



ACMS

presents

A
Chamber
Music
Showcase

at The Independent

Sunday March 15th 2015
3:00 - 5:00pm



From the President



The ACMS is an association of people who love playing chamber music.

We hope to provide a range of music for your enjoyment, some familiar, some which will surprise.

Music is a complicated business. It is not enough to love it in private. It is intended to be shared with an audience.

The ACMS offers a range of benefits to its members. The primary reason for membership is that members of the Society have access to a list of players from which they can form groups to perform particular pieces, or to play together on a regular basis. To encourage interest in new music and to get to know other performers, the Society holds regular get-togethers called Playing Days, usually five in a year, where players are allocated groups and have access to the Society's extensive library of music. The key event of our year is a three day music camp held in late January at the Wollongong Conservatorium.

Members also have regular opportunities to perform at Sunset Concerts at the Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, and now we can move on from that test bed to enjoy the opportunity to perform at The Independent Theatre. For some people getting together to play music is what it is all about, for others a performance provides a focus and the satisfaction of having an audience.

Susan Butler
President, ACMS

The ACMS would like to thank Wenona School
for supporting us in presenting this concert.

And you, for your patronage!

We look forward to seeing you again at our
next concert:

Sunday June 14th 2015

featuring
Bridge, Kats-Chernin, Spike, Zemlinsky

Check the Independent website or the ACMS website
for details:

www.theindependent.org.au/whats-on/

www.acms-australia.org/concerts/concerts-at-the-independent-theatre/





PROGRAM

Bruch – Selections from Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola and Piano Op 83

Andrew Kennedy (clarinet) | Michelle Urquhart (viola) | Kian Woo (piano)

Beethoven – Violin Sonata in E Flat Major Op 12 No 3


Tracey Tsang (violin) | Benjamin Chan (piano)

INTERVAL



Beethoven – Duet for Violin and Viola

Inge Courtney-Haentjes (violin) | Michelle Urquhart (viola)



Schubert – Lebensstürme; Characteristic Allegro Op 144

Rachel Valler OAM (piano) | Susan Butler (piano)

Milhaud – Suite Op 157b Incidental music from “Le Voyageur Sans Bagage” by Jean Anouilh

Andrew Kennedy (clarinet) | Tracey Tsang (violin) | Benjamin Chan (piano)
Yoann Bretonnet (Narrator)



Max Bruch (1838-1920) – Selections from *Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola and Piano Op 83*



1. Andante
2. Allegro con moto
3. Andante con moto
4. Allegro agitato
5. Rumänische Melodie: Andante
7. Allegro vivace, ma non troppo

Were it not for his son being a magnificent clarinet player, we may never have heard anything other than solos for stringed instruments with orchestra by Bruch, as many of his earlier and less grand pieces have been lost. Possibly surviving due to their late date and position as a family heirloom, the *Eight Pieces* use a rare combination of two instruments with nearly identical ranges and remarkable blending qualities. The clarinet and viola soliloquize, converse, reflect, and affirm each other throughout, whilst the piano is treated more as an accompanying orchestra, usually supporting, occasionally embellishing. Each piece stands alone, and the composer specified that they can be played in any order. They have the most simple structures, binary (A-B) or ternary (A-B-A) form, except for the sonata/ternary form with variations of the last two pieces. The mood is often autumnal, gently optimistically, or contemplative, perhaps reflective of Bruch's age.

The sparse opening to a melancholy and somewhat unsettled first piece evolves through some operatic interplay, using very large upward leaps, to find acceptance in a major key. The lush arpeggios at the close from the piano create a mystical or heavenly mood. Even after an ominous rolling beginning, piece number two eventually settles, from a swirling green stormy ocean to a flat reassuring calm by the end.

Perhaps the most theatrical, piece three has the viola playing angry recitative in a very bright C Sharp Minor, alternating with a soothing hymn. The clarinet, attempting to placate the deep terse string sound, whispers and soars ever higher. Next, the fourth piece uses pecky, militaristic rhythm and heavy punishing accents in D Minor to create desperation, once again giving way to carefree flowing delight in D Major near the end.

