



# *perspectives*

## CHELTENHAM ARTSCULTURE

Cheltenham Arts Council: awards\_funding\_publicity\_events listings

February - May 2026

Lansdown Art Studios • German Club  
Children's Art Competition • Holst Victorian House  
Film Society • Choirs

# Advertising Charges

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Please contact [editor@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk](mailto:editor@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk) for more information.

Submissions must be with us by the following dates for consideration for the next issue:

Mid December deadline for Feb/May Issue

Mid April deadline for June/Sept Issue

Mid August deadline for Oct/Jan Issue

## CONTENTS

CHELTENHAM ARTS SOCIETY'S COMMUNITY GRANT 2025	2
LANSDOWN ART STUDIOS	3-4
CANTORES CHAMBER CHOIR	5
CHELTENHAM CHAMBER ORCHESTRA	6
CHELTENHAM FILM SOCIETY	6
CHELTENHAM GERMAN CLUB	7-8
GLOUCESTERSHIRE WRITERS' NETWORK	9-12
HOLST VICTORIAN HOUSE	12-14
EVENTS LISTINGS	15-23
CHELTENHAM MUSIC FESTIVAL SOCIETY	24
THE ORIEL SINGERS	25-26

COVER ILLUSTRATION:  
CHELTENHAM YOUNG ARTIST 2026  
GARDENS GALLERY AWARD CEREMONY - JANUARY 2026

WINNER OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL SECTION: 'THE MARINE GIRL' BY OLIVIA.  
BEST PRIMARY SCHOOL ENTRY - CHARTON KINGS JUNIOR (CYA TROPHY)  
SEE BACK COVER FOR THE SECONDARY WINNER



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*Perspectives is produced three times a year.  
The next issue will span June - September 2026.*

**SUBMISSION (ADS AND EVENTS) MUST BE WITH US BY MID APRIL FOR CONSIDERATION FOR THE NEXT ISSUE. PLEASE EMAIL EVENT DETAILS TO [PERSPECTIVES.LISTINGS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:PERSPECTIVES.LISTINGS@GMAIL.COM)**

## Dear Readers

Welcome to the February 2026 edition of Perspectives. It may be freezing cold outside, despite the glorious sunshine of recent weeks, but it is time to look forward to February Gold daffodils and much else to entertain us in our town and locality this Spring.

Whether it's a carefully curated selection of cinematic gems offered by Cheltenham Film Society, another uplifting concert by the singers of Cantores in a beautiful village church, or new and fascinating loan exhibits in the Holst Victorian House, I hope you will find something of interest. As usual, of course, we also look back at events and performances during those long-ago months before mince pies and mulled wine took over our lives.

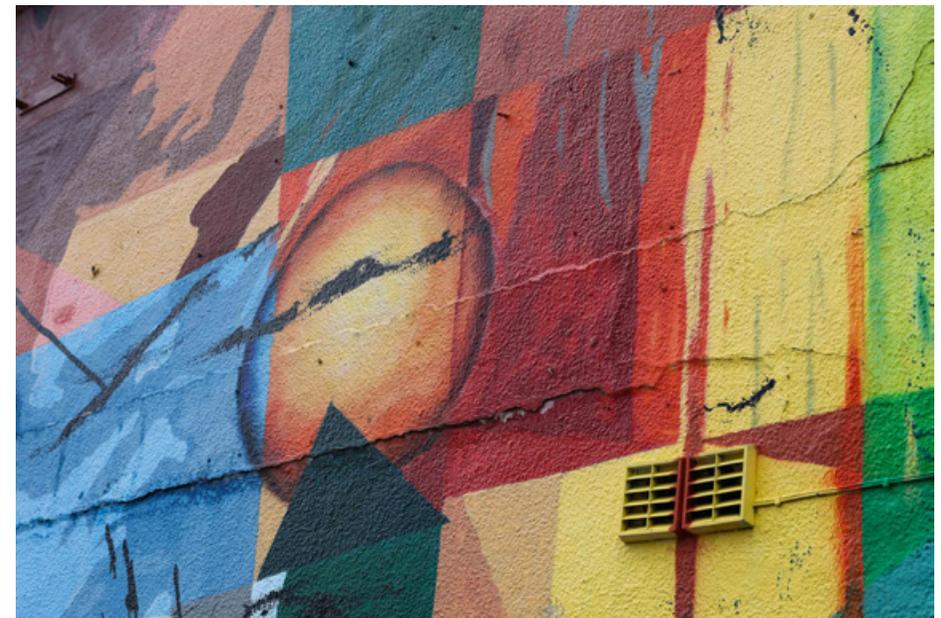
Importantly, the artists active in Lansdown Art Studios, whose future currently very much hangs in the balance, claim our attention with a detailed account of their uncertain position, and a plea for support.

I do hope you will find something of interest in this edition, not only encouraging you to continue to support the thriving artistic life of our town, but perhaps also prompting you to share the pdf with friends, or to suggest looking at this latest edition of Perspectives on the CAC website.

Best wishes,

**Elise Forbes**  
PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

[editor@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk](mailto:editor@cheltenhamartscouncil.co.uk)



LANSDOWN ART STUDIOS MURAL DETAIL

## CHELTENHAM ARTS SOCIETY'S COMMUNITY GRANT 2025

### SUPPORTING MAGGIE'S CANCER CARE

**O**ur recent Community Arts Grant from The Arts Society was used to provide a craft activity at Maggie's Cancer Care in Cheltenham. On 5th November, Tracy Spiers led a workshop to create individual Christmas tree baubles. It was open to cancer patients, families and supporters, and was so very well attended that the volunteers had to find extra chairs! Twenty-five people enjoyed both the morning and afternoon sessions.

The focus of the event was to design a bauble using card, wool, foil and felt pens to add colour. Our Community Arts volunteer attended the afternoon session and joined in with two women who regularly attend the centre. They were very open about their diagnoses and commented that their spirits had been lifted by attending the event. Our volunteer felt honoured to meet these people and to have seen firsthand the benefit of this kind of activity. The workshop was very well received by everyone, and the event was so

successful that attendees remained engaged until the end of each session. One reported that Maggie's used to run such sessions and her children always loved them. "They used to kick off their shoes and run into this safe space".

The event received publicity on Radio Gloucestershire on the day, and a notice was displayed at the centre showing that the Arts Society Cheltenham had funded the project.

Organising these events does have a very positive knock-on effect as a very welcome social occasion. It was obvious from the lively chatter that it had certainly helped everyone present.

The Arts Society Cheltenham will continue to fund rewarding and much-needed community events, and we are already working on our next project.

