



PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE USE

India's first professional symphony orchestra comes to Edinburgh's Usher Hall with standout violinist Marat Bisengaliev

**Symphony Orchestra of India with Marat Bisengaliev
Sunday Classics at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh
3:00pm, Sunday 24 February 2019**

Weber - Oberon Overture
Bruch - Violin Concerto No. 1
Rimsky-Korsakov - Scheherazade



Images available to download [here](#)

Experience the finesse, the power and the iridescent colours of one of the world's newest and most exciting orchestras at Edinburgh's iconic Usher Hall.

Founded in 2006, the **Symphony Orchestra of India** brings together exceptional players from across the Subcontinent – a region with its own vibrant traditions of classical music – together with superb international musicians. Based in Mumbai, it is India's **very first professional symphony orchestra**, and has already worked



extensively with some of the world's most renowned soloists and conductors, touring to the best concert halls across the globe.

To begin, the Orchestra will take audiences into the fairy realm with the magical orchestral evocations of **Weber's Oberon Overture**. The composer's final opera, it depicts the tale of Oberon, who quarrels with his wife Titania over whether men or women are faithful to their lovers. The pair can only be reconciled when a couple constant through misfortune can be found. The Overture is a musical standout of the work, with supernatural horns and strings transporting the listener into another realm.

The Orchestra's co-founder and Music Director, Kazakh-born violinist **Marat Bisengaliev**, joins the players for one of the true wonders of the violin repertoire. **Bruch's soulful First Violin Concerto** blends dazzling virtuosity with heartrending melody – it's not hard to hear why it's considered the world's most adored violin concerto. The iconic piece had drawn-out origins, with Bruch being consistently dissatisfied and modifying it "at least half a dozen times" over four years. It finally had its premiere in Bremen in 1968 with the great Joseph Joachim as the soloist, after Bruch sought his comments on the piece during the writing process.

Incisive British conductor **Martyn Brabbins** – Music Director of English National Opera – brings the concert to an electrifying climax with an exhilarating journey through the Arabian Nights – with tales of Sinbad's adventures, swashbuckling heroes, tender young love and a cataclysmic shipwreck, all related in **Rimsky-Korsakov's sensuous Scheherazade**. The composer's early life as a sailor surely played a role in the composition, with his own exploration of the Seven Seas and trips bound to the far east, where the tale of Scheherazade is set, giving Rimsky-Korsakov his own experiences to draw upon.

Join us at the Usher Hall for an afternoon of musical adventure and exploration with one of the world's most exciting young orchestras!

/ENDS

Media enquiries:

Will Moss / The Corner Shop PR / 0131 202 6220 / 07443334085

Listings information:

Symphony Orchestra of India with Marat Bisengaliev
Sunday Classics at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh
3:00pm, Sunday 24 February 2019

Martyn Brabbins – Conductor



Marat Bisengaliev – Violin
Symphony Orchestra of India

Weber - Oberon Overture
Bruch - Violin Concerto No. 1
Rimsky-Korsakov - Scheherazade

Tickets available at www.usherhall.co.uk

Prices

£35 | £29 | £24 | £18 | £13.50

Full time students are entitled to tickets for £10 which can be booked in advance

Under 16s are entitled to free tickets when booked with a paying adult

Concessions available

Please note a £1.50 transaction fee applies on the overall booking when purchasing online or over the phone (non-refundable)

Symphony Orchestra of India

The Symphony Orchestra of India (SOI), based at the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), Mumbai, is India's first and only professional orchestra. It was founded in 2006 by NCPA Chairman Khushroo N. Suntook and internationally-renowned violin virtuoso Marat Bisengaliev, who serves as the Orchestra's Music Director. Zane Dalal was appointed Associate Music Director of the SOI in September 2014, following serving seven years as Resident Conductor. Evgeny Bushkov serves as the Resident Conductor, taking up the role in January 2017.

The SOI has worked with renowned conductors including Charles Dutoit, Martyn Brabbins, Carlo Rizzi, Augustin Dumay, Yuri Simonov, Lior Shambadal, Rafael Payare, Adrian Leaper, Johannes Wildner, Evgeny Bushkov, Duncan Ward, Karl Jenkins, Mischa Damev, Alexander Anissimov, and Christoph Poppen, and more. Soloists appearing with the SOI have included Maria João Pires, Augustin Dumay, Simon O'Neill, Cédric Tiberghien, Alina Ibragimova, Barry Douglas, Angel Blue, Zakir Hussain, Edgar Meyer, Béla Fleck, Tamás Vásáry, and Lena Neudauer, amongst others.

