THE HEAVENLY LIFE

METRO SERIES #2





Conductor: Steven Moore | Sunday 26 June 3pm | Old Museum Concert Hall

CONCERT PROGRAM

Engelbert Humperdinck

Prelude to Hansel and Gretel

Kaija Saariaho

Leino Songs (Australian Premiere)

I. Sua katselen

II. Sydän

III. Rauha

IV. Iltarukous

Richard Strauss

Morgen!

INTERVAL

Gustav Mahler

Symphony No. 4 in G major

I. Bedächtig, nicht eilen

II. In gemächlicher Bewegung, ohne Hast

III. Ruhevoll, poco adagio

IV. Sehr behaglich



FIRST VIOLINS

Hayden Burton (Concertmaster)
Clare Cooney
Celine Crellin
Carmen Pierce
Drew Cylinder
Elena James
Emma Eriksson
Finn Williams
Hwee Sin Chong
Isabel Young
Keith Gambling
Nicholas Ooi
Tom Riethmuller

SECOND VIOLINS

Tove Easton

Sarah Trenaman*
Ai Miura
Danny Kwok
Elisna (Lisa) van Niekerk
Evangeline (Evie) Jacobs
Lauren Jones
Min Tan
Rachel Olsen
Ryan Smith
Shuo Yang
Sophia Goodwin
Tylar Leask
Vy Dinh

VIOLAS

Sophie Ellis*
Anthony Rossiter
Jacob Seabrook
Jane Wei
Jenny Waanders
John McGrath
Katrina Greenwood
Lauren Foster
Michele Adeney
Paul Garrahy
Samantha Smith

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Amy Naumann
Andrew Ruhs
Andrew Zischke
Angela Batch
Charmaine Lee
David Curry
Edward Brackin
Elouise Comber
Eugenie Puskarz Thomas
Jane Elliott
Joanna Cull

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OBOE

Gabrielle Knight* Hui-Yu (Whitney) Chung

COR ANGLAIS

Anton Rayner

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Daniel Sullivan* Hugo Anaya Partida Kendal Thomson

E FLAT CLARINET

Kendal Thomson

BASS CLARINET

Hugo Anaya Partida*

BASSOON

Lisa Squires* Rory Brown

CONTRABASSOON

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Oscar Schmidt* Melanie Taylor* Simon Olsen Prue Russell Jessica Piva

TRUMPET

Blake Humphrey* Sophie Kukulies Hamish McCamley

TROMBONE

Zhao Ming Liu* John Rotar

BASS TROMBONE

Clayton Fiander*

TUBA

Michael Sterzinger*

PERCUSSION

Davis Dingle*
Patrick Hassard
Andrew Palmer
Greg Turner#

CELESTA

Patrick Hassard*

HARP

John Connolly*

^{*}denotes principal

^denotes acting principal

#denotes guest performer

Conductor STEVEN MOORE



Conductor Steven Moore, born and raised in Toowomba, has a wide ranging education involving Organ, Piano, Voice, Conducting and Cello studies, most at tertiary level. On moving to London, he continued studies at the Guildhall School of Music and the National Opera Studio, before he was accepted on the Young Artist Program of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden as conductor and repetiteur. His long standing passion for opera and conducting flourished, working with the world's leading exponents of the art form, as repetiteur, assistant conductor, backstage conductor, orchestral musician.

He worked as Kapelmeister and Head of Music at the Badisches Staatstheater, Karlsruhe, conducting ballet, opera, concerts and operetta to great acclaim. While full time in Germany, Steven further developed his coaching and work with young singers, a passion he still very much pursues in his current career.

Steven moved to Copenhagen in 2018 to become Chorus Master and conductor at Det Kongelige Teater (The Royal Danish Opera) and has very swiftly made an enormous impact on the musical landscape. He was awarded a Knighthood for his services in 2020 and had great success on the podium, alongside his work with the Royal Opera Chorus, who were nominated as Best chorus at the International Opera Awards 2020. Upcoming engagements include his debut with Odense Sinfonie Orkester, La Cenerentola at Det Kongelige Teater.

