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# RSNO

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL  
ORCHESTRA

## Wagner's **Ring Symphony**

Usher Hall, Edinburgh  
Fri 16 May 2025 7.30pm

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall  
Sat 17 May 7.30pm

Dedicated to **Dr Robert Lillie** in recognition of his generous support  
of the **RSNO Foundation**

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# Wagner's Ring Symphony

**Usher Hall, Edinburgh** Fri 16 May 2025 7.30pm  
**Glasgow Royal Concert Hall** Sat 17 May 7.30pm

Wagner's *Ring* cycle is an epic in every sense. The full experience takes four days, but this evening's orchestral 'adventure' gives you a taste of the masterpiece – all its majesty, power and drama – in just over an hour. First, though, we welcome our Partnership Ensemble, Dunedin Consort, for Handel's enchanting *Water Music* before the Consort's period instruments lock horns with the full RSNO, in a world premiere from Edinburgh composer Neil Tòmas Smith.

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**HANDEL** Water Music Suite No3 HWV 350 [11']  
**NEIL TÒMAS SMITH** Hidden Polyphony [20'] WORLD PREMIERE  
(RSNO and Dunedin Consort commission)

INTERVAL

**WAGNER arr. HENK DE VliegER** The Ring, An Orchestral Adventure [62']

---

**Thomas Søndergård** Conductor  
**Anna Dennis** Soprano  
**Dunedin Consort**  
**Royal Scottish National Orchestra**

Dedicated to **Dr Robert Lillie** in recognition of his generous support  
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The Glasgow performance will be recorded for the RSNO Archive.  
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**Debussy** *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*  
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**Price** *Adoration* and **Wirén** *Serenade*  
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**Mendelssohn** Violin Concerto

**Lera Auerbach** *Symphony No1 Chimera*

**Thomas Søndergård** Conductor

**Kellen Gray** Conductor<sup>†</sup>

**Randall Goosby** Violin

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# Welcome



Welcome to this evening's concert, which is dedicated to the memory of Dr Robert Lillie in recognition of his generous support of the RSNO Foundation. It's a particularly special one tonight as we are joined by Dunedin Consort for the culmination of our three-year partnership. We are celebrating the success of this partnership with a World Premiere, written by Neil Tòmas Smith especially for the occasion.

Neil's work, *Hidden Polyphony*, was chosen after an open call for composers in 2023. I thoroughly recommend you spend some time reading about Neil's inspiration for the piece further on in this programme – it's absolutely fascinating. Neil was part of our Composers Hub a few years ago and it's a real testament to the importance of our Learning and Engagement Department's work that we get to hear his brand-new work performed by these world-class ensembles. It's a privilege to be able to give a platform to emerging composers such as Neil and I'm looking forward to seeing where the future takes him.

I'm certain you'll be impressed by Anna Dennis' voice too, and I'm pleased she'll be back with us next Season performing a new commission by Elena Langer under the direction of Kristiina Poska. General ticket sales for the 2025:26 Concert Season opened on Monday, so make sure you secure your chance to hear Anna at [rsno.org.uk](https://rsno.org.uk).

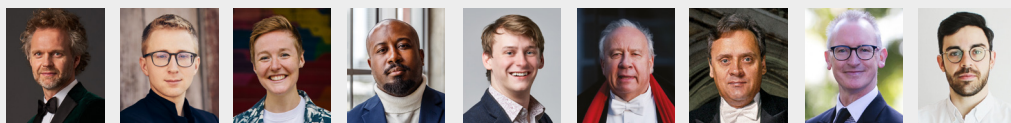
The Orchestra is heading out and about next week for matinee performances in Ayr and Lanark. Ayr is getting a second visit too, with the RSNO Chorus performing on Saturday afternoon in Holy Trinity Church to fundraise for their upcoming tour to Budapest. It would be lovely to see some of you there.

**Alistair Mackie**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

# Royal Scottish National Orchestra

1-9



10-18



19-27



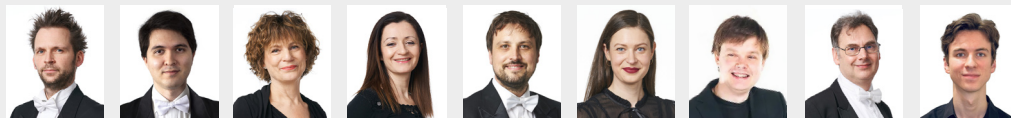
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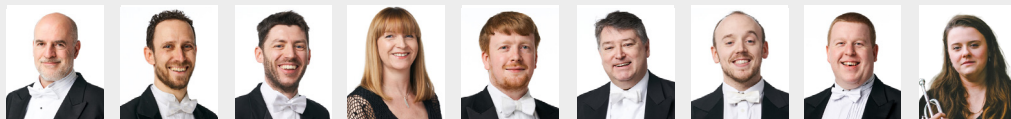
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Patrick Hahn	2
PRINCIPAL GUEST CONDUCTOR	
Ellie Slorach	3
ENGAGEMENT CONDUCTOR	
Kellen Gray	4
ASSOCIATE ARTIST	
Derrick Morgan	5
ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR	
Neeme Järvi	6
CONDUCTOR LAUREATE	
Alexander Lazarev	7
CONDUCTOR EMERITUS	
Stephen Doughty	8
DIRECTOR, RSNO CHORUS	
Patrick Barrett	9
DIRECTOR, RSNO YOUTH CHORUSES	
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**George Frideric Handel** (1685-1759)

