

AE NEWS

newsletter of the Australia Ensemble @UNSW

Upcoming Events

UNSW Orchestra &
Wind Symphony
Friday April 12 at 7pm
Sir John Clancy Auditorium
Well Orchestrated

DE MEIJ Symphony No. 1 'The Lord of
The Rings',
PAGANINI Violin Concerto no.1 Op. 6
Sarah Chang, violin
BRAHMS Academic Overture

Collegium Musicum Choir &
Burgundian Consort

Sunday April 14 at 5pm
Sir John Clancy Auditorium
DVOŘÁK Mass in D

and Six Moravian Songs arr. Janáček
JANÁČEK Otčenáš (Our Father)
Chloe Lankshear, soprano; Stephanie
Dillon; alto; Owen Elsley, tenor; Philip
Murray, bass; Julie Kim, harp; Ian
Munro, piano; Alister Nelson, organ

Australia Ensemble @UNSW
Saturday April 27 at 8pm
Sir John Clancy Auditorium
No Strings Attached

MOZART | Quintet in E flat K452
WESLEY-SMITH | Janet
POULENC | Sextet
LIGETI | Bagatelles
THUILLE | Sextet
Guest artists: Huw Jones oboe; Lyndon
Watts, bassoon; Robert Johnson, horn;
and Alison Pratt, percussion

June Gala: Macliver & Munro
Friday June 21, at 8pm

Sir John Clancy Auditorium
Songs my mother taught me

Soprano Sara Macliver and pianist Ian
Munro present works of Schumann,
Dvořák, Suk, Haydn and Grieg

www.music.unsw.edu.au

Thank you for your ongoing support

On behalf of the Australia Ensemble, we would like to thank you for your ongoing support of our activities. We were particularly grateful for your patience, flexibility and generosity of spirit at the first concert of our 40th season as we navigated the impact of the renovations on our core business for the first time. It is this generosity of spirit that we have come to know and love of our loyal subscribers and for that, we say a whole hearted thank you to each and everyone of you. We look forward to Sir John Clancy Auditorium reopening its foyer later in the year.

See page four for the latest update on the renovations.

Twilight Series

This July and August, the Music Performance Unit will present a brand new one-hour concert series held in the intimate Tyree Room, John Niland Scientia Building. The first in a series of three concerts will feature Australia Ensemble artists, violinist Dimity Hall and cellist Julian Smiles in recital (July 4), performing works by Bach, Ross Edwards, Vasks, Ravel and Hindson. Pianists Ian Munro and Tamara Cislowska (July 18) combine for a dynamic program of four hands. The third concert (August 1) will bring the Twilight series to a close as talented musical director Harrison Collins and his ensemble take us on a musical journey exploring dreams and passions, showcasing songs from famous hit Broadway musicals City of Angels, Follies and more. Following each concert, we invite you to join the artists in the foyer for a glass of bubbles.

Australia Ensemble subscribers can access a 15% discount. Mention your subscription when you call the box office on (02) 9385 4874 or head to our website and enter promotional code 'AESUBS' on Eventbrite.

Single tickets: \$60/\$50/\$40 before discount (including post-concert beverage)



Top to
bottom:
Tamara
Cislowska,
Dimity Hall,
Ian Munro,
Julian Smiles

Twilight Concert Series
Tyree Room, Scientia Building
Thursday July 4, 6.15pm
Thursday July 18, 6.15pm
Thursday August 1, 6.15pm

Global reach

Keen eyes at our first subscription concert of the year would have noticed flautist Geoffrey Collins and our strings, Dene Olding, Dimity Hall, Irina Morozova, and Julian Smiles not present. Our players are taking some well earned time off from the ensemble to pursue national and international opportunities. Rest assured however, they will be back and will feature throughout the year. We look forward to the return of Geoffrey Collins in concert two and our long-serving string players from concert three.

Artistic Chair Paul Stanhope says "I'm delighted that our musicians are so much in demand nationally and internationally and wish them well for these opportunities. This absence from our standard line-up provides the audience with a great opportunity to hear a range of outstanding guest musicians who are active in the Australian and international chamber music scenes." Forty years on from the first season, the ensemble is understandably a different and more fluid creature with the University offering a flexible environment for the players to contribute to the campus' cultural life.

