



EST. 1525

# Sedbergh

SCHOOL



# Performing Arts Report

17th February - 14th March

2024-2025



## National Choral Competition

Earlier this month, the Chapel Choir returned to the National Choir competition at Symphony Hall, Birmingham. For the second successive year, they had reached the grand final at which fifteen choirs competed – having been whittled down from hundreds of entries. There was a record number of entries this year, and the grand final was expanded in a change to the 2024 format.

The standard of singing at the event was just absolutely remarkable! The choirs came from across the UK, and were a mixture of schools, specialist music schools and regional choirs. Sedbergh were the last choir to perform, and as we sat and waited for our slot, we were treated to an array of captivating performances from our fellow competitors. A broad range of repertoire was performed, including some incredibly challenging pieces on a technical and musical level. It quickly became clear that, whatever the outcome of the competition, this celebration of excellence in choral music would be the winner.

Our two items were 'Bogoroditsye Devo' by Rachmaninov and 'Ain't Misbehavin' by Fats Waller. The former is an intense, prayerful piece that contains arching melodic lines and a very broad expressive range. It was a piece that required tremendous poise, sensitivity and technical control – and our choir did themselves proud. In particular, we noticed that the climax was very rousing and drew a noticeable reaction from the audience! The second song was a complete contrast in character and demanded a balance of rhythmic discipline combined with the communication of the fun essence of the song. It was an immensely enjoyable performance.

The team of adjudicators consisted of some of the top choral directors in the country, from the National Childrens' Choir to the Kingdom Gospel Choir, and their general feedback was rightly effusive about the amazing quality on show from all choirs. They had clearly been very moved by the performances and wanted all of the young people in the room to know how proud they should be of themselves.

By this point, if we are completely honest with ourselves, we had put the competitive element of the evening to the side in favour of celebrating the quality of the night, but when we were awarded second place in the popular category for our performance of 'Ain't Misbehavin' it is fair to say that we were absolutely delighted! Whilst we are humble in our success, for a comparatively small, non-specialist school to be in the top two in the country in this area is really quite exceptional and it is testament to the work that Mr Seymour does with the choir to draw out this quality and help our pupils realise their potential. Indeed, it is this latter point that is the reason behind us entering these competitions – the rehearsal process and exposure to such high quality performances from other choirs is, in our view, an essential part of an excellent educational and musical experience. Our Head of Choir, Liv added “To anyone considering taking part in choir, I would urge them to get involved as it is a great opportunity to be a part of something really special, and in the case of this competition to see some amazing performances from other choirs. It is a really fun process and the results, no matter what they are, are evidence of enjoyment, unity and commitment”





## Studio Techniques takes off!

Over the past few weeks, Mr Norman has been busy bringing our Recording Studio back to life, following the acquisition of new equipment. With this, we are now not only able to explore the various fascinating aspects of creating music through software such as sequencing programs, but also do much more recording of pupil performances.

Situated on the bottom floor of Guldrey Lodge, the studio is linked to adjacent teaching rooms as well as to the Thornely Studio.

We have already made plenty of use of the studio and its facilities for our GCSE Music classes, and in addition Mr Norman has started new Studio Techniques open sessions on Thursdays and Sundays. It has been brilliant to see pupils making extensive use of these already, and we shall be sharing the fruits of their labours in due course.

Do contact Mr Norman via Teams if you are interested in learning more.





## Exam season!

February and March is exam season in Drama as far as the practical element to the GCSE and A Level courses go. Over the past few weeks we have seen GCSE and A Level pupils perform in front of visiting examiners from the exam board, showcasing their acting and design skills.

### GCSE

Year 11 pupils, Ginny, Elsie-May, and Mickey took on the roles of Rat, Mole, and Badger in two scenes from *Toad of Toad Hall*. Ginny played the gregarious Ratty so confidently as he meets Mole by the river bank. Elsie-May was able to convey just the right amount of nervousness in Mole as he experiences Spring for the first time. Mickey based his interpretation of Badger on a cross between Eyore, and Severus Snape, creating a rather grumpy but loveable Badger.

Will, our lighting candidate, designed a sophisticated lighting plot which perfectly set the first scene by the riverbank, and the second scene in Badger's house complete with a crackling fire and snowstorm effect. Well done Year 11!



# Upcoming Events

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**Sedbergh**  
SCHOOL  
MUSIC

DO YOU FEEL  
NERVOUS ABOUT  
PERFORMING?

DO YOU HAVE A  
NEW PIECE TO TRY  
OUT?

*Play & Listen  
concerts are a small  
and informal  
performance  
opportunity, ideal  
for first-time  
performances and  
for developing your  
performance skills*

*Tuesdays*

12:55PM

**PLAY**

**&**

**LISTEN**



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More information about our Gala weekend to be released soon...!

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