



Newsletter *Spring 2020*

The International
Music School founded
by Yehudi Menuhin

Registered Charity 312010

Adéu

This term we say goodbye to Dr Òscar Colomina i Bosch as Director of Music and wish him well as he takes up his new post as Dean of Music at the Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía in Madrid. Òscar has made wide-ranging and long lasting contributions to the life of the School throughout his time here from when he started in 2006 as a General Music teacher. His contributions then were mainly in academic music, particularly in teaching harmony and aural lessons, and in the pastoral side as a House Tutor in Harris House. A sense of humour is clearly vital to thriving at YMS, and Òscar's inventive and witty contributions to the Christmas party sketches, both in person and on film, demonstrate he has a vivid one!

The study of Bach chorales has long been a foundation of the study of harmony, and Òscar brought this to life as Director of Music by introducing a cappella singing of a Bach chorale at each Morning Meeting. This, together with our traditional silence, has quickly become part of the fabric of the School. His musical contributions

have also been as a composer - particularly commissions for the Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition involving our pupils - and as a conductor. His conducting of the YMS Junior Orchestra produced some magical performances and the flowering of the Senior Orchestra under his baton recently has been a highlight of Òscar's time as Director of Music. He has coached and championed chamber music and has expanded a challenging repertoire.

Òscar's friendship and integrity will be missed but Madrid is not far away, and we hope that the opportunity for new links and cultural exchange will soften the blow of his departure.

Farewell

I have said goodbye before but now it is time to say farewell as Interim Head. It has been a particular pleasure to have had the opportunity to work with Òscar in this role, and to share this last term here with my friend and colleague. Of course it has been an unexpected interlude for me, and being among so many friends, and being given such wholehearted support from everyone from pupils to governors, has been a

real bonus. There have been plenty of challenges to face together, and some mistakes to learn from too, and the challenges have not disappeared this term as we respond to the continuing Covid-19 virus situation.

Covid-19

Firstly I wish all the School community well and a speedy recovery if you get the virus. We have been educating the pupils about the importance of handwashing, not touching your face, keeping social distance and keeping properly isolated if required. We have set up remote learning through email and Microsoft Teams so we can keep academic and music lessons going across the internet during term time as much as possible, when the School is closed.

YMS is a wonderful and unique institution, and pupils and staff past and present have made all made their mark. I am delighted to pass on the leadership to Ben Gudgeon and Ashley Wass, and feel confident that the heart of The Yehudi Menuhin School is in good shape and will be in very capable hands.

Richard Tanner

Competitions

Caterina won First Prize in the Jan Vychytil International Cello Competition in Prague.

Daniil won the Grand Prize at the 8th International Caspian Artist Competition.

Lara won the Audience Engagement Award at the International Anna Kull Cello Competition.

Viviane won a Gold Award at the 3rd China-UK International Music Festival. Alumna Anna Cashell was one of the performers and she played a duet on violin with a traditional Chinese stringed instrument, a Guzheng.

Well done to everyone!



Out and about

Though the term was abruptly cut short, the beginning of term was busy with pupils visiting various venues, both local and further afield, for concerts and events.

Gorka played a recital for the Horsley U3A Music Appreciation group, organised by longtime Friend Peter Collett, and a group of pupils returned to Phyllis Court in Henley to perform for their members.

Richard performed recitals in a few different places this term. He played first in Huntingdon, followed by a recital across the road from YMS at Little Slyfield. He then flew to Holland for a Young Pianists' Foundation masterclass with Angela Hewitt and performed a sold-out recital in Schiedam Westvest where alumna Katie Morgan was in the audience. The programme included Chopin *Piano Sonata No 2 Op 35* and Brahms *Balladen Op10*.

During half term, Akiko Ono took some pupils to perform the first movement of the Mendelssohn *Octet* at Middle Temple Hall for Grange Park Opera's Grand Winter Dinner. One audience member commented that our pupils' performance was the highlight of the entire evening.



Community Engagement

In January, we were pleased to welcome back local students from Cobham Free School, the Howard of Effingham, Gordon's School and Reigate College to continue work on their compositions. They had the opportunity to hear their pieces performed by our pupils, and to receive feedback on their work.

