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FSSO

CELEBRATING THE
GOLDEN
JUBILEE

OF THE FREE STATE
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

1974-2024

2 NOVEMBER 2024
FREE STATE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
SAND DU PLESSIS

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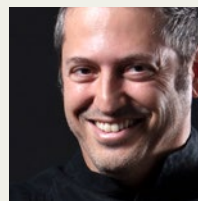
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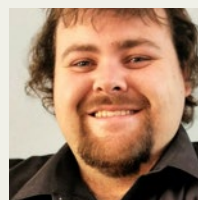
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CONDUCTOR:

DANIEL BOICO

SOLOISTS:

ILZE VAN STADEN, SOPRANO

TERESA DE WIT, MEZZO-SOPRANO

ALBERTUS ENGELBRECHT, TENOR

THESELE KEMANE, BASS-BARITONE

VINCENT KHETHA, BOY SOPRANO

UFS CHOIR & BLOEMFONTEIN CHILDREN'S CHOIR

WERNER STANDER, CONDUCTOR

THE CATHEDRAL SINGERS

LANCE PHILLIP, CONDUCTOR

BERNSTEIN:

CHICHESTER PSALMS

INTERVAL

BEETHOVEN:

SYMPHONY NO. 9 IN D MINOR, OP. 125

2 NOVEMBER 2024

FREE STATE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

SAND DU PLESSIS

LEONARD BERNSTEIN 1918-1990

Chichester Psalms (1965)

Introduction: Psalm 108, vs. 2

I. Psalm 100

II. Psalm 23

III. Psalm 131

IV. Psalm 133, vs. 1

Leonard Bernstein was the Renaissance man of American music in the postwar era. The charismatic conductor, composer, pianist & teacher was an inescapable global musical presence, although his colourful personality, celebrity status and political affiliations tended to occlude his reputation as a serious composer in his own lifetime. Indeed, he even expressed regret that his time-consuming podium duties sidelined his creative achievements – after all, Bernstein is principally remembered for his legendary tenure as the Music Director of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and was the first American-born conductor of comparable standing to the greatest European maestros of his era. Besides theatre pieces such as *West Side Story*, 'Lenny' also composed three symphonies, the operetta *Candide*, as well as numerous chamber works and songs. Bernstein made many musical enemies in his youth, and later they were all too happy to return the favour, castigating his concert works as being neither European nor American, but uneasy hybrids of the two (as if Mahler, Gershwin or Ravel had never blended the learned and popular styles!).

Bernstein also wrote a number of choral works, of which the *Chichester Psalms* is the most frequently performed. In the 1960s, the Dean & Chapter of Chichester Cathedral commissioned a work from him for the Southern Cathedrals Festival of 1965. Like many Americans, Bernstein had been devastated by the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy, and had composed his Third Symphony, subtitled *Kaddish*, as a response. Unlike the *Kaddish* (the term refers to a Jewish ritual lamentation), the *Chichester Psalms* is not purely a work of mourning, but includes texts of hope, serenity & jubilation.

The concept and structure has a precedent in Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*, although the musical language is unmistakably American, with perhaps a nod to Carl Orff. Bernstein evidently took delight in the Dean's suggestion that the musical style of *West Side Story* would be very welcome in his Cathedral. Bernstein set the texts in Hebrew, drawing from Psalms 108, 100, 23, 131 & 133. The composer stipulated that the solo part be sung by either a treble (boy soprano) or countertenor (male alto), possibly because this singer represented the young King David, accompanying himself on the harp and dancing before the Lord. The orchestra features a large and prominent percussion section which Bernstein uses to great effect, not least to underline the many instances of septuple meter – seven being a number of religious significance.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN 1770-1827

Symphony no.9 in D minor, Op. 125 (1824)

I. Allegro non troppo, un poco maestoso

II. Molto vivace

III. Adagio cantabile

IV. Presto – Allegro assai – Presto – Allegro assai – Alla marcia: Allegro assai vivace – Andante maestoso – Allegro energico, sempre ben marcato – Allegro ma non tanto – Prestissimo

Two hundred years ago, in 1824, the Viennese public greeted the premiere of Beethoven's D minor symphony with rapturous acclaim. The melody of the finale is now embedded in popular culture, simple enough to be sung as a hymn, yet grand enough to be the official anthem of the European Union. Beethoven's setting of Schiller's 1785 poem *An die Freude* ('Ode to Joy') was the fulfilment of a long-held ambition, the composer finally dragging the musical world out the entertaining but naïve classical era, into the visionary new age of Romanticism, where the old aristocratic values would be replaced with new democratic ideals. The world needed respite from Napoleon – Beethoven's stirring music would carry the message of universal brotherhood encapsulated in the fervent lines of Schiller's poetry, and men would beat their swords into plowshares.

Of course, in the real world nothing of the sort happened. Nineteenth century politicians and rulers continued to behave as badly as they had always done, and Beethoven turned out to be the naïve one. The great composer had always been driven by impossible ideals, believing that his heroic strivings would bring about the immediate betterment of society. In his defence, though, he was not alone – Bach, Handel, Schubert, Wagner, Liszt & Mahler all claimed near-magical powers for music that far exceeded reality. In later life, Schiller himself turned against his own much-fêted poem, considering it a silly indiscretion, and an example of artistic overreach.

