

MAHLER

in miniature



Presented by

MAHLER PLAYERS (mp)

COPLAND Appalachian Spring
MAHLER Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen
MAHLER Symphony No. 1

Douglas Nairne - baritone
Tomas Leakey - conductor

Dornoch Nairn Strathpeffer
30th April, 2nd & 3rd May 2014

Welcome to this evening's performance, the first of two concert programmes the Mahler Players will give in 2014.

We pair together two of Mahler's earliest works: *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and its musical twin the first Symphony. Composed only two years apart and both inspired by failed love affairs, these works have common material at their core and yet present strikingly different messages: the *Lieder* present a pessimistic portrayal of loss but the symphony is affirmative and all-embracing. These works will be preceded by Copland's *Appalachian Spring*. Copland and Mahler are in many ways polar opposites and yet there are parallels between them, the clearest examples being the inspiration they took from nature and their incorporation of elements of folk music. We are excited to be presenting the Scottish premiere of Klaus Simon's reduced orchestration of the symphony alongside Schoenberg's reduction of the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*.

We are delighted to be joined by the baritone Douglas Nairne, already familiar to Highland audiences from his performances with the young and dynamic company *Opera Bohemia*.

PROGRAMME

Aaron Copland: *Appalachian Spring*

Gustav Mahler: *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (arr. Schoenberg)

I. *Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht*

II. *Ging heut morgen übers Feld*

III. *Ich hab' ein glühend Messer*

IV. *Die zwei blauen Augen*

Interval

Gustav Mahler : Symphony No. 1 (arr. Klaus Simon)

I. Langsam. Schleppend. *Wie ein Naturlaut*

II. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell

III. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen

IV. Stürmisch bewegt

Douglas Nairne baritone
Tomas Leakey conductor
The Mahler Players

AARON COPLAND (1900-1990) *Appalachian Spring*

Copland's chamber ballet *Appalachian Spring* was composed in 1943–44 and dedicated to the dancer Martha Graham. The title was suggested by Graham herself after the music had been composed, as Copland explained in 1981:

I was really putting Martha Graham to music. I had seen her dancing so many times, and I had a sense of her personality as a creative office. Really in the front of my mind I wasn't thinking about the Appalachians or even spring. So I had no title for it; 'ballet for Martha' was actually the subtitle that I had.

It was first performed on 30th October 1944 in the Library of Congress, Washington, with Graham dancing the lead role. In 1945 the work received the Pulitzer Prize for music.

The action of the ballet, according to Copland's own programme notes, concerns the following: "a pioneer celebration in spring around a newly-built farmhouse in the Pennsylvania hills in the early part of the 19th century. The bride-to-be and the young farmer-husband enact the emotions, joyful and apprehensive, their new domestic partnership invites. An older neighbour suggests now and then the rocky confidence of experience. A revivalist and his followers remind the new householders of the strange and terrible aspects of human fate. At the end the couple are left quiet and strong in their new house".

In 1945 Copland arranged and re-orchestrated the work as a suite for full orchestra. In 1972 he prepared a version of this suite for the original instrumentation of flute, clarinet, bassoon, piano and strings. It is this version that is being performed today.

Copland is regarded as one of the first composers to write in a truly American style. His language at this time in his life is characterised by the use of ideas from American folk music. An example of this is the use of the popular Shaker song "Simple Gifts" as a basis for variations in the second half of the ballet. Throughout the piece the harmonies and melodies are mostly very simple, but there are frequent meter changes that rival Stravinsky in their complexity and unpredictability. The work ends with slow chorale-like music directed to be performed "like a prayer".

GUSTAV MAHLER (1860-1911) *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (arr. Schoenberg)

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (often translated as "Songs of a Wayfarer") is one of Mahler's earliest works. Unusually, he himself wrote the poems upon which the songs are based. The inspiration was Mahler's unhappy love-affair with Johanna Richter, a soprano working at the Royal Theatre in Kassel, where Mahler was employed as a conductor from 1883 – 1885. A letter from Mahler to a friend from 1st January 1885 shows his state of mind:

I have written a cycle of songs, six at present, all of which are dedicated to her. She doesn't know about them. What can they tell her that she doesn't know already? The order of the songs is meant to show a wayfaring journeyman who has had a fateful experience, and who is now setting off into the world, travelling on alone.

