



Borders Chamber Orchestra

Winter Concert

Conductor: Robert Dick
Leader: Cath Cormie
Soloist: Jill Morton

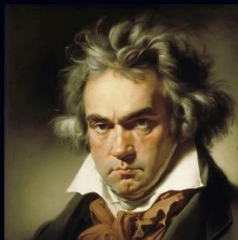
Concert in aid of

PATCH

Supporting the improvement of palliative care

February 14, 2026

7pm



BORDERS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA MUSICIANS

Musicians Playing in the Winter Concert, 14 February 2026

Violin 1

Cath Cormie (Leader)
Sheena Jardine
Jenni Borthwick
Niall Braidwood
Tim Espin
Ian McLennan
Karen Yeung
Iain Scott

Violin 2

Fiona Coutts
Dorothy Coe
Bridget Blackmore
Andrew Rushworth
Rachel Williamson
Alison Galbraith

Viola

Alison Lucas
Simon Johnson
James Young
Grace Sansom
Hilary Turbayne

Cello

Sam Coe
Malcolm Garden
Viv Young
Heine Venter

Double Bass

Jenny Warren
Raymond Leonard

Percussion

Fin McDermid

Oboe

Chris Crosby
Nicky Clark

Flute

Simon McCann
Petrina Moralee
Izzy Henry

Bassoon

Barbara Crosby
Rainer Thonnes
Graham Fraser

Clarinet

Paul Cormie
Alison Rushby

Trumpet

Elliot Longworth
Ruari Wilson

French Horn

Dave Wilson
Ian Kille
John Chick
Lisa Norman

Trombone

Robert Fraser
Gordon Campbell
Stu Pinches

Tuba

Graham Fraser

Our list of musicians was correct at the time of going to press. In case of any last minute changes, please check the most up to date list which is on our website.

ROBERT DICK – CONDUCTOR



One of the most sensitive and least clichéd conductors I have ever worked with – Nicola Benedetti

Robert Dick studied violin, piano and conducting at the Royal College of Music in London where he graduated with Honours, also gaining the Associateship Diploma of the RCM in Violin Performance. He also holds diplomas from the Vienna

International Mastercourse Series, and from the International Summer Academy of the Mozarteum, Salzburg. He continues to study conducting with Joerg Bierhance in Vienna.

Robert's interest in conducting began at an early age and in 1993 he was invited to conduct the Royal Scottish National Orchestra by its then Musical Director, Walter Weller.

In 2001, Robert came second in the British Reserve Insurance Conducting Competition in Cardiff and in 2007 he participated in the Fourth Lovro von Matacic International Conducting Competition in Zagreb, Croatia.

Currently the chief conductor of the Dundee Symphony Orchestra, the Waverley Consort and the Chorus & Orchestra of the Canongait, Robert is also a regular guest conductor of many groups including the Rose Street Ensemble, the Abbey Consort, the Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra and the Brecknock Sinfonia. His international conducting has taken him to orchestras in Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Mexico, Spain and the USA. Robert's repertoire encompasses several hundred choral, orchestral and operatic scores, ranging from the early-baroque right through to the present day and, he is proud to have conducted successful cycles of the symphonies of Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Brahms and Tchaikovsky. Within the past few years he has also embarked on a long term project to conduct the complete symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, with the Waverley Consort. He has developed a particular interest in the music of Johann Nepomuk Hummel and, his operatic credits include productions of *Julius Caesar*, *Carmen*, *Tosca*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Bittersweet*, *Don Giovanni*, *The magic Flute*, *The merry Wives of Windsor*, *Fidelio*, *Dido & Aeneas* and, numerous Gilbert & Sullivan operas.

Highlights in recent years have included his first ever appearance as a harpsichord soloist in Bach's D minor Keyboard Concerto with the Gecko Ensemble, what is believed to be the Scottish premieres of Schubert's overture *Claudine von Villa Bella* and Elgar's ballet *The Sanguine Fan*, as well as BBC Radio 3 Broadcasts with both the Dundee Symphony and Scottish Romance Orchestras. Robert has also conducted the UK premieres of Bruckner's Ninth Symphony in its 2012 SPCM Performing Version of the work, including realisation of its unfinished Finale, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's *A Reel of Spindrift*, *Sky* and, Hans Gal's opera *Das Lied der Nacht*. Particularly special events in 2023 included Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, concerts with the St Andrew Camerata, and the inaugural performance of the Borders Chamber Orchestra.