Soloist AMBER EVANS



Amber Evans is an Australian vocalist, conductor and composer. She regularly performs as an early music soloist, chamber ensemble vocalist, and contemporary opera/vocal specialist, with consistent touring engagements in Australia, the US and the UK.

Winner of the inaugural US Dwight and Ursula Mamlok Advancement Award for the interpretation of contemporary music, Amber is committed to the vital artistic collaboration with composers to thoughtfully contribute to the musical canon of the present day. An exponent of the capabilities of the "extra-normal" voice, she has premiered over fifty specialised vocal works, engaging audiences with everchanging insights into the paramount role of the voice in the evolution of art-making.

In 2022 Amber joined Opera Queensland's (OQ) Young Artist Program and most recently sang as a featured soloist in the QPAC Concert Hall season of OQ's *The Sopranos* with Queensland Symphony Orchestra. Amber then toured throughout regional Queensland with the same production in May 2022.

Since returning to Brisbane, Amber has been appointed as the inaugural lecturer for aural studies at the Griffith University Young Conservatorium, has stepped in as assistant conductor for renowned The Australian Voices, has established the vocal sextet Formant, and also directs the music for All Saints Anglican Church while she continues to engage in ongoing online projects with composers and artists in the US and the UK.

ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA

The Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO) is Brisbane's leading community orchestra. The orchestra brings together up to 200 musicians a year to play a variety of orchestral music. Over 100 members of the incorporated association form the core of the orchestra. Other players perform as casual musicians, but often join as full-time members after their first concert with BPO. The orchestra was founded on principles of musical excellence and development, communal participation, and organisational professionalism.

Since its creation in 2000, the BPO has become the community orchestra of choice for over 500 musicians. It is eagerly sought as a performance partner for touring choirs, festivals, and internationally acclaimed instrumentalists and vocalists. The BPO performs its own series of symphony concerts and participates in multiple community and festival events throughout the year, attracting an audience of over 2,500 people. The orchestra's main metropolitan concert series includes four to five symphony concerts at Brisbane City Hall and the Old Museum Concert Hall. Programs vary between concerts featuring the great classical, romantic, and 20th

century composers, light concerts including film music, as well as concerts with programs targeted at a younger audience. Additionally, BPO occasionally performs chamber music concerts, featuring smaller groups in a more intimate setting.

The BPO maintains many community partnerships including with the Queensland Music Festival, 4MBS Festival of Classics, Brisbane City Council, and The Brisbane Airport Corporation. These partnerships provide essential connections in artistic, educational, professional, and social programs and cater to the association's increased responsibility to culturally enhance localities and bring a diversity of people together in a fast-paced, everimpersonal global village. Unusually for a community orchestra, entry to the BPO is by audition and the ensemble is the only community orchestra within the city that rotates guest conductors by invitation rather than establishing a permanent Music Director. Uniquely, this allows a variety of the finest local professional conductors to deliver diverse and innovative programming to artistically stimulate members of the orchestra.



Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921) Kaija Saariaho (1952)

Prelude to Hansel and Gretel

Naija Saariano (1902)

Leino Songs (Australian Premiere)

The traditional status in Germany of Humperdinck's opera Hansel and Gretel as a Christmas piece no doubt owes much to the fact that its premiere (conducted by Richard Strauss at the Munich Opera) took place on 23 December 1893. Having originated three years earlier in a request from Humperdinck's sister to set four folksongs from the Grimm brothers' wellknown – if somewhat gruesome – story for performance at home by her children, it had quickly expanded first into a smallscale domestic opera with spoken dialogue, and thence to a full-blown professional opera in three acts. Like other works in the Germanic fairvtale opera (or Märchenoper) tradition, it is not specifically written for a child audience. but does evoke an innocence of atmosphere and a kinship with the worlds of folksong and nature. At the same time, it bears the marks of its age in the Wagnerian richness of its musical development and orchestral colourings.

The Prelude, which Humperdinck characterised as 'Children's Life', demonstrates these elements with dance tunes both urbane and toylike. These are intertwined with references to the solemn 'Evening Hymn' melody heard at the very opening, which will make strategically placed appearances throughout the opera to suggest the protective influence of divine providence. Sadly, the audience at the premiere was denied the pleasure of this charming and skilfully made overture: it was not performed on that occasion, as the orchestral parts had not yet arrived.

