

Alex Laing is a conductor, violinist, teacher, adjudicator and writer. He is recognised as one of the finest and most versatile educators in the country. His work with the Benedetti Foundation sees him teaching musicians from young beginners to conservatoire students and adult learners as well as working with music teachers on how best to lead, direct and conduct ensembles.

Alex has a long and close relationship with the National Children's Orchestra of Great Britain. For many years he was conductor of the NCO Easterlies and is regularly a tutor and conductor for the NCO age-banded orchestras. He has also acted as course director for the National Youth String Orchestra of Great Britain. Alex is a former Head of Strings at Uppingham School and a former professor at the Royal College of Music in the Junior Department where he coached chamber music and conducted the Sinfonia Orchestra. While at Uppingham, Alex conducted the Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra and Senior String Ensemble. His violin students have been awarded scholarships to study at UK conservatoires, have enjoyed success as members of the NCO and of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, and have been competition winners both in the UK and in Europe. He has also coached chamber music to national standard: in three out of four years under his guidance, Uppingham's chamber musicians were chamber champions in The Pro Corda Chamber Music Festival.

Alex began his musical education at the Edinburgh Academy and later at St. Mary's Music School. There he studied violin with Warren Jacobs and was privileged to have opportunities of working closely with Lord Menuhin, the School's Patron. Alex is a graduate of Cambridge University. While studying music at Christ's College, he also held one of the University's prestigious Instrumental Awards, which led to master classes with The Endellion String Quartet. Thereafter he attended Birmingham Conservatoire, where his violin studies continued with Jacqueline Ross. He was awarded the Diploma of Professional Studies in Music Performance, the flagship postgraduate degree at the Conservatoire. For his final degree recital he performed the Alban Berg Violin Concerto with the Conservatoire Symphony Orchestra. While in Birmingham, Alex also studied with Peter Thomas and Michael Bochmann..

Alex is founder and artistic director of the Darwin Ensemble Chamber Orchestra (DECO), which recently celebrated its tenth birthday. The orchestra specialises in accessible classical music, drawing large audiences from across all generations. Alex has appeared as soloist with DECO in Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante, Haydn's Sinfonia Concertante and in both the Bach double violin and the double violin and oboe.

Alex contributes articles on violin teaching to ARCO and JESTA, magazines for the European String Teachers Association, and his reviews of music and education regularly appear in the Strad magazine.

From 2017-2022 Alex was Artistic Director (Music) at the King's High School in Warwick, where he oversaw music provision for children aged 3-18 and conducted the Warwick Independent Schools Foundation Symphony Orchestra. He also conducted the newly founded regional string orchestra for Warwickshire Music Hub. In 2021 King's High received

national recognition by winning The ISA School of the year for Excellence and Innovation in the Performing Arts.

Alex is now Director of Music at Wells Cathedral School in Somerset where he leads a team of over 100 music staff at one of the very few specialist music schools in the UK.