# Water Music Suite No3

HWV 350



**DURATION** 11 minutes

## **Sarabande**

## **Rigaudon I – Rigaudon II**

## **Minuet I – Minuet II**

## **Gigue I – Gigue II**

Performed by Dunedin Consort

The historical background to Handel's *Water Music* – how it came to be composed and when it was first performed – remains imprecise. According to popular legend, Handel had obtained permission from the Elector of Hanover to visit England, but stayed far longer than allowed. When the Elector, now in his new role as our own King George I, landed in Greenwich on 18 September 1714, he was displeased at Handel's prolonged absence from his duties. However, he loved Handel's music, so a way to restore the composer to favour readily presented itself. The King was persuaded to form a boat party on the Thames. Handel privately prepared

music for the occasion, and in the event the King was surprised and delighted. This anecdote, probably to some extent fabricated, was related by Handel's earliest biographer, John Mainwaring. The only firm evidence reveals a boat trip dating from rather later, in 1717; subsequent royal trips down the river were enjoyed (in 1736, for example), during which further music was performed. Thus the complete *Water Music* as we know it – about 20 movements in all – is believed to be a compilation of music used on different occasions.

Traditionally the complete score has been divided into three suites: a group of movements in F Major, followed by a group in D Major then a group in G Major/Minor. Suite No3 owes its generally more intimate character to its scoring with the softer-textured wind instruments, rather than the brass used in the Second Suite. This relative intimacy may even suggest that it was intended for indoor performance, rather than for the open air. It begins with a sarabande of graceful beauty. The descending intervals of a minor seventh (bars 9 and 11 and again towards the end) are particularly expressive. A pair of rigaudons follows. The rigaudon is a lively dance of 17th-century folk-music origin. Here the second dance, with its unpredictable rhythmic structure, moves into B flat Major and G Minor. The first of the pair of minuets is again in G Minor, whereas its charming companion moves to C Minor. The Suite concludes with a robust pair of giges (G Minor then G Major) of a rather rustic character not common in Handel's music. Altogether the music of the Third *Water Music* Suite has a touching and memorable quality, all achieved with Handel's masterful simplicity.

© Philip Borg-Wheeler

Neil Tòmas Smith (Born 1987)

# Hidden Polyphony

## WORLD PREMIERE

RSNO and Dunedin Consort commission

**DURATION** 20 minutes

Performed by Dunedin Consort and the RSNO

Time and its degradations have been particularly efficient in the area of Scottish music. So little polyphonic, i.e. multi-voice, music survives from pre-1500 that some have argued that it must not have existed at all and that a tradition of monophonic chant lingered in the country, one deaf to the traditions of England and the continent. The Carver Choirbook, with its titanic Scottish polyphony from the mid-16th century, would from this viewpoint constitute a rapid acceleration in complexity and ambition.

The more likely scenario is that polyphonic singing has a much longer history in Scotland but it is one that is obscure to us because of a lack of sources. The loss of records to the sea in 1661 on the ship the *Elizabeth of Burntisland* is likely one significant reason, as well as the conscientious destruction of Scottish reformers.

The starting point for this piece was the material from the 16th century that survives, as well as an important sense that there is a gap in our imaginations that my own music could fill. Polyphony between historical periods, between instrumental groupings and between heaven and hell are all themes that the work explores. *Hidden Polyphony* is not an attempt to recreate the music of the past but rather to shine a contemporary light on the culture that gave rise to some of the greatest music ever composed in Scotland. This is most obviously approached by significant quotation from a number of sources, particularly Robert Carver, and partial settings of poetry and prose from the 16th century, especially those of the incredibly modern figure of William Dunbar.

After the huge chords and ensemble interplay of the introduction, there is a partial setting of Dunbar's *Lament for the Makaris*, with its refrain '*timor mortis conturbat me*' (the fear of death disturbs me). From there, the orchestras take over for a 'vision of hell', the fear of which, alongside purgatory, is a key reason that Renaissance polyphony was composed, performed and commissioned. The middle section of the piece uses words taken from the will of Christine Geddes (and the research of Dr James Cook), which asks for music to be sung for her deceased soul, before a more 'heavenly' section sets parts of Gavin Douglas' *Palyce of Honour*, which has lengthy descriptions of the musical instruments of the time, as well as theoretical discussion of different types of music and compositional techniques. The titanic chords of the opening return, now revealing their basis in Robert Carver's magisterial choral composition *O bone Jesu*. Finally, a partial setting of *Life* by William Dunbar is sung over unadulterated polyphony, taken from Dr Cook's transcription of the *Missa Rex Virginum* and 'Catherine Wheel Mass' from the Carver Choirbook. To our knowledge, this music has not been performed live since the 16th century.

During the course of my research for this piece, I read in Alan MacQuarrie's book on Scottish saints about a fragment of music that is written on the so-called Glamis copy of the Aberdeen Breviary, now in the National Library of Scotland. I alerted Dr Cook to this fragment, which was then identified by researcher David Coney as a 'faburden', that is a line that fits with an established chant, in this case '*Cultor dei memento*'. This material is woven throughout the piece, often obscured by much more modern harmony, but revealing itself more clearly towards the work's conclusion.

MacQuarrie's book was lent to me by my father, Donald, who is a passionate advocate for

Scottish history, literature and performing arts. The piece is dedicated to him, ‘a borrower and lender of books’.

A large number of people were generous with their time and expertise during the creation of this piece. Thanks to Dr James Cook at the University of Edinburgh, as well as Professor Greg Walker and Dr Kate Ash-Irisarri, who gave me a fascinating introduction to the literature of the

period. Many thanks to David Coney for the use of his research.

Thanks to Edward Edgcumbe of Dunedin Consort, who was a great help with vocal lines and general support, and thanks to Hilary Michael for discussing the Baroque string parts with me.

