



St Albans

# **IOF**estival

International Organ Festival

**7-19 JULY 2025**

**Exhilarating music,  
Inspirational performers**  
**[organfestival.com](http://organfestival.com)**

# HOW TO BOOK

You will be able to buy all tickets from  
St Albans Cathedral Box Office:

**Online** at [stalbanscathedral.org](http://stalbanscathedral.org)

**Telephone** 01727 890290

Or **in person** in the Cathedral Shop  
open daily 10am–5pm (Saturdays 9am–5pm)

**General booking from 22nd April**

*Early booking advised*

**Priority booking in advance  
for Supporters and Members**  
[organfestival.com/support](http://organfestival.com/support)

St Albans International Organ Festival and Competitions  
PO Box 80, St Albans AL3 4HR | [info@organfestival.com](mailto:info@organfestival.com)

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photo by Chris Christodoulou

Welcome to our 33rd Festival, which truly has something for everyone! Large-scale highlights include the much-anticipated return of **Three Choirs**, **Beethoven's Ninth Symphony**, and **London Handel Players**.

The list of exceptional Festival guest artists includes **Alim Beisembayev**, **Jacqui Dankworth**, **Lucy Crowe**, and **Dame Mary Beard** with **Nardus Williams** and **Elizabeth Kenny**. Historic St Michael's hosts late-night **Candlelight Concerts**.

Headlining everything are the Competitions. Organists from around the world will perform to our distinguished jury, all of whom also give concerts and recitals.

I look forward to welcoming you in July.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "David Titterton".

David Titterton Artistic & Executive Director

**Sunday 6th July 8.10am**

## **BBC SUNDAY WORSHIP FROM ST PETER'S CHURCH**

St Peter's Church *Free, but tickets required*



Our 33rd International Organ Festival opens with a live BBC Radio 4 broadcast of Sunday Worship. Led by the Reverend Mark Dearnley; guest preacher the Reverend Lucy Winkett, Rector of St James's Church, Piccadilly; Choir of St Peter's Church directed by Nicholas Robinson.

It is probable that people have worshipped here, at the northern entrance to the medieval town, for over 1000 years.

**Congregation to be seated by 7.45am.**

**Tuesday 8th July 8.30pm**

## **DAME MARY BEARD PRESENTS 'MONSTROUS REGIMENTS'**

St Albans Cathedral £28



*Women's Stories from the Ancient World*: a compelling exploration of the theme of women's voices in antiquity and their echoes in later culture. **Dame Mary Beard's** captivating storytelling is illustrated by spellbinding songs and arias performed by soprano **Nardus Williams** and lutenist **Elizabeth Kenny**. Presented in the atmospheric surroundings of the Cathedral Crossing.

*'Death of Dido'*. France, Circa 1637/1640. State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg. Photography by Sebastien Bourdon / Alamy.

**Wednesday 9th July 1.00pm**

## **JEAN-BAPTISTE ROBIN INTERVIEW**

St Albans Cathedral *Free, but tickets required*



The composer of the commissioned work for this year's Interpretation Competition is interviewed by Artistic Director David Titterington.

Jean-Baptiste Robin, a member of this year's distinguished jury, is Organist of the Royal Chapel at the Palace of Versailles and is regarded as one of France's most prominent concert organists, teachers and composers.

*Commissioned work sponsored by Martin Owen.*

**Wednesday 9th July 10.00pm**

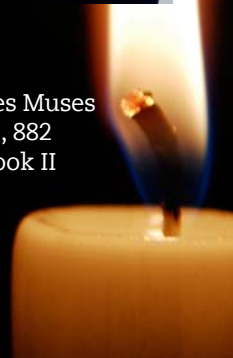
## **BY CANDLELIGHT: JA-KYUNG OH, HARPSICHORD**

St Michael's Church £15



**SWEELINCK** Fantasia Crommatica  
**COUPERIN** Passacaille  
**RAMEAU** Les Tendres Plaintes; L'Entretien des Muses  
**JS BACH** Preludes and Fugues BWV 885, 881, 882  
and 883 from The Well-Tempered Clavier Book II

A member of this year's illustrious international jury, Ja-Kyung Oh is Director of the Early Music Institute at Seoul's Korea National University of Arts (K'Arts).



