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Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra

2024 U.S. Tour

Conductors

Nayden Todorov, Principal Conductor
Derek Gleeson, Principal Guest Conductor
Christo Pavlov, Associate Conductor

Beethoven: Coriolan Overture, Op 62

Beethoven: Piano Concerto No 5 in E flat Major, Op 73

Intermission

Beethoven: Symphony No 7 in A Major, Op 92

SOFIA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA



Founded in 1892 as Guards Symphony Orchestra, in 1938 after fusion with the Academic Symphony Orchestra transformed into Royal Military Symphony Orchestra, after 1945 the SOFIA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA became the national orchestra of Bulgaria and has long established itself as one of the leading cultural institutions, representative of the overall contemporary musical culture of the country. The orchestra's high artistic achievement is associated with the names of prominent figures such as Sasha Popov, Konstantin Iliev, Dobrin Petkov, Vassil Stefanov, Vladi Simeonov, Vassil Kazandjiev, Dimitar Manolov, Emil Tabakov, Julian Kovatchev, Nayden Todorov. Unforgettable in the chronicle of the Philharmonic are the instances of co-operation with personalities such as conductors Bruno Walter, Hermann Abendroth, Kurt Masur, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Valery Gergiev, Yuri Simonov, Yuri Temirkanov, Igor Markevitch, Carlo Zecchi, Karl Österreicher, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Neville Marriner, Charles Dutoit, Marin Alsop, Frédéric Chaslin, Gianluigi Gelmetti and others. Soloists who have performed with the orchestra were David Oistrakh, Sviatoslav Richter, Emil Gilels, Alexis Weissenberg, Dmitri Shostakovich, Mstislav Rostropovich, Vladimir Spivakov, Ruggiero Ricci, Ghena Dimitrova, Jose Carreras, Julian Rachlin, Plácido Domingo, Sarah Chang, Thomas Hampson, Yuri Bashmet, Tabea Zimmermann, Elena Bashkurova, Alexandrina Pendatchanska, Sonya Yoncheva, Patricia Kopatchinskaja, Maxim Vengerov, Svetlin Roussev, Angela Gheorghiu, Vadim Repin, Paul Badura-Skoda, Joshua Bell, Dmitri Ratser, Elina Garanča, Sharon Kam, Ivo Pogorelič, Martha Argerich, Viktoria Mullova, Mischa Maisky, Shlomo Mintz, Gidon Kremer and many more world-renowned artists.

The repertoire of the Sofia Philharmonic comprises works from the entire historically available range of music – from classical to contemporary opuses, including premiere performances of numerous works by Bulgarian composers. The orchestra has garnered substantial recognition all over the world. It has guest-performed with great success in the major musical centres across Europe (Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain, Luxembourg, Netherland, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Turkey, France, Croatia, Switzerland), Asia (China, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Japan), and North America, and has received frenetic acclaim even from the most demanding of audiences. The Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra was awarded many prestigious accolades including: "Musician of the Year", "Golden Lyre", "Golden Stave", "Golden Quill", "Crystal Lyre", the Honorary Sign of Sofia, the Honorary Sign of the President of Bulgaria. From 2017, general director of the Sofia Philharmonic is maestro Nayden Todorov.



Derek Gleeson

Principle conductor

Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra

In 2020 Maestro Gleeson was named principle conductor of the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra.

Born in Dublin, Ireland (a U.S./Irish dual citizen), Derek Gleeson studied piano, percussion, composition and conducting at the music conservatories of Dublin, London and Vienna, and film scoring at the University of California, Los Angeles. By the age of 11, Gleeson was the recipient of many piano and percussion competition prizes within Ireland and Great Britain. At the age of 15 he represented Ireland as a conductor in the European Community Youth Orchestra, where he had the opportunity to perform at the leading European music festivals, such as Salzburg, Edinburgh and Lucerne Festivals under the direction of Maestros Herbert von Karajan, Claudio Abbado, Leonard Bernstein, Sir George Solti and others. These early experiences directed him toward a career in conducting. In

1984 he was a first prize winner of the London Symphony Orchestra's music scholarship.

As a Guest conductor, Maestro Gleeson performed conducted The London Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Orchestras, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He was Music Director of the Rückert Orchestra of Dublin (1990 through 1993), and since 1997, he has been permanent Music Director of The Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra.

