

RAM  
*page*

# RAMpage SUMMER EDITION



INTERVIEWS WITH  
ANNEMARIE FEDERLE,  
NICK DANIEL AND  
DR. NOEMI GYORI



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SUMMER 2021

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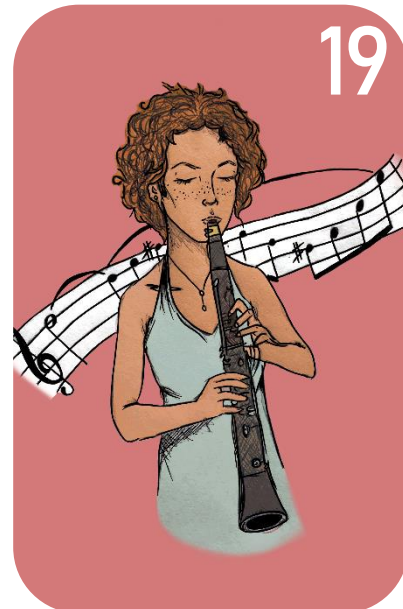
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ISSUE 3,  
SUMMER 2021

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# EDITOR'S NOTE



Welcome to our summer edition! I ended my last note, back in February, with a wish for 'brighter days to come' and as I write this recovering from the successful RAM summer ball (shoutout to the SU team) and a second scorching heatwave, I am glad to say that they have been realised. This last term has been my favourite yet and has been filled with in-person exams, practice and performances – I know I am speaking for many when I say that we are very grateful for the efforts that have been made by RAM to keep us safe while providing as many musical opportunities as possible.

As we sit on the verge of RAM and musical life gradually returning to 'normal', this edition seeks to question what changes can emerge in a post lockdown music world.

These include diversifying double reed repertoire, having frank conversations about the logistics of being a mother while maintaining a high flying musical career and continuing to push for inclusivity and acceptance of all sexualities, economic classes, genders and races in the classical music scene.

If you head to our back pages, you will find lots of fun summery activities to celebrate the much needed break – cocktail making, a guide to outdoor swimming and how to spend your summer in London on a budget. The edition is also packed with colourful artwork in a variety of styles and I hope that it will be a treat to look at, as well as read. Huge thanks to everyone involved and I wish you all a sunny, covid free summer! See you in September,

Ellen x

**Thankyou to our  
editing team!**



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# Interview with BBC Young Musician 2020 finalist Annemarie Federle

By Ellen Wilkinson

March 2020 saw the sudden shut down of the arts in an unprecedented and devastating way; three musicians left teetering on the edge of stardom were the 2020 BBC young musician finalists. Having triumphed in a nail biting semi-final (filmed at the very end of March, just before the lockdown) oboist Ewan Miller, percussionist Fang Zhang and horn player Annemarie Federle were plunged into the unknown, having to prepare a concerto in lockdown for a televised final on an unfixed date, which could easily be cancelled entirely. Over a year later, in a night of impressive and at times emotional music-making, the long awaited grand final was filmed on the 25th April 2021, with seventeen year old Fang Zhang winning the title with his spirited but moving rendition of Keiko Abe's Prism Rhapsody for solo marimba.

Eighteen year old horn player Annemarie also wowed the judges with her striking and composed performance of the virtuosic Horn Concerto by Ruth Gipps. She started at the Royal Academy of Music in September 2020, studying with David Pyatt and Richard Watkins, and we met in a quiet corner of RAM to chat about why she chose the horn, the challenges of preparing for an unfixed goal and her highlight of the BBC young musician experience.

*Ellen Wilkinson: How did you get into music?*

Annemarie Federle: My parents both play the violin as a hobby; my dad actually studied music but he is a biologist now! Music was always around me when I was growing up, so it felt very natural to start an instrument.

*EW: Why the horn?*

AF: I was always told I was a very loud baby with strong lungs so my dad suggested that I try a wind instrument. We had a local brass dectet which we saw perform a few times and I think I liked the look of the horn - I was seven when I started.





***EW: When did you know you wanted to play professionally?***

I realised in my last few years of school when I played with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain that music was something I really enjoyed and wanted to keep doing.

***AF: What was the highlight of your BBC young musician experience?***

Definitely playing in the final; the opportunity to play and rehearse with a professional orchestra was incredible and very rewarding. I had never played the Ruth Gipps concerto with an orchestra so that was exciting in itself.

***EW: What was the most challenging part of the experience?***

AF: Probably the delay between the semi-final and final and not knowing if the final was ever going to happen. It had to be postponed a few times and there were long gaps of not knowing because the BBC was dependent on government guidelines. We all had an extended period without performance experience so it was quite extreme going from that to such a high pressure situation. In a way I was glad that there wasn't much of an audience because although it was a shame not to be able to have the full in person support, I think it would have been a big shock going from not performing for a year to playing in front of a packed hall. Our parents were allowed to be there though - up in a corner and not shown on TV!

***EW: How did you manage the preparation in the long gaps? Were you consistently working on the concerto or did you leave it for a bit?***

AF: I had prepared the piece a bit before the first lockdown, and then after the semi-final I left it for a while because we had no idea when the final was going to be. I practiced it on and off and then in the month before the competition I really focused on it.

***EW: How did you go about memorising the piece?***

AF: That kind of thing comes quite naturally to me - when I know I have practiced a piece a lot and listened to it, it just kind of happens.

***EW: Did you look much at the orchestral score or did you mainly listen?***

AF: The score isn't publicly available so I mainly listened and absorbed and used the piano reduction as reference.

***EW: Why did you pick the Ruth Gipps horn concerto?***

AF: I didn't want to pick the default choice of Strauss 2, which Ben Goldscheider played in the 2016 BBC final, and horn repertoire is very limited so I wanted to pick something different. I had heard my teacher David Pyatt's recording of the piece, which is the only recording that currently exists of it, and remember being surprised that I didn't know it at the time because it was such amazing music. Gipps was actually at the recording sessions with my teacher so he was very helpful for my preparation. I thought it would be suitable for the competition because it is technically very challenging but also something I really enjoy playing and listening to.



*EW: How was the process of rehearsing with Mark Wigglesworth and the BBC Philharmonic?*

AF: We had one initial rehearsal with Mark and a pianist; that was really useful for getting tempos and establishing things like places where I wanted to take more time. It was reassuring for me because I knew he would take it how I wanted. We then had two 50 minute rehearsals with the orchestra which ran pretty smoothly and were really exciting for me as I got to hear how the different parts fit together live.

*EW: I guess because there are so few recordings it makes working on a new version really fresh - why do you think the concerto hasn't been frequently played?*

AF: It's a shame because Ruth Gipps faced a lot of discrimination as a female composer so a lot of her music isn't known or even published. This year is her birth centenary and there has been a big push to publish her work; Ben Goldscheider actually just recorded the horn concerto, so there will be two recordings once that comes out! I hope her music becomes more well known because it really deserves it.

*EW: It was interesting that all of the finalists played quite unknown pieces; I am an oboist and had never heard of Ewan Miller's concerto, 'Legacy' by Oscar Navarro, and I guess the obvious choice for him would also have been Strauss!*

AF: Exactly, and it levelled the playing field with the percussionist Fang Zhang since a marimba concerto would be less known anyway.

*EW: What did you do in the hours leading up the performance?*

AF: For the final we had to do our own hair and makeup due to social distancing restrictions; I originally thought that might be quite stressful because I am a bit of a perfectionist but actually it was a relief to have something to distract myself with in the hours leading up to the performance!

*EW: How have you found starting RAM in a pandemic?*

AF: I have really enjoyed it; obviously it isn't the same as it would be but I live in mixed university halls and have seen how little other students have had and how lucky we are to have anything in person!





***EW: What are your musical aims post-graduation?***

AF: I would love to have a balance of orchestral, solo and chamber playing. I couldn't limit myself to one and as I love all three.

## Quickfire questions

***EW: Best and worst part of playing the horn?***

AF: The best part is when you get the good tunes in composers like Mahler and Strauss. The worst part is when there is a hard passage in an orchestral piece and if you play it right no one will appreciate it but if you play it wrong everyone will notice! Beethoven 7 is a classic example of this.

***EW: Favourite meal before a concert?***

AF: I don't usually eat right before concerts! I do eat on the day and usually have something like a banana before I go on stage - I know everyone says you should do that but it works.

***EW: Favourite way to exercise?***

AF: At home in Cambridge I really like to cycle but I am a bit scared to in London traffic... I prefer walking here.

***EW: Dream job other than musician?***

AF: Something maths or science related - maybe medicine?

***EW: Best part of lockdown lifting?***

AF: Being able to go to the pub.

***EW: Favourite genre other than classical?***

AF: Jazz - obviously to listen to because I can't play jazz on the horn!

***EW: The best concert you have played in?***

AF: I played in Mahler 9 a couple of years ago and it was the first time I had played a Mahler symphony - it's a really good piece.

***EW: Tips for managing nerves?***

AF: I guess you have to expect to be nervous and then you can manage it. If I do something small I might not anticipate the nerves and then they really throw me off. Also, as much performance practice as possible - I performed the concerto in front of a RAM symphonic brass rehearsal, which was very nerve racking, as well as in a performance class at RAM; both of these were very useful for helping me manage my nerves for the performance in the final.

***EW: Favourite symphonic work?***

AF: It's hard to pick just one, but maybe Mahler 9.

***EW: Go to takeaway?***

AF: Chinese!

***EW: Cats or dogs?***

AF: I actually can't pick, I love both!



# Where to Start with Classic Literature

By Jack Tostevin-Hall

For the majority of my life, “the joy of reading” was a sentiment I was never really able to connect with. I’m sure many people can relate when I say that secondary school killed any love for literature I already had; studying the same novel for months on end, picking out every last metaphor and dissecting every sentence made it impossible to ever separate reading from work. Even when I did decide to occasionally pick up a book, for years I was trapped in the misconception that it had to be full of action, suspense, mystery and ideally featuring a serial killer, for me to actually enjoy it.