Thursday 10th July 1.15pm

## BACH CORNER: CAROLYN CRAIG

St Albans Cathedral *Free; voluntary donations invited*



**JS BACH** Passacaglia in C minor, BWV582;  
O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde gross, BWV622;  
Pièce d'Orgue, BWV572

Bach performed by an outstanding young organist:  
30 minutes of uplifting music in the middle of the day.  
Carolyn Craig is Wells Cathedral Assistant Director of  
Music and co-founded [amplifyfemalecomposers.org](http://amplifyfemalecomposers.org)

Sponsored by RCO Foundation.



Thursday 10th July 8.00pm

## LONDON HANDEL PLAYERS: VIVALDI, HANDEL & BACH

St Albans Cathedral £30-£15



**Adrian Butterfield** director & violin | **Rachel Brown** flute &  
recorder | **James Laing** alto | **Martin Schmeding** organ

**VIVALDI** Stabat Mater, RV621

**HANDEL** Organ Concerto in G minor, op.4 no.3, HWV291

**JS BACH** Violin Concerto in A minor, BWV1041

**HANDEL** Cantata Mi palpita il cor, HWV132

*A concert dedicated to David Laing CBE (1945–2024), who did  
so much for music and charities.*

Friday 11th July 1.15pm

## BACH CORNER: LUKE MITCHELL

St Albans Cathedral *Free; voluntary donations invited*



**JS BACH** Fantasia in C minor, BWV562; An Wasserflüssen Babylon, BWV653; Trio on Allein Gott in der hoh sei ehr, BWV676; Prelude and Fugue in E minor, BWV548

Bach performed by an outstanding young organist: thirty minutes of uplifting music in the middle of the day. Luke Mitchell specialises in 17th-century music, French Baroque music, performance practice and minimalism.

Sponsored by RCO Foundation.



Friday 11th July 10.00pm

## BY CANDLELIGHT: CHOIR OF KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

St Michael's Church £15



**Joseph Fort** conductor

**RACHMANINOFF** All-Night Vigil

Rachmaninoff's extraordinary Vespers immortalises the music and rituals of the Orthodox Church. Lasting just over an hour, this quintessentially Russian work celebrates 'magnificent melodies' the composer remembered from his childhood – ten movements quote directly from ancient chants, and the remaining five use his own 'conscious counterfeits'.

**Saturday 12th July 4.30pm**

## **SIMON HARDEN, ORGAN**

St Peter's Church £15



**BUXTEHUDE** Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein  
**JS BACH** Vater Unser im Himmelreich, BWV682  
**MENDELSSOHN** Sonate VI in d-minor op.65 no.6  
**JS BACH** Sei gegrüset Jesu gütig, BWV768

Illustrious jury member Simon Harden performs internationally and lectures at the TU Dublin Conservatoire. He founded the Waterford Festival, where he is Organist and Director of Music at Christ Church Cathedral.

**Saturday 12th July 7.30pm**

## **BRITTEN SINFONIA PERFORM BEETHOVEN'S NINTH**

St Albans Cathedral £48-£17



**Paul Daniel** conductor  
**Sophie Bevan** soprano | **Catherine Wyn-Rogers** alto  
**Peter Hoare** tenor | **Robert Hayward** bass  
**St Albans Bach Choir** and **Choir of King's College London**

**BEETHOVEN** Symphony no.9  
**BRAHMS** Alto Rhapsody; Academic Festival Overture

Arguably the greatest symphony in classical music, with a star roster of performers and soloists.

