



## Building for the Future

**Our Samling Artists have been inspiring hundreds of young people in schools across the North East with our Samling Futures workshops and the launch of our first Samling Singing School.**

Soprano Anush Hovhannisyan, mezzo-soprano Katherine Aitken, tenor Nick Pritchard, pianist Ella O'Neill and a team of eight Academy Singers worked with over five hundred students in state schools in Peterlee, Durham, Darlington, Stockton-on-Tees, Newcastle, Morpeth, North Shields and Whitley Bay. Together they coached both soloists and choirs, giving them tips for their own singing through masterclasses and introducing students to a lively mixture of song and opera repertoire. The students were encouraged to think about the differences

and similarities between opera and other types of singing and Anush, Katherine, Nick and Ella shared their stories of how they became professional musicians.

Our Futures visits ended at Wellfield Middle School in Whitley Bay, where we met their year six students who have been learning about opera through the Royal Opera House resources on *Hansel and Gretel*. The children were thrilled to meet and hear 'real live' opera singers in their school and demonstrated – with enormous enthusiasm – how well they could sing two songs from Humperdinck's opera.

In parallel with Samling Futures, we have launched our Singing Schools initiative, which gives in-depth coaching to choirs, soloists and – crucially – the staff, in schools (more about this on p2).

All of this work is provided at no cost to the schools and we are grateful for the support of the Three Monkeys Trust and the Finn Family Fund for making this possible.

In March, the Samling Artist Programme for early career singers and pianists achieved another milestone as the number of Samling Artists passed four hundred. Our global reach increased

Samling Artist Anush Hovhannisyan with students at Egglecliffe School, Stockton-on-Tees.

to 46 countries with our first Samling Artist from Greece and we welcomed two new leaders – soprano Marie McLaughlin and writer and director Susannah Waters to the team. Continuing our association with Berwickshire High School, a group of students attended an informal concert part way through the week and chatted to the artists and leaders over tea and cake afterwards.

We are now selecting the singers and pianists who will benefit from our Samling Artist Programme and Samling Academy over the next year. We have held Artist Programme auditions over three days in London and Glasgow and applications for Samling Academy are open now with auditions in mid-May.

Our current Academy are preparing for their summer production 'Lost and Found', directed by Samling Artists Miranda Wright and Leo Nicholson. Rehearsals for this semi-staged production begin in June, with a performance at The Glasshouse International Centre for Music on 12 July.

**For full details of events and ticket information please see p4**



Samling Artist Nick Pritchard coaching Academy Singer Fergal Deane at Samling Futures. All photos: Mark Pinder

## WHY SAMLING INSTITUTE?

**'I am so pleased to be a Samling Artist and to have a chance to make an impact on so many young minds by spreading the love for opera and the power of the human voice. Samling is an Institute to treasure.'**

*Samling Artist Anush Hovhannisyan*

### SAMLING SHORTS

## Miranda Wright



Miranda Wright became a Samling Artist in 1999. After performing professionally for several years, she discovered a passion for teaching. Since the creation of Samling Academy in 2012, she has been a valued member of the coaching team and has also directed Samling Academy Opera productions and summer concerts. Miranda joined the vocal staff at the Royal College of Music in 2023 and is Head of Classical Singing at Newcastle University. She will direct this year's Samling Academy semi-staged production 'Lost and Found'.

**My earliest musical memory is...** dancing around in my nightie to a recording of Swan Lake, aged about three or four. Later these 'performances' became more organised and I cajoled our patient neighbours in to be the audience!

**The last piece of music I listened to was...** the Unst Boat Song performed by the Danish String Quartet. It's a real favourite in our house. Although Unst is in Shetland, this haunting melody always reminds me of time spent in the Hebrides with family.

**In my spare time, I like to...** walk in Weardale with my friend. We have been walking together weekly since lockdown and it's a wonderful time to de-stress and catch up on each other's lives.

**The musician I most admire is...** Dame Janet Baker. I have been listening to her my whole life.

**My happy place is...** The Ship Inn, Low Newton by the Sea. Happy times with friends and family eating crab sandwiches and walking along the Northumbrian coastline.

**The possession I would most hate to lose is...** the upright piano that I learned to play on. I was brought up in a single parent family and when my Mum realised that I was musical (too much prancing around in my nightie!) she decided we needed a piano in the house. She found one in the back of a junk shop and thought it sounded nice and it was cheap. It turned out to be a Bechstein model from around 1900, complete with brass candlesticks! She obviously had a good ear!

**The best thing I've ever found is...** empty, white beaches at Scarista, on the Isle of Harris.

**My favourite Samling Academy memory is...** So many to choose from – that's very hard! I love the support that the young singers give each other in their masterclass groups. If someone has a breakthrough, either technical or interpretative, we all feel involved in that special moment. It's pure magic!

Photo: Jen Hart Photography

## Our first Singing School

Eggescliffe School has become the first Samling Singing School and the start of a new initiative for classical singing in the North East. Over the next three years we will embrace six state schools across the region, spreading Samling Institute's core principles of healthy and natural vocal production, commitment to text and learning through doing.



Over six weeks, sixty students in the school choir and soloists from years 9 and 10 received coaching from Samling Artist Miranda Wright. She also worked with the school music staff and provided guidance about suitable classical repertoire for developing voices.

This first phase of the programme ended with a performance for families and friends at which the singers demonstrated what they had learned.

