

# SCOTTISH FREELANCERS ENSEMBLE

**SFE**

**NOVEMBER  
2020**

**THE NEW ERA OF CLASSICAL MUSIC**

**CHRISTMAS WITH SFE AND FRIENDS!  
Save the date 7:30pm on Friday 4th of  
December.**



# INTRODUCTION

Hello friends of SFE! Welcome to our SFE November newsletter!

It is hard to believe another month has passed so quickly - for us at Team SFE, it has been a busy but fruitful and exciting month for us as we prepare for our Virtual Christmas Concert!

By the time you receive your November edition of the SFE newsletter, the five day countdown to our musical extravaganza will have begun! Get your mulled wine and mince pies at the ready, and join us for a wonderful evening of festive music. Not only are we promising you some gorgeous christmas classics from our SFE string players (plus some compulsory sleigh bells!), but we are honoured to be sharing the virtual stage with TEN other fantastic guest ensembles! Each of our ensembles represent the very best of the Scottish folk, jazz and classical freelance scene. We are continually astounded at the wealth of musical talent that exists across so many genres of music, all nestled within this one small country! We hope you will join us in an evening of celebrating Scotland's rich and diverse freelance music scene, and hope you agree that it is something worth nurturing, protecting and investing in. It's been a tough year for many - let's put it behind us on this festive evening as we invite you to put your feet up, get the fire on, and relax with us as we serenade you into Christmas 2020!

The concert will premiere on our Scottish Freelancers Ensemble YouTube channel on Friday 4th December at 7:30 BST. - Not to be missed! The link to the live concert will be circulated on all our social media. You will also be able to find it on our website 24 hours before the concert begins. The full lineup is available for you to check out at the end of this newsletter.

As well as all the exciting SFE concert preparations, we have some really amazing news to share with you this month! We are delighted to announce our recent partnership with the Scottish Arts Club. This will involve future collaborations and events together in 2021. Keep your eyes peeled for more details over the coming months...

In this month's SFE Spotlight, we have the fabulous Cellist Andrew Huggan joining us in the hot seat - if you want to know just how hot... he's also on page no.203 in '101 Photos of Men in Kilts.' (Available on Amazon for those Christmas stocking fillers...!).

