

*Symphony Orchestra of India's Spring 2015 Season presents*

**~ The India premiere of Verdi's Requiem**

**~ An Opera Gala featuring works of Verdi, Puccini, Mozart, Wagner, and others**

~ The season also features a free, non-ticketed performance by the orchestra at the Kala Ghoda Arts Festival, and special concerts and workshops for children

~ 5<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2015

- The first performances in India of Verdi's monumental Requiem, with 200 musicians on stage
- Opera Gala featuring excerpts from much-loved operas such as Carmen, Tosca, Don Giovanni, Turandot and others
- Renowned Russian conductor Yuri Simonov leads the orchestra in three performances, with international star soloists—Lucrecia Garcia, Angel Blue, Oksana Volkova, Simon O'Neill, and Vuyani Mlinde
- Music Director Marat Bisengaliev performs Bruch's famous first violin concerto alongside newly written works by Yerkesh Shakeyev.

**Mumbai, January, 2015:** The National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), Mumbai, presents the 18<sup>th</sup> Season of the Symphony Orchestra of India (SOI), India's only professional orchestra, from February 5<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015.

This season kicks off on February 5<sup>th</sup>, with SOI Music Director & world-renowned violinist Marat Bisengaliev performing **Bruch's** Violin Concerto No. 1—one of the most famous violin concertos and certainly Bruch's most famous work—as well as excerpts from a new piece by Kazakh composer Yerkesh Shakeyev written for Marat. The programme will also include **Beethoven's** Symphony No. 2, taking the SOI just one step away from completing all nine of Beethoven's symphonies, which form the cornerstone of orchestral repertoire. The programme will be conducted by Polish conductor Piotr Borkowski.

The highlight of this season will be the first performances in India of the **Verdi Requiem**, on February 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. These performances will see close to 200 people on stage at the NCPA Jamshed Bhabha Theatre, (as well as additional musicians positioned off stage)! The Symphony Orchestra of India will be joined by over 100 singers from the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus from the United Kingdom, and international star soloists: Lucrecia Garcia (soprano), Oksana Volkova (mezzo-soprano), Simon O'Neill (tenor), and Vuyani Mlinde (bass). Each of them has been performing in leading opera houses and with leading orchestras around the world. The performances will be led by renowned Russian conductor Yuri Simonov. Often regarded as Verdi's best 'opera', and the Verdi Requiem is an extremely powerful and

moving work, with the *New York Times* declaring it to be one that “can stir the blood and grip the imagination like no other work in the concert repertory.”

The season will close with an Opera Gala on February 21. In addition to Volkova, O’Neill, and Mlinde, soprano Angel Blue will join the SOI and Maestro Simonov in a programme carefully designed to allow Mumbai audiences to hear the singers in the repertoire for which they are best known. The gala will feature works from some of the best-loved operas by Mozart, Puccini, Verdi, Bizet, and Wagner, amongst others.

In addition to the concerts at the NCPA, this year, the Symphony Orchestra of India will also be opening the music series of the 2015 Kala Ghoda Arts Festival on February 8<sup>th</sup> at Cross Maidan Garden. This will be the first time the SOI has performed a free, non-ticketed outdoor concert with the entire orchestral forces. The concert will be led by Associate Music Director Zane Dalal, and feature popular classics including the excerpts from Dvořák’s Slavonic Dances, Brahms’ Hungarian Dances, Bizet’s *Carmen* Suite, as well as medleys from *The Sound of Music* and *My Fair Lady*.

**Mr. Khushroo N. Suntook (NCPA Chairman & Founder of the Symphony Orchestra of India)** said, “The SOI’s Spring 2015 season is probably one of the most ambitious that we have undertaken thus far. The Verdi Requiem is a grand undertaking and its blazing music is as exciting as it is inspiring. We would especially like to thank the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, who readily agreed to participate in these performances at their own expense. Our performance at the Kala Ghoda festival is another endeavor with which the SOI is trying to reach out to newer audiences who may never have had the opportunity to hear a live orchestra.”

**SCHEDULE**

Date	Time	Event	Tickets
Thursday, Feb 5 <sup>th</sup>	7 PM	Bruch & Beethoven / Piotr Borkowski, conductor; Marat Bisengaliev, violin	1,600, 1,200, 1,000, 800 & 400
Sunday, Feb 8 <sup>th</sup>	6 PM	Concert at Kala Ghoda	
Sunday, Feb 15 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday, Feb 17 <sup>th</sup>	5 PM 7PM	The Verdi Requiem / Yuri Simonov, conductor	1,600, 1,200, 1,000, 800 & 400
Saturday, Feb 21 <sup>st</sup>	7 PM	Opera Gala / Yuri Simonov, conductor	1,600, 1,200, 1,000, 800 & 400

-Ends-

**About SOI:**

The Symphony Orchestra of India (SOI), based at the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), Mumbai, 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. India’s first and only professional symphony orchestra, the SOI currently offers two series of concerts—in the spring and autumn—every year. Over the past eight years, the Orchestra has performed around India and internationally, as well. Zane Dalal was appointed Associate Music Director of the SOI in September 2014, following serving seven years as Resident Conductor.

The SOI has worked with renowned conductors including Charles Dutoit, Augustin Dumay, Lior Shambadal, Adrian Leaper, Johannes Wildner, Evgeny Bushkov, Rafael Payare, Duncan Ward, Karl Jenkins, Mischa Damev, Alexander Anissimov, and Christoph Poppen, amongst others. Soloists have included Maria João Pires, Augustin Dumay, Cédric Tiberghien, Alina Ibragimova, Barry Douglas, Zakir Hussain, Edgar Meyer, Béla Fleck, Tamás Vásáry and Lena Neudauer, amongst others. Apart from the mainstays of the symphonic repertoire, the NCPA and SOI have also presented some large-scale productions, including fully-staged operas.

The Orchestra's core group of musicians are resident at the NCPA all year round; 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. Many of the SOI musicians are also teachers as the orchestra places great emphasis on teaching and developing musical potential amongst young people in India. One of NCPA's educational initiatives is the Special Music Training Programme, which brings a professional level of teaching 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 will continue to build on the goal to become 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.

[www.soimumbai.com](http://www.soimumbai.com)

#### **About the NCPA:**

Opening its doors to the world in 1969, the NCPA became the first multi-venue and multi-purpose cultural centre to be built in South Asia. Vibrant and diverse, the NCPA today is recognized by artistes, patrons and media alike as India's premier performing arts institution. The Centre provides a fine showcase for India's rich performing arts traditions, all thanks to the institution's training and research initiatives.

The NCPA presents over 600 events each year across all major art forms, most notably Indian Music, International Music, Theatre and Film, Dance, and Literature, Visual Arts and Photography. There are Heads of Programing for each of these art forms who curate innovative events and festivals; representative of everything from classical to contemporary throughout the year. The NCPA produces its own programmes as well as collaborates with leading cultural promoters from around the world.

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