

# AE News

newsletter of the Australia Ensemble UNSW

## Upcoming Events

**Australia Ensemble UNSW  
Subscription Concert 6**  
Saturday October 16, at 8pm  
Sir John Clancy Auditorium

### Slipstream

SCHUBERT | Quartettsatz in C minor,  
D703 (1820)  
HARRISON | Slipstream (2020)  
SHOSTAKOVICH | Piano Quintet in  
G minor Op.57 (1940)  
SHOSTAKOVICH & PROKOFIEV |  
Five Waltzes for flute, clarinet, two  
violins, viola, cello and piano arr.  
Levon Atovmian & Ian Munro

Performed without interval

David Griffiths, clarinet; Dene Olding,  
violin; Dimity Hall, violin; Irina  
Morozova, viola; Julian Smiles, cello;  
Ian Munro, piano with Emeritus Artist  
Geoffrey Collins, flute

### For Your Viewing at Home

FAURÉ Requiem III *Sanctus*,  
Collegium Musicum Choir UNSW and  
Dimity Hall, violin  
[youtu.be/3HIXPVjNGzU](https://youtu.be/3HIXPVjNGzU)

I Want Your Job with Julian Smiles  
[youtu.be/lwxv-PtoHJw](https://youtu.be/lwxv-PtoHJw)

FAURÉ Requiem VII *In paradisum*,  
Collegium Musicum Choir UNSW and  
Dimity Hall, violin  
[youtu.be/BPM3Sow6vso](https://youtu.be/BPM3Sow6vso)

## Concerts Take A Musical Pause

We're disappointed to announce upcoming concert cancellations, with August 21 and September 18 Subscription Concerts unable to proceed following a fantastic start to our 2021 season.

The health and wellbeing of our audiences, musicians and staff continues to be our highest priority, and we are closely monitoring the situation in accordance with NSW Health. We will continue to provide additional updates on any future performances that may also be impacted.

We greatly value your ongoing support and understanding at this extremely difficult time. While we are unable to meet with our audience face-to-face, we are trying to increase our online presence so you can enjoy the people and music of the Australia Ensemble at home. We know that this is less fulfilling than a live concert experience, but hope it goes some way to improving this strange circumstance until we can reconvene to share in some rewarding music-making.



### What are my options?

**Exchange tickets to an upcoming performance:** Although details are yet to be announced, we are happy to offer a direct credit to subscribers for these two concerts, to be put towards our 2022 subscription season. We understand that audiences are thinking carefully about investing in future performances, and we do not charge a fee for ticket exchanges to increase your flexibility of choice.

**Donate the ticket value:** Your tax-deductible donation means that the Australia Ensemble will still be here to share the joy of live music when you next join us for a concert at UNSW, as a healthy, vibrant and financially secure organisation. To donate the value of your ticket, please email [australia.ensemble@unsw.edu.au](mailto:australia.ensemble@unsw.edu.au) before September 17 so we can arrange a receipt to be issued through the UNSW Foundation.

**Refund tickets:** We are offering partial refunds on subscriptions. This will be held off until we resume activities in order to minimise the required number of transactions and ensure accuracy.

Ticket holders are kindly asked to please email their preference to:  
[australia.ensemble@unsw.edu.au](mailto:australia.ensemble@unsw.edu.au)

# Remembering Emeritus Professor Roger Layton



*Emeritus Professor Roger Layton*

We are sorry to share with you the sad news that long time supporter of the Australia Ensemble UNSW, Emeritus Professor Roger Layton, died peacefully on Saturday 5 June, surrounded by his family.

Roger was part of the fabric of UNSW and a major figure in the fledgling discipline of marketing in Australia and internationally.

Roger joined our University in 1958 and, when he was appointed Professor of Marketing in 1967, he was Australia's first. From 1992–2002, Roger was Dean of what was then our Faculty of Commerce and Economics. Throughout his stellar career, he was much awarded and much admired. In 1998, his service to marketing, research and teaching was recognised with his admission as a Member of the Order of Australia.

Roger was a willing mentor and a generous benefactor: in 2018, Roger and Merrilyn Layton established the Layton Emerging Composer Fellowship, for an Emerging Composer to write chamber works as part of the Australia Ensemble UNSW's outreach program. Roger leaves an impressive and valuable legacy and will be sadly missed. The musicians of the Australia Ensemble UNSW wrote him a note of support during our last concert week in April, which was warmly received by Roger and his family.