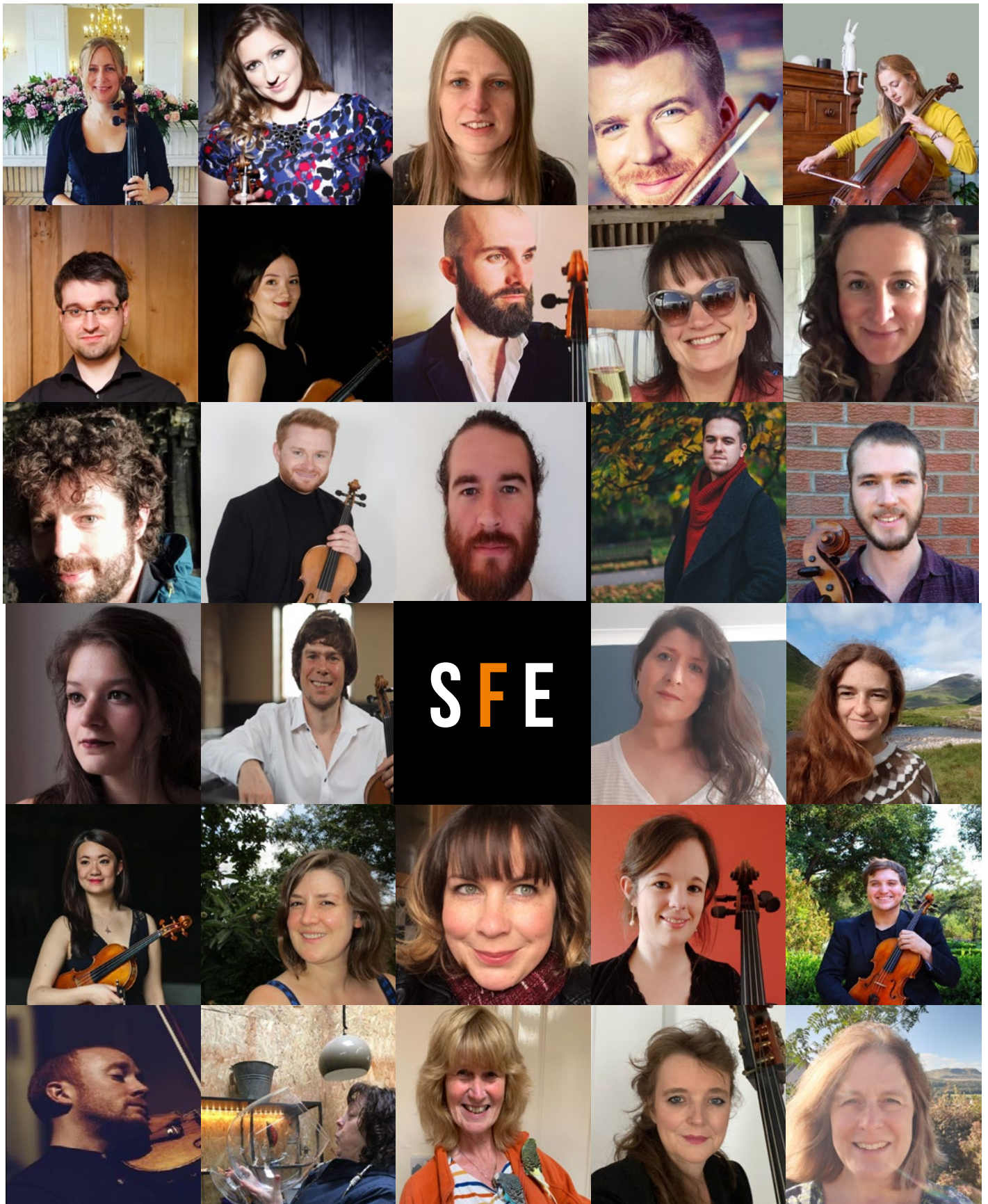
In this month's SFE Focus commission, Dr Aaron McGregor talks us through some of Scotland's hidden historical female composers.

We would also love you to visit our Christmas Workshop on page 6 featuring some great christmas stocking fillers made by our very own SFE members.

As always, we would like to thank you for your continuous support and interest. We hope you will enjoy reading our November newsletter as much as we have enjoyed creating it! We are so grateful for each and every one of your contributions, that support us in paying our musicians and enable us to carry on creating digital content for you to enjoy from the comfort and safety of your homes. SFE continues to be a voluntary organisation, with all of your donations going towards supporting our freelance musicians. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Wishing you good health, and if you are watching our Christmas concert, please do say hello in the live chat! We'd love to hear from you.

**Katrina and Alice**  
**Scottish Freelancers Ensemble**





# SFE FOCUS

## SCOTLAND'S "GOLDEN AGE"



Caption ; left to right- Alice Allen, Aaron McGregor, Katrina Lee.

National library of Scotland September 2019

Researcher and SFE violinist Aaron McGregor explores the life and work of female composers during Scotland's "Golden Age" of Scottish fiddle music of the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Back in Summer 2019, SFE co-founders Alice and Katrina (AKA the then newly-founded Gaia Duo) approached me for some advice about tunes written by female composers during Scotland's "Golden Age" of Scottish fiddle music of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Alice and Katrina's project centred around championing works by female composers, particularly reviving the work of lesser known musicians from Scotland.

In Scottish music, there is evidently still a long way to go in terms of gender balance and equality, but there is no denying that women make up many of the great fiddlers and tune composers active in trad music today. On the other hand, if you ever read any of the "histories" of Scottish fiddle music, it would seem that before the last quarter of the 20th century this was an entirely male-dominated scene. The history of the Scottish fiddle tradition is not only about music and the various ways in which it is played, but centres on the lives and careers of its founders and creators: the Gow family, Robert Mackintosh, Simon Fraser, William Marshall, James Scott Skinner - the "Great Men" of Scottish fiddling.