**Katherine Judge**  
The Arts Society Cheltenham



## ART HANGS IN THE BALANCE

### THE UNCERTAIN FUTURE OF LANSDOWN ART STUDIOS

**M**any in the Cheltenham arts community will have seen recent social media discussion and news coverage about the future of Lansdown Art Studios, Cheltenham's oldest creative space.

Today, artists working from buildings that were once home to H. H. Martyn and its craftsmanship of exceptional quality and innovation continue that legacy of skilled making, linking Cheltenham's industrial past with its contemporary creative identity. This legacy is now facing a significant and uncertain future.

#### *What was promised – and what may now be unravelled*

At a meeting on 17th January 2024, Cheltenham Borough Council's planning committee resolved to grant outline planning permission for the redevelopment of the northern part of the Lansdown Industrial Estate to provide up to 215 new homes (application ref. 21/02832/OUT). At the same meeting, the committee also resolved to grant permission for replacement accommodation for the

artists (ref. 23/00728/FUL), alongside outline permission for the mixed-use redevelopment of Units 23 and 30 on Roman Road (ref. 21/02828/OUT).

As part of this decision, the planning committee endorsed Heads of Terms for a Section 106 legal agreement, intended to secure delivery of the replacement artists' studios as part of the wider redevelopment.

#### *Final planning permission, however, has not yet been issued*

Since then, the development has been re-appraised by Patrizia, acting on behalf of the Cheshire West & Chester Local Authority Pension Fund, which owns the site. Patrizia has advised the Council that the scheme, including its Section 106 obligations, may not be financially viable.

The Council is now considering whether

to reduce or remove those obligations. One possible outcome under discussion is the removal of the commitment to deliver replacement artists' studios, a prospect that has caused understandable concern among the artists and the wider creative community.

#### *Growing public concern*

This latest threat to Lansdown Art Studios has prompted widespread concern across Cheltenham, with growing coverage in the Gloucestershire Echo and on the BBC

website. The issue has resonated well beyond the studios themselves, reflecting broader anxiety about the continued loss of creative infrastructure in the town.

Cheltenham MP, Max Wilkinson, has publicly warned that independent artists should not be “made homeless”, highlighting the seriousness of the situation and the importance of protecting spaces

### Why this matters right now

For those who work here, Lansdown is not simply a workplace, but a long-standing creative community and one that supports experimentation, collaboration and continuity. Its loss would represent a significant shift in Cheltenham’s cultural

### How you can help

Those of us who work at Lansdown Art Studios, along with many friends, supporters and members of the wider arts community,

### What you can do

If you feel able, one of the most helpful actions at this stage is to share your support directly with those involved in the decision-making process.

When contacting your local councillor, members of the planning committee, or Cheltenham’s MP, Max Wilkinson (max.wilkinson.mp@parliament.uk), you may wish to:

Express your support for Lansdown Art Studios continuing as part of the Lansdown Industrial Estate redevelopment

Highlight that the studios are the last remaining large, affordable studio complex in Cheltenham and a vital cultural and community asset

Encourage Cheltenham Borough Council to uphold its original planning commitments,

where creative work can continue. Local councillors have also acknowledged the studios’ cultural value and significance to the town.

landscape, particularly for artists who rely on affordable, long-term studio space.

With planning decisions approaching a critical stage, there is a narrow window in which views can still be shared.

are deeply grateful for the interest and concern shown so far.

including the Section 106 obligations linked to application 21/02832/OUT

As Max Wilkinson has noted, Cheltenham’s independent artists should not be left without a place to work. For many of us, this is not only about buildings, but about whether the town continues to value and make space for creative practice as part of its identity.

Thank you for reading, and for any support you are able to offer.

**The artists and supporters of  
Lansdown Art Studios**

## CANTORES CHAMBER CHOIR

### CELEBRATING SAINT NICOLAS

**C**antores ended 2025 with an exciting concert at St Philip and St James Church, Leckhampton, in celebration of the fourth-century saint, Nicolas, on his feast day, the 6th December. The choir was accompanied by The Bristol Ensemble and conducted by Simon Harper.

The programme included two pieces which celebrated the life and work of the saint. In the first half we heard Joseph Haydn’s joyous Missa Sancti Nicolai, scored for choir and four soloists, with a chamber orchestra of strings, organ, bassoon, oboes and horns adding a lovely richness to the sound. The choir was joined by soloists Jennifer Walker (soprano), Hannah Beddoe (alto), James Gilchrist (tenor) and Aidan Smith (bass).

James Gilchrist returned in the second half to give a very dramatic and engaging performance of the title role in Benjamin Britten’s cantata St Nicolas. The choir was also joined by talented young singers from Cheltenham’s Beauregard Youth Choir who made up the ‘gallery choir’. It was a thrilling performance, aided by the colourful orchestration of piano duet, organ, strings and much percussion. It was very much enjoyed by a large audience, who joined in the singing of two rousing hymns as part of the work.



SIMON HARPER

In the new year, Cantores will begin preparations for two concerts in the spring, taking place at 4pm on Saturday 21st March at St Mary’s Church, Fairford, and on Saturday 28th March at Holy Trinity Church, Minchinhampton. The programme, Music for Lent, will be a reflective selection of music exploring some of the themes associated with the seasons of Lent and Passiontide. One of J.S. Bach’s best-loved choral works, his motet Jesu meine Freude, will be paired with James MacMillan’s deeply moving setting of the Miserere. The programme will also include motets by Lassus, Byrd and Schütz, alongside 20th-Century English works by Herbert Howells and John Sanders.

For tickets and more information, please visit [www.cantores.net](http://www.cantores.net)

## CHELTENHAM CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

### DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

**C**heltenham Chamber Orchestra (CCO) launched their Diamond Jubilee Year in January with a memorable concert at Cheltenham Town Hall.

The programme included music by Malcolm Arnold, Vaughan-Williams' The Lark Ascending, with soloist George Ewart, the CCO's regular leader, and Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony, conducted by one of their regular guest conductors, Toby Purser. The concert was held in memory of Oliver Goldfinch, the orchestra's friend and supporter who had been involved with the CCO in various roles over many years.

The orchestra is now looking forward to three more concerts planned during the Jubilee year, all to be held at St Andrew's Church. The series starts with an afternoon concert

on Sunday 8th March, conducted by Tom Gauterin. Soprano Kathy Macaulay, who has sung with the CCO several times, will perform Finzi's Dies Natalis, and the programme also includes music by Fauré and Schubert.

On Saturday 9th May, the programme will include music with a French theme by Rossini, Haydn, Mozart and Saint-Saëns, conducted by Timothy Carey. Saturday 26th September will see the final concert of the year starring local violinist, Edgar Bailey, playing Dvorak's Violin Concerto, with other works by Mozart and Schubert, all conducted by Jonathan Mann. Both these concerts will begin at 7:30 pm.

