

**Sir James MacMillan launches Cumnock as a new centre of excellence in the learning and teaching of composition, delivered by The Cumnock Tryst in partnership with leading global music education provider Trinity College London.**

**Sir James MacMillan today launches a major initiative aimed at putting Scotland centre stage in the world of composition.** As a composer with global acclaim, Cumnock will become a centre of excellence in the learning and teaching of composition, not limited to Scotland but for teachers and composers across the world.

Delivered through his festival The Cumnock Tryst and in partnership with Trinity College London, it is anticipated that over the next ten years, **Cumnock will become an internationally renowned centre for composition** that supports composers at the beginning of their careers; those teaching composition in schools; composers studying within higher education; and young composers still at school.

Sir James MacMillan, alongside his continued contribution to the world of classical music as a composer, has long been a champion of emerging composers; mentoring individuals, supporting music provision in schools and commissioning and premiering new works at the Cumnock Tryst.

**Sir James said,** *“It has long been an ambition of mine to take all the experience and learnings we have built over many years of teaching composition in the schools around Cumnock and East Ayrshire and make those available to teachers and students further afield. Teachers are under an incredible amount of pressure and for many composition is a challenging topic to tackle. We’ve seen fantastic results at both primary and secondary school levels through our work here and feel we can really help support and empower those tasked with teaching composition in our schools across the UK.*

*“The resources we create will not just be focused on teachers, but also support students studying composition at a higher education level or even self-taught. As part of our work to date we have mentored many emerging composers and supported some incredible talent nurtured here in Cumnock, such as Jay Capperauld and Electra Perivolaris through commissions for our festival, the Cumnock Tryst.*

*“I really believe that here we have the skills and resources to create an internationally recognised centre of excellence which will benefit the potential composers in the area, but also those around the world.”*

**The first year of this new partnership** is delivering a school-based composition project ‘**Build It Loud**’ and a **new book** co-authored by Sir James MacMillan and fellow composer and Chief Executive of the Cumnock Tryst, Jennifer Martin.

**Build it Loud is a Composition Project for Advanced Higher Music Students at Cumnock's Robert Burns Academy.** The Barony Campus in Cumnock opened in late 2020, bringing together two secondary schools, two primary schools and a school for those with special needs, all under one roof for the first time.

To celebrate the opening of the campus, the theme of Build it Loud is the connection between the creative processes in both music and architecture.

Rupert Goddard the chief architect of Cumnock's brand new Barony Campus of schools joined James MacMillan, Jennifer Martin and 15 Advanced Higher students, to explore the creative processes within architecture and composition. Each young composer is now being mentored by James and Jennifer along with a composition student from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland as they write a new piece for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's Brass Quintet.

All of the completed works will be performed and recorded in a live event within the Robert Burns Academy in 2021 (when restrictions allow). The works by the young composers will then be collated in a growing archive of music written by pupils in East Ayrshire and in due course, it is hoped made available to teachers and students via the Trinity College London website.

**Trinity College London has now commissioned a new book for music teachers and young composers from James MacMillan and Jennifer Martin** to illustrate the compositional process and to support those teaching and learning composition in the upper years of secondary school. This book incorporates much of the teaching processes used in the Tryst's composition projects for schools and will be launched at The Cumnock Tryst Festival in October 2021.

The book will be supported by a series of UK and international online and local seminars and Q&A sessions as well as an archive of footage and materials designed to support and bring to life the processes explored in the book.

**Sir James MacMillan added,** "At a time when those who make music face so many challenges, we are very glad to be able to continue our plans to create a centre of excellence in the teaching and learning of composition. Working with Trinity College London we can make the resources we will develop available to a wide network of music and education establishments around the world to support the creation of new music everywhere."

**Stuart Pearce, Trinity's Director of UK & Ireland markets said,** "Trinity's relationship with Sir James and the Cumnock Tryst is very important to us and we are delighted to be able to support this invaluable and ground-breaking work. The publication of this book is a wonderful way to underpin the centre of excellence initiative and we look forward to a long and valuable collaboration, making a real difference to the lives of young musicians everywhere."

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## **Background**

Trinity College London and The Cumnock Tryst already enjoy a close working relationship, following their first joint project in 2019, 'Flow Gently?' and the commissioning of a new book from composers Sir James MacMillan and Jennifer Martin.

'Flow Gently?' saw new works written by Advanced Higher Music students and their Music Teacher at Auchinleck Academy, premiered as part of The Cumnock Tryst Festival in October 2019. James MacMillan and Jennifer Martin mentored the composers over a three-month period in their writing of new works for Clarinet Quartet, the results of which were incorporated into a specially written script celebrating the life of Robert Burns and performed by Scotland's leading chamber ensemble, Mr McFall's Chamber. In addition, James and Jennifer mentored two composition students from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland who were experiencing creative work in the classroom for the first time and two further composition students who wrote new pieces for young dancers. This project was generously sponsored by Trinity College London.

The Tryst has worked to support creative music making and music education both in schools and across its community since its inception in 2013. Current and recent examples include Build It Loud, A Musical Celebration of the Coalfields, Create! Daldorch, and others in their initial development phases.

### **Sir James MacMillan**

<https://www.boosey.com/composer/James+MacMillan>

### **Cumnock Tryst**

<https://www.thecumnocktryst.com>

### **Trinity College London**

<https://www.trinitycollege.com>