In the decade since its inception, the Orchestra has performed around India and internationally. Tours have seen the SOI perform in the Hall of Columns, Moscow, and the Royal Opera House, Muscat. In the October 2015, the SOI opened the 2015-16 Abu Dhabi Classics season, performing at the Emirates Palace Auditorium, Abu Dhabi, and in January 2016, presented three concerts in Switzerland—at the Tonhalle, Zurich; Victoria Hall, Geneva; and the Tonhalle, St. Gallen—on invitation from the Migros Kulturprozent Classics series. Apart from the mainstays of the symphonic repertoire, the NCPA and SOI have also presented large-scale productions, including fully-staged operas—with productions of Tosca,



Madama Butterfly, and Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci. In 2017, the SOI premiered an innovative new production of La Bohème, conducted by Carlo Rizzi.

The Orchestra's core group of musicians is resident at the NCPA all year round and forms the SOI Chamber Orchestra, which performs a regular series of concerts through the year. Additional players are recruited from a talented pool of professionals from around the world. The SOI features a growing number of Indian players, representing the finest home-grown talent, which provides a solid foundation for the future of orchestral playing in the country. The Orchestra places great emphasis on education and many of the SOI musicians are also teachers, working to develop the musical potential amongst young people in India. Chief amongst the Orchestra's educational initiatives is the NCPA Special Music Training Programme, which brings a professional level of teaching, previously not available in India, to gifted young musicians, with the aim of growing the number of Indian musicians in the SOI in the near future.

The creation of first-class cultural institutions working towards international recognition is a vital component of India's growing prestige on the world stage. Moreover, the SOI is fulfilling an important cultural and educational role within India. The NCPA continues to grow as a centre of musical excellence, developing international standards of professionalism among its musicians, thereby addressing the aspirations of young musicians and music-loving audiences throughout India.

Martyn Brabbins

Martyn Brabbins is Music Director of the English National Opera. An inspirational force in British music, Brabbins has had a busy opera career since his early days at the Kirov and more recently at La Scala, the Bayerische Staatsoper, and regularly in Lyon, Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Antwerp. He is a popular figure at the BBC Proms and with most of the leading British orchestras, and regularly visits top international orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw, DSO Berlin and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony (all of whom he conducted last season). Known for his advocacy of British composers, he has also conducted hundreds of world premieres across the globe. He has recorded over 120 CDs to date, including prize-winning discs of operas by Korngold, Birtwistle and Harvey. He was Associate Principal Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra 1994-2005, Principal Guest Conductor of the Royal Flemish Philharmonic 2009-2015, Chief Conductor of the Nagoya Philharmonic 2012-2016, and Artistic Director of the Cheltenham International Festival of Music 2005-2007. He is currently Visiting Professor at the Royal College of Music and Music Director to the Huddersfield Choral Society alongside his duties at ENO, and has for many years supported professional, student and amateur music-making at the highest level in the UK.

In 2017/18 at English National Opera Brabbins conducts the world premiere of Nico Muhly's Marnie and a revival of Marriage of Figaro – his first productions as Music Director. He launches a Vaughan Williams symphonic cycle with the BBC Symphony at the Barbican (and recorded for Hyperion) and tours Holland with the BBC Scottish Symphony, with whom he continues his Tippett symphony cycle at the Glasgow City Halls and also for Hyperion. He celebrates the London Sinfonietta's 50th birthday at the Southbank, and conducts the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic at the Holland Festival 2018. In Summer 2017 he conducts Elgar's Dream of Gerontius with the Philharmonia at Three Choirs and he also conducts the final concert of the Edinburgh International Festival with the BBC Scottish Symphony.



Brabbins' extensive discography ranges from Romantic to contemporary repertoire. He won the Gramophone Award for Birtwistle's *Mask of Orpheus* with the BBC Symphony (NMC), the Cannes Opera Award for Korngold's *Die Kathrin* with the BBC Concert Orchestra (CPO), and the Grand Prix du Disque in the 2013 opera category for his recording of Jonathan Harvey's *Wagner Dream*.

Marat Bisengaliev

Internationally-renowned violinist Marat Bisengaliev is the founding Music Director of the Symphony Orchestra of India. Described by *The Times* as a "brilliant violin soloist", Marat Bisengaliev has also been designated "a latter-day Ysaÿe" by the *American Journal Fanfare*. The *New York Times* says that "he has taken to heart a style of playing that was a hallmark of violin virtuosity early in the century".

