

**Southampton Youth Orchestra**  
presents

# **UPRISING!**

**Verdi - Nabucco Overture**

**Bernstein - Slava! A Political Overture**

**Saint-Saëns - Danse Macabre**

**Shostakovich - Symphony No. 5 in D minor**

**Friday 22 July 2022**

**Thornden Hall**

**Kevin Withell - Conductor**



[southamptonmusichub.org](http://southamptonmusichub.org)  
[music@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:music@southampton.gov.uk)

023 8083 3648  
[@musichubsouth](https://www.facebook.com/musichubsouth)



**SOUTHAMPTON**  
CITY COUNCIL

Good evening, and welcome to Southampton Youth Orchestra's final concert of the season.

It is a night to celebrate the talent that Southampton Music Services continue to discover, develop and support, and Southampton Youth Orchestra are honoured as always to be able to showcase the hard work and talent of some of Southampton's finest young musicians.

I am delighted to welcome back no less than twenty SYO alumni for this concert, as well as several local musicians who jumped at the opportunity to perform this programme, and for whose support SYO is very grateful.

I'm also delighted to be able to announce details of SYO's 2022-23 concert season, details of which can be found further on in the programme.

I'd like to thank Southampton Music Hub for their ongoing support for SYO, and particularly to Zoe Hunting, our tireless Head of Ensembles who has not only been of tremendous personal support to me this year, but has given up some rare free time over the last few weeks to run sectionals, to be a valuable presence at rehearsals and to join us onstage tonight in the string section.

Finally, I'd like to thank Friends of Southampton Youth Orchestras, who have supported us financially and morally throughout this difficult last couple of years, ensuring that SYO has a post-Covid future. Their involvement in rehearsals this term has also been invaluable; providing sugar for the students and caffeine for the adults, along with unparalleled support in every area of producing a concert.

It remains only to thank each and every member of tonight's audience for supporting us tonight, and to wish you all a most enjoyable evening.

Kevin Withell

Musical Director of Southampton Youth Orchestra

# **Programme**

**Verdi – Overture to Nabucco**

**Saint-Saëns – Danse Macabre**

Annabel Cullington-Doss – Solo Violin

**Bernstein – Slava! A Political Overture**

## **INTERVAL**

**Shostakovich – Symphony No.5 in D minor**

I – Moderato – Allegro non troppo

II – Allegretto

III – Largo

IV – Allegro non troppo



## Giuseppe Verdi – Overture to Nabucco



*Nabucodonosor*, or Nebuchadnezzar, shortened by the composer to *Nabucco* was the third of some 30 operas composed by Giuseppe Verdi. Premiered in 1842, *Nabucco* is commonly regarded as the opera that made the young Verdi's career.

The opera retells the story of the plight of the Jews as they are exiled from Jerusalem by Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar II in 597BC, with much of the text taken from biblical books Kings II, Jeremiah, Lamentations and Daniel. It's therefore likely that the success of this opera owed a lot to Italian politics, and that the public identified with the story

of *Nabucco* in what, to that point, had been a 40 year fight for Italian unification; a movement called *Risorgimento*, or Rising Again, which finally achieved its aim in 1861.

The overture to an opera can serve many purposes. It can be used to introduce listeners to some of the music themes that will be important in the opera, it can be used to set the mood for what's about to happen onstage, or it can be used as a 'warm-up act', simply to rouse the anticipation of the audience. In *Nabucco*, Verdi does all three. A sombre brass quartet opens the overture, setting an immediate tone of solemnity and defiance. A militaristic theme takes over, a restless and unstable battle march which rushes to a premature halt. The melody that comes next is the very first version of what is probably Verdi's most famous tune: *Va pensiero sull' ali dorate* – the Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves, so popular that it was sung a choir of over 800 and an estimated crowd of 300,000 at Verdi's own funeral procession almost 60 years later, and has remained an anthem of celebration, defiance and protest ever since.

