



# Newsletter *Spring 2021*

The International  
Music School founded  
by Yehudi Menuhin

Registered Charity 312010

## Welcome

"In the depths of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer." Camus wrote this more than half a century ago, but it is incredibly germane today.

This term was yet another filled with challenges, some expected and some unforeseen. Over the Christmas holidays we were busying ourselves preparing to welcome the pupils back in January only to learn, even as some were in the air on their way to us, that we could not open as planned. It all seemed so disheartening, but we coped, quickly turning Harris House into an interim B&B of sorts for the handful of pupils who needed to stay. Sam prepared and left meals for the little lockdown family of pupils and staff, and we all ate them together in the boarding house or in the Head's house, and it was another first in the history of YMS.

March brought many of our numbers back, and we faced the formidable task of regularly testing all of our pupils and staff, but again we coped. Our testing team was superb in making sure that

everyone knew what they were doing, and now we are all dab hands with a nasal swab (which is a phrase I never thought I'd write!)

In the last week of term, we took a moment to reflect on the fact that it's now been one year since lockdown began for us here at the School. We thought about what we have lost – some of us have lost family members, some have lost friends and we have all lost the intangible things like time and freedom - but we also took the time to think about what we have gained, and realised that we have gained much this past year. We have found new ways to work with each other, new ways to inspire each other, and new ways to connect with our ever-growing community of supporters across the world, and these are things from which we will benefit long after the face masks and nasal swabs and testing strips have been relegated to the bin. We have learned through the passage of our own



winter, that within us, there are reserves we didn't know we had.

And so we choose to be hopeful that next term will be different – our invincible summer. We choose to be hopeful that next term will bring not only the sunshine, but also the opportunity to finally celebrate our collective resurgence. An event so anticipated and so necessary deserves a blowout unlike any other, which is why we are planning a Summer Festival filled with all sorts of new events – lectures and films and days for the whole family to enjoy – but most importantly, we will showcase the incredible talents of our pupils, who are our *raison d'être*.

It will be our own invincible summer and we cannot wait to share it with you.

**Ben Gudgeon**  
Headmaster

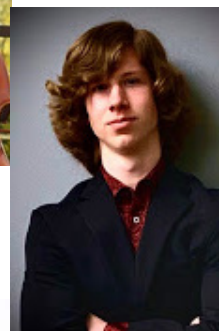
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## Competition success

**The YMS double bassists** made an incredible showing at the 4th "Violin Doc" International Online Festival. **Nathan, Levi, Lukas** and **Patrick** each won First Prize in their category. Well done both to the boys and to Professor of Double Bass **Caroline Emery** for such a fantastic achievement.

**Duru** won First Prize in both the Franz Liszt Center Competition and the Incentive Award in the Arte Piano E-Competition.

Well done to everyone!



**Caterina** won First Prize at the Rudolf Barshai International Strings Competition in St Petersburg.

**Claire** won First Prize in the Piano Category at the American Music Talent Competition Piano Category. **Ruth Nye** was awarded a certificate as Claire's teacher. Claire also won Third Prize in the Euregio Piano Award in Germany.



**Daphne** has had an extremely successful run in several competitions, winning First Prize in the International Moscow Music Competition, the PianoArt International Online Competition, Gloria Artis International Online Piano Competition, V Future Stars International Piano Competition and the 5th Danubia Talents Online Piano Competition, Hungary. An incredible achievement!

**Darwin** won Second Prize in the Li Shude Elite Violin Competition.



### Follow us!

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

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

Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @menuhinschool



Find us on Facebook @yehudimenuhinschool



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



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

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## A few words from Ashley

Dear all,

Before composing this message, I glanced back out of curiosity to see what I'd written in last year's Spring newsletter, shortly after I joined the School. Unsurprisingly, I referred to the strangeness of arriving in the midst of lockdown, and praised the remarkable resilience and creativity of the staff as they adjusted to remote learning.

And so it is somewhat ironic that I write this entry feeling as if, to some extent, little has changed. I still feel very new and, until recently, the School was closed and lessons were once again taking place online.

