

RSNO

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL
ORCHESTRA

RECOMMENDED BY
CLASSIC *f*M



Sibelius Violin Concerto

Music Hall, Aberdeen
Thu 2 Nov 2023 7.30pm

Usher Hall, Edinburgh
Fri 3 Nov 7.30pm

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall
Sat 4 Nov 7.30pm

In memory of **Tom Bruce Jones** and in recognition of the generosity of **Stina Bruce Jones**

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Sibelius Violin Concerto

Music Hall, Aberdeen Thu 2 Nov 2023 7.30pm

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Glasgow Royal Concert Hall Sat 4 Nov 7.30pm

Dynamic superstar violinist Ray Chen returns to Scotland to perform Sibelius' beloved Violin Concerto, conducted by Music Director Thomas Søndergård. First, though, there's pure enchantment from Finnish composer Lotta Wennäkoski and afterwards the songs, dances and Czech sunshine of Dvořák's joyous Sixth Symphony.

BRAHMS Hungarian Dance No5 in G Minor [3'] *(Aberdeen only)*

Side-by-side with Big Noise Torry

LOTTA WENNÄKOSKI Om fotspår och ljus
(Of Footprints and Light) [11'] SCOTTISH PREMIERE

SIBELIUS Violin Concerto in D Minor Op47 [31']

INTERVAL

DVOŘÁK Symphony No6 in D Major Op60 [41']

Thomas Søndergård Conductor

Ray Chen Violin

Royal Scottish National Orchestra

In memory of **Tom Bruce Jones** and in recognition of
the generosity of **Stina Bruce Jones**

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CLASSIC *f*M

The Glasgow performance will be recorded for the RSNO Archive.
Supported by the Iain and Pamela Sinclair Legacy.

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.**



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Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No2

PTH Thu 9 Nov 2023: 7.30pm

EDN Fri 10 Nov 2023: 7.30pm

GLW Sat 11 Nov 2023: 7.30pm

Anna Clyne Stride
Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No2
Dvořák Symphony No8

Anja Bihlmaier Conductor
Nelson Goerner Piano

In memory of **Mr Roderick Jones**

Pre-concert talk, 6.45pm
With RSNO First Violin Ursula Heidecker Allen

rsno.org.uk

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Scottish Government



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Welcome



Welcome to this evening's concert.

We are delighted to be joined once again by Music Director Thomas Søndergård, now in his sixth year in the role with the Orchestra. Sharing the prowess of our Music Director is always a pleasure but particularly so when he is joined by young, exciting talent such as we have tonight. Our soloist, Ray Chen, joins the RSNO for the first time, with an impressive performance record under his belt. Exceptionally popular with younger generations of classical music fans and a certified star of social media, he is a brilliant example of the positive future for arts and culture.

Another example of the nurturing of future generations of audiences and musicians this weekend comes from Sistema Scotland's Big Noise Torry at the Aberdeen concert. These young musicians, dotted among the RSNO's players, are taking part in the first 'side-by-side' performance of the 2023:24 Season, with

others to come in Perth (9 Nov), Glasgow (2 Dec), Edinburgh (9 Mar) and Dundee (23 May). Being able to offer the young people of Sistema Scotland's Big Noise the opportunity to take to the stage with Scotland's National Orchestra is really important to us. It is an enriching experience for our players and conductors. We sincerely hope that it is for the young performers too.

Last week we also announced our latest National Schools Concert Programme, *Still I Rise*. Aimed at secondary school pupils in S1-3, *Still I Rise* focuses on the lives and music of three important but marginalised 20th-century composers – Ethel Smyth, Julius Eastman and Viktor Ullmann – through the lens of Maya Angelou's poem of the same name. To find out more, visit rsno.org.uk/still-i-rise

Alistair Mackie

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Royal Scottish National Orchestra

