

Embargoed until 16th March

**King's Lynn Festival announces a celebratory
75th Anniversary Edition from 12th – 25th July**
with star performers: **Boris Giltburg, Roderick Williams, Sheku and Isata Kanneh-Mason, Craig Ogden, Nuria Garcia, Christopher Frayling & more**



King's Lynn Festival proudly announces its 75th Anniversary Festival, taking place over two weeks in **July 2026 (12th – 25th)**, marking three-quarters of a century of world-class music, arts and cultural celebration at the historic Hanseatic League port in the heart of West Norfolk. The Festival will once again fill the streets, churches and community spaces of King's Lynn with a diverse programme of music, talks, exhibitions, and events.



Festival highlights include **Mark-Anthony Turnage** as featured composer and artists including **Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective**, **Novo Quartet**, baritone **Roderick Williams**, pianist **Boris Giltburg**, filial duo on cello and piano **Sheku** and **Isata Kanneh-Mason**, flamenco dancer **Nuria Garcia** and the **Academy of Ancient Music**, plus a talk on taste by writer **Christopher Frayling**.



Artistic Director Ambrose Miller says:

"As we warmly welcome Ben Horden as our new Festival Manager, we look forward to a spectacular celebration of music and the arts for both West Norfolk residents and visitors to the area."

Festival Manager Ben Horden says:

"Our aim remains to deliver a cultural offering as dynamic and inclusive as the community we serve. In combining rich traditions and strong history with a dedication to future development, we don't just celebrate 75 years of the King's Lynn Festival - we lay foundations for the next 75!"

Part of the Festival's magic lies in its venues. Performances take place in some of Norfolk's most beautiful and historic buildings including St Nicholas' Chapel, the Corn Exchange, the Town Hall, and the Minster, its civic buildings and monuments a reflection of its rich sea-faring and cultural history. William Shakespeare is said to have graced the boards of the Guildhall. Composer and viol player John Jenkins was resident musician at the home of the L'Estrange Family near King's Lynn. Celebrated 18th-Century travel writer and musicologist Charles Burney was organist for a decade at King's Lynn Minster (St Margaret's Church - pictured) and Vaughan Williams spent considerable time recording the folk tunes of Norfolk.

For this special anniversary edition, honouring the Festival's remarkable legacy, audiences will be invited to experience an exceptional programme of orchestral, chamber and choral music, jazz, folk, early music, talks, walking tours and family events, presented in King's Lynn's most iconic venues. The Festival has also expanded its connections with schools and community groups of all ages, creating vibrant arts projects than enrich and empower.

Musical highlights include **Kaleidoscope Collective's** programme of Coleridge-Taylor, Brahms and Schubert, a programme of Rebecca Clarke, Nadia Boulanger, Mendelssohn and Schumann by the **Kanneh-Mason siblings** on Thursday 16th July, two programmes encompassing Vaughan Williams, Elgar, Holst and Gurney with **Roderick Williams** on 19th and 23rd July, **Novo Quartet** performing Neilson and Mozart on 20th July and **Boris Giltburg** commencing with the Bach/Busoni Chaconne and ending with Ravel's *Gaspard de la nuit*.

For three quarters of a century, audiences have enjoyed performances by exceptional artists Nicola Benedetti, Benjamin Grosvenor, Tasmin Little, Sam Lee, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Lesley Garrett, Jools Holland, the Black Dyke Band, Evelyn Glennie, and more. The Festival also supports new music from brilliant upcoming talents, both local and national.

History of King's Lynn Festival

Lady Fermoy, a talented pupil of celebrated pianist Alfred Cortot, launched the first King's Lynn Festival in 1951 to celebrate the restoration of the historic Guildhall of St George; her vision laid the foundations for a Festival that would grow into one of the UK's most respected cultural events.

What began as a week of music and the arts has become a cherished and living tradition – a place where the community gathers to experience world-class performance in the heart of King's Lynn.

The Guildhall of St George (currently undergoing a multi-million pound restoration project) – now believed to be the oldest working theatre in the UK that once hosted Shakespeare – was nearly lost in the aftermath of the Second World War. Used for scenery storage and threatened with demolition, its fate changed when Alexander Penrose of Norfolk bought the building in 1946 to save it from destruction.

