

# Ealing Symphony Orchestra @100

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**SCRIABIN / David MATTHEWS** *Vers la flamme*  
**RACHMANINOV** Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30

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**COPLAND** Symphony No. 3

**Ealing Symphony Orchestra**  
**John GIBBONS** musical director  
**Dinara KLINTON** piano

Saturday, 27 November 2021 · 7.30pm  
St Barnabas Church, Pitshanger Lane, W5 1QG

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**Ealing Symphony  
Orchestra @100**

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John Gibbons is a multi-faceted musician: conductor, composer, arranger, pianist, and organist, who works across musical genres including opera, cathedral music, and recording neglected British orchestral music.

John has conducted most of the major British orchestras including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, and, most recently, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

He has recorded orchestral works by Nikos Skalkottas with the Philharmonia Orchestra, the string concertos of Arthur Benjamin with the RSNO on the Dutton Epoch label, four Mozart Piano Concertos with Idil Biret — two with the London

Mozart Players and two with the Worthing Symphony Orchestra, Bruckner's Ninth Symphony (with a completion of the finale by Nors Josephson) with the Aarhus Symphony Orchestra on the Danacord label, and William Wordsworth's Orchestral Works (Vol. 1) on the Toccata label.

Renowned for his adventurous programming, John has given many world and UK premieres of both new pieces (most recently the Triple Concerto by Errollyn Wallen with Kosmos Ensemble and WSO in Chichester Cathedral) and neglected works including the Third Orchestral Set by Charles Ives, the Violin Concerto by Robert Still, and both the Second Piano Concerto and Violin Concerto by William Alwyn. His recent performance of George Lloyd's Fourth Symphony with the Ealing Symphony Orchestra drew an ecstatic review from Simon Heffer in the Daily Telegraph.

John recorded Laura Rossi's film score *The Battle of the Ancre* (Pinewood Studios) and conducted the BBC Concert Orchestra in her score to *The Battle of the Somme* at the live screening in the Royal Festival Hall to commemorate the centenary of the ending of this battle.

Overseas work includes Walton's First Symphony with the George Enescu Philharmonic as well as concerts with the Macedonian Philharmonic, the Çukurova Symphony (Turkey), the Portuguese Symphony Orchestra, and performances of Malcolm Arnold's Fourth Symphony in Latvia and Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony* in Worms, Germany.

John Gibbons studied music at Queens' College, Cambridge, the Royal Academy of Music, and the Royal College of Music, winning numerous awards as conductor, pianist, and accompanist. He assisted John Eliot Gardiner on the 'Leonore' project and the recording of music by Percy Grainger, and was Leonard Slatkin's

second conductor for a performance of Charles Ives's Fourth Symphony with the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam.

He has conducted numerous opera productions at Opera Holland Park with particular emphasis on Verdi, Puccini, and the verismo composers, including Mascagni's *Iris* and Cilea's *Adriana Lecouvreur*. He conducted *La bohème* for the Spier Festival in South Africa, toured *Hansel & Gretel* around Ireland with Opera Northern Ireland and Opera Theatre Company, and conducted a number of productions for English Touring Opera. John's orchestral reductions include Walton's *Troilus & Cressida* for Opera St Louis, Missouri and Karl Jenkins's *Stabat Mater*.

John, a renowned communicator with audiences, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Vice-Chairman of the British Music Society, and Choral Director at Clifton Cathedral. His own music has been performed in various abbeys and cathedrals as well as at the Southbank, London.

## ESO Cellos Forthcoming Concerts

**5 March** | All Saints' Church  
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**6 March** | St Peter's Church  
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**4pm**

Free admission with donations welcome. Refreshments served in the interval. All proceeds to the ESO Centenary Fund.





After sharing the top prize at the 2006 Busoni Piano Competition aged 18, Dinara took up a busy international concert schedule appearing at many festivals, including the “Progetto Martha Argerich” in Lugano, the Cheltenham Music Festival, the Aldeburgh Proms, and “La Roque d’Anthéron”. She has performed at many of the world’s major concert venues, including the Royal Festival Hall and Wigmore Hall in London, Berliner Philharmonie and Konzerthaus, Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Gewandhaus zu Leipzig, New York 92Y, Cleveland Severance Hall, Tokyo Sumida Triphony Hall, Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, and Tchaikovsky Concert Hall.

In concerto engagements, Klinton has worked with the Philharmonia, Lucerne Symphony Orchestra, Svetlanov State Orchestra, and St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra. Dinara combines her concert

activities with her role as Piano Professor at the Royal College of Music in London.

