



ELFRIDA ANDREE
CONCERT OVERTURE

DVORAK
CELLO CONCERTO
SOLOIST: SOPHIE KAUER

SCHUMANN
SYMPHONY No.2

CONDUCTOR: CHRIS STARK
LEADER: PAULA TYSALL

SATURDAY 28 JUNE 2025
ALL SAINTS WEST DULWICH



SOPHIE KAUER

Sophie Kauer is a German-British cellist, born in London in 2001.

Her breakthrough came with a leading role in Todd Field's feature film *TÁR* (2022), starring Cate Blanchett, where she was described by renowned composer John Williams as 'an extraordinary actor and consummate musician'.

Her debut EP, *Unsung*, released on Deutsche Grammophon, made her the youngest artist to reach No. 1 on the Classical On-Demand Audio Streaming Chart.

She is a Classic FM 'Rising Star,' and has been nominated for an Opus Klassik Award.

Kauer has performed as a soloist with a number of world-renowned orchestras such as the Deutsches Symphonie Orchester, London Symphony Orchestra, and Gewandhaus Orchester.

Sophie has studied at the Norwegian Academy of Music under Torleif Thedéen and at the Junior Royal Academy of Music, of which she is now an associate (ARAM).

She is supported by 'Podium', Talent Norge's talent program for young soloists, and by the Scandinavian Cello School 'Young Artist Scheme'.

Sophie plays a Thomas Meuwissen cello kindly loaned to her through Dextra Musica.



CONCERT OVERTURE IN D

ELFRIDA ANDRÉE (1841-1929)

Elfrida Andrée was a Swedish composer and organist. She was born in 1841 in Visby, where her father, a doctor, was very aware of the debate around women's rights and followed local and international political developments with interest. He realised that Elfrida and her sister both had the talent to become professional musicians and he encouraged them to follow their dreams.

After initial lessons with the village organist, Elfrida studied at the Royal Swedish Academy of Music in Stockholm and, at age 16, became the first woman in Sweden to graduate as an organist. The law, however, prevented her from working as a professional organist, apparently owing to St Paul's edict that 'women must be silent in church.' Determined as she was, the setback only increased her desire and, with the help of her father, she set about changing the law. After four years petitioning Parliament, the law was amended in 1861 and Andrée took up her first post at the Finnish Reformed Church in Stockholm. She became the organist at Gothenburg Cathedral in 1867 and remained there for 62 years, until her death, in 1929.



Elfrida Andrée

While at the Cathedral she trained the choirs, taught aspiring organists, gave organ concerts and conducted. She composed around 100 pieces, including two symphonies, two organ symphonies, an opera, two masses and much chamber music and became the first Swedish woman to conduct a symphony orchestra.

Andrée's style is reminiscent of Mendelssohn and the German Romantics, reflecting the time she spent studying composition with Niels Gade in Copenhagen in 1870. Her music has clear, sweeping melodies, but relatively discreet sentimentality.

The Concert Overture we are performing tonight was composed in 1873. It consists of two sections, *Andante maestoso* and *Allegro ma non troppo*, and overall boasts a serene atmosphere. It is notable for the colourful use of the wind section. The manuscript is held in the Statens Musikbibliothek in Stockholm and has been edited by Dr Susan Pickett.

Claire Richards

CELLO CONCERTO IN B MINOR

ANTONIN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

- i) Allegro
- ii) Adagio, ma non troppo
- iii) Finale: Allegro moderato—Andante—Allegro vivo

When Czech Romantic composer Antonín Dvořák composed his Cello Concerto in B minor in 1894-95, he was at the height of his creative powers. Written during his final months in the United States, where he had been serving as director of the National Conservatory in New York, the concerto was his last major orchestral work and marks a pinnacle not only in his own output, but in the entire cello repertoire.

Despite the cello's expressive range, composers had long been wary of using it as a concerto instrument, due to its deep register and potential to be overpowered by the orchestra. Though Dvořák had penned an early cello concerto in the 1860s (only discovered in 1925 and now rarely performed), he also considered the cello too unwieldy for a solo role. It was only after hearing a performance of Victor Herbert's Second Cello Concerto in New York that he was inspired to try again – this time

with astonishing success and receiving much praise from his friend and mentor, Johannes Brahms. Dvořák, solves the orchestration problem masterfully: he gives the cello a noble, lyrical voice, setting it against an orchestration that is rich yet never overwhelming. The result is a deeply personal work that balances drama, tenderness and folk-tinged warmth.

The concerto opens with a broad orchestral introduction before the solo cello enters with the same stirring theme – bold and poignant. The first movement unfolds with a symphonic sweep, filled with passion and sweeping melodic lines.

The slow Adagio offers a more intimate, elegiac mood, drawing on a song Dvořák had written years earlier and laced with nostalgia. It was, in fact, composed partly in response to the illness of Dvořák's beloved sister-in-law, Josefine, whose death shortly after the work's completion profoundly affected the composer. He later added a quiet, touching coda to the finale in her memory, quoting the same song in tribute.

The final movement brings a return to vitality, but also moments of reflection. Instead of ending with bombast, Dvořák gives us a ruminative farewell, full of emotional complexity – an unusual and striking decision.

The concerto premiered at a private concert in 1895 with Dvořák's friend and dedicatee Hanuš Wihan as soloist, who was also meant to star at the public premiere in London the following year, but due to scheduling difficulties, cellist Leo Stern took the spotlight. The concerto was immediately acclaimed and now stands as one of the most beloved and frequently performed cello works – celebrated for its emotional depth and lyrical beauty.

