

13th November 2026

BAROQUE ALCHEMY

Piers Adams (recorders)

Lyndy Mayle (keyboard)

The Golden Thread

Programme

J.S. BACH - Allegro from Sonata in A minor BWV 1003

ANON - Tristan's Lament

ANON - Saltarello **ANON**

J.S. BACH -Andante from Sonata in E minor BWV 1034

M. UCCELLINI - La Luciminia Contenta

E. MASSENET - Meditation from Thais

J.S. BACH - Prelude in C minor BWV 999

C. DEBUSSY - Syrinx

H. BIBER - Sonata Representiva

J.S. BACH - Aria from the Easter Oratorio BWV 249

J.S. BACH - Gigue from Sonata in B minor BWV 1030

Interval

J.S. BACH - Adagio from Sonata in E minor BWV 1034

J.S. BACH - Allegro Assai from Sonata in E major BWV 1035

J. IBERT - Entr'acte **J. IBERT**

L. COUPERIN - Prelude in G minor

ANON - Hymn of the Cathars

J.S. BACH - Courante, Minuet and Fugue from Suite in G BWV 1007

H. BEEFTINK - Nocturne

H.M. LINDE - Music for a Bird

J.S. BACH - Adagio from Sonata in C minor BWV 1017

V. MONTI - Czardas

Programme Notes

Baroque Alchemy brings together two musical worlds we love: the ancient, expressive voice of the recorder and the vast colour palette of the modern keyboard. We explore how music of the past can speak vividly in the present - sometimes through historically inspired sounds, sometimes through textures and atmospheres of which the original composers could only have dreamed. Our aim is not to modernise for its own sake, but to rediscover the spirit of experimentation that originally gave this music life - and to share it in ways that are engaging, expressive and full of character.

In today's programme we weave a colourful tapestry of sound, using the luminous music of J.S. Bach as a golden thread running throughout. Our choice of works by this great baroque master range from irrepressible energy to inward meditation, and around them we gather voices from earlier centuries and later generations, each illuminating Bach's world from a different angle.

The journey opens with our transcription the fiery Allegro from the A minor sonata for solo violin BWV 1003, music of relentless motion and architectural clarity. From there we step back into the medieval world with Tristan's Lament and a vibrant Saltarello, reminders that long before Bach, music already carried both heartbreak and exuberance.

The Andante from the E minor flute sonata provides a warm, mellifluous balm, before we enter the highly individual world of Marco Uccellini, whose *La Luciminia Contenta* delights in abrupt shifts of character and unexpected turns of phrase. From that unpredictability we move into the unashamed lyricism of Massenet's *Meditation* from *Thaïs* - a moment of pure melodic calm.

Bach's Prelude in C minor follows in a more driven spirit: its flowing semiquavers (here heard as a keyboard solo with recorder providing a jazzy descant on the reprise) create a sense of perpetual motion. Debussy's atmospheric flute solo *Syrinx* then clears the air entirely - free and fluid, almost suspended in time.

Biber's wonderfully theatrical *Sonata Representativa* introduces humour and vivid characterisation, before Bach returns with a radiant oboe solo from the Easter Oratorio and the mesmerising intricacy of the *Gigue* from the B minor flute sonata - music that seems to dance of its own accord.

After the interval the thread continues. The Adagio from BWV 1034 returns us to a more contemplative sound-world, its treble and bass lines interweaving in gently restrained passion, before the perky Allegro assai from BWV 1035 breaks the spell with an irresistible burst of energy. From there we launch into Ibert's mercurial *Entr'acte*, evoking the fire of the Spanish soul.

The improvisatory and harmonic genius of 17th century French harpsichordist Louis Couperin is on full display in his G minor prelude, leading into a medieval Cathar hymn evoking distant landscapes. A trio of movements adapted from Bach's G major cello suite restore courtly poise and rhythmic vitality.

Highly contrasting contemporary reflections by Herman Beeftink and Hans-Martin Linde extend the line into our own time, proving that the expressive language and spirit of experimentation that Bach shaped still resonates today. The programme closes with a gentle,

café-style version of the Adagio from the C minor violin sonata, and finally Monti's virtuosic Czardas - a blaze of colour and spirit in which the golden thread bursts into full brilliance.

Piers Adams 2026

Biography

Baroque Alchemy is the duo partnership of recorder player Piers Adams and keyboardist Lyndy Mayle, bringing together early music repertoire and a wide-ranging contemporary keyboard palette.

Piers Adams has enjoyed an international career spanning four decades, performing throughout Europe, the Americas, Asia and Australasia. He is widely recognised as the founder and frontman of the iconic baroque quartet Red Priest, with whom he has given over 1,500 concerts worldwide and recorded extensively. Alongside his ensemble work, he appears regularly as soloist with orchestras across the UK and abroad, and enjoys an enviable reputation for his virtuosity, stylistic insight and communicative stage presence.

Lyndy Mayle studied harpsichord at the Royal College of Music, graduating as a prize-winning student. Rather than pursuing a conventional performing career, she followed a broader path, working as a music director at the National Theatre before becoming established as a highly respected piano teacher. Her return to the concert platform with Baroque Alchemy celebrates this breadth of musical experience in a uniquely versatile approach, combining historical performance practice with a wide range of contemporary keyboard textures and musical styles.

Baroque Alchemy was formed in 2022 and has since performed widely for music societies and festivals throughout the UK, as well as at major international wind festivals in Germany and Spain. Their debut album, *Breaking Free*, was released in 2024. For more information, including future tour dates and recordings, please visit www.baroquealchemy.com