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Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra

Spring Concert

MacCunn The Land of the Mountain and the Flood
Mozart Flute and Harp Concerto
Brahms Symphony No 1

Soloists Aliara Duo

Flautist
Sirius Chau
Winner of the
ESO Young Soloist
Competition
2018

Harpist
Gwenllian Llŷr



Conductor
Graham Jones
Leader
Lisa Wigmore

Sunday 7pm 27 April 2025
St Saviour's Church BN21 4UT

Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra

Dates for your Diary

More information from: www.eso.org.uk concertmanager@eso.org.uk 07780 993801

ESO 2025 Forty-fifth Season continues...

Sunday 7pm 22 June 2025 ESO Summer Concert, St Saviour's Church

Nicolai Merry Wives of Windsor Overture

Schubert Unfinished Symphony

Dvořák Slavonic Dance No 4

Delius The Walk to the Paradise Garden

Rachmaninov Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

Pianist Firoze Madon (winner of the ESO Young Soloist Competition 2025)

Norah Sande Award 2025 (www.sande-award.co.uk) Birley Centre BN21 4EF

Semi-final: Saturday 5 July; Final: Sunday 6 July

Sunday 7pm 19 Oct 2025 ESO Autumn Concert, St Saviour's Church

Soloist: winner of the Norah Sande Award Piano Competition

ESO 2026 Forty-sixth Season

38th Annual Young Soloist Competition 2026, Birley Centre BN21 4EF

Round One Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 January 2026. Final Sunday 15 February 2026

Established in 1988 as a result of the 11th Duke of Devonshire's generosity, this competition gives the winner the opportunity of performing a concerto with the ESO.

In the first round, competitors present a 15-minute performance of a contrasting programme of their own choice. In the final, competitors present a 20-minute performance of two contrasting concerto movements. An audience is welcome at both the first round (no advanced booking; a voluntary donation of £5 on the day; come and go as you wish between competitors) and the final (£15 entry on the door; £13 for ESO Friends; tea is provided while the judges decide).

Sunday 7pm 26 April 2026 Choral Concert, St Saviour's Church

Elgar Dream of Gerontius

With Hailsham Choral Society

Mezzo Soprano Rebecca Hughes

Tenor Andrew Mackenzie-Wicks

Bass Jozik Kotz

Sunday 7pm 21 June 2026 ESO Summer Concert, St Saviour's Church

Soloist: winner of the ESO Competition

Norah Sande Award 2026 (www.sande-award.co.uk) Birley Centre BN21 4EF

Semi-final: Saturday 4 July; Final: Sunday 5 July (dates tbc)

Sunday 7pm 18 Oct or 25 Oct 2026 ESO Autumn Concert, St Saviour's Church

Soloist: winner of the Norah Sande Award Piano Competition

Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra

www.eso.org.uk

The Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1979 and we are celebrating our 45th season. Graham Jones is the musical director and one of the founding members, and Lisa Wigmore celebrates her 41st year as leader. We welcome you to our 157th concert. Archived photographs, programmes, reviews and so on of all concerts are on www.eso.org.uk.

Financially self-supporting, the ESO registered as a charity in 1987 and, with quality players from Eastbourne and the surrounding areas, performs a number of concerts a year. These have included biennial music-from-the-movies concerts (with film clips), concerts for children, an ESO annual young soloist competition winner's concert, and choral concerts with singers from local choral societies and further afield.

This concert continues the ESO's goal of giving opportunities to young players, and we are delighted this evening to welcome back Sirius Chau, winner of the ESO's Young Soloist Competition in 2018. Conductor Graham Jones initiated the competition in 1988.

'This competition has been a very rewarding part of guiding the orchestra since its inception in 1980. My colleagues and I on the judging panel must have heard some 2,000 competitors over the years and have been able to give a concerto performance to more than 40 top-quality players. There can, sadly, be only one winner every year but much of it is about giving the soloists a chance to perform, even if they don't win. Working with the winners at such a formative stage of their career as they build their confidence in working with orchestras is a privilege and something I always enjoy, and they bring a freshness to their performance. The 2025 winner, pianist Firoze Madon, will play in our summer concert. It has also been especially pleasing to have collaborated in recent years with the local Norah Sande Award Piano Competition, and our autumn concert features their winner.'

As you will know, orchestras always need to keep an eye on income and expenditure and ensure that we remain as financially buoyant as possible. Thank you for continuing to support our increase in ticket price to £20 (we hadn't raised the price for quite some time). Please do consider joining us as an ESO Friend. You will find more details later in this programme.

