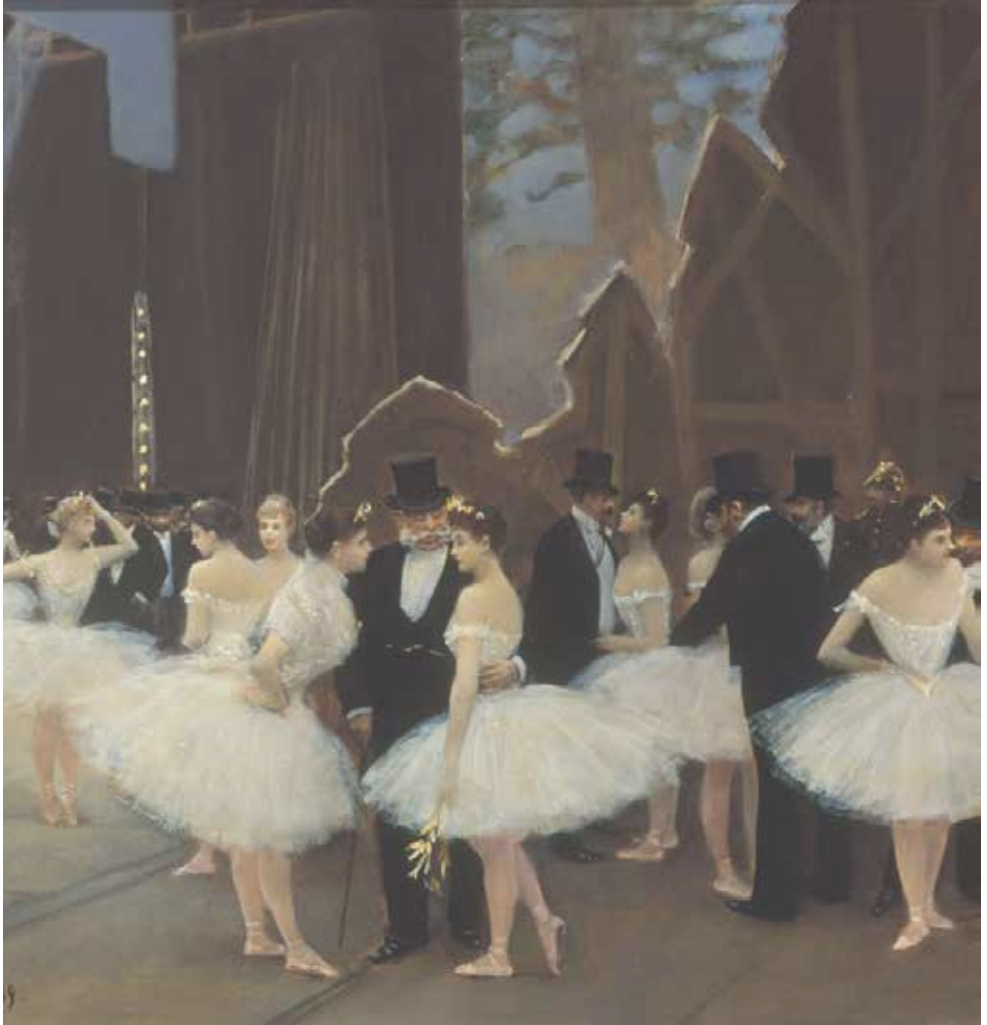




Solihull Symphony Orchestra



New Year Concert - Opera Gala!
St Philip's Church, Dorridge
Saturday 1 February, 2025

Programme £1

Jack Lovell-Huckle



Jack Lovell-Huckle is a Conductor, Arranger/Orchestrator, Orchestral Librarian and Piano Technician, recently holding the title of Assistant Conductor with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Opera House.

A music graduate from the University of Birmingham, he studied Conducting at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama working with Timothy Murray (National Dance Company of Wales), Alice Farnham (Welsh National Youth Opera), Nicholas Cleobury (Britten Sinfonia), Sir Richard Armstrong (Scottish Opera) and Carlo Rizzi (Welsh National Opera).

