

Madeleine Mitchell's Red Violin Festival returns from **14-19 October** in Leeds, featuring two premieres by James B Wilson and Heggie/Scheer

RedViolinFestival.co.uk



"For violin lovers and general music appreciators alike, the dynamic Red Violin festival should not be missed."

Classic FM, 2007

Founded by violinist **Madeleine Mitchell**, **The Red Violin Festival** returns for a city-wide celebration in **Leeds** from **14 to 19 October** and features **two premieres by James B Wilson** and **Jake Heggie & Gene Scheer**. A joyous inter-generational celebration of the violin in all its guises, from Baroque to contemporary, Roma to Indian, Red Violin combines new repertoire, lesser-known works and popular favourites. Merging with the local community for a unique exploration of the violin, the third festival partners with **Leeds International Concert Season, Leeds Conservatoire, Opera North in Harmony, University of Leeds, South Asian Arts UK, Sinfonia of Leeds, ArtForms, Everyman Cinema, and Leeds City Walking Tours**. **Lord Menuhin** was the Founder Patron, the first festival taking place in **1997** and **Lord Michael Berkeley** joins this year as **President**, writing:

"I am delighted to be associated with the Red Violin. Madeleine Mitchell has been an intrepid and inspiring music maker, extending the repertoire of her instrument with new work and exploring the highways and byways of violin writing over the centuries. I am sure that the famous hunger for music in Leeds that I have often experienced as

a composer and broadcaster will respond to this new initiative and that the Red Violin will become an important part of the musical scene in Yorkshire."

Madeleine Mitchell comments:

"I'm thrilled to be staging the eclectic Red Violin Festival again, this time throughout Leeds after 5 years of planning, in partnership with established organisations. The fiddle crosses all boundaries and is associated with angels and devils alike. 'Where there are violins there is hope' (from The Violins of Hope).

I founded the Red Violin with Menuhin on the inspiration of Le Violon Rouge paintings by Dufy and others. Coincidentally, the film 'The Red Violin' came out the following year, so we showed it at the second festival. This time I'm pleased to feature live performances of the Red Violin Caprices taken from Corigliano's film score, before the two screenings. Lots to discover and enjoy!"



James B. Wilson with Madeleine Mitchell

Highlights for **2024** include the **world premiere** of a new piece for violin and piano by RPS Award winning composer **James B Wilson** on **18 October** supported by the Vaughan Williams Foundation and the **UK premiere** of **Heggie/Scheer Intonations** at The Venue at Leeds Conservatoire, on **17 October**. **Intonations** is a 40-minute song cycle for mezzo-soprano, solo violin, string quartet and youth solo violin, inspired by James Grymes' book *Violins of Hope: Violins of the Holocaust - Instruments of Hope and Liberation in Mankind's Darkest Hour*. *Violins of Hope* presents instruments that were owned by Jewish musicians before and during the Holocaust, representing strength and optimism out of darkness.

An extract from Intonations:

"The past is a clock without any hands. When the wheel of history comes round When hatred is chanted and screamed - again - When innocents are blamed - again - When the gun is loaded When the match is lit Let someone - someone - pick me up And let me sing again ... to remember."

It will be performed by the **London Chamber Ensemble**, which was founded by violinist Madeleine Mitchell, with projected images of the violins. Coupled with the UK



Madeleine Mitchell with Gene Scheer

premiere of *Intonations*, the concert on **17 October** will celebrate the launch of the London Chamber Ensemble Quartet's album on the SOMM label of **premiere recordings** of **Charles Wood's Quartet No.6** and the recently discovered earlier version of **Howells Quartet 'In Gloucestershire'** alongside Mitchell's own arrangements for string quartet of two Howells pieces for violin & piano, **Luchinushka** and **Chosen Tune**. The latter refers to Howells' birthplace Chosen Hill near Gloucester and this little hymn-like piece was dedicated to his wife Dorothy for their wedding. [Photo Adaq Khan, Menuhin Hall]

Red Violin launches on **14 October** with a free lunchtime concert of violin and organ music with Leeds City Organist **Darius Battiwalla** and violinist **Sarah Brandwood-Spencer**, as part of Leeds International Concert Season's Lunchtime Organ Music Series.

