

A poster for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's 50th anniversary. It features a violinist, Lorenza Borrani, playing in a concert hall. In the background, a large classical painting is visible. The design includes a teal curved banner at the top and a purple curved banner at the bottom. The text is white and black.

SCOTTISH  
CHAMBER  
ORCHESTRA 50

# BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY NO 7

WITH LORENZA BORRANI

28 February-1 March 2024

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PROGRAMME

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# BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY NO 7

WITH LORENZA BORRANI

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**Wednesday 28 February, 7.30pm**, Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries  
**Thursday 29 February, 7.30pm**, The Queen's Hall, Edinburgh  
**Friday 1 March, 7.30pm**, City Halls, Glasgow

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**MADERNA** Selection from 'Odhecaton' Suite  
**BEETHOVEN (arr. Mahler)** Quartet in F minor 'Serioso'

*Interval of 20 minutes*

**BEETHOVEN** Symphony No 7

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**Lorenza Borrani** Director/Violin



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Elizabeth Wexler  
Sijie Chen  
Kana Kawashima  
Aisling O'Dea  
Siún Milne  
Fiona Alexander  
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Marcus Barcham Stevens  
Michelle Dierx  
Rachel Smith  
Sarah Bevan Baker  
Niamh Lyons  
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## **Viola**

Max Mandel  
Jessica Beeston  
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

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Maximiliano Martín  
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**Katherine Bryer**  
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# WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO HEAR

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## MADERNA (1920-1973)

Selection from 'Odhecaton' Suite (1501)

*Suite No2*

**OBRECHT: Rompeltier (Allegro)**

**ANONYMOUS: Nostre cambriere si malade estois (Andante scorrevole)**

*Suite No1*

**COMPÈRE: Alons ferons la barbe (Moderato)**

**JOSQUIN DESPRES: Adieu mes amours (Adagio)**

*Suite No2*

**ANONYMOUS: Hélas, que il est amongre (Adagio)**

**MOUTON: James, james, james (Allegro moderato)**

**OBRECHT: Rompeltier (Allegro)**

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## BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

String Quartet No 11 in F minor,  
Op 95 'Serioso' (1810)  
arr. Mahler (1898)

**Allegro con brio**

**Allegretto ma non troppo**

**Allegro assai vivace ma serioso**

**Larghetto espressivo**

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## BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Symphony No 7 in A major, Op 92  
(1811-12)

**Poco sostenuto – Vivace**

**Allegretto**

**Presto – Assai meno presto**

**Allegro con brio**

Time and history are funny concepts in classical music. We might like to think of an unwavering forward-moving trajectory behind what composers do, with new ideas and fashions incorporated as time goes on, only be developed or abandoned as other new ideas and fashions emerge, all in a relatively straightforward linear progression. In truth, there's a lot of back and forth, as musicians feel re-inspired by earlier generations, or even create works that are vastly ahead of their times. There's a lot of that in tonight's programme, too, as three composers peer distantly back and forward in time – in Beethoven's case to the visionary contemplations of his own later music, and in Maderna and Mahler's cases backwards to cherished sounds from the past.

In many ways, Bruno Maderna was an uncompromising modernist, as much a fully signed-up member of the hardline postwar avant-garde as Boulez, Nono and Stockhausen, whom Maderna counted as friends. He was a child prodigy, born in Venice in 1920, and he founded Milan Radio's pioneering Studio di fonologia musicale with his colleague Luciano Berio in 1955, in which the two composers (and many others) carried out sonic experiments into the possibilities of electronic music. He taught for many years at the avant-garde hothouse of the Darmstadt summer school, alongside Pierre Boulez, and died in 1973 at the age of just 53.

Maderna was very fondly remembered by his friends and colleagues. Indeed, he was a much-loved, larger-than-life, gregarious character, a world away from the ascetic puritan we might associate





*Bruno Maderna*

*Maderna was very fondly remembered by his friends and colleagues. Indeed, he was a much-loved, larger-than-life, gregarious character, a world away from the ascetic puritan we might associate with the arid, academic avant-garde.*

with the arid, academic avant-garde. There's a sensual, human quality to even Maderna's most challenging music, and he retained a fascination with the music of the past, a passion that he'd first discovered during his student days – a respect and love for earlier works that many of his colleagues found it harder to emulate.