As a recording artist, Dinara has received widespread critical acclaim for her interpretations. Among many dazzling reviews, her album *Liszt: Études d’exécution transcendante, S. 139*, released by the German label “GENUIN classics”, was selected by BBC Music Magazine as Recording of the Month. Dinara’s debut album *Music of Chopin and Liszt* was made at the age of 16 with the American label DELOS. Her third CD is part of the renowned recording series “*Chopin. Complete Works on contemporary instruments*”, released by The Fryderyk Chopin Institute in Poland. This year’s release with Piano Classics is featuring Prokofiev’s Complete Sonatas.

Dinara’s music education started at the age of five in her native Kharkiv, Ukraine. She graduated with highest honours from

the Moscow Central Music School, where she studied with Valery Piassetski, and the Moscow State P.I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory, where she worked with Eliso Virsaladze. Dinara completed her Master’s degree at the Royal College of Music under the tutelage of Dina Parakhina and became the inaugural recipient of the highly prestigious RCM Benjamin Britten Fellowship during her Artist Diploma course. After that, Dinara attended masterclasses at the Lake Como Piano Academy and worked with Boris Petrushansky at the Imola Piano Academy.

“Klinton generally highlights the lyrical side of Prokofiev, though she doesn’t play down the sonatas’ sardonic, motoric and percussive elements, which are essential characteristics in most of the composer’s

piano works. She also tends to impart an epic sense to the music... Nothing in the set is less than compelling.”  
— *MusicWeb International (Prokofiev Complete Piano Sonatas)*

“This account by Dinara Klinton holds its own against all comers.”  
— *Gramophone (Liszt 12 Études d’exécution transcendante, S. 139)*

“An astonishing achievement... Dinara Klinton’s interpretative gift gives her a wonderful instinct... and her response to the Byronic sweep of Liszt’s imagination enthralled at every point... Klinton can find a complete world in a single quiet chord.”  
— *BBC Music (Liszt 12 Études d’exécution transcendante, S. 139)*

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### Alexander Scriabin (1871–1915)

Orchestrated by **David Matthews (1943–)**

#### *Vers la flamme*

Alexander Scriabin was one of the most unusual, and controversial, composers ever. Nurtured in the hot-house musical and artistic atmosphere of late nineteenth-century Russia, he developed into a uniquely egocentric figure given to messianic delusions, who dreamed of uniting all the arts and of transforming the world totally through art, in which he himself would be one of the prime movers.

Scriabin came from a wealthy aristocratic background, but was clearly marked for a musical career from an early age; his mother was a concert pianist. He joined the piano class of Nikolai Zverev when he was 13, and there met Sergei Rachmaninov, one year younger than him, with whom he maintained a rivalry for the rest of his life. Scriabin entered the Moscow Conservatory in 1889, when he had already begun to compose, but damage to his right hand caused by over-practice meant that composition gradually became central to his life. Scriabin's early works were fairly typical of their period, the Piano Concerto of 1897 is a charming work in the style of Chopin. The following year his third Piano Sonata showed a new direction, a fascination with texture and colour and with ambivalent harmony. Scriabin's music began to develop the harmonic dissolution of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* to extremes, and he developed his own highly personal system of chords. Scriabin maintained that "there is no difference between harmony and melody" and in addition was prone to synaesthesia, which caused him to see specific pitches or keys as particular colours: A was green,



B was pearly blue, F minor was deep blue — the colour of reason, F major the blood-red colour of hell. Scriabin's first two symphonies, the second completed in 1901, remained fairly traditional works. The key year for Scriabin's development was 1903, during which he composed a huge amount of music, beginning with the Fourth Piano Sonata, Op. 30, and ending with the Third Symphony, Op. 43. Of the Symphony he wrote "This is the first time I found light in music, the first time I knew intoxication, flight, the breathlessness of happiness".

In parallel with this he discovered the theosophical writings of Helena Blavatsky, and developed a personal brand of mysticism from these, believing that he portrayed in his own music the search for Truth, Light, Goodness, and Divine Love.

Following the break-up of his marriage to Vera Issakovich, the composer began a relationship with Tatiana Schoelzer and by 1904 was living with her openly. The scandal forced the couple to leave Russia for five years, living first in the US and then settling in Lucerne.

The final years of Scriabin's life were spent preparing a work he called *The Mysterium*, which he intended to be performed in a temple in India. Apparently a multi-media extravaganza of sound, sight, scent, light and sculpture, with orchestra, chorus, singers, actors, and dancers, this would culminate in the end of the world and the creation of a new race of men. However, it was not to be: Scriabin died of blood poisoning in Moscow on 27 April 1915, leaving a mass of ideas, but not many musical sketches.

