



Dundee Symphony Orchestra is the performing name of Dundee Orchestral Society. The Society was founded in 1893 by a group of enthusiastic amateur performers, and has gone from strength to strength ever since. The only period in the Orchestra's history when it did not perform or rehearse was during the Second World War.

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## **Robert Dick (Guest Conductor)**



Our Conductor this evening is Robert Dick, in Ralph Jamieson's absence. He has stepped in at relatively short notice, and we are grateful to him.

Robert Dick was born in Edinburgh in 1975. On leaving school, Robert entered the Royal College of Music in London studying violin with Grigori Zhislin and Madeleine Mitchell and piano with Yonty Solomon. He graduated with Honours in 1997 and also gained the Associateship Diploma of the Royal College of Music in Violin Performance.

Robert has been conducting since he was 11. In 1993 he conducted the Royal Scottish National Orchestra at the invitation of its then Musical Director, Walter Weller, appearing with them again three years later, and in 1995 he co-founded the reconstituted Orchestra of Old St Paul's in Edinburgh. He has also conducted all the youth orchestras of which he was a member including the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland and the Royal College of Music Symphony Orchestra. Robert is a regular guest conductor with the East Lothian Players and the Scottish Borders Community Orchestra, the latter with whom he performed a highly successful concert with internationally-renowned cellist, Steven Isserlis. He has conducted much of the great symphonic repertoire including symphonies by Schumann, Dvorak, Sibelius, Mahler and the Fourth and Eighth by Bruckner. Robert conducted the inaugural concert in March 2002 of the Edinburgh Philharmonic Orchestra and in the same year's Edinburgh Festival appeared with the Kelvin Ensemble and the Orchestra of the Canongait, with both of whom he will be doing further concerts. He had a highly successful debut with the

Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra in a concert in 2000 and was immediately invited back for further appearances.

Robert has also been the musical director of the Dunfermline Gilbert and Sullivan Society with whom he conducted their successful Spring 2002 production of *The Yeomen of the Guard*. In 2001, Robert was one of only a few conductors who were invited to conduct the Plovdiv Philharmonic Orchestra in the final concert of the Vienna International Mastercourse Series. He was also awarded the Diploma of that organisation. He had a similar success in 2002 at the International Summer Academy at the Mozarteum in Salzburg where he was invited to conduct the Varna Symphony Orchestra in concert as well as being awarded the Diploma. In the same year, he also went to Germany to work with the Camerata Academica of Freiburg. Robert has also enjoyed some success in competitions. In November 2001, he came second in the final of the British Reserve Insurance Conducting Competition in Cardiff.

Future plans this year include further concerts with the Edinburgh Philharmonic, the Orchestra of the Canongait, his debut concert with the Dundee Symphony Orchestra and a visit to the United States to work with the Council Rock High School Symphony Orchestra in Philadelphia.

As a violin and viola soloist, Robert has performed concertos by Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Bruch and Brahms and has extensively toured Europe as an orchestral player in venues including the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, the Hofburg Palace, Vienna and at the Henry Wood Proms in the Royal Albert Hall, London. In addition, he has freelanced with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Concert Orchestra and the North Pennine Orchestra.

Robert also works as a pianist both in chamber music, orchestras and as an accompanist.

## **Alan Torrance (Leader 2003-2004)**

Alan Torrance studied violin with Winifred Gavine in Edinburgh until the age of eighteen, when he completed his performer's ARCM. Over the following four years he studied with David Martin of the Royal Academy of Music in London, before receiving further lessons from Max Rostal in a Master Course at the Klagenfurt Conservatoire in Austria aided by a Scottish Arts Council Award.

In 1975, while playing with the Scottish Ballet Orchestra (and also for Bing Crosby!) he became a member of the Scottish Baroque Ensemble (now the Scottish Ensemble) with which he toured widely and made recordings.

On moving to New Zealand in 1987, he combined teaching theology in the University of Otago with being leader of the Dunedin Sinfonia - a part-time professional orchestra which attracted international soloists and conductors and broadcast regularly on New Zealand's Concert FM.