Penrose's vision of an arts centre captured the imagination of Lord and Lady Fermoy. Together, they formed a trust, raised restoration funds, and transformed the Guildhall into a cultural hub. The newly restored building was officially opened in 1951 by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother – who became a long-time Festival Patron.



From its earliest days, King's Lynn Festival attracted legendary names from music, literature, and the performing arts. Benjamin Britten, Kathleen Ferrier, Peter Pears, Dame Judy Dench, Peggy Ashcroft, Peter Ustinov – all graced Festival stages.

Live BBC broadcasts and regular royal visits helped the Festival quickly gain national and international recognition. Yet throughout its success, it has remained deeply rooted in the King's Lynn community.



Full Listings

Sunday 12th July

15:00

Corn Exchange

Concert: Brighthouse and Rastrick

Programme includes

Elgar Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1

Coates March of the Dambusters

Wood Fantasy on British Sea Songs

Berlioz Carnival Romain

arr. Graham Crimond

20:00

Town Hall

Cabaret: Bowjangles

This a string quartet with a difference! Bowjangles will turn your preconceptions of classical musicians upside down with their spectacular mix of upbeat classical music, comedy songs, well-known film, pop and rock tunes, and foot-stomping Gypsy and Celtic bangers; all presented with humour, charisma, and impressive physicality.

Monday 13th July

11:00

Tour: Walking tour with Paul Richards

15:00

Tour: Walking tour with Paul Richards

18:00

Town Hall

Concert: Contemporary Consort

Mark-Anthony Turnage is a British composer of international stature whose music blends jazz and classical styles. His most recent children's opera, The Railway Children, received its premiere in October 2025. Enjoy a pre-concert talk by the composer and the opportunity to meet him afterwards.

Tuesday 14th July

11:00

Tour: Rural churches tour with Fr Adrian Ling

19:00

The Minster

Young Musicians' Prelude Concert

19:30

The Minster

Concert: Kaleidoscope Collective *

Schubert String Trio in B flat, D.471

Coleridge-Taylor Clarinet Quintet in F sharp minor, Op. 10

Brahms Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 11

Wednesday 15th July

15:00

Town Hall

Talk: Musical taste

Patrick Hemmerlé

18:00
All Saints' Church

Searchlight Concert: The Guildhall Singers
Showcasing local amateur artists and ensembles
Josquin Des Prez Miller regretz
Lassus Matona mia cara
Moeran The sailor and young Nancy
Lindberg Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Whitacre Seal lullaby

19:30

Dance: Nuria Garcia (Flamenco)
The Corn Exchange
The flamboyant and evocative music of the Moors in Andalusia comes to the stage of the Corn Exchange as Flamenco star, Nuria Garcia, brings her colourful troop of brilliant dancers and musicians to King's Lynn.

Thursday 16th July

15:00
Town Hall

Talk: Design taste and the origins of the V&A
Christopher Frayling

19:30
Mason (piano)
The Corn Exchange

Concert: Sheku Kanneh-Mason (cello), Isatah Kanneh-Mason (piano)
Mendelssohn Cello Sonata No. 1 in B flat, Op. 45
Nadia Boulanger Three Pieces for cello and piano
Robert Schumann Five pieces in Folk Style, Op. 102
Rebecca Clarke Viola Sonata

Friday 17th July

18:00
Wadsworth (cello),
All Saints' Church

Concert: Anne Heemskerk (flute), Kate Benett
David Wright (harpsichord) *
Leipzig to Hamburg 1735
J S Bach Trio sonata for flute, viola da gamba, and continuo in

G, BWV 1027/1039

J S Bach Trio sonata for flute and harpsichord in B minor BWV 1030
Telemann Fantasy for viola da gamba
Telemann Concerto for flute, harpsichord, and bass in D, TWV 42:D6
Telemann Trio Sonata for flute, viola da gamba, and basso continuo in B minor, TWV 42:H4

20:00
(Saxophone)

Concert: Gary Crosby Quartet with Denys Baptiste
Corn Exchange
Bassist, band leader and co-founder of Tomorrow's Warriors, Gary Crosby OBE teams up with Mercury Prize nominee and MOBO award winning saxophonist Denys Baptiste to lead an all-star quartet for this celebration of what is widely regarded as the greatest jazz album of all time, John Coltrane's A Love Supreme. Gary and Denys will be joined by Andrew McCormack (piano), and Rod Youngs (drums).