Robert is proud to have collaborated with some of the most distinguished soloists in the world, including Nicola Benedetti, Steven Isserlis, Anna-Liise Bezrodny, Madeleine Mitchell and Murray McLachlan.

As a violin and viola soloist himself, Robert has performed concertos by Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Bruch, Brahms and Vivaldi amongst others and has extensively toured Europe as an orchestral player in venues including the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Hofburg Palace in Vienna and the Royal Albert Hall in London. In addition, he has freelanced with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the Scottish Concert Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra of Scotland and, is an examiner to the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, for whom he visited Singapore in the summer of 2019.

JILL MORTON - PIANO



Jill Morton is a distinguished pianist, educator, and chamber musician, recognised for both her dynamic performances and dedication to piano pedagogy. An accomplished performer, Jill has appeared as a concerto soloist with orchestras throughout Britain and has been heard on BBC Radio's Friday Night is Music Night as soloist with the BBC Concert Orchestra. Future performances scheduled for 2026 include performances of Rachmaninov Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini and Gershwin Rhapsody in Blue.

Beyond performance, Jill is a dedicated educator, serving as a Principal Tutor for the **Piano Teachers' Course UK**, the country's leading pedagogical programme, where she delivers lectures and mentors both aspiring and experienced piano teachers. Her expertise is widely sought after, and she is frequently invited to give masterclasses and adjudicate competitions. She is also a tutor for the **Summer School for Pianists** and **Pianissimi** courses.

Jill also has a popular YouTube channel featuring repertoire from the ABRSM and Trinity graded music syllabuses, as well as other piano repertoire, which has received over 3 million views. She teaches at the Perse School in Cambridge and is the founder of Encore! Concerts for All, Big and Small, a concert series designed to introduce preschool children and their carers to the excitement of live music.

It is wonderful to welcome Jill back to her Scottish Borders roots to perform for us tonight

Tonight's concert brings together three well-known and much-loved repertoire pieces, beginning with an exhilarating Overture by Glinka. We are delighted to welcome Jill Morton as our soloist in one of the most lush, romantic Piano Concertos ever written. Our concert closes with arguably the most famous Symphony of all time - a trailblazing masterpiece by Beethoven. We hope you enjoy your evening with us.

Mikhail Glinka - Overture to the Opera "Ruslan and Lyudmila" ("Ruslan and Ludmilla") Op. 5

Igor Stravinsky once said of Glinka, "*All music in Russia stems from him.*" Not that Russia had been a musical wasteland prior to Glinka. The traditions of liturgical and folk music had been established for centuries, but Glinka was the first significant composer to write serious music with a distinctly Russian flavour.

Performances of Italian opera in St. Petersburg in 1828 fired Glinka's determination to create a Russian equivalent and led to the two operas for which he is chiefly remembered. *A Life for the Czar* (1836) was a success both for its use Russian folk music, and its contemporary plot, which resonated with burgeoning Russian nationalism. Glinka then turned to the epic poem *Ruslan and Ludmilla* which had secured Pushkin's reputation when it was published in 1818.

The poet's death in a duel prevented him from collaborating directly with the composer on the libretto, and Glinka used a team of five librettists, who shaped Pushkin's already convoluted story line into an even more complex series of static *tableaux*. The confusing plot probably contributed to a rather lukewarm response at the premiere on 9 December 1842, at the Maryinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg. Nevertheless, *Ruslan and Ludmilla* became a recognised symbol of Russian music and was performed over 300 times in St. Petersburg alone over the next half century.

In his memoirs, Glinka claims that he "*wrote the overture directly in full score, much of it in the Regisseur's room while rehearsals were going on.*" The Overture opens with two vigorous themes, both from the final scene of rejoicing, and both consisting of brilliant tutti chords followed by dashing scales. The contrasting lyric theme, heard on cellos and violas with bassoon reinforcement, is a melody from Ruslan's second-act aria; on the battlefield, his thoughts turn to Ludmilla. All three themes are developed briskly until Tchernomor's descending whole-tone scale is declaimed by trombones before the jubilation of the final bars.