But none of this detracts from the grandiose power and revolutionary zeal of Beethoven's musical achievement in his final symphony. Indeed, it is precisely the hopeless struggle against irresistible forces that gives Romanticism its wonderful, transcendent quality. And startling originality is hardly confined to the iconic finale – the opening of the first movement, with its initial avoidance of a firm tonal centre, seems to evoke the ancient Greek creation of the world by the tuning of a musical string. This accomplished, the first theme bursts out, fortissimo. No one does musical tension like Beethoven – in this case a plethora of notes over an excruciatingly slow harmonic rhythm. Even the elegant second theme is quickly overtaken by the stormy atmosphere. After the development, Beethoven does not resolve the tension in the recapitulation, as is customary; instead, this section begins in the tonic major, which allows the composer to set up a battleground of competing tonal areas, which is only resolved in the closing bars of the massive coda. The scherzo that follows is a miracle of economy and transparency. There are touches of musical humour here, too; Beethoven instructs the timpanist to tune his two kettledrums an octave apart, and rewards him with some delightfully cheeky writing – at one point the drummer comes across a woodwind band merrily chattering their way into the wrong key, and sets them right only after multiple attempts. The trio, far from a mere contrasting section, seems to harken back to the shepherd's prayer in the Pastoral symphony, and anticipates just a hint of the melody of the finale. The wonderful slow movement is one of Beethoven's most lyrical creations – the composer plays his two themes at considerable leisure, then freely elaborates them at each restatement. The epic finale begins with the famous *Schreckensfanfare* ('horror fanfare'), denoting the enemy which must be overcome. Themes of the previous movements are examined, then rejected, while a dark recitative is played in the lower strings. Finally, that ominous figure transforms itself into the dovelike 'Ode to Joy' theme, which Beethoven subjects to three variations, before the *Schreckensfanfare* returns. This time, it takes the community to stand in solidarity, and Beethoven must transcend the traditional symphony orchestra by introducing the human voice, a quartet of soloists and a choir. A baritone sounds the call to arms, which is taken up by his comrades. Beethoven introduces a number of episodes, including a Turkish march that accompanies a breathless tenor solo (presumably representing an exhausted battlefield messenger). In the end, the victory is celebrated when the war song is transformed into a hymn of praise, which becomes progressively more exhilarated & delirious, bringing the symphony to a thrilling conclusion.

Beethoven could not change human nature, even with this mighty statement. But he certainly changed the way music was written, claimed new modes of expression for future composers, expanded the orchestra & injected a healthy dose of drama into classical sonata form. His Ninth symphony remains a symbol of idealised peace & universal brotherhood, and exemplifies the power of the artist to inspire, delight and uplift his audience.

CONDUCTOR

DANIEL BOICO

Described by critics as "Dynamic, vigorous, exciting and imaginative - an undisputed star who combines magnetic charisma with a skilled technique" Israeli-American conductor Daniel Boico is the Artistic Director and CEO of the Free State Symphony Orchestra, as well as Associate Guest Conductor of the KZN and Mzansi Philharmonics.



Former Music Director and Chief Conductor of the MÁV Budapest Symphony Orchestra, Hungary, Daniel was Assistant Conductor of the New York Philharmonic, where his debut with the orchestra, sharing the podium with Riccardo Muti, was followed by his subscription concert debut, replacing Kurt Masur on short notice in what the New York Times called “a smoldering performance” of Sofia Gubaidulina’s concerto for two violas and orchestra.

Born in Israel to musician parents and raised in both Paris and the United States, (Daniel’s father, Fima Boico, was principal second violin of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, concertmaster of Orchestre de Paris, and is the second violinist of the Fine Arts Quartet since 1983). Daniel initially received his training as a singer, and later was a student of legendary Russian professor of conducting, Ilya Musin, at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. A finalist and prize winner at the Prokofiev, Pedrotti, and Cadaques International Conducting Competitions, Daniel was also Music Director of the Skokie Valley Symphony Orchestra, Chicago, and visiting professor and director of orchestras at the Grand Valley State University in Michigan. Earlier in his career, Daniel was apprentice conductor, and later assistant, to Daniel Barenboim at the Chicago Symphony, where he worked closely with such distinguished conductors as Pierre Boulez, Claudio Abbado and Zubin Mehta.

Daniel has recorded a premiere recording of Nino Rota’s two cello concerti with cellist Dimitry Yablonsky and I Virtuosi Italiani for the Chandos label, Der Mondbach II by Andres Alcalde for cello and double string quartet with cellist Pablo Mahave-Veglia for the Eroica Classical Recordings label, as well as Statue Dance from Pavlovsk, a ballet in 3 tableaux by Karen LeFrak, for the American Ballet Theatre’s ABT II Company. Daniel has also recorded Kalinnikov’s Symphony No. 1 with the Nürnberger Symphoniker for Bayerische Rundfunk.

As an educator of young musicians, Daniel is a frequent guest conductor at DePaul University, Chicago and the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University Bloomington, and a private conducting teacher to winners of national and international conducting competitions.

Equally at home with contemporary music, world premieres have included works by Nino Rota, Steven Gerber, David Winkler, Airat Ichmouratov, Karen LeFrak, Hilda Paredes, Carlos Escalante, Eddie Mora, and Warren Bessey.

Daniel also has extensive experience in music administration, planning and programming, having worked as Manager of Artistic Administration of the New York Philharmonic, as executive assistant to Daniel Barenboim at the Chicago Symphony and Chicago Symphony Presents, as well as for the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra.

Daniel has performed on such distinguished stages as the Philharmonie in Berlin, Avery Fisher (David Geffen) Hall in New York, Chicago’s Symphony Center, War Memorial Opera House of San Francisco, Mann Auditorium in Tel Aviv, Meistersinger Halle in Nürnberg, Abu Dhabi’s Emirates Palace Auditorium, Mexico City’s Bellas Artes Palace and Nezahualcoyotl hall, the Tchaikovsky Concert Halls in Moscow, the National Concert Hall of Taiwan, and the Budapest Music Academy and Bartok halls, with such orchestras as the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of London, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Nürnberger Symphoniker, State Academic Symphony Orchestra of Russia, Moscow Philharmonic, National Orchestras of Taiwan, Mexico and Costa Rica, Taiwan Philharmonic, Columbus Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, and the KZN, Johannesburg and Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestras.

