

Secret Steinway Steps Into the Spotlight



Rebecca Nash & Sara Colman

FOR YEARS, Bridport's Sir John Colfox Academy's most talented resident has lived under a staircase. On Thursday 8th October, it finally gets its moment: a 1967 Steinway concert grand piano is coming out of hiding for the launch of a brand new jazz series, with pianist Rebecca Nash and vocalist Sara Colman doing the honours.

The piano once belonged to a local music club. When the club folded, the instrument was left in trust to the Sir John Colfox Academy—where it has spent years, quietly maintained, rarely heard until last year, and known to few beyond the school gates. But in October, it moves into the school's main auditorium for a special jazz concert.

Sir John Colfox Academy's Head of Music, Alison Davies, has had a front-row seat to the piano's double life. 'It's a 1967 Steinway concert grand, and there aren't many of those in the South West, which makes it very special,' said Ms Davies. 'Kids play it after school—under the stairs. They're hidden away, so they don't feel exposed, but they play and the music fills the halls. Because it once belonged to the town, I feel like it should be a local celebrity—a star in its own right.'

Star treatment is now underway. Rebecca Nash—pianist, composer and educator at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire—joins Sara Colman, the Conservatoire's first ever Recording Artist in Residence, for an evening of jazz, folk and classical music. The pair go back years, and their album *Ribbons* has an origin story to match the piano's: ten days shut away in a forest house during lockdown with nothing but each other and a set of chickens for company. The



The Steinway at the Sir John Colfox school main hall

results draw on everything from Joni Mitchell to British jazz pianist John Taylor.

This is the first date in a new concert series born from a partnership between Jazz Jurassica, a local music promoter and The Sir John Colfox Academy.

Julie Sheppard, of Jazz Jurassica, says it's worth clearing your diary—and your assumptions. 'We know what you're picturing. Draughty. Squeaky floors. A hall that smells faintly of PE lessons. Forget it. Colfox has an auditorium that wouldn't look out of place on the South Bank, and inside it sits a Steinway with a story of its own.'

Rebecca Nash & Sara Colman is on Thursday 8th October 2026. Doors/bar 6.30pm, starts 7.00pm at the Sir John Colfox Academy, Ridgeway, Bridport DT6 3DT.

Tickets: £12 advance (plus booking fee), available at ticketsource.com. For more information: jazzjurassica.co.uk/rebecca-nash-sara-colman-8th-oct