

BBC

**Scottish
Symphony
Orchestra**

**04.12.2025
7.30PM
GLASGOW
CITY HALLS**

90TH ANNIVERSARY CONCERT

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**CONCERT
PROGRAMME**

BBC
RADIO

3



ADVENTURES IN CLASSICAL



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Thursday
04.12.2025
7.30pm
City Halls
Glasgow

B B C
SCOTLAND

The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra's 90th Anniversary Concert

Ayanna Witter-Johnson

Bacchanale (BBC commission: world premiere)

Edvard Grieg

Piano Concerto in A minor

Interval

Michael Tippett

A Child of Our Time

Sir Stephen Hough piano

Pumeza Matshikiza soprano

Beth Taylor mezzo-soprano

John Findon tenor

Ashley Riches bass

National Youth Choir of Scotland

Ryan Wigglesworth conductor

This concert ends at approximately 9.55pm

This concert is being broadcast live by BBC Radio 3 in *Radio 3 in Concert* and will be available for 30 days via BBC Sounds; it is also being filmed for future broadcast in *Inside Classical* and will be available after broadcast via BBC iPlayer.

Please make sure your mobile device is switched off or to 'Do Not Disturb'.

During the performance, please don't film or take any photographs.

Latecomers will be admitted at a suitable break in the performance.

Welcome

A very warm welcome to the BBC SSO's 90th-Anniversary Concert which is being broadcast live on Radio 3 and filmed for BBC Four!

Each work tonight speaks to a different part of the orchestra's story – from our earliest performances in the 1930s to musical friendships that have shaped the orchestra's identity, and to bold new voices pointing towards our future.

90 years ago this week, in December 1935, the newly formed 'BBC Scottish Orchestra' made its first live broadcast. A year later came our first performance of Grieg's Piano Concerto, conducted by our founder Ian Whyte. This audience favourite has become a cherished part of our history with no fewer than 58 performances across Scotland. We're delighted to welcome back Sir Stephen Hough this evening, a treasured collaborator who first performed with us at just 21 years old.

'The world turns on its dark side. It is winter ...' These words capture the heart of Michael Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*. Written during World War II and shaped by decades of intolerance, this music feels no less urgent in today's turbulent times. Tippett himself conducted the BBC SSO's first performance in 1968 and his music has been woven into our story ever since, most recently with the first commercial recording of his opera *New Year*. With Ryan Wigglesworth leading the National Youth Choir of Scotland and a superb cast of soloists, tonight's performance offers a powerful culmination to our anniversary celebration.

And in the spirit of this trailblazing orchestra, we open with a new BBC commission from composer, singer and cellist Ayanna Witter-Johnson. She describes it as 'a musical ode to joy, movement and community ... a celebration of life in full sound.' If you enjoy this new work, don't miss her appearance with jazz pianist Fergus McCreadie at Glasgow's SWG3 in March 2026.

Thank you for celebrating this milestone with us, and here's to the decades ahead.

Dominic Parker

Director, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra



Bacchanale (2025) c.12 minutes

**Ayanna
Witter-Johnson**
(born 1985)

BBC commission: world premiere

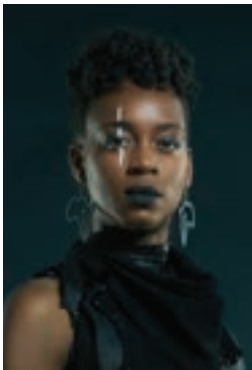
Bacchanale is a vibrant celebration of Caribbean carnival spirit – a musical ode to joy, movement and community. The title draws on the word ‘bacchanal’ often used in Caribbean culture to describe exuberant festivity, dance and togetherness. Here, that sense of liberation and collective energy forms the heartbeat of the piece.

Led by a bright, rhythmically charged trumpet line, the work captures the electricity of a carnival procession – its pulsing rhythms, bursts of colour and infectious momentum. Across the orchestra, percussion and brass drive the groove, while strings and woodwinds add layers of warmth and shimmer, evoking the swirl of costumes and the syncopated sway of the crowd.

While *Bacchanale* shares the rhythmic vitality and cross-cultural spirit found in several of my chamber works, it expands into the full symphonic palette, allowing the orchestra itself to dance. The piece embodies my continuing journey to weave classical tradition with the sounds and sensibilities of my Caribbean heritage – celebrating how these worlds can meet, play and uplift one another.

At its heart, *Bacchanale* is a musical invitation: to revel, to move – and to celebrate life in full sound.

Programme note © Ayanna Witter-Johnson



Ayanna Witter-Johnson

Born and raised in North London to Jamaican parents, Ayanna Witter-Johnson grew up with the sounds of reggae, gospel and classical music. Since earning a First Class Bachelor’s degree at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in London and a Master’s at the Manhattan School of Music, she has built a career grounded in cross-genre collaboration.

