



# Solihull Symphony Orchestra



*Spring Concert - Inspired by Shakespeare*  
*Shirley Methodist Church*

Programme £1

*15:30, Saturday 20 April, 2024*

# Keith Slade



Born in the West Midlands, Keith Slade began learning the clarinet at the age of ten. After reaching the final of the BBC Young Musician of the Year Woodwind Category, he graduated from the Royal Northern College of Music where he was awarded the Hilda Collens' prize. He furthered his studies at the Royal Academy of Music supported by the Countess of Munster Trust. At the RAM, Keith was awarded the Dorothy Grinstead Memorial Prize, the John Solomon Woodwind and Brass Prize and the Morgensterns' Award.

Keith has extensive experience as an orchestral musician and has worked with orchestras including the CBSO, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, London Festival Opera and the BBC Philharmonic. As a soloist, Keith has performed concerti by Mozart,

Finzi, Weber and Copland. Recent appointments include Head of Wind and Brass at the Birmingham Conservatoire Junior School and Head of Woodwind at Oakham School. Keith has conducted Sinfonia of Birmingham, The National Schools' Symphony Orchestra, The British Police Symphony Orchestra and the Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra. Keith has worked with artists including James MacMillan, Mark Padmore, Roderick Williams and Sarah Fox.

In January 2010, Keith was appointed Music Director of the Worcestershire Symphony Orchestra. He is a regular guest on BBC Radio Hereford and Worcester promoting the orchestra and classical music amongst the local community. In recognition of his services to WSO, Keith was honoured to be invited to a private gathering to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in Worcester. As Conductor of the Kimichi Symphony Orchestra, Keith received a 5 star review for his performance of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* complete with dancers which the orchestra subsequently took to the Rudolfinum in Prague in 2018.

Programme notes - David Evans and Vivienne Brown  
Cover - William Hogarth, *David Garrick as Richard III*  
1745, oil on canvas, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool

# Programme

*Coleridge-Taylor – Othello Suite 15'*

*Volkmann – Overture from Richard III 14'*

*Walton – Suite from Henry V 16'*

*INTERVAL*

*Gade – Hamlet Overture 10'*

*Tchaikovsky – Romeo & Juliet Overture 20'*

## **Conductor**

Keith Slade

## **Leader**

Charlotte Beresford

## **Readings**

Adam Pritchard



*Please make sure that all telephones, watch alarms and other electronic devices that make noises are switched OFF or to silent. You can make short video recordings and take photographs - but please do not use flash and be careful not to disturb people nearby. And we'd love it if you could share them and tag us on social media!*

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912)

## Othello Suite Op. 79

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- 1 Dance
- 2 Children's Intermezzo
- 3 Funeral March
- 4 The Willow Song
- 5 Military March



Born in Holborn to an English mother and Creole father, Coleridge-Taylor won a scholarship to the Royal College of Music at the age of only 22 with the epic cantata, *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* which had over 200 performances sold more than 200,000 copies during his lifetime. Coleridge-Taylor was especially well received in America,

where societies were dedicated to him and, on the first of three visits there (1904), he was invited to the White House to meet President Theodore Roosevelt.

His output runs from solo songs to symphonies, to incidental music for the theatre, of which the *Othello Suite* is his best known example. Composed in 1909, it was commissioned by the great English actor and theatre impresario Herbert Beerbohm Tree for a production of the Shakespeare play at His Majesty's Theatre London. Working with Beerbohm Tree, who was not known for his musical ear, came with unique challenges. Fortunately, this did not deter the composer who had worked with him on other plays too. The journal *Musical Progress*, wrote that the score's 'melodiousness...is quite a refreshing feature in these days, when so many composers seem to take fright if they find they have written a tune.'