My PhD research looked at the early history of the violin in Scotland, and in many ways attempted to challenge the orthodoxy. I uncovered a far richer story than had previously been known – one stretching back far earlier and with more cosmopolitan roots. It is clear that more than any other instrumental tradition in Scotland, the violin / fiddle was (and is) defined by its ubiquity: by the 18th century it was played across class divides, used across different styles, and was known in every corner of the country. Experts have long insisted that there were

strict gender divides in choice of instruments and music making in the period, between professional and social activities for men, and more solitary music-making (keyboards, plucked instruments, solo song) for women. Nevertheless, I kept coming early across evidence to the contrary – records of violin lessons given to young women; important fiddle manuscripts compiled by or for young ladies; and even relatively well-known amateurs like Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock, whose music making at Kilravock Castle (Nairnshire) included wide-ranging repertoire from chamber and orchestral music through to Scottish fiddle tunes.

Into the late 18th century – the “Golden Age” of Scottish fiddling – women were actually far more represented in tune collections than would seem likely from reading the literature. In carrying out research for the Gaia Duo, I found dozens of examples of volumes containing tunes by female composers, including several collections entirely consisting of tunes by one or more Scottish women.

Some of these individuals were specifically named. For example, Madelina Stirling of Ardoch (1766-1846) seems to have patronised or befriended a number of Perthshire musicians, and her tunes were printed in several collections by the Gow family and the dance musician John Bowie. Stirling was a member of the Perthshire Gentry (her father was the 4th Baronet of Ardoch, Strathallan), and in c. 1810 she published a collection of her own tunes, including the popular strathspeys Duneira Lodge and Perthshire Hunt.

Perhaps the most important reason women have not been included in the official early history of Scottish fiddle music is their anonymity: most tunes by women and even whole collections were not attributed directly to individuals, but anonymously, to “a Lady” or “a female amateur”. Nevertheless, in one case a bit of detective work has uncovered some information on one of these anonymous female composers.

The volume in question is a collection composed by a “Young Lady” and published by Urbani and Liston in Edinburgh in 1804:

*A Collection of Original Strathspey Reels, with Variations, Waltzes, Marches, Irish Airs & Co. and A New Sonata for the Piano Forte, Violin or German Flute.*

A perusal of the contents of this volume shows that the “young lady” was a talented composer of sophisticated music. The collection has an impressive scope of contemporary traditional styles, including variation sets on Scottish tunes with difficult pianistic writing, a skilfully-handled range of dance forms and military pieces, and tunes in the style of Scottish and Irish national airs. The collection opens with a three-movement ‘Sonata’ which effectively merges ideas from classical-era sonata form and vernacular idioms. An opening march marked Maestoso is in rondo form, featuring a recurring melody evoking the sound of trumpet calls. The second movement opens with a song-like Andantino, based on a theme in the style of a Scots tune, followed by ten art-music style variations, variously setting the tune with different accompaniments, rhythmic figuration, melodic divisions, and a shift to the minor key. The Finale is thematically related to the slow movement, but in a faster Allegretto, evoking the feel of a country dance or reel.

The best clue to the identity of the composer is a note on the title page that the collection was ‘entered into Stationers Hall’, the legal deposit libraries that functioned as the copyright of the day. Whilst

many publishers made this claim without entering a copy of their book, fortunately this volume was entered, on 17 August 1804 by one Catherine E. White, presumably the anonymous ‘Young Lady’ composer.

A search for known composers, publishers, or musicians with the name has not revealed any information, nor are there any obvious candidates in Scottish Old Parish Records of marriages, births and deaths. However, an intriguing possibility is that Catherine E. White was one of the ‘Misses Whites’ apparently responsible for the tunes in another volume, published by Gow and Shepherd in Edinburgh in c. 1800. Its full title page reads:

*A Collection of entirely Original Strathspey Reels, Marches, Quick Steps, & c. for the Piano Forte, Violin, German Flute &c. by Ladies resident in a remote part of the Highlands of Scotland. NB. Corrected by Nath. Gow.*

