

# RSNO

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL  
ORCHESTRA



# THE MUSIC OF **JOHN WILLIAMS**

**CAIRD HALL, DUNDEE**

THURSDAY 7 MAY 2026: 7.30PM

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SATURDAY 9 MAY: 7.30PM

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# THE MUSIC OF **JOHN WILLIAMS**

No one writes a movie theme like John Williams. It's no wonder he's the world's most popular film composer. Join Hollywood conductor Richard Kaufman and the full might of Scotland's National Orchestra for hit after Williams hit. From *Schindler's List*, *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* and *Jaws* 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!

**Summon the Heroes** [6']

**A New Beginning** from *Minority Report* [3']

**Nimbus 2000** and **Harry's Wondrous World** from  
*Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* [7']

Theme from *Schindler's List* [4']

Soloist: Lena Zeliszewska

**Jim's New Life** from *Empire of the Sun* [4']

**The Face of Pan** from *Hook* [5']

Suite from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* [8']

**INTERVAL**

**Scherzo for Motorcycle and Orchestra** from  
*Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* [4']

**Sayuri's Theme** from **Memoirs of a Geisha** [4']

**DIMITRI TIOMKIN** (1894-1979)

**Love Theme** from **Lost Horizon** [3']

**DIMITRI TIOMKIN**

**Fiesta** from **Mexique** [3']

**Scherzo for X-Wings** from  
**Star Wars: The Force Awakens** [3']

**Theme, Out to Sea** and **Shark Cage Fugue**  
from **Jaws** [8']

**E.T.'s Adventures on Earth**  
from **E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial** [9']

**Richard Kaufman** Conductor  
**Royal Scottish National Orchestra**

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

# The Composer with the Perfect Knack

I wonder where John Williams keeps his awards. Perhaps they're on a reinforced mantelpiece, such must be the weight of his many accolades. He is, after all, the undisputed heavyweight champion of movie music, and he's the man with the perfect knack of making music match the film.

John Williams was born in New York in 1932, moving with his family to Los Angeles in 1948, where he joined the air force. He later studied at the Juilliard School in New York and cut his musical teeth in big band jazz and music for TV. It was in the late 1960s that he moved full time to composing for feature films, for which he produced some of the most famous and treasured music of our time.

However, we begin our cinematic journey not in Hollywood but with a fanfare written for the 1996 Olympic Games, held in Atlanta. **Summon the Heroes** is one of Williams' most effective concert works, a bold and rousing fanfare that showcases the brass section, and in particular the trumpets.

For 2002's **Minority Report**, starring Tom Cruise, Williams joined the film when it was nearing completion, leaving him minimal production time. Happily, director Steven Spielberg wanted the soundtrack to emulate the sound of Williams' great hero, the composer Bernard Herrmann, for whom Williams had worked extensively in the 1950s. *A New Beginning* is the most Herrmann-esque of these original compositions.




As the primary composer for the **Harry Potter** series, Williams conjured magical images of Hogwarts Castle, its staff, students and other magical inhabitants with warmth and wry humour, especially in two of the most popular themes for the series: *Nimbus 2000*, a lively theme for the brand-new racing broomstick that everybody wants, and *Harry's Wondrous World*, the heroic theme that glues the world of Harry Potter together on-screen.




Williams initially felt **Schindler's List** would be too challenging for him to score. He said to director Steven Spielberg, 'You need a better composer than I am for this.' Spielberg responded, 'I know. But they're all dead!' The great violinist Itzhak Perlman was startled at the authenticity of Williams' heart-breaking main theme, evoking the traditional Jewish music of central Europe. Tonight, it is performed by the RSNO's Lena Zeliszewska.

**Empire of the Sun** starred the then 13-year-old Christian Bale as Jim, an English schoolboy who survives World War II in a Japanese prisoner of war camp. Rather than depicting the bleak and unforgiving realities of life in the camp, Williams' frolicking theme, *Jim's New Life*, highlights Jim's internal view of the camp, as he turns his experiences into a game.



In 1991's **Hook**, one of the most magical of all Williams' scores, a now grown-up and respectable Peter Pan rescues his own children from the clutches of the wicked Captain Hook. As collaborations between Spielberg and Williams go, this swashbuckling adventure certainly captures all the wonder and innocence of childhood.



