

GUILDHALL HARP DEPARTMENT NEWS: AUTUMN 2026

We are well into the swing of the Autumn Term, and happy to hear exciting news of our Alumni. Both **Heather Brooks** and **Chris Clarke** gave concerto performances in London in the space of one week; **Lise Vandersmissen** and **Zuzanna Olbrys** played together in Scottish Opera's Turandot; **Oliver Wass** appeared at the Wigmore Hall in recital with countertenor Iestyn Davies, and toured the USA including a masterclass at The Juilliard School.

Orchestral opportunities this term range from Bernstein's Chichester Psalms, through Mahler, Shostakovich, Berlioz, Borodin, Copland, Wagner, Ravel, Vaughan Williams, Janacek, Holst, Tchaikovsky and Sibelius, in the Guildhall Symphony Orchestra, the Guildhall Symphonic Wind Orchestra, Wind Repertoire Orchestra, Ubu Ensemble, and Jazz Orchestra. Harpists are also involved in operas by Bernstein and Menotti, as well as work with early music ensembles, and an exciting collaboration with the London Contemporary Dance School.

We are always passionate about the importance of contemporary music and about educating young composers to love the harp and to write well for it. In November, **Imogen Barford** and the harp students will give a workshop and demonstration for all Guildhall composers on writing for the harp, and, in the Summer, we will premiere our latest commissions: a new flute-violin-harp trio by **Zoe Martlew** and a new harp solo by **Colin Matthews**.

This year **Imogen Barford** gave masterclasses at the Amsterdam Conservatoire and the Mozarteum Salzburg, gave a masterclass for Polish harp teachers, and next year will visit the Liszt Academy in Budapest – a wonderful way of building bridges with other professors and students!

Our **Summer Harp Festival: Looking Back, Looking Forward** in June, included a celebration of 200 years since the birth of John Thomas in the form of a fascinating exhibition and lecture recital by **Sioned Williams**, and a mock orchestra audition with the Philharmonia Orchestra's Principal harpist **Heidi Krutzen** and the London Symphony Orchestra's Principal **Bryn Lewis**. From Greece we welcomed **Lena Palera and Theodoros Koumartzis** who gave a revelatory concert and workshop on the harp's ancient ancestor, the Lyre, and **Joy Smith** entranced us with early harps and stories. We enjoyed a presentation on **Britten's Harp** devised by Eleanor Medcalf, and **Contemporary Music for Harp** presented by Guildhall students. This year we also launched two very successful harp courses taught by Guildhall harp professors.

For the most up-to-date information, 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.

27 October at 1.00pm Salvi Harps London Showroom, 14 Molasses Row, London SW11 3UX

Guildhall Harpists Bethany Caswell and Eleanor Medcalf in a Masterclass by Anneleen Lenaerts, Principal Harpist of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

28 January 7.00pm in the Music Hall

Free to attend

Guildhall Harpists and Friends play solos and chamber music.

This will be preceded by an **OPEN AFTERNOON** where prospective students can visit informally to meet the professors and see us in action. Please email harp@gsmd.ac.uk for details.

17 March 1.00pm at St Olave's Church, 8 Hart Street, London EC3R 7NB

Free to attend

Guildhall Harpists in Recital in this beautiful City Church

4 May 1.00pm in the Lecture Recital Room

Free to attend

Guildhall Harpists and Friends

12 May 1.00pm at St Olave's Church, 8 Hart Street, London EC3R 7NB

Free to attend

Guildhall Harpists in Recital

21 and 22 June in the Lecture Recital Room

Free to attend

Summer Harp Festival

Look out for more details of masterclasses soon