Tickets for all the concerts are available from Eventbrite, and on the door on the night.

Angela Walker

## CHELTENHAM FILM SOCIETY

### A LONG-ESTABLISHED PART OF THE CHELTENHAM ARTS SCENE

**C**heltenham Film Society (CFS) is one of Cheltenham's largest and oldest societies.

We have over 480 members and meet from September to April in the Bacon Theatre at Dean Close School. We are currently celebrating our 80th Anniversary season.

We show predominately subtitled, foreign language films that have been released in the last two years and which will not have been shown in many, or indeed any other venues in Gloucestershire or on television. Soft drinks, coffee and a bar are all available.

Membership costs £25 for the remaining 9 films (January to April 2026). Guest tickets

are available at £7 for each film for those coming along with a member. Film notes are available at each film. Members can also share their views on the films shown, which then form a key part of the selection process for the Society's future programmes.

The season kicks off with 'The Ballad of Wallis Island' on January 13th at 19.45, followed by 'Santosh' on January 20th and 'Disco Boy' on January 27th.

See our website in July/August for details of our 2026/27 season when full membership will be open to all.

Full details of upcoming films can be found on the website  
<https://www.cheltenhamfilmsociety.com/index.html>

## GERMAN CLUB EVENTS

### THE AGM AND BEYOND IN 2025



**O**ur new season began with our AGM on 19th September 2025, followed by a talk about the East Side Gallery in Berlin given in German by Katie, a seventeen-year-old pupil at Pate's Grammar School.

Katie introduced her talk by explaining how she first encountered the Gallery which so piqued her interest.

"After visiting Berlin during the summer holidays, I became captivated by Germany's vibrant cultural scene – showcased by the East Side Gallery. Murals by Thomas Klingenstein such as 'Der Mauerspringer' (The Wall Jumper) are symbolic of crossing boundaries, literally as well as metaphorically. Today these artworks commemorate personal stories shaped by the separation and reunification of Germany and preserve memories of the former East – such as the iconic Trabbi."

The rest of the evening continued the theme of Berlin with a contribution from Bärbel about the Weimar Republic (1919–1933) and the atmosphere of the Roaring Twenties at the same time in the German capital.

To round off the entertaining evening, we listened to some music by the Comedian Harmonists, a famous singing group in Germany at that time. **Bärbel Hewett**



Dr Ian Turner, Chair of the Bristol Hannover Council, visited us on 17th November to talk about Volkswagen under British occupation. This was a subject Dr Turner had researched for his PhD and updated with more recent findings.



Volkswagen was once described by a former CEO of the company as 'The most successful car company ever created by the British'. Since then, despite periodic crises, VW has risen to become the second largest carmaker in the world. In this fascinating talk, Dr Turner

explained how it all started and what role the British occupation authorities played in its meteoric rise. **Anne Gimingham**

On 14th November members enjoyed a musical evening with Carol Hubel-Allen who played her viola, which is more than 300 years old. Her theme was: "Johann Sebastian Bach, the storyteller". She explained how music can tell stories and played a wide range of Bach's compositions. After her studies at the Royal Academy of Music, Carol Hubel-Allen moved to Germany, where she became a member of an international string quartet. She also lived in America and has now returned to England. She is a member of the Duo Karadys and the Bochmann Trio. The evening was well received by our members, who were very engaged with the music.

**Bärbel Hewett**



CAROL HUBEL-ALLEN



ANNA LANSLEY

## GLOUCESTERSHIRE WRITERS' NETWORK

### ANNUAL POETRY AND PROSE COMPETITION

Once again, the Gloucestershire Writers' Network experienced a wonderful response to our call-out for entries to our annual poetry and prose competition, receiving entries from writers across Gloucestershire, who found a wealth of different ways to interpret this year's theme of Edges.

Entries were generally of a very high standard. However, our poetry judge Kate Potts and prose judge Jamila Gavin rose to the challenge of choosing between the contenders, to come up with the fantastic selection featured in our anthology. It was a great pleasure to be able to showcase the work of both winners and runners-up once again during the prestigious Times and Sunday Times Cheltenham Literature Festival in October, at our event held at the Queens Hotel. The winning entries were richly varied and 'worried at my mind's borders and edges', to quote judge Kate Potts. Our winners wrote

with insight, sensitivity, warmth and humour, exploring all manner of edges that make up the human condition. We also heard selections of our judges' own work, adding up to a most enjoyable evening. The winners, runners-up and highly commended writers should all feel very proud of their achievements.

Next year the competition theme will be Islands. The competition will open on 1 January 2026, and we are looking forward to seeing how Gloucestershire's writers will interpret this theme. We will be running two workshops beforehand to get those creative juices flowing! Visit our website [www.gloswriters.org.uk](http://www.gloswriters.org.uk) for more information and to buy our anthology (selling out fast!). As ever, we are grateful to our generous sponsor, Liggys Webb.

The winning poetry and prose pieces are reproduced below with the writers' permission and copyright remains with them.

**Judith Green, overall winner of the poetry category**  
*after Simberg, the Wounded Angel*

JUDITH GREEN,  
OVERALL WINNER  
OF THE POETRY  
CATEGORY



... in the liminal space between hypothesis  
and flight

between firm ground and sedge  
on the reedmaced margins  
he prayed to the gods he didn't believe in  
but the language sprang from his tongue  
like pollen.

After the splash and the silence of feathers  
the old man dismantled his craft  
took apart his awl so that it had no point  
threw his lathe into the bushes and took the  
fish bones to the river,

the wax back to the hives and stripped  
himself of invention.

They found him naked by the roadside  
turning his words on stones  
with no name on his tongue but son  
so they took him in and gave him a number  
instead.

When it is dark and they have checked his  
sleep  
he listens to the air beating through the  
wings of startled swans.