1-9



10-18



19-27



28-36



37-45



46-54



55-63



64-67



ARTISTIC TEAM

Thomas Søndergård
MUSIC DIRECTOR
Neeme Järvi
CONDUCTOR LAUREATE
Alexander Lazarev
CONDUCTOR EMERITUS
Derrick Morgan
ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
Stephen Doughty
DIRECTOR, RSNO CHORUS
Patrick Barrett
DIRECTOR, RSNO YOUTH CHORUS

FIRST VIOLIN

Maya Iwabuchi LEADER
Lena Zeliszewska
ASSOCIATE LEADER
Tamás Fejes ASSISTANT LEADER
Patrick Curlett ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Caroline Parry
Ursula Heidecker Allen
Lorna Rough
Susannah Lowdon
Alan Manson
Elizabeth Bamping
Liam Lynch
Veronica Marziano

SECOND VIOLIN

Jacqueline Speirs
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Marion Wilson ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Nigel Mason
Paul Medd
Harriet Hunter
Anne Büneemann
Sophie Lang
Robin Wilson
Emily Nenniger

VIOLA

Tom Dunn PRINCIPAL
Felix Tanner
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Susan Buchan SUB PRINCIPAL
Lisa Rourke SUB PRINCIPAL
Nicola McWhirter
Claire Dunn
Katherine Wren
Maria Trittinger
Beth Woodford
Francesca Hunt

CELLO

Pei-Jee Ng PRINCIPAL
Betsy Taylor ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Kennedy Leitch ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Rachael Lee
Sarah Digger
Robert Anderson
Gunda Baranauskaitė

DOUBLE BASS

Michael Rae ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

FLUTE

Katherine Bryan PRINCIPAL
Janet Richardson
PRINCIPAL PICCOLO

OBOE

Adrian Wilson PRINCIPAL
Peter Dykes ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Henry Clay PRINCIPAL COR ANGLAIS

CLARINET

Timothy Orpen
PRINCIPAL CLARINET
Duncan Swindells
PRINCIPAL BASS CLARINET

BASSOON

David Hubbard PRINCIPAL
Luis Eisen ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Paolo Dutto
PRINCIPAL CONTRABASSOON

HORN

Alison Murray ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
Andrew McLean
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
David McClenaghan
Martin Murphy ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

TRUMPET

Christopher Hart PRINCIPAL

TROMBONE

Dávor Juul Magnussen PRINCIPAL
Lance Green ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL
Alastair Sinclair
PRINCIPAL BASS TROMBONE

TUBA

John Whitener PRINCIPAL

TIMPANI

Paul Philbert PRINCIPAL

PERCUSSION

Simon Lowdon PRINCIPAL
John Poulter ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Hungarian Dance No5

in G Minor



FIRST PERFORMANCE

1869

DURATION 3 minutes

Charlie Chaplin carried out a cut-throat shave to it in *The Great Dictator*, and the Three Little Pigs erected their houses to it in Looney Tunes' 1942 *Pigs in a Polka*. There can surely be few listeners who've never encountered the rich, throaty tune of Brahms' Hungarian Dance No5 in one form or another. And indeed, it was specifically conceived to lodge in the memory and achieve just that kind of enormous popularity. It's one of 21 dances that Brahms composed between 1869 and 1880, mostly based on traditional Hungarian tunes (or so the composer thought – we'll come to that), and originally written for piano duet, with a canny eye on the domestic music-making market. The Dance's whirling melodies and stomping rhythms no doubt entertained countless well-off German and Austrian households in the years before radio and television, as well as wider audiences in its plentiful arrangements for all manner of musical ensembles.

Brahms was also tapping into a passion for exotic 'gypsy' music, all the rage in central Europe at the time, although there was some confusion as to whether the tunes he plundered came from age-old Hungarian folk music or from travelling 'gypsies' (who we'd now call Roma) more likely to have been from what is now Romania. Brahms believed he was using a Hungarian folk tune in his Dance No5, but in fact he'd inadvertently stolen the melody of *Bártfai emlék* (Memories of Bártfa), written in 1859 by the Hungarian composer and bandleader Béla Kéler. The town of Bártfa (now Bardejov in Slovakia) has a rich and important Jewish history, something that Kéler may have reflected in the distinctive twists and turns of his piece's melodies, and which might cast new light on Brahms' version too.

