

LUNCHTIME RECITAL

THURSDAY 5TH FEBUARY 2026

RUDDOCK HALL, 13.10

CLARICE NGO – violin

JAI LEWIS – violin

STRING QUARTET

(PRIYAMVADA AGARWAL, violin;

GLENDY CHEUNG, violin; SIYAO OU, viola;

ARAN MURUGANATHAN, 'cello)

PIANO ACCOMPANISTS: KATE THOMPSON AND MICHELLE SANDERS

Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso

CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS

Violin Sonata in E minor, Op. 82

EDWARD ELGAR

1. Allegro: Risoluto

String Quartet No. 9 in D minor, Op. 34

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

1. Allegro

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921): Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso (1863)

Camille Saint-Saëns was a French composer, pianist, and organist. A child prodigy, he studied at the Paris Conservatoire, where he later became known as a performer and composer. His music reflects strong ties to Classical forms while incorporating elements of the Romantic style. Saint-Saëns composed a variety of works, including symphonies, concertos, chamber music, operas, and orchestral works; among his best-known compositions is *The Carnival of the Animals*. He remained active as a composer and performer throughout his life and continued to have an influence on French music into the early 20th century.

Composed in 1863 for the great violinist Pablo de Sarasate, Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso is one of Saint-Saëns' most popular works. The piece highlights both lyrical expressiveness and dazzling virtuosity.

The opening introduction is slow and expressive, featuring a dark, improvisatory character with rich colours in the accompaniment highlighting the singing violin lines. This section gradually builds tension before launching into the lively Rondo Capriccioso.

The rondo is spirited and rhythmically driven, infused with Spanish flavour through its dance-like rhythms, sharp accents, and playful exchanges between soloist and accompaniment. Rapid passages, left-hand pizzicato, harmonics, and brilliant bowing techniques showcase the violinist's technical mastery. The work remains a staple of the violin repertoire.

Clarice Ngo, Upper Fourths

Edward Elgar (1857-1934): Violin Sonata in E minor, Op. 82 (1918)

i. Allegro: Risoluto

Edward Elgar was largely self-taught as a composer, learning music by studying scores borrowed from his father's music shop rather than through formal conservatoire training. Although he later became one of Britain's most celebrated composers, Elgar often felt like an outsider, both socially and artistically. During the First World War, his confidence declined, and he retreated to the countryside, where he wrote several deeply personal chamber works, including this violin sonata.

The Violin Sonata in E minor was composed near the end of Elgar's creative life and marks a striking contrast to the grand, public works for which he is best known. For the listener, this sonata offers a glimpse into Elgar's private world, where subtle shifts in mood and colour give the music its deeply expressive power.

Jai Lewis, Fifths

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904): String Quartet No. 9 in D minor, Op. 34 (1877)

i. Allegro

Antonín Dvořák completed his Ninth String Quartet on 18 December 1877, having begun it earlier that summer. The work was written shortly after the deaths of two of his children and is dedicated to Johannes Brahms, who championed Dvořák's music and helped secure the publication of his works. While completing the quartet, Dvořák received a letter from Brahms praising his Moravian Duets and informing him that he had recommended them to the publisher Simrock. In gratitude, Dvořák dedicated the Quartet in D minor to Brahms, who in turn encouraged further revisions and supported the piece's publication, showing his role as both a mentor and advocate for Dvořák.

The first movement, Allegro, opens the quartet with a dramatic, serious theme that contrasts lyrical moments with intense development before a return of the opening ideas in typical sonata form.

Priyamvada Agarwal, Lower Sixth

CLARICE NGO is 13 years old and she studies violin, piano and oboe. Clarice loves chamber and orchestral music alongside solo performances; and she is a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain (NYO) and violin principal of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) Youth. Aside from her music studies, Clarice also loves doing ballet and fundraising for charities. Clarice has loved music from a very young age; and music is an important part of her everyday wellbeing.

JAI LEWIS is 16 years old and began studying the violin at the age of four with Lucy Akehurst. He passed his ABRSM Grade 8 exam with a distinction at the age of 11 and is currently studying with Sam Mason. In addition to the violin, Jai studied piano with Lan Mi, achieving a distinction in his Trinity Diploma exam in 2025. He is a former member of the National Youth Strings Orchestra and the City of Birmingham Strings Orchestra.

