

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and the ARCO Project present

11 “live” online a Viola Recitals performed by RBC students

Full Programme

(Includes performer and composer biographies as well as detailed information on the 10 world premieres composed by Monthati Masebe 'Trials that Trail')

Where to find the recitals online and donations

We would be delighted if you could join us for these recitals, all will be **live streamed on Facebook**. They will be shared on the following pages for you to view:

Louise Lansdown

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

ARCO Project

Quartet of Peace

and directly from **each viola students** personal Facebook page.

We ask for a donation of £5 or more if you can afford when you listen to one of the concerts.

Please click on this link to donate: https://www.justgiving.com/birminghamcity-university?fbclid=IwAR2NDnkF3FS8QGW01VgDKLhPNfGy5eR0PCzUZSL0mO92qiTkNlbOV0X3N_4

Any money you donate will go towards supporting the three young stars coming from South Africa to study at UK music schools this September – Kamo Maraba, Sifiso Mbatha and Jordan Brooks.

Monthati Masebe is a black queer composer/ pianist and indigenous music archivist. She describes herself as fluid and tries to weave a musical world that embraces a flow between her classical music background, her indigenous music background and also her electronic modern twist. She often compares her musical journey to the african legend of the griot whose purpose is to pass down ancestral wisdoms to the next generation. Many of her compositions incorporate stories about people and cultures that don't usually make mainstream media. She's done commissions for Pitika Ntuli's Azibuyele amasisweni exhibition, The Stockholm Saxophone Quartet, X[!] ksa, Wits Arts Museum- to name a few...

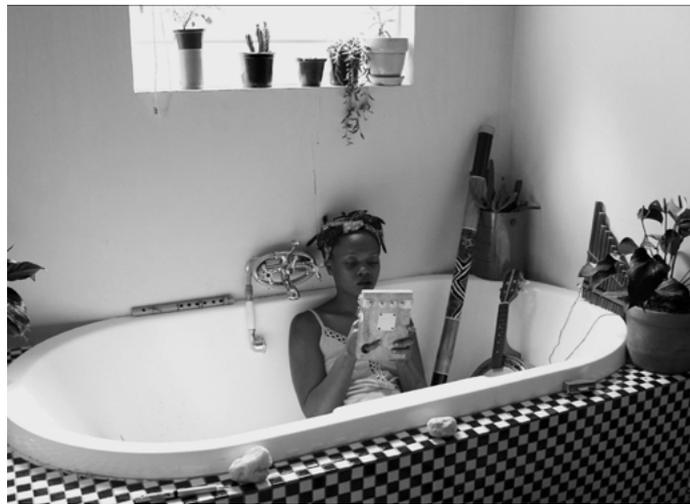


Photo by: Neo Ruth Paulus

“Trials that Trail”

This series is focusing on 10 members of the Rivonia Trial, by creating short viola pieces that pay tribute to them. History and politics are usually shared in a way that states facts, and concludes ideas about life based on those facts. This pandemic has brought schools of thought to life that weren't given much light of day before. We know that what people say vs what they do is sometimes contradictory, but we also view problem solving a rare skill that very few people in the world are able to do. In this series I try to invite everyone participating to imagine these struggle heroes as people you know, or people you can be in your own way. Try to use this to channel your political views in an authentic way. Many of these trialists were not perfect human beings. The death of Winnie Mandela came with many skeletons that left South Africans disheartened and betrayed that our hero Nelson Mandela was... Well... human. But my fellow millennials, some of us have a shifted perspective, some of us aren't looking for perfect, we just want real. We want real issues to be dealt with outside of a parliamentary building. We want everyone to be acknowledged across the gender spectrum. We want everyone to feel safe to be themselves. And so... the strengths and weaknesses of all these struggle heroes form a strong foundation for the empathetic and equally accountable world we desire. I hope you enjoy this as much as I enjoyed composing.

