



Diana Doherty & Streeton Trio

 MUSICA VIVA AUSTRALIA



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Paul Kildea, Artistic Director





Diana Doherty & Streeton Trio

{ Diana Doherty *oboe*
Emma Jardine *violin*
Umberto Clerici *cello*
Benjamin Kopp *piano* }

Adelaide

Adelaide Town Hall
Tuesday 2 March, 7.30pm
Wednesday 3 March, 11am

*Presented in association with
Adelaide Festival*

Brisbane

Conservatorium Theatre
Griffith University, South Bank
Thursday 4 March, 7pm

Canberra

Llewellyn Hall
ANU School of Music
Friday 12 March, 7pm

Melbourne

Elisabeth Murdoch Hall
Melbourne Recital Centre
Tuesday 9 March, 7pm
Saturday 13 March, 7pm

Newcastle

Newcastle City Hall
Thursday 11 March, 7.30pm

Perth

Perth Concert Hall
Wednesday 10 March, 7.30pm
*Alternative concert offered due to
COVID restrictions*

Sydney

City Recital Hall
Saturday 6 March, 2pm
*Recorded for delayed broadcast on
ABC Classic*
Monday 8 March, 7pm
Livestreamed



From the Artistic Director

© Keith Saunders



'The year, the year is gathering' – the final words of James Joyce's short poem 'Chamber Music' – is the most perfect strapline for the opening of our 2021 season. Sure, the optimism with which we launched our 75th year has evolved into a degree of wariness, which is only right and proper, yet we embark nonetheless upon this season with confidence, determination and a sense of celebration. And great art, of course!

One of my absolute favourite concerts in the last few years featured Diana Doherty playing the 12 Telemann solo Fantasias, one lined up after another, each in a different and magnificent livery. Diana liked the enormous challenge of playing all 12; all of us at Ukaria that Sunday morning wanted there to be at least another ten, for in that hour or so, time had stood impressively still.

It is therefore a joy to tour Diana throughout Australia, performing with her friends the Streton Trio, in repertory old (Mendelssohn and Smetana), new (Skipworth), and obscure (Martinů). These are programs planned way before the worldwide pandemic, yet as musicians and audience brush themselves down after a bruising year, as we all work out our responsibilities to each other and to the composers who keep the wheels oiled, the repertory choices could not be more nourishing. Mendelssohn is to blame: his piano trio set the bar impossibly high for composers who followed and were interested in these instruments, with the odd addition, which spurred Smetana, Martinů and now Skipworth to their own great heights. Our job is to engage. Viva 2021!

Paul Kildea

Artistic Director | Musica Viva Australia



From the Chief Executive Officer

© Keith Saunders



Much has been written about the essential contribution made by the audience to any live performance. Still more has been said about how relevant the audience is in chamber music, acting as an essential and irreplaceable contribution that makes the music – literally – come alive. Therefore, we are delighted to be able to, once again, begin a year of live music across Australia, something Musica Viva has been able to offer for more than 75 years because our audiences – you – make that possible. Our commitment to you in 2021 is straightforward: we will bring you live music of quality throughout the year.

We return with a celebration of a new artistic chapter for our company in a season that presents the vision of Paul Kildea. Working with colleagues in our offices around the country, Paul has designed seven tours, each of which offers a new approach to our presentation of chamber music and exemplifies the deep wellspring of talent in Australia. This season also celebrates a new philanthropic program – Concert Patrons and Champions – which will become an ever more important contribution to our ability to present new works and concerts, fully enacting Paul's vision for the future of chamber music. The season is also supported in its entirety by our cherished members of the Amadeus Society.

Above all, I invite you to consider this year's music as a testament to the resilience, adventure and passion our founders demonstrated, and which we attempt to embody every day as we bring music to schools and concert halls around the country.

Hywel Sims

Chief Executive Officer | Musica Viva Australia

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

The Streeton Trio will perform a concert in Coffs Harbour on Monday 15 March, as part of Musica Viva's Regional Touring Program.

Diana Doherty presented a Masterclass in connection with this tour on 4 October 2020, via video link from Musica Viva House in Sydney, with students from the University of Western Australia. A live masterclass for students at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music

will take place on Thursday 4 March – please see musicaviva.com.au/masterclasses for details.

The Masterclasses Giving Circle is a group of generous donors whose collective support will enable the artistic development of the next generation of Australian chamber musicians: Caroline & Robert Clemente, Allan Myers AC QC & Maria Myers AC, Andrew Sisson AO & Tracey Sisson, Anonymous

Meet the Artists

© Christie Brewster



Principal Oboe of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra since 1997, **Diana Doherty** has performed as soloist with the New York, Liverpool and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestras, Japan's Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa, all the major Australian and New Zealand symphony orchestras, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, St Lawrence String Quartet, Musica Viva and the Seymour Group, as well as appearing at the Queensland Music Festival, Four Winds Festival, Australian Festival of Chamber Music, Prague Spring Festival, Italy's Musica Riva Festival, Bratislava Music Festival and the 'Young Artist in Concert' Festival in Davos, Switzerland.