The final week of term was meant, as always, to bring a series of concerts in local primary schools by our younger pupils, who always hugely enjoy these performances but these unfortunately could not take place. We hope to be able to reschedule this series of concerts when schools open again.

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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



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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 to see what we are up to.

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The Benedetti Sessions

In January, our quartet of Coco, Darwin, Viviane and Caterina were thrilled to have the opportunity to support alumna Nicola Benedetti at the Southbank Centre in her new initiative, the Benedetti Sessions.

The sessions are a series of orchestra-based weekend workshops across the country which aim to address the needs of young musicians and of teachers. Our quartet featured in the Elgar *Introduction and Allegro* during the Advanced String Orchestra workshop in London.

Each of the sessions follow the same format and cater for all playing abilities, with courses for Beginner String Orchestra (pre-grade 1 to grade 3); Intermediate String Orchestra (grades 4-6); and Advanced String Orchestra (grade 7+).

There are also General Musicianship mornings for beginners; String Teachers Professional Development

Weekends for instrumental string teachers; Primary Classroom Teachers Professional Development Workshops for non-specialist primary classroom teachers, and Primary Schools Workshop Sessions introducing pupils to the fundamentals of music.

Nicola said, "There are no limits to our learning possibilities through music. We just have to be curious and open-minded enough to notice that this language is as rich as life itself, and this is what we aspire to expose young people to through the Benedetti Sessions. In order to provide the highest possible standard of teaching, inspiration and guidance throughout the weekends, we have engaged the



most phenomenal group of tutors. Each and every one of these musicians are not only extraordinary instrumentalists and teachers, but are also the most wonderful, uplifting, joyous yet serious individuals. We can't wait to get started."

Our pupils hugely enjoyed the workshops. Viviane said, "Taking part in the Benedetti Sessions was such an eye-opening experience. We got to witness how music can bring people together and we feel so lucky to have been a part of it. We were thrilled to perform the Elgar *Introduction and Allegro* at the Queen Elizabeth Hall with all these amazing children."



From Auschwitz to Surrey: the story of a fabled violin



A violin previously played by a young woman in Auschwitz is being given a new life by our pupils.

After fleeing the Bolsheviks with her family in 1917, Rosa Levinsky, a young violinist with the Berlin Philharmonic, was arrested by the Nazis on Kristelnacht in 1938 and eventually ended up in Auschwitz. Like other musicians imprisoned in the camps, she was saved by her music as she was forced to join the Women's Orchestra where she played the violin her father had brought from Russia twenty years earlier. She spent the last five months of the war in Bergen-Belsen, and on being released in 1945, was transferred to a hospital in Germany, then returned home to the UK after testifying at Nuremberg.

As a result, she missed, by a matter of weeks, the performances by Yehudi Menuhin and Benjamin Britten at the

Displaced Persons' camps at Belsen on 27 July 1945.

Upon her death shortly after her return home, the violin passed to Levinsky's brother, a successful musician, who in turn left it to his daughter Natalie Cumming. Cumming told her family's story and that of the instrument in her book *The Fiddle*, and in 2018, the violin was restored in an episode of BB2's *The Repair Shop*.

Following the restoration, the instrument was donated in perpetuity to YMS, where it is now played by Kingsley and Ezo. Both pupils have played the violin at various events, including a performance by Ezo at Central Synagogue London on 26 January to mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. You can see Kingsley playing the violin online on *The Strad*.



Easter egg hunt



Fewer pupils on site at the end of term meant less competition during our annual Easter egg hunt! That didn't stop the usual scrum, though, with Caterina winning the top prize of the giant chocolate egg. Many thanks to Jenny and Pendo for organising, and to the Easter bunny helpers, Nathan and Steve.

Bletchley Park

Hayden in our Junior class writes:

Bletchley Park was a secret base where British Intelligence decoded messages during World War II. It was kept top secret so that no one would hear about it.