Ndo Livhuwa

Monthati Masebe

- **Baleka Bob:** Bob Hepple was a revolutionary academic, I mean imagine having a lecturer who is actively fighting the apartheid regime? The activist in him never died, and we thank comrades like himself, for the 'mzabalazo' he took with him to London when exiled.
- **Backroom Boy:** Andrew Mlangeni defines humility to this day. Known for countless accolades, he still prefers to be defined by his township roots. And embraces the culture that being a backroom boy brought.
- **Color me welcome:** Mixed race complexities in South Africa are beautifully depicted by Walter Sisulu, as he carries Italian and Xhosa blood. Growing up in a racially segregated South Africa could not have been easy.
- **Golden:** Free Palestine! Free Palestine! Arthur Goldreich is a South African- Israeli abstract painter who used art, his courage and experiences to speak out about racism in South Africa and Israel. He's saddened that despite fighting the apartheid regime in South Africa, his home Israel continues to oppress Palestinians to this day.

- **Bombs, books and guitars:** Govan Mbeki left many secrets in the frets of the guitar which he carried throughout his sentencing. His complex mind had no choice but to translate feelings and emotions through music.
- **Kathy:** Ahmed Kathrada knew the power of enlightened youth, the power of solidarity in shared struggle amongst all marginalized groups.
- **Madiba, dlomo, Yem-yem:** Nelson Mandela, Tata. a humble leader and a Xhosa royal. We take the opportunity to explore the Mthembu clan and the spiritual force that birthed a political king.
- **A Healthy Grave:** James Kantor was a writer, film maker and one of the defence Lawyers in the Rivonia Trial. He was discharged quite early like many white trialists, but used the opportunity to write many stories on the atrocities of the apartheid system. Many of us carry privilege, are we aware of the ways we can use that privilege to empower?
- **Unlearning to heal the Wounds:** Elias Motsoaledi represents a large unspoken voice of rage, fury and necessary mistrust of members outside of black communities. He thanks many of the ANC Youth League debates for helping him see the power of allies and solidarity, but that initial anger comes from a very important place. We are living in changing times and what we can now learn is that to dismiss the ideologies of some because they don't align with yours, is to be counter-progressive. Many people watched their parents get backpack bombed in front of them, were tortured just for being black. How do we learn to acknowledge people's experiences and pain in a way that makes them see our empathy and shared desire to abolish oppressive systems (even if we are in the superior position of that system)?
- **"Afritecture":** Lionel Bernstein was an architect and political activist. Space is very political. Feeling comfortable in a space is external and internal. Bernstein understood this and made sure to consider the ways that colonial thought is perpetuated by structures and spaces. How do we use physical space and buildings to reinvent an inclusive society?"

Concerts

CONCERT 1

Tuesday 4th August, 13:00

Gavin Marnoch – viola

Douglas Leadbitter - piano

Brahms: Sonata for Viola and Piano in F minor, op.120, no.1

Allegro appassionato – Andante un poco adagio – Allegretto grazioso - Vivace

Masebe: 'Baleka Bob'

Gavin Marnoch (19) is a violist from Scotland. He was raised on the Isle of Lewis and began learning the viola aged 5. In 2011 Gavin was awarded a place at St. Mary's Music School in Edinburgh where he studied for six years, performing regularly as a soloist, chamber and orchestral musician. Following this Gavin accepted a scholarship offer from the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire where he now studies with Lucy Nolan and Louise Lansdown.

Douglas Leadbitter graduated from Birmingham University in the early 70's and for more than 30 years has been a music teacher in the Western Isles of Scotland.

CONCERT 2

Friday 7th August, 11:00

Bill Ko - viola

Dr Vivian Cheng - piano

Bowen: Sonata for Viola and Piano in C minor

Allegro moderato – Poco lento e cantabile – Finale, Presto

Bill Ko won the Gloucestershire Young Musician of the Year 2019 at the age of 15. A keen orchestral musician, Bill has been principal violist with the CBSO Youth and is a current member of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain. Bill is studying viola with Dr Louise Lansdown and is delighted to play to you all today.

Steinway artist **Vivian Cheng Wai** obtained a bachelor's degree from the Curtis Institute of Music, Master and Artist Diploma from Yale School of Music and DMA from New York State University at Stony Brook. She is now a faculty at the HKAPA and the chairlady of the Central Conservatory of Music (HK) Foundation.