After a further five years' academic teaching and playing in London, Alan has returned to his homeland where he is professor of systematic theology in the University of St Andrews. This allows him time to lead both the NSPO and the DSO as well as enjoying chamber music, playing on an Italian violin made by Camillus Camilli in 1737. He also performs with his four sons, who constitute their own string quartet, when he is not kayaking and making the most of the Scottish mountains!

## Vladislav Adelkhanov-Steinberg (Soloist)



Our soloist this evening, Vladislav Adelkhanov-Steinberg, studied violin at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London with Professor Yfrah Neaman, after reading music and studying violin at the Moscow State Conservatoire and the Stuttgart Bach Academy. He was Leader and Soloist of the Chamber Orchestra of the Moscow State Conservatoire from 1990 until 1994 and performed concerts in Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands and Belgium, as well as touring within Russia. Vladislav was Leader of the Ensemble of Soloists with the Composers Association of Russia for the next two years and appeared as Soloist of the Moscow Virtuosos Orchestra from 1998 until 2000.

Further accolades include three first prizes in National Music Competitions in Russia and Winner of the Mendelssohn Concerto Competition in Moscow in 1988. Vladislav was also Winner of the 4<sup>th</sup> Carl Nielsen International Competition in Denmark in 1992 and of the Guildhall School Scholarship Competition for Advanced Instrumental Studies in 1996.

As well as teaching violin and viola at St Leonard's School in St Andrews, Vladislav travels to and from London where he leads an orchestra and performs around the UK. He has recorded 2 CDs including Brahms 3 violin sonatas and works by Wieniawsky, Tchaikovsky and Sarasate.

# Programme Notes

**Otto Nikolai (1810 – 1849)**

## **Overture “The Merry Wives of Windsor”**

This opera is a bright little work, charming and fresh, in spite of its old style; full of captivating melody, with some excellent concerted writing and good orchestration. The story is, of course, an adaptation of Shakespeare’s comedy. Mosenthal, the librettist, has faithfully followed the original play in all essentials and the overture is widely known from frequent hearings.

Otto Nikolai had an interesting career. The dates of his birth and death coincide with those of Chopin, and almost with those of Mendelssohn. His father ill-treated him and he passed through much trial and suffering before he arrived in Berlin in 1827. After professional training he went to Rome and zealously devoted himself to operatic composition.

In 1841 he was called to Vienna as Court Kapellmeister, and subsequently founded the now celebrated Philharmonic Society there. In 1844, five years before his death, he had chosen “The Merry Wives” for the subject of an opera, but it was not until March 9, 1849, in Berlin, that the work was first produced. The success was immense; but already the composer was seriously ill, and though he managed to conduct the first four performances, he lived only a few weeks to enjoy his triumph. None of his other operas have survived.

Nova Book Company 2004

## Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

### Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 61

*I Allegro ma non troppo*

*II Larghetto*

*III Rondo (Allegro)*

Beethoven composed his only complete violin concerto for Franz Clement, leader and conductor of the orchestra at the Theater an der Wien. It found no real following during Beethoven's lifetime and entered the repertoire only after its rediscovery in 1844 by the young virtuoso Josef Joachim.

The concerto opens with four peremptory timpani strikes answered immediately by a sustained woodwind chorale. Resolving this sharp opposition of the stern and the serene is the principal business of the movement. The repeated strikes are quickly subsumed into the orchestral texture, where they become a persistently disruptive influence, sending the first theme materials in darker, considerably more unstable directions. Even the naïve, songlike second theme, again introduced by the woodwind, is not immune to this tendency; immediately after the first statement of this appealing tune the four-strikes motive appears to darken the mood, and the tune is restated in minor. In the end, the initially lyrical thematic materials show themselves capable of making their own bold assertions during the passages leading into the soloist's cadenza.

The resolution of opposites in the first movement is confirmed in the second, a theme and variations set. If the concerto's opening timpani strikes communicated distantly military connotations, so too, does this movement's characteristic long-short-long rhythmic motive. The movement is remarkable for its distinctive revision of the variation-set concept; rather than stating the theme once and subjecting it to a series of increasingly complex revisions, as

was the conventional usage, the theme is repeated verbatim in each of the variations, shifting only in instrumental colour, while the solo violin provides ever more intricate commentary. The soloist never actually states the theme; instead, the final variation consists of an entirely new theme, stated once against the original theme, then itself varied as the original theme subsides.

