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PRESS RELEASE

27 May 2020

EXCITING NEW MUSIC OPPORTUNITY WILL HIT THE RIGHT NOTE WITH YOUNG PLAYERS IN SCOTLAND

The Scottish Chamber Orchestra and St Mary's Music School are delighted to announce the launch of SCO Youth Academy.

Developed in partnership between the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and St Mary's Music School, **SCO Youth Academy** is a new, high quality orchestra for young musicians, which will build on the recent success of the SCO String and Wind Academies. This unique and distinct youth orchestra will offer school-aged young musicians the opportunity to work with top professionals over a series of Sunday afternoon sessions in the centre of Edinburgh. Designed to complement existing provision, it aims to enhance musical learning in a welcoming environment.

Conducted by SCO violinist **Gordon Bragg** and tutored by SCO musicians, the SCO Youth Academy is open to aspiring secondary school-aged orchestral musicians who have reached Grade 6+ for strings and timpani and percussion, Grade 7+ for winds and brass and who are able to commit to a series of five sessions. Repertoire for this course is Sibelius' *Finlandia* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* movements 1 and 3 and places will be allocated following submission of a successful video audition.

Kirsteen Davidson Kelly, Creative Learning Director at the Scottish Chamber Orchestra said: *"The programme combines the outstanding musical skills of the SCO musicians and the educational expertise of St Mary's to create - and I quote an SCO String Academy participants here - "a fantastic experience" playing "amazing music with really friendly people" in a "really good environment". The range of abilities that young people develop through orchestral playing are hugely valuable transferable skills for their future. SCO Youth Academy will be a brilliant way to support successful learning, develop confidence, and give participants the opportunity to contribute to high-quality ensemble performance."*

Kenneth Taylor, Headteacher of St Mary's Music School said: *St Mary's Music School is delighted to be working with SCO in offering advanced young musicians from all over Scotland the chance to work in a range of ensembles under the expert guidance of SCO musicians. Our courses so far have proved very popular, offering high quality music making in a friendly, supportive and inspiring environment. Next session we are excited to be offering both a full orchestral course in November followed by a repeat of our successful String and Wind Academies in Spring 2021.*

The first session is scheduled to take place on Sunday 1 November 2020.

Apply now at sco.org.uk/academy. Applicants will be emailed full instructions about how to send their audition video.

The Scottish Chamber Orchestra and St Mary's Music School are committed to making this opportunity accessible to all young musicians and bursaries for up to 100% of the £90 course fee and travel expenses are available. See website for further details.

SCO Youth Academy is kindly supported by The Marigold Whittome Memorial Trust and The William Syson Foundation.

COVID-19

Despite the current movement restrictions due to COVID-19, the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and St Mary's Music School are looking to the future and these remain exciting times. Our priorities are to ensure the health and safety of our audiences, stakeholders and staff. We are monitoring the situation carefully and closely following the guidelines provided by the Scottish Government. This event will proceed only when it is assessed to be safe nearer to the event date, otherwise it may be postponed until further notice.

Notes to Editor:

[SCO Academy](https://sco.org.uk)

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About Scottish Chamber Orchestra

The internationally celebrated Scottish Chamber Orchestra is one of Scotland's National Performing Companies.

Formed in 1974 and core funded by the Scottish Government, the SCO aims to provide as many opportunities as possible for people to hear great music by touring the length and breadth of Scotland, appearing regularly at major national and international festivals including the Edinburgh International Festival, BBC Proms, and by touring internationally as proud ambassadors for Scottish cultural excellence.

Making a significant contribution to Scottish life beyond the concert platform, the Orchestra works in schools, universities, colleges, hospitals, care homes, places of work and community centres through its extensive Creative Learning programme.

The SCO has long-standing associations with many eminent guest conductors including Conductor Emeritus Joseph Swensen, Principal Guest Conductor Emmanuel Krivine, François Leleux, Pekka Kuusisto, Richard Egarr, Andrew Manze and John Storgårds.

The Orchestra also enjoys close relationships with many leading composers and has commissioned almost 200 new works, including pieces by the late Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sir James MacMillan, Martin Suckling, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Mark-Anthony Turnage, Nico Muhly and Associate Composer Anna Clyne.

An exciting new chapter for the SCO began in September 2019 with the start of dynamic young conductor Maxim Emelyanychev's tenure as the Orchestra's Principal Conductor.

The SCO and Emelyanychev released their first album together (Linn Records) in November 2019. The repertoire - Schubert's Symphony No. 9 in C major 'The Great' – is the first concert Emelyanychev performed with the Orchestra in March 2018.