

SCOTTISH
CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA 50

MAXIM PLAYS MOZART AND HAYDN

SCO 50TH BIRTHDAY CONCERT

18-19 January 2024



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PROGRAMME

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MAXIM PLAYS MOZART AND HAYDN

SCO 50TH BIRTHDAY CONCERT

Thursday 18 January, 7.30pm, The Queen's Hall, Edinburgh

***Friday 19 January, 7.30pm**, City Halls, Glasgow

ELENA LANGER Suite: Figaro Gets a Divorce

MOZART Concerto in E-flat for two Pianos

Interval of 20 minutes

HAYDN Symphony No 94 'Surprise'

Maxim Emelyanychev Conductor/Piano

Dmitry Ablogin Piano



*This performance will be broadcast live for the BBC 'Radio 3 in Concert' series.



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Stephanie Gonley
Elizabeth Wexler
Oleguer Beltran-Pallarés
Aisling O'Dea
Siún Milne
Fiona Alexander
Amira Bedrush-McDonald

Second Violin

Marcus Barcham Stevens
Gordon Bragg
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Tom Hankey
Abigail Young

Viola

Max Mandel
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Brian Schiele
Steve King

Cello

Philip Higham
Su-a Lee
Donald Gillan
Eric de Wit

Bass

Nikita Naumov
Jamie Kenny

Flute

André Cebrián
Marta Gómez

Piccolo

Marta Gómez

Oboe

Robin Williams
Katherine Bryer

Clarinet

Maximiliano Martín
William Stafford

Bassoon

Cerys Ambrose-Evans
Alison Green

Contrabassoon

Alison Green

Horn

Boštjan Lipovšek
Jamie Shield

Trumpet

Peter Franks
Shaun Harrold

Trombone

Duncan Wilson
Cillian Ó'Ceallacháin

Tuba

Craig Anderson

Timpani

Louise Lewis Goodwin

Percussion

Kate Openshaw
Paul Stoneman
Pete Murch

Piano

Simon Smith

Accordion

Ryan Corbett



Peter Franks and Shaun Harrold (Trumpet)
Calton Hill, Edinburgh (1991)

WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO HEAR

ELENA LANGER (b. 1974)

Suite: Figaro Gets a Divorce (2020)

Night at the Almagiva castle

Angelika and Serafin: Love Song

The Escape

The Major

Susanna and Cherubino: Less of a love song

A Mad Day

MOZART (1756-1791)

Concerto in E-flat for Two Pianos,
K 365/316a (1779)

Allegro

Andante

Rondo: Allegro

HAYDN (1732-1809)

Symphony No 94 'Surprise' in G major
(1791)

Adagio cantabile – Vivace assai

Andante

Menuetto: Allegro molto

Finale: Allegro molto

On 27 January 1974, a brand new ensemble called the Scottish Chamber Orchestra gave its very first concert, in Glasgow's City Halls. James Loughran was on the podium, conducting Mozart's Symphony No 29 and Beethoven's Symphony No 4, and conductor and players were joined by tenor Robert Tear for Britten's *Les illuminations*.

The SCO's entire current Season, of course, forms a grand, year-long 50th anniversary celebration, and marks the Orchestra's achievements across wide-ranging musical styles, and with many of its cherished musical collaborators. But tonight's concert – falling, as it does, in the 50th anniversary month of that inaugural concert back in 1974 – is something a bit special. There's a definite sense of fun and joy bubbling away amid this evening's music, and also a bit of a theme of surprise. That's demonstrated ably in tonight's closing piece, of course, but... well, let's just say that you might be wise to take these programme notes as something of a starting point, and perhaps expect some unexpected additions.

We begin, however, with a compelling mix of high comedy and dark drama, in music from composer Elena Langer's operatic follow-up to Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* and Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*. Born in Moscow, Langer studied piano and composition at the city's famed Conservatoire before moving to London in 1999 to continue her studies. She's now based permanently in the UK, and a prolific and widely respected opera composer whose works have been staged by companies right across Europe and America (and she's also composed substantial works for the concert hall, too). She collaborated with director and librettist Sir David Pountney on *Figaro Gets a Divorce*, which received its stage premiere from Welsh National Opera in Cardiff in 2016. Incidentally, it's tonight's conductor – SCO



Elena Langer

We begin with a compelling mix of high comedy and dark drama, in music from composer Elena Langer's operatic follow-up to Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* and Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*.

