
GLASGOW
CHAMBER
ORCHESTRA
Robert Baxter - Conductor
Hazel McDonald - Leader
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
THE WASPS OVERTURE
CANTELOUBE
SONGS OF THE AUVERGNE
Soloist - Alison McNeill, Soprano
POULENC
SINFONIETTA
SUNDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2026
7.30PM
Sherbrooke Mosspark Church
240 Nithsdale Road,
Pollokshields, Glasgow G41 5AD
WWW.GCO.ORG.UK



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GCO support: donations of any amount, whether one-off or regular, would be gratefully received and would help with the running costs of the orchestra.

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Support can be anonymous, or we will gladly acknowledge your contribution in our concert programme.

If you would like to donate, or to discuss any of these options further, please email **sponsorship@gco.org.uk** for information.

Welcome to this evening's concert!

The Glasgow Chamber Orchestra can trace its origins back to 1956, when the Glasgow String Orchestra was founded. Some ten years later, this strings-only group decided to extend its musical repertoire, and the Glasgow Chamber Orchestra was born.

Since its first performance in 1967, the GCO has built an enviable reputation as one of the leading amateur orchestras in Scotland and continues to attract some of the best amateur musicians in the region.

CONTACTING THE ORCHESTRA

We welcome enquiries from potential new members. To find out more about the orchestra, visit **www.gco.org.uk**.

If you are interested in becoming a member please contact our Orchestra Manager, Arthur Doyle: **join@gco.org.uk**

For general enquiries please contact our Orchestra Chair, Wendy Dougan: **chairperson@gco.org.uk**

WHY NOT COME AND JOIN US!

We rehearse weekly on Tuesday evenings September to June

The Glasgow Chamber Orchestra is registered in Scotland Charity No. SC022256



R VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958):
OVERTURE "THE WASPS"

Vaughan Williams wrote the incidental music "The Wasps" as part of a triennial ritual at Cambridge University called the "Cambridge Greek Play", where Cambridge students and alumni performed works in Ancient Greek.

Vaughan Williams had studied at Trinity College as well as the Royal College of Music.

The music for The Wasps, written in 1909, was written to accompany Aristophanes' play of the same name. The original work is in five movements and takes around an hour and three quarters to perform. Tonight you will only hear the Overture which takes around ten minutes to perform.

This is a popular, stand-alone piece in orchestra repertoire. The Overture consists of three sections, the outer two which are often described as being 'quintessentially English in style', and the middle which is more lush and romantic in nature.

This is often ascribed to the time Vaughan spent in Paris studying with Ravel, who was known for his beautiful flowing and lush melodies and harmonies.

The final section harks back to the lush middle section and Vaughan Williams melds the two together before bringing the work to a rousing three chord ending.

Wendy Dougan

J CANTELOUBE (1879-1957):

SONGS OF THE AUVERGNE

Canteloube was a French composer, musicologist and author, who composed and arranged a variety of works all of which focused heavily on regional folk song collections, opera and chamber music.

His most famous work is his "Songs of the Auvergne", some of which you will hear tonight. Written between 1923 and 1930 for soprano and orchestra or piano, the 27 songs are arranged into five series.

The songs were all written in the local language of Auvergnat, a dialect of Occitan. This preserves the authentic rustic "flavour" of the music.

The orchestra is used to create the feel of the area with the woodwind, in particular, being used to replicate the sound of local instruments of the time. The works were first published between 1924 and 1955.

Tonight you will hear:

Series 1: 1. La Pastoura als camps (La bergère aux champs)

This upbeat song depicts a young beautiful shepherdess tending her flock, when a passing gentleman tries to flirt with her and win her affection. Not easily fooled, she distracts him, causing him to momentarily turn away which allows her to escape.

