EDINBURGH UNIVERSITY CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Ceòlraidh Seòmair Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann



Welcome



Good evening everyone, and welcome to the EUCO Summer Tour to the Isle of Arran! We have not been on tour for many years and this year we've all loved playing together so much that we decided to go for it. We have a really fun and varied programme or short works tonight, from the dramatic Siegfried Idyll to the vibrant Overture to the Marriage of Figaro, as well as music by Brahms, Delius, Donizetti, Coldplay and some based on folk tunes. We've had a lot of fun putting together these pieces and rehearsals have been a well-needed break from revision and final deadlines, and we hope you enjoy the last concert of what has been an incredible and exciting year for EUCO.

Srishti Ramakrishnan, President of Edinburgh University Chamber Orchestra 2025/26



Hello! My name is Anna and I'm the president of EUCO for the 26/27 academic year. I only joined the orchestra in September, but I have loved every minute of my time spent playing music with them and I can't wait for the year ahead! I hope you enjoy the concert this evening and do come back next year as we have lots of exciting plans coming up and more really great music to play!

Anna Barsham, President of Edinburgh University Chamber Orchestra 2026/27

EUCO on *Arran*

PROGRAMME

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791) *arr. Minhas*
Sinfonia to Le nozze di Figaro (or The Marriage of Figaro), K. 492

GAETANO DONIZETTI (1813–1883) *arr. Minhas*
"Una furtiva lagrima" from L'elisir d'amore

RICHARD WAGNER (1813–1883) *arr. Minhas*
Siegfried-Idyll, WWV 103

INTERVAL

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897) *arr. Minhas*
Hungarian Dances (I, II, III, IV, V)

FREDERICK DELIUS (1862–1934) *arr. Ramakrishnan*
On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring

FOLK *arr. Minhas*
Arran Boat Song Variations

COLDPLAY (CHRIS MARTIN) *arr. Mooney*
Overture, Scherzo and Finale, Op. 52



Edinburgh University Chamber Orchestra

Edinburgh University Chamber Orchestra was founded by a group of enthusiastic students in the summer of 1983. Distinct from the university's music society, EUCO is a fully student run society, that takes pride in playing chamber music.

Over the decades, we have had the privilege of performing under many of Scotland's finest composers and conductors including James Lowe, Garry Walker, Edward Harper, Peter Nelson, WIlliam Conway and Philip Higham. We collaborate regularly with musicians from Scotland's flagship ensembles such as the Scottish Chamber Orchestra.

The orchestra currently consists of nearly forty members from all over the university, and all over the world. We rehearse weekly and typically perform three main concerts a year, working with a different professional conductor each semester. We collaborate with Edinburgh Studio Opera annually and host the Edinburgh University Concerto Competition. Our musicians also find play in smaller chamber groups and community outreach projects, in our chamber series at St Giles Cathedral.



The Orchestra

Edinburgh University Chamber Orchestra on tour:

VIOLIN I
Srishti Ramakrishnan
Yundi Chen

VIOLIN II
Ella Allen
Lethu Khanyile

VIOLA
Anna Barsham
Daniel Ferdosinia

CELLO
Miriam White
Lara Andrews
Esther Mayer-Rieckh
Oscar Maclean

DOUBLE BASS
Max Wilson

FLUTE
Lauren Mooney

BASSOON
Daniel Cook

TRUMPET
Rowan Glegg

[FLUTE]
Paolo Minhas



Conducted by: Paolo Minhas

OVERTURE TO THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

The Marriage of Figaro is a comic opera, completed in 1786. The opera was based on the controversial play that was premiered in Paris in 1784 by French playwright Pierre Beaumarchais, La folle journée, ou Le mariage de Figaro. Due to the political and revolutionary content in the play, Viennese theatres were banned from presenting the work at the time. Librettist Lorenzo da Ponte and composer W. A. Mozart were keenly aware of this controversy and decided to create an opera based on the play to be premiered in Vienna one year later. Due to the controversy, Mozart and da Ponte focused on dynamics of characheters relationships and the elements of humour from the play when making the opera.

The premiere of the opera took place in Vienna on May 1,1786. The complete opera is set in four acts and the entire plot develops during one very action-packed day. The hurried and lively activity of the opera is musically depicted in the brief (four minute) "Overture." The first theme is stated in a quiet and sneaky manner that leads to a second motivic theme that is abrupt, a bit jarring, and loud. The extreme contrasts in mood, dynamic, and energy are all purposeful to set the tone for the opera. After several themes are quickly presented in the "Overture," the sequence is repeated; with a brief coda and an exuberant final cadence.