Jack is currently Music Director of Stafford Sinfonia and Spires Music, Principal Conductor of The Mahler Orchestra, and has previously

help positions with Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra, Royal Forest of Dean Orchestra, Sheffield Philharmonic Orchestra and Opera'r Ddraig. He is passionate about working with professional performers, emerging artists, and amateur musicians and devising and leading concerts for young and diverse audiences.

Charlotte Beresford



Charlotte Beresford 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 several local schools.

Programme

Verdi - *Force of Destiny: Overture*
Puccini - *Gianna Schicchi: O mio babbino caro*
Tchaikovsky - *Eugene Onegin: Lensky's Aria*
Puccini - *Manon Lescaut: Act III Intermezzo*
Mozart - *La Nozze di Figaro: Se vuol ballare*
Verdi - *Triumphal March from Aida*

INTERVAL

Wagner - *Die Meistersinger: Prelude to Act 1*
Puccini - *Turandot: Nessun Dorma*
Bizet - *Carmen (Toreador March: Prelude:
Habanera: Intermezzo: Toreador Song)*
Gounod - *Faust: Jewel Song*
Strauss - *Die Fledermaus: Champagne Chorus*
Verdi - *La Traviata: Brindisi*

Jane Burnell (soprano)

Jay Broadhurst (tenor)

David Bicarregui (baritone)

Conductor Jack Lovell-Huckle

Leader Charlotte Beresford

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

Giuseppe Verdi (1813 – 1901)

**Force of Destiny: Overture
Triumphal March from Aida
La Traviata: Brindisi**

Verdi was born near Busseto in Northern Italy: his parents, who ran an inn, encouraged him in his musical studies when his early talent became apparent. He became the paid organist at the local church at the age of eight and was already composing (and performing) his own music as a teenager. Early success with *Nabucco* (1841) gave him a foundation as an opera composer, in Italy and beyond, which continued over the rest of the century despite personal and political turmoil. Most of his operas are tragic love stories, with *Falstaff* (1893) the only comedy.

Our concert opens with the dramatic overture to *La forza del destino* (1862) an opera based on a Spanish drama of tragic thwarted love, first performed in St Petersburg. The first half ends with the triumphal chorus from *Aida* (1871), a drama of battles, divided loyalties and a royal love triangle set in ancient Egypt: the opera was commissioned to celebrate the opening of first opera house in Cairo. Our final Verdi extract is the *Brindisi* or drinking song from Act 1 of *La Traviata* (1853) based on the Dumas play *La Dame aux*

camélias. This exuberant song marks the beginning of the doomed relationship between young Alfredo and the tragic courtesan Violetta who famously (spoiler alert) dies in his arms in the final scene.

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

**Gianna Schicchi: O mio babbino caro
Manon Lescaut: Intermezzo
Turandot: Nessun Dorma**

Few composers understood the theatre as instinctively as Giacomo Puccini. With an extraordinary ear for melody and orchestration, Puccini captured human emotion in ways that remain profoundly moving. His works are marked by a cinematic vividness and great sensitivity to dramatic pacing.

Gianni Schicchi (1918), Puccini's only comic opera, is a masterclass in satire and wit. Its rapid-fire dialogue and sparkling orchestration reveal his lightness of touch, while the moving aria *O mio babbino caro* is one of the most heartfelt moments in all opera.

Earlier *Manon Lescaut* (1893) had first established his reputation. The opera's sweeping emotional range, its passionate arias and duets, demonstrate Puccini's ability to transform ordinary human desires into music of epic intensity. The *Intermezzo* however is an orchestral interlude.

