

Mozart Symphony Orchestra
21 December 2021
Cadogan Hall

Christmas Concerts

Philip Mackenzie and Julia Donaldson – *The Gruffalo*

Herbert Chappell – *Paddington Bear's first concert*

INTERVAL

Howard Blake – *The Snowman*



PHILIP MACKENZIE

Conductor and narrator

Philip started learning the piano when he was 8 and the cello when he was 9. He also took organ lessons in a big, draughty church from a teacher with wild white hair who was very old indeed- even older than Philip is now. After taking a degree in music he went on to learn how to be A Conductor at the Royal College of Music in London.

When Philip grew up he discovered that being A Conductor is Brilliant! He has travelled all over the world, conducting orchestras in Russia, China, India, Singapore and South Africa. While he is travelling he likes to go exploring and sometimes he is introduced to all sorts of weirdly wonderful foods . . . Philip has been offered Roast



Snake (sounds like something from the Gruffalo, I know, but true!), Snake Stew and some kind of Slimy Sea Slug in a Green Custard . . . bleugh. (Philip would much rather eat Chocolate Cake.)

Philip has also composed music for various different groups of musicians including full symphony orchestra and this music has been heard around the world and back home on the BBC.

He has performed several times on radio and television, including a TV programme in which he taught Top Gear presenter James May how to conduct. Other fun stuff includes making advertisements for the Uefa Cup Final and the Ashes for Sky Sports. On the whole, he's pretty pleased not to have a proper job.

Photo: Alastair Merrill

MALCOLM FORBES-PECKHAM

Conductor and keys

Malcolm enjoys a varied career as a musical director, pianist and educator in both the theatre and concert performance worlds. He is a graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music where his training included solo piano, accompaniment and conducting. He is currently the conductor and Musical Director of the UK and International tour of the Lincoln Centre's award winning production of *The King and I*.



Theatre includes, as Musical Director/Assistant: *Caroline or Change* (Playhouse Theatre), *A Christmas Carol* (Royal Shakespeare Company), *The King and I* (London Palladium), *Aladdin*, *Cinderella*, *Dick Whittington*, *Snow White* (Bristol Hippodrome/Milton Keynes Theatre), *Grand Hotel* (Southwark Playhouse), *Wonder.land* (National Theatre/Theatre du Chatelet), *A Pacifist's guide to the War on Cancer* (National Theatre), *The Braille Legacy*, *Emma; The Musical* (UK Workshops). Malcolm was the pianist for the smash hit West End run of *An American in Paris* (Dominion Theatre). He is currently Associate Musical Director for *Phantom of the Opera* in the West End.

Other theatre work as pianist includes: *West Side Story*, *On the Town* (RNCM), *Sweeney Todd* (West Yorkshire Playhouse/Manchester Royal Exchange), *Porgy and Bess* (Regent's Park Open Air Theatre), *Wind In The Willows* (UK Tour), *Titanic; The Musical* (UK Tour), *London Road* (Movie Version).

Malcolm has given recent concerto performances at YB Chavan Centre (Mumbai) Exeter Cathedral, Cadogan Hall and Wells Cathedral, and has performed as a classical artist at venues including Bridgewater Hall, Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, The Forbidden City and Xi'an Concert Halls. He is also the assistant conductor of the Amadeus Orchestra and Mozart Symphony Orchestra.

Photo: Alastair Merrill

MARK MAJCHERCZYK-OLCZAK

Singer

Mark is a Music Scholar at St Benedict's School Ealing and Deputy Head Chorister in Ealing Abbey Choir, a Catholic choir based at the monastic foundation of Ealing Abbey.

Mark has performed here in the UK as a soloist and member of Ealing Abbey Choir in venues including The Royal Albert Hall and Westminster Cathedral. He sang 'Walking in the Air' in a live performance of 'The Snowman' with the Orpheus Sinfonia in 2019 and 2021.

As a musician, Mark is working towards Grade 8 singing and piano, he is also an excellent cellist. Mark is a member of the National Youth Choir of Great Britain and the Ealing Youth Orchestra.

GEORGE MAJCHERCZYK-OLCZAK

Singer

George is a Music Scholar at St Benedict's School Ealing and Head Chorister in Ealing Abbey Choir, a Catholic choir based at the monastic foundation of Ealing Abbey.