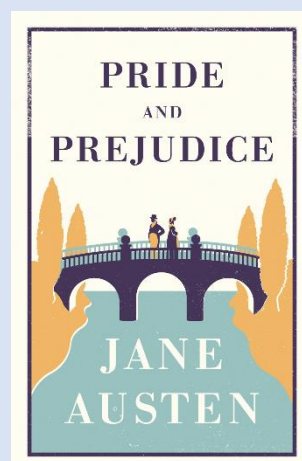
At the end of last year I finally decided that enough was enough. I was fed up with always having to admit to being the one who “isn’t really a reader” and constantly having to back away when any conversation got too literary.

I made it my New Year’s resolution for 2021 to start reading again, with a particular focus on the classics - the sort of novels you “need to read before you die”.

And here I am six months later, having read more books in half a year than I have in the previous five combined. I have been completely surprised by how much I have enjoyed the experience, and I really feel that picking up a book again has opened what feels like a whole new world to me. So if you too feel that you want to get back into reading, here is a selection of my five favourite classics so far - there is definitely something for everyone in this list!

## Pride and Prejudice

Jane Austen  
(1813)

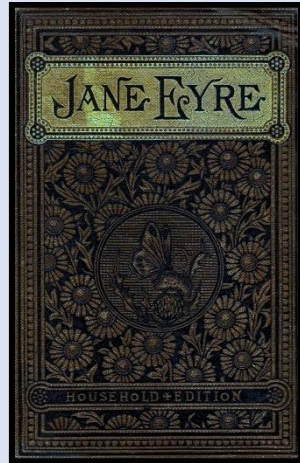


Upon typing “classic literature” into Google, ‘Pride and Prejudice’ is the first result that appears, and this is not without good reason. Arguably Jane Austen’s most famous novel, ‘Pride and Prejudice’ is undeniably one of literature’s most iconic romances. Set in Regency England, the novel depicts the amusing and often chaotic life of the upper class Bennet family as Mrs Bennet tries to secure favourable marriages for her five daughters. The novel explores the relationship between protagonist Elizabeth Bennet and Mr Darcy, as they learn to overcome their prejudice and pride respectively. Austen’s witty portrayal of manners, education and marriage in this period brings a much loved humorous element and her extreme characterisation paints vivid pictures of a whole range of people; some who you’ll love and others who you’ll despise. In my opinion ‘Pride and Prejudice’ is a great place to start with the classics: it’s light, charming, and not too long, making it a thoroughly enjoyable read.

Genre	Romantic
Length	350 pages approx.
Ease of Read	📖 📖 📖
Plot Driven	📖 📖 📖
Character Driven	📖 📖 📖 📖
Page Turner?	📖 📖 📖
Overall Rating	🌟 🌟 🌟 🌟

## Jane Eyre

Charlotte  
Brontë  
(1847)

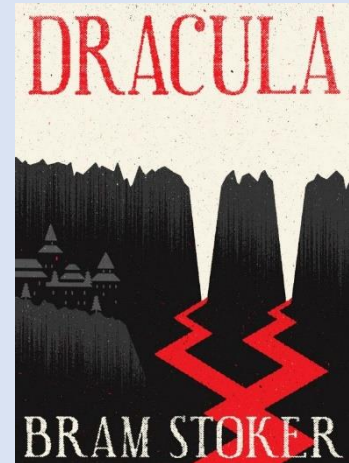


Another one of literature's greatest novels, 'Jane Eyre' is Charlotte Brontë's most well-loved work and arguably the most famous of any Brontë novel. 'Jane Eyre' is a Bildungsroman, a literary genre that explores the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from youth into adulthood. Brontë's intimate first person narrative gives the reader incredible insight into Jane's mind, exploring with great emotion her life experiences; from a turbulent childhood, to adolescence at boarding school, and on to working as a governess in a private house. The novel also explores Jane's relationship with Mr Rochester, her brooding employer, which leads her to question her moral and spiritual views. Brontë's writing on a woman's place in society and early feminist sentiments are particularly powerful, especially considering the Victorian society this novel was published in. 'Jane Eyre' remains the most touching and passionate novel I have read to date, securing it firmly as a personal favourite; this is an absolute must-read.

Genre	Romantic / Bildungsroman
Length	500 pages approx.
Ease of Read	☐ ☐ ☐
Plot Driven	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Character Driven	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Page Turner?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Overall Rating	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Dracula

Bram  
Stoker  
(1897)



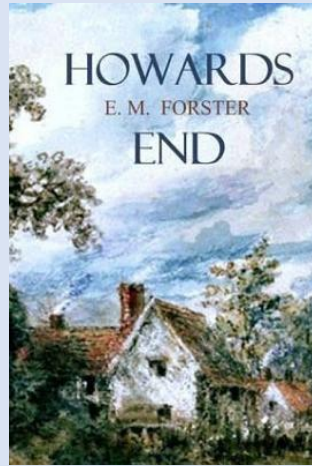
Count Dracula, the bloodthirsty Transylvanian vampire, has become an infamous part of popular culture, being called upon time and time again as the inspiration for film and TV. However, what struck me when I started to read Bram Stoker's original novel is how little I knew of the actual plot. The novel all starts when solicitor, Jonathan Harker, travels to Count Dracula's castle on business, to settle the purchase of a London mansion. He quickly realises everything is not as it first seemed and the novel subsequently follows Jonathan and a small party in their long mission to attempt to defeat Dracula. Rather uniquely, the novel is entirely comprised of a collection of letters, diary entries and newspaper articles, all pieced together in chronological order which guides the reader through the plot from a variety of perspectives. 'Dracula' is completely action-packed, gripping and spooky: a real page-turner that you can't put down once you start.

Genre	Gothic Horror
Length	400 pages approx.
Ease of Read	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Plot Driven	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Character Driven	☐ ☐ ☐
Page Turner?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Overall Rating	★ ★ ★ ★ ★



## Howards End

E. M.  
Forster  
(1910)

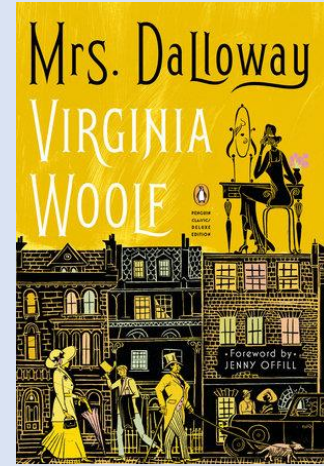


One of the most well-loved novels by the lesser-known author E.M. Forster, 'Howards End' unravels the interconnected relationships of three families: the cultured and intelligent Schlegel sisters, the bourgeois Wilcoxes and the working class Basts. Throughout the novel Forster explores ideas such as class, culture, politics, cosmopolitanism and women's rights, painting a thought-provoking picture of England at the turn of the century. What really stood out for me is how beautifully Forster crafts the prose, weaving in extended metaphors and provocative descriptions that makes it a joy to read. Do not be put off by the 'domestic fiction' genre; this novel has more than its fair share of twists and turns that will shock and surprise. 'Howards End' is another totally gripping novel in its own way and is without a doubt up there as one of my favourites.

Genre	Domestic Fiction
Length	250 pages approx.
Ease of Read	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Plot Driven	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Character Driven	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Page Turner?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Overall Rating	★ ★ ★ ★ ★

## Mrs Dalloway

Virginia  
Woolf  
(1925)



'Mrs Dalloway' follows a single day in the life of upper-class Londoner Clarissa Dalloway, as she prepares to host a party that evening. The novel tackles challenging issues including class and society, memories and regret, and aging and mental illness. Using a stream-of-consciousness narrative, Woolf's prose stands as a complete rejection of the literary conventions of the Victorian period. As a result, the novel is essentially plotless and instead focuses on the often chaotic thoughts and feelings of the narrator's mind. The narration is also passed between multiple characters throughout the novel as Woolf seamlessly weaves together multiple stories and perspectives. Put together, these things do make 'Mrs Dalloway' a fairly challenging read, and I would definitely not recommend starting your journey into the classics with this novel. However when you become more comfortable with the long and complex sentences and immerse yourself into Woolf's style, you can really begin to appreciate the depth

Genre	Psychological Fiction
Length	150 pages approx.
Ease of Read	☐
Plot Driven	☐
Character Driven	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Page Turner?	☐ ☐ ☐
Overall Rating	★ ★ ★

# Pandemic reflections: why it's ok (and even useful) to fall in and out of love with your instrument

By Ellen Wilkinson

It seems crazy that I am reaching the halfway point of my undergraduate degree at RAM; it has been a rollercoaster of experiences and emotions, made particularly tumultuous by the pandemic. As the final push of summer term draws to a close, I ponder on what can be learnt from those often bleak months spent locked in with our instruments over a year ago.

There were several approaches to 'pandemic practice'. The first, which we were encouraged to embrace by teachers, was making the most of all the free time, enjoying the space and using it to knuckle down and create a routine to finally iron out those pesky parts of our technique that held us back. The second - the no pressure practice - aimed to take the stress out of what was an incredibly stressful time and let you play whatever the hell made you happy, whether that was exploring pieces you never had time to look at, only playing lovely tunes or performing something poignant to your street on a Thursday night. Finally, there was the no-practice practice; the one where you actually had a much needed break from your instrument, or you just had very little motivation to get it out of its case.

Along with most music students, I implemented a combination of all three, and each approach came in and out of focus at different points in the lockdown. The one I remember most vividly, however, was the no-practice stage.

Having played an instrument almost daily from the age of seven, there is something equally disconcerting and liberating about taking an extended break from 'proper practice'. I soon found, however, that my initial freedom from the routine warped into a disconnect from my instrument entirely. The worsening horror of the news coupled with my sudden severing from a musical environment made practising an oboe seem like the most bizarre thing in the world. I kept busy (musicians are used to being busy) with what seemed like absolutely anything but my instrument.

I started German on Duolingo (and gave up after a month when I realised I couldn't stop pronouncing words in a French accent), fell passionately in love with the novels of E.M Forster while lamenting that I had never properly considered an English degree, and started a daily online ballet barre, relishing the reconnection to my body and my love of dance. I was scrambling around, grappling for anything that made sense in a time of complete confusion.

Meanwhile, when I did get out my instrument, my practice was tainted with resentment and a niggling sense of guilt. My teacher once described the oboe as capricious: one moment the intimate vessel to pour your emotions into and the next a cunning adversary, stubbornly tripping up your musical progress. I was irritated with it, and ashamed that I was. I felt frustrated that I couldn't focus as well as some of my peers, barely correlating the loss of my motivation with the loss of any goals, performance opportunities or musical companionship that I may have had before the lockdowns.



