



150 YEARS 1870 2020

DONATION PROGRAMME

BEETHOVEN SYMPHONY No. 9

Conductor **STEPHEN BROAD**
THE CITY OF GLASGOW CHORUS

SAT 25 MAR 2023 7.30^{PM}
CITY HALLS, GLASGOW

Welcome

Good evening and welcome to the City Halls to this very special concert, which was first scheduled for November 2020 as the opening event of our 150th anniversary season. And at last, here we are!



Beethoven's monumental 9th and final symphony is the main work tonight and we are joined for the performance by the City of Glasgow Chorus and four great young soloists who are all alumni of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland here in Glasgow.

Tonight we celebrate great music, but also the joy of making music together, which the Society has been doing now for 152 years. You, the members of the audience are a crucial part of that music-making. We welcome you all, friends old and new. Thank you for being here with us tonight!

Stephen Broad, Conductor

GLASGOW ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY



Conductor STEPHEN BROAD

Stephen Broad grew up on the Isle of Mull and was introduced to orchestral music by Radio 3 and an inspirational teacher called Kenneth Way. He joined the Music School of Douglas Academy and was lucky enough to conduct the whole school in a composition of his own, aged 17. University studies at Glasgow and Oxford allowed time for more conducting, which became a special passion. More recently, he took part in the BBC's *Great Orchestra Challenge* with Stirling Orchestra, which saw the orchestra perform in the grand final at the Royal Albert Hall.

In a parallel life, Stephen is Director of Research and Knowledge Exchange at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. He is especially proud of being one of the authors of *What's Going On?*, the report that started the Youth Music Initiative over 20 years ago.

He is also an occasional presenter on Radio 3 – through which he tries to introduce more people to the power and joy of music.



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At first sight, the works on tonight's programme seem disparate – but they are held together by a thread that is at once gossamer thin and stronger than steel: the individual and collective humanity that binds us all.

Beethoven's *Egmont* celebrates a man who sacrificed himself in standing against oppression – the moral and spiritual triumph of his death translates musically into an exalting coda that has echos of the *Marseillaise*. In the *Saint Kentigern Suite*, the life and legend of St Kentigern, founder of Glasgow, is expressed with solemn beauty by Thomas Wilson, one of the greatest musical sons of the city, through the five symbols of Glasgow – the Bird, Fish, Ring, Bell and Tree. The plainsong *Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est* – 'Where there is charity and love, there is God' – binds the whole work together and emerges in full in the final movement. *Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child* expresses the anguish provoked by an absence of charity and love. Samuel Coleridge Taylor, a black British man of Sierra Leonian descent, made it his life's work to secure the

dignity of black people and one of the ways he did this was to draw attention to African and African American music by translating it into the European idiom in which he had trained; this included music from the era of slavery like *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child* – breathtakingly beautiful, heartfelt and humane.

And then we come to Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, a monumental work and one of the few symphonies that live up to Gustav Mahler's dictum that 'a symphony... must contain everything'. After the storm and stress of the first movement, the violence of the second and the repose of the third comes a finale that brings together a monster orchestra, choir, and four vocal soloists to affirm the spirit of humanity in the 'Ode to Joy': the European anthem, but also a melody sung in protest in situations as disparate as Pinochet's Chile and Tiananmen Square in 1989. A song for everyone?

Stephen Broad

Soprano HOLLY BROWN

Holly Brown is a soprano currently enrolled on the Opera Course at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, having previously completed studies at the Guildhall and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Previous stage work includes chorus work for Grange Park Opera, Clorinda (La Cenerentola) for British Youth Opera, Carolina (Il matrimonio segreto) for Hampstead Garden Opera, The Queen of Shemakha (The Golden Cockerel) and Donna Anna (Don Giovanni) for Orchestra VOX. On the concert platform she has performed in Mahler's 2nd Symphony and Beethoven's 'Christ on the Mount of Olives' for the LSO Discovery programme.

