

LUNCHTIME RECITAL

THURSDAY 6TH NOVEMBER 2025

RUDDOCK HALL, 13.10

ALASTAIR ZHANG – *guitar*

GLENDA CHEUNG – *violin*

GWILYM THORP – *trumpet*

PIANO QUARTET

MARK BO, VIOLIN; KAREN MAO, VIOLA; MING JIANG, 'CELLO;
AIDAN ZHANG, PIANO

PIANO ACCOMPANISTS: JAMES O'KEEFE

Lute Concerto in D Major, RV 93

VIVALDI

i. *Allegro Guisto*

ii. *Largo*

iii. *Allegro*

'Bess, You Is My Woman Now' from *Porgy and Bess*

GERSHWIN

Sonata for Trumpet and Piano

HINDEMITH

i. *Mit Kraft*

Piano Quartet No. 1 in C minor op. 15

FAURÉ

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741): Lute Concerto In D Major RV 93 (1730-31)

- i. *Allegro guisto*
- ii. *Largo*
- iii. *Allegro*

Antonio Vivaldi was an Italian composer and Roman Catholic priest and is seen as one of the most prominent composers of the Baroque period. His father was a professional violinist, teaching Vivaldi how to play from a young age. After being ordained as a priest in 1703, Vivaldi worked at an orphanage, teaching music and composing many pieces, including over 140 concerti written between 1723 and 1733.

Vivaldi's Lute Concerto is in three movements. Though originally composed for lute, it is now been performed often on guitar. An important thing to note is that each performance varies, since Vivaldi has left the ornamentation to the performer.

The first movement is based around a ritornello passed between the strings and the guitar. When by itself, the guitar is often accompanied by a bouncy countermelody played by the 'cello. The second movement is much slower than the first, where the solo guitar plays a lyrical melody and the strings accompany with long held chords. It invokes a sense of tranquillity, while also leaving room for the soloist to embellish the melody. The final movement is similar to the first in which the strings play a different repeated ritornello, while the guitar interjects with phrases of melody. Its lively mood and quick tempo contrasts with the slow movement, ending the piece on a joyful note.

Alastair Zhang, Sixths

Alastair will be joined by an orchestra composed of KES/KEHS students:

Priyamvada Agarwal, Mark Bo, Hilary Cheng, Li Wan, Clarice Ngo, Brendan Priest, Violins; Tarun Murugananthan, 'cello; Gabriel Iyiola, Bass; Yilin Chen, Harpsichord continuo.

George Gershwin (1898-1937): "Bess, You Is My Woman Now" from *Porgy and Bess* (1935)

"Bess, You Is My Woman Now" is an aria from *Porgy and Bess*, an opera composed by George Gershwin in 1935. Gershwin was remarkable for blending jazz, blues, and classical traditions, creating a uniquely American sound. He often experimented at the piano late into the night, improvising melodies that later became some of his most famous works. This duet portrays a tender moment of love and devotion between the two main characters, Bess and Porgy. The soaring melody and lush harmonies reflect Gershwin's gift for expressing deep emotion through his seamless fusion of classical and popular styles.

Glenda Cheung, Lower Sixth

Paul Hindemith (1895-1963): Sonata for Trumpet and Piano (1939)

i. Mit Kraft

Paul Hindemith was a German composer born in Hanau, near Frankfurt in 1895. Unusually, he achieved functional proficiency on all orchestral instruments, giving him a profound understanding of their unique strengths and limitations. Because of this, many of his sonatas remain in modern repertoire.

His music was not popular with the Nazis, who labelled his work as “degenerate art” due to its modernist tendencies, and consequently, his music was banned in 1936. He composed his Trumpet Sonata in 1939 whilst living in Switzerland, after his initial flight from Germany.

The piece opens with the first movement’s bold, fanfare-like theme (often interpreted as a mocking heroism) which reflects the initial jubilation and false promise of the Nazi regime’s rise to power. This theme is developed throughout the movement in various forms. Shortly after, the music contrasts sharply with a sudden, quiet triple-tonguing motif. This is often interpreted as the sound of the gunfire, marking the end of the German decline.

The Sonata showcases the technical extremes of the instrument, with many high-volume entries in the upper register. This demands exceptional endurance in the performer. The sonata finishes with the chorale: “Alle Menschen müssen sterben” translating to “All men must die”. Here, Hindemith reminds us that, like the Nazi occupation of Germany, all things must eventually come to an end.

Gwilym Thorp, Sixths

Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924): Piano Quartet No. 1 in C minor, Op. 15 (1876–1879, revised 1883)

Gabriel Fauré, a pillar of late 19th-century French music, was born in Pamiers, France in 1845 and spent much of his life furthering the course of French Romanticism through song, piano, and chamber music. His journey into music began as a boarder at the Niedermeyer school in Paris, where he received not only a rigorous education in church music, but also, thanks to his teacher Saint-Saëns, a deep grounding in the broader trends of European Romanticism. Despite starting life far from the Parisian centre, Fauré would rise to become one of France’s most influential composers as well as director of the Paris Conservatoire—a role in which his forward-looking tastes left a mark on generations of French musicians.

