



# CECIL ARONOWITZ INTERNATIONAL VIOLA COMPETITION 2021



PROGRAMME



# Introduction

Better late than never! Almost a year after the Cecil Aronowitz International Competition was meant to take place in November 2020, we are proud and ecstatic to present the third iteration of this magnificent celebration of young viola talent from across the globe. Two postponements, oceans of re-invention and plenty of tenacity have got us here! We are not able to welcome members of the public into the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire building until the Final Round on the 12 November, but, everyone is invited to join us online as we live stream all rounds of the competition.

Our first two competitions were won by Timothy Ridout (2014) and Emma Wernig (2017) who are both making their mark on the viola world. We celebrate their success and follow their careers with great interest.

This competition week was also going to be host to two extensive live festivals, one a schools tour with a production of *Romeo and Juliet*, and the other a tour with Timothy Ridout performing and visiting significant viola composers and players birthplaces and towns around England. Instead, we have created two documentaries that will reach an even wider and more diverse audience. We are proud to present a completed *Romeo and Juliet*, recorded and created during lockdown with musicians and actors recording in isolation. Additionally, the "teaser" video for *Cinderella No More: The English Viola Legacy*: a six-episode documentary on the history of the viola in England, recorded with Timothy Ridout and James Baillieu in Benjamin Britten's Library at The Red House, Aldeburgh in late 2020. The full documentary will be available in 2022! Watch this space. Both productions will be available and free to all.

Most importantly, we will be welcoming young violists who have travelled from across the globe under difficult circumstances to perform for a "live" jury, an opportunity to learn and grow as musicians! Onwards and upwards - a viola feast is ahead!

Louise Lansdown



Artistic Director and Founder  
Chair of the Jury

# Cecil Aronowitz



Cecil Aronowitz was the youngest of three children all showing remarkable musical talent. Each in turn won the overseas scholarship to come and study in England. In 1939, war interrupted Cecil's studies and he spent the next six years in the army. When he returned to the RCM he decided to concentrate on the viola. He left the RCM in 1948 and embarked on his extensive career in chamber music.

He was a frequent guest artist with Yehudi Menuhin, the Amadeus Quartet, and more. In 1963 he formed a duo with the pianist Nicola Grunberg, whom he married four years later. Together they gave frequent recitals and broadcasts and in 1976 they gave the first British performance of Shostakovich's last work, the sonata for viola and piano, at the Aldeburgh Festival in the presence of the composer's widow.

Cecil had had a long and fruitful association with Benjamin Britten, taking part in every festival from 1949 until his death in 1978. He got to know Britten well as composer, conductor and pianist – even violist on occasion. Britten dedicated his rescored 'Lachrymae' with strings to Cecil.

# Louise Lansdown

Louise is the founder and Artistic Director of the Cecil Aronowitz International Viola Competition and Festival, launched at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (RBC) in October 2014, as well as the founder and President of the British Viola Society. Louise has been Head of Strings at RBC since 2012.

She is a deeply committed teacher and is immensely proud of her many brilliant ex and current viola students who are making their mark in the music world. Louise commissions new music for the viola and concocts hair brain schemes to perform music by Paul Hindemith (the subject of her PhD) and much unknown viola music, bringing the viola to many unsuspecting and innocent people. She plays on a French Viola c.1750 and 1890 Sartory bow, both previously belonging to the South African violist Cecil Aronowitz, as well as a more recently acquired beautiful viola made by Antoine Gourdon.



# Prizes

## 1<sup>st</sup> Prize

£5000 (British Viola Society & British Violin Making Association)

Album recording with Champs Hill Records\*

\* This is a guaranteed recording. The originally advertised recording with EM records will be provided, subject to acquiring future funding.

Viola bow made by Robert Shallock at £3,500 (Bishop Instruments & Bows)

Pirastro strings: EVAH PIRAZZI GOLD SET C-ROPE CORE/TUNGSTEN MITTEL , Rosin: PIRASTRO EVAH PIRAZZI GOLD, KorfkerRest for Viola

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## 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize

£3,000 (The Tertis Foundation)

Fine Viola Bow (Ayres Violins)

Pirastro Strings: EVAH PIRAZZI GOLD SET C-ROPE CORE/TUNGSTEN MITTEL , Rosin: PIRASTRO EVAH PIRAZZI GOLD.