One might instinctively think of it as déjà vu, but in reality much has changed since the first lockdown of 2020. It goes without saying the government's announcement to close schools at the beginning of January came as a huge disappointment to everyone attached to YMS, but both staff and pupils responded magnificently. The lessons we learned from last year stood us in good stead; we knew exactly where we needed to focus our energies and set about filling the gaps created by the loss of

orchestra, chamber music and choir with a range of new initiatives which proved immensely popular and valuable.

I am extremely grateful to everyone who came forward with creative ideas to support the pupils, and have been amazed by the care and generosity of spirit demonstrated throughout these difficult months. Our staff pianists teamed up to deliver workshops covering a range of subjects; the Perks brothers devised a weekly podcast addressing both practical and artistic musical matters; Miho rifled through her address book and proved to be an outstanding interviewer to a wonderfully diverse range of guest speakers; and David Condry delivered a series of life-skills classes which I know will prove extremely useful to our Leavers when they bid farewell to YMS. It was a joy to eavesdrop on all of these projects and many of them

will be continued in live format in the months to come.



Despite these brilliant lockdown initiatives, it goes without saying that we are all delighted to be open once again. Most excitingly of all, we are finally able to plan public events with a degree of confidence (keeping our fingers tightly crossed that the

government's roadmap remains on track) and we are now immersed in planning for what will be an ambitious and celebratory Summer Festival in July.

We can't wait to share our plans with you in the coming weeks, and look forward to welcoming you to our glorious concert hall later in the year.

**Ashley Wass**  
Director of Music

## Welcome to our new pupils



**Caio**  
Cello  
Brazil



**Jason**  
Guitar  
China

## Don't miss out!

Be sure to add  
**[news@mail-menuhinschool.co.uk](mailto:news@mail-menuhinschool.co.uk)**  
to your address book and safe senders  
lists to make sure you don't miss  
anything from us!

## Musical activities

You might think that lockdown meant no performances.....but the Menuhin School pupils have not let that stop them! For the first seven weeks of term we ran **Lunchtime Concerts** over Teams, with pupils either playing live from their homes or sending in recordings. When the School re-convened on 8 March we reverted to live Lunchtime Concerts, and continue to prepare **Showcase Concerts** with a pupil audience for sharing with the wider community.

Many of the pupils are preparing videos for **online auditions with European music conservatoires**, as well as a selection of the many **online competitions** which have sprung up over the last year – keeping everyone in the Hall very busy!

Just before Half term we were asked to make a short inspirational video for the **Surrey Music Hub** with the seven pupils that were living together in Harris House. After some thought, we found one of Brahms's *Hungarian Dances* for which we had a piano duet version and also string parts; the only slight difficulty was that the string parts were in F sharp minor, whereas the piano music was in F minor! The pianists, **Richard** and **Miffy**, graciously gave way and transposed their music to fit in with the string players. The pupils also recorded a brief message of encouragement to the young musicians in the Surrey Hub to inspire them to use their music as a way to keep their spirits up during this latest lockdown.

We have also enjoyed a new look to Saturday mornings. **Oscar** and **Elliott Perks** have produced a weekly **Perks Podcast** in which they discuss various aspects of being a chamber musician, covering areas such as intonation and rehearsal techniques. This has been followed by **Miho's Mates** – **Miho Kawashima** in conversation with alumni or people she has met during the course of her career. These have proved extremely popular with everyone who has seen them. The older pupils have then spent time with choir director **David Condry**, who has given seminars on the realities of life after the Menuhin School. **The Condry Column**, as it is known, has covered subjects such as finding a flat, dealing with utilities, and how to talk to the tax man.



## YMS partners with Orchid Classics

YMS is thrilled to be partnering with **London-based record label Orchid Classics** in an exciting collaboration that will introduce our pupils to the intense concentration, discipline and satisfaction of recording. The first album will be released in 2022, and will feature performances recorded in our own Menuhin Hall, which is renowned for its acoustics. These recordings will document the music made by the next generation of professional performers, and be of invaluable experience to their all-round musical and personal development.