Scriabin's 1914 'piano poem' *Vers la flamme (Towards the Flame)* encapsulates in five intense minutes his sense of harmony and melody being one. The melodic line is the obsessively repeated semitone motif announced at the opening, and present throughout at the top of the texture. The accompaniment is not only filled with harmonic ambiguity, but the music remains rhythmically ambiguous, marked by a five-against-three pattern. It develops in three sections, which merge seamlessly, and Scriabin's directions show clearly the mood and sensibility he intended: *avec une émotion naissante* (with incipient emotion), *avec une joie voilée* (with veiled joy), *de plus en plus*

*animé* (more and more animated), *avec une joie plus en plus tumultueuse* (with increasingly tumultuous joy), culminating in an incandescent climax of contrasted high and low registers, *éclatant, lumineux* (vivid, bright) and *comme une fanfare*.

According to Vladimir Horowitz the title of the work derives from the composer's conviction that the world as a whole was edging 'towards the flame' and would gradually heat up until it erupted into a fiery cosmic conflagration. "He was crazy, you know" Horowitz added, dryly. In 1914 the world was indeed heading towards the flames, in ways which Scriabin could hardly have imagined, but did not live to see.

David Matthews arranged the work for large orchestra in 1986, and tonight is the first performance.





## Programme Notes

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### Sergei Rachmaninov (1873–1943)

#### Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30

*Allegro ma non tanto*

*Intermezzo. Adagio*

*Finale. Alla breve*

Many composers have also been exceptional pianists — Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, for instance — but in the twentieth century one composer, supported by the unassailable evidence of many glittering recordings, stands out as a virtuoso of the keyboard: Sergei Rachmaninov. Nevertheless he would gladly have done without the acclaim he received in the latter part of his life for this gift. His career as a performer after 1919 arose out of necessity, as he was then in exile following the Bolshevik Revolution and had lost his income from royalties as well as his estates.

Prior to the Revolution and exile, Rachmaninov's performing career as a pianist was confined almost exclusively to his own music (in contrast to his work as a conductor where he directed Debussy, Elgar, Strauss, and Berlioz, among others). Over a forty-three-year period he gave the premieres of all four of his concerti plus the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*. The premiere of this Third Piano Concerto was given on 28 November 1909 with the New York Symphony Orchestra, as part of Rachmaninov's first US tour; the second New York performance, also by the composer, on 28 January 1910, was probably more historic — the conductor of the New York Philharmonic that evening was Gustav Mahler.

Much of this work was written at the home of his wife, Ivanovka, south of Moscow, in the summer of 1910, and it turned

out to be the grandest and most complex of his concerti, with a rich emotional tapestry presented in the most dazzling pianistic colours. Rachmaninov dedicated the work to the pianist he admired the most, Josef Hoffman, who however complained that the work was “more a fantasia than a concerto, not enough form” and probably never played it — one more example of a dedicatee rejecting a work without realising its quality. His complaint is quite unjustified, the Concerto has just the form it needs. Rachmaninov's own technique was more than equal to the work's difficulties, but many pianists came to grief amid the complex piano writing and for a long time the composer was its only performer; he remarked that it was “a work for elephants”. The young Vladimir Horowitz took it up and eventually Rachmaninov gave up playing it, satisfied that it was in good hands, but not before he made a stunning recording of it. Though even here, Rachmaninov's deep-seated insecurity about the lasting value of his music shows through, since he made at least two of the cuts he regularly included in his concert performances. Fortunately, pianists now realise the worth of the music and play it complete.

The Concerto opens with a rocking orchestra accompaniment in dotted rhythm (long short, long short) over which the soloist spins a long sinuous melody. From this deceptively simple beginning Rachmaninov fashions the most elaborate virtuosity. The orchestra takes over

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thematic connection with the opening and is also the more bravura. After this, the return of the opening is quieter and more thoughtful, and there is a sudden quick run to the end.

