
Thursday 12 May, 7pm
Barbican Hall

Gold Medal 2022

Finalists

William Bracken
Kryštof Kohout
Stephanie Tang

Guildhall Symphony Orchestra
Adrian Leaper conductor

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Barbican

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Gold Medal 2022

Thursday 12 May, 7pm

Barbican Hall

Finalists

William Bracken piano

Beethoven *Piano Concerto No 4, Op 58*

Kryštof Kohout violin

Berg *Violin Concerto*

INTERVAL

Stephanie Tang piano

Brahms *Piano Concerto No 1 in D minor, Op 15*

The Jury

Emma Bloxham

Jessica Cottis

John Gilhooly CBE

Adrian Leaper

Armin Zanner (chair)

Guildhall Symphony Orchestra

Adrian Leaper conductor

The presentation of the Gold Medal will take place after the final performance and adjudication.

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1917	Dora Labbette	1981	Susan Bickley
1918	Percy Kemp	1983	Carol Smith
1919	Arnold Stoker	1985	Peter Rose
1921	Marjorie Claridge	1987	Juliet Booth
1922	Marion Browne	1989	Bryn Terfel
1923	Esther Coleman	1991	William Dazeley
1924	Linda Seymour	1993	Nathan Berg
1925	John Turner	1995	Jane Stevenson
1927	Marie Fisher	1997	Konrad Jarnot
1927	Agostino Pellegrini	1999	Natasha Jouhl
1928	Stanley Pope	2001	Sarah Redgwick
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1930	Doreen Bristoll	2005	Anna Stéphany
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1933	Joyce Newton	2009	Gary Griffiths
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1936	Arthur Reckless	2019	Samantha Clarke
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Instrumentalists

1915	Margaret Harrison	1941	Pauline Sedgrove
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1917	Margaret Fairless	1946	Brenda Farrow
1918	Frank Laffitte	1947	Mary O White
1919	Marie Dare	1948	Jeremy White
1920	Horace Somerville	1948	Susanne Rozsa
1922	William Primrose	1950	Leonard Friedman
1923	Walter Nunn	1952	Alfred Wheatcroft
1924	Sidney Harrison	1954	Joyce Lewis
1926	Sidney Bowman	1956	Joan Cohen
1928	Allen Ford	1958	Michael Davis
1929	Roger Briggs	1960	Jacqueline du Pré
1930	Daphne Serre	1962	Robert Bell
1931	Katherine LJ Mapple	1964	Sharon McKinley
1931	Max Jaffa	1966	Anthony Pleeth
1933	Joshua Glazier	1968	David Loukes
1934	Ursula Kantrovich	1970	Jeremy Painter
1935	Vera Kantrovich	1972	Gillian Spragg
1935	Phyllis Simons	1974	Charles Renwick
1936	Lois Turner	1976	James Shenton
1937	Kenneth Moore	1978	Iain King
1939	Carmen Hill	1980	Julian Tear
1940	Marie Bass	1982	Simon Emes
		1984	Kyoko Kimura
		1986	Tasmin Little
		1988	Simon Smith
		1990	Eryl Lloyd-Williams
		1992	Katharine Gowers
		1994	Richard Jenkinson
		1996	Stephen de Pledge
		1998	Alexander Somov
		2000	Maxim Rysanov
		2002	David Cohen
		2004	Boris Brovtsyn
		2006	Anna-Liisa Bezrodny
		2008	Sasha Grynyuk
		2010	Martyna Jatkauskaitė
		2012	Ashley Fripp
		2014	Michael Petrov
		2016	Oliver Wass
		2018	Joon Yoon
		2020	Soohong Park

Welcome



You join us tonight for one of the high points of our season. It is, of course, a contest: three finalists vying for one Gold Medal. But more importantly, this is a concert. We have three magnificent works of music, chosen by the soloists to spotlight their exceptional playing while giving a platform, too, for the array of talent that forms the Guildhall Symphony Orchestra. I hope you are thrilled, enchanted, challenged and moved in equal measure by what you hear, from the introspective opening of Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No 4* – which famously inverts convention by beginning with the piano alone – via Berg's haunting *Violin Concerto*, dedicated almost as a requiem 'in memory of an angel', to the mighty, turbulent *Piano Concerto No 1* by Brahms.