In their texts the *Lieder* are very much part of the German Romantic tradition and have much in common with Schubert's song cycles - themes of unrequited love, departure, nature as a comforter and even a reference to the "Lindenbaum", the title of one of the most famous songs from Schubert's *Winterreise*. Musically, however, they are unmistakably Mahler's own, with an earnestness of expression at times bordering on the hysterical and melodramatic. The music from the second and fourth songs appears in a different guise in the First Symphony.

In the years after their initial composition Mahler revised, orchestrated and reduced the songs in number from six to four. The first performance of the cycle as we know it now was in 1896, with the Berlin Philharmonic, Dutch baritone Anton Sismans and Mahler himself conducting.

The reduced orchestration being performed today is one of many major works arranged by Arnold Schoenberg for his *Society of Private Musical Performances* and was first performed in Vienna in 1919.

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen

I.

Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht,
Fröhliche Hochzeit macht,
Hab' ich meinen traurigen Tag!
Geh' ich in mein Kämmerlein,
Dunkles Kämmerlein,
Weine, wein' um meinen Schatz,
Um meinen lieben Schatz!

Blümlein blau! Verdorre nicht!
Vöglein süß! Du singst auf grüner Heide.
Ach, wie ist die Welt so schön!
Ziküth! Ziküth!
Singet nicht! Blühet nicht!
Lenz ist ja vorbei!
Alles Singen ist nun aus.
Des Abends, wenn ich schlafen geh',
Denk' ich an mein Leide.
An mein Leide!

II.

Ging heut morgen übers Feld,
Tau noch auf den Gräsern hing;
Sprach zu mir der lust'ge Fink:
"Ei du! Gelt? Guten Morgen! Ei gelt?
Du! Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?
Zink! Zink! Schön und flink!
Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt!"

Auch die Glockenblum' am Feld
Hat mir lustig, guter Ding',
Mit den Glöckchen, klinge, kling,
Ihren Morgengruß geschellt:
"Wird's nicht eine schöne Welt?
Kling, kling! Schönes Ding!
Wie mir doch die Welt gefällt! Heia!"

Songs of a Wayfarer

I.

When my darling has her wedding-day,
When her joyful wedding-day comes,
I shall have my day of grief!
I shall go to my dark little room,
There I shall weep
for my dear beloved!

Blue flower, do not wither!
Sweet little bird!
You sing on the green heath.
Ah, how beautiful the world is!
Chirp! Chirp!
Do not sing, do not bloom!
Spring is past!
All singing must now end.
At night when I go to sleep,
I think of my sorrow!

II.

I went across the fields this morning,
dew still hung on the grass;
The merry finch spoke to me:
"Good morning!
Isn't it a wonderful world?
How the world delights me!"

The bluebells in the fields
also rang out to me,
their morning greeting:
"Isn't it a wonderful world?
How the world delights me!"

Und da fing im Sonnenschein
Gleich die Welt zu funkeln an;
Alles Ton und Farbe gewann
Im Sonnenschein!
Blum' und Vogel, groß und klein!
"Guten Tag, ist's nicht eine schöne Welt?
Ei du, gelt? Schöne Welt?"

Nun fängt auch mein Glück wohl an?
Nein, nein, das ich mein',
Mir nimmer blühen kann!

III.
Ich hab' ein glühend Messer,
Ein Messer in meiner Brust,
O weh! Das schneid't so tief
In jede Freud' und jede Lust.
Ach, was ist das für ein böser Gast!
Nimmer hält er Ruh', nimmer hält er Rast,
Nicht bei Tag, noch bei Nacht, wenn ich
schliefe.
O Weh!

Wenn ich in dem Himmel seh',
Seh' ich zwei blaue Augen stehn.
O Weh! Wenn ich im gelben Felde geh',
Seh' ich von fern das blonde Haar
Im Winde wehn.
O Weh!

