

Tree of Strings Young Artists Programme 2027-28

Developing outstanding musicians.
Connecting communities through
music.

APPLICATIONS OPEN:

8 September 2026

APPLICATIONS CLOSE:

31 October 2026

About the Programme

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The Tree of Strings Young Artists Programme is a unique year-long opportunity for talented young musicians aged 18–30 who are ready to take the next step in their professional development.

Based around the acclaimed Tree of Strings Festival in Abbotsbury, Dorset, the programme combines artistic development, performance experience, mentoring and community engagement.

Young Artists become part of the wider Tree of Strings family, working alongside internationally respected musicians and helping bring world-class music-making to communities across the South West.

The programme runs from **1 April 2027 to 31 March 2028**.

What's different about the Tree of Strings Young Artist Programme

The classical music profession increasingly requires artists to be versatile performers, creative collaborators and confident communicators.

Tree of Strings believes that young musicians should have opportunities to develop all these skills in real-world settings. The programme provides meaningful paid performance opportunities while allowing participants to gain experience in education and community engagement.

The scheme was also created in response to two significant challenges facing the sector: supporting the next generation of professional musicians at a crucial stage in their careers and ensuring that high-quality live music remains accessible beyond major cities. By connecting emerging artists with schools, audiences and communities in rural Dorset, the programme creates opportunities for talented musicians while expanding access to exceptional cultural experiences.

At the same time, the scheme supports our wider mission to make excellent live music accessible to more people and to inspire future generations through music. By investing in emerging talent, we aim to strengthen the future of classical music while deepening connections between artists, audiences and communities.

Meet Adrian Brendel

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The Tree of Strings Young Artists Programme is led by Tree of Strings Artistic Director, Adrian Brendel, one of Britain's most respected and versatile musicians.

As a cellist, artistic director, curator and teacher, Adrian has performed as a soloist and chamber musician at many of the world's leading concert halls and festivals, collaborating with some of the most distinguished artists of his generation. He is a member and Co-Artistic Director of the renowned Nash Ensemble, Artistic Director of Bath Mozartfest and Bath Bachfest, and has long been recognised for creating imaginative musical programmes that bring together music from different eras, styles and traditions.

Alongside his international performing career, Adrian is a passionate educator and mentor, teaching regularly at leading conservatoires and music institutions across Europe. He has spent decades supporting emerging musicians and creating opportunities for the next generation of artists. Through the Young Artists Programme, participants will benefit from Adrian's artistic insight, encouragement and experience, gaining not only high-level performance opportunities but also a deeper understanding of how to build a creative, sustainable and fulfilling career in music.

The Programme consists of

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Performance Opportunities

- Solo recital opportunities
- Chamber music performances
- Side-by-side performance with established artists
- Featured appearances at Tree of Strings Festival

Professional Development

- Mentoring from Adrian Brendel and festival artists
- Experience of artistic collaboration
- Greater confidence presenting and discussing your work
- Insight into festival programming and production

Community Engagement Experience

- School visits and workshops
- Working with children and young people
- Developing outreach and communication skills
- Understanding how music can engage diverse audiences

Publicity and Professional Assets

- Promotion through Tree of Strings channels
- Professional photography and showreel material

How the Programme Works

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The programme centres around the annual Tree of Strings Festival in Abbotsbury, Dorset, in summer 2027.

Alongside festival participation, Young Artists will undertake a number of visits to Dorset throughout the year for performances, education work and community activity.

Participants should expect:

- Up to one week of activity around the festival, including rehearsals and performances
- At least four additional visits to Dorset during the year
- Up to four school engagement visits
- Preparation and rehearsal time appropriate to each activity

Full details of commitments and scheduling will be discussed with shortlisted applicants at audition.

Financial Support

The programme is fully funded.

- No application fee
- Every engagement is paid
- All travel and reasonable expenses covered for successful participants while taking part in the programme

We want financial circumstances to be as little a barrier as possible to participation.

Who Can Apply?

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Applications are welcome from:

- Individual musicians aged 18–30
- Existing ensembles whose members are aged 18–30
- Musicians based in the UK

We are looking for artists who demonstrate:

- High-quality musical performance
- Curiosity and versatility
- Commitment to collaboration
- Interest in engaging with communities and young people

Previous outreach experience is welcome but not essential.

Accessibility and Inclusion

Inclusivity is central to the Tree of Strings Young Artists Programme.

We welcome applications from musicians of all backgrounds and are committed to removing barriers wherever possible. We encourage applicants to discuss any access requirements with us at any stage of the process, and we will work with successful participants to ensure appropriate support is in place.

Key Dates

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Applications open:	8 September 2026
Applications close:	31 October 2026
Audition invitations issued:	by 6 November 2026
Live auditions in London:	late November and early December 2026
Offers made:	mid-December 2026
Public announcement:	January 2027
Programme period:	1 April 2027 to 31 March 2028