Kéler's original piece is a *csárdás*, a traditional, whirling Hungarian dance characterised by sudden changes in speed – something Brahms captures perfectly in his colourful adaptation. Its rich opening melody is answered by a contrasting section complete with clashing cymbals – and unexpected drops in tempo – before a brighter central section, and a shortened repeat of the opening that brings the Dance to a rousing conclusion.

© David Kettle

Big Noise Torry

VIOLIN

Adele Tarvet
Aisha Teghri
Cayden Mark Goodridge
Chloe Stirton
Maja Babiarz
Maria Drelich
Matthew Duthie
Natalia Babiarz
Sandra Janiszewska
Vasilisa Karmanova
Tochi Chetuya
Victoria Tuckerson

CELLO

Adrian O'Brien-Gilbert
Auria Quintal
David Xue
Lauren Bowman

BASS

Michael Tuckerson
Szymon Dziegielewsk

PERCUSSION

Logan Gerard



Lotta Wennäkoski (born 1970)

Om fotspår och ljus

(Of Footprints and Light)



FIRST PERFORMANCE

Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted
by Susanna Mälkki, 11 September 2019
SCOTTISH PREMIERE

DURATION 11 minutes

As part of the Helsinki Variations series, composers have chosen a Finnish composition written before 1945 as a source for inspiration for their own works commissioned by the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra.

Om fotspår och ljus (Of Footprints and Light) is based on a scene from the opera *Asiens ljus* (Light of Asia) by Ida Moberg (1859–1947). The opera tells the story of the Buddha's life, and in the scene the young prince Siddhartha Gautama sings to his faithful servant Channa in the palace garden. The composer worked on the opera from 1910 until her death. The opera remained unfinished, and only an excerpt (Lullaby) has ever been performed in public.

© Lotta Wennäkoski

If you like this, why not try:

English composer Anna Clyne's Beethoven-inspired **Stride** in **Perth** (9 Nov), **Edinburgh** (10 Nov) and **Glasgow** (11 Nov), alongside Rachmaninov's **Piano Concerto No2** and Dvořák's **Symphony No8**.

Lotta Wennäkoski

Composer

Lotta Wennäkoski (born in Helsinki, Finland) studied violin, music theory and Hungarian folk music in the Béla Bartók Conservatory in Budapest. She then studied music theory and composition at the Sibelius Academy and was awarded her diploma in 2000. Her main composition teachers have been Eero Hämeenniemi, Kaija Saariaho and Paavo Heininen. During 1998-9 she studied in the Netherlands with Louis Andriessen.

Wennäkoski's debut concert took place at Musica Nova Helsinki in 1999. Her orchestral piece *Sakara* was commissioned by Esa-Pekka Salonen, who also conducted the 2003 premiere with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. The stage work *N! (Woman's love and life)* was premiered at the Helsinki Festival the same year, and was nominated for the Nordic Council Music Prize in 2004. In 2014 Wennäkoski was nominated again, for *Jong* for juggler and chamber orchestra. Other important premieres include the flute concerto *Soie* in 2009 and the mini-opera *Lelele* at Musica Nova Helsinki in 2011. In 2012 Wennäkoski was one of the featured composers at the 17th Other Minds Festival in San Francisco.

Wennäkoski has been the Artistic Coordinator of the Tampere Biennale (2008-10) and the Composer-in-Residence of the Tapiola Sinfonietta (2010-11). In 2017 she was the Artistic Planner for the Avant! Summer Sounds Festival. The BBC commissioned her orchestral work *Flounce*, which premiered at the 2017 Last Night of the Proms. Another premiere, *Uniin asti* for male choir and orchestra, took place at the Helsinki Music Centre in December the same year. The Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra commissioned the chamber work *Hele*, which premiered in 2018 in Walt Disney Hall.

