

## SOLOIST

### BERTHINE VAN SCHOOR-KRUMME

Berthine van Schoor is a graduate of the University of Stellenbosch and the Mozarteum University in Salzburg, Austria and studied under the legendary Betty Pack, Magdalena Roux and Prof Heidi Litschauer. During her years in Austria, she performed extensively in Europe and Japan as a member of several orchestras and was the principal cellist in the Philharmonic Orchestra in Bad Reichenhall, Germany.

Berthine returned to South Africa in the year 2000 and founded her own cello academy, which has produced numerous prize-winning students, some of whom are currently studying abroad. She is a tutor in the Unisa Music Foundation community development projects, a string specialist examiner for Unisa, as well as a part-time lecturer at the University of Pretoria. She has received six awards from Unisa for outstanding teaching. She is the cellist in the Indian Classical music group East meets West with whom she has performed all major music festivals in the country. She is also regularly invited to judge at music festivals and competitions countrywide.

As a soloist she has performed with several orchestras in South Africa, Germany and India. Berthine regularly performs as a chamber musician and has played numerous concerts and recitals for foreign embassies in South Africa, e.g. The High Commission and Consulates of India, the Alliance Francaise, the Embassies of Austria, Italy, Hungary and Norway, as well as the South African Embassy in Rome. She has been a faculty member of the International Academy of Music in Castelnuovo di Garfagnana, Italy since 2010.

Berthine plays a cello made by Georg Tiefenbrunner in Munich, 1849.



## CONDUCTOR

### JACO VAN STADEN

Jaco van Staden was born in Cape Town and grew up in Pretoria. He obtained his MMus degree in Performing Arts at the University of Pretoria and holds a Teacher's Licentiate in French horn (UNISA). He enjoys a career as a French horn player, conductor and teacher.

During his years of study, he had lessons with Peter Griffiths, Shannon Armer, Eddie Clayton and Frik le Roux. He was the recipient of the SICMF French horn scholarship, which allowed him to study with world-renowned French horn soloist Abel Pereira and to perform with the Orquestra Simfonica da Porto in Portugal. He also had lessons from Austrian horn player Volker Altmann through the Miagi Youth Orchestra.

He studied conducting with Gerben Grooten between 2012 and 2017 and received masterclasses from Daniel Boico and Victor Yampolsky. In collaboration with Miagi, he attended conducting master classes of Professor Mark Stringer at the University of Music and Arts in Vienna and also received private tuition from Prof Georg Mark. He was the runner-up in the 3rd Len van Zyl National Conductor's Competition held at Cape Town City Hall and conducted the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra at the finals.

Jaco is currently the principal French horn player of the Gauteng Philharmonic Orchestra, Head of Music at the Mamelodi Magnet School, and part-time lecturer in French horn at the University of Pretoria. He was formerly the Head of Brass at St John's College, JHB. He is the principal conductor of the Pretoria Symphony Orchestra, resident conductor of the Unisa Music Foundation Wind Ensemble, UP Chamber Ensemble, and the Gauteng Chamber Strings. He also frequently conducts productions at Brooklyn Theatre, from chamber music to opera.



## ORCHESTRA

### CONCERTMASTER

Ute Smythe

### FIRST VIOLINS

Mariëtte Malherbe  
Adriaan Gerrys  
Rashmi Thomas  
Linnet Labuschagne  
Esté Nortje

### SECOND VIOLINS

Lizette Vosloo  
Lucian Johnson  
Mariza Pistorius  
Bianca Rudolph  
Maike Schwär  
Tasmin Schwär  
Joshua Holcroft  
Cilliers du Preez

### VIOLAS

Joryn van Staden  
Brenton Ward  
Juretha Swanepoel\*

### CELLOS

Alexander Retter  
Natalie Bentley  
Lammie Marx  
Sanet Groenewald  
Tony Wentzel  
Anri du Preez