To reach the Barbican stage, our finalists had to work their way through several preliminary rounds. I would like to thank all of the students who took part, as well as all of the prelim panellists, including guests Ann McKay and James Blair. And, of course, for their time and expertise, special thanks go to this evening's panel members, Emma Bloxham, Jessica Cottis, John Gilhooly and conductor Adrian Leaper.

Finally, as Guildhall's orchestral season reaches its end tonight, the music-making on stage is a tribute to all of you who support our students by attending performances and donating to our all-important fundraising campaigns. We look forward to seeing you back in our buildings for other events over the coming weeks, and in the Barbican Hall once again in September for our 2022–23 season opener, when a glorious all-French programme reintroduces the Symphony Orchestra together with the newest cohort of students. Booking opens this summer.

Armin Zanner

Armin Zanner

Interim Director of Music & Head of Vocal Studies

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No 4 in G major, Op 58 (1804–6)



1. *Allegro moderato*
2. *Andante con moto* –
3. *Rondo: Vivace*

The most poetic and intimate of Beethoven's five piano concertos, the Fourth also has the most arresting opening. Gone is the customary orchestral introduction, after which the piano would make its entrance. Instead the solo piano opens the concerto alone with a gentle theme that unfolds from a devastatingly simple G major chord. The orchestra, responding tentatively in B major, has clearly been knocked sideways but soon finds its feet in G major. Throughout the movement, Beethoven gives the pianist plenty of brilliant fingerwork, including his beloved double trills. At the concerto's premiere – in the famous four-hour-long all-Beethoven concert in 1808 that also saw the premieres of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies and the *Choral Fantasy* – the composer Johann Friedrich Reichardt noted the concerto's 'frightful difficulty, the fastest tempos of which Beethoven performed to astonishment'. As with the Third Piano Concerto, Beethoven composed the cadenzas (rather than leaving them to the performer to improvise) and wrote them out in the score.

At only around five minutes in length, the slow movement can be experienced almost as a diversionary scene or a palate-cleanser but, though brief, its impact is immense. Beethoven's biographer A. B. Marx supplied the poetic analogy with Orpheus taming the Furies, reflecting the way the piano gently grinds down the orchestra by continuing to pour balm on its furrowed-brow outbursts.

The trumpets and timpani, silent until now, join in for the Rondo finale. Even though the movement opens with rhythmic precision and boundless energy, there is lyricism in the second theme, introduced by the piano in two separate melodic strands, which the orchestra then amplifies. Exuberance has the last word, though, in a playful Presto conclusion.

William Bracken

Piano



William Bracken was born on the Wirral into a musical family and began playing the piano at the age of four. By the age of twelve he had been accepted onto the Pianoman Scholarship Scheme studying in London with Richard Meyrick. Two years later, in 2013, William received a scholarship from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music to study with Jonathan Middleton at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. In 2017 he was awarded a scholarship to study at Guildhall School of Music & Drama where he is currently on the postgraduate course studying with Ronan O'Hora, Martin Roscoe and Paul Roberts.

