

Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh Fri 23 Feb 2024 7.30pm

St Aloysius' Church, Glasgow Sat 24 Feb 7.30pm

Airdrie New Wellwynd Church Sun 25 Feb 4pm



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RSNO CHORUS SINGS Bruckner

Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh Fri 23 Feb 2024 7.30pm **St Aloysius' Church, Glasgow** Sat 24 Feb 7.30pm **Airdrie New Wellwynd Church** Sun 25 Feb 4pm

Imagine the stillness and mystery of an ancient church on a dark night. Suddenly, softly, the air starts to glow and shimmer with music that feels as eternal – and as sacred – as the stones themselves. RSNO Chorus Director Stephen Doughty conducts the RSNO Chorus, Brass and Woodwind in a concert with an atmosphere all of its own: from the Romantic century, music of quiet rapture and soaring beauty in venues that couldn't be more perfect.

BRAHMS Begräbnisgesang Op13 [8']

BRUCKNER Os justi WAB 30 [4']

A MENDELSSOHN Suite for Woodwind, Brass and Percussion Op62 [27']

INTERVAL

BRUCKNER Mass No2 in E Minor WAB 27 [37']

Stephen Doughty Conductor
RSNO Chorus
RSNO Brass and Woodwind

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.

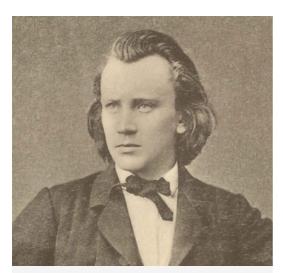
The Airdrie concert is given in aid of the Beatson Cancer Charity



Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

Begräbnisgesang

Op13



FIRST PERFORMANCE
Hamburg, 2 December 1859 **DURATION** 8 minutes

It was in 1858, some two years after the death of his friend, Robert Schumann, that the young Brahms published the choral work Begräbnisgesang. It was written during a period when he was much engaged in choral matters. He had been appointed the previous year as Music Director of the Choir and Orchestra at Detmold (in the North Rhine area of Germany), a posting in which he was encouraged by Robert's wife, the renowned pianist and composer Clara Schumann. Brahms split his time between the court and his home town of Hamburg, where he had started a female choir.

Begräbnisgesang – the name translates literally as 'Funeral Song' – was one of his earliest published choral pieces. While certainly prefiguring the funeral march elements of his great Deutsches Requiem (written in 1865 after the death of his mother), it has also been suggested that Begräbnisgesang was itself a form of miniature requiem in memory of Schumann, whose early death in the summer of 1856 had deeply affected Brahms. Written for chorus and wind ensemble including oboes, clarinets, tuba, horn, bassoons, trombones and timpani - its sombre sound echoes Lutheran chorale writing in his setting of the hymn 'Nun laßt uns den Leib begraben'. Yet Brahms' brilliantly paced sense of drama moves the work from the darkly melancholic to a tempered joyousness, and then back to darkness, with the sopranos, the highest voice, only appearing towards the end of the work.

Moving and powerful, despite its brevity, Clara Schumann – for whom the work may have had more resonance than most – called it 'most glorious'.

© Sarah Urwin Jones

Nun laßt uns den Leib begraben, Bei dem wir kein'n Zweifel haben: Er wird am letzten Tag aufstehn, Und unverrücklich herfür gehn.

Erd ist er und von der Erden; Wird auch wieder zu Erd werden; Und von Erden wieder aufstehn Wenn Gottes Posaun wird angehn.

Seine Seel lebt ewig in Gott, Der sie allhier aus seiner Gnad Von aller Sünd und Missetat Durch seinen Bund gefeget hat.

Sein Arbeit, Trübsal und Elend Ist kommen zu ein'm guten End, Er hat getragen Christi Joch, Ist gestorben und lebet noch,

Die Seel, die lebt ohn alle Klag, Der Leib schläft bis am letzten Tag, Bei welchem ihn Gott verklären Und der Freuden wird gewähren.

Hier ist er in Angst gewesen, Dort aber wird er genesen, In ewiger Freude und Wonne Leuchten wie die schöne Sonne.

Nun lassen wir ihn hier schlafen, Und gehn allsamt unser Straßen, Schicken uns auch mit allem Fleiß, Denn der Tod kommt uns gleicher Weis.

Michael Weiße, c.1488-1534

Now let us bury the body, Which without a doubt On resurrection day Will rise in splendour.

For out of earth he was made And to the earth he will return And from it he will rise When the Lord sounds the trumpet.

His soul will live forever in God, Who in his mercy Has swept it clear of All sin and evil.

His work, sorrow and misery
Has come to a good end.
He helped carry the Lord's burden,
Has died and yet is still alive.

