



MUSIC FEST

ABERYSTWYTH
2025

26 JULY - 2 AUGUST

Festival Brochure

CANOLFAN Y CELFYDDYDAU
ABERYSTWYTH ARTS CENTRE

 **MUSICFEST**

Aberystwyth

musicfestaberystwyth.org

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

CANOLFAN Y CELFYDDYDAU
ABERYSTWYTH ARTS CENTRE

PRIFYSGOL
ABERYSTWYTH
UNIVERSITY

 Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales



Cyngor Tref
Aberystwyth
Town Council


AMGUEDDFA
CEREDIGION
MUSEUM

Tŷ CERDD
hyrwyddo cerddoriaeth Cymru
promoting the music of Wales


Colwinston
CHARITABLE TRUST


CYNNAL Y CARDI
Cwm Cymunedau a Cynaliadwy
Creating Sustainable Communities

Friends of Musicfest is a registered charity, set up in 2007. The fund assists students, including many local youngsters, who would otherwise be unable to attend the event which is so advantageous to their musical knowledge and in many cases their future careers.

As Musicfest grows year by year Aberystwyth is increasingly put on the musical map in Wales and beyond. We are indeed privileged to have such an event locally. However, as the event grows annually the demands for bursaries increase as students, and their parents, find it difficult financially.

If you would like to help by becoming a 'Friend' please contact

Joan Rowlands on:

joanrowlands777@gmail.com

07964159401

WELCOME

Aberystwyth Musicfest 2025 will offer a vision of the ideal Wales, through music. *Wythnos yng Nghymru Fydd*, Islwyn Ffowc Elis's seminal 1957 novel, invites us to imagine the Wales we want to see. In the centenary of his birth, and inspired by his key themes, we will bring to life a society where equality, the Welsh language, and our relationship with the world around us, are celebrated and interrogated, creating a unique experience of Welshness, through music and words.

It is our privilege to welcome to Aberystwyth opera legend Sir Bryn Terfel, alongside the Archdruid of Wales, Mererid Hopwood, and students from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, accompanied by Zoë Smith, in a celebration concert to mark the 150th anniversary of the Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies at Aberystwyth University. The concert will feature music by Wales's foremost composer of art song, Meirion Williams, and words by some of Wales's best-known poets, together with music and poetry that trace Williams' legacy and celebrate his influence on the next generations of Welsh songwriters.

Musicfest's Artistic Director, Iwan Teifion Davies, will conduct the Welsh National Opera orchestra in a rare concert performance of Arwel Hughes and Saunders Lewis's comic opera, *Serch yw'r Doctor*. This important part of our musical heritage, by two of the leading creative figures of the twentieth century, has only been heard once since its premiere at the National Eisteddfod in 1960.

There's a wide variety of other events, including performances by Sinfonia Cymru alongside N'famady Kouyaté, fusing West-African rhythms and melodies with classical and folk sounds; the Welsh Chamber Orchestra in a programme including Mozart's 40th Symphony; Art Deco Trio, led by pianist and composer Iain Farrington, performing classical repertoire re-interpreted as jazz standards; Pocket Sinfonia with their award-winning chamber versions of symphonic works; 'When Hitler Stole the Music', an exploration of women refugee composers, focusing on Julia Kerr; violinist Sara Trickey 'recreating' a Jelly d'Aranyi recital; Jane Austen 250, an event with music and words curated by Andrew Matthews-Owen – and much more.

There truly is something for everyone at this year's Musicfest. We hope you enjoy.

Full details of the programme are on the Musicfest website:

www.musicfestaberystwyth.org

Tickets are available through the Aberystwyth Arts Centre ticket office.

Festival passes £175

www.musicfestaberystwyth.org

01970 62 32 32
artstaff@aber.ac.uk
aberystwythartscentre.co.uk
    **@aberystwytharts**

MUSICFESTXtra

Pre-festival events

- 27/06/2025 Holy Trinity Church 7.30pm
Guy Johnson (cello) and Tom Poster (piano)
Friends Fundraiser
- 03/07/2025 Holy Trinity Church 7.30pm
Côr ABC
- 09/07/2025 Holy Trinity Church 7.00pm
Schubert Octet
- 23/07/2025 Holy Trinity Church 7.00pm
Mellow Cellos & Friends
- 24/07/2025 Aberystwyth Arts Centre 1.00pm
Amazing Piano
- 25/07/2025 Aberystwyth Arts Centre 7.30pm
Peter Stevenson and Friends
- 25/07/2025 Ffynnon Garon 7.30pm
Angharad Davies & Friends of the Well
please see our web site as this has very limited numbers

Please visit our website to see more events as they are added
www.musicfestaberystwyth.org