Before coming up with the iconic five-note phrase in **Close Encounters of the Third Kind**, Williams composed around 350 phrases before he and Spielberg settled on the famous one heard in the 1977 film. Unnerving and evocative, it's a fitting soundtrack for a film exploring the life-changing encounter between an ordinary man and visitors from outer space.




**Memoirs of a Geisha** is another triumphant collaboration with Spielberg. Based on Arthur Golden's best-selling novel, the film tells the story of a young Japanese girl who is sold by her impoverished family to a geisha house and ultimately becomes one of the most celebrated geishas of her time. *Sayuri's Theme* features solo violin and cello.

Prior to Williams' era, there were a host of great composers who satiated Hollywood's appetite for music. Among them was Dimitri Tiomkin, a Ukrainian who found fame and fortune in 1920s Hollywood. He's best known for his dynamic and memorable music to films such as *Dial M for Murder*, *High Noon* and *It's a Wonderful Life*. The RSNO and Richard Kaufman have recently released a new CD of his music, and it feels entirely appropriate that we should feature some of this wonderful film music in this concert – the *Love Theme* from **Lost Horizon** and the *Fiesta* from **Mexique**.



I'll wager the sound of the next film brought many of you here this evening, as the surest signal that one is watching a **Star Wars** film isn't something on the screen. It's not the opening text crawl, or the lightsabers, or starfighters. It's not even the unfaltering droids. The only true constant in the *Star Wars* series is the sound of its score, and for five decades that sound was the work of one man – John Williams.

Williams became a household name in 1975 with Spielberg's take on Peter Benchley's blockbuster novel **Jaws**, about a small American seaside resort terrorised by a great white shark. The incessant two-note bass ostinato that brilliantly captures the predatory nature of the shark, alerts the audience when it's time to get worried, frightened or relieved, and almost becomes a character itself.

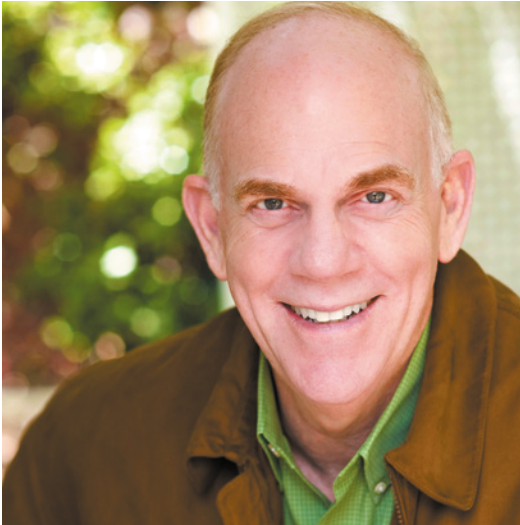
In 1982, Spielberg's **E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial** came as a bit of a surprise. Despite the title's promise of a 'creature from outer space', it took place not in the far future, but in modern-day Los Angeles and dealt with a sad little boy with a troubled home life who finds the courage to help the very non-scary E.T. to 'phone home'. This score is one of the finest in the history of film, especially *E.T.'s Adventures on Earth* and the exciting finish, in which E.T. helps the boys fly on their bikes as they race to meet a spaceship which has come to rescue the little alien. Believe a boy, his bike and his Alien can fly? Tonight's programme is proof that John Williams can make us believe almost anything.

© Stephen Duffy



# Richard Kaufman

## Conductor



Richard Kaufman has devoted much of his musical life to conducting and supervising music for film and television productions, as well as performing film and classical music in concert halls and on recordings. After 32 seasons as Principal Pops Conductor of Orange County's Pacific Symphony, he continues conducting the orchestra with the new title of Principal Pops Conductor Laureate. He is also Pops Conductor Laureate with the Dallas Symphony, and is in his 20th season with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra concert series, CSO at the Movies. He regularly appears as a guest conductor with symphony orchestras throughout the USA and around the world.

In 2015 he made his conducting debut with the Boston Pops, substituting for John Williams at the annual Pops Film Night. In 2016 Williams invited him to share the podium at the annual Tanglewood Film Night, and in 2018 he again joined Williams in concerts with the Chicago Symphony.

