

AE NEWS

newsletter of the Australia Ensemble @UNSW

Upcoming Events

Collegium Musicum Choir

Rehearsals commence

Wednesday February 20

5-8pm

Sir John Clancy Auditorium

Singers welcome - please see the website to register:

<http://www.music.unsw.edu.au/choral/collegium-musicum-choir>

or call 02 9385 4874

Free Australia Ensemble
lunchtime event

Tuesday March 12, at 1.10pm

Tyree Room, Scientia Building

MUNRO | Aus tiefer Not schrei' ich zu

Dir (Out of the Depths I Cry to You)

SCHUMANN | Fantasiestücke for

clarinet and piano

SHOSTAKOVICH | Cello Sonata

Svetlana Bogosavljevic, guest cello

Australia Ensemble @UNSW

Subscription Concert 1

Saturday March 16, at 8pm

Sir John Clancy Auditorium

The Age of Steam

MOZART | Trio K498 'Kegelstatt'

DVORAK | Sonatina Op.100

BRUCE | Steampunk

SAINT-SAËNS | Piano Quartet Op.41

Guest Artists: Lerida Delbridge, violin;

Justin Williams, viola; Catherine

Hewgill, cello; Alexandre Oguey,

oboe & cor anglais; Andrew Barnes,

bassoon; Carla Blackwood, horn; and

Andrew Meisel, double bass

Collegium Musicum Choir

Sunday April 14, 5pm

Sir John Clancy Auditorium

including DVOŘÁK Mass in D

JANÁČEK Otčenáš (Our Father)

www.music.unsw.edu.au

The show must go on!

Sonia Maddock

In August of last year, the AE News included a brief article about the pending renovation of the Clancy Auditorium foyer and consequent disruption. Those who frequent the Kensington campus will have noticed a major change to the face of Clancy, with works having commenced in December, removing the front awning and entry doors, and restoring the foyer interior ceiling to the original brutalist concrete beams.

This process is extremely disruptive and will severely impinge on our use of the foyer. For the first concert of the Australia Ensemble 2019 subscription season, we will be relocating the foyer facilities to a marquee behind the

auditorium, and directing patrons into the hall via the side doors. We have arranged for the Pavilions at the rear of Clancy Auditorium to be open for our events with casual seating for our patrons. While this is obviously less than ideal for the March concert, we are looking forward to the reopening of the northern section of the foyer in April/May, with its spectacular new facade and increased space.

The bathroom facilities will remain accessible while the foyer is being renovated, although access will not be as straightforward as that to which you might be accustomed.

The only thoroughfare from the western foyer (including the men's toilets) to the eastern foyer (including the women's and accessible toilets) is through the hall, or outdoors across the rear of the building. Additional toilets are available in the arcade beneath the back of Clancy Auditorium.

The MPU will have extra staff to guide our audience in the right direction, and to assist any who may need help.



Looking forward to a new Foyer!



Sir John Clancy Auditorium undergoing foyer renovations

The disabled parking area in front of the Clancy Auditorium, inside Gate 9 on High Street, remains accessible, although the passage to the hall itself will best be along the western side (right-hand side) of the building. At the rear of the building on the eastern side there is a ramp for patrons to access the marquee area functioning as our temporary foyer space. Again, there will be staff on hand to direct patrons and ensure a smooth experience during this period of disruption.

The construction project has been staged so that not all the foyer is out of action at the same time – once the northern section is complete, work will focus on the eastern and western foyers, and finally on the Green Room. The finished project will include a new bar area, a separate box office, and a substantially increased foyer space with automated sliding doors, and a vastly improved concert experience for our patrons.

In the meantime, we will do our best to support our audience in this changing environment, to make sure that the concert is still as enjoyable as ever. You will also notice some cosmetic improvements inside the hall with newly painted walls and fittings. We are expecting the internal floors of the hall to be refreshed in May following the university's first academic term. Before too long, we will have something quite wonderful to celebrate with our Australia Ensemble in its fortieth season.



Refreshed! Inside Sir John Clancy Auditorium

Join the dots!

At the end of 2018, the Music Performance Unit presented a composer workshop for major donors. Two young composers were featured, 2019 Layton Emerging Composer Fellow, Nicole Murphy, and the UNSW Blakeman Student Composition prize winner Gamran Green.

Guest artists Airena Nakamura (violin), Andrew Jezek (viola) and Paul Stender (cello) joined Australia Ensemble members, Ian Munro (piano), Geoffrey Collins (flute) and David Griffiths (clarinet) to read through and perform two brand new works composed by these prize-winning composers. In addition, key industry figures Paul Stanhope (Composer and Australia Ensemble Artistic Chair) and John Peterson (Composer and UNSW academic) were in attendance to provide pivotal guidance and expertise in composition to the two emerging composers.



Gamran Green and Nicole Murphy. *Photo: Keith Saunders*

The half day workshop was a great success finishing with an informal cocktail reception where guests were able to mingle with composers Nicole and Gamran.

Subscribers should keep an eye out for Nicole Murphy's new work which will feature in the Australia Ensemble 2019 lunch hour series. We will also present Gamran Green in concert with a composition of his in the pipeline planned for Term 3, performed by UNSW Orchestra as part of his Honours program.

Musical chairs

A fond adieu!

Last month we bid a fond farewell to two of our staff members, Felicity Clark (Artistic and Operations Coordinator) and Callum Bowles (Operations and Communications Assistant). Both are onto exciting new endeavours!