The soul lives without sorrow, The body sleeps until resurrection day, When God transfigures him, And gives him eternal bliss.

Here he was weighed down by fear, There he will be at ease again, In eternal peace and happiness Radiant like the brilliant sun

Now we leave him here at rest
And all go our separate ways,
Do our duties with eagerness
Until death comes to us without exception.

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

Os justi



FIRST PERFORMANCESt Florian Monastery, Austria, 28 August 1879 **DURATION** 4 minutes

Bruckner's involvement with sacred choral music goes back before his teens: a setting of St Thomas Aquinas' hymn 'Pange lingua' appeared at about 11 or 12. After the death of his father, when he was 13, Bruckner was taken to the chastely

beautiful monastery of St Florian, which became his actual home for several years, and which remained his spiritual home and refuge for the rest of his life. For the first two decades of his adult life, most of the music Bruckner composed was in some way religious, a direct expression of his profound but by no means unreflective Roman Catholic faith.

The motet Os justi ('The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom') is perhaps the purest of all Bruckner's musical confessions of faith. It was composed in 1879 for Ignaz Traumihler, Choirmaster at St Florian and, like Bruckner, a devotee of the church music of the Renaissance. It is set purely in the old church Lydian Mode (think of a scale of F using only the white notes of the piano). The miracle is that it all sounds so natural, with no hint of contrivance or sentimental archaism. The central section ('et lingua ejus') contains some of the most ethereal counterpoint in all Bruckner, while the ending, designed to dovetail into a chanted 'Alleluia', is pure serenity.

© Stephen Johnson

Os justi meditabitur sapientiam: et lingua ejus loquetur judicium. Lex Dei ejus in corde ipsius: et non supplantabuntur gressus ejus. Alleluia. The mouth of the righteous utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks what is just.
The law of his God is in his heart: and his steps will not be impeded.
Alleluia.

Arnold Mendelssohn (1855-1933)

Suite for Woodwind, Brass and Percussion Op62

FIRST PERFORMANCE 1916 DURATION 27 minutes

- 1. Maestoso
- 2. Moderato
- 3. Molto tranquillo
- 4. Allegro non troppo, ma scherzoso
- 5. Vivace
- 6. Commodo
- 7. Andante
- 8. Marsch

Arnold Mendelssohn, whose father was a cousin of the famous Felix Mendelssohn, is probably best remembered these days for his substantial body of church music, and as one of Paul Hindemith's composition teachers. But posterity's verdict on his achievement fails to do justice to a composer whose output also included a number of highly regarded songs, chamber works and three operas, not to mention his extensive scholarly activities preparing modern editions of late Renaissance and early Baroque choral works by Monteverdi, Schütz, Lassus, Hassler and Praetorius.

Mendelssohn's life was relatively uneventful. After studying music in Berlin, he was appointed Organist and Choral Director of the Lutheran congregation in Bonn, and subsequently occupied increasingly influential positions in Bielefeld and Cologne. In 1891 he finally settled in Darmstadt, though for a brief period in 1912 commuted to Frankfurt, where he taught choral conducting and composition at the Hoch Conservatory. Although showered with honours during his lifetime, Mendelssohn was almost completely neglected following his death in 1933, primarily because his

music was banned on racial grounds by the Nazi regime. Only after 1945 did it make a modest recovery.

The Suite for Woodwind. Brass and Percussion was published in 1916, during the First World War. Yet despite its scoring and that the work opens with a Fanfare and closes with a March, there is little to suggest that Mendelssohn conceived it with any military connotations. Rather, the Suite is best appreciated as an early 20th-century recreation of the Mozartian multi-movement Serenade, featuring a series of contrasting dance movements that are couched in a conservative vet highly accessible musical language. After the introductory Fanfare movement comes a jovial Polonaise and then a slower and stately Reigen (a devotional medieval dance performed at early Christian festivals). The mood changes with a light-hearted fourth movement which includes a middle section dominated by a rhythmic pattern that is close in character to a Scotch snap. A dynamic and rhythmically propulsive fifth movement Scherzo is followed by a gentler Commodo, which features some mellifluous solo woodwind writing. The penultimate expansive Andante exploits a more lyrical and expressive style before the boisterous March brings the Suite to a powerfully affirmative close.

© Erik Levi

Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

Mass No2

in E Minor WAB 27

FIRST PERFORMANCE

Linz, 29 September 1869 **DURATION** 37 minutes

- 1. Kyrie
- 2. Gloria
- 3. Credo
- 4. Sanctus
- 5. Benedictus
- 6. Agnus Dei

Bruckner's symphonies, those colossal 'cathedrals in sound', still polarise opinion sharply. His church music. however, is another matter. Music-lovers who struggle with the symphonies often find, to their surprise and delight, that Bruckner's unaccompanied motets and mature masssettings are an open book – a very beautiful open book, which somehow manages (in the words of the old Anglican hymnbook) to be 'ancient and modern' at the same time. Some of the harmonies testify that this was a composer who had bathed in the gorgeous, if tortuous mysticism of his hero Richard Wagner. But Bruckner also revered the music of the Renaissance master Palestrina, whose spirituality and exquisite craftsmanship he found not romantically archaic, but timeless.

