



INSTITUTE
FOR YOUNG
ARTISTS

INSPIRING MUSICAL EXCELLENCE IN YOUNG PEOPLE

news

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Photo: Mark Pinder

Our 30th anniversary celebrations across the year have shone a spotlight on the people whose lives have been changed by Samling Institute's work.

The birthday year ends with a special showcase at Wigmore Hall on 6 November, with Samling Artists and former Academy Singers sharing this stage for the first time, in a programme that celebrates the power of music to change lives.

Samling Artists mezzo-soprano Cláudia Ribas and tenor Euan McDonald will make their Wigmore Hall debuts at this showcase, alongside soprano Nardus Williams, baritone Felix Gygli and pianists Jonathan Ware and Alfred Fardell. Their programme illustrates how composers and poets have harnessed the power of music to tell its own story, and includes Schubert's *Shepherd on the Rock*, Dvořák's *Gypsy Songs* and ends with one of the greatest love songs to art, Vaughan Williams's *Serenade to Music*.

Samling Artists and Academy Singers also came together in Gateshead this summer for the first of our celebratory concerts, *The Party* – read more about this on p3. We are now preparing to welcome our new cohort of thirty Academy Singers who will begin their year with six busy days of workshops and classes developing every aspect of their performance. You can come and see them in action in our afternoon concert at The Glasshouse on 25 October when they'll be sharing some of the

solo and ensemble repertoire they've been working on with our leaders. We're also making exciting plans for the next Samling Academy Opera which will be at The Fire Station in Sunderland again, with performances on 9 and 10 July. We'll tell you more soon!

Our outreach work in state secondary schools across the North East is continuing to have a significant impact on our intake for Samling Academy. We are very proud that almost two thirds of this year's intake are from state schools, joining singers from our university partners. This year's new singers include four from our recent Singing Schools programmes and another five from the schools we visited with our Samling Futures workshops earlier this year.

This vital work continues in October when Durham Johnston Comprehensive School join our Singing Schools network. Their choir, solo singers and staff will receive an intensive course of development led by Samling Artist Miranda Wright, focussing on Samling's core principles of healthy technique, attention to text and learning through doing.

'What Samling does is incredible. Support the anniversary appeal so they can continue their important work.'

Sir Thomas Allen, Patron of Samling

30 Voices of Samling

Find out from the people who matter how Samling has changed their lives. As part of our 30th anniversary fundraising campaign, we've been hearing from Samling Artists and Academy Singers across the generations, including a video from Garsington Opera's cast of *Il ritorno d'Ulisse* that features nine Samling Artists.



You can see the growing collection of messages on our social media or on our YouTube channel youtube.com/@SamlingMusic

Still time to donate

With only a few months to go please help us reach our target of £30,000 which will be match-funded by a generous donor.

To donate, visit samling.org.uk/support or use the QR code



WHY SAMLING INSTITUTE?

'At Samling, you are entirely immersed in art, nature, and inspiration. Every element of the week is thoughtfully designed to encourage creative exploration and a deeper appreciation of artistic expression in its many forms – ideas and experiences that I hope to carry with me throughout my career.' *Samling Artist Maryam Wocial*



Karon Wright co-founded Samling with Roger McKechnie 30 years ago and as Artistic and Executive Director she has been the driving force behind all our work since the very beginning.

My earliest musical memory is... singing. I loved it and when I was at primary school in the West Highlands of Scotland the teacher would sometimes ask me to sing for the class at the end of the day.

The last piece of music I listened to was... Francesco Piemontesi playing Schubert's piano sonata no.18 – it was so beautiful and held me fast to the end.

My three travel essentials are... my noise cancelling headphones, woolly socks and a good book.

My favourite place to relax is... in my garden and gardening. I can spend hours pottering about and have learned a lot about accepting what life throws at you by being around plants and nature.

The things that bring me joy are... my family, music and poetry.

The thing that most inspires me is... working with young people. Over the past 30 years of Samling I am always struck by their resilience, courage and how willing they are to trust and open their hearts to new thoughts and ideas and be brave.

My favourite opera is... *Le nozze di Figaro* which is surely one of the greatest works of art for all time. The final scene where the count begs forgiveness is the very definition of the sublime when disguises fall away and in a moment of stillness and grace we see humanity in all its complexity.