Future engagements include Almira in the modern debut of Mary Fauche's rediscovered 'The Shepherd King', Donna Anna for Cumbria Opera Group, and the premiere of Stephen McNeill's 'A Star Beside the Moon' for the Guildhall School.

She studies under John Evans and is generously supported by the Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers and the Behrens Foundation.



Mezzo-Soprano LAURA MARGARET SMITH

Described as "A name to watch" by Gramophone magazine, Scottish Mezzo-Soprano, Laura Margaret Smith has sung with Bayreuth Festival Opera, Hamburg State Opera, Wexford Festival Opera, Scottish Opera, Red Note Ensemble, Mahler Players, Mahogany Opera, Opera Bohemia, NOISE and Paisley Opera.

She has performed at the Melbourne Recital Centre with the Edinburgh International Festival, Wigmore Hall, Royal Festival Hall, Kings Place for the Yehudi Menuhin Centenary Concert, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, The Usher Hall, The Queen's Hall, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow City Halls, The Caird Hall and Aberdeen's The Citadel in a live broadcast for BBC Radio 3.

Laura is a former Scottish Opera Robertson Scholarship Trust Emerging Artist, graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland's Alexander Gibson Opera School, a recipient of a Young Concert Artists Award from Making Music, Samling Artist, Britten-Pears Young Artist and alumna of the Georg Solti Accademia di Bel Canto and Live Music Now Scotland.



Tenor EUROS CAMPBELL

Euros is a graduate of the Opera School at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, having previously completed an honours degree in History and Politics at the University of Glasgow. Since studying on the Opera Course at the RCS, Euros has been a member of the Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and was involved in their productions of Carmen, The Cunning Little Vixen and Die Meistersinger Von Nuremberg. Since graduating, Euros has been in the televised final of the Towyn Roberts competition in Wales, performed the role of Edmund Bertrum in Jonathan Dove's Mansfield Park with Edinburgh Studio Opera, Schaunard in Diva Opera's Production of La Boheme, Tegid in Opra Cymru's production of Gareth Glyn's new opera 'Wythnos yng Nghymru Fydd' (A Week in Wales of the Future) and Germont in La Traviata with West Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra.

Euros understudied the role of the Gamekeeper in Glyndebourne's 2019 production of Rusalka and will return to understudy Lysander in A Midsummer Night's Dream in 2023.



Baritone ARSHAK KUZIKYAN

Armenian baritone Arshak studied at the Yerevan State Conservatory, the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and the Wales International Academy of Voice, with Dennis O'Neill.

Arshak is a Recipient of the Sadler's Wells Independent Opera Postgraduate Voice Fellowship 2015 and a Georg Solti Foundation scholarship holder. Masterclasses include with Angela Gheorghiu, Renata Scotto, Juan Pons, Richard Bonynge, Sir Thomas Allen and Malcom Martineau.

He has performed the roles of Sir John Falstaff (Sir John in Love); Publio (La Clemenza di Tito); Leporello and Masetto (Don Giovanni); Figaro (Le Nozze di Figaro) Dulcamara (L'Elisir d'Amore); and The Duke (Romeo and Juliet).

Most recently he sang the title role in Macbeth at Cambridge Art Theatre with English Touring Opera and with Duchy Opera. He has also sung with Grange Park Opera, and with companies in Armenia, Italy and Spain. His Wigmore Hall debut was made as a Samling artist in the Samling Showcase.



PROGRAMME

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770 – 1827)

OVERTURE *EGMONT* OP. 84

Beethoven was a significant composer for the theatre. His one opera, *Fidelio*, is performed worldwide; his ballet *Prometheus* is his longest purely instrumental composition; and he wrote overtures and incidental music to various, mostly historical, dramas of his day. His incidental music (1809-10) for Goethe's historical drama *Egmont* is only occasionally performed. But the thrilling overture justifiably has a permanent place in the repertory as an arresting concert-opener.