Matthew Trusler with Thomas Carroll and Ashley Wass

The Orchid deal, the first of its kind for YMS, will run initially for three years, and provide a focal point for followers of YMS pupils. It was directly inspired by Yehudi Menuhin who began his recording career at the age of 13 and remained with the same record label for almost 70 years, the longest contract in the history of recorded music.



ORCHID CLASSICS

**Of the partnership, Ashley said:** "This is a wonderful educational opportunity for our pupils, and represents an exciting development as the School enters a new phase in its illustrious story. Our first album will showcase the diversity and internationalism of our community, and I can't think of a more appropriate record label with which to join forces."

**Orchid's founder and Director, Matthew Trusler, said,** "I've always felt it was important for Orchid to work with exceptional young people at the beginning of their careers," he observes. "We've now released award-winning debuts from such artists as sopranos Louise Alder and Natalya Romaniw, pianist Boris Giltburg and cellist Andrei Ionita. This new relationship is massively exciting in the promise it holds to bring performances by these incredible young musicians to a wider public while allowing them to experience the thrill of making their first recordings."

## Virtual Menuhin School - pilot programme

We are excited to announce the launch of the pilot phase of the **Virtual Menuhin School**. This new learning experience was created to make the expertise of YMS available to a wider group of talented young musicians around the world, and focuses on the under-11 age group. It offers a highly individualised learning pathway that includes online social interaction with a

peer group, and a sense of community and engagement with the main School.

This term we have welcomed two eight-year-old pupils, **Margaret, a violinist from Paris**, and **Sapphire, a pianist from Hong Kong**. From April, we will also welcome **Lyana, a 10-year-old Armenian cellist**, and **Brando, a nine-year-old violinist from Italy**.

These young musicians are having online instrumental tuition and guidance, as well as tailored lessons in musicianship, theory and composition. **Marco Galvani, Ayaka Shigeno** and **Elliott Perks** are our first teachers to be involved in the Virtual Menuhin School, and they have been doing a fantastic job at making the newest members of the YMS family feel welcome.

## Testing, testing 1...2...525!



Niamh with Mingjia Li

Over the years the Recital Room has seen many uses - concert space, teaching room, lecture hall, meeting room, photography studio and even a cocktail party venue, but this term its primary function has been more utilitarian; it has seen the completion of **525 asymptomatic COVID-19 tests**.

As part of our efforts to get back to work (and play!) the School has put in place a number of prevention and detection measures to stay COVID-free. One of the most important has been lateral flow testing of all pupils and staff on site. **Alison** and **Joanne** had the unenviable task of

implementing a system of testing that takes into account the ever-evolving restrictions and advice, the needs of our pupils, our bespoke timetabling and demands on staff time. They have been heroically assisted by a number of people: **Niamh** and **Polly**, who have both worked far outside of their normal hours; **Jan** who recently joined our Housekeeping Team; **Victoria**, who joined us this term as Day Matron; and **Peter Emery** (Caroline's husband) and **Mingjia Li** (Enpei's mum), who very kindly volunteered their time to come and muck in to help keep us on track. We are indebted to them for their help.

It has been a gargantuan effort from all involved, and they deserve their own special round of applause.

## Director of Pastoral Care appointment

We are pleased to announce the appointment of **Melanie Bloor-Black** as Director of Pastoral Care. After a very rigorous selection process, involving representatives from almost every area of the School, Melanie was the stand-out candidate from a very impressive field of applicants. She has a wealth of pastoral experience across many prestigious schools and we look forward to the continued development of Pastoral Care at YMS under her leadership.



Melanie is a British-trained and qualified Drama teacher with over 20 years' experience in the UK and Switzerland, which includes Head of Faculty, Director of Drama, Housemistress, Head of Year, Co-Curricular Coordinator and PSHE Coordinator. Previous work in boarding includes Roedean School for Girls, Royal Hospital School, Christ's Hospital School and Aiglon College in Switzerland. She greatly enjoys developing an extensive, exciting and

balanced programme of pastoral care, and creating academic and experiential learning opportunities within a whole school community.