2. Baïlèro (Chant de bergers de Haute-Auvergne)

This is the best known of all the songs with its beautiful, haunting melody and lush harmonies depicting a pastoral dialogue between a shepherdess and shepherd, one on either side of a wide valley split by a rushing stream. They each try to convince the other that their side is greener, and a better area to be in. It ends with them agreeing to meet later that day. The frequently repeated "Baïlèro" is a musical type of "fa-la-la" used by real herders to allow their voices to project across massive alpine spaces.

Series 2: 2. L'Antouèno (L'Antoine)

The text here depicts a playful, exasperated nagging match between a woman calling out to "Antoine" to try to discover his whereabouts, insulting him by calling him a drunkard with a lazy. He replies in the same vein!

Series 3: 1. Lo Fiolarè

This translates as "The Spinner" and is one of the liveliest of all the songs. The song depicts a shepherdess reminiscing about herding her sheep whilst she is spinning. She asks a local shepherd to help watch her flock. He asks for a kiss as payment and in an effort not to appear ungrateful, she gives him two!

3. Lou boussu (Le bossu): "The Hunchback".

This song depicts the mismatched courtship involving a local hunchback. The song basically reflects small town gossip and old fashioned views of the time.

Wendy Dougan

F POULENC (1899-1963):
SINFONIETTA (FP 141)

In 1947, Poulenc was commissioned by the BBC to write a piece celebrating the first anniversary of its Third Programme. The result was the Sinfonietta.

The first performance of the work was in 1948 in London, played by the Philharmonia. Poulenc had a reputation for bringing humour and levity into his work, and whilst there is definitely a lot of fun running throughout the work, there are also moments of real tenderness and beauty.

In four movements the work is scored for double woodwind, horns and trumpets plus harp, timpani and strings and lasts around 28 minutes.

1: Allegro con fuoco

The movement opens with a few disjointed motifs before settling into a fast, flowing theme that is passed throughout the orchestra.

There is a change of mood in the middle of the movement where a beautiful, simple melody, played by the oboe and principal viola is passed throughout the orchestra, before we return to the fast pace of the start of the movement.

2: Molto Vivace

As the saying goes, this movement does what it says on the tin! Fast paced, lively and full of fun throughout!

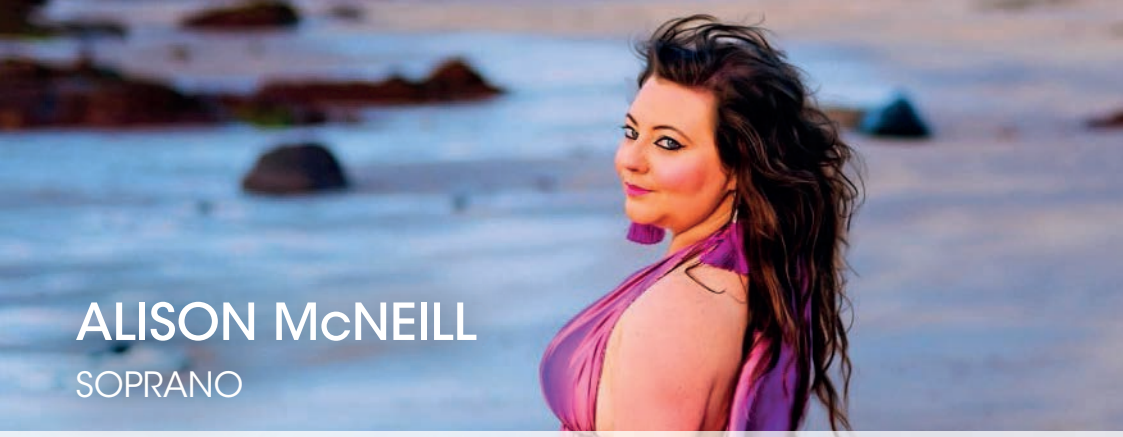
3: Andante Cantabile

A lovely, soft gentle movement, so different from the movements on either side

4: Finale

Poulenc gives us humour right from the start of this movement with all sorts of bells and whistles and quirky themes running throughout. The movement ends as it began, with a bang!