From an early age, Coleridge-Taylor was actively invested in questions surrounding race and colonialism. At 25, he was the youngest delegate to participate in a Pan-African Conference held in Westminster in 1900. It was here that he first met W.E.B. Du Bois, a contact he was to maintain for life. Seeking to combine his European

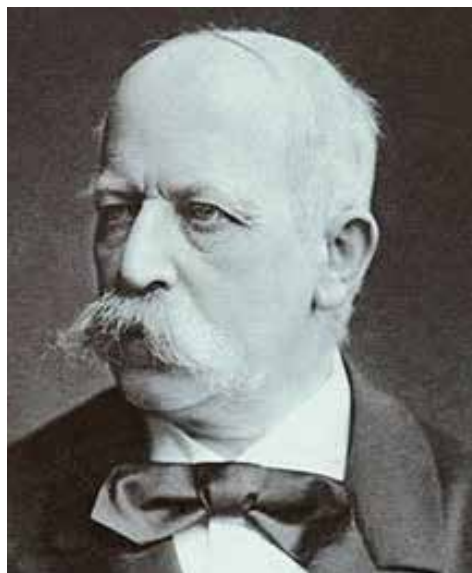
musical training with a wider outlook, Coleridge-Taylor wrote that his ambition was to do for African music and song 'what Brahms has done for Hungarian folk-music, Dvořák for Bohemian, and Grieg for Norwegian.'

Robert Volkmann (1815-1883)

### **Richard III Overture Op. 68**

"Now is the winter of our discontent."

Volkmann was born in Saxony to a father who was a music director for a church, and he learned to play organ, piano, violin, and cello from an early age with the aim of inheriting his father's position.



He became friends with Liszt, Schumann and Brahms, and went to Budapest in 1842 where he

stayed most of his life. His output as a composer was limited and most of his works were for piano.

*Richard III* was composed in 1870 as a symphonic poem for a full orchestra, including a contra bassoon. Written in F minor, the work begins with a continuous note from the bassoon followed by another long note from the strings accompanied by timpani. This leads into a lovely melody from the oboe and flute which continues with the bassoon and clarinet. Although it seems out of place in what is otherwise a rather dark work it recurs throughout the entire piece. The battle section sounds perhaps like background music for a silent film (a woman tied to the railway tracks?) slowly building to a rousing climax that is ended with the gong. The battle has ended and we return to the beginning.

William Walton (1902-1983)

### **Henry V Suite**

"Once more unto the breach ..."

- 1 Overture
- 2 Passacaglia (Death of Falstaff)
- 3 Charge and Battle
- 4 Touch Her Soft Lips and Part
- 5 Agincourt Song

Walton had been working in film since the mid-30s when he was

commissioned to write the score for Laurence Olivier's *Henry V*. Olivier described Walton as 'extolled to the skies. His paleness and coldness made the passionate blaze in all his music a thing of wonder and amazement.' Olivier produced, directed and starred in *Henry V*, acting on stage in his army uniform.



The symbiotic relationship of cinema and music in Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky* had inspired both Olivier and Walton, who scored the work for orchestra and mixed chorus. Walton's quasi-Elizabethan music includes tunes adapted from the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, a passacaglia commemorating Falstaff's death and the beautiful minuet *Touch her soft lips and part*, revealing

delicate nuances behind Pistol's rustic bravado.

A recurrent melody borrowed from *Chansons d'Auvergne* becomes the leitmotif for the French princess. However the composer Joseph Canteloube had never granted permission for its use, and was awarded damages after the film's release.

Olivier said, 'for me, music made the film' and acknowledged this by bestowing on Walton the final screen credit. When Olivier screened the completed film for Walton, the composer remarked, 'I'm very glad you showed it to me, because I must tell you I did think it was terribly dull without the music.'

## INTERVAL

### Neils Gade (1817-1890) **Hamlet Overture Op. 37**

"To be or not to be"

Born in Copenhagen, the son of a musical instrument maker, Neils Gade, a violinist, composer, and conductor, started his career with the Royal Danish Orchestra as a violinist, and his compositions were often performed by the orchestra. Felix Mendelssohn was an early champion of Gade's work, and they became close associates. Robert Schumann was a good friend as well, and the influence of other composers of the



German Romantic style (Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn) can be heard in his works. Gade in turn went on to influence Scandinavian composers such as Edvard Grieg and Carl Nielsen. Despite being considered one of the most important Danish composers, Gade's works are not now programmed very often.



