



Leeds  
Song

"Leeds Song Festival ... from inner city to international, world-class music making."  
*The Guardian*

*Music gives a soul  
to the universe*

2026 Festival  
Sunday 12 April at 4pm

**Study Event**

RECITAL ROOM, LEEDS CONSERVATOIRE



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



THE LIZ & TERRY BRAMALL  
FOUNDATION

# Director's Welcome

## Music gives a soul to the universe

It is with great joy and delight that I welcome you to the Leeds Song Festival 2026, a week-long celebration of one of the most intimate, expressive, and endlessly fascinating forms of music: the art song. Across seven days and a variety of venues throughout Leeds, we have gathered some of the brightest stars, most compelling voices, and most visionary creators in the world of song to present a programme as diverse and vibrant as the city itself.

Buoyed by the extraordinary success of last year's Festival – which broke all previous box office records by 30% – we return in 2026 with renewed energy, ambition and gratitude. This momentum would not be possible without the loyal and generous support of our Friends, audiences, donors, and those trusts and foundations whose belief in our mission underpins everything we do. My heartfelt thanks to each of you.

Faced with an embarrassment of riches, it feels almost invidious to pick out highlights, but as you turn the pages ahead you'll notice programmes from internationally acclaimed singers Marianne Crebassa, Katharina Konradi, Axelle Fanyo, and Fleur Barron, who bring fresh energy to Leeds. British stars Dame Sarah Connolly, Louise Alder, Huw Montague Rendall and Roderick Williams return, delivering performances that showcase the very best of British artistry. The opening and closing evening recitals are especially packed with joyous fare.

Our commitment to supporting the finest rising stars includes recitals by Austrian mezzo-soprano Patricia Nolz, our first lute-accompanied recital with Nardus Williams (partnered by early music royalty Elizabeth Kenny), and a performance from recent Deutsche Grammophon signing Theodore Platt. Leeds Song Young Artist alumni are also represented: Héloïse Werner's *Knight's Dream* will be performed by Helen Charlston and Sholto Kynoch, while Keval Shah, Felix Gygli and Jong Sun Woo all make welcome returns.

Festival favourites Roderick Williams and Iain Burnside explore new compositions inspired by Japanese haiku from leading American composer Libby Larsen, and we are proud to present a Leeds Song commission: *Dunwich*: an intermedia première by Martin Iddon blending spoken word, piano and video in a powerful meditation on history and memory.



This year's masterclasses feature renowned artists including Bernarda Fink, Joan Rodgers CBE, Mark Padmore and Roger Vignoles, whose guidance offers invaluable insight into the art of interpretation.

Our community offering, *Bring and Sing!*, returns with Gareth Malone, inviting all to take part in a joyous performance of Haydn's *Nelson Mass*. Meanwhile, the *Composers & Poets Forum* and the Art Song Challenge winner, Gerda Iguchi, broaden the boundaries of the genre with bold, interdisciplinary work.

The festival concludes with a specially curated recital by Dame Sarah Connolly, joined by prize winners from the Northern Aldborough New Voices Singing Competition – a fitting finale, celebrating both excellence and the future of song.

Leeds Song Festival is not just a series of concerts; it is a vibrant gathering of artists, audiences, and ideas, a space where music's power to connect, move, and transform is celebrated in all its richness. Whether you are a lifelong devotee of art song or discovering it anew, we invite you to join us for what promises to be an unforgettable festival.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph Middleton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Joseph Middleton  
Director, Leeds Song

# 2026 Festival at a Glance

## Saturday 11 April

|            |   |               |
|------------|---|---------------|
| 1 – 2pm    | <b>Lunchtime Opening Recital:</b> Patricia Nolz and Joseph Middleton                    | The Venue, LC |
| 3 – 5.30pm | <b>Bring and Sing! Rehearsal</b> with Gareth Malone OBE                                 | The Venue, LC |
| 6pm        | <b>Bring and Sing! Concert</b> with Gareth Malone OBE: Haydn <i>Nelson Mass</i>         | The Venue, LC |
| 6.30 – 7pm | <b>Pre-concert Talk</b> with Richard Stokes   | HAR           |
| 7.30pm     | <b>Evening Opening Recital:</b> Louise Alder, Huw Montague Rendall and Joseph Middleton | HAR           |

## Sunday 12 April

|                |  |                        |
|----------------|--|------------------------|
| 10am – 12.30pm | <b>Festival Masterclass I:</b> Bernarda Fink                   | The Venue, LC          |
| 2 – 3pm        | <b>Lunchtime Recital:</b> Nardus Williams and Elizabeth Kenny  | Royal Armouries Museum |
| 4 – 5.30pm     | <b>Young Artists Study Event</b> with Richard Stokes           | Recital Room, LC       |
| 6 – 7pm        | <b>Friends of Leeds Song Private Reception</b>                 | Rooftop Bar, LC        |
| 6.30 – 7pm     | <b>Pre-concert Talk</b> with Richard Stokes                    | The Venue, LC          |
| 7.30pm         | <b>Evening Recital:</b> Marianne Crebassa and Joseph Middleton | The Venue, LC          |

## Monday 13 April

|            |  |                     |
|------------|--|---------------------|
| 10am – 1pm | <b>Friends' Festival Masterclass II:</b> Bernarda Fink     | Linacre Studio, HOC |
| 2pm – 5pm  | <b>Friends' Festival Masterclass III:</b> Mark Padmore CBE | Linacre Studio, HOC |

## Tuesday 14 April

|            |  |                     |
|------------|--|---------------------|
| 10am – 1pm | <b>Festival Masterclass IV:</b> Bernarda Fink                                      | Linacre Studio, HOC |
| 6 – 8pm    | <b>Evening Recital:</b> Roderick Williams OBE and Iain Burnside                    | The Venue, LC       |
| 9pm        | <b>Late Night Recital:</b> <i>Dunwich</i> : An intermedia première by Martin Iddon | The Attic           |

## Wednesday 15 April

|         |  |                                  |
|---------|--|----------------------------------|
| 5 – 7pm | <b>Composers &amp; Poets Forum Showcase and Exhibition:</b> 'A Leeds Songbook' | Brodrick Hall, Leeds City Museum |
| 8pm     | <b>Evening Recital:</b> Helen Charlston and Sholto Kynoch                      | Left Bank Leeds                  |

## Thursday 16 April

|             |   |                     |
|-------------|---|---------------------|
| 12 – 1.30pm | <b>Young Artists Showcase</b>                                       | HAR                 |
| 3 – 6pm     | <b>Festival Masterclass V:</b> Joan Rodgers CBE                     | Linacre Studio, HOC |
| 6.30 – 7pm  | <b>Pre-concert Talk</b> with Dr Katy Hamilton                       | HAR                 |
| 7.30pm      | <b>Evening Recital:</b> Axelle Fanyo, Fleur Barron and Julius Drake | HAR                 |
| 9.45 – 11pm | <b>Late Night Lieder Lounge</b> with Leeds Song Young Artists       | HAR Bar             |

## Friday 17 April

|                |  |                     |
|----------------|--|---------------------|
| 10am – 12.30pm | <b>Festival Masterclass VI:</b> Roger Vignoles                   | Linacre Studio, HOC |
| 1 – 2pm        | <b>Lunchtime Recital:</b> Felix Gygli and Jong Sun Woo           | HAR                 |
| 3 – 6pm        | <b>Festival Masterclass VII:</b> Anna Tilbrook                   | Linacre Studio, HOC |
| 6.30 – 7pm     | <b>Pre-concert Talk</b> with Mark Rogers                         | HAR                 |
| 7.30pm         | <b>Evening Recital:</b> Katharina Konradi and Joseph Middleton   | HAR                 |
| 9.45 – 11pm    | <b>Late Night Recital:</b> Gerda Iguchi: Art Song Challenge 2025 | HAR Bar             |

## Saturday 18 April

|             |   |                 |
|-------------|---|-----------------|
| 11am – 12pm | <b>Coffee Recital:</b> Theodore Platt and Keval Shah  | The Venue, LC   |
| 2 – 3.30pm  | <b>Young Artists Finale Concert</b>   | The Venue, LC   |
| 6 – 6.30pm  | <b>Pre-concert Talk</b> with Dr George Kennaway   | Rooftop Bar, LC |
| 7pm         | <b>Festival Closing Recital:</b> Dame Sarah Connolly and Joseph Middleton<br>(and Northern Aldborough New Voices Singing Competition Prize Winners) | The Venue, LC   |

HAR = Howard Assembly Room | LC = Leeds Conservatoire | HOC = Howard Opera Centre  
All information correct at the time of publication.