An annotated copy belonging to J. Murdoch Henderson (now held at the University of Aberdeen) includes a pencilled note that the “Ladies” were the “Misses White, Brockly”, and another copy owned by Kidson now at the Mitchell Library, Glasgow also refers to the composers as “the Misses Whyte”. Presumably this was the family referred to in several tunes in this volume: “Miss M. White of Brachloch”; “Miss White of Brachloch’s Strathspey”, and “Capt. White 73rd Regts. Strathspey”. Brachloch, or Brackloch is the historical name for a small village on Lochinver, Sutherland, 90 miles northwest of Inverness. Easiest to trace amongst the Whites named in the tunes is ‘Capt. White’, almost certainly a reference to Captain William White of the 73rd Highland Regiment of Foot, author of *Journal of a Voyage performed in the Lion Extra Indiaman* (London, 1800), a travel diary written during his time in India and Africa.

The argument for the common authorship of the two tune collections is strengthened by their tune titles, many of which are named for upper class individuals from the North Highlands, Moray, and North Aberdeenshire. Whilst there are no specific overlaps of tunes between the collections, several individuals or families are named across both collections, including the Macleods of Geanie (Tain), the celebrated musical family the Roses of Kilravock, and members of the family of the Duke of Gordon, several of whom were important amateur musicians and patrons, most notably to the fiddler-composer William Marshall (1748-1833). Whether these individuals were friends or patrons to Catherine White, she was clearly not only a skilled composer, but someone intimately connected to Scotland’s musical elite, including important amateur musicians, publishers, and other fiddler-composers from the “Golden Age”.

Hopefully rediscovering the identity and music of Scotland’s anonymous female tune composers will go some way to ensuring that the history of Scotland’s “Golden Age” of Scottish fiddling is no longer entirely male-dominated. In the meantime, check out many of the original collections at the National Library of Scotland’s digital collections (<https://digital.nls.uk/special-collections-of-printed-music>) and listen to Gaia Duo’s live recording of some of Catherine White’s music here: <https://www.gaiaduo.com/media>.

**Aaron McGregor 28 November 2020**

# SFE CHRISTMAS WORKSHOP

The wonderful members of the Scottish Freelancers Ensemble are not only amazing musicians, but also incredibly talented in their other creative outlets - we want to show them off as much as possible!

Please consider supporting our local businesses, by giving something truly unique this Christmas, specially crafted and created by our wonderful members.

## MIRANDA PHYTHIAN- ADAMS



Check out Miranda's amazing collection. If you like the bags you can find your way through to mugs, scarfs, face masks and lots more! Miranda takes painting commissions on:

[mirandaphythianadams.mpa@gmail.com](mailto:mirandaphythianadams.mpa@gmail.com)

[https://www.zazzle.co.uk/collections/totes\\_by\\_miranda-119843669372025980](https://www.zazzle.co.uk/collections/totes_by_miranda-119843669372025980)

# LYNETTE EATON POTTERY



Contact Lynette Eaton for enquiries at: [lynetteeaton@me.com](mailto:lynetteeaton@me.com)

Check out her amazing pottery skills.



LYNETTE'S POTTERY

**PRICE LIST**  
Most items handmade to order  
Colours may vary  
All sizes are approximate

**Christmas Wreath**



£40    23cm across

**Glazed Bowls**



Large £40    29 x 9cm    Small £15    14 x 6cm

**Candle holder**



£25    11cm square. Cut outs can be stars, circles or hearts

**Small Plate**




£20    19cm across

**Round Soap Dishes**




£15    12cm across

**Round Soap Dishes**



£15    10cm across

**Oval Soap Dishes**



£15    14 x 9cm    Yet to be glazed

**Two Part Soap Dishes**



£20    15 x 10cm    Yet to be glazed

**Christmas Bowls**



£12    Flowers    13cm across    Yet to be glazed

**Small Plate**



£12    Holly    13cm across    Yet to be glazed

**Christmas Tree Tea Light Stands**




£15    11cm tall    Yet to be glazed

**Various Christmas Tree Decorations**




£2 - £5    Small £2    Stars and circles 6cm



Medium £3.50    Stars, cut out circles, 3D shapes, hearts Christmas trees. 8cm

Large £5    Double stars, gingerbread men. 12cm

**Dishes**



£20    17cm across

**Large Bowl**



£40    32cm across

# MAY HALYBURTON BESSY BASS



Bessy Bass is the central character in the “Around the World with Bessy” series of books with music for all children up to age 12. Bessy lives in the beautiful coastal village of Lower Largo in Fife and loves to travel and have adventures with other musical instrument family and friends.