Works written specifically for Diana include concertos by Ross Edwards, Graeme Koehne, Allan Zavod, Joe Chindamo and Nigel Westlake (*Spirit of the Wild*), and she is featured on ten CD recordings.

Diana's awards include joint winner of the Young Concert Artists International Auditions in New York, First Prize at Prague Spring Festival Competition, a 'Mo' Award for

Classical/Opera Performer of the Year and an APRA-Australian Music Centre Award for her performance of Ross Edwards' Oboe Concerto.

Diana Doherty appears courtesy of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Hailed as 'Australia's most internationally successful piano trio', the **Streeton Trio** has received great acclaim for its performances across Germany, France, Austria, Switzerland, United Kingdom, China, United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Norway, New Zealand and Australia.

The Trio was formed in 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland, from three young Australian musicians all living in Europe. In 2010, the Trio was selected to be a part of the prestigious European Chamber Music Academy, where it was in residence for three years. The Trio has studied intensively with the world's leading chamber musicians (Gábor Takács-Nagy, Hatto Beyerle, Avedis Kouyoumdjian, Johannes Meissl, Ferenc

Rados, Erich Höbarth, Pascal Devoyon, Mihaela Martin).

Named after the Australian Impressionist painter Sir Arthur Streeton, the Trio has performed in venues such as the Wigmore Hall, Het Loo Royal Palace (the Netherlands), Shanghai Oriental Arts Centre, Sydney Opera House and Melbourne Recital Centre, and appeared at the Trondheim Festival, Apeldoorn Festival and the Pablo Casals Festival in Prades.

Winner of the 2011 Musica Viva Chamber Music Competition, the Streeton Trio has

been a laureate of several prestigious international competitions, and has won scholarships from the Australia Council for the Arts, Arts Victoria and the Ian Potter Cultural Trust. The Trio performs exclusively on Larsen strings and is now based in Sydney. In 2012, the Trio featured as Musica Viva's Rising Stars ensemble and in 2018 was Fine Music (formerly 2MBS-FM) Ensemble in Residence.

This is Diana Doherty's third national tour for Musica Viva, and the first by the Streeton Trio.

Further Exploration

Diana Doherty's performances are featured on ten recordings to date: Nigel Westlake's *Spirit of the Wild* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the composer; *Romantic Oboe Concertos* with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra under Werner Andreas Albert; *Blues for DD*, a recital program of folk- and jazz-influenced works with pianist David Korevaar; *Souvenirs*, a disc of great oboe adagios; Ross Edwards' Oboe Concerto with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Arvo Volmer, on the album *Heart of Night*; Carl Vine's Oboe Concerto with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, on the album *The Tempest*; Bach's Concerto for violin and oboe with Richard Tognetti and the Australian Chamber Orchestra, on the album *Bach Violin Concertos; The Bach Album: concertos for oboe and oboe d'amore* with Ironwood and Linda Kent (all for ABC Classics); Concertos by Haydn, Mozart, Martinů and Zimmermann with the Symphony Orchestra of Lucerne (released in Europe on Pan Classics); and Graeme Koehne's *Inflight Entertainment* (Naxos, 2005).

The **Streeton Trio** has released four CD recordings, which are broadcast frequently across Australia. The Trio's debut album (trios by Ravel and Brahms), released in 2011, received rave reviews, including: 'It is quite clear that these young players have entirely

identified with this repertoire – their unerring exactitude of tempo and mood is almost psychic' (Thomas' Music, Melbourne) and: 'There are many accomplished recordings of this wonderful work, and this is one of the finest I have heard' (*Limelight*). The Trio's second album, *Elation* (2012), was featured as CD of the Week on ABC Classic, 3MBS, 2MBS, Radio National and SBS Radio and received great acclaim from *Limelight* magazine: 'The trio are a refreshing find for this reviewer ... their undoubted talent and enthusiasm are infectious.' The Trio's 2013 CD release, *Elena Kats-Chernin: Works for Piano Trio*, has received continuous airplay since its release, including as ABC Classic CD of the Week, and been praised for its 'still-youthful exuberance and razor-sharp technical and interpretative gifts' (*Limelight*). *Felix Mendelssohn: Works for Piano Trio* (2016) was described as 'outstanding... Mendelssohn as you've never heard him played' (*Limelight*) and 'There's a lot to love about their interpretation – it's crisp, gutsy and holds its own against the likes of the Beaux Arts Trio' (*The Age*).