After the exposition of this theme, Verdi brings back the march-like theme, developing it into a frenzy of emotion – anger, chaos and triumph battle it out, and by the time the curtain raises for Act I Scene I, the audience are on the edge of their seats.

## Camille Saint-Saëns – Danse Macabre, Op. 40

*Zig, zig, zig, Death in cadence,  
Striking with his heel a tomb,  
Death at midnight plays a dance tune,  
Zig, zig, zig, on his violin.*

*The winter wind blows and the night is dark;  
Moans are heard in the linden-trees.  
Through the gloom, white skeletons pass,  
Running and leaping in their shrouds.*



*Zig, zig, zig, each one is frisking.  
The bones of the dancers are heard to crack –  
But hist! of a sudden they quit the round,  
They push forward, they fly; the cock has crowed.*

It was this 1872 poem by Henri Cazalis that inspired Saint-Saëns to compose his third tone-poem. Saint-Saëns makes innovative use of a 'de-tuned' solo violin, with the E string tuned down to Eb. This creates an interval of a diminished 5<sup>th</sup>, otherwise known as a tri-tone or 'the devil's chord' – this interval doesn't exist in the regular major or minor scales, so has a jarring and unsettling sound which was rejected by early music theorists. There are stories (of dubious origin and reliability) of composers and performers being excommunicated from the Church for using the 'devil's chord' in their music.

The tone poem follows the character of Death, rising at midnight – represented by twelve 'chimes' on the harp – and wreaking havoc with his violin. Two main themes develop; a restless fast-paced dance put in contrast with a smoother gentler theme which became popular as the theme tune for Jonathan Creek.

Over the development of the themes, the woodwinds quote the *Dies Irae*, the *Day of Wrath* section of the Requiem Mass. The original *Dies Irae* text was set to an instantly recognizable four-note motif that dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, and has been quoted in classical music and film scores ever since – from Berlioz and Holst to *The Shining* and *Frozen II*.

With the xylophone illustrating dancing skeletons, the diabolical dance builds up to a frenzy, stopping suddenly as the sun begins to rise and a solo oboe becomes the crowing cockerel. The creatures of the night go back into hiding, and Death plays on his last graceful melody on his violin as he backs away into the shadows.

## **Leonard Bernstein – Slava! A Political Overture**



In 1976, 19 years after the success of *West Side Story*, Bernstein wrote a Broadway musical called *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*, which addressed a 100 year period of corruption and racism in the White House. While Bernstein's score was widely praised, the premise, lyrics and performance were savagely criticised and the show closed after just seven performances, making it one of the most legendary flops in the history of Broadway.

The following year, cellist and conductor Mstislav 'Slava' Rostropovich - for whom many cello concerti, including Shostakovich's, were composed - began his tenure as Music Director of National Symphony Orchestra and Bernstein decided to compose an overture in his honour. He took two of the themes from his musical as the basis of the overture, as well as a reference to the *Slava Chorus* from Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*. The two main themes are exchanged with a relentlessly positive energy, pausing briefly for the strings and piano to play a repeated vamp section



underneath a pre-recorded tape of Bernstein and three friends shouting excerpts of presidential speeches over each other. As this reaches a climax, the orchestra springs back into life for an unapologetically excitable coda, during which the orchestra is required to shout 'SLAVA!', Rostropovich's nickname. The score is notable for its huge percussion section, brass instruments using mutes usually associated with jazz, and a soprano saxophone, which takes the lead during the 2<sup>nd</sup> theme.

### **Dmitri Shostakovich – Symphony No.5 in D minor, Op.47**

Shostakovich Symphony No.5 was composed in 1937 at the height of Joseph Stalin's power in Soviet Russia. Russian artists were subject to severe censorship and any music that was atonal, contemporary or experimental was dismissed as 'anti-Russian' and the composer was publicly disgraced. Shostakovich did an excellent job of hiding his political views and his distrust of Stalin in order to retain a rare position of honour and respect among the



Soviet government, but even he was not untouchable. It took one scathing review of his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* – the 'Muddle Instead of Music' article was brutal in its suggestions of unpatriotism – for Shostakovich's career and indeed life to be on the line. The government expected an apology in symphonic form, and Shostakovich needed to ensure the safety of him and his family, but without compromising his beliefs.

