

Kirklees Concert Season

2026-2027

Music that moves

Featuring the Orchestra of Opera North

Contents

Welcome	2
Orchestral Concerts	5
Chamber Lunchtime Concerts	13
Amplify.....	18
Pre-concert Lunchtime Menu	19
Organ Lunchtime Concerts.....	20
Looking for something fun to do?	32
How to book	33
Access Information	35

Welcome to 2026–27

A message from Garry Walker, Music Director at Opera North, and Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Deputy Chief Executive & Executive Director for Public Health and Corporate Resources at Kirklees Council.

Welcome to the Kirklees Concert Season. Presented by Opera North and Kirklees Council, this annual season brings captivating concerts to Huddersfield and Dewsbury Town Halls. The Orchestra of Opera North is unique amongst professional British orchestras in that it has a year-round programme of performances both in opera houses and concert halls.

Each and every member of the Orchestra holds a passion for making music for the widest possible audience. It is always a delight to take to the stage with conductors and soloists who share that passion, be they from the Opera North family, or guests who are some of the brightest talents on the international scene. Great music is good for the soul. It is firm in that belief and in that spirit that we bring world-class music-making to your doorstep in Kirklees.

This year you can look forward to another fantastic selection of music in our orchestral series. In common with previous seasons, we have something for everyone.

Whether you are looking for the intimacy of Mozart's 'Linz' Symphony and Debussy's impressionistic and dreamlike *Prélude à l'après midi d'un faune*, or the large-scale romantic classics such as Ravel's *La valse*, Brahms' Symphony No. 3 or Mahler's Symphony No. 9, we've got it covered.

Look out too for lesser-known masterpieces such as Sibelius' Symphony No. 6 and Bruch's Double Concerto – they won't disappoint.

Our chamber concerts in Dewsbury feature and are curated by members of the Orchestra and Chorus of Opera North. This year you will find string quintets, clarinet quintets, trios and more, as each programme showcases the unique textures and colours to be found in smaller ensembles of instruments.

With food available beforehand, these concerts make for a musical lunchtime treat.

Back in Huddersfield, Town Hall Organist David Pipe has invited some of his finest fellow organists from across the country to perform on the marvellous 'Father' Willis organ, which has been delighting audiences at the Town Hall for over a century.

This year, we welcome organists from Denmark, France, Germany and Greece, as well as star players from the UK. There is so much to choose from and be inspired by.

Whether you join us for an orchestral classic, a reflective moment of chamber music or a powerful organ recital, or all of the above, we look forward to giving you a warm welcome at a concert soon.

Orchestral Concerts

Experience the thrilling spectacle of a live orchestra.

A full stage and a full sound.

The programme includes:

- Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony
- Opera North Youth Orchestra playing Tchaikovsky's Second Symphony and more
- Debussy, Ravel and more
- Christmas Gala
- Brahms' Third Symphony
- Opera North Youth Orchestra playing Beach's Gaelic Symphony and more
- Mozart and Mahler
- Sibelius' Second Symphony, and
- Schubert's Fifth Symphony

Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony

The concert will take place on Thursday 24th September at 7.30pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall.

Two wartime symphonies bookend a dazzling piece for solo cello and orchestra.

Sibelius' Sixth Symphony finds peace in a nature-inspired reverie. Prokofiev's Fifth Symphony, meanwhile, sounds as if it has been hewn from the factory floor rather than nature – there's bite and energy, but dark lyrical moments too, before an outwardly triumphant finale. The light-hearted centre of the concert is Tchaikovsky's spirited 'Rococo' Variations with soloist Guy Johnston.

Opera North Youth Orchestra – Tchaikovsky's Second Symphony and more

The concert will take place on Sunday 1st November at 3.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall.

The Opera North Youth Orchestra (ONYO) returns to Dewsbury with a fantastic programme which showcases each section of the orchestra.

ONYO is made up of young musicians aged 16–21 from across the North, led by conductor Oliver Rundell and coached by members of the Orchestra of Opera North.

Join us in celebrating their achievements so far this academic year with an afternoon of exciting repertoire including:

Dukas – Fanfare from *La Péri*

Elgar – Serenade for Strings

Bruch – Violin Concerto No. 1

Pärt – *Fratres*

Tchaikovsky – Symphony No. 2

Debussy, Ravel and more

The concert will take place on Thursday 3rd December at 7.30pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall.