Principal Conductor Maxim Emelyanychev – who conducted the premiere of the concert Suite that Langer derived from her opera score, with the Seattle Symphony in 2020.

The composer writes about her Suite:

*"Figaro Gets a Divorce is a mixture of Beaumarchais's *La mère coupable* [The Guilty Mother] and a dark comedy – Figaro Gets Divorced – written in 1936 by the Austro-Hungarian playwright Odon von Horváth, set amid the émigré turmoil of the time. The plays were stitched together by my collaborator, the opera's librettist and director, Sir David Pountney. The opera follows the fortunes of the Almoviva household and takes place in a highly turbulent world, somewhere and sometime in 20th century Europe.*

The family is on the run from a revolution, in a constant state of flight; Figaro and Susanna's marriage is shaky, the lovely boy Cherubino has become a horrible fat cynic and runs a dive

bar. There is a new character, the Major, evil incarnate, who causes everyone much misery. The orchestra is like Mozart's in size but with a slightly larger brass section, an accordion (the Major's signature instrument) and percussion. I did not try to quote from Mozart or Rossini.

Turning the opera into a coherent orchestral piece was less straightforward than I thought, and while I worked it became a somewhat different piece, albeit with the same musical characters.

The first movement is a little nocturne with cicadas, insects and birds in the warm night-time garden. The second is a love scene for young Angelika (the Count's illegitimate daughter with Barbarina) and Serafin (product of the Countess's fling with Cherubino); the main musical motif grows to an unashamedly lyrical orchestral apotheosis. The third is a concoction of 'movement interludes' from the opera describing the family's anxious flight. The fourth is the evil Major: a tango with accordion, bongos and maracas.

In the fifth movement I take the orchestra down to chamber size; it's rather like the slow movement of a sonata for violin and piano. The material comes from a scene where Cherubino and Susanna are nostalgically remembering the past. The last movement uses all the main characters' music as the verses of a rondo. The refrain acts as an MC, and the kaleidoscopic episodes become like the numbers in a cabaret."

From an operatic follow-up to one of Mozart's most famous works, we next turn to Mozart himself. He was 23 when he composed his Concerto for Two Pianos in 1779 (at least that's what's generally thought – we don't know the piece's date for certain). And he'd just returned from a 16-month tour that had taken him to Augsburg, Mannheim, Paris and Munich, all in the hope of securing a lucrative job in one of Europe's musical centres – and all in vain. He'd quit his position at Prince-Archbishop Hieronymus Colloredo's Salzburg court before his trip, sick of his boss's demands and tired of his talents going unrecognised. But on his return to Salzburg, he was forced to go back to Colloredo's employment as court organist and composer, his tail slightly between his legs, in a new role that his father Leopold had arranged for him.

In many ways, then, 1779 wasn't a great year for the young Mozart. But although his long European tour had been fruitless in terms of employment, it nonetheless opened the composer's ears and eyes to musical ideas that were sparking into life across the continent. Those ideas – and, indeed, a new sense of verve and enthusiasm, no doubt also inspired by those encounters – are clearly evident in tonight's Double Concerto.

There's very possibly a family connection, too. Mozart probably wrote the piece for himself to play with his elder sister Maria Anna

(nicknamed 'Nannerl' by the family). Imagining two affectionate but competitive siblings at the piece's keyboards casts an especially vivid light on the Concerto's witty interplay between its two solo instruments. Mozart not only divides his musical material very democratically between his two soloists, but also shifts the music's focus very much towards the interplay between them. There's plenty of traditional concerto virtuosity, and of equally tender lyricism, but what's far more clearly in the spotlight here is the two pianists swapping material, interrupting one another, doing one better than each other.

