

Coral Lancaster

cello

Coral was born in Perth, Western Australia, and grew up there. She studied cello in Perth with Gregory Baron and Suzanne Wijsman at the WA Academy of Performing Arts and the University of Western Australia, graduating with a Master of Music degree.

In 1995 Coral studied at the Canberra School of Music with Australian cellist David Pereira (where she first met Wendy Hiscocks who was a visiting musician there). Coral moved to London in 1997 and took cello lessons with David Waterman, also participating in masterclass courses, such as the International Musicians' Seminar at Prussia Cove, Cornwall.

She undertook trials with several UK orchestras, before taking up a position in the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra for six years. Currently living in Oxford, Coral maintains a varied and busy freelance career, playing and teaching cello. She regularly freelances with orchestras including the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and performs in solo recitals and chamber music.

Coral first became interested in women's music a few years ago through her work with the Lyric Piano Trio. Realising that women composers have been very neglected, the trio began to research and seek out music by women composers and have performed a number of recitals of women's music at the Oxford International Women's Festival.

Wendy Hiscocks

piano

Wendy Hiscocks studied with Peter Sculthorpe at the University of Sydney before moving to London in 1987.

Her music has been performed by major international artists and ensembles such as Piers Lane, Michael Collins, Elizabeth Connell, Schubert Ensemble and Jesus College Choir at a



Wendy Hiscocks and Coral Lancaster

range of venues and festival that include the Amadeus Festival (Geneva) and the Australian Chamber Music Festival to London's Purcell Room and the Kusatsu International Summer Academy and Festival (Japan).

Her most recent recordings on the Naxos label feature her as pianist accompanying Susan Bickley and Christopher Gillett in the songs of Arthur Benjamin and Edgar Bainton, and Jeremy Huw Williams in songs by Grace Williams.

Wendy is Artistic Director of Celebrating Australian Music.

Acknowledgements

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Music on Mondays



PROGRAMME

Monday 21 July 2025, 1pm

St. Michael at the Northgate, Oxford



Music on Mondays programme

Monday 21 July 2025, 1pm - 2pm

St. Michael at the Northgate, Cornmarket St, Oxford OX1 3EY

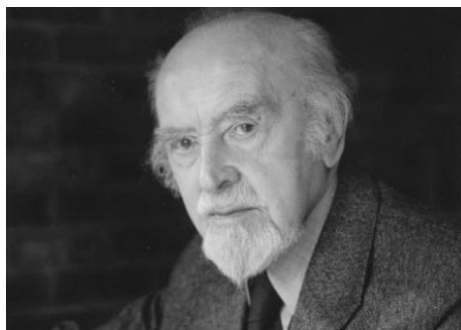
Coral Lancaster cello

Wendy Hiscocks piano

Thomas B Pitfield (1903 - 1999)

Sonatina for cello and piano

Preludio; Arietta; Scherzino; Toccatina



Pitfield's love of dance and melody comes to the fore in this *Sonatina*. Composed with a light touch and assured craftsmanship, his awareness of instrumental and harmonic colour is supported by a clear sense of structure.

All these qualities were used with equal skill in a variety of mediums that he worked in, whether it be paintings, poetry, drawings, linocuts or wooden carvings. Each discipline inter-fed and enriched the other.

In the field of composition he sculpted musical sounds, and decorated a musical phrase with the same intricacy and delicacy as his pen and ink designs; the latter appeared on the score covers of Oxford University Press, Augener and Lengnick publications.

His music enjoyed performances by distinguished artists of the day such as Barbirolli, Leon Goossens and Florence Hooton, with today's *Cello Sonatina* (1955) written for the principal cellist of the Liverpool Philharmonic, Oliver Vella.

Peter Sculthorpe (1929- 2014)

Threnody for solo cello

Sculthorpe identified strongly with his homeland and influenced a generation of Australian composers, including Wendy Hiscocks, during his teaching years at Sydney University. He established himself as a father figure of identifiable Australian music, and was known to have used Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island music, as well as the gamelan music of Indonesia. Composed in 1992, *Threnody* is a lament dedicated to the memory of the conductor Stuart Challender and is constructed in four sections: Cantando; Con malinconia; Risoluto; Con rassagnazione.

Peter says: "I chose to base the work upon the main theme of my orchestral piece *Kakadu*, this theme being a free adaptation of an Aboriginal lament from Echo Island, near Australia's northern coast."

In 1977, Sculthorpe was awarded an OBE as well as being the recipient of a Silver Jubilee Medal. He was appointed AO in 1990 and declared an Australian Living Treasure in 1997.



John Wayne Dixon (1945)

Giverny Idyll, op. 27



Sydney-born composer, conductor and music educator, Dixon has composed extensively for orchestra and for the voice. *Giverny Idyll* (2007) was inspired by a walk through Monet's garden in Giverny and by participating as a spectator during a May-day folk parade in Arles featuring the 'fife-drummers'. In his own words: "Thus, in a piece which attempts to capture the idyllic mood of Monet's magical domain, I have incorporated part of a fife-drum song from Provence called '*Ronde sospelloise de mai*'."

Arnold Bax (1883 - 1953)

Folk-Tale



Bax was regarded in the 1920s as a leading British symphonist, and is today mostly remembered for his orchestral music such as *In the Faëry Hills* and *Tintagel*. By the time he penned *Folk-Tale* for cello and piano in 1918, he had

found his mature voice as a composer and was looking towards Nordic influences, rather than Celtic, for inspiration.

Another important development at this time was his affair with the pianist Harriet Cohen whom he considered his muse and for whom he had left his wife and children.

A true romantic at heart, Bax's *Folk-Tale* opens to a theme marked 'melancholy and expressive'; its recurrence throughout the tale captures a dark brooding or longing interspersed with a livelier dance-like episode and a passage of lighter-veined lyricism before returning, almost fatalistically, to the opening melancholy theme accompanied by falling chromatic lines.

Wendy Hiscocks (1963)

Songline



Songline relates to the Aboriginal songline used by the native people to navigate the Australian landscape. The cello and piano travel the northern part of the Illawarra, a region where the composer was born and grew to love as a child.

Expansive stretches of shoreline, the five islands, Lake Illawarra and the two guardians of the region Mount Kiera and Mount Kembla are all part of the songline journey. Coral Lancaster and the composer gave the world premiere of *Songline* in the Holywell Music Room, Oxford in 2018.