The slow movement opens with a sigh, strings followed by woodwind announce the theme and the pianist has a wild chromatic jumble of notes which ends up in D flat major. This then builds up the main theme in a turbulent development — suddenly a scherzo section intrudes, where the soloist’s rapid trills and triplets dispel the impassioned melancholy for a while. It returns in truncated form and appears to sink away to nothing. An urgent call to attention, which is actually the last few bars of the slow movement, leads directly into the quicksilver finale with its urgent march-like melody, rising and falling several times. The mood becomes more introspective and the piano writing takes on the character of a fantasy, the bar lines seem to disappear and the piano line seems to float effortlessly (though it is extremely difficult) as the soloist meditates wistfully on themes gone by. Eventually the orchestra breaks into his reverie with a return of the march-like theme to which the pianist responds with even more brilliance, leading to a resplendent re-statement of the earlier material and a bravura barnstorming whirlwind end to the Concerto.

the melody and the pianist is free to soar above with fabulous decoration, leading into a short cadenza from which the orchestra introduces the second subject, a crisp theme which preserves the dotted rhythm of the opening. This is developed with an increasing sense of pace until the main cadenza. Rachmaninov eventually had doubts about his original cadenza and wrote a second, where the lead-up to the big climax is lighter and swifter, after which both are the same. Both are printed in the score leaving the choice to the soloist. The composer preferred, and recorded, his second thoughts, but most pianists opt for the original as it has more

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## Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

### Symphony No. 3

*Molto moderato*

*Allegro molto*

*Andantino quasi allegretto* —

*Molto deliberato*

Leonard Bernstein, in a 75<sup>th</sup>-birthday tribute to Aaron Copland, observed, “... like his Biblical namesake he has functioned as the High Priest of American Music, the gentle, but forceful leader and tastemaker ... It is as though the amiable and cultivated Aaron provides the public voice for the harsh and resolute prophet that rages within. And it is this inner voice which ultimately informs the whole Copland musical corpus, uniting all its flexibility and eclecticism into a significant and lasting whole...”

Bernstein here highlights the marked dichotomy in Copland’s character and music, between the serious composer and the popular musician. Much of this dichotomy was quite deliberate on Copland’s part — he was consciously striving for an idiom which was uniquely American and which would embrace the whole range of styles which surrounded American composers. Perhaps the diversity of his own music reveals that there is, or can be, no such thing as a single uniquely American idiom; diversity is the true American cultural hallmark.

In Copland’s early years musicians all looked to Europe for inspiration and teaching; in 1921 Copland did what all American composers did, travelled to Paris to study with Nadia Boulanger — which he later described as the most important musical experience of his life. His early works, from the expressionist ballet *Gro-*

*hg* to the Piano Concerto, skilfully blended jazz and the classical tradition. Yet in 1927 Copland dropped jazz, declaring that it had limited intellectual scope. His next pieces, *Short Symphony* and *Statements for Orchestra*, revealed a stripped down, powerful, superbly logical style; greatly admired by musicians these scores did not then find a wide public. Copland was always well aware of public attitudes to music and around 1935, in his own words he “began to feel dissatisfied with the relationship between the public and the living composer ... I felt it was worth the effort to see if I couldn’t say what I had to in the simplest possible terms.” There followed a series of immensely popular works in the very open “American” idiom: *El Salón México*, *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo*, and, in 1944, *Appalachian Spring*. After 1946 Copland’s music moved on again and eventually he tried his hand at a very personal form of twelve-tone music. *Connotations* (1962) and *Inscape* (1967) are still distinctively Copland and make a fascinating comparison with *Grohg* and the *Organ Symphony*.

This Symphony, dated 1946, which has come to be recognised as **the** American symphony, was commissioned by Serge Koussevitzky in 1944 and the premiere was given by him in Boston in November 1946.

The key to the Symphony is Copland’s *Fanfare for the Common Man*, written



with lots of percussion, followed by heavily emphatic brass, and the movement closes with the lean sound of strings and bassoons meditating on the same three notes and fading gradually into silence.

The second movement opens with a thump and an energetic leap for the brass, the woodwind take over and play games with the tiny snippets of the *Fanfare*, with the help of percussion and piano. Then the strings take over and complement the woodwind before the brass bring in a longer phrase over the top of this busy accompaniment, which expands and then explodes, leaving the woodwind playing the same phrases to a pizzicato accompaniment from the strings. The percussion and piano contribute a perky variant of the same music and the heavy brass return with the overwhelming energy, which slows to become massively triumphant.

in 1942 to a commission from the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and which underlies the whole work. The *Fanfare* is most obvious in the finale where it appears undisguised but short melodic figures from it underpin the entire Symphony.