The music by Maderna in today's programme demonstrates that fascination, taking ancient works and recasting them for a modern-day orchestra, thereby paying affectionate homage to and also celebrating their dancing rhythms and joyful sense of entertainment.

*Odhecaton* is the usual shorthand used for Ottaviano Petrucci's *Harmonice musices odhecaton* (literally 'One Hundred Songs of Harmonic Music'), published in Venice in 1501, and counting as one

of the very earliest examples of printed sheet music. Petrucci was a printer rather than a musician, but he was a canny businessman, too. Following Johannes Gutenberg's printing innovations in Mainz in the 1450s, Petrucci quickly spotted that printing music could be lucrative. He convinced the city's authorities to allow him exclusivity on printing music books within the Venetian Republic for a period of 20 years, and quickly brought out what became known as the *Odhecaton*. It contained music by some of the most respected composers of the time, including Ockeghem, Busnois, Josquin, Brumel and Obrecht, and it was an immediate and widespread success. It travelled so far, in fact, that it also inadvertently made French and Flemish choral music the dominant style across the continent for about a century afterwards.

It was Maderna's teacher (and fellow composer) Gian Francesco Malipiero

who in the late 1940s suggested that the younger man might be interested in looking at the *Odhecaton* for inspiration. Maderna was fascinated, and produced two suites of arrangements from it in 1950. Tonight's concert selects miniature movements from across Maderna's two suites. Obrecht's 'Rompeltier' makes a rousing, galloping opener, while the more lyrical, 'Nostre cambriere si malade estois' splits the orchestra into duos and small groups, who pass its singing themes back and forth between one another. Compère's 'Alons ferons la barbe' combines dancing rhythms with strict contrapuntal rules, while Josquin's stately, sorrowful 'Adieu mes amours' makes for a heartfelt slow movement, with a singing violin line. The sense of quiet reflection continues in the 'Hélas, que il est a mongre', while Mouton's sprightly 'James, james, james' almost imperceptibly slides from four-time to three-time about halfway through. Maderna rounds things off with a rousing repeat of his opening 'Rompeltier' by Obrecht.

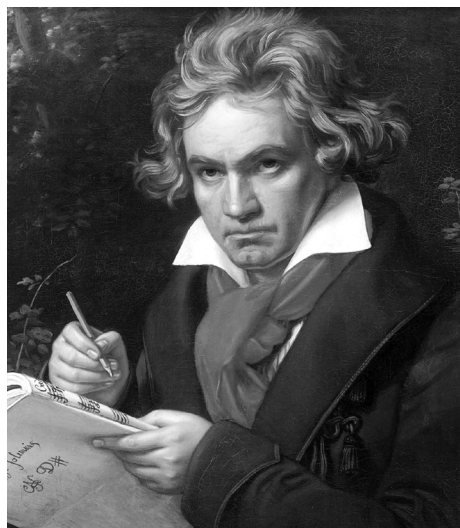
The string quartet was still a fairly new musical form – and a new performing ensemble, too – when Ludwig van Beethoven wrote his first ones, the six Op 18 quartets, in the last years of the 18th century. By the 1820s, however, he'd transformed the medium into a vehicle for visionary, exploratory music, exemplified by the profound spiritual contemplations of his late quartets.

Tonight's next piece – Beethoven's String Quartet in F minor, Op 95, from 1810 (in Gustav Mahler's arrangement for string orchestra) – stands right in the middle of those two extremes, and also at a crucial point in the composer's relationship with

the form. It looks both backwards to the extrovert, exuberant quartets he'd already written, and also forwards to the more rarified, philosophical later quartets. The piece clearly held a special personal significance for the composer, too: that 'serioso' description was Beethoven's own.