'We chose Eggescliffe School because we knew we would get school-wide support for this investment which is essential and the progress the students made was palpable,' said Samling Institute's director Karon Wright.

Matthew Haworth, Subject Leader of Music at Eggescliffe said,

'I passionately believe that the best way to inspire our students is to expose them to excellence. Samling Institute is helping us to achieve this by bringing in truly world-class artists and coaches to inspire our students and staff and we are already seeing the amazing impact of this work. We are thrilled to be the first Samling Singing School!'

We will be continuing to support singing at Eggescliffe and we are now making plans to add two more schools to what will become a network of Singing Schools from the Rivers Tweed to the Tees.

Eggescliffe students Tilly, Sophie, Amely, Ayah and Oliver who took part in solo workshops as part of Samling Singing Schools.

**'This project is an incredible way to immerse young singers in high-quality tuition. Thank you so much to everyone at Samling who made this happen! I feel more confident in my singing and aspire to develop a healthy, good technique.'** Sophie, Eggescliffe School

'I'm very grateful to Samling Institute for continuing to support young musicians in our endeavours to find our identity as artists.'  
*Samling Artist Charlotte Bowden*



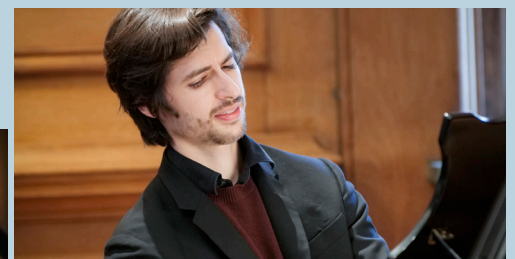
Photos: Mark Pinder

# Samling Artist Programme

*'That splendid organisation, Samling Institute, has brought off another triumph,'* was how reviewer David Byrne described a lively afternoon of masterclasses at Marchmont House in Edinburgh Music Review.

Scottish soprano Marie McLaughlin, director and writer Susannah Waters and Samling Artist James Baillieu led the week at Marchmont House in March when we welcomed sopranos Charlotte Bowden and Hannah Crocker, mezzo-soprano Alexandra Achillea Pouta, tenors Hugo Brady and Michael Lafferty, baritone Felix Gygli and pianists Zany Denyer and Daniel Peter Silcock to the programme. Ella O'Neill supported the team as staff pianist.

Samling Artist Hugo Brady writes *'Being so absorbed in an atmosphere of artistry, in the spectacular surroundings of Marchmont, with such a feeling of support created by the Samling team and leaders is a unique experience. I'm certain that it is one which will turn out to be formative for me.'*





Samling Academy

# Lost and Found

Friday 12 July, 7.30pm

The people, places and things that we find and lose on life's journey

A semi-staged concert of song and poetry, directed by Samling Artists Miranda Wright and Leo Nicholson

Sage Two, The Glasshouse International Centre for Music  
theglasshouseicm.org 0191 443 4661

Tickets £18 / £10 on sale at  
The Glasshouse from Friday 26 April



## SAMLING ACADEMY

4 – 6 October and 18 – 20 October

Thirty young singers aged 14–21 who live or study in North East England receive six days of intensive masterclasses and workshops. The Academy is led by Caroline Dowdle of the Royal Opera House and an outstanding team of singers, coaches, pianists, an actor and a choreographer.



## Samling Academy Concert

Sunday 20 October, 3pm

The Glasshouse International Centre for Music

Our Academy Singers, accompanied by an impressive team of Samling Artist pianists, take to the stage for an afternoon concert of song and opera.



## SAMLING ARTIST SHOWCASE

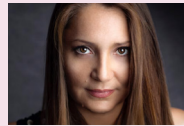
Thursday 7 November, 7.30pm

Wigmore Hall, London

In a frenetic world where there never seems time 'to stop and stare', this year's Samling Artist Showcase celebrates the art of contemplation and what it means to be alive. Drawing inspiration from the poetry of the Romantics to the present day, the programme will reflect 'On Man, On Nature and On Human Life'.

With Samling Artists  
**Jessica Cale** soprano  
**Beth Moxon** mezzo-soprano  
**Dafydd Jones** tenor  
**Jamie Woollard** bass  
**Jonathan Ware** piano  
**JongSun Woo** piano

**Tickets** £40 £36 £32 £26 £18  
General booking opens 10.00am on Tuesday 30 April.  
wigmorehall.com | 020 7935 2141



## SAMLING IN MASTERCLASS

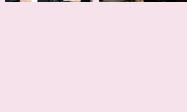
Saturday 30 November

1.30 – 4.30pm

Marchmont House,  
Duns, Berwickshire, TD10 6YL



Italian soprano Barbara Frittoli leads the Samling Artist Programme for the first time. She is joined by pianist Caroline Dowdle and actor James Garnon in an afternoon of musical discovery with eight new Samling Artists. Details and tickets will be announced in our next newsletter.



INSTITUTE FOR  
YOUNG ARTISTS

## Samling Institute for Young Artists

Community Centre | Gilesgate | Hexham

Northumberland | NE46 3NP

Tel: 01434 602885

Email: enquiries@samling.org.uk

samling.org.uk

Patron: Sir Thomas Allen CBE

Artistic and Executive Director: Karon Wright

Registered Charity in England & Wales 1112032

Scottish Charity SC051568

Company No: 05576907

SamlingInstitute
 @Samling\_Inst
 samling\_institute