

SHAKESPEARE IN MUSIC FESTIVAL
Stratford-upon-Avon
2 May to 5 May 2025



Brush up your Shakespeare!
Organ Recital by Bel Comeau

Improvisation around Greensleeves
Anon / Bel Comeau

Movements from *The Tempest*, Matthew Locke, arr Comeau
Introduction
Galliard
Gavot
Curtain Tune
Rustick Air
A Canon 4 in 2

Improvisation around 'O Let Me Weep', Henry Purcell / Comeau
from *The Fairy-Queen*

Amor Dualis, a new work by Susannah Self

Movements from *Othello Suite*, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, arr Comeau
Children's Intermezzo
Willow Song
Military March

Improvisation inspired by Sonnet 20, Bel Comeau

Sonnet for Ceasar, Billy Strayhorn/Duke Ellington, arr Comeau

The Star-Crossed Lovers, Billy Strayhorn/Duke Ellington, arr Comeau

So In Love from *Kiss Me Kate*, Cole Porter

Medley on tunes from *West Side Story*, Leonard Bernstein, arr Comeau



Bel Comeau is an organist, pianist & composer, active mainly in the classical and jazz worlds. Grounded in the European classical tradition, they were a chorister at Truro Cathedral as a child, and later graduated top of their year in music from Cambridge University. At the age of 18 they won the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition; a couple of years later they won the Cambridge University Composition Competition, leading to a commission from the Britten Sinfonia. Their compositions and arrangements have been heard in the Royal Albert Hall, the Wigmore Hall and Birmingham Symphony Hall. They have performed as a solo recitalist in venues including Westminster Abbey and King's College Chapel, Cambridge.

Their solo repertoire incorporates five centuries of the classical canon alongside repertoire from Bjork to Michel Legrand to Fats Waller and Herbie Hancock, as well as frequent improvisations on audience requests. They have been featured on BBC Radio 3's *In Tune* programme. Their formal education also includes postgraduate study at Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz, Cologne.

More recently they favour musical spontaneity and improvisation across diverse musical fields, and increasing immersion in spaces that prioritise raw emotional expression over narrower technical criteria. They seek to unite the best of what the European classical tradition has to offer with a deconstruction of the limitations and exclusions often present in this world. They are also on an ongoing quest to work out what role music might play in social and environmental justice. Upcoming projects include ensemble projects combining organ with musicians from jazz and hip-hop scenes, and collaborations with drag artist Rizzla la Fizz.



Dr Susannah Self has forged an impressive International career as a solo opera singer and as a composer/conductor. She has sung solo roles for Covent Garden, De Vlaamse Opera, Opéra du Rhin in Strasbourg, Salzburg Landestheater, Lyon and Luxembourg operas. She has conducted much of the main choral and opera repertoire as well as her operas, *The Butt* in Vienna: 2016, *Quilt Song* in Birmingham, 2018 and her musical *The Boy From Brazil* in London 2013.

Susannah studied at the Royal College of Music: composing/conducting/singing. ARCM in singing performance, Cambridge University: MPhil Cantab in composition and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire: PhD in composition funded by a stipend scholarship. Susannah currently conducts five choirs in the East Anglian corridor: Her two auditioning choirs North Sea Voices and Orchestra and Ely Collegium have performed her *Stabat Mater*, *Magnificat* and *Sea Requiem* in Ely Cathedral in the last three years.

Susannah is currently composing a new opera for Helsinki opera. This year she has composed two organ works, *City of Divine Dreams* for Jonathan Stamp and *Amor Dualis* for Ben Comeau which is inspired by Viola's love for the Duke Orsino in Shakespeare's, *Twelfth Night*.