

"WHAT A GREAT TIME TO BE A HIPSTER ... THERE'S AN INFECTIOUS ENERGY AND A SENSE OF ENTHUSIASM THAT TURNS AN ARCO CONCERT INTO AN EVENT."

LIMELIGHT MAGAZINE

2018 AUSTRALIAN ROMANTIC & CLASSICAL ORCHESTRA



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CREATIVE VICTORIA

SYDNEY
CITY RECITAL HALL
SUNDAY 19 AUGUST | 3.00PM

MELBOURNE
MELBOURNE RECITAL CENTRE
WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST | 7.30PM

POETICAL MELODIES ELEGIAC & DARING

POETICAL MELODIES

ELEGIAC & DARING

RACHAEL BEESLEY | DIRECTOR

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

String Symphony in B minor No.10 (1821-23)

Adagio – Allegro – Più presto

Edvard Grieg (1843–1907)

Elegiac Melodies Op.34 (1880)

Hjertesår (The Wounded Heart)

Våren (The Last Spring)

'From Holberg's Time' Op.40 (1884)

Praeludium (Allegro vivace)

Sarabande (Andante)

Gavotte (Allegretto)

Air (Andante religioso)

Rigaudon (Allegro con brio)

INTERVAL

Johannes van Bree (1801–1857)

Allegro in D minor for Four String Quartets (1845)

Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924)

Crisantemi (1890)

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904)

Serenade in E major for Strings Op.22 (1875)

Moderato

Menuetto: Allegro con moto

Scherzo: Vivace

Larghetto

Finale: Allegro vivace

This concert will last approximately two hours, including a twenty minute interval.

PROGRAM NOTES

If music and language share the same roots, poetry and music are even more closely related – they both span the boundaries of suggestion and meaning, and they both seek to harness emotion in the service of communication.

This program includes representations of grief and evocations of an earlier time, including songs without words, and music which speaks directly to the heart. Each composer was shaped by the rhythms and melodies of a different language, yet their music carries across time and space.



Émile Friant (1863–1932)
La Toussaint (All Saints' Day), 1888

FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809–1847) STRING SYMPHONY IN B MINOR NO.10 (1823)

There is a sweet melancholy to the opening of Mendelssohn's 10th string symphony, an emotion which is surely present in the heart of many 13-year-olds. But very few teenagers possess the musical language to express it. Between the ages of 12 and 14, Felix Mendelssohn wrote twelve string symphonies as well as other chamber works. They were composed for performances at his home in Berlin, where Mendelssohn's wealthy parents held concerts for friends and associates. Since the family's arrival in Berlin from Hamburg, Felix and his sister Fanny had enjoyed a wide-ranging education, including piano and composition lessons. Both children showed precocious musical talent, but only for Felix was the pursuit of music deemed a suitable career.



Carl Joseph Begas (1794–1854):
Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, 1821
Bodleian Library, Oxford.

These early string symphonies are milestones in the path of Mendelssohn's musical development. Since the age of nine, he had been studying composition with Carl Friedrich Zelter, who taught him the forms and expectations of late 18th-century music. The string symphonies are well-crafted examples of these forms, and Mendelssohn makes effective use of the different expressive possibilities of the string instruments while not straying from standard harmonic progressions. The symphonies are fresh and engaging, and were the stepping stones to his first work of striking originality, the Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

EDVARD GRIEG (1843–1907) ELEGIAC MELODIES OP.34 (1880)

Elegiac Melodies Op.34 have no text, but even today many Norwegians will recognise the songs and poems on which they were based. The piece is an arrangement of two songs from a set of 12 Melodies after Poems by Vinje Op.33 for voice and piano. *Våren* (The Last Spring) is the most well-known of the poems, expressing longing for spring and acceptance that it will not arrive before death. *Hjertesår* (The Wounded Heart) describes how the scars and wounds of the heart, when watered by tears may still grow flowers like wounds in the earth.