Wenn ich aus dem Traum auffahr'
Und höre klingen ihr silbern' Lachen,
O Weh!
Ich wollt', ich läg auf der schwarzen Bahr',
Könnt' nimmer die Augen aufmachen!

IV.
Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz,
Die haben mich in die weite Welt geschickt.
Da muß ich Abschied nehmen vom
allerliebsten Platz!
O Augen blau, warum habt ihr mich
angeblickt?
Nun hab' ich ewig Leid und Grämen.

Ich bin ausgegangen in stiller Nacht
Wohl über die dunkle Heide.
Hat mir niemand Ade gesagt.
Ade! Mein Gesell' war Lieb' und Leide!

Auf der Straße steht ein Lindenbaum,
Da hab' ich zum ersten Mal im Schlaf
geruht!
Unter dem Lindenbaum,
Der hat seine Blüten über mich geschneit,
Da wußt' ich nicht, wie das Leben tut,
War alles, alles wieder gut!
Alles! Alles, Lieb und Leid
Und Welt und Traum!

And then in the sunshine the world began
to sparkle;
Everything gained sound and colour in the
sunshine!
Flower and bird, great and small!
"Good day, isn't it a wonderful world?"

Now will my happiness also begin?
No, I know that happiness can never bloom
for me!

III.
I have a red-hot knife in my breast,
Alas, it cuts so deeply into every joy and
delight.
Ah, what an evil guest it is!
It's never silent, never still,
Neither by day or by night,
when I try to sleep
Alas!

When I gaze up into the sky,
I see two blue eyes.
Alas! When I walk in the golden field,
I see her blond hair
waving in the wind
Alas!

When I rise from a dream
I hear the ringing of her silvery laughter,
Alas!
I wish I was lying on my black bier,
never to open my eyes again

IV.
The two blue eyes of my beloved,
Have sent me out into the wide world.
I had to take my leave of
this place I loved!
Oh blue eyes,
why did you look on me?
Now I have eternal sorrow and grief

I went out into the still night
across the dark heath.
No-one bade farewell to me.
My companions were love and sorrow!

By the roadside stands a linden tree,
There for the first time I found rest in
sleep!
Beneath the linden tree,
that snowed its blossoms over me,
I knew no more of life's sorrows
and everything was well again! Everything!
Love and sorrow,
and world and dreams!

GUSTAV MAHLER Symphony No.1 in D-major (arr. Klaus Simon)

Throughout his life, Mahler had to fit his composing around his conducting work. In early 1888, an opportunity arose for him to focus solely on composing when Leipzig Opera, where he worked at this time, was temporarily closed due to Germany's period of mourning for Emperor Wilhelm I. The Symphony No. 1 in its original form was completed in just a few weeks of frenzied activity. However, hopes of a first performance in the summer of 1888 came to nothing, and it was not until 20th November 1889 (by which time Mahler was musical director of the Hungarian Opera) that it received its premiere with the Budapest Philharmonic and the composer conducting. The performance was not the success that Mahler had hoped for, with contemporary reports describing the audience's reaction as: "a deathly silence, finally broken by some timid applause, interspersed with booing". Even Mahler's friends were uncomfortable, he recalled: "afterwards everyone avoided me, no one dared to talk to me about my work". This is an extraordinary thing to reflect upon in the present day, with the symphony being regularly performed and one of the most well-loved and popular works in the repertoire.

As with several other works by Mahler, the symphony underwent many transformations before becoming the "definitive" version we know today. Although Mahler always described it as a symphony in his letters, at the first three performances he referred to it as a "Symphonic Poem in Two Parts", with a title: *Titan*, after the novel by Jean Paul. The first part, entitled *Memories of Youth*, included the first two movements as we know them today, with an additional movement, *Blumine (Flower)*, added between them. The second part, *Commedia umana (Human Comedy)* was the funeral march and a slightly different version of the finale. *Blumine* and the original title, *Titan*, were dropped for the fourth performance in 1896. Even as late as its New York premiere in December 1909 (only a year and a half before his death) Mahler was still altering the orchestration.