Daniel has collaborated with such fine soloists as Itzhak Perlman, Gil Shaham, Daniel Barenboim, Shlomo Mintz, James Ehnes, Gary Hoffman, Andreas Ottensamer, Nikolay Lugansky, Pablo Sainz-Villegas, Aviram Reichert, Daniel Ciobanu, Nikita Mndoyants, Alexander Buzlov, Olga Kern, and Ilya Friedberg.

Daniel has recently published his translation of legendary conducting teacher Ilya Musin’s book *The Language of the Conductor’s Gesture* available from Sferapublishing.com.

SOLOISTS

ILZE VAN STADEN (COETZEE)

Coloratura soprano Ilze van Staden has been pursuing a successful singing career since 2009. Her performance career was ushered in on stage in Windhoek, Namibia when she was still a second year music student at the Tshwane University of Technology. She sang the role of Adele in the Strauss operetta, *Fledermaus*. Following this first accomplishment in her singing career, she was also selected to perform various other title roles including Violetta in *La Traviata*, Norma in *Norma*, and Lucia in *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Roles such as Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus*, Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni*, Gilda in *Rigoletto* and the queen of the Night is also part of her repertoire.

Between 2012 and 2014 Ilze was the inhouse soprano at the Brooklyn Theatre in Pretoria. When her time there ended, she still sang various concerts under the Brooklyn theatre.

In 2020, Ilze recorded Mozart's *Exultate Jubilate* with Brooklyn Theatre TV. Their most recent recording included Vivaldi's Baroque composition, *Nulla in mundo pax sincera* and Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* with Clint van der Linde.

Ilze is a member of Mimi Coertse's *Bel Canto* music group, and also regularly performs with members of the former *Black Tie Ensemble*, as well as the Pretoria Symphony Orchestra.

TERESA DE WIT

Teresa de Wit (mezzo soprano) obtained the UNISA Performers Licentiate with distinction in 2000 and started her opera training as a member of the Cape Town Opera Studio, as well as a member of Mimi Coertse's *Black Tie Ensemble*. On two occasions she received masterclasses at the Mozarteum Sommerakademie in Salzburg, Austria. Teresa regularly performs in operas, concerts and oratorios in various theaters and concert halls in South Africa. Operas and operettas she has performed leading roles in, include *Carmen*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Rigoletto*, *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Martha*, *La Traviata*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Die lustige Witwe* and *Wiener Blut*. Religious

works include Handel's *Messiah*, Vivaldi's *Gloria* and *Lauda Jerusalem*, Mozart's *C Min Mass*, *Requiem* and *Kronungsmesse*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solenne*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Bach's *Easter Oratorio* and *B Minor Mass*, Karl Jenkin's *Feel the Spirit*, *Stella Natalis* and *The Armed Man* and *Saint Saens' Christmas Oratoria*.

Since moving to Kimberley, she has obtained a *BMus*, *BMus Hons* and *M Mus* (all cum laude) from the University of the Free State. Teresa is on the staff the Kimberley Music Academy as well as a singing lecturer at the Odeion School of Music.

ALBERTUS ENGELBRECHT

Albertus Engelbrecht was appointed in opera houses of Nuremberg and Passau (Germany) from 1999 to 2016, where he sang a diversity of leading opera and operetta roles such as Orfeo in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, Ulisse in Monteverdi's *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*, Nerone in Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (all three operas under direction of Kobie van Rensburg), Ramiro in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, Duca in Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Belmonte in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Danilo in Lehár's *The Merry Widow*, Tassilo in Kalmann's *Gräfin Mariza*, Oronte in Händel's *Alcina*, Graf Zedlau in J. Strauss' *Wiener Blut* and Paolo in Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto*. Engelbrecht performed regularly as Lied and oratorio singer in Berlin, Frankfurt, Mainz and Vienna. A highlight of his career was concerts of Medelssohn's *Walpurgisnacht* in the Teatro San Carlo, Naples.

Other international engagements outside Germany include the Luzern Opera House (Switzerland), where he sang the role of Danilo and a tour of New Year's concerts to Los Angeles (Disney Concert Hall) and San Diego. During his international career, Albertus collaborated with acclaimed conductors such as Bruno Weil, Wolfgang Katschner, Howard Armin, and Philipp Augin. In 2016, Engelbrecht returned to his country of birth as lecturer in singing and coordinator of vocal studies at the Odeion School of Music. Albertus received his PhD in Music (Performance) in 2023 from the University of the Free State.

THESELE KEMANE

Thesele is a graduate at the University of Cape Town Opera School and Julliard School (New York) and he has been a member of the Opera Studio of the Frankfurt Opera. He made his debut in *Der Spieler* as Director of the casino and other roles include Trojan Soldier in *Les Troyens*, Doctor in *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Welko in *Arabella*, A Gypsy in *Il Budd* and The Pope in *From the House of The Dead*. He also debuted in an acting role as *The Stranger* in Anna Seghers' production of *The Seventh Cross* with the Schauspiel (Frankfurt) and the film version of *La Forza del Destino* as Don Alvaro. He previously participated in the Young Artist Program of the Glimmerglass Festival and was invited to the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia (Rome) where he worked with Renata Scotto, also in Modena working with Raina Kabaivanska and the Internationale Meistersinger Akademie (Germany) led by Edith Wiens.