Grieg had an affinity for song. He considered the importance of this genre in his output to be circumstantial, but also deeply personal. In 1900 he explained that:

I loved a young girl who had a wonderful voice and an equally wonderful gift of interpretation. That girl became my wife and my lifelong companion to this very day. For me, she has been – I dare admit it – the only genuine interpreter of my songs.

Grieg's love for his wife notwithstanding, he composed 12 Melodies at a time when his marriage was strained, and the pair would soon undergo a period of separation. Against the background of this emotional turmoil, Grieg was inspired to set Aasmund Olavsson Vijnje's poems after meeting in 1880. Vijnje was a famous journalist and poet, known for his use of the Nyorsk Norwegian dialect. Grieg set the songs in both Danish and Nyorsk, and although he accepted that Danish would be accessible to a wider audience, he appreciated the contribution Nyorsk made to the distinctly Norwegian flavour of the songs.



Nina and Edvard Grieg's wedding photo, unknown photographer, 1867. Original belongs to the Edvard Grieg Archives at Bergen Public Library.

EDVARD GRIEG 'FROM HOLBERG'S TIME' OP.40 (1884)

Ludvig Holberg is one of Norway's most famous writers. Born in 1684, he was a thinker of the Enlightenment, widely travelled, and successful as an historical and comedic writer. In 1884, Grieg was charged with composing a cantata for male chorus for the 200-year celebration of Holberg's birth. Unfortunately, Grieg found this commission profoundly uninteresting and felt unable to write to a high standard. He also doubted the wisdom of the vision for its performance, writing in a letter:

I can see it all before me, snow, hail, storm and every kind of foul weather, huge male choir with open mouths, the rain streaming into them, myself conducting with waterproof cape, winter coat, galoshes, and umbrella! And a cold afterwards, of course, or goodness knows what kind of illness! Oh well, it's one way of dying for one's country!

The performance proceeded much as Grieg had predicted and he then tucked the cantata away, commenting that it was "sleeping the eternal sleep, and a good thing too". Although the cantata had not been a success, Grieg had become fascinated with Holberg's historical context, and composed a suite for piano inspired by music which Holberg might have heard. His point of departure was the stylised French dance-suite favoured by composers such as Couperin, Rameau and Bach. The result is an engaging pastiche of older styles fashioned into a Romantic version of five 18th-century suite movements: *Praeludium*, *Sarabande*, *Gavotte*, *Air* and *Rigaudon*.

From Holberg's Time predated the wave of 19th-century fascination with 18th-century musical genres by a decade. The piano version was well received and a year later Grieg decided to transcribe the work for string orchestra. It remains popular in both formats, considered by many to be of equal standard to the more popular *Peer Gynt*.

JOHANNES VAN BREE (1801–1857) ALLEGRO IN D MINOR FOR FOUR STRING QUARTETS (1845)

Johannes van Bree was an important member of Dutch musical circles in the mid-19th century. He actively exposed Dutch audiences to the most influential and impressive composers of his time, conducting the Dutch premieres of Berlioz's *Symphonic Fantastique* and Wagner's *Faust Overture*. He had

previously achieved acclaim as director of the Caecilia orchestra. This ensemble was devoted to performing Classical and early Romantic symphonies and overtures. Such specialisation was a new trend in the 19th century, and undoubtedly a response to a growing fascination for rediscovering music of the past. Van Bree also formed a string quartet dedicated to the music of Spohr and Beethoven, reflecting his special admiration for these composers.

Much of Van Bree's output followed the French compositional approach of straightforward accompaniments to melodies. However, in his string quartets – and especially in the *Allegro in D minor* – Van Bree turns to the more polyphonic Germanic style typical of Beethoven, and it is well-suited to the transparent voices of this ensemble. Following a unified statement of the theme, motivic phrases are passed between instruments in conversation, repeatedly meeting in brief moments of consensus. The differences of timbre and variety of articulation, emphasis and ornamentation give this composition its character and life.