William has had the opportunity to perform to pianists such as Simon Trpčeski, Paul Lewis, Jonathan Biss and Stephen Hough and has performed concertos by Beethoven, Prokofiev, Gershwin, Tchaikovsky, Saint-Saëns and Rachmaninoff in venues up and down the country including Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall and St John's Smith Square. He also has an impressive number of recital performances to his name including a St James's Piccadilly debut, a residency aboard a cruise ship in the Indian Ocean and recital tours of the North East of England for the 'Master Musicians International' concert series. In December 2020 he made his solo radio debut playing in a concert of works by German composer Detlev Glanert at Guildhall School. William has been a prize-winner at the Welsh International Piano Competition, the Musikfest Wasserschloss Gesmold in Germany and was the 2020 winner of the Guildhall School Glass Sellers' Beethoven Prize. William is supported in his postgraduate studies by the Headley Trust Scholarship Award and by the Craxton Memorial Trust.

Alban Berg (1885–1935)

Violin Concerto (1935)



Part 1

1. *Andante* –
2. *Allegretto*

Part 2

3. *Allegro* –
4. *Adagio*

Berg was orchestrating his opera *Lulu* when, early in 1935, the American violinist Louis Krasner commissioned him to write a violin concerto. In need of the \$1,500 commission fee, given that performances of his works had dwindled since Hitler had come to power, Berg interrupted work on the opera.

The emotional impetus for the concerto came with the death from polio, in April, of Manon Gropius, the 18-year-old daughter of Alma Mahler (Mahler's widow) and the architect Walter Gropius. Berg decided to dedicate his concerto 'To the memory of an angel' and in the last movement incorporated the funeral chorale 'Es ist genug! So nimm, Herr, meinen Geist' ('It is enough! Take then my spirit, Lord') from Bach's Cantata No. 60.

The concerto is based on a 12-tone row, but one that is, unusually, rich in harmonic associations. The first nine notes of the series (G–B flat–D–F sharp–A–C–E–G sharp–B) form an overlapping sequence of minor and major triads; the final three notes rise in whole-tones (C sharp–E flat–F), echoing the beginning of the chorale melody. Furthermore, taking alternate pitches at the start of the row, G–D–A–E, gives the notes of the violin's open strings, the 'tuning-up' sound with which the soloist first enters.

Symmetry is a key feature: the concerto's four movements are arranged in two pairs, presenting a symmetrical slow–quick–quick–slow sequence. Beyond this, each movement is in itself also strongly palindromic in shape.

According to Berg's biographer Willi Reich, the first part represents the 'vision of the lovely girl in a graceful dance that alternates between a delicate and dreamy character and the rustic character of a Carinthian folk tune'. Part 2 opens with 'a wild orchestral cry'. The last movement begins with the chorale and brings a return of the earlier folk tune as a distant memory of Manon.

Kryštof Kohout

Violin



Kryštof Kohout made his solo debut with the Pilsen Philharmonic Orchestra at the age of eleven in his home town of Pilsen, Czech Republic, and has since performed as a soloist and chamber musician throughout Europe and in the US, at festivals such as the International Chamber Music Festival Plovdiv, Smetana Days, JAM on the Marsh and Young Euro Classic. He studied with Olga Kinzlova, then at the Conservatory of Pilsen with Radka Beranova and in 2017 he won the Whitgift International Music Competition, receiving the Headmaster's Scholarship to study at Whitgift School and a scholarship to Junior Guildhall, where he studied with Ivo Stankov. Two years later he was accepted directly into the second year of the undergraduate course at Guildhall School, where he now studies with professor David Takeno and is generously supported by the Brian George Coker Scholarship and the Huddersfield 1980 Scholarship.

Kryštof is a prize-winner of the Kocian Violin Competition, the Art-Duo International Music Festival in Vienna and the Muse International Music Competition among others. He is also a UK 'Talent Unlimited' artist, and is grateful to have been awarded the Hattori Foundation Junior Award in 2021. He has recently joined the award-winning string ensemble LGT Young Soloists, with whom he has already toured widely, performing for the Princely Family of Liechtenstein and at Konzerthaus Berlin and Musikverein Vienna.