In 2019 Wennäkoski was the guest composer at the Korsholm Music Festival. The same year the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra commissioned *Om fotspår och ljus*. In 2021/22 Wennäkoski was one of three composers featured by the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, and the season also included the harp concerto *Sigla*. In April 2022, the Danish String Quartet premiered *Pige* at Carnegie Hall in New York.

Later this month, Ilya Gringolts and the BBC Symphony Orchestra premiere Wennäkoski's new violin concerto, *Prosoidia*. Wennäkoski has also recently finished her opera *Regine*, a commission from Savonlinna Opera Festival. The libretto is by Laura Voipio and it tells the story of philosopher Søren Kierkegaard's fiancée, Regine Olsen.

Wennäkoski's orchestral music has been recorded twice by the Finnish RSO: *Soie* was released in 2015 and *Sigla* in 2023, both on Ondine. A CD of her chamber music, *Culla d'aria*, was released by Alba Records in 2008.

Wennäkoski was awarded the State Prize for Music in November 2020. She is currently (2022-6) Artist Professor, an honorary title awarded by The Arts Promotion Centre Finland.

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Violin Concerto

in D Minor Op47



FIRST PERFORMANCE

Berlin, 19 October 1905

DURATION 31 minutes

**1. Allegro moderato – Largamente –
Allegro molto**

2. Adagio di molto

3. Allegro, ma non tanto

Sibelius was well qualified to write a violin concerto. As a student he had hoped to become a violin virtuoso, and when he was 25 he auditioned for the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Although composition was the path he eventually took, it is clear that late into his life, he still yearned for the heroic role of a soloist. He later confessed:

Right from childhood the violin took me over completely. For the next ten years or so my profoundest wish, the loftiest aspiration of my ambitions, was to become a great violin virtuoso.

It is therefore no surprise that his one and only concerto should be for the instrument that had so dominated his youthful studies.

When, in the first years of the 20th century, Sibelius began the Concerto, it was set to become one of the most demanding pieces in the repertoire – almost as if he were composing his own unrealised dreams into the work. The first version in particular, completed in 1903 and premiered the following year, threatened to overwhelm the soloist in a flood of technical challenges. A revised version, in which many of the most overtly virtuosic elements were removed, was eventually heard in Berlin in 1905, with Karl Halíř as soloist and no less a figure than Richard Strauss conducting.

The revised version had an important structural change to the first movement: instead of a cadenza in the expected place near the end of the movement, Sibelius placed it in the middle of the movement and gave it the prominence and importance of a development section.

Significantly, the violinist who did the most to establish the work in the repertory was Jascha Heifetz, who probably had the most dazzling technique of any violinist in the 20th century.

The first movement of the Concerto is the longest and the most symphonic in character, and opens with the solo instrument intoning one of Sibelius' most inspired and unforgettable themes. The slow movement, a poetic romance, features a long, poignant, song-like theme for the soloist, prefaced by a passage in thirds from the woodwind. The finale, which the composer once described as a *danse macabre*, enters with an outburst of vitality, the rhythmic momentum being established at the outset by the timpani and basses.

© Mark Fielding

RSNO Connections

One of the earliest performances in Scotland of Sibelius' Violin Concerto was given by David McCallum, the Leader of the Scottish Orchestra (now the RSNO), on 1 February 1941. McCallum, born in Kilsyth, was one of the most respected violinists in the UK. He was also the father of actor David McCallum, of *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* fame, who died recently.

