



HELLENSMUSIC



5 to 11 May / Herefordshire, UK
**HELLENSMUSIC
MASTERCLASS
COURSE
2025**

Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello and
Woodwind Ensemble (Clarinet,
Bassoon, Horn)

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Class of 2024

ABOUT

Hellensmusic is a festival and masterclass course that takes place every May in and around Hellens Manor, Herefordshire. Its aims are threefold: to create opportunities for world-class musicians to collaborate outside the concert circuit and explore new ideas; to provide a platform for talented music students from the UK and beyond to learn from leading experts; and to bring great music to this corner of England, inspiring local audiences.

Led by a prestigious team of senior resident artists, the Hellensmusic Masterclass Programme spans seven intensive days of individual masterclasses, chamber music instruction, and music improvisation sessions for top students invited from conservatories worldwide. Additionally and even more significantly, these young people are given the opportunity to work towards and perform alongside their tutors in the festival's main concerts, and to be featured as soloists at the end of the festival.

Our objective is to craft an immersive and enriching musical week that accelerates substantial learning. Students not only engage in detailed coursework with their mentors and witness them up close in rehearsals and performances, but are also encouraged to interact with them during meals and breaks. This distinctively personal approach to rigorous yet informal learning sets Hellensmusic apart, offering an exceptional educational experience for the most advanced students.



"Amazing. The faculty truly one of a kind and impeccable. I couldn't imagine a better week anywhere."

THE TEAM

We are proud to have a team of resident artists who are not only acclaimed performers and chamber musicians, but also committed and passionate teachers:

VIOLIN | Maya Iwabuchi

VIOLA | Máté Szücs

CELLO | Alice Neary

CLARINET & WOODWIND ENSEMBLE | Matthew Hunt

BASSOON | Amy Harman

PIANO | Christian Blackshaw and Julien Quentin

BANDONEON (Piazzola Masterclass) | Omar Massa

COLLABORATIVE PIANO | Xiaowen Shang

STRINGS

Maya Iwabuchi, violin ([read full bio](#))

Maya Iwabuchi is an accomplished violinist with extensive experience as both an orchestra and chamber musician. Since her debut concert at age five, Maya has established an impressive international career. She has performed in prestigious concert halls worldwide, including London's Royal Festival and Wigmore Halls, Vienna's Musikverein, and New York City's Lincoln Centre and Carnegie Hall. Her solo highlights include appearances at renowned orchestras and music festivals such as the BBC Proms, Aldeburgh, Bath, Chichester, and Edinburgh festivals. Maya's role as Leader of the Philharmonia Orchestra and her involvement with major UK orchestras highlight her exceptional orchestral leadership. Currently residing in Scotland, she serves as Leader of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and is a faculty member at Glasgow's Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Máté Szücs, viola ([read full bio](#))

Máté is a distinguished musician celebrated for his career as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral player. He served as the Principal Viola of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra



"I've never in my life experienced such a life changing and inspiring week of sharing and making music."

and achieved international acclaim for his solo performances. Máté has collaborated with renowned artists such as Janine Jansen, Frank-Peter Zimmermann, and Christian Tetzlaff, and has worked with esteemed conductors including Valery Gergiev and Thomas Adès. He is also a respected educator, his teaching experience spans various prestigious institutions and masterclass courses around the world. Since 2018, he has held the position of Professor of Viola at the Geneva University of Music and earned his Ph.D. in Arts in 2020.

Alice Neary, cello ([read full bio](#))

Alice Neary, principal cellist of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, enjoys a diverse career as a chamber musician, soloist, and educator. She has performed at prestigious festivals such as BBC Proms, Malboro, Santa Fe, and Lofoten, and has appeared as a guest cellist with leading ensembles like the Nash Ensemble and the Endellion Quartet. A former member of the Gould Piano Trio, Alice has toured internationally, commissioned new works, and recorded over 25 CDs. She studied with Ralph Kirshbaum and Timothy Eddy, and currently teaches at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Alice plays a 1710 cello by Alessandro Gagliano.

WOODWIND ENSEMBLE (oboe, bassoon, horn)

Matthew Hunt, clarinet ([read full bio](#))

Matthew Hunt stands as a leading European clarinetist, renowned for his emotive and distinctive playing style that resonates deeply with audiences. He currently holds the position of Solo Clarinetist with the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie, Bremen, and enjoys a thriving international career as both a soloist and chamber musician. As one of the most sought-after chamber musicians in Europe, his rich portfolio includes collaborations with renowned quartets and instrumentalists such as Meta4, Chiarascuro, and Pavel Haas, and eminent artists including Pekka Kuusisto, Alina Ibragimova, and Thomas Adès. He holds a position as Chamber Music Professor at the University of Künste, contributing to



"Meeting the musicians was incredible, one of the musical highlights of my life. I learnt an enormous amount and was more inspired than ever."

the development of the next generation of musicians. His CD recording of Mozart's Clarinet Quintet has earned widespread acclaim, establishing it as a definitive interpretation of this frequently recorded piece.