Aside from his formal studies, Kryštof has benefitted from masterclasses with distinguished musicians such as Midori, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Pierre Amoyal, Josef Špaček, Gerhard Schulz and Gyorgy Pauk and attended international courses including the Kronberg Violin Masterclasses, Weimar Masterclasses and the Meadowmount School of Music.

He is grateful for generous support he receives from the Brian George Coker Scholarship, the Hattori Foundation, the Harrison Frank Family Foundation, Velehrad London, Charity of Mary Barnes and Talent Unlimited.

Kryštof plays an Italian violin by G.B. Guadagnini, generously on loan from the Florian Leonhard Fellowship.

Johannes Brahms (1833–97)

Piano Concerto No 1 in D minor, Op 15 (1854–9)



1. *Maestoso*
2. *Adagio*
3. *Rondo: Allegro non troppo*

In the period between Beethoven's 'Emperor' Concerto (1808–10) and Schumann's Piano Concerto (1841–5), the piano concerto had diminished in stature. The rise of the virtuoso pianist had driven a fashion for feats of technical display and the orchestra had largely been relegated to an accompanying role. Writing in 1839, Schumann observed of the genre: 'What once was regarded as an enrichment of instrumental forms... is now voluntarily abandoned.'

Schumann addressed the problem with his own Piano Concerto. So too did Brahms in his First Piano Concerto, conceived on a vast scale. Above all there is also new expressive range, drawing in turbulent struggle and questing passion. It was apparently all too much for the audience at the work's second performance, in Leipzig on 27 January 1859, with Brahms as soloist. The public hissed and one critic reported, 'For three-quarters of an hour one has to bear the struggling and agitation, the pulling and shoving, the bringing together and tearing apart of phrases and flourishes. One has to consume this unfermented mass and then choke down a dessert of screaming dissonance and cacophonous chords.'

The first movement sets the tone from the start with a raging first theme that the violinist Joseph Joachim, who conducted the first performances, said reflected Brahms's mood on hearing in February 1854 that his friend Robert Schumann had thrown himself into the River Rhine. The piano arrives in a more tranquil mood and generally remains there but is drawn into the stormy music from the development section onwards.

Though richly lyrical and unashamedly romantic in expression, the slow movement has a searching, almost mystical quality. The Brahms biographer Malcolm MacDonald suggested Brahms saw this Adagio as an instrumental *Requiem* for Schumann, though Brahms claimed in a letter to Clara Schumann that it was 'a tender portrait' of her.

The vigorous rondo finale brings us back to reality with an exhilarating main theme, which alternates with two contrasting episodes. Drone fifths in the cellos and hunting-horn figures in the oboes mark the start of the coda, before the triumphant close.

Programme notes by Edward Bhesania

Stephanie Tang

Piano



A native of Los Angeles, pianist Stephanie Tang is a prize-winning soloist and chamber musician who has performed around the world since a young age. At the age of 12, she performed at the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and when she was 16 she made her orchestral solo debut with the West Covina Symphony Orchestra. She has since performed solo recitals in Los Angeles, Shenzhen, Shanghai, Sendai, the Netherlands, Banff, Ottawa, Toronto and Gijon.

Stephanie won first prize at the 2013 American Beethoven Society Young Pianists' Competition, second prize at the 2011 Louisiana International Piano Competition and at the Susan Torres Award for Pianists. She also won the Jury Discretionary Prize at Los Angeles Philharmonic's Bronislaw Kaper Awards. In 2017, she competed in the Sendai International Piano Competition and was a finalist in the Heida Hermanns International Piano Competition. In 2021, she was a semi-finalist in the Montreal International Piano Competition and performed in Brussels at the Queen Elisabeth International Piano Competition.

Over the years, Stephanie has worked with many prominent artists including Richard Goode, Robert Levin, Jonathan Biss, Robert McDonald, Matti Raekallio, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Menahem Pressler, and Leon Fleisher. An avid chamber musician, she has performed and collaborated with John Adams, András Diaz, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and coached with members of the Ébène, Guarneri, and Tokyo Quartets. She is a member of the London-based Paddington Trio, where the ensemble recently won second prize and a special prize for the best interpretation of an Estonian work at the Tallinn 2021 International Piano Chamber Music Competition.