Programme notes provided by Dominic Nudd, Making Music

Sergei Rachmaninov - Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18

Moderato

Adagio sostenuto

Allegro scherzando

This concerto, begun in Italy during a summer holiday in 1900, was completed the following year. Its composition followed Rachmaninov's recovery from a nervous breakdown occasioned by the disastrous reception of his *First Symphony*. He dedicated the concerto to Dr. Nikolai Dahl, a psychologist who had, by the use of hypnosis and autosuggestion, helped him to regain his self-confidence and the will to compose. At the first performance of the concerto in Moscow, in November 1901, with Rachmaninov as soloist, it gained immediate success, winning international fame and recognition for the composer and a level of popularity which has never declined. The work is harmonically and melodically rich and complex. It combines the best of Rachmaninov's gifts as a composer.

The solo piano opens the first movement with eight solemn, dramatic, and massive chords, which, gradually increasing in volume and intensity, lead to the first subject played *con passione* by the strings and accompanied by energetic piano arpeggios. A brief orchestral interlude follows, ending with a rapid treble passage that culminates in a series of heavy chords. The soloist introduces the lyrical second subject after a brief phrase played by the violas and accompanied by the clarinets. The development is built mainly from the first subject in association with a rhythmic figure originally heard on the lower strings later to be elaborated by the woodwind and in a powerful passage for the piano. A climax builds up, leading directly to the recapitulation. There is no conventional solo *cadenza*, but a full-sized coda brings this movement, full of restrained tension, to a close.

Four introductory bars on muted strings act as a transition from C minor to E major and serve as a prelude to the slow movement. The piano enters on the fifth bar with a beautiful accompaniment figure above which the solo flute and solo clarinet introduce the principal theme from which the whole movement is constructed. This theme is developed until a brief *cadenza* leads to a section in livelier tempo followed by a larger, more powerful *cadenza*. The final trill of the *cadenza* turns itself into the original accompaniment figure while the strings play the principal melody for the last time. The movement ends with an exquisite coda.

In the finale, the orchestral introduction suggests the rhythm of the forthcoming main theme and returns, from E major to the original key of C minor. A brilliant piano cadenza ushers in the main theme, which is developed before the oboes and violas state the second subject, to be repeated by the piano in an extended form. A quiet bridge passage in triplets, to which the percussion adds a certain *frisson*, leads to the return of the main theme, a short fugal section and the reappearance of the second subject in D flat major. The triplet bridge passage introduces the final section, which brings the concerto to a triumphant close with a restatement of the second subject.

Programme notes provided by Making Music

INTERVAL

Ludwig van Beethoven - Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67

Allegro con brio

Andante con moto

Allegro vivace

Allegro

It is most unlikely that Beethoven intended his *Fifth Symphony* to contain any programmatic content, especially of a personal nature, but the idea of fate knocking at the door, arising from the four hammer blows in the opening bars, has persisted. Contemporaries were adamant that the four-note motif had a much less dramatic origin and that it came to the composer as he listened to the chirping of a goldfinch. In wartime Britain the ominous sound of the four notes, played on timpani, acted as a rallying call throughout Europe as they spelt out the morse code letter V – for Victory.

The *Fifth Symphony* was first performed at a marathon personal benefit concert given at the Theater an der Wien on 22 December 1808. Never before, or since, could there have been such a display of new music by one composer. As well as the *Fifth*, the programme also included premières of the *Sixth Symphony (Pastoral)* – although the numbering of the two was reversed, the *Fourth Piano Concerto*, movements from the *Mass in C*, and a hastily written *Fantasia* for piano, chorus and orchestra, with its foretaste of what was to come in the *Ninth Symphony*. As if this wasn't enough, a much earlier work, the aria *Ah, Perfido!*, was revived. The hall was cold and the performers under-rehearsed, so it is not surprising that the playing was rough and that in the

Fantasia the orchestra broke down. It is almost unbelievable that so much great music could have been heard for the first time under such adverse conditions.