Marat was born in Kazakhstan in 1962 and made his debut at the age of nine. He studied at the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire in Moscow with two of the legendary names in violin tuition: Boris Belinki and Valery Klimov. He was a prize-winner in 1988 at the Leipzig International Bach Competition, and in 1991 won first prize at the International Nicanor Zabaleta Competition in Spain, also receiving the Special Virtuoso Prize.

Since signing a major recording contract with Naxos and Marco Polo in 1991, Marat has produced a number of acclaimed recordings. His recording of the Mendelssohn Concertos (Northern Sinfonia) became Gramophone Critic's Choice of the Year in 1998. *Fanfare* nominated his recording of Havergal Brian's concerto (BBC SSO) as Critics' Choice 1994. Sony BMG awarded him a Gold Disc for his recording *Tlep* by Karl Jenkins. In 2000, he received the 1st Platinum Tarlan Award and the Government Medal of Honour in Kazakhstan.

A noted interpreter of the works of Sir Edward Elgar, his album *Elgar: Re-discovered works for violin, Vol. 1 (Black Box)* was nominated for the 1999 Gramophone Award and the second volume was named by Classic FM as one of the "Top 5 Elgar recordings". His three-CD anthology *Elgar: The Violin Works*, which received the Gold Disc award from the American Elgar Foundation was recently reissued by Naxos. In 2013, Marat received the first Elgar Proliferation Award from the American Elgar Foundation.

Marat has performed with orchestras around the globe including the English Chamber Orchestra, BBC Scottish, Philharmonia, Polish Radio National Symphony Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, Moscow Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra of Ukraine, BBC Ulster, Beijing Symphony Orchestra, Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Mexico Symphony Orchestra, amongst others, playing in venues including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Royal Albert Hall, Barbican, Wigmore Hall, Bridgewater Hall, and the Forbidden City Concert Hall.

Apart from the SOI, Marat has also founded two orchestras in his home country. In 2003, he founded the West Kazakhstan Philharmonic Orchestra. Their first CD—Karl Jenkins' *Requiem*—was released on EMI and reached No. 1 in the classical sales charts and was No. 1 in Hall of Fame in *Classic FM* magazine. In 2012, he founded the Almaty Symphony Orchestra.

Recent and forthcoming highlights include the premiere of a new album by Yerkeshe Shakeyev with the London Symphony Orchestra which was recorded with the same orchestra



at the legendary studios at Abbey Road, and concerts in New Zealand, China, USA, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Brazil, Mexico, India, Italy, France, Russia and the UK.

USHER HALL

The Usher Hall is Scotland's only five-star concert hall hosting a range of concerts from rock, pop, classical, jazz, world and folk music. The venue has hosted concerts and events since it opened way back in 1914! A beautiful Edwardian building with a modern twist, which is well loved by performers and audiences all over the world due to its magnificent acoustics.

It is said that Andrew Usher sparked the idea of a 'concert hall for Edinburgh' whilst chatting away over the counter of his jewellers in Rose Street. His 'desire and intention' was that this Hall 'should become and remain a centre and attraction to musical artistes and performers and to the citizens of Edinburgh and others who may desire to hear good music...'

On 23 June 1896 it was formally announced that Andrew Usher had gifted £100,000 to The City of Edinburgh. The purpose of the money was to provide a City Hall, to be used for concerts, recitals, or other entertainments or performances of a musical nature, and for civic functions, or such other performances as the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Council saw fit. Above all it was to be about the music. Edinburgh was very much lacking a hall for such musical and civic purposes, as stated in the Scotsman the following day; 'The necessity for a great hall in Edinburgh under city management has been pressed upon the attention of the public for many years.' Sadly Andrew Usher died before his dream was realised.

Today

Today, **the much-praised acoustics make it one of the best concert halls in Europe with many of the world's finest musicians performing here.** The Usher Hall is the city's key venue for visiting national and international orchestras and has been the main venue for the Edinburgh International Festival since 1947, hosting legendary artists such as composers Benjamin Britten and Dmitri Shostakovich, contralto singer Kathleen Ferrier and cellist Jacqueline Du Pre to name but a few.

The venue is a centre of excellence embracing the widest range of music and events, including rock, pop, jazz, world and blues. It is Edinburgh's go-to venue for today's mid-large scale rock and pop acts, with the likes of Queens of the Stone Age, The National, Radiohead's Thom Yorke, George Ezra and Echo & the Bunnymen having performed on its stage. Usher Hall also hosts a broad spectrum of comedy, talks, school concerts, conferences, sponsorship events, ceremonies, lectures and recording sessions.