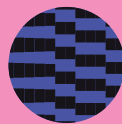


# SHIFTING PATTERNS



**25-29  
OCT 2025**

A striking fusion  
of sound and visuals.



**scottish  
ensemble**

*Inverness / Glasgow  
Edinburgh / Perth*

**PROGRAMME**

# PROGRAMME

Henryk Górecki *Quasi Una Fantasia Op. 78*

I Largo

II Deciso – Energico

III Arioso: Adagio cantabile

IV Allegro

Interval

Anna Meredith arr. Richard Jones *Honeyed Words*

Anna Meredith *Tuggemo*

Anna Meredith *Chorale*

Anna Meredith arr. Richard Jones *Shill*

Anna Meredith arr. Richard Jones *Haze*

Anna Meredith arr. Richard Jones *Blackfriars*

Anna Meredith arr. Richard Jones *Nautilus*

Thanks for joining us for this performance. We'd greatly appreciate your feedback, which will be used to help shape our future activities. Please fill in the survey by scanning the QR code.



# WELCOME TO SHIFTING PATTERNS

On behalf of the whole team at Scottish Ensemble, welcome!

In tonight's concert we focus our hearts and minds on two highly distinctive musical voices, Henryk Górecki and Anna Meredith.

I have wanted to programme *Quasi una Fantasia* for a long time. Its austere beauty, explosive energy, and hypnotic repetitions require intense levels of listening and commitment, from both players and audiences. I hope that the collective experience of this extraordinary music will stay with us for some time.

Anna Meredith is the creative force behind one of Scottish Ensemble's most exciting collaborative projects to date, *Anno* (which we recently performed at London's Barbican Centre). We have been looking for opportunities to add more of her music to our repertoire, and when I heard the wonderful album *Nuc* by the Ligeti Quartet, the idea for tonight's concert took shape. I am very grateful to Richard Jones, the violist from the Ligeti Quartet, for being so generous with his brilliant arrangements and for letting us expand them into the full string ensemble versions you will hear today.

We are thrilled to present this genre-defying, joyful, kaleidoscopic and always surprising music!

Thank you for joining us tonight.



Jonathan Morton

## VIOLIN 1

Jonathan Morton  
(Artistic Director)  
Cheryl Crockett  
Freya Goldmark  
Liza Johnson

## VIOLIN 2

Tristan Gurney  
Laura Ghio  
Joanne Green  
Annabel Stevens  
(Young Artist)

## VIOLA

Andrew Berridge  
Ed Creedon

## CELLO

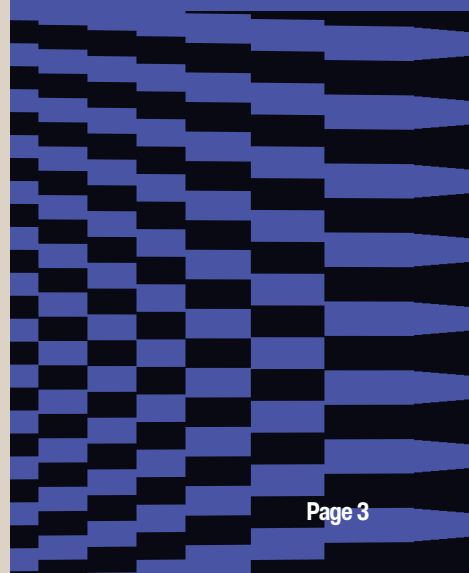
Peteris Sokolovskis  
Niamh Molloy

## BASS

Diane Clark

## VISUALS

Ewan Jones Morris



# NOTES ON THE MUSIC

While exhibiting very different musical personalities, Henryk Górecki and Anna Meredith have both used subtly evolving textures and rhythms in their music; beyond ‘minimalism’, which more strictly adheres to these processes, yet still with a sense of gradual evolution – of ‘shifting patterns’.

Polish composer Górecki was a hugely versatile and distinctive musician, whose style ranged from avant-garde extremities in the 1960s to deeply personal and spiritual works such as the *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs* of 1976. Across his career, Górecki drew upon influences from composers he admired, sometimes quoting them directly, and adapting and incorporating their music into his own.

Górecki said explicitly that Beethoven’s piano sonatas and string quartets inspired his first two string quartets. In the case of the *String Quartet No. 2*, dating from 1991, he employed what he called ‘Beethovenian chords’ – a sequence of three major chords used as anchor points during the work. His choice of title, *Quasi una fantasia*, also invokes works such as Beethoven’s Piano Sonatas Nos. 13 and 14 (the second of which is better known as the ‘Moonlight’).

The first movement of Górecki’s Second Quartet is underpinned by a repeated note on the cello, like trudging feet, over which the viola articulates introspective, mournful material. Górecki then recalls a chordal drone from his First Quartet, revealing an overarching relationship between the two works that emphasises the sense of freedom implied by a ‘fantasia’. This movement ends with the first articulation of the Beethovenian chords, launching the animated second-movement folk tune in which pairs of instruments duet as though engaged in vigorous dialogue.

In the third movement ‘Arioso’ (which implies a singing quality), a chordal accompaniment underpins a melody played simultaneously at two pitches separated by a dissonant interval – an astringent effect and a feature of several of Górecki’s instrumental works from the 1980s. There are allusions to the first movement, too, accentuating the work’s unified conception. The fast-paced finale is bursting with energy, and in the contrasting soft, slow section towards the end, Górecki slyly includes a quote from the Christmas carol ‘Silent Night’ over sustained Beethovenian chords.

