

Seaford Music Society

Sunday 11th October 2026, at 3.00 pm

Jacqueline du Pré: A Celebration

A concert unashamedly all about the cello, in celebration of the life of the celebrated cellist Jacqueline du Pré, with music performed by:

Raphael Wallfisch	<i>Cello</i>
Alexander Baillie	<i>Cello</i>
Sebastian Comberti	<i>Cello</i>
Steven Neugarten	<i>Piano</i>

Jacqueline Mary du Pré OBE (26 January 1945 – 19 October 1987) was a British cellist, widely regarded as one of the pre-eminent cellists of the 20th century. Born in Oxford, she began studying at the Guildhall School of Music in the mid-1950s with William Pleeth, earning the school's Gold Medal in 1960. Her musical development was further enhanced by advanced studies with prominent cellists such as Paul Tortelier, Pablo Casals and Mstislav Rostropovich.

Du Pré gained early recognition, winning Britain's most prestigious cello award at age eleven and making her official debut at Wigmore Hall at sixteen. She achieved international acclaim with her 1965 American debut, where she performed Elgar's Cello Concerto, a piece closely associated with her. By the age of twenty, she was performing with leading orchestras worldwide. In 1967 she married the acclaimed conductor and pianist Daniel Barenboim, forming a celebrated musical couple.

Her career was cut short in her late twenties by multiple sclerosis, forcing her to withdraw from public performances. Du Pré remained active as a teacher and mentor until her death at the age of forty-two.

Raphael Wallfisch is one of the world's most celebrated cellists, renowned for his musical integrity, curiosity and passionate commitment to expanding the cello's repertoire. Born in London into a distinguished musical family, he is the son of pianist Peter Wallfisch and cellist Anita Lasker-Wallfisch. Inspired as a child by hearing Zara Nelsova, he went on to study in California with the legendary Gregor Piatigorsky, who invited him to perform alongside Jascha Heifetz. His international career was launched when, aged twenty-four, he won the Gaspar Cassadó International Cello Competition in Florence.

Since then, Wallfisch has enjoyed an extraordinary international career, performing with many of the world's leading orchestras, including the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia, BBC Symphony, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Berlin Konzerthaus, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Sydney Symphony. He has appeared at major venues and festivals including the Concertgebouw, Berliner Philharmonie, Wigmore Hall, BBC Proms, Aldeburgh, and Edinburgh International Festival.



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His extensive discography reflects a remarkable breadth of musical interests, encompassing both the core repertoire and many neglected works. He is particularly celebrated for his advocacy of British music, with recordings of concertos by Bax, Bliss, Britten, Delius, Finzi, Moeran and Walton, alongside acclaimed recordings of Martinů and Vivaldi. His work with Chandos and other leading labels has brought many lesser-known composers to a wider audience.

Wallfisch has also played a significant role in expanding the cello repertoire, collaborating with composers including Peter Maxwell Davies, Kenneth Leighton, John Tavener and James MacMillan, several of whom have written works especially for him. As a chamber musician, his long-standing partnership with pianist John York and his work with the Trio Shaham Erez Wallfisch have been central to his musical life.

Deeply committed to passing on his experience to a new generation, Wallfisch is Professor at the Royal College of Music and International Chair of Violoncello and Chamber Music at Trinity Laban Conservatoire.

Alexander Baillie is internationally recognised as one of the most valuable cellists of his generation. In 1968, at the age of twelve, inspired directly by the legendary Jacqueline du Pré, he began playing the cello. Self-taught, he picked up the Haydn C major concerto by ear and without being able to read music! Watford School of Music provided him with an invaluable musical training before he went to London's Royal College of Music, where his teachers were Joan Dickson, the doyenne of England's post-war cellists, and Anna Shuttleworth. He also studied composition with Herbert Howells. A Caird scholarship then took him to Vienna to study with the great French pedagogue André Navarra.

His concert and teaching engagements have taken him to festivals all over the world. His first concerto engagement for the BBC was playing Dutilleux's "Tout un Monde lointain", and he subsequently became a frequent concerto soloist with all the major orchestras in Britain. At London's Wigmore Hall he was frequently heard in recital and gave first performances of works by Lutoslawski, Schnittke and Gordon Crosse.

At the Proms he made a notable debut with Colin Matthews' first cello concerto and the "Sieben Liebeslieder" by Hans Werner Henze, under the composer's direction. He gave the Canadian premiere of Penderecki's second cello concerto. With the European Youth Philharmonic Orchestra he made a film about the Dvořák Cello Concerto ("Dvořák...who?"), which has been singled out for its transparent portrayal of what can be achieved by young musicians communicating through the performance of music.

His recordings of the Britten solo cello suites and sonata achieved the highest acclaim in the New York Times: "Many other cellists have made a strong claim on this repertory. Perhaps the most successful is Alexander Baillie".

From 1994 Baillie lived in Bremen, where he was Professor of Cello at the Hochschule, University of Bremen. He has now relocated back to the UK.

Sebastian Comberti was born in London and studied in Italy with Amedeo Baldovino and later with Derek Simpson at the Royal Academy of Music. He was a founder member of the Bochmann Quartet, and between 1983 and 2025 was principal cello with the London Mozart Players.