We look forward to unveiling some exciting special stand alone events with our resident artists of the Australia Ensemble throughout the year.



*Irina Morozova,
and Dene Olding
Photo: Keith Saunders*



Well Orchestrated

A night of virtuosic music is ahead of the Music Performance Unit, with UNSW Orchestra and Wind Symphony joining forces in concert on April 12, 2019 at 7pm, Sir John Clancy Auditorium under the batons of Steven Hillinger and Paul Vickers. The program includes movements from De Meij's celebrated 'Lord of the Rings' Symphony for concert band, Brahms' Academic Festival Overture and Paganini's famous Violin Concerto No. 1 with soloist Sarah Chang. Sarah is one of Australia's most exciting emerging artists, having been semi-finalist in the Kendall National Violin Competition in 2015, 2016 and 2017, and finalist in 2018. Sarah was selected to perform with the UNSW Orchestra following concerto audition in 2018, and has won the 2016 International Animato Competition in Brisbane, Multiples Section of the 2017 NSW KPO Concerto Competition, and 2017 Marcus Edwards Violin Prize. Sarah recently came first in the state for both Music 2 and Music Extension courses in the 2018 NSW Higher School Certificate and was selected to perform in Encore 2019 at the Sydney Opera House.

Soloist Sarah Chang, violin

Head to the website www.music.unsw.edu.au for further information.

Musical chairs Welcome to the Unit

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Alex Siegers to the position of Operations and Communications Assistant. Alex commenced with the Music Performance Unit in early March and comes to us from Sydney Youth Orchestras. Alex has a plethora of experience as an educator and performer across jazz, sacred, classical and pop genres with leading ensembles throughout Australia including The Song Company, The Choir of St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney Chamber Choir, and Cantillation. This last appointment brings our recruitment period to a close. We are thrilled to finally have the full team in place and look forward to presenting some fabulous concerts to the public.



Alex Siegers

Australia Ensemble - the sum of its parts

Genevieve Lang

Forty years ago, a younger version of Geoffrey Collins was feeling, well, rather chuffed. 'I'd just been appointed to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra as Associate Principal Flute.' In fact, he'd started playing with the orchestra three years earlier as second flute, 'at a very tender age. I couldn't quite believe it at the time, it all seemed quite surreal.' In fact, Geoff admits, he felt quite unprepared for the job. 'I had a lot to learn at that stage. My playing was growing, but I was very incomplete.' Geoff credits his orchestral SSO colleagues for getting him up to speed, teaching by example, very quickly.

It wasn't long, though, before Geoff sought to pursue more study opportunities overseas, courtesy of a Churchill fellowship. On his return, he soon joined the fledgling Australia Ensemble, and has been a core member of the group ever since. 'It was an adventure. I'd already had a good taste of playing a lot of contemporary music with various ensembles, but with the Australia Ensemble, it was a richer experience. They programmed and played music from all genres, not just contemporary.' That diversity suited Geoff. 'I've never seen myself as a "specialist" in anything' – be that orchestral playing, concerto soloist, or as a chamber musician. 'And that was odd to a lot of people; it's easier if they can pigeonhole you.' But Geoff has always maintained an open mind and approach. 'There's no reason why you can't have a good stab at all those things, so long as you do it with a good sense of style.'

Geoff remains a proud member of the Australia Ensemble. 'I don't think anyone expected it to last very long.' Australia, he explains, has a fragile music eco-system. 'The commitment to fund something like the AE in an ongoing way doesn't normally exist outside very big institutions.' He credits the University of New South Wales for its far-sightedness in supporting the ensemble. 'It's enlightened. It's really not necessarily in those areas that you'd expect a university to make that kind of commitment.' And the audience deserves a round of applause too. 'You might not expect an audience to stay as loyal as our has. They've been in it with us for the long haul.'

The turnover of ensemble's personnel has been remarkably slow. When the time comes to replace a member, Geoff reveals it's not just a matter of ticking the requisite boxes. 'We're looking for someone who's not just a very fine player but has something else. Someone who's motivated and energetic. I'm not sure I could say what all the qualities are.' It's possible they'll be looking for a new flautist in the not-too-distant future. 'I'm not sure for how much longer I will play there. That's not anything to be upset about. It's simply about renewal.'