CONCERT 3

Tuesday 11th August, 13:00

Yupeng Cai - viola

Bach: Suite No.3 in C Major

Prelude – Allemande – Courante – Sarabande – Bouree 1 and 2 - Gigue

Masebe: 'Backroom Boy'

Yupeng Cai (Thomas) was born in 2000 in Chongqing, Western China. He began playing the viola when he was 7 years old. He moved to England in 2019 to commence his undergraduate degree at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire where he learns with Louise Lansdown. Thomas is delighted to perform for you today and particularly to present a world premiere by Monthati Masebe.

CONCERT 5

Tuesday 18th August, 13:00

Peter Whitehead - viola

Adolfo Busch: Suite for Solo Viola op.16a

Lento – Scherzo Vivace – Andante tranquillo – Allegro (Tempo di Bouree)

Xuntian He: Scent Dance II

Penderecki: Tanz

Masebe: 'Color me welcome' and 'Golden'

Peter Whitehead began studying at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in 2016, and recently graduated with First Class Honours, under the tuition of Lucy Nolan. From this September, Peter will continue to study at RBC on a Masters course with Louise Lansdown. Besides this, Peter has had opportunities to lead as Principal Viola in the CBSO Youth and RBC Symphony Orchestras.

CONCERT 4

Friday 14th August, 11:00

Yujie Wang - viola

Charles Matthews - piano (pre-recorded)

Franck: Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major, arr. Viola

Allegretto Ben moderato – Allegro – Ben moderato: Recitativo – Fantasia – Allegretto poco mosso

Yujie Wang was born in China in 2001 and moved to England in 2019 to commence her undergraduate study at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire with Louise Lansdown. Yujie received a scholarship for the 20th Canadian Morningside Music Bridge program and was awarded second prize at the Russia Young Musician International Competition.

Charles Matthews attended the Royal College of Music, London, and was an organ scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge. He has won various awards, including first prize in the 1999 Liszt Organ Interpretation Competition in Budapest. His most recent solo recording is of Francis Routh's cycle *The Well-Tempered Pianist*; some tracks from this CD can be heard free of charge at the composer's website. Recent engagements include solo performances in the UK, Greece and Spain, as well as duo recitals with saxophone, flute, recorder, violin, viola and 'cello.

Charles works as piano accompanist and organ tutor at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, and also as a coach for the annual *Curso Internacional Matisse* in El Escorial, Spain.

CONCERT 6

Friday 21st August, 11:00

Zian Wang - viola

Franz Chen - piano

Bruch: Romance

Marcello: Sonata in E minor

Forsyth: Chanson Celtique

Zian Wang (Mike) began to learn the viola at the age of 13 and was admitted to Royal Birmingham Conservatoire in 2018. He is the first visually impaired musician from mainland China to undertake undergraduate study overseas. Mike's aim is to make people feel happy through music. He firmly believes in the power of music and its ability to give hope and help to those who need it. Mike enjoys meeting musicians from all over the world, exchanging cultures and ideas.

Franz Chen began learning piano at the age of 11 despite weak vision due to optic neuropathy. He was awarded first prize at the Guangzhou Open Piano Competition in 2016, and sixth prize in the youth group of the International Piano Competition in Wiesbaden, Germany. Franz loves reading and the study of musicology. His dream is to travel all over the world and learn the music culture of every nation and country.

CONCERT 7

Tuesday 25th August, 13:00

Alma Orr-Ewing - viola

Bach: Suite No.6 in G Major

Prelude

Reger: Suite No. 1 for Solo Viola

*Molto sostenuto – Vivace, Andantino –
Andante sostenuto – Molto vivace*

Masebe: 'Bombs, Books and Guitars',
'Kathy' and '*Madiba, dlomo, Yem-yem*'

Alma Orr-Ewing has just finished the first year of her masters on the viola at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, having graduated from the University of Leeds in 2019 where she studied Maths and Music. She began playing the viola aged 11 while growing up in southern Spain, and in the past few years her passion for the instrument has developed massively. Alma particularly loves playing chamber music and although lockdown has given her lots of time for personal practice she is very excited to be able to play with other people again.

