



SCOTTISH
CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA

**BENEDETTI
PLAYS MOZART**

15 – 17 Dec 2021

SCO.ORG.UK

PROGRAMME

Season 2021/22

BENEDETTI PLAYS MOZART

The Perth Concert Series
is supported by



Wednesday 15 December, 7.30pm Perth Concert Hall
Thursday 16 December, 7.30pm Usher Hall, Edinburgh
Friday 17 December, 7.30pm City Halls, Glasgow

J Strauss II Overture, Der Zigeunerbaron (The Gypsy Baron) †
Mozart Violin Concerto No 1 in B-flat *
Schoenberg Verklärte Nacht *
J Strauss II Geschichten aus dem Wienerwald (Tales from the Vienna Woods) †

Nicola Benedetti Director / Violin *
Benjamin Marquise Gilmore Director / Violin †

Please note there will be no interval.



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CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA

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The Scottish Chamber Orchestra is a charity registered in Scotland No. SC015039.
Company registration No. SC075079.

Our Musicians

YOUR ORCHESTRA

*The orchestra list is correct
at time of publication*

FIRST VIOLIN

Benjamin Marquise Gilmore
Ruth Crouch
Aoife Ní Bhriain
Kana Kawashima
Siún Milne
Amira Bedrush-McDonald
Tom Hankey
Amy Cardigan

SECOND VIOLIN

Marcus Barcham Stevens
Gordon Bragg
Rachel Spencer
Rachel Smith
Niamh Lyons
Sian Holding

VIOLA

Max Mandel
Felix Tanner
Hannah Shaw
Shelagh McKail
Ruth Nelson
Kathryn Jourdan

CELLO

Philip Higham
Su-a Lee
Donald Gillan
Niamh Molloy
Robert Anderson
Kim Vaughan

BASS

Ben Burnley
Adrian Bornet

FLUTE

André Cebrián
Emma Roche

OBOE

Robin Williams
Julian Scott

CLARINET

Maximiliano Martín
Cathal Killeen

BASSOON

Cerys Ambrose-Evans
Alison Green

HORN

Zoë Tweed
Jamie Shield
Fergus Kerr
Harry Johnstone

TRUMPET

Peter Franks
Shaun Harrold
Simon Bird

TROMBONE

Nigel Cox
Lewis Bettles
Chris Stearn
Alan Pash

TUBA

Craig Anderson

TIMPANI

Louise Goodwin

PERCUSSION

Tom Hunter
Colin Hyson
Kate Openshaw
Pete Murch

HARP

Eleanor Hudson

Siún Milne
First Violin



WHAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO HEAR

J STRAUSS II (1825-1899)

Overture, *Der Zigeunerbaron*
(The Gypsy Baron)
(1885)

MOZART (1756-1791)

Violin Concerto No 1 in B-flat (1773)

Allegro moderato
Adagio
Presto

SCHOENBERG (1825-1899)

Verklärte Nacht (1899)

J STRAUSS II (1825-1899)

Geschichten aus dem Wienerwald
(Tales from the Vienna Woods) (1868)

Vienna – undisputed cultural capital of Europe (and, therefore, of the world) in the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries – is the city that brings together the music in tonight's concert, alongside a quick trip down the road to Salzburg. And although today's four pieces might appear somewhat disparate (and in many ways, they are), there are more connections between them than you might at first imagine.

We begin by gazing eastwards from the imperial capital, into the wilder, more exotic lands of Hungary. The operetta *Der Zigeunerbaron* (or 'The Gypsy Baron') was very much a three-way, Austro-Hungarian collaboration between Vienna's waltz king Johann Strauss II, Austrian/Hungarian writer Ignaz Schnitzer and Hungarian novelist and playwright Jókai Mór. It was in November 1882 that Strauss travelled to Budapest with Adèle Deutsch (who five years later would become his third wife), where she encouraged him to sample traditional Hungarian music. Also during his stay in the Hungarian capital, Strauss met the esteemed Hungarian writer Mór, and suggested working together on a stage work based on Hungarian themes. In the end, following bouts of illness that delayed the project until 1885, *Der Zigeunerbaron* was created using a story by Mór, adapted into a libretto by Schnitzer, and set to music by Strauss. Unveiled at Vienna's Theater an der Wien on 24 October 1885 (coincidentally the eve of Strauss's 60th birthday), it was an immediate success, and remains among Strauss's most popular stage works today, second only to his operetta *Die Fledermaus*.



Johann Baptist Strauss II

It was in November 1882 that Strauss travelled to Budapest with Adèle Deutsch (who five years later would become his third wife), where she encouraged him to sample traditional Hungarian music.

Der Zigeunerbaron's unapologetically preposterous storyline revolves around an exiled landowner who returns from Austria to his Hungarian homeland, where he finds his family's castle occupied by gypsies. Deciding to join them, he marries his gypsy sweetheart, who turns out to be the daughter of a Turkish nobleman. Strauss's overture begins with the same kind of halting, rhapsodic, typically Hungarian-sounding introduction made famous by Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsodies* and Brahms's *Hungarian Dances*, before breaking into a dashing sequence of melodies that will return in fuller form later in the opera, from a polka to an intermezzo to – naturally – a waltz (which bears an uncanny resemblance to the main tune of Ravel's *La valse*, written three decades later).