In Cape Town, the bass-baritone performed in *Le Nozze di Figaro* doing the title role, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* as Don Basilio. *The Rake's Progress* as Nick Shadow, *Tales of Hoffmann* as both Lindorf and Dr. Miracle, the title role in *Don Giovanni*, *Viva la Mamma* as Procolo, *Il Viaggio a Reims* as Don Prudenziio as well as in Handel's *Messiah* and Haydn's *Creation*. Since his return in South Africa in 2018 he did Baron Mirko Zeta in *The Merry Widow*.

VINCENT KHETHA

Vincent Khetha is a very versatile young singer who can perform both sacred and secular solos with musical poise. He is a learner of Grey College Primary School and got accepted to the Bloemfontein Children's Choir (BCC) in 2023, where he is currently a first soprano and has been singing solos with the choir ever since. Vincent Khetha's appearance with the FSSO is in collaboration with the BCC.

ILZE VAN STADEN
Soprano



TERESA DE WIT
Mezzo-soprano



ALBERTUS ENGELBRECHT
Tenor



THESELE KEMANE
Bass-baritone



VINCENT KHETHA
Boy Soprano



SOLOISTS

BLOEMFONTEIN CHILDREN'S CHOIR

The Bloemfontein Children's Choir (BCC) was established 37 years ago to be a shining beacon of quality children's choral music and has been home to many children throughout the years. The Choir has performed on world, national, and local stages. In 2020, the choir appointed Werner Stander as Director of Music and continued an exciting path toward the future. The Choir is accompanied by Frelét de Villiers and our Creative Director & Choreographer is Xander Steyn.

In 2023, the Choir performed at the first National Mzansi Conductors Convention in Cape Town. The Choir also took part in the Cape Town Eisteddfod in 2023 and received two gold medals and was named winners of this prestigious competition's junior section. Furthermore, the BCC had a memorable tour to Kimberley and an absolute highlight to conclude the year, a performance with the Drakensberg Boys Choir in December 2023. The Choir recently (2022) returned from a European tour to Belgium, France, and Germany with an exceptional performance at Euro Disney. The Choir captivated audiences all over and received standing ovations everywhere.

In 2024 the Choir undertook a coastal tour. The tour started in George and ended in Cape Town and included several performances, some of which was joint performances with other Children's Choirs, such as the Southern Cape Children's Choir, the Cape Town Children's Choir and the Tygerberg Children's Choir. For the remainder of the year, we are also looking forward to church performances, recordings, gala concerts, and a performance of the Chichester Psalms by Leonard Bernstein with the Free State Symphony Orchestra. The BCC is also planning its subsequent international tour to Europe in 2025.

We commemorate a blessed 37 years and breathtaking moments in BCC's life. This Choir is a tribute to the city of Bloemfontein and boasts the magnificent young talent of the Free State. The heartbeat of the Choir is our loving parents and supporters.

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE CHOIR

The University of the Free State (UFS) Institutional Choir is one of four UFS Choirs administered by the Arts and Culture office within the division of Student Affairs, founded in 1966 by prof. Chris Swanepoel as the first conductor. The Choir is also known as the Kovsie Choir and is a 60-member ensemble with a composition based on diverse students from across all three UFS Campuses.

Under the current music directorship of Mr Werner Stander and accompanied by Dr Frelét de Villiers, the Choir boasts itself as one of the flagships of the university, contributing to student success through the promotion of a positive and vibrant student experience that promotes student well-being and overall development. The choir reflects what it means to be a true Kovsie; as the saying goes, "Only a Kovsie Knows the Feeling".

The South Campus Choir is conducted by Mr Bonisile Gcisa, and the QwaQwa Campus Choir is conducted by Mr Themba Dladla. All three campus choirs work together as a cohesive team!

Choir activities include participation in the bi-annual KUESTA Choir Festival, the annual UFS Rector's Concert and regular performances across the UFS Bloemfontein Campus for students and staff to enjoy their melodic sounds. In October 2023, the UFS Institutional Choir took part in the European Choir Games in Norrköping, Sweden. The Choir walked away as winners of both their categories and won gold. The choir was also awarded a gold medal from the Grand Prix of Nations at the European Choir Games.

WERNER STANDER

Werner Stander is an established choral conductor and a music education enthusiast from South Africa with a classical choral background and a passion for rock music genres. His first musical training was at the Ladybird International Arts Academy. Werner started conducting his high school choir in his grade eleven school year and became the director of the Cantu Maluti Youth Choir when he was 18 years old

In August 2020, he was appointed Director of Music of the world-renowned Bloemfontein Children's Choir (BCC). The BCC toured Europe at the end of 2022 and gave sold-out performances in Belgium and France. The choir particularly enjoyed their performance at Euro Disney. This choir also won the junior division of the Cape Town Eisteddfod in 2023 and received two gold medals. In September 2022, he was appointed as Choir Master at the University of the Free State's (UFS) Institutional and Bloemfontein Campus Choirs overseeing all the three UFS Campus Choirs. In October 2023, under his direction, the UFS Institutional Choir took part in the European Choir Games in Norrköping, Sweden. The Choir walked away as winners of both their categories and won gold. The choir was also awarded a gold medal from the Grand Prix of Nations at the European Choir Games.

Werner is a member of the International Federation for Choral Music, and in April 2023, he attended the World Symposium on Choral Music held in Istanbul, Türkiye. Werner is also a PhD candidate in music (choral studies) at the University of the Free State, South Africa. He studies with Dr. Frelet de Villiers (UFS) and Dr. Stuart Chapman Hill (Michigan State University – USA). As part of his research, he attended the Professional Development Levels Course (choral based) at Maryland University, Washington, USA, in the summer of 2023 and was awarded the Choral level 1 accolade. Werner holds BMus & BMus (Hons) Music degrees, read for a master's degree in Choral Directing from the UFS (awarded in 2014), and studied conducting with Lance Phillip.