Bletchley Park is a very big site, with historical artefacts such as enigma machines and other gadgets for codebreaking and deciphering. The workers there had to sign a treaty saying that if they didn't keep the base a secret...death. They employed many people with logic and good maths skills. The site can be seen as a mansion and many huts, where people stored things. Many of the people who worked there in those days saw no daylight and smoked all day!

Many people didn't know Bletchley Park existed since it had been kept secret for many years. This is very sad because the way they dealt with the war is incredible.

This is by far one of the best exhibition centres I've been to yet. The people were amazing and brave, and it is unfortunate that their efforts in shortening the war by up to two years were unrecognised for so many years.



International Day of Women and Girls in Science



The International Day of Women and Girls in Science, celebrated on 11 February, is implemented by UNESCO and UN-Women, in collaboration with institutions and civil society partners that aim to promote women and girls in science. This Day is an opportunity to promote full and equal access to and participation in science for women and girls.

Here at YMS, our entire Science team is made up of women. Karen, Jenny, Delphine and Laura do a fantastic job of making our Science curriculum stimulating and fun for everyone, especially Ghofrane, our only pupil studying A-level Science this term!

Academic success

According to figures released by the Independent Schools Council and reported in the *Telegraph* in January 2020, YMS was ranked third for A-level results and eighth for GCSEs against other small independent schools in the country in 2019.

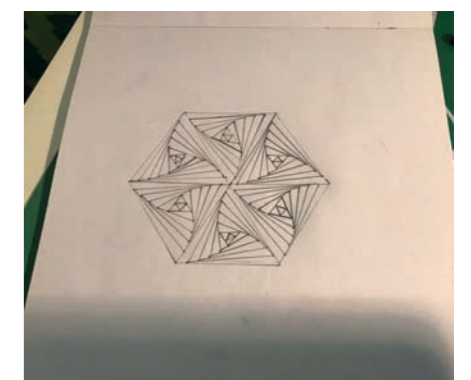
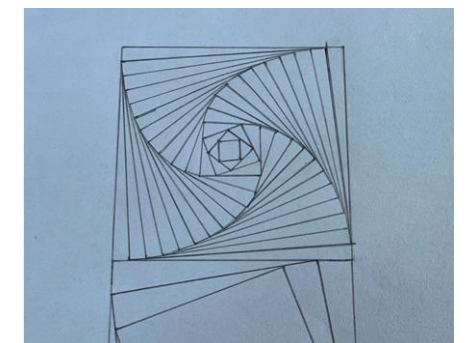
This is an enormous achievement, especially considering our pupils normally sit their exams alongside an extremely busy programme of rehearsals, competitions, concerts and auditions.

We could not be prouder of each and every one of them.

Remote teaching

During this period of school closure, our teachers have been working remotely with our pupils using Microsoft Teams for video lessons, and setting assignments over email. For the most part, it has been working very well, with the pupils adjusting extremely quickly to using technology to help them learn.

Rebecca, Kate and Yamato (work shown below from top to bottom) along with the rest of Sarah Lee's C2 Maths class, have been creating some beautifully mesmerising curves of pursuit.



Alumni news

Nicola Benedetti won Best Classical Instrumental Solo for her latest recording *Violin Concerto; Fiddle Dance Suite* at the 62nd annual Grammy Awards. The album features two new pieces written especially for her by American trumpeter and composer, Wynton Marsalis: *Violin Concerto in D* and *Dance Suite for Violin Solo*. The latter was recorded in our very own Menuhin Hall in March of last year. Nicola also performed *Violin Concerto in D* at the ceremony with The Philadelphia Orchestra under the baton of Cristian Măcelaru.



Nicola Benedetti at the Grammy Awards

Emmanuel Despax has been appointed Artistic Director of the complete Beethoven piano sonata cycle at the Royal Concert Hall and Lakeside Arts in Nottingham. Emmanuel is honoured to be joined by nine outstanding artists to perform all of Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas in ten concerts over four days, to celebrate his 250th anniversary. The festival will take place from 14-17 May and he will be performing the final three sonatas on 17 May.

Cheryl Frances-Hoad was named one of Bachtrack's Top 50 Contemporary Composers of 2019.