And an apt one, too. It was a tough time for the composer. On top of his steadily worsening deafness and other health concerns, he was enduring continuing financial insecurity, plus the fallout from a failed love affair. Eight years earlier he'd admitted to having contemplated suicide in a letter (unsent) that we now call his Heiligenstadt Testament. He referred to that missive when writing to a friend in 1810: 'if I had not read somewhere that no one should quit life voluntarily while he could still do something worthwhile, I would have been dead long ago and certainly by my own hand. Oh, life is so beautiful, but for me it is poisoned forever.'

There's always a question, of course, of how much we should connect a composer's state of mind with the music they create. In the case of Beethoven's 'Serioso' Quartet, however, the link appears to be real, and intentional. Not only is it Beethoven's shortest, densest string quartet – its music feels like it's been stripped back to its essentials, boiled down to a thick concentration – but it's also one of his most overtly emotional. Perhaps he intended a kind of catharsis, for composer and listeners alike: by experiencing the dark, turbulent emotions embedded in the music, we'd be able to overcome them. If so, he was aware that only certain listeners would be up to the task. He warned Sir George Smart, who



*Ludwig van Beethoven*

***Not only is it Beethoven's shortest, densest string quartet – its music feels like it's been stripped back to its essentials, boiled down to a thick concentration – but it's also one of his most overtly emotional.***

was considering publishing the work in Britain: 'NB: The quartet is written for a small circle of connoisseurs and is never to be performed in public. Should you wish for some quartets for public performance I would compose them to this purpose occasionally.'

It's perhaps no surprise that such a potent, concentrated work might appeal to Gustav Mahler. Though in truth, Mahler revered all that Beethoven had created, and saw his own symphonies (certainly the earlier ones) as something of a continuation of what Beethoven had begun several decades earlier. Indeed, it's hard not to see parallels between the Second Symphony that Mahler unveiled in 1895, and Beethoven's own Ninth Symphony from 1824. It was three years later, in 1898, that Mahler arranged Beethoven's 'Serioso' Quartet for a performance by the Vienna Philharmonic, during his first season as its Principal

Conductor. His aim, he said, was to retain the original chamber version's sense of intimacy and concentration, but expand the sound to fill a symphonic concert hall. The results, however, didn't go down well. Disappointed, Mahler never conducted the arrangement again, and let his score gather dust in the Vienna Philharmonic archives, where it remained until the composer David Matthews unearthed it in 1986, and prepared a new performing edition.

The explosive first movement – the shortest opening movement to any of Beethoven's quartets – begins with one of the composer's most brutal, brusque ideas: all instruments play, in unison, a gruff theme that goes up, down and back up again. It says what it has to say, then stops – as if to take stock, or maybe ask whether it's even worth continuing. Two further themes provide respite, but that inescapable opening idea is never far



***What Beethoven's Seventh Symphony does have, however, is a single overriding obsession: rhythm. It seems to focus on rhythm as pure energy, an unstoppable force, something from which all else flows.***

away, and the movement ultimately dies away, apparently in resignation.

Beethoven provides stark contrast with the song-like melody of his slow-ish second movement, though his third throws us back into the drama of the Quartet's opening. It's supposedly a lighthearted scherzo, though it's anything but playful – something Beethoven himself stresses by marking the movement itself 'serioso'. After an expressive slow introduction, his finale continues the earlier movements' drama and turmoil. It's up to you, though, whether you're convinced by its sudden shift into the brighter major in boisterous music towards the end. Is Beethoven genuinely transcending the angst and turmoil of earlier in the Quartet, or intentionally (even ironically) giving us an unconvincingly happy ending? You decide.

There are far fewer unanswered questions in tonight's final piece. What Beethoven's

Seventh Symphony does have, however, is a single overriding obsession: rhythm. It seems to focus on rhythm as pure energy, an unstoppable force, something from which all else flows. Richard Wagner famously described the Symphony as 'the apotheosis of the dance itself: it is dance in its highest aspect, the loftiest deed of bodily motion, incorporated into an ideal mould of tone'.