George has performed here in the UK as a soloist and member of Ealing Abbey Choir in venues including The Royal Albert Hall and Westminster Cathedral. He sang 'Walking in the Air' in a live performance of 'The Snowman' with the Orpheus Sinfonia in 2019 and 2021.

As a musician, George is working towards Grade 8 singing and piano, he is also an outstanding violinist and budding organist. George is a member of the National Youth Choir of Great Britain and the Ealing Youth Orchestra.

DIGGORY SEACOME

Narrator



Originally trained to teach French, Diggory now occupies himself almost totally in the music business as either teacher, performer (on percussion), administrator or conductor. In addition to conducting most of the Gilbert and Sullivan Operettas, as well as several Broadway Musicals, at the Everyman and Playhouse Theatres in Cheltenham and elsewhere, he has also taken his own Orchestra, as well as Brass Ensemble, to Cheltenham's twin town of Annecy in the Alps giving three or more successful concerts there during the course of each week. Twenty years ago he was elected a Councillor for the Borough of Cheltenham and, among his other duties, enjoys presenting the case for the Arts in this town.

JULIA DONALDSON

Author

Julia Donaldson is the author of some of the world's best-loved children's books, including modern classics 'The Gruffalo' and 'The Gruffalo's Child', which together have sold over 17 million copies worldwide, and the hugely successful 'What the Ladybird Heard' adventures. Julia also writes fiction, including the Princess Mirror-Belle books illustrated by Lydia Monks, as well as poems, plays and songs – and her brilliant live shows are always in demand. She was Children's Laureate 2011-13 and has been honoured with a CBE for Services to Literature. Julia and her husband Malcolm divide their time between West Sussex and Edinburgh.



Photo: Steve Ullathorne

AXEL SCHEFFLER

Illustrator

Axel Scheffler is a star illustrator whose instantly recognisable, warm and witty illustrations have achieved worldwide acclaim and numerous awards. Axel is the illustrator of wonderful novelty, gift and poetry books for Macmillan, such as 'Fish Dream of Trees' (Two Hoots) and the bestselling 'The Bedtime Bear', 'The Tickle Book' and 'Mother Goose's Nursery Rhymes' – and of course, he is the illustrator of some of the world's best-loved picture books, including the modern classic 'The Gruffalo', with over 27 million books sold worldwide across the series. Axel's artwork is exhibited internationally; he has illustrated for many charities, and designed the Royal Mail Christmas stamps in 2012. Born in Hamburg, Axel now lives with his family in London.

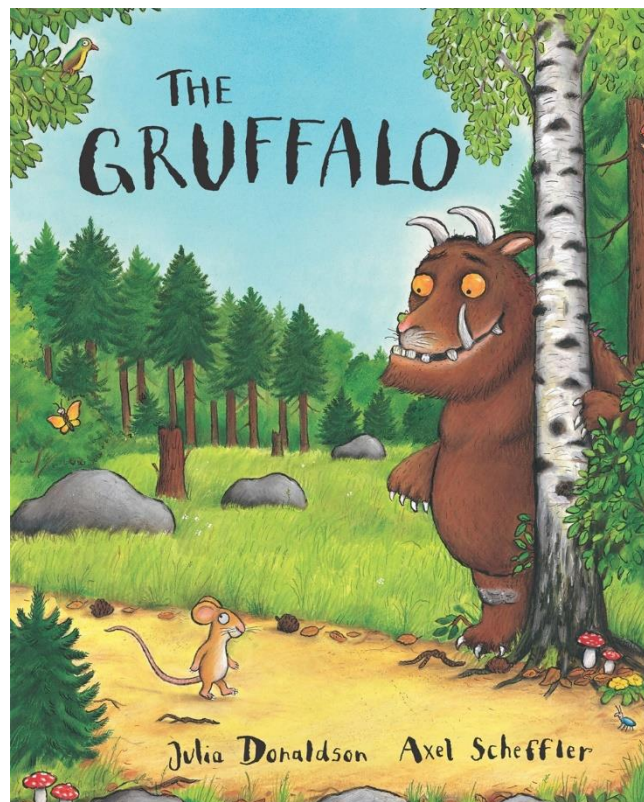
THE GRUFFALO

Music by Philip Mackenzie
Words by Julia Donaldson
Illustrations by Axel Scheffler

We all know the story of the Gruffalo (I hope!) – Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler’s tale of the brave mouse meeting a monster from his own imagination and persuading it that he, the mouse, is the scariest creature in the woods. This new version came into composer Philip Mackenzie’s mind a few years ago whilst reading the book to his then three year old son. Having conducted Peter and the wolf many times before, it struck him that the Gruffalo would fit perfectly with the other, more outlandish woodwind instruments.

