

THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

JENEBA
KANNETH-
MASON

THURSDAY 7 SEPTEMBER at 7.30PM

**Jeneba Kanneh-Mason
The Gathering Storm**

**Dmitri Shostakovich
Prelude and Fugue in D Major**

**Beethoven
Sonata No. 7 in D Major**

**Franz Liszt
Vallée d'Obermann**

**Florence Price
Fantasie Nègre No. 1**

“Sinner, please don’t let this harvest pass,
and die and lose your soul at last.”

—African American spiritual

“Here I am!
I’m not going anywhere!”

—Florence Price

At just 21 years old, Jeneba Kanneh-Mason is already a household name. The fifth youngest of seven siblings, Jeneba has no trouble holding her own amongst the significant musical credits attributable to the surname Kanneh-Mason. The prodigious pianist has gone from strength to strength, with her 22/23 classical season seeing her tour internationally; appear on television and radio, and release two albums. Almost a year ago to the day Jeneba made her debut here at Bold Tendencies. She delivered a staggering interpretation of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2; accompanied by the Philharmonia Orchestra led by celebrated American conductor Roderick Cox. She made the notoriously difficult work - a towering epic characterised by a yearning, bittersweet intensity - look and feel effortless. Primed with poise and elegance despite the early interview start, I had the pleasure of briefly catching up with Jeneba, on the precipice of her sophomore performance in the concrete spaces.

MONDAY 10 AM SEPTEMBER 4 2023, LONDON

KATRINA NZEGWU: This is your second time performing at Bold Tendencies. How does it feel returning as an “alumnus”?

JENEBA KANNEH-MASON: It's really exciting to return! Bold's atmosphere isn't like anywhere else I've performed. Because it's in London my entire family came; I felt really supported and I think it's going to feel the same this time.

KATRINA: Last year you performed a longer piece - Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 2 - but this year you return with a curated selection of shorter works. Do you have a preference in performing single, longer pieces, or a collection of works?

JENEBA: I don't have a preference. There's a different feeling you get performing with an orchestra versus performing on your own; it's not necessarily that the one is better. What's exciting about solo repertoire is that you're completely in control of everything that happens on stage, and you feel completely connected to the music. You're the only one sharing that with the audience, and that's quite special.

KATRINA: You come from an incredibly virtuosic musical family. Does it help to be surrounded by members who understand the demands of the job? Do you advise/bounce ideas off of each other, for instance regarding repertoire, or technique?

JENEBA: Yeah, definitely - I'm always talking to my family about the industry; about repertoire; and just asking for advice as well. My sister and brother - Isata and Sheku - have been performing professionally a lot longer than I have, so their advice is always incredibly valuable. It's so great that I have that support, and they're always just a phone call away.

KATRINA: Your programme includes Liszt's Vallée d'Obermann, from the "Years of Pilgrimage" suites. One

of the things that makes the work so powerful is that it frames music as a way of relieving suffering - something that directly relates to Bold's 2023 theme, "Crisis." What does the word "Crisis" mean to you? Did you take the theme into consideration when curating your programme?

JENEBA: The word crisis, to me, is when you reach a point of no return and something has to change because you're at breaking point. I think the pieces in my programme depict that really well, especially the Liszt. It starts with this really beautiful lyrical melody, with a lot of chromaticism; there's an undertone of discomfort, which builds and builds into crashing octaves. It peaks at a point of turbulence, which I think is very relevant to now.

KATRINA: Your performance ends with *Fantasie Nègre* No. 1 in E Minor, by the unbelievably underrated African-American composer Florence Price. Price battled sexism, racism and segregation throughout her career. What drew you to Price's work? What do you think the importance is of recentering the classical canon to include such prolific, but sadly too often overlooked artists?

