

Australian
Festival of
Chamber
Music

CELEBRATING
30
YEARS



FRIDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2021

Thriller of a festival!

30th Australian Festival of Chamber Music to be celebrated with joy: four world premieres, a brilliant Beethoven tribute and Festival debuts!

Tickets on sale Tuesday March 2 at 9am AEDT via afcm.com.au

In news that will thrill music lovers, the 30th Australian Festival of Chamber Music (AFCM) will take place in Townsville from 23 July to 1 August as a joyous 10-day celebration of music curated by Artistic Director, **Kathryn Stott** in her third and final festival, themed, *Carnival*.

Over 30 music-filled years, the AFCM has forged a stunning international reputation as one of the best chamber music celebrations in the world, one that attracts leading music makers and music lovers from all corners of the globe, and while 2021 presents its challenges, Kathryn Stott has created a program and an artistic line-up that can only be described as extraordinary.

Featuring 133 works, 112 composers, four world premieres and five Australian premieres the program stars more than 40 Australian musicians, 15 in their AFCM debut, as well as three ensembles including the **Goldner String Quartet** in their 25th anniversary year, and three local groups including the acclaimed **Dancenorth**.

“What a rollercoaster we have all been through with such unimaginable times on a global scale. The world of live music became eerily silent for far too long, but I am so excited about an absolute thriller of a Festival program for 2021! I am incredibly proud to bring together such an outstanding group of Australian musicians,” said Artistic Director, Kathryn Stott.

The artist line-up is led by the return of legendary Australian pianist and toast of the world’s great concert halls, **Piers Lane** (and former AFCM Artistic Director), internationally applauded didgeridoo star **William Barton** returning to the Festival to celebrate the milestone 30th anniversary with his own compositions, and soprano and composer **Deborah Cheetham** with an important world premiere music event. They are joined by **Kirsty McCahon** (double bass), **Zoë Black** (violin), **Tobias Breider** (viola), **Mark Gaydon** (bassoon), **James Crabb** (accordion), **Lloyd Van’t Hoff** (clarinet), **Timothy Young** (piano), **Natsuko Yoshimoto** (violin), **Daniel de Borah** (piano) and a raft of fellow musical makers, representing the best of Australian talent from across the country (see the line-up below).

Young stars will also feature at AFCM including 22-year-old violinist **Grace Clifford** and 24-year-old Australian pianist **Kevin Chow** who will appear as part of his *ABC Young Performers Award*. In thrilling news, violin prodigy, 13-year old **Christan Li** will also travel to Townsville to perform during the 10-day Festival. Christian will be the youngest ever artist at AFCM and indeed made history in 2018 when just 10 years old, became the youngest performer to ever win the Yehudi Menuhin International Competition for Young Violinists in the Junior Category.

The three ensembles traveling to Townsville include the Goldner String Quartet, fellow Sydneysiders and saxophonist masters the **Nexus Quartet** and **Flinders Quartet** from Melbourne. The Festival also boasts three Festival hosts including ABC Classic’s **Russell Torrance**, **Cheryl Barker AO** and **Peter Coleman-Wright AO**.

Highlights in the 2021 program include:

WORLD PREMIERE - Deborah Cheetham AO - Nginda Ngarrini Bi Ngya: Opening Night Concert, Friday 23 July
To celebrate the Festival’s 30th anniversary, AFCM has commissioned Yorta Yorta composer **Deborah Cheetham AO**’s work *Nginda Ngarrini Bi Ngya* featuring herself singing alongside **David Greco** (baritone) and the **Goldner**

String Quartet, in the language of the **Wulgurukaba** people as acknowledgment of their culture and as the traditional owners of the land on which the Festival resides. This important work will have its world premiere at the opening night concert, **PARADE**.