Igudesman and Joo were joined by **Viviana-Zarah Baudis** along with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of **Thomas Carroll** to perform *Clash of the Soloists* and *Big Nightmare Music* at the Royal Festival Hall in March.

Alina Ibragimova and **Kathryn Stott** were among those honoured by the Prince of Wales at a ceremony in March at the Royal College of Music. The event was part of his annual visit in his role as President.

Kevin Loh won Joint First Prize in the Cambridge University Music Society Concerto Competition 2020. He is looking forward to performing with the Cambridge University Orchestra next season.



Recording in the Hall

The Menuhin Hall is pleased to offer alumni and current teachers a 50% discount on Hall and piano hire for commercial recordings.

Recently, we have welcomed alumni **Juliette Roos, Miho Kawashima** and **Charles Owen**, as well as teachers **Tereza Privratska, Mariko Brown** and **Nathan Williamson**.

For further information, please contact **Tamas Reti**, Menuhin Hall Manager on tamas.reti@menuhinschool.co.uk.

New staff

We were honoured to welcome both **Adrian Brendel** and **Ning Kam** as Principal Teachers this term.



Adrian Brendel studied the cello with William Pleeth, with whom he developed a lifelong love of chamber music. He went on to take lessons with Alexander Baillie and Frans Helmerson in London and Cologne, and frequently attended the masterclasses of Gyorgy Kurtag, Ferenc Rados, members of the Alban Berg Quartet and his father,

pianist Alfred Brendel with whom he recorded Beethoven's cello sonatas. His chamber music partners include Henning Kraggerud, Lisa Batiashvili, Lars-Anders Tomter, Andrej Bielow, Katharine Gowers and Alasdair Beatson. Adrian is Artistic Director of the Plush Festival in Dorset and recently received honorary membership of the Royal Academy of Music, where he is on the faculty.

Ning Kam won Second Prize at the Queen Elisabeth Competition in 2001.



Between 2011 and 2017 she was Artistic Director of Het Kamerorkest Brugge, a conductorless chamber orchestra with a focus on 20th and 21st century music. She regularly guest directs the strings of the Staatsorchester Rheinische Philharmonie, and as a chamber player she is part of the Kheops Ensemble and is also a founding member of Loco Motive, a bluegrass, jazz and funk trio with cellist, Sebastien Walnier and bassist, Lisa De Boos. Ning is also Professor of Violin at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels.



Julian Bell joined our Cleaning team this term and is married to Tracey, who has been taking excellent care of us as part of the Cleaning team for several years.



Joanna Greenwood returned this term to supervise practises and to help keep our Music library running efficiently.



Esther Park returns to the School as an Assistant Violin Teacher after studying with Simon Fischer and Boris Kucharsky between 2009 and 2017.



Gergana Raykova returns to YMS as an Assistant Violin Teacher after a four-year break. She previously worked with Natasha Boyarsky and Lutsia Ibragimova between 2011 and 2015.

Staff news

We were sorry to say goodbye to **Alice Benzing** earlier in the year. Alice was Hall Manager since 2016, and did an incredible job looking after the Hall, her staff and all of our guests, be they visiting artists or audience members. We shall all miss her greatly and wish her well.

John Cooney's latest piece, *Signs - Paths - Landscapes*, will be premiered in Faversham on 21 May by the Callanan Wind Ensemble and David Knotts. Written for wind quintet and piano the piece is an exploration of landscape, both real and imagined, in which instruments navigate a journey through and between a number of varied musical scenes. There will also

be a pre-concert talk in which John will be interviewed by the composer and artistic director Alasdair Nicolson.

Congratulations to **Caroline Emery**, who has been invited to be a Visiting Professor at Den Hague Conservatory.

Lisa Guy has taken up a new job with Surrey County Council after having been with us on Reception since 2018 and then as part of the Music Administration team. Her sunny personality and can-do attitude will be hugely missed by staff, pupils and parents alike.

Damian LeGassick leaves us to devote more time to other music projects.

Damian has been a key member of the General Music team since 2010.