Programme note Lindsay Kemp

The Four Leino Songs are a setting of poems by one of Finland's most important poets, Eino Leino. He was the most important developer of Finnish-language poetry at the turn of the 20th century, and in his works combined symbolism, mythic tradition and influences from Nietzsche with his own romantic concept of the poet as a truth-seeking visionary. The four songs, entitled *Looking At You*, *The Heart*, *Evening Prayer* and *Peace* were written for the Finnish soprano Anu Komsi and are the first set of songs Saariaho has written in Finnish.

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

Morgen!

Morgen! (Tomorrow!) is the last in a set of four songs composed in 1894 by the German composer Richard Strauss. The text of this Lied, the German love poem Morgen!, was written by Strauss' contemporary, John Henry Mackay. Strauss had met Mackay in Berlin, and set Morgen! to music on 21 May 1894. It was one of his four Lieder Opus 27, a wedding present to his wife, Pauline.

Strauss wrote the song originally to be accompanied by piano. In 1897 he orchestrated the accompaniment for orchestral strings plus a solo violin, harp, and three horns.

Morgen! remains one of Strauss' best-known and most widely recorded works.

Kaija Saariaho: Leino Songs

Translated by Lola Rogers

1. Sua katselen

Sua katselen silmin ma huikaistuin kuni kaunista sateenkaarta, sua silmäni sulkien muistelen kuin meren laskija lehtosaarta.

Sua katson ma hiljaa henkien kuin kuvaa äitini armaan ja uskon, ett' enkelit lapsuuden nyt lähellä liikkuvat varmaan.

2. Sydän

Sydän, mitä sahaat? Sahaatko lautaa neljää, joiden välissä maata, maata mun mieluisa on?

Sahaan ma rautaa, kahleita katkon, että sun henkesi vapaa oisi, henkesi onneton.

Sydän, mitä kuiskaat? Kuiskitko kummaa polkua päivän, tunturin tietä, taivahan tähtiä päin?

Kuiskin ma tummaa ruonoa Tuonen, kuiluja, vaivaa virkkumatonta, autuutta ylpeäin.

1. Looking at You

Looking in your eyes dazzles me like looking at a rainbow's beauty, I close my eyes and drift to your memory as to a gladed island in the sea.

I look at you breathing softly like an image of my mother dear and it seems that the angels of childhood must be stirring somewhere near.

2. The Heart

Heart, what are you sawing? are you sawing planks, four planks for me to lie down in, a pleasant place to lie down?

It's iron I'm sawing
I'm breaking your chains
so that your soul
will be free,
your unhappy soul will be free.

Heart, what are you whispering? Are you whispering the wondrous path of the daylight a pass through the mountains toward the stars in the sky?

It's darkness I'm whispering dark Tuoni's poems chasms, trouble, uttering nothing, the blessedness of pride.

3. Iltarukous

Unta, unta, unta syvää uinumaan. Lunta, lunta, lunta päälle mustan maan.

Yössä, yössä, yössä öiset linnut lentää. Työssä, työssä, työssä lepää tuskat sentään.

Lennä, lennä, lennä aatos inehmon! Mennä, mennä, mennä aika maata on.

4. Rauha

Mitä on nää touksut mun ympärilläin? Mitä on tämä hiljaisuus? Mitä tietävi rauha mun sydämessäin, tää suuri ja outo ja uus?

Minä kuulen, kuink' kukkaset kasvavat ja metsässä puhuvat puut. Minä luulen, nyt kypsyvät unelmat ja toivot ja toou'ot muut.

Kaikk' on niin hiljaa mun ympärilläin, kaikk' on niin hellää ja hyvää. Kukat suuret mun aukeevat sydämessäin ja touksuvat rauhaa syvää.

Richard Strauss: Morgen!

Und morgen wird die Sonne wieder scheinen und auf dem Wege, den ich gehen werde, wird uns, die Glücklichen sie wieder einen inmitten dieser sonnenatmenden Erde... und zu dem Strand, dem weiten, wogenblauen, werden wir still und langsam niedersteigen, stumm werden wir uns in die Augen schauen, und auf uns sinkt des Glückes stummes Schweigen.

