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SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL  
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# Carmina Burana

Usher Hall, Edinburgh  
Fri 15 Nov 2024 7.30pm  
Glasgow Royal Concert Hall  
Sat 16 Nov 7.30pm

Supported by **Jennie S. Gordon Memorial Foundation**

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# Carmina Burana

**Usher Hall, Edinburgh** Fri 15 Nov 2024 7.30pm

**Glasgow Royal Concert Hall** Sat 16 Nov 7.30pm

Passion, drink and roasted swans – choral music isn't meant to be this much fun! But the medieval monks who wrote the words to *Carmina Burana* didn't seem to have been that bothered. Expect great tunes, unstoppable rhythms and some thoroughly bad behaviour from Orff's outrageous piece. Plus, we begin the evening with a playful cello concerto featuring the nonsense verse of Edward Lear, reimagined by Elena Langer and RSNO Principal Cellist Pei-Jee Ng.

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**ELENA LANGER** The Dong with a Luminous Nose [21']  
SCOTTISH PREMIERE

INTERVAL

**ORFF** Carmina Burana [65']

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**Marzena Diakun** Conductor

**Pei-Jee Ng** Cello

**Fflur Wyn** Soprano

**Adrian Dwyer** Tenor

**Ben McAteer** Baritone

**RSNO Youth Chorus**

**Patrick Barrett** Director, RSNO Youth Choruses

**Alison McNeill** Associate Conductor

**RSNO Chorus**

**Stephen Doughty** Director, RSNO Chorus

**Royal Scottish National Orchestra**

Supported by **Jennie S. Gordon Memorial Foundation**

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**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

# Choral Concerts



## Handel's Messiah

**Thu 2 Jan 2025: 3pm**  
Glasgow Royal Concert Hall

Hallelujah! Celebrate the New Year with the RSNO's annual performance of Handel's *Messiah*. Simply some of the most uplifting music ever written.

## RSNO Chorus in Concert

**Fri 14 Mar 2025: 7.30pm**  
Greyfriars Kirk, Edinburgh

**Sat 15 Mar 2025: 7.30pm**  
Paisley Abbey

Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* are a burst of joy and light in this American-inspired celebration of the power of choral singing. Don't miss it!

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# Welcome



Welcome to this evening's concert, which features an RSNO musician as soloist, the RSNO Chorus, RSNO Youth Chorus and a stellar line-up of vocal soloists, in addition to the RSNO – Scotland's National Orchestra.

In the first half, we welcome our Principal Cello Pei-Jee Ng to centre stage for the Scottish premiere of Elena Langer's *The Dong with a Luminous Nose*, setting the nonsense poetry of Edward Lear. It's always a pleasure to offer such talented soloists the opportunity to step into the limelight. In addition to Pei-Jee's agreement to take on the soloist's role, the programming of this piece wouldn't have been possible without the RSNO's Artistic Advisor Gillian Moore. As Artistic Associate at London's Southbank Centre, Gillian keeps in touch with the brightest and best in the classical music world, and invites the finest of them to perform here in Scotland, alongside our own home-grown talent.

We're very proud of our Choruses and we like to keep them busy! As well as *The Dong with a Luminous Nose* and *Carmina Burana*, they are presently rehearsing for Christmas Concerts, Handel's *Messiah* and the Scottish premiere of Jonathan Dove's brand-new community opera *Uprising*, to be performed in the Spring. Stephen Doughty and Patrick Barrett, our Chorus Directors, do a brilliant job keeping everyone on track.

Presiding over this evening's proceedings is conductor Marzena Diakun, in her first appearances with the RSNO. We've followed her career closely for around five years now, after an initial endorsement from former RSNO Leader Sharon Roffman, and have heard only good things from soloists and orchestra members across the European circuit. Marzena is working with a number of choruses this season, so I'm sure she'll take the massed ranks of the RSNO entirely in her stride!

## **Alistair Mackie**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

# Royal Scottish National Orchestra

1-9



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19-27



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<i>PRINCIPAL GUEST CONDUCTOR</i>	
Ellie Slorach	3
<i>ENGAGEMENT CONDUCTOR</i>	
Kellen Grey	4
<i>ASSOCIATE ARTIST</i>	
Derrick Morgan	5
<i>ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR</i>	
Neeme Järvi	6
<i>CONDUCTOR LAUREATE</i>	
Alexander Lazarev	7
<i>CONDUCTOR EMERITUS</i>	
Stephen Doughty	8
<i>DIRECTOR, RSNO CHORUS</i>	
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**Elena Langer** (born 1974)

# The Dong with a Luminous Nose



**FIRST PERFORMANCE**

London, 18 March 2023, soloist Kristina Blaumane, London Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Andrey Boreyko

**SCOTTISH PREMIERE**

**DURATION** 21 minutes

Elena Langer is a Russian-born British composer who is probably more familiar to opera audiences in the UK than to concertgoers. In this 2023 work, based on the 1877 poem by Edward Lear, she brings her talent for dramatic storytelling to the concert hall.

Elena was born in Moscow and studied at the Moscow Conservatoire before arriving in London in 1999, where she continued her studies at the Royal Academy of Music. Her first stage work was *Ariadne* of 2002, in which she showed great promise as a lyrical and vocal composer. Her operatic work continued with small-scale works including *Four Sisters* of 2012 (also performed at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in 2023) to her first full-scale work, *Figaro Gets a Divorce*, premiered at Welsh National Opera in 2016, and staged widely since then around Europe.

More operatic works followed, including the entertaining vaudeville (also written for WNO) *Rhondda Rips It Up!* (2018), as well as a number of orchestral pieces (for example, her orchestral suite from *Figaro Gets a Divorce*, 2019, and *Leonora's Dream* of 2022), where landscapes and moods are depicted in a quirky, individual idiom that has echoes of lush, almost Richard Strauss-style Romanticism alongside a spikier modernism that always remains evocative and painterly. What is most noticeable in Elena's orchestral work is a joy in the possibilities of sound and timbre that reminds you of the pleasure Russian composers have traditionally taken in the massively colourful potential of the symphony orchestra. In fact, Elena's music combines many qualities somewhat rare in contemporary British music: behind that highly attractive surface of orchestral playfulness there is real musical sophistication; her talent for narrative goes hand in hand with a generous lyricism; and the music is very emotional, but also witty and light-hearted.