Indeed, when he finally escaped Colloredo's Salzburg court for the glittering lights of Vienna in 1781, the Concerto for Two Pianos was one of the pieces with which Mozart set about making his mark. He's known to have given two private performances of the piece in the city, both of them with his piano pupil Josepha Barbara Auernhammer. Sadly, he seems to have been less than convinced by young Josepha's playing, writing home to his father: 'she plays enchantingly, though in cantabile playing she has not got the true delicate singing style. She clips everything...'

After the first movement's confident orchestral introduction, the two pianos make their initial entry alone and unaccompanied, though it's brusque and showy enough for them to clearly set out their stall. It's a lyrical and surprisingly spacious movement, however, as though Mozart is allowing time and space to develop his material and explore his ideas, with an overall sense of warmth and contentment – despite a later swerve into the darker minor, which doesn't last long.

The two pianists enter unaccompanied again in the slow and refined second movement, which shows a remarkable variety of textures



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Mozart not only divides his musical material very democratically between his two soloists, but also shifts the music's focus very much towards the interplay between them.

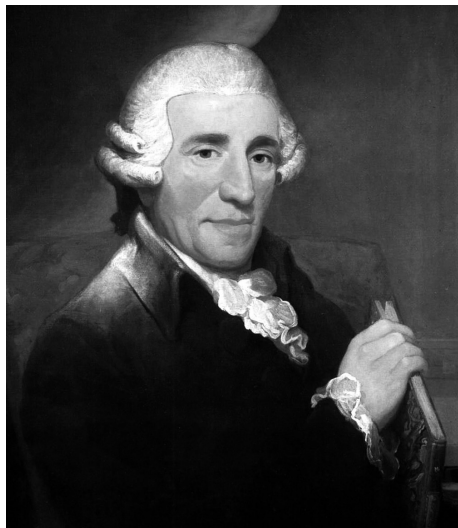
in Mozart's writing. His exuberant finale, however, is full of wit and humour – not least in its perky recurring theme, which manages to grind to a halt on a different pregnant chord each time it returns. A lavish double cadenza, with the two pianists freely sparking off each other's material, drives the Concerto to its joyful conclusion.

Joseph Haydn was, of course, an inveterate musical joker. Not just in terms of the general bustling wit of much of his music (though it has its darker drama too, of course), but also in his unexpected harmonic twists, his sudden stops, his false endings – in fact, all manner of musical tricks to keep his listeners guessing. His 'Surprise' Symphony contains one his best-known gags – and one that's hardly complex in its humour (if you haven't yet experienced it, you will tonight, at some point in the second movement), though always effective all the same.

But perhaps the most surprising thing about the Symphony is that its famous 'surprise'

wasn't originally there at all. Haydn wrote the piece as the second of his six-symphony set intended to delight and captivate English listeners during his first trip to London, in 1791-2. By then, he'd spent almost 30 years in the employment of the fabulously wealthy Esterházy family, much of that time in the lavish but rather isolated Eszterháza Palace, in what's now north-west Hungary, in Haydn's time firmly at the heart of the Habsburg Empire. During those decades, he'd used the court's resident musicians to the fullest, virtually inventing the modern symphony and string quartet as musical forms, and developing his clean, clear, elegant and mischievously witty musical style across operas, chamber music and plenty more.

But equally, he felt he needed to stretch his wings. In 1790, at the age of 58, he found his chance. The incoming Prince Anton looked to trim back his artistic outgoings, still guaranteeing an on-going salary for Haydn, but no longer requiring his permanent



Franz Joseph Haydn

His motivation for adding that unexpected element to his Symphony No 94 was 'to surprise the public with something new, and to make a debut in a brilliant manner so as not to be outdone by my pupil Pleyel'.


presence at court. The composer's music was already wildly popular among London audiences, and German-born, London-based impresario Johann Peter Salomon snapped him up for two visits to England, the first in 1791-2, and the second in 1794-5. Both went down a storm, so much so that Haydn reportedly even considered settling permanently in the English capital (and was explicitly invited to do so by George III, no less).