As well as our Friends, we are indebted to our sponsors and donors. If you are interested in becoming a donor, a sponsor, an ESO Friend, a singer or a player, or would like to help the Music Working Group, then please contact concertmanager@eso.org.uk or 07780 993801.

Our thanks go to the PCC of St Saviour's Church who have allowed us to hire this venue.

We anticipate that the 15-minute interval will start at about 7.45pm, and that the concert will finish a little before 9.00pm.

If you are thinking of going on holiday, please consider booking through Riviera Travel to help the ESO finances. The ESO receives ten per cent for each holiday booked through Riviera Travel. Please mention the ESO when you book (the dedicated code is ESO) though this link automatically registers your connection with the ESO: www.esoriviera.co.uk (their phone number is 01283 523493).

Paul Lucas 1938-2025 (ESO President 2008-2018)



Paul after the concert featuring his father's composition in October 2015

The ESO were delighted when Paul agreed to become our president following in the footsteps of Sir John Chatfield.

Paul had been well known to the Orchestra for many years, supporting our concerts and singing in many of our annual choral concerts. He was also a very long-time member of the Eastbourne Choral Society. His love of music and singing was nurtured as a young boy when he was a member of the choir at St Mary's Church, Hailsham, where he was brought up. Among his many other interests were model planes, engines, cars and motor racing (he was at Goodwood the day

Sterling Moss had his accident). Sailing was also one of his passions and he and his then-wife Anna spent many weekends at regattas or at Pevensy Bay Club where, from 1976 to 1977, he was made commodore.

Paul studied dentistry at the University of Birmingham and returned to Sussex, and Eastbourne, in 1962 when Paul became a partner in Beech House Dental Practice where he was well known for his skill and caring manner.

A great family man, Paul instilled a love of his many interests into his children, and this same passion and commitment helped guide the Orchestra for some ten years.

In a similar way, Charles Lucas, Paul's father, a station master with Great Western Railways, had helped form many of Paul's interests. He was a very accomplished pianist and composer of both classical and light music. His love for classical music found an outlet in the 1950s when he became percussionist, for over 30 years, with the Eastbourne Orchestral Society and the Hailsham Orchestra. His favourite composer was Delius whose influence can be seen at times in his composition Wilmington Suite. Paul was delighted when the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra played two of its movements in their 2015 October concert.

Paul connected past, present and future in his quiet, unassuming manner. And, with his wife, Priscilla, who shares many of his interests, he supported Eastbourne's classical music world in so many ways and over so many years.

Thank you to them both and to Paul's family.



Paul with tonight's flautist Sirius Chau at the final of the ESO's Young Soloist Competition in 2018

Graham Jones (ESO Musical Director, Conductor)



Graham attended Durham University where he was an organ scholar of Hatfield College, with responsibility for the chapel choir and college musical events. He was still at school when he first conducted an orchestra, gaining further experience at university in workshops with Sir David Willcocks and Roger Norrington. Having been appointed assistant director of music at Eastbourne College in 1976, he became director of music in 1991 and retired from the College in 2012. During his time in Eastbourne, he has been responsible for the Eastbourne Tudor Singers (1978-1988) and co-founded the Eastbourne Sinfonia (1979), now the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra.

As musical director of the ESO from its inception and first concert in January 1980, Graham has conducted the majority of the Orchestra's concerts (this concert is Graham's 134th). He has also been responsible for many of the Orchestra's initiatives including the now nationally recognised annual Young Soloist Competition (the 37th competition takes place in January and February 2025). Though his own particular interest lies in the romantic field, ESO programmes have included the standard orchestral repertoire as well as some works commissioned especially for the Orchestra.

He has worked with some of the country's leading soloists including Sarah Connolly, Simon Deller, Simon Hewitt Jones, Neil Jenkins, Freddie Kempf, Mark Le Brocq,

Anthony Marwood, Martin Roscoe, Patricia Rozario and John York, one of the Orchestra's patrons, as well as, for example, the Barbican Piano Trio.

Graham is always keen to find opportunities which encourage appreciation of music within the community, and this has led to initiatives like the biennial music-from-the-movies concert (with film clips) (working with Adam Faith, Hubert Gregg, Robin Gregory and Brian Murphy). Johnny Morris narrated one of the Orchestra's first children's concerts and Denis Quilley was the narrator in the Mari Markus Gomori series of concerts for children, which also featured percussionist Alisdair Molloy.

