

# TONIGHT'S CONCERT

## MacMillan and Shostakovich 12

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Thursday 3 April 2025  
Barbican

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7pm

### **Dmitri Shostakovich**

Festive Overture

### **Sir James MacMillan**

Violin Concerto No 2 (London premiere)

Interval

### **Dmitri Shostakovich**

Symphony No 12, 'The Year 1917'

**Gianandrea Noseda** conductor

**Nicola Benedetti** violin

**London Symphony Orchestra**

Concert ends at approximately 8.55pm

This concert is supported by the PRS Foundation's  
Resonate programme



Shostakovich Symphony No 12, 'The Year 1917'  
recorded for future release on LSO Live

# Welcome



A warm welcome to tonight's performance conducted by Gianandrea Noseda, LSO Principal Guest Conductor. It is a pleasure to welcome back Nicola Benedetti, performing Sir James MacMillan's Violin Concerto No 2, which was written especially for her. This concert continues our exploration of Dmitri Shostakovich's music, as Gianandrea Noseda nears the conclusion of his Shostakovich symphony cycle for LSO Live.

The concert opens with Shostakovich's *Festive Overture*, a lively and spirited work that captures a sense of joy and optimism, followed by Sir James MacMillan's evocative Violin Concerto No 2. We are pleased to continue our celebration of Sir James MacMillan's music following the vibrant *Concerto for Orchestra* that opened our 2024/25 season, a world premiere performance and LSO commission. Closing the evening is Shostakovich's Symphony No 12, 'The Year 1917', which recalls events surrounding the Russian Revolution.

We are grateful to the PRS Foundation, who have supported this concert with their 'Resonate' programme. Resonate seeks to encourage more performances, recordings and broadcasts of exceptional contemporary repertoire selected by UK orchestras.

We hope you enjoy this concert and that you will be able to join us again soon. Next week, Gianandrea Noseda conducts Sergei Prokofiev's Symphony No 2 alongside Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 1, performed by Alice Sara Ott. Later in the same week, Gianandrea Noseda joins soloist Lisa Batiashvili in the first of her LSO Artist Portrait concerts at the Barbican, performing Alfred Schnittke's Violin Concerto No 1, paired with Shostakovich's Symphony No 2. We look forward to seeing you there.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn McDowell". The script is fluid and cursive.

**Dame Kathryn McDowell** DBE DL  
Managing Director

# Coming Up

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Thursday 10 April 7pm  
Barbican

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## Beethoven and Prokofiev 2

Prokofiev's mind-blowing Second Symphony, plus Beethoven with soloist Alice Sara Ott and a charming opener from Schubert, conducted by Gianandrea Nosedà.

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Sunday 13 April 7pm  
Barbican

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## Schnittke, Shostakovich and Brahms

Lisa Batiashvili joins Gianandrea Nosedà for Schnittke's Violin Concerto, plus early Shostakovich and stirring Brahms featuring the London Symphony Chorus.

**Welcome to tonight's group bookers**  
Ms Adele Friedland & Friends

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**Please switch off all phones.**  
**Photography and audio/video recording**  
**is not permitted during the performance.**

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the QR code to complete a short  
survey about tonight's concert.



# Festive Overture Op 96

Dmitri Shostakovich



1954



6 minutes

Programme note by  
**Wendy Thompson**

Dmitri Shostakovich emerged from the trauma of World War II physically unscathed, but artistically compromised. Though he was hailed as a national hero for his Seventh Symphony, written during the gruelling siege of Leningrad, his next two symphonies did not find favour with the authorities. Against a grim background of official disapproval, he began composing a *Festive Overture*, designed to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the 1917 October Revolution, out of which the modern Soviet state was born. Shostakovich said that his new work would 'embody in musical form the enthusiasm of men working peacefully under the new five-year plan. There are no sharp dramatic conflicts in the Overture. Its themes are melodious, its orchestration varied.'

But the Overture wasn't performed at the 1947 October celebrations. Shostakovich may have been forewarned of the approaching storm that would engulf him and many fellow composers early

the following year, when Stalin's cultural commissar accused them of writing music full of 'anti-democratic tendencies alien to the Soviet people'. Fearful for his life, Shostakovich withdrew all the major pieces he was working on. The *Festive Overture* only came to light seven years later, after Stalin's death, when it was performed at a gala concert at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow on 6 November 1954.