THOMAS BRENDAN WILSON (1927 – 2001)

ST. KENTIGERN SUITE FOR STRING ORCHESTRA

Thomas Wilson was a significant figure in Scottish, indeed British, music in the second half of the 20th century. Born in the USA to British parents who moved back home while Thomas was an infant, he spent most of his life in Glasgow. From 1957 he held an academic post at Glasgow University, being awarded a personal chair in 1977. His compositions cover a broad range of genres. The *St. Kentigern Suite* was written in 1986 to a commission from the Friends of Glasgow Cathedral, for the cathedral's 850th anniversary. The five movements represent aspects of the legend of St. Kentigern or Mungo: the Bird (the aspirant); Fish (the Christian activist); Ring (the contemplative); Bell (proclaimer of the word) and, following without a break, Tree (Kentigern's legacy). In these, Wilson deftly explores a wide range of string textures in an uncompromising modernist style.

SAMUEL COLERIDGE-TAYLOR (1875 – 1912)

SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A MOTHERLESS CHILD

Son of an English woman and a Sierra Leonian doctor who returned home to take

up an official appointment without learning of his partner's pregnancy, Coleridge-Taylor nevertheless had a secure childhood and youth. His musicality was encouraged, to the extent of his taking a degree at the Royal College of Music. Being of mixed race doesn't seem to have disadvantaged him, given his sheer talent. His three cantatas *The Song of Hiawatha*, based on Longfellow's poem, particularly *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, were hugely popular for decades. Later decline in his reputation may reflect an over-reliance on *Hiawatha* (in the 1920s semi-staged performances in London's Albert Hall seemed ridiculous to a younger generation). Worse, the popularity didn't benefit his family: he had sold *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* to Novello for fifteen guineas and got no royalties. This scandal was a factor in the formation of the Performing Rights society in 1914 – two years after his death from pneumonia. Happily, Coleridge-Taylor's music has undergone major reappraisal in recent years with his instrumental music getting the attention it deserves. Trips to the USA gave him an interest in Black American culture. His arrangement of the "Negro Melody" (as it is described on the printed music) *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child* is a moving product of this.

INTERVAL

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770 – 1827)

SYMPHONY NO. 9 IN D, OP. 125

1. **Allegro non troppo e un poco maestoso**
2. **Scherzo: Molto vivace – Presto**
3. **Adagio molto e cantabile – Andante moderato**
4. **Finale: various tempi**

The decade or so after Beethoven came to terms with his increasing deafness was extraordinarily productive. Most of his concerti and symphonies, his opera *Fidelio*, several piano sonatas and major chamber works

(including his last for piano and strings) all date from 1802 – 1815. Then, things fell apart for a while. His health was unreliable, and would remain so. He was increasingly eccentric in manner and unkempt in appearance (staff at favourite restaurants knew to seat him well away from other customers). His ailing younger brother Caspar Carl died in 1815 and Beethoven raised a lawsuit to gain guardianship of his nephew Karl from his bereaved sister-in-law. He eventually won, but this draining episode did not reflect well on him.

A series of unrelated events rekindled his creative impetus. In 1817 the Philharmonic Society of London offered him £50 for a new symphony, also inviting him to visit London. The initiative came to nothing at the time, but his sketchbooks show Beethoven considering ideas for one or two new symphonies: one might have vocal parts; there could be a fully worked out fugue in the style of Bach. In 1818 Broadwood, the London piano manufacturers, made Beethoven a gift of a new, eight-octave, model, decorated with a dedicatory panel and bearing the signatures of five leading musicians based in London, including Beethoven's former pupil and friend Ferdinand Ries. A refocussed interest in the piano resulted in the four last great sonatas and the *Diabelli Variations*. Then, to honour his great musical friend and patron the Archduke Rudolf on his appointment as a bishop, Beethoven planned the *Missa Solemnis*. This preoccupied him from 1819 to 1823, largely pushing aside other projects. Meanwhile, in late 1822 the Russian Prince Nikolas Galitzin wrote, offering to commission up to three new string quartets. He had to wait until 1825 for the first: with the *Missa* out of the way Beethoven returned to the symphony project. Extracts from Schiller's *Ode to Joy*, which he had admired since 1793, would provide a secular text. His entertaining 1808 *Fantasy for Solo Piano, Chorus and Orchestra*, with its set of orchestral and choral variations, was the model for the new symphony's much grander choral finale.