The Arts in 1905

5 Jan Baroness Emma Orczy's play *The Scarlet Pimpernel* debuted at London's New Theatre; the novel was published soon after

16 Jan Neil Munro's first *Vital Spark* story was published in the *Glasgow Evening News*

8 Mar Edward Elgar premiered his *Introduction and Allegro* and *Pomp and Circumstance March No3* with the London Symphony Orchestra

10 May Oscar Wilde's play *Salome* was performed privately at the New Stage Club in London; Richard Strauss' opera *Salome*, based on a German translation of the original 1891 version in French, opened in Dresden on 9 December

19 Jun In Pittsburgh, John P Harris and his brother Harry opened the first theatre in the US to exclusively show motion pictures

13 Oct English actor-manager Sir Henry Irving collapsed in his hotel and died soon after while on tour in Bradford

15 Oct *La Mer* by Claude Debussy was given its first performance by the Lamoureux Orchestra in Paris

15 Dec Pushkin House was founded in St Petersburg

16 Dec The film industry newspaper *Variety* was published for the first time, in New York

28 Dec Franz Lehár's *The Merry Widow* premiered in Vienna

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Symphony No6

in D Major Op60



FIRST PERFORMANCE

Prague, 25 March 1881

DURATION 41 minutes

- 1. Allegro non tanto**
- 2. Adagio**
- 3. Scherzo (Furiant). Presto – Trio. Poco meno mosso – Scherzo**
- 4. Finale. Allegro con spirito**

Sometimes it only needs a simple stroke to transform a plodding musical idea into something vibrant and dynamic. Dvořák's first conception for the opening movement of his Sixth Symphony was a tune in D Minor, based on a Czech folk song, trotting along amiably enough in two beats to a bar. Then inspiration struck, and Dvořák altered the theme from melancholy minor to a sunlit major key, now with a fast three beats per bar. The result is a theme with impressive swinging momentum, like an airborne waltz. The potential for development is clear at once, and it's hardly surprising that from this beginning Dvořák was able to create his first truly great symphonic opening movement.

Something else that is new about the Sixth Symphony is the complete assurance of the orchestral writing. Dvořák may have created fine, even magical touches of instrumental colour in his earlier symphonies, but there are also passages where the textures can sound a little muddy or coarse-grained. The freshness and refinement of the Sixth's sound world, however, is never compromised, and here for the first time in an orchestral work we sense how much Dvořák's orchestral thinking was influenced by nature: there are suggestions of birdsong and the sounds of wind and water, along with echoes of the music of the rural communities of his native Bohemia – music that was then considered 'uncultivated' or even 'barbarous' by self-conscious European sophisticates.

Dvořák's new confidence may have been partly due to the encouragement of the outstanding conductor Hans Richter, originally a Wagnerian 'progressive' but increasingly sympathetic to Dvořák's 'classical-romantic' champion Brahms. In 1879 Richter had given a fine performance of Dvořák's Third Slavonic Rhapsody in Berlin in the presence of the composer and his friend and mentor Brahms. Not only was the audience

enthusiastic, but Richter himself had pulled Dvořák out of his seat and embraced him on the concert platform. Afterwards Richter invited Dvořák to dinner and made him promise to write a symphony for Richter himself to conduct. The result was the Symphony No6, completed in the summer of 1880. Dvořák clearly realised that he had to turn out something extra special for a conductor like Richter, which may help explain why the first movement's leading idea took time to shape itself – normally he wrote very quickly. In fact, the Symphony was originally published as 'No1', evidence that Dvořák felt it represented a fresh start. (The first four symphonies were only published after Dvořák's death, necessitating renumbering of the last five.)

After the first movement's sustained dancing flight, sometimes lyrical, sometimes tautly dramatic, a song-like *Adagio* follows. The influential Dvořák scholar Otakar Šourek described this slow second movement beautifully as 'a softly yearning nocturne [with] an ardently passionate intermezzo'. Then comes a direct invocation of Czech folk music in the Scherzo. The subtitle is 'Furiant', a reference to the wild dance in a dizzyingly shifting rhythm popular in rural communities like the one Dvořák grew up in. Dvořák's main theme drives forward on a ONE-two TWO-two THREE-two ONE-two-three TWO-two-three pattern typical of the furiant. A gentler pastoral Trio section follows, in which Dvořák makes unusual lyrical use of a solo piccolo. Then the Finale makes no secret of its debt to Brahms: the opening theme of this movement and that of Brahms' Second Symphony (also in D Major) are clearly related. But this is an act of homage, not of theft, and the movement as a whole is utterly independent in spirit, at last building confidently to one of Dvořák's most exhilarating endings.

