

The Conference of Birds was founded in 2009. It is the performing ensemble of Planet Birdsong (www.planetbirdsong.org), a global citizen science initiative that connects people with birdsong in many different ways. We play 350 years of birdsong-inspired music, from traditional and baroque music to our own improvisations and compositions. We believe that enhancing our awareness of the common ground between birdsong and human music can transform our relationship with the environment.

The programme will include

- *Johann Schmelzer* Sonata Representativa (1668)
- *Jean-Philippe Rameau* La Poule
- *François Couperin* Le Rossignol-en-amour, La Linotte effarouchée, Les Fauvettes Plaintives,
- *Antonio Vivaldi* Il Gardellino
- *Peter and Liz Cowdrey* Garden Birds
- *Peter Cowdrey and Jennifer Raven* African Birds
- *Peter Cowdrey* Wrens, Auroriole, Irish Air with Song Thrush
- *Gypsy Music* from Transylvania.



Jennifer Raven, flautist, has played with the Conference of Birds since its inception in 2009, when she was studying for a Masters at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Having spent her childhood as a very active member of the Surrey Wildlife Trust, and with a surname like Raven, she fitted right in!

Jenn is also an experienced senior leader and consultant working in music, arts, heritage and sustainability. She is Director of Fairbeats (a music charity working with young refugees and asylum seekers), Deputy Director of Sound Connections (a music education development and consultancy organisation), Head of Youth Outreach for Greener & Cleaner (a ground-breaking sustainability hub in South East London) and a successful consultant specialising in evaluation and youth leadership (her clients include the British Council, English Heritage, Wigmore Hall and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra).



Liz Cowdrey, violinist, is music graduate of Manchester University. Liz has combined interest in world music and cultures with a childhood love of chamber music. She was a founder member of world music ensemble Orbestra, with whom she performed throughout Europe, in Colombia and Turkey, and in collaborations with the Brodsky and Emperor string quartets in London's South Bank Centre. She explores folk and gypsy flavours from Eastern Europe with the

trio Jubovski.

Liz loves to interact with the elemental presence of birdsong in beautiful venues and natural settings; with the Conference of Birds she has travelled to Brazil via the British Council, researching and promoting links between Amazonian birds, music, and dance, and taken part in performances on birdsong-rich hillside terraces in Tuscany and Andalucia. Her meticulous transcriptions of birdsong mark her commitment to absorbing depths of style and gesture.



Peter Cowdrey won music scholarships to Winchester College and Trinity College Cambridge. He studied composition with Oliver Knussen. Many of his works are inspired by birdsong, and he has led Birdsong and Music walks all over Europe.

Peter is a member of the trio Jubovski, which plays virtuoso gypsy inspired music from Haydn and Bartok to Transylvanian folk music and improvisation. He plays in a piano duet with Katharine Durrant. In 2023 he became the first person to complete *Mlada*, a composite opera started in 1872 by Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Musorgsky and Cesar Cui. 2024 premieres included a short childrens' opera *The Horse and the Greyhound* in Moffat, and a community oratorio *St Birgitta's Vision* at Broadwell Church in Oxfordshire.

Audience feedback from performances by The Conference of Birds:

"Those musicians were unbelievable and quite transported one to nirvana..."

"Thank you very much for an interesting angle on music."

"My friends and I came to your Birdsong Concert and were awed and inspired. Thanks so much for giving us such a wonderful experience."

"I did so enjoy your exciting and evocative performance this evening, thank you so much ...I have completely fallen in love with the final piece you played..."

"I loved your compositions, especially the golden oriole. It's in my heart. Thank you for a lovely concert with the summer breeze with birdsong floating through the window. Altogether a lovely Sunday repose."

"The short bird compositions based on actual song were a delight."