### DOUBLE BASS

Albert van Niekerk  
Willem Fourie

### FLUTES

Werdie van Staden  
Kobus Groenewald

### OBOES

Andrea Racionzer  
Paul Vaandrager

### CLARINETS

Peter Ball  
Elaine Holliday

### BASSOONS

Adrián Koessler  
Drikus Zwarts

### FRENCH HORNS

François Malherbe  
Gavin Surgey  
Mieke-Marie Kunz  
Frikkie le Roux

### TRUMPETS

Jeremy Fabian  
Colette Westcott  
Katy Racionzer

### TROMBONES

Jesse Stevens  
Jeffrey Wiseman\*  
Wim Kurpershoek

### TUBA

Bennie Oosthuizen\*

### TIMPANI

Loandi Richter

### PERCUSSION

Motshwane Pege  
Sabrina Whistler

\*Ad-hoc/guest player



**BRAHMS ACADEMIC FESTIVAL OVERTURE**

**MOZART SYMPHONY NO. 38 (PRAGUE)**

**ELGAR CELLO CONCERTO SOLOIST: BERTHINE VAN SCHOOR**

## UPCOMING CONCERTS

**4 December** – Christmas Carols @ Brooklyn Mall



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PRETORIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

# ON THE PROGRAMME

**Brahms** – Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80

**Mozart** – Symphony No. 38 in D “Prague” KV 504  
with Berthine van Schoor

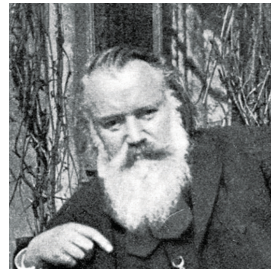
20 min interval

**Elgar** – Cello Concerto in E minor, Op. 85

## PROGRAMME NOTES BY FRANCOIS MALHERBE

### ACADEMIC FESTIVAL OVERTURE, OP. 80

**JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)**



Brahms was a highly complex character. On the one hand, his ‘serious’ and ‘dark’ side, he was a philosopher thinking deeply about life’s big questions, an avid reader of literature and poetry. He also had a deep-seated dislike of ceremonies and flattering talk, himself preferring a rather frugal lifestyle.

On the other hand, he was described as a wonderful and reliable friend who enjoyed drinking beer and schnapps in a pub in the company of friends and singing students.

He loved children, even though he never had any of his own, and a good tune (Johan Strauss was a lifelong friend of his). As a lover of nature who enjoyed long forest walks, he knew the names of all the birds and could imitate their calls.

Brahms composed the Academic Festival Overture during the summer of 1880 as a tribute to the University of Breslau, which had notified him that it would award him an honorary doctorate in philosophy. Initially he had contented himself with sending a simple handwritten note of acknowledgment to the University. However, the conductor Bernard Scholz, who had nominated him for the degree, convinced him that protocol required him to make a grander gesture of gratitude. Nothing less than a musical offering was expected of him. “Compose a fine symphony for us!” he wrote to Brahms. “But well-orchestrated, old boy, not too uniformly thick!”

Brahms was known to have a rather ‘rustic’ sense of humour and one can almost imagine him thinking to himself “I’ll show you!”. Rather than composing some ceremonial equivalent of Pomp and Circumstance Brahms crafted what he described as a “rollicking potpourri of student songs,” in this case student drinking songs. In spite of Scholz’s request, the orchestration calls for one of the largest ensembles for any of his compositions. However, the blend of orchestral colours is carefully planned, humorous and playful.

The Overture consists of four continuous sections:

1. Allegro (C minor)
2. Maestoso (C major)
3. Animato (G major)
4. Maestoso (C major)

The allegro opens with a stealthily tip-toeing motive that creates a feeling of expectation – ‘something is going to happen’ – underlined by the bubbling clarinets. This is followed by the maestoso melody of the song “We had built a stately house” by the trumpets and horns. The diddle ‘The Fox Song’ is introduced by the bassoons at the start of the animato section which then, joined by the full orchestra, leads into the final section with a triumphant rendering of the “Gaudeamus igitur” which succinctly engages Brahms’ sophisticated mastery of counterpoint, further fulfilling the “academic” aspect of his program, cheekily applied to the well-worn melody. Brahms manages to evoke ravishing euphoria without sacrificing his commitment to classical balance.

