

MILNGAVIE MUSIC

The newsletter of Milngavie Music Club

WELCOME

The Music Club is more than a concert series: we are a community.

The committee thought the concert audience might like to know more about how Milngavie Music Club promotes chamber music through activities such as schools outreach events and the weekly Music Hub; therefore we are introducing a newsletter. The newsletter also provides a way to let you know about future plans, and for us to find out more about each other. There will be three issues per year.

Your contributions are extremely welcome: please get in touch with the editor at newsletter@milngaviemusic.org. Send us ideas for features you'd like to see, create a quiz or puzzle, or write an article about your favourite music or musician.

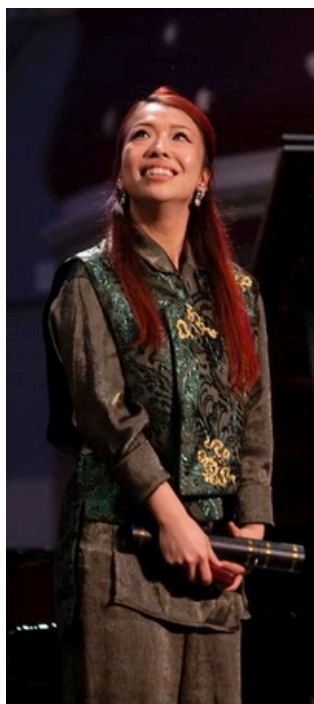


This is your newsletter. We'd love to hear from you!

DOING WELL

Chinese-born pianist Junyan Chen, who performed so brilliantly with cellist Hugh Mackay at Milngavie Music Club last season, has been making waves in the musical world since she played for us. Her dazzling performance of Rachmaninov's 4th Piano Concerto (which you can see on YouTube) won her 2nd Prize in the 2024 Leeds International Piano Competition. She also won the chamber music prize in Leeds and it turns out she's a composer and won their composition prize too!

This year she makes her solo recital debut at London's Wigmore Hall and has a string of other important engagements, though she is still a post-graduate student at the Royal Academy of Music. What a talent! And we're delighted that she and Hugh will be back in Milngavie next season!



LOOKING AHEAD



A date for the diary: next season's opening concert will be on Friday 26th September - a rather special event featuring a very distinguished British singer. You won't want to miss it!

We're excited about our plans for the season which are well-advanced and we expect to announce them and publish our brochure in April.



SCHOOLS OUTREACH

Your donations make it possible

McOpera had a goat-tastic time in Milngavie Primary School in December. Kirstie, Heather, Sue and Rachael introduced oboe, bassoon, horn and voice to the children via the tale of the Three Billy Goats Gruff (and a troll).

Each instrument was introduced in turn. There was lots of interaction with the children. For each instrument an orchestral extract relating to an animal was played so the children could hear the instrument and also pretend to be the animals. For the oboe we had Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake. The bassoon gave us Saint-Saëns' Elephant with lots of waving arms pretending to be trunks and stomping feet. Then there was high energy galloping round and round like horses to the Rondo of Mozart's fourth horn concerto.

Questions and answers included some fun size comparisons: who in the class was as tall as the bassoon? Not many if you're dealing with children from primary one and two. How long is a French horn? Very, very long if you unwind it! It took 25 children to hold up the whole length of the horn. Don't worry: they used a hose pipe to demonstrate length and no horns were harmed in the process.



Lastly, the voice was introduced as a fourth "instrument". Rachael sang *O mio babbino caro* by Puccini. Then we all settled down to hear the tale of the billy goats and a troll, with musical accompaniment. This was a setting for wind trio and narrator by the English composer Ruth Gipps.

This work was made possible by your donations. Around 100 children were introduced to classical music and these "endangered" instruments close up. The workshop is planned to visit schools in Kirkintilloch next month.

THANK YOU

As in previous years we were very fortunate to receive a number of generous donations from subscribers. Gift aid means that as a charity every £1 we receive becomes £1.25, so if you're a taxpayer please do remember to tick the gift aid box! Your donations allow us to fulfill our objectives of advancing appreciation of the art and science of music in all its aspects. For example, we were able to set up the Music Hub confidently knowing initial costs of hiring the rehearsal rooms were covered. Now, the Music Hub has grown and covers its own costs. What a success! Donations are used for projects such as outreach, for commissioning new works, or, in time, replacing our piano.



What's in a name?

French string quartet Quatuor Agate, who'll be giving our February concert on Friday 28th, seem to be a popular choice for those 'One to Watch' lists that appear every New Year. Classical music website Bachtrack has them in its *Rising Stars - 10 to Watch* list after its critic heard them play Brahms and was "bowled over by their big, bold playing". And if you're wondering where the quartet's name comes from, the clue is indeed Brahms. He famously loved and was briefly engaged to Agathe von Siebold and worked her first name into the notes of his G major Sextet. Quatuor Agate love playing Brahms, ergo...



CHRISTMAS HUB

Doesn't it seem a long time ago now? Members of the Music Hub raised £270 for Médecins Sans Frontières at their Christmas concert. We had a very early Schubert quintet (D8), a cello quartet playing Jeremiah Clarke, a viola quartet dancing with La Folia, and an elegant London trio by Haydn. A delightfully social break, accompanied by wine and mince pies, was followed by carols and Christmas music. We even had audience participation with singing and percussion.



MEET THE COMMITTEE

*Who are we?
What do we do?
How can you help?*



Carron with Loki

This regular feature will introduce you to committee members and the variety of roles they undertake. You might take on a committee role yourself next time we need new members.