Alongside his classical music pursuits, Jai is a keen sportsperson. He plays in the 1st XV rugby team and represents Gloucester Academy. Jai is taking his GCSE's this year and, although not yet fully decided, is planning to study Maths, Further Maths, Chemistry and Spanish at A level.

PRIYAMVADA AGARWAL is 16 years old and has played the violin since the age of 4 and piano since age 6, and recently began learning viola and organ. She achieved her violin ARSM diploma at 14 and Grade 8 piano at 13, and is now pursuing the violin LRSM diploma and Grade 8 viola under Sarah Murphy, the piano LRSM diploma and Grade 8 music theory under Shi Ling Chin, and Grade 7 Organ with Darren Hogg. She is concertmaster of the KES/KEHS Symphony Orchestra, leads the KEHS Chamber Orchestra, and has played in the CBSO Youth Orchestra since 2023, alongside numerous other ensembles.

She studies Maths, Further Maths, Physics, Computer Science and Music at A-Level. She also enjoys programming, cipher decryption, and maths competitions.

GLENDA CHEUNG is a violinist who achieved Distinction in the ARSM Diploma. She is a member of the City of Birmingham Symphony Youth Orchestra and is also doing her grade 5 on the flute.

Outside of music, she enjoys badminton and pottery making. Glenda hopes to study medicine in the future.

SIYAO OU is 15 years old, and has been playing viola since she was 9 years old, beginning under the guidance of Carol Millward. She then started studying with Sam Mason who mentored Siyao to achieve grade 8 distinction in just 4 years. After this, she began studying the violin whilst continuing to study viola, helping her achieve grade 8 distinction violin before beginning her academic journey here in KEHS with 3 instruments (piano, viola and violin) at post-grade 8 level standard.

Her love for viola has grown over the 8 years, through being part of the Birmingham Schools Symphony Orchestra (with whom she performed in the Royal Albert Hall), CBSO remix, CBSO Youth Orchestra. She has played in the National Children's Orchestra (NCO) since she was 10 in the weekend projects to playing in its U12, U13 and finally the Main Orchestra where she has made many life-long friends and added the experience of leading her section as principal violist in concerts across UK concert halls with great enthusiasm.

As she becomes an NCO alumni this year, she continues her orchestral journey by performing as part of National Youth Orchestra's Inspire, spreading her love for music to school children across the UK through concerts and tours. Personally, she is still very keen on progressing her viola standards, so she eagerly plans to take her viola LTCL diploma soon.

Aside from music, Siyao is also an experienced chess player, competing for Warwickshire and for her school as well as individually. Additionally, she enjoys spending her free time doing handcrafts out of paper and playing badminton, both of which she loves immensely.

ARAN MURUGANANTHAN is 15 years old and started studying the cello with his current teacher, Emma Barron, when he was 6 years old. He passed his Grade 8 in 2023 with distinction and is preparing for his Diploma, which is scheduled for this summer.

Aran also plays both the saxophone as well as the piano. He is planning to sit his diploma and Grade 8 respectively this summer.

Outside of music, Aran enjoys road cycling and playing hockey in his free time.

FORTHCOMING CONCERTS

Instrumental Evening

Monday 9 February 2026, 17.00 | Ruddock Hall | Admission free.

An informal concert given by woodwind and brass players from both schools.

Instrumental Evening

Monday 23 February 2026, 17.00 | Ruddock Hall | Admission free.

An informal concert given by string players from both schools.

Instrumental Evening

Monday 2 March 2026, 17.00 | Ruddock Hall | Admission free.

An informal concert given by singers, drummers, and percussion players from both schools.

Instrumental Evening

Wednesday 4 March 2026, 18.00 | Ruddock Hall | Admission free.

An informal concert given by guitar players from both schools.

Lunchtime Recital

Thursday 5 March 2026, 13.10 | Ruddock Hall | Admission free.

Priyamvada Agarwal, violin; Yilin Chen, Piano; Li Wan, violin;
Piano Trio: Connie Zhang, flute; Hilary Cheng, violin; Jessie Hong, piano

For information on these and other concerts, visit www.ruddockpac.co.uk.

If you have a query or need to book an accessible space, please contact the Box Office
by email: ruddockpac@keschools.org.uk.