Fauré started his Piano Quartet No. 1 in C minor in 1876, completing it in 1879, before revising the finale in 1883 in response to some criticism from his close circle. One striking episode in its history: friends’ reservations about the original final movement led Fauré,

after some reflection, to completely rewrite it, thereby transforming the work and ensuring its acceptance into the canon of beloved French chamber music. The Quartet's first movement, *Allegro molto moderato*, is a study in both power and restraint. Its passionate opening sets the tone for a work that balances stormy intensity with glimpses of the shimmering "arpeggios in the mist" that would become a Fauré hallmark. Unlike German chamber music contemporaries, Fauré never forces the piano and strings to behave similarly—he revels instead in their distinct voices, weaving together subtle lyricism and rhythmic vitality. For listeners new to this movement, notice especially how Fauré keeps the textures luminous even as the music builds, guiding the ensemble through drama with superb control and emotional depth.

Mark 'Al' Bo, Divisions

ALASTAIR ZHANG is 18 years old today and started studying guitar when he was 9. He was first taught by Ben Porter, before moving to Birmingham Junior Conservatoire and learning from Andrew Gough. Alastair left Conservatoire in year 8, however he still learns from Mr Gough. He is also currently doing IB music and is principal bassoon of Symphony Orchestra. Outside of music, Alastair plans to study mechanical engineering at university.

GLENDAL CHEUNG is a violinist who achieved her ABRSM Diploma in 2024. She currently performs with the City of Birmingham Symphony Youth Orchestra. Glenda began learning the violin at the age of 6 and particularly enjoys exploring lyrical and expressive repertoire. Outside of music, she is also interested in science and creative writing.

GWILYM THORP is 17 years old and has been studying the trumpet for 10 years, now under the supervision of former CBSO principal trumpet Jason Lewis. He is in his final year of the International Baccalaureate, studying Music, Philosophy, and Maths at higher level. He has found IB Music to be “eye-opening” in terms of developing his academic music skills. Gwilym loves playing the trumpet in orchestra, but recently he has started to enjoy his solo performances too. After he leaves school, Gwilym hopes to join a conservatoire. Whilst music keeps him very busy, Gwilym makes time for reading and IB coursework.

MARK BO is a 16-year-old violinist who studies under Lucy Akehurst. He completed his Grade 8 in violin at age 13 and performs in the school’s Symphony Orchestra. Mark has also played multiple national youth orchestras, gaining experience in larger ensemble settings. In his free time, he enjoys rock climbing at Birmingham Depot and is currently studying Maths, Further Maths, Physics, and Chemistry at A Level. He also leads a VEX robotics club and hopes to pursue engineering in the future.

KAREN MAO is in her final year at King Edward VI High School for Girls and is currently studying Viola under Lucy Akehurst. She has completed her Viola diploma and has also achieved distinction in Piano Grade 8 with Dr Heng Ching Fang. Aside from music, Karen likes to make soap and decorate cakes.

Ming Jiang is 16 years old and started studying the guitar when he was 7 years old. He's taught by John Gerighty. He did his DipABRSM in 2021 for the guitar along side with the piano where he is taught by Mike Adams. He also and began studying the cello at the age of 7 with Mark Walkem, he passed grade 8 with distinction five years later. Now he receives tuition from Emma Barron. Outside of music, Ming enjoys playing rugby in his free time and is planning to study medicine in university.

AIDAN ZHANG is 16 years old and he studies piano with Robert Markham and cello with Elaine Heinen. Aidan attained Grade 8 distinction in piano, cello and violin (under Sam Mason) when he was at Bluecoat School. He achieved the LTCL Licentiate Diploma in piano performance when he was 12 and has won several music competitions. Aidan made his concerto debut in 2023, performing Mozart's piano concerto No. 24, and more recently, he performed Beethoven's piano concerto No. 3. Outside music, Aidan has also participated in training and competitions in swimming and badminton.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Instrumental Evening

Monday 17 November 2025, 17.00 | Ruddock Hall | Admission free.

An informal concert given by guitar players from both schools.

Magaret Faultless Masterclass

Wednesday 3 December 2025, 9.30 | Ruddock Hall | Admission free.

A masterclass given by Professor Margaret Faultless, of the University of Cambridge and the Royal Academy of Music, and internationally renowned specialist in historical performance practice.

Steinway Jazz Night 1

Wednesday 3 December 2025, 18.00 | Ruddock Hall | £5.00 adults, £2.50 concessions.

A seasonal concert of solo and group jazz performances given by musicians from both schools.

Lunchtime Recital

Thursday 4 December 2025, 13.10 | Ruddock Hall | Admission free.

Adi Ray, voice; Aidan Forde, voice; KEHS Chamber Orchestra

Christmas Concert 1

Sunday 7 December 2025, 14.30 | Ruddock Hall | £10.00 adults, £5.00 concessions.

Performances by Choral Society, Wind Band, String Orchestra, KES/KEHS Big Band, KEHS Chamber Choir and KES/KEHS Symphony Orchestra.

Tickets available to parents and members of the school community from Tuesday 18 November 2025; on general sale from Tuesday 25 November 2025.

Christmas Concert 1

Sunday 7 December 2025, 19.00 | Ruddock Hall | £10.00 adults, £5.00 concessions.

Performances by KES Choir, Swing Band, KEHS Chamber Choir, Concert Band and KES/KEHS Symphony Orchestra.

Tickets available to parents and members of the school community from Tuesday 18 November 2025; on general sale from Tuesday 25 November 2025.

Christmas Concert 3

Monday 8 December 2025, 19.30 | Ruddock Hall | £10.00 adults, £5.00 concessions.

Performances by Choral Society, KES/KEHS Big Band, KEHS Lower School Choir, Concert Band, Concert Orchestra and KES/KEHS Symphony Orchestra.

Tickets available to parents and members of the school community from Tuesday 18 November 2025; on general sale from Tuesday 25 November 2025.