Thus, Symphony No.5 was born; a four-movement message of anger, mourning and defiance that also somehow fulfilled the Soviet demands. With every box that Shostakovich ticked, there was a hidden message, a hint of defiance or a touch of irony. The symphony begins with a Beethoven-esque 'ta-da' theme, reaching a 'full-stop' consisting of three repeated notes - two short and one long – a rhythmic theme that will play many important roles throughout the symphony. The music builds gradually, becoming more militaristic with fanfaring trumpets and finally a dominating snare drum. The march that ensues is not, as Stalin thought, a proud and patriotic theme, but ironically overblown and borderline dissonant, with a bassline which, whilst overtly tonal, does not adapt to the changing chords around it. The opening 'ta-da' recapitulates in a frenzy, broadening out to a series of firm 'full-stops', before the music relaxes first into a beautiful duet for flute and horn and a short solo for violin, before three scales on the celesta bring the movement to a gentle close.

It is traditional for the second movement of a symphony to be a *scherzo* – a light and playful section, often quite fast and often with three beats in a bar. Shostakovich duly obliged – except the music is heavy and awkward, a little too slow, and every now and again the rhythm is thrown out of sync with an unexpected fourth beat in the bar.

Movement three is one of the most plaintive and heartbreaking movements in the



symphonic repertoire. Having been described as a ‘requiem without words’, it is an unapologetic outpouring of grief for those of Shostakovich’s friends who had faced dehumanisation, exile and execution at the hand of Stalin. The string section is divided into three violin parts, two viola parts and two cello parts throughout, giving even more depth and richness to the harmonies. Rising chromatic lines add tension to the mournful melody and after a crescendo reaches an almost angry outburst, a solo oboe introduces a lonely and vulnerable tune. The movement represents every level of grief – from inconsolable sadness, to tearful fury, to utter brokenness, finally settling onto a major chord; a sad, thoughtful smile.

The finale, in comparison, is nothing less than an onslaught. Over thundering timpani, the brass introduce what will become the central theme – a melody which bears striking resemblance to a tune (as then unpublished) that Shostakovich had written for a banned Pushkin poem about the ‘artist-barbarian’, censoring the world with his black brush. It is no accident that this melody became the best-known theme of the symphony that saved his career, and the later discovery of Shostakovich’s *Romances on Poems by Pushkin* put an end to any suspicion that Shostakovich may have been in support of Stalin and his regime.

*Khudozhnik-varvar kist'iu sonnoi  
Kartinu geniia chernit  
I svoi risunok bezzakonnyi  
Nad nei bessmyslenno chertit.  
No kraski chuzhdye s letami  
Spadaiut vetkhei cheshuei;  
Sozdanye geniia pred nami  
Vykhodit s prezhnei krasotoi.  
Tak ischezaiut zabluzhden'ia  
S izmuchennoi dushi moei,  
I voznikaiut v nei viden'ia  
Pervonachal'nykh, chistykh dnei.*

With his lethargic brush, an artist-barbarian  
Scrawls over a painting made by a genius,  
Tracing his own illicit sketch  
Over it without reason.  
But with the years, these alien colours  
Fall away like decrepit scales;  
And the creation of that genius  
Appears before us in its former beauty.  
In the same way, delusions disappear  
From my anguished soul,  
And in their place, visions arise within it,  
Visions of pure and primal days.