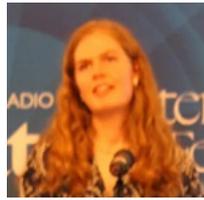
Laura Cassell, winner of the 16-18 poetry category

*Jump*

Standing, knees slightly bent  
 over a fast-flowing river  
 no one thought to tell her the name of  
 before she was told to trust it.  
 Their words slosh loosely  
 in the pit of her stomach  
 jump like so, and the river will catch you  
 though her mind was as loud  
 as the white in the rapids.  
 She'd like to say she thought of lizards  
 under torchlight, back at the campsite  
 making their run, like her, between footfalls –  
 not of lemmings, or of empty swimming  
 pools  
 as she watched the others plummet before  
 her  
 the daring drop of their dark figures, limbs  
 flailing.  
 She tries not to think of them now  
 below her, in the laughter of the water  
 because what did that leave her?  
 Only words: humiliation, the hand  
 on her back and fear,  
 the ripples on the hard surface –  
 broken glass. At last, she shuts her eyes  
 closes her fist around the words  
 her friend gave her, on the last calm evening  
 of how the distance doesn't matter  
 if the battle before was harder  
 this is her, not them, and this is  
 now, this is she

jumps

before she can finish her thought  
 the words become under and rush  
 they echo in the tide as she forces them  
 up. She tries to float



LAURA CASSELL, WINNER OF THE 16-18  
 POETRY CATEGORY

the aftermath somehow worse  
 than the beautiful falling  
 silent, for why shout  
 when the current screams hush  
 someone else's hands haul her onto the rocks  
 wet flesh against flesh becomes a human  
 reassurance  
 of tomorrow, the words are now chivalry  
 or maybe just survival. For now,  
 she smiles at her friends, their chattering  
 teeth  
 between childish pleas to do it all again.  
 No one asked her, or spoke to her, but the  
 words  
 became sky, and green, and reflection,  
 thinking  
 perhaps on the day she dies, since that day is  
 not today,  
 she will remember some kind of moral  
 from this tale of lizards and lemmings and  
 beautiful falling  
 and the words will change again  
 because no one will fight for her blood and  
 her bones  
 better than she could.

Kate Levett, winner of the prose category

*The Edges Folk Choose to Embrace*

Inside the room the heat was building up,  
 the fug intensifying as larch and apple  
 crick-crackled, spat and cast comforting  
 incense over all therein. Outside, a cold late  
 November's Saturday afternoon clamped  
 chill white mist down over the woodlanded  
 countryside.

The woman, in the 60s pine green wool  
 rocking chair, was tight-lipped and, had  
 her daughter known her better, vibrating  
 with worry. The woven upholstery absorbed  
 her poker tense back, the book a half-read  
 allusion on her lap and her small black  
 leather-strapped watch consulted often, the  
 glances designedly subtle and measured.

But the black dog stretched out the muscles  
 in his flanks to luxuriate in the flames' heat,  
 the third eyelid red-rimmed, brown eyes  
 hidden.

Outside, across the still gravel, tarmac and  
 grass a path lay across the common.

Further east, across the path from the house,  
 over the mist-embraced heath, a left fork from  
 the path descended to the man's place of  
 worship – not the chapel, that had been built  
 the other side of the main road – but the C  
 of E church. And in that church, in the chill  
 Larkin-frozen air, a man swung. He was seen  
 thus, in the mind's eye of his woman: his face  
 still, thoughtful, serious, swinging between  
 two ladders.

Yes, Larkin had it right about the smell and  
 sound of Anglican churches: 'tense, musty,  
 unignorable silence, Brewed God knows  
 how long!' The man, in that vacuumed still  
 absence, with just the slow escapement-  
 released tick to accompany him, passed  
 between unprotected ladder to unprotected  
 ladder. Filaments of that 'unignorable silence'  
 slipping into the warm, firelit room, wrapping  
 the spider silk strands of tension tighter  
 around the woman.

The man continued his studied ascent, soft



leather tchitt of flexible shoe on rung, tchitt  
 of sole on wood, with human hands grasping  
 the wooden vertical sides. Steady, measured:  
 sideshuffled cautious along the beam  
 avoiding its edge. Up the next ladder, stepped  
 onto platforms steady; slow.

Truth is, it was a death trap.

Other wives refused to let their men up there.  
 But not this man and his wife: my father, my  
 mother.

Reaching the top, he captured the pendulum,  
 lashing it still, gripped the waiting handle  
 and wound up the timepiece of the clock,  
 the first of the two ratcheted wheels; pulling  
 the weight up so that the escapement could  
 slowly tick it to the ground again. The large  
 mechanical sound whirring and chattering  
 down the tower and through the silted air,  
 the must, the smell of wood and faint trails of  
 past perfumes and old ladies' pink-essenced  
 talc.

Next the bell weight was wound up, the  
 release of which would toll out the hours for  
 the insomniacs and those forced to be awake  
 in the fell dark. And that winding echoed  
 through the upturned ark, the resounding  
 shell of wood, whizz whirls that spun through  
 the nave to lightly shake the motes of dust on

altar, organ, choir stalls, pews, the red stone tiles, the stained windows that, in sunlight, glow rainbow chard.

All wound, the tick restored, he descended, same thoughtful expression – this time, as he neared the floor, tinged with relief.

With just perceptibly lighter step, he clunk-bounced off the black fat Bakelite switch whose bulbs dimly lit the tower, felt his way to the deliberately ajar door, and, after swinging the huge, heavy, hinge-creaking slab firmly shut, used the gloaming to lock up, with massive iron key, the church.

Leaving it to further brew its silence, satisfied that his job as the winder of the church clock, the aural backdrop to the village, was timely completed for the coming week, he set off through the graveyard, the carved tombstones mostly straight, and variously simple and ornate around him.

Stepping up the moss-slippery path, passing through the gate between dripping rhododendrons; along the common, across the grass, tarmac, his tread on the gravel drive: the back door closing berchunk – the final wake up sound if the dog'd not yet heard – signalled his homecoming.

He quietly shut the glass doors of the log-warmed sitting room, and stood, brown eyes twinkling.

Inside the room, in the woman's relieved smile, the wound-up worry un-spoiled like the catchment-released weight sinks before rewinding...

And in that open fire-incensed place all the church bells rang.



SOPHIE WARDLE; PLEIN AIR EVENT LANSDOWN  
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT, :  
WTSCOLLECTIVE.CO.UK/SHOP

## HOLST VICTORIAN HOUSE IN 2026

### FASCINATING NEW EXHIBITS ENHANCE THE COLLECTION

**H**olst Victorian House is an accredited museum in Cheltenham and the birthplace of composer Gustav Holst.

Set within a Victorian terrace house furnished in period style, the museum combines domestic interiors with objects and materials relating to music, art and literature, offering insight not only into Holst's life and work but also into the

nineteenth-century Gothic-Romantic artist Theodor von Holst (1810-1844).

After early work on the British stage, Ernest Cossart moved to the United States in 1908, where he appeared on Broadway and toured widely. Following the First World War, he appeared in musical comedy in London's West End, before returning to Broadway in 1919. He later became a familiar character actor in Hollywood films of the 1930s and



ERNEST COSSART

influences of his creative family and wider artistic circle.

In 2026, the museum will highlight two of Gustav Holst's relatives: his younger brother Emil von Holst (1876-1951), who pursued an acting career under the stage name Ernest Cossart, and Holst's great-uncle, the

1940s, often playing butlers, valets and similar roles.

Objects and archive material relating to Cossart will be brought together in a case display at Holst Victorian House from 23rd May 2026 to 22nd May 2027. Related events, including musical performances and film screenings, are also planned.

