



RSNO

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL
ORCHESTRA



ROYAL
PHILHARMONIC
SOCIETY
Winner
2026 RPS Ensemble Award

Orchestral Qawwali Project

GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL
THU 30 APR 2026: 7.30PM

Go by train



- Dundee 
- V&A Dundee

Discover hidden gems
and iconic attractions
when you go by train.

[scotrail.co.uk](https://www.scotrail.co.uk)



Your ticket goes further than you think

Orchestral Qawwali Project

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall Thu 30 Apr 2026 7.30pm

The Orchestral Qawwali Project joins the musicians of the RSNO and the RSNO Chorus for this special one-off show. Created and led by critically acclaimed composer Rushil Ranjan and renowned singer Abi Sampa, the project breathes new life into centuries-old traditions, reframing the spiritual rapture of Sufi music through Rushil's rich orchestral scores, blending Western classical with South Asian music and Indian classical dance. Within just three years of its founding, the ensemble has performed several sell-out shows, including at the Royal Albert Hall in 2024, following which the RAH appointed Rushil and Abi as its new Associate Artists.

The running time of this concert is approximately 2 hours,
including a 20-minute interval.

If viewing these notes at the concert, please do so considerately and not during performances.

**Please silence all mobile telephones and alerts, and refrain from taking photographs,
without flash, until the end of each piece.**

RSNO

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL
ORCHESTRA

Recommended by
CLASSIC *f*M

THE MUSIC OF JOHN WILLIAMS

From **Schindler's List**, **E.T.** and **Superman** to the music of **Harry Potter**, we've got your favourites covered. If you think it sounds good in the cinema, wait until you hear it played live by the RSNO!

CAIRD HALL, DUNDEE

THURSDAY 7 MAY 2026: 7.30PM

USHER HALL, EDINBURGH

FRIDAY 8 MAY: 7.30PM

GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL

SATURDAY 9 MAY: 7.30PM

Sponsored by **agilico**
Workplace Technology

Book online at

rsno.org.uk



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

Welcome

When Abi and I first brought the Orchestral Qawwali Project to the stage, it was here at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. It was the first time we had ever worked with an orchestra, and the first time this music was heard in this form.

We didn't know what to expect. Much of the audience was unfamiliar with Qawwali, unfamiliar with us, and unfamiliar with the idea of bringing this tradition together with an orchestra. It felt like a step into the unknown.

What followed changed everything for us. We were met with a warmth and openness that gave us the belief to continue. It was on this stage that we first heard this sound come to life, and it was the Glasgow audience that made us feel that it could have a future.

Everything that has followed has grown from that moment. The chance to travel, to develop this music, and now to stand here working with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the RSNO Chorus all traces back to that first concert in Glasgow. It is a real privilege to return here and share this music again.

Tonight's programme brings together Qawwalis from different places in our journey. Some are drawn from the traditional repertoire, and some are pieces we have written ourselves. Performing them alongside the RSNO and the RSNO Chorus allows the music to open out in new ways. The scale, the colour and the human voice all become part of the same expression.

Our aim is not to simply place these elements side by side. We want the music to feel whole. We were once told that fusion only works when you cannot see how it has been put together, and that idea has stayed with us. Our hope is that what you hear tonight feels like a single sound, rather than separate parts.

Glasgow means a great deal to us, and it always will. We are very grateful to be back.

We hope you enjoy the performance.

Rushil Ranjan & Abi Sampa

Keep in touch with the RSNO

Royal Scottish National Orchestra
19 Killermont Street
Glasgow G2 3NX
T: +44 (0)141 226 3868

rsno.org.uk



Scottish Company No. 27809
Scottish Charity No. SC010702

The RSNO is supported by
the Scottish Government



Orchestral Qawwali Project

Allah Hoo

Ya Mustafa

Man Kunto Maula

Candles

Soul Escape

INTERVAL

Ya Nabi Salaam Aleka


Rubaru

Dam Dam Karo Fareed

Ganje Shakar

Dam Mast Qalandar

Tu Hi Tu (Allah Hoo reprise)