Leeds Song reserves the right to change artists, programmes and events if necessary.

**Box Office: 0113 223 3600** | [boxoffice@operanorth.co.uk](mailto:boxoffice@operanorth.co.uk) | [www.leedssong.com/whats-on](http://www.leedssong.com/whats-on)

Sunday 12 April 2026, 4pm  
**RECITAL ROOM, LEEDS CONSERVATOIRE**



## Study Event

Exploring *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*

with **Richard Stokes**  
and **Leeds Song Young Artists**

Leeds Song Patron and Professor of Lieder at the Royal Academy of Music, Richard Stokes returns to Leeds Song to give one of his enlightening lecture recitals with song performances by Leeds Song Young Artists, focusing on varied settings of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* by Mahler, Schumann, Strauss, Schoenberg, Zemlinsky and Weber.

**Kelsey Thomas** soprano  
**Edward Lloyd** piano

**Richard Strauss**  
Hat gesagt, bleib's nicht dabei

**Martina Neubauer** soprano  
**Alexander Koschka** piano

**Gustav Mahler**  
Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen

**Lisa-Marie Lebitschnig** soprano  
**Amelie Warner** piano

**Robert Schumann**  
Marienwürmchen

**Mariana Rodrigues** soprano  
**Andrew Cowie** piano

**Gustav Mahler**  
Lob des hohen Verstandes

**Carleigh Ross** soprano  
**Curtis Vetter** piano

**Alexander von Zemlinsky**  
Das bucklichte Männlein

**Klara Solén** mezzo-soprano  
**George Herbert** piano

**Gustav Mahler**  
Urlicht

**Naomi Boot** mezzo-soprano  
**Viviana Ţaga-Radu** piano

**Gustav Mahler**  
Das irdische Leben

**Zheng Jiang** counter-tenor  
**Yihan Zhao** piano

**Johannes Brahms**  
Schnitter Tod

**Bruno Meichsner** baritone  
**Wan-Yen Li** piano

**Carl Loewe**  
Herr Oluf

**Daniel Sauer** baritone  
**Honoka Komoda** piano

**Felix Mendelssohn**  
Hüt du dich

# Texts and Translations

## Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

### **Hat gesagt, bleibt's nicht dabei**

Mein Vater hat gesagt,  
Ich soll das Kindlein wiegen,  
Er will mir auf den Abend  
Drei Gaggeleier sieden;  
Siedt er mir drei,  
Ißt er mir zwei,  
Und ich mag nicht wiegen  
Um ein einziges Ei.

Mein Mutter hat gesagt,  
Ich soll die Mägdlein verraten,  
Sie wollt mir auf den Abend  
Drei Vögelein braten, ja braten;  
Brat sie mir drei,  
Ißt sie mir zwei,  
Um ein einzig Vöglein,  
Treib ich kein Verräterei.

Mein Schätzlein hat gesagt,  
Ich soll sein gedenken,  
Er wollt mir auf den Abend  
Drei Küßlein auch schenken;  
Schenkt er mir drei,  
Bleibt's nicht dabei,  
Was kümmert mich's Vöglein,  
Was schiert mich das Ei.

## Gustav Mahler (1860-1911)

### **Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen**

Wer ist denn draußen und wer klopft an,  
Der mich so leise wecken kann?  
Das ist der Herzallerliebste dein,  
Steh auf und laß mich zu dir ein.

Was soll ich hier nun länger stehn?  
Ich seh die Morgenröt aufgehn,  
Die Morgenröt, zwei helle Stern,  
Bei meinem Schatz da wär ich gern,  
Bei meinem Herzallerlieble.

Das Mädchen stand auf, und ließ ihn ein,  
Sie heißt ihn auch willkommen sein.  
Willkommen, lieber Knabe mein,  
So lang hast du gestanden!

...

### **It won't stop there**

My father told me  
To rock the baby,  
In the evening, he said,  
He'd boil me three eggs;  
If he boils me three,  
He'll eat two,  
And I don't want to rock  
For a single egg.

My mother told me  
To tell on the maids,  
In the evening, she said,  
She'd roast me three birds;  
If she roasts me three,  
She'll eat two,  
For a single bird  
I'll not turn traitor.

My sweetheart told me  
I should think of him,  
In the evening, he said,  
He'd give me three kisses;  
If he gives me three,  
It won't stop there,  
What do I care for the bird,  
What do I care for the egg.

### **Where the splendid trumpets sound**

Who stands outside and knocks at my door,  
Waking me so gently?  
It is your own true dearest love,  
Arise, and let me in!

Why leave me longer waiting here?  
I see the rosy dawn appear,  
The rosy dawn and two bright stars.  
I long to be beside my love,  
Beside my dearest love.

The girl arose and let him in,  
She bids him welcome too.  
O welcome, dearest love of mine,  
Too long have you been waiting.

...

Sie reicht ihm auch die schneeweiße Hand.  
Von Ferne sang die Nachtigall,  
Das Mädchen fing zu weinen an.

Ach weine nicht, du Liebste mein,  
Aufs Jahr sollst du mein eigen sein;  
Mein eigen sollst du werden gewiß,  
Wies keine sonst auf Erden ist.  
O Lieb auf grüner Erden.

Ich zieh' in Krieg auf grüne Haid',  
Die grüne Haide, die ist so weit.  
Allwo dort die schönen Trompeten blasen,  
Da ist mein Haus von grünem Rasen.

### **Robert Schumann (1810-1856)**

#### **Marienwurmchen** (Caroline Rudolphi)

Marienwurmchen, setze dich  
Auf meine Hand, auf meine Hand,  
Ich tu dir nichts zu Leide,  
Es soll dir nichts zu Leid geschehn,  
Will nur deine bunten Flügel sehn,  
Bunte Flügel, meine Freude!

Marienwurmchen, fliege weg,  
Dein Häuschen brennt, die Kinder schrein  
So sehre, wie so sehre,  
Die böse Spinne spinnt sie ein,  
Marienwurmchen flieg hinein,  
Deine Kinder schreien sehre.

Marienwurmchen, fliege hin  
Zu Nachbars Kind, zu Nachbars Kind,  
Sie tun dir nichts zu Leide,  
Es soll dir da kein Leid geschehn,  
Sie wollen deine bunten Flügel sehn,  
Und grüß sie alle beide.

### **Gustav Mahler**

#### **Lob des hohen Verstandes**

Einstmal in einem tiefen Tal  
Kuckuck und Nachtigall  
Täten ein Wett anschlagen,  
Zu singen um das Meisterstück:  
„Gewinn es Kunst, gewinn es Glück,  
Dank soll er davon tragen.“

...

She gives to him her snow-white hand,  
From far off sang the nightingale,  
The girl began to weep.

Ah, do not weep, beloved mine,  
Within a year you shall be mine,  
You shall be mine most certainly,  
As no one else on earth.  
O love on the green earth

I'm going to war, to the green heath,  
The green heath so far away.  
There where the splendid trumpets sound,  
There is my home of green turf.