All the opulence and sensuality of late Romanticism is captured in this quartet of concert hall classics.

Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* is a remarkable example of literature transformed into music. The lilt and courtly charms of the Viennese waltz course through both Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* suite and Ravel's *La valse*.

Liza Ferschtman is soloist in Korngold's much-loved Violin Concerto, rich with unforgettable melodies borrowed from the composer's Hollywood movie scores.

Christmas Gala

The concert will take place on Thursday 10th December at 7.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall.

Gather together with family and friends and get your celebrations off to a magical start with a feast of Christmas music, new and old.

There will be carols for all to sing (including O Come, All Ye Faithful and Hark! The Herald Angels Sing) plus festive favourites performed by the Orchestra of Opera North, joined by the many singers of the Opera North Chorus, Youth Chorus and Young Voices.

Selections from Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker Suite, The Christmas Song as made famous by Nat King Cole, carols by John Rutter and Eric Whitacre, the ever-popular Sleigh Ride ...and much more!

Brahms' Third Symphony

The concert will take place on Thursday 21st January at 7.30pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall.

Ryan Wigglesworth conducts Mendelssohn and Brahms alongside a work by one of classical music's greatest radicals. Brahms wrote his Third Symphony while at the height of his powers – it was an immediate success and the third movement contains one of the most beautifully yearning melodies he ever wrote. It's paired with a rippling, elegant overture by then child prodigy Felix Mendelssohn, and a passionate, lovelorn song-cycle with soloist Sophie Bevan.

Opera North Youth Orchestra - Beach's Gaelic Symphony and more

The concert will take place on Sunday 21st March at 3.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall.

The Opera North Youth Orchestra (ONYO) make their second appearance of the season at Dewsbury Town Hall.

ONYO is made up of young musicians aged 16-21 from across the North, led by conductor Oliver Rundell and coached by members of the Orchestra of Opera North.

Their concert programme includes the first symphony by an American female composer.

Their repertoire for this concert is as follows:

Carwithen – Bishop Rock – Overture

R. Strauss – Horn Concerto No. 2

Beach – Symphony in E minor, ‘Gaelic’

Mozart and Mahler

The concert will take place on Thursday 22nd April at 7.30pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall.

Mahler’s Ninth (and final complete) Symphony is the ultimate farewell from a composer who was truly a master of a seismic symphony! The music is peppered with allusions to the ‘great beyond’ and hums with a thirst for life. ‘It is the expression of a tremendous love for this earth’ wrote fellow composer Alban Berg.

Mozart's sunny 'Linz' Symphony – one of his finest – opens the concert. It is a light contrast to the Ninth Symphony by Mahler, who was himself a huge exponent of Mozart's work.

Sibelius' Second Symphony

The concert will take place on Thursday 27th May at 7.30pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall.

In his Second Symphony, Sibelius summons one of the great feel-good finales of the symphonic repertoire – despite his inner grief and anxiety over his daughter's ill health – a musical balm wrought in shining orchestral colours.

Strauss pours forth his own despair in *Metamorphosen*, written as Europe limped towards the close of the Second World War.

The Orchestra of Opera North's own David Aspin and Oliver Casanovas Nuevo display the warm sonorities of the clarinet and viola as soloists in Bruch's Double Concerto.

Schubert's Fifth Symphony

The concert will take place on Sunday 4th July at 4pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall.

The season rounds off with a delightful afternoon concert directed by Orchestra of Opera North Leader, Katie Stillman.

There's an American accent in parts: Jessie Montgomery's Banner draws on patriotic songs of the US, while Copland's Appalachian Spring is rich with wide, open harmonies and rhythmic vitality.

It's not all American though and we also hear Grieg's Suite for string orchestra, modelled on a series of dances, and Schubert's Fifth Symphony, a cheerful tribute to the style of his beloved predecessor Mozart.

Chamber lunchtimes

Mini moments of magic: intimate concerts with close-knit groups of musicians.

The programme includes:

- Strings of Opera North
- Schubert's String Quintet
- Ravel, Debussy and Bax
- University of Huddersfield Brass Band
- Mozart's Clarinet Quintet
- Korngold and Frank Bridge Trios, and
- Beethoven's To the distant beloved

Strings of Opera North

Wednesday 2nd September, 12.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall.