Whereas Prokofiev used a flute for the bird, an oboe for the duck, a clarinet for the cat, the bassoon for the Grandfather, three horns for the wolf and the strings for brave master Peter, Mackenzie uses the piccolo for the mouse, the cor anglais for the snake, a small high pitched clarinet called the E flat for the fox, the contrabassoon for the Gruffalo and the horn for the owl. The strings represent the forest.

Listen out carefully at the end of the piece for the two mouse themes and the two Gruffalo themes fighting for supremacy in the orchestra. Which one wins?



The Gruffalo ©Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler 1999. Published by Macmillan Children’s books.

PADDINGTON BEAR'S FIRST CONCERT

Herbert Chappell

Paddington Bear's First Concert was first performed by the London Chamber Orchestra with Ian Lavender (Pike from Dad's Army!) as narrator and Herbert Chappell (conductor) at a Teddy Bear's Concert at the Barbican in London on January 3rd 1986.

Paddington, the lovable bear from Peru with a talent for troubles and a taste for marmalade sandwiches is famous around the world but no more so than in the UK. Stories of his exploits have been translated into more than twenty languages and have recently been made into two highly successful films.

Michael Bond's story reminds us of Paddington's journey from Peru to the Portobello road in London and some of the friends he found there. It's climax is reached with Paddington's unscheduled appearance mid-symphony in one of London's finest concert halls. Herbert Chappell's witty and attractive music illustrated the story with great skill and imagination.



THE SNOWMAN

Howard Blake

Howard Blake composed the words and music of *The Snowman* in 1982, when an animated film was made of the story, using the drawings by Raymond Briggs that had already made his children's picture book a best seller. The film won many prizes too, and the music was released on CBS Records, on cassettes and on video, all of which have been enormously successful.

In 1985, Aled Jones recorded its famous song, *Walking in the Air*, which rose to number three in the hit parade and made him a household name. *The Snowman* has been performed by orchestras worldwide from Japan to Canada and elicited from the *Independent* the headline 'Knee-deep in Snowmen' and the astounding comment that "The Snowman has well-nigh frozen out Handel's *Messiah* as the nation's traditional Christmas fare."

What is its appeal? Christopher Palmer writing in March 1990 says: "...since we have seen many excellent products which have been and gone and failed to reach a wider audience, *The Snowman* must have something special, something which touches a popular nerve. Looking at it and its successor *Granpa*, it is not too difficult to see what the 'something' is. It is the voice of Innocence which has not been silenced or distorted by Experience but actually made more articulate by it..."



THE TEAM

Flutes

Nikki Shorland (+ picc)
Daniele Rogan (+ picc)

Oboes

Philip Haworth (+ cor)
Josh Hall

Clarinets

James Maltby (Eb)
Chris Goodman (Bb)
Helen Bennett (+ bass + alto sax)

Bassoons

Stanley Kaye-Smith (+ contra)
Sarah Sesu

Horns

Tom Bettley
Eddie Morgan

Trumpets

Sam Pierce
Thomas Fountain

Bass trombone

Sam Taber

Percussion

Jonny Grogan
Luke Taylor
Matt Skelton

Pianos

Malcolm Forbes-Peckham
Fionnuala Ward

Harp

Olivia Jageurs

First violins

Michael Gurevich
Emily Nebel
Maddie Pickering
Harry Kneeshaw
Fran Barritt

Second violins

Rebecca Smith
Dawn Kelleher
Lena Segal
Laure Chan

Violas

Chris Beckett
Anna Growns
Heather Bourne

Celli

Austen Scully
Jenny Kimber
Clare Durgan

Double basses

Ben Griffiths
Damon Burrows

Managers

Jan Allen
Helen Cockcroft

Narrators

Diggory Seacome
Philip Mackenzie

Singers

George Majcherczyk-Olczak
Mark Majcherczyk-Olczak

Conductors

Philip Mackenzie
Malcolm Forbes-Peckham