

London
Philharmonic
Orchestra

**Evan Williams:
Woven in Tears**

Musicians of the
London Philharmonic
Orchestra



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COVER IMAGE

Hannah Rose Thomas

Nasreen, 2025

on view in the 'With Every Fiber' exhibit at Grace Farms

Egg tempera/oil on MDF panel

5'8''h x 4'w

Nasreen is a portrait painting of Nasreen Sheikh, modern slavery survivor, human rights activist, artist and Founder of The Empowerment Collective, by Hannah Rose Thomas, PhD. *Nasreen* was created using egg tempera paint mixed from natural pigments – a technique traditionally used for religious art. Thomas's use of iconography and early Renaissance painting techniques and gold leaf for portrait paintings is symbolic of the restoration of dignity and the sacred value of each individual.

hannahrosethomas.com

EVAN WILLIAMS

WOVEN IN TEARS (2025)

Woven in Tears was composed especially for the 'With Every Fiber' exhibit at Grace Farms, a cultural and humanitarian centre in New Canaan, Connecticut. The piece responds to *Nasreen*, a portrait by artist Hannah Rose Thomas of Nepali activist Nasreen Sheikh, a survivor of sweatshop labour and attempted forced marriages. In her work, Sheikh teaches women the skills to create and sell their own garments, empowering them economically. The portrait features a shawl created by Sheikh herself, along with the lush nature of Grace Farms. The freedom of the portrait is in stark contrast to the confinement Sheikh was subjected to in her youth.

The title of the work is inspired by the words of Sheikh. In her TEDxVail talk, she speaks of being constantly surrounded by garments in the sweatshop where she worked and slept. She says, 'I hated those clothes. They were woven with the energy of my suffering.' In another talk, to the 2023 Summit At Sea Conference, she says, 'I could not talk to anybody, so I started to talk to the clothes that I was making, and I said to those clothes that whoever is going to wear these clothes, I hope that they can feel me, I hope that they can see my tears ...'

The title of the piece is also inspired by Thomas's book *Tears of Gold*. And the musical material is influenced by her painting method. Thomas often paints women who survived traumatic events using techniques of Renaissance painters, employing gold leaf and egg

tempera. Her portraits mirror those of European royalty or devotional paintings of Catholic saints. In response to this, *Woven in Tears* employs musical material from the air 'Flow, My Tears' by English Renaissance composer John Dowland. The material is presented in the opening using the *Klangfarbenmelodie* or 'tone-colour melody' technique with a different instrument of the ensemble playing one of the notes of the melody in a unique timbre, representing each individual thread coming together to weave a tapestry. The work of Sheikh and organisations like Grace Farms reminds us that each of us is a thread, coming together as a tapestry for justice. No matter how small our role may seem, it is integral to this tapestry.

Later in the work, the theme is presented as a proportional canon, another Renaissance musical technique, with each statement of the melody either lengthened or shortened, and weaving in and out of the others. Slowly, over the course of the piece, the minor lament is transformed into major, becoming another proportional canon, this time bursting with joy and freedom, then a loving passacaglia, a Baroque courtly dance, reinforcing the regal nature of the painting and its subject.

Throughout the work, *glissandi*, plucking, and other techniques are used by both the string players and the pianist to evoke the fibres of strings threading each other. Tapping gestures are first used to evoke the

constant mechanical noise that Sheikh was forced to hear day and night. Later, they evoke the peaceful sounds of the 100-year-old loom that she acquired for her first business, using her skills and sustainable practices to empower herself and other women in her region. Sudden and poignant moments of silence represent the peaceful rest that Sheikh so desperately desired.

Woven in Tears was written for and recorded by musicians of the London Philharmonic Orchestra: Kate Oswin & Claudia Tarrant-Matthews (violins), Martin Wray (viola), Kristina Blaumane (cello) and Clíodna Shanahan (piano).

Reproduced by kind permission of Grace Farms

Musicians and recording team with composer Evan Williams (4th from left)



Dr Hannah Rose Thomas, Nasreen Sheikh and Evan Williams at Grace Farms on the opening day of the 'With Every Fiber' exhibit, 11 October 2025



Grace Farms
 Partnership has
 is that we are not too
 to dive in and be
 erned about where our
 ents are coming from.”
 Dinice, Sherwin-Williams

dy of Sabraw's work, layers of expressive
 are coaxed into interacting and amalgamating
 tions of up to several months. The result
 x, visceral, mysterious paintings that strike
 il balance between controlled and
 rocesses.

erized coal on the Lithologic canvas merges
 mine drainage pigment paint, which present
 of extraction and the innovative and hopeful
 AMD pigments were developed in 2016 by
 nd environmental engineer, Dr. Guy Riefler.
 rship with Rural Action and social enterprise
 nents, there's the potential to create a
 p system with a new factory plant that
 up the watershed and create more iron
 use in pigments, concrete, and other
 scale applications.

e naturally occurs in stone and is commonly
 pigment in the fine arts, commercial paint,
 as well as in cosmetics. When heated at varying
 ure levels, iron oxide can turn into popular
 f yellow, red, purple, and black.

s made from AMD can be used like any
 de paints such as Harvard Art Museums'
 e Forbes Pigment Collection. Certified B Corp
 Artists Colors has sold more than 10,000 tubes
 paint, which funds the ongoing watershed
 ion. Acid mine drainage pigments are now ready
 commercial application, and part of the making
 hibit has included conversation with
 Williams and Tomorrow's Artist.