Akerke Ospan returned home to Kazakhstan having been a much-valued Assistant Violin Teacher here since 2012.

Our Receptionist **Niamh Poole**, who is also an Assistant Technical Manager in the Hall, has moved into Music House and will be performing some boarding duties.

The Menuhin Hall is delighted to welcome **Tamas Reti** to the team. Formerly our Partnership and Outside Events Officer, Tamas has taken up the position of Menuhin Hall Manager.

This term in The Menuhin Hall

As we greet the spring, this time it almost seems as if January happened to someone else. Our year opened with Peter Medhurst's *Twelfth Night* performance bidding a joyous farewell to the Christmas season. This was followed by the first Showcases of 2020, demonstrating the boundless talent and artistry of the School's pupils. We were treated to some of the most exciting programmes heard on our stage, as the young performers took us from the serene complexity of Webern's *Vier Stücke* through to the melancholy and drama of Chausson's *Poème*.

Michael Law's Piccadilly Dance Orchestra visited us once again for a stunning night of swing and jazz as we were swept off to the Art Deco era. One month later a very different magic filled the Hall as the National Youth Harp Orchestra took up the stage, leaving us all mesmerised both by the sight and the music.

Unexpectedly, we only had the chance to see one YMS alumnus this season

– however we can count ourselves lucky that we could welcome him to our stage for two nights! The extra time was much needed as Colin Carr, accompanied by Thomas Sauer, introduced us to all of Beethoven's works for cello, taking us on a journey that explored the composer's life in great musical detail – a magnificent celebration for the Beethoven year.

It was at this point, save for one last Showcase, that our concert series came to an untimely close. Searching for the words to write this article, I opened last year's Spring Newsletter; "Summer term," Alice wrote, "would not be the same without the Summer Festival (and academic exams...)". Neither of these will happen now and indeed the world is not the same as it was a year ago.

A concert hall is not meant to be a quiet place. Our rooms are not designed to be empty, the pianos are not built to be silent, and the ice cream was not bought to sit in the bar's freezer untouched. It has always



been a pleasure for everyone at the Hall to welcome you, and yet we find ourselves working from home, myself writing these lines at my kitchen table, asking you to stay away.

It is in times such as these that we recognise what is truly important and valuable. We cannot thank you enough for everything you have given us over the years, and for the many messages of support we have received these past weeks.

I am beginning to realise that I may have no concerts to write about in the next issue of this Newsletter. Instead, we will be inviting you to join us for a new concert season. We may miss our Summer Festival this time, but I firmly believe that when we reopen our doors, dust off our pianos and unwrap the ice cream, it will be for a new festival – a festival of hope. It will be in memory of all we have been through together, and it will be a celebration of who we are as a community.

Tamas Reti, Menuhin Hall Manager



Colin Carr with pupils

Dear all

Let me begin by saying how excited I am to be joining the Menuhin School family. From the moment I first stepped foot on the School grounds I was struck by the overwhelming warmth and friendliness of everyone here, from the youngest pupil to the most experienced member of staff. Over the course of my performing career I've worked with countless Menuhin School alumni, and they have all spoken of their time here as positive and life-enhancing. I've come to realise that the vast majority of people who study at YMS develop an unbreakable bond with the place and leave with a life that has been enhanced not only musically and professionally, but - above all - spiritually.

Even from the limited time I've spent thus far at the School, I can understand why. It is a very special, unique place. Needless to say, I could never have envisaged arriving in such a time of crisis and turmoil. I've been remarkably impressed by the calm manner in which the staff have prepared themselves to deal with the impact of Covid-19; remote teaching was successfully up and running long before the order came to close the school, the timetabling - complex at the best of times - is being managed with extraordinary sensitivity and flexibility to accommodate numerous timezones. The sense of community remains unbroken and morale is high.