Violinist Vilemina Neruda leading a string quartet, c. 1880. Unknown artist

GIACOMO PUCCINI (1858–1924) CRISANTEMI (1890)

In many areas of Europe, the chrysanthemum is associated with grief and death. Long used as a graveside flower, Puccini had this image in mind when he composed *Crisantemi* (Chrysanthemums). It was written in response to the death of the Duke of Savoy, King Amadeo I of Spain, who died suddenly in Turin at the age of 44. Little is known about how Puccini came to be befriended with Amadeo. But when he heard the news of Amadeo's death, Puccini was overcome with sadness and composed this work in the space of a single night. Originally for string quartet, Puccini soon arranged *Crisantemi* for string orchestra and it is in the latter form that it is most often performed. The sorrowful melodies from this piece also appear to great effect in his opera *Manon Lescaut*, written three years later and his first great success.

Best known as a composer of opera, Puccini's instrumental works are few. It therefore seems strange that in a moment of strong emotion he turned not to the voice but to the string quartet. However, Puccini's operas were initially criticised for their overly-symphonic nature. As Verdi wrote in 1883:

I have heard many good things said about the composer Puccini. It seems however that the symphonic element predominates in him. No harm in that! But here we should tread carefully. Opera is opera and symphony is symphony.

Verdi's words reflect an opinion which was fast becoming eroded. Wagner had already ushered in a new operatic era with his ideas of synthesising music and words and creating a complete work without seams or breaks. Puccini was not completely committed to Wagner's ideals, however *Crisantemi* is a testament to the ability of music to communicate the strongest and most complex of human emotions without the aid of words.

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904) SERENADE IN E MAJOR FOR STRINGS OP.22 (1875)

Antonin Dvořák was the eldest of eight children to modest parents. His father was a butcher and innkeeper who played the zither to entertain his guests, and recognised his son's musical talent at an early stage. Dvořák learned the violin and was sent to be educated as an organist in Prague, while earning money playing viola in a dance band. He also played viola in the orchestra of the Cecilia society and became acquainted with the music of Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Wagner. He saw Liszt conduct his own compositions and heard Clara Schumann perform on piano. In 1862 he became principal violist of the new Provisional Theatre orchestra. Here he had the opportunity to play popular Italian operas by Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, Verdi, and Wagner conducted by the composer himself. Czech dramatic works were also on the program, adding further depth to an already extraordinary set of musical experiences.

Until 1865, Dvořák appeared to be mainly a performing musician. However, the music he had been hearing and playing had been steadily brewing, and his own compositions began to flow. Following a brief setback in 1871, when his first opera was removed from the program because of excessive difficulty, Dvořák reconsidered his direction as a composer. Abandoning the modern German style, he set out to adopt more classical structures, and to acknowledge his Slavonic roots.

The Serenade in E Major for Strings Op.22 was Dvořák's first truly successful composition of this happy period in his life. He wrote it quickly and easily, finishing it within two weeks. Although it is a relatively straightforward piece, he was satisfied with its quality and enclosed it as an example of his work in his fourth application for a state scholarship in 1877. The five movements contain singing melodies, an elegant waltz and a scherzo. The themes flow in unexpected directions, sometimes becoming dramatic, but always return to a sense of calm. The final movement is exuberant and daring, bringing the work full-circle via a quotation of a theme from the first movement. Its warm gestures make it a delight for orchestra and audience alike. It is little wonder that it has remained a popular choice on programs from the time of its composition to the present day.

MEGAN LANG
EDUCATION MANAGER

AUSTRALIAN ROMANTIC & CLASSICAL ORCHESTRA

INSPIRE ❖ EDUCATE ❖ ENLIGHTEN

The Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra is unique in the Australian musical landscape as the only orchestra specialising in historically informed performance of late 18th- to early 20th-century repertoire. Established in 2013 by conductor Richard Gill AO, violinist Rachael Beesley and clarinettist Nicole van Bruggen, the ensemble is now a familiar sight and sound at major Sydney and Melbourne arts venues, as well as in metropolitan and regional centres throughout the country.