JENEBA: My first encounter with Price's work was the *Concerto in One Movement*, which I played with the Chineke! Orchestra. I was instantly intrigued by the piece - how beautiful and lyrical it was, and its depiction of different aspects of Black American history. It's so important that we're rediscovering all of this music now, and I'm always so excited to perform music

by female, Black [and/or] minority ethnic composers. When the majority of the audience hasn't heard the piece I feel free to interpret it how I want to, and bring more individuality to it.

KATRINA: Not only are you performing Price at Bold, but you released an album featuring her Piano Concerto in One Movement, and Symphony No. 1, with Chineke! orchestra. What was the process of recording that album, and working with Chineke!, and conductor Leslie Suganandarajah?

JENEBA: It was amazing. Every time I've performed the piece it's been with a different conductor, and they always have something new to bring to the piece. The Concerto keeps being edited; people aren't quite sure what her final version was, and that's always interesting. [Leslie] was a great conductor, and he really loved the piece as well. It's always exciting playing with Chineke!, because I have lots of friends in that Orchestra.

KATRINA: Your performance repertoire is expansive and diverse - is your personal music taste the same? Who are the top three artists or songs you're listening to at the moment?

JENEBA: Yeah, I listen to a huge range of music. I'm listening to a bit of Queen, Doja Cat, Little Simz, Aretha Franklin...and then also just a lot of classical. I'm really enjoying Brahms' Sextet No. 1 at the moment.

KATRINA: This concert at Bold is the first of your 23/24 season, which also includes a performance in Brighton in November, with noisenights. Taking place in The Arch - one of the old victorian arches nestled on the Brighton seafront - as far from the vibe of the concert hall as Bold! What do you enjoy about bringing classical music to atypical spaces? Why do you think it's important to play such works in diverse and unexpected venues?

JENEBA: So I have a few friends who are not classical musicians, and don't really go to classical concerts...a lot of people are quite intimidated by concert halls, so when you bring classical music to clubs for example, it opens the music to a wider audience, and makes it more accessible.

KATRINA: Are there any other exciting performances or projects coming up across the rest of the musical season you're able to share?

JENEBA: You just mentioned noisenights - the Through the Noise concert series is what I'm most excited about, because I've never done that before. I'm looking forward to playing the Chopin Second Piano Concerto on the 18th November, with the Bridgewater Sinfonia, conducted by Steven Joyce [Myall]. It's only my second time playing that Concerto, and it's one of my favourite concertos and one of my favourite composers.

Jeneba Kanneh-Mason (b.2002) is Recipient of the Victoria Robey Scholarship to the Royal College of Music, Jeneba was a Keyboard Category Finalist in BBC Young Musician 2018, as well as winner of the Iris Dyer Piano Prize at The Royal Academy of Music, Junior Academy, where she studied with Patsy Toh. She has played concerts in England, Wales, Paris and the Caribbean as recital and concerto in 2021. For the 21/22 season, she performed with the CBSO Youth Orchestra, the Sinfonia Viva for the New Year Gala, as well as recorded with the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra. Throughout 2022 Jeneba has been touring globally - in Australia, New Zealand, USA, Antigua and Barbuda. Jeneba has appeared on television and radio, including Radio 3, and The BAFTAs, and has recorded for the album Carnival with Decca Classics.

Katrina Nzegwu (b.1999) is Visitor Engagement Manager & Artist Research at Bold Tendencies. Katrina has worked for Bold Tendencies since 2019, first on the Creative Learning team, and in her current role as Artist Research since 2022. Katrina graduated from Goldsmiths College with a Bachelors in Fine Art and History of Art.

Final Live Events of the Season

Friday 8 September at 7.30pm

Isata Kanneh-Mason

Music by Haydn, Fanny Mendelssohn, Schumann,
Chopin

Sunday 10 September at 6pm

Derek Jarman: Modern Nature

Directed by James Dacre, Derek Jarman's Prospect Cottage diaries are read live by Giles Terera and Samuel Barnett alongside original audio recordings made specially by Tilda Swinton, Jessie Buckley and Valgeir Sigurðsson and music by Donna McKeivitt, Max Richter and Benjamin Britten, performed live by singer Jessica Walker, pianist Joseph Atkins and cellist Rosie Banks-Francis with sound design by David Gregory.

