

The artists

Emily Masser *vocals* **Alex Clarke** *alto saxophone*
Graham Harvey *piano* **James Owston** *bass*
Steve Brown *drums*

The **Emily Masser/Alex Clarke Quintet** features two of the brightest young talents to have emerged on the British jazz scene in recent years. Since discovering their mutual love for bebop, they've joined forces to perform fresh and innovative arrangements of standards with a contemporary edge, while remaining grounded in the swing tradition.

Quickly gaining recognition among fellow musicians and audiences alike, they've appeared at numerous major UK jazz clubs and festivals including Pizza Express Soho, the Swanage Jazz Festival and the Buxton International Festival.

Emily Masser is currently a student at the Guildhall School of Music, "but her range, variation and seemingly effortless delivery reflect a confidence and ability which belie her years" (*Jazz Journal*). Her strengths as an arranger and vocalist have received multiple plaudits, highlighting her scat singing in particular. Besides the superb musical education she received at the Chetham's School of Music, Emily was also given invaluable mentorship by her father, respected saxophonist Dean Masser. Her breakthrough came with the release of her recent album *Songs With My Father*, a project dedicated to her late mother. It's been met with glowing reviews and praised for Emily's "pin-sharp singing, sparkling scat, and polished vocalese" (*UK Jazz Views*). She presents her arrangements and vocals with a freshness and maturity that have quickly established her as a "new star of British Jazz" and "a burning talent" in the words of *London Jazz News*.

emilymasser.co.uk

As a finalist at the BBC Young Jazz Musician of the Year 2020, winner of the Rising Star category in the 2019 British Jazz Awards and three-times Jazz Newcomer of the Year nominee in recent Parliamentary Jazz Awards, **Alex Clarke** is one of the most in-demand and versatile young reed players to have emerged on the British jazz scene. Lauded for her extensive repertoire and intelligent ear for harmony, her sound is steeped in the tradition of bebop. Her deep respect for the heritage of the music can be heard in a hard-swinging, melodic approach reminiscent of Scott Hamilton and Lester Young, with strong bop influences of Phil Woods and Cannonball Adderley.

alexclarkejazz.co.uk

After completing a music degree at the University of Denver in the '80s, **Graham Harvey** returned to England and began working in the UK as a jazz pianist and session musician. Between 1991 and 2001 he was Musical Director of the pop band *Incognito*.

From 2006 to the present, Graham has been the pianist for singer Stacey Kent, touring extensively and recording several albums for *Blue Note*, including the Grammy nominated *Breakfast on the Morning Tram*. He also established The Graham Harvey Trio 25 years ago, appearing at Ronnie Scott's in London and on French national radio.

grahamharveypiano.com

James Owston is a graduate of the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and currently plays and records with artists such as Clark Tracey, Paul Dunmall, Alex Clarke, Xhosa Cole and many more. He's rapidly making a name for himself in high level jazz circles, taking on a leadership role with his own touring trio, and in 2018 was a finalist in the BBC Young Musicians Award. "Improvised music is a never-ending journey – I always try to appreciate how I sound on any given day and learn from it."

[@jamesowstonmusic](https://twitter.com/jamesowstonmusic)

Steve Brown began playing drums at age 14. Five years later he was performing with local jazz groups and, at 23, he'd become "first call" jazz drummer in Manchester, working with Scott Hamilton, Art Farmer and other artists during their engagements in the city.

In 1996, Brown moved to London and was the winner of the 'Drums' and 'Rising Star' categories in the 1999 British Jazz Awards. A year later he joined the quartet of the great jazz saxophonist Scott Hamilton, with whom he's toured internationally over the last seven years and also featured on Scott's last four recordings for *Concord* records.

woodvillerecords.com > Steve Brown

Visit www.little-missenden.org

Festival Patron: David Matthews

Grateful acknowledgements

We thank all those who have helped with the Festival or supported us financially and in other ways. Special thanks to the funding bodies, sponsors and supporters listed below, without whose generous help there would be no Festival.

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The Festival Volunteers

Piano: **Bechstein C-234** from **Jaques Samuel**

Tuner: **Jim Denton**

Flowers: **Rosemary Ladd**

Next Year's Festival

The 2027 Little Missenden Festival will run from Friday 8th to Sunday 17th October.

Festival Website little-missenden.org

- See the full **2026 Festival Programme**
- **Book Tickets** (or phone 0333 666 3366)
- Be added to our **Mailing List** for next year's brochure
- Find out about the **Friends** or **Sponsorship**

Booking Information

- Email: tickets@little-missenden.org
- Phone: 01494 958148 between 11am and 8pm

General Information

- Email: contact@little-missenden.org

Little Missenden Festival Executive Committee

Chair: Dick Ware

Committee: Angela Bishop, Polly Buston,
Martin Cunningham, John Glasson,
Beth Neill, Mark Stanton, Liz Wager,
Dick Wells, Rachel Wilcox

Programme Notes

THE EMILY MASSER/ALEX CLARKE QUINTET



8pm, Saturday October 3rd, 2026
Little Missenden Church

66th Little Missenden Festival