The composer himself conducted the premiere of the overture, and received his honorary degree, at a special convocation held by the University on January 4, 1881. Because of its easily grasped structure, its lyrical warmth, and its excitement and humour, the work has remained a staple of today’s concert-hall repertoire.

### SYMPHONY NO. 38 IN D “PRAGUE” KV 504



**WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)**

1. Adagio – Allegro
2. Andante
3. Finale: Presto

Three years had passed since 1783, the year Mozart wrote his last symphony, the C-major work known as the “Linz” (No. 36, K. 425). Those years were among the most productive in Mozart’s life; in addition to a magnificent series of piano concertos (no fewer than twelve works!), he composed the six great string quartets dedicated to Haydn, a host of other chamber music works, and, last but not least, the opera “The Marriage of Figaro”.

Mozart probably didn’t write Symphony No. 38 with Prague in mind. It was completed in Vienna on December 6, 1786 before he received the invitation to go to Prague, and at a time when he was considering traveling to London. But the work became a spectacular gift to a city which had always treated Mozart well, forever earning the nickname the “Prague Symphony”. The Prague public was in the grips of a veritable “Figaro-mania” and one could hear its tunes being played and sung in cafés and whistled in the streets of the city. This was in stark contrast with the rather cool and aloof attitudes of Vienna towards their very own resident genius.

Mozart, who had turned thirty in January 1786, had entered a new artistic phase, reaching an unprecedented level of maturity and sophistication. Having mastered the musical conventions of the age as a child and created his own personal style as a young adult, he was now beginning to write works that were totally unique in the way they treated that style and those conventions. Every page of the new symphony, known as the “Prague” because it had its first performed there on 19 January 1787, bears witness to Mozart’s intention to transcend the scope of what a symphony had normally been in the past. The main novelty is a much more complex web of motivic relationships; a few short motifs and melodic gestures are enough to control much of what is happening, and they often appear in places where we might least expect them. In addition, the technical demands placed on the performers have significantly increased--there are more virtuoso passages, intricate syncopations and sensitive woodwind solos than ever before.

The lavish use of wind instruments might offer a clue that the new symphony was fashioned specifically with the Prague public in mind. The wind players of Bohemia were famed throughout Europe, and the Prague press specifically attributed the great success of the operas “The Abduction from the Seraglio” and “The Marriage of Figaro” partially to their skilful deployment of wind instruments. It is also possible that the extensive use of winds in the “Prague” Symphony was simply the result of experiments with orchestration that Mozart had been cultivating in the orchestral accompaniments for his piano concertos for the previous two years and the new experience he had of writing for winds would have shown up in his symphonies regardless. No matter, the use of wind instruments in the “Prague” Symphony represents a major advance in Mozart’s symphonic technique that was imitated not only in his last three symphonies, but also by Haydn, Beethoven, and Schubert.

The “Prague” is one of only three Mozart symphonies that start with a slow introduction, the other two being the “Linz” and No. 39 in E-flat, K. 543. The introduction begins with a typical Mozartian gesture of repeated notes played in unison with rapid scale figures leading up to them. But the introduction soon diverges from all similar openings: the harmonies become more and more chromatic, and the progression culminates in a great D-minor chord that sets off a new chain of astonishing modulations. The intense dramatic power of this introduction presages the overture to Don Giovanni, the new opera Mozart was soon to write for Prague.

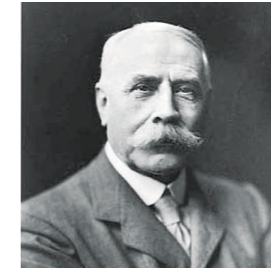
Throughout the first movement, we hear echoes of Mozart’s operas from The Magic Flute to the yet unwritten darkness of Don Giovanni. A syncopated, skipping heartbeat in the violins launches the first movement’s allegro section. All the distinct voices which emerge, overlap and converse explode with full force into a dizzying counterpoint rushing into the excitement of the movement’s conclusion.

