



Music making and music awards

Music Awards at Selwyn College

Selwyn offers Music Awards of three kinds: Organ Scholarships (each worth £450 a year), Choral Exhibitions (£100 a year), and Instrumental Awards (£100 a year). In addition to the financial value of the award itself, each holder of a music award is eligible for a substantial subsidy towards the cost of instrumental or singing lessons.

For information about applying and auditioning, consult the University of Cambridge Undergraduate Prospectus or:

www.undergraduate.study.cam.ac.uk/finance/music-awards

Selwyn College Music Society

The Music Society organises both undergraduate and professional concerts. It presents regular concerts during Term, usually on Sunday evenings in Hall, as well as an annual Concert at the end of the Easter Term. The Society is run almost entirely by undergraduates. The College is fortunate in having a Hall with beautiful acoustics and an excellent Steinway grand piano. There is also a one-manual harpsichord.

At least one concert a year is given by a professional performer (artists who have performed in the past include Emma Kirkby, Ian Partridge, Joanna MacGregor, Margaret Faultless, the Chilingirian Quartet, and Stile Antico), but most concerts are devoted to undergraduate music-making, generally by members of Selwyn. These take many forms; there are opportunities in each term for undergraduates to conduct choral and/or orchestral concerts, and there is a Freshers' concert. Selwyn undergraduates show considerable initiative in programme-planning.

Selwyn College Chapel Choir: Organ Scholarships and Choral Exhibitions

The choir is conducted by the Director of Music who is assisted by two Organ Scholars. Choral Exhibitioners comprise the majority of the choir, and they read a wide variety of subjects. The College welcomes applications for Choral Exhibitions from all voices. It is not essential to have a trained voice, though most of our candidates will have had lessons. We are looking for people with good voices, good intonation, good sight-reading ability, and an enthusiasm for and commitment to singing and the choir. There are vacancies for all voices for 2018 and 2019. The Organ Scholars lead a very busy life, and play a prominent part in the musical life of the College, not just that of the Chapel. Prospective Organ Scholars should be playing at about ARCO level, have good sight-reading skills, and experience in liturgical playing and choral accompaniment. The renowned mechanical-action organ, installed in July 2004 by Orgues Létourneau Ltée, has 30 stops over three manuals and pedals. The chapel also has a beautiful three-stop Kenneth Tickell chamber organ.

During term the choir sings three services per week in the College Chapel, as well as concerts and services throughout the UK, recently in venues including Westminster Abbey and St Paul's Cathedral. Its repertoire ranges from the 10th to the 21st century. It has broadcast services for BBC Radio, sung live on television, and every year undertakes an international tour.

In an on-going collaboration with London's John Armitage Memorial Trust, Selwyn choir has premièred major new works by some of the UK's most significant composers, including Jonathan Dove, Gabriel Jackson, Judith Bingham, and Tarik O'Regan. The choir usually records one or two commercial CDs each year. One of their recent recordings, "The Eternal Ecstasy", has received much critical acclaim, and spent three weeks in the Top Ten of the Specialist Charts.

The Director of Music, Sarah MacDonald, is happy to meet sixth-formers who are interested in Organ Scholarships and Choral Exhibitions; appointments can be made by emailing her on seam100@cam.ac.uk.

Instrumental Awards Scheme

Selwyn was a founder-member of the Instrumental Awards Scheme. Awards are made without regard to College affiliation, but there are usually between three and five Award-holders in residence at Selwyn. The scheme helps gifted instrumentalists to channel their energies into the rehearsal and performance of chamber music. They receive professional coaching free of charge. It is normally possible for the IAS to offer each Award-holder a subsidy towards the cost of individual lessons.

Ensembles organise many of their own concerts and the Director of the IAS organises an annual 'Showcase' concert, and receives many requests from concert-giving organisations for recitals by IAS ensembles. These contribute to the major music festivals that are organised in Cambridge about every three years.

Prizes for Musical Performance at Selwyn

Three prizes are awarded annually to distinguished performers: the Williamson Prize for Musical Performance; the Edith Ray Singing Prize; and the George Roe Prize for a member of Selwyn who has given an outstanding performance at a Music Society concert.

Pianos and Practice Facilities

All undergraduates reading Music and both Organ Scholars are provided with a good upright piano (free of charge) in their College room for all three years. Other undergraduates who wish to hire a piano may sometimes do so, provided enough notice is given and a suitable room is available. The Cripps Court Music Room is available throughout the day and during much of the night for private practice and chamber music rehearsals. The Hall can be used for rehearsals and concerts.

Subsidy for Instrumental and Singing Lessons

The College has an endowed Music Fund that is used to subsidise generously the cost of instrumental and singing lessons for all students (undergraduate and postgraduate) reading Music, and for all students (regardless of academic subject) holding a Music award (organ, choral, instrumental).