THE FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

Saturday 26 July

8pm Sinfonia Cymru with N'famady Kouyaté

Sunday 27 July

4pm Welsh Chamber Orchestra

8pm Art Deco Trio

Monday 28 July

1pm When Hitler Stole the Music

6pm String Student Showcases

8pm Bryn Terfel: An Evening of Song

Tuesday 29 July

1pm Raphael James, piano

6.30pm String Student Showcases

8pm Pocket Sinfonia

10pm Late Night Piano

Wednesday 30 July

1pm Norwegian Students String Quartet

6.30pm String Student Showcases

8pm Jane Austen 250

Thursday 31 July

1pm Aurelija Stasiulytė

6.30pm String Student Showcases

8pm Jelly d'Aranyi and Aberystwyth

Friday 1 August

1pm Beethoven's Vienna

3.30pm Afon Film + Q&A

6.30pm String Student Showcases

7pm Serch yw'r Doctor

Saturday 2 August

9am - 5pm Summer School Showcase Concerts

5pm Afon Film + Q&A

8pm The Finale - the Tutor's Quintet



Saturday 26 July

8pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £20 (£18)

Sinfonia Cymru with N'famady Kouyaté

Winner of Glastonbury's Emerging Talent Competition 2023, N'famady Kouyaté is a Guinea-born singer and multi-instrumentalist, now living in Cardiff. Come and experience new arrangements of N'famady's music, his incredible vocals and balafon playing skills alongside Sinfonia Cymru's string quartet and percussion. Expect a dynamic mix of international styles, fusing West-African rhythms and melodies with classical and folk sounds.



Sunday 27 July

4pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £20 (£18)

Welsh Chamber Orchestra

Since its inception in 1986, the Welsh Chamber Orchestra has performed with many of the world's greatest soloists, undertaken several European concert tours and performed throughout the UK. For many years it was resident chamber orchestra at the Swansea International Concert Series where its innovative policy of giving second performances of works by Welsh composers was highly successful. It has recorded numerous television programmes including a New York Film Festival, and prize-winning Opera series.



Programme

Coleridge Taylor 4 Novelletten

Debussy Danses Sacrée et Profane
soloist Alis Huws

Gershwin Lullaby

Mozart Symphony no.40

8pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £20 (£18)

Art Deco Trio

Art Deco Trio perform classical and popular music with a jazz influence, combining the materials and textures of the classical repertoire with the rhythms and harmonies of jazz. Like the Art Deco style, their music mixes elegance and clean lines with exuberance and bold colours. The trio is made up of three friends and colleagues, who have performed together in numerous ensembles at many of the leading UK venues.



Peter Sparks – clarinet

Kyle Horch – saxophone

Iain Farrington – piano/arranger

Monday 28 July

1pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £10 (£9)

When Hitler Stole the Music

The life and songs of Julia Kerr

Julia Kerr (1898-1965) - composer, wife of writer Alfred Kerr, and mother of the acclaimed children's author Judith Kerr, who wrote *The Tiger Who Came to Tea*, the *Mog* series and *When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit*, her novelisation of the family's flight from Germany. Kerr had just completed her second opera, *Der Chronoplan* in 1933 when the family were forced to flee, and the manuscript travelled with them, though the opera was never staged. With the recent revival of interest in *entartete musik* (the Nazis' so-called 'degenerate music'), it will receive its world premiere in 2026. Dr Andrea Hammel, from Aberystwyth University's Centre for the Movement of People, and Professor Christian Leitmeir from Oxford's Faculty of Music, will discuss Kerr's experience of exile as a creative artist, combined with performances of her songs, accompanied by Artistic Director, Iwan Davies.



6.30pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre Free

String Student Showcase

8pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £25

Bryn Terfel: An evening of song

Operatic legend Sir Bryn Terfel and Archdruid of Wales Mererid Hopwood, join advanced young singers from the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama accompanied by pianist, Zoe Smith. This concert is a celebration to mark the 150th anniversary of the Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies at Aberystwyth University. In collaboration with the RWCMD, the concert will feature music by Wales's foremost composer of art song, Meirion Williams, and words by some of Wales's best-known poets together with music and poetry that trace Williams' legacy and celebrate the influence he had on the next generations of Welsh songwriters.



Tuesday 29 July

1pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre £10 (£9)

Raphael James

As part of our Young Artist series we present Raphael James. He is an 18-year-old from Cardigan in West Wales. He recently completed A levels in Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry at Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi. In September he will begin his undergraduate piano studies with Professor Gareth Owen at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.



Beethoven: Piano Sonata no. 18 in E-flat major, Op.31 No.3 (The Hunt)

Edvard Grieg: Piano Sonata in E minor, Op.7

Morfydd Owen: Talyllyn, The Passing of Branwen

Rachmaninoff: Études-tableaux

Op.33 No.3 in C minor

Op.39 No.9 in D major

Stephen Hough: Fanfare Toccata

6.30pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre Free

String Student Showcase

8pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre £20 (£18)

Pocket Sinfonia

Pocket Sinfonia reinterprets orchestral masterpieces with the spontaneity and intimacy of a chamber group. Using both modern and period instruments, Pocket Sinfonia was formed to recreate the atmosphere of 19th century living room parties, where the intimacy of chamber music performance could be applied to orchestral-scale pieces. This is made possible via various transcriptions by composers of the 19th century, including Hummel and Clementi. Pocket Sinfonia has since made their own arrangements, applying spontaneity and vigour to creations that are not merely smaller versions of great pieces, but are new and artistic in their own right.