3. Evening Prayer

Sleep, sleep, sleep deeply to slumber. Snow, snow, snow over the black land.

Night, night, night, night birds are flying. Work, work, work but even woe must rest.

Fly, fly, fly, humankind's pondering! Away, away, away the time has come to rest.

4. Peace

What is this fragrance around me? What is this quietness? What is this promise of peace in my heart, what strange, grand, new thing is this?

I hear how the flowers are growing and the talk of the trees in the wood.
I think that my old dreams are ripening all my hopes, all the things that I sowed.

Everything's quiet around me, Everything's gentle and sweet. Great flowers are opening here in my heart with a fragrance of deepest peace.

Tomorrow again will shine the sun
And on my sunlit path of earth
Unite us again, as it has done,
And give our bliss another birth...
The spacious beach under wave-blue skies
We'll reach by descending soft and slow,
And mutely gaze in each other's eyes,
As over us rapture's great hush will flow.

Gustav Mahler (1860 - 1911) **Symphony No. 4 in G major**

I. Bedächtig, nicht eilen II. In gemächlicher Bewegung, ohne Hast III. Ruhevoll, poco adagio IV. Sehr behaglich

THE BACKSTORY

Many a love affair with Mahler has begun with the sunlit Fourth Symphony. Mahler himself thought of it as a work whose transparency, relative brevity, and nonaggressive stance might win him new friends. It enraged most of its first hearers. Munich hated it and so did most of the German cities—Stuttgart being, for some reason, the exception—where Felix Weingartner took it on tour with the Kaim Orchestra immediately after the premiere.

The very qualities Mahler had banked on were the ones that annoyed. The bells, real and imitated (in flutes), with which the music begins! And that rustic tune in the violins! What in heaven's name was the composer of the Resurrection Symphony up to with this newfound naïveté? Most of the answers proposed at the time were politicized, anti-Semitic, ugly. Today, we perceive more clearly that what he was up to was writing a Mahler symphony, uncharacteristic only in its all but exclusive involvement with the sunny end of the expressive range. But naïve?

THE MUSIC

The violin tune, yes, is so popular in tone that we can hardly conceive that once upon a time it didn't exist, but it is also pianissimo (very quiet), which is the first step toward subverting its simplicity. Then Mahler marks accents on it in two places, both unexpected. The first phrase ends, and while clarinets and bassoons mark the beat, low strings suggest a surprising though charmingly appropriate continuation. A horn interrupts them mid-phrase and itself has the very words taken out of its mouth by the bassoon. At that moment, the cellos and basses assert themselves with a severe "as I was saying," just as the violins chime in with their own upside-down thoughts on the continuation that the lower strings had suggested four bars earlier. The game of interruptions, resumptions, extensions, reconsiderations, and unexpected combinations continues—for example, when the violins try their first melody again, the cellos have figured out that it is possible to imitate it, lagging two beats behind (a discovery they proffer with utmost discretion, pianissimo and deadpan)—until bassoons and low strings call "time out," and the cellos sing an ardent something that clearly declares "new key" and "second theme."

"Turning cliché into event" is how Theodor W. Adorno characterized Mahler's practice. Ideas lead to many different conclusions and can be ordered in many ways. Mahler's master here is the Haydn of the London symphonies and string quartets of the 1790s. The scoring, too, rests on Mahler's ability to apply an original and altogether personal fantasy to resources not in themselves extraordinary.

Trombones and the tuba are absent; only the percussion is on the lavish side.

Mahler plays with this orchestra as though with a kaleidoscope. He can write a brilliantly sonorous tutti (with the full ensemble playing) but hardly ever does. What he likes better is to have the thread of discourse passed rapidly, wittily, from instrument to instrument, section to section. He thinks polyphonically, but he enjoys the combining of textures and colors as much as the combining of themes.