By contrast, *Turandot* (1926), his final, unfinished opera, explores grand themes of love and redemption through a rich tapestry of exoticism and stark modernity. The icy princess Turandot is matched by music of imposing grandeur, while Calaf's *Nessun dorma* (none shall sleep) remains an enduring anthem of hope and triumph. Like Verdi's *Aida*, the opera is imbued with what the cultural critic Edward Said called orientalism, a fascination with largely fictitious erotic tales from the east, at a time when European powers were falling over each other to conquer these territories.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840 – 1893)

Eugene Onegin: Lensky's Aria

As a middle-class child, one of six siblings growing up in the Russian provincial town of Votkinsk, the young Pyotr was recognised as precociously talented both musically and in his other studies. A musical career was not considered to be a sensible option, and at only ten years old he was sent 800 miles away to boarding school in St Petersburg in preparation for a career as a civil servant. However after four years as a junior clerk in the Ministry

Jane Burnell

Praised for her 'effortless, vivacious singing' and 'deep musicality', British/Irish Soprano Jane Burnell completed her Master of Music at the Royal Northern College of Music under the tutelage of Linda Richardson. She has participated in masterclasses with Sir Antonio Pappano, Lisette Oropesa, Roderick Williams and Matteo Dalle Fratte.

Recent roles include Gasparina in *La Canterina* (Haydn) and Giovanna in *Ernani* (Verdi) for Buxton International Festival, and Molly Allgood in *Lady Gregory in America* for Wexford Festival Opera. '[her]sweet, clear, unforced soprano voice endows Molly with a radiant benevolence. There is something about Jane Burnell's stage presence that makes the world seem a better place'. *Edinburgh Music Review*.

Jane returns to the Buxton Festival later this year in a remake of the Opera Zuid production of Mozart's *The Impresario*, and to Wexford Festival Opera as a member of the Factory.



of Justice, he leapt at the chance to study full-time at the newly-opened St Petersburg Conservatory, and thereafter to teach at the new Moscow Conservatory. He combined this modestly paid role with composition and work as a music critic which enabled him to travel overseas and encounter a wider range of musical influences than the 'Mighty Handful' of openly Russian Nationalist composers with whom he had a sometimes difficult relationship.

Lensky's aria, sung before a fateful duel with Eugene Onegin, captures his reflections on fleeting youth, lost love for Olga, and impending death. The aria's melancholy music and introspective nature make it one of the opera's most touching moments, evoking universal themes of nostalgia and fate and making it a defining expression of Romantic operatic tragedy.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

La Nozze di Figaro: Se vuol ballare

'Se vuol ballare' is an aria from Mozart's opera *The Marriage of Figaro*, sung by Figaro. The opera, with a libretto by Lorenzo Da Ponte, explores themes of love, power, and social class. In this aria, Figaro, a clever servant, realizes that his master, Count Almaviva,

is trying to seduce his fiancée, Susanna. Figaro mockingly declares that if the Count wants to dance, he will play the tune—meaning he will outwit him. The aria's lively, playful melody and shifting moods reflect Figaro's intelligence and determination to turn the tables on his master.

Born in Salzburg in 1756, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was a child prodigy who toured Europe, dazzling audiences with his brilliance. By adulthood, he had mastered nearly every musical genre, creating operas, symphonies, and chamber works of profound beauty and innovation. Despite his genius, Mozart struggled with financial difficulties, dying tragically young at only 35.

Richard Wagner (1813–1883)

Die Meistersinger: Prelude to Act 1

Richard Wagner, the colossus of 19th-century German music, eschewed traditional Italian opera forms such as those of Verdi with their set piece arias and minimal orchestral accompaniment in favour of what he called a total work of art (*Gesamtkunstwerk*), combining music, drama, and poetry into a recreation of how he imagined the plays of Ancient Greece were performed. His music often uses specific motifs to

represent people, places or ideas. *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1868) is the only comic opera among his mature works, and the only one not rooted in mythology, being based on a song contest in medieval Germany. The overture encapsulates Wagner's ability to blend contrapuntal brilliance with themes of tradition, artistry, and renewal. All the main motifs from the opera are cleverly interwoven in this majestic overture. Today, Wagner remains a transformative force in cultural history in spite of his often disturbing politics and deeply flawed character.

Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

**Carmen (Toreador March:
Prelude: Habanera: Intermezzo:
Toreador Song)**

Bizet's final opera *Carmen* revolutionized the genre with its bold characters, earthy realism, and unforgettable music. Based on Prosper Mérimée's short story, the opera shares the novel's tale of love, obsession, and betrayal but softens some of its bleakness with Bizet's vibrant score, and the creation of two overlapping love triangles.

The contrasts between Don José, a simple soldier and the charismatic

Jay Broadhurst

Jay Broadhurst is a Manchester-born lyric tenor studying with Mark Wildman at the Royal Northern College of Music. For the 2023/24 season, Jay created the role of Stephen in the world premiere of Bicarregui's *Capsule* and was an Alvarez Young Artist with Garsington Opera.



Operatic roles include: Lensky *Eugene Onegin* (Preston Opera), Don Curzio *Le nozze di Figaro* (Garsington OperaFirst), Un Chef *Le roi de Lahore* (Dorset Opera Festival), Tsar Berendeyi *The Snow Maiden*, King Ouf *L'étoile* (both RNCM Opera), Spoletta *Tosca* (NPO) and Alfredo Germont *La Traviata*.

This year Jay makes his debut at Glyndebourne, in the chorus of *Parsifal* and *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Jay is generously supported by the Drapers' de Turckheim Scholarship and the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation. When not singing, he is cheering for his beloved Manchester United.

bull fighter Escamillo are crucial to the opera's tension. Don José is trapped between his rigid sense of duty and his obsessive love for Carmen, the archetypal femme fatale. His music evolves from tender lyricism to searing desperation, although he has no real theme of his own. In sharp contrast, Escamillo, the confident toreador, represents freedom and self-assured masculinity. His Toreador Song exudes bravado and vitality, symbolizing the carefree life Carmen desires.

Bizet borrowed Wagner's idea of motifs (listen for the ominous Fate motif in the Prelude), but at the opera's heart is Carmen's Habanera, "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle". This sultry aria establishes her as a symbol of independence and sensuality, its hypnotic rhythm and seductive melody encapsulating Carmen's philosophy of free love, capricious and uncontrollable. Loosely translated into English for the 1954 film *Carmen Jones* it becomes 'You go for me and I'm taboo, But if you're hard to get. then I go for you. And if I do, then you are through!' The Habanera sets the tone for the opera's exploration of passion, power, and the dangerous allure of freedom. Sadly Bizet died in 1875 entirely unaware that his opera would come to be one of the best loved of all time.

Charles Gounod (1818–1893)

Faust: Jewel Song

Charles Gounod was a composer who bridged the sacred and the sensual with a flair that shaped much 19th century French opera. Best known for *Faust*, he combined soaring melodies with an electric sense of drama. The Jewel Song from *Faust* captures his genius: a glittering display of virtuosity, beauty, and character. Gounod's music is unapologetically emotional, with lush harmonies and a theatrical sensibility that influenced generations. Yet beneath the elegance lies a deep spiritual core, shaped by his religious convictions and love for Bach. Gounod's music pulses with life, drawing audiences into its spellbinding mix of brilliance and humanity.

Johann Strauss II (1825-1899)

Die Fledermaus: Champagne Chorus

Die Fledermaus (1874) is a sparkling example of Viennese operetta at its finest, combining infectious melodies, effervescent wit, and a deliciously farcical plot. Known as the Waltz King, Johann Strauss the younger brought his mastery of dance rhythms to the stage, creating a score that exudes joy and elegance.

Central to the operetta's enduring charm is the famous *Champagne Chorus* (Im Feuerstrom der Reben), a jubilant toast to the pleasures of life and the intoxicating effects of wine. The music perfectly captures the glittering decadence of the ball scene, with its cascading waltz motifs and exuberant energy. The chorus serves not only as a celebratory high point, but also as a metaphor for the operetta's overarching themes of revelry, deception, and the blurring of social boundaries.