**Of her appointment, Melanie said:**  
 "I am so excited, delighted and honoured to have been appointed Director of Pastoral Care at YMS. I cannot wait to meet everyone - students and staff alike - in September. Please do come and introduce yourselves to me at the start of term. Baked goods will be available for all!"

Melanie will officially join the School in September 2021 and will live in Music House. We look forward to welcoming her, along with her family and her dog!

# Downtime



## This term in The Menuhin Hall

It has now been just over a year since we sat in the Box Office with Penny, Sian and Clive, printing, folding, and stuffing envelopes with my first message as Hall Manager: a message urging you not to come to The Hall, to say that all our concerts have been cancelled. I was struck by the words of our Headmaster a few weeks ago during a school assembly; Ben spoke of Lent, in the spiritual as well as secular sense: a time of reflection, of cleansing, of renewal. Truth be told, our whole industry has been on a year-long lent since last March.

There is, of course, the physical cleansing: the sigh of relief as 15 years of clutter and outdated machinery get cleared out of the control room, temporarily covering the mezzanine

with cardboard and cables. The long and arduous task of giving away, eating and drinking all the nearly out of date ice cream and beer in the bar – a necessary sacrifice! There is also the virtual space of digital records and databases that we have been working on in the background, cleaning, merging and streamlining in order to make it easier for us to serve our Friends and ticketholders as best as we can.



Beyond these more obvious changes, however, this year and these past months have given us a chance to reflect on who we are and what we do. We have been given the opportunity to think about who we want to be. This period of lent will pass, Easter will come, bringing brighter times and exciting new adventures – we hope you will join us on this journey.

**Tamas Reti**  
Menuhin Hall Manager

## Technical upgrades



After many years of planning and postponing we are finally ready to go ahead with a major upgrade of the Hall's technical equipment.

Exciting bits of technology have been appearing in the Hall over the past few weeks – new cameras, a new sound desk, a new computer, even a little box with a 'Record' and 'Stream'

button on it, transforming what used to be a mad dash around the room to switch and select and click a half a dozen controls, to the literal push of a button.

We cannot wait for you to see and hear the results of this upgrade. At long last, The Menuhin Hall will no longer only be available 'at Home' but truly 'Live'.

**We would like to extend a huge thank you to the HR Taylor Trust for their generous support in making all of this possible.**





## Coming up

I would not count myself as a superstitious person, but being the Hall Manager who has now announced three exciting concert seasons that have never happened, I cannot help being cautious, writing these words firmly in contact with a wooden desk! Still, it is with a mounting sense of optimism that we look into the future. Perhaps my predictions for a grand, celebratory reopening may come true a year later, but I still stand by their accuracy.

Plans are now in place for a very special Summer season and a Festival unlike any we have ever had in the past. There will be a series of digital as well as live events. There will be a marquee and picnic tables. There will

be the traditional Showcases as well as postponed Celebrity concerts, with cellist **Alexander Chaushian** in June and pianist **Charles Owen** performing with our pupils in July. There will be events never-before-seen on our stage, such as a **day-long Piano Gala and silent film screenings with live music. Alumni, last year's leavers, pupils and staff will all join together as one great family to present a truly magnificent Summer Festival.** And so we invite you and your family to join us as well; we would love to see your children and grandchildren in the audience for our **Family Day, listening to fairy tales and music, and we would love to help you introduce your friends and family to a very special**

**concert experience in our afternoon and evening Showcases.**

We will be sharing details about the upcoming concerts **towards the end of April, with bookings opening in May.** The safety and comfort of our audience is our highest priority, so we are expecting to run at least some of these events at reduced capacity, with some form of social distancing in place. **Tickets may be limited, so please make sure that you are signed up to our mailing list** by creating or logging into your account on our website at [www.themenuhinhall.co.uk](http://www.themenuhinhall.co.uk) and that you book your tickets early. It will be a huge pleasure to finally welcome you back to The Menuhin Hall.



