MEDIA RELEASE

Edinburgh, Tuesday 13 October 2015

After almost a quarter of a century, Roy McEwan OBE will step down as Chief Executive of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra (SCO) in Summer 2016.

Roy McEwan has announced his retirement from the Scottish Chamber Orchestra in Summer 2016 after a remarkable 23 years as Chief Executive. This coincides with the end of the Orchestra’s 42nd Season and Roy’s 65th birthday. The time leading up to this will allow for the appointment of his successor to take its course, alongside his continuing leadership and direction.

Roy’s legacy with the Orchestra is distinctive and far-reaching. He has carefully nurtured the SCO’s long-lasting creative relationships with internationally renowned soloists, conductors, composers and recording companies; created high profile international touring; and sustained the development of SCO Connect’s imaginative projects in education and the community.

Under his leadership, which spans more than half the SCO’s history, the Orchestra has become one of the world’s foremost chamber orchestras, performing core classical repertoire and also commissioning and premiering an impressive portfolio of contemporary work. Many distinguished composers have written regularly for the ensemble, including Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sally Beamish, James MacMillan and young composer Martin Suckling whose third commission for the SCO premieres next year. Roy has also negotiated the Scottish and UK premieres of numerous new works that inspire both players and audiences.

The SCO tours the nation far and wide with over 90 concerts a year – more than any of Scotland’s other music organisations - while overseas touring has been pioneering and far-reaching. As well as performing in celebrated concert halls and festivals throughout Europe, the USA and Far East, the SCO was also the first British orchestra to tour to India in 2009.

Enduring creative partnerships are at the heart of the SCO’s artistic existence: Roy has nurtured highly rewarding relationships with Sir Charles Mackerras, Joseph Swensen, Emmanuel Krivine and Principal Conductor Robin Ticciati who is just beginning his third contract period which runs to the end of the 2017/18 season. International soloists who return regularly include Piotr Anderszewski, Maria João Pires, Llŷr Williams, Christian Zacharias and Alexander Janiczek. Roy introduced the SCO Associate Artist scheme and most recently appointed mezzo-soprano Karen Cargill and composer Martin Suckling to the roster.

Stable recording relationships are also a touchstone of the SCO’s successful profile. With Mackerras the SCO produced many critically acclaimed recordings of Mozart Operas as well as a Grammy-nominated set of Brahms Symphonies on the Telarc label. The relationship with Linn has produced 25 recordings and counting, including the multi award-winning set of Mozart Symphonies with Mackerras and acclaimed recordings with Robin Ticciati of Berlioz, Schumann and Haydn. Linn also came on board with Roy’s drive to spotlight the Orchestra’s own highly talented instrumentalists with an ongoing series of CDs including Mozart Divertimenti and Weber Concertos featuring the outstanding SCO Wind Principals as soloists.
Artistic integrity and audience development are maintained by Creative Learning projects which Roy has integrated into the main season programme, creating vital opportunities for young people. Jonathan Dove’s *Crocodiamond*, based on a story by Anthony Horowitz, is this season’s highlight for families and young children. Over the last season the SCO reached more than 9000 young people through different projects including those for babies and toddlers, primary school children, a fusion band for teenagers and workshops for secondary school pupils studying music.

Roy McEwan comments, “My decision to step down has been a while in the planning. All the great things the Orchestra has achieved have been team efforts and I have had the privilege of working with many very remarkable musicians and staff members, to whom I am extremely grateful for their support. They have shown an extraordinary level of professional dedication to what is now a great orchestra. My appreciation too to the many board members over the years who have shown confidence in my work and that of our administrative team. I am confident that the Orchestra is in safe hands with our Chairman, Colin Buchan, and with the continued involvement of our Life President, Donald MacDonald, with whom I have enjoyed a long professional partnership and friendship. Whatever the challenges of the next few years, the SCO couldn’t be in a better position to confront them.

“I hope to continue to contribute to the cultural and public life of Scotland, perhaps at a more relaxed pace than the last 23 hectic, but wonderful, years.”

SCO Chairman Colin Buchan comments: “Roy’s contribution has been remarkable. He leaves the SCO in great shape so I anticipate the vacant position his retirement creates will be a highly attractive prospect. We will all miss him, but I hope he enjoys his retirement.”

Scottish Parliament’s Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop, said: “Throughout his career, Roy McEwan OBE has made a considerable contribution to the developments of the arts in Scotland, particularly through his work with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Twice, under Roy’s guidance, the SCO was awarded the Bank of Scotland Archangel in recognition of their sustained quality contribution to the Edinburgh Festival.

“The SCO is leading the way in music education with unique projects and workshops for children and adults. It has also attracted interest and invitations from overseas. I’d like to thank Roy for showing such dedication and passion to the arts and wish him well in the future.”

