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coming soon



why black voices?

Bedford Music Club is delighted to announce an exciting new festival against the backdrop of Black History Month.

As a local charity, we believe great music should be accessible to everyone in Bedford. We bring inspiring artists, uplifting concerts, and cultural events right into the heart of the town. More than just music, our weekend festivals aim to foster community spirit, support emerging talent, and encourage the next generation of music lovers.

A fantastic festival. Very well organised, a great programme
Audience reaction to Bella Caiol, April 2024

We loved it, loved the audience, the dad dancing was a highlight
Artist member on Red Hedgehog, April 2025

Black Voices brings together extraordinary artists to celebrate the richness of Black music. Through concerts, talks, community and educational events, we present music that illuminates stories of history, resistance, faith and joy.

when and where?

Our events take place in the heart of the community at All Saints Church, Queen's Park and at The Higgins, over the weekend of 24-26 October, with affordable tickets and a warm welcome for all.

We're delighted to announce **extensive free parking** in Queen's Park courtesy of the Gurdwara and the Family Hub.

what's on?

Young people are at the heart of **Black Voices** and we kick off with a major project for primary schools before getting into the mood for the evening concert with Bedford Academy's steel pans. Jazz and classical boundaries dissolve in the hands of Beatrice Nicholas and colleagues, celebrating classic women writing, composing and playing classic music.

Fri 24th

2.00pm **Peace on Earth**
Local primary schools perform spirituals and Errollyn Wallen's (Master of the King's Music) Peace on Earth led by Vox Urbane.

6.30pm **Steel Pan Ensemble**
Outdoor
Bedford Academy
Food £10 including glass of wine.

7.45pm **Classic Women**
Beatrice Nicholas (piano), with Matt Home (drums), Matayas Hofecker (bass).
A concert inspired by female jazz legends Hazel Scott, Lil Hardin Armstrong, Dorothy Donegan and Nina Simone. These African American women were jazz stars who trained first as classical pianists. Scott, Beethoven, Tatum, Chopin, Bonds, Liszt, Simone.

Wondering what's so special or different about 'black' music? Discover more at an informal study morning at The Higgins ...

Sat 25th

The Higgins Art Gallery and Museum.

11.00am **Hiawatha to Hip Hop**
Hear about the huge success of Coleridge Taylor's Hiawatha, the message of Hip Hop (Robert Beckford) and where Black voices are headed (David Bryan Arts Council).

1.00pm

Gospel music and Spirituals run deep through our daily soundtrack. Dig even deeper as we explore powerful emotions, with Leon Bosch's intimate chamber arrangements contrasting with an explosion of energy as the world-famous London Adventist Chorale blow us out of our seats. Those still able can dance til midnight with DJ LS ...

Sat 25th

2.00pm **Reimagined Spirituals**
Leon Bosch (bass) Beatrice Nichols (piano)
Award-winning programme of Spirituals arranged for bass and piano.

6.30pm Food £10 including glass of wine.

7.30pm **The Story Through Song**
London Adventist Chorale Ken Burton (conductor)
Much Black history over the past century and a half has been told through song which has captured the sound of the age.

10.00pm **DJ Lauren Smart**

At heart **Black Voices** is a community project and what better way to finish than to joining us in a special celebration of hymn singing led by a hugely talented young and diverse choir?

Sun 26th

Community Hymn Singing

3.00pm

Come and join local churches sing together with Vox Urbane's Vox Next Gen.

how can I get a ticket?

Tickets are on sale now through our online box office (booking fees apply).



Entry to all events is free to 18 years and younger and very heavily discounted for full time students and adults who buy a weekend pass.

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Website
- Email

Thanks to our sponsors

Bedford Music Club is delighted to have received support from the **Frank Branston Charitable Trust** managed by the Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation (BLCF). We also thank **The Wixamtree Trust**, the Borough's **Educational Improvement Strategy Group**, the **Gale Family Charity Trust** and **Making Music**. Thanks to this support we able to continue our work bringing cultural festival experiences to Bedford.

