

PIANO DEPARTMENT DISCOVERY DAY AND WELCOME MEETING

TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2026 10AM
DUKE'S HALL



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MARYLEBONE ROAD, LONDON NW1 5HT +44 (0)20 7873 7373 [RAM.AC.UK](https://ram.ac.uk)

SCHEDULE

10am-12pm
Masterclass with
Professor Joanna MacGregor CBE FRAM
Dame Myra Hess Chair of Piano

12pm – 12.30pm
Piano Department: Introductory Talk

12.30pm -1pm
Informal Q & A

MASTERCLASS PROGRAMME

10am
Schumann (1810-1856)
Novelletten Op.21 no.8
Sehr lebhaft

Kaiwen Jin (UG3)

10.30am
Messiaen (1908-1992)
Le Courlis cendré
from Catalogue d'oiseaux

Harry Bowden (UG2)

11am
Schubert (1797-1828)
Sonata in C minor D958
I Allegro

Sejin Yoon (PG2)

11.30am
Amy Beach (1867-1944)
Piano Trio Op.150
I Allegro
II Lento con espressivo
III Allegro con brio

Estuary Trio
Björg Pas violin (UG3)
Julius Maknickas cello (PG1)
Emanuil Ivanov piano
(Sulamita Aronovsky Fellow)

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our courses here



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Joanna MacGregor CBE is one of the world's most innovative musicians, appearing as a concert pianist, curator and conductor. As Dame Myra Hess Chair of Piano and Head of Keyboard at the Royal Academy of Music she runs a thriving piano department for young pianists from all over the world, many of whom have gone on to great success in major competitions like Van Cliburn, Leeds, Rubinstein and Sydney International Piano Competitions, in representation by Young Concert Artists Trust, and to busy concert careers. She oversees two annual Piano Festivals at the Academy, and curates a year-round series at the Wigmore Hall for Academy pianists. She encourages her students to be as proactive and as creative as possible, ready for a 21st century career.

Professor MacGregor serves regularly as a jury member and Chair of many eminent competitions, and as a concert pianist she has performed in over eighty countries. She has appeared with many distinguished conductors – Pierre Boulez, Sir Colin Davis, Sir Simon Rattle and Ilan Volkov amongst them – and orchestras, including the London Symphony and BBC Symphony orchestras, Chicago, Melbourne and Oslo Philharmonic orchestras, Berlin Symphony Orchestra and Salzburg Camerata. She has premiered many landmark compositions, and performs regularly at major venues including Wigmore Hall, Southbank Centre and Royal Albert Hall in London, Sydney Opera House, Leipzig Gewandhaus, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and the Mozarteum in Salzburg. Her 2020 cycle of the complete Beethoven Sonatas was followed in 2023 by an immersive series of Schubert recitals. The 2026-7 season sees her performing and lecturing in Europe and Scandinavia, China, US and

Canada.

Joanna MacGregor is a regular broadcaster on TV and radio, and is a judge on the 2026 BBC Young Musician of the Year, to be broadcast throughout October. As a recording artist she has made over forty solo and concerto recordings including the complete Chopin Mazurkas, the Mercury Prize-nominated *Play*, Bach's *Goldberg Variations* (recorded at the Mozarteum in Salzburg) and *Live in Buenos Aires* with the Britten Sinfonia. Joanna MacGregor has been the Artistic Director of Dartington Summer School, Bath International Music Festival, and the multi-arts Deloitte Ignite Festival at the Royal Opera House, as well as *Aventures+* for Luxembourg Philharmonie. She holds five honorary doctorates – including from Cambridge and St Andrews – and is an Honorary Fellow of many institutions. She made her conducting debut in 2002 and is the Music Director and Principal Conductor of the 100-year-old Brighton Philharmonic, curating and conducting large-scale symphonic programmes.

A very warm welcome to all new undergraduates and postgraduates, as well as continuing students – I wish you a very happy and successful time here at the Academy. This is one of the most exciting places to be a musician, and to prepare for your professional life. The Piano Department is supportive, warm, and very ambitious for the development of your artistry as a 21st century pianist.

Our piano students are from more than 30 countries. We offer four years of undergraduate study, Master's programmes and Professional and Advanced Diplomas - all the way to doctoral programmes.

All through the year, we send out information about classes, prizes, concert opportunities and auditions, along with a bulletin of Piano Department classes, Visiting Professors, and student performances at the Academy and in London. Make sure you read this, and the emails sent to you by the Piano Administrator Lydia Teale - there's a lot happening!

We will also let you know about funding schemes, international Summer Schools and audition programmes – from courses at Aspen and Lucerne to the Tillett Trust and Kirckman Concert Society.

WEEKLY 1-1 LESSONS WITH YOUR PIANO PROFESSOR

After a very careful consultation process, each have you have been allocated to a piano professor, with whom you have weekly lessons.

Every Academy piano professor is experienced and wise; your relationship is based on mutual respect. Be punctual and well-prepared for each of your lessons; don't hesitate to ask their advice and be sure inform them about your plans for competitions, concerts, prizes, masterclasses and performance classes.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Florian Mitrea and John Reid are in charge of chamber music for music for pianists.