Sophia Swanepoel

Interval - drinks are available in the church (donations to the orchestra gratefully received)

SYMPHONY NO.2 IN C MAJOR

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

i) Sostenuto assai—Allegro ma non troppo

ii) Scherzo: Allegro vivace

iii) Adagio espressivo

iv) Allegro molto vivace

There is a relatively small number of the great symphonists of whom one might suggest that, setting aside personal preferences and delights, each of their symphonies is at core as marvellous as all of the others. One's favourite is the symphony one happens to be listening to or performing at any given time. Schumann, with his four mature symphonies, is one of these greats. Others, in my opinion, would include Brahms (1833 – 1897) (also four symphonies), Beethoven (1770-1827) with no fewer than nine top notch symphonies, also the Danish composer, Carl Nielsen (1865-1931) with six symphonies. Elgar (1857-1934) as well, but just two completed symphonies.

Schumann's second symphony, written in 1845-1846 was in fact his fourth attempt: he wrote his (incomplete) early "Zwickau" Symphony (named after the town in Saxony where he was born) when he was about 22 years old in 1832-1833. In its truncated form it is a thoroughly enjoyable listen. Schumann's numbered first symphony ("Spring", its vernal wonders certainly live up to its name) was written in 1841, but between the "Spring" Symphony and the numbered second symphony (composed 1845-1846, which we are performing tonight), Schumann also wrote in 1841 the first version of what in due course was revised to become his last numbered symphony, no. 4 in D minor. His incandescent Symphony no. 3, the Rhenish, was composed in 1850, the year before he revised the D minor symphony. Schumann died in 1856 at just 46.



Robert Schumann

Listen carefully to the opening chorale-like motif of the slow introduction to the first movement, quietly, almost mistily, intoned by the brass, over an undulating accompaniment on the strings. This is the unifying motif for the whole symphony, and will be heard throughout the work, except in the slow movement. It is heard in a very different guise, vigorously for the full orchestra, shortly into the dramatic Allegro section of the first movement, and again after a development section bristling with incident, in the lead up to the peroration of the movement, which brings it to its rousing and emphatic ending.

The bustling Scherzo second movement includes two contrasted more contemplative trio sections, after which the reprieve of the scherzo is capped off in the coda with a strong restatement of the symphony's opening motif as if in an (unsuccessful) attempt to restore order. An intensely eloquent Adagio follows, of an altogether darker hue than the rest of the symphony, richly yearning and elegiac.

The finale opens with a vigorous march and introduces another chorale theme, excitingly developed, before being combined, initially quietly on the trumpets, but with increasing force, with the chorale motif that opens the symphony. The intensity ratchets up gradually, leading to a magnificent close.

John-Paul de Soissons

Chris Stark is based in South East London. He began as a cellist, turning to conducting whilst a choral scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge.

As a co-founder of the RPS Award Winning Multi-Story Orchestra, he has conducted all the Orchestra's car park performances since their inception with The Rite of Spring in 2011, including celebrated performances at the BBC Proms.

Away from Multi-Story, he works mostly in opera, for organisations that include Glyndebourne, Oper Köln, Garsington, English Touring Opera and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

Committed to community music, he is principal conductor of the Ernest Read and Blackheath Halls Symphony Orchestras. He has recorded for NMC and broadcast with both Multi-Story and the Aurora Orchestra.

Paula Tysall studied violin at the Centre for Young Musicians, the Royal College of Music and the National Centre for Orchestral Studies.

As a member of the New London Orchestra she has recorded for Hyperion Records, made broadcasts for the BBC and Classic FM, appeared at the Proms and in Matthew Bourne's award winning Swan Lake. She has played with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philharmonia and English National Ballet, and also has performed in many operas, shows, and chamber music concerts.

She leads the Blackheath Halls Orchestra and recently took over shared running of the Minehead Orchestral Festival and is delighted that Chris Stark has become their new Musical Director.

Paula teaches at Westminster School and has just a few private pupils.

Violin I
Paula Tysall
Helen Bartholomew
Chris Burns
Marc Callonnec
Charlotte Chaplin
Tessa Crilly
Ruth Holton
Nancy Simpson
Wendy Talbot
Ted Thornhill

Violin II
Jane Howard
Gillian French
Andrew Fryer
Lucy Galloway
Celeste Hicks
Stephen Holt
Virginia Kennedy
Jacob Leask
Andrew McGregor
Chris Shone
Fiona Treharne

Viola
David Lawes
Liz Cleary
Jennifer Green
Nicola Prior
Katie Saunders
Sophia Swanepoel
Alan Taylor

Cello
Nicky Jackson
Russell Ashley-Smith
Sarah Bort
Karen Bowman
Laura Bradley
Fiona Clarey
Emma Geoghegan
Kathryn Gray
Nikolay Gromov

Catherine Johnson
Annabelle Juritz
Jim Nierobisz

Double Bass
Sylvain Letall
Sam Wise

Flute
Alison Gill
Sam Purser

Oboe
Ian Finn
Louise Simon

Clarinet
Claire Richards
Ally Rosser

Bassoon
Jeremy Crump
Hilary Dodd

French Horn
Mary Cowlett
Alana Knowles
Henry Osmond

Trumpet
John-Paul de Soissons
Susan Emmons

Trombone
Frances Barrett
Charles Mackworth-Young
David Syer

Tuba
Martin Oxenham

Percussion
Jon French

Prokofiev

Selections from 'Romeo and Juliet'

Mahler

Totenfeier

Alan Taylor

Prelude: Remembering the civilian victims
of warfare



Saturday 6 December 19:30

All Saints, West Dulwich