At points I worried about the future in an all consuming manner, comparable to the panic I felt in swimming exams as a child when I had to dive to the bottom of the pool and collect a ring with a weight on it. Chlorine filled my nose and stung my eyes as my lungs burned for oxygen, every part of my body rejecting the task I had signed up to do, desperate to kick the other way and gasp for air.

More than a year on from the isolated, dragging days of the first 2020 lockdown, musical life is gradually getting back to 'normal'. There have been many ups and downs since September but I am learning to treat my instrument as neither a friend nor an enemy, but a neutral companion that is a constant through the peaks and troughs. I am focusing on being present in the moment and worrying less about the massive.

My love of practicing and performing has renewed and blossomed as if it never left: the kick of excitement when zipping up a black concert dress,

the ripple of laughter as a clarinet squeaks in a rehearsal, the relief as a reed crows for the first time - it will work - the small glow of pride as you feel your fingers getting stronger and the irreplaceable electric tension between performer and audience. Each unfurling moment is a reminder of what was and what will be, forming a deeper appreciation of everything that musicians have lost and are now slowly regaining.

I am learning, gradually, to be patient with my doubts, to properly congratulate my successes and to respect the diversity of my interests as much as I admire the consistent focus of others. Most of all I have learnt that for me, music is first and foremost about companionship and communication. I rely on and and learn from other musicians more than I realised; my oboe and I can only thrive in the opposite of isolation, and that's ok.



Artwork by Jess Abrahams

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# Asexuality – A mini crash course

By Hera Protopapas Wettergren

Pride Month may be over, but Pride content is still as relevant! Let's take this opportunity to shed some light on an orientation that doesn't usually get much attention. Chances are you know someone who identifies as asexual or on the asexuality spectrum – there are more of us than you might think. Even so, there are many misconceptions about this orientation floating around, something I've experienced in many contexts, including at RAM. So if you're unsure what asexuality is all about, here is a little crash course:

## What it is (and what it isn't)

Asexuality is defined as 'not experiencing sexual attraction', but what does this actually mean? Perhaps the two most crucial things to understand about asexuality is that it is:

1. A sexual orientation, just like any other. This means that it is not an illness, a disability, or a dysfunction. It also means that - unlike celibacy - asexuality is not a choice, any more than it's a choice to be straight, gay, bi, etc.
2. An umbrella term. Because the definition is based on not experiencing something, it includes a very wide variety of experiences. Some asexual people have a sex drive or libido, while others don't. Some fall in love and have romantic relationships, while some experience neither sexual nor romantic attraction. Asexuality is also often described as a spectrum, including people who experience little or limited sexual attraction.

## Sexual vs. romantic attraction

A lot of people don't feel the need to differentiate between sexual and romantic attraction, because they often go hand in hand (though having said that, some people who are not asexual still experience these two as separate things).

For asexual people the distinction is important, because while most of us don't experience sexual attraction, some are still romantically attracted to other people, and might also identify as gay, straight, etc. Conversely, some experience neither form of attraction, and also identify as aromantic.

## Sexuality and sex drive

One of the most common misconceptions about asexual people is that we're all completely uninterested in sex of any kind. Despite the name, asexuality doesn't necessarily mean a complete lack of sexuality – only that it isn't directed towards other people.

Many asexual people masturbate, and some even have sex with other people, whether for the sake of a romantic partner or to please themselves. That said, there are also those who don't experience any kind of sex drive.

## Why is knowledge about asexuality important?

By its very nature, asexuality is not a very visible orientation, and the fact that the definition is so wide means that it's very often misunderstood. In a society where sexual attraction is a fundamental part of most people's lives and relationships, not experiencing that attraction can feel very alienating. Growing up, most asexual people are faced with a firm conviction from people around them that what they're experiencing is not real, or at best a problem that needs to be fixed. Even the most progressive and inclusive sexual education material often skips asexuality completely, or brushes past it with a mistaken definition.

As adults, asexual people are still often met with disbelief, confusion, or misplaced pity when we talk about our orientation, whether with friends, family, romantic partners, or professionals such as healthcare staff. By increasing general awareness about asexuality, we also increase openness and acceptance, allowing people to feel comfortable in their own skin and live their lives as they want.

## So what can you do?

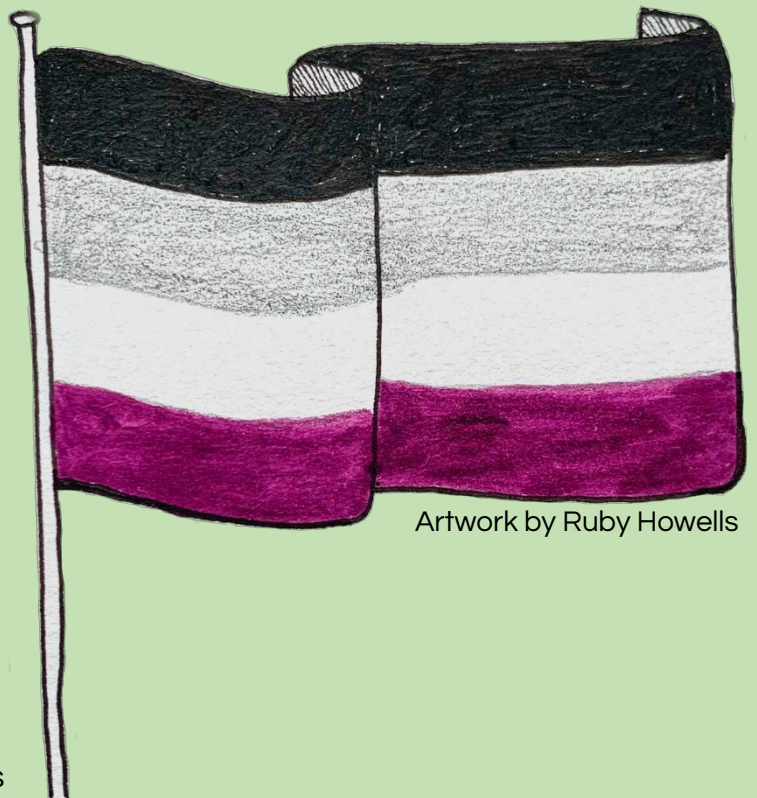
Having sexual or romantic relationships isn't a condition for happiness, and asexual and aromantic people are just as able to live full lives and have meaningful relationships as anyone else. Recognising this, and having a basic understanding of asexuality (as with any other identity) is already a great way to be supportive of asexual people around you.

In my own experience, my orientation often becomes an anticlimactic bomb I have to drop in response to a leading question about my love life, leading to

an awkward silence as the other person tries to decide how to react.

I'm not telling anyone not to ask these questions of your friends, but please be open to the answer, because just as you can't usually presume what gender someone is interested in, you can't always presume that they are interested in anyone at all.

Awareness of asexuality is growing – for example, asexual activist Yasmin Benoit is one of the recipients of this year's Attitude Pride Awards, the first time an LGBTQ+ award in the UK has gone to an asexual activist. This is great news, and hopefully we can continue to increase general awareness and acceptance through curiosity, information, and open-mindedness.



Artwork by Ruby Howells



# Diversifying double reed voices: an interview with Nick Daniel

By Ellen Wilkinson

Nicholas Daniel's prolific career as an oboist, conductor, teacher and champion of new music was propelled forward when he won the 1980 BBC Young Musician of the Year competition at the age of eighteen (he remains the only oboist to have won the title). Daniel studied briefly at the Royal Academy of Music with Janet Craxton and Celia Nicklin, before launching a prestigious career as a recording artist, chamber musician and concerto soloist with world leading orchestras.

He is a pioneer of new oboe music and has premiered works written for him by composers such as Harrison Birtwistle, Henri Dutilleux, James MacMillan and Thea Musgrave. Daniel is Professor at the Trossingen Musikhochschule in Germany and at the Guildhall School of Music in London, and in 2012 he was awarded the 'Queen's Medal for Music' for his "outstanding contribution to the musical life of the nation".



I had the privilege of attending a masterclass Nick gave at RAM in June and, as well as his astonishing skill on the oboe, I was struck by his warm wit, wealth of experience and passion for music's place in politics. In the class, Nick mentioned his role in the British Double Reed Society and International Double Reed Society and I was keen to learn more about the IDRS's plan to diversify new oboe repertoire for their 50 for 50 project, which celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the society. We chatted over zoom, when Nick was unfortunately isolating ("I'm completely fine – just a little bored!") about the impact of the Black Lives Matter movement on musical life, the exciting discoveries that are made when musicians make an effort to diversify their programmes and how our most important goal should be enabling every child to learn a musical instrument.

***Ellen Wilkinson: What is the purpose of the International Double Reed Society?***

Nick Daniel: The IDRS exists to promote communication between double reed players, increase repertoire and open barriers between different schools of playing, which can be quite extreme. In my opinion, it should exist to increase repertoire more than it has done in the past and the project we will discuss is probably the biggest example of the society commissioning new music for oboe and bassoon. The society is American based, as there isn't an American Double Reed society (there is a British/Spanish etc). Historically, the IDRS is the biggest ever double reed platform and it has over 4000 members, meaning the social media presence and resources are quite extreme.

Since 1980, I have attended and performed at conferences that they hold every year in America and cities around the world, from Melbourne to Birmingham;

the conferences are huge and have about ten performances a day.

They are also a great place to see all the latest double reed toys: new machinery, knives and crazy knife sharpening equipment that you couldn't take on a plane!

***EW: What is your role in the IDRS?***

ND: I have been involved in various different ways over the years, sometimes as a judge for their high level competitions - one of which I was a winner of many years ago when it was held in Graz, Austria. I have also helped choose repertoire for the competitions, as well as given presentations – a notable one was on Britten's Temporal Variations in Banff, Canada.

My role has changed in the last year following the Black Lives Matter movement and the footage of the George Floyd murder. The social media response to the clip broke the dam and made hugely beneficial changes to the IDRS and musical life in general; the BLM movement has shown what we as white people need to do and how we need to change and learn – a big process. The push for diversity in the IDRS may have started before 2020, as there was a huge outcry when there wasn't a single composer of colour on the list of repertoire for the Gillet competition. The president of the IDRS, Eric Stomberg, took the feedback and formed much more inclusive committees, including for 'Diversity, Equity and Inclusion', 'Repertoire' and 'Competitions' - which I was a member of - to work on the 50 for 50 project.

