

**PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE USE**

Scottish Ensemble and Andersson Dance present

# **Goldberg Variations - ternary patterns for insomnia**

- **London premiere of cross-artform collaboration at the Barbican Centre**
- **Stunningly different interpretation of one of classical music's most loved works**
- **Limited run from 5-7 July 2018**
- **Tickets available at [barbican.org.uk](http://barbican.org.uk)**



(Credit Hugh Carswell)

Images available to download [here](#)

***“...an infectious, sonorous dance interpretation of the Goldberg Variations” – 4\* - The Guardian***

***“ spinning the well-known variations into an exciting blend of movement and music” – 4\* - Bachtrack***

## Eleven musicians. Five dancers. Choreographed together as one in a new interpretation of the J.S. Bach masterpiece.

Following its success in Scotland, Washington DC and Shanghai, **Scottish Ensemble** is excited to bring its music-and-dance collaboration with **Andersson Dance** to the **Barbican Centre** for its **London premiere** from **5-7 July 2018**.

Featuring 11 musicians and 5 dancers, audiences will witness a **new, 21st-century interpretation** of J.S. Bach's iconic masterpiece, in which both musicians and dancers are choreographed together as one single entity. This idea - to take a string ensemble that performs standing up, and with movement part of their performing DNA, and match them with a dance company with the performance of classical music at its heart - sounded deceptively simple.

When the Artistic Directors of both companies, **Jonathan Morton** and **Orjan Andersson**, met for the first time in London, they knew immediately that they wanted to take it a step further: rather than have musicians only performing the music, they took the ambitious decision to choreograph musicians and dancers as one.

Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, with its myriad textures, moods and forms, provided the rich musical material that is the basis of the collaboration. Published in 1741 as an aria and set of 30 variations for harpsichord, the piece remains today one of the most well-known and most celebrated pieces ever written - praised in 1802 by Bach's first biographer Nicolas Forkel as "**the model according to which all variations should be made**", and widely considered to sum up the entire history of the Baroque variation, in the way that Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations* does for the Classical era.

What drew both Jonathan and Orjan to this work, however, was that it is also **one of the most interpreted**. From theories that its structure deliberately mirrors the ascent of the nine spheres of Ptolemaic cosmology, to the claim that the whole thing is a cleverly coded rebuke to a critic who had snubbed the composer, there is something about this sprawling, complex piece which has invited interpretation since its composition - and this collaboration adds another one. By taking the well-known model of dance-with-live-music-accompaniment one step further by choreographing musicians along with the dancers, the audience has **the singular experience of musician and dancer performing as one**, transforming the notes and our perception of them.

**Orjan Andersson's choreography**, typical of his company's tendency towards bold, physical, non-narrative statements, does not tell a story; instead, it takes the audience on a journey through the notes of the variations, using the music almost as the script. As a piece celebrated for its structure, Andersson has picked out sequences, trills, arpeggios and syncopations and re-imagined them in movement. Playful yet tender, contemporary yet faithful, Andersson opens a door to this masterpiece of the classical canon and invites new listening.

**The music performed - the Dmitry Sitkovetsky arrangement** of the piece for string orchestra and trio - is similarly exploratory in nature. Written in 1985 to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Bach's birth, Sitkovetsky's orchestral and trio arrangements of the keyboard

piece swiftly became known in their own right as lauded additions to the string repertoire, sensitively drawing on the timbres and textures of strings to bring something new to the music. As such, the choice to explore this work - and reinvent it yet again with the addition of contemporary dance choreography - was an exciting and natural fit for Scottish Ensemble in their desire to champion the string repertoire.



(Credit Hugh Carswell)

### **Listings information**

#### **Goldberg Variations - ternary patterns for insomnia**

**Thu 5 - Sat 7 July**

The Barbican, London

7.45pm

Tickets: [barbican.org.uk](http://barbican.org.uk) / 020 7638 4141

#### *Collaborators*

#### **Scottish Ensemble and Andersson Dance**

#### *Programme*

**J.S. Bach**

Goldberg Variations [arr. Sitkovetsky]

#### **/ENDS**

#### **Cast and Creatives**

**Choreography** Örjan Andersson

**Musical direction** Jonathan Morton

**Musicians** Scottish Ensemble

**Dancers** Jozsef Forro, Eve Ganneau, Paul Pui Wo Lee, Csongor Szabo, Danielle de Vries

**Music** J.S. Bach – Goldberg Variations (arr. Sitkovetsky)

**Set and light design** SUTODA

**Costume design** Bente Rolandsdotter

**Video design** Sam Salem

**Production** Andersson Dance, Scottish Ensemble & Nordberg Movement



**Co-production** Regionteatern Blekinge Kronoberg & Riksteatern  
**Technical services** In co-operation with Lumination of Sweden/SUTODA  
**Duration** 75 min (no interval)

*Made possible with the support of **Creative Scotland, Swedish Arts Council and the City of Stockholm.***

Video Trailer [here](#)

Images [here](#)

## Links and more information

Scottish Ensemble & Andersson Dance  
[www.goldberg-variations.com](http://www.goldberg-variations.com)

Scottish Ensemble  
[www.scottishensemble.co.uk](http://www.scottishensemble.co.uk)  
[www.facebook.com/scottishensemble](https://www.facebook.com/scottishensemble)  
[www.twitter.com/scotensemble](https://www.twitter.com/scotensemble)  
[www.youtube.com/ScottishEnsemble](https://www.youtube.com/ScottishEnsemble)

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### Scottish Ensemble

***Scottish Ensemble is a group of 12 outstanding musicians who champion music written for strings, crossing genres, styles, periods, and art forms to make new connections.***

*You might find them playing in a prestigious concert hall, a shopping centre, your local pub or an international music festival; by performing in as many different places as possible, they aim to reach as many different people as possible, letting them experience and enjoy classical music in a way that is relevant to them.*

Linking each and every event is a commitment to live performance of the absolute highest quality.