Wendy Dougan



ALISON McNEILL

SOPRANO

Alison McNeill is a Scottish soprano, conductor and fiddle player whose multifaceted career spans classical, folk and world music. She has a particular passion for cross-cultural, collaborative and immersive performance and draws much of her artistic inspiration from world music and diverse cultures.

Alison graduated with a Master's in Performance from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and subsequently studied with the late legendary mezzo-soprano Teresa Berganza in Granada, Spain. She was awarded the Andrés Segovia Prize for Spanish Song, becoming the only non-native Spanish speaker to receive the award.

As a specialist in Spanish song, Alison has premiered new works by leading Spanish composers including Antón García Abril and Teresa Bretal, with performances at the National Auditorium of Galicia and the Ateneo in Madrid.

Her international career has taken her across the UK, the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Japan, Pakistan, Kenya, the USA and Mexico. Highlights have included performances with Scottish Opera, the Glasgow Chamber Orchestra and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra singing Verdi's Requiem and Carmina Burana at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, as well as appearances at the Minami Aizu Concert Hall in Japan and The Cosmovitral in Mexico.

As a fiddle player and singer-songwriter with the award-winning folk-rock band Reely Jiggered, she has toured internationally, with performances including the Scottish Parliament, Celtic Connections, 5 tours to Pakistan, 4 tours to Kenya and, most recently, New York Tartan Week and Sony Hall in New York.

Alison is Youth Chorus Director of Opera North Youth Chorus, Associate Director of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Youth Chorus, whose singers have performed at the Royal Albert Hall for the BBC Proms, conductor of the National Youth Choir of Scotland National Boys Choir trebles, Director of Coats Choral who will perform Karl Jenkins' *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* with the GCO in Paisley Abbey in March 2027 and Director of Voices of Argyll who have performed all over Scotland (including Scottish Parliament), Northern Ireland, Denmark and look forward to their tour of Latvia.

www.alisonmcneill.com

ROBERT BAXTER

CONDUCTOR OF GCO



Robert has collaborated as Guest Conductor with Scottish Ballet in productions of *Cinderella*, *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, *Coppelia*, *The Scandal at Mayerling*, *Dextera*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Snow Queen*, *The Crucible*, and *Mary Queen of Scots*.

Graduating as a trumpet player, Robert has performed, recorded and toured with every orchestra in Scotland, and further afield has performed with the Mahler Chamber, Singapore Symphony and Birmingham Royal Ballet to mention a few. While working, he studied conducting with Ilan Volkov and Christian Kluttig.

He has conducted the Royal Scottish National Orchestra in many performances including the British première of Gavin Bryars viola concerto, John Williams - *Night at the Oscars*, and has conducted numerous film sessions including the Netflix series, '*Life on Our Planet*'.

He recently conducted the RSNO in a recording of Dimitri Tiomkin's film score, '*Strangers On A Train*'. Robert has conducted the Lithuanian State Symphony and the Auckland Philharmonia, the latter on Scottish Ballet's tour to New Zealand. He has been Musical Director for diverse groups including Colours Classical, Belle and Sebastian, and Celtic Connections for BBC TV.

Robert is director and founder of Kessington Hall, a rehearsal and performance space in Glasgow, and is chair of Scottish Schools Orchestra Trust. In 2024 he was appointed Artistic Director of St Mary's Music School, Edinburgh.

Robert has been conductor of Glasgow Chamber Orchestra since June 2019.