**Sunday 13th July 3.00pm**

## **NATHAN LAUBE, ORGAN**

St Albans Cathedral £15



**JULIUS REUBKE** Sonata on the 94th Psalm in C minor  
**FRANZ SCHMIDT** Chaconne

International recitalist Nathan Laube is a regular guest artist at major festivals around the world, including a solo recital at the Royal Albert Hall for the 2022 BBC Proms. He teaches at the Eastman School in Rochester NY, and is a jury member at this year's St Albans International Organ Competitions.

**Sunday 13th July 8.30pm**

## **ALIM BEISEMBAYEV, PIANO**

St Albans Cathedral £30-£15



**DEBUSSY** Images book 2  
**LISZT** Transcendental Etude no 11 Harmonies du soir  
**LISZT** Après une lecture du Dante: Fantasia quasi Sonata  
**CHOPIN** 24 Preludes

A BBC New Generation Artist, Beisembayev won First Prize at The Leeds International Piano Competition in 2021 and made his BBC Proms debut in 2023 to great acclaim.

'There's no pianist under 30 in the world I would rather hear' – The Telegraph.

**Monday 14th July 1.00pm**

## **MARGARET PHILLIPS, ORGAN**

Christ Church Spitalfields, London E1 6LY £15



English music from the 17th to 19th centuries by **JOHN STANLEY, HENRY PURCELL, JOHN BARRETT, WILLIAM HAYES, JOHN RUSSELL** and **SAMUEL WESLEY**, alongside **MENDELSSOHN**'s Prelude & Fugue in D minor op.37 no.3

One of Britain's outstanding concert organists and teachers and co-founder of the English Organ School and Museum, Margaret Phillips is on the jury for this year's competitions. Her numerous CDs have been highly praised.

**Monday 14th July 7.30pm**

## **THREE CHOIRS**

St Albans Cathedral £40-£17



The Choirs of **St Albans Cathedral, New College Oxford** and **Temple Church** conducted by **William Fox, Robert Quinney** and **Thomas Allery**

Music to include  
**FINZI** God is gone up  
**LEIGHTON**  
What love is this  
of thine?  
**ELGAR** Te Deum &  
Benedictus (op.34)



The hugely popular  
Three Choirs concert  
returns!

Book early to avoid  
disappointment.

Tuesday 15th July 8.30pm

## JACQUI DANKWORTH, LIVE IN CONCERT

St Albans Cathedral £30–£15



Join Jacqui and her world-class trio for a night of spectacular music to celebrate the release of her stunning new album, *Windmills*. The concert will feature classic songs by **STEPHEN SONDHEIM**, **LEONARD BERNSTEIN**, **MICHEL LEGRAND**, **SÉRGIO MENDES** and many others, specially arranged by US pianist (and Jacqui's husband) **Charlie Wood**. With **Oli Hayhurst** (bass) and **Ralph Salmins** (drums).

*Sponsored by Sue & Philip Vaughan.*

Wednesday 16th July 8.00pm

## LUCY CROWE SOPRANO & ANNA TILBROOK PIANO

St Albans Cathedral £30–£15



**DVORAK** Gypsy Songs op.55

**MADELEINE DRING** Shakespeare songs

**DEBUSSY** Chansons pour Madame Vasnier

**MENDELSSOHN** Five Songs | **STRAUSS** Four Last Songs

We are thrilled to welcome back to St Albans one of the world's great sopranos, in a recital with her distinguished accompanist. 'Her pure soprano took us heavenwards with dazzling high notes until we arrived at paradise itself' – The Times.

Thursday 17th July 1.15pm

## BACH CORNER: HAMISH WAGSTAFF

St Albans Cathedral Free; voluntary donations invited



**JS BACH** Kyrie, Gott Heiliger Geist, BWV671; Sonata no.2, BWV526; Dies sind die heil'gen zehn Gebot, BWV678; Prelude and Fugue in C, BWV547

Bach performed by an outstanding young organist: thirty minutes of uplifting music in the middle of the day. Hamish Wagstaff Organ Scholar at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

Sponsored by RCO Foundation.



