



SELO

SOUTH EAST LONDON

Orchestra

SATURDAY 22 JULY 2023

WELCOME

David Smith, Music Director

The end of another season of concerts is always a special day for the orchestra, and this season finale has a bit more going for it than some we've enjoyed in the past!

The centrepiece of the programme, Shostakovich's remarkable Tenth Symphony, was originally scheduled for our concert in July 2020, which of course went by the wayside as we and everybody else adjusted to a different way of life in peak Covid-era UK. It's all the more meaningful to perform it today – the first item from any of our 'cancelled' concerts we've brought back – and think about how much the world has changed, and Russia in particular, these past three years.

Shostakovich's reputation remains shrouded by questions as to whether he opposed the Stalinist regime or not. His seemingly subservient response to public criticism by Stalin's official mouthpieces counts against him for some. His wartime Seventh Symphony was seen as a live symbol of Russian defiance during the German siege of Leningrad, and by extension, support for the authorities.

And yet, the clues are there throughout his music – particularly his string quartets – that he had a more subversive story to tell. Many in the Soviet Union thought that his Fifth and Seventh symphonies in particular had given the people the chance to express their grief over Stalin's Great Purges (or Great Terror). And here in the Tenth Symphony, the first to follow Stalin's death, Shostakovich casts himself in musical form, outlasting and enduring some of the worst times imaginable.

The other pieces in the programme by Kabalevsky and Mussorgsky also reference elements of Russia's turbulent political history. They are also wonderful pieces of music, with character and beauty woven throughout.

Thank you for being with us today, and we hope to see you again at one of our next concerts!

PROGRAMME

Kabalevsky, Colas Breugnon Overture

Mussorgsky, Khovantchina: Prelude and Dance of the Persian Maidens

Shostakovich, Symphony No. 10 in E minor

THE ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Daniel Pukach
Claire Rutland
Mike Bradburn
Philip Curry
Nicole Teszke
Heather Hall
Mario Basilisco
Seb Brooks

Violin II

Louise Esaias
Penny Davies
Keith Hide
Wendy Albuquerque
Tracey Duncan
Ros Sykes
Geraldine Lowery

Viola

Lucy Mackintosh
Maeve Lynch
Hywel Williams
Stephen Blows
Martin Ash

Cello

Hilary Wood
Tony Albuquerque
Philippa Bradburn
Dione Roach
Will Albuquerque
Charlotte Davidson
Ed Langford

Double bass

David Wright
Morven Main
Martin Gulliford
Owen Harris

Flute

Jenn Raven
Sarah Harington Hawes
(+picc)
Jenny Sutton (+picc)

Oboe

Catherine Smale
Alice Hardy
Dan Elson (cor anglais)

Clarinet

Charlotte Woolley
Phil Broadey
Chris Jeffery (+Eb)

Bassoon

Alex Moss
Val Currie
Elizabeth Boyden
(+contra)