Weekly timetabled chamber coaching slots ensure all students have access to regular coaching with all our chamber coaches. Take advantage of all the opportunities to have coaching sessions and lessons with other instrumental teachers, and to play in Informal Concerts and chamber music masterclasses and prizes. All undergraduates are examined in chamber music.

If you need help finding chamber partners, contact our Chamber Music Fellows who'll help you to find Academy instrumentalists.

UG1s: there's a 'Chamber Music check-up' in the second half of November to make sure you're all in chamber groups or duos.

EXAMS AND FACULTY REQUIREMENTS

There are solo recital and chamber exams every year. From UG3s, UG4s, PG1s and PG2s also have a concerto exam.

Whatever year you're in, check your exam and portfolio requirements. Be sure to look in the Piano Handbook – **don't leave it to the last minute!** Plan your repertoire well ahead and discuss it with your professor. If you have any queries, email me or Lydia.

MASTERCLASSES, VISITING PROFESSORS AND REPERTOIRE CLASSES

Performance Classes

There are Performance Classes for pianists on Tuesday mornings (10am-1pm), usually in Duke's Hall. These are taken by different Academy professors, and it's a chance to learn from another teacher. Feel free offer a well-prepared piece you'd like to play; it's mandatory to play at least once in the year.

Visiting Professors

Visiting Professors give 1-1 tuition and small classes regularly. As these places are limited, it's essential to sign up on the Piano Board outside 115, or inform the Piano Administrator, to be considered. Make sure you offer suitable repertoire – if in doubt, ask your professor. Don't be disheartened if you don't get picked straightaway: just try again.

Our Visiting Professors this year are:

Dame Imogen Cooper
Steven Osborne CBE
Leif Ove Andsnes
Pascal Rogé
Sir Stephen Hough
Yevgeny Sudbin
Adrian Brendel (chamber music)
Megumi Masaki (multimedia collaboration)

ACADEMY WIGMORE HALL SERIES

Academy Piano Series at Wigmore Hall

The Head of Piano chooses our older pianists to give their solo debut at the Wigmore Hall, in a regular lunchtime

series. There are free tickets available for Academy students.

ACADEMY PIANO FESTIVALS: AUTUMN AND SUMMER

We run two annual Piano Festivals.

Autumn Piano Festival

The intensive one-day Autumn Piano Festival takes place each year in Duke's Hall, and usually concentrates on one composer, one theme, or a linked series of works.

This year's festival, on 10 November 2026, is the complete solo piano music of Janáček, including chamber and concertante works.

Summer Piano Festival

At the end of the summer term every year we run the spectacular **Summer Piano Festival**.

Over three days there are multiple concerts all over the Academy: solo recitals, chamber music, jazz, multimedia, contemporary music, and collaborations with actors, dancers. Last year over fifty Academy pianists – alongside instrumentalists, composers, actors and artists – performed at the Wigmore Hall, Duke's Hall, Angela Burgess Recital Hall and Aud Jebsen Hall.

If you have any ideas about what you might like to contribute, talk to your professor and let me know.

The next Summer Piano Festival will take place 9-11 June 2027.

ACADEMY CONCERTS YEAR-ROUND

There are public Academy concerts all year, advertised in the Academy brochure and website each term. The Piano Department curates and arranges several of these; I often choose pianists to take part.

Chamber Music Series

Every Spring, there's a major **Chamber Music Series in the Academy**, involving many pianists.

You can also apply to be included in a public Academy concert – in a chamber ensemble - by telling us about your ideas for a concert programme. Go to the Performance Office page on SharePoint and apply for a lunchtime, early evening or late concert using the online form.

Working as an Orchestral Pianist

Occasionally you'll be asked to be an **orchestral pianist in Duke's Hall, with an eminent guest conductor**. This is a fantastic chance to learn how to work with an orchestra, and to rehearse with some of the best conductors around.

Contemporary Music and Piano Lab

We have a group of pianists called Piano Lab specialising in contemporary music, coached by Professor Joseph Havlat. See me if you'd like to join this.

There are lots of opportunities to play with the **Manson Ensemble**, which specialises in contemporary music of all kinds, and to work with visiting composers.

Concerto Opportunities

Piano students occasionally have the opportunity to perform concertos with the Academy Symphony Orchestra. We usually audition pianists for these, so you can all have a chance to apply.

There are also plenty of opportunities for you to play concertos outside the Academy, often with amateur orchestras in London. It's important to let me know which concertos you're working on this year.

Working with Student Conductors

Sian Edwards, Head of Conducting, often needs pianists to work with her student and guest conductors, in classes, on major concertos and symphonies. It's a great way to make contacts with young orchestras, and find performance opportunities.

Accompanying

I'm often asked to recommend good sight readers for paid accompaniment work in the Academy.

INFORMAL ACADEMY CONCERTS

Each term there are Informal Concerts

arranged by the Piano Department, 6pm-8pm.

You can sign up to play for 30 minutes in one of these, either chamber or solo music. It's an opportunity to try out repertoire in front of your friends and a small, friendly audience, just before an exam, a competition, or another concert. Invite your friends to listen to you.