Thursday 17th July 2pm

## IMPROVISATION FINAL

St Albans Cathedral £15, students free  
All 15 competition events £150 (saving £75)

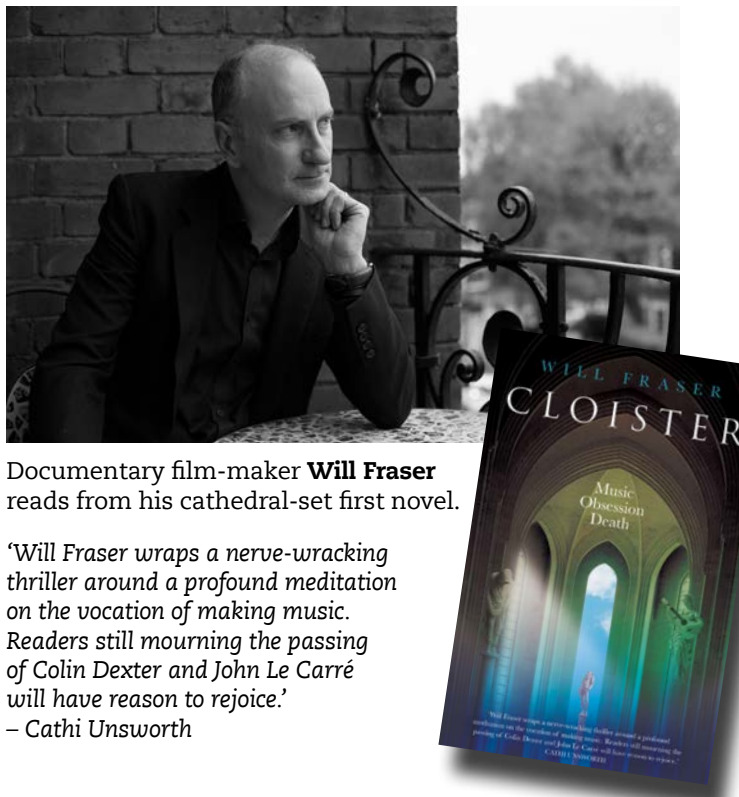


The Final of the Tournemire Prize of £8,000, on the magnificent Harrison & Harrison organ of St Albans Cathedral. Each finalist will present an improvisation in three movements (Prelude, Scherzo and Finale) with a free choice of style, alongside **CHARLES TOURNEMIRE's** Suite no.51 Domenica XXIII post Pentecosten. Whichever young organist takes the prize will need to demonstrate exceptional virtuosity, creativity and quick thinking.

Thursday 17th July 5.00pm

## CLOISTER, A NOVEL: MUSIC OBSESSION DEATH

St Albans Cathedral Free, but tickets required



Documentary film-maker **Will Fraser** reads from his cathedral-set first novel.

*'Will Fraser wraps a nerve-wracking thriller around a profound meditation on the vocation of making music. Readers still mourning the passing of Colin Dexter and John Le Carré will have reason to rejoice.'*

– Cathi Unsworth

Thursday 17th July 6.00pm

## JEAN-BAPTISTE ROBIN, ORGAN

St Albans Cathedral £15



**LULLY\*** March and 5 Variations | **RAMEAU\*** Les Sauvages

**COUPERIN** Tierce en taille

**JS BACH** transcribed **Dupré** Sinfonia from Cantata BWV29

**LISZT** Prelude and fugue on B-A-C-H

**SCHUMANN** transcribed **Guilmant** Träumerei

**ALBENIZ\*** Asturias | **POULENC\*** La reine de cœur

**RAVEL\*** Rigaudon & Toccata

A varied programme At the Crossroads of Keyboards.