**Fearful for his life, Shostakovich withdrew all the major pieces he was working on.**

The Overture is light and celebratory in style. It opens and closes with a fanfare said to have been based on a children's piano piece. The main section is fast and lively, and towards the end, the orchestra is augmented by a brass band.



# Dmitri Shostakovich

1906 to 1975 (Russia)



## Contemporaries

Benjamin Britten,  
Mieczysław Weinberg

## Key events

**1917:** Russian  
Revolution

**1936–37:** Receives  
damning review of  
opera *Lady Macbeth  
of the Mtsensk  
District*; writes  
Symphony No 5

**1941:** Russia enters  
World War II

**1953:** Receives  
international acclaim  
for Symphony No 10

## Listen to

Symphony No 8  
**Isolive.co.uk**

## With the LSO

**1971:** London  
premiere of Symphony  
No 13, 'Babi Yar'

Composer profile by  
**Andrew Stewart**

After early piano lessons with his mother, Dmitri Shostakovich enrolled at the Petrograd Conservatoire in 1919. Shostakovich announced his Fifth Symphony of 1937 as 'a Soviet artist's practical creative reply to just criticism'. A year before its premiere, he had drawn a stinging attack from the official Soviet mouthpiece *Pravda*, in which his initially successful opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* was condemned for its 'leftist bedlam' and extreme modernism. With the Fifth Symphony came acclaim not only from the Russian audience, but also from musicians and critics overseas.

Shostakovich lived through the first months of the German siege of Leningrad serving as a member of the auxiliary fire service. In July, he began work on the first three movements of his Seventh Symphony, completing the defiant finale after his evacuation in October and dedicating the score to the city. A microfilmed copy was despatched by way of Tehran and an American warship to the US, where it was broadcast by the NBC Symphony Orchestra and Arturo Toscanini.

In 1943, Shostakovich completed his emotionally shattering Eighth Symphony. In 1948, he and other leading composers, Sergei Prokofiev among them, were

forced by the Soviet Cultural Commissar, Andrey Zhdanov, to concede that their work represented 'most strikingly the formalistic perversions and anti-democratic tendencies in music', a crippling blow to Shostakovich's artistic freedom that was healed only after the death of Stalin in 1953. Shostakovich answered his critics later that year with the powerful Tenth Symphony, in which he portrays 'human emotions and passions', rather than the collective dogma of communism.


In his later years, Shostakovich suffered from increasingly poor health. Nevertheless, he continued to produce a string of masterpieces throughout the later 1950s and the 1960s, including his Symphonies Nos 11 to 14, two cello concertos, the Piano Concerto No 2 and the Violin Concerto No 2, String Quartets Nos 6 to 12 and various songs, including the *Seven Romances on Poems by Alexander Blok* for soprano and piano trio. His compositions in the 1970s were much preoccupied with mortality and included his Symphony No 15, his final three string quartets and the *Suite on Verses of Michelangelo Buonarroti* for bass and piano (which he later arranged for bass and orchestra). His final work, the Viola Sonata, was completed just weeks before his death.



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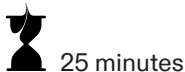
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# Violin Concerto No 2 (London premiere)

Sir James MacMillan

**Nicola Benedetti**  
violin



Programme note by  
**James MacMillan**

My Second Violin Concerto is written in one through-composed movement and is scored for a medium-sized orchestra. It opens with three chords, and the notes which the soloist plays in these (pizzicato) outline a simple theme which is the core ingredient for much of the music. This three-note theme incorporates a couple of wide intervals, which provide much of the expressive shape to a lot of the subsequent melodic development throughout the Concerto.

When the soloist eventually plays with the bow, the character of the material sets the mood for much of the free-flowing, yearning quality of the music throughout. The prevailing slow pulse is punctuated by some faster transitional ideas, and after a metric modulation, the second main idea is established on brass and timpani, marked *alla marcia* (in the style of a march). The wide-intervallic leaps in the solo violin part continue to dominate in a passage marked soaring, even as the music becomes more rhythmic and dance-like.