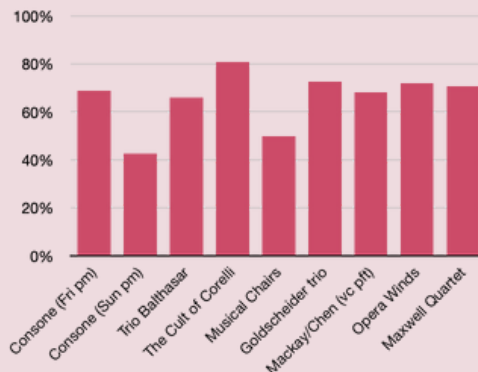
Carron Shankland's main role is membership secretary. She receives your subscription applications and sends out cards in return, keeping a list of subscribers, and depositing cheques. It's a few hours' work a week from June to October. This leaves time in the rest of the year for membership engagement through surveys and now the newsletter. Got an idea for the newsletter? Talk to Carron! You can usually find her pouring juice at the interval.

Carron enjoys playing chamber music (viola or clarinet) at the Music Hub and elsewhere. Now she's retired she's planning to spend more time on art. She enjoys a gallery trip with her partner Pat, but is creating more art herself with print-making and watercolour painting. They both enjoy the garden and grow lots of fruit and vegetables.

ABOUT SUBSCRIBERS

In April we asked your views about the club. We use this, and audience attendance, to shape our views of what our 167 subscribers liked best.

The chart here shows subscriber attendance across the season as a percentage of total number of subscribers:



Last season, The Cult of Corelli was the favourite concert among subscribers, but by a fairly small margin. Our experiment of a Sunday afternoon concert as part of a string quartet weekend wasn't so popular.

In future issues of the newsletter we'll feature results of the survey. If you can't wait, the full results are on the notice board at each concert for you to peruse.



HANDMAID HANNA

Our March concert with the fantastic Polish mezzo Hanna Hipp looks like being fortuitously timed. Hanna had a huge success at the Royal Danish Opera a couple of years ago, singing the leading role of Offred in Poul Ruders's opera The Handmaid's Tale based on Margaret Attwood's dystopian novel. As it happens, the sixth and final season of the Handmaid TV series is to air this Spring, soon after Hanna/Offred visits Milngavie!

LOOKING BACK

60 years ago, Milngavie Music Club hosted a recital by an American pianist in the early stages of a truly stellar career. Born in Los Angeles to a Croatian father and an American mother, he had started life as Stephen Kovacevich but then became Stephen Bishop when his mother remarried. That was the name the sensational 25-year-old appeared under in Milngavie on 19 March 1965. Later in his career he reverted to his original name and is now one of the world's most distinguished elder statesmen of the piano. In Milngavie Town Hall he played Bach, Chopin and Beethoven's A flat Sonata, Op 110.



FRIENDLY, FUN AND THE FUTURE

That's our Music Hub!



The Music Hub meets every Tuesday in Bearsden Cross Parish Church to play chamber music for strings. Sometimes we play pieces you will have heard in our regular concert series but we also explore the vast treasure trove of copyright-free music that is available on the internet nowadays.

**AUDIENCE
spotlight**



Ailsa Bhattacharya has been a regular attender of Milngavie Music Club since 2011. She still can't quite believe her good fortune of hearing, almost on her doorstep, outstanding musicians at all career stages, performing a rich range of pieces from the past and present in a welcoming and friendly environment. Memorable highlights for Ailsa are those concerts which have broadened her musical horizons including recitals from Ryan Corbett (accordion), Michael Mofidian (bass-baritone), Adam Walker (flute) and the chamber music of the Danish Quartet, the Jubilee Quartet and the Maxwell Quartet. She also enjoyed the combination of music and film as an engaging feature of the concert by the splendidly-named Zum Roten Igel (to the Red Hedgehog!)

Ailsa often finds images, especially of paintings, springing to mind as she listens to music, although that's not so surprising for an art historian. Ailsa may be familiar to some members of the MMC audience as she is a former art history tutor for the University of Glasgow's Short Courses and continues to give art talks to local interest groups and societies. She worked under her maiden name Ailsa Turner as she enjoys sharing the surname of a famous artist! She is, however, happily married to Dr Jo Bhattacharya and together they enjoy the many delights of living in Milngavie, including regular walks in Mugdock Country Park and the Campsie Fells in addition to attending MMC concerts.

We are a very friendly bunch of chamber music enthusiasts but we don't take ourselves too seriously. In fact, fun is the order of the day! Music-making becomes truly enjoyable, bringing all those positive health benefits we hear so much about, when you leave the fearful, judgemental person you might have learned to be behind. And the irony is that you may have learned to be that person long ago in your ... music lessons. So, we don't ask you to practice, meet targets, pass grades, do what a teacher says or play in formal concerts. Just turn up and play music.

We are committed to remaining small, and community-based, with low costs and a low environmental impact as well as being accessible to players of all ages and stages. The world is changing rapidly but when playing chamber music we get a chance to look back and experience subtly different ways of doing things. Whether as a listener or player, a healthy dose of chamber music plus some friendliness and fun can be a part of our future.

Would you like to join us? Visit the web pages for more information: milngaviemusic.org/themusichub.



Chamber Music Scotland

CMS is the quango that has for thirty two years distributed funding from the Arts Council/Creative Scotland to volunteer-led chamber music societies like ours.

Last year CMS announced that it was cutting back on its support. It no longer supports education projects, for example. Now we await news about whether it will discontinue the grants system itself. We'd like to be optimistic but we won't hold our breath. Fortunately, MMC is in a strong enough financial position to withstand any such shock, but we fear for the future of some smaller clubs. We'll keep you informed - watch this space!

MMC Spring 2025 Schedule

31 January

28 February

21 March

25 April (8pm)

Lark Piano Trio

Quatuor Agate

Women in Song

Chamber Music Box

preceded at 6.45pm by the AGM