The overture, it might be noted, originally contained a slow middle section with a melancholy oboe solo. But contrast be damned, Mozart wisely decided, and maintained the swirling, manically jolly mood throughout. Figaro was first presented on the stage of Vienna's Burgtheater in May of 1786. The composer conducted from the keyboard.

Arrangements and transcriptions of popular operas were very fashionable during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, especially for the court Harmonie ensembles (pairs of oboes, clarinets, horns, and bassoons, sometimes with added double bass or contrabassoon). Johann Nepomuk Wendt created the Harmoniemusik arrangement of Le nozze di Figaro shortly after the opera premiere. Wendt was an oboist in the Venna opera orchestra (the same orchestra that premiered Le nozze di Figaro) and was one of the original members of the court Kaiserlich-Konigich Harmonie, created by Emperor Joseph II. According to several sources, Wendt transcribed the entire suite for Harmoniemusik with the consent and approval of Mozart. Scholarship of David Whitwell states that this transcription was created in 1791, five years after the opera premiere.



L'elisir d'amore

Act I

Italy, 1836. While peasants rest from work, Nemorino, a young villager, watches the beautiful farm owner Adina read a book. He loves her but wonders if she is now beyond his reach. The peasants ask Adina what her book is about, and she tells them the story of how Tristan won the heart of Isolde by drinking a magic love potion. A drum roll announces the arrival of Sergeant Belcore and his men. He promptly introduces himself to Adina and asks her to marry him. Adina declares that she is in no hurry to make up her mind but promises to think over the offer. Left alone with Nemorino, Adina tells him that his time would be better spent in town, looking after his sick uncle, than hoping to win her love. Or he should do as she does: change her affections every single day. Nemorino reminds her that one can never forget one's first love.

Dulcamara, a traveling purveyor of patent medicines, arrives in the village advertising a potion capable of curing anything. When the doctor has finished his routine, Nemorino shyly asks if he sells the elixir of love described in Adina's book. Dulcamara claims he does and pulls out a bottle of Bordeaux. Though it costs him his last ducat, Nemorino buys it and immediately drinks it; Dulcamara explains that he has to wait until the next day for results (by which time Dulcamara will be gone). When Adina appears, Nemorino begins to feel the effect of the "potion." Certain he will be irresistible to her the next day, he feigns cheerful indifference. To punish him, Adina flirts with Belcore.



The order arrives for the sergeant to return immediately to his garrison, and Adina agrees to marry him at once. Shocked, Nemorino begs her to wait one more day, but she ignores him and invites the entire village to her wedding. Nemorino desperately calls for the doctor's help.

Act II

At the pre-wedding feast Adina and Dulcamara entertain the guests with a barcarole. Adina wonders why Nemorino is not present. She doesn't want to sign the marriage contract until he appears. Meanwhile, Nemorino asks Dulcamara for another bottle of the elixir. Since he doesn't have any money with him, the doctor agrees to wait at the inn for an hour so Nemorino can borrow the cash from someone. Belcore is bewildered that Adina has postponed the wedding. When Nemorino tells him that he needs money right away, the sergeant persuades him to join the army and receive a volunteer bonus of 20 scudi. Having bought more of the elixir, Nemorino returns to find himself besieged by a group of girls. Unaware of the news that his uncle has died and left him a fortune, he believes the elixir is finally taking effect. Adina enters, feeling responsible for Nemorino's enlistment, but when she sees him with the other girls, she reacts jealously. Nemorino and the girls leave, and Dulcamara boasts to Adina about the power of his elixir, offering to sell her some as well. She replies that she will win Nemorino in her own fashion. Nemorino, having noticed a tear on Adina's cheek when she saw him with the girls, feels sure that she cares for him. When she returns to tell him that she has bought back his enlistment papers, he again feigns indifference. Finally, she confesses she loves him. Belcore appears to find the two arm in arm and takes his leave, declaring that thousands of women await him elsewhere. Dulcamarareveals to the crowd the news of Nemorino's inheritance and brags about how his miraculous potion

SIEGFRIED IDYLL

Lucerne in Switzerland is an important place in the life of Richard Wagner. It was at Villa Tribschen on the shores of the lake at the foot of the Alps, where the composer lived between 1866 and 1872, that the most important events in his career took place. There his second child was born and there in 1870 he married Cosima Liszt-Fon Bülow. There he completed The Master-Singers of Nuremberg, wrote the Siegfried-Idyll, which he presented Cosima for her 33rd birthday. The original score of the Ring of the Nibelungs is preserved there, and his essay "Das Judenthum in der Musik" was first published under his own name (rather than a pseudonym). His personal Parisian grand piano, the Erar, is preserved in the Villa Tribchen, converted into the composer's home museum. This period of Wagner's life was probably the happiest – after he put aside the hardships of the past and devoted himself to creativity and family happiness. The Ring of the Nibelungs tetralogy re-creates ancient Germanic legends of gods and heroes. The opera Siegfried is the third part of the tetralogy and Wagner named his only son after the hero. The premiere of Siegfried-idyll on December 25th 1870 was also dedicated to Cosima. At the beginning of the score, Wagner inscribed his address to her as follows:

When you sacrifice yourself

In the family circle, letting the martyr catch his breath,

Then inspiration to the soul flew,

The world of heroes spread

And became near and dear to us.