Gary Crosby explains "Hearing A Love Supreme for the first time was a life-changing moment for me as a young musician. There were so many complexities in the compositions and the arrangements, but the groove and directness were real. It is musically as close to a spiritual moment as I have ever had — a message from the mountain top, mind-blowing but completely rooted in everything I believed music could be. Coltrane stands above all others as a musician. A jazz deity? Possibly. All I know is that with A Love Supreme, he preached, and we all listened!"

Saturday 18th July

12:00

St Nicholas' Chapel

Organ recital: Francesca Massey

Mendelssohn Sonata in C minor, Op 65, No. 2

J S Bach Chorale Prelude on Schmücke dich, o liebe Seele, BWV 654

Schumann Two Fugues on BACH, Op. 60 Nos 5, 6

Lindberg Gammal fäbodpsalm från Dalarna

Olsson Prelude and Fugue in D sharp minor, Op. 56

Byrd Ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la, BK 58

Pott Toccata on 'King's Lynn' (Three Hymn Tune Fantasias)

14:30

Peter Wedland (Viols))

Corn Exchange Foyer

Pop-up concert: Heartstrings (Jacqui Robertson Wade,

15:15

Corn Exchange Foyer

Workshop: 'Try a viol' with Jacqui Robertson Wade
A fascinating opportunity to your hand at playing a viol!

No experience needed. Instruments provided.

19:00

St Nicholas' Chapel

Concert: Academy of Ancient Music *

The art of the Italian concerto

Mossi Concerto in G minor for four violins, No. 12

Locatelli Concerto grosso in C minor, Op. 4 No. 11

Vivaldi Violin Concerto in E, No. 12, RV 265 (from L'Estro Armonico)

Vivaldi Concerto in D minor for two violins, No. 11 RV 565 (from L'Estro Armonico)

Valentini Concerto in A minor for four violins

Corelli Concerto grosso in D, Op. 6 No. 4

21:15

Peter Wedland (viols))

St Nicholas' Chapel

guillotine

Late night concert: Heartstrings (Jacqui Robertson Wade,

Resonant French music from before the age of the

Couperin Les Goûts réunis

Sainte-Colombe Cinquième Sonata *from* Tombeau Les regrets Boismortier, Op. 10

Couperin Le dodo, ou L'amour au berceau

Sainte-Colombe Le Retour

Sunday 19th July

14:00

St Nicholas' Church,
Dersingham

Concert: Novo Quartet (BBC New Generation Artists) *

Haydn String Quartet Op. 33 no. 5

Mendelssohn String Quartet Op. 44 No. 1

16:30

St Nicholas' Chapel
(Violin), Ella O'Neill (Piano),

Concert: King's Lynn Festival Chorus,

Roderick Williams (Baritone), Charlie Lovell-Jones

Ben Horden (Conductor)

Vaughan Williams arr. Paul Drayton The Lark

Ascending

Vaughan Williams Five Mystical Songs

Elgar Scenes from the Bavarian Highlands

20:00

Methodist Church

Folk: Magpie Lane

Magpie Lane brings to the festival joyous traditional English song and dance music in vivacious, inventive arrangements. "...quite the best offering of English traditional songs and dance tunes that has come this way in many a day... a well-chosen and balanced programme, full of change of pace and variety."
(Sussex Folk Diary)

Monday 20th July

10:00

True's Yard

Pop-up concert: Magpie Lane

11:00

with Toby Cook (Viola) *
Town Hall

Concert: Novo Quartet (BBC New Generation Artists)

Neilson String Quartet

Mozart String Quintet in G minor K.516

19:30

Methodist Church

Theatre: Alison Skilbeck "Are there more of you?"
A one-woman show of a tale of four women, living utterly different lives, linked, it seems, only by a postcode. "Brilliantly observed, richly comic characters, all played to painful perfection, a wonderful evening."
(Alan Ayckbourn)