Stephanie began her professional studies with Zhaoyi Dan at the Shenzhen Arts School in China. She completed her Bachelor of Music at the Colburn Conservatory of Music with John Perry and Master of Music at the Yale School of Music with Peter Serkin and Boris Slutsky. She is currently in her second year of Artist Diploma studies with Ronan O'Hora at Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

Stephanie is thankful for the generous support of the Silver Bow Scholarship and Steinway & Sons Scholarship.

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Wei Ling Thong
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Camille Said
Anna Mollà Aliaga
Maris Pilgrim
Cathryn Cowell
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Ami-Louise Johnsson
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Yishang Sheng
Kathryn Monteiro
Harry Everitt
Rosie Spinks
Anna White
Nathanael Horton
Natalie Alfillé-Cook

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Chiu Yung Chan
Fabián Galeana
Georgia Lloyd
David Dominguez Vargas
Elena Calvo Bravo

Brahms:

Chiu Yung Chan*
Yat Hei Lee
Fabián Galeana
Georgia Lloyd
David Dominguez Vargas
Elena Calvo Bravo

Flute

Beethoven & Berg:

Isobel Doughty* (piccolo)
Anna Ryan (piccolo)

Brahms:

Karen Wong*
Pauline Delamotte

Oboe

Beethoven & Berg:

Richard Lines-Davies*
Charis Lai (cor anglais)

Brahms:

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Jonathan Willett (A clarinet)
Fresca David (bass clarinet)

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Adrian Leaper Conductor



Adrian Leaper has a distinguished career during which he was Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of Spain's RTVE Symphony Orchestra & Chorus in Madrid and previously Principal Conductor of the Orquesta Filharmónica de Gran Canaria for nearly 20 years. His career began with an unusually long tenure of five years as Assistant Conductor of the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester. Adrian has conducted all four major London orchestras, the Moscow, Vienna and Prague Symphony Orchestras, several Radio Orchestras across Europe including the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Malmö Symphony Orchestra, the Mozarteum Orchester in Salzburg, Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, the Orquesta Ciudad de Sevilla, Orquesta Ciudad de Málaga and Real Orquesta de Galicia.

Adrian's repertoire has grown over the years to extend well beyond normal core classical pieces, encompassing Sibelius, Janáček, Elgar, Dvořák and Mahler, plus an empathy with Spanish music. He has also had considerable success with pieces like Stravinsky *Rite of Spring*, Bartók *Miraculous Mandarin*, Martinů *St. Francisco Frescoes*, Shostakovich *Symphony No 1* and Janáček *Jenůfa*. He has also worked with Mstislav Rostropovich, Felicity Lott, Garrick Ohlssen, Rudolf Buchbinder, Mischa Maisky, Frank Peter Zimmermann, Alicia de Larrocha, Pierre Amoyal, Ernst Kovacic, Cho-Liang Lin and Anne-Sofie von Otter.

His enormous discography for Arte Nova, ASV, Naxos/Marco Polo and La Mota de Polvo includes an extraordinary range from standard classical repertoire through core Russian and central European works, staples of the English concert platform alongside British light music classics and, for ASV, Spanish 20th century music amongst which are premier recordings of works by Granados, Ernesto Halffter, Rodo, Obradores and Conrado del Campo.

The Jury



Emma Bloxham

Emma studied the clarinet and piano and read music at Oxford University followed by a postgraduate year at King's College, London. She joined the BBC in 1997 and for many years was a Producer working across the whole of Radio 3's output. Since July 2014 she has been Editor, live music, where her responsibilities include Opera on 3, the radio coverage of the BBC Proms, and the running of the BBC New Generation Artists scheme.