Listeners have long been keen to interpret Beethoven's symphonies. Following his heroic 'Eroica', his triumph-against-adversity Fifth and the evident storytelling of his 'Pastoral', commentators and fellow composers were eager to find a story behind the Seventh, too. Many saw it as a sequel to the bucolic Sixth, picturing harvesters making merry. Schumann heard a peasant wedding, and Berlioz thought of peasants dancing. Others imagined it depicted a tale from Moorish legend, or a political revolution. In fact,

it's one of Beethoven's most abstract and story-less symphonies – unless that 'story' is about the inner workings of music itself. And it's in those terms that Beethoven focuses so clearly on rhythm, deriving from that core musical element a work that feels like a celebration of energy and positivity.

It's ironic, then, that Beethoven wrote it during one of the most difficult periods in his life, shortly after the 'Serioso' Quartet we heard earlier. Alongside his steadily worsening deafness, in 1811 he came down with a serious fever, as a cure for which his doctor sent him to the Bohemian spa town of Teplice for several periods in 1811 and 1812. It was during these visits that he worked seriously on his new symphony.

Beethoven himself conducted its first performance, on 8 December 1813 in Vienna, at a benefit concert for Austrian and Bavarian troops wounded in the Battle of Hanau, an encounter that forced Napoleon's retreat. The concert was one of the high points of the composer's career – so popular, in fact, that it was repeated the following January, and again in February. The Seventh Symphony went down well – the audience demanded that Beethoven immediately repeat the second movement – but the concert's wild acclaim really came for another piece. The anti-Napoleon *Wellington's Victory* clearly captured the mood of the moment, but its popularity hasn't survived changes in taste. Even Beethoven seemed aware that the greater work had perhaps been overshadowed by the lesser one: he was furious that the *Wiener Zeitung* newspaper referred to the Seventh Symphony as a 'companion piece' to *Wellington's Victory*.

Nonetheless, the Symphony's energy and positivity must have matched the celebratory mood, too. As must the propulsive rhythmic drive that pushes its music ever onward, even in its not-very-slow 'slow' movement. The Symphony's slowest music, in fact, comes right at the start, in the introduction to its first movement, although the loud chords that interrupt that opening hint at the energy about to be unleashed. The repeated long-short-long rhythm that leads into the movement's main, faster section quickly comes to dominate, as Beethoven plays inventive games with its perky main theme.

The second movement is serious but not slow, its persistent long-short-short rhythm providing an implacable tread that's too quick to be a funeral march or dirge, even if it has something of that character. This is the movement that the audience demanded to be repeated at the Symphony's premiere, and it's maintained a remarkable life ever since, cropping up in movies as diverse as *X Men: Apocalypse*, *The King's Speech* and John Boorman's eccentric *Zardoz*, often to symbolise a strange mix of nobility and dread, an inescapable unfolding of events.

The third movement is a bright and bouncing scherzo whose unstoppable rhythm is simply a barrage of notes in three time. And if you felt there was any restraint holding back the Symphony's first three movements, Beethoven lets rip entirely in the blazing energy and wild, whirling motion of his finale, which truly seems to race towards its conclusion.

© David Kettle

Director/Violin

## LORENZA BORRANI



© Piera Mungiguerra

Lorenza Borrani performs internationally as leader, ensemble director, soloist and chamber musician. Her inspiring programmes and inclusive approach in music making are recognised and appreciated by orchestras throughout the world. Alongside her orchestral activities, she is a committed chamber music partner in special projects with her close musical friends.

In the 2023/24 season, Lorenza makes her long-awaited debut with Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and her debut with Orchestre de Paris with Ligeti Kammerkonzert alongside Haydn's Symphony Concertante and Symphony No 60 'Le Disträit'. She debuts with Musica Vitae and returns to the Swedish and Norwegian chamber orchestras, to Västerås Sinfonietta and the Arctic Philharmonic as their Artistic Partner from this season. Previous seasons' highlights include debuts with Camerata Bern, Orchestra Sinfonica de Bilbao, Arctic Philharmonic and visits to Ostrobothnian Orchestra, Riga Sinfonietta and Australian Chamber Orchestra where Lorenza premiered her own orchestral arrangement of Prokofiev's Violin Sonata No 1.