© Neil Tõmas Smith

## Hidden Polyphony

Only the text set in **bold** is performed as part of *Hidden Polyphony*.

### Lament for the Makaris

William Dunbar

I **that in heill** [health/wholeness] **was and gladness**

**Am trublit now with great sickness**

**And feblit with infirmitie:**

*Timor Mortis conturbat me.*

**Our plesance here is all vain glory,**

**This fals world is but transitory,**

**The flesh is bruckle, the Feynd** [fiend] **is slee:**

*Timor Mortis conturbat me.*

**The state of man does change and vary,**

**Now sound, now sick, now blyth, now sary,**

**Now dansand mirry, now like to die:**

*Timor Mortis conturbat me.*

### Latin Mass Excerpts

**Lava me, Domine, ab iniquitate mea, et a peccato meo munda me.**

**Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus**

**Dominus Deus Sabaoth.**

**Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua.**

**Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.**

**Holy, holy, holy,**

**lorde God of hosts.**

**heaven and earth are full of thy glory.**

### **Palyce of Honour (Excerpt)**

Gavin Douglas

A sound I hard, of angellys as it had bene,  
With armony fordynnand all the skyis,

**So dulce, so swete, and so melodius**  
**That every wucht thair with mycht be joyous**

**Fresche ladyis sang in voce virgineall**  
**Concordes swete, divers entoned reportis,**  
**Proportionis fyne with sound celestiall:**  
Duplat, triplat, diatesseriall,  
Sesque altra and decupla resortis;  
Diapason of mony syndry sortis  
War songin and plait be seir cunnyng menstrall  
On luf ballattis with mony fair disportis.

**In modulatioun hard I play and syng**  
**Faburdoun, priksang, discant, conturyng,**  
Cant organe, figuration, and Gemmell,  
On crowd, lute, harp, with mony gudly spring,  
Schalmis, **clarionis, portativis hard I ring,**  
Monycord, orgain, tympane, and **sybell,**  
**Sytholl, psaltery,** and vocis **swete as bell,**  
**Soft releschyngis in dulce delyveryng;**  
Fractyonis divide, at rest, or clos compell.

### **Life**

William Dunbar

**What is this life but a straight way to deid,**  
**Which has a time to pass and none to dwell,**  
**A sliding wheel us lent to seek remeid,**  
A free choice given to Paradise or Hell,  
A prey to deid whom vain is to repell;  
A short torment for infinite gladness,  
As short a joy for lasting heaviness.

# Neil Tòmas Smith

## Composer



A 'composer on the rise' (*Morning Star*), Edinburgh-based Neil Tòmas Smith writes chamber, orchestral and choral works. He is fascinated by the connections between sound, space and movement.

Neil studied in York and Stuttgart, the latter leading to a keen interest in German contemporary music. In Germany, he won first prize in the Acht Brücken Composition Competition with *Gravitation*, and his orchestral work *Habitus* was performed by the WDR Symphony Orchestra.

Neil's debut album, *Stop Motion Music*, was released in 2023 and received a 5-star review from *The Scotsman*, Ken Walton writing that the 'whole album is powerful and moving'. This CD was a self-realised project, funded by the Hope Scott Trust, Creative Scotland and the PRS Foundation.

Recent work has focused on the intersection between science and music. *Perihelion* and *Aphelion* for orchestra (a diptych that can be performed either way round) engages with orbits in both illustrative and concrete ways: there is an exploration of circular movement in the latter while orbital data informs the trajectories of the instruments in both.

These pieces were written while Neil was taking part in the RSNO's Composers Hub and the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Young Composers' Programme. During this time he also wrote a piece for children, *Cyched*, which was toured throughout Scotland in 2018 and 2019 by the RSNO.

*Aphelion* was selected as part of the Scottish submission to the International Society of Contemporary Music World Music Days in Shanghai and was subsequently chosen for performance by the international jury.

Neil teaches at the University of Edinburgh, Open College of the Arts and St Mary's Music School. He is currently working on a new disc with record label Delphian, to include *Regular Music*, a recent chamber piano concerto for Simon Smith, while an audio adventure in psychogeography, *next time ur in london*, will be released later this year.

# Anna Dennis

## Soprano



Anna Dennis studied at the Royal Academy of Music and was the recipient of the 2023 Royal Philharmonic Society's Singer award.

Her opera performances include Katie Mitchell's *New Dark Age* at the Royal Opera House, Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* at Drottningholms Slottsteater in Stockholm, Handel's *Rodelinda* at the Göttingen International Handel Festival, Mozart's *Idomeneo* directed by Graham Vick at Birmingham Opera Company, Damon Albarn's *Dr Dee* at English National Opera, and roles in all three Monteverdi operas during Sir John Eliot Gardiner's world tour of the trilogy. She recently created the title role of Violet in Tom Coult's debut opera, premiered at the Aldeburgh festival, and multiple roles in Sir David Pountney's Purcell pasticcio *Masque of Might* for Opera North.

In concert she has sung with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of St Luke's in New York, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Birmingham Contemporary

Music Group, Orquestra Gulbenkian, Les Violons du Roy, Britten Sinfonia, Akademie Alte Musik Berlin and Sinfonietta Riga. She has sung Britten's *War Requiem* at the Berlin Philharmonie and Thomas Ades' *Life Story*, accompanied by the composer, at New York's White Light Festival. Recent highlights include performing Anthony Burgess' setting of T S Eliot's *The Waste Land* with Benedict Cumberbatch and Britten Sinfonia at the Charleston Festival, Bach's *Mein Herz schwimmt im Blut* with Kristian Bezuidenhout in Riga, Haydn's *Jahreszeiten* with the Düsseldorfer Symphoniker under Adam Fischer, and Handel's *Orlando* with the Academy of Ancient Music under Laurence Cummings.