Later in the year, the museum will present a significant special exhibition devoted to the work of Theodor von Holst.

Theodor von Holst was a nineteenth-century British artist associated with the Gothic-Romantic tradition. He trained at the Royal Academy, having shown artistic ability from a young age, and sold his first work at the age of ten. Although he died prematurely, before receiving wider recognition, he was an important influence on artists associated with the Pre-Raphaelite movement, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

Interest in Theodor von Holst's work has continued to develop in recent years, and several of his paintings are now held in major public collections, including *The Bride*, which is on display at Tate Britain.

From September 2026 to April 2027, works from private collections will be shown at Holst Victorian House alongside the museum's existing collection, offering the opportunity to see paintings by Theodor von Holst not normally on public display, within the appropriate setting of the Holst family home.

To find out more about Holst Victorian House and its exhibitions and events, visit [holstvictorianhouse.org.uk](http://holstvictorianhouse.org.uk). The website also includes information on supporting the museum by becoming a Friend or adopting an object, including the Theodor von Holst paintings *Self-Portrait with Brother Gustavus* and *Macbeth: Banquo and the Witches*.



**Holst Victorian House** (4 Clarence Rd, Cheltenham, GL52 2AY) is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am - 4pm. Adults: £10, Young Adults (16-25): £5, Under-16s: Free with a paying adult. Special exhibitions are included with admission and tickets include free returns for 12 months.

## LISTINGS: EVENTS DIRECTORY FEBRUARY - MAY 2026

### VISUAL ARTS

**Paula Rego: Visions of English Literature**  
30th January 2026 - 10th May 2026, The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum

**AT THE GARDENS GALLERY, MONTPPELLIER GARDENS:**  
Core hours 10am - 5pm

**Nathan Coll: The Yellow House Project**  
Wed 4 - Tue 10 Feb, a colourful display illuminating the need for truly affordable homes, with skill sharing and audience participation

**Lovers: Mina Stefanovic**  
Wed 11 - Tue 17 Feb

**Jessica Tanner**  
Wed 18 - Tue 24 Feb

**The Power Within: Petya Stoeva**  
Wed 25 Feb - Tue 3 Mar

**Shifting Grounds: Sarah White and Sarah Granville**  
Wed 4 - Tue 10 Mar, painting, prints and textiles

**Jonathan Oakes**  
Wed 11 - Tue 17 Mar

**Aspects and Attitude: Clare Hines,**  
Wed 18 - Tue 24 Mar

**Cheltenham Group of Artists**  
Wed 25 - Tue 31 Mar

**Luba Arnold**  
Wed 1 - Tue 7 Apr

**Cheltenham Art Club**  
Wed 8 - Tue 14 Apr

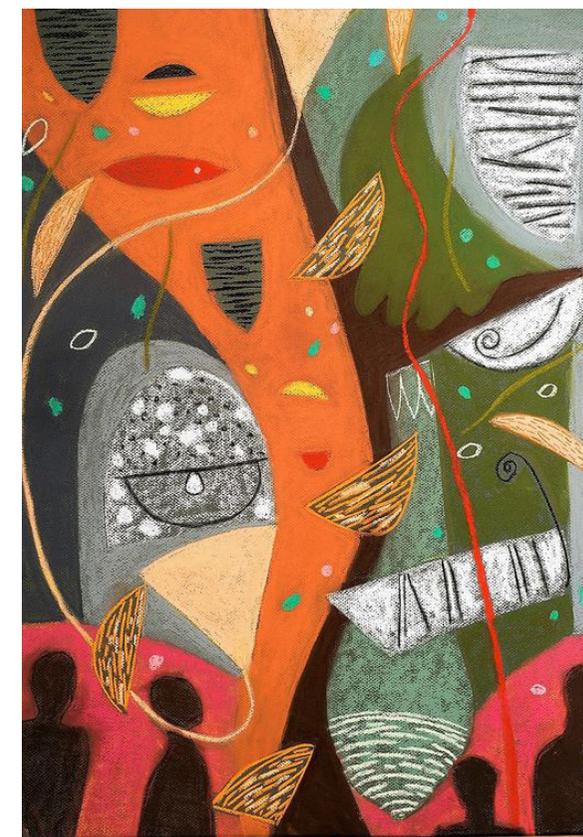
**Cheltenham Camera Club,**  
Wed 15 - Tue 21 Apr

**Jazz Festival**  
Tue 21 Apr - Sun 10 May

**Claire Roberts**  
Wed 13 - Tue 19 May

**Simon Howe**  
Wed 20 - Tue 26 May

**Impasto landscape: Tom Gowen**  
Wed 27 May - Tue 2 Jun



JENNY WEASTBOOK, BORN IN THE FIFTIES  
CHELTENHAM GROUP OF ARTISTS



Paula Rego, *Come to Me*, 2001 - 2002, Coloured lithograph.

© Ostrich Arts Ltd | Paula Rego Estate. Courtesy Ostrich Arts Ltd and Cristea Roberts Gallery

The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum  
**Paula Rego: Visions of English Literature**  
 30th January 2026 – 10th May 2026  
[wilsonmuseum.org.uk/exhibition/paula-rego-visions-of-english-literature/](http://wilsonmuseum.org.uk/exhibition/paula-rego-visions-of-english-literature/)

Paula Rego: Visions of English Literature is a Hayward Gallery Touring exhibition. The exhibition was developed with the support of Paula Rego's Estate.

## EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY – MAY 2026

### MUSIC

#### Charlton Kings Choral Society Rehearsals

Wednesdays, 7.30pm, new members always welcome. Further info: [ckcsonline.org.uk](http://ckcsonline.org.uk), email: [thesecretary@ckcsonline.org.uk](mailto:thesecretary@ckcsonline.org.uk), tel. 01451 822277

#### Cheltenham Choral Society Rehearsals

Wednesdays, 7.30-9.30pm, St Andrew's Church, Montpellier, welcoming new members, see [cheltchoral.org](http://cheltchoral.org) for details

#### Cleeve Harmony A Cappella Chorus Rehearsals

Wednesdays, 7.30-10pm, Bishop's Cleeve Tithe Barn, new members welcome! See [cleeve-harmony.org.uk](http://cleeve-harmony.org.uk) or enquiries to [md@cleeve-harmony.org.uk](mailto:md@cleeve-harmony.org.uk)

#### Musica Vera Rehearsals

Wednesdays, 7.30-9.30pm, St Mary's, Prestbury, please email our secretary, Chris Carruthers, at [4chriscrs@gmail.com](mailto:4chriscrs@gmail.com) for further information. See [www.musicavera.org](http://www.musicavera.org)

#### Musica Vera Come and Sing: Fauré Requiem

Sat 7 Feb, 10am-5pm, informal concert at 3.30pm, Harwood Hall, Christ Church, for more details and to book, see [www.musicavera.org](http://www.musicavera.org) – look forward to seeing you there!