He could think of the most wonderful titles for the movements of this symphony, he wrote to a friend, but he refused "to betray them to the rabble of critics and listeners" who would then subject them to "their banal misunderstandings." We do, however, have his name for the scherzo: Freund Hein spielt auf—Death Strikes Up. (Freund Hein-literally this could be rendered as "Friend Hal"—is a fairy tale bogy whose name is most often a euphemism for Death.) Alma Mahler amplified that hint by writing that here "the composer was under the spell of the selfportrait by Arnold Böcklin, in which Death fiddles into the painter's ear while the latter sits entranced." Death's fiddle is tuned a whole tone high to make it harsher (the player is also instructed to make it sound like a country instrument and to enter "very aggressively"). Twice, Mahler tempers these grotesqueries with a gentle trio; Willem Mengelberg, the Amsterdam conductor, took detailed notes at Mahler's 1904 rehearsals, and at this point he wrote into his score, "Here, he leads us into a lovely landscape."

The adagio, which Mahler thought his finest slow movement, is a set of softly and gradually unfolding variations. It is rich in seductive melody, but the constant feature to which Mahler always returns is the tolling of the basses, piano under the pianissimo of the violas and cellos. The variations, twice interrupted by a leanly scored lament in the minor mode, become shorter, more diverse in character, more given to abrupt changes of outlook. They are also pulled more and more in the direction of E major, a key that asserts itself dramatically at the end of the movement in a blaze of sound. Working miracles in harmony, pacing, and orchestral fabric, Mahler, pronouncing a benediction, brings us back to serene quiet on the very threshold of the original G major, but when the finale almost imperceptibly emerges, it is in E. Our entry into this region has been prepared, but it is well that the music sound new, for Mahler means us to understand that we are now in heaven.

On February 6, 1892, Mahler had finished a song he called "Das himmlische Leben" ("Life in Heaven"), one of five humoresques on texts from Des Knaben Wunderhorn (The Boy's Magic Horn). Des Knaben Wunderhorn is a collection of German folk poetry compiled just after 1800 by Clemens Brentano and Achim von Arnim. That, at least, is what it purports to be. In fact, the two poets indulged themselves freely in paraphrases, additions, and deletions, fixing things so as to give them a more antique and authentic ring, even contributing poems all their own. Mahler began to write Wunderhorn songs immediately after completing the First Symphony in 1888 (he had already borrowed a Wunderhorn poem

as the foundation of the first of his Songs of a Wayfarer of 1884-85). The Wunderhorn then touches the Second. Third, and Fourth symphonies. The scherzo of No. 2 was composed together and shares material with a setting of the poem about Saint Anthony of Padua's sermon to the fishes, and the next movement is the song "Urlicht" ("Primal Light"). The Third Symphony's fifth movement is another Wunderhorn song, "Es sungen drei Engel" ("Three Angels Sang"), and until about a year before completing that symphony, Mahler meant to end it with "Das himmlische Leben." the song we now know as the finale of the Fourth. That explains why the Third appears to "quote" the Fourth, twice in the minuet and again in the "Drei Engel" song.

Mahler had to plan parts of the Fourth Symphony from the end back, so that the song would appear to be the outcome and conclusion of what was in fact composed eight years after the song. From a late letter of Mahler's to the Leipzig conductor Georg Göhler, we know how important it was to him that listeners clearly understand how the first three movements all point toward and are resolved in the finale. The music, though gloriously inventive in detail, is of utmost cleanness and simplicity. The solemn and archaic chords first heard at "Sanct Peter in Himmel sieht zu" ("Saint Peter in heaven looks on") have a double meaning for Mahler; here, they are associated with details about the domestic arrangements in this mystical, sweetly scurrile picture of heaven, but in the Third Symphony they belong with the bitter self-castigation at

having transgressed the Ten Commandments and with the plea to God for forgiveness.

Whether you are listening to the Fourth and remembering the Third, or the other way around, the reference is touching. It reminds us, as well, how much all of Mahler's work is one work. Just as the symphony began with bells, so it ends with them—this time those wonderful, deep single harp-tones of which Mahler was the discoverer.

The poem Mahler used for the text of the Fourth Symphony's finale is a Bavarian folk song called "Der Himmel hängt voll Geigen" ("Heaven is Hung with Violins"). On the text: Saint Luke's symbol is a winged ox. Saint Martha, sister of Lazarus, is the patron saint of those engaged in service of the needy. It is said that Saint Ursula and her ten companions, returning home to England from Rome, were slaughtered by Huns who hated them for their Christian faith. Over the centuries these eleven martyrs somehow became eleven thousand.