WORLD PREMIERE - Goldner Variations on 'Ode to Joy': Governor's Gala concert, Saturday 24 July

In recognition of the 25th anniversary of its quartet in residence, the Goldner String Quartet, AFCM has commissioned 25 Australian composers to write short variations based on Beethoven's famous 'Ode to Joy'. Inventive and brilliant, the work will be performed by the Goldners. The 25 Australian composers include: **Joe Chindamo, Robert Davidson, Brett Dean, Paul Dean, Ross Edwards, Andrew Ford, Paul Grabowsky, Iain Grandage, Maria Grenfell, Holly Harrison, Matthew Hindson, Mark Isaacs, Jakub Jankowski, Elena Kats-Chernin, Graeme Koehne AO, Liza Lim, Nicole Murphy, John Peterson, Andrew Schulz, Harry Sdraulig, Paul Stanhope, Clare Strong (formerly Johnston), Carl Vine, Natalie Williams and Elizabeth Younan.**

BEETHOVEN TRIBUTE DAY - 250th CELEBRATIONS: Thursday July 29

While COVID-19 stopped the world celebrating Beethoven's 250th anniversary in 2020, Artistic Director Kathryn Stott pays tribute to this great composer (voted Australia's favourite composer in the 2020 ABC Classic's Top 100 Composer countdown) with a full day of music (this is in addition to the Goldner Variations concert on July 24). The evening concert salutes his *Kreutzer* Sonata and features two world premieres – Dancenorth's specially curated choreography in response to the novel, *The Kreutzer Sonata* by **Leo Tolstoy**, directed by **Amber Haines**, as well as **Roderick Williams' Not Here Yet**, performed by **Jacqueline Porter** (soprano) and **Kristian Chong** (piano).

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE - Immortal Beloved: Thursday 29 July

Written by UK author and music critic **Jessica Duchon**, narrated by **Cheryl Barker** and featuring **David Greco** (baritone), **Timothy Young** (piano) and the **Flinders String Quartet**, this Australian premiere explores the ongoing mystery of Beethoven's legendary, unnamed 'Immortal Beloved'.

WILD SPIRIT ~ FOUR CELLO BOLERO: Friday July 30

In one stunning evening concert, Kathryn Stott has programmed Ravel's famous *Bolero* performed on four cellos featuring **Julian Smiles, Yelian He, Blair Harris and Elina Faskhi**, as well as **Nigel Westlake's** iconic *Spirit of the Wild* performed by **Diana Doherty** (oboe), **Kirsty McCahon** (double bass), **Timothy Young** (piano) and the Goldner String Quartet.

FESTIVAL FAVOURITE - The Families' Concert - Stan and Mabel: Saturday 31 July

AFCM will perform composer **Paul Rissmann's** chamber version of *Stan and Mabel*, the wonderful story by **Jason Chapman** of two friends (a dog and a cat) who start an orchestra. A local children's choir will be part of the performance.

The free **Queens Garden Concert** will be held on Sunday 25 July at 3pm and the much-loved **Concert Conversations** return as six **Conversation Concerts** over the 10 days. Bookending the Festival is the opening concert titled **PARADE**, and the closing night concert, **CELEBRATION**, and in between, a degustation of music to uplift. What's more there are two superb concerts on nearby Magnetic Island to tempt visitors too.

Kathryn Stott said the real uniqueness of AFCM comes from its combination of world-leading music, world-exclusive artist combinations and its location... tropical North Queensland in the middle of winter!

"This is my final Festival as Artistic Director and I have almost been stopped in my tracks from bringing you what I see as my last gift to AFCM - a program called *Carnival* with the emphasis on celebrating everything AFCM has in abundance!"

Education is an important element of the Festival and its Advanced Winterschool is renowned for high quality coaching and development of tertiary level ensembles. Taking the helm as Winterschool Director in 2021 is **Adam Chalabi**, renowned Australian violinist and Associate Professor at the University of Queensland School of Music. Supporting Adam is Lloyd Van't Hoff who fills the Director role for the AFCM Junior Winterschool, which provides a program of workshops for local schools.

Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch said arts and cultural experiences such as the Australian Festival of Chamber Music offer significant economic benefits for regional Queensland communities.

“It’s great to see AFCM’s live music program return to Townsville, engaging the community, supporting regional development, and bringing joy to local audiences,” Minister Enoch said.

“The Palaszczuk Government is a long-time major supporter of AFCM, and in 2021 our ongoing investment includes additional funding of \$25,000 through the Queensland Arts Showcase Program to support new commissions from Ms Cheetham and Dancenorth.