*The Dong* combines these operatic and orchestral strains in rather a marvellous way. Lear's poem – a kind of sequel to *The Jumblies* of 1871, wherein we learn how to make a sieve seaworthy – is not as well known as his *The Owl and the Pussycat*, but I imagine most people know, at least by its title, the far less jolly tale of the poor Dong.

Lear – a great traveller, illustrator and musician, as well as writer – is generally pigeonholed as a 'nonsense' poet, and so we probably enjoy the fantasy and rhymes and made-up words above the substance of his poems, which when you look at them properly actually reveal him as a fierce, unhappy Romantic – obviously of a peculiar kind. If *The Owl and the Pussycat* is an idyllic love story, *The Dong* is the opposite – a short, tragic tale of lost love, abandonment and madness. Behind those seagoing sieves,



illuminated noses and colourful creatures is a story of heartbreak that is all the more affecting in how it afflicts the harmless and pathetic Dong.

For the eccentric Lear, Elena devised an eccentric musical form: part cello concerto, part cantata, part tone-poem, with sections that reflect the poem's landscapes, veering from the Gothic gloom of the opening to the enchanted innocence of the middle. We begin in the wild surroundings of the Gromboolian Plain, the men's chorus painting it and the stormy sea in dramatic colours. The orchestra vividly evokes the Dong's emotional journey, the jovial middle section dancing along in waltz time while percussion and woodwind cavort about like circus seals, before the music turns first panicky, then jagged and fragmented, reflecting the Dong's poor deranged mind; finally a tragic, lyrical peace returns.

The solo cello permeates the whole score and is the true heart of the story, representing perhaps both the Dong, and his beloved with her green hair and blue hands who arrives like a blessing and vanishes without a word. It's a virtuoso part, often playing on its own, and – with chorus and orchestral *tutti* rising to a series of huge, ecstatic climaxes – shows us the Dong as a questing Romantic hero, splendidly alone, doggedly searching, finally in a kind of elegiac trance.

A live recording of *The Dong* will be released digitally by the London Philharmonic Orchestra (who commissioned it, together with the Boston Symphony Orchestra) in February next year.

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## The Dong with a Luminous Nose

Edward Lear (1812-1888)

When awful darkness and silence reign  
Over the great Gromboolian Plain,  
Through the long, long wintry nights; –  
When the angry breakers roar  
As they beat on the rocky shore; –  
When storm-clouds brood on the towering  
heights  
Of the Hills of the Chunkly Bore: –

Then, through the vast and gloomy dark,  
There moves what seems a fiery spark,  
A lonely spark with silvery rays  
Piercing the coal-black night, –  
A Meteor strange and bright; –  
Hither and thither the vision strays,  
A single lurid light.

Slowly it wanders, – pauses, – creeps, –  
Anon it sparkles, – flashes and leaps;  
And ever as onward it gleaming goes  
A light on the Bong-tree stems it throws.

And those who watch at that midnight hour  
From Hall or Terrace, or lofty Tower,  
Cry, as the wild light passes along, –  
'The Dong! – The Dong!  
'The wandering Dong through the forest goes!  
'The Dong! the Dong!  
'The Dong with a luminous Nose!'

Long years ago  
The Dong was happy and gay,  
Till he fell in love with a Jumbly Girl  
Who came to those shores one day.  
For the Jumblies came in a sieve, they did, –  
Landing at eve near the Zemmery Fidd  
Where the Oblong Oysters grow,  
And the rocks are smooth and gray.  
And all the woods and the valleys rang  
With the Chorus they daily and nightly sang, –  
*Far and few, far and few,*  
*Are the lands where the Jumblies live;*

*Their heads are green, and the hands are blue  
and they went to sea in a sieve.*

Happily, happily passed those days!  
While the cheerful Jumblies staid;

[Happy days ... Happy days]

They danced in circlets all night long,  
To the plaintive pipe of the lively Dong,  
In moonlight, shine, or shade.  
For day and night he was always there  
By the side of the Jumbly Girl so fair,  
With her sky-blue hands, and her sea-green hair.

[They danced in circlets all night long]

Till the morning came of that hateful day  
When the Jumblies sailed in their sieve away,  
And the Dong was left on the cruel shore  
Gazing – gazing for evermore, –  
Ever keeping his weary eyes on  
That pea-green sail on the far horizon, –  
Singing the Jumbly Chorus still  
As he sate all day on the grassy hill, –  
*Far and few, far and few,  
Are the lands where the Jumblies live;  
Their heads are green, and the hands are blue  
And they went to sea in a sieve.*

But when the sun was low in the West,  
The Dong arose and said;  
– ‘What little sense I once possessed  
Has quite gone out of my head!’ –  
And since that day he wanders still  
By lake and forest, marsh and hills  
Singing – ‘O somewhere, in valley or plain  
‘Might I find my Jumbly Girl again!  
‘For ever I’ll seek by lake and shore  
‘Till I find my Jumbly Girl once more!’

[For ever he’ll seek by lake and shore  
Till he finds his Jumbly Girl once more!  
Jumbly Girl ... ]

Playing a pipe with silvery squeaks,  
Since then his Jumbly Girl he seeks,  
And because by night he could not see,  
He gathered the bark of the Twangum Tree  
On the flowery plain that grows.  
And he wove him a wondrous Nose, –  
A Nose as strange as a Nose could be!  
Of vast proportions and painted red,  
And tied with cords to the back of his head.  
– In a hollow rounded space it ended  
With a luminous Lamp within suspended,  
All fenced about  
With a bandage stout  
To prevent the wind from blowing it out; –  
And with holes all round to send the light,  
in gleaming rays on the dismal night.

And now each night, and all night long  
Over those plains still roams the Dong;  
And above the wail of the Chimp and Snipe  
You may hear the squeak of his plaintive pipe  
While ever he seeks, but seeks in vain

To meet with his Jumbly Girl again;  
Lonely and wild – all night he goes, –  
The Dong with a luminous Nose!  
And all who watch at the midnight hour,  
From Hall or Terrace, or lofty Tower,  
Cry, as they trace the Meteor bright,  
Moving along through the dreary night, –  
‘This is the hour when forth he goes,  
‘The Dong! The Dong!  
‘Yonder – over the plain he goes;  
‘He goes!  
‘He goes;  
‘The Dong with a luminous Nose!’