Whilst only the fifth piece, *Rumänische Melodie*, has a title specifying its origin, it is possible that Bruch adapted other folk music in this opus of miniatures. All the instrumental lines are very singable, and he had certainly incorporated Scottish, Swedish, Hebrew, Welsh, Russian, and Celtic tunes into his other works. Finally, the seventh movement's sparkling mood is a refreshing salve after a lot of intense music. As is customary in a rondo, the very first musical idea will be played again and again, sometimes as a surprise, or in a new guise.

The Ensemble

Andrew Kennedy – Clarinet

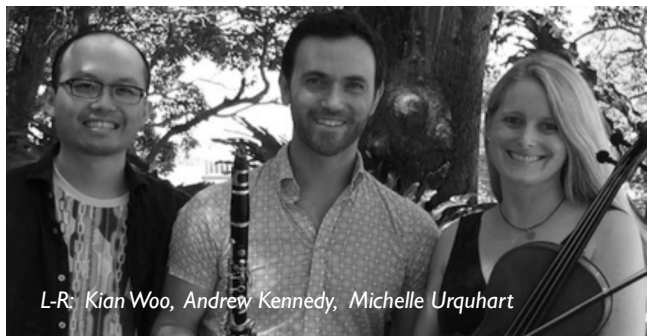
As a child Andrew gravitated to all things musical. He was awarded a scholarship in Astrophysics by the University of Tasmania, concurrently majoring in clarinet performance at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music. After graduating as an Anaesthetist, Andrew took up clarinet again and has been principal clarinet of the New South Wales, Australian, and World Doctors' Orchestras, and performed in series and tours with the *Barega Saxophone Quartet*, *Ensemble Astor* and *Wind Energy*. In 2015 Andrew will give a series of concerts entitled *Le Voyageur Sans Bagage*, culminating in a performance at the Utzon Room of the Sydney Opera House on 19th April, where his newest composition, *Sun and Moon*, will premiere.

Michelle Urquhart – Viola

Michelle studied music at the Sydney and Hobart Conservatoriums under teachers Alex Todicescu and Jeremy Williams. She performs regularly as a freelance violist and violinist, as soloist, chamber musician and orchestral instrumentalist. Michelle has also been soloist with a number of Sydney based orchestras. Michelle's passion is playing chamber music and teaching. Michelle has her own teaching studios in St Ives, Hornsby and on the Central Coast. Michelle is also organizer of the annual *Eisteddfod on the Mountain* held in the outlying areas of the Central Coast. Michelle runs her own chamber music 'festivals' (playing weekends) at her property on the Central Coast for like-minded musicians and friends who never tire of chamber music playing!

Kian Woo – Piano

Kian has a Bachelor of Information Technology from the University of Technology, Sydney and a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design from Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design in London. He currently works as a software developer. Kian started learning the piano at the age of eight. He completed his AMusA Diploma in 1998, while studying with Paul Virag. Kian joined the ACMS in 2010 and has been a regular performer in *A Chamber Music Showcase*. He is currently undertaking further study with Rachel Valler. In April, Kian will be performing in *Le Voyageur Sans Bagage* at the Utzon Room of the Sydney Opera House, playing Bruch and world premieres by Australian composers.



L-R: Kian Woo, Andrew Kennedy, Michelle Urquhart

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) – Violin Sonata in E Flat Major Op 12 No 3



1. Allegro con spirito
2. Adagio con molt'espressione
3. Rondo - Allegro molto

Beethoven's *E Flat Major Sonata* is the third, and last, of the Opus 12 set, all composed between 1797 and 1798 and dedicated to Antonio Salieri, one of Beethoven's teachers and an influential Kapellmeister of the Hapsburg court in Vienna. Written around the same time as the Piano Sonatas Numbers. 4 and 7, the Opus 9 String Trios, the Opus 18 String Quartets and the first Piano Concerto, the influence of Franz Josef Haydn, another of Beethoven's Viennese teachers, can also be heard. The general feeling of this Sonata is one of youthful joy that is almost addictive.