Rushil Ranjan Music Director and Piano

Abi Sampa Lead Vocals

Melvin Tay Conductor

Parkash Pal Tabla

Jatinder Kwatra Qawwali Chorus

Vibhati Bhatia Qawwali Chorus

Shahid Abbas Khan Qawwali Chorus

Sarthak Kalyani Qawwali Chorus and Soloist

Lydia Alonso Solo Cello

Vidya Patel Dancer

RSNO Chorus

Stephen Doughty Director, RSNO Chorus

Royal Scottish National Orchestra

Celia Llácer Assistant Conductor, RSNO

Rushil Ranjan

Music Director and Piano



Rushil Ranjan is a critically acclaimed and award-winning composer, arranger and producer. His work in bridging classical art forms from around the world has earned him a reputation as one of the most distinctive and exciting musical voices of today.

He currently holds the position of Associate Artist at the Royal Albert Hall and Artistic Partner at Manchester Camerata. He is also a recipient of the PRS Foundation's Composer's Fund. A composer across mediums, he has written for concerts, award-winning dance productions and BAFTA-nominated TV and film projects.

Having begun his orchestral career in 2020, Rushil rose to prominence as the co-founder and composer of the Orchestral Qawwali Project. Created in collaboration with his partner Abi Sampa, the project reframes the spiritual rapture of Sufi music through Rushil's rich orchestral scores. Drawing unanimous international acclaim, Rushil went on to direct and produce a

series of sold-out shows for the Project at the Camden Roundhouse, Birmingham Symphony Hall, Al Wasl Plaza, Dubai, the 5,500 capacity Royal Albert Hall and here at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, where it all began.

Rushil's work is also frequently commissioned and performed by leading ensembles including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Manchester Camerata and A R Rahman's Firdaus Orchestra. Having never received formal training, Rushil's self-taught approach to classical composition and his unique ability to integrate Indian classical and Sufi influences has blurred the lines between genres and brought new audiences to orchestral ensembles and venues.

Often writing for dance, Rushil most recently created the score for Aakash Odedra's *Songs of the Bulbul*. Premiering at the Edinburgh International Festival, Rushil's score was unanimously and critically acclaimed, with the production going on to win the Festival's coveted 'Best International Show' award.

As a composer for film and TV, Rushil has already built up an impressive list of credits and accolades, having scored award-winning films for Netflix, ITV, Film4 and the BFI. His music has also served as the soundtrack for a number of brand campaigns ranging from Coca-Cola to leading Indian fashion designer Manish Malhotra.

Abi Sampa

Lead Vocals



Multi-instrumentalist, Qawwal and Veena virtuoso Abi Sampa has become a genre-shattering focal point within contemporary Sufi and fusion music. Her ability to mix different styles and her command over both Western and Indian classical music has garnered her praise from all corners of the music industry.

An Associate of the Royal Albert Hall, Abi was born in north-west London to Sri Lankan Tamil parents. Reflecting the multicultural nature of the city she grew up in, Abi went on to explore and absorb a myriad of different musical styles and genres, all of which ended up forming the building blocks of her unique vocal and instrumental style.

Abi is the lead vocalist of the Orchestral Qawwali Project. One of the very few women to ever front a Qawwali troupe, she has stunned sold-out audiences across continents with her groundbreaking vocal style and ability to unite huge classical ensembles and orchestras in song.

An internationally celebrated singer and songstress, Abi has performed and collaborated with numerous luminaries in the industry, including Nitin Sawhney, A R Rahman and Engine-Earz, and frequently performs with leading symphony orchestras including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra.

A pioneer across genres, Abi's incredible vocal prowess and style are emblematic of a truly new and global interpretation of Qawwali and Indian classical music.

Melvin Tay

Conductor



Melvin Tay is a versatile Singaporean conductor based in Manchester. He regularly collaborates with a wide range of ensembles, spanning diverse musical genres. These include the BBC Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Manchester Camerata, Northern Ballet Sinfonia, London Voices, National Youth Choir of Great Britain and Orchestral Qawwali Project (OQP), among others. He was awarded the Special Prize at the 2nd International Conducting Competition in Brescia. Currently he serves as Music Director of Northern Film Orchestra (NFO) and Westmorland Orchestra, and is the Artistic Director of Leeds Haydn Players.