***EW: Could you explain further about the aim of the 50 for 50 project?***

ND: It is the fiftieth anniversary of the IDRS and the aim of the project is to commission fifty new works for oboe and bassoon over the next five years, with a focus on expanding and diversifying the double reed repertoire. There are three categories for new works: oboe and piano, bassoon and piano, and oboe, bassoon

and piano trio. My involvement in the project was as part of the competition committee which spent a large number of meetings deciding on the best way to make the competition represent as much diversity as possible, be that gender, race or sexual orientation. Each meeting was really fascinating and educational for me, which is not always the case with meetings!



The end result was that we are focused on including and promoting more black and brown women and closed the competition to white, straight, cis-gender men. After so much discussion this seemed a natural conclusion but it was slightly controversial in the reaction to it. Some people thought that the exclusion was a bit hard but I think it has been very elegantly handled by Eric Stomberg, the IDRS president.

That was also the first time I had ever heard the phrase 'black and brown women' in a meeting; I was initially nervous to use that term as a white person, and now I don't really know why I was. In the British Double Reed Society composition competition, which I am president of, we concluded that if there are two candidates of equal merit, the more ethnically or gender diverse candidate will win. Both of these decisions about exclusions for the competitions are compromises, and are seeing the same problem from different sides of the sculpture; having been involved in both discussions, I stand by the results.



***EW: What positive impact do you think this decision will have on the future of double reed music?***

ND: The fact that IDRS will have fifty new diverse works for double reed instruments is so exciting in itself! It multiplies by about 20% the number of accessible pieces for the instruments. I saw yesterday that one of the winners of this competition is a British composer called Hannah Kendall; she sent me her work for oboe and piano and I am very excited about it! It is already a piece that I will be programming in recitals. Only that one piece coming out of this project makes it worthwhile, but I really think the whole competition is fantastic and will be hugely enriching for the repertoire.

In Leicester I am the artistic director of the International Music Festival and about two years ago I started insisting on at least one work by a non-male composer. That may to some seem an unnecessary term, and why mention men at all, but as someone with a trans daughter I'm much more aware of the elements of non binary in the rainbow, and that needs acknowledgement, so we use it instead of female.

That caused a rich and beneficial blossoming of more diverse concert programmes, whether that be Clara Schumann, Thea Musgrave or Judith Weir. You make wonderful discoveries – Florence Price's Art Songs are just amazing.



We have extended this requirement to now include a composer of colour and are commissioning Eleanor Alberga in 2023 for a substantial new work which will include oboe. I think she represents the very best of British music and her work is extraordinary in the way that it is lit; it is very dark and then suddenly she uses tonality to cut through like lemon and it all shines.

***EW: Wow, that is all really interesting. Double reed instruments are expensive and players often come with a lot of privilege. What do you think can be done to encourage children from all backgrounds to learn the oboe and bassoon?***

ND: I would say the best way to get children to learn musical instruments is to give tuition to them for free. I think it is interesting that we are talking the day after Scotland is bringing in free instrumental tuition for all children in state schools. It was a manifesto commitment from all the parties, which is extraordinary. I have personally campaigned for the government to adopt the 'Every Child a Musician' scheme which was happening in the London Borough of Newham. It has been unfortunately scrapped because the new council Mayor is not interested, but the legacy of ten years remains. After the pandemic, children need music now more than ever.

The benefits academically are extraordinary: in Newham they went from the lowest 9% to the highest 12% of achieving schools in three years. People who had come from war torn countries were passing grades on the clarinet and receiving awards – the scheme really changed lives. We could bring it in throughout the country, but this government has other priorities.

I am working with people like Harriet Harmon and David Warburton to stoke the fire and get people talking about this again post Brexit and covid. I decided that my lockdown was going to be about other people and what kind of profession young musicians of all backgrounds would be entering.

***EW: I guess everything is interconnected and as we aim to diversify repertoire and players, audiences for classical music will broaden as a result. Is that an aim of yours and the IDRS?***

Nick: Absolutely, yes. Representation is so important. I use the example of Leicester, which is one of the first cities in Europe with a white minority, and yet our audiences are extremely white. The audiences are amazing, but we would like them to diversify. We are making a conscious effort to make it so that people can see themselves reflected on stage, both in gender and race. I think diverse programming has more of an effect on the players and the profession than audiences, but eventually this will feed into audiences too. It will have a huge impact on the IDRS; there are large numbers of very fine ethnically diverse oboe and bassoon players who have felt disenfranchised by the society and would never come to a conference. The IDRS is a huge networking event so it is crucial that everyone feels included from now on.

As a result of the 50 for 50 competition there were a few members who withdrew their subscriptions to the IDRS but there were considerably more who joined. I feel that we have definitely gained more than we have lost. The situation is about audiences, but in a way that is further down the line - the immediate changes to the inner workings of the profession are a crucial first step. We are at the bottom of a wave in music at the moment, and those of us that can need to give a push to get over it.

***EW: Finally, in ten to fifteen years from now, what changes do you hope will have come into place in double reed life?***

Nick: There are many things that I hope for! I hope that we will all be playing on instruments made from wood that is FSC - Forestry Stewardship Council - approved; I am the patron of a trust in Tanzania called 'Sound and Fair', which I am incredibly proud of. The environment is the most concerning thing in all of our lives and we must pressure our leaders to

commit to big changes; I hope that in a decade we will see a healing planet.

I also hope that we will see a hugely diverse workforce in music and I think that is definitely possible; if we were to get every single state school child in the UK learning an instrument then we would get brilliant musicians from all backgrounds. It might take longer than fifteen years but I think it is doable. The most fundamental ground level thing is to get every child learning a musical instrument; that will feed into everything we have been talking about, from composers to performers and audiences, who will no longer think that a classical concert hall is off limits to them. I tend to be a rather optimistic person – maybe we will even be back in the EU by then!



# Gender and the Woodwind Section

By Hayley Mitchell

Doriot Anthony Dwyer was the first female principal woodwind player in a major symphony orchestra. She was appointed principal flute to the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1952, which was 22 years after the first female string player - Edna Phillips - was hired by the Philadelphia orchestra in 1930. But why is there such a difference between female string players and woodwind players? Even today, although the gender imbalance of the orchestra is evening out, there is still a huge gender gap within the woodwind section.

Furthermore, the instruments deemed to be acceptable to play and performed by women were primarily accompaniment instruments, creating a huge gender gap in the decision-making aspect of any performance.

It is no coincidence that the instruments women were allowed to play were predominantly home-based. Richard D. Leppert's study on domestic musical life in eighteenth-century England outlines "how musical practices helped to assure and preserve male domination of women by limiting female activity to the home."

The historical context of woodwind instruments has been a key factor in the gender gap of individual instrument groups, especially wind instruments. In Western society during the 1400s, women were forbidden from playing wind instruments (woodwind and brass) due to the distortion of the face that was required when playing, which apparently upset her 'graceful and soft nature'. Women's outfits also presented issues when it came to playing these instruments, with skirts and large sleeves getting in the way. In other words, it was not acceptable for women to disrupt their appearance for the sake of playing an instrument.

Even 300 years later, during the 1700s, the aim of teaching a young girl a musical instrument was primarily to make her more appealing to male suitors, and consequently to marry well, rather than to allow her to become a professional musician.

An article published in 2019 which surveyed 40 orchestras across the UK, Europe and America showed that



Artwork by Ruby Howells

woodwind sections had a gender gap of 14 to 57 percent. The stats showed that the highest gender gap was the clarinet section with a ratio of 78.5% male. Although these stats are not as bad in other sections within the orchestra (brass for example is 44-80% male-dominated), the woodwind section is, I believe, to be seen as neutral with not a huge disparity in gender. However, the research shows that it is still a major issue within the music industry, and something that requires space to be discussed.

A study done on the gender gap in the top 20 American orchestras in 2014 showed that the ratio of male woodwind players was, on the whole, larger than the number of female players. The clarinet figures, for example, showed 83% male and 17% female, and the bassoon was 72% male and 28% female. Furthermore, the study showed that women were much less likely to become a principal of their section than their male counterparts.

Even within the flute section, which had a ratio of 68% female and 32% male, the ratio of principal flute players was 57% male compared to 43% female. Therefore, it is apparently easier for a man to become a principal flautist even though a higher percentage of flute players were female, resulting in female flute players being paid less than their orchestral male counterparts. Although the gender gap of an orchestra as a whole is beginning to even out, this rarely translates into women gaining positions of higher authority and they are often not involved in any of the decision-making within an orchestra.

From my own experience as a clarinetist, and through conversations I have had with fellow female woodwind students, factors such as role models, physique, and education techniques can affect the gender imbalance at an institutional level, and follow through to the professional world. This is by no means a blanket

statement based on the experiences of female woodwind students around the world, but rather observations of issues I have encountered or witnessed.

Evident from the figures above, the number of female woodwind players in professional orchestral positions today is much lower than those occupied by men. Consequently, there are fewer female role models compared to males, making it harder to visualize oneself in the industry. Although almost all of the women I talked to had been taught by a female instrumental tutor at some point, for a large number, this was only at the beginning stages of learning their instrument. So from these personal experiences, female teachers are more commonly teaching at beginner level, rather than professional.



Photo from an Academy Symphony Orchestra concert featuring Camille Curtis, Ellie Blamires, Hannah Condliffe and Eleanor Sullivan (front row woodwind: left to right)

A major factor in playing a woodwind instrument is the stamina behind blowing through the instrument itself. It is the most fundamental aspect of any wind instrument and is something that all wind students practice and develop regardless of gender.

However, I personally have always struggled with tension release and stamina more than any of my male colleagues, and when discussing the issue with fellow female wind players I have found them to have very similar experiences. There is no doubt that we



are all past the idea that women aren't strong enough to play wind instruments, but one must take into account the different social and biological constraints that are present for a female wind player which are not present for men who play the same instruments.