#### **Ladybird**

Ladybird, come and settle  
On my hand, on my hand,  
I shall do you no harm,  
No harm will come of you,  
I just want to see your bright wings,  
Bright wings are my joy!

Ladybird, fly away home,  
Your house is on fire, the children are crying  
So sorely, so very sorely,  
The wicked spider's spinning them in,  
Ladybird, fly away home,  
You children are crying sorely.

Ladybird, fly off  
To the children next door, next door,  
They will do you no harm,  
No harm will come of you there,  
They want to see your bright wings,  
And send them greetings from me.

#### **In praise of high intellect**

Once upon a time in a deep valley  
The cuckoo and the nightingale  
Between them made a wager:  
Who could sing the finer song,  
Whoever won by skill or luck,  
Should carry off the prize.

...

Der Kukuk sprach: So dirs gefällt,  
Hab ich den Richter wählt,  
Und tät gleich den Esel ernennen,  
Denn weil er hat zwei Ohren groß,  
So kann er hören desto bos,  
Und was recht ist, kennen!“

Sie flogen vor den Richter bald,  
Wie dem die Sache ward erzählt,  
Schuf er, sie sollten singen.  
Die Nachtigall sang lieblich aus,  
Der Esel sprach, du machst mirs kraus!  
Du machst mir's kraus! Ija! Ija!  
Ich kanns in Kopf nicht bringen.

Der Kukuk drauf fing an geschwind  
Sein Sang durch Terz und Quart und Quint.  
Dem Esel gfiels, er sprach nur: Wart,  
Dein Urteil will ich sprechen.

Wohl sungen hast du Nachtigall,  
Aber Kukuk singst gut Choral,  
Und hältst den Takt fein innen;  
Das sprech ich nach mein' hohn Verstand,  
Und kost es gleich ein ganzes Land,  
So laß ichs dich gewinnen.  
Kukuk, Kukuk, Ija!

## Alexander von Zemlinsky (1871-1942)

### Das bucklichte Männlein

Will ich in mein Gärtlein gehn,  
Will ich meine Zwiebeln gießen,  
Steht ein bucklicht Männlein da,  
Fängt als an zu niesen.

Will ich in mein Küchel gehn,  
Will mein Süppllein kochen,  
Steht ein bucklicht Männlein da,  
Hat mein Töpflein brochen.

Will ich in mein Stüblein gehn,  
Will mein Müslein essen,  
Steht ein bucklicht Männlein da,  
Hat schon halber gessen.

Setz ich mich ans Rädlein hin,  
Will mein Fädlein drehen,  
Steht ein bucklicht Männlein da,  
Läßt mirs Rad nicht laufen.

...

The cuckoo said: I have, so please you,  
Already chosen the judge.  
And named the donkey straightaway,  
Because with his two large ears  
He'll hear much clearer what is bad,  
And also know what's good!

So they soon flew before the judge,  
When he was told how matters stood,  
He commanded them to sing.  
The nightingale sang beautifully,  
The donkey said, you're confusing me!  
You're confusing me! Hee-haw! Hee-haw!  
I just can't understand it.

Whereat the cuckoo quickly sang  
His song through thirds and fourths and fifths.  
The donkey liked it, and merely said: Wait,  
Wait while I give my verdict.

Nightingale, you sang well,  
But you, cuckoo, sing a fine hymn  
And keep the strictest measure.  
My high intellect pronounces this,  
And though it cost me a whole country,  
I declare you now the winner.  
Cuckoo, cuckoo, hee-haw!'

### The little hunchbacked man

When I go into my garden  
To water my onions,  
A little hunchback's standing there,  
And starts at once to sneeze.

When I go into my kitchen  
To heat my little soup,  
A little hunchback's standing there,  
Who's smashed my little bowl.

When I go into my little room  
To eat my little porridge  
A little hunchback's standing there,  
Who's eaten half of it.

When I sit down at my little wheel  
To weave my little thread,  
A little hunchback's standing there,  
And stops my wheel from spinning.

...

Geh ich in mein Kämmerlein,  
Will mein Bettlein machen,  
Steht ein bucklicht Männlein da,  
Fängt als an zu lachen.

Wenn ich an mein Bänklein knie,  
Will ein wenig beten,  
Steht ein bucklicht Männlein da,  
Fängt als an zu reden:

„Liebes Kindlein, ach, ich bitt,  
Bet' für's bucklicht Männlein mit!“

## Gustav Mahler

### Urlicht

O Röschen rot,  
Der Mensch liegt in größter Not,  
Der Mensch liegt in größter Pein,  
Je lieber möchte ich im Himmel sein.  
Da kam ich auf einen breiten Weg,  
Da kam ein Engellein und wolt mich abweisen,

Ach nein ich ließ mich nicht abweisen.  
Ich bin von Gott und will wieder zu Gott,  
Der liebe Gott wird mir ein Lichtchen geben,  
Wird leuchten mir bis in das ewig selig Leben.

### Das irdische Leben

Mutter, ach Mutter! es hungert mich,  
Gib mir Brot, sonst sterbe ich.  
Warte nur mein liebes Kind!  
Morgen wollen wir ernten geschwind.

Und als das Korn geerntet war,  
Rief das Kind noch immerdar:  
Mutter, ach Mutter! es hungert mich,  
Gib mir Brot, sonst sterbe ich.  
Warte nur mein liebes Kind!  
Morgen wollen wir dreschen geschwind.

Und als das Korn gedroschen war,  
Rief das Kind noch immerdar:  
Mutter, ach Mutter! es hungert mich,  
Gib mir Brot, sonst sterbe ich.  
Warte nur mein liebes Kind!  
Morgen wollen wir backen geschwind.

Und als das Brot gebacken war,  
Lag das Kind auf der Totenbah.

When I go into my little chamber  
To make my little bed,  
A little hunchback's standing there,  
And starts at once to laugh.

When I kneel down at my little pew  
To pray a little while,  
A little hunchback's standing there,  
And starts at once to speak:

'Dear little child, please, ah do,  
Pray for the little hunchback too.'

### Primordial light

O red rose,  
Man lies in direst need,  
Man lies in direst pain,  
I would rather be in heaven.  
I then came upon a broad path,  
An angel came and sought to turn me back,

Ah no! I refused to be turned away.  
I am from God and to God I will return,  
Dear God will give me a light,  
Will light my way to eternal blessed life.

### Life on earth

Mother, ah mother, I'm starving.  
Give me bread or I shall die.  
Wait, only wait, my beloved child!  
Tomorrow the reaping will be swiftly done.

And when at last the corn was reaped,  
Still the child kept on crying:  
Mother, ah mother, I'm starving.  
Give me bread or I shall die.  
Wait, only wait, my beloved child!  
Tomorrow the threshing will be swiftly done.

And when at last the corn was threshed,  
Still the child kept on crying:  
Mother, ah mother, I'm starving.  
Give me bread or I shall die!  
Wait, only wait, my beloved child!  
Tomorrow the baking will be swiftly done.

And when at last the bread was baked,  
The child lay dead upon the bier.

## Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

### Schnitter Tod

Es ist ein Schnitter, heißt der Tod  
Hat G'walt vom großen Gott  
Heut' wetzt er das Messer  
Es schneidet schon besser,  
Bald wird er drein schneiden  
Wir müssens erleiden  
Hüt' dich, schön's Blümelein!

Was heut' noch grün und frisch dasteht  
Wird morgen hinweggemäht  
Die edlen Narzissen,  
Die Zierden der Wiesen  
Die schön'n Hyazinthen  
Die türkischen Binden  
Hüt' dich, schön's Blümelein!