Described as ‘one of the most innovative minds in modern British music’ (*Pitchfork*), Scottish composer Anna Meredith MBE is a musical polymath whose work embraces both acoustic and electronic music in an eclectic range of styles and media: contemporary classical, experimental rock, art pop, techno, soundtracks and installations. Meredith regularly collaborates with a variety of ensembles, including the Scottish Ensemble and the



Ligeti Quartet - whose violist, Richard Jones, has made some of the arrangements of her works heard on this programme, which are accompanied by visuals by Ewan Morris Jones. *Tuggemo* (2016) is an old English word for a swarm of birds or flies, inspiring in Meredith a piece that she describes as being ‘all about swoops of direction and energy’. Extended glissandi (a swooping slide) on the strings are punctuated by loud, rhythmic electronics.

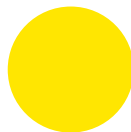
In *Honeyed Words* (2016), the electronics create an almost bagpipe-like quality, Meredith combining concise melodic units with sliding figures while exploiting the full range of the cello’s voice - including its more forthright sonorities. For string quartet and electronics, *Chorale* (2010) references both birdsong and a recording of an MRI scan, creating an intense, almost claustrophobic effect.

With its propulsive rhythms and hypnotic electronics, Meredith’s debut album *Varmints* (2016) earned *Pitchfork*’s sought-after accolade of Best New Music, and won the 2016 Scottish Album of the Year (SAY) Award. *Shill* and *Blackfriars* (heard later in the programme) both come from *Varmints*. *Shill* brims with life, spurred on by intricate rhythmic patterns, whereas *Blackfriars* features gossamer-light string effects - fragile tone, rapid flurries of notes and icy glides - over subtle electronics.

2016 also saw the composition of *Anno*, in which Meredith fused Vivaldi’s *Four Seasons* with her own music, the result described by *The Times* as ‘magical... Italian Baroque meets techno.’ *Haze* is a mesmerising stand-alone movement from *Anno* in which, in Meredith’s words, ‘amplified live quartet is doubled with a recorded quartet, played by the Ligeti Quartet, who reinforce and blur the lines of the material, creating a shimmering and woozy texture which slowly builds into something more direct and intense before fading away.’

Anna Meredith describes *Nautilus* (2011) as a ‘sort of call to arms (for myself!)’ in which she took full ownership of her style. This piece represents ‘one of the first tracks I wrote when I started to work in electronics alongside my acoustic or orchestral writing.’ Inspiration came from Meredith’s homeland (she grew up in South Queensferry): ‘I came up with the rising line whilst stomping along a beach in Scotland and experimenting with placing my steps across different parts of the material to create the shift in feel you hear roughly two thirds in.’ The effect is bold, arresting and good-humoured, with more than a hint of defiance - a ‘call to arms’ not only for Anna Meredith herself, but for the listener as well.

© Joanna Wylde, 2025



*About*

# SCOTTISH ENSEMBLE



For half a century, Scottish Ensemble has been shrinking the gap between listeners and musicians. From our roots in early music, we've become a versatile performing group that makes ageless art for the here and now. We resist the constraints of a home venue, a set season or a creative routine and are shaped by the changing times in which we live.

After decades playing together, we have redefined what a group of twelve musicians can do. We now design each performance bespoke: a meeting of site, sound and vision that generates an atmosphere of its own. With the support of Creative Scotland, we are proud to be a beacon for Scottish creativity at home and around the world. We promise to make you experience music differently.

*About*

# EWAN JONES MORRIS

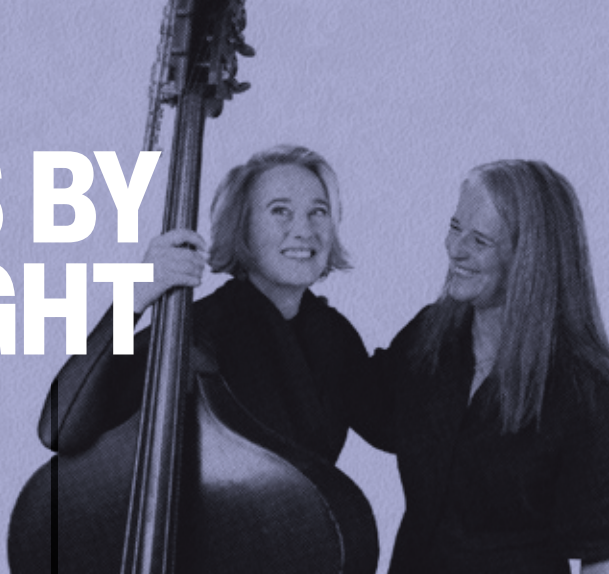


Ewan Jones Morris is a filmmaker and animator from Wales. His films and collaborations span a variety of disciplines: music videos, short films, installations, advertising, concert visuals and video design for theatre and have garnered a number of awards and nominations including a Bafta Cymru award for best short film and a UK Music Video Award. As well as directing a number of music videos for Anna Meredith he's also collaborated with a wide variety of artists such as John Grant, Cate le Bon, Leftfield and DJ Shadow.

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Fraser Anderson  
Peter Armit  
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Joe Coleiro  
Iain Currie  
L. B. Currie  
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