My best Samling memory... there are so many! But when I see and hear all those who we have worked with over the years succeed in their careers and wherever life takes them, I like to think back to when we first met them with all that potential and am glad that we helped them on their way.



Samling Artist Programme



Introducing Samling Artists sopranos Katrīna Paula Felsberga, Bella Marslen and Maryam Wocial, mezzo-soprano Sian Sulke, countertenor Will Prior, baritone David Kennedy and pianists Archie Bonham and Yihan Zhao.

The week was led by soprano Camilla Tilling who joined us for the first time, alongside pianist Roger Vignoles and actor James Garnon.



Photos: Mark Pinder

The summer project has given me a lot more new-found confidence when it comes to solo singing and it was genuinely the first time I felt excited rather than nervous for a performance due to the support from all the other young people and professionals. I couldn't stop smiling!' *Academy Singer Josephine Sim*



The Party

Our Samling Academy Singers celebrated our 30th anniversary in style with a glamorous semi-staged concert inspired by the 1920s, in a cabaret setting that drew the audience right into the action.

Alongside song and opera the programme, directed by Miranda Wright, included readings from *The Great Gatsby* and jazz-age poetry by Langston Hughes and under the guidance of Desireé Kongerød the cast learnt Charleston and waltz routines. They were joined by guests Samling Artists tenor Ted Black and pianist Sid Ramchander and former Academy Singers sopranos Camilla Harris and Zoë Jackson. If you missed the concert, you can see a highlights video on our website.



WIGMORE HALL

Serenade: To Music

Celebrating 30 years of musical excellence

Friday 6 November, 7.30pm

This year's Showcase brings together all the strands of our work in a glorious evening of song and poetry celebrating the art of music and its power to change lives.

With Samling Artists

Nardus Williams soprano
Cláudia Ribas mezzo-soprano
Euan McDonald tenor
Felix Gygli baritone
Jonathan Ware piano
Alfred Fardell piano

Guest artist **Elliott Berdugo**, clarinet

And from Samling Academy **Tia Radix-Callixte** soprano,
Lauren Bagge mezzo-soprano, **Benedict Munden** tenor
 and **Fabian Tindale Geere** baritone

Tickets: £5 – £40 available now from
wigmore-hall.org.uk | 020 7935 2141



SAMLING ACADEMY

9–11 and 23–25 October

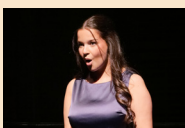
Our 2026/27 cohort of thirty Academy Singers begin their year with six intensive days of coaching and workshops, directed by Caroline Dowdle (Royal Ballet and Opera). They'll work on every aspect of their vocal technique and stagecraft skills.

With:

Caroline Dowdle music director
Joan Rodgers soprano
James Garnon actor
Mandy Demetriou choreographer

And Samling Artists:

Miranda Wright vocal teacher
Katherine Aitken vocal teacher
Jonathan Ware pianist
Jo Ramadan pianist
Marianna Abrahamyan pianist
Alfred Fardell pianist
Francesca Lauri pianist
George Ireland pianist
Sid Ramchander pianist
Yihan Zhao pianist



Samling Academy In Concert

Sunday 25 October, 3pm

**Sage Two, The Glasshouse International
 Centre for Music.**

See what our Samling Academy Singers have been working on as they put their skills into practice in a joyful afternoon of song and opera.

Tickets £20
theglasshouseicm.org | 0191 443 4661


SAMLING IN MASTERCLASS

Saturday 6 March 2–5pm

Marchmont House, Duns, Berwickshire

Eight new Samling Artists will be selected by auditions in November to join us for a week led by soprano Barbara Frittoli and Samling Artist pianist Joseph Middleton.

This lively public masterclass gives audiences an insight into the work that has been going on during the week and vividly illustrates the 'art that conceals art'.



SAVE THE DATE:

SAMLING ACADEMY OPERA

Friday 9 and Saturday 10 July

The Fire Station, Sunderland

Building on the success of *Dido and Aeneas* in 2025, Samling Academy returns to The Fire Station to present a fully-staged and costumed period opera.

More details to be announced in the New Year.



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 Louise Alder MBE and James Baillieu

Artistic and Executive Director: Karon Wright MBE

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