**Carl Orff** (1895-1982)

# Carmina Burana



**FIRST PERFORMANCE**

Frankfurt, 8 June 1937

**DURATION** 65 minutes

**FORTUNA IMPERATRIX MUNDI**  
(Fortune, Empress of the World)

1. *O fortuna*
2. *Fortune plango vulnere*

**I. PRIMO VERE** (Springtime)

3. *Veris leta facies*
4. *Omnia sol temperat*
5. *Ecce gratum*

**Uf dem Anger** (On the Green)

6. *Tanz*
7. *Floret silva nobilis*
8. *Chramer, gip die varwe mir*
9. *Swaz hie gat umbe*
10. *Were diu werlt alle min*

**II. IN TABERNA** (In the Tavern)

11. *Estuans interius*
12. *Olim lacus colueram*
13. *Ego sum abbas Cucaniensis*
14. *In taberna quando sumus*

**III. COURS D'AMOURS** (Court of Love)

15. *Amor volat undique*
16. *Dies, nox et omnia*
17. *Stetit puella*
18. *Circa mea pectora*
19. *Si puer cum puellula*
20. *Veni, veni, venias*
21. *In trutina mentis dubia*
22. *Tempus est iocundum*
23. *Dulcissime*

**Blanziflor et Helena** (Blanziflor and Helena)

24. *Ave formosissima*
25. *O fortuna*

Despite a thorough musical training as a child and graduating from the Munich Academy of Music in 1914, Carl Orff composed relatively little during the first 40 years of his life. The music of Debussy had a profound impact on his early work, although it was the likes of Schoenberg, Richard Strauss and Pfitzner who were to leave the most lasting impressions. Otherwise, Orff was largely occupied with his 'true' vocation as one of Germany's most important music educators.

Following military service towards the end of the Great War, in 1924 Orff joined forces with Dorothee Günther to inaugurate Munich's Güntherschule, a progressive institution dedicated to finding complementary areas of discipline within the arts – principally music, dance and gymnastics. As a result, Orff began work on his mammoth *Schulwerk*, the first volume of which was published in 1930 and on which he was still working right up to the time of his death.

Orff's practical music skills came into their own between 1930 and 1933, when he was appointed conductor of the Munich Bach Society, although it was as the composer of *Carmina Burana* (1937) that he first won fame. The rest of his long life was devoted to his educational work and a series of music dramas, most notably *Antigonae* (1949), *Oedipus* (1959) and *Prometheus* (1966).

The fact that *Carmina Burana* – arguably the most popular choral piece of the 20th century – came into existence at all was serendipitous in the extreme. It was on Maundy Thursday 1934 that Orff received an anthology of medieval poetry from a Würzburg second-hand bookseller, who thought he might find them diverting. The original had been published in 1847 by the Court Librarian at Munich, Johann Schmeller, itself based on a manuscript dating from around the middle of the 13th century which had been unearthed in a Bavarian abbey. Indeed, it was

Schmeller who originally devised the work's title: *Carmina Burana* (Songs of Buren).

The manuscript that had so fortuitously come into Orff's possession contained some 200 ancient songs and poems, meticulously categorised according to subject matter and then alphabetised. Some were in Latin, others Middle High German, and a number in a curious amalgam of the two. But perhaps the most extraordinary feature of this collection is its breathtaking range of moral tone. Some are religious stories and poems expressing strong disapproval of the decline in standards among the clergy and those in authority, while others are of a more sensual nature, extolling the virtues of a life based on eating, drinking, gambling – and making love.

Orff fell instantly in love with the collection, citing in particular 'the infectious rhythms and vividness of the poems and, not least, the musicality and peculiar concision of the Latin language with its high density of vowels'. With the help of archivist Michael Hofmann, he set to work on producing a collection of texts that suggested themselves as particularly suitable for musical settings. He then arranged the poems into a 'happening', subtitled 'Secular songs for soloists and choruses, accompanied by instruments and magical images'. The actual music itself appears to have caused Orff very few problems: 'The whole work was playable within a matter of weeks,' he later enthused. 'The music was already in my head. So vivid was it, indeed, that I had no need of any written aid.'

In complete contrast to the complexity of innumerable scores of the period, Orff went back to basics in terms of the rhythms, harmonies and textures he employed. Most of the work is strongly key-centred and the material is predominantly sequential or based on reiterated rhythmic ostinati, which give the piece a distinctly 'primitivist' feel. There is an almost total avoidance of contrapuntal or fugal devices



and a clear emphasis on unison writing. Equally revolutionary is Orff's handling of the orchestra, with its concentration on crystal-clear textures and strong differentiation of the various vocal and instrumental groups – percussion in particular. Indeed, simplicity is the watchword here, yet such is the sheer quality of Orff's invention that the music never becomes merely facile.

The triumphant premiere was given as a staged production on 8 June 1937 at the Frankfurt Opera under Oskar Waelterlin. Such was its success around the world that Orff promptly instructed his publisher to destroy 'everything that I have written so far and which you've unfortunately published. ... My collected works now begin with *Carmina Burana*.'

There are 25 numbers in all, framed by the score's most celebrated passage, *O fortuna*, a physically imposing, breathtakingly resplendent invocation to the goddess of Fate and Fortune. The remainder is subdivided into three main sections dealing with Springtime (*Primo Vere*), the Tavern (*In Taberna*) and Love (*Cours d'amours*).

The first three numbers of *Primo Vere* combine as a celebration of the delights of springtime, progressing from the semi-liturgical unisons of *Veris leta facies* to *Ecce gratum*, in which a boundlessly energetic chorus invites the listener to taste freely in the joys of love. The orchestral dance that follows is a riot of exuberant rhythmic misplacements and constantly changing metre. The central section features a duet for flute and timpani, a reference to an old Bavarian tradition known as *Aufspielen*, in which the literal meaning 'playing up' should be interpreted more as representing a musical accompaniment to the dance tune proper. This metrical unpredictability spills over into *Floret silva nobilis*, a maiden's lament of moving simplicity.

*Chrumer, gip die varve mir* finds a group of young coquettish maidens attempting to seduce the

menfolk with fine displays of the art of make-up, to the accompaniment of sleigh bells. Their male counterparts respond in less than enthusiastic terms, opening an excited sequence that climaxes in *Were diu werlt alle min*, an orgiastic invocation to the Queen of England. Exactly which 'queen' we are not told, although the latest research would appear to indicate Eleanor of Aquitaine, who was apparently forlorn at being separated from her husband, Henry II of England.