***For full biography please visit [sco.org.uk](https://sco.org.uk)***



Biography

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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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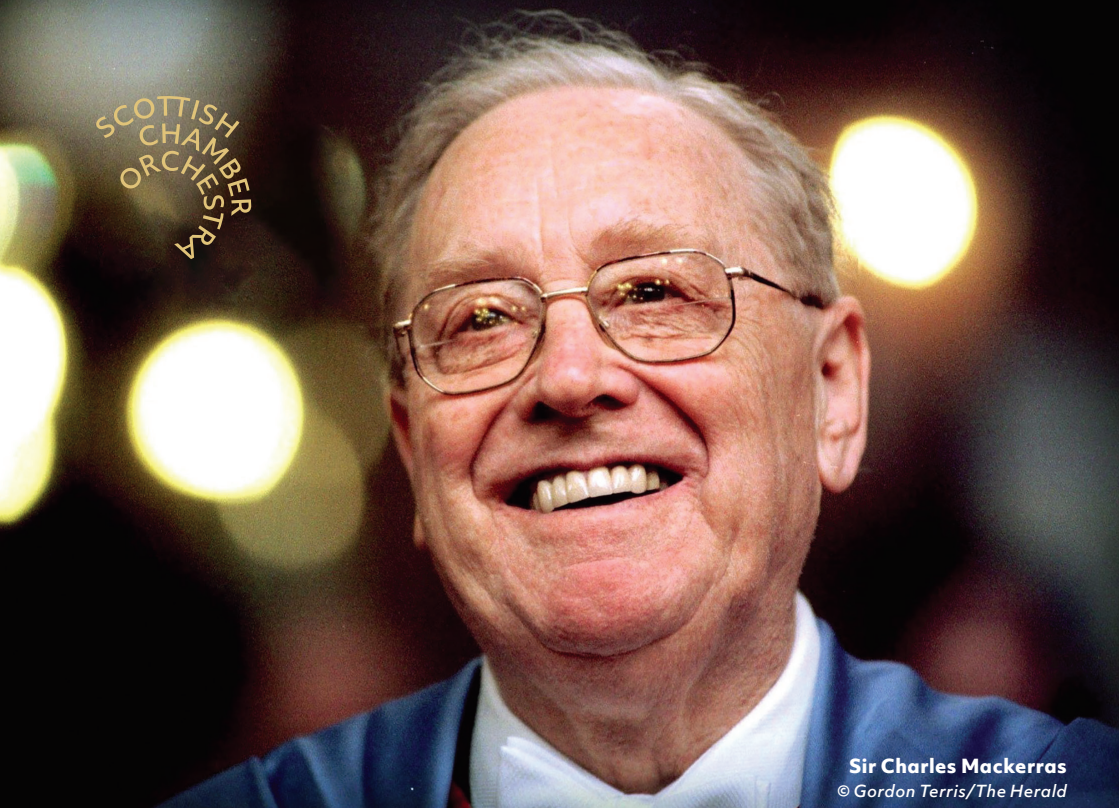
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## LEAVE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

Former SCO Conductor Laureate Sir Charles Mackerras had the vision to help the SCO by leaving the legacy of his royalty payments from all his SCO recordings in perpetuity. We remember him with the utmost respect, fondness and gratitude.

Inspired by Sir Charles, we have created *The Sir Charles Mackerras Circle* to recognise the generosity of those who wish to leave a legacy to the SCO during their lifetime.

Circle members will enjoy a special relationship with the SCO through an exclusive annual event that will give behind-the-scenes access to our musicians and the chance to hear about how legacies help make incredible live music accessible to as many people as possible.

For a confidential conversation and to learn more about becoming a *Sir Charles Mackerras Circle* member, please get in touch with **Mary Clayton** on **0131 478 8369** or by email at **[mary.clayton@sco.org.uk](mailto:mary.clayton@sco.org.uk)**