THE CATHEDRAL SINGERS

The Cathedral Singers of St Andrew & St Michael, formerly incorporating the Odeion Choir, was founded by the Reverend Simon Aiken & Lance Phillip in 2009. The choir is now affiliated to Bloemfontein Anglican Cathedral.

The choir's main duty is liturgical, notably the singing of the Office of Choral Evensong. This provides an opportunity for members to learn to cope with the demands of regular choral performance. Highlights have included Byrd's Mass for four voices, Mozart's Missa brevis settings in D and C ('Spatzenmesse') and the Missa ad honorem sanctissimae Trinitatis, Buxtehude's Membra Jesu nostri, excerpts from Monteverdi's Vespers, Lotti's Missa brevis in D minor, Rutter's Feel the Spirit, Haydn's Nelson Mass, Vierne's Messe solennelle, requiem settings by Brahms, Palestrina, Mozart & Fauré, Bach's Easter oratorio, Handel's Messiah, Dettingen anthem & Zadok the Priest, as well as major secular works such as Carl Orff's Carmina burana. The Cathedral Singers regularly collaborates with cantando@bloem, the Free State Symphony Orchestra and the Odeion Camerata. Past guest conductors include Lindsay Gray, Louis van der Watt, Richard Cock, Branko Starck, Gordon Appleton, Geoffrey Webber & Alexander Fokkens. At present, the Director of Music is Lance Phillip, and the Organist is Maretha Krige.

LANCE PHILLIP

Lance Phillip is employed by the Odeion School of Music (University of the Free State), where he lectures in Choral Studies, Composition and Musicology. He holds a BMus in Composition from the University of Pretoria, and an MMus in Choral Directing from the University of the Free State. Trained in part as a church musician, Phillip presently conducts the Odeion Choir, which he founded in 2009. As Director of Music of Bloemfontein Cathedral, he also conducts the Cathedral Choir and the Cathedral Singers of St Andrew & St Michael. He is also Principal Guest Conductor of the Bloemfontein Rhapsody Orchestra. In his spare time he continues to work as a choral tenor and oratorio soloist for diverse ensembles, as well as a freelance choral conductor, and occasionally, a lieder recitalist.

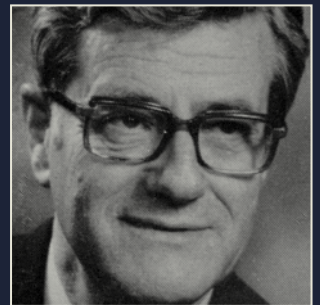
Conductors and Artistic Directors 1974-2024

In this Jubilee year, the FSSO would like to honour our esteemed Conductors and Artistic Directors.

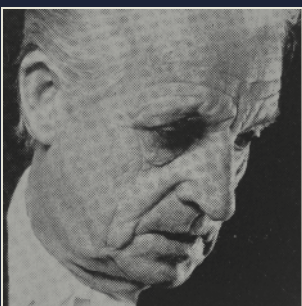
PIERRE DE GROOTE

RESIDENT CONDUCTOR, 1974-1978

Pierre De Groote was born in Belgium and studied at the Conservatoire in Brussels where he was awarded several diplomas for virtuosity in violin and chamber music. He became the lead violinist of the National Orchestra of Brussels. During the second world war he inaugurated his own string quartet with his brother as cellist.



In 1947 he emigrated to South Africa where he became the lead violinist of the Johannesburg City Orchestra and officiated as conductor for school concerts. When the City Orchestra was disbanded, de Groote became a violin lecturer at the Stellenbosch Music Conservatoire. In 1965 he was appointed senior lecturer at the Music College at the University of Cape Town. In 1974 he was approached to come to Bloemfontein and was appointed as the founding Resident Conductor of the Symphony Orchestra (as well as leader of the UFS String Quartet). He played a major role in establishing a professional performance culture and standard in the early years of the new symphony orchestra. He fulfilled this position until his retirement in 1978.



EDGAR CREE

CONDUCTOR LAUREATE, 1982-1995

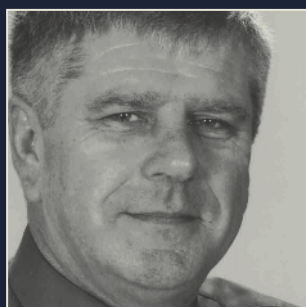
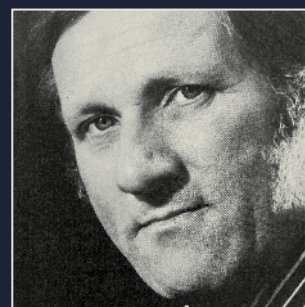
Edgar Cree was resident conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of the SABC for 28 years. He was born in Sheffield (England) and first conducted at the age of 14. At 17 he ran away from school to audition for the post of assistant organist at Peterborough Cathedral. Two years later he won an organ scholarship to Kings College, Cambridge and from there went on to the Royal College of Music to study with composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. His next appointment was as junior conductor at the BBC. After WWII he was invited to join the SABC as conductor. After the retirement of Pierre de Groote, he played an important guiding role at Pacofs in the early 1980s as Director of Orchestral Services and as principal guest conductor of the (Pacofs) Symphony Orchestra. He was later designated Conductor Laureate.

GERHARD GEIST

RESIDENT CONDUCTOR, 1984-1997

Gerhard Geist was born in Ansbach, West Germany. He started conducting studies with professors Heinrich Knappe and Fritz Lehman. With a master's degree in piano and conducting he was contracted by the Frankfurt Opera House under the eminent George Solti. Two years later he was appointed to the Opera House of Wuppertal and subsequently as head of the Lenz Singing Academy (previously conducted by Anton Bruckner). In 1970 he was appointed assistant to Herbert von Karajan during the Salzburg festival for the production of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*.