© Stephen Johnson

RSNO Connections

Dvořák's Sixth Symphony had its first performance in Scotland on 16 January 1906. Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* also had its Scottish premiere during the same Scottish Orchestra (now the RSNO) concert.

Listen again to the RSNO

Antonín Dvořák Symphony No6 and The Noon Witch

Conductor Neeme Järvi

More information

rsno.org.uk/recordings

Get a taste of this recording



Please do not listen to this recording
during the live performance.

Ray Chen

Violin



Violinist and online personality Ray Chen redefines what it means to be a classical musician in the 21st century. With a global reach that enhances and inspires a new classical audience, his remarkable musicianship transmits to millions, reflected through his engagements both online and with the foremost orchestras and concert halls around the world.

Initially coming to attention via the Yehudi Menuhin (2008) and Queen Elisabeth (2009) competitions, of which he was First Prize winner, he has built a profile in Europe, Asia and the USA, as well as his native Australia, both live and on disc. Signed in 2017 to Decca Classics, that summer saw the recording of the first album of this partnership with the London Philharmonic, following three critically acclaimed albums on Sony, the first of which (*Virtuoso*) received an ECHO Klassik award.

Profiled as 'one to watch' by *The Strad* and *Gramophone* magazines, his profile has grown to encompass featuring in the Forbes list of 30 most influential Asians under 30, appearing in online TV series *Mozart in the Jungle*, a multi-year

partnership with Giorgio Armani and performing at major media events such as France's Bastille Day (live to 800,000 people), the Nobel Prize Concert in Stockholm and the BBC Proms.

He has appeared with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhausorchester, Munich Philharmonic, Filarmonica della Scala, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale della Santa Cecilia, Los Angeles Philharmonic, SWR Symphonieorchester, New York Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra and Bavarian Radio Chamber Orchestra.

More recently, Ray Chen co-founded Tonic, an independent start-up that aims to motivate musicians and learners around the world to practise their craft together. His presence on social media makes him a pioneer in an artist's interaction with their audience, utilising the new opportunities of modern technology. He is an ambassador for Sony Electronics, a music consultant for Riot Games (the leading e-sports company best known for *League of Legends*) and has been featured in *Vogue*. He released his own design of a violin case for the industry manufacturer GEWA and proudly plays Thomastik-Infeld strings. His commitment to music education is paramount, inspiring the younger generation of music students with his series of self-produced videos combining comedy, education and music.

Born in Taiwan and raised in Australia, Ray Chen was accepted to Philadelphia's Curtis Institute of Music at 15, where he studied with Aaron Rosand and was supported by Young Concert Artists. He plays the 1714 'Dolphin' Stradivarius violin, on loan from the Nippon Music Foundation and once owned by the famed violinist Jascha Heifetz.

Thomas Søndergård

Conductor



Paris (Orchestre National de France), London (London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, London Symphony and Philharmonia), 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 have included the symphony orchestras of Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Baltimore, St Louis, Toronto, Atlanta, Montreal, Vancouver, Houston and Seattle. He has also made highly successful tours to China, Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

Danish conductor Thomas Søndergård has been Music Director of the RSNO since 2018, following six seasons as Principal Guest Conductor. The 2023/24 season also sees him begin his tenure as 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.

In addition to his regular appearances with the RSNO during the 2023:24 Season, Thomas led the Orchestra's Residency at Salzburg's Grosses Festspielhaus in October 2023, joined by pianist Lise de la Salle, and leads an extensive European tour with violinist Ray Chen in January 2024.