The string section of the Orchestra of Opera North takes centre stage for the first chamber lunchtime concert of the season, directed by Leader Katie Stillman.

The playful Entr'acte from Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Caroline Shaw opens the programme. Tchaikovsky's Souvenir de Florence for string sextet was completed following a stay in its namesake city, and has become a mainstay of the string chamber repertoire.

Schubert's String Quintet

Wednesday 28th October, 12.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall

The String Quintet in C major was the last piece Schubert completed. Though it remained unpublished for some 30 years, it has gradually gained recognition as a masterpiece among chamber music. The music is a rich tapestry of beauty and darkness, balancing unsettling drama with sublime euphoria.

Ravel, Debussy and Bax

Trios for flute, viola and harp

Wednesday 11th November, 12.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall

The combination of flute, viola and harp was not first imagined by Debussy, but his colourful, playful Sonata of 1915 (a staple for the ensemble) did make it a more popular trio. Bax's reflective Elegiac Trio dates from around the same time, while an arrangement of Ravel's Sonatine for piano is another shining demonstration of this grouping's unique sound.

University of Huddersfield Brass Band

Monday 7th December, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall.
Part of the Organ Package.

Monday 14th December, 12.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall. Part of the Chamber Package.

Nothing says Christmas quite like the warm tones of a brass band playing festive favourites. Audience participation is always encouraged in this annual concert, so prepare to sing along in full voice to some carols.

Mozart's Clarinet Quintet

Music for reed and strings

Wednesday 27th January, 12.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall

Mozart's Clarinet Quintet was one of the earliest and now best-known pieces written specifically for the instrument. The beautiful blend of the clarinet with strings inspired many future composers.

Pulitzer Prize and Grammy Award winning Corigliano wrote for the same ensemble, whereas Françaix's Divertissement puts the bassoon centre stage with the strings.

Korngold and Frank Bridge Trios

Wednesday 24th February, 12.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall

A delightful collection of chamber music for soprano, trombone and piano, curated by Opera North trombonist Blair Sinclair and featuring Chorus member Pasquale Orchard.

The concert includes a beautifully evocative song cycle by Frank Bridge and a piece by Schubert that pays homage to Beethoven, plus more to be announced.

Beethoven's To the distant beloved

Songs for soprano and tenor

Wednesday 31st March, 12.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall

Two members of the Chorus of Opera North bring a selection of songs to Dewsbury Town Hall for the final lunchtime chamber concert of the season.

The programme includes Beethoven's popular An die ferne Geliebte (To the distant beloved), a tender, sentimental setting of poetry by Alois Jeitteles.

Amplify

Invest in our world-class Orchestra and Chorus

At Opera North we take immense pride in the success of our Orchestra and Chorus. As the arts and culture industries continue to navigate an increasingly challenging economic environment, with some of our peers compelled to reduce these vital artistic forces, we are firmly committed to large, full-time permanent ensembles.

Amplify, Opera North's growing dedicated programme of philanthropic support for our Orchestra and Chorus, is vital in supporting these talented artists to perform world-class music and opera.

In recognition of your support, we will bring you closer to our performers and share insights into the busy life of a national touring opera company.

You will be invited into the rehearsal room to see the work come to life and gain unprecedented access to our artists and the creative process.

Find out more at operanorth.co.uk/amplify or by emailing development@operanorth.co.uk.

Pre-concert Lunchtime Menu

Huddersfield & Dewsbury Town Halls

Make your matinee extra special with a delicious pre-concert lunch, served in the stunning surroundings of our historic town halls.

Before each Chamber or Organ Concert with the Orchestra of Opera North, enjoy a relaxed and great value lunch menu featuring a choice of:

- Homemade soup and a roll
- A selection of triangle sandwiches
- Tasty cakes with fresh cream
- Hot and cold drinks

Served from 11:30am. All items individually priced

No need to book... just turn up and enjoy!

Concert start times: Chamber 12.30pm. Organ 1:00pm

Organ lunchtimes

Marvel at one of the finest organs in the country, which has been delighting audiences since 1881.

The programme includes:

- David Pipe
- Joshua Simões
- Svyati Duo
- Emmanuel Hocdé
- Peter King
- Paul Carr
- Stephen Disley
- University of Huddersfield Brass Band
- Music for Christmas
- Eleni Keventsidou
- William Campbell
- Friedhelm Flamme
- Tina Christiansen
- Gordon Stewart, and
- David Pipe for the Organ Finale

David Pipe

Monday 7th September, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

David Pipe opens the new season with a concert of works inspired by the variation form.