More about **Lachlan Skipworth** and his Intercurrent ensemble, including videos, can be found at lachlanskipworth.com. Lachlan's albums *Chamber Works* (2019) and *Breath of Thunder* (2020) are also available at the website for preview and purchase.



Programs

PROGRAM 1

(Brisbane, Melbourne 13 March,
Newcastle, Sydney 6 March)

Notes begin on page 7.

Bohuslav MARTINŮ (1890–1959)

Quartet for oboe, violin, cello and piano,

H315 (1947) 12 min

- I *Moderato poco allegro*
- II *Adagio – Andante – Poco allegro*

Bedřich SMETANA (1824–1884)

Piano Trio in G minor, op 15 (1855) 28 min

- I *Moderato assai*
- II *Allegro, ma non agitato*
- III *Finale: Presto*

Lachlan SKIPWORTH (b 1982)

Oboe Quartet (2020)* 15 min

- I *Allegro moderato*
- II *Misterioso, molto rubato*
- III *Allegretto giocoso*

PROGRAM 2

(Adelaide, Canberra, Melbourne 9 March,
Sydney 8 March)

Notes begin on page 11.

Bohuslav MARTINŮ (1890–1959)

Quartet for oboe, violin, cello and piano,

H315 (1947) 12 min

- I *Moderato poco allegro*
- II *Adagio – Andante – Poco allegro*

Felix MENDELSSOHN (1809–1847)

Piano Trio no 1 in D minor, op 49 (1839) 27min

- I *Molto allegro agitato*
- II *Andante con molto tranquillo*
- III *Scherzo: Leggiero e vivace*
- IV *Finale: Allegro assai appassionato*

Lachlan SKIPWORTH (b 1982)

Oboe Quartet (2020)* 15 min

- I *Allegro moderato*
- II *Misterioso, molto rubato*
- III *Allegretto giocoso*

**Commissioned for Musica Viva Australia
in memory of Anne and Alan Blanckensee,
by their son Andrew, family and friends
World premiere performances*

Musica Viva would also like to thank the following for their generous support of this tour:

Ensemble Patron: Australian Music Foundation

Concert Champions: Darin Cooper Foundation, Robert Gibbs & Tony Wildman in memory of Barbara Gibbs (née Spencer), Peter Griffin AM & Terry Swann, Deborah Lehmann AO & Michael Alpers AO, Andrew & Kate Lister, Helen Kerr & John Ratcliffe, Malcolm & Lachlan Snow and Jo Ferguson, and Bill & Megan Williamson

About the Music

PROGRAM 1

(Brisbane, Melbourne 13 March,

Newcastle, Sydney 6 March)

Bohuslav MARTINŮ (1890–1959)

Quartet for oboe, violin, cello and piano, H315 (1947)

- I *Moderato poco allegro*
(Moderate tempo, a little quickly)
- II *Adagio* (Slow) – *Andante*
(Moving along at a walking pace)
– *Poco allegro* (A little quickly)

If you had to summarise the life of Bohuslav Martinů in just one word, it would probably be 'Bohemian': literally, in the sense that his birthplace was in a small town in Eastern Bohemia, but also figuratively, because his lifestyle tended to be 'Bohemian' in the more colloquial sense of 'itinerant'.

Martinů embodied a curious mixture of industry and indolence. As a violin student at the Prague Conservatory, he was expelled for 'incorrigible negligence', but already by that stage he was hard at work establishing the beginnings of what subsequently became an enormous compositional output of more than 400 works. Many of these works were scored for unusual instrumental combinations.

Yet Martinů was notoriously haphazard in his approach to his completed compositions. He had difficulty recalling works which he had composed, titled them confusingly (there are, for instance, two Nonets which bear exactly the same title), and rarely knew or cared about the fate of his manuscripts.

But the further westward he travelled, the more productive Martinů became. Leaving his homeland after the First World War, he settled in Paris just at the moment when it became the composition capital of the Western world. There, he was one of the bright young things from abroad who flocked to the Parisian melting-pot where surrealism and neo-classicism met jazz, and where Stravinsky rubbed shoulders with Picasso and the young Aaron Copland led the American compositional charge toward Nadia Boulanger.



By the 1930s, Martinů was making a modest living in Paris, but like so many others, the onset of Nazism put him in danger. It became impossible for him to return to his Czech homeland, and by June 1940, with the Nazis just days away from taking Paris itself, he and his wife hurriedly escaped, first to Portugal and then across the Atlantic, eventually arriving in New York in March 1941.

But what had begun as a forced evacuation became a professional godsend, because in the land of the free, new commissions rolled in. All six of Martinů's symphonies were written in America, and much of his chamber music too, including this Quartet for oboe, violin, cello and piano, which he completed in 1947.