Life President Donald MacDonald comments “Roy has played a crucial role in establishing the SCO as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world. Over his years at the helm, he has shown great skill in successfully steering the Orchestra through many challenging periods for arts funding and ensured continual financial stability and sustainability. The way he cares for the Orchestra, staff and for the arts generally in Scotland is something that I admire. He has been a great colleague and will remain a very good friend.”
NOTES TO EDITORS

Recent Commissions and Premieres

2013  Sally BEAMISH Flodden
2013  Peter MAXWELL DAVIES Ebb of Winter
2013  Martin SUCKLING Six Speechless Songs
2014  Toshio HOSOKAWA Harp Concerto
2014  Toshio HOSOKAWA Meditation (UK Premiere)
2015  John McLEOD Out of the Silence
2015  Martin SUCKLING Candlebird (Scottish Premiere)
2015  Rolf MARTINSSON Garden of Devotion
2015  Lotta WENNÅKOSKI Verdigris
2016  Hafliði HALLGRÍMSSON Five Songs for Soprano and Orchestra

Recordings released in last 10 years

Haydn: Symphonies Nos. 31, 70 & 101 with Robin Ticciati
Mozart: Opera Arias and Overtures with Christian Baldini
Mozart: Divertimenti with SCO Wind Soloists
Schumann: The Symphonies with Robin Ticciati
Chopin: Piano Concertos with Ingrid Fliter and Jun Märkl
40th Anniversary Edition with Robin Ticciati, Charles Mackerras and Joseph Swensen
Hommage a Trois with William Berger and Nicholas McGegan
Berlioz: Les nuits d'été with Robin Ticciati
Weber Wind Concertos with SCO Wind Soloists
Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique with Robin Ticciati
Samaagam by Amjad Ali Khan with David Murphy
Mozart: Divertimento K.334 & Oboe Quartet K.370 with Alexander Janiczek
Truls Mørk Plays Hallgrímsson - Cello Concerto with John Storgårds
Mozart: Symphonies 29, 31 (Paris), 32, 35 (Haffner) & 36 (Linz) with Sir Charles Mackerras
Miracles - The Music of Edward Harper with Garry Walker
Beethoven: Piano Concertos 3, 4 & 5 with Artur Pizarro and Sir Charles Mackerras
Mozart: 'Colloredo' Serenade K. 203 & Divertimento K. 251 with Alexander Janiczek
Mozart: Symphonies 38 - 41 with Sir Charles Mackerras
Mozart: Serenades with Alexander Janiczek
Mozart: Wind Concertos with SCO Wind Soloists

Associates
Patron  HRH The Prince Charles, Duke of Rothesay
Life President  Donald MacDonald CBE
Chairman  Colin Buchan
Chief Executive  Roy McEwan OBE
Principal Conductor  Robin Ticciati
Principal Guest Conductor  Emmanuel Krivine
Conductor Emeritus  Joseph Swensen
Composer Laureate  Sir Peter Maxwell Davies
Associate Composer  Martin Suckling
Associate Artist  Richard Egarr
Associate Artist  Alexander Janiczek
Associate Artist  Karen Cargill
Chorus Director  Gregory Batsleer
Overseas Tours over the last 10 years

2015 – Tour of Germany, Austria and France with Robin Ticciati and Renaud Capuçon
2014 – Tour of Japan, Hong Kong and South Korea with Maria João Pires and Robin Ticciati
2014 – Salzburg Mozartwoche with Paul Lewis
2013 – San Sebastian Festival with Robin Ticciati
2012 – 8-concert tour across Europe with Maria João Pires and Robin Ticciati
2012 – 6-concert tour of Germany with Robin Ticciati, Kit Armstrong and Andreas Brantelid
2012 – Bilbao with Robin Ticciati and Karen Cargill
2010 – Tour of the USA with Piotr Anderszewski and Alexander Janiczek
2010 – Turin with Robin Ticciati
2009 – Tour of India with Amjad Ali Khan
2009 – Tour of Eastern Europe with Piotr Anderszewski
2008 – Tour of Europe with Piotr Anderszewski and David Watkin
2007 – European concerts with Franz Brüggen and Andrew Manze
2006 – European tours with Piotr Anderszewski
2005 – Tours with James Ehnes and Thierry Fischer

ROY McEWAN

Roy McEwan was born in Dumfries and studied at the London School of Economics. He was House Manager at the St George's Theatre in London and Manager of the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1978. In 1979, he was appointed Administrator of the MacRobert Arts Centre at the University of Stirling and, from 1982 to 1991, was the Centre’s Director. He became Director of Arts Development for North West Arts Board, Manchester in 1991 and, in 1993, was appointed Chief Executive of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

Chairman of the Federation of Scottish Theatres from 1988 to 1991, he also served on the Scottish Arts Council Drama Committee in 1991 and from 1993-99 on the Combined Arts Committee. From 2003 to 2007 he was a Council member of the Scottish Arts Council.

From 1993 to 1998 he was also a member of the Board of the Scottish Music Information Centre, a member of the Board of the Association of British Orchestras from 1993 to 2003 and returned in 2014, and was Chairman of the ABO’s Scottish forum until 2007. From 2004 to 2010 he was Chairman of Glasgow Grows Audiences (now Culture Republic). He was also a Trustee of the Scottish Musician Benevolent Fund from 2000 to 2002. He is currently a board member at the Traverse Theatre. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a member of the Royal Philharmonic Society and the Royal Society of Great Britain.

Roy McEwan was awarded an OBE in The Queen’s Birthday Honours List 2011 for services to music.

SCOTTISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA BIOGRAPHY

http://www.sco.org.uk/creative-learning/resources/516-orchestra-biography-201516