

MEDIA RELEASE

2017 Coffee Concerts

Musica Viva shines a spotlight on the Goldner String Quartet



The Goldner Quartet: Irina Morozova (viola), Julian Smiles (cello), Dimity Hall (violin), Dene Olding (violin)

"I felt so sad when the piece ended – it was almost unbelievable that such an extraordinary creation could suddenly cease to be heard."

Jennifer Gall, Sydney Morning Herald

On **Wednesday 29 March**, Musica Viva's much loved **Coffee Concerts** return to the **Independent Theatre** in North Sydney, offering inspiration, great company, tea, coffee and cake on five Wednesday mornings throughout the year. Music lovers are invited to morning tea from 10am, followed by an hour of favourite pieces and exciting new discoveries from 11am.

In 2017, every performance stars **Australia's pre-eminent chamber ensemble**, the **Goldner String Quartet**.

"Only once before, in 2012, did we devote an entire year of Coffee Concerts to these splendid musicians," says Musica Viva's Artistic Director, **Carl Vine AO**. "It proved to be one of the most popular years since the series began." Guest appearances by Australian pianist **Piers Lane** and virtuoso cellist **Umberto Clerici** are the icing on the cake in what promises to be a delectable season of musical delights.



Composer Elizabeth Younan

The opening concert on **29 March** pairs Beethoven's exquisite 'Razumovsky' Quartet op 59 no 2 with a breath of fresh air from emerging Sydney composer, **Elizabeth Younan**. Recently named **Young Composer of the Year** by Fine Music FM, Younan created 'Interwoven' as part of the Sydney Conservatorium's National Women Composers Development Program.

Vine describes the second program on **24 May** as "a healthy helping of **Beethoven** and a little enclave of Australian gems for two and three players." Intimate musical dialogues run the gamut from **Ross Edwards'** rhythmic verve to **David Hush's** subtle melodies and the spry ragtime of **Elena Kats-Chernin**, all building up to the orchestral drama of Beethoven's ninth String Quartet.

"The Goldners are joined in the middle of the year by renowned Australian pianist **Piers Lane**, to mount the magnificent but rarely performed Piano Quintet of **Borodin**," continues Vine, describing a program on **19 July** that also features the instantly recognizable Nocturne from Borodin's String Quartet no 2 and **Glazunov's** elegant variations on a Finnish folksong for solo piano.

On **30 August**, Szymanowski's youthful first quartet makes a perfect match for the life-affirming, gypsy qualities of Brahms' well-loved second quartet. "The year closes with enormous elan on **4 October** with the addition of virtuoso cellist **Umberto Clerici**, enabling the Goldners to present one of the great pinnacles of the repertoire, **Schubert's** peerless String Quintet," concludes Vine, adding: "Coffee and cake have rarely been so well adorned!"

Enjoy all five performances at the special rate of \$225 or book individual concerts for \$52 per ticket (\$20 for under-30s). For further information, please visit www.musicaviva.com.au/coffee2017.

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MUSICA VIVA COFFEE CONCERTS 2017

Independent Theatre, 269 Miller Street, North Sydney

MORNING TEA FROM 10AM | CONCERTS FROM 11AM

BOOKINGS AND PROGRAM DETAILS: www.musicaviva.com.au/coffee2017

PROGRAM 1: WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH

YOUNAN Interwoven **BEETHOVEN** String Quartet in E minor, op 59 no 2

The season opens with a fresh breath of new musical air from talented young Sydney composer Elizabeth Younan. Her quartet 'Interwoven' was composed as part of Sydney Conservatorium's National Women Composers Development Program and is heard here for the first time in public. Beethoven's 'Razumovsky' quartets are named for their commissioner, the Russian ambassador to Vienna – who would have been delighted by Beethoven's unexpected treatment of a Russian folksong in the rumbustious Scherzo. The Count must have also been moved by the beautiful Adagio, thought to have been composed while contemplating a starry sky.

PROGRAM 2: WEDNESDAY 24 MAY

EDWARDS Ecstatic Dances for violin and cello **HUSH** Contrapunctus for violin and viola **KATS-CHERNIN** Two Rags for two violins **BEETHOVEN** String Quartet in C major, op 59 no 3

In three Australian miniatures, the Goldners are given an opportunity to show off their individual talents in combinations of two players. These musical dialogues run the gamut from Ross Edwards' rhythmic verve to David Hush's subtly unfolding melodies, and the spry ragtime of Elena Kats-Chernin. The full quartet then returns to the stage for the drama of Beethoven's ninth String Quartet, forward-thinking in form, and almost orchestral in power.

PROGRAM 3: WEDNESDAY 19 JULY

with special guest artist Piers Lane, piano

GLAZUNOV Theme and Variations for solo piano, op 72 **BORODIN** Nocturne from String Quartet no 2 **BORODIN** Piano Quintet in C minor

Glazunov's elegant variations on a Finnish folksong allow guest artist Piers Lane a special moment in the spotlight, as this popular Australian pianist joins his friends for a unique Sydney appearance with the Goldners. Their combined forces draw out the beauty of Borodin's exquisite Quintet, interspersed with perhaps that composer's most famous work, his delightful Nocturne.

PROGRAM 4: WEDNESDAY 30 AUGUST

SZYMANOWSKI String Quartet no 1 in C major, op 37 **BRAHMS** String Quartet in A minor, op 51 no 2

A sense of adventure surrounds Szymanowski's youthful first quartet, full of colours and unanticipated jewel-like moments, suiting the artistry of the Goldners perfectly. Brahms' second quartet is the work of a more mature composer, with the influence of Hungarian or 'gypsy' idioms giving it a fresh, life affirming quality that has placed it firmly in the pantheon of chamber music favourites.

PROGRAM 5: WEDNESDAY 4 OCTOBER

with special guest artist Umberto Clerici, cello

SCHUBERT String Quintet in C major, D 956

Concluding the 2017 Sydney Coffee Concert season is an unassailable masterwork: Schubert's celestial C major string quintet. Schubert famously opted for his quintet to feature an extra cello rather than the more standard second viola. In what would be one of his final compositions, his choice pays off, in music of extraordinary pathos and depth. The Goldners are joined on this occasion by Umberto Clerici, Principal Cello with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Media Enquiries: Adele Schonhardt, Media & Communications Manager, Musica Viva,
T (03) 9645 5092 | M 0457 727 379 | E aschonhardt@musicaviva.com.au