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## 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize

£1,500 (Gwyn Williams Trust and Pirastro)

Fine Viola Bow (British Violin Making Association)

Pirastro Strings: EVAH PIRAZZI GOLD SET C-ROPE CORE/TUNGSTEN MITTEL, Rosin: PIRASTRO EVAH PIRAZZI GOLD.

## Matthew Jones



Described by 'Fanfare' Magazine as 'the finest violist since William Primrose', Matthew enjoys a diverse performing and teaching career, equally at home as soloist or chamber musician playing both viola and violin, performing classical or contemporary repertoire or giving fully improvised concerts. He gave a critically acclaimed Carnegie Hall recital debut in 2008, and until 2019 was a member of Ensemble MidtVest. Matthew was a member of the Badke String Quartet when they won the 2007 Melbourne International Chamber Music Competition.

Matthew has recorded twenty-three solo and chamber CDs, including five for Naxos which include 'Britten: Reflections' with pianist Annabel Thwaite - named Chamber CD of the Month by BBC Music Magazine - which has had more than 4.5 million online streams.

Matthew is Head of Chamber Music and Professor of Viola at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, and directs the Intermediate Course at Pro Corda International Chamber Music Academy. In recent years he has premiered concertos by Tolibkhon Shakhidi, Derek Ball and Gordon Crosse. Among his most popular viola/piano discs are the only complete recording of Prokofiev/Borisovsky 'Romeo and Juliet' extracts and the 'Bridge Duo' recordings of York Bowen and other viola works.

Born in Swansea, Wales, Matthew is also a composer, mathematics graduate and teacher of the Alexander Technique and Kundalini Yoga. In the capacity of Alexander and Yoga/Meditation teacher he has worked individually with more than 1600 musicians. Matthew frequently presents workshops on empowering musicians and enhancing performance, clients of which have included world-renowned conductors and soloists, world champion athletes and orchestras including the New World Symphony, Melbourne Symphony and the European Union Youth Orchestra. A recording of some of Matthew's chamber compositions will be released in 2022.

## Garth Knox



Garth Knox was born in Ireland and spent his childhood in Scotland. After studying at the RCM, he played with most of the leading groups in London in a mixture of all repertoires, from baroque to contemporary music.

In 1983 he was invited by Pierre Boulez to become a member of the Ensemble InterContemporain in Paris, involving extensive solo and chamber music playing, touring widely and appearing in international festivals.

In 1990 Garth Knox joined the Arditti String Quartet, playing in all the major concert halls of the world, working closely with and giving first performances of pieces by most of today's leading composers including Ligeti, Kurtag, Berio, Xenakis, Lachenmann, Cage, Feldman and Stockhausen (the famous "Helicopter Quartet").

Garth Knox now lives in Paris, where he enjoys a full time solo career, giving recitals, concertos and chamber music concerts all over Europe, the USA and Japan. He is also an active composer, and his «Viola Spaces », the first phase of an on-going series of concert studies for strings (published in 2010 by Schott) combines ground-breaking innovation in string technique with joyous pleasure in the act of music making. The pieces have been adopted and performed by young string players all over the world.

He is also a pioneer of the viola d'amore, exploring its possibilities in new music, with and without electronics, and is in the process of creating a new repertoire for this instrument.

After teaching posts at Musikene in San Sebastian and the RNCM in Manchester, Garth Knox is presently International Professor at the RCM in London.

## Thomas Riebl



Born in Vienna in 1956, Thomas Riebl studied with Siegfried Führlinger, Peter Schidlof and Sandor Végh.

He won third prize winner at the International Competition in Munich (ARD 1976) and in 1982 first prize at the International Naumburg Competition New York.

Thomas has been invited to many of the major international music festivals (e.g. Salzburger Festspiele) and has appeared at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam and the "Goldene Saal" of the Wiener Musikverein.

