

## MEDIA RELEASE

Ray Chen & Julien Quentin

# Violin superstar returns for Musica Viva



Star violinist Ray Chen

Image © Keith Saunders

*'Ray Chen can do pretty much anything he wants on the violin.'* –  
**Washington Post**

**Ray Chen** is no ordinary violinist. With millions of social media followers, a partnership with Giorgio Armani and a spot in the 2017 Forbes list of 30 most influential Asians under 30, his extraordinary talents take him well beyond the bounds of classical music. Jaw-dropping virtuosity is guaranteed when he returns for **Musica Viva** from **9-27 August**, touring nationally with pianist **Julien Quentin** in two programs of violin masterworks and a **world premiere by Australian composer, Matthew Hindson AM**.

Ray Chen is one of the foremost violinists of our generation. Born in Taiwan and raised in Brisbane, he moved to the USA at 15 to pursue intensive violin studies at the Curtis Institute of Music. Since then, his appearances as a soloist with great orchestras around the world have carved his niche as a heart-stopping virtuoso.

Named 'one to watch' by *The Strad* and *Gramophone* magazines, the 29-year-old burst onto the global scene a decade ago, winning the Yehudi Menuhin Competition in 2008 and the Queen Elisabeth Competition in 2009. He's never left the spotlight since. Standouts in a daunting list of achievements include performances at France's Bastille Day (live to 800,000 people), the Nobel Prize Concert in Stockholm, the BBC Proms and the Japan Winter Olympics. He plays the 1715 'Joachim' Stradivarius violin on loan from the Nippon Music Foundation – an instrument once owned by the famed Hungarian violinist, Joseph Joachim.

As if that's not enough, Ray has just released his first Decca album – *The Golden Age*, a "tip of the hat to the era of my favourite violinists; Oistrakh, Heifetz, Kreisler, Milstein – you name it". *The Australian* named it 'stupendous!' in a recent five-star review.

On his return to Australia, he's joined by his regular playing partner, acclaimed French pianist **Julien Quentin**. The two musicians met in 2011 – "relatively early" in the young violinist's career – in a castle in Germany.

"It was a seven-day residency featuring different soloists and Julien was performing with ALL of them; everyone had a different program," he marvels. "It was the biggest 'WTF' moment for me because to be able to do that alone is already something, and then to be able to perform the way he did on such a high level made me realize that he was a whole different league of pianist from what I had ever known."

The duo will perform two programs on this tour – the first showcasing works by **Beethoven, Grieg, Falla, Monti**, and a **world premiere by Australia's own Matthew Hindson AM**; the second pairing the Hindson with favourites by **Vitali, Franck, Ysaÿe and Ravel**.



Pianist Julien Quentin (Image © Julien Mignot)

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Ray has put much thought into the Hindson work: “It’s called ‘Dark Matter’ which alludes to the term used in astrophysics to describe the matter that makes up the majority of the universe,” he explains. “It’s everywhere and dates back to the Big Bang and yet here we are 13 billion years later (give or take a few) trying to see it.”

“There is also a second meaning to the piece which is that the dark matter of the universe could be perceived as a metaphor for our existence,” he continues. “We as human beings are on this planet for such a relatively short amount of time, what is the point? It’s basically the ‘What is the meaning of life?’ question we ask ourselves. Matthew points out that perhaps our lasting legacy is the things we can’t see ourselves - rather it’s the memories others hold of us. It’s an honor to present such a meaningful and thoughtful piece. I hope audiences will enjoy it!”

**Ray Chen and Julien Quentin will tour to Newcastle, Brisbane, Hobart, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Perth and Adelaide. For bookings and further details, please visit <https://musicaviva.com.au/raychen/>.**

**Ray will also mentor talented students at masterclasses in Brisbane, Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney, while Julien will give masterclasses in Newcastle and Melbourne. Members of the public are welcome to attend. For details, please see [www.musicaviva.com.au/masterclasses](http://www.musicaviva.com.au/masterclasses).<sup>1</sup>**

**RAY CHEN, VIOLIN  
JULIEN QUENTIN, PIANO**

### TOUR DATES

**Newcastle** 09 Aug 2018 7:30 PM

**Brisbane** 11 Aug 2018 7:00 PM

**Hobart** 13 August 2018 8:00 PM

**Melbourne** 14 Aug 2018 7:00 PM

**Canberra** 16 Aug 2018 7:00 PM

**Sydney** 18 Aug 2018 2:00 PM

**Perth** 21 Aug 2018 7:30 PM

**Adelaide** 23 Aug 2018 7:30 PM

**Melbourne** 25 Aug 2018 7:00 PM

**Sydney** 27 Aug 2018 7:00 PM

### VENUES

**Adelaide:** Adelaide Town Hall

**Brisbane:** Queensland Conservatorium

**Canberra:** Llewellyn Hall

**Hobart:** Hobart Town Hall

**Melbourne:** Melbourne Recital Centre

**Newcastle:** Newcastle Conservatorium

**Perth:** Perth Concert Hall

**Sydney:** City Recital Hall

### PROGRAM ONE

*(Newcastle, Hobart, Melbourne Weekday, Sydney Weekend, Adelaide)*

**BEETHOVEN** Violin Sonata no 1 in D major, op 12 no 1

**GRIEG** Violin Sonata no 2 in G major, op 13

**HINDSON** Violin Sonata no 1 ‘Dark Matter’\*

**FALLA** arr **Kochanski** *Suite populaire espagnole*

**MONTI** Czardas

### PROGRAM TWO

*(Brisbane, Canberra, Perth, Melbourne Weekend, Sydney Weekday)*

**VITALI** Chaconne for violin and continuo in G minor

**FRANCK** Sonata in A major

**YSAÏE** Sonata for solo violin in D minor, op 27 no 3

**HINDSON** Violin Sonata no 1 ‘Dark Matter’\*

**RAVEL** *Tzigane*

\*Commissioned for Musica Viva with the support of the Hon Jane Mathews AO, Jan Minchin, and Peter Lovell.

<sup>1</sup>Musica Viva’s Masterclass program is supported by principal patrons Stephen Johns & Michele Bender, the Sydney Conservatorium Association (NSW), Lyn Hamill & Ian Dover (Queensland), Wesfarmers Arts (Western Australia), Anonymous Donor (South Australia), and the late Mary Turner OAM (Newcastle).



Composer Matthew Hindson AM

(Image © Dan White)