Das himmelfarbene Ehrenpreis,  
Die Tulipanen weiß,  
Die silbernen Glocken,  
Die goldenen Flocken,  
Sinkt alles zur Erden,  
Was wird daraus werden?  
Hüt dich, schönes Blümelein!

Trutz, Tod, komm her  
Ich fürcht' dich nicht  
Komm her und tu einen Schnitt!  
Wenn er mich verletzt  
So werd' ich versetzt,  
Ich will es erwarten,  
In den himmlischen Garten.  
Freu dich, schön's Blümelein!

### Death the Reaper

There is a reaper who is called Death,  
Who has power from the highest god;  
Today he whets his knife  
So that it will cut much better.  
Soon he will begin to cut  
And we can only suffer.  
Beware, fair little flower!

What today is yet green and fresh  
Will be cut down tomorrow:  
The noble narcissi,  
Adornment of the meadows,  
The lovely hyacinths,  
The Turk's-cap lilies  
Beware, fair little flower!

The sky-blue speedwell,  
The white tulips,  
The silvery bell-flower,  
And golden centaury,  
All will sink to the earth –  
What will become of them?  
Beware, fair little flower!

I defy you, Death. Come here,  
I do not fear you,  
I defy you; hasten here!  
Even if I were wounded,  
I would be transported  
To the celestial Garden,  
Which we all await.  
Rejoice, fair little flower.

## Carl Loewe (1796-1869)

### Herr Oluf

(Johann Gottfried Herder, from the Danish)

Herr Oluf reitet spät und weit,  
Zu bieten auf seine Hochzeitleit.

Da tanzen die Elfen auf grünem Strand,  
Erlkönigs Tochter reicht ihm die Hand:

„Willkommen, Herr Oluf, komm tanze mit mir,  
Zwei goldene Sporen schenke ich dir.“

„Ich darf nicht tanzen, nicht tanzen ich mag,  
Denn morgen ist mein Hochzeittag.“

„Tritt näher, Herr Oluf, komm tanze mit mir,  
Ein Hemd von Seide schenke ich dir,

Ein Hemd von Seide, so weiß und fein,  
Meine Mutter bleichts mit Mondenschein.“

„Ich darf nicht tanzen, nicht tanzen ich mag,  
Denn morgen ist mein Hochzeittag.“

„Tritt näher, Herr Oluf, komm tanze mit mir,  
Einen Haufen Goldes schenke ich dir.“

„Einen Haufen Goldes nähme ich wohl;  
Doch tanzen ich nicht darf noch soll.“

„Und willst du, Herr Oluf, nicht tanzen mit mir,  
Soll Seuch und Krankheit folgen dir.“

Sie tät ihm geben einen Schlag auf's Herz,  
Sein Lebtag fühlt er nicht solchen Schmerz.

Drauf tät sie ihn heben auf sein Pferd:  
„Reit hin zu deinem Fräulein wert!“

Und als er kam vor Hauses Tür,  
Seine Mutter zitternd stand dafür.

„Sag an, mein Sohn, sag an mir gleich,  
Wovon du bist so blaß und bleich?“

„Und sollt ich nicht sein blaß und bleich,  
Ich kam in Erlkönigs Reich.“

„Sag an, mein Sohn, so lieb und traut,  
Was soll ich sagen deiner Braut?“

„Sagt ihr, ich ritt in den Wald zur Stund  
Zu proben allda mein Roß und Hund.“

Frühmorgens, als der Tag kaum war,  
Da kam die Braut mit der Hochzeitschar.

Sie schenkten Met, sie schenkten Wein;  
„Wo ist Herr Oluf, der Bräutigam mein?“

...

### Sir Oluf

Sir Oluf rode far through the night  
To invite his friends to his wedding;

The elves were dancing on the green shore,  
The Erlking's daughter holds out her hand.

'Welcome, Sir Oluf, come, dance with me,  
Two golden spurs I'll give to thee.'

'I must not dance, I will not dance,  
For tomorrow is my wedding day.'

'Come closer, Sir Oluf, come dance with me,  
A silken shirt I'll give to thee,

A silken shirt so white and fine,  
My mother bleached it with moonshine.'

'I must not dance, I will not dance,  
For tomorrow is my wedding day.'

'Come closer, Sir Oluf, come, dance with me,  
A heap of gold I'll give to thee.'

'I'd gladly take a heap of gold,  
But I may not and I must not dance.'

'And if, Sir Oluf, you'll not dance with me,  
Disease and sickness shall follow thee.'

She struck her hand across his heart,  
Never in his life did he feel such pain.

She lifted him now upon his steed:  
'Ride back home to your worthy bride.'

And when at last he reached his home,  
His mother stood trembling outside the door.

'Tell me, my son, tell me at once,  
Why are you so pale and wan?'

'And should I not be pale and wan?  
I set foot in the Erlking's realm.'

'Tell me, my son, so beloved and dear,  
What shall I say to your bride-to-be?'

'Tell her I rode just now to the wood,  
There to try my horse and hound.'

At early morn, when day had scarce dawned,  
His bride arrived with the wedding throng.

They poured the mead, they poured the wine,  
'Where is Sir Oluf, my husband-to-be?'

...

„Herr Oluf ritt in den Wald zur Stund,  
Zu proben allda sein Roß und Hund.“

Die Braut hob auf den Scharlach rot:  
Da lag Herr Oluf und war tot.

'Sir Oluf rode just now to the wood,  
There to try his horse and hound.'

The bride raised up the scarlet cloth,  
There lay Sir Oluf, and was dead.

### Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

#### Hüt du dich

Ich weiß mr ein Mädchen hübsch und fein,  
Hüt du dich!

Sie kann recht lieb und freundlich sein,  
Hüt du dich! Hüt du dich!

Vertrau ihr nicht, sie narret dich.

Sie hat zwei Äuglein, die sind braun,  
Hüt du dich!

Die werd'n dich überzwerch anschaun,  
Hüt du dich! Hüt du dich!

Vertrau ihr nicht, sie narret dich.

Sie hat ein lichtgoldfarbnes Haar,  
Hüt du dich!

Und was sie redt, das ist nicht wahr,  
Hüt du dich! Hüt du dich!

Vertrau ihr nicht, sie narret dich.

Sie hat zwei Brüstlein, die sind weiß,  
Hüt du dich!

Sie legt's hervor nach allem Fleiß.  
Hüt du dich! Hüt du dich!

Vertrau ihr nicht, sie narret dich.

Sie gibt dir'n Körblein, fein gemacht,  
Hüt du dich!

Für einen Narr'n wirst du gemacht,  
Hüt du dich! Hüt du dich!

Vertrau ihr nicht, sie narret dich.

#### Take care

I know a maiden pretty and fine.

Take care!

She may be lovely and friendly,

Take care! Take care!

Trust her not, she's fooling you.

She has two eyes and they are brown,

Take care!

She may look at you with wide-open eyes,

Take care! Take care!

Trust her not, she's fooling you.

She has hair that's light and golden,

Take care!

And what she says, it is not true,

Take care! Take care!

Trust her not, she's fooling you.

She has two little breasts, and they are white,

Take care!

She takes great trouble in showing them off.

Take care! Take care!

Trust her not, she's fooling you.

She'll turn you down most cleverly,

Take care!

She will make a fool of you,

Take care! Take care!

Trust her not, she's fooling you.

# Biographies

## Richard Stokes

### Speaker

Richard Stokes, Professor of Lieder at the Royal Academy of Music, is a regular juror at international song competitions. For the operatic stage, he has translated *Wozzeck* and *La voix humaine* for Opera North, and *Parsifal*, *Lulu*, *L'Amour de loin* and *Jakob Lenz* for English National Opera.