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), Leipzig (Gewandhausorchester),

This season sees Thomas make his return to the London Symphony Orchestra, as well as his debut with the New York Philharmonic, where he will perform the US premiere of Olga Neuwirth's *Keyframes for a Hippogriff*. He also makes regular guest appearances throughout Scandinavia, debuting with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra and at the Bergen International Festival, where he leads a full staging of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt* to Grieg's complete incidental music. Return visits include the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, a joint collaboration with the Aalborg and Aarhus Symfoniorkestere, and the Danish National Symphony Orchestra, celebrating his receipt of the Carl Nielsen and Anne Marie Carl-Nielsen Foundation's award for his outstanding contribution to Danish musical life.

Royal Scottish National Orchestra



The Royal Scottish National Orchestra is one of Europe's leading symphony orchestras. Formed in 1891 as the Scottish Orchestra, the company became the Scottish National Orchestra in 1950, and was awarded Royal Patronage in 1977. The Orchestra's artistic team is led by Danish conductor Thomas Søndergård, who was appointed RSNO Music Director in 2018.

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 the 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. Over 200 releases are available, including Thomas Søndergård conducting Strauss (*Ein Heldenleben*, *Der Rosenkavalier Suite*) and

Prokofiev (Symphonies Nos 1 and 5); two discs of African American Voices featuring the music of George Walker, William Levi Dawson, Margaret Bonds and more, conducted by Kellen Gray; the complete symphonies of Sibelius (Gibson), Prokofiev (Järvi), Bruckner (Tintner) and Roussel (Denève); as well as further discs championing the music of William Grant Still (Eisenberg), Xiaogang Ye (Serebrier) and Thomas Wilson (Macdonald).

The RSNO's Engagement strategy, Music for Life, sees the Orchestra work with schools and community groups, connecting its music with the people of Scotland. Since March 2020, the RSNO has created multiple online Engagement programmes and Digital Seasons, ensuring the RSNO continues to bring world-class music to its audiences in Scotland and around the world on stage and on screen.

On Stage

FIRST VIOLIN

Maya Iwabuchi
LEADER
Lena Zeliszewska
ASSOCIATE LEADER
Tamás Fejes
ASSISTANT LEADER
Patrick Curlett
Caroline Parry
Ursula Heidecker Allen
Elizabeth Bamping
Lorna Rough
Susannah Lowdon
Alan Manson
Liam Lynch
Veronica Marziano
Gillian Risi
Helena Rose

SECOND VIOLIN

Julia Noone
GUEST PRINCIPAL
Jacqueline Speirs
Marion Wilson
Nigel Mason
Paul Medd
Harriet Hunter
Anne Bünemann
Sophie Lang
Robin Wilson
Emily Nenniger
John Robinson
Gongbo Jiang

VIOLA

Tom Dunn
PRINCIPAL
Felix Tanner
Lisa Rourke
Nicola McWhirter
Claire Dunn
Katherine Wren
Maria Trittinger
Francesca Hunt
Beth Woodford
Elaine Koene

CELLO

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

DOUBLE BASS

Alex Jones
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Oliver Roberts
Adam Richardson

OBOE

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Duncan Swindells
PRINCIPAL BASS CLARINET

BASSOON

David Hubbard
PRINCIPAL
Paolo Dutto

HORN

Andrew Littlemore
GUEST PRINCIPAL
Alison Murray
Andrew McLean
David McClenaghan
Martin Murphy

TRUMPET

Christopher Hart
PRINCIPAL
Juliette Murphy

TROMBONE

Dávur Juul Magnussen
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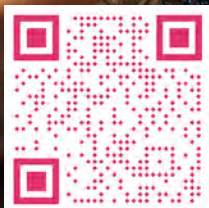
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Sistema Scotland



Sistema Scotland is the charity that delivers the Big Noise social change and music education programmes, working with over 3,500 children and families to improve lives and strengthen communities across Scotland. Its immersive and long-term Big Noise programmes use music and nurturing relationships to help children and young people fulfil their potential. At Big Noise the symphony orchestra becomes a community which supports young people to gain an invaluable range of life skills. Independent evaluation shows that Big Noise supports children to improve their learning, wellbeing and confidence, bringing communities together and paving the way for positive futures. The programmes are delivered by inspirational staff musicians who act as role models and mentors, and foster supportive, long-term relationships.