If the first part of *Carmina Burana* is generally full of high spirits, *In Taberna* is positively riotous a great deal of the time. The baritone solo, *Estuans interius*, is a tongue-in-cheek confession of having worshipped the ribald way of life. We hear the falsetto voice of the swan as it slowly braises in the pot (*Olim lacus colueram*, a delightful take-off of buffa tenor stratospherics), the patron saint of gambling in a thoroughly inebriated state appointing himself the 'Abbot of Cloud-Cuckoo Land' (*Ego sum abbas Cucaniensis*), and a gloriously unbuttoned chorus (*In taberna quando sumus*) that revels in the joys of drinking.

Finally, the *Cours d'amours*, in which the atmosphere becomes altogether more restrained, the art of courtly love winning (in this case) the upper hand. This does not mean that the language pulls any punches, as the no-holds-barred men's chorus *Si puer cum puellula* plainly shows. It is instructive to place this beside the quiet composure and sophistication of *In trutina mentis dubia*, a lady's confession of love for her knight. The final *O fortuna* finds the wheel coming full circle – a musical depiction of the wheel of fate emblazoned on the front cover of the 1847 edition of *Carmina Burana* that had inspired this stirring masterpiece into being in the first place.

© Julian Haylock

# Pei-Jee Ng

## Cello



Australian cellist Pei-Jee Ng joined the RSNO as Principal Cello in May 2023. From 2015 to 2022 he was Co-Principal Cello of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He won the 2008 Young Concert Artists Trust auditions in London and was the 2001 Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year.

In addition to the six major Australian symphony orchestras, he has performed as soloist with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Malaysian Philharmonic, Singapore Symphony, National Taiwan Symphony, Oulu Symphony, Estonian National Symphony, London Philharmonic and Philharmonia, and performed Shostakovich's Concerto No1 with the RSNO and Music Director Thomas Søndergård in the 2023:24 Season.

Pei-Jee is cellist of the Fournier Trio, winners of the 2013 Parkhouse Award and second prize and audience prize at the 2011 Trondheim International Chamber Music Competition. His collaboration with pianist Chiao-Ying Chang won them the Libero Lana Prize in Trieste in 2011.

Pei-Jee began cello studies with Barbara Yelland and Janis Laurs in Adelaide before moving to the UK to study extensively with Hannah Roberts and Ralph Kirshbaum in Manchester. He completed his studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London with Jo Cole and Sung-Won Yang, receiving the prestigious Queen's Commendation for Excellence upon graduation.



# Fflur Wyn

## Soprano



© Cat Arwel

*Rodrigo* (Göttingen International Handel Festival); *Celia Lucio Silla* (Buxton Opera); *Euridice Orfeo* and *Euridice*, *Sophie Werther*, *Marzelline Fidelio*, *Susanna The Marriage of Figaro*, *Morgana Alcina*, *Servilia La clemenza di Tito*, *Blue Fairy Pinocchio*, *Woodbird*, *Achsaah Joshua*, *Gretel Hänsel und Gretel*, *Flora The Turn of the Screw*, *Clerida Croesus*, *Giannetta L'elisir d'amore*, *Sophie Der Rosenkavalier*, *Fire/Nightingale/Princess L'enfant et les sortilèges*, *Trio Soprano Trouble in Tahiti* (Opera North); *Floriana Zazà* (Opera Rara); *Mimi Vert Vert* (Garsington Opera); *Nedda Pagliacci* (Cambridge Philharmonic); *Michal Saul* (BBC Singers); *Celidora L'oca del Cairo* (London Mozart Players).

Welsh singer Fflur Wyn received a First Class Honours Degree from the Royal Academy of Music, where she studied with Beatrice Unsworth and Clara Taylor, and graduated from the Royal Academy Opera Course with the prestigious DipRAM for outstanding performance. She has subsequently been elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music.

This season she returns to Welsh National Opera for 1st Niece *Peter Grimes*, and on the concert stage she joins the RSNO, BBC Concert Orchestra and National Orchestra of Wales.

Fflur's operatic performances include 1st Niece (Royal Danish Opera); *Jemmy Guillaume Tell*, *Iphis Jephtha*, *Blonde Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, *Dorinda Orlando* (WNO); *Pamina The Magic Flute*, *Alice Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *Vivetta L'arlesiana*, title role *Lakmé* (Opera Holland Park); *Malinka The Adventures of Mr Brouček* (Grange Park Opera); *Barbarina Le nozze di Figaro* (La Monnaie Brussels); *Lucia The Rape of Lucretia* (Potsdamer Winteroper); *Woodbird Siegfried* (Longborough Festival Opera); *Esilena*

Fflur is in demand as a singer of contemporary music and has created many roles, including *Blonde Woman* in Oscar Bianchi's *Thanks to My Eyes* (Aix-en-Provence, Brussels, Paris, Lisbon); *Girl* in Julian Philip's *How the Whale Became* (Royal Opera House); *Daughter* in Elena Langer's *The Lion's Face* (The Opera Group, ROH); *Adele* in Michael Berkeley's *Jane Eyre* (Music Theatre Wales); and *La Plus Jeune Fille* in Philippe Boesmans' *Au Monde* (La Monnaie).

Fflur is the recipient of both the first prize and audience prize at the London Handel Singing Competition, the Kathleen Ferrier Bursary for Young Singers, the London Welsh Singer of the Year, the Bryn Terfel Scholarship and the MOCSA Young Welsh Singer Prize.

# Adrian Dwyer

## Tenor



Born in Melbourne, the British-Australian character tenor Adrian Dwyer has appeared at many of the world's greatest opera houses, gaining international recognition for his wide-ranging vocal ability and theatrical presence in works spanning the 19th century to the present day.

Engagements have taken him to the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Teatro Real (Madrid), Teatro Massimo (Palermo), Opernhaus Zürich, Dutch National Opera (Amsterdam), Welsh National Opera, Israeli Opera, English National Opera, Opéra de Toulon, Scottish Opera, Irish National Opera, Cape Town Opera, Opera Queensland, Opera North, Birmingham Opera Company, Northern Ireland Opera and State Opera of South Australia, as well as the Amsterdam, Edinburgh International and Aldeburgh festivals.