He has performed with numerous leading orchestras including the Chicago, Berlin and Vienna Symphony, the Bavarian and Finish Radio Symphony Orchestras, and with conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Horst Stein, Edo de Waart, Andrew Davies and Sylvain Cambreling.

## Thomas Riebl (cont.)

His chamber music partners have included Jessey Norman, Auréle Nicolet, Andras Schiff, Oleg Maisenberg, Elisabeth Leonskaja, Pierre-Laurent Aimard, Lars Vogt, Gidon Kremer, Benjamin Schmid, Isabelle Faust, Joshua Bell, Tabea Zimmermann, Natalia Gutman, Boris Pergamenschikow, Steven Isserlis, Sabine Meyer and the Juilliard String Quartet.

From 1972 - 1979 he was a member of the Franz-Schubert-Quartett, Vienna (first.prize at the competition of the European broadcast cooperations in Stockholm in 1974); subsequently he became a founder member of the Vienna String Sextet (1979 - 2004), which performed worldwide and recorded several CDs for EMI and pan classics.

Since 1983, Thomas Riebl has been a professor at the University Mozarteum Salzburg. In addition, he has been Visiting Tutor at the RNCM in Manchester and holds the International Chair for Viola at the Conservatoire in Birmingham. He has given numerous master classes worldwide. Many of his students won international competitions and became professors at music universities or members of leading orchestras and string quartets.

He is artistic director of the Internationale Sommerakademie Bad Leonfelden, Austria and has recorded for RCA, pan classics and Hyperion Records.

In 2011 he developed, together with luthier Bernd Hiller, a five stringed tenor viola, on which he performs F.Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata, Beethoven's first cello sonatas op.5, Mozart's clarinet concerto (his original basset clarinet version), J.S.Bach's 6th cello-suite and his sonatas for viola da gamba as well as recently written pieces for this instrument.

# Competitors 2021



Alvaro Castello  
(Spain)



Yuxin Chen  
(China)



Jone Diamantini  
(Spain)



Edgar Francis  
(UK)



Brian Isaacs  
(USA)



James Kang  
(USA)



Bill Ko  
(Hong Kong)



Yat Lee  
(Hong Kong)



Haneul Park  
(South Korea)



Anuschka Pedano  
(Netherlands)



Connie Pharoah  
(UK)



Mikel Rollet  
(USA)



Alinka Rowe  
(UK)



Noga Shaham  
(Israel)



Joseph Skerik  
(USA)



Abigail Smith  
(USA)



Miguel Sobrinho  
(Portugal)



Marvin Stark  
(Germany)



Lynn Sue-A-Quan  
(Canada)



Anna Sypniewski  
(France)



Otoha Tabata  
(Japan)



Yanan Wang  
(China)



Yujie Wang  
(China)



Jaren Ziegler  
(UK)

# Schedule

## Round 1

### Saturday 6th November

10:30	Álvaro Castelló	Bach - Suite 2 (Courante, Sarabande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
10:50	Yuxin Chen	Bach - Suite 4 (Courante, Allemande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I)
11:10	Jone Diamantini	Bach - Sonata 1 (Adagio, Fuga) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I)
11:30	Edgar Francis	Bach - Suite 4 (Prelude, Bouree I) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
11:50	Brian Isaacs	Bach - Sonata 3 (Largo, Allegro assai) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
12:10	Lunch (60 minutes)	
13:10	James Kang	Bach - Suite 3 (Prelude, Sarabande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
13:30	Bill Ko	Bach - Suite 4 (Prelude, Bouree I and II) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I)
13:50	Yat Lee	Bach - Suite 1 (Prelude, Allemande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I)
14:10	Break (30 minutes)	
14:40	Haneul Park	Bach - Suite 4 (Prelude, Courante) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I)
15:00	Anuschka Pedano	Bach - Suite 5 (Prelude, Gigue) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
15:20	Connie Pharoah	Bach - Suite 4 (Prelude, Courante) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
15:40	Miguel Sobrinho	Bach - Partita 2 (Allemande, Gigue) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
16:00	Finish	