A passionate advocate for contemporary music, Melvin has conducted numerous notable premieres, including the recording of Rushil Ranjan's music for the Aakash Odedra Company's production of *Songs of the Bulbul*, which premiered at the Edinburgh International Festival to critical acclaim, and the world premiere of *Shikwa*, the first-ever symphonic interpretation

of Allama Muhammad Iqbal's legendary Urdu poem, with Manchester Camerata at Bradford Literature Festival.

His work with the BBC Philharmonic includes recordings for BBC Radio 3, *Blue Peter* and a new musical by Theo Jamieson and Simon Pitts for BBC World Service. As a regular conductor for OQP, Melvin plays a pivotal role in bridging the two musical worlds of Qawwali and Western classical music through his meticulous and thoughtful approach.

With NFO he has led the UK premiere of Michael Shapiro's *Frankenstein* alongside the 1931 film and conducted sessions for composers such as Dom Jones, Louie Taylor and Jeff Nang. Additionally, he conducted the recording of *Panopticon* by David Fennessy with Psappa and Hebrides Ensemble for NMC Recordings. He was also the conductor of Birmingham Contemporary Music Group NEXT between 2021 and 2023.

On the opera stage, Melvin made his Singapore debut conducting a double bill of Menotti's *The Telephone* and his own 65-minute chamber arrangement of Puccini's *La Bohème*. He also served as Assistant Conductor for the premiere of Adam Gorb's *The Path to Heaven* and has led productions of Verdi's *La traviata* and Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* with Opera Viva.

In addition to his conducting work, Melvin is a Tutor in Conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music and its Junior school. He has also led conducting workshops for the Royal Air Force Band Service and the Liverpool Philharmonic Youth Company. As a team member of ConductIT, an Erasmus+ funded platform, Melvin plays a key role in developing high-quality educational resources for conductors of all levels.

Stephen Doughty

Director, RSNO Chorus



Stephen Doughty has been Chorus Director of the RSNO Chorus since the start of the 2022:23 Season. Since his arrival the Chorus has seen an influx of new members, and an abundance of varied and critically acclaimed performances, including Verdi's *Requiem*, Britten's *War Requiem*, Bruckner's E Minor Mass and the Scottish premiere of Sir James MacMillan's *Christmas Oratorio*. He has also directed the Chorus in new and imaginative programmes in their own right, including Rheinberger's Mass in E flat for double choir, and concerts with percussion and organ featuring Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, the European premiere of McIntyre's *Missa Brevis* and Ives' final major choral work, *Psalm 90*.

Stephen's previous 12-year tenure as Chorus Master of Belfast Philharmonic Choir included a number of world premieres, most significantly James Whitbourn's *The Seven Heavens* and Philip Hammond's *Requiem for the Lost Souls of the Titanic*, performed exactly 100 years since the liner went down, and further European premieres of both Stuart Scott's *Requiem Brevis*, which saw the 100-strong choir separated into eight choirs

spaced around the audience, and Christopher Marshall's *Earthsong*.

Stephen particularly enjoys working with amateur singers, not least leading regular singing days frequently involving up to 800 amateur singers. He was Musical Director of Edinburgh Bach Choir for seven years and has enjoyed directing the Garleton Singers for over 30 years, performing with them recently at the Lammermuir Festival.

Stephen plays harpsichord/organ continuo and orchestral piano and has given frequent organ recitals, including several on the grand Mulholland Organ in the Ulster Hall, Belfast. He is also in demand as an arranger and orchestrator, with a large portfolio of work particularly for young voices. He has produced a plethora of arrangements of the music of pianist Christopher Norton, including two publications of piano duets and a suite for wind sextet, and has received commissions from Children's Classic Concerts, the Ulster Orchestra and the RSNO. Commissions from the BBC have seen his work being performed on BBC Alba and at the Last Night of the Proms, and his pieces feature on several recordings, including with the RSNO Chorus.

Stephen is an Examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.

Royal Scottish National Orchestra



Formed in 1891, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO) is one of Europe's leading symphony orchestras. Awarded royal patronage by Her Late Majesty The Queen in 1977, its special status in the UK's cultural life was cemented in 2007 when it was recognised as one of Scotland's five National Performing Companies, supported by the Scottish Government.