Jack Liebeck

Charles Owen

## What you need to know about our reopening

### PRIORITY BOOKING:

**Menuhin Circle opens 4 May.**

**Best Friends opens 4 May.**

**Friends opens 10 May.**

**General booking opens 17 May.**

**Box Office: 01932 559400**

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

In order to ensure the safety of our staff, the Box Office may need to operate at a reduced capacity. Additionally, due to the issues involved in handling and processing paper forms safely during COVID-19, **paper booking forms will not be available.**

**We encourage all patrons to book their tickets at [www.themenuhinhall.co.uk](http://www.themenuhinhall.co.uk).**

For more information, or if you need help with your booking, the Box Office will be open between 9.30am and 2.30pm Monday to Friday from 4 May and will be happy to help with ticket bookings over the phone.

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

## Staff news

This term saw some changes to our Pastoral Care team. **Joanne Field** stepped down as Head of Pastoral Care and Housemistress in Music House in order to return to working as a Nurse in the NHS. Joanne shepherded us admirably through some challenging waters, and her sense of humour and commitment to her work, especially where Safeguarding was concerned, will be missed. The girls are in good hands though, as **Hannah May** has taken on the role of Acting Houseparent in Music House. **David** and **Angela** took over Joanne's Safeguarding responsibilities on 8 March.

There were some changes in Harris House too, as we said goodbye at the end of term to Assistant Houseparent **Liam Baxter**. We wish him well as he returns to his previous role in childcare. The boys are pleased to



be welcoming back **Marco Galvani** as Interim Houseparent for the Summer term.

The Box Office has also had to say some farewells, as both **Clive Stevens** and **Wendy Gabriel** stepped down from their part-time roles as Box Office Assistants. Both Clive and Wendy were welcoming faces in the Box Office for many years, and they will be missed not just by the staff and pupils, but also by the audience members in The Menuhin Hall. Thankfully, we may not have seen the last of them though, as they have both said that they may return to help out from time to time around the Hall.

In other news, **Ruth Nye**, in partnership with Terry Lewis from Jacques Samuels, has released a new CD. **Ruth Nye - Mozart, Beethoven,**

**Schubert, Liszt and Debussy Solo Piano** is available to purchase now from ebay.

Former Chair of Governors **Richard Morris** has been elected to the Board of the European Movement International in Brussels where he will be doing all he can to advocate for the strongest educational and cultural links between the UK and our European counterparts.



## New staff



**Jan Beland** joined our very busy cleaning team this term. She says she feels so lucky to work at YMS, mixing every day with such lovely, gifted children. In her spare time she likes walking, and feeding foxes and birds.



**Victoria Hiscock** is the new Day Matron at Music House. Before this she worked as a carer for four years, looking after elderly residents in their own homes. She's a very keen bird watcher and wildlife photographer, which takes up most of her free time, along with raising her seven-year-old son.



**Angeline Gao** joins us as Accounts and Admin Assistant. She has a degree in Law from Fudan University and has several years working in financial institutions in Shanghai. She enjoys Fine Arts, gardening, literature and everything related to nature and beauty.



**Barbara Thwaites** joined the Development Team at the end of March. Following many enjoyable years in the Airline industry she is delighted to be moving into the world of musical education. Barbara loves walking, travel, trying to keep fit and of course music!

## Alumni news



Jamal Aliyev

**Jamal Aliyev** was featured as one of Classic FM's 'Rising Stars' as part of their new programme presented by Julian Lloyd Webber featuring 30 of the most brilliant young classical musicians playing today.

**Ben Baker** has become an Ambassador for the music education charity, Music Masters. Of the partnership, Ben said "I've come to know and love Music Masters for their amazing community of young musicians. Their infectious enthusiasm for music, and appetite to always try something new is continually inspiring. I look forward to sharing some of my own experiences and explorations with Music Masters' musicians, and to

support the continuing development of Music Masters' pathway for young musicians. It's a privilege to have the opportunity to contribute something to their musical journey as a Music Masters Ambassador."

