

Orchestra Biography

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 and 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, 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 Associate Composer Anna Clyne, the late Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sir James MacMillan, Martin Suckling, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Mark-Anthony Turnage and Nico Muhly.

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' – was part of the first concert Emelyanychev performed with the Orchestra in March 2018.

In response to the current restrictions on live performances in Scotland, the Orchestra has undertaken its first ever digital Season of streamed orchestral concerts. These began on the 24 September with a performance of Bruch's Violin Concerto No 1 with Principal Conductor Maxim Emelyanychev and violinist Nicola Benedetti. Concerts are currently streamed every Thursday evening at 7.30pm on the SCO's YouTube channel and Facebook page.