LIZ FREEDMAN - CHELTENHAM OPEN STUDIOS

#### Young Musicians Concert: Rupert Egerton-Smith (piano)

Tue 10 Feb, 1pm, free, Drawing Room, Cheltenham Town Hall

#### Young Musicians Concert: Vitaly Pisarenko (piano)

Tue 24 Feb, 1pm, free, Drawing Room, Cheltenham Town Hall

#### Cheltenham Music Society: Kaleidoscope Music Collective

Tue 24 Feb, 7.30pm, Princess Hall, Cheltenham Ladies College, music for horn, violin and piano, by Mozart, Ethel Smyth and Brahms

#### Cheltenham Chamber Orchestra

Sun 8 Mar, 4pm, St Andrew's Church Montpellier, Conductor: Tom Gauterin, Soprano: Kathy Macaulay. Fauré: Pavane, Finzi: Dies Natalis, Schubert: Symphony No.9 in C major, "The Great"

#### Cheltenham Bach Choir

Sat 14 Mar, 7.30pm, Tewkesbury Abbey, Puccini: Messa di Gloria, Parry: Blest Pair of Sirens, Bruckner: Te Deum. Info: [cheltbachchoir.com](http://cheltbachchoir.com)



LANSDOWN ART STUDIOS, PLEIN AIR EVENT SHOWING THE STUDIOS MURAL IN THE BACKGROUND

### Young Musicians Concert: Nina Savicevic (piano)

Tue 17 Mar, 1pm, free  
Drawing Room, Cheltenham  
Town Hall

### Cantores Chamber Choir: Music for Lent

Sat 21 Mar, 4pm £15 (U18s  
& Students £5) St Mary's  
Church, Fairford, GL7 4AF,  
featuring works by Bach,  
Howells and MacMillan. Info  
and tickets: [www.cantores.net](http://www.cantores.net)

### Cheltenham Choral Society Spring Concert

Sat 21 Mar, 7pm, Christ  
Church, Joseph Haydn:  
Little Organ Mass, Vaughan  
Williams: Five Mystical  
Songs, Matthew Coleridge:  
Requiem

### Young Musicians Concert: Balcarras School

Tue 24 Mar, 1pm, free  
Drawing Room, Cheltenham  
Town Hall

### Cheltenham Music Society: Clare Hammond (piano)

Wed 25 Mar, 7.30pm, Princess  
Hall, Cheltenham Ladies  
College, wide-ranging  
programme including music  
by Chopin, Rachmaninov,  
Florence Price and Janáček  
and a piece by Michael  
Betteridge written as part of  
Clare's work in prisons

### Cantores Chamber Choir: Music for Lent

Sat 28 Mar, 4pm, £15 (U18s  
& Students £5), Holy Trinity  
Church, Minchinhampton,  
GL6 9BP, featuring works

by Bach, Howells and  
MacMillan. Info and tickets:  
[www.cantores.net](http://www.cantores.net)

### Musica Vera

Sat 28 Mar, 7.30pm, St Mary's,  
Prestbury, Fauré Requiem  
and works by Parry, Elgar,  
Bach, Saint-Saëns and others.  
For more details and to book,  
see [www.musicavera.org](http://www.musicavera.org)

### Cheltenham Philharmonic Orchestra Spring Concert: Folk, Rebellion & Romance

Sun 26 Apr, 3pm, Princess  
Hall, Cheltenham Ladies  
College, Rachmaninov:  
Symphony No.2,  
Khachaturian: Masquerade  
Suite, Kodaly: Dances of  
Galanta, Rachmaninov:  
Vocalise with cello - Victoria  
Sinista. Tickets: [www](http://www).

## EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY - MAY 2026

[ticketsource.co.uk/](http://ticketsource.co.uk/)  
[cheltphilorch](http://cheltphilorch)

### Cheltenham Music Society: Marmen and Kleio String Quartets

Wed 29 Apr, 7.30pm,  
Parabola Arts Centre,  
Quartets by Beethoven  
and Kaija Saariaho, and  
Mendelssohn's Octet

### Charlton Kings Choral Society

Sat 9 May, 7.30pm, Holy  
Apostles Church, Puccini:  
Messa di Gloria, Parry:  
Blest Pair of Sirens,  
Wagner: Siegfried Idyll.  
Accompanied by Regency  
Sinfonia, conductor John  
Wright

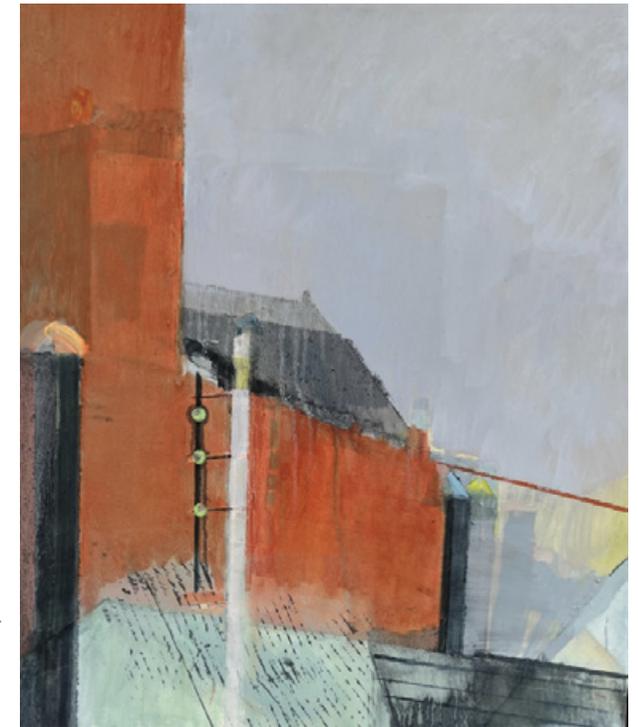
### Cheltenham Chamber Orchestra: French Connections

Sat 9 May, 7.30pm,  
St Andrew's Church,  
Montpellier, Conductor:  
Timothy Carey. Rossini:  
Overture "The Barber  
of Seville", Haydn:  
Symphony No.86 in D  
major, Mozart: Symphony  
No.31 in D major "Paris",  
Saint-Saëns: Symphony  
No.2 in A minor

### STAGE AND PERFORMANCE

### Promenade Productions: Rapunzel The Pantomime

Wed 18- Sun 22 Feb,  
7pm, 2pm matinee on  
Thu and Sat, 11am and  
4pm on Sun, Playhouse,  
info and tickets:  
[promenadeproductions](http://promenadeproductions).