For tonight's second piece, we head west from Vienna to Salzburg, where the teenage Mozart had gained his first salaried employment as a court musician to Prince Archbishop Hieronymus Colloredo (who he'd quickly grow to despise). As concertmaster, he was expected to produce and perform entertaining violin concertos: five of them remain, and there may well have been others that didn't survive down the centuries.

We might reasonably think of Mozart as a keyboard player, but it's easy to forget that he was equally fluent on the violin, writing 33 sonatas for the instrument as well as his five concertos. His father Leopold was one of the period's most esteemed string players,



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

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and author of an influential treatise on violin technique that's still used today. Young Wolfgang had studied violin with him since the age of six, and his father later wrote to the young man: "You are not quite aware yourself of what an excellent violinist you are, when you gather up all your strength and play with self-confidence, verve and fire."

It was long thought that all five of Mozart's violin concertos date from 1775, when the composer was 19, but more recently it's been established that his First Violin Concerto was written two years earlier, making it his first entirely original concerto for any instrument (he'd written earlier keyboard concertos, but they reworked other composers' music). That said,

by this stage Mozart had already composed around 20 symphonies and seven operas, so he hardly counted as a novice.

Indeed, he seems to have wanted to show off his early compositional dexterity in this First Violin Concerto. All three movements – very unusually – are in sonata form, the elaborate musical structure of the time that pits two contrasting melodies against each other, develops them together, then reconciles them at the end. A brief orchestral introduction establishes the first movement's main material before the soloist launches into their elegant solo line. The second movement – the longest of the three – makes clear the immersion in opera that Mozart



Arnold Schoenberg

Arnold Schoenberg might be notorious as a musical revolutionary, either glorified or vilified for the pioneering dissonant music of later in his life, and as such he may seem a world away from the lighthearted lavishness of the Strauss family's concoctions. In fact, he admired them hugely.

had already experienced, and the dashing finale makes great play of its surprisingly light, transparent orchestration, which serves to emphasise the soloist's athletic prowess.

We return to Vienna for tonight's third piece, and to a musical figure working a few decades after the Strauss family's extraordinary popularity. Arnold Schoenberg might be notorious as a musical revolutionary, either glorified or vilified for the pioneering dissonant music of later in his life, and as such he may seem a world away from the lighthearted lavishness of the Strauss family's concoctions. In fact, he admired them hugely, even making chamber arrangements of three of

Johann Strauss II's waltzes to leaven the hardcore contemporary music on the menu at the Society for Private Musical Performances concerts that he established in 1918. His *Verklärte Nacht* ('Transfigured Night') dates from just 14 years after Strauss's *Der Zigeunerbaron*, and though it admittedly occupies a different stylistic universe, its musical language is more similar to that of Wagner or Mahler than it is to Schoenberg's own, more challenging later music.

It was composed in just three weeks in 1899, in a burst of inspiration, originally as a work for string sextet, then transformed into a version for string orchestra in 1917. Its inspiration comes from a mystical poem by German

If Strauss celebrated Hungarian traditions earlier this evening, here he does the same with the folk music of the forests of the Wienerwald, in the foothills of the Alps to the northwest of Vienna.

writer Richard Dehmel – and also from Schoenberg's own burgeoning passion for Mathilde von Zemlinsky (sister of his teacher Alexander von Zemlinsky), who he would go on to marry.

Surging passion, in fact, runs through both the poem's storyline and the deeply romantic, sensuous music with which Schoenberg conveys it. Two lovers – a man and a woman – are walking through a forest on a moonlit night. She reveals that she bears the child of another man. He is thrown into turmoil, but ultimately accepts the child and forgives the woman, thereby transfiguring both the night and their relationship from sorrow and despair to hope and joy.

Accordingly, Schoenberg's music surges ever forward from brooding darkness to radiant light, its restless tapestry of melodies constantly transforming and melding in new combinations that reflect the shifting emotions between the couple.

We remain in Vienna's forests for tonight's final piece, which celebrates the hardy peasants and local traditions that Schoenberg's city-dwelling lovers might have encountered on their moonlit stroll. Johann Strauss II wrote his waltz *Tales from the Vienna Woods* in 1868, with a dedication to Viennese Prince Constantin zu Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, at whose Viennese palace it was probably premiered in a private soirée. If Strauss celebrated Hungarian traditions earlier this evening, here he does the same with the folk music of the forests of the Wienerwald, in the foothills of the Alps to the northwest of Vienna. His slow introduction – the longest he ever wrote for a waltz, in fact – introduces the music's bucolic ideas right from the start with bagpipe-like drones from the horns and birdsong in the woodwind. Ultimately, however, the music's succession of more cosmopolitan waltzes transport us back to the urban sophistication of the city of dreams.

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