Encouraged by the newly formed Cecilian Movement, which encouraged simplicity and devotional purity in church music, Bruckner composed his Mass No2 in E Minor for the dedication of the Votive Chapel in Linz's new Roman Catholic Cathedral. It is scored for chorus and wind band, but the wind instruments are used discreetly, sometimes supporting the voices, sometimes enhancing them with quasi-vocal lines of their own. At the time Bruckner wrote it, the so-called Gothic Revival in architecture was at its

height, and neo-Gothic buildings were appearing all across Europe. But there is nothing 'neo' about this Mass. Simplicity and devotional purity came naturally to Bruckner, despite his often intense struggles with mental illness and even, sometimes, with his deeply held Roman Catholic faith.

All of this can be felt in the flowing counterpoint and dignified steady ascent of the opening Kyrie, and also in the radiant long crescendo that opens the Sanctus – the latter built on a figure taken from Palestrina's Missa Brevis. Elsewhere the choral writing can be remarkably exploratory, but then, so too could the church music of Renaissance masters such as Carlo Gesualdo. We hear this in the Gloria's 'Qui tollis' section, which conveys the suffering of Christ, or in the gorgeous central 'Et incarnatus' from the Credo. But there is no suggestion of worldly impiety about this music, but of heart-easing resolution, especially in the glorious hushed final cadence of the Agnus Dei. At the first performance of the revised version of the Mass, in the old Linz Cathedral in 1885, a friend remembered how Bruckner stood near the organ, which he had played magnificently during his 30s, 'with his eyes lifted up ecstatically to the vaulted roof, his lips moving in silent prayer'.

© Stephen Johnson

KYRIE

Kyrie eléison, Christe eléison, Kyrie eléison

GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo

Et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis. Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te, glorificamus te, gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam, Domine Deus, Rex caelestis, Deus Pater omnipotens.

Domine Fili unigenite, Iesu Christe, Domine Deus, Agnus Dei, Filius Patris, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis;

qui tollis peccata mundi,

Suscipe deprecationem nostram.

Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris, miserere nobis; Quoniam tu solus Sanctus, tu solus Dominus, tu solus Altissimus, Iesu Christe, cum Sancto Spiritu: in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

CREDO

Credo in unum Deum,

Patrem omnipotentem, factorem cæli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.

Et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum,

Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula.

Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero.

genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri; per quem omnia facta sunt.

Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de cælis.

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est.

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato passus, et sepultus est,

et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas, et ascendit in cælum, sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria, iudicare vivos

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For You alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

CREDO

I believe in one God.

the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages;

God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God;

begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father,

by whom all things were made;

who for us men and for our salvation descended from heaven.

He was incarnate by the Holy Ghost out of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

He was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried:

And he rose again on the third day, as in the Scriptures

et mortuos, cuius regni non erit finis; Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem,

qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.

Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur:

qui locutus est per prophetas.

Et unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.

Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.

Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi sæculi. Amen.

SANCTUS

Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth.

Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua. Hosanna in excelsis

BENEDICTUS

Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini. Hosanna in excelsis.

AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

And ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father:

And he shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead: Of whose kingdom there shall be no end;

And [I believe] in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who, with the Father and the Son, together is worshipped and glorified, and spoken through the prophets. And in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, I confess one baptism for the remission of sins. And I await the resurrection of the dead: and the life everlasting. Amen.

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.

BENEDICTUS

Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord

Hosanna in the highest.

AGNUS DEI

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world.

have mercy upon us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,

grant us peace.

Stephen Doughty

Conductor



Stephen Doughty was appointed Chorus Director of the RSNO Chorus from the start of the 2022:23 Season. Prior to this appointment, during his 12-year tenure as Chorus Master of Belfast Philharmonic Choir the choir gave a number of world premieres, including 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 the 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. He has been Musical Director of Edinburgh Bach Choir since 2017 and of the Garleton Singers since 1994. He was also Organist and Director of Music of St John's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh for 18 years, directing the 30-voice choir through the full range of sung services, which included large-scale, orchestrally-accompanied services during the Edinburgh Festival. He plays harpsichord/organ continuo and orchestral piano with all the Scottish orchestras, as well as the Ulster Orchestra, and has given frequent organ recitals, including several on the grand Mulholland Organ in the Ulster Hall, Belfast.