An ardent champion of contemporary music, Gleeson has provided many premier performances of works by living composers, his own works also being performed in Europe and the U.S. In 2004, Gleeson's concert work titled "Buenos Aires" premiered in Buenos Aires, Argentina. His recordings as conductor include premieres of contemporary American and Irish composers with The Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra and Philharmonia Bulgarica.

Amongst others, Gleeson has conducted The London Philharmonic Orchestra, the RTE Concert Orchestra (Ireland's national broadcaster), The National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, The Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra (Ireland), Orchestra Da Camera Fiorentina (Italy), The Brohuslav Martinu Philharmonic (Czech Republic) Karlovy Vary Symphony Orchestra (Czech Republic) Hradec Kralove Symphony Orchestra (Czech Republic), Czech National Symphony Orchestra, Prague Philharmonic Orchestra. The Beijing Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Symphonique de Bretagne (France), RTL Orchestra (Luxembourg), NOS Orchestra (Holland), The Rückert Orchestra (Ireland), The Danish Radio Concert Orchestra (Denmark), Orchestra of the Sadlers Wells Royal Ballet (England), Bulgarian National

Radio Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonica Bulgarica, The Vratza Philharmonic, Plovdiv State Opera, Varna State Opera, and Burgas Opera/Philharmonic (Bulgaria), The Los Angeles Composers Guild Chamber Orchestra. Maestro Gleeson's extraordinary conducting talent also extends to opera. Repertoire includes performances of Verdi's *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *Rigoletto*, and *Un Ballo in Maschera*, Mozart's *La Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così Fan Tutte*, and *The Magic Flute*, Bizet's *Carmen*, and Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. Gleeson conducted *Rigoletto* at the Anna Livia International Opera Festival in Dublin.

In 2009, as Music Director and Conductor, Gleeson and The Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra embarked on its inaugural United States ten-week tour of 49-cities in 24 states, presented under the auspices of Columbia Artists Management, Inc. In July 2010, Maestro Gleeson and the all-Irish DPO toured extensively in China, including China's important World Expo Program, as well as two concerts in Beijing's most important Opera House, televised throughout China to over 400 million people. In 2014 Gleeson returned to China for a Gala TV broadcast performance at The Great Hall of the People, with The National Symphony Orchestra of China.

In January 2016 Gleeson again toured China, with The Dublin Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2017 Gleeson toured China with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra. In 2016, Gleeson was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of The Harbin Symphony Orchestra, Harbin, China. In 2020, Gleeson was appointed permanent principle conductor of the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra of Bulgaria.

Gleeson will tour the USA in 2024 with the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra.

IVALYO VASSILEV, *Pianist*



Vassilev was born in 2007 in Sofia and studied piano at the National Music School in Sofia with prof. Borislava Taneva, PhD.

At the age of 16, he has earned an impressive collection of more than 30 prizes from international competitions from around the world.

Ivalyo has played in various piano festivals, amongst them 2023 Cliburn Junior Piano Festival (Dallas), Lancaster International Piano Festival (Lancaster, USA, 2022), "Wunderkinder" (Toblach, Italy, 2018), "Musical Olympus" (St. Petersburg, 2019), and "Moscow Meets Friends" (Moscow, 2019). He has studied with world known pianists and pedagogues, including Konstantin Scherbakov, Dmitry Bashkirov, and Alexander Kobrin.

He has performed at iconic halls around the world, such as the Great Hall and Rachmaninoff Hall of Moscow State Conservatory, Tchaikovsky Hall, the House of Music in

Moscow, Symphonic Capella in St. Petersburg, and of course, Bulgaria Hall in Sofia.

As a soloist he has performed with famous conductors, like Pavel Balev, Sascha Goetzel, Vyacheslav Valeev, Alexander Titov, Alexander Chernushenko, Mikhail Kirkhoff, Igor Lerman and others, with many Bulgarian and Russian orchestras, including the four major Bulgarian ones – Sofia Philharmonic, Bulgarian National Radio Orchestra, Classic FM orchestra and Varna Philharmonic, as well as with Russian Philharmonic Orchestra.

His first album with Mozart and Shostakovich piano concertos was recorded and released in 2019 in St. Petersburg, as a special prize for winning the Golden Nutcracker award.

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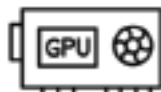
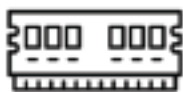
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