Re-defining the string orchestra, Scottish Ensemble inspires audiences in the UK and beyond with vibrant performances which are powerful, challenging and rewarding experiences. Known both in the UK and internationally for its versatility and ambitious programming, Scottish Ensemble reaches out to create rich partnerships across boundaries of genre, geography and musical style.

Founded in 1969 and based in Glasgow, Scottish Ensemble is the UK's only professional string orchestra, built around a core of 12 outstanding string players who perform together under Artistic Director Jonathan Morton. SE's distinctive programming style habitually blends music from different ages, offering new perspectives and making unexpected connections. Performing standing up, the individual players bring an energetic and passionate dynamic

to every performance, both in the concert hall and in SE's comprehensive programme of education and outreach activities.

Its work in this area was developed further in 2012 with the launch of the **City Residency programme**, aiming to engage communities around major Scottish Ensemble touring venues with music of the highest quality, in ways relevant to them. The bespoke four-day residencies have included: late-night events, masterclasses, 'pop-up' performances, coaching sessions, free community performances, collaborative cross-genre projects, and participatory events including tea dances and ceilidhs.

Committed to developing the string repertoire, SE seeks out unusual pieces, and has commissioned a rich catalogue of new works from some of the brightest voices working in music today. In recent years, these have included composers such as **Sir John Tavener**, **James MacMillan**, Sally Beamish, Martin Suckling, John Woolrich, Craig Armstrong, Luke Bedford and Thea Musgrave.

SE's first-class reputation attracts collaborations with world-class soloists including trumpeter Alison Balsom; tenor Toby Spence; violinist Anthony Marwood; cellist Pieter Wispelwey and violist Lawrence Power. SE also welcomes collaborations with musicians from different traditions, performing alongside Scottish folk musicians Catriona McKay, Chris Stout, and Aly Bain; DJ and electronic producer Alex Smoke; Finnish violinist Pekka Kuusisto and American bassist Edgar Meyer. Most recently, Scottish Ensemble has collaborated with one of Scotland's leading artists Toby Paterson in an ambitious, cross art-form project bringing together music, art and architecture.

Alongside performances across Scotland, SE presents an annual series of concerts at London's Wigmore Hall and has appeared at BBC Proms and the Edinburgh International, City of London, Aldeburgh and St Magnus festivals. Recent invitations to tour abroad have resulted in engagements in Belgium, Austria, Turkey, Taiwan, and China. In 2013 SE undertook an 11-date tour of the USA, performing in prestigious halls including Walt Disney Hall and New York Town Hall.

SE's extensive recording catalogue includes EMI Classics' top-selling CD of 2010: Italian Concertos with Alison Balsom, and the first in a three-disc series on highly respected label Linn Records, comprising Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich, was released in February 2015.

### **Andersson Dance**

Andersson Dance is an alternating constellation of artists and was founded in 1996 in Stockholm by the choreographer Örjan Andersson. Since 1996 Örjan Andersson has created numerous works in various contexts, from the intimate to the larger format. An exploration of music has always been in focus, regardless if newly composed electronica, folk music or classical works. Andersson Dance continuously invites dancers, composers, light designers, set designers, costume designers, video designers for cooperations in various formats. The project company tours both nationally and internationally.

Örjan Andersson creates different types of choreographic works, often focusing on live music. His choreographic work focuses on the body's inherent possibilities and limitations – ranging from major live music works to opera, to text-based work and to the exploration of classical music. He is known for collaborating with both actors, opera singers, musicians and dancers, so that they work together and communicate with the same physical language.

Early on he received opportunities to create choreography for the large institutions nationally and internationally. This gave him an opportunity to develop his language and his view on the larger stages. At the same time Örjan Andersson founded Andersson Dance.

Örjan Andersson was born 1964 in Eslöv, Sweden. Örjan Andersson received his education at Balettakademien in Stockholm. He began his career as a dancer at Östgötabaletten in Norrköping where he worked with amongst other Birgit Cullberg, Mats Ek and Jiri Kylian. He then left Sweden to dance with Batsheva Dance Company and the choreographer Ohad Naharin in Tel Aviv, Israel. In Batsheva Dance Company he danced works by Ohad Naharin, Angelin Preljocaj, Jiri Kylian, Hervé Robbe and Mark Morris. Örjan Andersson created his the first work, Nemo saltat sobrius (1992) during his period in Israel. Örjan Andersson returned to Sweden permanently in 1995, creating his first pieces whilst working with amongst others Per Jonsson (Sweden) and Ina Christel Johansson (Norway).



In 1996 Örjan Andersson received his first commission, by the Cullberg Ballet in Stockholm. He has since been commissioned by a majority of the leading dance companies in Europe whilst creating a large body of work for his own company. The company has been presented in Italy, South Korea, Germany, Finland, Norway, Denmark, Great Britain, Ireland and Belgium.

Örjan Andersson has continually taught at the University College of Dance, the University College of Film, Radio, Television and Theatre, Danscentrum and Balettakademien in Stockholm, giving courses in choreography, interpretation as well as giving class. Andersson Dance is funded by the Swedish Arts Council, the Arts Grants Committee and the Cultural Capital of Stockholm.

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