Recent highlights include Mime *Der Ring des Nibelungen* for Longborough Festival Opera (and in *Das Rheingold* in Singapore), Astrologer *The Golden Cockerel* for Theater Magdeburg, where he was immediately reinvited for the German premiere of Gerald Barry's *Alice's Adventures*

*Under Ground*, Almeric *Iolanta* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Brighella *Ariadne auf Naxos* for Opera North, title role in the world premiere of *The Life & Death of Alexander Litvinenko* by Anthony Bolton at Grange Park Opera and the world premiere of Michael Gallen's *Elsewhere* with Straymaker Opera and Music-Theatre Company.

He has also performed D'Esperaudieu in Gerald Barry's *The Intelligence Park* at the ROH Linbury Theatre with Music Theatre Wales, the Prince in John Adams' *A Flowering Tree* with Opera Queensland, and Anatole in Prokofiev's *War and Peace* with Welsh National Opera, including performances at the ROH, following what critics called a 'career-defining' house debut as Andrei in Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina*. He performed one of his signature roles, Electrician in Thomas Adès' *Powder Her Face*, for the inaugural production of Irish National Opera. Notable international main stage debuts include Israeli Opera (*Salome*), Oper Zürich (*Sweeney Todd*), Teatro Real Madrid (*Street Scene*) and Teatro Massimo Palermo (*Parsifal*).

On the concert stage he has appeared at the BBC Proms, and with the RSNO, Orchestre de Paris, Münchner Rundfunkorchester, Ulster Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, RTÉ Symphony Orchestra, and the symphony orchestras of Melbourne, Queensland and Adelaide.

A prizewinner in the Australian Singing Competition, Adrian studied at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the National Opera Studio London, with additional scholarships to the Ravinia Festival (Chicago), Britten-Pears Young Artist Programme and Bayreuth Festival. He made his professional debut in Los Angeles as Rodolfo in Baz Luhrmann's production of *La bohème* (winning an Ovation Award for Outstanding Performance).

# Ben McAteer

## Baritone



Recent concert work includes Haydn's *Creation* with the Ulster Orchestra and Daniele Rustioni and Brahms' *German Requiem* with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland.

Versatile in character and with a remarkable vocal range, Ben has sung both Figaro (Scottish Opera) and Count Almaviva (INO) *Le nozze di Figaro*, Falke (Welsh National Opera) and Eisenstein (Northern Ireland Opera) *Die Fledermaus*, Pish-Tush (Scottish Opera) and Pooh-Bah (Lyric Opera Ireland) *The Mikado*, as well as Frank-Fritz *Die tote Stadt* (RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra), Goryanchikov *From the House of the Dead* (WNO), Sharpless *Madama Butterfly* (Opera Holland Park), Father *Hänsel und Gretel* (INO), *Papageno* *The Magic Flute* (NIO) and *Guglielmo Così fan tutte* (Scottish Opera).

Northern Irish baritone Ben McAteer's current highlights include Pangloss *Candide* with Marin Alsop at Theater an der Wien, and with the Hamburger Symphoniker and Martin Yates. He previously performed the role in the work's Chinese premiere with the Xi'an Symphony Orchestra and Dane Lam. He returns to Hamburg for Schumann's *Das Paradies und die Peri*.

Ben revived his acclaimed Mountarat *Iolanthe* for English National Opera in 2023. A natural performer of Gilbert & Sullivan, he has also appeared as Grand Inquisitor *The Gondoliers* and King Paramount *Utopia Limited* for Scottish Opera and the International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival.

Ben made his Wexford Festival Opera debut in 2022 as Baskir in David's *Lalla-Roukh*, and returned to Irish National Opera as Malatesta *Don Pasquale* and Officer 2/Blazes in Maxwell-Davies' *The Lighthouse*.

Ben features on a disc of undiscovered songs by Irish composer Ina Boyle with Iain Burnside, released on Delphian Records, and has recorded the role of Jesus in Arthur Sullivan's oratorio *The Light of the World* and Rupert Vernon in his operetta *Haddon Hall*, both with the BBC Concert Orchestra. In 2023 he featured on EM Records' *Maltworms and Milkmaids: Warlock and the Orchestra* with the BBC CO and David Hill.

Ben was an Emerging Artist at Scottish Opera (during which time he won Outstanding Performance in Opera at the My Theatre Awards in Toronto for his performance of James in the world premiere of *The Devil Inside*) and trained at the National Opera Studio in London and at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. Before embarking on a musical career, he studied Chemistry at the University of St Andrews.





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# RSNO

SCOTLAND'S NATIONAL  
ORCHESTRA

Dvořák's

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The Nutcracker Suite

Barber Violin Concerto

Dvořák Symphony No9 From the New World

Patrick Hahn Conductor

Randall Goosby Violin

**EDN** Fri 6 Dec 7.30pm

**GLW** Sat 7 Dec 7.30pm



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# Marzena Diakun

## Conductor



Praised as a conductor of immense temperament, convincing with her sureness, energy and the detailed power of her baton, Polish conductor Marzena Diakun has reached veteran status at a young age. Second prize winner of two major international conducting competitions (Prague Spring Competition 2007 and Fitelberg Conducting Competition 2012), she focuses on orchestral and choral works by Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner, Mahler, Rachmaninov, Scriabin and Shostakovich, as well as her country's greatest composers – Penderecki, Lutosławski, Karłowicz and Szymanowski. Sought after for her interpretations of the French and Bohemian masters, her performances are described as remarkably balanced, finely nuanced and deeply felt, knowing how to dazzle with her mastery, and how to obtain from an orchestra density, expressiveness and detail.

The 2024/25 season sees her return to orchestras such as the Komische Oper Berlin and Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken Kaiserslautern, and initiate new relationships with other orchestras, including the RSNO, NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover and Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Her newest recording (on the BIS label), of Brahms' works for choir and orchestra with the Orquesta y Coro de la Comunidad de Madrid, of which she was Artistic Director and Principal Chief Conductor until the summer of 2024, has been greatly acclaimed by the press.

Diakun's new relationship with Ensemble Intercontemporain is the culmination of two decades of premiering and performing new works by numerous Spanish, Dutch, Austrian and Polish composers. Her recording *Polish Heroines of Music* (on the PWM label) is an exemplary model of her savoir faire and commitment.