The Hamlet Overture was written in 1861, and is a tone poem based on the Shakespeare play. It starts off with a funeral march-like entrance, plodding its way until it opens up to a dramatic theme in the brass, which then gives way to a tumultuous, angry passage. A major key love theme then makes its way in to the work (thought to represent Hamlet and Ophelia), and material from earlier is presented again, before the work ends as it

began with the funeral march.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

## Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture

“Two households, both alike in dignity”

In 1869, and at the same age as Shakespeare when he wrote the play, Tchaikovsky was a young professor at the Moscow Conservatory. His first symphony and first opera, *Voyevoda* had already been very successful. However a symphonic poem *Fatum* dedicated to his friend and mentor Balakirev was less well received, The older composer encouraged Tchaikovsky to try instead a new piece modelled on his own concert overture *King Lear* but based instead on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Balakirev even gave Tchaikovsky suggestions for which keys to use for the main themes. Although the ideas took some time to come together, the overture was completed by 1870 (with minor revisions in 1880 ) and is widely considered Tchaikovsky's first masterpiece, foreshadowing his later symphonic genius.

The structure is in sonata form with a slow introduction and an epilogue, not attempting to recreate the detailed plot of the entire play in twenty minutes but instead using

the interplay of three main themes to summarize the tragedy. The introduction (which starts in F# minor and descends to F minor and E minor) represents Friar Lawrence, not using the serene chorale Balakirev had suggested but, as Tchaikovsky later wrote 'I wanted in the introduction to represent a lonely soul mentally striving heavenward'. The section becomes gradually more agitated before the strings burst into the fight theme (in B minor) representing the conflict between the Montagues and Capulets



The love theme follows, with cor anglais and flute representing the lovers over string chords with quiet intensity throughout. In the following section Tchaikovsky

develops the fight and Friar Lawrence themes into a frenzy which culminates in a shortened recapitulation: the love theme this time is more passionate but is eventually overwhelmed by the fight despite the efforts of Friar Lawrence. Finally the overture, and the doomed lovers, meet their tragic end in a deeply poignant slow epilogue.

### **Charlotte Beresford**

Charlotte, our Leader, studied violin at Birmingham Conservatoire and has worked with orchestras such as the BBC Philharmonic and the English Symphony Orchestra. She has played in touring West End shows such as Les Miserables and Miss Saigon, for artists such as Michael Ball, Gloria Estefan and Barry Manilow and in ITV's 2022 Concert for Ukraine. She is a member of the Enigma String Quartet, and teaches violin both privately and in local schools.





## Adam Pritchard

We are joined today by actor Adam Pritchard who will be providing readings from our chosen Shakespearean works throughout the concert - Richard III, Henry V, Hamlet and Romeo and Juliet. This is something we have never tried before and we would love to hear your reactions?

Adam earned a BA (Hons) in Musical Theatre Performance from the University of Chichester Conservatoire. Recent career highlights include Prince Charming at the Elgiva Theatre (New Pantomime Productions), and Lead Vocalist for Viking Cruises (David Michael Productions). He currently works at the Lichfield Garrick Theatre.



## Non-Playing Members

If you've enjoyed our concert and want to become more involved with the orchestra, there are a variety of tasks and activities that are always open to friends of the orchestra as well as to players. In return, we can offer you complimentary tickets for our concerts, visits to rehearsals and other benefits!

## Sponsorship

We would welcome offers of sponsorship from individuals, local businesses or other organisations. Sponsors can choose to support particular projects - for example, work with young musicians or inspiring soloists and composers. We look forward to hearing from you!

**info@**

**solihullsymphony.org.uk**

## Group Bookings

If you belong to a group such as the U3A, a music circle or any other informal organisation, why not ask us about group bookings? Bookings for groups of ten or more people paid for in advance offer 20% off regular ticket prices.