Anna's numerous recordings include Elena Langer's *Landscape with Three People*, the GRAMMY-nominated Kastalsky Requiem with the Orchestra of St Luke's under Leonard Slatkin, two orchestral song cycles on composer Tom Coult's debut disc *Pieces that Disappear* with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and Handel's *Amadigi di Gaula* with the Early Opera Company under Christian Curnyn.

In the current season she sings Queen of the Night in *The Magic Flute* for Opera North, Boulez's *Pli selon Pli* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Martyn Brabbins, Thomas Ades' *America: A Prophecy* with The Hallé, conducted by the composer, Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* with the Portland Baroque Orchestra, Mendelssohn's *Lobgesang* with the Orquesta de la Comunidad de Madrid and Poulenc's *Gloria* with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

**Richard Wagner** (1813-1883) **arr. Henk de Vlieger** (born 1953)

# The Ring,

## An Orchestral Adventure



**FIRST PERFORMANCE** 1991

**DURATION** 62 minutes

Performed by the RSNO

Gods and monsters, giants and dwarves, heroism, boundless love and an unending quest for power: Richard Wagner's four-opera *Ring* cycle creates an entire world all its own, a vast Nordic and Germanic mythology in which it immerses its audience for no fewer than 15 hours (or thereabouts). No wonder it took the composer 28 years to compose, and required a brand-new venue – Wagner's Bayreuth Festival Theatre, with its pioneering innovations in staging, lighting, pyrotechnics and more – to fully satisfy the operas' epic demands.

Despite its complex plot and its immense cast of characters, in many ways Wagner's *Ring* cycle is surprisingly straightforward. As Wagner wrote to his friend August Röckel in 1854, it's about death, renewal and change:

We must learn to die in the most absolute sense of the word. The course of the drama shows the necessity of accepting and giving way to the changeability, the diversity, the multiplicity, the eternal newness of reality and of life.

And the agent of that fundamental change is, of course, the ring itself – an object of unspeakable power, forged from the sacred Rhine Gold by the scheming dwarf Alberich in the first of the four operas, *Das Rheingold*. But the almighty ring also wields a terrifying curse: it will be an object of overwhelming desire for those who do not possess it, but an object of fear and ultimate doom for those who do.

Wagner weaves his mythic story – derived from the *Poetic Edda*, a collection of ancient Norse poems, and the medieval Germanic *Nibelunglied* – through often intoxicatingly rich music, in which the raw ingredients of his tale play a fundamental role. They are musically

1. **Vorspiel (Prelude)**
2. **Das Rheingold (The Rhine Gold)**
3. **Nibelheim (Nibelheim)**
4. **Walhall (Valhalla)**
5. **Die Walküren (The Valkyries)**
6. **Feuerzauber (Magic Fire)**
7. **Waldweben (Forest Murmurs)**
8. **Siegfrieds Heldentat (Siegfried's Heroic Deed)**
9. **Brünnhildes Erwachen (Brünnhilde's Awakening)**
10. **Siegfried und Brünnhilde (Siegfried and Brünnhilde)**
11. **Siegfrieds Rheinfahrt (Siegfried's Rhine Journey)**
12. **Siegfrieds Tod (Siegfried's Death)**
13. **Trauermusik (Funeral Music)**
14. **Brünnhildes Opfertat (Brünnhilde's Sacrificial Act)**

embodied as what were later termed Leitmotifs, short musical ideas representing characters, places, themes or ideas that are in a constant state of flux and cross-fertilisation as the story progresses. Wagner's musical innovation of so inseparably intertwining his narrative and his music has been immensely influential, going on to impact everything from uncompromising Schoenbergian serialism to lush Hollywood film scores.

And it's this fundamental linking of music and story that makes a purely orchestral version of Wagner's *Ring* cycle such an attractive – and convincing – idea. Dutch percussionist and composer Henk de Vlieger created *The Ring, An Orchestral Adventure* in 1991, and it would be the first of four orchestral arrangements he made of Wagner operas. De Vlieger focuses on key episodes from the *Ring*'s four operas, but retains chronological and narrative order and – for the most part – Wagner's original scoring, occasionally supplying an orchestral instrument to stand in for a vocal soloist. The result is almost an immense symphonic poem spread across four connected movements, each representing one of the cycle's operas.

We begin with the Prelude to the first opera, *Das Rheingold*, depicting nothing less than the beginning of the world and the flow of the Rhine. After a vision of the river's precious gold, protected by the Rhine Maidens, we shift to the hammering anvils of the dwarvish kingdom of Nibelheim, where the ring is being forged, and then to the god Wotan's shimmering castle Valhalla, built by the giants Fasolt and Fafner, whom Wotan hopes to pay with the ring he has stolen from Alberich.

We move into the cycle's second opera, *Die Walküre*, for what's surely the *Ring*'s most iconic orchestral music. The 'Ride of the Valkyries' depicts the flying warrior women – including Wotan's daughter Brünnhilde – who carry the fallen from the battlefield to everlasting light in Valhalla. The subsequent 'Magic Fire' music comes from the very end of *Die Walküre*, as Wotan punishes his disobedient daughter by

sending her to sleep within a ring of charmed flames, which only a true hero can cross.

We meet that hero in the cycle's third opera, *Siegfried*, first at rest amid the sounds of birds, insects and trees in the forest. Having slain the giant Fafner (now in dragon form, and jealously guarding the ring), Siegfried is directed to seek out Brünnhilde. He crosses Wotan's ring of magic fire and awakens our heroine with a kiss, marking the moment that the gods' dominance over the world first begins to crack.