The symphony is originally scored for a very large orchestra: four of each woodwind instrument, seven horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tuba, two timpanists, percussion, harp and a very large string section. All of the movements were initially given sub-titles by Mahler, but these were later removed in order not to enforce a specific interpretation on his listeners. These sub-titles are interesting nonetheless. The first movement, *Spring without end*, begins with an extraordinary seven-octave deep A in the strings. Explicitly directed by Mahler to play "like a sound of nature", the woodwind enter with the motif of a descending 4th. There are distant fanfares, cuckoo calls and a Romantic horn theme very reminiscent of Weber, before a slightly menacing rising idea in the lower strings dissolves into the main *Allegro*. The principle musical material for this is taken from the second of the *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen – Ging heut morgen übers Feld*. The second movement, *Under full sail*, is an earthy Scherzo and Trio. The Scherzo is a lively and wild dance and the trio more intimate, and almost a little tipsy in its expression.

The 3rd movement, *The Huntsman's Funeral Procession, a Death March in Callot's Manner*, is probably what most disturbed the audiences of Mahler's day. It begins with a solo double bass playing the well known nursery rhyme, *Frère Jacques*, in the minor mode and transformed into a funeral march. This is continued as a round before being interrupted by what can only be described as a busking Klezmer band, directed by Mahler to be performed "with parody". After this bizarre opening, he uses music from the dream-like sequence in the last song from *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* as an interlude before the return of the

music from the opening. The enormous finale, *Dall'inferno al Paradiso: the sudden expression of a deeply wounded heart*, begins as Mahler's original title suggests, with the most tempestuous music of the symphony so far. After this section has burned itself out and subsided into silence, there follows a beautiful melody for the strings, marked "very songful". Then there comes a variant of the violent music from the opening. A chorale theme suggests the end may be in sight but this too dissolves away and is replaced by music from the opening of the first movement. Out of this mist Mahler gathers together his material to create one of the most triumphant and optimistic musical apotheoses ever written.

The reduced orchestration being performed today is from 2008 and has been prepared by the German composer and musicologist Klaus Simon.

DOUGLAS NAIRNE - baritone

Born in Fife, Douglas studied at the RSAMD, before winning a scholarship to study at the Guildhall School of Music where he gained an advanced Masters with distinction. He was the baritone soloist in Faure's 'Requiem' with the Ulster Youth Choir in a live performance on BBC Radio Ulster and was the guest soloist with the Ulster Orchestra. In 2004 he led the National Anthem at Scotland's televised home games of the RBS 6 Nations Rugby Tournament and in 2009 appeared as the baritone soloist at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

Major roles include Don Giovanni with Fife Opera, Dancairo 'Carmen' at Haddo House Opera, Silvio 'Pagliacci' with Lakeland Opera, Marcello 'La Boheme', Enrico 'Lucia di Lammermoor', 'Eugene Onegin' with Opera Bohemia, Sid 'Albert Herring', Tarquinius 'Rape of Lucretia' and Papageno 'The Magic Flute' with the RSAMD and Herald in 'Burning Fiery Furnace' which he performed at the Aldeburgh Festival and at the Hermitage in St Petersburg with Mahogany Opera. He has covered roles at Garsington Opera and Scottish Opera.

In 2012 Douglas was the Baritone soloist for Go Opera's collaborative project with Peroni Beer, Opera di Peroni, which toured around the UK bringing reimagined opera to thousands of people. In 2013 he was the Baritone soloist for the critically acclaimed 'Sloans Project' which was an opera based around tales from Glasgow's oldest pub.

On the concert platform Douglas has performed many works including the Britten War Requiem, Brahms Requiem, Carmina Burana by Carl Orff, Handel's Messiah, including a New Year performance with the Edinburgh Royal Choral Union and the Vaughan-Williams Sea Symphony with the Scottish Opera Orchestra. Douglas is also the co-founder of Opera Bohemia, a young company dedicated to bringing Opera to more people around Scotland.