Program note by Michael Steinberg

Das himmlische Leben (The Heavenly Life)

From Des Knaben Wunderhorn, translated by Deryck Cooke

Over page.

Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden, D'rum tun wir das Irdische meiden. Kein weltlich' Getümmel Hört man nicht im Himmel! Lebt alles in sanftester Ruh'! Wir führen ein englisches Leben! Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben! Wir tanzen und springen, Wir hüpfen und singen! Sankt Peter im Himmel sieht zu!

Johannes das Lämmlein auslasset,
Der Metzger Herodes d'rauf passet!
Wir führen ein geduldig's,
Unschuldig's, geduldig's,
Ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod!
Sankt Lucas den Ochsen tät schlachten
Ohn' einig's Bedenken und Achten;
Der Wein kost' kein Heller
Im himmlischen Keller;
Die Englein, die backen das Brot.

Gut' Kräuter von allerhand Arten,
Die wachsen im himmlischen Garten!
Gut' Spargel, Fisolen
Und was wir nur wollen,
Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit!
Gut' Äpfel, gut' Birn' und gut' Trauben;
Die Gärtner, die alles erlauben!
Willst Rehbock, willst Hasen?
Auf offener Straßen
Sie laufen herbei!

Sollt' ein Fasttag etwa kommen, Alle Fische gleich mit Freuden angeschwommen! Dort läuft schon Sankt Peter Mit Netz und mit Köder, Zum himmlischen Weiher hinein. Sankt Martha die Köchin muß sein!

Kein' Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
Die unsrer verglichen kann werden.
Elftausend Jungfrauen
Zu tanzen sich trauen!
Sankt Ursula selbst dazu lacht!
Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten
Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten!
Die englischen Stimmen
Ermuntern die Sinnen!
Daß alles für Freuden erwacht.

We revel in heavenly pleasures, Leaving all that is earthly behind us. No worldly turmoil Is heard in heaven; We all live in sweetest peace. We lead an angelic existence, And so we are perfectly happy. We dance and leap, And skip and sing; Saint Peter in Heaven looks on.

Saint John has lost his lambkin,
And butcher Herod is lurking:
We lead a patient,
Guiltless, patient,
Darling lambkin to death.
Saint Luke is slaying the oxen,
Without the least hesitation;
Wine costs not a farthing
In the Heavenly tavern;
The angels bake the bread.

Fine sprouts of every description,
Are growing in Heaven's garden.
Fine asparagus, fine herbs,
And all we desire,
Huge platefuls for us are prepared.
Fine apples, fine pears and fine grapes,
The gardeners let us pick freely.
You want venison, hare?
In the open streets
They go running around.

And when there's a holiday near,
All the fishes come joyfully swimming;
And off runs Saint Peter
With net and with bait,
Towards the celestial pond.
Saint Martha will have to be cook!

There's no music at all on the earth Which can ever compare with ours. Eleven thousand virgins Are set dancing.
Saint Ursula herself laughs to see it! Cecilia with her companions Are splendid court musicians. The angelic voices Delight the senses, For all things awake to joy.



SUNDAY 25 SEPTEMBER, 3PM OLD MUSEUM CONCERT HALL

Conductor: Chen Yang Soloist: Joshua Jones (cello)

PROGRAM:

Dvořák | Carnival Overture Op.92
Tchaikovsky | Rococo Variations Op. 33
Berlioz | Symphonie Fantastique Op. 14

SUNDAY 27 NOVEMBER, 3PM OLD MUSEUM CONCERT HALL

Conductor: Susan Collins

Soloist: Emily Granger (harp)

PROGRAM:

Rimsky-Korsakov | Capriccio Espagnol Debussy | Danse Sacrée et Profane Prokofiev | Symphony No.5 Op.100



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Being a member of the BPO is a rewarding community experience and a lot of fun. Our members are just like you – ordinary people who enjoy coming together to make extraordinary music! Auditions are held to fill vacant positions or to appoint suitable reserve players capable of filling temporary vacancies from time-to-time.

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Cover photo and design by Adam Finch