Wagner's ecstatic portrayal of the love between Siegfried and Brünnhilde opens de Vlieger's selection from the cycle's final opera, *Götterdämmerung*, followed by Siegfried's Rhine Journey to the Hall of the Gibichungs, where he will be murdered by evil dwarf Hagen, son of the wronged Alberich. His funeral music is fittingly grand and grief-stricken. In despair, Brünnhilde mounts Siegfried's funeral pyre to join her lover in death, the Rhine overflows, Valhalla burns, and the gods are no more. Wagner ushers in a new age at the end of his vast tetralogy almost entirely without voices, and de Vlieger follows the earlier composer's lead as *The Ring, An Orchestral Adventure* soars to a conclusion of visionary majesty.

© David Kettle

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The Ring,  
An Orchestral Adventure  
Plus Siegfried Idyll**

**Neeme Järvi** Conductor

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# Thomas Søndergård

## Conductor



Danish conductor Thomas Søndergård has been Music Director of the RSNO since 2018, following six seasons as Principal Guest Conductor, and is Music Director of the Minnesota Orchestra. Between 2012 and 2018, he served as Principal Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales (BBC NOW), after stepping down as Principal Conductor and Musical Advisor of the Norwegian Radio Orchestra.

He has appeared with many notable orchestras in leading European centres, such as Berlin (Berliner Philharmoniker, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Konzerthausorchester Berlin), Munich (Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunk), Zurich (Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich), Leipzig (Gewandhausorchester), Paris (Orchestre National de France), London (London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, London Symphony, Philharmonia Orchestra) and Amsterdam and Rotterdam (Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Netherlands Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic), and is a familiar figure in Scandinavia, with such orchestras as the Oslo Philharmonic, Gothenburg Symphony,

Danish National Symphony, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Swedish Radio Symphony, Finnish Radio Symphony and Helsinki Philharmonic. North American appearances to date have included the symphony orchestras of New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Baltimore, St Louis, Toronto, Atlanta, Montreal, Vancouver, Houston and Seattle.

Following his acclaimed debut for Royal Danish Opera (*Kafka's Trial*), he has since returned to conduct *Die Walküre*, *Elektra*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *La bohème*, *Cunning Little Vixen* and *Il viaggio a Reims*. He has also enjoyed successful collaborations with Norwegian Opera and Royal Swedish Opera. His Stockholm productions of *Tosca* and *Turandot* (both with Nina Stemme) led to his Bayerische Staatsoper debut, conducting main season and Opera Festival performances of *Turandot* with Stemme. He made his Deutsche Oper Berlin debut with the world premiere of Scartazzini's *Edward II* and has since returned for Berlioz's *Romeo and Juliet*.

His discography covers a broad range of repertoire, including Carl Nielsen (Royal Danish Orchestra, Naxos Records); Poul Ruders (Arhus Symphony, Norwegian Radio, Royal Danish Opera (*Kafka's Trial*), Da Capo and Bridge Records); Sibelius symphonies and tone poems with BBC NOW and Prokofiev and Richard Strauss with the RSNO, Linn Records; Lutosławski and Dutilleux concertos with cellist Johannes Moser and Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester Berlin (Pentatone); and Vilde Frang's celebrated debut recording (WDR Köln, EMI).

In 2023, Thomas was a recipient of the Carl Nielsen and Anne-Marie Carl Nielsen's Foundation award for his outstanding contribution to Danish musical life. In 2022, he was decorated with a prestigious Royal Order of Chivalry, the Order of Dannebrog (Ridder af Dannebrogordenen), by Margrethe II, Queen of Denmark.

# Royal Scottish National Orchestra



Formed in 1891 as the Scottish Orchestra, the company became the Scottish National Orchestra in 1950 and was awarded Royal Patronage in 1977. Many renowned conductors have contributed to its success, including Sir John Barbiroli, Walter Susskind, Sir Alexander Gibson, Neeme Järvi, Walter Weller, Alexander Lazarev and Stéphane Denève.

The Orchestra's artistic team is led by Danish conductor Thomas Søndergård, who was appointed Music Director in 2018. In March 2024, Austrian-born conductor, composer and musician Patrick Hahn became the Orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor.

The RSNO is supported by the Scottish Government and is one of the Scottish National Performing Companies. The Orchestra performs across Scotland, including concerts in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Perth and Inverness, and appears regularly at the Edinburgh International Festival and BBC Proms. The RSNO has made recent tours to the USA, China and Europe.

The RSNO has a worldwide reputation for the quality of its recordings, receiving a 2020 Gramophone Classical Music Award for Chopin's

Piano Concertos (soloist: Benjamin Grosvenor), conducted by Elim Chan, two Diapason d'Or awards (Denève/Roussel 2007; Denève/Debussy 2012) and eight GRAMMY Award nominations. In recent years, the RSNO has increasingly recorded soundtracks for film, television and video games, with notable titles including *Horizon: An American Saga* (Warner Bros), *Life on Our Planet* (Netflix), *Star Wars Outlaws* (Ubisoft), *Avatar: Frontiers of Pandora* (Meta Quest VR) and *The Woman King* (Sony Pictures). The Orchestra records at its bespoke in-house facility, Scotland's Studio, in Glasgow.

The RSNO believes that music can enrich lives, and aims to inspire, educate and entertain people throughout Scotland and beyond with its performances, recordings and engagement programmes. Supporting schools, families, young professionals and wider communities, the RSNO delivers high-quality initiatives for all ages and abilities, reaching over 68,000 people in 2023.