Tuesday 21st July

11:00

(Piano) (Tillett Trust Artists) *
Town Hall

Coffee Concert: Joel Munday (Violin), Julian Trevelyan

Mozart Violin Sonata No.18 in G K.301

Brahms Violin Sonata No.2 in A Op.100

Ravel Tzigane

14:00

Pop-up concert: Joel Munday (Violin)

The Duke's Head Lounge

15:00
Town Hall

Talk: Aristocratic taste
Godfrey Evans

19:00
(Piano)
The Minster

Young Musician's Prelude Concert: Amelie Hayward

19:30
The Minster

Concert: Boris Giltburg (Piano) *
Bach/Busoni Chaconne in D minor
Liszt Sonata in B minor
Rachmaninov Preludes, Op. 23, Nos. 1, 2, 5, 8, 6, 7
Ravel Gaspard de la nuit

Wednesday 22nd July

11:00
Town Hall

Coffee Concert: Rose McLachlan (Piano) *
Schubert Sonata in A, D. 959
Ravel Valse Nobles

19:30
Town Hall

Concert: Craig Ogden (Guitar)
Fantasy to flamenco
Torroba Allegretto *from* Sonatina for guitar No.1
arr. Llobet Three Catalan folk songs
Koshkin The usher waltz
Piazzola Invierno porteño
Dyens Fuoco *from* Libre Sonatina
Vivaldi, arr. Williams Concerto, Op. 3, No. 9
Rameau Les tendres plaintes
J S Bach Sarabande *from* Lute Suite No. 2
Reinhardt, arr. Dyens Nuages
Rodrigo Tres Ppezas Españolas

Thursday 23rd July

11:00
(harp) *
Town Hall

Coffee Concert: Sirius Chau (flute), Gwenellian Llyr
Spohr Sonata Concertante
Debussy Syrinx
Debussy Clair de lune
Reade Suite *from* Victorian kitchen garden
Doppler/Zamara Casilda opera fantasy

19:00
The Minster

Young Musician's Prelude Concert: Zoe Burton (Violin)

19:30
(Piano) *
The Minster

Concert: Roderick Williams (Baritone), Iain Burnside
From the Forest of Dean to the Appalachians
Boyle The water mill
Gurney Black stichel

Ireland Blow out, you bugles
Gurney Lights Out
Hugh-Jones Ad ream
Howells A Girl's Song
Head A vagabond's song
Weiland Six songs to Dymock poets, Op. 69
Payne Adlestrop

Vaughan Williams Nocturne
Holst Darest thou now, O soul
Vaughan Williams Clear midnight
Stanford Joy, shipmate, joy
Bliss Gone, gone again is summer
Bliss Little elegy
Bliss Siege
Samuel Of swans, snails and geese
Samuel The memory of swans
Samuel Eine kleine snailmusik
Samuel Franz, a goose
Vaughan Williams Songs from the southern
 Appalachian Mountains
 The Tree in the Wood
 The Twelve Apostles

Friday 24th July

11:00

Town Hall

Coffee Concert: The Paddington Trio *

Haydn Piano Trio in A, Hob. XV:35

Beethoven Piano Trio in B flat, Op. 97 "Archduke"

18:00

All Saints' Church

Concert: Dowland's Foundry *

Silly bees and nightly cares

[Programme TBC (Dowland)]

19:30

The Corn Exchange

Concert: Pasadena Roof Orchestra

For one night only, take a step back into the glamorous era of The Great Gatsby, The Cotton Club, Flappers, and Speakeasies, for a unique concert celebrating the music of the roaring twenties... and thirties!

Featuring a sparkling collection of music and lovingly recreated orchestrations of classics from the likes of George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, and Irving Berlin, the concert showcases the very finest hot rhythms and sweet melodies of this iconic era. Experience an evening of superlative live music that inspired the most celebrated of decades, alongside more than just a dash of wit and humour!

Saturday 25th July

19:00

The Corn Exchange

Concert: Royal Philharmonic Orchestra,

Hana Chang (Violin), Adam Hickox (Conductor)

Mendelssohn The Hebrides Overture "Fingal's Cave",
Op. 26
Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D, Op. 35
Beethoven Symphony in E flat, Op. 55, No. 3 "Eroica"

For more information on any of the above, please contact:

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