Horn

Andy Currie
Steph Jeffery
Roy Banks
Lottie Orr

Trumpet

Ben Whalley
Ben Reeve
Alex Brain

Trombone

Tom Woodcock
Graham Winter
Kieron O'Neill

Tuba

Dan Mackintosh

Timpani

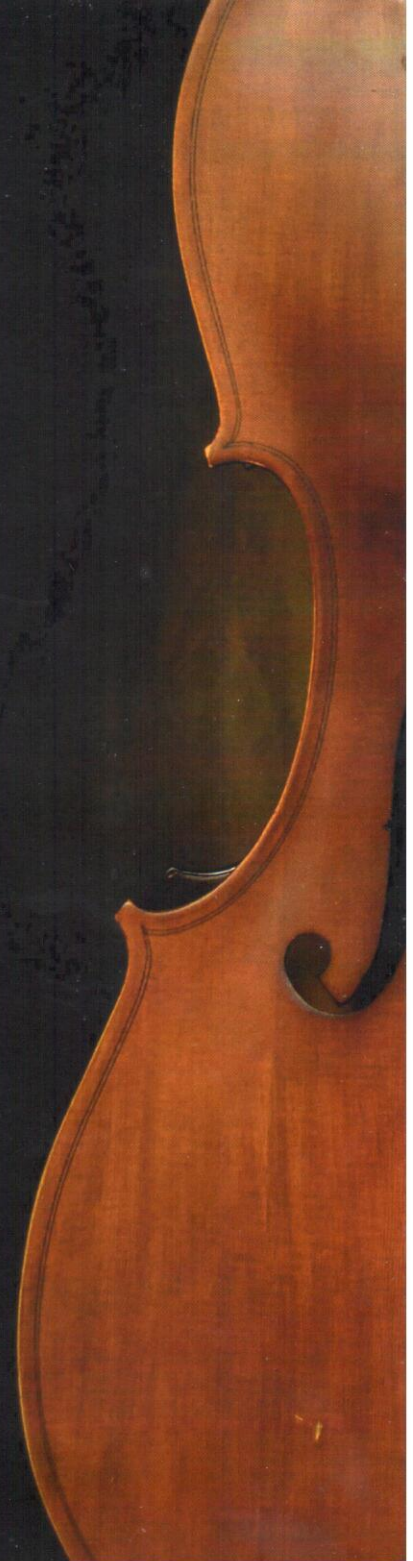
David Coronel

Percussion

James Crook
Iolo Edwards
Tobias Engelbrektsson
Johan Smith

Harp

Iona Duncan



BIOGRAPHIES



David Smith | Music Director

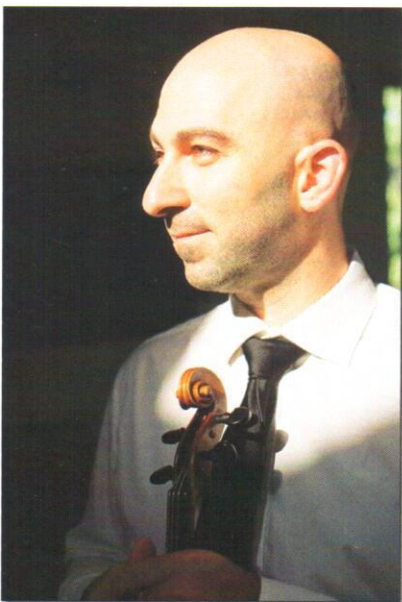
David is passionate about conducting contemporary music alongside the more recent 20th-century music and the great masterpieces of the classical repertoire. David is the founding Music Director of South East London Orchestra.

He was Music Director of City of London Symphonic Winds (2011-2017) and has been a regular guest conductor with London Repertoire Orchestra, many orchestras across the south of England and in London. As an instrumentalist David has extensive experience as an orchestral trombonist and timpanist, with rare forays into the world of the double bass.

He read Music and a Masters in Musicology at the University of Southampton, where his tutors included David Owen Norris

and Michael Finnissy. He studies conducting with Robin Browning, and previously studied with Denise Ham.

When not conducting, David is Head of Assessment Services at ABRSM (the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, inspiring musical achievement around the world), coaches junior age group cricket, and enjoys debating small details with his two young children.



Daniel Pukach | Leader

Daniel is a freelance orchestral violinist, chamber musician, soloist and a sought-after teacher. He has played in top orchestras in the UK and Israel such as BBC Concert Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Israel Symphony, Israeli Opera, Israel Chamber Orchestra, Israel NK orchestra and the Galilee Chamber Orchestra. He is also founding member and violinist in the Waldstein Quartet.

He is a tutor at Junior Guildhall's string training program, and also taught at leading conservatories in Israel. He is currently continuing his work on implementing his one-of-a-kind teaching method and pedagogical system which has been transformative to students of all levels and will be published and distributed in the next few years.

Daniel has gained his BMus at The Aaron Copland School of Music under Burton Kaplan and his MMus from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance with Ofer Falk. He won the Vera Kanterovich Competition for solo Bach, Barbirolli competition for a classical string quartet and won second prize with the Waldstein Quartet in the Carne Trust Chamber Music Competition.

Bromley,
Lewisham
& Greenwich



Bromley, Lewisham & Greenwich Mind are delighted to be partnering with South East London Orchestra to commemorate their 10 years of existence.

As our name suggests we provide mental health services to people across the three boroughs of Bromley, Lewisham & Greenwich. It is important to note that we are a local Mind and not the Mind that everyone knows, we are a separate registered charity and responsible for our own financial management. National Mind carry out research into mental health, provide information about it and lobby government around mental health issues. Local Minds provide mental health services to local people. We work with people to aid their recovery and to improve their quality of life.

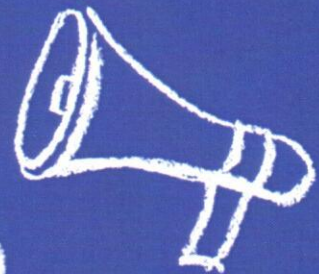
We also have a role in early intervention and the prevention of mental health issues through our wellbeing services. We provide wellbeing services to new mums and dads, to people bereaved by suicide and to secondary school pupils. We also offer a wide range of awareness raising training and workplace wellbeing advice.