The biological processes that some women experience, including menstruation, pregnancy and childbirth, affect the abdominal muscles used in the everyday life of a professional wind player. They change how your support muscles feel and work from one day to the next.

Furthermore, social constraints such as clothing typically worn by women, i.e. tights and high-waisted jeans, can hinder the breathing process needed to play a wind instrument. Not to mention the body image that society deems to be 'ideal' in popular cultures, such as having a flat stomach, directly interferes with the physical act of relaxation and tension release needed to play a wind instrument to one's best ability.

Due to the male-dominated industry, women are taught to breathe and play a wind instrument predominantly by men, or by women who perhaps haven't experienced difficulties in these areas personally. Consequently, as students, female wind players are not made aware of these differences until later on in our education, making it harder to reverse any damage done trying to overcome these hurdles in the wrong way, or feeling as though you aren't as capable as a male counterpart. These issues are, admittedly part of a larger general conversation concerning gender stereotypes, but if these subjects were approached within education this would be a great start.

There are many things that could change or be adapted within the music industry to make it more accommodating towards female woodwind players. These could include female mentoring programs and more female college-level professors, active engagement in conversations around the female body, relating to breathing and possible tensions, as well as realistic discussions of what the industry is like for a female musician, and most importantly, allowing the space for education on these topics.

I look forward to the next generation of music teachers and young professionals entering the industry and pushing further against archaic gender stereotypes for woodwind players.



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# Summer Sporting Stories You Might Have Missed

By Chris Vettraino

This summer, the England men's football team made the final of the 2020 European Championships (as anyone with internet access will know because the media refused to shut up about it). As much as it pains me (a Scot) to say, this really is not that surprising; England are ranked the fourth best team in the world, and the only two European sides ranked ahead of them - France and Belgium - were drawn into the other half of the knockout round. On the other hand, Italy (England's opponents and the eventual champions), had not lost a football match since early September 2018. No matter who had won the final, it wasn't really newsworthy, as both teams would have made worthy champions of Europe.

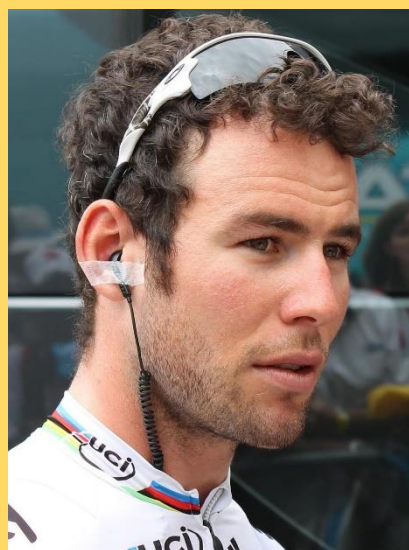
However, whilst this has been going on, some truly groundbreaking things have been happening in many different sports and I am here to fill you in.

## Cavendish chasing records against the odds

Mark Cavendish is one of the most outstanding British athletes of all time; a cyclist from the Isle of Man, he is widely regarded as one of, if not the best, sprinters in cycling history. Before this year he had won 30 stages at the Tour de France, the most prestigious bike road race in the world, and has been a four-time World Champion - once on the road and three times in track events.

However, time waits for no one. Cavendish is now at the steady age of 36 and has been struggling with injuries and illness for the past few years.

He hadn't won a stage at 'Le Tour' since 2016, any other major races since 2018 and he didn't even participate in the 2019 or 2020 Tour. Cavendish is now riding on a team that includes Sam Bennett, one of the best sprinters in the world (on last year's Tour, Bennett won the Green Points Jersey for sprints - along with two stages), and no team would ever take two sprinters to the Tour.



Then, this summer, the stars began to align as Bennett suffered a knee injury. Initially, Cavendish didn't seem like an option to ride the Tour with his team manager citing contract issues, and the cyclist himself stating that he was heavier than he would have wanted to be to get over the notoriously vicious mountains. However, in a surprising turn of events, Cavendish was named in his team's lineup, and began training in intense southern-Italian heat to shed weight and get in shape for the three-week race.

Fast forward to the end of the race and Cavendish had found his world-leading form, winning an astounding four stages at the 2021 Tour.

He now has 34 stage wins, equal to the all-time record set in the 1970s by cycling legend Eddy Merckx, who is

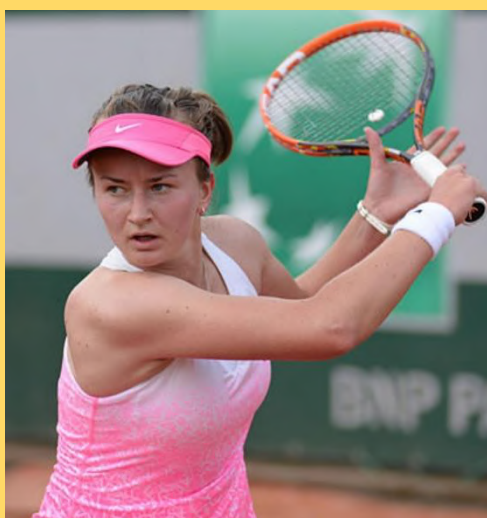


almost universally considered the greatest road racer of all time.

To top it all off, Cavendish survived the gruelling mountain stages and won the Green Points Jersey, something he had only managed once before in his career. His performance over the three-week race truly is among the greatest ever comeback stories in all of sport, and now the countdown begins to the 2022 Tour de France, where a potential all-time record awaits Mark Cavendish.

## Krejčíková at the French Open

Czech tennis player Barbora Krejčíková entered the 2021 French Open women's doubles tournament with her partner Kateřina Siniaková as one of the favourites to win the trophy. Having been runners up at the 2021 Australian Open, and formerly ranked no.1 in the world, the two make a formidable pairing. They won the 2021 title as the 2nd seeded pairing.



Krejčíková also played in the women's singles event, unseeded, beginning the tournament as the world number 38. In her seven singles matches, she defeated six opponents ranked higher than her (including a previous grand

slam champion and the world number 6). Having only just won her first singles tournament of any kind earlier in 2021, Krejčíková took her first Grand Slam singles Championship as an unseeded singles player, and completed a historic singles/doubles sweep.

Only five other women in history have ever won a Grand Slam singles title as an unseeded player. Two of those, Serena Williams and Kim Clijster, were former world number 1s returning from injuries and retirement respectively. Additionally, going back 20 years since 2001, only Serena Williams and Venus Williams have won a singles/doubles sweep at a Grand Slam.

To achieve either an unseeded singles title or a singles/doubles sweep would be an incredible achievement. To achieve both at once is nothing short of exceptional and should have been front page news.

## Another incredible double win

It is not uncommon to hear of track and field athletes competing in two similar field events: long jump/triple jump, shot put/discus throw, and of course we have seen Usain Bolt dominate the 100m and 200m for many years.

What is rare however, is for athletes to compete in two events with contrasting techniques. For example, the long jump and the high jump, differing with the need for horizontal and vertical distance respectively.

In fact, the only American man to ever represent the U.S.A. at the Olympics in both events was Jim Thorpe in 1912.

Thorpe was an incredible athlete: he competed in the pentathlon, decathlon, long jump, and high jump in the 1912 Olympics, as well as playing professional American football, basketball, and semi-professional baseball. Alas, Thorpe was not able to win a medal in either the long jump or the high jump.

Enter JuVaughn Harrison.

Harrison is a 22 year-old college athlete at Louisiana State University. A six-time college national champion, Harrison entered the U.S. Olympic trials with high, and long, hopes. Not only did he qualify to represent the U.S in both events at the Tokyo Olympics, he won both events. Harrison also achieved two personal bests - 8.47m in the long jump and 2.33m in the high jump - and is the only human in history recorded jumping both further than 8.40m and higher than 2.30m.

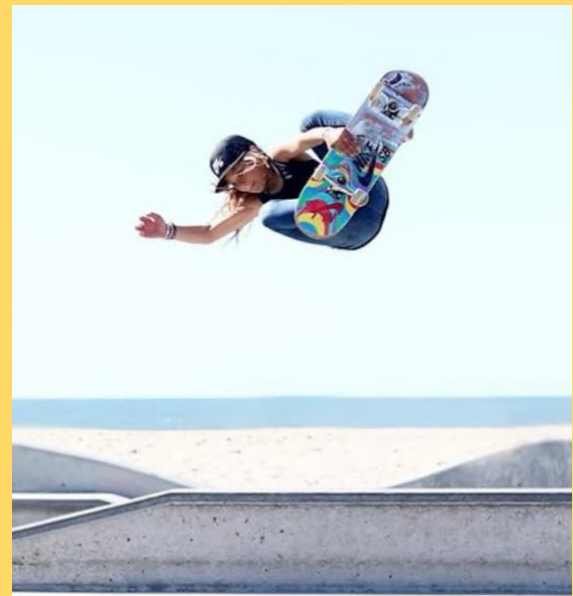
## British women paving the way

This year the Great British Olympic team will consist of 376 athletes heading to the games in Tokyo. 122 are returning Olympians and 51 are returning medallists.

There are 309 from England, 42 from Scotland, 18 from Wales, and 7 from Northern Ireland. Most importantly however, for the very first time in the 125 year history of the GB Olympic team, there will be more female athletes than male – and by quite some margin – 201:175.

Of those 201 women, Sky Brown will be the youngest ever British Summer Olympian at a ludicrous 13 years old when she competes in the brand-new skateboarding event.

A World Championship bronze medallist two years ago at age 11, Brown is the youngest Nike-sponsored athlete in the world.



Unbelievably though, Brown will not be the youngest Summer Olympian of all time, as 12 year-old Hend Zaza will be representing Syria in table tennis at the upcoming Tokyo Games.

# Music and Motherhood: an interview with Dr. Noemi Gyori

By Ruby Howells

The Hungarian flautist Noemi Gyori is not only my former professor, but also one of the most inspirational people whom I have had the pleasure of meeting. As well as leading a highly successful career as an international recording artist, playing regularly as a soloist and orchestral musician all over the world, Gyori is a recent graduate of the Academy's PhD programme, and is the first flautist to do so.

This is of course each time a high-level logistic hassle and requires lots of flexibility on everyone's end, but I am reluctant to leave my children behind for longer periods (my older daughter was five years old the first time I left her at home for several days at once). My husband, the conductor Gergely Madaras, is also travelling extensively, so taking my daughters with me is often the only solution.