Prokofiev: Romeo and Juliet

Fanny Mendelssohn: Overture in C major

Felix Mendelssohn : A Midsummer Night's Dream

10pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre

Free event

Late Night Piano

Wednesday 30 July

1pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £10 (£9)

Norwegian Students String Quartet

Continuing our lunchtime series of performances by young artists associated with Musicfest 2025, a quartet of talented young players from Norway who are students on the Musicfest Summer School will showcase their talents.



6.30pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre Free

String Student Showcase

8pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £20 (£18)

Jane Austen 250

Love, Life and Sisterhood

"She was the sun of my life, the gilder of every pleasure, the soother of every sorrow, I had not a thought concealed from her, and it is as if I had lost a part of myself." — Cassandra Austen

Jane Austen, that most perceptive observer of the human spirit, is loved by us through her inimitable characters. Jane and her beloved sister Cassandra enjoyed a vivid correspondence, covering life events and their related emotions over numerous years. Cassandra destroyed many of these letters, leaving us only fragments with which to build a portrait of Jane.

In this recital of words by Jane Austen, illuminated by music she loved, by composers including Gluck, Handel, Haydn, Schubert, popular songs of the time, and extracts from Jonathan Dove's underscoring of the letters, *My Beloved Cassandra*, we explore and celebrate an extraordinary life.

Nina Wadia, actor
Claire Booth, soprano,
Andrew Matthews-Owen, piano



Thursday 31 July

1pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £10 (£9)

Aurelija Stasiulytė

As part of our Young Artist's Concert Series we are pleased to welcome Aurelija Stasiulytė, the Lithuanian mezzo-soprano, who will be performing Elgar's *Sea Pictures* and a Lithuanian song cycle.

Jurgis Karnavičius – *Six Romances* (P.B. Shelley):

Ozymandias

A Dirge

Time Long Past

The Waning Moon

To Emilia Viviani

To The Moon



6.30pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre Free

String Student Showcase

8pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre £20 (£18)

Jelly d'Aranyi and Aberystwyth

This concert is inspired by the Hungarian violinist Jelly d'Aranyi who was a great favourite with Gregynog and Aberystwyth audiences from the 1920s to the 1950s.

The concert is presented by the violinist Sara Trickey with an introduction by Rhian Davies.

Jelly d'Arányi (1893–1966) was a Hungarian violinist, the great-niece of Joseph Joachim, sister of violinist Adila Fachiri (1886-1962). She began study as a pianist, but switched to violin at the Franz Liszt Conservatory in Budapest when Jenő Hubay accepted her as a pupil. She formed a trio with Pablo Casals, cello, and Frederick Septimus Kelly, piano. She also performed together with Béla Bartók, who dedicated his two sonatas for violin and piano to her which they performed in London in March 1922 (No. 1) and May 1923 (No. 2).



Friday 1 August

1pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £10 (£9)

Beethoven's Vienna: Nineteenth-Century Guitar Repertoire on a Period Instrument

Dr Oliver Chandler presents a recital of music composed by guitarists — contemporaries of Beethoven — working in Vienna between 1806 and 1818. He will be performing on a period instrument, on loan from the Bate Collection in Oxford, which was built in Paris in the mid nineteenth century. There will be commentary between the pieces, creating a 'lecture recital' format

Anton Diabelli, *Amusement pour les dames*, No. 1

Anton Diabelli, *Overture for Solo Guitar*

Simon Molitor, *Grand Sonata for Solo Guitar*, Op. 7/i

Wenzel Thomas Matiegka, Op. 31, No. 1/i

Mauro Giuliani, Op. 15/i



3.30pm Cinema Free

Afon

Film + Q&A



6.30pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre Free

String Student Showcase

8pm - Great Hall, Arts Centre £25

WNO Orchestra

Serch yw'r Doctor

A once-in-a-lifetime performance of *Serch yw'r Doctor*, Arwel Hughes and Saunders Lewis' comic operatic masterpiece, performed by the Welsh National Opera orchestra, conducted by Musicfest Artistic Director Iwan Davies, with leading Welsh soloists Fflur Wyn, Robert Lewis, Paul Carey Jones, Steffan Lloyd Owen and Sioned Gwen Davies. First staged at the 1960 National Eisteddfod, this concert performance will take place 65 years to the date of the original. This event is supported by the Saunders Lewis Memorial Fund.



Saturday 2 August

9.30am (see website for exact times) Great Hall, Arts Centre Free event

Summer School Showcase Concerts

5pm Cinema Free

Afon

Film + Q&A

A stop motion journey following the course of the Afon Rheidol



8pm Great Hall, Arts Centre £20 (£18)

The Finale – the Tutors' Quintet

Our well known tutors get together to perform a sparkling programme with an extra surprise.

Violin: Sigyn Fossnes

Violin: Gabriela Jones

Viola: Rebecca Chambers

Cello: Kari Ravnan

Piano: Oliver Cuttriss

Programme

Schumann : Piano Quintet: op 44

Shostakovich : Piano Quintet: op 57