The first movement is in three sections, each using material derived from the *Fanfare*. It opens with high violin harmonics, with an unmistakable Copland interval. This gradually becomes more agitated, the falling three-note phrase heard here is the opening of the *Fanfare* upside-down, building to a climax before withdrawing to the opening mood and colour. The second section is faster and more energetic and the three-note phrase is heard both rising and falling, developing considerable energy and power before vanishing, leaving the woodwind repeating simple flowing fragments of the *Fanfare*. The strings bring back the rising and falling phrase

By contrast the opening mood of the slow movement is cold and withdrawn, bleak and empty, revealing a deep and unconsoling pain. A chilled line of string harmonics recedes to allow a solo bassoon to take up the threnody, followed by oboes over a stalking accompaniment. Very gradually the mood lightens, two flutes attempt a dance-like *Fanfare* variant, which fades leaving the other woodwind to try similar lines before the violins succeed in introducing something almost jaunty, which seems to shake off the coldness. The mood shifts back and forth but the warmth is only temporary, the strings resume their slow keening which recedes further and further towards silence, leaving the basses holding a single low note, which leads directly into the finale. Over this pedal note, the woodwind gently intone the *Fanfare*; when they have played it through, the brass repeat the *Fanfare* in its original guise, the only time it is heard

this way, and as their final chord fades, the woodwind come back with the gentle version and transform it into a sprightly little episode full of offbeat rhythms. The horns become briefly prominent then the build-up stops abruptly and the woodwind, harp, and strings make graceful play with fresh fragments of the *Fanfare*; this is cut short harshly by a loud and painful

discord. Only the flutes are left hanging in the air and over their slow arabesques the horns recall the opening of the *Fanfare* and build this up for the last time. The final peroration, hard won and by now totally confident, is long and loud.

*Programme notes by Dominic Nudd.*

11 Dec

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

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12 Feb

**BAX** *Tintagel*

**WAGNER** *Tristan and Isolde*, Act 2

26 Mar

**TCHAIKOVSKY** *Francesca da Rimini*, Op. 32

**Grace WILLIAMS** Violin Concerto

**FRANCK** Symphony in D minor

14 May

**DEBUSSY** *Images pour orchestre: II. Ibéria*

**FALLA** *Noches en los jardines de España*

**Silvestre REVUELTAS** *Sensemayá*

**CHABRIER** *España*

**FALLA** *El amor brujo: Danza ritual del fuego*

**José Pablo MONCAYO** *Huapango*

9 Jul

**ELGAR** *Pomp and Circumstance March No. 4*

**George LLOYD** Symphony No. 2

**Paul LEWIS** Wurlitzer Organ Concerto

**STRAVINSKY** *The Firebird Suite (1945)*



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Thank you all,  
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Mark Robbins  
Emilie Edelenbos  
Kate Day  
Simon Morris  
Kieron Daniel  
Andrew Roberts  
Laura Rossi  
Heidi Everingham

### Violas

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Mollie Koenigsberger  
Mike Frost  
Álvaro Rebón  
David Smith  
Jenny Davies  
Janet Robinson  
Rainer Hersch  
James Greener  
Clare Barker  
Catherine Barlen  
Matthew Newton

### Cellos

Rachael Bucknall  
Alice Laddiman  
Heather Humphreys  
Deborah Lovell  
Emma Wakeling  
Tessa Watson  
Paul Robinson  
Alan Garriock  
Martin Jones  
Richard Bolton  
Barbara James

### Basses

James Trowbridge  
Lon Fon Law  
Clara Nissen

### Harps

Ruby Aspinall  
Glain Dafydd

### Flutes

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Caroline Swan  
Paul Darling  
Chris Reding

### Oboes

Rachel Wickham  
Mike Phillips  
Richard Partridge

### Clarinets

David Weedon  
Felicity Bardell  
Barbara James  
Filiz Yilmaz Sever

### Bassoons

Geoff Roussel  
Steve Warrington  
Nick Epton

### Horns

Pamela Wise  
Mary Saunders  
Catherine Fox  
Paul Jefferson

### Trumpets

Richard Davies  
Fergus Pateman  
Felicity Coad  
Dan Burchette  
Ben Wong

### Trombones

Felix McGonigal  
Hywel Walters  
David Fletcher

### Tuba

Alan Henry

### Percussion

Andrew Barnard  
James Larter  
Ethan Skuodas  
Matthew Fletcher  
Ben Gale

### Piano

Kelvin Lim

### Celeste

Martin Jones

We are always happy to hear from potential new members! Rehearsals are on Thursdays near Ealing Broadway. To find out more, please visit our website: [ealingso.org.uk/join](http://ealingso.org.uk/join), or write to us at [contact@ealingso.org.uk](mailto:contact@ealingso.org.uk).



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