Kate Thomas chose
 from 2016, U.S.,
 great painting of
 with which was applied
 to the scene in paper and
 other material pigments
 the background.



Use acid mine drainage pigments
 to help the world breathe
 friendlier and greener

Common Materials	New Materials
• Concrete	• Pigment
• Paint	• Pigment
• Pigment	• Pigment
• Pigment	• Pigment
• Pigment	• Pigment
• Pigment	• Pigment
• Pigment	• Pigment
• Pigment	• Pigment

Nasreen on display in the 'With Every Fiber' exhibit
 Photograph © Andrew Werner

EVAN WILLIAMS (BORN 1988) COMPOSER PROFILE



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Drawing from inspirations as diverse as Medieval chant and contemporary pop, the music of composer and conductor Evan Williams explores the thin lines between beauty and disquieting, joy and sorrow, and simple and complex, while often tackling important social and political issues. Williams's catalogue contains a broad range of work, from vocal and operatic offerings to instrumental works, along with electronic music.

He has been commissioned by notable performers and ensembles including the Cincinnati and Toledo symphony orchestras, Urban Playground Chamber Orchestra, Quince Ensemble and the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia with further performances by members of the International Contemporary Ensemble, and the Detroit, Seattle, and National symphonies, along with the the American Brass Quintet, The U.S. Army Band 'Pershing's Own', New Music Detroit, Fifth House Ensemble, Splinter Reeds, the Verb Ballets and the Pacific Northwest Ballet. His work has also been featured at festivals such as MATA, RED NOTE, Strange Beautiful Music, SEAMUS, the New Music Gathering, the Electroacoustic Barn Dance, the New York City Electronic Music Festival, and the New Music Festival at Bowling Green State University.

In January 2025 at London's Queen Elizabeth Hall, the London Philharmonic Orchestra performed Williams's *Dead White Man Music (Concerto for Harpsichord)* with soloist Olga Pashchenko and conductor Richard Egarr.

Originally from the Chicagoland area, Williams currently resides in Boston, MA, and serves as Associate Professor of Composition at Berklee College of Music, where he teaches composition, conducting, music technology, harmony and counterpoint.

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA & GRACE FARMS

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The London Philharmonic Orchestra and Grace Farms Foundation enjoy a meaningful and impactful partnership delivered through projects that celebrate and showcase their shared mission, values and purpose. The Orchestra's reputation for prioritising human connection alongside its onstage artistry fits closely with the ethos of Grace Farms, which, through its Design for Freedom movement, is leading the campaign to eradicate forced labour in the building materials supply chain.

The LPO first collaborated with Grace Farms at the opening of Theaster Gates's *Black Chapel* (the Serpentine Pavilion for 2022 and Design for Freedom's first international project), giving a string quartet performance on the UN's World Day Against Child Labour. Recordings by LPO players of the music from this occasion can be heard alongside *Woven in Tears* within the permanent 'With Every Fiber' exhibit on Grace Farms's New Canaan site, encouraging audiences to think and reflect.

The Orchestra appeared in Grace Farms's stunning River building as part of its 2024 US Tour, and a group of players will return there in 2027 to give a programme showcasing *Woven in Tears* alongside a range of complementary works. The Orchestra looks forward to continuing this important partnership in which art and music of the very highest quality are the gateway to deeply human conversations.

LPO performance in the River Building at Grace Farms, October 2024



ABOUT THE MUSICIANS

© Miha Smirnov Ostir



KATE OSWIN VIOLIN

Kate joined the LPO as First Violin (No. 4) in 2020.

Originally from New Zealand, Kate moved to London to pursue Masters studies at the Royal Academy of Music. Before joining the LPO, she

was Sub-Principal First Violin in the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and was previously a member of the LPO Future Firsts scheme. She regularly works as a guest principal player in orchestras across the UK.

As a chamber musician, Kate has given performances at Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the Southbank Centre and Carnegie Hall, and has toured as an Encompass Artist with Chamber Music New Zealand. She was a CAVATINA Chamber Music Fellow at the Royal Academy of Music, and was winner of the First Prize and Special Prize for the best performance of a contemporary work at the Orlando International Chamber Music Competition.

LPO chair supported by Eric Tomsett



CLAUDIA TARRANT-MATTHEWS VIOLIN

Claudia joined the LPO in 2022 and was promoted to Sub-Principal Second Violin in 2025.