All that the dust of ages enveloped with a veil.

And suddenly there was a voice full of happiness:

– A son is born! it must be Siegfried.

You and your son in sounds I have glorified, –

Is there a better reward on earth?

But silent joy, like that in "Idyll"-,

We kept jealously to ourselves.

But now let it sound triumphant

For all friends, treated always with love;

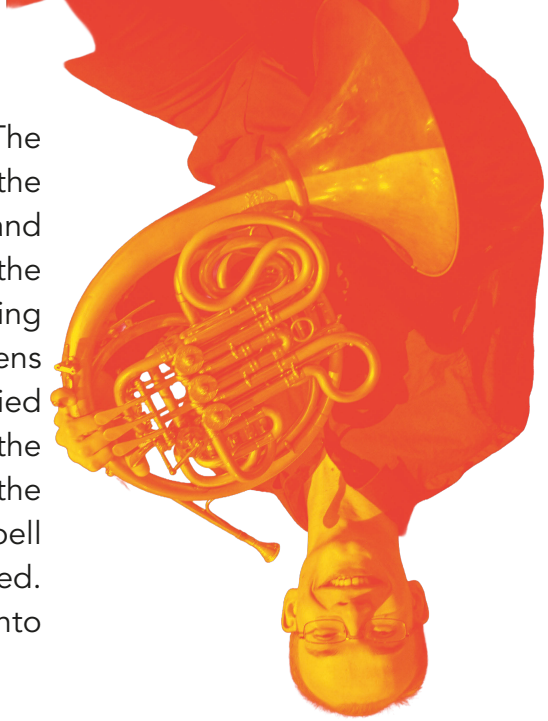
And let him, appreciating the two named Siegfried

Taste the world of sounds, to thee dedicated.

(Taken from Sofia Philharmonic)



The Siegfried-idyll poem was written for chamber orchestra. The main material is from the opera's finale, namely the love duet of the young hero Siegfried, raised in the most secluded woods and awakened from his magical sleep thanks to Brünnhilde. In the music, Wagner strictly adheres to his leitmotif technique, saturating the texture with various musical signs and symbols: the poem opens with a lullaby whose theme is Brünnhilde's love song, accompanied by the motif of sleep. Siegfried's theme appears, conveying the character's purity of soul, combined with the motif of love. In the texture, the composer encrusts motifs-imitations of birdsong, bell ringing, a forest horn; the lullaby and the dream motif are repeated. In the very finale Siegfried's gentle theme modulates into Brünnhilde's theme.

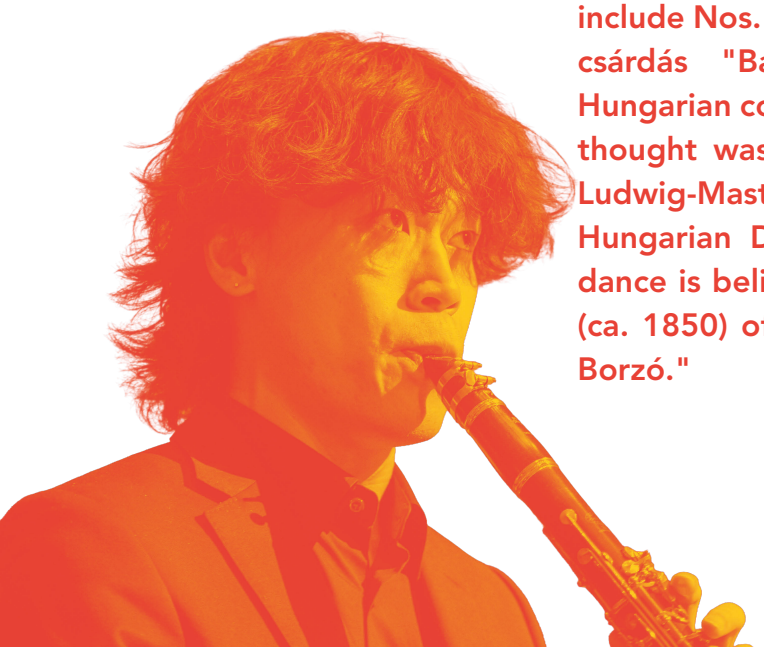


HUNGARIAN DANCES

Brahms' original 21 Hungarian dances were ompleted in 1879 for piano with 4 hoands. He later arranged the first ten dances for solo piano, and many selections have been further arranged by others for orchestra.