His books include *The Spanish Song Companion* (with Jacqueline Cockburn), *J. S. Bach – The Complete Cantatas* (Scarecrow Press), *A French Song Companion* (with Graham Johnson) (OUP), *The Book of Lieder* (Faber), a translation of Jules Renard's complete *Histoires naturelles* in a dual-language edition (Alma Classics), and *The Penguin Book of English Song – Seven Centuries of Poetry from Chaucer to Auden*, now available in paperback. He collaborated with Alfred Brendel on the latter's *Collected Poems: Playing the Human Game* (Phaidon)

His translations of Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and *The Trial* have been published by Hesperus Press, and Alma Books published his translation (with Hannah Stokes) of Kafka's *Letter to his Father*. His translation of Helmut Deutsch's *Memoirs of an Accompanist* appeared in autumn 2020 (Kahn & Averill), and Faber recently published *The Complete Songs of Hugo Wolf. Life, Letters, Lieder*.

Bittern Press will publish Richard's new book in the Autumn: *A Carl Loewe Song Companion*. It will be launched at noon at Wigmore Hall on Saturday 10 October, when Joseph Middleton will accompany Juliane Banse, Lizzie Estrada, Aksel Rykkvin and Günther GroiBböck.

Richard Stokes was awarded the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2012 and the Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art in 2022.



# Leeds Song Young Artists

## Naomi Boot (mezzo-soprano)

Mezzo-soprano Naomi Boot is in her final year of undergraduate studies at the Royal College of Music, where she is a Douglas and Hilda Simmonds Scholar under the tutelage of Ben Johnson. She is also generously supported by the Gillian Bardsley Trust. Born in Oxford and raised in Canada, she began her vocal training with Jennifer Tung, Artistic Director of Toronto City Opera.

She sings with the Upper Voices of Eton College's Lower Chapel Choir and has performed in masterclasses with Dame Ann Murray, Matthew Rose, David Parry, Tom Primrose, James Gilchrist and Markus Hadulla. This past summer she appeared with the Scherzo Ensemble in Longhope Opera's production of Rossini's *L'italiana in Algeri* and was a Young Artist at the Southrepps Music Festival. She is also a recipient of the Folkestone on Song Luxon Amit Singing Bursary.

Most recently, Naomi was the soloist in the Royal College of Music Symphony Orchestra and Chorus's performance of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's rarely performed *Meg Blane, A Rhapsody of the Sea*, under the baton of Sofi Jeannin.

## Andrew Cowie (piano)

Andrew Cowie has performed at some of the world's most distinguished venues, including Buckingham Palace, the Duomo di Cremona and the Salzburger Dom. After completing an undergraduate degree in trombone at the Royal Academy of Music, he is now a postgraduate at the Royal College of Music, specialising in keyboard, historical performance and conducting. Recent highlights include the reopening of the King's Gallery; a double song recital début at the Royal Albert Hall with duo partner Mariana Rodrigues; appearances at the London Handel Festival; the London Bach Society Singer's Prize (on keyboard); and performances at the Japan Matsuri Festival and with the Aurora Orchestra at the Southbank Centre.

At home in most music written over the last 600 years, Andrew performs on various instruments, including piano, historical keyboards, trombone and sackbut. He has been a regular song accompanist alongside Richard Stokes, Florence Daguere de Hureaux and Emily Kilpatrick, and has enjoyed working with and performing for artists such as Rachel Podger, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, James Baillieu, Christian Gerhaher, Laurence Cummings, James Gilchrist, Dame Emma Kirkby, Yvonne Kenny, Nick Mulroy and Elizabeth Kenny. Recent albums as an instrumental accompanist with the Girton College, Cambridge Choir have placed in the top ten of the UK and worldwide classical charts.

Andrew is a Parnassus Scholar, supported by the Charles Colt Scholarship, and a recipient of the Help Musicians Ian

Fleming Award. His song project 'Chantefable' with Mariana Rodrigues blends improvised music, poetry and song into complete concert narratives. They are BREMF 2025–26 Emerging Artists.

His recent piano feature film score for *Away with Words* will be released in 2026.

## George Herbert (piano)

George Herbert was born in Manchester in 2001. His first album as a collaborative pianist, Rodrigo Ruiz's *Venus and Adonis* with Grace Davidson, won the Spanish prize *Melómano de Oro* in January 2025. He studied German and Music at St John's College, Cambridge, where he served as an organ scholar. He is now studying for an MA in Ensemble Piano at the Royal Academy of Music with Professors Michael Dussek and James Baillieu, where he is a scholarship recipient.

He has recently collaborated with Carolyn Sampson, Susan Bullock and Manchester Camerata. He is a participant in the Wigmore Hall French Song Exchange and looks forward to upcoming recitals at Wigmore Hall, Hallwylska in Stockholm, Salle Cortot in Paris and Southwark Cathedral. His recent projects include work with composer David Roche on a Welsh language heavy metal project, and a collaboration with author Bernhard Malkmus on the literary musical project *Flight Paths*.

Alongside his pianistic work, George is also active as a freelance singer. His engagements with Tenebrae and Continuum have taken him across Europe and the UK. He is generously supported by the Choir Association of St John's College, Cambridge. A passionate environmentalist, he volunteers with the London Wildlife Trust.

## Zheng Jiang (counter-tenor)

Zheng Jiang is a Chinese countertenor praised by *The Times* for the "chorister's purity" of his timbre, rapidly establishing himself as a compelling artist on both the operatic and concert stages.

In 2026 he appears as a Season Artist with The Mozartists, making his company début as a soloist in their Mozart Birthday Concert at Cadogan Hall. He has also been selected for the Samling Artist Programme and the Leeds Song Young Artist Programme. Later in the season he makes his role début as Sesto (*Giulio Cesare*) in The Grange Festival's production, and in the summer he makes his Salzburg Festival début performing Grimbald (*King Arthur Junior*) as cover, with scheduled performances. From September 2026 he will join the Royal College of Music International Opera Studio.

Recent highlights include his appearance at the 2025 Kathleen Ferrier Awards Final, where *The Times* praised his Schubert 'Nacht und Träume' as "ineffably beautiful" and his performance of 'Dawn, still darkness' from Jonathan Dove's *Flight* as "compelling and devastating." As a 2025 Ferrier Awards Finalist, his competition successes also include First Prize in the Adrian Clarke Vocal Award at the Grasmere Song Festival and Third Prize in the RCM Lies Askonas Competition. In 2024 he received the Nicholas Partridge Award for Outstanding Creativity at the inaugural Eastbourne International Singing Competition.

Operatic roles include Cherubino (*Le nozze di Figaro*) and the Sandman (*Hänsel und Gretel*) at the Summer Opera Lyric Theater in Toronto, along with covers at the Royal College of Music including Piero della Francesca (*Seven Angels*). Other opera scenes include Ruggiero (*Alcina*), Rinaldo (*Rinaldo*) and Valentiniano (*Ezio*).

Zheng trained in Canada with Norma Burrowes and completed his Master's degree with distinction at the Royal College of Music, studying with Ben Johnson and supported by an RCM Study Award and the Josephine Baker Trust.

### **Honoka Komoda (piano)**

Honoka Komoda is a pianist from Japan. She completed her studies at the Aichi University of the Arts, where she trained with Irina Chukovskaya, Professor of Piano, and is now continuing her musical development in Austria.

From October 2022 to March 2024, she studied in the Postgraduate Piano Programme at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna with Professors Wolfgang Watzinger and Stefan Vladar. Since March 2024, she has been enrolled in the Master's programme in Lied accompaniment with Professor Justus Zeyen.

She has won several awards at piano competitions in Japan and has performed in the Great Hall of the Vienna Musikverein. She has also appeared at the Schubertiade 'Junge SchubertStimmen' at Schubert Castle Atzenbrugg and in concerts organised by the Schubert Society.