At the time, Martinů was teaching at Mannes College of Music, and on the syllabus was Mozart's sublime Oboe Quartet in F major, K370. Having already fully assimilated Parisian-style neo-classicism, Martinů now set out to compose a Mozartian-equivalent oboe quartet for the modern era, swapping out the viola preferred by Mozart for a piano. From the very beginning, though, it's clear that this isn't some derivative pastiche, and nor is it an oboe concerto in disguise. All four instruments are equals from the outset,

the oboe and violin trading off ideas one to the other with the cello and piano also quite independent players. That clarity within the instrumental textures is compelling, and the New World energy balances the 'neo' with the 'classical'.

Unexpectedly, though, the first movement seems to slow before it stops, as if arriving prematurely at the slow movement. When that second movement proper gets underway, the piano takes the lead with some dramatic chords. Soon, the violin, then cello, usher in the main theme, lyrical, reflective and ruminative, but always with Martinů's distinctively short phrasing, as if, like the composer himself, unable to settle fully amidst the ever-present sense of impending upheaval. As the tempo picks up again, in an almost how-did-we-get-here moment the realisation somehow emerges that the mood and the melodies have turned quirky and capricious without a clearly defined borderline.

To the end, there remains a restlessness in the music that Martinů himself, both by temperament and also through historical circumstance beyond the concert hall, must have known all too well.

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**Bedřich SMETANA** (1824–1884)  
**Piano Trio in G minor, op 15 (1855)**

- I *Moderato assai*  
(At a very moderate pace)
- II *Allegro, ma non agitato*  
(Fast, but not agitated)
- III *Finale: Presto* (Quick)

It was a momentous occasion for the Smetana family, that evening of 26 February 1855 when father Bedřich, just days away from his 31st birthday, strode out onto the stage of Prague's Konvikt Hall to make his professional debut as a conductor. The program was built around Smetana's own *Triumphal Symphony*, composed a year or two earlier as a wedding commemoration for Franz Joseph I, ruler of Austria, Hungary, Croatia, and Smetana's native Bohemia. But the Emperor had rejected the gift, leaving the disappointed composer no option but to hire his own orchestra, at his own expense, and to conduct the premiere himself.

Out in the audience that night, Bedřich's eldest daughter Bedřiška was also making a debut of



sorts. At age four, this was her first-ever concert, and when her father made his appearance, she spontaneously leapt to her feet – and that's how she remained throughout the entire concert, too excited to sit down, too transfixed to do anything other than watch and listen. Already by that tender age, little Bedřiška was showing exactly the same kind of precocious musical gifts that her father had done at a similar age. Now, his pride in 'Fritzi', as the family called her, was only increased by her exemplary behaviour that evening.

But Fritzi's first concert was also destined to be her last. Just six months later, on September 6, she died from scarlet fever. 'Nothing can replace Fritzi, the angel whom death has stolen from us,' Smetana wrote in his diary.

It was neither the first bereavement nor the last that Smetana and his wife Kateřina would endure – only one of their four children survived childhood and Kateřina herself would die before that deadly decade of the 1850s was out – but the death of so musical a daughter somehow forced Smetana to confront his inconsolable grief with an impassioned musical response.

Pouring out his tormented soul into a piece which replaced the predictable niceties of the Classical tradition with an unfettered howl of rage, Smetana composed his first masterpiece, his Piano Trio in G minor, op 15. Not that anyone at the trio's premiere in December 1855 recognised it as

such, nor understood its agonising source of inspiration. With Smetana himself at the piano and his colleagues Otto von Königslöw and Georg Goltermann playing the strings, the first audience remained unmoved and the critics, in Smetana's own words, 'condemned it of one accord.'

There, in abject desolation, Smetana's piano trio rested, until a year later when Smetana's childhood idol Franz Liszt visited the Smetana family's home in Prague and heard a private performance of it. Liszt was overwhelmed, throwing his arms around Smetana himself, congratulating Kateřina too for whatever part she had played in its creation, and promising to take it to the world, which he duly did, starting with performances sponsored by him in Germany and Austria.

One of the great piano trios, composed amid such personal pain by a composer who was so little appreciated in his home country that he moved to Sweden soon afterwards, was at last on its inexorable path toward immortality.

Smetana never left an explicit 'program' for his piano trio, other than saying: 'The loss of my eldest daughter, that extraordinarily gifted child, inspired me to write the Trio in G minor in 1855,' but its sentiment right from the twisted opening violin solo is unmistakably that of a father grieving for his dead daughter. In particular, the emotional second subject, introduced on cello, was acknowledged by Smetana as being one of Fritzi's favourite tunes.