Originally from Aotearoa, New Zealand, Claudia graduated from Te Kōkī New Zealand School of Music in 2018 with a Bachelor of Music in violin and piano performance, before moving to London the following year to pursue further study. During her studies at the Royal Academy of Music, Claudia was accepted onto the LPO Foyle Future Firsts Scheme in 2020/21 and began freelancing with the Orchestra during this time. Claudia completed her postgraduate study in violin performance at the Royal Academy of Music in 2022, under the tutelage of Professor György Pauk.

A keen chamber musician, Claudia performs regularly in London in a variety of ensembles, including with her string quartet, Calathea Quartet. They were Britten Pears Young Artists in 2023 and during the year toured New Zealand, supported by Chamber Music New Zealand.



MARTIN WRAY VIOLA

Martin joined the LPO in 2022, having been a member of the LPO's Foyle Future Firsts scheme in 2013/14 and freelanced with the Orchestra for eight years.

He has given concerts throughout the UK, Europe and

Asia, serving as Guest Principal Viola in the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, Welsh National Opera and City of London Sinfonia.

Martin completed his undergraduate studies with Mark Knight at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and postgraduate studies with Martin Outram at the Royal Academy of Music. He is an active chamber musician and has given many concerts in Japan with the Dulcinea Quartet. During his travels Martin developed an interest in Japanese and now holds an intermediate language qualification. As an arranger of string music, Martin has published many arrangements of pop tracks for string quartet which are now played across the globe.

LPO chair supported by David & Bettina Harden



© Benjamin Ealovega

KRISTINA BLAUMANE CELLO

Kristina has been Principal Cello of the London Philharmonic Orchestra since 2007.

Kristina was born in Riga and graduated from the Latvian Academy of Music and the Guildhall School of Music &

Drama. She has performed as soloist with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Chicago Civic Orchestra, Kremerata Baltica, Britten Sinfonia, Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, Sofia Soloists, Netherlands Wind Ensemble and Dalarna Sinfonietta, as well as all the main orchestras in Latvia.

As a chamber musician, Kristina has worked in partnership with such renowned artists as Isaac Stern, Gidon Kremer, Yo-Yo Ma, Yuri Bashmet, Leif Ove Andsnes, Janine Jansen, Julian Rachlin, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Bruno Giuranna, Misha Maisky, Nikolaj Znaider, Tatyana Grindenko and Oleg Maisenberg, among others, and has performed at festivals worldwide.

LPO chair supported by Bianca & Stuart Roden



CLÍODNA SHANAHAN PIANO

Irish keyboard player Clíodna Shanahan is much in demand internationally as a soloist, chamber and orchestral musician. As well as the London Philharmonic Orchestra, she performs regularly with the London Sinfonietta, Britten

Sinfonia, and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Her great passion for 20th-century and contemporary music has led to many composer collaborations, world premieres and first recordings. Clíodna particularly enjoys collaborating with dancers and choreographers, including numerous projects with Rambert, the Royal Ballet and English National Ballet.

Clíodna's formal musical training began at the School of Music in her native Limerick, followed by the Yehudi Menuhin School and the Royal College of Music, London. She was a participant on the LPO Future Firsts scheme in 2010/11.

In addition to her performing career, Clíodna is deeply committed to music education, and is Head of Keyboard at Dulwich College.



LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The London Philharmonic Orchestra is one of the world's finest orchestras, balancing a long and distinguished history with its present-day position as one of the most dynamic and forward-looking ensembles in the UK. This reputation has been secured by the Orchestra's performances in the concert hall and opera house, its many award-winning recordings, trailblazing international tours and wide-ranging educational work.

Founded by Sir Thomas Beecham in 1932, the Orchestra has since been headed by many of the world's greatest conductors, including Sir Adrian Boult, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt and Kurt Masur. In September 2021 Edward Gardner became the Orchestra's Principal Conductor, succeeding Vladimir Jurowski, who became Conductor Emeritus in recognition of his transformative impact on the Orchestra as Principal Conductor from 2007–21.

The Orchestra is based at the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall in London, where it has been Resident Orchestra since 1992. Each summer it takes up its annual residency at Glyndebourne Festival Opera where it has been Resident Symphony Orchestra for 60 years. The Orchestra performs at venues around the UK and has made numerous international tours, performing to sell-out audiences in America, Europe, Asia and Australasia.

The LPO made its first recordings on 10 October 1932, just three days after its first public performance. It has recorded and broadcast regularly ever since, and in 2005 established its own record label. These recordings are taken mainly from live concerts given by conductors including those with LPO Principal Conductors from Beecham and Boult, through Haitink, Solti, Tennstedt and Masur, to Jurowski and Gardner.

lpo.org.uk



Recorded on 21 August 2025 at World Heart Beat Studios, London.

Producer: Olli Cunningham

Recorded and mixed by: Robbie Nelson

Assistant Recording Engineers: Lucas Clahar, Isabelle Devonshire

Assistant Mix Engineer: Ames Allen-King

Mastering Engineer: Neil Pickles

Total playing time: 00:20:27

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