# On Stage

## FIRST VIOLIN

Maya Iwabuchi  
LEADER  
Lena Zeliszewska  
ASSOCIATE LEADER  
Tamás Fejes  
ASSISTANT LEADER  
Patrick Curlett  
Caroline Parry  
Elizabeth Bamping  
Lorna Rough  
Susannah Lowdon  
Alan Manson  
Liam Lynch  
Gillian Risi  
Fiona Stephen  
Nia Bevan  
Helena Rose  
Bríona Mannion  
Emily Brise

## SECOND VIOLIN

Lisa Obert  
GUEST PRINCIPAL  
Jacqueline Speirs  
Marion Wilson  
Nigel Mason  
Paul Medd  
Harriet Hunter  
Anne Bünemann  
Robin Wilson  
Kirstin Drew  
Colin McKee  
Tom Greed  
Shulah Oliver-Smith  
Seona Glen  
Joe Hodson  
Julie Reynolds  
Elsbeth MacLeod

## VIOLA

Tom Dunn  
PRINCIPAL  
Felix Tanner  
Nicola McWhirter  
Claire Dunn  
Katherine Wren  
Maria Trittlinger  
Francesca Hunt  
Beth Woodford  
Elaine Koene  
Nicola Boag  
Aoife Magee  
Ian Budd

## CELLO

Pei-Jee Ng  
PRINCIPAL  
Betsy Taylor  
Kennedy Leitch  
Yuuki Bouterey-Ishido  
Rachael Lee  
Sarah Digger  
Niamh Molloy  
Gunda Baranauskaitė  
Sonia Cromarty  
Susan Dance  
Miranda Phythian-Adams  
Emily Brockett

## DOUBLE BASS

Nikita Naumov  
PRINCIPAL  
Simo Väisänen  
Michael Rae  
Moray Jones  
Alexandre Cruz dos Santos  
Cole Morrison  
Joana Moura  
Olaya Garcia Alvarez

## FLUTE

Katherine Bryan  
PRINCIPAL  
Jack Welch  
Siobhan Grealy  
Janet Richardson  
PRINCIPAL PICCOLO

## OBOE

Rainer Gibbons  
GUEST PRINCIPAL  
Peter Dykes  
Gaynor Gowman  
Fraser Kelman  
COR ANGLAIS

## CLARINET

Timothy Orpen  
PRINCIPAL  
William Knight  
PRINCIPAL E FLAT CLARINET  
Robert Digney  
Duncan Swindells  
PRINCIPAL BASS CLARINET

## BASSOON

David Hubbard  
PRINCIPAL  
Hugo Mak  
Fraser Gordon

## HORN

Benji Hartnell-Booth  
GUEST PRINCIPAL  
Alison Murray  
Andrew McLean  
David McClenaghan  
Martin Murphy  
WAGNER TUBA  
Mark Bennett  
WAGNER TUBA  
Flora Bain  
WAGNER TUBA  
Finlay Bain  
WAGNER TUBA  
Max Howling

## TRUMPET

Christopher Hart  
PRINCIPAL  
Katie Smith  
Mark Addison

## TROMBONE

Dávur Juul Magnussen  
PRINCIPAL  
Hannah Stell  
Alan Adams  
BASS TROMBONE  
Alastair Sinclair  
CONTRABASS TROMBONE

## BASS TRUMPET

Huw Evans

## TUBA

John Whitener  
PRINCIPAL

## TIMPANI

Paul Philbert  
PRINCIPAL  
Simon Archer

## PERCUSSION

Simon Lowdon  
PRINCIPAL  
Alasdair Kelly  
Peter Murch

## HARP

Rosanna Rolton  
Teresa Barros Pereira  
Romão  
Clara Gatti Comini  
Gina Gallacher

## OFF-STAGE HORN

Lauren Reeve-Rawlings

# Dunedin Consort



Dunedin Consort is one of the world's leading Baroque ensembles, recognised for its vivid and insightful performances and recordings. Formed in 1995 and named after Din Eidyn, the ancient Celtic name for Edinburgh Castle, Dunedin Consort's ambition is to allow listeners to hear early music afresh, and to couple an inquisitive approach to historical performance with a commitment to commissioning and performing new music. Under the direction of John Butt, the ensemble has earned two coveted Gramophone Awards, a BBC Music Magazine Award and a GRAMMY nomination. In 2021 it was the recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society Ensemble Award.

Dunedin Consort performs regularly at major festivals and venues across the UK and abroad, and enjoys close associations with the BBC Proms, Wigmore Hall, Edinburgh International Festival and Lammermuir Festival. Alongside its performance and recording work, Dunedin Consort is committed to a wide-ranging education programme both in schools and in the wider community. In inspiring and encouraging

musical participation, developing vocal skills and fostering a love of classical music, historical performance and new music, Dunedin Consort aims to develop and nurture its potential audience and to encourage the performers of the future.

Dunedin Consort is an enthusiastic champion and commissioner of contemporary music, and in recent years has premiered a new set of orchestral dances at the BBC Proms, a new opera by Errollyn Wallen at the Barbican Centre, and new choral music for its cappella consort. In 2025 it premiered a new cantata by David Fennessy, the second instalment of a three-year co-commissioning series which saw a guitar concerto by Cassandra Miller for Sean Shibe in 2024, and will see further new music by Tansy Davies in 2026.