The cheerful rondo finale brings into the foreground the pastoral quality that was at least latent in the first and second movements. The rollicking main theme is set off against a bass-pattern that has been described as “appealingly offbeat”, and hunting calls stated by the horns and echoed in the woodwind confirm the countryside atmosphere. The brighter tempo encourages some of the most virtuosic solo passages in the concerto, particularly in the first and third episodes; the second episode, a brief shift into the minor mode where the soloist exchanges a bit of melodic banter with the bassoon, serves to heighten the generally jolly mood, so that not even a more marked digression immediately following the final cadenza is able to throw events out of joint.

David Isadore Lieberman 2001

## *Interval*



## **Antonin Dvorak (1841 – 1904)**

### **Symphony No. 6 in D major, Op. 60**

*I Allegro non tanto*

*II Adagio*

*III Scherzo (Furiant): Presto*

*IV Finale: Allegro con spirito*

Dvorak was a proud and fervent Czech patriot, having attained success with colourful “national” works, novelties which charmed Western European ears with their exotic Slav melodies; but he also belonged to the great Central European musical tradition which looked to the symphonic works of Beethoven and Brahms as examples. When, in 1880, the Vienna Philharmonic and the conductor Hans Richter asked him to write a symphony for them, Dvorak finally had his chance to prove himself as a master symphonist in the Beethoven tradition. He wrote the Sixth Symphony in seven weeks, but the premiere was postponed until March 1881, when it was performed in Prague. Within a year it had been performed in half a dozen different countries, including Britain and the USA.

The Sixth Symphony’s rapid success was richly deserved, being arguably, an even greater, more perfect work than the more popular Eighth and Ninth Symphonies, written when success had made him less self-critical. Dvorak’s debt to his great symphonic predecessors is clearly shown – to Beethoven’s Ninth, in the *Adagio*, to Schumann’s Fourth, in the coda of the *Finale*, and above all to Brahms, to whose Second Symphony he pays explicit homage in the outer movements, and in the very key of the whole symphony. His Czech heritage is also proudly displayed – most evidently in the *Scherzo*, a Czech *Furiant*, or Swaggerer’s Dance, but also in the first two movements where themes could have been taken straight from the Slavonic Dances.

The opening of the symphony is pastoral. Answering phrases in the upper and lower strings evoke vistas of “Bohemia’s Woods and Meadows” before swelling to a *grandioso* climax. Then follows a long group of melodies, by turns dance-like and lyrical, and a closely-worked development which opens with one of the most imaginative passages Dvorak ever wrote – fragments of themes rising from a deep, mysterious pedal note. After a further “Eroica”-like climax the recapitulation runs its course, and the movement ends in sunlit celebration. The opening of the B flat major *Adagio* immediately evokes Beethoven, but Dvorak follows it with a sweetly lyrical movement which could be by no other composer – in its glowing ‘cello and horn writing, its sudden outbursts of rustic high spirits, the quiet polka-rhythms which the timpani cannot resist adding in the background, and in the exquisite coda for woodwind and horns, which brings the movement to a close. After this, the fiery *Furiant* comes as a rude awakening, but this impetuous folk-dance *Scherzo*, with its dreamy, luminous *Trio* (containing surely the most romantic solo ever written for the piccolo!) was an instant hit at the symphony’s premiere, and was encored. The *Finale* opens with a tribute to Brahms, but Dvorak asserts himself unmistakably at the first climax, again marked *grandioso*. As in the first movement, the second subject group, by turns song-like and rhythmic, leads to a furiously-worked development with tranquil interludes. At the climax of the recapitulation, the violins break dramatically loose and cascade unaccompanied into a *Presto* coda, in which all the themes of the movement are built up to a tremendous climax. Without the slightest slackening of momentum the symphony sweeps to a close.

R.G. Bratby 1997

## Acknowledgements

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Soloists:

Collette Ruddy, Yvette Bonner  
Christopher Saunders, Paul Keohone

**Dundee Symphony Orchestra**

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2004, Caird Hall

See website for programme:

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