



HELLENS
MUSIC

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3 to 9 May 2027 / Herefordshire, UK

HELLENSMUSIC MASTERCLASS COURSE 2027

A week of chamber music, masterclasses,
and performances alongside internationally
renowned artists at the Hellensmusic Festival

Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello, Contrabass,
Clarinet, Bassoon & French Horn

ABOUT THE COURSE

Hellensmusic is a **chamber music festival and masterclass course** taking place every May in and around Hellens Manor, Herefordshire. Each year, a group of **12 advanced students** from conservatories across the world are invited to become an integral part of the Festival.

Led by a **distinguished faculty of internationally recognised musicians**, the student programme spans **seven days** and includes:

- **Intensive chamber music rehearsals and coaching**
- **Three individual masterclasses**
- **Participation in selected public festival concerts**
- **Improvisation and collaborative music-making sessions.**

Participants share the stage with their tutors in **chamber ensembles** and have the opportunity to be **featured as soloists** in selected **festival concerts**.

Hellensmusic gives students a unique and valuable experience at the beginning of their careers, combining rigorous musical development and **intergenerational exchange within an informal and collaborative environment**.

Within the programme, all **12 students work in close contact with their tutors**, receiving **personalised guidance in solo repertoire**, and **direct insight into the creative and interpretative processes of accomplished professionals**.



THE FACULTY

Hellensmusic brings together a team of internationally recognised artists who are not only acclaimed performers, soloists and chamber musicians, but also committed and passionate teachers.



“Exceptional! The best program I've ever done.
The level of musicianship and community is
unparalleled.

THE FACULTY



STRINGS

Maya Iwabuchi | Violin

Maya Iwabuchi's many accomplishments as a violinist extend to performances as concertmaster, chamber musician and soloist. Former Leader of the Philharmonia Orchestra, she currently serves as Leader of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and is a faculty member at Glasgow's Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. ([read full bio](#))

Alena Baeva | Violin

Alena Baeva is considered one of the most versatile and captivating soloists active on the world stage today. She has performed as a soloist with orchestras including New York Philharmonic Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, NHK Symphony and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony orchestras, and more. ([read full bio](#))

Gareth Lubbe | Viola

Gareth Lubbe, a South African-born violist, violinist, and overtone singer, is internationally known for his wide-ranging collaborations with artists from many genres and for his versatility as a musician. He is professor of viola at the Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen, Germany. ([read full bio](#))

Alice Neary | Cello

Alice Neary enjoys a varied performing career as a chamber musician and principal cellist of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. Familiar to listeners of BBC Radio 3, she has performed at major festivals including BBC Proms chamber series and played concertos with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, Orchestra of Welsh National Opera, and more. ([read full bio](#))

THE FACULTY

A photograph of a man with a beard and grey hair, wearing a black shirt, playing a clarinet. He is looking down at the instrument. The background is dark and out of focus, with some warm light sources visible on the left.

WOODWINDS

Matthew Hunt | Clarinet

One of Europe's leading clarinetists, Matthew Hunt has been Solo Clarinetist of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen since 2007. In 2020, he was appointed Professor of Chamber Music at the Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen, Germany. He is a member of the British ensemble Orsino and performs regularly at major festivals and concert halls worldwide. ([read full bio](#))

Amy Harman | Bassoon

A passionate advocate for the bassoon, Amy Harman is much sought after as a soloist, chamber musician, teacher and communicator. Amy was a professor at the Royal Academy of Music from 2013 to 2024 and gives masterclasses and coaches internationally. She was appointed professor of bassoon at the Robert Schumann Hochschule Düsseldorf in 2024, the first woman to hold such a position in Germany. ([read full bio](#))

“It was absolutely fantastic. Teachers told us life-changing and great advice. The programme was well integrated, and helped us improve many things in a faster and simpler way.

THE FACULTY

PIANO

Christian Blackshaw

Christian Blackshaw has appeared worldwide as recitalist and soloist with leading orchestras and conductors, including Sir Simon Rattle, Gianandrea Noseda, Herbert Blomstedt and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. He founded Hellensmusic Festival in 2013, where he continues to inspire new generations of musicians. ([read full bio](#))

Joseph Havlat

Joseph Havlat works frequently as a soloist, having given recitals at Wigmore Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and King's Place, and also a chamber musician, having performed with artists such as James Ehnes and Steven Isserlis. Passionate about modern and contemporary music, he has collaborated with such composers as Thomas Adès, Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Gerald Barry and Hans Abrahamsen. ([read full bio](#))

Xiaowen Shang | Collaborative piano

Nominated as one of BBC Music Magazine's "Rising Stars" of classical music for 2024, Xiaowen has performed at Wigmore Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, and the Royal Festival Hall, collaborating with musicians like Steven Isserlis, Brett Dean, and Dame Imogen Cooper. She is recipient of numerous awards, including the Gold Medal from the Beethoven Piano Society of Europe and the Harriet Cohen Bach Prize. ([read full bio](#)).