The programme includes:

Karg-Elert - Homage to Handel

Barber - Wondrous Love, Variations on a Shape-Note Hymn

J. S. Bach - Passacaglia

Sweelinck - Mein junges Leben hat ein End

Bonnet - Variations de concert

Kindly sponsored by a keen supporter of the Kirklees Organ Concert Season.

Joshua Simões

Monday 21st September, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

Joshua Simões, prizewinning Assistant Director of Music at His Majesty's Chapel Royal, Hampton Court, makes his debut in Huddersfield. His programme includes some of the most demanding pieces in the repertoire.

Olsson - Prelude and Fugue in D-sharp minor

Mendelssohn - Variations sérieuses

Gerald Barry - The Chair

Reger - Symphonic Fantasia and Fugue in D minor,
'Inferno

Svyati Duo

Monday 5th October, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

The Svyati Duo have forged an international reputation for their stunning recitals and pioneering commissioning of music for cello and organ. With beautiful melodies and stirring dances, the programme includes:

Zsolt Gárdonyi - Variations on a Hungarian Chorale

Jongen - Humoresque

Ad Wammes - The day that was

Piazzolla - Libertango

Also featuring Rebecca Hepplewhite on the cello and Julian Collings on the organ.

Emmanuel Hocdé

Monday 19th October, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

French organist Emmanuel Hocdé plays in the Town Hall for the first time. Organist of Laval Cathedral in France's Pays de la Loire region, he won the prestigious Chartres International Organ Competition in 2002. His programme includes some of the great French masterpieces:

J . S. Bach - Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C major

Franck - Prélude, fugue et variation

Vierne - Carillon de Westminster

Alain - Litanies

Kindly sponsored by Mr & Mrs Aldred and dedicated to Stroke Awareness

Peter King

Monday 2nd November, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

The celebrated Organist Emeritus of Bath Abbey brings a virtuosic programme to Kirklees. Recognised for his authoritative performances, Peter delivers a stunning selection with some of his own arrangements of music by Respighi, Schumann and Ligeti. The programme includes:

Respighi - Preludio from 'The Birds'

Ligeti - Musica ricercata

Saint-Saëns - Danse macabre

Iain Farrington- Voices of the World

Paul Carr

Monday 16th November, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

Paul Carr is based in Birmingham, as an organist, recitalist, choral director, accompanist and teacher. His concerts take him round the world, and he has been Artistic Director to the Thursday Live organ recital series in St Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham, since 2016. The programme includes:

Gigout - Grand chœur dialogué

J. S. Bach - Prelude and Fugue in D major

Walton - Popular Song from 'Façade'

Guilmant - Sonata No. 1 in D minor

Stephen Disley

Monday 30th November, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

Stephen Disley makes a welcome return to Huddersfield. He has collaborated with choirs and orchestras around the world, with recent performances including Janáček's Glagolitic Mass at the Montepulciano Festival in Italy.

The programme includes:

Roderick Elms - Carillon Festivo

Naji Hakim - To Call My True Love to My Dance

Sowerby - Comes Autumn Time

Ravel - Toccata from 'Le Tombeau de Couperin'

University of Huddersfield Brass Band

Monday 7th December, 1pm, Huddersfield Town Hall.
Part of the Organ Package

Monday 14th December, 12.30pm, in Dewsbury Town Hall. Part of the Chamber Package.

Nothing says Christmas quite like the warm tones of a brass band playing festive favourites. Audience participation is always encouraged in this annual concert, so prepare to sing along in full voice to some carols.

Music for Christmas

Friday 18th December, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

The Huddersfield Youth Choirs present a selection of Christmas music from around the world. With the hall decorated colourfully, carols for all to sing, and the beautiful voices of the choirs joined by David Pipe at the mighty Willis organ, this will surely get you into the festive spirit!

Eleni Keventsidou

Monday 11th January, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

We welcome the Greek virtuoso Eleni Keventsidou for her first trip to Huddersfield.

