

Classical music goes clubbing

Chances are you haven't heard the words "clubbing" and "classical music" mentioned in the same sentence before, but that's about to change.

The first Harmonic event, at The Art Club on Mayfair's Dover Street on Wednesday featured the hottest names in classical music live, including soprano Danielle De Niese. It sold out within a week of being announced. As well as regular punters paying £10 a ticket, Julian Lloyd Webber, Myleene Klass, Nicola Benedetti and Alfie Bowe all secured places on the guest list.

Such demand is already leading the promoters to consider upping the frequency of Harmonic from monthly to twice a month.

Steve Abbott, director of Bedlam, judge on BBC Two's Classical Superstar and DJ at Harmonic, thinks this has been a long time coming.

He said: "I used to play classical at a French restaurant, Papillon in New York's Greenwich Village, and people started to come from all over as they weren't used to seeing someone mix classical music. "I had the likes of RZA from the Wu - Tang Clan drop in," he added.

With Harmonic doing something of a first, putting on an underground, tipped-to-be-massive act alongside a high-profile artist in an intimate environment, Abbott hopes it will entice newcomers to give classical a go, as well as leading industry types there to network. "I was reading about Charles Dickens, who started The Arts Club because literary people had nowhere to go in London except for brothels and taverns. I thought it would be a good thing for the classical world, a chance to see performances close up, wearing what you want and getting a chance to meet people. "

The next event is 9 April, with Julian Lloyd Webber, Pam Chowhan and The Pavao Quartet. Book early. If you can't wait, NonClassical at the Macbeth, Hoxton Street, is the first Wednesday every month.