The orchestra's twin goals of performance and education are delivered through live concerts, collaborations with guest ensembles, radio broadcasts, innovative education programs, pre-concert presentations and specialist online resources. The Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra is at the forefront of the historically informed performance scene, and stays abreast of the latest research and developments around the world by collaborating with key guest musicians, including overseas-based Australian experts.

Featured soloists have included flautist Georgia Browne, oboist Emma Black, mezzo soprano Fiona Campbell, and the orchestra's concertmaster Rachael Beesley and principal clarinettist Nicole van Bruggen. Van Bruggen's performance on bass clarinet of Mozart's Quintet was lauded by Limelight Magazine as one of the top 25 concerts of 2017.

In tandem with the main concert season, the *Richard Gill Presents – A Voyage of Musical Discovery* education concerts focus on recently composed Australian works. With guest musicians joining the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra on stage, Richard Gill explains and provides live examples of the compositional similarities between contemporary and historical works. The *Young Mannheim Symphonists* is an education program of week-long workshops where secondary and tertiary instrumentalists are introduced to techniques of historically informed performance by musicians from the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra. For more information on our educational activities, please visit arco.org.au/education

WHAT IS HIP?

Historically informed performance (HIP) on period instruments is a movement which began in Europe in the 1960s. It is a performance style – previously referred to as Early Music – that evolved from performing music of the Baroque era and before on instruments and with interpretations corresponding to the time of composition. HIP is based on research into the aesthetics of the period in which the music was conceived and performed, including locating expressive markings and annotations in original scores and treatises, comparing these to some of the earliest recordings of Classical and Romantic repertoire, and identifying supporting evidence in the parallel disciplines of literature, theatre and the arts.

To the listener, there is an immediately noticeable contrast between the HIP approach and that of the mainstream symphony or chamber orchestra. This is due to different tonal relationships between wind, brass, string and percussion sections – for example, the HIP wind and brass instruments possess a slender sound quality that blends more readily with the delicate colours produced by gut strings. Articulations tend to be more pronounced, vibrato is employed as an ornament or expressive device, and players are more likely to introduce a slight glide – or portamento – between notes. Along with playing original historical instruments or replicas, the musicians will interpret phrases – particularly in solos – with considerable expressive and rhythmic freedom, add ornamentation based on an advanced understanding of the harmonic progression, and these techniques will routinely vary from performance to performance.

SUPPORT US

To deliver high quality performances played by internationally-recognised specialist musicians, host unique education programs, and to attract new audience members, the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra relies on various forms of support. Along with philanthropic, and federal and state government funding, this includes private donations. If you would like to support the orchestra by making a tax-deductible donation, please visit arco.org.au/donate

We invite you to continue with us on this exciting musical journey, and please share your thoughts with us on the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra Facebook page.

RACHAEL BEESLEY

VIOLIN | DIRECTOR

Rachael Beesley is an internationally renowned Australian violinist, director, concertmaster and educator specialising in the field of historically informed performance. As guest concertmaster with Europe's most distinguished HIP ensembles and orchestras including Anima Eterna Brugge, La Petite Bande and the New Dutch Academy, and as guest director of Les Muffatti in Brussels and NZBarok in Auckland, Rachael has performed in festivals and concert halls worldwide.

In Australia, Rachael is director and concertmaster of the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra, which she co-founded in 2013, and has performed as guest concertmaster with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Pinchgut Opera, Opera Australia and Victorian Opera. Rachael is regularly invited to guest direct modern orchestras from the violin, including the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra and Adelaide Chamber Players. Rachael features on over 50 album recordings and broadcasts for radio and television and is much in demand as a chamber musician and soloist, regularly collaborating with contemporary Australian composers as well as exploring repertoire from the 17th to the 20th centuries on period instruments.