Jessica Cottis

Jessica Cottis is an award-winning Australian conductor who works with many of the world's leading orchestras. She is Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra, where she champions new commissions, especially by Australian composers. This season, she makes her debuts with Bremer Philharmoniker, RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Royal Danish Opera, and returns to the Royal Opera House for the world premiere of Laura Bowler's *The Blue Woman*. Jessica is a frequent contributor on the BBC, commenting on a wide-range of arts-related topics such as opera, architecture, synaesthesia, the environment, and acoustics. She studied as an organist and trumpeter at the Australian National University and in Paris, but when a wrist injury halted her playing career, she began conducting studies at the Royal Academy of Music, studying with Colin Metters and Sir Colin Davis. She was Assistant Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Symphony Orchestra and is an Associate of the Royal Academy. Jessica lives in London where she pursues her passion for butterflies all over the world.



John Gilhooly CBE

As Artistic and Executive Director of Wigmore Hall, John Gilhooly programmes the largest chamber music and song series in the world. In 2021, he was awarded a CBE and in 2015 was made a Knight of the Order of the White Rose of Finland by the President of Finland. John has also received the Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art and the Order of the Star of Italy. In 2016 he was awarded the German Order of Merit. He is a recipient of Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Academy of Music, Honorary Membership of the Royal College of Music, Honorary Fellowship of the Guildhall School, and Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Irish Academy of Music and is patron of Leeds Lieder, Irish Heritage, Cavatina Chamber Music Trust, Wimbledon Music Festival and Corpus Christi Maiden Lane Refurbishment Project. John was awarded the Heidelberger Frühling Music Award in 2019 and was presented with the Musicians' Company Cobbett Medal for chamber music. He is Chairman of the Royal Philharmonic Society and is Chairman of BBC Cardiff Singer of the World song prize.



Armin Zanner chair

Armin Zanner serves as Head of Vocal Studies at Guildhall School of Music & Drama, where he is also Interim Director of Music. Armin began his performing life as a violinist and was educated at Selwyn College, Cambridge, before moving to Guildhall School to specialise as a singer. In his Vocal Department role at Guildhall, Armin has expanded performance opportunities for students, strengthened the UK and international network of visiting artists and embedded collaboration across the programme. Outside of Guildhall, Armin is an Artistic Director of Austria's Franz-Schubert-Institut, has been on the faculty of multiple summer programmes, including the Internationale Meistersinger Akademie in Germany, and has led masterclasses for students at institutions ranging from the Sibelius Academy to Taiwan National University of the Arts. He has served on international competition juries and his writing has been published by Bloomsbury and various magazines in the UK and US.

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Thanks

We would like to thank James Blair (Artistic Director, YMSO) and Ann McKay (Chief Producer, BBCSO) for adjudicating the preliminary rounds of the competition, Jack Sheen for conducting the initial tutti and sectional rehearsals, and each of the following orchestral tutors provided by the London Symphony Orchestra:

Amanda Truelove tutti strings

Max Spiers woodwind

Angela Barnes wind, brass, percussion & harp

Joost Bosdijk wind, brass, percussion & harp

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Monday 27 June
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Enjoy a sumptuous evening of dining and performances in the magnificence of Mansion House and help raise vital funds for world-class training at Guildhall School.

This very special evening, hosted by The Rt. Hon. the Lord Mayor of the City of London will include a champagne reception, three-course gala dinner interspersed with performances from the School's talented students and alumni, and a unique arts themed auction.

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For further information about supporting Guildhall School and its students, please contact the Development Office on 020 7382 7179 or email development@gsmd.ac.uk

We have done our utmost to ensure the information listed here is accurate. If there is anything you would like us to amend please get in touch.

The Guildhall School Trust is a Registered Charity, No. 1082472

The Gold Medal 2023

Next year's Gold Medal, celebrating outstanding Guildhall School singers, will be held on **10 May 2023**.