Toward the end of the first movement the violin soars high toward heaven, falls back to earth, before struggling up again – symptomatic of the work as a whole, whose naturally descending phrases attempt, through herculean effort and with only limited success, to haul themselves out of the gloomy key of G minor.

The second movement is notionally a scherzo which, after a skittish opening and another unsettled, ghostly violin solo, works its way toward what some have identified as an idealised portrait of Fritzi. This takes the form of two much slower sections, the second being particularly majestic in character. True, there's some form of nostalgia here, but the real tribute emerges much more explicitly in the *Finale*.

Essentially a lively rondo, juxtaposed with a beautifully reflective theme introduced on the cello, this third movement remodels itself toward the end into an unequivocal funeral march, complete with the simulated tolling of bells in

the piano. And there, writ large, emerges the transformative, enduring miracle of music, with so much beauty born of so much pain.

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**Lachlan SKIPWORTH** (b 1982)

**Oboe Quartet (2020)**

- I *Allegro moderato* (Moderately fast)
- II *Misterioso, molto rubato*  
(Mysteriously, with much flexibility of tempo)
- III *Allegretto giocoso* (Fairly fast, playful)

*Commissioned for Musica Viva Australia in memory of Anne and Alan Blanckensee, by their son Andrew, family and friends*

*World premiere performances*

Lachlan Skipworth's individual and highly personal compositional language is coloured by three years spent in Japan, where his immersion in the study of the shakuhachi bamboo flute inevitably became a part of his muse. His *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra* (2014) was awarded the 2016 Paul Lowin Prize, and his orchestral work *Spiritus* (2017) won both the Albert H Maggs Composition Award and the



New England Philharmonic's annual Call-for-Scores.

The vibrant colours of Skipworth's music reflect his longstanding dedication to seeking inspiration from a wide variety of sources. While living in Japan, Skipworth studied shakuhachi intensely with the revered masters Kakizakai Kaoru and Yokoyama Katsuya. Further afield, he spent two semesters in Germany studying at the Freiburg Hochschule für Musik with leading international composer and clarinetist Jörg Widmann. At home, he holds degrees from the University of Western Australia and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music where he studied with composers Roger Smalley and Anne Boyd respectively.

International recognition for Skipworth's music continues to grow, with his compositions being selected as the official Australian work at the 2016 International Rostrum of Composers (Poland) and the International Society for Contemporary Music's World Music Days in 2015 (Slovenia) and 2017 (Canada). Skipworth is a Churchill Fellow, has been the recipient of an Asialink Performing Arts Residency, and has been invited to attend composer workshops with Ensemble Modern at Tokyo Wonder Site and at the Bang on a Can Summer Music Festival in Massachusetts, USA. Recent performance highlights include premieres from the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, the Sitkovetsky Trio, the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, the Tokyo Philharmonic Chorus, Arcadia Winds and his own ensemble Intercurrent.

#### *The composer writes:*

Alan Blankensee rarely appeared in public without a colourful tie, shoes or shirt. Accordingly, this musical portrait in memory of him and his wife Anne required a distinctly vibrant palette. Bright virtuosic oboe lines characterise the work, immediately calling Alan to mind. Anne's presence flows in the piano lines interlaced throughout. (She was a pianist and a fine knitter and weaver.) And their shared love of Bach, whose overtly devotional music spoke to their own deep ties with the Anglican Church, inspires lively textures brimming with counterpoint and compound melody.

The first movement unfolds as a *moto perpetuo*, driven initially by a delicate piano figure spinning rapidly on the surface. Each beat is divided into not four but *five* semiquavers, lending a unique buoyancy to the broader *Allegro moderato* feel. Above this the oboe draws out the long lyrical lines of the main theme, before darting energetically off into a second theme revealing the unique rhythmic possibilities of the quintuple subdivisions. The violin and cello then take up the main theme, with the incessant internal piano motion evolving through several episodes and slowing considerably during a brief *Adagio*. Oboe fireworks set us off once more and the music builds towards an ecstatic tutti presentation of the main theme before ebbing away to end the movement.

The second movement offers a brief moment of respite. Alan's love of Messiaen is invoked in an extremely slow and searching melody played by the cello and violin, marked *dolente espressivo* (mournfully expressive). The underlying harmony remains predominantly major, however (as it does for the whole work), giving the mood here a distinctly sacred feel. Two brief sections of *misterioso* bird-like figures bookend the movement, featuring the oboe in dialogue with the cello and violin.