Upon moving to South Africa, in the 1980s he conducted many operas for Pacofs as well as symphony concerts of the Pacofs Symphony Orchestra (having been appointed Resident Conductor in 1984). He conducted Wagner's *Lohengrin* at the opening of the Sand du Plessis Theatre in 1985.



CHRISTOPHER DOWDESWELL

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND RESIDENT CONDUCTOR 2003-2010

After graduating from Royal College of Music in London, Dowdeswell continued his studies in Germany, and in Monte Carlo under Igor Markevitch. This was followed by appointments at the Augsburg, Dortmund and Darmstadt opera houses. In 1981 he was invited to South Africa to take up an appointment as staff conductor and head coach for Capab and the Nico Malan Theatre in

Cape Town, where he conducted a wide range of operas, ballets, musicals, oratorios and concerts. From 1987 he was Capab's Head of Music for the Eastern Cape in Port Elizabeth (now Gqeberha) for 10 years, also founding the Eastern Cape Philharmonic Orchestra. He regularly conducted concerts and operas in other cities such as Pretoria and Johannesburg. After returning to Cape Town in 1998 he was a part-time lecturer at the UCT Music Department. In the late 1990s and 2000s he conducted Pacofs opera productions as well as several FSSO concerts.

At the beginning of 2003 he was appointed as the founding Artistic Director of the reconstituted FSSO, serving till his untimely passing in early 2011.

ALEXANDER FOKKENS

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND CEO, 2011-2021

Alexander Fokkens received his Bachelor of Music degree in Double Bass from the University of Cape Town. As a student he conducted the UCT Symphony Orchestra and the UCT Opera studio. After completing his master's degree in double bass at Fort Worth, Texas, he pursued studies in Conducting at the Texas Christian University (TCU), conducting the TCU Symphony on several occasions. From 1999-2005 he served as Director of Orchestral Activities and conductor of the Aberdeen University/Civic Symphony Orchestra in Aberdeen, South Dakota.

In South Africa he worked as a freelance conductor, as music director of the Symphony Choir in Cape Town and the Swakopmund Musicwoche and as advisor to the Namibian Symphony Orchestra. In 2011 he was appointed CEO and Artistic Director of the FSSO, regularly conducting the FSSO as well as the Free State Youth Orchestra. He emigrated to the United States in 2021.





GÉRARD KORSTEN

PRINCIPAL GUEST CONDUCTOR, 2016-

Gérard Korsten was born in South Africa. He studied violin with Ivan Galamian at the Curtis Institute and with Sandor Végh in Salzburg. In 1980 he won the SABC Conducting Competition. Returning to Europe he became the concert Master and Assistant Musical Director of Camarata Salzburg and in 1987 he was appointed Concert Master of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. In

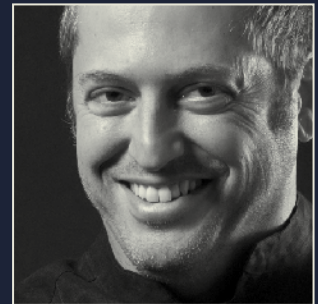
1996 he left to concentrate solely on his conducting career and did so, building a large repertoire, especially in Europe.

He was appointed Principal Conductor of Austria's Symphonieorchester Vorarlberg Bregenz in 2005. In 2010 he took up appointment as Music Director of the London Mozart Players, where he also conducted all their major UK concerts. He has continued to an international career, conducting many orchestras both in concert halls and opera houses. After acclaimed appearances with the FSSO in 2015 and 2017, he was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the FSSO in July 2018. When visiting Bloemfontein he regularly presents master classes to string players, singing students and aspirant conductors.

DANIEL BOICO

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND CEO, 2024-

Daniel Boico was born in Israel to musician parents and was raised in both the United States and Paris. Daniel was initially trained as a singer before joining the class of legendary Russian conducting professor Ilya Musin at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. Daniel was the Assistant Conductor of the New York Philharmonic, as well as apprentice conductor with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where he was assistant to then Music Director, Daniel Barenboim, as well as guest conductors Pierre Boulez and Zubin Metha.



Former Chief Conductor of the MAV Budapest Symphony Orchestra, Daniel has had an international conducting career including orchestras of great repute in the U.S, Europe, Central and South America, Africa and Asia. In South Africa he regularly conducts the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra, the KZN and Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestras. Daniel is an Associate Conductor with the KZN and Mzansi National Philharmonic Orchestras.

Daniel was engaged by the FSSO as Artistic Consultant and ad hoc conductor from October 2021 and formally appointed as CEO and Artistic Director of the FSSO Company from January 2024.

Guest Conductors 1980-2024

Derek Hudson (1981)

David Tidboald (1982, 1985, 1985, 1995, 1999)

Henri Arends (1982)

Brian Priestman (1983)

Christof Escher (1984)

Weiss Doubell (1986, 1987)

Gerry Bosman (1986)

Brian Priestman (1986)

Piero Gamba (1989)

Neville Dove (1990)

Soloists 1974-2024

During this time audiences in Bloemfontein have been fortunate to experience a wonderful array of local and international soloists, including:

Pienaar Fourie (1990; 2023)

Omri Hadari (1990)

Graham Scott (1991; 2011)

Doreen Rao (1991)

James Brooks Bruzzese (1995)

Derrek Huson (1995)

Richard Cock (1995; 2001; 2011; 2023; 2024)

Pieter Louis van Dijk (2000; 2002)

Sjoerd Alkema (2000; 2001)

Lykele Temming (1999, 2000; 2001)

Noel Stockton (2002)

Arnold Bosman (2002; 2003)

Gideon Linde (2004)

