

# Aaron Akugbo and Zeynep Özsuca

Pittville Pump Rooms

Friday 11 July

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<b>Arthur Honegger</b>	Intrada
<b>Lily Boulanger</b>	Nocturne
<b>Mark-Anthony Turnage</b>	True Life Stories: Elegy For Andy
<b>Antonio Vivaldi</b>	<i>Agitata da due venti</i>
<b>Eugène Bozza</b>	Aria
<b>Jean Françaix</b>	Sonatine
Interval	
<b>Jean Hubeau</b>	<i>Trumpet Sonata</i>
<b>Florence Price</b>	<i>The Glory of the Day was in Her Face</i>
<b>Mark-Anthony Turnage</b>	<i>True Life Stories: Tune for Toru</i>
<b>Florence Price</b>	<i>Song to the Dark Virgin</i>
<b>Gustav Mahler</b>	<i>Ich atmet' einen linden Duft!</i>
<b>Guy Ropartz</b>	<i>Andante and Allegro</i>

## Artist Biographies

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### **Aaron Akugbo** *trumpet*

Born in 1998 and of Nigerian-Scottish descent, Aaron Azunda Akugbo hails from Edinburgh and is poised as a future leading exponent of his instrument. He brings a wide-ranging musical taste to his artistry and despite being classically trained, cites Louis Armstrong as his biggest musical inspiration. He is a charismatic performer with an abundance of natural humour which translates into an effortless engagement with people and audiences.

A graduate of the Royal Academy of Music and an ex-principal of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, Aaron can often be seen freelancing in the principal chairs of some of the most prestigious orchestras in the UK including the Philharmonia, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Symphony and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras.

In 2020, as part of the Southbank Centre's 'Behind Closed Doors' concerts series, Aaron made his London debut at the Royal Festival Hall playing the Haydn Trumpet Concerto with Chineke!, Europe's first Black and Minority Ethnic orchestra. His performance received glowing reviews, with the Arts Desk describing him as "a refined soloist... His sound was sweet, often lyrical... with perfect clarity and intonation". Within the orchestra, Aaron has played in the UK's top concert halls including Chineke's BBC Proms debut. Aaron made his Wigmore debut playing Saint-Saëns Septet Op. 65 for trumpet, piano and strings with members of Chineke! as well as participating in the orchestra's tour of Europe playing in halls such as the Royal Concertgebouw Amsterdam and Kölner Philharmonie.

Recent and forthcoming highlights include recitals at St George's Bristol, the Bath International, Lichfield, Glasgow Cathedral and Lucerne Festivals. The latter of which saw him perform the world premiere of a new piece by Joy Guidry commissioned for him by the I&I Foundation entitled They know what they've done to us. In 2022 he performed

as soloist with the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland and will play Haydn's Trumpet Concerto with the Orchestra of the Swan in 2023.

Besides his solo and orchestral performances, Aaron is also a founding member of Connaught Brass. In 2022 the group were finalists at the Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT) awards in London and were also selected to be Artists of the Tillett Trust, City Music Foundation and Kirckman Concert Society. They were the inaugural winners of the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble Award in 2019 and attended the prestigious Britten Pears Chamber Music Residency in March 2022.

In early 2019, Aaron was a finalist in the Girolamo Fantini International Trumpet Competition whilst also being awarded the special prize for best performance of "Vulcano Club" by Piergiorgio Ratti. Aaron was subsequently invited by competition panellist and trumpet soloist, Tine Thing Helseth, to the Risør Kammermusikfest in Norway where he received masterclasses from Tine herself whilst also performing as a soloist. Aaron has received both lessons and attended masterclass from many of the top trumpet players including Urban Agnas, Reinhold Friedrich, Jeroen Berwaerts, Gabor Tarkovi, Guillaume Jehl and Eric Aubier. He plays on a combination of Vincent Bach Stradivarius and Scherzer instruments.

### **Zeynep Özsuca** *piano*

The Turkish pianist Zeynep Özsuca has performed worldwide as a soloist, chamber musician and accompanist. Born in Ankara, she began piano lessons at the age of four and continued her studies at Ankara Conservatory of Hacettepe University. After winning Istanbul Symphony's Young Soloists Competition in 2001, Zeynep moved to the United States to complete a Bachelor's degree in Piano Performance at the Oberlin Conservatory under Prof. Peter Takács. She then majored in accompaniment and vocal coaching at Hochschule für Musik "Hanns Eisler", Berlin with Prof. Alexander Vitlin and graduated with an MA in 2013. Zeynep currently lives in London and pursues her career as concert pianist, répétiteur and educator.

Zeynep has worked with conductors such as Gustavo Dudamel, Francois-Xavier Roth, Sir Simon Rattle and Sir Antonio Pappano, and acted as rehearsal pianist and recital partner for singers Sir Willard White, Magdalena Kozená, Rolando Villazón, Gerald Finley, Annette Dasch, Michael Schade to name a few. She has been working as a répétiteur and orchestra member with renowned opera companies and orchestras like London Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Concert Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Staatsoper Berlin, Aix-en-Provence Music Festival, Royal Opera House Covent Garden and Glyndebourne Festival Opera.

As a chamber musician, she has performed on prestigious stages including the Berlin Philharmonie, Wigmore Hall, Wiener Konzerthaus, Elbphilharmonie, The Concertgebouw as well as live radio broadcasts on Deutschlandfunk, Deutschlandradio, RBB Kulturradio (Germany), RNE (Spain), BBC 3 and 4(UK), alongside co-hosting the BBC Young Musician Podcast. She also regularly appears in concert with her duo partners saxophonist Jess Gillam, clarinetist Sacha Rattle and trumpeter Aaron Akugbo as well as her wind and piano sextet Berlin Counterpoint.

Zeynep has a close working relationship with the Guildhall School of Music and Drama where she has acted as accompanist, music director of opera scenes and currently as lecturer of the Opera Skills course.