LORRAINE HOUSTON

[co.uk](http://co.uk)

### STAGE AND PERFORMANCE

### Chitty Chitty Bang Bang

Tue 31 Mar- Sat 4 Apr,  
7.3pm, 2.30pm matinee on  
Thu and Sat, Everyman  
see [codsonline.co.uk](http://codsonline.co.uk)

### Cheltenham Festival of Performing Arts: 100th Anniversary

Wed 6- Tue 12 May Town  
Hall, info: [cfpa.org.uk](http://cfpa.org.uk)

### LECTURES AND MEETINGS

### Cheltenham Local History Society

Tue 3 Feb 10.30am,  
St Luke's Hall, Talk:  
A History of Polar  
Exploration in 50 Objects,  
with Anne Strathie

### Victorian Book Group: Wessex Poems by Thomas Hardy

Mon 9 Feb, 2-3.30pm,  
Holst Victorian House,  
info and registration:  
[holstvictorianhouse.org.uk/visit/whats-on/](http://holstvictorianhouse.org.uk/visit/whats-on/)



NATASHA HOUSEGO - WOODCARVER

**The Arts Society  
Cheltenham: Graveyards to  
Die For: How 19th Century  
London Buried its Dead**

Tue 10 Feb, 7.15pm, members free, visitors £8, students £4, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, with Charlie Forman. As London's population doubled in the early decades of the C19th, so did the numbers dying. Where to bury them became a problem. A close look at London's cemeteries. See [theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk](http://theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk) or email info. [cheltenham@theartssociety.org](mailto:cheltenham@theartssociety.org)

**Friends of The Wilson**

Wed 11 Feb, 2pm, members £11, non-members £13, St Matthew's Church, Talk: Lucy Abel Smith and the story of the biennial Fresh Air sculpture show. Booking at [friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/](http://friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/)

**Cercle Français: Douce Creuse**

Mon 16 Feb, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, with Maryse Wright, see [cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk](http://cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk)

**Cheltenham Local History Society**

Wed 18 Feb 7.30pm, St Luke's, Hall Talk: The Elusive Digger Settlement at Slimbridge, with Stuart Butler

**Cheltenham German Club: Basierend auf seinem Doku-Film für den Norddeutschen Rundfunk: Niedersachsen und seine britischen Wurzeln**

Fri 20 Feb 7 for 7.30pm, The New Club, Montpellier Parade, with Dr John Goodyear, University of Birmingham, in German, see [cheltgesell.uk](http://cheltgesell.uk)

## EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY - MAY 2026

**Prestbury Local History Society: The Mills on the River Chelt**

Mon 23 Feb, 7.30pm, free to members, £2 for visitors, W.I. Hall, Prestbury, with Ray Wilson. [prestburyhistory.com](http://prestburyhistory.com)

**Cercle Français: Alexis Soyer**

Mon 2 Mar, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, with Dr Steve Wharton, see [cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk](http://cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk)

**The Arts Society  
Cheltenham day of special interest: Islamic Art and Architecture**

Thu 5 Mar, with Prof James Allan, three lectures on different aspects of Islamic culture. For more info and to book, please visit <https://theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk/Special/FutureSpecial.aspx>

**Victorian Book Group: Fingersmith by Sarah Waters**

Mon 9 Mar, 2 -3.30pm, Holst Victorian House, info and registration: [holstvictorianhouse.org.uk/visit/whats-on/](http://holstvictorianhouse.org.uk/visit/whats-on/)

**The Arts Society  
Cheltenham: Scandinavian Modern**

Tue 10 Mar, 7.15pm, members free, visitors £8, students £4, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, with James Vaux. The height of Scandinavian Modern design in the 1950s and how Sweden, Denmark, Finland

and Norway broke away from Bauhaus and International Style to create softer, more organic furniture and graceful ceramics, glassware and textiles. See [theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk](http://theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk) or email info. [cheltenham@theartssociety.org](mailto:cheltenham@theartssociety.org)

**Cheltenham German Club: Zwei Zu Eins – eine Sommerkomödie in der ehemaligen DDR**

Fri 13 Mar, 7 for 7.30pm, The New Club, Montpellier Parade, Film, in German, see [cheltgesell.uk](http://cheltgesell.uk)

**Cercle Français: Albert Camus**

Mon 16 Mar, 7.30pm, ZOOM (to members at home), with Emilie Capulet, see [cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk](http://cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk)

**Friends of The Wilson**

Wed 18 Mar, 2pm, members £11, non-members £13, St Matthew's Church, Talk: Living in a work of art – the domestic architecture of C R Mackintosh, with Fiona James. Booking at [friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/](http://friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/)

**Prestbury Local History Society: The Stroud Water Canal**

Mon 23 Mar, 7.30pm, free to members, £2 for visitors, W.I. Hall, Prestbury, with Louise Nicholson. [prestburyhistory.com](http://prestburyhistory.com)

**Cheltenham Local History Society**

Wed 25 Mar, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, Talk: George Rowe's 'Illustrated Cheltenham Guide' of 1845, then and since, with Dr Steven Blake

**Cercle Français: Soirée film**

Mon 30 Mar, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall

**Leckhampton Local History Society: Tolkien and the Cotswolds – the shaping of Middle Earth**

Tue 31 Mar, 7.30pm, St Peter's Church, with Andy Mellor. See [leckhamptonlhs.weebly.com](http://leckhamptonlhs.weebly.com)

**Friends of The Wilson: Wine Tasting**

Wed 1 Apr, 5.30pm for 6pm, The Grape Escape, Regent Street, booking at [friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/](http://friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/)

**Cheltenham Local History Society**

Tue 7 Apr, 10.30am, St Luke's Hall, Research and Display event

**Victorian Book Group: The Time Machine by HG Wells**

Mon 13 Apr, 2-3.30pm, Holst Victorian House, info and registration: [holstvictorianhouse.org.uk/visit/whats-on/](http://holstvictorianhouse.org.uk/visit/whats-on/)

**The Arts Society  
Cheltenham: And So to Bed**

Tue 14 Apr, 7.15pm, members free, visitors £8, students



WIMPERIS EMBROIDERY; WIMPERIS.CO.UK

£4, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, with Janusz Kaczewski-Slowikowski, tracing the significance and use of beds from the medieval period through to the C18th in terms of their association with the highest level of society, expressed through the great 'State Beds', and also the history of their construction, decoration and textiles. See [theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk](http://theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk) or email [info.cheltenham@theartssociety.org](mailto:info.cheltenham@theartssociety.org)

**Cheltenham Local History Society**  
Wed 15 Apr, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, Talk: Gloucestershire and the Atlantic Slave Trade, with Tony Condor

**Cheltenham German Club: Quizabend**  
Fri 17 Apr, 7 for 7.30pm, The New Club, Montpellier Parade, with Simon Lewis, in German, see [cheltgesell.uk](http://cheltgesell.uk)

