

Young Soloist winner joins Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra

Phil Hewitt

Following the recent success of their performance of *The Dream of Gerontius*, the Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra season continues with their 161st concert on Sunday, June 21 at 7pm in St Saviour's Church, Eastbourne.

Featuring as soloist is the winner of their annual Young Soloist Competition, 17-year-old Sofia Demetriades, who will be playing Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto.

Currently completing her A-levels, Sofia is also attending the Junior Department of the Royal Academy of Music and Beare's Chamber Music and will be starting at the Royal Academy of Music on a full scholarship in September 2026.

She has won many national and international competitions and has performed as a soloist with orchestras in the UK, Europe and Canada. She was also one of five Mini Violini in showcase concerts during the opening of the Concours Musical International de Montréal.

In July, she will take part in the quarter-final round of the BBC Young Musician in Swansea. In October, she has a recital at Club 1901 and, next year, she appears as a soloist with the English Chamber Orchestra.

The concert opens with Mozart's overture to the *Magic Flute*.

ESO concert manager John Thornley said: "This is a brilliant

masterpiece of musical storytelling, fusing grand, solemn temple chords with a lively fugue, perfectly capturing the opera's journey from darkness to light. This timeless classic continues to captivate audiences worldwide.

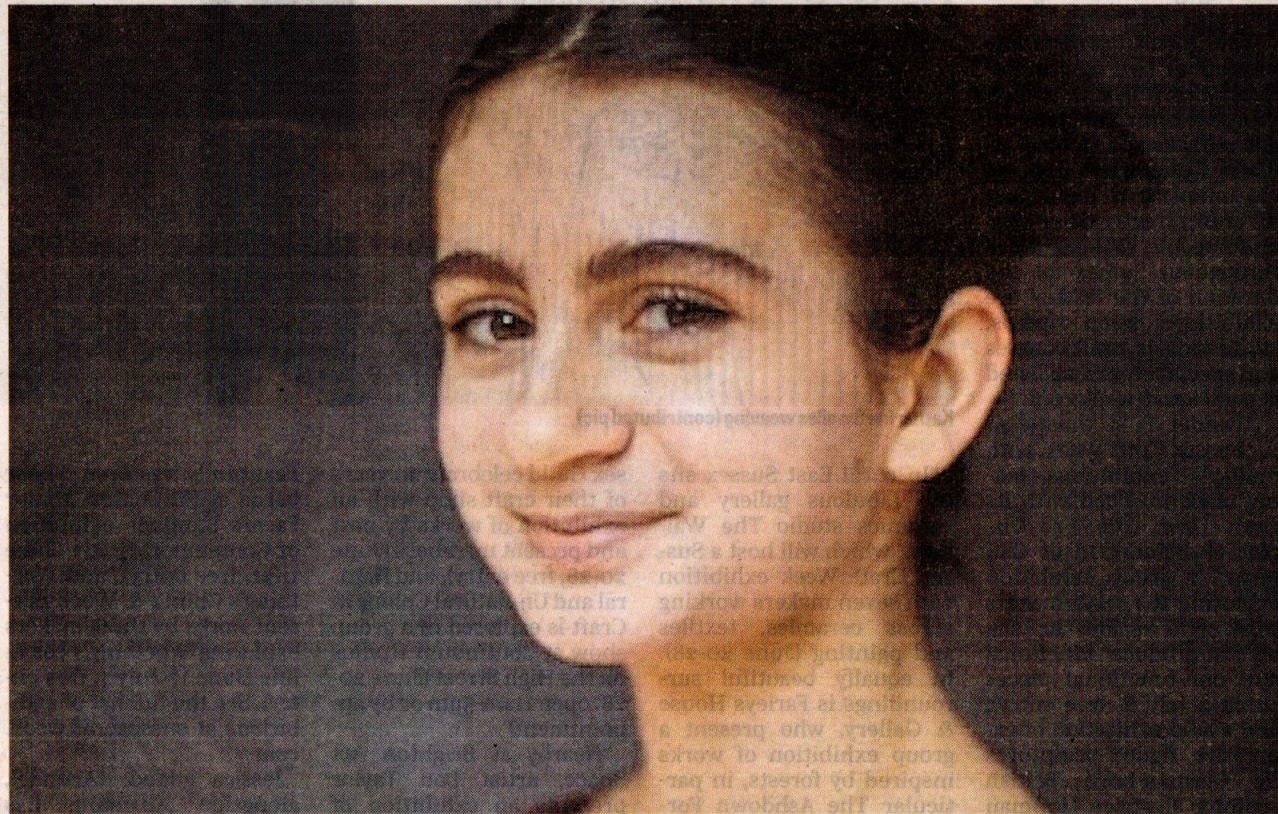
"Next comes Beethoven's Symphony No 2, the first time the ESO has performed this in its 46-year-old history."

Conductor Graham Jones, one of the founders of the orchestra, explained: "There's a remarkable freshness about this symphony despite Beethoven's declining health when he was beginning to grapple with the reality of his encroaching deafness. The work looks both backwards and forwards.

"The slow movement is clearly from the world of Haydn while the fast movements show Beethoven's thematic development, so much a feature of his later works. The brief scherzo is full of irrepressible humour.

"The work is surprisingly overflowing with vibrant optimism and vitality and it ends with a final rambunctious movement, an energetic romp full of brilliant musical jokes. Complete with abrupt stops, false endings, and wild, eccentric leaps, it concludes with a thrilling, triumphant blaze of D major. Rather than reflecting his despair, this symphony is widely viewed as a defiant celebration of art over tragedy."

Graham is particularly looking



Sofia Demetriades (contributed pic)

forward to Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto in the second half of the concert: "It was a unanimous decision by the ESO's competition judging panel, after a very brief discussion, that Sofia was the winner, having played the first movement in the final. Performers and audience will be

captivated by the work's sweeping Russian lyricism and breathtaking virtuosity.

"Soaring melodies meet explosive, dance-like folk rhythms in a spectacular display of instrumental fireworks."

Sofia said: "The Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto is my favourite

because, among many other moments, it has elements of his gorgeous ballet music. Its sensitivity truly speaks to my heart."

Tickets are available in advance (£18) from WeGotTickets and from (cash only) Rager and Roberts, 36 Cornfield Road, Eastbourne BN21 4QH, and also on

the door (£20).

All ESO concerts from the very first one in January 1980 are archived using photos, programmes and video clips where available. Visit the Past Concerts tab on www.eso.org.uk where more details of the orchestra can also be found.