Partnership Ensemble

**DUNEDIN  
CONSORT**

# On Stage

## SINGERS

### SOPRANO

Anna Dennis

### MEZZO-SOPRANO

Catherine Backhouse

### TENOR

Magnus Walker  
Malcolm Bennett

### BASS

Jon Stainsby

## PLAYERS

### LEADER AND DIRECTOR

Jane Gordon

### VIOLIN

Sarah Bevan-Baker  
Hilary Michael  
Kristin Deeken  
Barbara Downie  
Malú Pomares

### VIOLA

John Crockatt  
Thomas Kettle

### CELLO

Lucia Capellaro  
Samuel Ng

### BASS

Kate Brooke

### OBOE D'AMORE

Alexandra Bellamy

### FLUTE

Katy Bircher

### FLUTE AND RECORDER

László Rózsa

### BASSOON

Catriona McDermid

---

## Directors

Jenny Stewart

CHAIR

Mark Batho  
Courtney Beck  
Cathy Bell MBE  
Susie Gray  
Kate Molleson  
Philip Rodney  
Kalvir Sangha

### Music Director

John Butt OBE FBA FRSE

### Associate Director

Nicholas Mulroy

## Management

Andrew Trinick

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Jennie Baillie

HEAD OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Lucia Capellaro

LEARNING AND PARTICIPATION MANAGER

Sanne Dijkstra-Downie

DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Edward Edgcumbe

HEAD OF ARTISTIC PLANNING AND OPERATIONS

Amy Strachan

LEARNING AND PARTICIPATION MANAGER

Georgia Tawn

ARTISTIC PLANNING COORDINATOR

## Dunedin Concerts Trust Ltd

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Dunedin Consort acknowledges with grateful thanks the support of Creative Scotland, Dunard Fund, Baillie Gifford, Binks Trust, John Ellerman Foundation and the Arts and Humanities Research Council, who very generously support our programmes.

Every wise guy wants her fortune,  
but Hanna calls the shots

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# Supporting the RSNO

I am honoured and extremely proud to be Music Director of the RSNO. It is through the continued generosity of you, our friends, donors and supporters, that we can continue to achieve and realise the most ambitious goals of the Orchestra.

One of the wonders of the RSNO is how it brings high-quality music not only to concert halls, but to the wider community. From hospital settings to care homes, from our Astar app for families with newborns to our National Schools Concert Programme, our music touches so many lives in Scotland and beyond. Your support is the

cornerstone of all that we do, as it allows us to continually build and develop.

Thank you for being part of this wonderful Orchestra's journey, as we adapt and grow towards a bright future.



**Thomas Søndergård**  
MUSIC DIRECTOR, RSNO

## RSNO Benefactors

RSNO Benefactors are beacons of philanthropic inspiration, providing truly transformative financial support to the Orchestra that enables us to build and deliver long-term strategic plans. Benefactors share the RSNO's vision for orchestral music and work with us to drive

the organisation forward, helping us to realise our future plans and ambitions.

Sir Ewan and Lady Brown  
Gavin and Kate Gemmell  
Kat Heathcote and Iain Macneil  
Ms Chris Grace Hartness

## RSNO Conductors' Circle

The RSNO Conductors' Circle is an inspirational group of individual supporters at the heart of the RSNO's Individual Giving programme. Our members' annual gifts enable us to realise the Orchestra's most ambitious goals. Conductors' Circle members support inspirational concert performances for our audiences alongside innovative education programmes in communities across Scotland, via our ground breaking initiative Music for Life.

The RSNO is very grateful for the continued support of its Conductors' Circle:

Ardgowan Charitable Trust  
Stina Bruce Jones  
Ian and Evelyn Crombie  
Kenneth and Julia Greig  
Carol Grigor and the Trustees of Dunard Fund  
Shirley Murray  
David and Alix Stevenson  
Rolf and Celia Thornqvist  
Eric and Karen Young

We would also like to thank those generous donors who wish to remain anonymous.

# Patron Programme

RSNO Patrons support individual musicians and members of the artistic team as well as advocating our work off the stage, from Learning and Engagement activity to commissioning new music. Becoming a Patron will bring you closer to the communities we serve across Scotland and will help to ensure that we maintain our position as one of Europe's leading symphony orchestras.

## RSNO Patrons

Geoff and Mary Ball  
George Ritchie  
Stephen Sweeney  
Valerie Wells

## Learning and Engagement Patrons

William Brown, W.S  
The Dundee RSNO Circle Committee  
Members of the Glasgow RSNO Circle  
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## Chair Patrons

Chair Patrons are connected directly to the musicians on stage and get to enjoy privileged behind-the-scenes access. Our musicians truly appreciate the support they receive from their Chair Patrons and the brilliant opportunities they bring to the Orchestra.

### Assistant Conductor

Derrick Morgan  
**The Solti Foundation Chair**

### First Violin

Maya Iwabuchi *LEADER*  
**Dunard Fund Chair**

Tamás Fejes *ASSISTANT LEADER*  
**The Bill and Rosalind Gregson Chair**

Ursula Heidecker Allen  
**The James and Iris Miller Chair**

Elizabeth Bamping  
**The WL and Vera Heywood Chair**

Alan Manson  
**The Hugh and Linda Bruce-Watt Chair**

Liam Lynch  
**Mr Kyle Anderson Weir**

### Second Violin

Marion Wilson  
*ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL*  
**The Nigel & Margot Russell Chair**

Sophie Lang  
**The Ian & Evelyn Crombie Chair**

Emily Nenniger  
**Mr Jamie & Kyle Anderson Weir**

### Viola

Tom Dunn *PRINCIPAL*  
**The Cathy & Keith MacGillivray Chair**

Lisa Rourke *SUB PRINCIPAL*  
**The Meta Ramsay Chair**

Francesca Hunt  
**The Rolf and Celia Thornqvist Chair**

Beth Woodford  
**Mr Jamie & Kyle Anderson Weir**

## **Cello**

Pei-Jee Ng *PRINCIPAL*  
**Mr Jamie & Kyle Anderson Weir**

Betsy Taylor  
*ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL*  
**The Maxwell Armstrong Chair**

