

# The Guildhall Singers

## Andrés Hernández-Salazar Conductor

Wednesday 15 July 2026, 6pm  
All Saints' Church, King's Lynn

In this 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, we are proud to present an exciting and diverse programme of classical music and arts in wonderful historic venues across our festival town. We welcome established international artists and emerging and local talent across the spectrum of genres.

Our aim remains to deliver a year-round cultural offering as dynamic and inclusive as the community we serve. In combining rich traditions and strong history with a dedication to future development, we both celebrate 75 years of King's Lynn Festival and lay foundations for the next!

A very warm welcome to the 2026 75<sup>th</sup> King's Lynn Festival.

**Ben Horden** Festival Manager

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### Programme

**Purcell** If music be the food of love

**Josquin des Pres** El Grillo

**Josquin des Pres** Mille regrets

**Lasso** Manntona mia ara

**Lasso** Tutto lo di

**Mantjarvi** Lullaby

**Mantjarvi** Double, Double Toil and Trouble

**Lindberg** Shall I compare thee to a summer's day

**Vaughan Williams** Just as the tide was turning

**Vaughan Williams** The Lover's Ghost

**Whitacre** Seal Lullaby

**Shearing** Songs and Sonnets from Shakespeare

1. Live with Me and Be My Love; 5. Who Is Sylvia?;

6. Fie on Sinful Fantasy; 7. Hey, Ho, the Wind and the Rain

**McConnel** Like a Bell\*

The Guildhall Singers are delighted and honoured to give the first performance of **Like a Bell**, a piece of music specially commissioned by Kate Parker to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of King's Lynn Festival. Norfolk composer James McConnel has set the words by Rachel Goodman to music in a dynamic and joyous way, describing a stage performance, including references to the town's maritime and theatrical past.

The concert celebrates the themes of James' piece and the maritime and cultural heritage of King's Lynn, in particular Shakespeare's suggested association with St George's Guildhall and Vaughan Williams' visit to the town as part of his project to collect regional folk songs. Through music we explore the town's links with the sea through the centuries and include composers from fellow members of the Hanseatic league.

We start with a setting of **If music be the food of love** from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* by Henry Purcell, English composer and organist of the middle Baroque.

The town's links with Hanseatic countries is illustrated by music by the next two composers. Two pieces by the outstanding Franco-Flemish composer of Renaissance music, Josquin des Prez. **Mille regrets** and **Il Grillo** are followed by **Tutto lo di** and **Matona mia Cara** by Orlando di Lasso, a leading Belgian/Dutch composer in the polyphonic style of the Renaissance period.

Leaping forward to the 20<sup>th</sup> century we continue with two highly imaginative arrangements of texts from Shakespeare: **Double Double, Toil and Trouble** (*Macbeth*) and **Lullaby** (*Midsummer Night's Dream*) by Jaako Mäntyjärvi, a Finnish composer and translator.

*\*Commissioned by Kate and Adrian Parker to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of King's Lynn Festival with a text by Rachel Goodman*

The concert will last approximately one hour and does not include an interval.

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This concert is kindly supported by  
**Kate and Adrian Parker.**

Remaining in the Shakespearean vein, the Swedish composer Nils Lindberg was known for combining jazz, folk and classical styles in his music, as shown in his arrangement of **Shall I compare thee to a summer's day**, Shakespeare's sonnet 18.

Vaughan Williams visited King's Lynn around the year 1910 as part of his project to collect regional folk songs, and we are delighted to include two that reflect a link to the maritime heritage of King's Lynn and life at sea: **Just as the tide was flowing** and **The Lover's Ghost**.

Next, Eric Whitacre's setting of a poem from Kipling's *Jungle Book*, **Seal Lullaby**, evokes the lonely cries of grey and common seals on our nearby coast.

Our last group of songs are four settings of texts from the Elizabethan period by blind English jazz pianist and composer George Shearing: **Live with Me and Be My Love** (Marlowe: *the Passionate Shepherd to his Love*); **Who Is Sylvia** (Two Gentlemen of Verona); **Fire on Sinful Fantasy** (The Merry Wives of Windsor), and **Hey, Ho, the Wind and the Rain** (Twelfth Night).

We end the concert with the premiere of **Like a Bell**. Composed by James McConel who writes:

*Commissioned to write this piece to celebrate 75 years of the festival, I immediately thought of the chiming of a clock tower bell to represent the passing of time, the movement of history, of people passing through. Like A Bell is in three distinct sections. Part one: We hear the clock tower bell. We are in an empty performance space. All around is the evidence of past performances, of people. An audience gradually fills the space. Part two is the performance itself. Fast, energetic, incorporating rhythmic clapping. Part three is an anthem, the aftermath of the performance, a celebration of performance itself. The bells return. Celebrating not just the festival. But art. And life.*

Rachel Goodman writes:

*Anyone who has been in the audience for a piece of music or theatre will recognise the thrill that continues to reverberate long after the performance is over. Like a bell. There is the initial clang that grabs your attention, sets the senses tingling, and then there is the memory, the echoing ring that continues for a while longer – and if the performance has done its work – is delicious. Like a Bell celebrates that feeling, the moment of vibrant intoxication, and the ongoing ripple. It celebrates the performance, the audience, the event and the spaces that hold them.*

Programme notes © 2026 The Guildhall Singers

**The Guildhall Singers** is a dynamic chamber choir based in West Norfolk, dedicated to bringing choral music to life with warmth, clarity, and expressive artistry. Formed in 2019 by Helen Herbert and a group of experienced local singers, the ensemble was born from a desire to explore music especially suited to a smaller, more agile vocal group, one that values intimacy, precision and diversity in programming. From sacred Renaissance motets and English part songs to jazz standards and modern folk-inspired works, their repertoire spans centuries, genres, and moods, always chosen for its emotional resonance and musical

richness. We are curious, collaborative, and committed to craft. We honour tradition while embracing innovation, always aiming to create intimate musical moments that resonate deeply.

The Guildhall Singers has performed at notable events and venues across the region, including projects for the Shakespeare's Guildhall Trust, the Mayor's Trust, True's Yard, and a special performance alongside UK jazz legend Norma Winstone.

Led by **Andrés Hernández-Salazar**, an expert choral director and vocal coach, the group combines technical excellence with an open, collaborative spirit. He brings vision, vitality, and a deep sense of musical purpose, helping each singer contribute to a unified, expressive sound.

He began his musical studies in Venezuela and was awarded a scholarship by The British Council (the first for a Venezuelan musician) to study at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. He subsequently studied at the Trinity College of Music, London, and has since performed extensively. He was conferred the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Humanities with Music, by The Open University. Since 2002 he has been in great demand as a voice tutor and music history lecturer.



**Unauthorised video and audio recording are not permitted during the performance.** Please ensure electronic devices are silenced. In the event of an emergency please remain seated and follow directions from the stewards. This concert will be photographed and videoed for publicity purposes. If you would rather not appear in this media, please speak to a member of the team.



**Details and tickets for all King's Lynn Festival concerts and events can be found at [kingslynnfestival.org.uk](https://kingslynnfestival.org.uk)**



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