Stalin demanded music to be composed in Western classical traditions, to glorify Russia in an accessible, tried-and-tested musical language. The sort of music with grand finales, and strong ‘dominant-tonic’ bass lines (think of the famous timpani solos at the beginning of the opening music in ‘2001: A Space Odyssey’). Shostakovich does not disappoint – quite the opposite. His grand ending is too grand – it is slow, heavy and repetitive to the point of sarcasm. The repeated quavers in the strings and woodwind become jarring. The two repeated notes in the timpani become little less than irritating. Stalin was impressed and Shostakovich was vindicated. A journalist gave the symphony the subtitle ‘*A Soviet Artist’s Practical and Creative Response to Just Criticism*’ – a label which Shostakovich did little to challenge.

Music is a powerful and versatile language. Throughout history, music has spoken where voices cannot – throughout the history of the slave trade, in Soviet Russia and in the concentration camps of Nazi-occupied Europe – if only one simply knows how to listen to it.

# Southampton Youth Orchestra

## Flutes

Alex Jones  
Poppy Hawkins

## Piccolo

Aoife Scully

## Oboes

Katie Guy  
Cameron Hutchinson  
Heather Grant

## Clarinet

Anna Wilkinson  
Justine Courtier  
Leah Wortham  
Anna Robinson

## Bassoons

Lucy Gowans  
Wendy Lloyd

## Contrabassoon

Don Lloyd

## Soprano Saxophone

Nathaniel Serpell-Stevens

## French Horns

Rebecca Cox  
Charlie Mann  
Trevor Grant  
Naomi Andrew  
Edward Bence

## Trumpets

Daniel Gould  
Ed Kinge  
James Gardner  
Richard Price

## Trombones

James Mobley  
John Hanchett  
Catherine Lewis  
Andrew Carr

## Tuba

Morro Barry

## Harps

Laura Lister  
Lizzie Laybourne

## Piano

George Smith

## Percussion

Oren Manore  
Joshua Clark  
Byron Horne  
Grace Lane

## First Violins

Katie Ho  
Esme Thompsett  
Yumeng Wang  
Nengwei Zheng  
Miles Norman  
Amelia Wozniak  
William Ward  
Henry Ward  
Christa Porter  
Helena Charlton  
Isaac Wright  
Harry Price  
Hannah Martin  
Jo Molloy

## Second Violins

Natham Yam  
Teresa Kiang  
Kyriaki Hannides  
Maya Callaway  
Euan Lee-Cann  
Jax Leonard  
Joshua Rookes  
Charlayne Pueblo  
Liz Mellor  
Louisa Broad  
Clare Prest  
Ian Brightman  
Eoin Williams

## Violas

Annabel Cullington-Doss  
Hannah Leary  
Charlie Wright  
Tom Gilbert  
Malcolm Porter  
Hiro Jones  
Chris Nichols  
Sarah Gunton

## Cellos

Isabella Rose  
Heather Greenfield  
Sophie Blundell  
Judi Galbraith  
Simon Wilkins  
Zoe Hunting  
Kelly-Jo Peters  
Thora Tews

## Double Basses

Lucas Olley  
Adrian Osman  
Pete Gosney  
Joy Tricklebank  
Fiona Sunderland



## Kevin Withell – Conductor



Kevin enjoys a busy and varied conducting career as well as playing and teaching French horn, trombone and percussion.

Kevin read music at University of Southampton, where he excelled in conducting, as well as studying composition and orchestration and a writing dissertation in Holocaust Music, before remaining to complete a Masters in orchestral conducting.

During his studies at University of Southampton, Kevin was awarded the prestigious positions of assistant conductor of both Southampton University Symphony Orchestra and Southampton University Sinfonietta. Kevin currently conducts Southampton Youth Orchestra, Southampton Youth Concert Sinfonia and Southampton University String Orchestra, as well as directing and assisting several ensembles within Southampton Music Services and having served as Musical Director of both Southampton Youth Wind Band and Brass Band. Kevin is in regular demand to conduct rehearsals and sectionals with City of Southampton Orchestra, Worthing Philharmonic Orchestra and London Gay Symphony Orchestra, as well performing in the brass or percussion sections of several orchestras around the Hampshire and Sussex area including Southampton Concert Wind Band, Hyde Brass and City of Southampton Orchestra. He has also recently made three appearances with Meridian Winds to perform Tom Davoren's *Divisions on Calan Lan* for trombone and band. Shortly before Covid hit, Kevin made a successful debut conducting Charity Symphony Orchestra, and, more recently, organised and conducted the first ever 'Concert in the City' - a celebration of orchestral music in Southampton with over 100 local musicians. As a composer, Kevin has conducted the premieres of his own settings of the Requiem Mass (2011) and Gloria Mass (2013), both performances featuring Worthing Choral Society and local guest soloists and orchestras. Kevin continues to dedicate his spare time to researching the lives and works of musicians affected by Nazism and the holocaust, and has had articles published on the Music and the Holocaust website.

