

GLASGOW **CREATE** PRESENTS :

GLASGOW SCHOOLS'

Symphony Orchestra

Summer Concert 2022



June 24 • 7 PM

Stevenson Hall, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

Programme Schedule

John Blackwood McEwen

Symphony in A minor

I. Allegro marcato

II. Andante quasi adagio

Jean Sibelius

King Christian II Suite

I. Nocturne

II. Serenade

III. Ballad

Interval

Hamish MacCunn

The Land of the Mountain and the Flood

Vaughan Williams

English Folk Song Suite



Conductor - Gerry Doherty

I have had a career that encompasses conducting, playing violin with all of the major orchestras in the country, including 23 years as 1st violin with the RSNO, and as an instrumental teacher for local authorities and the senior and junior schools of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Conducting Studies

1975-76 Undergraduate Dip Mus Ed. choral conducting class. Dr Kenneth Barratt.
1999-2000. Postgraduate conducting course, RCS, with Martyn Brabbins.
1999 & 2001. Scholarships to study at the American Academy of Conducting, Aspen, Colorado with David Zinman, Jorma Panula, James Levine and Murry Sidlin.

Conducting

1994 - Present. Principal Conductor - The Glasgow Sinfonia.
2001 - 2018. Principal Conductor - Ayr Choral.
2016. Conducted world premiere of "Quas non Terras" by James McMillan dedicated to me.
2005 - Present. Principal Conductor of The Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra.
1999 - 2007 conducted the RSNO for Education, outreach and family concerts while still a playing member of the orchestra.
Conducted the under noted youth orchestras:
2008 - present - Conductor of East Renfrewshire Schools Symphony and String Orchestras. The string orchestra won the Glasgow Festival for the 11th time in 12 years under my direction.

For ten years, Principal Conductor of the Strathclyde University Symphony Orchestra. Conducted the Symphony and Chamber Orchestras of the Royal Conservatoire Scotland. The Orchestra of the University of Castel Branco, Portugal.

Edinburgh University Chamber Orchestra,
Renfrewshire Schools Symphony Orchestra,
West of Scotland Independent Schools Orchestra
Glasgow Schools Symphony Orchestra.

I have been conductor and course director of the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland's repertoire course on several occasions.

GSSO

Course Director: Pam Black

Tutors: Rachael Black - Viola, Ali Carberry - Clarinet,
Judith Clarke - Oboe, Andy Connell Smith - Trumpet,
Andrea Kuypers - Flute, James McKenna - Lower Brass,
Kath Nagl - Bassoon, Fred Parry - Cello, Emma Pantel - Violin 1,
Jenna Sloane - French Horn, Rachael Smart - Violin 2,
Trish Strain - Double Bass, Wilf Taylor - Percussion

Violin 1: Eleanor Carrie, Julia Cullen, Holly Gilchrist,
Nellie Heinrich, Vivienne Hood, Rae McIver, Kiera Stoney,
Ruby Warmington, Emily Winn, Estelle Woodrow,
Charlotte Walker

Violin 2: Jude Bamford, Scarlett Carey, Ruby Crawford,
Luke Doyle, Logan Forsyth, Akrit Ghimire, Isla Grewal,
Luna Greer, Dylan McGroarty, Olwen Dimpleby Weber,
Martha Johnson, Ellen Marie Philips

Viola: Jessica Allen, Hannah Cook, Gavin Greenshields,
Eve Porter, Katherine Isabella Ross



Cello: Robert Baird, Hannah Carrie, Alexander Crawford, Iain (Dougie) Easdale, Amy Fuller, Harper Stewart Henderson, Ross McCormick, Robin Crossley, Lia McCulloch, Louisa McRae, Laudika Monaghan

Bass: Joe Bradstreet, Matilda Cormie, Isabel Driscoll

Flute: Wenjing Chen, Nuala Dunbar, Francesca Jamieson, Amelia Young

Oboe: Autumn Clark, Rose Jamieson, Thomas Sinclair

Clarinet: Lucy Deng, Ella Gillespie, Daisy Kirk, Freya Mullen

Bassoon: Reuben Clark, Hamish Williams

Trumpet: Lucas De La Orden, Dorothy Gay, Andrew Nelson, Ethan Thomson

Trombone: Matthew Donegan, Jack Traynor, Akshar Abdulla

Horn: Cara Goutcher, Ima Kirkwood

Percussion: Marianne Dunn, Emma Dunn, Oisin Hayden, Garance Labrosse, Julia Pyrcz



John Blackwood McEwen

Symphony in A minor

Born in Hawick on the 13th April 1868 as the son of a Presbyterian minister who 'disapproved of music as a profession for his son', John Blackwood McEwen grew to be a quiet man, often with little faith in his own work. This regard for his father's feelings and intentions is clear in McEwen's letters, namely to Henry George Farmer. Having experience as an organist – and one can only assume his early experiences as the son of a manse – leave McEwen with a firm idea of a congregation's appreciation of music, leaving him adept at writing in a style easily accessible and yet relevant to the concert-going audience. McEwen studied at Glasgow University; then at the Royal Academy of Music and is best known for his composition of string quartets, of which he wrote nineteen. However, his output for various other instrumentations are also extensive and include seven violin sonatas as well as various other piano, orchestral and chamber works.