An obsessive repetitiveness enters the soloist's material just before the first main climax of the work, where the wind blare out the

wide-intervalled theme. The central section of the work is reflective, restrained and melancholic, where the soloist's part is marked *dolce* (softly) and eventually *misterioso* (mysterious), hovering over an unsettled, low shimmering in the cellos and basses.

The martial music returns and paves the way for an energetic section based on a series of duets which the violin soloist has with a procession of different instruments in the orchestra – double bass, cello, bassoon, horn, viola, clarinet, trumpet, oboe, flute and violin. After this, we hear the three notes/chords again developed in the wind over a pulsating timpani beat, which sets up the final climax, marked braying, intense and *feroce*. The final recapitulation of the original material provides a soft cushion and backdrop to the soloist's closing melodic material, marked *cantabile* (song-like), before the work ends quietly and serenely.

My Second Violin Concerto is dedicated to Nicola Benedetti and in memoriam Krzysztof Penderecki, the great Polish composer who died in 2020.



**Interval – 20 minutes**

Find us on Instagram

@londonsymphonyorchestra



# Sir James MacMillan

b 1959 (Scotland)



## Premieres with the LSO

**1994:** *Brittania*

**1996:** Cello Concerto

**1996:** *The World's Ransoming*

**1997:** *Symphony Vigil*

**2003:** *A Deep But Dazzling Darkness*

**2007:** *Stomp (with Fate and Elvira)*

**2008:** *St John Passion*

**2010:** Violin Concerto

**2018:** Trombone Concerto (UK premiere)

**2024:** Concerto for Orchestra, 'Ghosts'

## Listen to

*St John Passion*, *The World's Ransoming* and *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* on LSO Live  
[lso.live.lso.co.uk](https://www.lso.co.uk)

Sir James MacMillan is one of today's most successful composers and performs internationally as a conductor. His musical language is flooded with influences from his Scottish heritage, Catholic faith, social conscience and close connection with Celtic folk music, and is distinctive for its rhythmic excitement and powerful emotional communication.

MacMillan first became internationally recognised after the extraordinary success of *The Confession of Isobel Gowdie* at the BBC Proms in 1990. His prolific output has since been performed and broadcast around the world. His major works include percussion concerto *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel*, a Cello Concerto for Mstislav Rostropovich and five symphonies. Recent major works include his Percussion Concerto No 2 for Colin Currie, Violin Concerto No 2 for Nicola Benedetti and his Symphony No 5, written for The Sixteen, which was premiered at the Edinburgh International Festival in 2019 as part of a major feature to celebrate his 60th birthday year. Most recently, several new works for chorus and orchestra have been premiered, including his *Christmas Oratorio* in 2021 and *Timotheus, Bacchus and Cecilia*, a celebration of the power of music, in 2023.

MacMillan enjoys a successful career as conductor of his own music alongside a range of contemporary and standard repertoire, and is praised for the composer's insight he brings to each score. He has conducted orchestras such as

the Rotterdam Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Danish Radio Symphony, Gothenburg Symphony, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, BBC Symphony, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and NHK Symphony Orchestra. He was Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Chamber Philharmonic until 2013 and Composer/Conductor of the BBC Philharmonic until 2009.

Highlights of the 2024/25 season include world premieres of MacMillan's new concerto for euphonium, *Where the Lugar meets the Glaisnock*, by the David Childs and BBC National Orchestra of Wales conducted by MacMillan; and his Duet for Horn and Piano, performed at Middle Temple Hall. This year's Stockholm Philharmonic Composer Festival is dedicated to MacMillan, and includes performances of his Trombone Concerto, *Concerto for Orchestra*, Violin Concerto No 2 and a variety of chamber works.

MacMillan has conducted many of his own works on disc for Chandos, BIS and BMG. His recent release on Harmonia Mundi conducting Britten Sinfonia included his Oboe Concerto and won the 2016 *BBC Music Magazine* Award. In 2017, The Sixteen's recording of MacMillan's *Stabat Mater* was nominated for a *Gramophone* Award and won the *Diapason* d'Or Choral Award.

MacMillan was awarded a CBE in 2004 and a knighthood in 2015. He was appointed a Fellow of the Ivors Academy in 2024.