Led by Music Director Thomas Søndergård, the Orchestra performs across Scotland, including concerts in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Perth and Inverness, and appears regularly at the Edinburgh International Festival and the BBC Proms. The RSNO tours internationally, most recently visiting China and Europe. In 2026 the RSNO was the first professional symphony orchestra to be awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society's Ensemble Award since 2014. The award recognises musical ensembles for outstanding quality and scope of performances and work.

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 cultivated an international reputation for world-class film, television and videogame soundtrack recording. The Orchestra has recorded for BAFTA-winning series *Silo* (Apple TV) and worked with the likes of GRAMMY Award-winning composer Lorne Balfe on *Life on Our Planet* (Netflix). Other notable titles include *Nuremberg* (Sony Pictures), *Now You See Me: Now You Don't* (Lionsgate), *Horizon: An American Saga* (Warner Bros) and *Star Wars Outlaws* (Ubisoft). The Orchestra records at its bespoke in-house facility 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. The RSNO's engagement offering includes its singing strand, encompassing a Buggy Choir and Chorus Academy in both Dundee and Glasgow and a lunchtime Workplace Choir, which complements the well-established and highly respected RSNO Youth Choruses and RSNO Chorus. The community choruses are designed with the benefits of group singing for health and wellbeing at their core and are open to all.

On Stage

FIRST VIOLIN

Shlomy Dobrinsky
ASSOCIATE LEADER
Patrick Curlett
Liu-Yi Retallick
Liam Lynch
Alan Manson
Ursula Heidecker Allen
Caroline Parry
Joana Rodrigues
Veronica Marziano
Elizabeth Bamping
Sharon Haslam
John Robinson

SECOND VIOLIN

Jacqueline Speirs
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Marion Wilson
Emily Nenniger
Paul Medd
Anne Bünemann
Sophie Lang
Robin Wilson
Kirstin Drew
Colin McKee
Helena Rose

VIOLA

Tom Dunn
PRINCIPAL
Felix Tanner
Asher Zaccardelli
Susan Buchan
Lisa Rourke
Maria Trittinger
Francesca Hunt
Beth Woodford

CELLO

Pei-Jee Ng
PRINCIPAL
Kennedy Leitch
Yuuki Bouterey-Ishido
Sarah Digger
Robert Anderson
Gunda Baranauskaitė
Rachael Lee

DOUBLE BASS

Nikita Naumov
PRINCIPAL
Michael Rae
Moray Jones
Alexandre Cruz dos Santos
Olaya Garcia Alvarez

FLUTE

Oliver Roberts
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Janet Richardson
PRINCIPAL PICCOLO

OBOE

Adrian Wilson
PRINCIPAL
Peter Dykes

CLARINET

William Knight
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Duncan Swindells

BASSOON

Matt Kitteringham
GUEST PRINCIPAL
Paolo Dutto

HORN

Amadea Dazeley-Gaist
PRINCIPAL
Alison Murray
Andrew McLean
David McClenaghan
Martin Murphy

TRUMPET

Jason Lewis
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Ben Jarvis
Robert Baxter

TROMBONE

Emma Close
GUEST PRINCIPAL
Richard Leonard
Alastair Sinclair
PRINCIPAL BASS TROMBONE

TUBA

John Whitener
PRINCIPAL

TIMPANI

Simon Archer
GUEST PRINCIPAL

PERCUSSION

Stuart Semple
GUEST PRINCIPAL
Tom Hunter
Coiln Hyson

HARP

Pippa Tunnell

ORGAN

David Goodenough

RSNO Chorus



The RSNO Chorus performs in around six different programmes in up to 20 concerts across Scotland with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra each year. The RSNO Chorus has also had great success in recording with the Orchestra. Its recordings, among others, of Prokofiev's *Alexander Nevsky*, conducted by Neeme Järvi, and Holst's *The Planets*, conducted by David Lloyd-Jones, have both attracted high critical acclaim.

