

GUILDHALL HARP DEPARTMENT NEWS: SPRING 2024

Welcome to our Spring newsletter!

In 2023 the Guildhall School was ranked number one in Arts, Drama and Music by the Complete University Guide, in the top ten performing arts institutions in the QS World University rankings, and we topped the Guardian University Guide league table for Music. We are now looking forward to an exciting and stimulating 2024.

The year starts with the Studio Orchestra playing the music of Burt Bacharach, using our Big Blue Camac electric harp. There are also lots of notes to play in a London Symphony Orchestra/Orchestral Artistry repertoire session with Nicolò Foron conducting Sibelius 1. This is a wonderful chance to perform with a professional conductor alongside members of the LSO; there will also be a chance to sit in a professional rehearsal with the Orchestra.

The orchestral schedule is as busy as ever, with regular weekly repertoire sessions, and chances to perform in the Barbican Hall with the Guildhall Symphony Orchestra conducted by Roberto Gonzales-Monjas. Our orchestral classes with LSO Principal Harp Bryn Lewis prepare core orchestral repertoire with the students, and they take these skills into practical orchestral sessions, this year rehearsing/performing works by Berlioz, Prokofiev, Mahler, Britten, Strauss, Dvorak, Holst, Stravinsky, Ravel and Respighi.

Opera happens every term, and this year's Spring Opera includes harp and is the world première of a new work by Stephen McNeff 'A Star Next To The Moon'.

Our regular Harp and Voice project is going from strength to strength, and this year 6 first-year composers will write pieces for harp and voice which will be showcased in the Summer Festival. We are passionate about the value of this project, where composers work intensively with a harpist and learn to love the instrument and write well for it.

We had a mesmerising class with **Hugh Webb** last term on The Glissando, and this term alumnus **Oliver Wass** will give a class on Ginastera's Harp Concerto, with which he won the Guildhall Gold Medal. **Sioned Williams'** masterclass last term was a perfect balance of challenge and kindness, with all the performers energised and uplifted by her comments. This term we welcome **Emily Hoile**, prizewinning soloist and Principal Harpist of the WDR Symphony Orchestra in Cologne, Germany, who will give a Masterclass in March.

Next term, our special guests will be **Sandrine Chatron**, solo harpist of the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra and professor of harp at the Haute École de Musique, Geneva, who visits in May, and the inimitable **Park Stickney** who will join us for a Jazz workshop in our Summer Festival. We are also hosting a workshop 'Harp Alchemy' with **Amy Turk** and **Lauren Scott**, who will talk about how to forge your unique path as a 21st-century musician as well as focusing on percussive and extended techniques for harp.

Finally – a happy and rare event to celebrate: two of our harp department Alumni, Oliver Wass and Lise Vandersmissen, are getting married in the summer! Maybe we should be called the Guildhall School of Music & Dating? We wish them every happiness.

Follow us on Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/guildhallharps/> and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/GuildhallHarps/>

OPEN EVENTS

Email harp@gsmd.ac.uk to check details for events. All events take place at Guildhall School, Silk Street Barbican London EC2Y 8DT unless otherwise stated.

- 24 January 2.30-4.30pm in Room 150
Hugh Webb: Improvising and Exploring Melody for the Classical Harpist
Invitation only – please email if you would like an invitation
- 1 February 7.00pm in the Music Hall *Free to Attend*
Guildhall Harp Department Concert
A lively programme of chamber music and solos:
Debussy Trio; Fauré Impromptu; Debussy Danses; Ravel Sonatine en Trio; Debussy Valse Romantique; Castelnuovo-Tedesco Harp Concertino.
- 8 February 6.00pm in Milton Court Concert Hall
Strings at Six
With postgraduate harpists Heather Brooks and Emilia Agajew:
Britten Overture; Scarlatti Sonata K209; Fauré Impromptu; Fauré Une Châtelaine en sa Tour; Castelnuovo-Tedesco Harp Concertino.
- 21 February 10am-12pm in Room 150
Oliver Wass on Ginastera's Harp Concerto
Invitation only – please email if you would like an invitation
- 8 March 12.30-1.30pm Whitechapel Road, E1 1FR
Guildhall Harpists at the Royal London Hospital
An informal foyer performance for patients and visitors
- 13 March 12.00-6.00pm in Room 150 *Please book your place online*
Guildhall Harp Department Open Day
11.45-12.00 Arrival and registration in the foyer
12.00-12.45 Welcome/presentation on the Harp Department
1.00-1.45 Harp Recital by current students
1.45-2.15 Lunch
2.15-3.00 Masterclass with Head of Harp Imogen Barford
3.15-4.00 Harp Class with one of the harp professors
4.15-5.00 Harp Class with one of the harp professors
5.00-6.00 Tour of the Buildings with a current student
7.30pm Guildhall Symphony Orchestra in the Barbican Hall
- 21 March 1.00-2.00pm in St Olave's Church, Hart Street, EC3R 7NA
Guildhall Harpists and Friends *Free to Attend*
- 24 March **Guildhall Chamber Music Festival**
Including Ravel's Introduction & Allegro with Emily Sullivan
- 28 March 1.30-7.40pm in the Lecture Recital Room *Free to Attend*
Harp Masterclass with Emily Hoile
- 3 April 7.30pm at the Wigmore Hall, London
Ana-Carmen Balestra (soprano) with Heather Brooks (harp)
Postgraduate Heather Brooks appears with the winner of the Guildhall Wigmore Recital Prize 2024 <https://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk/whats-on/202404031930>

- 1 May 7.30pm in the Barbican Hall
Guildhall Gold Medal Competition Final
Heather Brooks: Ginastera: Harp concerto
Kosuke Shirai: Copland: Clarinet concerto
Strahinja Mitrovic: Nino Rota: Divertimento concertante for double bass
- 6 May 1.00pm in the Lecture Recital Room *Free to Attend*
Harp Department Concert
- 10 May **Harp Masterclass with Sandrine Chatron**
Invitation only – please email if you would like an invitation
- 16 May 1.00-2.00pm in St Olave's Church, Hart Street, EC3R 7NA
Guildhall Harpists and Friends *Free to Attend*
- 17 May 1.30-3.30pm in the Lecture Recital Room *Free to Attend*
Harp Alchemy: A Hands-On Workshop
with Amy Turk & Lauren Scott
This is an opportunity to work with two musicians who invent and collaborate, and who take charge of their own musical careers & destinies. We will hear how Lauren & Amy developed their individual careers as professional harpists, and focus on percussive and extended harp techniques.
- 23 May 7.00pm at Salvi Showroom, 14 Molasses Row, London SW11 3UX
Guildhall Harps Showcase Concert *Free to attend, but email info@salvimusic.com to reserve your ticket*
- 24/25 June In the Lecture Recital Room *Free to Attend*
Guildhall Summer Harp Festival with Park Stickney
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