\* denotes a transcription by today's performer.

**Friday 18th July 1.15pm**

## **BACH CORNER: DANIEL COLANER**

St Albans Cathedral Free; voluntary donations invited



**JS BACH** 'Gigue' Fugue in G major, BWV577;  
Fantasia and Fugue in G minor, BWV542;  
Trio Sonata no.5 in C major, BWV529

Bach performed by an outstanding young organist: thirty minutes of uplifting music in the middle of the day. Daniel Colaner first captured media attention aged 12 with same-day performances at Carnegie Hall and St Patrick's Cathedral. He won the Bach Prize at the 2024 Northern Ireland International Organ Competition.

**Friday 18th July 7.00pm**

## **INTERPRETATION FINALS**

St Albans Cathedral £15, students free  
All 15 competition events £150 (saving £75)



The Interpretation Final will take place on the Cathedral's magnificent Harrison & Harrison organ.

Each competitor will perform a free choice of contrasting music alongside the Scherzo from **JEHAN ALAIN's** Suite for Organ, with a total timing not to exceed 35 minutes.

The evening will conclude with announcements of the prize winners, culminating with our First Prize of the Gold Medal, £12,000 and a range of recital engagements.

**Saturday 19th July 11.00am**

## **PRESENTATION OF PRIZES**

St Albans Cathedral £15



Your chance to hear the winners of the 33rd St Albans International Organ Competition, performing together in a celebratory programme. These exceptional organists will have been selected from a field of performers aged under 33 from all around the world.

## **OUR FESTIVAL NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT**

**Please consider joining one  
of our Supporters' schemes**

### **HURFORD CIRCLE**

Annual donation £5000+

### **BENEFACTORS**

Annual donation £250+

### **BACH CIRCLE**

Annual donation £1000+

### **FRIENDS**

Annual donation £100+

Join one of our higher-level Circles and receive:

- All of the benefits of a Benefactor or Friend
- Invitations to interval receptions, for you and up to three guests
- Opportunities to meet the artists

You may sign up individually or jointly, and can donate by cheque or bank transfer.

Support us by becoming a Friend or Benefactor and receive:

- Priority booking for ticketed events
- Credit in programmes in which supporters are named (unless you prefer otherwise)

You may sign up individually or jointly, and will be asked to complete a Standing Order form.

**See [organfestival.com](http://organfestival.com) or call us on 01727 844765**

# THE COMPETITIONS

*Tickets for each event: £15; students free  
All 15 competition events: £150 (saving £75)*

The St Albans International Organ Competitions attract young organists from all over the world, to perform in front of a jury of organists of international standing. All competition events appear in white text in the 'At a Glance' pages overleaf.

We are pleased to acknowledge the support of the four Competition venues:

*Cathedral* St Albans Cathedral, Sumpter Yard, AL1 1BY  
*St Peter's* St Peter's Church, St Peter's Street AL1 3HG  
*Spitalfields* Christ Church Spitalfields, London E1 6LY  
*RAM* Royal Academy of Music, London NW1 5HT

## **Interpretation First Prize and Gold Medal Interpretation**

£12,000 plus recital engagements  
*sponsored by The Williams Church Music Trust*

## **Tournemire Prize for Improvisation**

£8,000 plus recital engagements

## **Interpretation Second Prize** £5,000

*sponsored by Amphion Fund*

**Peter Hurford Bach Prize** £2,500 jointly sponsored by  
*the RCO Foundation and the late Mrs Elisabeth Wells*

**Audience Prize** £1,000 sponsored by *Mr Andrei Lussmann*

**Best performance of the commissioned work** £1,000

**Douglas May Award** for the best performance in any  
Quarter-Final or Semi-Final of either competition £1,000

# FUNDERS AND SUPPORTERS

The St Albans International Organ Festival thanks the Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury for their significant support.