TOMAS LEAKEY – conductor

Tomas Leakey began his musical life as a trombonist in the Highland Regional Youth Orchestra. He later joined the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, playing under such conductors as Vernon Handley and Christopher Adey. At the University of Cambridge he studied Natural Sciences but was also very active on the music scene as a pianist and

trombonist. He played in all the main orchestras and ensembles and was fortunate enough to work with such conductors as Sir Roger Norrington, Dimitri Sitkovetsky and Stephen Cleobury. In his third year he took up conducting and was the director of Christ's College Orchestra.

Tomas studied conducting with the late George Hurst at the Sherborne (formerly Canford) Summer School of Music, where in 2012 he was invited to assist Hurst in open rehearsals of Beethoven's Symphony No. 1, Mozart's Symphony No. 40, Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* and Tchaikovsky's 5th Symphony. From 2012 – 2013 he studied conducting with Denise Ham at the Blackheath Conservatoire in London. In the summers of 2012 and 2013 he was one of the student conductors at Aberystwyth *Musicfest*, working with Toby Purser and the *Orion* Orchestra. Tomas has also studied privately with Susan Dingle. In March 2013 he set up and conducted an educational project in the Highlands of Scotland, in which a full performance of Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* was taken round several local schools, and culminated in a sold-out public performance in Inverness Town House. In June 2013 he founded an ensemble, *The Mahler Players*, for three performances of Mahler's Symphony No. 4. The project, *Mahler in Miniature*, will continue in 2014 with performances of the First Symphony and Lieder from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*.

Tomas was the organ scholar at Inverness Cathedral for a year from September 2012 to September 2013. As well as learning the rudiments of the organ and singing bass, he gained his first experiences of choral conducting.

Tomas is currently studying for the Masters in Orchestral Conducting at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama under David Jones. In Cardiff he was one of the conductors for the Cardiff University Healthcare Music Society, and in December 2013 led them in a performance of Bartok's *Rumanian Dances* and Bizet's *L'Arlesienne Suite No. 1*. In November 2013 he assisted David Jones and the RWCMD Symphony Orchestra with rehearsals of Mahler's *Resurrection* Symphony as well as assisting the opera department on excerpts from Verdi's *Falstaff* and Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*. Upcoming projects include conducting Beethoven's 4th Symphony and Schumann's Piano Concerto.

Described by reviewers as "a highly capable musician, and a talent to watch", Tomas continues to play the trombone and piano in addition to conducting and is currently studying piano with the eminent accompanist Eugene Asti.

MAHLER PLAYERS

The Mahler Players was founded in 2013 for the *Mahler in Miniature* project and is a hand-picked ensemble of entirely voluntary professional, former professional and very talented amateur musicians. Between them, the other ensembles with which they have played include the Berlin Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, Hallé, BBC Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Opera North, BBC Scottish Symphony, Royal Scottish National, Scottish Chamber, Sydney Symphony and Tasmanian Symphony orchestras. They are for the most part resident in the local area, although some come from as far away as Manchester and Perth to be part of the ensemble. Currently they get together twice a year to rehearse very intensively for each set of concerts which are then toured across the Highlands. One of the aims of the ensemble is to present performances which have at their heart the philosophies and attitudes of chamber music, even if the central work is a big symphony like in tonight's concert. Their inaugural concerts featuring Mahler's 4th Symphony in June 2013 were a great success, described by reviewers as "a tour de force" and "beautifully idiomatic".

VIOLIN I:

Eleanor Cameron *leader*
Anne Wood
Emma Donald

VIOLIN II:

Friedegund Riehm
Simon Evans

VIOLA:

Della Hickey
Jill Wilson

CELLO:

Rick Lusher
Natalie Kilgallen

DOUBLE BASS:

Godfrey Herman

FLUTE/PICCOLO:

Ruth Binks

OBOE:

Leslie Callander

CLARINET/BASS CLARINET:

Mhairi Callander
Rachel Farmer

BASSOON:

Bruce Gordon

HORN:

Andy Evans
Wendy Ritchie

TRUMPET:

Rob Farmer

PERCUSSION:

Alison Russell
Scott Nairn

PIANO:

Fiona Sellar

HARMONIUM:

Gordon Tocher



PROUD TO BE SPONSORS OF THE MAHLER PLAYERS

At Callander Colgan we pride ourselves on providing a professional personal service to our clients throughout the Highlands and Islands. Our office is based in the centre of Inverness and has a highly qualified team who are delighted to assist with your business needs.