A teacher and a mentor, Diakun looks back on the inspiration and support she has received from great conductors such as Kurt Masur, Pierre Boulez and Marin Alsop.

# Royal Scottish National Orchestra



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

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

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

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

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

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



# On Stage

## FIRST VIOLIN

Igor Yuzefovich  
GUEST LEADER  
Lena Zeliszewska  
ASSOCIATE LEADER  
Tamás Fejes  
ASSISTANT LEADER  
Patrick Curlett  
Eleanor Wilkinson  
Liam Lynch  
Lorna Rough  
Alan Manson  
Ursula Heidecker Allen  
Caroline Parry  
Veronica Marziano  
Elizabeth Bamping  
Susannah Lowdon  
Helena Rose

## SECOND VIOLIN

Elen Haf Reidel  
GUEST PRINCIPAL  
Jacqueline Speirs  
Marion Wilson  
Sophie Lang  
Paul Medd  
Harriet Hunter  
Kirstin Drew  
Anne Bünemann  
Colin McKee  
Robin Wilson  
Shulah Oliver-Smith  
Seona Glen

## VIOLA

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

## CELLO

Betsy Taylor  
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL  
Yuuki Bouterey-Ishido  
Rachael Lee  
Sarah Digger  
Niamh Molloy  
Heeyeon Cho  
Elias Rooney  
Neil Sild

## DOUBLE BASS

Nikita Naumov  
GUEST PRINCIPAL  
Michael Rae  
Moray Jones  
Alexandre Cruz dos Santos  
Lucía Polo Moreno  
Joe Standley

## FLUTE

Katherine Bryan  
PRINCIPAL  
Jack Welch  
Janet Richardson  
PRINCIPAL PICCOLO

## OBOE

Adrian Wilson  
PRINCIPAL  
Hazel Cropper  
Fraser MacAulay

## CLARINET

Timothy Orpen  
PRINCIPAL  
William Knight  
Duncan Swindells  
PRINCIPAL BASS CLARINET

## BASSOON

David Hubbard  
PRINCIPAL  
Grant McKay  
Paolo Dutto  
PRINCIPAL CONTRABASSOON

## HORN

Martin Murphy  
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL  
Alison Murray  
Andrew Saunders  
David McClenaghan  
Max Howling

## TRUMPET

Christopher Hart  
PRINCIPAL  
Katie Smith  
Andrew Connell-Smith  
Mark Elwis

## TROMBONE

Huw Evans Guest  
PRINCIPAL  
Emma Close  
Alastair Sinclair  
PRINCIPAL BASS TROMBONE  
Joshua Parkhill

## TUBA

John Whitener  
PRINCIPAL

## TIMPANI

John Poulter  
ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL

## PERCUSSION

Simon Lowdon  
PRINCIPAL  
Tom Hunter  
Philip Hague  
Stuart Semple  
Colin Hyson  
Peter Murch

## HARP

Pippa Tunnell

## PIANO / CELESTE

Lynda Cochrane  
Judith Keaney

# 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.

# RSNO Chorus

## **SOPRANO 1**

Alison Blair  
Alison Pryce-Jones  
Annie Hudson  
Cara-Rose Toale  
Caroline Cradock  
Catherine Taylor  
Charlotte McKechnie  
Iris O'Connell  
Joan Lacy  
Karman Leung  
Katherine Szumowski  
Katie Cochrane  
Lucie McBean  
Mhairi Hendry  
Morag Kean  
Rei Camilleri  
Rhona Christie  
Roberta Yule  
Sarah Greer  
Seonaid Eadie  
Tabea Schulte Strathaus

## **SOPRANO 2**

Amelie Masters  
Beth Kean  
Carol McLean  
Carole Sim Sayce  
Eleanor Gaskell  
Elizabeth Jack  
Elspeth Waugh  
Fiona Murray  
Frances Kennedy  
Heather Keating  
Helen Hyland  
Jennifer Imrie  
Jenny Cheung  
Joanna Beaton  
Judith Pexton  
Kate Adams  
Katie Dew  
Laura Gorman  
Leila Inglis  
Lizzie Reather  
Lorna Robertson  
Lynsey Scott  
Mairi Therese Cleary  
Margaret Mills  
Ruby Ginoris  
Sally Sandground  
Theresa Hoare

## **ALTO 1**

Ailie MacDougall  
Angela McDonald  
Anne Browning  
Anne Murphy  
Anne Thies  
Brenda Williamson  
Cath Malone  
Esther McMillan  
Fiona Taylor  
Freya Atkinson Gibson  
Harriet Skipworth  
Heather Keating  
Janette Morrison  
Julia Haddow  
Julia King  
June Thomas  
Katharine Oyler  
Kirstie Fairnie  
Laura MacDonald  
Lauren Hadley  
Linda McLauchlan  
Louise Reid  
Marita McMillan  
Marrian Murray  
Maureen McCroskie  
Mary Taylor  
Ruth Townsend  
Sophy Ying  
Steve Halfyard  
Thea Jones  
Uta Engelbrecht

## **ALTO 2**

Alice Bennett  
Alison Bryce  
Ann Firth  
Anne Newlands  
Carol Leddy  
Catharine Perrin  
Denny Henderson  
Eleanor McLaren  
Elizabeth Scobie  
Elizabeth Stevenson  
Felicia Gray  
Gillian Downie  
Hilde McKenna  
Jane Stansfield  
Moira Allingham  
Sonja Crossan

## **TENOR 1**

Alex Rankine  
Andrew Clifford  
David Miller  
Lawrence Smith  
Nathan Dunsmore  
Neil Simpson

## **TENOR 2**

Calum Lowe  
Cosma Gottardi  
Donald Weetman  
Graham Parsonage  
Kerr Noble  
Laurie Nelson  
Robert Paterson  
Tyler Newton

## **BASS 1**

Alistair Laird  
Andrew Lyons  
Andrew Matheson  
David MacDonald  
Findlay Peters  
Fraser Dalziel  
George Lloyd  
Ian MacKay  
Ian Mills  
Jake Cheung  
Keith Thomasson  
Kuba Sanak  
Mark Higginson  
Martin Engelbrecht  
Martin Waddell  
Peter Saunders  
Robin Watson  
Roger Robertson  
Stephen Penman  
Stuart Corkindale  
Toby Reed