Wednesday 13 September at 7.30pm

The Bittersweet Review

Readings by Amelia Abraham, Jordan/Martin Hell,
Donna Marcus Duke

Saturday 16 September at 7.30pm

Gustav Mahler: Symphony No. 1 "Titan"

Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Elena Schwarz

Upcoming Free Creative Learning Sessions

Made possible by the generous support of the Mila Trust.

Friday 8 September at 1pm

Backstage Pass: Isata Kanneh-Mason

Award-winning pianist Isata Kanneh-Mason will animate the lower levels through a special performance for local school groups. This session will be followed by a facilitated Q&A, offering insight into her world-renowned practice and the music she plays.

Saturday 16 September at 1pm

Backstage Pass: Philharmonia Orchestra

An interactive workshop led by Philharmonia's musicians and Teddy Prout, the Orchestra's Learning & Participation Manager. This session will deep dive into Mahler's First Symphony through participatory activities, actions and performances. This session is aimed at senior groups based in Southwark.

Saturday 16 September at 3pm

Public Rehearsal: Gustav Mahler: Symphony No.1

An informal and relaxed opportunity to hear live the emotionally powerful work of Gustav Mahler, performed by the vast forces of the Philharmonia Orchestra. This session is open to anyone who faces barriers to attending the evening performance and/or is curious to see, hear and experience an orchestra in action, at work.

BOLD TENDENCIES

We need your help!

Every year we fundraise to keep our programme thriving and to keep tickets affordable. This means ticket sales only cover about 5% of our costs. Every donation, however big or small, has a major impact and helps us to do more and better. Donations can be made on-site and on-line on our website.

Huge thanks to our 2023 Supporters

Southwark Council, Art Fund, Selfridges, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Phillips, The Mila Charitable Organisation, Genesis Kickstart Fund, Outset Partners, Steinway & Sons, Southby Productions, Vanguardia, Big Issue Access Invest, CMS-CMNO, Hallett Independent Art Insurance, Think Smart Accounts, and all those individuals who have generously donated.

About Bold Tendencies

Bold Tendencies is a non-profit arts organisation started in 2007 in Peckham, London. Bold Tendencies supports artists to develop their ideas and to realise site-specific projects and present live performances from its rooftop home, Peckham's Multi-Storey Car Park. Bold Tendencies celebrates the free enjoyment of public space in the city, welcoming participation in its rich, experimental programme and preserving open access to this special, spectacular place.

Bold Tendencies Team

Hannah Barry - Artistic Director & Chief Executive

Diana Córdoba Barrios - Managing Director

Tom Kelly - Site & Production Manager

Charlie Mills - Visual Arts Curator & Producer

Misty Ingham - Creative Learning Producer

Toby Taylor - Visitor Engagement Manager & Live Events

Katrina Nzegwu - Visitor Engagement Manager & Artist Research

Esme Wedderburn - Creative Learning Facilitator

Akhera Williams - Creative Learning Facilitator

Molly Burrows - Visitor Engagement Assistant

Margot Dower - Visitor Engagement Assistant

Maya King-Dabbs - Visitor Engagement Assistant

Luca Pokorny - Visitor Engagement Assistant

Mitzi Clarke - Back of House Assistant

Riccardo Pillon - Special Projects

Simon Whybray - Graphic Design

Oscar Maguire - Visualisation

Bold Tendencies Board

Ronojoy Dam

Linda Hewson

Helen Newman

Zia Zareem-Slade

BOLD TENDENCIES

**FLOORS 7-10
95A RYE LANE
LONDON SE15 4TG
BOLDTENDENCIES.COM**