She works as a singer, songwriter, pianist, cellist and composer, seamlessly blending classical, jazz,

reggae, soul and R&B while also celebrating her Jamaican heritage.

She has been championed by figures ranging from Gilles Peterson to Jools Holland and has collaborated with artists including Andrea Bocelli, Peter Gabriel, Nitin Sawhney and Anoushka Shankar. Her televised performances include *Later ... with Jools Holland*, the BBC Proms and *Sing It Loud: Black and Proud* (Channel 4).

Among the ensembles to have commissioned new works from her are the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO), Kronos Quartet, Gürzenich Orchestra (Cologne) and Philharmonia Orchestra, as well as many chamber groups. In 2022 her composition *FAIYA!* was performed by the LSO under Sir Simon Rattle in London's Trafalgar Square. Recent honours include the Nordoff and Robbins O2 Silver Clef Classical Award (2023) and nominations for RPS and AIM Independent Music awards.

Ayanna Witter-Johnson's latest release, *Ocean Floor* – a collaborative album with the LSO Percussion Ensemble – delves into her Jamaican heritage, weaving classical textures with island rhythms and ancestral storytelling. Currently she is co-scoring her first TV drama for Sky Arts (premiering next year). Her forthcoming second album, due for release in autumn 2026, bridges sacred and soulful, Caribbean and contemporary.

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op.16

(1868, rev. 1907) c.30 minutes

Edvard Grieg

(1843–1907)

- 1 **Allegro molto moderato**
- 2 **Adagio –**
- 3 **Allegro moderato molto e marcato – Quasi presto – Andante maestoso**

Sir Stephen Hough piano

'Keep going. You've got what it takes – don't let them intimidate you!' It's the kind of reaction young composers dream of. The international star virtuoso pianist and composer Franz Liszt had just read through the newly completed Piano Concerto by the 25-year-old Norwegian composer Edvard Grieg, his enthusiasm visibly growing as he played. Then, at the end of the finale, where the movement's lyrical 'big tune' returns in triumph (with just one note tellingly altered), Liszt had leapt up from the keyboard, thrown his arms wide and exclaimed, 'G, G, not G sharp! Splendid!'

Although Grieg did take Liszt's advice and 'keep going', the path he took led him in a rather different direction. It seems that soon after that formative meeting with Liszt, Grieg decided that his real talent was for creating miniatures rather than grand symphonic works. Prompted by this, some critics – possibly irritated by the Piano Concerto's seemingly indestructible popularity – have suggested that in the end it doesn't quite work: that the first movement is all too obviously modelled on that of Schumann's great Piano Concerto and that some of its development is a bit formulaic; and that the finale in particular sounds like a collection of short pieces stuck together.

But Liszt wasn't wrong. Grieg may have had Schumann's dramatic opening gesture in mind when he began this work, but he transformed it into one of the most majestic beginnings in the concerto repertoire: a short *crescendo* roll on timpani, a shout for the full orchestra, then a series of downward-cascading figures for the piano. After this the movement contrasts two main themes with great skill: the first is introduced quietly by winds, answered by strings, the second is a warm singing melody first heard on cellos.

After its magical, hushed orchestral opening, the song-like Adagio is dominated by the piano, decorating and embellishing the orchestral ideas with wonderful

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op.16 Edvard Grieg

c.20 minutes

Interval

(as tonight's concert is being broadcast live on BBC Radio 3, please be sure to return to your seat in good time)

romantic poetry until it seizes the main melody in triumph at the climax. The finale follows without a break. At first we have a sequence of vigorous folk-dance tunes, then comes the concerto's big tune, introduced in a slower tempo by a solo flute. Grieg builds up the excitement impressively in the faster coda, up to the point where the flute tune returns in full orchestral splendour, with that tiny but thrilling alteration that so excited Liszt. Not only is it a fine dramatic stroke in its own right, it rounds off the concerto magnificently, as though the whole work had been building to this moment of radiant affirmation.

Programme note © Stephen Johnson

Stephen Johnson is the author of books on Bruckner, Wagner, Mahler and Shostakovich, and a regular contributor to *BBC Music Magazine*. For 14 years he was a presenter of BBC Radio 3's *Discovering Music*. He now works both as a freelance writer and as a composer.

