



Review of Curry Rivel Music Club concert, March 21, 2026

Huw Wiggin, saxophone and Oliver Wass, harp

A cold, late Spring evening did not deter our largest audience yet to attend the first concert of our new season given by a talented duo featuring two instruments not usually thought of as musical partners, the saxophone and the harp. Huw Wiggin and Oliver Wass are fine musicians, technically skilful, musically eloquent and excellent communicators, and they produced an eclectic programme ranging from Couperin to a work only recently composed for the duo.

The opening number, by the contemporary Hungarian clarinettist, Béla Kovács, was in the klezmer style, beginning with a sombre call to prayer which led to a thrilling dance played with virtuosic panache. Then followed two arrangements, a ravishing melody from a harpsichord work by Couperin, played exquisitely on the alto saxophone by Huw Wiggin, and Arvo Pärt's curious depiction of images in opposing mirrors repeating themselves to infinity, *Spiegel im Spiegel*. Other arrangements in the programme included a mesmeric depiction of New York at night by Philip Glass, an Aria from the Goldberg Variations of Bach, Songs by Gershwin and Bernstein, the famous Pavane by Faure and two Spanish pieces, beautifully played on the harp by Oliver Wass

There were just three original works for saxophone and harp in the evening's programme. The first was commissioned by the duo from the young saxophonist and composer, Charlotte

Harding. In her Euphonic she describes her impressions of a benign watery landscape with great sensitivity and subtlety, the saxophone singing joyfully above the wave-like ripples from the harp. The second original, Sussurros Brasileiros by another sax player, Andy Scott, was a riot of South American colour depicting a Brazilian street scene. The final original was the finale to the concert. Carmen Fantasy, as the name suggests, is a collection of tunes from Bizet's opera Carmen and is a tour de force for the saxophonist. Huw Wiggin carried it off with spectacular aplomb.

It was a great start to another season of wonderful music to be played by brilliant artists in our lovely church of St. Andrew. We look forward to the next recital on April 25th, a piano recital by Tim Horton.

Peter Merry