CONCERT 8

Friday 28th August, 11:00

Yuxin Chen - viola

Yang Bai - piano

Vieuxtemps: Sonata for Viola and Piano in B flat Major

Maestoso, Allegro – Barcarolla, Andante con moto – Finale Scherzando, Allegretto

Yuxin Chen was born in Shenzhen, China, where she started playing viola at the age of eight. In 2010 she auditioned for the Shenzhen Arts school and began to studying with Professor NiSha Ren. In 2018, Yuxin began her studies with Dr Louise Lansdown. Yuxin has taken masterclasses with some of Europe's leading violists, including Thomas Riebl, Martin Outram, Garth Knox, Wolfram Christ and Nadia Sirota. Yuxin has performed at the Gwyn Williams Bursary Concert in Birmingham and Ulverston Music Festival in 2019.

Yang Bai started her musical journey at the age of six. She studied piano with Sheng Jin, who has had a lifelong influence on her both musically and personally from 2010-2018. She has also had masterclasses with many musicians, including Sa Chen and Andrzej Jasiński and these experiences have had a very positive impact on her piano playing. Yang has performed works by Beethoven, Chopin and Bartok at music festivals in New York and Austria. In 2018 she began her undergraduate study at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. She is currently in her second year studying with Daniel Tong.

CONCERT 9

Tuesday 1st September, 13:00

Carla Mendoza Trejo – viola

Bach: Suite No.4 in E flat Major

Prelude – Allemande – Courante – Sarabande – Bouree 1 and 2 – Gigue

Masebe: 'A healthy grave'

Carla Mendoza Trejo was born in 1999 in Miami, Florida. After moving to the UK in 2007, she began learning the violin at the age of 10. In 2016, she switched to viola and began learning in the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire junior department, having been awarded a full scholarship. Carla is now a third year undergraduate student at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire studying with Dr Louise Lansdown and she plays on a modern viola made by Christopher Taylor in 2018.

CONCERT 10

Friday 4th September, 11:00

Aimee Lucas - viola

Josh Lucas - cello

Bach: Suite No.3 in C Major

Prelude - Courante - Sarabande

Beethoven: 'Eyeglass' Duo for viola and cello

Masebe: 'Unlearning to Heal the Wounds'

Aimée Lucas is a 21 year old violist from Saffron Walden, Essex. She is about to begin her fourth year of study at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire under the tutelage of Lucy Nolan. Aimée has a passion for chamber music and she enjoys playing with her piano quartet and her flute, harp and viola trio.

Joshua Lucas is a sixth form student at Saffron Walden County High School. He studies cello with Sarah Suckling. Outside of school he is a member of the Britten Sinfonia Academy and Saffron Centre for Young Musicians where he enjoys playing both orchestral and chamber music.

CONCERT 11

Tuesday 8th September, 13:00

Maria Do Vale Antunes - viola

Daniela Castro - dancer

Bach: Suite No.4 in E flat Major

Prelude – Allemande – Courante – Sarabande – Bouree 1 and 2 – Gigue

Masebe: 'Afritecture'

Born in Portugal, **Maria João Antunes** completed her Bachelor Degree in 2015 at Escola Superior de Musica e Artes do Espetáculo in Porto. She is currently finishing her postgraduate education at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, studying modern viola with Louise Lansdown and baroque viola with Kate Fawcett.

Throughout her studies, Maria has participated in many orchestral projects, including training schemes with the CBSO and Birmingham Royal Ballet. Maria works as a violin and viola tutor at Birmingham Services for Education and on the Arco Project. Maria is a passionate chamber musician and is a founding member of the Impetus Trio.

Daniela Leite Castro works professionally with music in performance, creation and pedagogy. She has graduated in Musical Composition at ESMAE – Escola Profissional de Música e Artes do Espectáculo, in Porto, Portugal. Always looking for transversality and interdisciplinarity, she crosses other artistic languages with music, especially dance and theatre. Early dances are a particular interest in her studies and work.