In 2025 she was nominated for the Anny Felbermayer Förderpreis together with baritone Daniel Sauer. She was also nominated for scholarships from the AMICITIA Foundation and the Yamada Sadao Music Foundation. She has been selected for participation in the Basel LIEDAcademy 2026.

Honoka has received private lessons and masterclasses from distinguished artists including Dina Yoffe, Kevin Kenner, Elena Levit, Graham Scott, Noriko Ogawa, Matti Raekallio, Richard Stokes, Malcolm Martineau and Thomas Hampson.

On 19 February 2026, she will perform on the Hammerklavier in the Brahms Hall of the Vienna Musikverein as part of the concert series 'Aus der Schatzkammer' ('From the Treasury').

### **Alexander Karl Koschka (piano)**

The Austrian pianist Alexander Karl Koschka received musical training from an early age and won multiple awards at the Prima la Musica Competition, including national level distinctions. He began his studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna in 2017 with Sibylla Joedicke, completing his bachelor's degree with distinction in 2022. He now studies with Matthias Trachsel for his master's degree and, since autumn 2025, has also specialised in Lied accompaniment with Justus Zeyen at the mdw.

Alexander has participated in masterclasses with Harald Ossberger, Mats Widlund and Marta Zabaleta, among others. His artistic interests encompass solo and chamber music as well as innovative concert formats and contemporary repertoire. In 2023 he took part in the world première of Georg Friedrich Haas's *11,000 Saiten* at the Wiener Konzerthaus. At the Munich Piano Podium 2024 he received several awards and subsequent invitations to perform throughout Germany.

As a Lied accompanist he forms a regular duo with soprano Martina Neubauer. Together, they won the Audience Prize at the final of the Sibelius Singing Lied Duo Competition in Finland (2025) and Third Prize at the International Copenhagen Lied Duo Competition. His playing is noted for its richness of colour, stylistic sensitivity and finely judged musicianship.

Alexander is increasingly in demand for projects that combine classical repertoire with contemporary influences. His collaborations highlight his versatility and his dedication to thoughtful programming, making him an exciting and expressive presence on today's musical scene.

### **Lisa-Marie Lebitschnig (soprano)**

Soprano Lisa-Marie Lebitschnig was shaped early in life by her love of the arts, expression and creativity. Her passion for opera developed on the stage of her hometown theatre, the Stadttheater Klagenfurt. Joining the company at the age of twelve, she has already taken part in more than twenty opera productions.

Highlights from her eleven years in Klagenfurt include roles such as First Boy (*Die Zauberflöte*), Yniold (*Pelléas et Mélisande*) and Barbarina (*Le nozze di Figaro*), as well as numerous performances in the children's and extra choruses. These early experiences working alongside professional singers and conductors were formative in developing her acting, musicianship and artistic professionalism.

A childhood cancer survivor, Lisa-Marie is passionate about supporting charitable organisations. She organised her first benefit concert for Kärntner Kinderkrebshilfe at the age of sixteen, raising significant donations to support their mission in combating childhood cancer.

Since 2017 she has studied voice at the Kunstuniversität Graz with Antonius Sol. There she discovered her love for the subtle art of interpreting classical song through work with Josef Breinl and Julius Drake. In February 2023 she gave

her first recital at the Arnold Schönberg Center in Vienna with Thomas Ebenstein and Sascha El Mouissi at the piano, followed by a solo recital in Padova organised by L'amicci della Musica Padova. In summer 2023 she performed Despina (*Così fan tutte*) at Oper Lungau and later gave a recital for the Österreichische Richard Wagner Gesellschaft. In early 2024 she sang Pamina at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz and subsequently took part in a number of contemporary performances at Oper Graz.

She won three prizes at the 2025 competition Liedkunst im Schloss vor Husum and completed her Master's degree in the same year.

### **Wan-Yen Li (piano)**

Wan-Yen Li was born in Taipei, Taiwan. She has earned a distinguished reputation as a soloist, artsong pianist, accompanist, teacher and individual coach. She has been invited to the Heidelberger Frühling Liedakademie, the LIEDBasel Academy and Carnegie Hall SongStudio. She has also been selected for the Young Artists Programme at the 2026 Leeds Song Festival and for Campus Lied et Mélodie at the Royaumont Foundation.

She has received important artistic inspiration through collaborations with Thomas Hampson and Susan Manoff, as well as masterclasses with James Baillieu, Patricia Petibon, Anne Le Bozec, Javier Arrebola, Bryan Wagorn and others.

Wan-Yen works as a piano accompanist with numerous choirs and holds a lectureship in several singing classes at the Conservatory for Music and Dance Cologne. From the 2025 season onwards she will serve as choir accompanist at Theater Aachen in Germany. She has performed in New York, Paris, London, Basel, Montepulciano, Tokyo, Taipei and at many venues throughout Germany.

Following her bachelor's degree in Taiwan, she completed three master's degrees in Germany: in Lied interpretation with Prof. Ulrich Eisenlohr, in contemporary piano music with Prof. Pierre-Laurent Aimard and in solo piano with Prof. Florian Hölscher. She earned her Konzertexamen degree in Lied Interpretation under Prof. Stefan Irmer.

### **Edward Lloyd (piano)**

Described as "A highly poetic and expressive performer with strong musical instincts alongside beautiful tonal colouring creating a notable silence in the audience indicative of their expressive ability and communicative musicianship." (Pascal Nemirovski)

Edward made his concerto début with the Oxford Festival Orchestra in the Church of St Mary the Virgin in 2022. Subsequent performances have brought him to the Bridgewater Hall, Stoller Hall, Liszt Academy in Budapest and most recently the Liverpool Philharmonic.

Edward has been a prize winner in numerous international competitions including the Liszt Society International Piano

Competition, Christopher Duke and Vienna International Competition as well as the Beethoven Piano Society of Europe Competition. He is also active in chamber music and has received the first prize in both the Dorothy Richardson and the Alexander Young prizes for vocal accompaniment.

Edward Lloyd studied at Chetham's School of Music and is currently at the Royal Northern College of Music under the tutelage of Prof. Graham Scott, where he is supported by the The LHR Charitable Foundation.

Edward is an artist in the Davison Young Musicians Foundation. Since 2024, Edward has been an awards advocate for the DYMF. Currently in 2025, Edward has been selected as a Drake Calleja Trust Scholar and is supported by the Craxton Memorial Trust.

### **Bruno Meichsner (baritone)**

Bruno Meichsner was born in Berlin and discovered his passion for singing with the Berlin Boys' Choir. The lyric baritone completed his vocal studies in 2025 at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler Berlin under Prof. Stephan Rügamer.

He is a multiple prizewinner at the 7th Internationale Haydn Gesangswettbewerb für klassisches Lied und Arie. In addition to First Prize, the young baritone won the Mozarthaus Vienna Prize and the Audience Prize.

As a concert singer, he performs major roles across a wide variety of oratorios and Masses in venues such as the Philharmonie, the Konzerthaus Berlin and the Pierre Boulez Saal. He has appeared with renowned orchestras including the Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester Berlin and the Kammersymphonie Berlin.

During his studies, Bruno Meichsner appeared regularly in musictheatre productions at the HfM Hanns Eisler. These included Papageno (*Die Zauberflöte*), Pasquino (*Il mondo della luna*), and Demetrius (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

He has received important artistic impulses through collaboration with Thomas Hampson, Wolfram Rieger and Martin Bruns, and has furthered his training in numerous masterclasses with KS Robert Holl, KS Birgid Steinberger, Susan Manoff and Malcolm Martineau.

He was a scholarship holder at the Lied Academy of the Heidelberger Frühling for the 2023–24 season.