**Max Baillie** has been working with the Scottish Ensemble to create *First Light*, an uplifting concert featuring works by Haydn, Vivaldi, Jessie Montgomery, Steve Martland as well as by Max himself. Bringing life and energy to audiences via their screens, *First Light* signals the transition from darkness to brighter times, and leads viewers on a journey through joyful, uplifting and optimistic music. *First Light* premieres online on 29 April at 7.30pm and is available to view for

ticket holders until 7 August at [www.scottishensemble.co.uk](http://www.scottishensemble.co.uk).

**Emmanuel Despax** has just released a new album on Signum. *Spira, Spera* (Bach: Transcriptions) combines both well-known transcriptions, including the mighty Bach-Busoni *Chaconne* and Saint-Saën's *Overture*, with the first recordings of several arrangements by the late 19th/early 20th century pianist Theodor Szántó.



**Damir Durmanovic** released a new digital album in March. *Schubert: Piano Sonata in A major, D.959* is available on Spotify, Amazon Music and iTunes.

Both **Alina Ibragimova** and **Tasmin Little** received nominations for BBC Music Magazine Awards for *Shostakovich Violin Concertos 1 & 2* and *British Violin Sonatas, Vol. 3* respectively.

**Kevin Loh** was named a EuroStrings Artist for the '20/'21 season, as part of winning the recent London International Guitar Competition 2020.

**Bréanainn Ó Mathúna** (aka Braynin) has released a new single inspired by a romance during the Covid-19 lockdown. *Too Late* is available now on all music streaming platforms.

## Corinne Chapelle 1976 – 2021

Sunshine. Pure sunshine. When you walked into a room, the whole room lit up with warmth, love all around, beaming smiles, and sunshine energy that fuels and heals the soul. How lucky was I to bask in your glowing rays. Like a famous Kryptonian, I always felt super-charged and invincible by your side.

"What's a Kryptonian?" I can hear you saying, with your curious and infectiously adorable giggle.

Corinne suspended the feeling of time when you were in her presence. She listened to you intensely, kindly, and patiently, and you felt safe and loved. As a musician and violinist, I believe she was among the true greats. She was committed to capturing and communicating the core essence of the music. See and hear for yourself; thanks to the internet, we can forever experience Corinne's musical magic. Oops, I can feel that even from her new world, Corinne is scolding me for

praising her, so here are some words from other friends from our YMS family.

**Claudia Ajmone-Marsan:** "Corinne's determination to help was so strong that she would not stop until her message had come across. She had such an eye for detail and appreciation for nature in its purest form which never ceased to inspire me."

**Katharine Gowers:** "She had an ability for instant friendship."

That's the effect you had on us, Corinne. We were mesmerised by your vivacity, sense of humour and fun, and outrageous gorgeous beauty.

One of the last things Corinne said to me, weeping, as she saw the



overwhelming response of donations and messages on her crowdfunding campaign, was, "I didn't know there was so much love".

Well, Corinne, as the Beatles famously sung, "The love you take is equal to the love you make". We felt so much love from you, Corinne, and this love you gave us will last us our lifetime.

**David Cohen,** father to your daughter, Leila, has revealed to Leila that she can find you in her heart, in the trees, in the air, the flowers and the birds, and those are the places where we will also look for you when we miss you.

In fact, that's what I'll do right now.

**Hyung-ki Joo**  
March 2021

**On 23 March, after having battled a very rare and aggressive form of cancer so courageously for the last 12 months, Corinne Chapelle passed away, after experiencing a devastating stroke. She leaves behind her 6-year-old daughter Leila, who will be taken care of by David, Leila's father and Corinne's partner for the last 10 years.**

**The crowdfunding page [www.JustGiving.com/crowdfunding/help-corinne-chapelle](http://www.JustGiving.com/crowdfunding/help-corinne-chapelle) will be active for donations to help care for Leila until her final service.**

## New mentoring scheme for recent graduates and YMS leavers

We are delighted to announce the launch of a new mentoring scheme, to help connect recent graduates (who left YMS in the past five years) and this year's leavers with some of our illustrious roster of alumni. Violinist and alumnus **Maximilian Baillie** is spearheading this initiative, and we are thrilled to have recruited eight others to the cause, including **Tatiana Berman, Melanie Di Cristino, Cheryl Frances-**