### Evening Concert (Internal Event)

Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire  
18:00 GMT

J.S.Bach  
Schubert

Suite BWV 995  
Arpeggione Sonata

Thomas Riebl – Viola  
Robert Markham – Piano

## Sunday 7th November

10:00	Mikel Rollet	Bach - Suite 6 (Courante, Gavotte) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I)
10:20	Alinka Rowe	Bach - Suite 3 (Prelude, Sarabande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I)
10:40	Noga Shaham	Bach - Sonata 1 (Adagio, Fuga) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
11:00	Joe Skerik	Bach - Suite 3 (Prelude, Sarabande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I)
11:20	Break (10 minutes)	
11:30	Abigail Smith	Bach - Suite 3 (Prelude, Bouree) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
11:50	Marvin Stark	Bach - Suite 1 (Courante, Sarabande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
12:10	Lynn Sue-A-Quan	Bach - Partita 2 (Courante) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
12:30	Anna Sypniewski	Bach - Suite 6 (Allemande, Courante) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
12:50	Lunch (60 minutes)	
13:50	Otoha Tabata	Bach - Suite 2 (Prelude, Allemande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
14:10	Yanan Wang	Bach - Suite 5 (Prelude, Allemande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (III)
14:30	Yujie Wang	Bach - Suite 6 (Courante, Sarabande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I & II)
14:50	Jaren Ziegler	Bach - Suite 6 (Prelude, Allemande) Knox - Pocket Concerto (I)
15:10	End of Round	

## Evening Concert (Internal Event)

Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire  
17:00 GMT

G.P. Telemann	<i>Fantasia No.1</i>
Garth Knox	<i>Viola Spaces</i>
Garth Knox	<i>Quartet for One</i>
Marin Marais	<i>Les Folies d'Espagne (viola d'amore and cello)</i>
Garth Knox	<i>Quatre petites Entropies for viola d'amore</i>
Arr. Garth Knox	<i>Black Brittany - Celtic melodies (viola d'amore and cello)</i>

Garth Knox – Viola  
Kamogelo Maraba - Cello  
Charlie Woodhouse - Cello

# Round 2

## Pianists

Robert Markham  
Charles Matthews  
Anthony Hewitt

## Monday 8th November

09:00	Álvaro Castelló	Clarke - Sonata
09:30	Yuxin Chen	Vieuxtemps - Sonata in B-Flat Major, Op.36
10:00	Jone Diamantini	Hindemith - Sonata, Op.11 No.4
10:30	Edgar Francis	Franck - Sonata
11:00	Break (10 minutes)	
11:10	Brian Isaacs	Bax - Sonata, GP 251
11:40	James Kang	Hindemith - Sonata, Op.11 No.4
12:10	Bill Ko	Hindemith - Sonata 1939
12:40	Miguel Sobrinho	Brahms - Sonata No.1 in F Minor, Op.120
13:10	Lunch (50 minutes)	
14:00	Yat Lee	Brahms - Sonata No.2 in E-flat Major, Op. 120
14:30	Haneul Park	Bowen - Sonata No.1 in C Minor, Op.18
15:00	Anuschka Pedano	Vieuxtemps - Sonata in B-Flat Major, Op.36
15:30	Connie Pharoah	Bowen - Sonata No.1 in C Minor, Op.18
16:00	Break (40 minutes)	
16:40	Mikel Rollet	Schubert - Arpeggione Sonata, D. 821
17:10	Alinka Rowe	Brahms - Sonata No.1 in F Minor, Op.120
17:40	Noga Shaham	Brahms - Sonata No.1 in F Minor, Op.120
18:10	Finish	