But Haydn received a surprise of his own when he discovered that his erstwhile pupil Ignaz Pleyel would be in London at the same time as his own first visit, with a concert series of his own, in direct competition. The elder composer had little to fear, but clearly something had to be done. And as he told his first biographer, August Griesinger, his motivation for adding that unexpected element to his Symphony No 94 was 'to surprise the public with something new, and to make a debut in a brilliant manner so as not to be outdone by

my pupil Pleyel'. The technique clearly worked: the Symphony was a huge success at its first performance, in Mayfair's Hanover Square Rooms on 23 March 1792, and ultimately proved to be the sensation of the season.

A slow, tender introduction divided between winds and strings sets the scene for the bucolic idyll of Haydn's first movement (you might even hear some asses braying at one point), which manages to be lyrical and energetic at the same time. The second movement's hushed theme seems to be asking you to lean in and listen closely, even if it sounds suspiciously like 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star' (widely known in Haydn's time as the French melody 'Ah! vous dirai-je, maman', in Haydn's time). His robust third movement minuet and trio continue the Symphony's rustic theme, with distinctive oom-pah-pah accompaniment, while Haydn throws in one or two of his unexpected pauses amid the propulsive energy of his dashing finale.

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Roderick Brydon



Jukka-Pekka Saraste



Ivor Bolton



Roderick Brydon in 1975




SCO on tour in Hong Kong, 1983



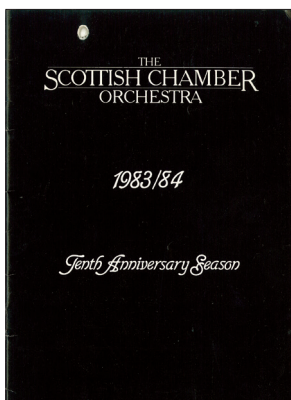
Wind Ensemble at Hopetoun House, 1970's



Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, 1985

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Evolution of SCO programme covers from 1974





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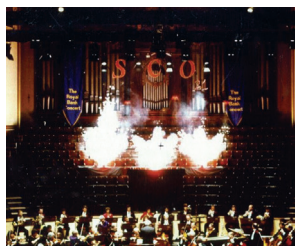
Orchestra and Nessie, 1987



Sir Charles Mackerras



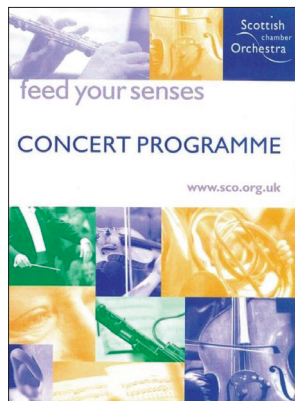
Edinburgh Festival Fireworks, 2012



21st Anniversary Gala Concert, Usher Hall, 1995



SCO Season 23/24 (Rachel Smith violin)



Conductor/Piano

MAXIM EMELYANYCHEV



At the Scottish Chamber Orchestra Maxim Emelyanychev follows in the footsteps of just five previous Principal Conductors in the Orchestra's 49-year history; Roderick Brydon (1974-1983), Jukka-Pekka Saraste (1987-1991), Ivor Bolton (1994-1996), Joseph Swensen (1996-2005) and Robin Ticciati (2009-2018).

Recent highlights have included a US tour and a performance at the London Proms with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and his debuts with the Berliner Philharmoniker, New Japan Philharmonic, Osaka Kansai Philharmonic, Bergen Philharmonic, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Chambre de Paris.

In 2023/24 Maxim's highlights include the following debuts: Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, SWR Symphonieorchester Stuttgart, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio-France, Mozarteum Orchestra at the Salzburg Festival. He returns to the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

He regularly collaborates with renowned artists such as Max Emanuel Cenčić, Patrizia Ciofi, Joyce DiDonato, Franco Fagioli, Richard Goode, Sophie Karthäuser, Stephen Hough, Katia and Marielle Labèque, Marie-Nicole Lemieux, Julia Lezhneva, Alexei Lubimov, Riccardo Minasi, Xavier Sabata and Dmitry Sinkovsky.