“These exciting commissions are a wonderful way to celebrate the Festival’s 30 years, and I’m pleased to see Townsville’s traditional custodians the Wulgurukaba and Bindal peoples highlighted in the program,” Ms Enoch said.

Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe said the AFCM would boost Townsville’s s growing reputation as a regional cultural tourism hub.

“The Australian Festival of Chamber Music is an important event for the Townsville region’s tourism and small business operators, delivering thousands of visitor nights and millions of dollars to the local economy,” Mr Hinchliffe said. “AFCM presents an incredible program of events each year.

“It’s the hard work of Queenslanders against COVID-19 that means we’re able to bring the 30th anniversary event to Townsville for an unforgettable chamber music experience.

“What makes this event so special is the opening night concert and its acknowledgement of Townsville’s traditional custodians and their language and culture in the Year of Indigenous Tourism.

“Events like AFCM support local jobs, encourage tourism and are crucial to North Queensland’s COVID-19 economic recovery.”

Australian Festival of Chamber Music

23 July to 1 August 2021 in Townsville, North Queensland

General public tickets, passes and holiday packages go on sale from Tuesday 2 March 2021.

www.afcm.com.au | Facebook | Instagram | Twitter | #afcm2021

Artists of the 30th Australian Festival of Chamber Music:

Piers Lane	Piano	London
Blair Harris	Cello	Melbourne
Christian Li	Violin	Melbourne
Christopher Moore	Viola	Melbourne
Daniel de Borah	Piano	Brisbane
David Greco	Baritone	Sydney
Deborah Cheetham	Soprano & Composer	Melbourne
Dene Olding	Violin	Sydney
Diana Doherty	Oboe	Sydney
Dimity Hall	Violin	Sydney
Elina Faskhi	Cello	Melbourne
Elizabeth Layton	Violin	Adelaide
Grace Clifford	Violin	Adelaide
Imants Larsens	Viola	Brisbane
Irina Morozova	Viola	Sydney
Jacqueline Porter	Soprano	Sydney
James Crabb	Accordion	Sydney
Julian Smiles	Cello	Sydney
Kevin Chow	Piano	Melbourne
Kirsty McCahon	Double bass	Sydney

Kristian Chong	Piano	Melbourne
Lloyd Van't Hoff	Clarinet	Melbourne
Mark Gaydon	Bassoon	Adelaide
Natsuko Yoshimoto	Violin	Brisbane
Nicolas Fleury	Horn	Melbourne
Phoebe Gardner	Violin	Melbourne
Timothy Young	Piano	Melbourne
Tobias Breider	Viola	Sydney
Virginia Taylor	Flute	Brisbane
William Barton	Didgeridoo	Sydney
Yasmin Rowe	Piano	Melbourne
Yelian He	Cello	Melbourne
Zoë Black	Violin	Melbourne
Ian Brunskill	Percussion	Townsville
Felix Sampson	Dance (Dancenorth)	Townsville
Marlo Benjamin	Dance (Dancenorth)	Townsville
ENSEMBLES		
Goldner String Quartet	String Ensemble x 4	Sydney
Flinders Quartet	String Ensemble x 4	Melbourne
Nexas Quartet	Sax Ensemble x 4	Sydney
LOCAL GROUPS		
1RAR Band	Band	Townsville
Barrier Reef Orchestra	Orchestra	Townsville
Amadeus Singers	Choir	Townsville
HOSTS & NARRATORS		
Cheryl Barker	Soprano, Evening Concert Host	Sydney
Peter Coleman-Wright	Baritone, Evening Concert Host	Sydney
Russell Torrance	Concert Conversations Host	Sydney
Emily Gann	Families Concert Narrator	Adelaide
Glenn Mintern	Queens Gardens Co-Host	Sydney

ENDS

IMAGERY HERE: dropbox

For media enquiries please contact Kath Rose | 0416 291 493 | kath@kathrose.com

For North Queensland media, contact Heidi Hatherell | 0488 132 636 | heidi@crystalclearpr.com.au