What makes her situation uncommon is that whilst living this busy performing schedule and tackling her thesis, she also has two young children to take care of. As this is a topic that Gyori doesn't often discuss publicly, to have interviewed her is a privilege, and I hope that this insight into her dual role as an outstanding musician and loving mother will inspire all who read it.

***Ruby Howells: What is your favourite aspect of being a musical mother?***

Noemi Gyori: As a musician, I get to visit many different places and play in lots of unusual settings, while also meeting a large variety of people coming from different cultures, societies and backgrounds. Many of the people I am acquainted with lead unique, sometimes extraordinary lives, which don't necessarily follow the common patterns of society.

My children travel with me very often; they come to my performances and rehearsals, which means that they are extensively exposed to the arts and all the experiences that come with travelling and engaging in an eventful social life.





Despite all the challenges, it makes me immensely happy that as a result of this lifestyle, my daughters have encountered so many different cultures from an early age, have visited so many countries, have met a great variety of people, and have seen so much of what goes on behind the scenes in a musician's life!

I believe that these experiences will greatly enrich their lives and open their eyes to the colourfulness of the world around us, and will positively influence their personalities, their creativity, their resilience and their views in the long run.

***RH: Are there any moments in your career where being a mother has made things challenging?***

NG: Nearly every moment since I became a mother! Building a serious career and being a mother both require a whole person, so thriving to pursue both roles simultaneously is definitely a full-time job. Even though I had normal pregnancies, I found that there is already a certain level of extra emotional pressure and responsibility whilst pregnant. Not to mention that pregnancy is physically demanding so, being a flautist, I found it a new challenge to perform large scale works and concertos on stage to the same standard whilst my body was undergoing major changes.

Then once the baby is born, one needs to gain back the physical control needed for the instrument...and while trying to manage this, you are most of the time completely sleep deprived! The amount of time one is able to dedicate to practising shrinks immensely, and those are just the technical aspects. Even if not prepared, I was at least aware of these. However, what struck me more unexpectedly, was that from the moment of my first pregnancy, I often found people struggling to believe that

I still had the same dedication and aspirations in my career.

Often times, whether it is taking care of children or other family members, the role of the carer falls mainly on women, causing them a huge amount of extra workload that they need to balance extremely skilfully throughout their whole adult lives, in order to have a chance to stay competent in their professions.

I feel that most societies still need to work on these aspects and rethink these traditional gender roles - a pattern that was further highlighted in recent periods of Covid-lockdowns. I am sure that pursuing a PhD at RAM was for me also a way to prove my seriousness and commitment to excel in my profession, even while being a young mother.



***RH: Simultaneously, are there any incidents where motherhood has made life easier?***

NG: Being a mother teaches you that you can't control most things, so you have to become flexible and quick at adapting to new situations. A great positive result of this is that you inevitably become resilient, in both your personal and working lives. If something proves to be difficult, I won't "chicken out" at any moment, I just know that I need to carry on or give it more time.

Similarly, I am becoming more aware of my own self: if someone is being critical, it can still shake me up, but then I reflect and only take to heart what is really important, not letting my self-esteem be challenged, as I am more confident in my path and its values.

Another significant aspect I had to work on to make life easier is time management. I have definitely needed to learn to work fast and effectively, setting my goals extremely clearly.

Before having children, I often thought "I should have practiced more, or I should have slept better before the concert" - I was trying to make the conditions ideal for the performance to go well, putting all of that pressure onto my own shoulders. However now, my practicing has become much more focused and I usually feel that I have done all I could; if I haven't slept or practiced 'enough', I do have a valid excuse (that being the children!), which helped me to become more relaxed about 'perfectionism' on stage. Everything is put into perspective. I also realised that doing more hours of practice doesn't necessarily result in a better outcome.

In addition, looking at everything as a whole, I feel that through motherhood, my life has become richer, more colourful and fulfilling. My children have taught me to appreciate so many little details that I previously hadn't even noticed. Their genuine love of existence, their curiosity, their energy, enthusiasm and humour shows me every moment of each day how to live life to the fullest and this of course, feeds back to my musicianship.

I feel immensely lucky that alongside my regular teaching job at the Royal Northern College of Music and my solo flute position at the Jewish Chamber Orchestra Munich, I am able to lead a mostly freelance career, which all in all gives me lots of freedom. I luckily have many engagements coming in, so am

able to decide which one to take on and to some extent can have a say in terms of rehearsal timings. This means that my life is very intense, but this path allows me to pursue a colourful career whilst spending plenty of time with my children, which is exceptional.

***RH: Please elaborate a bit on your experiences of being a PhD candidate at the Academy whilst navigating motherhood!***

NG: I often tell my students that things that make you grow rarely come from moments of comfort and extraordinary things are born beyond that comfort zone. I feel that this could have easily been the motto of my years spent at the Academy. I have grown in ways I have never thought I would and in return, it is no question that I have spent much of my time out of my comfort zone. While continuing my performance career and teaching, I had a toddler when beginning my studies.

This meant that I ended up doing a lot of PhD work during night time and there were periods when I was going to sleep at 4am and waking up at 7am at the latest. Because it was not always possible to arrange a babysitter, there were numerous occasions where my eldest daughter would come to the seminars with me. And later on, towards the end of my doctoral studies, I didn't quite manage to write up everything before giving birth to my second daughter, so I ended up finishing my thesis and completing my Viva next to a few months old baby and a primary school student that I needed to home-school due to the pandemic.

So, looking back, the beginning and the very end were the most intense periods. I always tremendously enjoyed developing my artistic ideas and experimenting in rehearsals and

at concerts, or leading discussions with colleagues on seminars.

However, writing up things in academic English was something I had much less experience with, so I found it relatively stressful and needed substantial time to get into the flow of it.

I was so lucky to have Dr. Briony Cox-Williams to supervise my work; she supported me along every step of the way with great intelligence and insight, while being tremendously calm and patient at all times. Whenever I felt that “this is beyond me” or that “there is no way I can produce such substantial work” I also had the constant encouragement of my family: my husband and daughters (it was wonderful seeing how much they were rooting for me!) as well as my parents. I also saw a counsellor on occasion (which really helped me during the write up period that was exactly at the same time as my second pregnancy) and a career coach, who was there for me to show how much small but steady steps matter.

All in all, it was a really exhilarating and very intense time; most importantly, it felt wonderful and uplifting to be attached to this incredible institution during this extraordinary period of my life. It was a privilege to learn and grow in such a world-class environment.



***RH: What would be your best piece of advice for anyone going into the music profession who may want to have a family in the future?***

NG: My close musician friends and I often talk about the fact that the image of a serious artist is often associated with solitude, loneliness, and a kind of constant state of “inner torture.” My impression is that it’s certainly less often linked with harmonious personal relationships or family life! This is really unfortunate, because I believe that there are huge benefits of having healthy human attachments that feed back into our career and artistry. A partner who encourages and inspires provides an incredible cushion and support mechanism and an emotional and mental security, which in my opinion, is much needed to maintain a high level of professional performance and to truly fly high.

For me, having a family was an extension of this network, and I feel that the happiness, joy and fulfilment family life brought to me also fuels my creativity. Spending time with children evoked a new kind of playfulness in me and opened up territories for even more experimenting and trying out new and bold things - skills that are great to have as a parent, but which are also crucial for being an exciting artist!

Noemi Gyori graduated with honours from the Liszt Academy of Music and completed post-graduate studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater München, studying with Henrik Prohle, Barbara Gisler-Haase and András Adorján. She is the first flautist to hold a PhD in Flute Performance from the Royal Academy of Music in London.



Noemi has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in 28 countries, and is a recipient of the European Culture Prize for Young Artists (2011), the Career Prize of the Salon de Virtuosi Foundation New York (2012) and the Performers' Prize of the Artisjus Music Foundation Hungary (2006, 2009). She is the principal flutist of the Jewish Chamber Orchestra Munich and has played as a guest member in the BBC Philharmonic and the Vienna Philharmonic (Vienna State Opera).

Noemi is an Associate Tutor in flute at The Royal Northern College of Music, Tutor at the Junior RNCM and at The University of Manchester. She has given masterclasses in three continents and has recorded for broadcast with the ORF, Deutschlandfunk, BRF, BBC, WQXR New York, Hungarian Radio, Arte and Mezzo TV.

Her recordings – Antonio Nava: Flute and Guitar Duos (2011), Glowing Sonorities (2016), Transforming Traditions (2019) and Haydn and Mozart Quartets (2021) – received international critical acclaim.

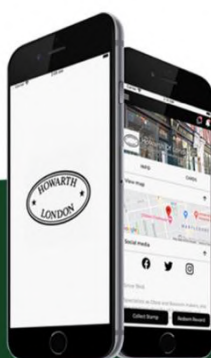
Noemi is a Miyazawa Flutes Artist, performing on a LaFin headjoint and a 14K gold Boston flute, sponsored by the Solti and PhilipLoubser Foundations.

[www.noemigyor.com](http://www.noemigyor.com)

<https://www.instagram.com/noemiflute/>

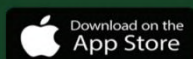
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# THE BACK PACKS





# A GUIDE TO OUTDOOR SWIMMING IN LONDON

By Ellen Wilkinson and Jack Tostevin-Hall

As London gradually awoke from its locked down doze, the one thing I was very excited to fill my summer with was outdoor swimming. My childhood is filled with fond memories of making the biggest splash in Brockwell Lido and lounging with an ice cream around Tooting Bec Common.

I am now based in Kensal Green, with the Hampstead Heath Ponds and Parliament Hill Lido less than half an hour from my door, and am fast becoming a North London convert when it comes to the swimming scene. My flatmate Jack and I, with the help of RAM students/friends/family, decided to produce a guide to the key contenders to plunge into when the sun decides to show (or not, if you're braver than us).

## HAMPSTEAD HEATH MIXED PONDS



### LOCATION

Mixed Pond, Hampstead Heath, London NW3 1BP

### TRAVEL LINKS

Hampstead Heath Overground Station

### DESCRIPTION

Originally dug to be fresh water reservoirs in the late 18th century, the untreated mixed ponds are a perfect day out with friends and a nice introduction to wild swimming. Whilst the waters are murky, one lively length will leave you refreshed and closer to nature than ever. The perfect way to forget you are in London entirely!