YOUR WEEK AT HELLENSMUSIC

CHAMBER MUSIC SESSIONS

In chamber music sessions, students will rehearse together with professors on the repertoire to be presented in the festival's main evening concerts. Works are assigned and sent in advance, allowing students to arrive fully prepared for an intensive rehearsal process, designed to reach a performance level in a short period of time.



“Amazing! One of the best experiences of my life. Solo masterclasses were absolutely fantastic. I have learnt so much! I’m so excited to process and practice everything that I’ve learnt here.”



YOUR WEEK AT HELLENSMUSIC

MASTERCLASSES

In masterclasses, students will focus on solo works of their choice, some of which may be showcased during the Festival programme. They will also have the opportunity to prepare for future auditions and competitions.

PIANO students will work extensively with Christian Blackshaw, recognised as one of his generation's leading interpreters of Mozart and Schubert.

STRING students will receive lessons from the string faculty for their respective instruments. Each violin student will work with both Alena Baeva and Maya Iwabuchi. Viola students will have one-on-one lessons with Gareth Lubbe, and cello and contrabass students will study with Alice Neary.

WOODWIND & FRENCH HORN students will work on their solo repertoire with both Matthew Hunt and Amy Harman, and will join together to practice and perform masterworks of the wind sextet repertoire.

YOUR WEEK AT HELLENSMUSIC

LEARNING BEYOND THE MASTERCLASSES

The residential character of Hellenismusic creates opportunities for informal mentorship and learning throughout the week.

Students stay in our restored Georgian Stables on the Hellens grounds and share all main meals with peers, professors and staff in the main house. This close contact and intergenerational exchanges is where the heart of Hellenismusic truly lies.

OUTSIDE REHEARSAL HOURS, students are encouraged to sight-read and practice chamber music together.

IN THE EVENINGS, senior musicians will lead **improvisation sessions** designed to inspire deeper connection and trust amongst peers. Through **collaborative music-making**, students will learn to listen and to explore freedom and creativity within ensemble work.



DATES, FEE AND APPLICATIONS

DATES

The course runs from Monday 3 to Sunday 9 May 2027.

Students are expected to arrive at Hellens by **midday on Monday 3 May** and to remain **until after the final festival concert** and activities on Sunday 9 May (finishing at 3pm).

FEE

The participation fee for Hellensmusic 2027 is £600.

The fee includes:

- All tuition (individual masterclasses, chamber music rehearsals and coaching)
- Participation in festival performances
- Accommodation for the 7 days of the course
- All meals
- Access to all festival concerts and activities

Travel expenses to and from Hellens are not included.

Every student place is substantially subsidised by The Pennington Mellor Munthe Charity Trust, allowing us to offer the complete residential programme at a fraction of its actual cost.





DATES, FEE AND APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION

Applications are open to advanced conservatoire-level students who are seriously preparing for a professional career.

Applicants should be **aged 18–26** at the time of the course.

There are vacancies for **violin, viola, cello, contrabass, clarinet, bassoon, french horn and piano.**

HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be submitted through the [Hellensmusic online application form](#). Applicants will be asked to provide:

- A current CV
- Two recent performance recordings of contrasting works, preferably in video format

APPLICATION TIMELINE

Applications open: 1 October 2026

Application deadline: 15 December 2026

Results communicated: First week of January 2027

Places are limited to 12 participants. Applications received after the deadline cannot be guaranteed consideration.

The **application form** can be accessed [HERE](#) or via our website: www.hellensmusic.com

HELLENS MANOR AND RESIDENTIAL LIFE



Hellensmusic takes place at **Hellens Manor, a much-loved and lived-in historic house in the Herefordshire countryside.** With a history spanning nearly a thousand years, Hellens is not a traditional concert venue but a living home whose architecture, gardens and surrounding landscape create an atmosphere of intimacy, freedom and discovery.

The heart of the festival is the 16th-century Tythe Barn, home to a Steinway D concert grand. Rehearsals and masterclasses also take place in the **Music Room,** other rooms within the main house and **St Bartholomew's Church,** situated at the end of the drive.

The character and scale of Hellens allow musicians, students, staff and audiences to share the same spaces throughout the festival, creating a sense of community that is central to the programme.

ACCOMMODATION

Students stay in the restored Georgian Stables within the Hellens grounds. The accommodation includes shared bath and shower rooms, a communal kitchen for breakfast and refreshments, and a central common room.



“ I've never in my life experienced such a life changing and inspiring week of sharing and making music.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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