

Maxwell Quartet

Ensemble

'Superb storytelling from four great communicators'

The Strad

The Maxwell Quartet combines a refined approach to classical works with a passion for its own folk heritage and a commitment to expanding the string quartet repertoire through wide-ranging projects. Its first two releases on Linn Records paired string quartets by Haydn with the players' own compositions, based on Scottish folk music, the first reaching number three in the classical specialist charts.

The quartet performs at UK venues such as London's Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room, Queen's Hall, Edinburgh, and Perth Concert Hall, and across Europe, including at Tivoli Copenhagen, Muziekgebouw Amsterdam, and the Rheingau, Just Classik, Wonderfeel, Lammermuir, and St Magnus Festivals. Since their debut American tour in 2019, which sold out venues in New York, Florida, California and Washington, they have toured the US annually.

Current projects include a new commission by Linda Buckley, with bagpiper Brìghde Chaimbeul, which they perform at Celtic Connections Festival in Glasgow and across Europe. They also continue to tour Worksongs, a project exploring the folk songs and cultures of Scotland's historic industries, including the jute and tweed trades. In 2023 they released Gather, bringing together traditional Scottish music ranging from 1200 to the present day together, such as ancient Celtic plainchant of the Inchcolm Antiphoner, fishermen's songs, pipe marches from the Western Isles and Shetland Reels, as well as new compositions.

Passionate about collaborating with other musicians and art forms, the quartet has worked with a global roster of artists and institutions, including theatre company Cryptic, installation artists Wintour's Leap, Royal Ballet School, soul duo Lunir, folk duo Chris Stout & Catriona MacKay, cinematographer Herman Kolgen, Danish String Quartet, Calidore Quartet, pianist Imogen Cooper, clarinettist Kari Krikku and baritone Roderick Williams.

The four players have been friends since youth, studying and playing together in youth orchestras in Scotland. They formed officially in 2010 at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, as postgraduate students, and a year later were named as Residency Artists for Enterprise Music Scotland 2011–13, which gave them several acclaimed concert tours. The quartet has since held residencies at Oxford University, Perth Concert Hall, Music at Paxton and the Lammermuir Festival. The players founded their own Loch Shiel festival in the West Highlands of Scotland curated a concert series at Guardswell Farm in Perthshire.

They studied with the Endellion Quartet through a ChamberStudio mentorship programme at King's Place and privately with Hatto Beyerle, founding member of the Alban Berg Quartet, in Hanover. Other mentors have included Miguel da Silva (Quatuor Ysaÿe), Erich Höbarth (Quatuor

Mosaïques), and Krzysztof Chorzelski (Belcea Quartet). The quartet plays on violins by David Tecchler and Giovanni Batista Rogeri, a viola by J.B. Vuillaume and a cello by Francesco Ruggieri (1670), all on loan from generous benefactors. Additionally they perform on modern instruments by British makers Roger Hansell, John Dilworth and David Rattray.