In his spare time, Graham is a steam-train enthusiast, an aficionado of English churches, and enjoys cooking and gardening.

Lisa Wigmore (Leader)

Lisa Wigmore has been leader of the ESO since the mid-1980s; she is also a member of the adjudicating panel for the annual competition. Born and educated in Eastbourne, at 15 she was awarded a junior exhibition to the Royal College of Music and continued her studies there under Jack Steadman in the senior department, where she gained her ARCM and GRSM.

Since leaving the RCM she has studied under Tina Gruenberg.

Lisa is a well-known violin teacher in Sussex, teaching privately as well as working in the Strings Department at Eastbourne College. She also took part in a masterclass with Yfrah Neaman on behalf of the European String Teachers Association (ESTA). Lisa is involved with many local music-making groups.

In her spare time, Lisa enjoys being with her family and walking her retriever in the Sussex countryside.





Aliara Duo

Sirius Chau • Gwennlian Llŷr

Sirius Chau (Flautist)

Hailing from Hong Kong, acclaimed flautist Sirius Chau is celebrated for his extraordinary artistry, technical brilliance, and captivating stage presence. A winner of the Royal Over-Seas League Competition and a City Music Foundation Artist, he is also a recipient of the prestigious Philip and Dorothy Green Young Artist Award. His accolades include the Tagore Gold Medal, presented by King Charles III, and the Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother Scholarship.

Sirius has performed as principal flute with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, in addition to working with the English National Opera Orchestra and London Philharmonic Orchestra. His solo appearances include performances at Wigmore Hall and Bridgewater Hall, earning him international recognition, including the Best Performance Award at the Hamamatsu International Festival.

Beyond performance, Sirius is dedicated to inspiring and mentoring the next generation of musicians. He recently joined the faculty at Junior Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance as a flute teacher. He holds an Artist Diploma and a Master of Music (Distinction) from the Royal College of Music, where he was mentored by Katie Bedford, Emer McDonough, and Sue Thomas. Generously supported by the Drake Calleja Trust and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund, explore more about his musical journey at www.siriuschau.com

Gwenllian Llŷr (Harpist)

Welsh harpist Gwenllian Llŷr is known for her charismatic and engaging performances. With prizes too numerous to list, including from the USA International Harp Competition and the Royal Over-Seas League Annual Music Competition, Gwenllian is becoming increasingly in demand as a solo performer.

Her career has already taken her across the globe to perform in prestigious venues alongside renowned artists such as jazz legend Al Jarreau, pianist Imogen Cooper, and international opera singer Bryn Terfel.

Following the successful release of her debut solo album 'Dusk to Dawn', for which her playing was hailed as 'magnificent' and 'powerful', Gwenllian toured the UK both in concert venues and in the community as part of her work for the charity Live Music Now.

As many a harpist before her, Gwenllian became inspired, largely by her students, to expand the harp's repertoire with her own compositions. Some of her pieces are regularly featured on the concert circuit and have been heard on BBC Radio 3 and BBC Radio Cymru, as well as being featured on exam syllabuses for Trinity and ABRSM.

Gwenllian's latest work, her own take on that quintessential Welsh hymn, Calon Lan, featured on her CD with Ty Cerdd, 'Soliloquies for harp'.

A graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, The Juilliard School and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, Gwenllian is enjoying a busy and varied freelance career.

Alongside several solo recitals, her forthcoming year will feature interesting projects including interdisciplinary concerts featuring dance and a performance Mozart's flute and Harp Concerto with the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra alongside her duo partner, Sirius Chau.

More details from here: www.gwenllianllyr.co.uk

Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra

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Friends and Sponsors of the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra

In order to maintain our varied musical programme and the high quality of our performances, the Orchestra needs continuing financial support. An essential source of income is provided by the ESO Friends and our sponsors for whose generosity we are very grateful.

For Friends, a subscription of £20 per person is taken on joining and then on 1 January each year. To sponsor the Orchestra for a year, a donation of £250 will give you two complimentary tickets to the three annual concerts and to the final of the Young Soloist Competition, and space in concert programmes for an advert.

If you would like to become an ESO Friend or sponsor the Orchestra, then please contact our treasurer for more details.