*Geoffrey Collins,
Andrew Jezek, 2018
Composer Workshop
Photo: Keith Saunders*



*Geoffrey Collins mentors
emerging composer Gamran Green,
2018 Composer Workshop.
Photo: Keith Saunders*

We want to hear from you:

Across this 40th season of the Australia Ensemble, each of our musicians will feature in a profile piece in the AE News. Keep your eye out for future instalments. And if you've got a burning question you've always wanted to ask, let's see if we can't get it answered! Simply email australia.ensemble@unsw.edu.au

Keep an eye out for our regular Facebook updates, where we look back on the 40-year history of the Australia Ensemble with photos and fun facts:

<https://www.facebook.com/AustraliaEnsembleunsw>

Case closed

In March we reported to our e-newsletter subscribers that workers on the Clancy site unearthed a mystery bone while working on the foyer renovations. Consequently, the site was shut down and looked like a scene out of a good CSI movie while police, detectives and the Coroner attended to identify the bone. It was determined that the bone was not human and the site reopened shortly thereafter.

After alerting our subscribers to this interesting behind-the-scenes story and taking a moment to be thankful it wasn't UNSW's mascot, Clancy the Lion, resident UNSW paleontologist Professor Mike Archer kindly reached out to solve the mystery - he advised that the bone was likely to be the left femur of a cow.



Cow femur found under Clancy forecourt, March 2019

To subscribe to our e-newsletter, head to www.music.unsw.edu.au/contact-us

Songs my mother taught me: June Gala with Sara Macliver & Ian Munro



The Music Performance Unit's inaugural Winter Gala will take place on June 21 in the Sir John Clancy Auditorium featuring Australian guest soprano Sara Macliver and Australia Ensemble pianist Ian Munro in a program all about women. Macliver is one of Australia's most popular and versatile artists, appearing in operas, concert and recital performances and on numerous recordings. She most recently appeared with the Australia Ensemble in a program including the premiere of Ian Munro's commissioned work *Three Birds*. The program will include Schumann's *Frauenliebe*, Dvořák's *Songs my mother taught me*, Suk's solo piano work *About Mother* Op. 28, Haydn's *My mother bids me bind my hair*, and Grieg's *Mutterschmerz* and *Ich liebe dich*.

Tickets will be available via our website shortly www.music.unsw.edu.au

Sir John Clancy Auditorium Update

Despite recent wet weather slightly dampening progress, Stage One of the Clancy renovations remains on track to be finished by May 2019, just in time for Graduations. Subscribers will be the first to experience what's to come with internal access to the northern foyer unveiled for all to see for our concert on April 27. Access to the auditorium will continue to be via the West and East doors while final works continue on the northern facade. Temporary carpet will be laid in the foyer especially for our concert with the official carpet making its way here from overseas later this month. Subscribers will find that the only areas not carpeted in April will be the two stairwells. We will have extra staff on hand to assist patrons navigate this area.

Pleasingly, we do look forward to showing subscribers the completed newly refurbished bar area, as well as a designated box office in the northern foyer. Renovations are full steam ahead, and weather permitting, our box office and catering team will be working out of these designated areas from the April 27 subscription concert onwards. Should you have any concerns about the renovations, please do not hesitate to contact us on 9385 4874 or email australia.ensemble@unsw.edu.au for more information.

What are you listening to this month?

We asked Australia Ensemble's Geoffrey Collins what he is listening to this month. It may interest subscribers to hear Geoffrey say that he is not an avid listener. He doesn't listen to music in his car or have background music on too often. Geoffrey explains that it is because he prefers to devote his full attention to the music when he does find moments to put on a record. Geoffrey says "it's hard to enjoy...anything remotely connected with flute playing, or what I do in chamber music or orchestra tends to quickly turn on my analytical switch".

Instead, Geoffrey has shared his homework playlist, in other words, music that is on his radar for the near to medium term for the year ahead. It includes J.S Bach's St John Passion, the first movement of Mahler's Symphony No 9 (the flute solo at the end of the movement is one of his all-time favourites), Janáček's *The Cunning Little Vixen*, and an unusual choice, Taraf de Haidouks' *Honourable Brigands*, earthy and truly wonderful Gypsy music. You can access Geoffrey's playlist online - to listen, head to <https://spoti.fi/2CXnf8f>.