A Child of Our Time (1939–41) c.65 minutes

Michael Tippett (1905–1998)

Part I

Part II

Part III

Pumeza Matshikiza soprano

Beth Taylor mezzo-soprano

John Findon tenor

Ashley Riches bass

**National Youth Choir
of Scotland**

For text, see page 17

Tippett's oratorio *A Child of Our Time* was first performed in Blitz-bedraggled London on 19 March 1944. It had, though, been conceived several years earlier: Tippett wrote the first notes on 3 September 1939, the day war broke out. He completed it in 1941, with some sections drafted during periods of bombing. He believed such a pacifist work was unlikely to get a performance at the time, so effectively relegated it to the bottom drawer. Yet a couple of years later he showed the work to his friend and fellow composer Benjamin Britten, who was enthusiastic, and active in its promotion. The premiere took place with the financial support of Britten himself. The soloists included Peter Pears and Joan Cross, who were at the time touring bomb-shattered Britain with an ad hoc opera company.

Though premiered in wartime, the 'action' of the oratorio is linked to events in the horrifying build-up to full-blown conflict. On 7 November 1938, the 17-year old Herschel Grynszpan, a German-Polish Jewish refugee, stateless and living in Paris, walked into the German Embassy in Paris and shot a junior official called Ernst vom Rath five times. Grynszpan told the police he had done this in response to the Nazis' persecution of the Jews. Vom Rath died of his injuries two days later and on 9 November the Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels announced that any acts of revenge against Jews would not be punished – or even prevented. Tippett's biographer Oliver Soden recounts what followed:

Germany's cities blazed and glittered in the violence, and the streets of shivered panes gave the riots their collective name: Kristallnacht. The Night of the Broken Glass.

Each part of *A Child of Our Time* corresponds to the Grynszpan and Kristallnacht events: the first part outlines the darkness of the world and the young man's despair; the second the horrific act of violence; and the third an attempt to make sense of it all, along with a plea for compassion. Tippett intended the piece to be political: he had been actively engaged in politics in the preceding years, and perhaps believed that Grynszpan's shots were the start of the revolution.

Yet while following the contours of the Grynszpan story, Tippett renders the participants universal – a Boy and a Mother – and further emphasises this point with the inclusion of the four African American spirituals. Tippett had been considering the use of folk songs, or Jewish hymns, as moments of reflection – or community – within the work. But having heard a version of 'Steal Away' on the radio in the early stages of composition he felt that – as Soden puts it – they 'expressed a collective suffering that could speak not just for the African slaves who had created them, but on a more universal level.' Spirituals had, furthermore, been banned in Nazi Germany.



19 35



19 36



Ian Whyte Founder and Principal Conductor (1946-60), BBC Scottish Orchestra

First rehearsal & broadcast

On 3 December 1935 the 'BBC Scottish Orchestra' gave its first live broadcast from its Edinburgh Studio on Queen Street, conducted by the orchestra's founder, Ian Whyte. The broadcast included music by Cyril Scott, Saint-Saëns and Elgar

90 YEARS OF BBC SSO

19 47



19 62



The Edinburgh International Festival

was founded in 1947; the following year, the BBC Scottish Orchestra performed Beethoven's Violin Concerto with one of the 20th century's greatest violinists, Yehudi Menuhin. *Listen to the live broadcast on BBC Sounds*





1930s



Guy Warrack was Principal Conductor of the newly founded BBC Scottish Orchestra from 1935–46

Ian Whyte with the BBC Scottish Orchestra in the Edinburgh Studio (1936)

During World War II, players took turns on Home Guard duty and continued to broadcast morale-boosting performances. Founder Ian Whyte received a telegraph from Sibelius thanking the BBC Scottish Orchestra for broadcasting his symphonies



19 69



Debut at the BBC Proms

A Proms debut at London’s Royal Albert Hall in 1962 included a world premiere by Thea Musgrave conducted by Norman Del Mar (Principal Conductor, 1960–65). The orchestra performs her work *Aurora* in Glasgow on 12 March 2026

Loughran’s Last Nights

The orchestra’s Principal Conductor James Loughran (1965–71) conducted the Last Night of the Proms no fewer than five times (*picture, 1969*)

19 76



19 77



Sir Simon Rattle in Scotland

A 21-year-old Simon Rattle becomes Assistant Conductor: "Everything I consider to be at the centre of my repertoire was discovered with the BBC Scottish," he would later say. Watch Rattle discuss his appointment on BBC News in 1976



19 90



The BBC SSO travelling to Shetland in 1984

Glasgow, 'City of Culture' In 1990 a BBC SSO concert with soprano Jessye Norman and conductor Sir Alexander Gibson was hailed by *The Scotsman* as one of the "greatest Scottish classical musical events of all time". In 1993, BBC Two's *Soundbites* was recorded with the BBC SSO, conducted by Martyn Brabbins and presented by percussionist Evelyn Glennie (*pictured together*)



19 84

First international tour

In 1977 the BBC SSO performed at the Hong Kong Arts Festival, conducted by Christopher Seaman (Principal Conductor, 1971–77, *pictured*) and Alun Francis