### CHANGING FACILITIES

Open air courtyard/shed style single sex changing areas, toilets available.

### UNIQUE FEATURES

Ideal for nature lovers (prepare to swim alongside ducks, fish and algae) and situated on the edge of the glorious Heath so a swim can be incorporated into a picnic day.

### OPENING HOURS

07:00-20:30 Only open during the summer season

### PRICE

Adult ticket - £4.05 (£2.43 for concessions)

## PARLIAMENT HILL LIDO



### LOCATION

Parliament Hill Lido, Gordon House Road, London NW5 1LT

### TRAVEL LINKS

Gospel Oak Overground Station

### DESCRIPTION

The grade 2 listed unheated lido was first opened in 1938 and was the most expensive art deco lido to open in London - costing £34,000 to build.

### CHANGING FACILITIES

Dated yet functional single sex changing rooms, toilets and showers available.

### UNIQUE FEATURES

Lebanese vegan cafe serving delicious snacks, cakes and salads.

### OPENING HOURS

07:00 - 20:30  
Open 365 days a year.

### PRICE

Adult ticket - £4.05 (£2.43 for concessions)

You must book an hour-long slot between the hours of 11:00-17:00. The periods outside of these are free-flow so no need to book (these get very busy on hot days and have limited numbers due to covid - get there early and prepare to queue!).

Sunbathing by the pool is not permitted because of covid. No diving boards. Tickets must be booked on Eventbrite.



I'd recommend taking along water/snacks, and goggles if you prefer.

'Strong swimmers only. The ponds are deep and can be very cold'. Cold at the start, of course. But you will acclimatise quickly after taking the plunge. Increase immersion gradually (cold water habituation) i.e don't stay in too long in one go.



## OASIS SPORTS CENTRE COVENT GARDEN



**LOCATION** Oasis Sports Centre 32, Endell Street Covent Garden London WC2H 9AG

**TRAVEL LINKS** Close to Tottenham Court Road, Holborn and Covent Garden tube stations.

**DESCRIPTION** There is a 27.5m outdoor heated pool and a 25m indoor swimming pool.

**CHANGING FACILITIES** Male and female changing rooms with showers and toilets. Mixed outdoor changing rooms and showers to rinse off by the outdoor pool.

**UNIQUE FEATURES** Patio areas with a sunbathing deck and sauna overlooking the outdoor pool.

**OPENING HOURS** Monday - Friday 06:30 - 22:00 Saturday - Sunday 09:30 - 18:00

**PRICE** £6.55 for a non-member £2.30 for concessions

**THINGS TO KNOW** You need to book via the Better app before going and present your booking before you go swimming. You must be on time for your 10 minute arrival slot.

By Jozef Gaszka

Daytime sessions must be pre booked and SSC membership must be bought online in advance.

SSC members also get a discount at the lovely waterside cafe next door to the Lido!



## HAMPSTEAD HEATH MENS POND



**LOCATION** Highgate Men's Pond, Hampstead Heath

**TRAVEL LINKS** 10 minutes' walk from Gospel Oak or Hampstead Heath overground stations, or 15 from Hampstead underground. The 214 bus route also goes close to the Pond.

**DESCRIPTION** A large, tree-surrounded, natural open air pond. This unique spot offers exercise which can be relaxing or invigorating, like a natural, immersive caffeine. There is a welcoming atmosphere and you can go on your own or bring a friend.

**CHANGING FACILITIES** Don't bring valuables as there are no lockers in the changing area, just benches around the perimeter and in the middle.

**UNIQUE FEATURES** Water fountains, a diving board (and steps), showers (recommended before and after) and you can lock up a bike on the gates outside.

**OPENING HOURS** 7am-8pm in the summer, or till 2.30pm in winter. Currently, pre-booking on Eventbrite is required from 11 till 4.30pm.

**PRICE** £4.05 adult price, £2.43 concession including students. During free flow, card and cash (no change) accepted.

By Samuel Teale Chadwick

## THE SERPENTINE



**LOCATION** Serpentine Lido Hyde Park London W2

**TRAVEL LINKS** 9 minute walk from Lancaster Gate tube, 13 minute walk from Knightsbridge tube.

**DESCRIPTION** Home to the oldest swimming club in Britain, the Serpentine Swimming Club, the Serpentine was originally created in 1730 as an ornamental lake to enhance the park's beauty. Swimming in the lake is a long held tradition - in fact, the Royal Humane Society calculated that in June and July of 1844 over 270,000 swimmers had bathed in the waters. Unchlorinated and unheated, the lido attracts wildlife and people alike, so don't be surprised if a swan decides to accompany you for your morning swim! The SSC runs weekly handicapped races yearlong, the most famous of which is the Christmas day Peter Pan race, and there is a strong, friendly sense of community between swimmers!

**CHANGING FACILITIES** Changing rooms currently closed due to COVID-19. Designated outdoor changing areas next to the water provided. Toilets and cold showers available (the use of soap in the showers is prohibited as they drain into the water).

**UNIQUE FEATURES** Beautifully located in Hyde park, the Lido is perfect for nature lovers so expect to swim alongside swans, egyptian geese and other waterfowl.

**OPENING HOURS** SSC members: 5:00-9:30, year round  
General public: 10:00-2:00, 1st July-5th September

**PRICE** SSC membership: £20 per year. General public: £5

By Meadow Brooks



## TOOTING BEC LIDO

By Jalal Mehdizade

### LOCATION

Tooting Bec Lido, South West London

### TRAVEL LINKS

Tooting Bec station (Northern Line), 249 and 319 buses

### DESCRIPTION

Tooting Bec Lido is home to the largest outdoor swimming pool in the UK. The water is unheated and it was originally opened to the public in 1906.

### CHANGING FACILITIES

Single outdoor changing rooms along the length of the pool, segregated toilets.

### UNIQUE FEATURES

Table tennis table and grass sitting area. Paddling pools. Colourful changing room doors!

### OPENING HOURS

Summer season:  
-29 March to 30 April 7am - 2pm; last booked swim at 1pm  
-1 May to 31 May 6am to 5pm; last booked swim at 4pm  
1 June to 31 August; last booked swim at 7pm  
1 September to 30 September TBC

### PRICE

All tickets must be booked through the Places Leisure website. Adult (16+) - £8. Concession - £5  
FREE with Places Leisure membership packages

### THINGS TO KNOW

Queues can get long in Summer. The cafe and picnic area is unfortunately closed due to COVID.

## BROCKWELL LIDO

### LOCATION

Brockwell Park, Dulwich Rd, Herne Hill, SE24 0PA

### TRAVEL LINKS

Brixton tube - 20 minute walk  
Herne Hill station - 7 minute walk  
37, 3, 196 bus routes (Brockwell Lido bus-stop)

### DESCRIPTION

Built in 1937 in art deco style, Grade II listed. 50 metre unheated pool. Poolside cafe. Sunbathing terraces and Sauna in the winter months.

### CHANGING FACILITIES

Open from 19 July. If not, come ready changed and leave your things on the sun-bathing terraces by the pool.

### UNIQUE FEATURES

Open 7 days a week, all year round. Triathlon, water polo and synchronised swimming clubs. Swim coaching available in the summer months.

### OPENING HOURS

Monday - Thursday 06:30-20:00 Friday 06:30-19:00  
Saturday - Sunday 07:00-18:00

### PRICE

Lido lane swimming includes up to 50 minutes of swimming - Adult £8, Concession £5

### THINGS TO KNOW

Book in advance using the Fusion Lifestyle app. Even using pay as you go, you need a Fusion Lifestyle swipe card to get through the barrier - you can get one on your first visit.

## HAMPSTEAD HEATH LADIES POND



### LOCATION

Millfield Lane, Hampstead Heath, London N6 6JL

### TRAVEL LINKS

The 88 or 214 bus and Gospel Oak tube station.

### DESCRIPTION

The Kenwood ladies' Pond is a natural open air swimming pond. Its features include female lifeguards on duty, outdoor showers, some changing facilities and toilets. It does not have any lockers or places to put your belongings, however some women choose to place their items within their field of vision when swimming. The Kenwood pond is smaller than both the mixed and male Hampstead ponds, but what it lacks in size it more than compensates for with its beautiful, enclosed surroundings and safe atmosphere.

### CHANGING FACILITIES

Limited space for changing in designated changing rooms. Many women also change in the field.

### OPENING HOURS

7am to 8:30 pm

### PRICE

Adult £4:05 (concession £2:43)

One of the greatest appeals of swimming here is that it is one of the very few outdoor swimming areas exclusively for women. For this reason, Kenwood is paradisaal. The whole field and pond area is circled by towering trees and thick foliage, ensuring that no peeping Tom or passerby can look through unless they enter through the correct access (which is guarded by female ticket collectors). This promise of complete privacy and safety allows swimmers to feel comfortable sunbathing partially (or wholly) nude. In this way, Kenwood is entirely liberating; it offers a rare respite from the male gaze and encourages you to fully relax and enjoy yourself.

Book a ticket online beforehand or go in the free flow times at 7-10:30am and 17:00-20:30pm.

In the winter months the water is very cold and it is important to be a strong swimmer as the pond is deep throughout. You must be over 16 to swim.

By Georgina Buckle/Harriet Cameron



# HOW TO MAKE AN ICESOLATION COCKTAIL



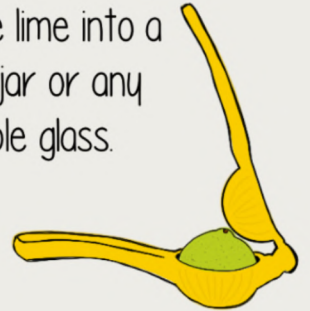
1



Cut the lime in half and cut a round slice for garnish. Set the round to the side and save for the end.

2

Juice the lime into a mason jar or any suitable glass.



3

Halve one strawberry and drop it into the glass. Muddle the strawberry in the lime juice until macerated



Fill the glass with ice. Pour 25ml of vodka into the glass

4

5

Top with tonic water until the glass is full. Stir gently until combined



6

Cut your remaining two strawberries into thin slices and drop them into your cocktail. Garnish with the round of lime



Artwork by Jess Abrahams and Hannah Stell

Enjoy with friends! Or alone...I'm not judging!



