



## NEW MACCLESFIELD CONCERT SEASON TO OPEN ON SATURDAY 15 OCTOBER

The Northern Chamber Orchestra has announced its 2022-23 season following its move to the brand new, purpose built, auditorium at The Kings' School in Macclesfield, and the beautiful, intimate St Michael's Church. The season, entitled "Orchestrating the Future", is the first since the departure of Artistic Director and Leader Nicholas Ward, and sees a host of exciting conductors, directors and soloists, including cellist Guy Johnston, violinist Jorge Jimenez, and conductor Jamie Phillips taking to the stage.

The season opens on Saturday 15 October, when the Hallé's assistant conductor **Delyana Lazrova** joins the youngest ever BBC Young Musician winner, violinist **Jennifer Pike**, for a concert of Beethoven works, including his revolutionary 'Eroica' symphony. The season continues in November and December with Mozart's Symphony No. 41, 'Jupiter', conducted by **Jamie Phillips** (November 5), and Haydn's D major cello concerto, featuring soloist **Guy Johnston** and directed by his brother **Magnus Johnston** (December 17).

The NCO returns to Tatton Park on Friday 9 December for its annual **Christmas Concerts**. The concerts (3.30pm and 7pm) will include festive favourites, readings and carols sung by the Choir of St Nicholas Catholic High School, Northwich, and the evening concert also includes a tour of the mansion.

2023 opens with the NCO in a reflective mood as it gives a concert at Macclesfield's St Michael's Church in remembrance of Holocaust Memorial Day. The concert features Rudolf Karel's Nonet, written in Theresienstadt prison during WWII. Following this are a baroque and tango special, with violinist **Sophie Rosa** (February 18); a musical setting of the Stabat Mater sequence directed by **Christopher Jones** and sung by soprano **Caroline Taylor** and countertenor **Ralph Thomas Williams** (March 11, St Michael's Church); and a concert devoted to the NCO's outstanding wind section and directed by principal oboe of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, **John Roberts** (April 1).

Closing the series on Saturday 6 May, Spanish violinist **Jorge Jimenez** directs the orchestra in three of Bach's Brandenburg Concertos alongside two 20th century works, Arvo Pärt's Fratres and Alfred Schnittke's Suite in the Old Style.

General Manager Charlie Rowley said "A new and exciting chapter opens in the NCO's long history in Macclesfield at two new venues: the beautiful and intimate St Michael's Church and the impressively grand and brand-new King's School welcome us for the first time, and we hope for many years hence. New places and faces, but we will continue to surprise and delight in bringing world-class music and exciting new talent to Macclesfield"

## INTERVIEW WITH MELISSA JOHNSON, CDL

The NCO is supported by Stockport based software company CDL. We spoke to Group Director, Melissa Johnson, about the season ahead.

*Why did you choose to support the NCO?*

Through our sponsorship of the Glossop Music Festival, we were introduced to the NCO and realised that as well as being a first-rate orchestra they shared our passion for community projects.

*Our musicians have been into CDL for short concerts, and during lockdown we produced films for you to watch from home. Which was your favourite?*

I would have to say the Christmas concerts ! I remember watching in 2020, eating a mince pie , it helped bring cheer to those strange times. And last year the NCO played live at our office as held a drive through grotto for our colleagues making it a jolly, festive event.

*Is Mind Music, our project where we work with care home residents, close to your heart?*

We understand it's something that is close to many peoples hearts, and we ask our colleagues to nominate care homes to take part in the Mind Music programme. Often, they nominate care homes that are looking after or have looked after their loved ones. It meant a lot for me and my Dad to nominate the home that was looking after my Uncle, a gifted pianist and former music teacher. We get wonderful feedback about how much the care home residents enjoy the concerts.

*You also support our education programme, what about this interests you?*

This interests us as we have established links with a local secondary school and were delighted to introduce the NCO team to develop a music project for them. The collaboration between the NCO and school music teachers has been wonderful; the project involves secondary students and those from surrounding primary schools participating in music workshops with the NCO's amazing musicians. These young people are able to perform with a full orchestra and attend a final performance with their families. The schools project has run for the last 5 (or 6) years even running virtually through lockdown. It's good, when music teaching in schools is generally under-resourced, to sponsor such an inspirational and enriching initiative.

*Which concert are you most looking forward to in our upcoming season?*

It is hard to choose with such an exciting season ahead, but I would probably say the first concert "Beethoven's Eroica: Breaking New Boundaries". It will be special to experience the collaboration of two talented young female musicians, Delyana Lazarova (conductor) and Jennifer Pike (Violin) on this dramatic work.

For information about sponsoring the NCO through our Corporate scheme, please visit [www.ncorch.co.uk/support](http://www.ncorch.co.uk/support), or call Charlie Rowley, Chief Executive, on 0161 247 2220.



## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND LEADER NICHOLAS WARD STEPS DOWN

The Northern Chamber Orchestra's Artistic Director and lead violin, **Nicholas Ward**, stepped down at the end of the 2021-22 season, after 37 years with the orchestra. His tenure saw him perform over 500 concerts with the NCO, with countless as leader in the orchestra pit at Buxton Festival. Nicholas said, "Since starting as the leader of the Northern Chamber Orchestra in October 1984, I've had 37 years working with many great colleagues, and have had some enjoyable and worthwhile music-making during that time, but the time has come to step down and leave the NCO to the next generation." NCO Chief Executive Charlie Rowley added, "Nick leaves us an extraordinary legacy of music-making and a never less than entertained audience behind. I'm sure that I can speak for board, staff and most of all, the players – he will be sorely missed."