All books are available as paperbacks and eBooks (PDF) from [www.bessybass.com/shop](http://www.bessybass.com/shop) along with other merchandise inspired by the stories.

Our books make an ideal stocking filler for the under 12s in your lives that you would like to encourage, or spark an interest, in music!

Also available from Amazon and Amazon Kindle.

# SFE SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEWS

**'SCOTLAND'S NEXT TOP MODEL'**

**ANDREW DRUMMOND HUGGAN**



In this edition of SFE Spotlight Liam talks to childhood friend and SFE Cellist, Andrew Huggan. Andrew and Liam could be found at the front desks of their respective orchestral sections in East Dunbartonshire Secondary Schools Symphony Orchestra, as students at the RSAMD Junior Department, and as members of the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland, and Camerata Scotland.

Since leaving school, Andrew has gone on to a successful freelance career as a cellist and teacher. Andrew has performed as a Baroque cellist with the Dunedin Consort, explored modern music with Glasgow New Music Expedition, and can often be found performing with the Orchestras of Scottish Opera and Scottish Ballet. Andrew has performed throughout Europe, China, and Oman. In 2018 Andrew made his debut at New York City's Lincoln Center. As well as being a talented performer and teacher, Andrew has also been known to model professionally. Some people just have it all...



**We started off by finding out Andrew's 'Lockdown Lazy Boy Luxuries';**

**Best Meal** – Biryani

**Most Consumed Beverage** – Wine

**Guilty T.V. Show** – The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills

**2020 has been a strange year, to say the least. How have you been keeping yourself entertained?**

My partner, Greig, and I have been competing by taking it in turns to cook a three-course meal for each other. There's been a Venetian night, Korean night, and of course the Biryani. We've eaten well... I've also been buying wine by the bucket full. Although, that all seems to have disappeared. I mean, we're not animals, we do love a glass of wine with our meals... breakfast, lunch and dinner!

**You spend a lot of your time off in the Highlands, specifically Skye. What is it about that area of the country that keeps you going back?**

Family! It's where my mum's family are from. My Grandparents lived there, and my parents moved back there once my siblings and I had finished school. Right now marks the longest I've been without going up there. We usually go every couple of months. It's a great place to get away from people so I can be at one with nature!

**People may not have known this, but you've appeared as a model on more than one occasion. How do you find the process working with a photographer, and can you draw any parallels to working as a musician?**

I don't think there are many parallels, but I would say that as a musician I've learned to take direction well, so that helps when I'm working with a photographer.

**Do you think it's fair to be handsome and talented at the same time?**

Do you think it's fair that there's a worldwide pandemic on? No! Because life isn't fair, Liam. Next Question!

**What was your first experience hearing the cello?**

It must have been hearing the RSNO play. I remember being dragged along kicking and screaming to watch my sister sing as part of the Junior Chorus.

**Are there any cellists alive or dead whose playing you idolise?**

I'm not one for listening to cello recordings much, so I wouldn't say I look up to a famous player particularly. However, I do idolise my teacher, Rudi DeGroote. His sound is just so unique and beautiful. I generally get my inspiration from friends and colleagues. I just love watching someone next to me play really well!

**What has been your most transformative experience as a musician?**

I've had lots of great experiences in my career so far, but I think I really noticed a turning point when I started teaching properly. Having a student come to their lesson with a problem forces me to reflect on my own process. It has really helped me to understand how I work and learn. It's funny, I travel around the world performing and my eureka moment comes while teaching 'wee jimmy' in Coatbridge!