Brahms' Hungarian Dances should be placed in the context of interest in folk music. Both Haydn and Boccherini refer frequently to gypsy music, but in Brahms' day it was Franz Liszt with his Hungarian rhapsodies who was an inspiration to Brahms, both artistically and financially (despite their differences in musical philosophy). In 1850 Brahms met the Hungarian violinist Ede Reményi and accompanied him in a number of recitals over the next few years. This was his introduction to "gypsy-style" music such as the csárdás, which was later to prove the foundation of his most lucrative and popular compositions, the two sets of Hungarian Dances (published 1869 and 1880).

Tonight we play the first 5 dances for orchestra.



Only numbers 11, 14 and 16 are entirely original compositions. The better-known Hungarian Dances include Nos. 1 and 5, the latter of which was based on the csárdás "Bártfai emlék" (Memories of Bártfa) by Hungarian composer Béla Kéler, which Brahms mistakenly thought was a traditional folksong. A footnote on the Ludwig-Masters edition of a modern orchestration of Hungarian Dance No. 1 states: "The material for this dance is believed to have come from the Divine Csárdás (ca. 1850) of Hungarian composer and conductor Miska Borzó."

ON HEARING THE FIRST CUCKOO IN SPRING

Frederick Delius was born on 29 January 1862 in Bradford, Yorkshire, the son of German-born parents who had emigrated to England to participate in the wool-trade, then one of Britain's most successful export industries. His father, Julius, was a keen musician; Friedrich, as he had been christened, grew in a musical household and comfortable circumstances. Although he was a proficient pianist and violinist even before entering his teens, Delius was expected to take up the family business; he worked there for over 3 years as an apprentice, with a growing sense of frustration. His compositional activities now began in earnest although the fact that he had little occasion to hear his music did not deter him. He was a prolific composer.

Sadly, due to his service in the Great War, Delius had contracted syphillis, and as he aged, he lost the function of his limbs to the point where he was no longer able to compose music. A young English musician, Eric Fenby, later took to Delius and he was able to enjoy a summer in India to try and imrove his help at the beginning of the 1930s.



Delius wrote this beautiful tone poem in 1912. Its first performance, just under a year later, took place in Leipzig.

This is the sister piece to Summer Night on the River. Together, they make up Two Small Pieces for Orchestra, which is occasionally referred to as Two Mood Pictures for Small Orchestra. One could normally listen out for a number of different instruments imitating the natural sounds of the cuckoo, including the oboe, strings, and clarinet. Here we find these themes in the flutes, bassoon and even the trumpet in this arrangement for smaller orchestra.

At the centre of the work is an old Norwegian folk song called 'In Ola Valley', which is stunningly beautiful in its own right. It had also attracted the attentions of the composer Grieg in his time. For Delius' sublime arrangement, we have the eccentric Australian composer Percy Grainger to thank, as he was the one who stuck it under Delius' nose in the first place.

Following its British premiere in 1914, it became a favourite, helped on its way by the never-flagging championship of the conductor and great friend of Delius, Thomas Beecham. It is just possible that Beecham and Delius were already familiar with 'In Ola Valley' prior to Grainger's encouragement, having spent the summer of 1909 rambling in the Norwegian mountains together, no doubt ears permanently pricked for any musical titbits. Today, it feels like a Delius original.

THE BOAT TO ARRAN

Given we have arrived here on the boat, we think it would be fitting to play a traditional folk tune based on this theme.

The word "Arran" means island dweller and therefore this island is an island of island dwellers. This tune is traditionally performed as a slow air (in 3), and is in the Dorian mode. It was first officially published in 1875, and is traditionally played best with fiddles, harps or flutes.

COLDPLAY

Coldplay are a British rock band formed in 1996 by lead vocalist and pianist Chris Martin and lead guitarist Jonny Buckland at University College London (UCL). After they formed under the name Pectoralz, Guy Berryman joined the group as a bassist in 1997 and they changed their name to Starfish. Will Champion joined as a drummer, backing vocalist, and multi-instrumentalist, completing the line-up. Creative director Phil Harvey is often mentioned as their fifth member. The band began playing music together from 1996 to 1998 and renamed themselves "Coldplay" later that year, before recording and releasing two extended plays: Safety E.P. independently in 1998 and The Blue Room E.P. in the same year. The Blue Room was their first release on a major label, after signing to Parlophone.

Since those day, Coldplay have of coure becuase stratospherically popular and famous.



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