A keen interest in historically informed performance has resulted in participation with a great many of London's period instrument groups, appearing as principal cello and soloist with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the Hanover Band.

As a member of several chamber groups, including Trio Goya and Divertimenti Ensemble, he has recorded for CRD, EMI, Harmonia Mundi, Hyperion, Meridian, Phoenix, RCA and CPO. In April 2001 Sebastian founded the CD label Cello Classics, devoted to recordings of rare repertoire and historical recordings, himself releasing several CDs of sonatas by Boccherini and Stephen Paxton, early 19th Century works with fortepiano, and concertos by Haydn and Zumsteeg with the OAE. Premier solo recordings include concertos by Geoffrey Hanson and Peter Fribbins and solo works by Kenneth V. Jones. In 2027 Chandos will release the premiere

recording of Johannes Sperger's Sinfonia Concertante and Cello Concerto with the Hanover Band. October 2026 sees the premiere of a new cello concerto by Tony Biggins in Eastbourne.

Steven Neugarten is a versatile pianist and sometime celesta and harpsichord player with a degree in Physics from Bristol University. He has performed with notable musicians including Thomas Adès, Alison Balsom, Sofiia Mekhonoshina and Raphael Wallfisch, and in prestigious venues such as the Barbican and Wigmore Hall. His repertoire spans William Byrd to contemporary composers, comprising chamber music, songs and piano concertos. He works at the major London music institutions – GSMD, RAM, RCM, Trinity Laban – and performs at events such as the Swaledale Festival and Venice Biennale, and as part of the team providing Christmas music at the Ritz Hotel.

Since 2024, he has been a pianist in Sebastian Comberti's Cello Classics Summer Course in Tereglio, Tuscany. He has twice run the London Marathon.

TODAY'S PROGRAMME

Georg Frederick HANDEL (1685-1759): Sonata in G minor, Op.2, no.8, HWV 393
Andante – Allegro – Largo - Allegro

E.J. MOERAN (1894-1950): Prelude

Paul LEWIS (1943-): In Memoriam Jacqueline du Pré

Clara SCHUMANN (1819-1896): Three Romances, Op.22
Andante molto – Allegretto – Leidenschaftlich schnell

Edward ELGAR (1857-1934): Cello Concerto, Op.85 (second movement)

INTERVAL 15 MINUTES

There are toilets in the lobby at the back of the church and also downstairs, via the stairs beside the stage or, **on request**, via the lift next to the entrance foyer.

Refreshments will not be served during the interval, but we invite you to join us downstairs for tea, coffee and biscuits after the concert ends.

Willem DE FESCH (1687-1761): Duo, Op.8, no.10

Benjamin BRITTEN (1913-1976): Suite No.1, Op.72
Canto primo – Fuga – Lamento – Canto secondo – Serenata – Marcia – Canto terzo – Bordone – Moto perpetuo e Canto quarto

Jacques OFFENBACH (1819-1880): Les Larmes du Jacqueline, Op.76, no.2

Edward ELGAR (1857-1934): Romance, Op.62

David POPPER (1843-1913): Requiem, Op.66

We warmly invite you to join us downstairs after the concert for a cup of tea or coffee
Step-free access is available via the car park

Our forthcoming concerts

Sunday 15th November 2026, 3.00 pm, at Seaford Baptist Church, Belgrave Road, Seaford

The Elmore Quartet, winners of the 74th Royal Over-Seas League International Music Competition, and Hans Keller Chamber Fellows at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, honour us with their presence, playing string quartets by Leo Geyer, Haydn, Frank Bridge and Ravel.

Sunday 7th February 2027, 3.00 pm, at Seaford Baptist Church, Belgrave Road, Seaford

We warmly welcome back our friends the **London Mozart Players**, with pianist **Howard Shelley**, playing quintets by Brahms and Dvořák.

Membership of the Society grants you free entry to these and all the remaining concerts this season, without additional charge. A limited number of children and young adults (under 26) may also attend without charge (children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult). If you are not a member and would like to join, see our Treasurer, Paul Moore, at the desk in the entrance foyer. The cost of your ticket for today's concert will be credited towards your membership subscription.

For non-members, single-concert tickets cost £21, and can be purchased in advance from **Newberry Tully Estate Agents** in Church Street, Seaford; **Seaford, Newhaven** and **Lewes Tourist Information Centres**; online through **TicketSource**; or from **our Treasurer, Paul Moore**.

Additional benefits for members of Seaford Music Society

Members may bring one guest to any of the concerts in our 2026-27 season of concerts, at a reduction of £3 off the single-ticket price, subject to the concert not having sold out.

On presentation of their current membership card, members also enjoy the following benefits:

- A reduced price of £14 at any Haywards Heath Music Society concert in their 2026-27 season
- A reduced price of £17 at any Nicholas Yonge Society concert in their 2026-27 season
- A discount of £3 off the price of any Uckfield Music Club concert in their 2027 season (to be confirmed)

Tickets at these reduced prices are available at the door, on concert days only. Details of the concerts can be found on each organisation's website:

Haywards Heath Music Society:	www.haywardsheathmusicsociety.org.uk
Nicholas Yonge Society:	www.nyslewes.org.uk
Uckfield Music Club:	www.uckfieldmusicclub.uk