Stephen has compiled a large portfolio of arrangements and orchestrations, particularly for young voices, and has received commissions from Children's Classic Concerts, the Ulster Orchestra and the RSNO. In addition, the BBC has commissioned a number of arrangements which have been performed on BBC Alba and at the Last Night of the Proms, and his pieces feature on several recordings. More information about his arrangements, including commissions, can be found at stephendoughty.co.uk

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

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 Nos1 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

FLUTE

Katherine Bryan PRINCIPAL Janet Richardson PRINCIPAL PICCOLO

OBOE

Peter Dykes ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL Henry Clay PRINCIPAL COR ANGLAIS

CLARINET

Timothy Orpen PRINCIPAL

Duncan Swindells PRINCIPAL BASS CLARINET

BASSOON

Luis Fisen ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL Paolo Dutto PRINCIPAL CONTRABASSOON

HORN

Martin Murphy ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL Alison Murray Neil Mitchell David McClenaghan

TRUMPET

Christopher Hart PRINCIPAL Robert Baxter

TROMBONE

Dávur Juul Magnussen PRINCIPAL Symone Hutchison Alastair Sinclair PRINCIPAL BASS TROMBONE

TUBA

John Whitener PRINCIPAL

TIMPANI AND PERCUSSION

John Poulter ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

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The RSNO is one of Scotland's National Performing Companies, supported by the Scottish Government



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 and, most recently, Amsterdam and Prague. In 2018 it performed Britten's *War Requiem* with the RSNO at the BBC Proms

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 Caroline Cradock Catherine Taylor Charlotte McKechnie Fleanor Gaskell Joan Lacv Joanna Beaton Joanna Webster Karman Leung Katie Cochrane Laura Gorman Lynsey Scott Maree Mutch Margaret Mills Morag Kean Rei Camilleri Rhona Christie Roberta Yule Seonaid Eadie

SOPRANO 2

Beth Kean Carol McLean Carole Sim Sayce Elizabeth Jack Elspeth Waugh Fiona Murray Frances Kennedy Helen Hyland Jennifer Imrie Jenny Cheung Judith Pexton Kate Adams Kirstie Fairnie Leila Inglis Lizzie Reather Lorna Robertson Lynsey Brook Mairi Therese Cleary **Ruby Ginoris** Sally Sandground Theresa Hoare

ALTO 1

Ailie MacDougall Angela McDonald Anne Murphy Anne Thies Brenda Williamson Catriona Eadie Elizabeth Stevenson Esther McMillan

Fiona Taylor Harriet Skipworth Janette Morrison Julia Haddow June Thomas Katharine Oyler Laura MacDonald Lauren Hadley Linda McLauchlan Louise Reid Marita McMillan Marrian Murray Mary Taylor Maureen McCroskie **Ruth Townsend** Steve Halfvard Thea Jones Uta Engelbrecht

ALTO 2

Alice Bennett
Alison Bryce
Ann Firth
Catharine Perrin
Carol Leddy
Denny Henderson
Elizabeth Scobie
Felicia Gray
Gillian Downie
Hilde McKenna
Jane Stansfield
Moira Allingham
Shona Banks
Sonja Crossan

TENOR 1

Alex Rankine
Alistair Thom
Andrew Clifford
David Miller
Grant Haddow
Lawrence Smith
Nathan Dunsmore
Neil Simpson

TENOR 2

Calum Lowe Cosma Gottardi Donald Weetman Graham Parsonage Kerr Noble Robert Paterson

BASS 1

Alistair Laird Andrew Lvons Andrew Matheson Chris Spencer David MacDonald Fraser Dalziel George Lloyd Ian MacKay Ian Mills Keith Thomasson Kuba Sanak Mark Higginson Martin Engelbrecht Robin Watson Stephen Penman Toby Reed

BASS 2

Alan Maxwell Alex Shen Brian Watt Chris Morris Graeme Simpson Ian Gray John MacLellan Kenneth Allen Melvyn Davies Richard Hassall Stephen Lipton Stewart McMillan Tim Reilly

RSNO CHORUS DIRECTOR

Stephen Doughty

RSNO CHORUS VOCAL COACH

Polly Beck

RSNO CHORUS REHEARSAL PIANIST

Edward Cohen



Bonis Femmes de légende, Three Pieces for Orchestra Chausson Poème de l'amour et de la mer Ravel Une barque sur l'océan Debussy La mer Thomas Søndergård Conductor Catriona Morison Mezzo-soprano Big Noise Wester Hailes (EDN only)



Kindly supported by RSNO Patrons and the ABO Trust's Sirens programme.

Pre-concert talk, 6.45pm (EDN and GLW)

Catriona Morison in conversation with RSNO Viola Katherine Wren

rsno.org.uk

The RSNO is supported by the Scottish Government