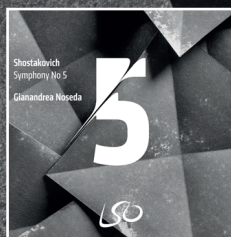
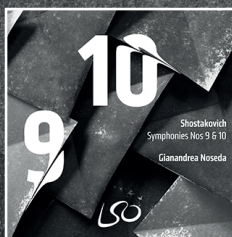
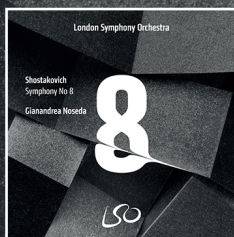


'A cycle of symphonies gives the complete picture. Shostakovich started at a very early age with the First Symphony, and finished just a few years before he died with Symphony No 15, so he covered half a century. It's storytelling of his life, but also of what was going on in the world in the 20th century.'

**Gianandrea Nosedà**

# SHOSTAKOVICH

Immerse yourself in Gianandrea Nosedà's Shostakovich recordings with the LSO to date, including the newly released **Symphony No 11**.



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**25**  
LSO LIVE

**Symphony No 11 out now**  
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# Symphony No 12 in D minor Op 112, 'The Year 1917'

Dmitri Shostakovich

- 1 **Revolutionary Petrograd: Moderato – Allegro – Più mosso – Allegro**
- 2 **Razliv: Allegro (L'istesso tempo) – Adagio**
- 3 **Aurora: Adagio (L'istesso tempo) – Allegro**
- 4 **The Dawn of Humanity: Allegro (L'istesso tempo) – Allegretto – Allegro – Moderato**



1961



40 minutes

Programme note by  
**Stephen Johnson**

Like the Eleventh Symphony, 'Year 1905', Shostakovich's Twelfth (1961) has a declared, overtly political programme. The title invokes the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, and the subtitle of the Twelfth Symphony's second movement explicitly ties the music in with the Revolution's great figurehead, Vladimir Lenin. Razliv was Lenin's secret headquarters before the revolution, just outside Petrograd – then, and now, St Petersburg. The four linked movements chart a familiar darkness-to-light/minor-to-major course, very similar to that in the Fifth Symphony (also in D minor), only here – in contrast to No 5 – there are no obvious thought-provoking incongruities or ironies. The music seems, on the whole, to explain itself.

On the face of it, this is pretty much what one might expect from a composer who had recently joined the Communist Party, apparently in recognition of the more 'enlightened' direction of the new First Secretary, Nikita Khrushchev. But evidence suggests that pressure had been put on him, and that, privately, Shostakovich saw his joining the party as a shameful capitulation. One friend, the musicologist Lev Lebedinsky, stated categorically that Shostakovich originally intended to write a symphony parodying Lenin, but realised just in time how dangerous that might be.

