

SHEKU
KANNIEH-
MASON
HARRY
BAKER

SATURDAY 19 JUNE

Sheku Kanneh-Mason — cello
Harry Baker — piano

Programme

Nigel Kennedy & Kroke
Lullaby for Kamila

Arthur Hamilton
Cry Me A River

Nadia Boulanger
Three Pieces for Cello & Piano

Harry Baker
London Waking

San Fermin, Nico Muhly & Attacca Quartet
In This House

Simon Parkin
Didsburrito

Sheku Kanneh-Mason
Melody

J.S. Bach arr. Simon Parkin
Goldberg Variations, No. 13

Trad. arr. Harry Baker
Thomas & Eleanor

Very special thanks to:

Dave Parsons, Senior Acoustician, Vanguardia,
Wayne Powell and Jack Page, d&b audiotechnik
Oliver Marns, J&C Joel

Triple E

Steinway & Sons, London for
the Steinway concert pianos

We are excited that Sheku Kanneh-Mason is returning to perform a special programme at Bold Tendencies with his collaborator Harry Baker, an award-winning improvising pianist and composer in jazz, classical and new-music.

In assembling tonight's programme, we were drawn mostly to songs and song-like music – folk melodies, jazz standards, classical pieces – which share the ability to connect deeply with their listener, to occupy unique yet clear expressive spaces. Throughout the set, we've tried to explore this music with a variety of approaches – centring around improvisation – to create

larger 'narrative' performances, whilst hoping to keep this expressive spark alight.

Lullaby for Kamila and Thomas & Eleanor, first and last in the programme respectively, are the most explicit examples of this balancing act. Conceived by Nigel Kennedy and Kroke band, a Polish instrumental ensemble, *Lullaby for Kamila* draws from Polish traditional music and klezmer, and is instilled with a constant 3+2+2 rhythm, underpinning a heartfelt, lyrical tune. In our performance of the song, these two elements form the basis for relatively free improvisation, as the melody weaves in and out of the texture: sometimes spotlighted,

sometimes submerged within the driving force of the rhythms. *Thomas & Eleanor* tracks a similarly elaborate journey, taking a dainty, 8-bar English folk song on a tumultuous path from youthful vigour, through unrest, arriving ultimately at serenity.

With the densely-crafted compositions of J.S. Bach (*Goldberg Variations No. 13*, arranged by Simon Parkin) and Nadia Boulanger (*Three Pieces for Cello and Piano*), nuanced narratives are already contained in the musical material, knitting together beautiful melodies. Alongside her compositional prowess, Boulanger was a renowned educator at a variety

of international conservatoires; her pedagogical approach was steeped in the classical music 'greats', notably Bach and his fugues (she had memorised the whole of Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* by the age of twelve). Perhaps surprisingly, given this classical method, her pool of notable students was diverse, including minimalist Philip Glass, composer/songwriter Burt Bacharach and musical polymath Quincy Jones. Boulanger once said, "you need an established language and then, within that established language, the liberty to be yourself." All three pieces clearly reflect this coalition of craft and personality.

American indie rock collective San Fermin's poignant *In This House* reveals a similar learned yet visionary approach. On one level the song is reminiscent of timeless pop ballads, though subtly off-kilter harmonies obscure this impression. What's more, its familiar verse-chorus form is punctuated by evocative string interludes, composed by Nico Muhly and recorded by the celebrated Attacca Quartet. In our version, we've stretched these passages into improvised solo 'cadenzas', allowing time to sit with the song's quirky melodic, harmonic and emotional traits.

In between these interpretations, we've interspersed a couple of

original pieces through the programme. Sheku's *Melody* is self-evident in nature – a solo cello folk-like theme – though vivid use of harmonics as well as much of the range of the instrument brings this simple tune to life. Conversely, *London Waking* portrays rush-hour morning chaos – from desolate at dawn, to frantic at peak times, back to desolate – through an improvised journey: from sparse imitations between both instruments, to a high-octane piano solo, and eventually back to the original imitative texture.

The resulting varied collection of pieces hopefully sustains both a dramatic and expressive

focus, as it weaves between improvisation and composition, moves through folk and classical styles, and explores putting a new stamp on music that intrigues us. —Harry Baker

In 2020, **Sheku Kanneh-Mason** released his second album, **Elgar**, featuring the Cello Concerto, which he recorded at Abbey Road Studios with Sir Simon Rattle and the London Symphony Orchestra. On its release, it reached No. 8 in the UK Official Album Chart, making Sheku the youngest classical instrumentalist and the first cellist in history to reach the UK Top 10. In 2017, Sheku made his BBC Proms debut at the Royal Albert Hall as soloist

with the Chineke! Orchestra, an ensemble with which he enjoys a special relationship. Sheku is passionate about the importance of making classical music accessible to all and is an ambassador for music education charities London Music Masters and Future Talent.