## Katie Ho – Lead Violin

Katie started playing the violin at the age of 6 under the guidance of Anca Campanie. She progressed quickly through the grades achieving Grade 8 Distinction at the age of 12. She regularly performs at local music festivals, where she has won many prizes and awards throughout the years. Katie has played in Southampton Youth Orchestra since 2019. Notable past performances include duets and Mozart Sonatas in Portsmouth, Basingstoke, and Southampton, as well as co-leading SYO Orchestra for Rachmaninoff's 2<sup>nd</sup> Piano Concerto with soloist Thomas Luke in December 2021.

Katie very much enjoys playing the symphonic repertoire, and in addition to performances with SYO, highlights include playing with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall with SYCS in 2018.

Her many passions include playing the flute and viola and being a chorister at Romsey Abbey Choir. Katie would love to pursue a career in music, specialising in music therapy and teaching. Outside of playing music, she loves to watch West End musicals and travel around the world with family.





## **Southampton Music Hub**

The Southampton Music Service is the lead partner for the Southampton Music Hub. Over 30 music and arts organisations are represented within the Southampton Music Hub partnership. The group (established in September 2012) work collaboratively to bring a high level of music provision, expertise, access and resource to communities and young people in Southampton.

Our aim is to support schools and colleges in delivering the National Plan for Music Education and provide opportunities for young people to engage in a rich programme of music making. This is an exciting time for all involved and we look forward to seeing music in Southampton continue to thrive and ensuring our young people can take fond musical memories with them into their future lives.



## **Southampton Music Service**

In March 2011, the Southampton Music Service was judged by the Federation of Music Services as being in the top category of Music Services in the country. SMS has maintained the level of excellence and access to music activity that our community has come to expect. SMS seeks every opportunity to promote and develop the musical potential and personal development of all young people in the City and region of Southampton.

In addition to the specialist instrumental lessons and curriculum support we deliver in schools, SMS also provides an impressive range of choirs, bands and orchestras to support musical progression.

Any young musician interested in joining a Southampton Music Service ensemble or starting lessons for the first time should contact the music service at [music@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:music@southampton.gov.uk) or call 02380 833648

Southampton Hub website [www.southamptonmusichub.org](http://www.southamptonmusichub.org)

Twitter <https://twitter.com/MusicHubSouth>

If you are age 8-18 and would like to join a student focus group to help shape future Hub activity, please contact us.

# **Southampton Youth Orchestra**

## **2022-2023 Calendar**

**Friday 17 December 2022**

**Thornden Hall, 7.30pm**

Christmas Concert

with guest choirs Bella Voce and Soton Voce

Programme to include Hely-Hutchinson 'Carol Symphony' and Anderson 'A Christmas Festival'

**Saturday 28 January 2023**

**Central Hall, 7pm**

Friends of Southampton Youth Orchestra Pyramid Concert

**Saturday 15 April 2023**

**Avenue St Andrew's Church, 7.30pm**

Offenbach – Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld

Saint-Saens – Piano Concerto No.2 (Edward Bence: piano)

Dvorak – Symphony No.9: From the New World

**Friday 15 July 2023**

**Southampton Guildhall, 7.30pm**

Tolga Kashif – *The Queen Symphony*

with combined local choirs