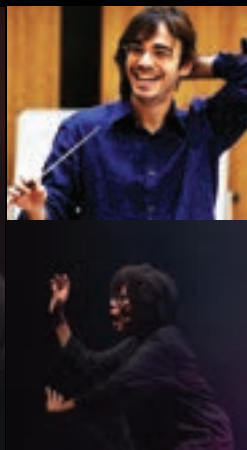
Jerzy Maksymiuk & Tours of Poland With Jerzy Maksymiuk as Principal Conductor (1983–93), the BBC SSO made its first of three tours of Poland in 1984, joined by the Scottish Philharmonic Singers for Mozart’s Mass in C minor and by John Ogdon for Rachmaninov’s Second Piano Concerto



19 97



20 03



The Sibelius Experience

Osmo Vänskä (Chief Conductor, 1996–2002) presents *The Sibelius Experience*, a five-concert symphony cycle

Ilan Volkov & Tectonics Glasgow At 26, Ilan Volkov becomes Chief Conductor (2003–09), the youngest ever of any BBC orchestra. In 2025 Volkov curated the 12th Tectonics Festival – still providing an “invigorating adrenaline rush” (*The Scotsman*, 2024). Volkov was Principal Guest Conductor (2009-24) and is now Creative Partner
Bottom right: vocalist Elaine Mitchener, Tectonics Glasgow, 2024

20 04



Nicola Benedetti

Benedetti wins the BBC's Young Musician of the Year in 2004, accompanied by the BBC SSO. She played in the orchestra's 75th-Anniversary Concert in 2010

20 09



Sir Donald Runnicles

Following the orchestra's move to Glasgow City Halls in 2006, Runnicles becomes Chief Conductor (2009–16). His BBC SSO debut in 2001 was described by *The Times* as "one of those evenings when lightning struck ... a truly epic breadth to his reading". He is now Conductor Emeritus

20 22



Ryan Wigglesworth

One of the leading artists of his generation, Ryan Wigglesworth (Chief Conductor, 2022–present) has conducted BBC Proms concerts including György Kurtág's opera *Endgame* and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony



The orchestra embarks on its first international tour with Ryan Wigglesworth to the vibrant cities of Seoul and Busan in South Korea, with soloists including violinist Daniel Lozakovich and cellist Jaemin Han (pictured)

20 16



Thomas Dausgaard

Thomas Dausgaard (Chief Conductor, 2016–22) presented a series of BBC commissions titled ‘Scottish Influences’ and led international tours to Vienna, Salzburg and Tokyo. *Watch a short film about the Scottish premiere of Rued Langgaard’s Music of the Spheres, including an interview with Dausgaard and former BBC SSO Leader, Laura Samuel*



20 24



Lucy Drever

Lucy Drever (Associate Artist, 2020–present, *pictured in 2024*) has led workshops all across Scotland with a focus on young children and their family unit, schools and criminal justice settings

20 25



Delyana Lazarova

Delyana Lazarova became Principal Guest Conductor in September 2025. At her debut with the BBC SSO in March 2024 *The Scotsman* noted the “warm-hearted performances” and the “visible, energised synergy between Lazarova and the orchestra”





*BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra
Ryan Wigglesworth Chief Conductor*

A Child of Our Time Michael Tippett

continued from page 7

The music of the oratorio is direct and powerful, a mix of extraordinary tenderness (in the Mother's aria, for example), yet with some jagged edges, and a powerful role for the chorus – sorrowful and vengeful by turn.

The whole work is anchored in the most powerful statements of humanity by the spirituals, each of which symbolise and respond in a remarkably apt manner to Tippett's trajectory from darkness to light. (The spiritual 'Deep River', including the words 'Let my people go', for example, appears just after the Boy commits his terrible act.) The oratorio concludes with a glimpse of hope ('That promised land ... where all is peace'). But it ends tentatively, not triumphantly. A simple, downward minor third, unaccompanied by orchestra, suggests that the struggles against darkness are far from over.

Programme note © Lucy Walker

Lucy Walker is a musicologist, writer and public speaker. She studied the operas of Francis Poulenc for her PhD and has edited two books on Benjamin Britten. She is currently co-editing a book of essays on Elizabeth Maconchy.

A Child of Our Time

PART 1

Chorus

The world turns on its dark side.
It is winter.

THE ARGUMENT

Mezzo-soprano

Man has measured the heavens with a
telescope, driven the gods from
their thrones.
But the soul, watching the chaotic mirror,
knows that the gods return.
Truly, the living God consumes within and
turns the flesh to cancer!

INTERLUDIUM

SCENA

Chorus

Is evil then good?
Is reason untrue?

Mezzo-soprano

Reason is true to itself;
But pity breaks open the heart.

Chorus

We are lost.
We are as seed before the wind.
We are carried to a great slaughter.