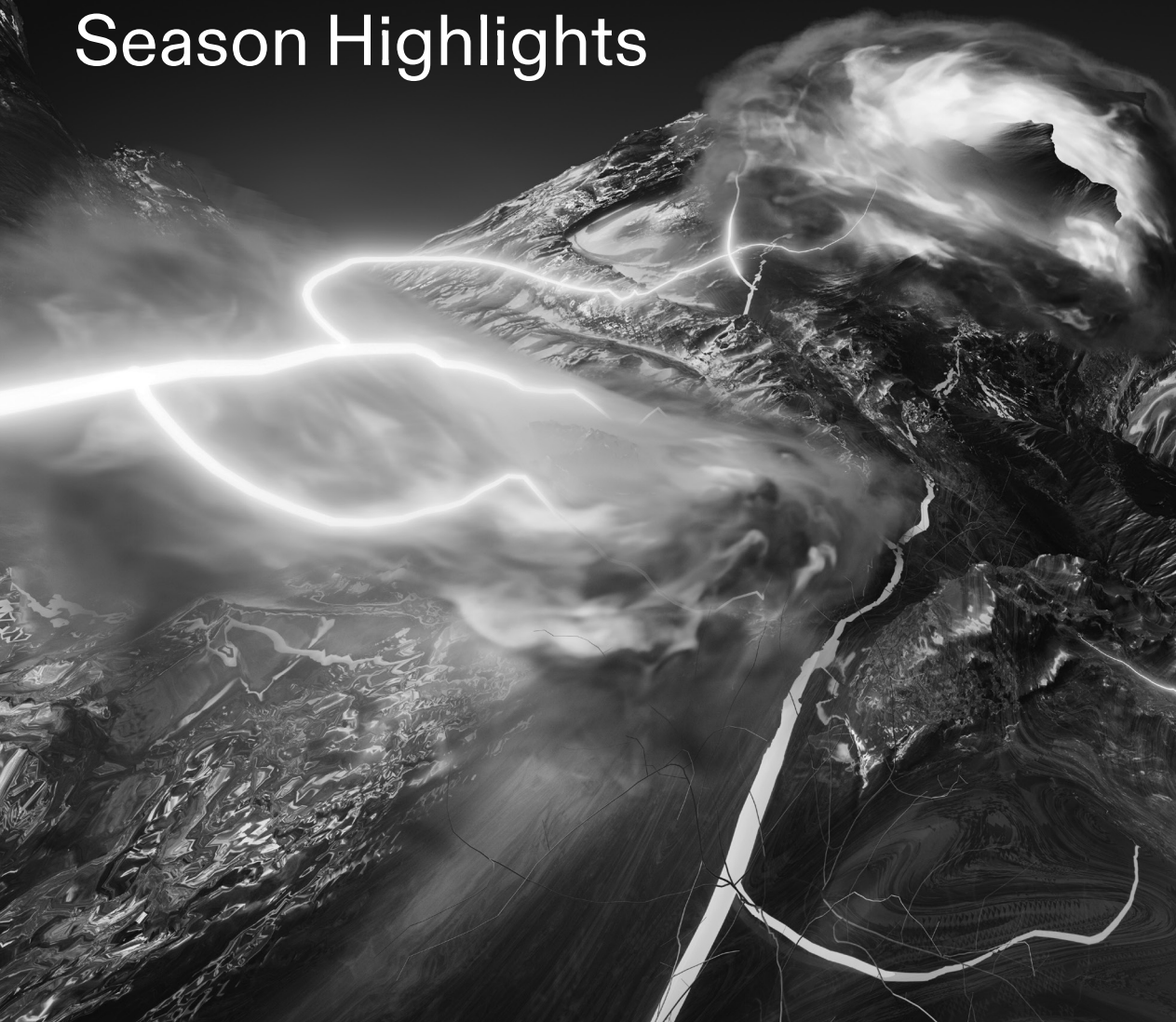
So is the Twelfth Symphony, as some have claimed, a piece of desperate last-minute hackwork? Or are there, as others suggest,

indications that the master ironist is at work, subverting his own declared message? Of course, it's quite possible simply to enjoy this as one of Shostakovich's least complicated major works – a reminder that, even in 'professional' mode, Shostakovich can still be exceptionally stirring. Strife and aspiration dominate the first movement: the former in the sombre opening theme, and in the driven Allegro that follows; the latter in the more hopeful (and very hummable) second theme, first presented on cellos and basses. The broad storyline is clear, its working-out compelling.

Tension builds up in the brooding second movement, until it erupts in the short but exciting 'Aurora' – the name of the ship whose attack on the Winter Palace signalled the start of the Communist Revolution. Then the finale strides forth confidently with a theme on massed horns, almost certainly derived from a piano piece by the ten-year-old Shostakovich, *Funeral March for the Victims of the Revolution* (long since lost). But there are hints of a counter-message: in the ominous low strings and bass drum sounds near the end of 'Aurora' (a pre-echo of the movement 'Fears' in the Thirteenth Symphony?), and in the pounding timpani figures at the end, which unmistakably echo the putatively triumphant ending of Symphony No 5 – an ending many find at least ambiguous. Even when Shostakovich seems relatively straightforward, he can still challenge.