**Hoad, Alina Ibragimova, Hyung-ki Joo, Kevin Loh, Sophia Rahman and Alexander Sitkovetsky.** Between them, they bring a wealth of experience of life as performers, educators, composers, producers, recording artists and entrepreneurs – and in Melanie's case, of a career in the corporate world. Unlike traditional mentoring schemes, our pupils will have the opportunity to connect with several Mentors at any

given time, rather than just one. This will allow pupils to ask for support and advice on a wide range of matters, and to hear different perspectives, drawing on the unique experiences and career paths of each of our Mentors.

**If you'd like to find out more about the scheme or to offer your time as a Mentor, please email [ymsmentors@menuhinschool.co.uk](mailto:ymsmentors@menuhinschool.co.uk).**

## Transformational gift from the Estate of the late Nancy Ann Wolfers

The School has received the second tranche of a significant bequest from the estate of the late **Nancy Ann Wolfers** for our Bursary Fund. Nancy was a great lover of music and her generosity will help her passion live on through the many pupils who will benefit from her support.

Nancy's generous bequest comes at a critical time, when demands on the School's Bursary Fund are higher than ever before. This is, in part, because of the impact of COVID-19 on many of our parents, and in part because of Brexit, as fewer pupils are now eligible for support under the Department for Education's Music and Dance Scheme. We estimate that we may need to

provide up to **£1.7 million in bursary funding** over the next two academic years in order to support our existing pupils and allow talented new pupils to take up their place at the School.

Legacies are a vital source of philanthropic support and have been critical to major developments at the School over the years, including the building of The Menuhin Hall and the Music Studios. We are deeply grateful to those of our Friends and supporters who choose to remember the School in this way, and help to provide the opportunity of a lifetime to our pupils.

We invite all new legacy pledgers to join **The 1963 Society**, allowing us

to keep them abreast of our work, acknowledge their generosity and invite them to special events.

**To let us know that you intend to leave a gift to the School in your will, or to find out more about The 1963 Society, please email Beth at [beth.quartermaine@menuhinschool.co.uk](mailto:beth.quartermaine@menuhinschool.co.uk).**

### New Members join The Menuhin Circle

We are thrilled to have welcomed four new members to The Menuhin Circle in recent months, whose support for the School during this challenging year is particularly appreciated. **Menuhin Circle members commit between £1,000 and £5,000 to the school's Annual Fund for a minimum of three years**, which the School is able to put towards those areas of greatest need. This flexibility and long-term commitment are vital as they help us to both seize new opportunities and to deal with the impact of unexpected crises – for example, putting in extraordinary measures to allow the School to reopen safely during the pandemic. In recognition for their support, we invite Menuhin Circle members to join us for bespoke events, including an annual concert and reception in London.

**To join The Menuhin Circle or to find out more, please email Beth at [beth.quartermaine@menuhinschool.co.uk](mailto:beth.quartermaine@menuhinschool.co.uk) or call 01932 584744.**

### An Audience with Tasmin Little: "be like Yehudi, an eternal student!"

We were delighted to welcome over 60 guests, including members of The Menuhin Circle and The 1963 Society, to a virtual audience with our Co-President, Tasmin Little, in January. Aably interviewed by Ashley Wass, Tasmin recalled some of her earliest memories of the School and of Yehudi Menuhin himself, whom she remembered particularly for his warmth and sense of humour. Tasmin also spoke ardently about the qualities required to be a successful 21st Century musician, including adaptability, flexibility, integrity, humanity and open-mindedness. She also noted that Yehudi considered himself to be "an eternal student", an attitude she thought would allow our pupils to thrive in life. Wise advice for all of us, no doubt!



## From the Chairman of the Friends

Dear Friends,

As the difficulties of the past year seem at last to be coming to an end (fingers crossed!), I wanted to thank you all for standing by the School during this challenging time. Membership levels have remained stable throughout the pandemic, with many of you making additional donations to further support the pupils. I am incredibly grateful for your steadfast support, as I know are our colleagues at the School.