The Orchestra

VIOLIN I
Hazel McDonald *(Leader)*
Shona MacLeod
Morag Greig
Janine Eleanor Hardwick
Rosie Wilson
Anne Armour
Dan Markus
Richeldis France

VIOLIN II
Tansy Hammarton
Andrew Hill
Fiona Logan
Arthur Doyle
Shirley Cowan
Tom Barrie
Alanah Proctor
Cartriona McGilvray

VIOLA
Anne Burton
Christine Johnston
David Rycroft
Robert Thurlow
Samantha Ross

CELLO
Jan Anderson
Katy Dowling
Maria Dunkley
Sara Cook
Marjorie Rycroft
Anna Marmion

DOUBLE BASS
Pete Fry
Ed Lucas

FLUTE
Lynne Bulmer
Debbie Mosson

PICCOLO
Debbie Mosson

OBOE
Wendy Dougan
David Thompson

COR ANGLAIS
David Thompson

CLARINET
David Hay
Adam Salisbury

BASSOON
Susan Gibson
Alice MacNiven

HORN
Richard Claughton
Andreas Morrison

HARP
Nana Welsh

PIANO
Gina Baker

TRUMPET
Chris Liddell
Megan Bousfield

PERCUSSION
Douglas Gibson
Caitlin Diver
Sarahanne Doherty
Philip Woodrow

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge and thank our Friends and Supporters for their valuable support.

HONORARY FRIENDS:
Mr Gordon Bragg • Mrs Janet Murdoch • Mr & Mrs Bob Nelson
2 anonymous Supporters

We are grateful for the support we receive from Making Music and from the many individuals who help with the organisation of our concerts.

The orchestra is indebted to Susan Hewitson for designing our GCO logo and all our publicity materials.

The Glasgow Chamber Orchestra is registered in Scotland Charity No. SC022256

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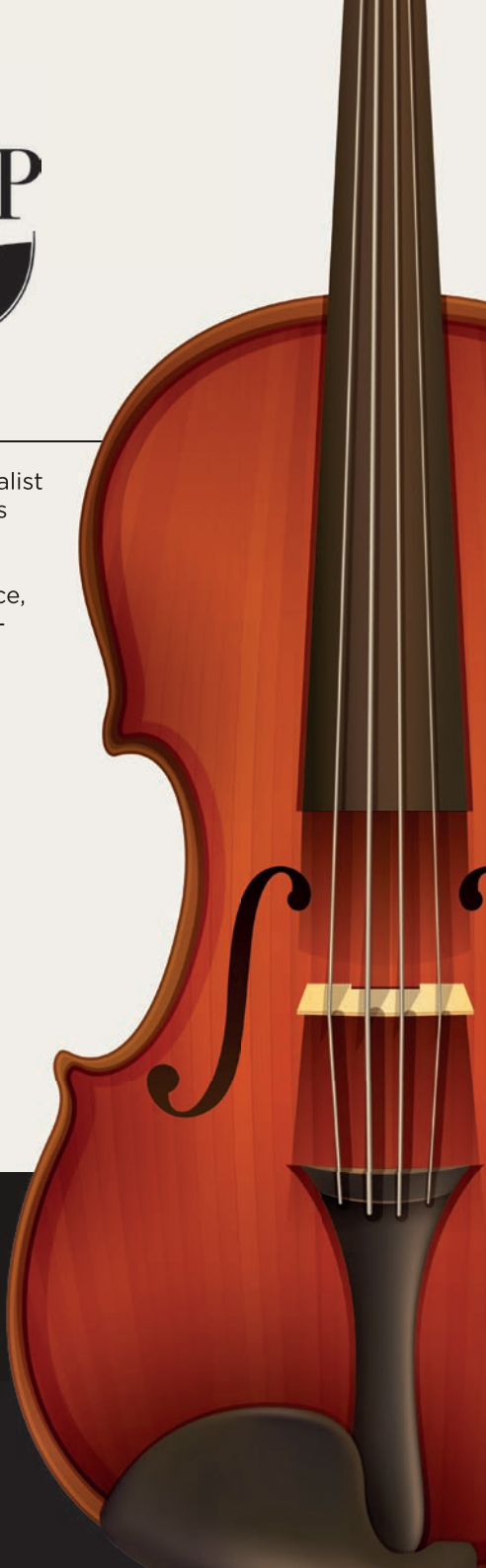
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Robert Baxter - Conductor
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