As the Sonata begins, the piano takes a virtuosic leadership role; the second theme is introduced by the violin. With positive energy and mood, the music flows effortlessly and its jolly character cannot be contained. The **Adagio** that follows, in C Major, is beautiful, with the two instruments alternating in singing the main line. The mellifluous lines are natural and uninhibited and occasionally complemented by the rhythmic figures of the accompaniment.

The **Rondo** theme is catchy, reminiscent of Haydn's Hungarian panache. The two instruments are playful with each other, with a constant exchange of themes. Pleasing is the best way, perhaps, to describe the end of the Sonata, at the conclusion of a twenty minute work filled with bliss, hope, and delight.

The Ensemble

Tracey Tsang - Violin

Benjamin Chan - Piano

Tracey and Benjamin have known each other for approximately 16 years, first being in the same orchestra and sharing the same violin teacher (as Benjamin also plays violin), before reuniting a few years later through chamber music. Tracey and Benjamin now enjoy exploring the chamber music repertoire together, and have performed at a number of successful fundraising and philanthropic events, and other gigs. They are the founding members of the *Colleghi* group and have performed with other musical colleagues under this name.

Although both Tracey and Benjamin have achieved their Licentiate Diploma of Music (LMusA), they both continue to play music for the love of it, and have completely different professions during the day – Benjamin has a business background and is working for the Commonwealth Bank, whilst Tracey is a post-doctoral researcher for The University of Sydney, working at The Children's Hospital at Westmead.



Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) – *Duet for Violin and Viola Op 27 No 1 in C Major*



1. Allegro commodo
2. Larghetto sostenuto
3. Rondo Allegretto

Born in Bonn, Germany, Beethoven is known as the 'Father of the Romantic Era'. He studied under both Haydn and Mozart, and was a composer and pianist. Beethoven's life can be divided into three periods. The early period in Vienna was his virtuosic pianist years. His compositions were focused on his main instrument at this time, and were classical in style, such as the *Pathétique Sonata Op 13* (1798). The middle period, known as the 'Heroic Period' is often thought to be his most productive period, during which Beethoven started writing music in a more romantic style. Some of his works from this period include the *Tempest Sonata Op 31* (1801-2), the *Third Symphony (Eroica) Op 55* (1803), Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio Op 72* (1803-5) and the *Fifth Piano Concerto (Emperor) Op 73* (1809). In his late period Beethoven wrote some of his largest works, the *Mass in D (Missa Solemnis) Op 123* (1818-23), the *Ninth Symphony (Choral) Op 125* (1818-23) and the late string quartets.

Beethoven's *Duet in C Major* is the first of three duets originally written for clarinet and bassoon. These duets have gained a significant place in the woodwind chamber music literature and are still reflected in the Beethoven catalogue. They were composed in 1790-92 and first published in parts from 1810-15. In character they reflect part of the earliest creative stage of Beethoven's composing career. This duet has been transcribed for many other pairs of instruments.

The first movement ***Allegro commodo*** begins with a lively character. It is in standard Sonata Form, with two main melodic themes, and the lower instrument taking on a harmonically supportive role. The second movement, ***Larghetto sostenuto***, is in the parallel minor key of C Minor. This is a lyrical movement, contrasting in character to the lively first and third movements. The third movement, ***Rondo Allegretto***, returns in the tonic key of C Major and is in a typical Rondo Form. This movement's refrain is full of classical grace and style, contrasting with the busy triplets in the episodic ideas, played by both instruments.

The Ensemble

Inge Courtney-Haentjes - Violin

Inge studied at the Music Conservatorium in Freiburg, Germany. After coming to Australia in 1983 she worked with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for a few years, at the same time teaching music and raising a young family. Inge has recorded, toured and performed with many groups, opera ensembles and orchestras, often as concertmaster or soloist.

Apart from her love of classical and baroque music, Inge also frequently performs and tours with tango and jazz ensembles, and very much enjoys exploring a wide variety of musical expressions which this has offered her. Chamber music, however, is the basis of Inge's philosophy of music making and probably her greatest passion. It has been part of her musical life and upbringing since earliest childhood.

