

Scottish Ensemble to put wellbeing centre-stage with **Breathe**, a guided concert exploring how live music makes us feel.



Scottish Ensemble are proud to present **Breathe**, a guided, deep listening event providing audiences with a release, an escape, and a new and unusual classical music experience. Touring to **Inverness, Glasgow, Edinburgh** and **Dundee** between **25-28 October**, *Breathe* puts audiences up close with Scottish Ensemble musicians as both groups explore how they feel when in a live concert.

This focused, intimate, and mindful listening experience comes off the back of Scottish Ensemble's long-standing collaboration with **Maggie's Centres**, a charity which supports people dealing with cancer. Together they have developed sessions that promote a different way of listening, including listening more deeply and looking at how mindfulness techniques can help to channel the power of music and alleviate pain and anxiety.

The programme, which features music by Beethoven, Caroline Shaw, Daniel Kidane, Donald Grant and more, is designed to take people through a mixture of emotions, moods and feelings and explore the ways in which an audience's presence and reactions influence the nature of a performance. Led by Guest Director Tristan Gurney, and conceived and curated by Scottish Ensemble viola player Andrew Berridge, the performers will move in between and during pieces, to enable the audience to get different perspectives on the sound. Live music is and always has been a collaborative, shared experience, and so *Breathe* is designed to help audiences understand how the performers are feeling and how their performance can be influenced by the interaction with an audience.

Scottish Ensemble violist Andrew Berridge has curated the concert and will guide audiences through it as the performance travels through intricate and contrasting music written for strings. Designed to calm overactive minds and help people experiment with what feels comfortable and uncomfortable, live feedback from the audience plays an integral role in the experience, as they will be asked for their thoughts at several points during the performance, and see how hearing other people's experiences changes how they listen, and changes the musician's perspectives too.

Audiences will get a real understanding of the buzz performers get when playing to a crowd and, rather than just communicating through a final bow, performers will spend time meeting the audience after the performance too. Scottish Ensemble always aim for intimate and intense performances – Breathe is set to maximise that atmosphere and celebrate the power of live music.

Breathe is part of a wider series of work by Scottish Ensemble which also features the soon-to-be-released *Breathe for Schools*, a bite-sized video series to be enjoyed by teachers and their classes across Scotland and beyond to help carve out a few moments for reflection and calm in a busy school day. Alongside collaborators from Maggie's they have delivered some training for school teachers to explore how they can use music in classrooms for wellbeing purposes, and are now developing similar formats that combine live performance and discussion into their work in schools.

Guest Curator and Scottish Ensemble violist Andrew Berridge said: "During the last few years we've been expanding our work with Maggie's cancer support centres, taking live performances to small mindfulness groups and using music both as a tool for therapy and to provoke a conversation about how it can make us feel on a fundamental level. These sessions have been so richly rewarding for both our musicians and the participants that we wanted to bring this experience to the concert hall, to share our gratitude for the unique energy that live performance brings. Breathe is a blend of meditative listening techniques and an exploration of how we can let the music in more fully; relishing texture and resonance while the Ensemble literally surrounds the audience with music."

Tickets are available from <https://scottishensemble.co.uk/programme/2022-23/breathe-2022/>

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For further media enquiries please contact Susie Gray susie@thecornershoppr.com

Images available [here](#)

Listings information

Tues 25 October
Eden Court, Inverness
7:30pm

Weds 26 October
The Engine Works, Glasgow
7:30pm

Thurs 27 October
Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh
7:30pm

Fri 28 October
Steeple Church, Dundee
7:30pm

Notes to editors

About Scottish Ensemble

Scottish Ensemble (SE) is the UK's leading string orchestra; a core of outstanding string players who perform together under Artistic Director Jonathan Morton. Based in Glasgow, Scotland, SE inspires audiences in the UK and beyond with vibrant performances which are powerful, challenging and rewarding experiences, crossing genres, styles, musical periods and artistic forms to offer fresh perspectives on classical music.

SE regularly collaborates with high-profile guest artists, from trumpeter Alison Balsom and mezzo-soprano Sarah Connolly to cellist Pieter Wispelwey and violinists Patricia Kopatchinskaja and Nicola Benedetti. SE is also becoming increasingly known for its international collaborations with artists from other disciplines, from dance and theatre companies to visual artists. Starting in 2014, their series of annual cross-artform collaborations has so far included immersive projects with visual artist Toby Paterson; Swedish contemporary dance company Andersson Dance; electronic-classical crossover composer Anna Meredith and visual artist Eleanor Meredith; and, Scottish theatre company Vanishing Point.

Alongside performances across Scotland, SE presents concerts across the UK, London and the globe. Recent invitations to tour abroad have resulted in engagements in Taiwan, China, Brazil, the USA and across Europe, performing at prestigious venues from the Shanghai Concert Hall (China) and the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts (USA) as well as festivals including the Edinburgh International, Edinburgh Fringe and Thuringia Bach Festivals.

SE is also committed to expanding the string repertoire, with recent commissions including new works from John Tavener, James MacMillan, Sally Beamish, Martin Suckling and Anna Meredith.