For people with more moderate to severe mental health problems, we offer counselling, mental health advice and help with more practical issues such as filling out benefits forms or getting back into employment. We also run a Recovery College, peer support groups of all kinds and we have staff who are based in Doctors Surgeries and other healthcare establishments.

In addition we provide a range of services to people with dementia and their families. Last year, we supported over 7,500 people across our three boroughs and this number increases every year.

We need your support to make this happen. Please consider making a donation to BLG Mind. You can donate via our website (www.blgmind.org.uk/donate) or by popping something into our collectors at one of the orchestra's concerts.

Thanks in advance for helping us to help your communities.



DMITRY KABALEVSKY (1904–1987)

Colas Bruegnon: Overture (1936–38)

Born in St. Petersburg, Kabalevsky toyed with the idea of becoming a painter before enrolling in the Moscow Conservatory to study piano and composition. He later became a professor at the Conservatory and, as a member of the Communist Party and one of the founders of the Union of Soviet Composers, thrived within the state's artistic constraints by writing music that was patriotic, tuneful and upbeat.

Kabalevsky began work on *Colas Breugnon*, the first of his five operas, in 1936. Based on a novel of the same name by the French author Romain Rolland, it depicts the comic life of a master craftsman in 16th-century

Burgundy – a tale of love, marriage, deception and sculpture! After the usual complicated tale of relationships, jealousies and lies, the Duke orders the destruction of all statues made by Colas, who is appalled but plots his revenge. Having promised the Duke a grand statue of him in armour by way of apology, the sculpture he instead produces shows the Duke sitting backwards, on a donkey – to the intense delight of the people.

Rolland had won the 1915 Nobel Prize in Literature and, after meeting Joseph Stalin in 1935, granted Kabalevsky the rights to use his novel as material for the opera shortly afterwards. The opera was completed in 1938 and received its premiere in St. Petersburg in the

same year. Kabalevsky continued to revise the opera over the next thirty years, culminating in a new premiere of the work in 1970, for which he was awarded the prestigious Lenin Prize.

The overture is a musical portrayal of the main character, with the bubbly opening incorporating syncopated rhythms. This is followed by a more sedate melody that is first introduced by the strings. The energy of the opening section reappears before we hear a quieter section where snippets of a folk tune precede some dissonance in the brass. The lull in proceedings does not last for long however as bustling strings drive the piece headlong towards its brilliant finale.



MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839–1881)

Khovantchina: Prelude and Dance of the Persian Maidens (1872–80)

Mussorgsky's *Khovantchina* ('The Khovansky Affair'), is set during an unstable period in Russian history in the late 17th century before Peter the Great came of age as Tsar.

Concerning an unsuccessful rebellion against the Tsarist regime by Prince Ivan Khovansky, it features a semi-independent military unit (a *streltsy*) led by Khovansky, the Old Believers (a sect of the Orthodox Church), agents for the Tsars, Persian girls, German Protestant settlers and other local characters. The very complicated story ends in assassinations, executions and mass suicide.

The libretto was written by the composer himself, based on historical sources, and reflected his interest in the tension between home-grown Russian culture and

Westernising trends. The first choral number in the opera provides a commentary on the continuing problems for Russia, recognisable now as then: a lament that Russia suffers because of internal fragmentation rather than foreign enemies.

Mussorgsky commenced *Khovantchina* in 1872; it was almost finished when he died. Rimsky-Korsakov simplified and orchestrated the opera, completing it in 1882, and it received its first performance in 1886. Stravinsky and Ravel made orchestral versions for dance, and Shostakovich made a performing version for film in 1960. The difficulty of staging the somewhat incoherent five-act plot means that the opera is performed relatively infrequently but some numbers have become concert hall

favourites, especially the *Prelude* and the *Dance of the Persian Maidens*; these demonstrate Mussorgsky's melodic genius enhanced by Rimsky-Korsakov's vivid orchestration.

The *Prelude* (*Dawn on the River Moscow*) does not prefigure the violence of the action to come but rather depicts a peaceful scene. Ascending arpeggios on flute and viola suggest the mist rising from the river, with a cock-crow on the clarinet. Variations on a folk-like melody and the clanging of bells, sounding on the horns, represent Old Russia. The *Dance of the Persian Maidens* has a contrasting mood, commencing with a languid *cor anglais* melody. This is varied in speed and orchestration to create a gradually changing atmosphere invoking an exotic, faraway world.



DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975)

Symphony No. 10 in E minor (1953)



The rise of Stalin in 1924 ushered in a chilling era in Russian history. The forced collectivisation of farms led to a famine in which ten million people died, including nearly four million in Ukraine alone; a series of purges, referred to as the Great Terror, resulted in 14 million Russians being incarcerated in prison camps and many were executed; Russians lived in fear. Stalin himself died in April 1953 and by December that year, Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony was ready for its first performance.