**Cercle Français: Olympe de Gouges**  
Mon 20 Apr, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, with Brigitte Thibaut, see [cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk](http://cheltenhamfrenchcircle.co.uk)

**Friends of The Wilson Study Tour: Northumberland**  
26-29 Apr, 3-night trip, details and booking at [friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/](http://friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/)

**Prestbury Local History Society: Prestbury's Lost Buildings**  
Mon 27 Apr, 7.30pm, free to members, £2 for visitors, W.I. Hall, Prestbury, with Michael Cole. [prestburyhistory.com](http://prestburyhistory.com)

## EVENTS FOR FEBRUARY - MAY 2026

**Leckhampton Local History Society: A walk down memory lane via steam, tram & horse**  
Tue 28 Apr, 7.30pm, St Peter's Church, with Ian Boskett. See [leckhamptonlhs.weebly.com](http://leckhamptonlhs.weebly.com)

**Friends of The Wilson**  
Wed 6 May, 2pm, members £11, non-members £13, St Matthew's Church, Talk: Winchcombe Pottery, with Helen Brown. Booking at [friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/](http://friendsofthewilson.org.uk/events/)

**Victorian Book Group: Vilette by Charlotte Bronte**  
Mon 11 May, 2-3.30pm, Holst Victorian House, info and registration: [holstvictorianhouse.org.uk/visit/whats-on/](http://holstvictorianhouse.org.uk/visit/whats-on/)

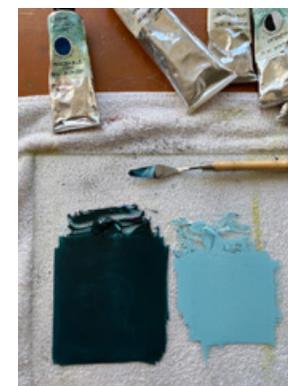
**The Arts Society Cheltenham: George Villiers The Duke of Buckingham**  
Tue 12 May, 7.15pm, members free, visitors £8, students £4, The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, with Lucy Hughes-Hallett. The artefacts and colourful life of the favourite of King James I and subsequently chief minister to King Charles I. See [theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk](http://theartssocietycheltenham.org.uk) or email [info.cheltenham@theartssociety.org](mailto:info.cheltenham@theartssociety.org)

**Cheltenham German Club: Die Politik des Gehorsams in Deutschland um 1800**  
Fri 15 May, 7 for 7.30pm, The New Club, Montpellier Parade, with Dr Elystan Griffiths, University of Birmingham, in German, see [cheltgesell.uk](http://cheltgesell.uk)

**Cercle Français: Assemblée générale**  
Mon 18 May, 7.30pm, St Luke's Hall, suivie d'une mini-conférence

**Cheltenham Local History Society**  
Wed 20 May, 7pm, St Luke's Hall, AGM followed by Arle Court, a House Through Time, with Sue Rowbotham

**Leckhampton Local History Society: AGM**  
Tue 26 May, 7.30pm, St Peter's Church, see [leckhamptonlhs.weebly.com](http://leckhamptonlhs.weebly.com)

PRINTMAKING AND LINO CUT WITH LIZ FREEDMAN  
[LIZFREEDMAN.CO.UK](http://LIZFREEDMAN.CO.UK)

## YOUNG MUSICIAN CONCERTS

### FOUR MONTHS OF MUSIC

As you may already be aware, the Pittville Pump Room will be closed for building works during the first four months of 2026. Last time it was the roof, this time it is the floor! There will clearly be an impact on any event that was planned to be held there during that time.



Future Young Musician Concerts, arranged by the Cheltenham Music Festival Society, in collaboration with The Cheltenham Trust, are some of many events affected by the Pump Room Closure. After Christmas these free Lunchtime Concerts will be held in The Drawing Room at Cheltenham Town Hall; unfortunately not all requested Tuesday dates were available. The scheduled concerts are:

13th January: Pate's Grammar School

20th January: Dean Close School

10th February: Rupert Egerton-Smith (piano)

24th February: Vitaly Pisarenko (piano)

17th March: Nina Savicevic (piano)

24th March: Balcarras School

All of these concerts will be held on Tuesdays at 1:00pm.

It is hoped that the series of Young Musician Concerts after Easter will take place again in Pittville Pump Room.

**Andrew Auster**

## THE ORIEL SINGERS

### A GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATED IN STYLE

**O**n 18th October 2025, The Oriel Singers celebrated their 50th anniversary with a very special concert at the iconic Pump Room.

This was a joyous occasion, and we hope you may get some sense of this from the photographs we have included here, for which we are indebted to James Wilkinson and Cheltenham Camera Club.

Our programme included examples of the music that has been important to us, from Bach motets to folk song by way of madrigals and part-songs, interspersed with readings to tell some of the choir's story, to reflect on themes of friendship,

Neil Cox - to mark our 50th. We also sang pieces written at the request of individual members and first sung by the Oriels, such as 'Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day' by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange and 'Et Nos Cedamus Amori' by Winchcombe-based composer Tom Kane. These latter two pieces are included in a CD 'The Good Morrow' that we recorded as part of our year of celebration. Thanks are due to Cheltenham Arts Council for their grant that made this possible.

It was a particular pleasure to include one of our favourite pieces, the Finzi song 'My Spirit Sang all Day', notable for its exultant



ORIELS THE EVENING'S WORK IS DONE

loss and love, and to share reminiscence and laughter. Pieces included 'Invocation' by James MacMillan, commissioned for the choir by the BBC as a prize for winning the Choir of the Year competition in our 30th year; and a new commission - 'Jubilee', by

use of the word 'Joy', which happens to be the name of the composer's wife. We welcomed former members of the choir to join us in our performance.

We are immensely grateful to our many friends and followers who have supported us



ORIELS JOINED BY FORMER MEMBERS



ORIELS PAYING ATTENTION

so loyally over the years, and to the former members of the choir who returned to share in this celebration. We would also like to thank Warwick Cole for his stylish playing in the two accompanied pieces in our concert, and our Music Director Ben Sawyer for his unfailing inspiration,

musicianship and leadership. We look forward to continuing the Oriels' story in our next concert at Bethesda Methodist Church on 7th March.

**Nick Pride**, edited from  
programme notes by **Ben Sawyer**



CHELTENHAM YOUNG ARTIST 2026  
GARDENS GALLERY AWARD CEREMONY - JANUARY 2026

WINNER OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL SECTION: 'WHERE MY  
HEART FINDS ITS SOUND' BY ARJUN.  
BEST SECONDARY SCHOOL ENTRY: CHOSEN HILL SCHOOL  
(CYA TROPHY)