Maxim is also a highly respected chamber musician. His most recent recording, of Brahms Violin Sonatas with long-time collaborator and friend Aylen Pritchin, was released on Aparté in December 2021 and has attracted outstanding reviews internationally. With the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Maxim has recorded Schubert Symphony No 9 – the symphony with which he made his debut with the orchestra – and Mendelssohn Symphonies Nos 3 'Scottish' and 5 'Reformation' both on Linn Records.

For full biography please visit sco.org.uk

Piano

DMITRY ABLOGIN



Dmitry Ablogin is regarded as one of the most brilliant and creative keyboard artists of his generation.

Dmitry studied piano under the guidance of Vladimir Tropp at the Gnessin Academy in Moscow and graduated with distinction in 2012. His marked interest in historical pianos led him to Frankfurt University of Music and Performing Arts, where he studied fortepiano and historically informed performance with Jesper Bøje Christensen.

Dmitry has won prizes at numerous piano competitions: the 1st International Chopin Competition on Period Instruments (Warsaw, 2018), the International Competition "Musica Antiqua" for Pianoforte (Bruges, 2019), the German Piano Open (Hanover, 2016), the International Vera Lotar-Shevchenko Competition (Novosibirsk, 2010) and the Nikolai Rubinstein Competition (Paris, 2006) to name a few.

In October 2021, Dmitry won the 10th International German Pianist Award and made his début at the Alte Oper Frankfurt.

Dmitry Ablogin's most recent album has been released in October 2023 by the Chopin Institute. He recorded a unique selection of Chopin's late works on a Pleyel fortepiano No. 14810 which once belonged to Chopin and was his very last instrument.

Highlights of Dmitry's 2023-24 season include debuting at the Berlin Philharmonie, Cologne Philharmonie, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Konzerthaus Freiburg, Edinburgh Queen's Hall and Glasgow City Halls. He appears as a soloist together with the Freiburger Barockorchester, the Orchestra of the 18th Century and Nürnberger Symphoniker.

For full biography please visit sco.org.uk

Biography

SCOTTISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



The Scottish Chamber Orchestra (SCO) is one of Scotland's five National Performing Companies and has been a galvanizing force in Scotland's music scene since its inception in 1974. The SCO believes that access to world-class music is not a luxury but something that everyone should have the opportunity to participate in, helping individuals and communities everywhere to thrive. Funded by the Scottish Government, City of Edinburgh Council and a community of philanthropic supporters, the SCO has an international reputation for exceptional, idiomatic performances: from mainstream classical music to newly commissioned works, each year its wide-ranging programme of work is presented across the length and breadth of Scotland, overseas and increasingly online.

Equally at home on and off the concert stage, each one of the SCO's highly talented and creative musicians and staff is passionate about transforming and enhancing lives through the power of music. The SCO's Creative Learning programme engages people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse range of projects, concerts, participatory workshops and resources. The SCO's current five-year Residency in Edinburgh's Craigmillar builds on the area's extraordinary history of Community Arts, connecting the local community with a national cultural resource.

An exciting new chapter for the SCO began in September 2019 with the arrival of dynamic young conductor Maxim Emelyanychev as the Orchestra's Principal Conductor. His tenure has recently been extended until 2028. The SCO and Emelyanychev released their first album together (Linn Records) in November 2019 to widespread critical acclaim. Their second recording together, of Mendelssohn symphonies, was released in November 2023.

The SCO also has long-standing associations with many eminent guest conductors and directors including Andrew Manze, Pekka Kuusisto, François Leleux, Nicola Benedetti, Isabelle van Keulen, Anthony Marwood, Richard Egarr, Mark Wigglesworth, John Storgårds and Conductor Emeritus Joseph Swensen.

The Orchestra's current Associate Composer is Jay Capperauld. The SCO enjoys close relationships with numerous leading composers and has commissioned around 200 new works, including pieces by the late Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sir James MacMillan, Anna Clyne, Sally Beamish, Martin Suckling, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Karin Rehnqvist, Mark-Anthony Turnage and Nico Muhly.

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Approver: Quilter Cheviot Limited, 25th August 2023

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