**Having taken part in many youth orchestra courses in the past, which stands out as your favourite?**

My first ever experience with the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland is quite memorable. We were conducted by Vernon Handley, who was ill at the time, but it was still so inspiring to work with someone at that level. I was last cello, sitting right at the back and couldn't play a note!

My favourite youth orchestra course, however, is one that we both went on... I don't think it couldn't be mentioned... the time we went to Mauritius! It cost us nothing and we did very few concerts because everyone's instruments had swollen up. Best holiday ever!

**As the twin brother of another talented musician, was there competition between you growing up?**

Well, we both started on the piano... and I was not very good at it. Then we both started learning percussion.... and I was not very good at it.

After I took up the cello there wasn't much competition because we were doing different things at different times. We're very supportive of one another and he even recommends me for work when he gets the chance.

That's all I have to say, and let's never talk about him ever again!

# SPOTLIGHT CONTINUED



## **What was your first professional engagement as a cellist?**

Back in 2009, while I was an undergraduate at the RCS, I got a gig playing with the Scottish Philharmonic Orchestra for 'A Play, A Pie, and A Pint' at the Òran Mór in Glasgow. It was called La Befana and was accompanied by string orchestra with Justine Watts playing a beautiful violin solo throughout. I remember being aware that I was playing with professionals for the first time and thinking just how fantastic it sounded.

## **What's your favourite thing about freelancing in Scotland?**

I think the best thing about working in Scotland is the amount of variety you get. Throughout the year there are different things that come up to keep work interesting, like tours and the Edinburgh Festival etc. That's why I love it: I feel doing something different each week is exciting and keeps my playing up to scratch. Also, the variety of people you get to work with is great!

## **What is the most embarrassing thing that's happened to you on stage?**

I won an apprenticeship with the Scottish Opera during my 2nd year at the RCS and got to sit next to my teacher, Rudi. During the dress rehearsal, I tried to turn a page at the same time as putting on my mute which, for someone with poor coordination, turned out to be a disastrous move... I accidentally threw my bow past the conductor and it landed at the feet of the Concertmaster. I looked at my teacher who mouthed 'go get it'. So, I had to stand up, climb off the riser, walk around the conductor, pick my bow up off the ground, and walk back to my seat. For the rest of the first half at least, I held the bow with a clenched fist and could hardly play a note. Naturally, the whole orchestra shuffled their feet to acknowledge my little mistake. I've been through therapy to repress that, so I'll send you the bill!

**Thanks, Andrew! Good luck getting that bill paid!**

# THE SCOTTISH ARTS CLUB



We are thrilled to be partnering with the Scottish Freelancers Ensemble. We are so impressed by the innovative nature of the organisation and have been following their online content since the inception of SFE. We are very excited about the future of our partnership with the Scottish Freelancers Ensemble so watch this space!

The Scottish Arts Club is a members' club, open to anyone with an interest in the Arts. We have a dynamic calendar of musical events and our exhibitions showcase the work of many outstanding and award-winning artists in our gallery spaces. Our members are offered access to a selection of classes and workshops provided by the Club. We are proud to host several awards such as Scottish Portrait Awards and the Scottish Theatre Awards. Our beautiful building is also available for private hire. Throughout the COVID pandemic, we have continued to support artists and promote their work on a virtual platform.

For more information, please visit our website  
<https://www.scottishartsclub.com/>

You can also have a VR tour of our building via this link:  
<https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=CzGBUerb8xt>

# CHRISTMAS WITH SFE AND FRIENDS!

SFE

Grab some mulled wine and come join us  
on our Scottish Freelancers Ensemble  
Youtube channel at 7:30pm on Friday  
4th of December.







# SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to extend a special thanks to our current sponsor through both Gofundme and Patreon accounts.

## FUNDRAISER STATS:

**120 DONORS**

**285 SHARES**

**120 FOLLOWERS**

The logo consists of the letters 'SFE' in a bold, sans-serif font. The 'S' and 'E' are white, while the 'F' is orange. This logo is centered within a black square, which is itself centered on a larger orange background.

**SFE**