If there is a silver-lining to the tragic impact of Covid-19, it is that anyone connected with the arts is being forced to think outside the box. For freelance musicians around the world, the closure of concert halls and cancellation of concerts is a nightmare scenario, but it has been fascinating

and inspiring to witness how they are continuing to engage with their audiences in creative and innovative ways. Despite the wonderful efforts of our staff to ensure academic and instrumental lessons will be delivered remotely during the Summer Term, I am painfully aware that our pupils will be missing out on key learning experiences such as chamber music and orchestra. Rest assured I will be working hard to provide them with new and exciting projects in the coming weeks, many of which we hope to be able to share with you.

In my previous roles at the Royal College of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music I auditioned hundreds of young musicians keen to study at conservatoire level. I found it fascinating to meet the candidates - often from wildly different backgrounds - and took great interest in reading their personal statements. By happy coincidence, the last audition I ever took at the RNCM was one of the most memorable and inspiring; a young woman who had travelled from Australia - played beautifully, presented herself in her interview with remarkable maturity and assurance, and had written a personal statement that touched my heart at the time and now seems particularly pertinent: "My ultimate dream is to be a doctor. Not for sick bodies, but for sick minds and hearts. I wish for my music to heal the hearts of the people who have given up on their dreams, to mend the souls of those who are tired and surrendered.



When people hear my music, I want them to reminisce their youth, to feel what it is to dream again, to bring them back to life."

I'm sure we can all agree that music indeed has tremendous therapeutic powers and has the potential to lift our spirits during this period of enforced isolation. With that in mind, I am pleased to announce that **we will be running a virtual concert series from our archive of Showcase Concerts, beginning on the first Tuesday of the Summer Term (21 April) at 15:30 GMT, and continuing at the same time each week. A link to view these concerts will be sent to all those within our community who have already given their permission to be contacted via email. If you do not currently receive communications from us by email, please visit www.themenuhinhall.co.uk where you can sign up to receive the virtual concert series emails. We hope this will bring a little bit of joy into your households in the coming months.**

These are challenging times for music and education, and the School is so, so grateful for your support. I am sorry this interruption to our lives means I will not be able to meet you all as planned in the Summer Term, but you remain very much in the thoughts of everyone connected with the School and The Menuhin Hall. I can't wait to get to know you in the months ahead. Until then, look after yourselves and your loved ones, and stay safe.

Ashley Wass, Director of Music

Menuhin Circle Annual Party

Our inaugural Menuhin Circle Annual Party took place on 11 March in the stunning surroundings of the Sir John Soane's Museum in London. We were delighted to be joined by our incoming Head, Ben Gudgeon, as well as our incoming Director of Music, Ashley Wass, and his wife Doriane, a professional violinist. Our pupils performed Paganini, Bach and Beethoven in the candlelit library and enjoyed chatting with our guests afterwards. Guests also had the opportunity to explore the Museum, which houses Sir John Soane's extensive and eclectic collection of paintings, drawings, sculptures, architectural fragments and models, and exquisite furniture.

The evening was an opportunity to thank our Menuhin Circle Members, as well as those who made significant contributions to last year's match-funding campaign, which raised £308,000 in just ten weeks.

Menuhin Circle Members support the School's Annual Fund through making a three-year commitment of between £1,000 and £5,000 each year to the School. This year Menuhin Circle



Victoria Agnew with pupils

Member contributions have funded a range of much-needed purchases, including a fume cupboard for our Science lab, improvements to The Menuhin Hall and a second-hand vehicle to transport our pupils to performances in the local community.

We are deeply grateful for the support of our Menuhin Circle Members, who enjoy a range of benefits by way of thanks. **For more information about joining the Menuhin Circle, please contact Beth Quartermaine on beth.quartermaine@menuhinschool.co.uk or 01932 584744.**

The 1963 Society Annual Gathering

We have taken the decision to postpone the 1963 Society Annual Gathering, originally scheduled to take place on Thursday 21 May. We will be in touch with all members in due course with a new date.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Beth Quartermaine at beth.quartermaine@menuhinschool.co.uk or on 07444 452371.

From the Chairman

As always, it has been a pleasure to see so many of you at The Menuhin Hall. The concerts have been a joyful antidote to the incessant winter rains.