Narrator (Bass)

Now in each nation there were some cast
out by authority and tormented, made
to suffer for the general wrong.
Pogroms in the east, lynching in the West;
Europe brooding on a war of starvation.
And a great cry went up from the people.

Chorus of the Oppressed

When shall the usurers' city cease, and
famine depart from the fruitful land?

Tenor

I have no money for my bread; I have no
gift for my love.
I am caught between my desires and their
frustration as between the hammer and
the anvil.
How can I grow to a man's stature?

Soprano

How can I cherish my man in such
days, or become a mother in a world of
destruction?
How shall I feed my children on so small
a wage?
How can I comfort them when I am dead?

A SPIRITUAL

Chorus, Soloists

Steal away, steal away, steal away to
Jesus;
Steal away, steal away home –
I han't got long to stay here.
My Lord, He calls me, He calls me by the
thunder,
The trumpet sounds within-a my soul,
I han't got long to stay here.

Steal away, *etc.*

Green trees a-bending, poor sinner stands
a-trembling,
The trumpet sounds within-a my soul,
I han't got long to stay here.

Steal away, *etc.*

PART 2

Chorus

A star rises in mid-winter.
Behold the man! The scapegoat!
The child of our time.

Narrator

And a time came when in the continual
persecution one race stood for all.

Double Chorus of Persecutors and Persecuted

Away with them! Where?
Curse them! Kill them! Why?
They infect the state. How?
We have no refuge.

Narrator

Where they could, they fled from the terror.
And among them a boy escaped secretly,
and was kept in hiding in a great city.

Chorus of the Self-righteous

We cannot have them in our Empire.
They shall not work, nor draw a dole.
Let them starve in No-Man's-Land!

Narrator

And the boy's mother wrote a letter,
saying:

SCENA

Mother (Soprano)

O my son! In the dread terror they have
brought me near to death.

Boy (Tenor)

Mother! Ah, Mother!
Though men hunt me like an animal, I will
defy the world to reach you.

Aunt (Mezzo-soprano)

Have patience.
Throw not your life away in futile sacrifice.

Uncle (Bass)

You are as one against all.
Accept the impotence of your humanity.

Boy

No! I must save her.

A SPIRITUAL

Chorus, Soloists

Nobody knows the trouble I see, Lord,
Nobody knows like Jesus.
O brothers, pray for me,
And help me to drive
Old Satan away.
Nobody knows the trouble I see, *etc.*
O mothers, pray for me,
And help me to drive
Old Satan away.
Nobody knows the trouble I see, *etc.*

SCENA

Narrator

The boy becomes desperate in his agony.

Mezzo-soprano

A curse is born.
The dark forces threaten him.

Narrator

He goes to authority.
He is met with hostility.

Mezzo-soprano

His other self rises in him, demonic
and destructive.

Narrator

He shoots the official –

Mezzo-soprano

But he shoots only his dark brother –
And see ... he is dead.

Narrator

They took a terrible vengeance.

THE TERROR

Chorus

Burn down their houses! Beat in their
heads!
Break them in pieces on the wheel!

Narrator

Men were ashamed of what was done.
There was bitterness and horror.

A SPIRITUAL OF ANGER

Chorus, Bass

Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land;
Tell old Pharaoh to let my people go.
When Israel was in Egypt land,
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,
'Thus spake the Lord,' bold Moses said,
'If not, I'll smite your first-born dead.'
Go down, Moses, 'way down in Egypt land;
Tell old Pharaoh to let my people go.

THE BOY SINGS IN HIS PRISON

Boy

My dreams are all shattered in a ghostly
reality.
The wild beating of my heart is stilled:
day by day.
Earth and sky are not for those in prison.
Mother! Mother!

Mother

What have I done to you, my son?
What will become of us now?

The springs of hope are dried up.
My heart aches in unending pain.

Mezzo-soprano

The dark forces rise like a flood.
Men's hearts are heavy: they cry
for peace.

A SPIRITUAL

Chorus, Soprano

O, by and by, by and by,
I'm going to lay down my heavy load.
I know my robe's going to fit me well,
I've tried it on at the gates of hell.
O, hell is deep and a dark despair,
O, stop, poor sinner, and don't go there!
O, by and by, by and by, etc.

PART 3

Chorus

The cold deepens.
The world descends into the icy waters,
Where lies the jewel of great price.

Mezzo-soprano

The soul of man is impassioned like a
woman.
She is old as the earth, beyond good and
evil, the sensual garments.
Her face will be illumined like the sun.
Then is the time of his deliverance.

SCENA

Bass

The words of wisdom are these:
Winter cold means inner warmth,
the secret nursery of the seed.

Chorus

How shall we have patience for the
consummation of the mystery?

Who will comfort us in the going through?