CONCERTS OUTSIDE THE ACADEMY

We encourage you to perform as much as possible. I often get asked to recommend pianists for outside engagements - from concerto performances to chamber concerts, Steinway Hall recitals, London churches and music club dates, UK music festivals, premieres and illustrated lectures. Keep in touch with me and let me know what repertoire you're currently working on.

If you are approached to play, make sure you reply to the Concerts Office or to the promoter immediately.

EXTRA CLASSES JUST FOR PIANISTS, RUN BY THE PIANO DEPARTMENT

Apart from 1-1 lessons with Visiting Professors, we run many other classes. These happen regularly each term, and are open to everybody.

Chamber Music Coaching
Adrian Brendel

Careers Sessions for pianists
Joanna MacGregor

Flashfix Technical Sessions
David Gray

Contemporary Music: Piano Lab
Joseph Havlat

Lieder classes
Amiran Zenaishvili and Andrew West (UG2s)

Early Keyboard classes
Jane Chapman (all UGs)

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS CLASSES

Postgraduate and undergraduate pianists must sign up for Professional Skills classes throughout the year:

Beautiful World: Collaborating with Visuals
Kathy Hinde

Improvising to Film
Neil Brand

Working with Jazz
Dominic Alldis

Digital Skills for Pianists
Sofia Sacco

Piano Duos and Duets
Florian Mitrea

Writing Piano Transcriptions
Mei-Ting Sun

Speaking in Public
Richard Williams

Conducting from the Keyboard
Timothy Redmond

Working with Conductors
Timothy Redmond

Playing Classical Music on the Fortepiano
Steven Devine

Early Keyboards
Carole Cerasi

Late Romantic Style
David Gray

PRIZES AND COMPETITIONS

Each term there are small prizes and intercollegiate competitions you can enter - a chance to learn specific repertoire and perform in public. These include:

Tuesday 13 October

Lilian Davies Beethoven Piano Prize

Thursday 22 October

Julian Barnes Award for Pianists

Wednesday 2 December

Sterndale Bennett Prize: music between 1830-1900

Next term prizes will include the Worshipful Company of Musicians Early Keyboard Music Prize.

PRACTISING

All pianists want to practice *a lot*, and the main building of the Academy is particularly busy from 10am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. Early in the morning, and later in the evening, are less busy times. You can book rehearsal rooms online; the new rehearsal studios, Cross Keys, at the bottom of Marylebone High St, all have pianos, and are often free.

Saturdays are taken up with Junior Academy until late afternoon; Sundays are very free, so a good time to come in and practice.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF PRACTISING ON ACADEMY PIANOS

1. DON'T ever try to move a piano! Even a tiny bit. Always ask permission first.
2. DO contact the Head of Technical Services, Doug Chapman, if you come across a piano with a broken string, or any kind of damage (including dropping a pencil inside). Email him on pianofault@ram.ac.uk, and he will fix it immediately.
3. DON'T put any kind of liquids – water, coffee – on the piano.
4. DO contact the Head of Piano and Head of Technical Services if you want to play a piece that involves any kind of preparation, for a concert, rehearsal or exam. We love you playing John Cage and George Crumb, but you must get permission first, and Doug will be able to advise you the best way to do it.
5. DON'T use a Teaching or Performance Piano for any kind of rehearsal. These are restricted, and usually locked. Use a practice piano.

RECORDINGS

All pianists can book a hall at the Academy to make a professional-level video recording, for an audition, a competition, or for your own website. The sessions are quite short – often an hour – so only book a recording session when you're fully prepared.

For older pianists, we have a relationship with Linn Records and several of our outstanding pianists release commercial recordings each year. This is particularly

attached to the Advanced Artist Diploma course, as well as the Bicentenary Scholarship.

This is a very exciting time in your life – and we're here to help you have the most fruitful and successful time here at the Academy. If you have any problems, or want to ask any advice, feel free to contact myself or Lydia Teale, and make an appointment to see us.



**Professor Joanna MacGregor CBE
FRAM
Dame Myra Hess Chair of Piano
September 2026**

USEFUL EMAILS

**Dame Myra Hess Chair of Piano, Head
of Piano Joanna MacGregor CBE**
j.macgregor@ram.ac.uk

**Piano Department Administrator
Lydia Teale**
LTeale@ram.ac.uk

Chamber Music Fellows:
Florian Mitrea f.mitrea@ram.ac.uk
John Reid J.Reid@ram.ac.uk

**Head of Technical Services Doug
Chapman**
DChapman@ram.ac.uk

USEFUL DATES

**Autumn Piano Festival 10 November
2026**
Summer Piano Festival 9-11 June 2027

UG1 Bach/Chopin study exam:
w/b 8 March 2027

UG2 Lieder exam:
w/b 8 March 2027

UG3 Mozart Concerto exam:
w/b 8 February 2027

UG4 Final Concerto exam:
w/b March 15 2027

PG1 Beethoven concerto exam:
w/b 1 March 2027

PG2 Final Concerto exam:
w/b March 15 2027

SUMMER TERM
END OF YEAR AND FINAL RECITAL EXAMS:
17 – 28 May 2027