As a highly regarded educator and mentor, Rachael teaches and lectures at the Melbourne and Sydney Conservatoriums of Music, the Royal Conservatoire in Den Haag, The Netherlands, and at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music, Monash University. Rachael has been awarded an Ian Potter Cultural Trust grant and is listed in the *Who's Who of Australian Women*.

rachaelbeesley.com

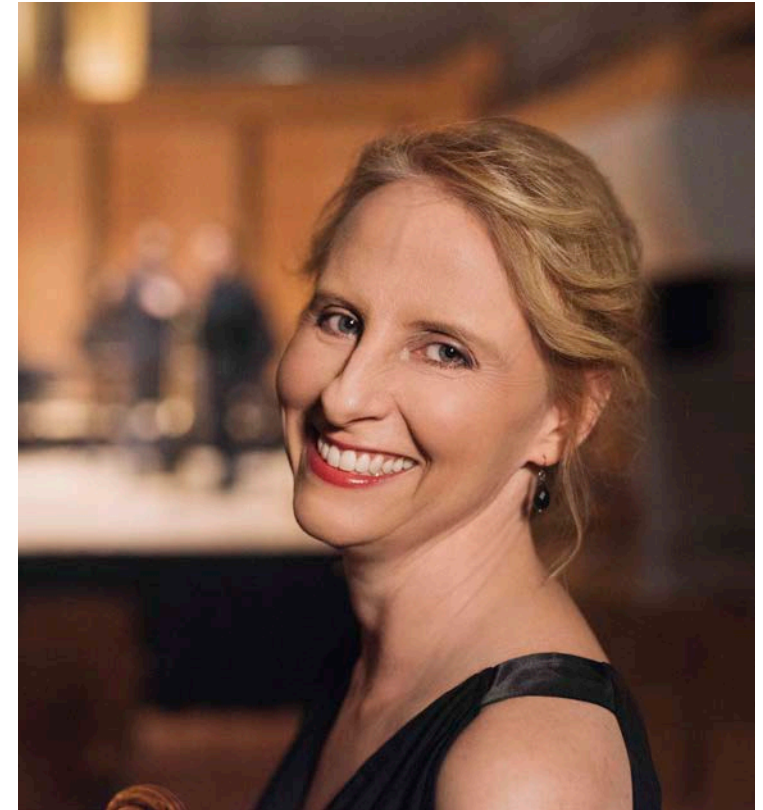


photo: Nick Gilbert

AUSTRALIAN ROMANTIC & CLASSICAL ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN

Rachael Beesley# (Melbourne)
Count Rodolfo Fredi, Rome, Italy, 1915

Anna McMichael* (Sydney)
Camilli Cammilus, Mantua, Italy, 1742

Miki Tsunoda* (Antwerp/Melbourne)
Johannes Cuypers, Amsterdam,
The Netherlands, 1797

Matt Bruce (Sydney)
Joannes Georgius Thir, Vienna, Austria, 1753

Peter Clark (Melbourne)
Lorenzo Ventapane, Naples, Italy, 1820

Natalia Harvey (Melbourne)
'Big Red' by Mark Pengilly, Melbourne, 1986

Caroline Hopson (Sydney)
Anonymous, Saxony, Germany, 1786

Cameron Jamieson (Melbourne)
John Simmers, Brisbane, 2009

Jessica Oddie (Melbourne/Christchurch)
Thomas Earle Hesketh, Manchester, UK, 1938