Bass

Patience is born in the tension of
loneliness.
The garden lies beyond the desert.

Chorus

Is the man of destiny master of us all?
Shall those cast out be unavenged?

Bass

The man of destiny is cut off from
fellowship.
Healing springs from the womb of time.
The simple-hearted shall exult in the end.

Chorus

What of the boy, then? What of him?

Bass

He, too, is outcast, his manhood broken
in the clash of powers.
God overpowered him – the child of
our time.

PRELUDIUM

GENERAL ENSEMBLE

Soloists, then Chorus

I would know my shadow and my light,
so shall I at last be whole.
Then courage, brother, dare the grave
passage.
Here is no final grieving, but an abiding
hope.
The moving waters renew the earth.
It is spring.

A SPIRITUAL

Chorus, Soloists

Deep river, my home is over Jordan,

Deep river, Lord,
I want to cross over into camp-ground.
Oh, chillun! Oh, don't you want to go
To that gospel feast,
That promised land,
That land where all is peace?
Walk into heaven, and take my seat,
And cast my crown at Jesus' feet.
Deep river, my home is over Jordan,
Deep river, Lord,
I want to cross over into camp-ground,
Lord!

Text by the composer © Schott Music

Ryan Wigglesworth conductor



Reuben Paris

Ryan Wigglesworth has been Chief Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra since 2022. In recent seasons he has appeared with leading orchestras throughout Europe, the USA and Japan, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (Amsterdam), Chamber Orchestra of Europe and the Bamberg, Bavarian Radio, Lahti, London and Melbourne Symphony orchestras. Also active as a pianist, recent play/direct projects have included concertos by Mozart and Beethoven, and he regularly appears in recital.

Also a composer, Ryan Wigglesworth had his first opera, *The Winter's Tale*, premiered by English National Opera in 2017. Other works include commissions from the Royal Concertgebouw, Cleveland and BBC Symphony orchestras, and his *Magnificat*, premiered in 2022. The BBC SSO's 90th-Anniversary Season opened with his BBC commission *For Laura, after Bach*, written in memory of the orchestra's former Leader Laura Samuel and premiered at the BBC Proms 2025.

Sir Stephen Hough piano



Martin Shields

Sir Stephen Hough combines a distinguished career as a pianist with those of composer and writer. He was the first classical performer to be awarded a MacArthur Fellowship, was appointed CBE in 2014 and knighted in 2022.

In a career spanning over 40 years he has performed with the Berlin, China, London, New York and Seoul Philharmonic orchestras, and the Royal Concertgebouw, Budapest Festival and the NHK (Tokyo) Symphony Orchestras. In recital he has appeared at New York's Carnegie Hall and London's Royal Festival Hall, as well as around the world.

Also a composer, this year saw the CD release of his Piano Concerto and the premiere of his piano quintet *Les noces rouges*. He is the author of three books, an Honorary Fellow of Girton College, Cambridge, International Chair of Piano Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music (Manchester) and a faculty member of the Juilliard School in New York.

John Findon tenor

John Findon studied at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama.

Recent opera highlights include the title-role in *Peter Grimes* for Dutch National Opera, Narraboth (*Salome*) in Naples, Andrei (*Mazeppa*) for the Grange Park Festival, and Steva (*Jenůfa*) and Luke (*The Handmaid's Tale*) for English National Opera. He has also appeared with the Royal Opera (Covent Garden) and Bavarian State Opera. In concert he has worked with the BBC, London and WDR (Cologne) Symphony orchestras, and this year he appeared at the BBC Proms with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra in *The Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*. He has just sung Don José (*Carmen*) for ENO and later this season takes the title-role in *Peter Grimes* for Opera North and makes his US debut singing Lennie Small (*Of Mice and Men*).



Bertie Watson

Pumeza Matshikiza soprano

South African soprano Pumeza Matshikiza has performed at many of the leading opera houses across Europe and the USA, including La Scala (Milan), English National Opera and Theater an der Wien (Vienna). She is admired for the role of Mimì (*La bohème*), which she has sung in Dallas, Stuttgart and Wiesbaden.

Recent highlights include concerts with Anna Netrebko and Yusif Eyvazov in Bucharest, Budapest, Paris and at the Ljubljana Festival, *A Child of Our Time* with the Royal College of Music Symphony Orchestra under Martyn Brabbins, a solo recital at Paris's Le Théâtre de l'Œuvre, *Aida* in Sicily and her debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl.

This season began with an Opera for Peace gala at the Palazzo Farnese in Rome and continues with concerts in Pretoria and Essen, as well as *Porgy in Bess* in concert in Paris.