Amy Harman, bassoon ([see website](#))

Amy Harman is an acclaimed and sought-after bassoonist known for her work as a soloist, chamber musician, and educator. She was appointed professor of bassoon at the Robert Schumann Hochschule Düsseldorf in 2024, becoming the first woman to hold such a position in Germany, and previously taught at the Royal Academy of Music. Amy is principal bassoon of Aurora Orchestra and has performed as guest principal with leading European orchestras. Solo highlights include the premiere of Roxanna Panufnik's Concerto for Bassoon with Royal Northern Sinfonia, Strauss's Concertino with the English Chamber Orchestra, and Mozart's Concerto at Festival Suoni dal Golfo. A dedicated chamber musician, she regularly performs with the Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective and Orsino Wind Quintet.

PIANO

Christian Blackshaw, piano ([read full bio](#))

Christian Blackshaw, a profoundly sensitive and passionate pianist, is lauded for his remarkable musicianship and emotional depth in performance. Having trained with Gordon Green at the Royal College Manchester and the Royal Academy London, he was the first British pianist to study with Moisei Hefin at the Leningrad Conservatoire. He later worked closely with Sir Clifford Curzon in London.

As a globally sought-after recitalist and soloist, he has performed with esteemed conductors like Valery Gergiev, Sir Simon Rattle, Gianandrea Noseda, Yury Temirkanov, and Sir Neville Marriner. Blackshaw is also the Founder Director of the Hellensmusic Festival, established in 2013. His highly praised Wigmore Hall complete Mozart Piano Sonatas series, released across four volumes, has received critical acclaim, described as "captivating," "magical," and



"Amazing! One of the best experiences of my life. Solo masterclasses were absolutely fantastic. I have learnt so much! I'm so excited to process and practice everything that I've learnt here."

"masterful." Recognized as one of the Best Classical Recordings of 2015 in the New York Times and among Gramophone Magazine's Top 50 Greatest Mozart Recordings.

Recent notable performances include the Mozart cycle in Tokyo, Shanghai and Beijing, a return to the Stars of the White Nights Festival in St Petersburg and debuts at the Schwetzingen and Edinburgh International Festivals. His 2019–20 season included taking the Mozart cycle to Montreal and debuting with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Yannick Nezet-Seguin. In 2019, he was honored with the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his contributions to music.

Julien Quentin, piano ([read full bio](#))

French pianist Julien Quentin is celebrated for his versatility and exceptional musicianship, both as a sought-after soloist and chamber artist. His extensive career spans acclaimed performances worldwide, including renowned venues such as Concertgebouw, Wigmore Hall, and Carnegie Hall. He has collaborated with esteemed musicians including Sarah Chang, Nicolas Altstaedt, Lisa Batiashvili Gautier Capuçon, Sol Gabetta, and Kirill Troussov, among others. In addition to his classical pursuits, he curates the innovative 'Musica Litoralis' concert series in Berlin and explores diverse musical genres alongside pianists Kelvin Sholar and Francesco Tristano. Julien's exceptional artistry was cultivated through his studies with mentors like György Sándor in Geneva and the United States. Currently based in Berlin, he continues to expand his musical horizons and artistic expressions.

Julien Quentin's extensive musical background makes him a valuable addition to our chamber music masterclass course. With his experience as both a chamber pianist and soloist, students can look forward to insightful guidance in refining their chamber music performances. In addition, his incorporation of improvisation techniques into classical music provides a unique learning opportunity.



"I have learned so much more than I would in a normal summer course. It is so refreshing to have the opportunity to speak and play with working professionals."

Omar Massa, bandoneon ([read full bio](#))

Argentine bandoneonist and composer Omar Massa, has been hailed by the international press as "the successor to Astor Piazzolla" (Crescendo, Pizzicato) and praised for elevating Tango Nuevo to a prestigious 'Tango Concertante' level (Adrian Quanjer, HRAudio). Massa's exceptional bandoneon performances have graced major concert halls, including the Lincoln Center, Concertgebouw, and the Berlin Philharmonic, where he premiered his own compositions. His 2023 CD with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra further solidified his prominence in the classical music world. Massa has collaborated with world-renowned artists such as Plácido Domingo, Jonas Kaufmann, Daniel Hope, Paquito D'Rivera, Guy Braunstein, and Alondra de La Parra.

Massa will be teaching a masterclass session at Hellensmusic: Astor Piazzolla's Nuevo Tango: Technical Insights and Performance Practice.

