

Biography – Katharine Ley, Cellist

British cellist Katharine Ley is based in the East Midlands and works professionally as a freelance musician and teacher, enjoying a varied portfolio career.

Katharine graduated with First Class Honours from the Royal Northern College of Music, having previously studied at the Royal Birmingham Junior Conservatoire and privately with Felix Schmidt. She subsequently undertook postgraduate private studies with Raphael Wallfisch and Petr Prause. Katharine has also performed in many masterclasses in the UK and internationally for distinguished cellists including Hannah Roberts, Julian Lloyd Webber and Miklós Perényi.

As a soloist, Katharine performs regularly with choirs, orchestras and in a recital setting. As a guest soloist with choirs, Katharine performs collaborative works including Karl Jenkins' *Benedictus* from *The Armed Man*, alongside solo repertoire. Recent engagements include appearances with Baslow Choir, North Notts Chamber Choir and Luton-Vauxhall Male Voice Choir. As a concerto soloist, she has performed Dvořák's Cello Concerto, Elgar's Cello Concerto and Haydn's C Major Cello Concerto with orchestras such as Grimsby Symphony Orchestra and Lincoln Symphony Orchestra.

A keen orchestral player, Katharine was a member of several national youth orchestras, including the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. She now performs professionally with orchestras and ensembles in the midlands.

Katharine combines her performance career with extensive teaching. She holds a PGCEi in Group Instrumental Teaching from Music Masters and Birmingham City University, and teaches cello, orchestral cello and string ensemble at Loughborough Schools Foundation, Nottingham Youth Orchestra, Worksop College and Ranby House.

Katharine currently plays a 1970s John Watkins cello, paired with a John Clutterbuck bow. For the past decade, she played on a c. 1790 cello believed to be from the Betts School, an instrument she grew up with and developed as a musician on. The cello is currently undergoing restoration and research to establish its identity. Although a lengthy process, Katharine is enjoying discovering more about the instrument, its history and provenance, while seeing it carefully restored to playing condition.

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