Simon Fowler

Ashley Riches bass



Debbie Scanlon

British bass-baritone Ashley Riches read English at the University of Cambridge, where he sang in the King's College Choir under Stephen Cleobury, and studied at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. Recent and forthcoming highlights include Stravinsky's *Requiem Canticles* at the BBC Proms, Brander (*The Damnation of Faust*) in Montreal, Handel's *Rinaldo* with The English Concert and Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen* for Irish National Opera.

A former Jette Parker Young Artist, he has sung with the Royal Opera (Covent Garden), English National Opera, Bavarian State Opera, Glyndebourne, Opera Holland Park and in Tokyo. In concert he has performed with the Berlin Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, Les Talens Lyriques and the Academy of Ancient Music. A former BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist, he appears regularly at the Wigmore Hall. His debut disc, *A Musical Zoo*, appeared in 2021.

Beth Taylor mezzo-soprano



Olivia da Costa

Scottish mezzo-soprano Beth Taylor is a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the Open University. She was a finalist in the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition in 2023. In recent years she has appeared at Glyndebourne as Bradamante (*Alcina*) and with the Deutsche Oper Berlin as La Cieca (*La Gioconda*), Arsace (*Semiramide*) and Erda (*Das Rheingold*). She has also sung the title-role in *La Cenerentola* in Nancy and Anna (*The Trojans*) at the Salzburg Festival. In May she made her debut at Carnegie Hall, New York, singing Cornelia (*Julius Caesar*) with The English Concert under Harry Bicket.

This season features appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Gustavo Dudamel, Berlin Philharmonic under Kirill Petrenko and Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra under Sir Simon Rattle, as well as with the Bergen and London Philharmonic orchestras. Her album *The Deepes Have Music*, with pianist Hamish Brown, is due for release early next year.

Ryan Wigglesworth
Chief Conductor

Delyana Lazarova
Principal Guest Conductor

Ilan Volkov
Creative Partner

Lucy Drever
Associate Artist

Hans Abrahamsen
Composer-in-Association

Sir Donald Runnicles
Conductor Emeritus

BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra

Across the 2025/26 season, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra celebrates 90 years as Scotland's national broadcasting orchestra. From Oban to Osaka, it has performed across Scotland and around the world, with concerts often featured on BBC Radio 3, Radio Scotland, BBC Sounds, and BBC TV and iPlayer. Scotland's leading champion of new music has, across nine decades, commissioned orchestral music by the most original voices and presents its annual Tectonics Festival of new and experimental music alongside its Creative Partner Ilan Volkov.

With Associate Artist Lucy Drever the orchestra runs projects across Scotland for families, schools and communities. And through a close association with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, the orchestra mentors the next generation of conductors, composers and instrumentalists. It also supports young musical talent in BBC Radio Scotland's Young Classical Musician competition.

Ryan Wigglesworth began his tenure as Chief Conductor in 2022. He has directed a wide range of repertoire including the ballets of Stravinsky, major works of Elgar and UK premieres of works by György Kurtág and Hans Abrahamsen. Following her BBC Proms debut earlier this year, Delyana Lazarova took up the role of Principal Guest Conductor.

The orchestra has received a Royal Philharmonic Society Award and four *Gramophone* Awards, and this year was named one of the UK's 10 Greatest Orchestras by *The Telegraph*.