On **16 October**, **Opera North In Harmony** will present a performance by 30 local children of violin pieces by **Peter Maxwell Davies** and **Malcolm Singer**. These have special resonance for Madeleine as her first job was as the last violinist/violist in Maxwell Davies' *Fires of London*. Furthermore, Malcolm Singer was for many years director of the Menuhin school, set up by the Founder Patron of Red Violin. That evening, Hungarian violinist **Antal Zalai** of Roma background and pianist **Adam Heron** of Nigerian-Filipino descent, share their friendship and heritage through music as part of Leeds International Concert Season's Sound Out Leeds series.



On **18 October**, Mitchell's lunchtime concert will include **Judith Weir's Atlantic Drift violin duos**, 'celebrating the flow of traditional music from the British Isles to North America', which Mitchell recorded on **Violin Muse**. To mark **Michael Nyman's 80th** birthday, the programme will also include **Taking it as Read** which Nyman composed for the last Red Violin festival in 2007. That evening, there will be screenings of **The Red Violin** at the Everyman Cinema in Leeds city centre, before which outstanding young violinist **Shing Hong Chow**, final year student at the Royal College of Music, will perform Corigliano's **Red Violin Caprices** from the film score.

On the final day of the festival, **Saturday 19 October**, there will be a **HundRED violinists' workshop** for all ages at Leeds Conservatoire, followed by flash mob performances in two shopping centres in Leeds, featuring a newly composed work by **James Gerrard**, a graduate of Leeds University and ex-NHS worker who is now pursuing a Master of Composition at York University.

Making the connection to Paganini's visit to Leeds, the festival will celebrate the musical city of Leeds with andante-paced walking tours with professional tour guide (and amateur violinist) Rachael Unsworth for a violin-themed musical route.

The grand finale welcomes father son duo David and Tom Greed for Vivaldi Double Violin Concerto and Madeleine Mitchell for Bruch Violin Concerto with the Sinfonia of Leeds, director David Greed, Opera North Orchestra leader 1983-2023.

2024 Festival Listings

Monday 14th October 12.00

Leeds Cathedral

Festival Opening Launch

13.15

Leeds Cathedral

Leeds International Concert Season
Leeds Lunchtime Organ Music Series

Florence Price Suite No 1: Toccata
JS Bach Sonata No 4 in C minor
Otto Olsen Romance for violin and organ
Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Two Pieces: Romance, Cavatina
César Franck Prelude, Fugue and Variation
César Franck Violin Sonata: IV

Darius Battiwalla organ
Sarah Brandwood-Spencer violin

Tuesday 15th October 11.00

Walking tour with violin soundtrack

19.30

The Venue at Leeds Conservatoire

Leeds International Concert Season
Leeds International Chamber Series

Henry Purcell Fantasias for String Quartet

Germaine Tailleferre String Quartet

Gabriel Fauré String Quartet

Benjamin Britten String Quartet No 2

Caerus Quartet

Jonian Ilias Kadesha violin

Pablo Hernán Benedí violin/viola

Lily Francis viola/violin

Vashti Hunter cello

Wednesday 16th October 13.05

The Venue at Leeds Conservatoire

Leeds International Concert Season
Leeds Lunchtime Chamber Music Series

Akiko Ono violin

Alison Rhind piano

Korngold Much Ado about Nothing

Richard Strauss Violin Sonata

18.00

Howard Assembly Room

Opera North In Harmony

Performance by 30 young violinists in 'Celebration of the Violin' with slides of great violin paintings by Picasso, Matisse, Dufy, Chagall and others.