In addition to its commitment to the Orchestra, the RSNO Chorus performs independently and has been invited to perform with orchestras in many parts of the world, establishing an international status and touring to Copenhagen, Hong Kong, Israel, Germany, Belfast, Australia, Trondheim, Amsterdam, Prague and, most recently, Budapest, performing with the MAV Orchestra in the Liszt Academy and Matthias Church, directed by Stephen Doughty. In 2018 it performed Britten's

War Requiem with the RSNO at the BBC Proms, joining the Orchestra again in the Royal Albert Hall in 2024 for Classic FM Live.

The RSNO Chorus evolved from a choir formed in 1843 to sing the first full performance of Handel's *Messiah* in Scotland. Today it is one of the most successful choruses in the UK. In recent years it has performed practically every work in the standard choral repertoire along with contemporary works by renowned composers, including John Adams, Magnus Lindberg, Howard Shore and, most recently, the critically acclaimed Scottish Premiere of Sir James MacMillan's *Christmas Oratorio*.

The RSNO Chorus is directed by Stephen Doughty, who was appointed to the role at the start of the 2022:23 Season.

SOPRANO 1

Alison Blair
 Alison Pryce-Jones
 Catherine Taylor
 Charlotte McKechnie
 Heather Keating
 Joan Lacy
 Joanna Beaton
 Joanna Webster
 Karman Leung
 Katherine Szumowski
 Mary Fraser
 Miriam MacDonald
 Morag Kean
 Morven MacDonald
 Roberta Yule
 Sarah Greer
 Seonaid Eadie

SOPRANO 2

Beth Kean
 Carole Sim Sayce
 Eleanor Gaskell
 Elspeth Waugh
 Frances Kennedy
 Helen Hyland
 Jennifer Stoddart
 Jenny Cheung
 Kate Adams
 Katie Dew
 Laura Gorman
 Leila Inglis
 Lorna Robertson
 Margaret Mills
 Ruby Ginoris
 Sally Sandground
 Theresa Hoare

ALTO 1

Ailie MacDougall
 Angela McDonald
 Anne Browning
 Anne Thies
 Brenda Williamson
 Catriona Eadie
 Esther McMillan
 Fiona Murray
 Fiona Taylor
 Julia Haddow

Julia King
 June Thomas
 Laura Macdonald
 Lauren Hadley
 Linda McLauchlan
 Louise Reid
 Marita McMillan
 Marrian Murray
 Mary Taylor
 Olivia Howe Gillespie
 Ruth Townsend
 Siobhán Rodger
 Sophy Ying
 Uta Engelbrecht

ALTO 2

Alison Bryce
 Ann Firth
 Anne Newlands
 Carol Leddy
 Catharine Perrin
 Denny Henderson
 Eleanor McLaren
 Elizabeth Scobie
 Elizabeth Stevenson
 Gillian Downie
 Jane Stansfield
 Janette Morrison
 Martha Colvin
 Steve Halfyard
 Sonja Crossan

TENOR 1

Andrew Clifford
 David Miller
 Nathan Dunsmore

TENOR 2

Calum Lowe
 Cosma Gottardi
 George Lloyd
 Graham Parsonage
 John Harvey
 Kerr Noble
 Laurie Nelson
 Robert Paterson
 Sandy Eadie
 Stuart Tait

BASS 1

Andrew Matheson
 Fraser Dalziel
 Ian MacKay
 Ian Mills
 Keith Thomasson
 Mark Higginson
 Mark Millington
 Martin Engelbrecht
 Martin Waddell
 Peter Saunders
 Robin Watson
 Stuart Corkindale
 Toby Reed

BASS 2

Alan Maxwell
 Graeme Simpson
 Ian Gray
 John MacLellan
 Kenneth Allen
 Melvyn Davies
 Richard Goldie
 Stephen Lipton
 Stewart Macfarlane
 Stewart McMillan
 Tim Reilly
 Tristan Stewart-Robertson

**RSNO CHORUS
DIRECTOR**

Stephen Dougherty

**RSNO CHORUS
VOCAL COACH**

Polly Beck

**RSNO CHORUS
REHEARSAL
PIANIST**

Edward Cohen



Sit *Bach* and relax

CLASSIC *f*M
THE **MOST** RELAXING MUSIC



 RADIO

 globalPLAYER

 "PLAY CLASSIC FM"