Subscribers may have encountered Felicity over the past year in our box office, and seen Callum on stage as our ever attentive stage manager. Both Callum and Felicity have been fabulous colleagues, contributing significantly to the Unit's activities during their time and will be missed. We wish them well in their next adventures.

A familiar face returns

At the start of February the lovely Yvette Goodchild rejoined the unit, stepping back into her role of Artistic and Operations Coordinator after a year-long secondment to the Faculty of Law. We are very pleased to warmly welcome Yvette back to the Music Performance Unit. Subscribers can look forward to seeing her at the box office.

Australia Ensemble - the sum of its parts

Genevieve Lang

Paul Stanhope, Composer and Artistic Chair of the Australia Ensemble, is quite frank about what he was doing at 40. 'I was feeling miserable.' A deadline loomed. 'I was in the headspace of just having to "plough on" to finish my 2nd string quartet. It had taken me longer than I'd expected – six months, in the end.' Paul says he still finds it surprising 'how deep you have to dig to get that last bit of energy and let a piece properly fulfill its potential.'

This year the Australia Ensemble presents its 40th season. The position of Artistic Chair is not one Paul takes lightly. 'That we can celebrate 40 seasons underlines to me the importance of this ensemble; not only at the University of NSW, not only here in Sydney, but around the whole country. It's a role I take very seriously, but at the same time, it's one which provides many joys.'

For Paul, one of the key elements in the ensemble's history is the creation and championing of new chamber works. With digital and communication technologies being what they are, these days there's a dizzying number of living composers and new pieces to consider. 'There's so much out there, it's not hard to find things that haven't had an Australian premiere.'

This year's 40th season will feature a newly minted work from Jessica Wells. 'I think her music is a really good fit for the ensemble,' Paul explains. 'Jessica's music is wonderfully imaginative, and her craft is exceptionally good.'

New music is also being specially created for the ensemble through the Layton Emerging Composers Fellowship. Last year's fellow was Nicole Murphy. 'We had a fantastic workshop of her quintet, which will be performed again in the future. And Nicole is writing another piece for this year's lunch hour concert series.' Applications for this year's fellowship close at the end of February.

Paul himself was the beneficiary of a similar opportunity when he was a young composer. 'It was the [then] 2MBS Young Composers competition, and I was lucky enough to win it.' The prize? A performance by... the Australia Ensemble! 'I remember Dimity, Julian and Geoff were all there' – one suspects a young Paul Stanhope was somewhat star struck – 'I don't think any of them remember it though!' But how lovely that supporting young composers has come full circle and is now something Paul can do through his role with the ensemble.

'There's an imperative in the musical community,' Paul reasons, 'to create a repertoire of our own work. That's why we've done repeat performances and we're now going down the road of creating recordings of these pieces.' Stay tuned for news of the digital releases of these new recordings. 'We're trying to slot them in around our artist availability, and that of the venue.' No mean feat when you're wrangling seven of Australia's best musicians. This is, however, a great sign of the liveliness of this ensemble, even its 40th year!



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 Thursday 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>

The Two of Us

The Collegium Musicum choir is currently accepting new members. The choir rehearses every Wednesday evening during academic term 5-8pm in Sir John Clancy Auditorium.

We sat down with two of our long term choir members, sisters Monica and Maery to ask them about their experience joining the choir. If you are interested in singing with us, please email cmc@unsw.edu.au



Maery (left) and Monica (right)

Maery: member since 2013

I'd been singing in community acappella choirs for years – world music sort of things – and I'd even facilitated a few leftie/greenie/gospelly choir gatherings in the old UNSW community garden. As a staff member I'd heard about the uni choir, but the classical repertoire put me off – yes I blush now! There is nothing like the snobbery of the working classes! And really underneath all that – I was too scared to do an audition.

Finally a friend who knew I was busting for more song in my life put the hard word on me – challenged me to 'sing through my fears' and off I finally went for what I was delighted to hear had been transmuted into a 'voice placement'. The power of language.

At my first rehearsal I knew I was with a very learned bunch of people – people who seemed to effortlessly sing on sight, who didn't wait for the piano to heavily bang out the opening note, who knew when tempos and keys changed, and who protested "Sonia! the sopranos are singing a C natural in Bar 53!" etc.. I went home and cried, but it wasn't out of fright. It was out of some huge relief and delight. I'd come into something really big – way bigger than me.

Maery's highlights: So many! The hot hailstones of Handel, the privilege of singing Tchaikovsky's Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, and starting out hating Vasks and then not being able to GET ENOUGH of him! Looking forward to singing Vivaldi this year! Woohoo!

Monica: member since 2016

I joined the choir because whenever I had come over from New Zealand on holidays and been able to hear the choir sing, I thought how beautiful they sounded, and how clever. Then, four years ago, I came to live in Australia and I decided I would try for it. I got a few lessons from a teacher beforehand to prepare because I had not been in a choir since school (just a few years ago!)

Monica's highlights: It's the music, the classical music, and to be able to sing that beautiful music – it's really a dream come true. Looking forward: I am happy with whatever Sonia chooses for us to sing, because it's all learning for me, and it's a joyful learning – it's opening up the soul. When I sing I feel connected to higher beings – all the past singers perhaps who have sung this beautiful music throughout the decades.

Are you an UNSW Alumni?

Our UNSW Alumni and Engagement team would love to hear from you as we celebrate 300,000 UNSW alumni in 2019. As an alumni you can subscribe to a range of alumni events, as well as access a range of benefits and services.

Contact: UNSW Alumni and Engagement office

Email: alumni@unsw.edu.au Website: <https://alumni.unsw.edu.au/>