With *Die Fledermaus*, Strauss crafted an enduring masterpiece that continues to dazzle audiences, offering an irresistible blend of sophistication, humour, and Viennese charm.

Programme notes - David Evans and Vivienne Brown. Cover - Jean Bereaud, *Backstage at the Paris Opera, 1889*, oil on wood, Musee de la Ville de Paris

David Bicarregui

David studied under Andrew Heggie at the RNCM, graduating with a First in the summer of 2024. He is praised for the warm, brilliance of his tone and his dynamic acting skills that bring naturality and drama to the stage.

David has worked closely with world class stage and music directors including Jack Furness, Paul Carr, Matthew Kofi-Waldren and David Parry. In 2022, he received the Michael Pendred Award from Oxford Opera Company. David has received tuition in masterclasses from Michael Fabiano, Kathryn Rudge, Ann Murray, Linda Richardson and others. Credits include *L'imperial commissario*, *Madama Butterfly* (Dorset Opera); *Under The Greenwood Tree* (chorus soloist), *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Le Roi de Lahore* (Chorus Mentor, Dorset Opera); 2nd Armed Man, *The Magic Flute* (Oxford Opera); *Father Frost*, *The Snowmaiden* (RNCM Opera); *Masetto*, *Don Giovanni* (Opera in a Box); *Bartolo*, Antonio, *The Marriage of Figaro* (Kleine Opera and Oxford Touring Opera).





SCANDINAVIAN SOUNDSCAPES

Birmingham Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor - Michael Lloyd

NIELSEN – Maskarade Overture

GRIEG – Peer Gynt Suite

SIBELIUS - Symphony No 6

SIBELIUS – Symphony No 7

Sunday 9th February, 15:00

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire

Tickets £16 / under 25 £6

www.bpo.org.uk

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MORE INFORMATION AND TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM SYMPHONY HALL
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Solihull Symphony Orchestra

Patron: The Mayor of Solihull



First Violins

Charlotte Beresford
Marina Battey
Lis Branson
Vivienne Brown
Peter Halldron
Elena Lemke
Jo Oswald
Sarah Sasse
Will Scott

Second Violins

David Roper
John Bayley
Ella Begley
Stephanie Byrne
Jessica Harris
Sarah Letters
John Maxwell
Charlotte McLuskie
Christine Oates
Suzannah Watson
Lucy Wilson

Violas

Kelvin Farge
Hannah Branson
Leah Broadfield
Joanna Clarke
Mark Emms

Harp

Natasha Gale

Cellos

Helen Atherton
Mike Bond
Jeremy Dale
Kim Free
Raye Garrett
Alison Hart
Anne Kemp
Seb Lovell-Huckle
Louise Robertson
Nicola Walters

Double Bass

David Evans

Flutes

Su Newton Ede
Mary Wright

Oboes

Sarah Vaughan
+ cor anglais
Fiona Speak

Clarinets

Victoria Rex
Jane Emms
Karen Bannister
bass clarinet

Bassoons

Harry Jones
Simon Gates

Trumpets

Lynne Hodgson
David Hirst
Maz Bradbury

Horns

Tim Overton
Stephen Mayes
Emma Mcleod
Sarah Gee
Edward Fisher

Trombones

Stephen Rhodes
Tony Miller
Bernard Moses

Tuba

Alexandra Hamilton

Timpani

Olly James

Percussion

Jonathan Pearce



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, viola 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 terms, with at least four concert performances a year.



Our Next Concert

Saturday 5 April 2024, 15:30
Shirley Methodist Church

Organ and Bassoon

Dvorak – Carnival Overture

Rota – Bassoon Concerto

Saint-Saens – Symphony no 3 “The Organ”

Guest Conductor – Tommaso Nista
Bassoon - Harry Jones
Organ - David Rice



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