Catherine Shugg (Melbourne)
Paulus Alletsee, Munich, Germany, 1710

Joseph Tan (Amsterdam/Texas)
Antonio Lechi, Cremona, Italy, 1923

Frances Thé (Amsterdam/Hobart)
Thilo Kürten, Düsseldorf, Germany, 2005

VIOLA

Simon Oswell* (Melbourne)
Gaspare Lorenzini, Piacenza, Italy, 1791

Deirdre Dowling (Paris/Melbourne)
Charles Boullangier, London, UK, c.1860

Gabrielle Kancachian (Cologne/Melbourne)
Jakob Weiss, Salzburg, Austria, 1720

Anna Webb (Adelaide)
Adrian Studer, Nelson, New Zealand, 1989

VIOLONCELLO

Natasha Kraemer* (Yarra Valley/London)
John Barratt, London, UK, 1743

Anton Baba (Sydney)
Peter Elias, Aigle, Switzerland, 2000

Anita Gluyas (Sydney)
Guersan, Paris, France, 1795

Kim Worley (Adelaide)
Gaillard, France, c.1890

DOUBLE BASS

Kirsty McCahon* (Sydney)
Giuseppe Abbati, Modena, Italy, c.1750

Miranda Hill (Melbourne)
anon

#concertmaster *principal

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AUSTRALIAN ROMANTIC & CLASSICAL ORCHESTRA WOULD NOT EXIST WITHOUT THE TIME, TREASURE AND TALENT DONATED BY OUR EXTRAORDINARY PATRONS.

Donations form a critical contribution to the orchestra's core activities, including:

- educating school children in historically informed performance
- accessing historical editions of sheet music informed by the best research
- transporting the historical instruments to our performances around Australia
- flying world-class HIP musicians to, and within, Australia to rehearse and perform

What began as an act of love for historically informed performance has quickly evolved into one of Australia's finest orchestras. Our ability to continue that journey rests on donors who share our vision and our passion. Help us reimagine the rich music of the late 18th- to early 20th-centuries by making a tax-deductible donation to Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra.

DONATION OPTIONS

Large or small, all levels of financial and in-kind gifts contribute greatly to sustaining the orchestra's performance and education activities. To make a one-off donation or for any donation enquiries, including information about how you can become a member of one of our Donor Circles or make a bequest, please visit the website arco.org.au or contact Nicole van Bruggen – General Manager: nicole@arco.org.au

ARCO EDUCATION

YOUNG MANNHEIM SYMPHONISTS



photo: Nick Gilbert

Launched in 2014, the *Young Mannheim Symphonists* is a dedicated youth orchestral training program that takes place annually in Melbourne and Sydney. Student musicians aged between 11 and 23 from metropolitan and rural areas take part in a week of intensive workshops and rehearsals exploring the theoretical and practical aspects of historically informed playing. The participants work side by side with the specialist musicians from the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra, and each workshop culminates in a performance of the works studied.

Young Mannheim Symphonists tutors are members of the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra, and the orchestra is directed by Rachael Beesley and Nicole van Bruggen and conducted by Richard Gill AO. Their combined knowledge of musical styles, articulations and embellishments comes from years of experience performing, reading treatises and studying scores, and experimenting with instruments and interpretations. They are passionate about understanding our musical heritage in the context in which it was created, and are enthusiastic about sharing this with others.

ARCO.ORG.AU/YMS

RICHARD GILL PRESENTS A VOYAGE OF MUSICAL DISCOVERY



photo: Nick Gilbert

Richard Gill Presents – A Voyage of Musical Discovery is a unique concert series supported by City Recital Hall, Sydney exploring connections and similarities between different styles and periods of Western art music. Sharing the stage with guest ensembles who specialise in the performance of improvised modern jazz or contemporary classical music, the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra musicians and Richard Gill AO demonstrate and explain different compositional techniques through the ages. Originally conceived as an educational resource for secondary school music students, the vibrant concerts have also proven very popular with concert audiences seeking to broaden their knowledge about how specific works are constructed and presented.

NEXT CONCERT

VOICES & INSTRUMENTS
TUESDAY 21 AUGUST | 6:30PM
WITH GUESTS CAMERATA ANTICA
CITY RECITAL HALL, SYDNEY

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