The third movement *Allegro giocoso* opens with a whimsical oboe theme recalling the bright colours of the first movement, over string pizzicato and bouncing piano figures. Here though, changes of mood come thick and fast, taking us through staccato, lyrical, flowing and dramatic writing, all within the first minute. Things rapidly unravel further as I unpack the quintuple rhythms of the first movement to the extreme. Splashes of oboe and piano colour a counterpoint in 5/8 time between violin and cello. Suddenly we reach a *Con forza* (with force) in 5/4 in which the piano stubbornly resists, dividing each bar into four and then seven against the strings' fives. The recapitulation plays further tricks, jumping between denominations of the beat until we then settle in 20/16 time and build toward an angular and exciting finale to end the work.

© Lachlan Skipworth 2020

## PROGRAM 2

(Adelaide, Canberra, Melbourne 9 March,  
Sydney 8 March)

**Bohuslav MARTINŮ** (1890–1959)  
**Quartet for oboe, violin, cello and piano, H315  
(1947)**

See notes on page 7.

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**Felix MENDELSSOHN** (1809–1947)  
**Piano Trio no 1 in D minor, op 49 (1839)**

- I *Molto allegro agitato*  
(Very fast and agitated)
- II *Andante con molto tranquillo*  
(Moving along very calmly at a walking pace)
- III *Scherzo: Leggiero e vivace*  
(Light and lively)
- IV *Finale: Allegro assai appassionato*  
(Fast, very passionate)

Mendelssohn demonstrated a fondness for chamber music involving pianos from an early age. His first, unpublished, piano trio, written at the age of eleven, remains lost with other juvenilia. His first published works at the age of 13 were for the combination of piano and strings. By his early twenties, he'd expressed the intent to compose, in his own words, 'a couple of good [piano] trios'. But partially because of his hectic schedule with varied performance activities, and a frustrating period of writer's block, it wasn't until about nine years later that he completed the first of his two mature piano trios.

The op 49 trio was completed in July 1839, and Mendelssohn played it for his friend Ferdinand Hiller, who expressed his deep admiration but mentioned one small misgiving: he felt the piano writing was 'somewhat old-fashioned'. Having 'lived many years in Paris, seeing Liszt frequently, and Chopin every day,' wrote Hiller, 'I was thoroughly accustomed to the richness of passages which marked the new pianoforte school. I made some observations to Mendelssohn on this point, suggesting certain alterations.' Though initially reluctant, Mendelssohn ultimately reworked the piano part, giving a brilliance that one might now assume from a virtuoso composer–pianist of that period. With the trio's more modern exterior, but using his respected Classical structures, he signed off on the score and sent it to his publishers in September 1839.

The opening of the trio features an arching, lyrical cello melody which, were it not for the brooding, agitated chords from the piano, might even seem reflective. As Robert Philip colourfully suggests, 'the effect is like a great liner sweeping through choppy seas.' Though the piano writing bears the influence of the virtuosos Romantic school, there is never the impression of virtuosity purely for virtuosity's sake. Mendelssohn's Classical ideals, along with the minor key and the unified lyricism of the string writing, impart a seriousness of purpose.

The second movement shows the influence of the composer's own *Songs without Words* – tender solo piano works with the melody floating above an accompaniment figure. Set in the relative warmth of B-flat major, the piano leads the movement before handing the theme to the strings 'in a singing style'. The dialogue between piano and strings continues, with a shift from major to minor providing touching contrast.

Marked 'light and lively', the third movement *Scherzo* evokes the nimble, scurrying 'fairy' world of his overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Featuring delicate textures and fleet fingerwork (for which Mendelssohn as pianist was renowned), the opening theme is tossed from one instrument to another, seamlessly propelling itself through the movement. A darker middle section provides momentary contrast, before returning to the elfin world and mischievously dissipating, in typical Mendelssohnian fashion.

The *Finale* returns to the largely serious disposition of the opening movement. Here, Mendelssohn masterfully unites the brooding, agitated characters from the start of the trio with the tenderness of the second movement and impishness of the third, with a rhythmic energy that compellingly drives the work to its conclusion.

After publication, the trio was an immediate success. Robert Schumann declared Mendelssohn to be at the height of his powers: 'the Mozart of the 19th century; the most brilliant among musicians; the one who has most clearly recognised the contradictions of the time, and the first to reconcile them.' Hailing the work as the 'trio masterpiece of the present day', Schumann projected that 'years from hence, [this trio] will still delight our grandchildren and great-grandchildren.' And here we are.

© Angela Turner 2017

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**Lachlan SKIPWORTH** (b 1982)  
**Oboe Quartet (2020)**

See notes on page 9.





Musica Viva is proud to partner with a number of Australian organisations – all experts in their respective fields. These partnerships support Musica Viva's activities as one of the most prolific presenters of the highest quality chamber music in the world, and a world-leader in impactful music education.