Maxwell Davies Sanday Tunes

Malcolm Singer Shtetlmusik

Madeleine Mitchell presenter

19.30

The Venue at Leeds Conservatoire

**Leeds International Concert Season
Sound Out Leeds**

Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges Unpublished Violin Sonatas (selection)

Pablo de Sarasate Zigeunerweisen

Maurice Ravel Tzigane

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Gypsy Suite Op 20: i Gypsy Song, ii Gypsy Dance

Keith Jarrett Elegy

George Gershwin/Frolov Concert Fantasy on themes of Porgy and Bess

Antal Zalai violin

Adam Heron piano

Thursday 17th October

11.00

Walking tour with violin soundtrack

19.30

The Venue

Jake Heggie & Gene Scheer

Intonations **UK PREMIERE**

Howells In Gloucestershire

Charles Wood Quartet no.6

Howells Luchinushka (arr. Mitchell)

The London Chamber Ensemble String Quartet launch their new album for SOMM of premiere recordings by Herbert Howells and his teacher Charles Wood - infused with Irish folk tunes

Siân Griffiths Mezzo soprano

London Chamber Ensemble

Madeleine Mitchell violin

Gordon MacKay violin

Bridget Carey viola

Joseph Spooner cello

Friday 18th October

13.05-13.55

Clothworkers Centenary Concert Hall

University of Leeds International Concert Series

Judith Weir Atlantic Drift violin duos

Rebecca Clarke Nocturne for two violins and piano

James B Wilson New work for violin and piano **WORLD PREMIERE**

Michael Nyman Taking it as Read (*composed for the Red Violin festival*)

Béla Bartók Violin Duos

Madeleine Mitchell violin

Gordon MacKay violin

14.45 and 18.00

The Everyman Cinema

The Red Violin film preceded by

Corigliano Red Violin Caprices

Shing Hong Chow Violin

19.00

Seven Arts, Chapel Allerton

South Asian Arts

North & South Indian Violin

Saturday 19th October

10.00

Leeds Conservatoire

A HundRED violins workshop

Workshop of new piece by James Gerrard for 100 violinists of all ages

13.00

Trinity and Victoria Shopping Centres

Flashmob performances

WORLD PREMIERE

19.30

St Edmund's Roundhay

Sinfonia of Leeds Concert

+**Vivaldi** A minor Double Violin Concerto

***Bruch** Violin Concerto

Dvorak Symphony No.7

Sinfonia of Leeds

David Greed violin

Tom Greed violin

***Madeleine Mitchell** violin

Anthony Kraus conductor

+**David Greed** director

Madeleine Mitchell

Madeleine Mitchell has been described by the Chief Music Critic of The Times as 'one of Britain's liveliest musical forces'. She has performed in 50 countries as a soloist in a wide repertoire in major festivals and venues, most recently in Japan and frequently broadcasts for television and radio including the BBC Proms.

Her latest album, *Violin Conversations* includes 8 premiere recordings, six of which were written for Mitchell. It follows her successful previous Naxos album, which reached no.2 in the Classical Charts. Her recording of the solo violin piece written for her by Michael Berkeley 'Notes on the Loss of a Friend: In Memoriam Nicholas Snowman' is on his album *Collaborations* released 14 June, Orchid Classics.



In 1992 she founded The London Chamber Ensemble, initially for Messiaen Quartet for the End of Time with Joanna MacGregor, performing at the BBC Proms, their recording being the widely recommended version of the work.

As a recording artist with a wide discography, Madeleine has been nominated for Grammy and BBC Music Magazine Awards. She won a Royal Philharmonic Enterprise Award for her project linking art and music in film with her programme for the V&A 2022 exhibition, Fabergé: *Romance to Revolution* (on youtube). Madeleine won the Tagore Gold Medal as a Foundation Scholar at the Royal College of Music, where she is now a Professor, followed by the prestigious Fulbright/ITT Fellowship to study in New York for a Master's Degree at the Eastman and Juilliard schools.



She has just been awarded the 2024 Stuart Burrows Prize by the Welsh Music Guild for a singer or instrumentalist who has promoted Welsh music.

www.madeleinemitchell.com

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