In 2016 he conducted the live performance of Michael Giacchino's score for *Star Trek Beyond* with the San Diego Symphony at its gala world

premiere, the first time a film was presented outdoors in IMAX.

Richard's live-performance-to-film repertoire includes over 30 films, and in 2014, at the Virginia Arts Festival, he conducted the world premiere of Stewart Copeland's score for the 1925 silent classic *Ben Hur*.

Richard received the 1993 GRAMMY Award for Best Pop Instrumental Performance for a recording he conducted with the Nuremberg Symphony. In 2011 he conducted the London Symphony Orchestra in a concert of the film music of Dimitri Tiomkin, the first film music recording released on the LSO Live label, which was nominated for a 2013 GRAMMY (Best Instrumental Accompaniment for a Vocal, *Wild is the Wind*, arranger Nan Schwartz) and was also among several LSO recordings produced by James Mallinson which received GRAMMY nominations in the Best Classical Producer category.

Richard joined the Music Department of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios in 1984 as Music Coordinator, and for the next 18 years supervised music for all MGM television and animation projects. He received two Emmy Award nominations, one for the animated series *The Pink Panther* in the category of Outstanding Music Direction and Composition, and another for Outstanding Original Song co-authored for the series *All Dogs Go to Heaven*.

Born in Los Angeles, Richard began violin studies at age 7, played in the Peter Meremblum California Junior Symphony, and was a member of the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra. He attended the Berkshire Music Festival at Tanglewood on the Fellowship programme, and earned a BA in Music from California State University Northridge. While a student there, he composed the University's Alma Mater and Fight Song.

# 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

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Lena Zeliszewska  
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Tamás Fejes  
ASSISTANT LEADER  
Patrick Curlett  
Robin Wilson  
Alan Manson  
Amelia Harding  
Ursula Heidecker Allen  
Caroline Parry  
Liam Lynch  
Veronica Marziano  
Liz Bamping  
Susannah Lowdon  
Lorna Rough  
Fiona Stephen

## SECOND VIOLIN

Marion Wilson  
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL  
Jacqueline Speirs  
Kirstin Drew  
Paul Medd  
Colin McKee  
Anne Bünemann  
Helena Rose  
Nigel Mason  
Sophie Lang  
Joe Hodson  
Sophie Sild  
Rosamund Noll

## VIOLA

Felix Tanner  
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL  
Asher Zaccardelli  
Susan Buchan  
Beth Woodford  
Lisa Rourke  
Francesca Hunt  
Nicola McWhirter  
Claire Dunn  
Maria Trittinger  
Henry Justo

## CELLO

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

## DOUBLE BASS

Nikita Naumov  
PRINCIPAL  
Michael Rae  
Alexandre Cruz dos Santos  
Moray Jones  
George Podkolzin  
Paul Speirs

## FLUTE

Katherine Bryan  
PRINCIPAL  
Oliver Roberts  
Janet Richardson  
PRINCIPAL PICCOLO

## OBOE

Adrian Wilson  
PRINCIPAL  
Peter Dykes  
Henry Clay  
PRINCIPAL COR ANGLAIS

## CLARINET

Timothy Orpen  
PRINCIPAL  
William Knight  
Duncan Swindells  
PRINCIPAL BASS CLARINET

## BASSOON

David Hubbard  
PRINCIPAL  
Hugo Mak  
Iona Garvie  
GUEST PRINCIPAL CONTRABASSOON

## HORN

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

## TRUMPET

Jason Lewis  
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL  
Juliette Murphy  
Andrew Connell-Smith  
Mark Elwis

## TROMBONE

Dávur Juul Magnussen  
PRINCIPAL  
Cillian Ó Ceallacháin  
Alastair Sinclair  
PRINCIPAL BASS TROMBONE  
Huw Evans

## TUBA

John Whitener  
PRINCIPAL

## TIMPANI

Murray Sedgwick  
GUEST PRINCIPAL

## PERCUSSION

Simon Lowdon  
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Stuart Semple  
Philip Hague  
Colin Hyson  
Peter Murch

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Pippa Tunnell

## PIANO

Judith Keaney

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**Elgar** Violin Concerto

**Stravinsky** The Firebird

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