COLLABORATIVE PIANO | Xiaowen Shang ([see website](#))

Nominated as one of BBC Magazine's "Rising Stars" of classical music for 2024, prize-winning pianist Xiaowen Shang released her debut album, Music of Silence, on Linn Records in April, as part of the Royal Academy of Music Bicentenary Scholar series. A busy recitalist, Xiaowen's recent career highlights include her debut solo recital at Wigmore Hall, appearances on BBC Radio 3's In Tune, another Wigmore concert with Brett Dean, Lawrence Power, and the Nash Ensemble, and a duo performance with Steven Isserlis at Apsley House.

Her upcoming engagements include Wigmore Hall appearances with her trio, Temporal Harmonies Inc., a UK tour with YCAT Young Artist Charlotte Spruit, and concerto performances across the UK. Recently, she received the Gold Medal from the Beethoven Piano Society of Europe and the Harriet Cohen Bach Prize. Xiaowen, a Young Artist with the Worshipful Company of Musicians, is pursuing her PhD at the Royal Academy of Music after completing her master's there under Joanna MacGregor.



"The fact that the Festival isn't too big was great, as it helped us to get to know each other better and cooperate more successfully. I loved the moments when we met over the excellent food to have inspiring conversation."

COURSE STRUCTURE

Over seven days students will take part in a series of individual masterclasses, chamber music classes and improvisation sessions. They will also rehearse and perform together with their tutors. There are four pianos at Hellens and various spaces that are available for rehearsal at all times.

INDIVIDUAL MASTERCLASSES

Students will have two to three individual masterclasses during the week.

CHAMBER MUSIC ENSEMBLES AND CONCERTS

Students will have a unique opportunity to perform alongside their tutors in the main evening concerts, engaging in diverse chamber music ensembles formed both by teachers and students. Additionally, on the festival's closure day, students will be invited to present their solo repertoire in dedicated performances. All selected repertoire will be provided in advance for students' preparation.

IMPROVISATION SESSIONS

Máté Szücs, Matthew Hunt and Julien Quentin will encourage students to loosen up and explore music improvisation.

MASTERCLASS: ASTOR PIAZZOLLA'S NUEVO TANGO: TECHNICAL INSIGHTS AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

Led by Omar Massa, this 3-hour session will explore the technical elements of Astor Piazzolla's style and Nuevo Tango, focusing on rhythmic language and the distinctive articulation of Buenos Aires' urban folklore, combined with influences from academic music through his studies with Alberto Ginastera and Nadia Boulanger, including contrapuntal treatments, morphology, harmony, and jazz elements. The aim is to help students accurately interpret Piazzolla's music in its authentic style. Similar to other musical traditions, such as Baroque music, many aspects of dynamics, articulation, and variation are left to the performer's discretion and not explicitly written in the score.



APPLICATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

DATES AND COSTS

The course starts at 2pm on Monday 5 May and finishes on Sunday 11 May 7pm, after the final concert. Students are expected to arrive at Hellens by midday on Monday, 5 May, and are requested to remain until after the final concert on Sunday, 11 May.

The fee for the course is £250. This includes all costs related to masterclass fees, accommodation and meals during the course. Transportation costs are not covered by Hellensmusic.

REGISTRATION

In order to apply students need to fill in an online application form where they are required to include their CV and TWO recordings of their playing, preferably videos.

The form can be accessed here: [Hellensmusic 2025 Application Form](https://www.hellensmusic.com/festival/masterclasses/) or through our website www.hellensmusic.com/festival/masterclasses/

There are vacancies open for violin, viola, cello, clarinet, bassoon, horn and piano students who are at advanced conservatory level and seriously preparing for a performing career in music, ages 18-26.

Places are limited, so we encourage you to register your interest with us as soon as possible. The deadline for applications is 22 January 2025.



VENUE & ACCOMMODATION

VENUE

Hellensmusic takes place in Hellens, a much loved and lived-in 12th century Manor house and home located in Herefordshire. It is no great stately house, but an ancient place where the watch-tower, monastery, fortified manor and farmhouses, Tythe Barns and Georgian stable have served their purposes in turn through the millennium. The knot and cloister gardens, a yew labyrinth, a short woodland and pond walk all contribute to a magical environment that entrances visitors.

Hellens provides an ideal setting for the Masterclass Programme. The beautiful houses, and the stunning surroundings contribute to create a great atmosphere of space, freedom and conviviality during the course.

The Festival's heart is the fine 16th century Tythe Barn with its Steinway D concert grand. Masterclasses will take place there, in the music room and other rooms in the main house, as well as at St Bartholomew's Church at the bottom of the drive.

ACCOMMODATION

Students will stay in our restored Georgian Stables. The stables are equipped with bath/shower-rooms, a communal kitchen for breakfast and tea and a central common room with piano. Main meals will be shared with musicians and staff in the main house.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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