### **Martina Neubauer (soprano)**

The Viennese soprano Martina Neubauer possesses a broad repertoire spanning opera, operetta, concert and Lied. She has appeared as Dido (*Dido and Aeneas*), Countess Zedlau (*Wiener Blut*), Eva the Diva (*Von O bis Oper*), the Queen (*Richard III.*, Musik Theater an der Wien), and Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*, Vienna Opera Summer Belvedere).

In 2022 she won the LIONS Music Prize, the Gabriele Sima Scholarship and the Musica Juventutis Competition of the Wiener Konzerthaus. Further recognition followed in 2024

when she reached the finals of both the Otto Edelmann Singing Competition and the Neue Stimmen Competition and received Second Prize and the Audience Prize at the Hans Staud Music Prize.

Alongside her vocal studies in Vienna, Martina attended the operetta course taught by Wolfgang Dosch and received significant artistic impulses from masterclasses with Elina Garanča, Linda Watson, Ian Bostridge and Adrian Eröd.

In addition to her operatic work, she is deeply committed to the concert repertoire and has appeared as a soloist at both the Vienna Musikverein and the Vienna Konzerthaus. Her passion for Lied is central to her artistic identity; together with pianist Alexander Koschka, she forms a permanent duo that performs regularly in concert and on the competition stage. In 2025 the duo won the Audience Prize at the Sibelius Singing Lied Duo Competition in Finland and Third Prize at the International Copenhagen Lied Duo Competition.

Martina is equally active in exploring new sonic and artistic directions. She is the founder of the Arelis Quintet, an ensemble consisting of soprano and four saxophonists, which combines classical tradition with contemporary innovation and reimagines well-known works through striking new colours and textures.

### **Mariana Rodrigues (soprano)**

Described as “singing with a crystalline beauty that would tame any savage beast” (*The Times*), Portuguese soprano Mariana Rodrigues has recently completed her MA with Distinction at the Royal Academy of Music in London under Marie Vassiliou, Raymond Connell, James Baillieu, Joseph Middleton and Philip Sunderland, supported by a full scholarship. She was awarded a DipRAM for her outstanding final recital.

Mariana has appeared as a soloist for Academy Song Circle, Academy Voices, Resounding Shores and the Bach in Leipzig series, working with artists including Masaaki Suzuki, Philippe Herreweghe, Rachel Podger, John Butt, Peter Whelan, Dame Jane Glover, Elizabeth Kenny, Yvonne Kenny, Margaret Faultless and Nicholas Mulroy.

She is the winner of the Isabel Jay Memorial Prize, the Edna Bralesford Vocal Prize, the Regency Award and the Flora Nielsen Prize. Mariana has also participated in masterclasses with Iestyn Davies, Dame Felicity Lott, Joanne Lunn, Christian Gerhaher, Lucy Crowe, Malcolm Martineau and Hartmut Höll.

Recent engagements include a double recital début at the Royal Albert Hall and the live première of Billy Cowie’s song cycle with her duo, Chantefable; performances in the Cripta de la Sagrada Família with Bachcelona; and appearances at the Palau de la Música Catalana with Fundació Salvat. She has also performed Sir John Clerk’s soprano solo cantata with the Dunedin Consort.

Alongside Carolyn Sampson, Mariana will create and première a new two-woman opera with the Dunedin Consort, Mahogany Opera and Hera as part of the project *In the*

*Belly of the Beast*. Her recent festival appearances include Bachcelona, Bloomsbury, Baroquestock, Islington, Surrey Bach and Vilalte in the south of France.

Young Artist Programmes for the 2025–26 season include Vache Baroque James Bowman Young Artist, Bachcelona Akademie, Concertist Fellow with the Oxford Bach Soloists, BREMF Emerging Artist with Chantefable and Next Generation Artist with Sestina Music.

Mariana is the soprano recipient of the 2026 Salvat Grant for Baroque Music.

### **Carleigh Ross (soprano)**

Carleigh Ross is a Canadian American soprano pursuing a master’s degree at the Royal Academy of Music, where she studies with Catherine Wyn Rogers, Raymond Connell and Joseph Middleton. Her studies are generously supported by Help Musicians.

Recent engagements include Zdenka (*Arabella*) and Susanna (*Le nozze di Figaro*) in Royal Academy Opera scenes; performing as soloist in Ravel’s *Chansons madécasses* for the Academy’s celebratory Ravel concert; appearances at London’s Tête à Tête Festival; and participation in the Glyndebourne Festival’s Opera Lab led by Jessica Walker and Stephen Langridge. She is a prize-winner in several vocal competitions, including First Prize in the Major Van Someren-Godfrey Prize and Second Prize in both the Isabel Jay Memorial Prize and the Blyth-Buesst Operatic Prize.

Alongside her work as a Young Artist at Leeds Song, Carleigh’s upcoming engagements include Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*) in Royal Academy Opera scenes, covering the Female Chorus (*The Rape of Lucretia*) with the Royal Academy Opera Studio, and projects at the National Institute for Dramatic Art in Brussels exploring the integration of wax and voice through George Crumb’s *Apparition*.

Carleigh holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of British Columbia, where her roles included Hannah (*Die Passagierin*, Canadian première), Marcellina (*Le nozze di Figaro*), La Marchesa Melibea (*Il viaggio a Reims*) and Zweite Dame (*Die Zauberflöte*), as well as female soloist in Duruflé’s Requiem with the UBC Symphony Orchestra. She has toured as a soloist with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, sung in masterclasses with Susan Bullock, Sondra Radvanovsky, Judith Forst and Katherine Ciesinski, and coproduced a multidisciplinary reimagining of Mahler’s *Rückert-Lieder* with WhatLab Studios as part of their Deep End Residency Programme.

### **Daniel Sauer (baritone)**

Daniel Sauer was born in 1999 in Munich and received his first vocal training at the age of seven with the Tölzer Knabenchor. At eleven, he appeared as one of the Three Boys in Mozart’s *Le nozze di Figaro*, including performances at the Bremen State Theatre.

He began his vocal studies in 2016 — initially as a precollege student — with Prof. Dominik Wortig at the Leopold Mozart College of Music at the University of Augsburg. During his bachelor's studies he discovered his passion for the piano, which has since become an important artistic companion. He completed his bachelor's degree in Augsburg in July 2023.

Masterclasses and coachings with artists such as Thomas Hampson, Philippe Jaroussky and Mariette Witteveen have further shaped his musical development. Since 2024 he has been pursuing a master's degree in 'Lied—Oratorio—Concert' at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna under Prof. Florian Boesch and Prof. Karlheinz Hanser. In Vienna he has developed a strong affinity for the art song and its close relationship with poetry — a focus reflected in numerous performances in and around the city. In 2025 he gave his first solo Lieder recital at Castello Miramare in Trieste, together with his close friend and pianist Steve Roy.

With equal curiosity and dedication, Daniel continues to explore the oratorio and opera repertoire. His artistic experience includes appearances as the baritone soloist in Gabriel Fauré's Requiem, as well as operatic roles such as Pelléas (*Impressions de Pelléas* by Marius Constant, after Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*).

Daniel Sauer is currently a scholarship holder of the Anny Felbermayer Fund, awarded to him and pianist Honoka Komoda for their joint work as a Lied duo.

### **Klara Solén (mezzo-soprano)**

Klara Solén is a Swedish mezzo-soprano with a passion for storytelling and expressive performance. She is currently pursuing her undergraduate degree in Classical Singing at the Royal Academy of Music in London and recently made her UK operatic début in the title role of Rossini's *La Cenerentola* with Hampstead Garden Opera.

Before moving to the UK, Klara trained at Kapellsberg's Opera Studio in Sweden, where she performed roles including Carmen (*Carmen*) and Oberon (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) at the Swedish Northern Opera House, Norrlandsoperan. She has also appeared with Moderna Operan in *Amour Fou* (2025) and with Skånska Operan in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* (2024).