The music of the Tenth Symphony is profound yet enigmatic. Shostakovich, who had lost friends during the Terror and had been denounced himself, knew better than to express his true feelings openly. 'Let them guess' he said, when asked whether he would publish a 'programme' for the Symphony. It was only after his death in 1975 that some of Shostakovich's intentions became apparent.

'I did depict Stalin in music in my Tenth Symphony. I wrote it right after Stalin's death and no-one has yet guessed what the Symphony is about. It's about Stalin and the Stalin years' he told Solomon Volkov in the posthumous (and still disputed) publication of Shostakovich's supposed memoirs, *Testimony*.

The Symphony is a virtuoso piece of orchestral composition that presents the orchestra with many challenges. The first movement begins and ends quietly but intervening moments of great emotional intensity may represent an outpouring of grief for Stalin's victims. It opens with a deeply felt motif in triple time played by the cellos and basses. As the theme develops, the strings are joined by the clarinet. The music builds to a climax and then fades. The flute now introduces a new theme which is developed by the strings. The orchestra builds to a prolonged climax, the music then fades away until only the piccolos continue playing the movement's introductory motif.

The second movement, a brief and furious *Scherzo*, is, according to Shostakovich's remarks in *Testimony*, 'a musical portrait of Stalin,

roughly speaking' – and elsewhere described as a portrait of the acts committed in Stalin's name. The movement begins with syncopated chords from the lower strings while the wind section introduces the main theme. As the theme is developed in passages of rapid playing, first the strings and then the wind section appear to be gripped by overwhelming fear and panic. Order is imposed by violent chords from the brass and percussion that represent the 'triumph of evil'.

The third movement begins with the violins introducing a theme based on Shostakovich's initials in the German transliteration of his name – D, E flat, C, B natural (or in German musical notation, D, Es, C, H – standing for D-SCH.) The writer Ian MacDonald observed that this use of the DSCH motif was 'not mere egoism... Shostakovich was advancing the concept of individual freedom'.

As the DSCH motif is developed, a horn call is heard employing the notes E-A-E-D-A. The call is repeated, offering the Symphony's first moments of tranquillity. Many years after Shostakovich's death, the Azerbaijani pianist, Elmira

Nazirova, a former student and friend of the composer, revealed correspondence in which he disclosed that the horn call embodies a musical representation of her name (E, La [A], Mi [E], Re [D], A) – seemingly an unrequited, unconsummated muse.

The final movement begins with a slow introduction. The oboe plays a haunting, lonely melody, which is then taken up in turn by the flute and then the bassoon. The music then transitions to an Allegro section in duple time that expresses optimism and exuberance, inspired by a peasant dance or gopak. Echoes of the *Scherzo* can be heard, but these are suppressed by the reappearance of the DSCH motif, which is fully asserted in the exhilarating finale.

The conductor Kurt Sanderling, who was present at the premiere, said in 1995: 'It was indeed a portrait of Stalin for all of us who had lived through the horrors of that time. But for the listener of today, it is perhaps more like a portrait of a dictatorship in general, of a system of oppression'.

WE ARE RECRUITING!

We are always on the lookout for new members and have specific vacancies in upper strings and brass. There is no audition process, so if you're around Grade 8 standard (even if you haven't played for a while...!) and are interested in getting involved, we'd love to hear from you

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SELO wishes to extend our sincere thanks to Terry Davis and Jonathan Jeffery for the design, production and printing of the programme, flyers and season leaflets.

Programme notes by Tony Albuquerque (Kabalevsky), Morven Main (Mussorgsky) and Martin Gulliford (Shostakovich).

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Image credits

Kabalevsky: Open AI - DALL·E
Mussorgsky: Open AI - DALL·E
Shostakovich: Ida Kar 1959 -
National Portrait Gallery

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NEXT CONCERTS

Sunday 15 October 2023 at 4:30pm

St Michael and All Angels, Beckenham

Borodin, Prince Igor Overture

Weber, Bassoon Concerto – bassoon soloist James Fisher

Sibelius, Symphony No. 2



10 December 2023 – a family Christmas concert!

24 March 2024 – Holst and Hindemith

25 May 2024 – Berlioz's Les nuits d'été with
Jess Gillingwater (Mezzo-soprano)

7 July 2024 – a tour through the music of Italy

More details about the orchestra, our concerts,
how to buy tickets and much more can be found
at our website, or via our social media links.
www.southeastlondonorchestra.com

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