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First Violins

Hed Yaron Meyerson

guest leader

Kanako Ito *associate leader*

David Routledge*

Iona McDonald†

Jane Mackenzie

Elita Poulter

Alastair Savage

Gent Koço

Emily Ward

Mireia Ferrer Yabar

Katrina Lee

Amy Cardigan

Jane Lemoine

Helena Quispe

Second Violins

Lise Aferiat*

Paula Smart

Brigid Leman

Gordon Bragg

Julia Norton

Alex Gascoine

Julia Carpenter

Barbara Downie

Alice Rickards

Ana do Vale

Ben Norris

Feargus Hetherington

Violas

Andrew Berridge†

Morag Robertson‡

Henry Justo

Martin Wiggins

Beth Willett

Rhoslyn Lawton

Rik Evans

Emma Connell-Smith

Yvette Berridge

Shelagh McKail Mary

Cellos

Rudi De Groote*

Siân Bell †

Nick Byrne‡

Sarah Oliver

Gill De Groote

Anne Brincourt

Feargus Egan

Sonia Cromarty

Double Basses

Gyunam Kim*

Iain Crawford †

Genna Spinks‡

Tom Berry

Lynette Eaton

Olaya Garcia Alvarez

Flutes

Matthew Higham*

Linda Spears

Luke Russell †

Oboes

Michael O'Donnell‡

Kirstie Logan

James Horan †

Clarinets

Yann Ghiron*

Cathal Killeen

Jenny Stephenson

Bassoons

Georgina Powell‡

Graeme Brown †

Peter Wesley †

Horns

Chris Gough*

Hector Salgueiro

Lauren Reeve-Rawlings †

Neil Mitchell

Sue Baxendale

Trumpets

Hedley Benson †

Mark Calder

Mark Addison

Trombones

Merin Rhyd †

Benny Vernon

Bass Trombone

Alexander Kelly †

Tuba

Andrew Duncan*

Timpani

Gordon Rigby*

Percussion

Joe Richards*

David Lyons

Harp

Helen Thomson

Piano

Lynda Cochrane

* *section principal*

† *principal*

‡ *string sub-principal*

‡ *guest principal*

*orchestra list correct at
time of going to print*

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Business Co-ordinator

Emma Simpson

Audio Trainee

Toby Swallow

National Youth Choir of Scotland

Recognised with the Ensemble Award from the Royal Philharmonic Society, the National Youth Choir of Scotland is an outstanding choir for young people aged 16 to 25 led by world-renowned conductor Christopher Bell. Membership is granted by yearly auditions to singers born, resident or studying in Scotland.

During Scotland's Year of Young People in 2018, the choir was in residency at the Edinburgh International Festival. The singers were awarded a Herald Angel Award for their performance at the Opening Concert in Haydn's *The Creation* followed by their own sell-out *a cappella* concert at Usher Hall conducted by Christopher Bell. The choir then travelled to New York to perform Berlioz's *Lélio* with the Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romantique under Sir John Eliot Gardiner, at Carnegie Hall. The following year the National Youth Choir of Scotland performed *Lélio* at the Philharmonie de Paris, this time with Les Siècles under François-Xavier Roth. The choir also performed at the 20th anniversary in 2019 of the first sitting of the Scottish Parliament.

Other celebrated performances include appearances with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Public Service Broadcasting, and at events including Edinburgh International Festival, 2014 Commonwealth Games Opening Ceremony, BBC Passchendaele Centenary Commemorations, BBC Proms, Festival Berlioz, Grant Park Music Festival and Grand Teton Music Festival.

First Sopranos

Sophie Allan
 Stephanie Bell
 Jaimee Cheung
 Eleanor Gaskell
 Florence Gill
 Brigitte Harrigan Lees
 Helen King
 Lorelei Law
 Emily MacDonald
 Emily MacFarlane
 Sophia Mashwani
 Olivia Massimo
 Niamh McLean
 Amy Spearing
 Beth Taylor
 Susannah Thomasson
 Caitlyn Yule

Second Sopranos

Amanda Blackwell
 Amelia Buchan
 Emma Fairbairn
 Mhairi Hendry
 Miriam MacDonald
 Iris O'Connell
 Rachel Quinn
 Ruth Sodden
 Elinor Weir

First Altos

Maisie Arbuckle
 May Bruce
 Elena Devlin
 Penelope Fish
 Nicola Forgues-Puccio
 Ruby Ginoris
 Emily Henderson
 Ellen MacDougall
 Clara Marks Lewin
 Lucie McBean
 Juliet McKenzie
 Katie McKinstry
 Rebecca Pennykid
 Emily Phillips

Mollie Quigley
 Natalie Rengger
 Eva Smeddle
 Poppy Strachan
 Eva Tarsia

Second Altos

Mia Cookson
 Lucy Ellis
 Joanna Farrow
 Abigail Mackay
 Niamh Paddon
 Kieran Penman
 Iona Pirie
 Elina Purina

First Tenors

Michael Harrison
 Fraser Macdonald
 Vittore MacKenna
 Callum Mason
 Rory McIver
 Michael Muoneke
 Tyler Newton

Second Tenors

Joseph Adie
 Matthew Gilmour Wright
 Alistair Hillis
 Robert Kelsey
 Lachlan Latto
 Calum Lowe
 David MacDonald
 Alexander Wallace

First Basses

Oluwatimilehin Bimbo-Adeola
 Colum Cameron
 Nicol Halcrow
 Jason Hogg
 Duncan Kay
 Taliesin Liston-Smith
 Euan MacLeod
 Ruaraidh McBain
 Zak McCullough
 Rohit Modak
 Sam Newman

Jake Thomson
 Struan Young

Second Basses

Graeme Buist
 Jonathan Collings
 Joseph Colvin
 Alexander Crawford
 Paul Ersfeld Mandujano
 Conan Mowbray
 Samuel Sheridan
 Callum Simpson
 Robbie Wallace
 Alex White
 Peter Whitelaw
 Scott Xu

*singers' list correct at
 time of going to print*

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**Scottish
Symphony
Orchestra**

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VALSES NOBLES ET
SENTIMENTALES

ELSA BARRAINE
SYMPHONY NO.2

MAURICE OHANA
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DEBUSSY
NOCTURNES
FOR WOMEN'S CHORUS AND ORCHESTRA

NICOLAS HODGES
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