Our specialist services include:

**Accountancy advice
Bespoke Business Services
Tax planning
Audits
Business Start up
Corporate Finance
Charities**

If you would like to contact us for a no obligation consultation please do not hesitate to contact Mhairi Callander or Brian Colgan on 01463 701940.

10 Ardross Street Inverness IV3 5NS

Telephone: 01463 701940

Email: enquiries@callandercolgan.com

www.callandercolgan.com

Mahler Players September concerts

Join us again in September for the third instalment of the *Mahler in Miniature* series. We will begin with the original version of Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*. We will then tackle Schoenberg's demanding and revolutionary *Five Orchestral Pieces*, before ending with nine of Mahler's song settings from the German book of folk poems *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*.

Wednesday 17th September 8pm, Dornoch Cathedral

Thursday 18th September 8pm, Strathpeffer Pavilion

Friday 19th September 8pm, Nairn Community and Arts Centre

Wagner *Siegfried Idyll*

Schoenberg *Five Orchestral Pieces* Op. 16 (arr. Greissle)

Mahler Nine songs from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (arr. Simon)

Mezzo-soprano Laura Margaret Smith

Baritone to be confirmed

Conductor Tomas Leakey

£12 full price, £10 concessions, £5 under 26

Tickets will be on sale from early July – keep updated by checking our website and social media pages.

Other upcoming concerts

Dingwall Choral Society

Saturday 10th May 7.30pm, Strathpeffer Pavilion

Rossini - Petite Messe solennelle

Claire Evans soprano

Marion Ramsay alto

John Stewart tenor

Aaron O'Hare bass

Aileen Fraser piano

John Thompson conductor

Tickets £10, available from Strathpeffer Pavilion, June's Card Shop Dingwall and choir members.

Highland Chamber Orchestra

Saturday 31st May 7.30pm, MacPhail Centre, Ullapool

Sunday 1st June 3pm, Strathpeffer Pavilion

Mendelssohn – Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Copland – *Quiet City*

Saint-Saëns – Cello Concerto No. 1

Beethoven – Symphony No. 7

Rob Farmer trumpet

Leslie Callander cor anglais

Stephen Laidlaw cello

Susan Dingle conductor

Tickets (£8 full, £6 concessions, £1 schoolchildren) available in advance from both venues, at the door and can be reserved on 01463 223171.

Like many other arts organisations, the Mahler Players are reliant on support from individuals and businesses in order to keep operating. If you enjoyed the performance this evening and would like to become a benefactor then please get in touch or send a cheque, payable to "Mahler Players", to the address below. If you are a UK tax-payer and fulfil the outlined conditions, you can also fill out the enclosed form which will allow us to claim Gift Aid on top of your donation. We'd also warmly invite owners of businesses who are interested in finding out about sponsorship to contact us.

More generally we are very interested in your feedback on the concert, so please let us know through social media, email or post. To keep updated on what we are doing you can join our mailing list by filling out the form on our website or sending an email to the address below.

Email: contact@mahlerplayers.co.uk

www.mahlerplayers.co.uk

Post: Mahler Players,
5 Englishton Muir,
Bunchrew,
Inverness,
IV3 8RQ

www.facebook.com/mahlerplayers

www.twitter.com/mahlerplayers

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Mahler Players are very grateful to the following people and organisations:

Our commission-free ticket sellers:

The Dornoch Bookshop
June's Card Shop, Dingwall
Leakey's Bookshop
The Nairn Bookshop

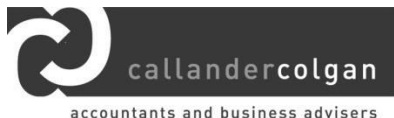
Highland Council for free loan of percussion and music stands

Our benefactor

W.A.E Fraser, MBE

Our sponsor

Callander Colgan Limited



.....
New Arts Sponsorship
Grants supported by the
Scottish Government
in conjunction with...

**Arts
& Business**
Scotland
.....

The Mahler Players is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO),
Charity No. SC044711.