

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. Friends since they met playing in youth orchestras in Scotland, the players’ tight bond shows through in compelling musical interpretations and their joyous communication with audiences.

Strongly connected to its own Scottish roots, the group often performs classical repertoire and new music alongside folk-inspired works. 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. They recently gave the world premiere of a new commission by Linda Buckley with bagpiper Brìghde Chaimbeul, touring to Celtic Connections 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. Their 2023 CD Gather brought together traditional Scottish music ranging from 1200 to the present day, such as ancient Celtic plainchant, fishermen’s songs, pipe marches and Shetland Reels, as well as new compositions. They have also worked with soul duo Lunir and folk duo Chris Stout & Catriona MacKay.

The quartet performs at UK venues such as Wigmore Hall, Purcell Room, Queen’s Hall, Edinburgh, and Perth Concert Hall, and across Europe, including at Berlin Konzerthaus, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Tivoli Copenhagen, Muziekgebouw Amsterdam, and Rheingau, Just Classik, Wonderfeel, Lammermuir, and St Magnus festivals. Since its debut American tour in 2019, which sold out venues in New York, Florida, California and Washington, the quartet has toured the US annually. In the 2025–26 season it makes its debuts at Carnegie Hall and The Frick Collection in New York.

Passionate about collaborating with other musicians and art forms, the players work with a global roster of artists and institutions, including theatre company Cryptic, installation artists Wintour’s Leap, Royal Ballet School, cinematographer Herman Kolgen, Danish String Quartet, Calidore Quartet, pianist Imogen Cooper, clarinettist Kari Krikku and baritone Roderick Williams. In 2026 they premiere a new commission by Eleanor Alberga at Muziekgebouw Amsterdam and Dublin International Music Festival.

They formed officially in 2010 as postgraduate students at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, 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. They founded their own Loch

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Shiel festival in the West Highlands of Scotland, curated a concert series at Guardswell Farm in Perthshire, and serve as Artistic Directors of the Mendelssohn on Mull Festival.

The quartet 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.