Harry Baker is an award-winning pianist active on the UK jazz and classical scenes, performing at venues from Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club to Wigmore Hall. His music has been featured on Jazz FM and BBC Radio 3 with Sheku Kanneh-Mason, and his compositions recorded by the National Youth Choirs of Great

Britain on NMC Recordings.
In 2020, he released his debut
album, *The Floating Boy*, a
suite for big band and voices
performed by the Oxford
University Jazz Orchestra
and vocal group *The Oxford
Gargoyles*.

HUGE THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HAS SUPPORTED THE BOLD TENDENCIES 2021 PROGRAMME

Southwark Council

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Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Bloomberg Philanthropies

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All those individuals who have generously
donated to Bold Tendencies

WHERE AM I?

Since 2007 these rooftop spaces at Peckham Multi-Storey Car Park have been home to not-for-profit organisation Bold Tendencies which is unique in terms of the rich mix of what it does, and where and how it does it.

Bold Tendencies supports artists to develop their ideas and to realise site-specific projects. We commission new visual art — 114 works have been shown here to date — and produce a live programme of music, dance and opera.

The live programme takes place in our covered spaces, deliberately preserving 42,000 sq ft of raw concrete floors and ceilings with panoramic London views.

Bold Tendencies has also commissioned new architecture for the site — Frank's Cafe in 2009, the Straw Auditorium in 2010, and the Peckham Observatory in 2017.

Bold Tendencies is for everyone. We have welcomed more than 2 million people in 13 summer seasons since 2007.

We animate the programme and the site for the neighbourhood through standalone education and community initiatives that take culture and civic values seriously.

Bold Tendencies celebrates the free enjoyment of public space in the city, participation in a rich, experimental programme and open access to this special, spectacular place.

 **BOLDTENDENCIES**

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

July - September programme at Bold Tendencies will be announced soon, check [Events & Tickets](#) for details.

Sheku and Isata Kanneh-Mason will play live from the Barbican on 4 July.
[Booking info here](#)

Sheku Kanneh-Mason will play Dvorák's Cello Concerto for his BBC Prom on 5 September.
[Booking info here](#)

*Glance at the sun. See the moon and the stars.
Gaze at the beauty of the Earth's greenings.
Now, think.*

— Hildegard of Bingen

*The needle skipped the groove of the present.
Into this dark forest you have already turned.*

— Timothy Morton

The Bold Tendencies Programme in 2021 examines Arcadia. We humans long for an “outside” to the burdens of modernity, a yearning as utopian as it is convenient. We dream of uncorrupted idylls of land and labour, conjure a wilderness unspoiled by avarice and atrocity—William Morris called it “the childhood of the world”. Now more than ever we crave this outside: to capitalism, fossil

fuels and overcrowded cities; to technological surveillance, social media and insomnia; to structural inequality, racism and police brutality. An archaic vision of Earth—and our place within it—exhumed, aroused and ignited. Arcadia isn't hope, still less optimism: it is need, and it is desire.

Arcadia never was that of Rousseau's 'State of Nature'—a timeless garden to which we must return—but the dark forest of Morton, alive with the dancing of flora and fauna, pagan subjects and rapturous all-night ravers; the thunder of quarries, fox hunts and the clamours of courting bird-song; the eerie rhythms of non-human

forces, felt in the foreignness of abandoned landscapes as in our own bodies. All points of supposed perfection have a hint of menace: Arcadia is a vexed and veering universe, where national pride slides into fascism and rural bliss surrenders to nostalgia; a last gasp of the human in the more-than-human world, where utopian dreams face an open grave.

Conflicts and contradictions ignite our Arcadia —between science and mysticism, rural and metropolitan, outside and other. New works on-site by Rebecca Ackroyd, Frances Drayson, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Andy Holden, Rene Matic, Harold Offeh and Jesse Pollock and our

Live Programme explores what drives our desperation for the outside, what Arcadia renders possible today and what is prohibited by it.

What happens when our connection to nature—and to each other—frays and unravels, when architectures of the past fall to ruin, and who is and isn't included in the cities and homes that we call ours. The past would seek to foreclose these questions with self-evident truths and a fear of the other; the truth for Arcadia, is that the past is yet to be discovered.

Please consider a one-time donation to keep our programme thriving
boldtendencies.com/partners-supporters

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