**concerts@**

**solihullsymphony.org.uk**

## **Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra**

**Sunday 9 June, 15:00**

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire  
200 Jennens Road, B4 7XR



**Arnold**      **Scottish Dances**  
**Stanford**   **Irish Rhapsody**  
**MacCunn**   **Land of the Mountain and the Flood**  
**Beach**      **Gaelic Symphony**

**Conductor - Michael Lloyd**

Tickets £16, £14 conc, £6 students

[www.bpo.org.uk](http://www.bpo.org.uk)

## **Music at St Alphege Church** **Wednesday Lunchtimes, 13:10 - 14:00**

24 April – Simon Watterton (piano)  
1 May – Calypso Moon saxophone trio  
8 May – Tony Bridgewater (piano)  
15 May – Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Harps  
22 May – Stuart Ironside (guitar)  
29 May – Joel Skaria (piano)

*Admission free, with a retiring collection. Coffee, tea and cakes are available from 12:30.*



## **Our Mailing List**

If you've enjoyed this concert, why not sign up to our Supporters' Newsletter to make sure you don't miss out on future events? You'll receive advance notice of the full season's programme, and reminders about all our concerts a few weeks in advance. [solihullsymphony.org.uk/mailling-list](http://solihullsymphony.org.uk/mailling-list)



# Solihull Symphony Orchestra

**Patron: The Mayor of Solihull**



## First Violins

Charlotte Beresford  
Marina Battey  
Lis Branson  
Vivienne Brown  
Peter Halldron  
Sabrina Ko  
Jo Oswald  
Aviva Sandler  
Sarah Sasse

## Second Violins

David Roper  
John Bayley  
Ella Begley  
Jessica Harris  
Rachel Johnson  
Sarah Letters  
John Maxwell  
Charlotte McLuskie  
Lucy Wilson

## Violas

Kelvin Farge  
Hannah Branson  
Joanna Clarke  
Mark Emms  
Julia Lawley  
Nick Rice  
Isabella Smith

## Harp

Nia Evans

## Cellos

Helen Atherton  
Sheila Armstrong  
Raye Garrett  
Alison Hart  
David Kanyandekwe  
Anne Kemp  
Louise Robertson  
Nicola Walters

## Double Bass

David Evans

## Flutes

Su Newton Ede  
Clare Symons  
Mary Wright

## Oboes

Sarah Vaughan  
Fiona Speak  
Duncan Spiers  
*cor anglais*

## Clarinets

Victoria Rex  
Jane Emms

## Bassoons

Harry Jones  
Simon Gates

## Trumpets

Lynne Hodgson  
David Hirst

## Horns

Sarah Gee  
Emma Mcleod  
Stephen Mayes  
Tim Overton  
Edward Fisher

## Trombones

Stephen Rhodes  
Tony Miller  
Bernard Moses

## Tuba

Paul Arthur

## Timpani

David Pett

## Percussion

Matt Firkins  
Sabrina Gledhill



## About the Orchestra

Solihull Symphony Orchestra is an inclusive and friendly group that enjoys taking on the challenge of a varied repertoire with professional leadership and inspiring soloists.

We are always open to new members, especially violin and double bass players. Commitment to attend rehearsals regularly, and a willingness to learn are more important to us than formal music qualifications. We like to perform in different venues around Solihull, and will always consider invitations to play at special events.

Rehearsals are held at Shirley Methodist Church every Tuesday from 19:30 until 21:45 during school term time, with at least four concert performances each year.



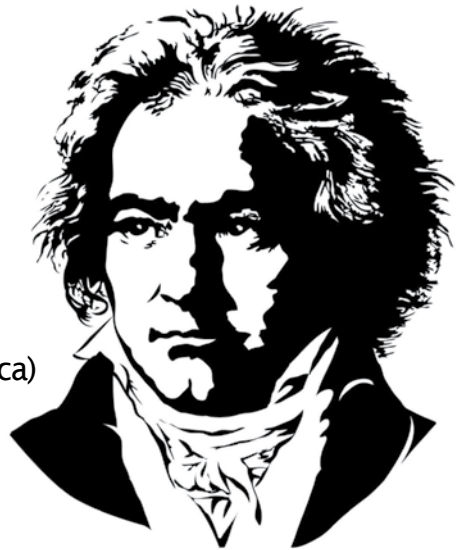
## Our Next Concert

### Strictly Beethoven

Saturday 6th July, 19:30,  
Shirley Methodist Church

Beethoven – Egmont Overture  
Beethoven – Piano Concerto no 4  
Beethoven – Symphony no 3 (Eroica)

Guest Conductor: Dan Watson  
Piano: Renata Konyicska



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