In its complexity the Ninth reached new heights. All movements are innovative. The first surprise is the absence of any grand opening statement: what we hear is the gradual emergence from musical fragments of an extended symphonic development, forming what becomes an epic first movement. In Beethoven's day, listeners would have expected a slower movement next, but he reverses the order of the middle movements to place the scherzo second. A minuet or scherzo usually was relatively light. But this scherzo is no joke. If there are hints of the *con brio* sense of fun found in his earlier music, something more relentless is also at work. Its theme is introduced in a fugue and it is far longer than any symphonic scherzo to date – threatening to go on forever as a *perpetuum mobile*. He springs rhythmic surprises in the form of three-bar phrases; and a trio in duple time. Serenity descends with the Adagio third movement, which is a glowing set of variations on two alternating themes, the first in square time; the second in triple time. But even here there is a sense of exploration, with remote keys being revealed. The calm is shattered by a piercing discord which opens the massive (ca. 25') finale. Cellos and basses play a recitative-like riposte after which we hear brief echoes from the previous movements. These in turn are brushed aside; but a new tune introduced by the woodwind finds favour and blossoms in an extended exposition. The discord returns but this time, the baritone soloist responds and is joined by the other singers as they take up this main theme with Schiller's words. There then follows a series of contrasting variations: a jaunty military march which transforms into a complex fugal passage; a majestic slow section; then another fast section in compound rhythm before the joyous closing passages.

Alastair Whitelaw

GLASGOW ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY

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* Section Principal



THE CITY OF GLASGOW CHORUS

The City of Glasgow Chorus is one of Glasgow's leading choirs. Our members are dedicated, talented singers and perform with professional musicians to a very high standard. Most of all, we have fun!

The Chorus was founded in 1983 by Graham Taylor MBE, and is now under the baton of Musical Director Paul Keohone. With around 100 members, the Chorus is one of the biggest independent choral groups in the West of Scotland and is a significant player in Scotland's arts environment. We perform a wide range of musical genres and are committed to performing less familiar pieces as well as the popular and well-loved choral works and have performed some of the greatest and most challenging choral works including Mahler's Eighth Symphony, Beethoven's Miss Solemnis and Britten's War Requiem.

We have toured in France, the Czech Republic, Poland and China and have worked with top orchestras including the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic, The Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra and the Orchestra of Scottish Opera. We have also appeared with many famous solo artists including Jose Carreras, Lesley Garrett and Sir Willard White.

To celebrate its 40th anniversary, the Chorus will join with the Orchestra of Scottish Opera and the Leeds Festival Chorus in the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on 12th November for the Verdi Requiem.



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OVERTURE**

**THOMAS WILSON –
ST. KENTIGERN SUITE**

**BROWN – HARDENED BY
SUN AND AIR**

**RACHMANINOV –
SYMPHONY NO 2**

Conductor **ROBERT BAXTER**

GLASGOW ROYAL CONCERT HALL

SEASON 23-24

SAT 21 OCTOBER 2023 7.30PM

PROGRAMME TBC

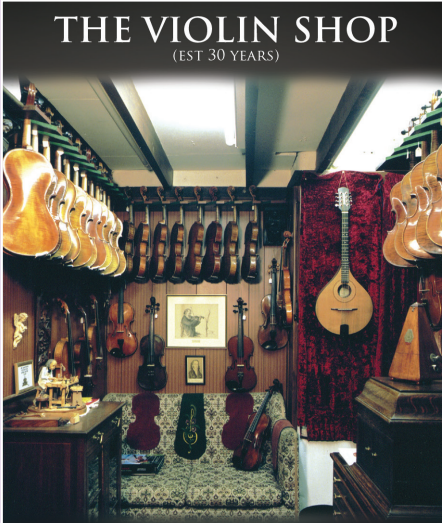
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