## **BASS 2**

Alan Maxwell  
Brian Watt  
Chris Morris  
Chris Spencer  
Graeme Simpson  
Ian Gray  
John MacLellan  
Kenneth Allen  
Melvyn Davies  
Oluwatimilehin Bimbo-Adeola  
Richard Goldie  
Stephen Lipton  
Stewart Macfarlane  
Stewart McMillan  
Tim Reilly

## **RSNO CHORUS DIRECTOR**

Stephen Doughty

## **RSNO CHORUS VOCAL COACH**

Polly Beck

## **RSNO CHORUS REHEARSAL PIANIST**

Edward Cohen

# RSNO Youth Chorus



The RSNO Youth Chorus is one of the leading children and youth choirs in the UK. Formed in 1978 by Jean Kidd, the Youth Chorus is currently led by director Patrick Barrett and boasts over 400 members aged 7 to 18. It has built up a considerable reputation singing under some of the world's most distinguished conductors and appearing on radio and television.

RSNO Youth Chorus members sing regularly with Scotland's National Orchestra in major concert

halls and festivals throughout the country, and in 2021 performed at COP26 in Glasgow. The Youth Chorus has also sung at BBC concerts and regularly appears at the Edinburgh International Festival.

The RSNO Youth Chorus is kindly supported by **Dunclay Charitable Trust, Meikle Foundation, W A Cargill Fund** and **Walton Foundation**.



**RSNO YOUTH  
CHORUS 1**  
**CARMINA BURANA**

Abigail Gallacher  
Ailsa Hutchinson  
Alexandra Cartmell  
Anna Arbuckle  
Ava-Simran Dhillon-  
Dileri  
Bernadette Xin-Ying  
Kho  
Blair McKinlay  
Bronagh McKinght  
Charlotte Muir  
Colette Balmer  
Cora Robertson  
Elishka Foster  
Elizabeth Poet  
Eunice Oyedokun  
Faith Junyen Wong  
Fiamma Milligan  
Gabriella Mills  
Grace Nickson  
Grace Romans  
Greta Ingleby  
Hannah Binu  
Idrissa Thiam  
Iris Stalin  
Isla Balitbit  
Jayden Odebeatu  
Kaia Grassl  
Katherine Moffett  
Kimberley McFarlane  
Kirsty McLean  
Lilianna Nemeth  
Lisa Kipgen  
Louise Morris  
Madeleine Rolland-  
Raydon

Megan Parsons  
Melissa Gunathilaka  
Melissa Maffia  
Misha Gupta  
Molly Kerr  
Neave Maclachlan  
Netra Gaikwad  
Olivia Tait  
Ollie Leitch  
Penelope Leithead  
Poppy Grafton  
Rita El Obbadi  
Rory Cameron  
Shreeya Pandit  
Sophie Waller  
Tess Fleming  
Thomas Wylie  
Timur Kassimkulov  
Tvisha Bhardwaj  
Yashar Pourghazi

**RSNO YOUTH  
CHORUS 2**  
**THE DONG WITH A  
LUMINOUS NOSE**

Aaleah McAulay  
Aariyanna Akram  
Abigail Hughes  
Aicha Thiam  
Aimee Morton  
Alannah Clancy  
Alec Buckley  
Alicia Idessane  
Alma Correal-Jarrett  
Amelia Mashwani  
Amelia Philip  
Amelia Wilson  
Amelie Caldwell  
Amy Sanderson

Ana Ryburn-Thomson  
Andrew Ross  
Anna Phillips  
Anshi Sai Vanga  
Bea Courtial  
Brewen Lyons  
Cara Mackay  
Charlotte Leathem  
Charlotte Ridland  
Connie Hunter  
Diana Lizer  
Edie Dunn  
Eilidh Hughes  
Eilidh McIntyre  
Ellie Digger  
Ellie Toner  
Emilia Ewer  
Emilia Rathbone  
Emily Fuge  
Emma Little  
Eve Cameron  
Evie Diamond  
Gemma Gowans  
Gregor Townsley  
Holly Rodger  
Hope Henderson  
Indii McCulloch  
Izzy Hughes  
Jennifer Friels  
Jessica Ewer  
Jessica-May Payne  
Jeviy Dela Santa  
Jodie Sumpter  
Joe Thunder  
Joely Gardiner-Clark  
Jude Tait  
Kate Mosley  
Katie Rourke  
Leila Osmond

Lia McCulloch  
Lily Overton  
Louisa Greenhill  
Lucy Arbuckle  
Maia Fernandez  
McCann  
Martha Danton  
Martha Johnson  
Max Biankin  
Mia Tomb  
Nellie Heinrich  
Nerea Winchester  
Nirvana Balideh  
Nuala-Maria McKnight  
Olivia Coccozza  
Olivia Osborne  
Orla Gilligan  
Rachel Cook  
Rebecca Greig  
Risha Chatterjee  
Rosa Caughie  
Rowie Bryce  
Sarah Oliver  
Sarah Orimoloye  
Scarlett O'Sullivan  
Sophie Hall  
Stella MacEachran  
Stella Sorenson  
Summer Wang  
Susie Wu  
Thea Morag Heinrich  
Valentina Campanella  
Willow Gardiner-Clark  
Yasmin Patel  
Yi Han Dong  
Zoe Drysdale

**RSNO YOUTH CHORUS**

**RSNO YOUTH CHORUS  
DIRECTOR**

Patrick Barrett

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR**

Alison McNeill *Youth Chorus 1*

**MUSICIANSHIP STAFF**

Heather Drysdale  
Phil Gault  
Mairi Leggatt  
Claire McCue  
Moluidh NicGriogair  
Sarah Skerritt  
Laura Smith  
Aimee Toshney  
Frikki Walker

**VOCAL COACHES**

Daniela Hathaway  
Alison McNeill  
Laura Smith

**PIANISTS**

Edward Cohen  
Judith Keaney

**RSNO CHANGED VOICES**

**DIRECTOR**

Frikki Walker

**VOCAL COACH**

Phil Gault

**PIANIST**

Tim Mills

**STAFF ASSISTANTS**

Claire Bryan  
Katie Bryan  
Dylan Findlay  
Rennie MacKechnie  
Eilidh Morrison  
Rachel Morrison  
Nicole Swindells

# Stephen Doughty

## Director, RSNO Chorus



Stephen Doughty was appointed Chorus Director of the RSNO Chorus from 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*. Prior to this appointment, Stephen's 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 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 was Musical Director of Edinburgh Bach Choir until the end of last season and was Organist and Director of Music of St John's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh for 18 years. He has been Musical Director of the Garleton Singers since 1994, 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 a recent one with the RSNO Chorus.