# COMING IN 2025

Season Highlights





# UP



**Beethoven Piano Concerto No 1**  
**Prokofiev Symphony No 2**

with Gianandrea Noseda  
and Alice Sara Ott  
Thursday 10 April 7pm

**Janáček The Excursions of Mr Brouček**

concert performance with surtitles  
with Sir Simon Rattle  
Sunday 4 & Tuesday 6 May 7pm

**Mozart Violin Concerto No 5**  
**Strauss Ein Heldenleben**

with Sir Antonio Pappano  
and Lisa Batiashvili  
Sunday 25 May 7pm

**LSO On Film: The French Connection**

with Dirk Brossé  
Sunday 22 June 7pm

# Gianandrea Nosedà

## Principal Guest Conductor



Gianandrea Nosedà is one of the world's most sought-after conductors, equally recognised for his artistry in the concert hall and the opera house. The 2024/25 season marks his ninth season as Principal Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, and eighth season as Music Director of the National Symphony Orchestra.

In addition to his performances at the Barbican and LSO St Luke's, Nosedà has toured with the LSO to the US, China, Europe and Edinburgh. His recordings on LSO Live include Britten's *War Requiem*, Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, Verdi's *Requiem*, and ongoing multi-year recording projects of the complete symphonic cycles of Prokofiev, Shostakovich and Tchaikovsky.

Nosedà's leadership at the NSO has reinvigorated the orchestra, which makes its home at the Kennedy Center in Washington D C. The renewed recognition has garnered invitations to Carnegie Hall and international concert halls, and led to streaming projects and a record label distributed by LSO Live.

The NSO's recent recordings include the complete Sinfonias by Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington DC native George Walker and a Beethoven symphony cycle. Nosedà has made over 80 recordings for various labels, including Deutsche Grammophon and Chandos where his recordings included works of neglected

Italian composers in his *Musica Italiana* series. Nosedà became General Music Director of the Zurich Opera House in September 2021. A recent milestone there was his first performances of Wagner's *Ring* cycle in May 2024. In February 2023, he was recognised as 'Best Conductor' by the German OPER! AWARDS.

From 2007 to 2018, Nosedà served as Music Director of the Teatro Regio Torino, where his leadership marked a golden era. He has conducted leading international orchestras, and at leading opera houses and festivals, and had significant roles with the BBC Philharmonic (Chief Conductor), Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (Principal Guest Conductor), Mariinsky Theatre (Principal Guest Conductor), Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI (Principal Guest Conductor), Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (Victor de Sabata Chair), Rotterdam Philharmonic (Principal Guest Conductor) and Stresa Festival (Artistic Director).

Nosedà has a strong commitment to working with young artists. In 2019, he was appointed the founding Music Director of the Tsinandali Festival and Pan-Caucasian Youth Orchestra in the village of Tsinandali, Georgia.

A native of Milan, Nosedà is Commendatore al Merito della Repubblica Italiana, marking his contribution to the artistic life of Italy. He has been honoured as Conductor of the Year by both *Musical America* (2015) and the International Opera Awards (2016). In 2023, he received the Puccini Award.



### Next on stage with the LSO

Wednesday 9 April 6.30pm,  
Barbican  
Half-Six Fix: Schubert  
*Zauberharfe* Overture and  
Prokofiev Symphony No 2

# Nicola Benedetti

violin



Nicola Benedetti is one of the most sought-after violinists of her generation. Her ability to captivate audiences and her wide appeal as an advocate for classical music has made her one of the most influential artists of today.

Benedetti began her 2024/25 season with a performance of Wynton Marsalis' Violin Concerto with the Belgian National Orchestra in a programme that also included Marsalis' Symphony No 4, 'The Jungle' with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. Following her performance with the LSO, she will close the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's season playing Brahms' Violin Concerto, conducted by Maxim Emelyanychev.

Winner of the Grammy Award for Best Classical Instrumental Solo in 2020, as well as Best Female Artist at both the 2012 and 2013 Classical BRIT Awards, Benedetti records exclusively for Decca (Universal Music). Her latest recordings of Beethoven's *Triple Concerto* with Benjamin Grosvenor and Sheku Kanneh-Mason, Vivaldi concerti and Elgar's Violin Concerto entered at number one in the UK's Official Classical Album Chart. Other recent recordings include her Grammy Award-winning album of works written especially for her by jazz musician Wynton Marsalis: his Violin Concerto in D and *Fiddle Dance Suite* for Solo Violin. In 2021, *BBC Music Magazine* named her Personality of the Year for her online support of many young musicians during the pandemic.