Michelle Urquhart - Viola

Michelle studied music at the Sydney and Hobart Conservatoriums under teachers Alex Todicescu and Jeremy Williams. She performs regularly as a freelance violist and violinist, as soloist, chamber musician and orchestral instrumentalist. Michelle has also been soloist with a number of Sydney based orchestras. Michelle's passion is playing chamber music and teaching. Michelle has her own teaching studios in St Ives, Hornsby and on the Central Coast. Michelle is also organizer of the annual *Eisteddfod on the Mountain* held in the outlying areas of the Central Coast. Michelle runs her own chamber music 'festivals' (playing weekends) at her property on the Central Coast for like-minded musicians and friends who never tire of chamber music playing!

In playing together both Inge and Michelle feel that there is a special connection and flow between them, making it a privilege, and an effortless and very enjoyable experience. They both firmly believe that the joy of playing chamber music is not only the music itself, but also the connection and communication that comes from sharing music with others.



Franz Schubert (1797-1828) – *Lebensstürme*; *Characteristic Allegro Op 144*



Schubert was a prolific composer of duets, some of which are still regularly performed today. He was not himself a virtuoso performer, - indeed it is said he was not actually able to play some of the works he composed. Perhaps he took refuge in duets, where his supposed pianistic deficiencies would not be so obvious!

This work has a very portentous title, ('Storms of Life'), conjuring up all sorts of emotional excesses, and yet it seems less deeply moving than Schubert's *Fantasy in F Minor*. It certainly is loud and insistent at times, and without due care in performance, the frequent repetition of the hammered-out motif which opens the piece might indeed seem excessive. There are of course some soft and reflective contrasting sections, with tinkly treble embellishments. There is also a section where the main theme is 'abstracted', with pared-down harmony and a shifted rhythm - rather inventive!

Overall, one would have to say that the mood is positive, that is that the storms are successfully weathered!

The Ensemble



Rachel Valler OAM - Piano

Rachel Valler is one of Australia's most distinguished pianists, having performed as a soloist with most of Australia's symphony orchestras as well as in numerous chambers ensembles. She has been an associate artist and toured with international and local musicians. She has also performed for the Sydney Mozart Society and major music clubs throughout the state. As a member of The Hazelwood Trio Rachel toured South-East Asia, the United Kingdom and Europe for Musica Viva and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. She

has tutored for many years at the Robertson String Development Camp and for the ACMS, of which she is a Patron. For her services to music, particularly as a pianist, Rachel was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1995.



Susan Butler – Piano

Susan Butler obtained her AMusA Diploma at the age of fifteen and has, through her connection with the ACMS, of which she is now the President, become a devoted chamber music player over the last decade.

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974) – Incidental music from “*Le Voyageur Sans Bagage*” by Jean Anouilh



1. Overture
2. Divertissement
3. Jeu
4. Introduction et Final

Le Voyageur Sans Bagage, is very often performed as *Suite for Violin, Clarinet and Piano*, but is actually a bracket of incidental music from the play about memory and identity by Jean Anouilh. The play begins with Gaston, a soldier recently sent home after 18 years in an asylum in France, being paraded to various families who claim he is their long lost relative.

In the first movement, **Overture**, we are prepared for the energetic verbal dance of the characters by a sunny, cheeky march that suggests Gaston driving optimistically through the back roads to find his hidden roots. Immediately the composer's first-hand knowledge of violin playing is on show, the writing technically demanding, but insightful and manageable, giving an exciting ride for the audience. The piano uses a variety of vamping and effervescent syncopation to give a view of this scene.

Next, **Divertissement** is a much more intimate and sentimental piece, with just clarinet and violin - perhaps a view of a grandparent watching a child, the young Gaston, at play. Suddenly the music dies, the violin rests, and the mood becomes distant and glassy. The violin reappears and coaxes back the happy memories. The flowing of the music, seldom resting, is like turning the pages of a book. In the play, the soldier is getting small flashes and anecdotes fed to him, his story is being reconstructed slowly.

In **Jeu** (Game), the pianist spies on the relationship of the other two musicians. It could be an illustration of the interaction of two blissful teenage lovers, or children chasing each other in a game where the rules change and deeper emotions are uncovered.