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

[stephendoughty.co.uk](http://stephendoughty.co.uk)

# Patrick Barrett

## Director, RSNO Youth Chorus



Patrick Barrett is a conductor specialising in choral music and opera. He is currently Chorus Director of the RSNO Youth Chorus, Royal Opera House Youth Opera Company, Irish Youth Choir (14-17 years) and the award-winning Farnham Youth Choirs.

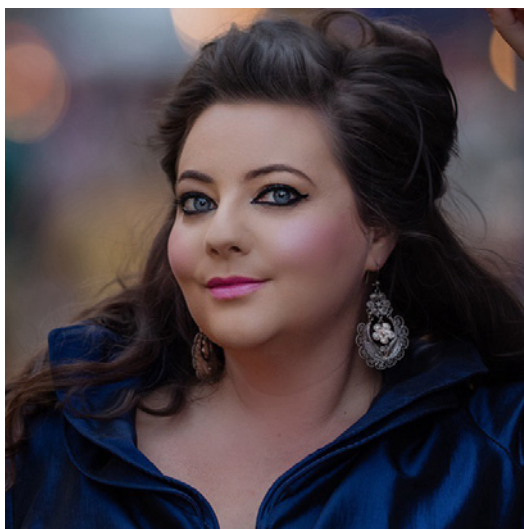
Recent highlights include conducting the RSNO Youth Chorus in performances with Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Benjamin Grosvenor and Nicola Benedetti, as well as preparing them for the recording of *Gaspard's Christmas* by Jonathan Dove. Patrick also led Farnham Youth Choir to two gold medals at the World Choir Games 2024 in New Zealand. He has premiered new works by Errollyn Wallen, Jonathan Brigg, Emma O'Halloran and DJ R.Kitt, and is a regular guest conductor with the National Youth Choirs 9-15 Years.

Patrick's commitment to youth choral music extends to preparing choruses for the Edinburgh International Festival, and for the Dunedin Consort, where his work often features in major international performances. As a dedicated music educator, Patrick has worked with organisations including The Sixteen, BBC Singers, Wigmore Hall and Aldeburgh Young Musicians, and has spoken at the Post Primary Music Teachers Association in Ireland.

In opera, Patrick collaborates with leading UK companies such as the Royal Opera House, English National Opera and Garsington Opera, where he prepares youth choruses for main-stage productions and world premieres, including *Carmen* under Antonello Manacorda and *Otello* under Sir Antonio Pappano. Previously, he was the conductor of the University of Birmingham's Upper Voices Choir, University of Reading Chamber Choir and Brockham Choral Society.

# Alison McNeill

## Associate Conductor



Scottish conductor, soprano and fiddle player Alison McNeill graduated with a Masters in Performance from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. She went on to study with the late legendary mezzo-soprano Teresa Berganza in Granada, winning the Andrés Segovia prize for Spanish Song in Spain (the only non-native speaker to win this award). As a specialist in Spanish Song, Alison has premiered new works by Spain's foremost composers Antón García Abril and Teresa Bretal in the National Auditorium of Galicia and Atheneum in Madrid. She has also performed in the Manuel de Falla Auditorium in Granada and in the houses of celebrated composers Joaquín Rodrigo and Manuel de Falla.


With guitarist and duo partner Sasha Savaloni, Alison performed world premieres by Stuart MacRae and Marco Ramelli at the St Magnus International Festival in Orkney, and gave a recital in Madrid's 'Clásicos en Verano' Chamber Music Festival which was recorded by Spanish national radio. Since then she has performed


as a soloist in the UK, Holland, Spain, Italy, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Japan, Pakistan, Kenya, USA and Mexico, with highlights including singing as a soloist with Ditrambo Early Music Ensemble in Mexico, in Minami Aizu Concert Hall (Japan), Canteloube's *Chants d'Auvergne* with the Glasgow Chamber Orchestra, and Verdi's Requiem and Orff's *Carmina Burana* with the RSNO in Glasgow Royal Concert Hall.

As a traditional musician, Alison is fiddler and singer songwriter in the award-winning folk rock band Reely Jiggered, who won the O2 ABC SoundWave Music competition and have since released three albums. They have most recently returned from a tour of Pakistan, Denmark and Virginia. The band have performed at the Scottish Parliament, Celtic Connections, for BBC Radio nan Gàidheal and Radio 4, and on Pakistani and Mexican national TV. They are set to perform in Nairobi this St Andrew's Night and Tartan Week in New York in April.

Alison is Director of the National Youth Choir of Northern Ireland's Boys Choir and 100-strong Junior Choir who recently gave the premiere of Claire McCue's *The Giant Folk and the Wee Folk*, broadcast on BBC Ulster. She is Associate Director of the RSNO Youth Chorus, Conductor of the National Youth Choir of Scotland National Boys Choir, and Director of Voices of Argyll, who recently performed the world premiere of *Interwoven*, an Indian-Scottish fusion commission for choir, sitar, tabla and Indian dancer, in the Scottish Parliament. Alison returns to Doha as head judge for the Qatar Choir of the Year Competition next year.





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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

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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

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

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

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

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*With thanks to the Gregor Forbes  
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**In memory of a dear friend, Fiona H**

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

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

# 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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If you would like more information about our work and how you can make a difference, please contact Miranda Behrens, Head of Development (Trusts and Projects), at [miranda.behrens@rsno.org.uk](mailto:miranda.behrens@rsno.org.uk)

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Have you ever wanted to see how a conductor prepares a symphony orchestra for a concert performance? Or receive exclusive updates from Scotland's National Orchestra? Joining today can gain you behind the scenes access and much more.

To say thank you for your support we offer:

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Higher levels of membership bring you even closer to the Orchestra and help us to achieve even more.

Membership helps to support the future of the RSNO whilst sharing the joy of music both on and off stage.

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# RSNO Circle

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

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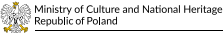
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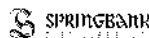
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