The slow movement is the most operatically lyrical and emotionally varied he had yet composed in a symphony, with allusions to themes from “The Marriage of Figaro”, for instance Figaro’s “... cinque, dieci, venti ...” which opens the first act of the opera. Likewise, the tune at the start of the finale is a quote from the same opera, exploding

the little duet between Susanna and Cherubino in Act II into a dazzling presto that’s by turns coquettish and muscularly dissonant. Celebration, sparkling virtuosity, and humour bring the “Prague” Symphony to an exhilarating conclusion.

It is no wonder then that the first performance, conducted by Mozart himself, was received with overwhelming enthusiasm!

### CELLO CONCERTO IN E MINOR, OP. 85



**EDWARD ELGAR (1857–1934)**

1. Adagio – Moderato
2. Lento – Allegro molto
3. Adagio
4. Allegro – Moderato – Allegro, ma non-troppo – Poco più lento – Adagio

**SOLOIST: BERTHINE VAN SCHOOR (CELLO)**

Although Elgar is often regarded as a typically English composer, most of his musical influences were not from England but from continental Europe, particularly the music of Schumann, Brahms, Richard Strauss and Wagner. He felt himself to be an outsider, not only musically, but socially. In musical circles dominated by academics, he was a self-taught composer; in Protestant Britain, his Roman Catholicism was regarded with suspicion in some quarters; and in the class-conscious society of Victorian and Edwardian Britain, he was acutely sensitive about his humble origins even after he achieved recognition. He nevertheless married the daughter of a senior British army officer. She inspired him both musically and socially, but he struggled to achieve success until his forties

Most of Elgar’s music was written between 1890 and 1914, part of the flowering of European art that preceded the First World War. The Enigma variations, The Dream of Gerontius and the two symphonies belong to the same world as the poetry of Yeats and Rilke, the plays of Galsworthy and Shaw, the music of Strauss and Puccini. All of these artists created new works after 1914, but the world they came from, and which had nourished them, was gone. The scale of the war was apocalyptic, and, before it happened, few people had thought such destruction was even possible. In Britain, for example, the public’s notion of modern warfare had been formed by the Boer War, in which 22,000 British troops had died over a period of two-and-a-half years. In this new conflict, nearly that many British soldiers were killed on a single day: July 1, 1916, the first day of the Battle of the Somme.

These were the circumstances when Edward Elgar checked into a London nursing home in March of 1918 to have his tonsils removed, surgery that at the time was considered somewhat dangerous on a sixty-year-old man. Nevertheless, he woke up one morning and asked for pencil and paper and wrote down the opening theme of the Cello Concerto. In the weeks to come, however, Elgar made no attempt to put this new melody in 9/8 time to use. Appalled and disillusioned by the war, he had done little sustained composition since 1914. “I cannot do any real work with the awful shadow over us,” Elgar wrote to a friend.

In May, Elgar and his family went to live at Brinkwells, the thatched cottage in Sussex where the family had spent the previous summer. Elgar loved the countryside, and the rural surroundings helped ease his recovery. Yet even in leafy Sussex, the war made its presence felt: at night the family heard artillery rumbling across the Channel.

He composed and completed his Cello Concerto during the summer of 1919. It was Edward Elgar’s last major work for orchestra, and his most confessional. In spite of fleeting moments of idyllic release, it’s dominated by disillusionment, by a sense of suffering that at times cries out against life, yet more often speaks in quiet anguish.

The four moments unfold from one another as if forming a single, rhapsodic thought — which, in view of Elgar’s masterful use of his thematic material, they actually do. After the almost funereal beginning of the first movement, the clarinets introduce a lyric second theme, which is treated in the graceful manner of a siciliana. The second movement is prefaced by a pizzicato version of the cello’s opening recitative; the main body of this movement is a scherzo-like moto perpetuo. A meditative adagio of great beauty reduces the orchestra to chamber size, and the cello sings through all but a single measure. In the concerto’s rondo finale, something of the pre-WWI Elgarian swagger can be detected, but only fleetingly. Fragments of melody from the concerto’s earlier movements are hinted at before a climax of anguish and resignation.