A partnership with Musica Viva can provide your organisation with a range of benefits that include:

- **Bespoke hospitality events;**
- **Client & stakeholder engagement opportunities;**
- **Brand exposure & digital marketing through print and digital media to a loyal audience that has supported Musica Viva for over 75 years;**

Musica Viva would love to explore potential partnership opportunities with you. To discuss further, please reach out to Director of Development, Zoë Cobden-Jewitt, [zcobden-jewitt@musicaviva.com.au](mailto:zcobden-jewitt@musicaviva.com.au)

## CREATE THE FINEST MUSIC WITH US

Through the generosity of donors, Musica Viva continues to commission exciting new music from Australia's leading and emerging composers. New compositions feature strongly in Musica Viva's concert programs, and we are proud of our extensive history of supporting fine music from Australian composers.

Lachlan Skipworth's (pictured) new Oboe Quartet, commissioned by Andrew Blanckensee in memory of his parents, Anne and Alan Blanckensee, receives its world premiere performances from Diana Doherty and the Streeton Trio on this tour.

To learn more about commissioning at Musica Viva, please contact: Zoë Cobden-Jewitt [zcobden-jewitt@musicaviva.com.au](mailto:zcobden-jewitt@musicaviva.com.au) or call 0409 340240



# Interview with Emma Jardine and Diana Doherty



In the midst of 2020's lockdown, Emma Jardine of the Streeton Trio had her hands full. Unusually, though, they weren't busied with the violin, but instead with gardening and cooking and chasing her three children under the age of five, the youngest of whom had been born that January. As the year progressed, and the crisis escalated, leaving colleagues and friends out of work and the sector as we knew it strangely deserted, she had started contemplating the work she had been engaged in up until that point – what was the true purpose of art? What is the point of music? How should musicians and artists be grappling with the question of their relevancy as all around them theatres and concert halls shutter?

One afternoon, this question at the forefront of Emma's mind, one of her children was idly scanning the radio as she tended to her garden. As he flicked through the channels, there out of the blue appeared Mendelssohn's Piano Trio no 1, and Emma knew immediately that it was her ensemble that the presenter had chosen

to broadcast. She hurried over to sit next to her son, and all of the feelings that had been brewing since the beginning of the strange new normal arose.

'You know when it hits you?' she asked me, when we caught up on the phone at the start of the new year. 'It was beautiful and sad, and a longing and nostalgia hit me all at once, remembering how it feels to perform, to feel the connection and energy of the audience.' You get on with things, we mused, with life and day-to-day frustrations and joys, and then all of a sudden it hits you: the reason why artists must continue to create.

Once the entirety of the piano trio had been performed, Emma listened as ABC Classic presenter Martin Buzacott relayed a text message he had received in the studio while the Mendelssohn played: a lady called Annette from Melbourne had written to tell him about her amateur piano trio, who had played together every Wednesday for the past 30 years.

That Mendelssohn trio had been a favourite of theirs to play together. Since the pandemic had begun, their cellist had been moved into an aged care facility, so the trio had been unable to get together for the first time in three decades. As soon as she'd heard those opening strains on the ABC though, performed deftly by the Streeton Trio, she'd called up her two long-time friends and musical colleagues and the trio had sat together, but apart, listening and remembering.

The power of chamber music, in all its inimitable, intimate goodness, is its ability to 'touch people to their very core'; a feeling that has been wildly missed by both the performers and their listeners over the past months. For acclaimed oboist Diana Doherty, who joins the Streeton Trio for this, Musica Viva's first program of the 2021 season, the slightly slower pace of the past year was 'an opportunity to let go of perfectionism. The pursuit of perfectionism is something that many musicians get drawn into, as if it is achievable or even definable.' In finding space for the simple joys of what music can do, in particular the music shared by distant colleagues, Diana has relished the return to 'the communication of the music' as first priority.

'I am determined to hold onto the freshness that this period of reflection has afforded us,' she says when asked about the challenges and excitements of moving into a time of renewed performance opportunities. 'We love what we do, but when it feeds us and financially sustains us, it adds additional pressure. I had turned into someone who didn't listen to music ever, because playing in an orchestra, what I craved was silence at the end of the day. I needed to rest my ears, so I stopped listening even to the radio, and I've rediscovered the joy of hearing my colleagues and friends performing. I have turned the music back on.'

The importance of chamber music to growth – technically, musically, 'and quite simply, as human beings' – cannot be understated, says Diana. 'It is a microcosm of all the things you need to learn in both music and life, particularly in its ability to teach you how to communicate, and how to both give and receive feedback.' The practice of playing in intimate settings with others 'extends you' in myriad ways – 'I am always looking for better ways to accompany, to articulate more subtly, to be in tune all the time

in this different setting. It is all learning, and you've never learned enough!'

Emma echoes these thoughts about the joys and learnings of working in a small ensemble: 'Music is a puzzle, and you have to figure out how it best fits together – which part feeds off which other part? Who has the line you most want to bring out? How do you communicate the feeling to the person who plays the most important line after you?'