A leading expert on the music of Max Reger, she performs his Fantasy and Fugue on the name BACH, alongside charming works from her native Greece:

Alain – Scherzo from ‘Suite pour Orgue’

J. S. Bach – Fantasia and Fugue in C minor

Yiannis Drositis – Greek traditional song from the Dodecanese islands

Reger – Fantasy and Fugue on the name BACH

Kindly sponsored by a keen supporter of the Kirklees Organ Concert Season

William Campbell

Monday 25th January, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

William Campbell was recently appointed Assistant Director of Music at Peterborough Cathedral. A multi-instrumentalist and award-winning composer, his playing is recognised for its energy and passion.

The programme includes:

Whitlock - Fantasie Choral No. 1 in D-flat major

Price - Retrospection (An Elf on a Moonbeam)

Vierne - Symphony No. 4 in G minor

Friedhelm Flamme

Monday 1st February, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

Based in north Germany, Friedhelm Flamme has a vast repertoire and unparalleled discography of music from all periods and schools. As Artistic Director of the Vox Organi festival, he leads one of the world's largest celebrations of organ music.

The programme includes:

Lübeck - Praeludium in D minor

J.S. Bach - Chromatic Fantasia and Fugue

Huw Morgan - Haven

Bartmuß - Toccata in C minor

Tina Christiansen

Monday 15th February, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

Tina Christiansen visits from Denmark, where she is Organist and Director of Music at Ansgar's Church in Odense, and Artistic Director of the Odense International Organ Festival.

Her programme includes:

Åhlén – Allegro 31estive

J.S. Bach – Prelude and Fugue in A minor

Franck – Pièce héroïque

Nowowiejski – Finale: Improvizazione from Symphony No. 9

Gordon Stewart

Monday 1st March, 1pm, in Huddersfield Town Hall

Gordon Stewart, Organist Emeritus, makes his ever-popular annual visit to the Town Hall, bringing his unrivalled knowledge of the 'Father' Willis organ's colours. The programme includes:

Lemare – Thanksgiving March

J.S. Bach – Prelude and Fugue in G minor

Carter – Passacaglia and Fugue

Hollins – Grand Choeur in G minor

David Pipe – Organ Finale

Monday 15th March, 1pm, Huddersfield Town Hall

David Pipe takes us on a journey through music from film and television. Samuel Barber's haunting Adagio sits alongside modern American works, before Gershwin's playful dog-walk leads us into Saint-Saëns' rousing theme.

The programme includes:

Barber - Adagio

John Williams - Hymn to the Fallen

Gershwin - Promenade: Walking the Dog

Saint-Saëns - Finale from Symphony No. 3

Creative Kirklees: Looking for something fun to do?

Creative Kirklees. Interested in finding out what's going on creatively in Kirklees? Passionate about music? Want to learn a new skill or looking to make connections in your community? Check out creativekirklees.com

How to book

Book tickets via Opera North or Kirklees Town Halls

Online: operanorth.co.uk or kirkleestownhalls.co.uk respectively

By phone: 0113 223 3600 from 12-6pm or 01484 225 755 from 9am-5pm respectively

In person -

The Opera North Box Office is located at 32 New Briggate, Leeds, LS1 6NU. It is open Monday-Friday from 12-2pm.

Huddersfield Town Hall is located at Ramsden Street, Huddersfield, HD1 2TA.

Dewsbury Town Hall is located at Wakefield Old Road, Dewsbury, WF12 8DG.

They are open Monday-Friday from 9am-1pm, and then from 1.30-4.30pm.

Tickets are also available from Huddersfield Library

Your visit

Huddersfield Town Hall

Access to the Box Office, Stalls and Old Court Room is via the Corporation Street entrance. For the Balcony and Gallery, use the entrance on Princess Street.

Dewsbury Town Hall

Enter via the entrance at the front of the Town Hall for ground floor access to the Box Office and stairs/lift access to the Concert Hall.

Refreshments

Bar facilities are available at both venues with the possibility of pre-ordering interval drinks at evening events. On lunchtime concert dates, food is served in the Town Halls from 11.30am.

Travel and parking

Both Town Halls are within walking distance of public transport. For information about parking, visit kirklees.gov.uk/transport/parking.

Access

Wheelchair users

Both Town Halls have lift access and there are a limited number of wheelchair spaces in the Stalls with free accompanying carer seats. Please book wheelchair spaces in advance for lunchtime and evening concerts.

Induction loops

Induction loops are available at both venues.

Print formats

To request a large print, braille or audio brochure, please contact Opera North on 0113 223 3600.