Benedetti has always been a dedicated, passionate ambassador and leader in music education and her commitment was underlined in 2019 when she established The Benedetti Foundation. The Foundation delivers transformative experiences through mass music events and unites those who believe music is integral to life's education. The Foundation believes in the strength of music and the power of mass inspirational moments to connect cultures and communities through combining excellence, inclusivity, tradition, innovation and meaningful collaboration. In its first four years, the Foundation has worked with close to 70,000 participants of all ages and levels, instrumentalists and non-instrumentalists alike, across 105 countries. Its free online educational video resources – 'With Nicky' and other Foundation videos – have had over six million views.

Benedetti was appointed a CBE in 2019, awarded the Queen's Medal for Music (2017), and made an MBE in 2013. In addition, she holds the positions of Vice President (National Children's Orchestras), Big Sister (Sistema Scotland) and Patron (National Youth Orchestras of Scotland's Junior Orchestra, Music in Secondary Schools Trust and Junior Conservatoire at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland). In October 2022, Benedetti became the Festival Director of the Edinburgh International Festival. In taking the role, she became both the first Scottish and the first female Festival Director since the Festival began in 1947.

# London Symphony Orchestra

## On Stage

### Leader

Roman Simovic

### First Violins

Rebecca Chan  
Clare Duckworth  
Ginette Decuyper  
William Melvin  
Stefano Mengoli  
Claire Parfitt  
Laurent Quénelle  
Harriet Rayfield  
Sylvain Vasseur  
Caroline Frenkel  
Victoria Irish  
Julia Rumley  
Helena Smart  
Kynan Walker\*  
Savva Zverev

### Second Violins

Harry Bennetts  
Thomas Norris  
Sarah Quinn  
Miya Väisänen  
David Ballesteros  
Helena Buckie  
Matthew Gardner  
Naoko Keatley  
Alix Lagasse  
Belinda McFarlane  
Iwona Muszynska  
Csilla Pogány  
Andrew Pollock  
Aleem Kandour

### Violas

Michael Grolid  
Anna Bastow  
Thomas Beer  
Germán Clavijo  
Steve Doman  
Julia O'Riordan  
Sofia Silva Sousa  
Robert Turner  
Mizuho Ueyama  
Stephanie Edmundson  
Elisabeth Varlow

### Cellos

Timothy Walden  
Alastair Blayden  
Salvador Bolón  
Ève-Marie Caravassilis  
Daniel Gardner  
JaeMin Kim Kang\*  
Morwenna Del Mar  
Ghislaine McMullin  
Jessie Ann Richardson  
Victoria Simonsen  
Joanna Twaddle

### Double Basses

David Desimpelaere  
Patrick Laurence  
Thomas Goodman  
Joe Melvin  
Phoebe Clarke  
Joseph Cowie  
Matthew Gaffney\*  
Toby Hughes  
William Pühr

### Flutes

Gareth Davies  
Imogen Royce

### Piccolo

Patricia Moynihan

### Oboes

Juliana Koch  
Rosie Jenkins  
Lauren Weavers

### Clarinets

Sérgio Pires  
Chi-Yu Mo

### Bass Clarinet

Ferran Garcerà Perelló

### Bassoons

Daniel Jemison  
Joost Bosdijk

### Contra Bassoon

Martin Field

### Horns

Timothy Jones  
Angela Barnes  
Zachary Hayward  
Jonathan Maloney  
Alexander Willett

### Trumpets

Niall Keatley  
David Carstairs  
Richard Blake  
James Nash

### Trombones

Mark Templeton  
Jonathan Hollick  
Gemma Riley

### Bass Trombone

Paul Milner

### Tuba

Ben Thomson

### Timpani

Nigel Thomas

### Percussion

Neil Percy  
David Jackson  
Sam Walton  
Patrick King  
Helen Edordu  
Rachel Gledhill

\* Members of the LSO String Experience Scheme

Established in 1992, the Scheme enables young string players at the start of their professional careers to gain work experience by playing in rehearsals and concerts with the LSO. The musicians are treated as professional 'extras', and receive fees in line with LSO section players. Kindly supported by the Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust, the Idlewild Trust and The Thriplow Charitable Trust.