Xandi van Dijk (2004)

Paul Loeb van Zuilenburg (2009)

Alan Stephenson (2003; 2009; 2011)

Bernard Gueller (2001, 2012; 2013; 2015, 2016, 2019, 2021)

Arjan Tien (2011)

Gérard Korsten (2011; 2012; 2015)

Lance Philip (2011)

Germán Gutiérrez (2012)

Daniel Boico (2016; 2018; 2022; 2023)

Tim Murray (2017)

Conrad van Alphen (2011; 2018)

Carla Delfrate (2018)

David Scarr (2019)

Julien Benichou (2019)

Leon Bosch (2022)

Erik Dippenaar (2022)

Jacobus de Jager (2023)

Vincent de Kort (2024)

Airat Ichmouratov (2024)

Lamar Crowson - Piano (1974)

Jan van den Berg - Violin (1974)

Heinrich Armer - Clarinet (1974)

Niel Immelman - Piano (1974)

Japie Human - Piano (1975, 1977, 1982)

Peter Katin - Piano (1975)

Piet Koornhof - Violin (1977)

Mimi Coertse - Soprano (1977, 1985, 1985)

Johan Potgieter - Piano (1977)

Michael Brimer - Piano (1977)

Dieter Möbert - Trumpet (1977)

Roger Penning - Trumpet (1977)

Gudrun Barrella - Soprano (1978)

Dieter Morschel - Bassoon (1979)

Michael Haller - Cello (1978)

Gregory Pauk - Violin (1981)

Yuri Braginsky - Violin (1982)

Deon Lamprecht - Organ (1982, 1993)

David Geringas - Cello (1982)

Gérhard Korsten - Violin (1982)

Eugene Sarbu - Violin (1983)

Derek Ochse - Violin (1983, 1989, 1995, 2005)

Cornelia Cloete - Basson (1983)

Isabella Stengel - Piano (1983)

Marc Raubenheimer - Piano (1983)

Oleg Maisenberg - Piano (1984)

Steven de Groote - Piano (1985)

Peter Frankl - Piano (1985)

Eugénie Chopin-Couzyn - Soprano (1985)

Jean Stuart - Mezzo Soprano (1985)

Soloists (CONTINUED)

- Michael Renier** – Tenor (1985)
Rouel Beukes – Bass (1985, 1991)
Rina Hugo – Soprano (1986, 1991)
Orazio Maione – Piano (1986)
Heinrich Armer – Clarinet (1986, 1991)
Jos de Groen – Bassoon (1986)
Ken Higgins – Piano (1986)
Esthé van Wyk – Soprano (1986)
Phillip Kotze – Tenor (1986)
Gerd Seifert – French Horn (1986)
Peggy Hutton - Piano (1986)
Odette Ray – Piano (1986)
Hendrika Krige – Soprano (1987)
Angelica Novak – Mezzo- soprano (1987, 1990, 1991)
Sjoerd Beute – Tenor (1987)
Hans van Heerden - Baritone (1987)
Jan Repko – Violin (1987)
Michael Snyman – Violin (1987)
Johann Potgieter – Piano (1987)
Mercella Crudeli – Piano (1988)
Albie van Schalkwyk – Piano (1987, 2000, 2004, 2018)
Jürgen Schwietering – Violin (1988)
Oliver Cazel – Piano (1990)
Erika Bothma – Piano (1990)
Anmarie van der Westhuizen – Cello (1990, 2012, 2016, 2018, 2024)
Lydia Orias – Piano (1990)
Mark Drobinsky - Cello (1990)
Fabio Bidini – Piano (1990)
Pieter Schoeman - Violin (1990, 2016)
David Earl – Piano (1990)
Chen Chung-Shen – Bamboo Flute (1991)
Wen Chin-Long – Chinese violin (1991)
Yvonne Timoianu – Cello (1991)
Alexander Preda – Piano (1991)
Margarita and Olga Malinova – Piano (1991)
Anton Nel - Piano (1991; 1996)
Manual Escorcio – tenor (1991)
Boris Krajny – Piano (1993)
Marita Napier – Soprano (1993)
Peter-Lukas Graf – Flute (1993)
Kobie du Plessis – Harpsichord (1995)
Corvin Matei - Flute (1995)
Francois du Toit - Piano (1995)
Douglas Masek – Saxophone (1995)
Laura Mikkola – Piano (1995)
Dmitri Makhtin – Violin (1997)
Franklin Larey – Piano (1997)
Jeanne-Minette Cilliers - Piano (1999)
Juan Munoz – Violin (2000)
Virginia Davids - Soprano (2001)
Sydwill Hartman – Tenor (2001)
Dana Cilliers – Piano (2002)
Olga Bosman – Harp (2003)
Malané Hofmeyer-Burger – Flute (2003)
Hanli Stapela – Soprano (2004)
Anneke Lamont – Piano (2004; 2021)
Beverley Chait - Soprano (2006)
Violina Anguelov (Mezzo – Soprano – (2006)
Mlamli Lalapantsi (Tenor) – (2006)
Otto Maldi – Bass (2006)
Catherine Foxcroft – Piano (2007, 2018)
Denise Sutton – Violin (2007, 2011)
Jeanne-Louise Moolman – Viola (2007, 2011, 2018, 2019)