## Evening Recital (Internal Event)

Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire  
19:30 GMT

Paul Patterson

*Tides of Mananan*

Hilary Tann

*The Cresset Stone*

Matthew Hindson

*Repetepitition*

Dobrinka Tabakova

*Pirin*

Per Norgaard

*Sonata - The Secret Melody (from 'Libro per Nobuko')*

Bach/Kodaly

*Chromatic Fantasy*

Matthew Jones - Viola

## Tuesday 9th November

09:00	Joe Skerik	Vieuxtemps - Sonata in B-Flat Major, Op.36
09:30	Abigail Smith	Rochberg - Sonata 1979
10:00	Marvin Stark	Shostakovich - Sonata, Op.147
10:30	Lynn Sue-A-Quan	Hindemith - Sonata 1939
11:00	Anna Sypniewski	Hindemith - Sonata, Op.11 No. 4
11:30	Break (10 minutes)	
11:40	Otoha Tabata	Schubert - Arpeggione Sonata, D. 821
12:10	Yanan Wang	Brahms - Sonata in G Major, Op.78
12:40	Yujie Wang	Franck - Sonata
13:10	Jaren Ziegler	Vieuxtemps - Sonata in B-Flat Major, Op.36
13:40	End of Round	

Semi-Finalists will be announced in the afternoon

### Round 3

### Wednesday 10th November

Recital Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire  
15:15 - 20:00 GMT

**Johannes Brahms** *Zwei Gesänge für eine Altstimme mit Bratsche und Klavier*  
(Two songs for an alto voice with viola and piano)  
Op.91

Solo Caprice or Etude

#### Pianists

Robert Markham  
Charles Matthews

#### Vocalists

Samantha Lewis  
Eleanor O'Driscoll  
Hannah Morley  
Sarah Bowkley

Finalists will be announced in the evening

## Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> Nov

Whilst the three finalists rehearse with the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Chamber Orchestra and conductor Angus Webster, all other competitors who do not proceed to the final round will be invited to receive feedback from the Jury.

Some competitors will take part in masterclasses throughout the day with the jury. The competitors who are not involved with master classes will be rehearsing a new work by RBC composer Patrick Case and recording solo viola music performed during the competition.

Matthew Jones will be holding a talk about 'The Art and Science of Practice'.

The day concludes with an evening concert by students from the RBC Viola Department. The students will perform works by British Composers, all inspired by the great Lionel Tertis, including many unknown and unpublished pieces.

## RBC Student Showcase (Internal Event)

*Pianist Charles Matthews*

### W.H Reed Quartet for Four Violas

*Erin Vinter, Nolitha Olusanya, Yujie Zhang, Jinhe Huang*

### Lionel Tertis: Three Sketches

*Gavin Marnoch*

1. Serenade (Revised as A Tune)
2. The Blackbirds
3. The River

### Walton (arr. Matthew Jones): Two Pieces

*Xueer Wu*

1. Canzonetta
2. Scherzo

### Coates: First Meeting: Souvenir for Viola and Piano

*Yupeng Cai*

### William Lloyd-Webber: Sonatina

*Carla Mendoza Trejo*

### Gordon Jacob: Air and Dance

*Keith Bray*

### York Bowen: Three Duos for Violin and Viola

*Alastair Legg and Peter Whitehead*

INTERVAL

**Forsyth: Chanson Celtique**

Ziang Wang

**Britten: Reflection**

Qianqian Yao

**Clarke: Morpheus**

Tianchi Song

**Arthur Bliss (arr. W. Forbes): Intermezzo for Viola and Piano (from piano quartet)**

Yujie Zhang

**Bridge: Three Songs for voice, viola and piano H76**

Alma Orr-Ewing (Viola), Lucy Thompson (Voice)

1. Far, Far from Each Other
2. Where is it that our Soul Doth Go?
3. Music, When Soft Voices Die

## Round 4 Final

**Friday 12th November**

**Bradshaw Hall, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire  
18:00 GMT (Public Event)**

**Hoffmeister** Viola Concerto in D major (first movement)

*with an original cadenza composed by the competitor*

or

**Stamitz** Viola Concerto in D major (first movement)

*with an original cadenza composed by the competitor*

**Benjamin Britten** Lachrymae

Conductor **Angus Webster**

**Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Chamber Orchestra**

Tickets available via the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire events office

**Prizes to be announced shortly after round concludes**