But as I write, the School has understandably suspended its programme of concerts in the face of the risks arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. It is clear that the virus poses many particular challenges for our community of pupils who come from all round the globe. And our age profile as an audience of Friends adds another dimension to the problem! So regretfully, but I am sure correctly, we also decided that it would be right to postpone our AGM until later in the year.

By the time we reconvene, the School will be under the new leadership of Ben Gudgeon, and Ashley Wass, so cancellation of the AGM and the last concerts before Easter meant we were unable to say goodbye as Friends to Richard Tanner and Óscar Colomina i Bosch. I would therefore like to record here our thanks to Richard and Óscar, a marvellously steady Interim Head and an inspirational Director of Music, and



Sir John with Gillian Baker and Elizabeth and David Challen

both huge supporters of the Friends. They take our best wishes with them, Richard back to retirement, and Óscar to Madrid.

I would like now to raise here one concern I had intended to raise at the AGM about ticketing for Menuhin Hall concerts. I know we think of the Hall as our 'second home' and many of us love to sit in the same seats for every concert. As I am sure you will all appreciate, the Hall is a small venue, and at times demand for certain seats can outstrip availability such that we simply cannot offer 'usual' seats to all 700 Friends! Penny and the Box Office team at the Hall always do their best to accommodate requests, but it can feel like a thankless task at times, to juggle multiple competing

demands in order to ensure that we all enjoy a wonderful evening of music-making. I would ask everyone to be mindful of this situation and to treat them as you yourselves would wish to be treated – with courtesy and kindness at all times.

Finally, the 20/21 academic year and concert season will mark the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Friends, and we will be celebrating the occasion appropriately. We are particularly interested in hearing from you any special memories you have about the School, concerts and events you have attended over the years, and would welcome photographs or other memorabilia. If you think you have something that could be of interest to our community of Friends, please get in touch with Rebekah Russo, Development Officer, on rebekah.russo@menuhinschool.co.uk or on 01932 584409.

John Baker

Sir John Baker
Chairman of the Friends

You did it! Match-funding campaign a huge success

Last term's match-funding campaign raised an astonishing £308,000, thanks to your support and the backing of two extremely generous local donors.

We are still holding auditions for the next academic year and will be able

to offer a number of new bursary-assisted places to deserving pupils.

Thank you so much for making this possible. Your generosity is deeply appreciated.



Evie performing at the Soane Museum



Zafira bought thanks to your Annual Fund gifts

An evening with Kevin Loh

We were delighted to welcome back alumnus Kevin Loh to the School in February for our inaugural, sold-out Friends Alumni event.

Kevin gave a wonderful guitar recital, performing Fernando Sor's *Six Bagatelles* and William Walton's *Five Bagatelles*. As a surprise encore, and much to the delight of the audience, he performed *Bluesette* by Jean 'Toots' Thielemans, arranged by Roland Dyens, originally for harpsichord.

The packed audience were then treated to a talk about his life since leaving the Menuhin School, including his time undertaking National Service in Singapore.

Kevin joined us at YMS when he was 12 years old, and was given a bursary provided by The Rolling



Stones. He studied with Richard Wright for seven years before graduating and returning to Singapore to complete his National Service. Kevin is now studying Music at the University of Cambridge, and we were thrilled to hear that he recently won First Prize in the University of Cambridge Music Society Concerto Competition.

We were hoping to plan the next exclusive Alumni event in the Summer term but, given the current guidance from the government, we expect this to be postponed to the Autumn. We will let you know as soon as we are able to make any further plans.

Wigmore Hall

Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic, Wigmore Hall has had to cancel all public events until the end of July, including our Leavers' concert on 28 June.

We are very sorry not to be able to share this annual event with our Friends. We know that for many, the coach trip and concert at the iconic London concert hall was a special way to support our pupils, but we look forward to seeing you all there next year.



On the day of the Easter Egg hunt, which was also one of the last days many of us were together before the School was closed, Richard was presented with his very own score. A few years ago, non-teaching staff were challenged to learn an instrument, and Richard achieved Grade 1 Jazz Piano. We hope he gets the chance to take it up again as he returns to his retirement, and send him our heartfelt thanks for seeing us through the last two terms.