We are grateful to the following organisations and individuals for their financial support:

The Alan Brentnall Charitable Trust  
Amphion Fund  
The Champrniss Foundation  
Douglas May Trust  
Eric Thompson Charitable Trust for Organists  
RCO Foundation  
The Williams Church Music Trust

The late Mrs Elisabeth Wells

Many generous Supporters in the Hurford Circle,  
Bach Circle, Benefactors and Friends

Plus anonymous donors and all subscribing members

Thanks also to St Albans Cathedral's Dean and Chapter,  
the Cathedral's Music Department, and Marketing and  
Box Office staff.

**Information correct at March 2025.**

The  
Eric Thompson  
Charitable Trust  
for organists  
and organ music

 The Williams Church Music Trust

**Sunday 6th July**

8.10am St Peter's

BBC SUNDAY WORSHIP BROADCAST

**Monday 7th July**

1.00pm St Peter's

INTERPRETATION QUARTER-FINAL 1A

**Tuesday 8th July**

1.00pm St Peter's

INTERPRETATION QUARTER-FINAL 1B

8.30pm Cathedral

MONSTROUS REGIMENTS**Wednesday 9th July**

1.00pm Cathedral

JEAN-BAPTISTE ROBIN INTERVIEW

2.00pm Cathedral

INTERPRETATION QUARTER-FINAL 2A

7.30pm Cathedral

IMPROVISATION QUARTER-FINAL

10.00pm St Michael's

JA-KYUNG OH, HARPSICHORD**Thursday 10th July**

1.15pm Cathedral

BACH CORNER: CAROLYN CRAIG

2.00pm Cathedral

INTERPRETATION QUARTER-FINAL 2B

8.00pm Cathedral

LONDON HANDEL PLAYERS**Friday 11th July**

1.15pm Cathedral

BACH CORNER: LUKE MITCHELL

2.00pm Cathedral

INTERPRETATION QUARTER-FINAL 2C

6.00pm Cathedral

INTERPRETATION QUARTER-FINAL 2D

10.00pm St Michael's

CHOIR OF KING'S COLLEGE LONDON**Saturday 12th July**

10.00am St Peter's

IMPROVISATION SEMI-FINAL 1

4.30pm St Peter's

SIMON HARDEN, ORGAN

7.30pm Cathedral

BEETHOVEN'S NINTH**Sunday 13th July**

3.00pm Cathedral

NATHAN LAUBE, ORGAN

8.30pm Cathedral

ALIM BEISEMBAYEV, PIANO**Monday 14th July**

1:00pm Spitalfields

MARGARET PHILLIPS, ORGAN

7:30pm Cathedral

THREE CHOIRS CONCERT**Tuesday 15th July**

10.30am Spitalfields

INTERPRETATION SEMI-FINAL 1A

2.30pm Spitalfields

INTERPRETATION SEMI-FINAL 1B

8.30pm Cathedral

JACQUI DANKWORTH TRIO**Wednesay 16th July**

10.00am RAM

INTERPRETATION SEMI-FINAL 2A

1.00pm RAM

INTERPRETATION SEMI-FINAL 2A

4.00pm RAM

IMPROVISATION SEMI-FINAL 2

8.00pm Cathedral

LUCY CROWE & ANNA TILBROOK**Thursday 17th July**

1.15pm Cathedral

BACH CORNER: HAMISH WAGSTAFF

2.00pm Cathedral

IMPROVISATION FINAL

5.00pm Cathedral

CLOISTER, A NOVEL

6.00pm Cathedral

JEAN-BAPTISTE ROBIN, ORGAN

**Friday 18th July**

1.15pm Cathedral

BACH CORNER: DANIEL COLANER

7.00pm Cathedral

INTERPRETATION FINAL

**Saturday 19th July**

11.00am Cathedral

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\* THERE WILL BE NO LIVE JAZZ ON 15 JULY,  
PLEASE SEE CATHEDRAL EVENTS FOR INFO