Nina Schoeman – Piano (2009)
Luis Magalhães – Piano (2009)
Peter Martens – Cello (2009)
Mark Uys – Violin (2010)
Maria du Toit – Clarinet (2011)
Maria Solozobova – Violin (2011)
Leslie Howard – Piano (2011)
Sharon de Kock – Violin (2011, 2016, 2018)
Jan Hugo – Piano (2012)
Pretty Yende – Soprano (2012)
Samson Diamond – Violin (2013, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2021)
Charl du Plessis – Piano (2014, 2018)
Aviva Pelham – Soprano (2014)
Magdalena de Vries – Marimba (2014)
Frank Mallows – Vibraphone (2014)
Ben Schoeman – Piano (2015; 2023)
Ockie Vermeulen – Organ (2015)
Magdalene Minnaar – Soprano (2015)
Ubrey Lodewyk – Baritone (2015)
Lance Phillip – Tenor (2015)
Farida Bacharova – Violin (2015)
Okkie Vermeulen – Organ (2015)
Francois du Toit – Piano (2016, 2019)
Jan Beukes – Organ (2016)
Makudupanyane Senoana – Tenor (2016)
Francois du Toit – Piano (2016)
Rachel Lee Priday – Violin (2017)
Grethe Nöthling – Piano (2017)
Bridget Rennie-Salonen – Flute (2017)
Gaylen-Rose Sales – Harp (2017)
Emily Dangwa – Soprano (2017)
Teresa De Wit – Mezzo-Soprano (2017, 2018)
Thabang Senrekal – Baritone (2017)
Bryan Wallick – Piano (2018)
Gretel Coetzee – Soprano (2018)
Albertus Engelbrecht – Tenor (2018)
Vitaly Pisareniko – Pianist (2018)
Alissa Margulis – Violin (2018)
Paul Madibeng – Bass (2018)
Kobus Malan – Oboe (2018)
Danré Strydom – Clarinet (2018)
Shannon Armer – French Horn (2018)
Brahm Henkins – Bassoon (2018)
Paul Loeb Van Zuilenburg – Trumpet (2018)
Eva Mei – Soprano (2018)
Jacques-Pierre Malan – Cello (2019)
Megan-Geoffrey Prins – Piano (2019, 2024)
Luthando Qave – Baritone – (2019)
Vanessa Tait-Jones – Soprano (2019)
Gunter Weyermüller – Bassoon (2020)
Aristide du Plessis – Cello (2021)
Megan-Geoffrey Prins – Piano (2021, 2024)
Rocco de Villiers – Piano (2023)
Jean-Philippe Sylvestre – Piano (2024)
Charl Du Plessis Trio (2024)

Disclaimer: Although every effort was made to assure the correctness of this information, the data was extracted from incomplete archival material, which is challenging. No musician has purposefully been omitted from the list. Any omissions or mistake can be brought to our attention by contacting the FSSO office. We would gladly improve our historical records.

ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Sharon de Kock
(Concertmaster)
Richard Reid
(Assistant Concertmaster)
Francois Henkins
(Assistant Concertmaster)
Keamogetswe Magau
Lizette Gous-Holloway
Abri van Nieuwenhuizen
Jason Oppelt
Eriel Huang
Louis van der Watt
Bambi Hellberg
Corné Beyers
Dané Hayes

VIOLIN II

Regomoditswe Molosioa
(Principal)
Stefné Raubenheimer
Ezelle Erasmus
Michele Williams
Tsholofelo Tshikare
Sue-Phill Petersen
Diandra Steenekamp
Dineo Molebatsi
Maria Yazbeck
Katlego Molelekoa

VIOLA

Jeanne-Louise Moolman
(Principal)
Chair sponsor: André Venter
Kate White
Elmarie van der Vyver
Ashleigh Botha
Friederike Scholtz
Kutloano Bookholane
John Warner
Sehle Mosole

CELLO

Arend Brink
(Guest Principal)
Chair sponsor: Frederick Fourie
Chris van Zyl
Willie Naudé
Tilla Henkins
Frederick Fourie
Jaco Cilliers

BASS

Ruan Baartman
(Principal)
Asta Budack
Mariechen Meyer
Christi-Louise Swanepoel

FLUTE

Handri Loots
(Guest Principal)
Renée Neuhoff
Kate Watson

OBOE

Johan Ferreira
(Guest Principal)
Elize van Zuilenburg

CLARINET

Danré Strydom
(Principal)
Chair sponsor: Katinka Botha
Naledi Dweba

BASSOON

Brahm Henkins
(Guest Principal)
Jan-Willem Hoorweg
Sigqibo Tokwe

FRENCH HORN

Dylan Barker
(Guest Principal)
Erik Albertyn
Louise van Zuilenburg
Caryn Pretorius

TRUMPET

Dingaen Chabalala
(Guest Principal)
Mike Magner
Andrew Strugnell

TROMBONE

Nick Green
(Guest Principal)
Stuart Scott
Vuyani Gxavu

TIMPANI

Maritsa Barlow
(Principal)

PERCUSSION

Heinrich Lategan
(Principal)
Marie-Elize Venter
Dario Broccardo
Reneé Scholtz
Julian Gaul

HARP

Gaylen Sales
(Guest Principal)

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Ernest Rood
Johan Rood
Annette Roberts
Ian van der Merwe
Jaco & Mandie Cilliers
Antoinette Lion-Cachet
Pieter Pienaar
Ludwig & Elsabé de Jager
Johan & Riana de Beer

FRIENDS

PLATINUM

Christo Saayman
Theo du Plessis
Johan Lombaard
Faan Hancke
Kobus Swart
Anonymous
Wilma Henning
Lizette de Coning & Annalie vd Vyfer

GOLD

Engela Pretorius
Eelco & Helena Boonstra

SILVER

Johan & Louise Cilliers
Elmar du Plessis
Carlo & Martiné Combrinck
Voet & Lydia du Plessis

BRONZE

Jeannine Lieffrig
Basie & Hilda Verster

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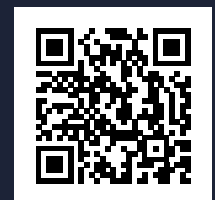


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