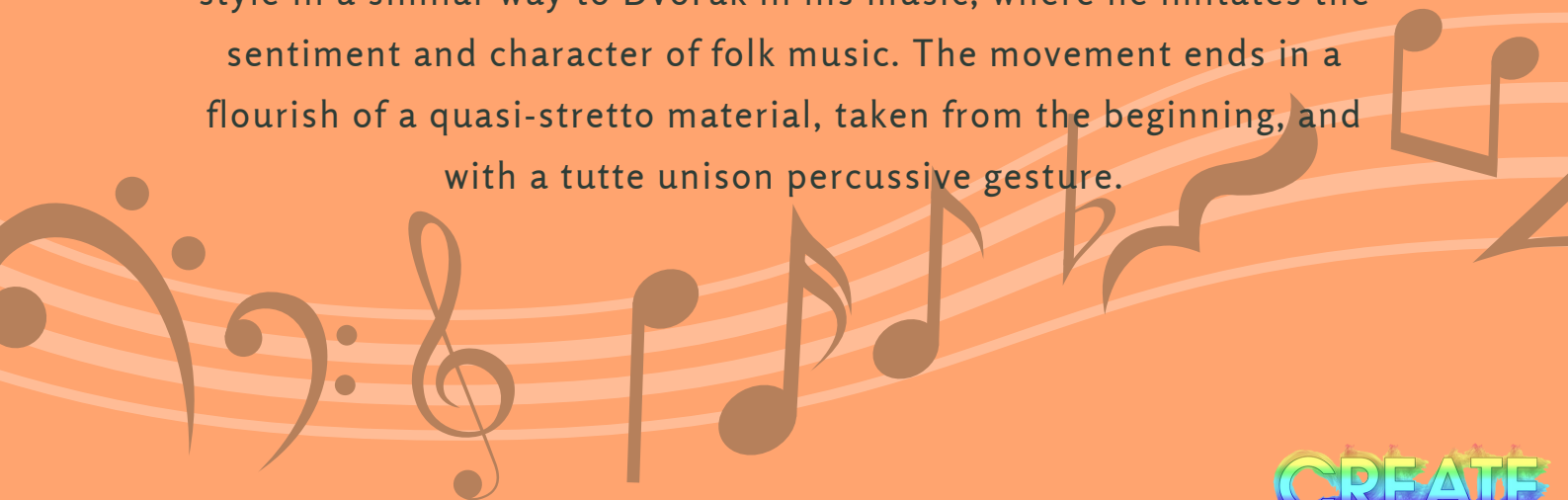
Convinced that the essence of a composition true to oneself reflected the national music of one's home country, Sir John Blackwood McEwen worked to promote music in Scottish 'dialect', something seen clearly in his early *Symphony in A minor*. The work was initially constituted of five movements, the last of which (an Epilogue) was scrapped midway through the composition process, and reused one of the *Border Ballads*, an orchestral work, *Conrach*. The reason cited by McEwen as to why this was necessary was that some material was too similar to a theme used in *Lohengrin*! The work, although not performed as initially intended, has been performed widely as a string quartet. The quartet is in essence very similar to the symphony, with only a few details changed. It seems that the symphony has allowed the composer some space for exuberance of expression, with some extended development of material and exploration of harmonic colour coming through in the orchestral version.

The first movement is a powerful and fast moving movement, already inspiring connections with music of traditional roots, with strongly dotted rhythms in the melody, punctuated with brass and timpani chordal interjections. The movement has sudden speed changes, notably the vivace of the end employing fast moving semiquavers in the strings and sudden bars of silence interspersing the statements of various themes and musical ideas, including a lilting dance-like moment and a rich melody in the strings.

The second movement is based on a Scots folk melody, The Arran Boating Song appearing first in the clarinet, and then horn and throughout various other orchestral sections. This movement is one of great beauty and serenity with motion injected into it in the two instances where *piu mosso* is indicated.

The third movement is something like a rustic dance, in 2/4, and necessitates a gritty sound from the orchestra, with the movement offering something of a burst of excitement in what is otherwise a dense and soaringly beautiful symphony.

The fourth and final movement begins with the wind's excitable and buoyant semiquaver figure, soon joined by the strings in what appears as a drone on the bagpipes. This movement, while not quoting any piece of traditional or folk music directly, nevertheless appears to be indicative of an idiom of Scottish composing. The harmonic structure; as well as the melodies, with their snapped rhythms, all indicate something of a national feeling of compositional style in a similar way to Dvořak in his music, where he imitates the sentiment and character of folk music. The movement ends in a flourish of a quasi-stretto material, taken from the beginning, and with a *tutte unison* percussive gesture.