We will once again be holding the AGM virtually on 28 April and you should have received the details by now. We have had many positive responses already, and I hope even more of you

might be able to join us and hear from Ben and Ashley about their plans for the School's full reopening in the Summer term. As always, we will enjoy a performance from one of the pupils to round off proceedings.

We are all desperately hoping to return to live concerts in The Menuhin Hall soon. The team are planning concerts from June, **with a 10-day Summer Festival in early July**. More details will follow, including how to access your Priority Booking as Friends.

This year also marks the **50th Anniversary of the Friends**. Although our original plans have had to be scaled back due to COVID, the

Summer Festival will include some special events in celebration of the occasion. On Friday 2 July we will hold a Friends-only concert as a prelude to the Summer Festival, with a champagne and cake celebration.

I hope you will be able to join us and raise a glass to the next fifty years of the Friends.

With very best wishes,



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

## Duke of Edinburgh Awards

Dear Friends,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Menuhin pupils who are taking part in the **Duke of Edinburgh award scheme** to say a massive thank you for your generous contribution towards the programme. The pupils and teachers involved are truly grateful for your support.

We are running all three stages of the award programme this year (Bronze, Silver and Gold), and as part of the Gold group I will be doing my expeditions in **Snowdonia and the Lake District**. Being able to take part in the Scheme has taught me so much over



the three years that I have taken part in it, and I hope that your donation will encourage many others like myself to become involved and to learn many new skills that might come in handy!

Thanks once again for your help; we shall look forward to using the new equipment that this will enable us to buy, and we know that we will appreciate it when we are on top of the wild rainy hills of the Lake District! We will make sure to take lots of photos so that you can see it all in use!

Kind regards

Pendo (17, South Africa)

## Viola restored to its former glory

Thanks to the **£5,000 grant the Friends allocated to instruments** in November 2020, we have been able to repair a wonderful viola, donated to the School for use by the pupils.

The work is being carried out by a string instrument repair expert, who says that after repairs "the viola will be a charming and useful instrument and particularly so, because of its small size, for a violinist to take up."

Many of our violinists also play viola in quartets or orchestra, but do not have access to a suitable instrument. The addition of this viola to the collection will be incredibly helpful to the pupils' musical development.

# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE FRIENDS OF THE YEHUDI MENUHIN SCHOOL

Friends  
50

## Save the date: 2 July 2021

We are delighted to announce a **celebratory 50th Anniversary event on the afternoon of 2 July 2021** as a prelude to the Summer Festival.

We will be holding a Friends-only concert, with a champagne and cake reception in the grounds.

More details, including how to book, will follow in late April with the launch of our Summer season.

**To register your interest in attending this event, please email [friends@menuhinschool.co.uk](mailto:friends@menuhinschool.co.uk).**



## Head's Quiz

Ben launched the 50th anniversary celebrations on 25 March with a quiz for Friends. Featuring some musical questions from pupils, the evening was a really fun way to celebrate the Friends and the end of term.

Congratulations to **David and Gillian Potts** who won First Prize, and a pair of tickets to a Showcase concert in The Menuhin Hall!

## Leavers concert at King's Place: 8 July 2021

This year's Leavers' concert will be held at **King's Place, King's Cross on 8 July**.

Unfortunately, it will not be possible for us to organise a coach up to London this year, due to the possibility that social distancing rules may still be in place.

We do hope that many of you will choose to join us nonetheless for this end of year celebration.

**Details on how to book will be included in the Summer Festival brochure.**



## Share your memories

We know that many of you have kept mementos from your time as Friends, and throughout this past year, we have heard from many people that they have spent time sorting through boxes and closets and have unearthed all sorts of treasures.

As part of our celebrations, we would love to hear your best memories of the School over the years.

We will be collecting photographs, programmes and anecdotes to create a virtual memory book to share.

**If you have anything you would like to contribute, please email Beth at [friends@menuhinschool.co.uk](mailto:friends@menuhinschool.co.uk).**

Friends  
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