Big Noise Torry launched in Aberdeen in 2015 and now works with over 750 children and young people from the Torry community. This includes babies and toddlers in Little Noise, and nursery and primary school-aged children at its partner primary schools Walker Road and Tullos. The programme also works with secondary-aged pupils from Lochside Academy and supports children who live in Torry but attend school elsewhere. Big Noise Torry also has a weekly

community orchestra which allows parents and other community members to come together to learn an instrument and gain musical skills.

Please support Big Noise Torry by visiting **www.makeabignoise.org.uk** or by scanning the QR code.



Big Noise Torry is delivered by Sistema Scotland with support from a range of public partners, trusts, foundations and individuals. In addition to Big Noise Torry, Sistema Scotland also runs programmes in the targeted communities of Raploch & Fallin (Stirling), Govanhill (Glasgow), Douglas (Dundee) and Wester Hailes (Edinburgh).



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 philanthropic gifts enable us to realise the Orchestra's most ambitious goals. Conductors' Circle members support inspirational concert performances for our audiences alongside transformational 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
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We would also like to thank those generous donors who wish to remain anonymous.

Patron Programme

CHAIR PATRON

From musical activities in schools with the musicians of the future to working in community venues across Scotland, as a Chair Patron you are enabling RSNO musicians to explore the many facets of their art and the positive impact it has on people's lives. Supporting an individual musician puts you at the heart of the RSNO family. You're connected directly to the musicians on stage and get to enjoy privileged behind-the-scenes access. RSNO musicians truly appreciate our Chair Patrons and enjoy developing personal relationships with our supporters.

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*With thanks to the Gregor Forbes
John Clark Chair for their support of
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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.

LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT PATRON

Our range of Learning & Engagement work is huge. From apps for babies to our free National Schools Concert Programme; community orchestras to professional development programmes; digital care packages for care homes and our pioneering Generations projects. The RSNO aims to provide a lifetime of music. Becoming a Patron will bring you closer to the communities we serve across Scotland and provide vital support for this crucial work.

Learning and Engagement Patrons

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NEW WORKS PATRON

The RSNO is dedicated to bringing new works and outstanding new talent to audiences across Scotland. Our New Works Patrons contribute a significant legacy to orchestral music that extends beyond the RSNO, providing new music for orchestras and audiences around the world – for generations to come.

New Works Patron

Susie Thomson

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

If you would like more information or would like to discuss how you can become part of the RSNO Family of Supporters, please contact Jenny McNeely, Head of Individual Giving and Partnerships, at jenny.mcneely@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 RSNO 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.

Leaving a gift to the RSNO in your will is the single most important way you can help us to make music and to create memories. Your legacy will support the work of the Orchestra for years to come, ensuring that we can continue to bring great music to a new generation of children, young people and adults right across Scotland.

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 RSNO, 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

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Torran McEwan, Individual Giving and Partnerships Officer, in the strictest confidence, at torran.mcewan@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 Naomi Stewart, Head of Trusts and Projects, at naomi.stewart@rsno.org.uk

RSNO Circle

Our Circle members are a vital part of the RSNO family. You, our community of music-lovers, inspire and support us. To all our existing Circle members, thank you. Your unwavering support allows us to continue bringing the joy of music to all across Scotland.

When you join the RSNO Circle you gain access to exclusive benefits such as priority single ticket booking, our exclusive *Inner Circle* magazine, the RSNO Circle e-newsletter and invitations to special events such as Open Rehearsals. You also help us to bring music to so many people, from children attending our free schools concerts to people in care homes watching our digital care packages.

To find out more about joining the Circle please visit rsno.org.uk/circle or get in touch with Torran McEwan, Individual Giving and Partnerships Officer, at torran.mcewan@rsno.org.uk

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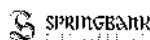
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