

**AARON AZUNDA
AKUGBO**
TRUMPET

Aaron Azunda Akugbo served up a flute of sparkling champagne, the effervescent brilliance of his playing radiating through the outer movements, with stylish ornamentation'

Bachtrack, BBC Proms 2023

Born in Edinburgh, Nigerian–Scottish trumpeter Aaron Azunda Akugbo is developing a following as a leading exponent of his instrument. He brings a musical breadth to his artistry and while classically trained in both trumpet and singing, cites Louis Armstrong as his biggest musical inspiration. He is a charismatic performer with an abundance of natural humour, which translates into an effortless engagement with colleagues and audiences.

Akugbo made his London concerto debut at the Royal Festival Hall in 2020 and his BBC Proms concerto debut in 2023, performing the Haydn Trumpet Concerto both times with Chineke!, Europe's first black and minority ethnic orchestra. His concerto performances often feature standard works alongside lesser-known pieces, for example, by Eric Ervazén and Florence Price, and he has performed with Lucerne Festival Strings, National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, Orchestra of the Swan and Bath Philharmonia.

In 2025, Akugbo performed Bernstein's *West Side Story* with Manchester Camerata, in its first ever arrangement for solo trumpet, at Classical Pride, a festival celebrating LGBTQ+ voices in classical music. In October he will make his debut with BBC Singers at Barbican Centre, curating a programme based on his own musical influences. This season he also performs Wynton Marsalis' Trumpet Concerto, conducted by Joanna McGregor, and collaborates with Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Steven Osborne in Shostakovich's Concerto no.1 for Piano and Trumpet. Other future highlights include recitals around the UK with regular duo partners Zeynep Özsuca (piano), Ryan Corbett (accordion) and Milo Harper (harp).

Recent highlights include recitals at St George's, Bristol, and Royal Conservatoire, Glasgow, as well as visits to Bath International, Lichfield, Petworth, Ryedale, Chipping Campden, Bedford Park, St Magnus and Lammermuir Festivals. Akugbo led the Emerging Talent programme at the 2024 Edinburgh Festival, culminating in a performance at the Hub. He was invited by Tine Thing Helseth to Risør Kammermusikfest in Norway, and has performed at Lucerne Festival three times, including giving the world premiere of Joy Guidry's *They know what they've done to us* for trumpet and

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electronics in 2022, commissioned for him by the I&I Foundation.

A graduate of the Royal Academy of Music and ex-principal of the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, Akugbo can often be seen as guest principal in the chairs of the UK's leading orchestras. He has received lessons and masterclass tuition from many leading trumpet players, including Urban Agnas, Reinhold Friedrich, Jeroen Berwaerts, Gabor Tarkovi, Guillaume Jehl and Eric Aubier.

He is a founding member of Connaught Brass, inaugural winners of the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble Award in 2019, Britten Pears Arts chamber music residency artists in 2022, and supported by The Tillet Trust, City Music Foundation and Kirckman Concert Society.

He plays a combination of Vincent Bach Stradivarius and Scherzer instruments.