Kennedy Leitch  
*ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL*  
**The David and Anne Smith Chair**

Rachael Lee  
**The Christine and Arthur Hamilton Chair**

## **Double Bass**

Nikita Naumov  
*PRINCIPAL*  
**The Gregor Forbes John Clark Chair**

Michael Rae  
*ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL*  
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## **Flute**

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Adrian Wilson *PRINCIPAL*  
**The Hedley Wright Chair**

Peter Dykes  
*ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL*  
**Witherby Publishing Group Charitable Trust Chair**

## **Cor Anglais**

Henry Clay *PRINCIPAL*  
**In memory of a dear friend, Fiona H**

## **Clarinet**

Timothy Orpen *PRINCIPAL*  
**The Shirley Murray Chair**

William Knight  
*ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL*  
**The David and Anne Smith Chair**

## **Horn**

*PRINCIPAL*  
**The Springbank Distillers Chair**

Alison Murray  
*ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL*  
**Mr & Mrs Pierre and Alison Girard**

Martin Murphy  
*ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL*  
**The Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust Chair**

David McClenaghan  
**The J & A Mitchell Chair**

## **Trumpet**

Christopher Hart *PRINCIPAL*  
**Ms Chris Grace Hartness**

Katie Smith *SUB-PRINCIPAL*  
**The Lady Fraser Chair**

## **Trombone**

Dávur Juul Magnussen *PRINCIPAL*  
**The Mitchell's Glengyle Chair**

## **Timpani**

Paul Philbert *PRINCIPAL*  
**Ms Chris Grace Hartness**

## **Percussion**

*With thanks to the Dot and Syd Taft Chair for their support of the RSNO Percussion Section.*

## **Staff**

Chiko Parkinson  
*COMMUNITY SINGING ASSISTANT*  
**Supported by ScotRail**

We would like to acknowledge the great support of the RSNO Chair Patron Programme by Mr Hedley G Wright.

We are also grateful to those who give but who wish to remain anonymous.

If you would like more information or would like to discuss how you can become an RSNO Patron, please contact Constance Fraser, Head of Development (Individuals and Partnerships), at [constance.fraser@rsno.org.uk](mailto:constance.fraser@rsno.org.uk)

We would like to thank all those who continue to generously support the RSNO's Play Your Part Appeal.



# Musical Memories

**Leave a gift to the RSN and ensure future generations can create their own Musical Memories of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.**

We all have special Musical Memories. It could be learning to play an instrument when you were a child, or a special piece of music that just left you breathless the first time you heard the Orchestra play it. Maybe it was seeing a soloist you had always wanted to hear, or just a great concert shared with friends. Memories such as these make music such an important part of our lives.

As a charity, our work relies on donations from our supporters and friends – whether performing world-class music on stage or engaging with children across Scotland in our National Schools Concert Programme – and we need your continued support.

By remembering the RSN in your Will, you can help us share the joy of music with future generations and allow your passion for the Orchestra to live on.

It is easy to leave a gift. After you have made provisions for family and friends, please think of the Orchestra.

Your gift is important to us and to everyone in Scotland who enjoys music. Contact your solicitor to draft a will or add a codicil to your current will.

If your estate is subject to inheritance tax, a gift to a charity, such as the RSN, is tax-free and will reduce the amount of tax payable to the Government. Please ask your solicitor for details.

For more information please visit [\*\*rsno.org.uk/memories\*\*](http://rsno.org.uk/memories)

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Polly Lightbody, Individual Giving and Partnerships Officer, in the strictest confidence, at [\*\*polly.lightbody@rsno.org.uk\*\*](mailto:polly.lightbody@rsno.org.uk)

To the many among you who have pledged to leave a gift already – thank you.



# Charitable Trusts and Foundations

Charitable trusts and foundations have a distinguished history of supporting the RSNO, both on and off stage. From one-off donations for specific projects to multi-year funding for our flagship outreach initiatives, including the National Schools Concert Programme and Young Creatives, every grant in support of our work is truly appreciated. We are grateful to the following trusts and foundations for their generosity:

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We are also grateful to a number of trusts that wish to stay anonymous.

If you would like more information about our work and how you can make a difference, please contact Kirsten Reid, Head of Development (Trusts and Projects), at [kirsten.reid@rsno.org.uk](mailto:kirsten.reid@rsno.org.uk)

# RSNO Circle

Our Circle Members are at the centre of the RSNO. Your membership helps to support the future of the RSNO while sharing the joy of music both on and off stage.

When you join the RSNO Circle you enhance your relationship with the Orchestra and enjoy exclusive updates from our musicians. If you would like to find out more about joining the Circle, please visit [rsno.org.uk/circle](https://rsno.org.uk/circle) or get in touch with Polly Lightbody, Individual Giving and Partnerships Officer, at [polly.lightbody@rsno.org.uk](mailto:polly.lightbody@rsno.org.uk)

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Mr I Gow  
Mr J D Home  
Christine Lessels  
Katharine M.E. Liston  
Professor J Mavor

Mrs A McQueen  
Mr Iain Percival  
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Dr C Cradock and Dr S Todd

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Neil Barton  
Miss D Blackie  
Dr C M Bronte-Stewart  
Dr F L Brown  
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Ms H Calvert  
Ross Cavanagh  
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Mr K Allen  
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