ESO Treasurer: Richard McDonough,
4 Cobbold Avenue, Eastbourne BN21 1XA
01323 732668 treasurer@eso.org.uk

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Lists updated 16 March 2025

There is a list of all our concerts since our first in January 1980. All concerts are also archived including photos and programmes. Visit the 'Past Concerts' tab on www.eso.org.uk

Hamish MacCunn (1868-1916) The Land of the Mountain and the Flood

The son of a Scottish ship-owner, Hamish MacCunn was one of the first pupils to enter the Royal College of Music after its opening in 1882. The Land of the Mountain and the Flood was written in 1887 when MacCunn was only nineteen. With its strong, evocative Scottish melodies and careful orchestration, the work met with immediate success and has remained popular ever since. It was used as the theme music for the television series Sutherland's Law.

GLJ (The ESO played this in 1984, 1993, 2001 and 2013.)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) Flute and Harp Concerto

Allegro-Andantino-Rondeau, Allegro

Composed in 1778 during Mozart's time in Paris, this work stands as one of the most elegant and refined works in the concerto repertoire. It is a unique piece in Mozart's output, being his only work to feature the combination of flute and harp, an instrumentation rarely encountered in the Classical period. Commissioned by the Duc de Guînes, a French nobleman and amateur flautist, for himself and his daughter, a talented harpist, the concerto embodies the grace and lyricism that were highly prized in the salons of 18th-century France. The concerto adheres to the traditional three-movement structure:

I. Allegro: The opening movement is bright and expansive, radiating an aristocratic charm characteristic of Mozart's Parisian works. The orchestral introduction establishes a buoyant and lyrical theme, soon taken up by the soloists. The interplay between the flute and harp is masterfully balanced, with passages of delicate dialogue and cascading virtuosity.

II. Andantino: The second movement, in the subdominant key of F major, exudes a tender, almost operatic quality. It unfolds as an intimate, song-like exchange between the solo instruments, with the orchestra providing a gentle, supportive accompaniment. The movement's exquisite simplicity and flowing melodic lines highlight Mozart's gift for expressive lyricism.

III. Rondeau, Allegro: The concerto concludes with a spirited rondo, featuring an infectious dance-like theme that recurs throughout. The movement's lively character and playful ornamentation showcase the technical brilliance of both soloists. The dialogue between the flute and harp remains charming and elegant, culminating in a sparkling finale.

Despite its brilliance, the Concerto for Flute and Harp was not widely performed during Mozart's lifetime, partly due to the harp's limited role as a solo instrument in the 18th century. However, the piece has since become a staple of the repertoire, cherished for its luminous textures and graceful interplay. It is a testament to Mozart's ability to craft music of effortless beauty while exploring novel instrumental combinations. Today, it remains a favourite among flautists and harpists alike, captivating audiences with its refinement and charm.

AI generated (The ESO played this in 1985.)

Interval (15 minutes)

Johannes Brahms 1833-1897 Symphony No 1

(i) Un poco sostenuto-Allegro (ii) Andante sostenuto (iii) Un poco allegretto e grazioso (iv) Finale: Adagio-Allegro non troppo ma con brio

Brahms stands out in the 19th century as perhaps the one composer for whom the narcotic dream of Romanticism had little appeal. His was a very conservative nature, order and restraint being an integral part of his personality. The symphonies owe their general construction and force to Beethoven, 'the giant whose steps I always hear behind me'. However, it was the study of Bach and the earlier church composers that taught him the counterpoint that is so much in evidence. These works are truly intellectual, not in the psychological or philosophical manner of many of the Romantics, but rather in the inner relationships between all the themes and their accompanying ideas. It is absolute music, existing in sheer terms of sound.

Symphony No 1, completed in 1876, had perhaps occupied Brahms's mind since 1854. The two big outer movements, both of which have slow introductions, are balanced by the two shorter, lighter inner movements. The conflict of the opening Allegro, which some writers relate to the tragedy of Schumann's suicide, is succeeded by the quiet lyrical flowing melody of the Andante. The romantic orchestration is perhaps most in evidence at the end of the movement where a solo violin is in dialogue with the horn. After the Allegretto, which is a straightforward, folk-based intermezzo, the atmosphere soon brightens as, with a romantic horn call accompanied by trombones, the transition from C minor to major is achieved. The acknowledgement of Beethoven, here and in the melody that follows, is undeniable; though spiritually we are in a different world.

GLJ (The ESO played this in 1983, 1991 and 1998.)

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Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra



Summer Concert



Nicolai Merry Wives of Windsor Overture
Schubert Unfinished Symphony
Dvořák Slavonic Dance No 4
Delius The Walk to the Paradise Garden
Rachmaninov Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini



Pianist Firoze Madon

Winner of the ESO Young Soloist Competition 2025

Conductor **Graham Jones**

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Sunday 7pm 22 June 2025
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