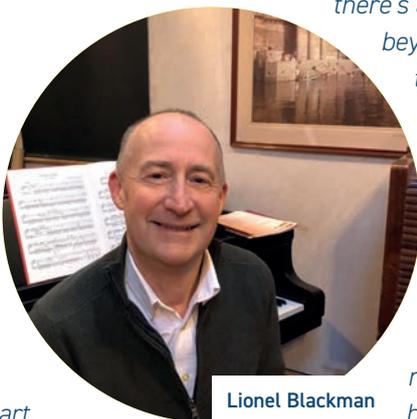
## **What part has music played in your life?**

*I started piano at the age of 10, which is quite late – my eldest brother was having lessons and my parents' logic seemed to be that he needed to finish them before I could start.*

*I worked through the grades up to Grade 8, and I played the violin for a while and sang in the church choir. Although I have a good sense of rhythm, I'm not good at counting and I don't have an ear for pitch, so I never had the potential of a career. I became interested in the law and that took over. However, I still play the piano every day, just for myself, and enjoy creating amateurish compositions. Some people go angling and sit beside a lake for hours to relax; my switch-off is to go to the music room and play.*

## **How did you become involved with the Menuhin School?**

*I've been a member of the audience at The Menuhin Hall for several years because it is just down the road. The concerts are excellent value and the students are so inspiring. You can't help but have your heart warmed, watching these talented young people perform. It's magical. Knowing how difficult it is to play an instrument helps me appreciate just how gifted and hard-working they are.*



Lionel Blackman

## **What made you decide to donate to the School?**

*I'm 61 and, having devoted more than 30 years to my legal career, I've been steadily reducing my caseload as a lawyer. The childhood experience of learning music reminds me that there's a dimension to life beyond law that needs to be renewed and refreshed.*

*Supporting a new generation of professional musicians is extremely rewarding. Life has been good to me in terms of being rewarded in my career, and it feels good to put something back. There are many charitable causes around the world, and I don't neglect them, but, for me, there's something special about investing in people. The Menuhin School's mission is to attract the best talents from all backgrounds and races around the world, offering them encouragement and an environment to become professional, and it's a privilege to be part of that in my small way. Also, Covid has been an extraordinary challenge for them over the last year, so I think they particularly appreciate the support they're receiving at the moment.*

## **Why did you decide to help to sponsor a professor rather than just making a donation?**

*It was suggested that it would be helpful to make a contribution towards the post of a piano professor and I immediately saw the merit of this for all of us. If any of her pupils become famous one day, it might be a bit*

*cheeky, but I will be able to feel proud, rather than putting all my eggs in one basket by sponsoring only one student!*

## **What makes the Menuhin School special for you?**

*Going to concerts and seeing the young musicians play, I've witnessed how the School instils great confidence in its students. In June, I helped sponsor a concert of young players at a local theatre in Epsom – occasionally we reach out so that people in the area get to know about the School. It was the first live concert in Epsom since Covid and it was remarkable how two young violinists, aged around eleven, just walked on stage and started to play a beautiful duet together. They took a bow at the end and the next players came on, and the concert went on like that. It was all about the music and giving it to an audience that was very appreciative – it was the first time many of them had been out at all, let alone to a live music concert, for over a year. It felt very special, and that is the product of the ethos that is engendered, and of the work of the staff, who remain inspired by the founding father himself, Yehudi Menuhin.*

## **What would you say to someone who might be thinking of donating to the School?**

*Whatever amount you can donate, you will know that it is not being wasted. Every pound is an investment in the future – not just in the culture of this country, but in music around the world, internationalism and, ultimately, peace on earth. The value of what music can do globally cannot be underestimated.*

**For a full version of this interview, visit [www.menuhinschool.co.uk/support-us/thank-you/meet-our-donors](http://www.menuhinschool.co.uk/support-us/thank-you/meet-our-donors)**

## From the Chairman of the Friends

### Dear Friends

The effects of the Covid pandemic sadly truncated our plans to celebrate 50 years of the Friends organisation in support of the School. But, as pupils and staff returned for a new academic year at YMS, we were delighted at last to welcome 86 of you to our 'Friends@50' cake and champagne celebration, postponed from the summer. It was lovely to see so many of you there at what was also the first showcase of the autumn season. The bubbles were flowing along with the conversation and there were individual cupcakes featuring the Friends at 50 logo, not to mention goody bags containing Jean Labourg's infamous brownies. Tasmin Little, our Co-president, was there to join us. She recalled her own personal memory of the beginnings of the Friends of YMS and thanked them for such wonderful support of the school over the last 50



John Baker

years, before cutting the cake, which, in her words 'resembled a giant champagne truffle!' Tasmin is such a joy to be with – even without a violin!

We are pleased to be able to offer the Friends exclusive events and, in October, a dozen or so took advantage of the rare opportunity to join one of the world's leading classical music producers, Andrew Keener, as he guided pupils through the process of making a professional recording. There will be more friends-only events, which you will be able to book soon, and these are featured in the new Spring/Summer 'What's On'.

Sadly, Barbara Thwaites has left the school and we would like to thank her for all her hard work and support of the Friends during her time at YMS. She is replaced by Michelle Feeley as Membership and Events Administrator. Michelle's previous career interestingly includes 30 years

in International Banking and we warmly welcome her to the team.

Finally, at our Friends Management Committee Meeting in November, we agreed to make a significant donation of £20,000 to the School's Bursary Fund, supporting the 90 per cent of pupils that require financial support to attend YMS. The good news is that, thanks to the overwhelming generosity of a local donor, this donation will be doubled as part of the Bursary match-funding campaign which runs until Christmas Eve.

My thanks go to all of you who helped to make this Friends donation possible, as well as for your enthusiastic support of the pupils playing in the Menuhin Hall this autumn term.

With best wishes,

Sir John Baker  
Chairman of the Friends of  
The Yehudi Menuhin School





Photography by Keelan Carew, Dave Greenwood, Victoria Hiscock, Jonathan Hodgson, Sarah Howell, Alan Humm, Alix de Mauny and Sara Porter. Edited by Alan Humm