Jean Sibelius

King Christian II Suite

February 1898 saw the premiere at the Swedish Theatre in Helsinki of a play called King Christian II by Adolf Paul, a writer who was born in Sweden but grew up in Finland. He got to know Jean Sibelius (1865–1957) while studying in Helsinki in the 1880s and they kept in contact when Paul went to live in Berlin. Sibelius composed four pieces of incidental music for the play (Elegy, Musette, Minuet and Song of the Cross-Spider) and conducted the theatre orchestra. He later added three more numbers, a Nocturne, Serenade and Ballad. Later in 1898, Sibelius took five of the pieces and made them into a suite of the same name. It became a considerable hit in its day. The atmospheric, gently waltzing Nocturne was originally an entr'acte between the 1st and 2nd acts of the play but forms the first movement of the Suite.



Hamish MacCunn

The Land of the Mountain and the Flood

Scottish Romantic composer Hamish MacCunn (1868-1916) was always intrigued with Scottish landscapes. Although he lived in London for a long time, MacCunn was a lifelong champion of Scottish folk songs, music and the incredible landscapes. He composed *The Land of the Mountain and the Flood* in 1887. The work is a concert overture for orchestra, and in true Scottish style, it depicts a Romantic view of Scottish landscapes.

The title is taken from Sir Walter Scott's *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*:

O Caledonia! Stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child!
Land of the heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of my sires! What a mortal hand
Can e'er untie the filial band
That knits me to thy rugged strand!

The premiere of the work saw many critics commenting on the it, with George Bernard Shaw saying that:

"Mr MacCunn's *Land of the Mountain and the Flood*, a charming Scotch overture that carries you over the hills and far away, was much applauded. I object, by the bye, to the "working out" section, which Mr MacCunn would never have written if his tutors had not put it into his head. I know a lady who keeps a typewriting establishment. Under my advice she is completing arrangements for supplying middle sections and recapitulations for overtures and symphonies at twopence a bar, on being supplied with the first section and coda."

The overture gained more success many years later in 1968, when it came to the attention of EMI, who included a recording of it on the LP Music of the Four Countries. The work was then used in the 1970s as the theme for the BBC series Sutherland's Law.

Although Shaw called out MacCunn's writing in the middle section of The Land of the Mountain and the Flood, the piece has remained the composer's most popular. From Romantic swirls across the orchestra, to MacCunn's engaging melodic writing, the work exudes pastoral thinking and highlights MacCunn's love for Scottish folk songs.

The bouncy opening is infectious in character, and this theme is soon passed around different sections of the orchestra. The lower brass accompaniments also add to the fairly low-level drama that MacCunn was going for. Hunting horns can be heard between the lyrical sections, adding to this idea of pastoral writing. The catchy string melody that sings out is perhaps one of the reasons that this work has remained popular. Soaring into the upper registers, the melody is emotive and evocative of the Scottish landscape. The climax in the middle of the work adds to the grandeur of the overall picture. Perhaps majestic mountains or vast lakes of water are being illustrated here.

MacCunn's style is poetic and although the form of the work is not out of the ordinary for this type of piece, the musical content is fresh and distinctive. The gentle, but somewhat dark, atmospheres swell with the more triumphant, offering food for thought for the listeners. As the pace begins to pick up near the end of the work, the rumbling pedal notes increase as the section is building up. Some have likened this to wild horses running across the land, with the end of the piece exhibiting Scottish pride that was evidently important to MacCunn.

Vaughan Williams

English Folk Song Suite

The English Folk Song Suite is one of the English composer's most famous works. It was first published on 4th July 1923, for the military band as Folk Song Suite, the piece was then arranged for full orchestra in 1924 by Vaughan Williams's student Gordon Jacob and published as English Folk Song Suite.

The suite consists of three movements: March, Intermezzo and another March.

The first march is called Seventeen Come Sunday. It tells the story of a soldier enticing a pretty maid and is followed by the contrasting lyrical Pretty Caroline, where a sailor returns from war to his beloved. The third strain of the march, is a full, marcato arrangement of Dives and Lazarus. The march then returns to Pretty Caroline before restating Seventeen Come Sunday with a final fanfare.

The Intermezzo is subtitled "My Bonny Boy". A painful song of unrequited love first introduced by a solo oboe, and subsequently joined by other instrumental colours. Later, a beautiful, swirling arrangement of Green Bushes, another song of unanswered love, enters in the woodwinds, before giving way again to the original theme.

The final movement is based on four "Folk Songs from Somerset". Blow Away the Morning Dew, High Germany, The Tree So High and finally John Barleycorn. The mood is brisk and cheerful, though the subject matter of a couple of the songs could not be more melancholy. There is a masterly handling of colours, register, and dynamic contrast, before a repeat of the first tune brings proceedings to an abrupt and good-humoured end.