# How to Spend Your Summer in London (on a Budget)

By Ruby Howells

With the warm weather beginning to reach British shores, and the recent government announcement of a rules relaxation, it comes as no surprise that many of us will be looking forward to seeing friends and family this summer. However, as students, we all understand just how expensive living the London Life can be. But fear not – there are ways to make your Instagram followers believe you're splashing the cash this summer without having to actually break the bank. Having scoured the Internet (and London itself!) for both popular tourist spots and little hidden gems, here are a few activities you can try this summer, none of which should cost you more than £20!



## The Sky Garden, City of London, EC3M 8AF (cost: free!)

Well-known by both Londoners and tourists, the Sky Garden is one of the best places to catch a glimpse of the London skyline without having to pay a penny – plus you're surrounded by lush foliage. It is at the top of the 'Walkie-talkie' building, near the Tower of London. There are also a selection of restaurants and bars at the garden if you're feeling peckish. Tickets are released each Monday on a weekly basis, and you can book in advance up to three weeks before your visit.

### Nearest tube station:

Monument/Bank (Circle, District, Central, Northern, DLR)

Promise Me Memories and I Will Let You In by Yinka Ilori & Summer Sessions, The Tide, Greenwich Peninsula, SE10 0ES (cost: free!)



From June 12th until September 19th, a beautiful and immersive art installation by London artist Yinka Ilori is taking over Tide Square. At the main stage, there will be open-air live music, community-based radio residencies and film screenings, which have been titled 'Summer Sessions'. Given that the entire event is free and only a short bus ride away from the beautiful Old Naval College, it's definitely not one to miss. The Emirates Airlines cable cars are also just a short walk away!

### Nearest tube station:

North Greenwich (Jubilee)



## Pop-up Film Screenings at the Rivoli Ballroom, SE4 2BY (cost: £10 per ticket)

There are not many things quite as wonderful as watching cinema classics in one of London's most beautiful ballrooms. On the 19th- 20th of August, and the 16th-17th of September, the Rivoli Ballroom (one of the last remaining 1950s-style ballrooms in London) will transform into a cinema showing some of Hollywood's greatest pictures, including *Pretty Woman*, *Jaws* and *Back to the Future*. There will also be snacks, a bar and cocktails available.

### Nearest tube station:

Brockley (London Overground)

## Mayfield Lavender Farm, SM7 3JA (cost: £4 per person)

Situated near the edge of London, this stunning farm is open from June 1st until August 31st. During the lavender season, they are open 7 days a week from 9am until 6pm.



As well as the place smelling amazing, you'll be able to take some beautiful photographs too – but be aware that if you are wanting to do any professional photography, you will have to pay a small fee at entrance. The farm also offers tractor rides for an additional £2 per person, and there is a café where you can have your lunch (packed lunches are not permitted).

### Nearest tube station:

Not applicable – the farm recommends taking a train from London Victoria to West Croydon, and then the 166 bus.

## London Wonderground, SW6 1TT (cost: free! But with additional costs for some events)

Taking place in Earls Court from July 15th to September 26th, the London Wonderground is a family-friendly festival with something for everybody to enjoy, including late-night comedy shows, vintage fairground rides, live music, street food and a city beach. The best part is that entry is absolutely free! For some shows, paid tickets are required, however these can be booked online. Additionally, the festival is committed to following all government guidance and will be regularly updating their website regarding safety protocols – so you can socialise and enjoy without worrying.

### Nearest tube station:

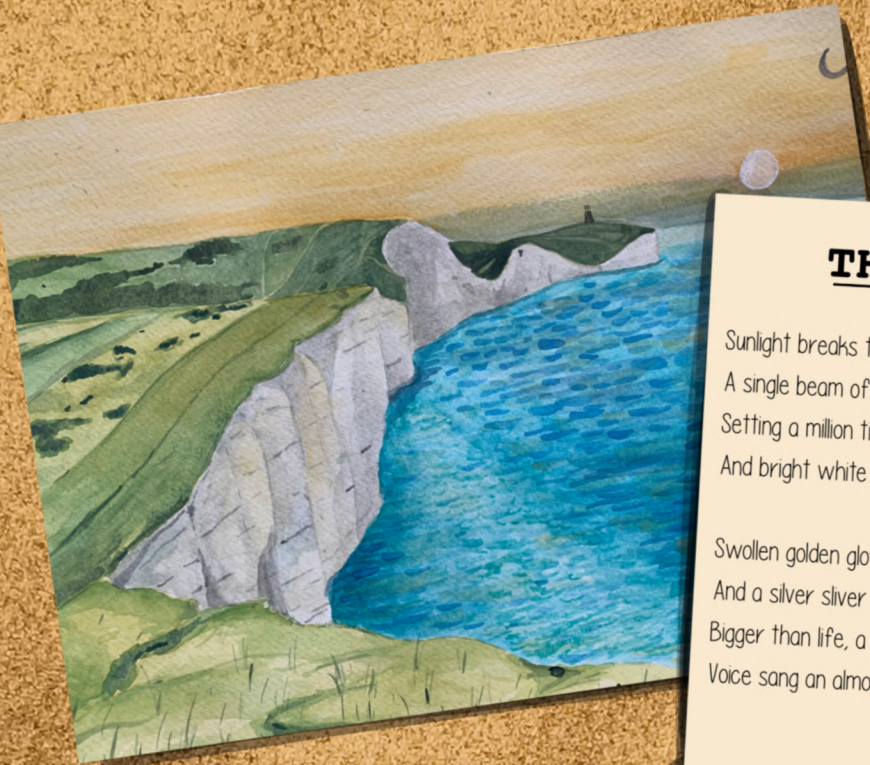
West Brompton (District, London Overground)

I hope these activity suggestions will help to keep you preoccupied this summer in London, but always remember that if the weather isn't in your favour, there are a myriad of free museums you can visit to soak up some culture! For those who are not already aware, the Tate has a free scheme for 16–25-year-olds known as the Tate Collective, where you can grab £5 tickets for any of their paid exhibitions, plus you receive store discounts and access to members-only areas. It's definitely worth signing up for!



# SUMMER POEMS

By Athalie Armon-Jones



## THE SEASIDE



Sunlight breaks through darkling clouds  
A single beam of golden dust  
Setting a million tiny fires alight  
And bright white burning hearts soar.

Swollen golden glow swathed in shadow  
And a silver sliver of her sister beside  
Bigger than life, a world away  
Voice sang an almost audible siren song

Cold swish and swoop of wind  
Blows hair into halos, Medusa-like,  
Sharp sea salt air crystallises  
And wipes clean the slate of the soul

Tiny toy figures standing sky high  
Dark against the chalky cliff face  
Looking out at the vast muttering sea  
Every face joy-bright, a mirror of mine

## SUMMER EVENING

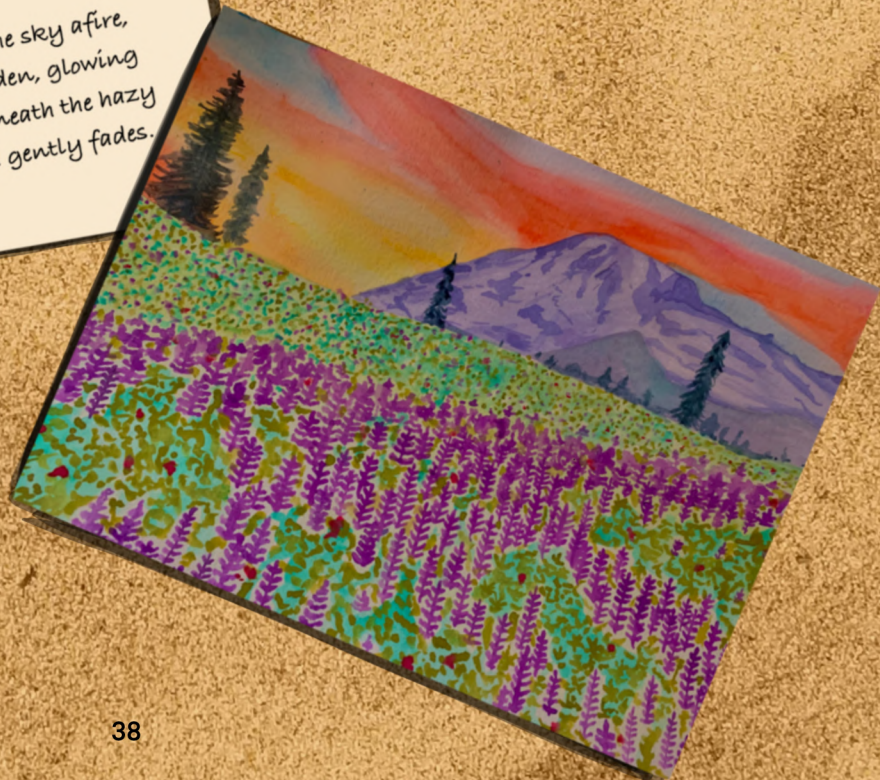


Grasses spring tall and proud,  
Trembling faintly as the sticky  
Summer breeze breathes through  
The mellowed meadow.

Insects, buzzing and humming,  
Vibrate in the air and petals  
Of sweet-smelling flowers  
Slowly unfurl like wind-filled  
sails.

Green-fingered trees cast cool  
Shadows across bald patches  
Of dirt, and pollen dust spirals,  
Bright in the stark sunlight.

The sun sets the sky afire,  
Blushing golden, glowing  
As it slips beneath the hazy  
Horizon and gently fades.



Artwork by Ruby Howells



# Birdsong

Birdsong slices through Sibelius  
The landscape is immense  
As a mother pushes a stroller  
Through a soggy local park

Pausing to stare emptily  
As the zebra finch cries  
To the canary and the cockatiel  
'It's a bit crowded in here!'

She craves a dash of colour  
A touch of the exotic  
Bottled birdsong chattering  
Bitter beaks busy as bees

I once thought of cutting a hole  
In the wire mesh, so the budgerigar  
Could soar with the parakeets  
Sewing streaks of colour into the sky

By Ellen Wilkinson

Artwork by Georgia Smith  
[@georgias.artt](https://www.georgias.artt)