An active concert and recital artist, Klara's recent solo repertoire includes Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Mozart's Requiem, Vivaldi's *Stabat Mater* and Bach's *St John Passion*. At the Royal Academy of Music, she has appeared in the Academy Voices concert series and in *An Evening with Rachel Podger and the Royal Academy of Music* at St George's, Hanover Square. She is also a member of the Royal Academy Song Circle.

Klara has a particular affinity for Nordic song and is committed to sharing this repertoire with new audiences. She has participated in masterclasses and coaching sessions with Aigul Akhmetshina, Susan Bullock, Julius Drake, Jennifer Larmore, Anna Larsson and Matthew Rose.

### **Viviana Țaga-Radu (piano)**

Viviana-Maria Țaga-Radu began her piano studies at the age of six at the Octav Băncila National College of Art in Iași, Romania. Since then, she has taken part in more than fifty national and international piano competitions, as well as numerous chamber music festivals and concerts. From 2020 to 2022, she was a member of the youth orchestra in her hometown, performing a wide range of repertoire. Her passion for understanding music in depth was encouraged from an early age, leading her to participate in several music symposiums where she wrote and presented her own articles.

She is currently in her fourth year as an undergraduate at the Royal College of Music under the tutelage of Professor Edna Stern. Viviana has also developed an increasingly strong interest in the world of art song, collaborating with a growing number of singers. Most recently, she was awarded the Pianist Prize in the 2025 Brooks Van Der Pump English Song Competition.

### **Kelsey Thomas (soprano)**

Kelsey Thomas is a British soprano studying at the Royal Northern College of Music. She is the current award holder of the Sybil Tutton Opera Award from Help Musicians UK and is also supported by the Riga Heesom Scholarship Award and the Richard Newitt Fund from the RNCM.

On the concert stage, Kelsey has performed at numerous UK venues, including the Buxton Pavilion Arts Centre, Crosby Hall and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, where she made her professional début opening the Philharmonic's 2025–26 lunchtime concert series alongside her duo partner, Edward Lloyd (piano). She has also appeared at several opera galas, including Grimsby Town Hall alongside Henry Waddington and Victoria Simmonds, where she was introduced as an "exciting, early career singer" (Grimsby Concert Society).

As an oratorio and chamber soloist, Kelsey has performed major soprano solos including VillaLobos's *Bachianas Brasileiras* with cellists of the Merseyside Youth Orchestra, and Handel's *Messiah* with the Liverpool Mozart Orchestra at Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral. She returns as soprano soloist in *Messiah* in March 2026 with the Oldham Symphony Orchestra, and appears as guest soprano soloist in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at Liverpool Cathedral in May.

Since 2024, Kelsey has been a member of the RNCM Songsters, a select ensemble of advanced singers and pianists at the conservatoire. Through this platform, she has performed widely, presenting a diverse range of art-song repertoire across multiple UK venues.

Recent operatic highlights include Berenice (*L'occasione fa il ladro*, RNCM Opera Scenes 2026), Sandrina (*La finta giardiniera*, RNCM Opera Scenes 2025), Maria Bertram (*Mansfield Park*, RNCM Opera Scenes 2024) and Colombina (*Le donne curiose*, RNCM Opera Scenes 2024). She has also performed with the RNCM Opera Chorus in Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (2022) and Rimsky Korsakov's *Snegurochka* (2023).

Kelsey has participated in masterclasses with Rebecca Evans, Joseph Middleton, Soraya Mafi, Elizabeth Llewellyn, David Owen Norris and Roger Vignoles.

### **Curtis Vetter (piano)**

Curtis Vetter is a British German collaborative pianist and répétiteur based in London. Specialising in vocal accompaniment and chamber music, he is an acclaimed recitalist who performs across the UK. Curtis is a Young Artist at Leeds Song and was the recipient of the Sam Hutchings Pianist Prize at the Oxenfoord International Summer School, where he worked with Malcolm Martineau.

He has performed in masterclasses with renowned artists including Susan Bullock, Marie McLaughlin and Lucy Crowe, and his répétiteur work includes engagements with Birmingham Contemporary Music Group and Barber Opera on a variety of productions.

Curtis is currently undertaking postgraduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music with James Baillieu and Joseph Middleton, where he is supported by the Sir Curtis Price Scholarship. His studies are additionally funded by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust. He holds a First Class Honours degree in Music from the University of Birmingham.

### **Amelie Warner (piano)**

Amelie Warner was born in Augsburg, Germany, in 1994. She completed her bachelor's degree in artistic pedagogical piano at the University of Music Würzburg with Prof. Martin Dombrowski. During this time she gained valuable experience in song interpretation through lessons with Prof. Gerold Huber and Prof. Alexander Fleischer. In October 2025 she completed her master's degree in piano-vocal accompaniment with distinction at the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, where she studied with Prof. Julius Drake, Prof. Joseph Breinl and Prof. Hedayet Djeddikar.

Amelie Warner's song repertoire encompasses a wide range of classical and romantic works by numerous composers, including many lesser known figures such as Isabelle Aboulker, Maria Bach, Jean Patrick Besingrand, Henriette Bosmans, Rebecca Clarke, Tom Cipullo, Anna Cramer, Violeta Dinescu, Manuela Kerer, Emilie Mayer, Lise Maria Mayer, Dora Pejačević, Wolfgang Rihm, Steffen Schleiermacher, Ruth Schönthal, Ethel Smyth, Karol Szymanowski, Viktor Ullmann and many others.

She has participated in numerous masterclasses and received formative musical inspiration from artists including Anne Le Bozec, Pauliina Tukiainen, Roger Vignoles, Erika Switzer, Joseph Middleton, Eleonora Pertz, JanPhilip Schulze, Gottfried Hefele, Elly Ameling, Thomas Quasthoff, Hartmut Höll, Anna Lucia Richter, Marlis Petersen, Sir Thomas Allen, Julia Kleiter, Michael McMahon, Hans Eijsackers, Christianne Stotijn, Jard van Nes, Werner Güra, Robert Holl, Michael Schade, Emily Hehl and others.

Amelie's artistic work has received numerous awards. Together with her duo partners Nina Schumertl and Lisa-Marie Lebitschnig she is a prizewinner at the International Student LiedDuo Competition 2024 in Groningen, the Udo Reinemann International Masterclass 2023–24, the International Chamber Music Competition 'Seghizzi', Liedkunst im Schloss vor Husum 2025 and the 58th International Vocal Competition 2025.

### **Yihan Zhao (piano)**

Yihan Zhao is a postgraduate student at the Royal College of Music in London, where he is studying piano with Jianing Kong and Dmitri Alexeev, and collaborative piano with Richard Uttley and Simon Lepper. He was generously supported by the Evelyn Tarrant Scholarship and the Eileen Rowe Musical Trust during his undergraduate studies, in which he was awarded the Chappell Medal as First Prize winner in the Chappell Medal Piano Competition 2022.

His recent début at Wigmore Hall in the 70th Kathleen Ferrier Award was highly commended, and his performance with countertenor Zheng Jiang received one of the most enthusiastic responses from the audience.

As a recent harpsichordist, Yihan has already achieved success as Second Prize winner at the Prix Annelie de Man, the international harpsichord competition in the Netherlands, in 2023. His involvement in the concert series *Abolition Song and Its Legacies* at the Handel Hendrix House explores, transmits and reinterprets the lost voices of historical composers and writers, particularly those who were Black or female.

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QR codes will be available around the venue should you wish to access the programme upon arrival. You are welcome to use your mobile device to view song texts during the recital, but please ensure that your device is switched to silent mode and that your screen brightness is turned down so as not to disturb the performers or fellow audience members.

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