It has to be admitted that the first movement of the *Fifth Symphony* lends itself to fate associations, whether intended by Beethoven or not. The opening four notes, surprisingly given to strings and clarinets alone, pervade the whole of the movement, becoming more insistent as tempi and dynamics increase. Even in the melodic second theme the motif is heard in the background. The horn call which announces this subject is the starting point for the development. It is remarkable that the immense strength of this opening movement is achieved with no more than the forces of the normal classical orchestra, illustrated nowhere better than by the overwhelming force of the coda.

The *Andante* is in free variation form, involving two themes treated in a wide ranging and improvisatory manner. Little remains of the dance origins of the third movement *scherzo* which opens with a rather mysterious theme on 'cellos and basses, in unison. The *trio* section opens with a bustling *fugato*, again for the lower strings. It is not surprising that cuts were made in the difficult first performance, but this has left a continuing ambiguity as to whether these were still to be made in subsequent performances, not least in the *scherzo*. The usual procedure today is to follow the *trio* with one ghostly and abbreviated repeat of the first section, eventually leading to an extended *crescendo* which moves directly into the finale. Three trombones, making their first important appearance in a symphony, together with added piccolo and contrabassoon, help to underline the brilliance of this last movement. Its triumphant, martial rhythms take it inexorably forward, interrupted only by a quiet recall of the main theme of the preceding *scherzo*, before the long, extended coda, with its quickening tempo and increasing dynamics brings the symphony to a majestic close.

Programme notes provided by John Dalton, Making Music

Remembering Pam Brown

It is with tremendous sadness that we have to advise of the untimely death of one of the stalwarts of the orchestra, our principal trumpet, Pam Brown.

Pam had been very bravely fighting cancer and we were all thrilled to see her at our last concert, despite her being very poorly. She played with her customary enthusiasm and great skill and she will be sorely missed by all of us.

Our thoughts are with Pam's husband, Kenny, and all her family at this really difficult time.

In very loving memory, Pam Brown, 1964 – 2026.



Our Chosen Charity – PATCH

To summarise the words of PATCH medical director, Dr. Pamela Levack:

“PATCH’s mission is to ensure that every patient, in every Scottish hospital can be confident that they will receive specialist palliative care, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, if they need it”.

The need for a charity like PATCH was first established 8 years ago by the bedside of a very ill patient, in a noisy, busy, surgical ward. The patient was sore and feeling sick and he had just received bad news from his consultant. It was at this point, as the patient buckled with pain trying to absorb this difficult news that his wife said, “There has to be a better way than this.”

These words ignited the challenge to provide that extra layer of care in hospital: a specialist palliative care unit. Thanks to the kind people of Tayside, enough money was raised to allow NHS Tayside to provide a 3-bedded acute palliative care unit, which opened in 2009. The unit was designed to offer intensive, short-stay palliative care to patients in need. State of the art symptom control was and continues to be carried out by a team of palliative specialists including doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, a complementary therapist and pharmacist on a daily basis at Ninewells Hospital.

More information about PATCH and their vital work can be found at www.patchscotland.com

The logo for PATCH features the word "PATCH" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. A teal-colored horizontal bar is positioned behind the letter "P", extending to the left and slightly overlapping the letter.

Supporting the improvement of palliative care



Borders Chamber Orchestra

Future BCO concert dates for your diaries, all at Melrose Parish Church:

Saturday 27th June 2026 Summer Concert: Programme to feature Rossini's Overture to The Italian Girl in Algiers, Ravel's beautiful Pavanne pour une infante défunte, the final movement of Ravel's Le Tombeau de Couperin, Dvorák's Romance in F Minor for violin, soloist Cath Cormie and Mendelssohn's 1st Symphony, conducted by James Young.

Saturday 7th November 2026 Winter Concert: Featuring soloist Nikita Lukinov playing Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini and Amy Beach's Gaelic Symphony, conducted by Tim Espin.

If you would like to keep up to date with what the orchestra is doing, please join our mailing list by filling in the slips provided tonight or alternatively, visit our website and you can join the mailing list that way. Be sure to follow us on Facebook too for the latest information and updates!



www.borderschamberorchestra.org.uk



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