Introduction et Final begins with the only dark music of the work. The parts are heavy, insistent and overlapping, and there are five beats per bar, creating ambiguity and tension, reflecting the inner conflict of the protagonist. We don't know what decision the soldier has come to - to stay with the aristocratic family that hate him but want him back nevertheless, or to adopt a simpler family where he not only has no memory, but also has no past.

The Ensemble

Andrew Kennedy – Clarinet

As a child Andrew gravitated to all things musical. He was awarded a scholarship in Astrophysics by the University of Tasmania, concurrently majoring in clarinet performance at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music. After graduating as an Anaesthetist, Andrew took up clarinet again and has been principal clarinet of the New South Wales, Australian, and World Doctors' Orchestras, and performed in series and tours with the *Barega Saxophone Quartet*, *Ensemble Astor* and *Wind Energy*. In 2015 Andrew, Tracey, Ben and Yoann will give a series of concerts entitled *Le Voyageur Sans Bagage*, culminating in a performance at the Utzon Room of the Sydney Opera House on 19th April, premiering Andrew's newest composition, *Sun and Moon*.

Tracey Tsang - Violin

Tracey has played the violin since she was five years old, having being taught by Marjorie Hystek, Perry Hart, Peter Zhang, Faina Krel, and Jeremy Williams. She was formerly the Concert Master of the SBS Radio and Television Youth Orchestra, and recently performed as Associate Concert Master with the *Rossini Strings Camerata*. Tracey co-founded the *Colleghi Duo* with pianist/violinist Benjamin Chan. Career-wise, Tracey has her PhD and is a full-time medical researcher, hoping to contribute to improvements in diagnosis, management, and outcomes for children and families affected by fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.



Benjamin Chan - Piano

Benjamin has been playing both the piano and violin since an early age. Benjamin was awarded his AMusA Diploma in piano in 2003 and the LMusA Diploma in violin the following year. Benjamin was also a member of the SBS Radio and Television Youth Orchestra where he met Tracey Tsang, with whom he has collaborated in various chamber music ensembles. Benjamin actively pursues his love of music by regularly performing on both instruments with *Colleghi Duo* and other ensembles. Benjamin holds a Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Arts degree and works at the Commonwealth Bank as a Video Conference Business Banking Specialist.

Yoann Bretonnet - Narrator

Yoann was born in France, where he first learned drama and improvisation. Now an Australian citizen, he has been living in Sydney for the past six years. Yoann began to follow his passion for acting again two years ago by joining the Sydney French Theatre. Yoann has participated in two shows, produced in French: *Dans l'ombre du theatre* and *Je t'aime, moi non plus*. Yoann's goal now is to expand his skills by playing in English. In April he will appear as the soldier; Gaston, in *Le Voyageur Sans Bagage* with Andrew Kennedy and friends.



Annual Wollongong Music Camp

The ACMS residential Music Camp is the highlight of our year and it attracts players from interstate. Participation is open to members only, or to members of affiliated societies interstate.

The Music Camp is held over three days on the University of Wollongong campus in late January each year. Members can indulge in chamber music playing for a full three days in delightful, relaxing surroundings. Events include a dinner and barbeque. The camp provides opportunities for both organised and self-arranged sessions of chamber music. Tutors are engaged to provide some chamber music tuition. There are opportunities to perform short pieces in lunchtime concerts or simply enjoy the informal performances by being part of the audience.

DATES for the 2016 MUSIC CAMP
From 5.30pm Friday 22nd to 4.30pm Monday 25th January.



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Glyndebourne Opera © Leigh Simpson

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Royal Albert Hall © Marcus Ginns

Join Us!

Free Playing Day!

The ACMS organises a Playing Day every second month where members get together to play chamber music.

We also offer:

- a membership register for contacting other players;
- a comprehensive library of chamber music for loan;
- regular opportunities to play with other members; and
- opportunities to perform works to a public audience.

**For more information or to attend a free Playing Day,
visit our website or send us an email.**

Website: www.acms-australia.org

Email: membership.secretary@acms-australia.org







ACMS

the **INDEPENDENT** 
Staging successful events since 1911

Cover art courtesy of Judith White and Rachel Scott from "The Painted Bach" performance