Creating a collaborative process that ensures your ensemble can fit all those puzzle pieces together seamlessly is about negotiation and practicality. Both Diana and Emma, who are playing chamber music together for the first time in these performances, reiterate the importance of good communication in the rehearsal space to ensure that each member has artistic input. Unlike in an orchestral setting, where players look to a conductor for final decisions, the members of the chamber ensemble have the bottom line, so it's important that everyone gets a chance to speak their mind. It's not as tricky to negotiate as it sounds, though: 'We're at the stage where we won't get offended if someone doesn't agree with our musical idea,' says Emma of the trio. 'We know there are many good ways of creating a phrase!'

Opening Musica Viva's 2021 season is 'a dream come true' for the Streeton Trio. The organisation had a hand in mentoring the budding ensemble in their early days, taking them on as a Rising Star group 'and giving us opportunities for both performance and to learn the business and administration side of the music sector – the things that they don't teach you at music school, when you're stuck in a practice room for eight hours of every day!'

Diana is ready to share the joy of being together again with her beloved colleagues on stage. "Here we are," these performances will say; "We *did* it in spite of everything. In spite of the challenges that we've faced, and the hurdles that have had to be jumped to get here." This program – the old, the brand new, the favourites and the rare gems – is a great celebration of the power of music to revitalise, to re-establish, and to re-invent. We have, as Diana said, 'turned the music back on.'

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# Musica Viva Education Partners

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National Rural Schools  
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**ACT**  
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The Patrick Brennan  
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# Stories to Inspire



## The Janette Hamilton Studio – a resounding legacy

As we celebrate a new year and take stock of 2020, it feels timely to highlight someone whose generosity continues to have special resonance at Musica Viva. Four years after her untimely passing, Janette Hamilton's legacy is very much alive and well in the form of the purpose-built music studio which bears her name – thanks to a significant gift in her will.

Despite the challenges of 2020, the Janette Hamilton Studio at Musica Viva House in Sydney has proved a vital connecting point, enabling artistic activity not only to continue throughout the pandemic, but also to evolve and even thrive.

Janette Hamilton was a long-term subscriber to Musica Viva, as well as an exceptional musician in her own right. She was a passionate advocate for the arts, dedicating much of her life not only to performing but also to educating, holding teaching positions at various Sydney schools as well as at the Conservatorium of Music.

It therefore seems poetic that in 2020, the Studio played an even more crucial role in the development and presentation of Musica Viva In Schools as we pivoted to take them online, as well as delivering online teacher professional development. It also held two masterclasses –

one was livestreamed to Germany for Sydney Conservatorium students with the Goldmund Quartet in Berlin, and the second, with Diana Doherty, was also livestreamed, across the country to students at the University of Western Australia.

The studio has also been used by musicians to rehearse and record, as well as by other arts organisations. For those New South Wales students who were unable to travel last year, the studio provided a virtual classroom as well as a space for rehearsals and recitals. In November, a webinar was conducted for students of the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM), featuring William Barton and Véronique Serret.

There's no doubt that this state-of-the-art space – Janette's legacy – has enabled Musica Viva to connect with musicians, students, teachers and audiences during a time of isolation, and enabled music to be created, expressed and shared all around Australia and the world.

**If you, too, are interested in leaving a legacy gift in your will to Musica Viva, please contact Jaci Maddern, Senior Development Manager at [jmaddern@musicaviva.com.au](mailto:jmaddern@musicaviva.com.au) or on (03) 9645 5088.**



# THANK YOU

On behalf of Paul, Hywel, the artists and all Musica Viva staff we want to thank **YOU** for your support, particularly over the last year.

Thank you for your generosity, patience and loyalty as we have adapted our business, taking our education programs and concerts online whilst always seeking out new ways to connect with you and all our audiences across Australia.




We simply can't do it without you.





At every Musica Viva concert, we present a variety of interactive events and experiences.

**Connect with us online for more chamber music news!**

   @MusicaVivaAU



CHAMBER OF  
**MUSICAL  
CURIOSITIES**  
WITH MUSICA VIVA

PODCAST 

Hosted by Artistic Director Paul Kildea, the Chamber of Musical Curiosities is a chamber music podcast exploring the world in and around Musica Viva Australia.

This season features an eclectic range of guests in conversation with Paul Kildea, as both parties reflect upon creativity, their careers, and their passion for chamber music. Australian academic and musicologist Malcolm Gillies, violinist Wilma Smith, recorder virtuoso Genevieve Lacey, and actor and theatre director John Bell all feature.

Search for Chamber of Musical Curiosities on Spotify or iTunes or listen online at <https://musicaviva.com.au/podcast>

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