



Scottish  
Chamber  
Orchestra

# Beatrice & Benedict

Sung in French with English surtitles

**Thursday 3 October, 7.30pm**  
Edinburgh Usher Hall

**Friday 4 October, 7.30pm**  
Glasgow City Halls

A brilliantly sharp comic opera by  
Hector Berlioz, in his witty retelling of  
Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*.



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# Berlioz's Shakespearean Romance

Sly wit, warm-hearted humour and a brilliant, larger-than-life score: *Beatrice and Benedict* is composer Hector Berlioz's sparkling reimagining of Shakespeare's romantic comedy *Much*

*Ado About Nothing* as a bright, sunny opera.

Returning to Sicily as a war hero, Benedict is tricked by his comrades into feigning love for the prickly Beatrice – who is the subject of similar subterfuge from her own attendants. But at the marriage ceremony of two friends, the pretend lovers discover that their feelings are truer than they dared admit.

Berlioz held a life-long love for the plays of Shakespeare, and *Beatrice and Benedict*, one of his final major pieces, marks the summation of his Shakespearean obsession. The light, lyrical score, concise and brimming over with memorable melodies, is full of musical high spirits and humour.



**Karen Cargill**  
Beatrice

Mezzo soprano Karen Cargill, recently appointed SCO Associate Artist, reveals the challenges of singing one of the opera's complex title characters.

"*Beatrice and Benedict* is a fun piece – that's the most important thing. Berlioz has such a unique way of writing, and of creating colours and textures within the orchestra, that you understand immediately the journeys that the characters are on.

"My character, Beatrice, is quite a complex individual – she's not sure that she believes in love, or maybe that's just what she portrays – deep down, I think she's looking for love. At the start of the piece she's quite cheeky with Benedict, pretending that she doesn't care about him, but by the end she realises that they're in love."

# Robin Ticciati on the magic of *Beatrice and Benedict*



“*Beatrice and Benedict* is a magical piece – it fizzes with texture, light, dew in the morning, stars in the evening. It’s Berlioz’s last opera – of his big works, it’s one that people sometimes forget about. It’s Berlioz the man responding to his love of Shakespeare, particularly the giddy summer nights of *Much Ado About Nothing*.

“But Berlioz takes away a lot of the darkness in the play and focuses on the couples – Beatrice and Benedict, and Hero and Claudio – and the journeys they make.

“It’s an intimate score, and we’re doing *Beatrice and Benedict* as a concert performance without the dialogue – in that form it really works without a staging. You can tell the story with just the music, and let the audience bring their own set design and costumes – then you can create something very different and very special.”



**Sally Matthews**  
Hero

**Soprano Sally Matthews, who sings Hero in *Beatrice and Benedict*, explains why the opera is a delight for singers.**

“The music of Berlioz’s *Beatrice and Benedict* is simply beautiful. It’s a gift to sing – Berlioz knew exactly how to write for the voice. It’s full of beautiful lines. My challenge as a singer is to try to get to the heart of what the composer wanted and communicate the story in the best way I can.

“For a singer, performing an opera on the concert stage is one of the most enjoyable experiences you can have – it gives you the chance to connect so closely with the conductor and orchestra. It’s something I really enjoy and look forward to, especially with my good friends Robin Ticciati and Karen Cargill.”

# How to Book

**EDINBURGH • 0131 228 1155 • TICKETS £30 / £26 / £20 / £15 / £10**

Online booking: [www.usherhall.co.uk](http://www.usherhall.co.uk)

Usher Hall Box Office, Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH1 2EA

Telephone and online bookings carry a £1 transaction fee. Please note: The Usher Hall Box Office sells an allocation of tickets for SCO concerts.

**GLASGOW • 0141 353 8000 • TICKETS £28 / £24 / £19 / £14**

Online booking: [www.glasgowconcerthalls.com](http://www.glasgowconcerthalls.com)

City Halls Box Office, Candleriggs, Glasgow G1 1NQ

Glasgow Royal Concert Hall Box Office, 2 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow G2 3NY

Online transaction charge of £1. Postal and phone booking transaction charge of £1.50. Postage charge of 75p where applicable.

## TICKET DISCOUNTS

**Senior Citizens** – £2 off standard prices • **U26s, students and unemployed people** – £5 for any ticket.

**Under 16s** – Free if accompanied by a paying adult. Maximum of 2 free children's tickets per adult ticket. Additional children £5 each.

**People with a disability** – 50% off standard ticket prices for people with a disability and a carer.

**Group discounts** – Groups of 6 or more save 20% off standard ticket prices.

**School groups** – Teachers and/or accompanying adults go free when bringing a school group. For more information, contact SCO Connect on 0131 478 8353 or [connect@sco.org.uk](mailto:connect@sco.org.uk).

Please note: All discounts are subject to availability. We regret that tickets are non-refundable. Every effort is made to ensure that all information is correct at time of going to press. The SCO does, however, reserve the right to change dates, artists or programmes if necessary.

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