*"I had the pleasure of meeting Roger at the Layton Fellowship Workshop in early 2021. In our discussion, he shared his keen insight in how he saw the relationship between music and his own discipline of marketing that demonstrated his love of both topics and his inquisitive intellect! His passionate and vital support of Australian composers through the Layton Fellowship has left an important legacy on how Australia sounds." - 2020-21 Layton Emerging Composer Fellow, Ian Whitney*

*"I was fortunate to be the inaugural Layton Composer Fellow in 2018. Through this Fellowship, the Laytons generosity afforded me the opportunity to explore and create in collaboration with the musicians of the Australia Ensemble UNSW. An unexpected benefit was the opportunity to become more familiar with Roger's research output.*

*When reading an article by Roger, I was struck by the similarities in language used to describe marketing systems in his work and the language used to describe music. Many descriptive sentences could have been taken directly from a review of a piece of music - phrases such as 'ever-changing whirlpools ... bubbling with the promise of more permanent patterns and structures' sparked my imagination and ultimately resulted in a composition for clarinet and piano, Exchange, that paid homage to Roger's expansive body of work in the field of marketing, and his generous contribution to the creation of new knowledge in the field of composition by using his research as stimulus." - 2018-19 Layton Emerging Composer Fellow, Nicole Murphy*

In memory of Professor Roger Layton AM and in lieu of flowers, the family welcomes donations to UNSW Sydney supporting two of Roger's passions, either Centre for Healthy Brain Ageing (CHeBA) or Australia Ensemble UNSW. **Vale Emeritus Professor Roger Layton.**

**To make a tax deductible donation in support of:**  
**Australia Ensemble UNSW go to: [alumni.unsw.edu.au/giving/AustraliaEnsemble](https://alumni.unsw.edu.au/giving/AustraliaEnsemble)**  
**Centre for Healthy Brain and Ageing (CHeBA) go to: [alumni.unsw.edu.au/giving/PRL/CHeBA](https://alumni.unsw.edu.au/giving/PRL/CHeBA)**

**If you prefer to send a cheque you can address as follows: University of NSW – in memory of Roger Layton and send to: J.Hall, G30 The Chancellery, UNSW Sydney 2052**

# In Time With Percussionist Alison Pratt

Percussionist Alison Pratt was due to return to Clancy Auditorium for the third Australia Ensemble UNSW concert in 2021, before its cancellation. She was to feature on marimba performing *And Legions Will Rise* by Kevin Puts.

**About the Artist:** Alison was the first percussionist to have won the ABC Young Performer of the Year Award in 1995 and has worked as a freelance percussionist with some of Australia's leading ensembles and orchestras. Born and educated in Perth, Alison completed a Bachelor of Music in Performance at the Western Australia Conservatorium of Music and a graduate diploma at Sydney Conservatorium of Music before studying at the Royal Music College in Stockholm under an Australia Council Grant. Being a versatile performer, Alison has played in a variety of ensemble contexts, including being a guest with various international orchestras, such as the London Sinfonietta and Israel Philharmonic. She was a core member of Synergy, Australia's flagship percussion ensemble, and toured throughout Australia, North America, Europe and Asia with Graham Murphy's Sydney Dance Company. We caught up with Alison and asked about her journey to becoming a freelance percussionist.

## **What drew you to the world of percussion initially?**

I still remember my mother's words: "Percussion sounds interesting. Why don't you write that down?"

The school [band] programme [at Perth Modern School – one of the two music scholarship high schools in existence back in the 1980's –] already had too many wind instruments and a lack of students wanting to learn percussion, so percussion is what they offered me! I had already had a taste of percussion when I was in kindergarten, playing the drum in *The Little Drummer Boy* at the end-of-year Christmas concert. Little did I know then that I would make a career in music as a percussionist!

## **What do you enjoy about playing in a chamber setting?**

Performing with other like-minded musicians, whether it be a full 100+ piece orchestra or a smaller chamber group or ensemble, is what I love most. The chamber music setting I particularly enjoy as it is more intimate and more focused on soloistic playing. I love being able to share the stage with fellow musicians, creating and telling a story through music. I find it inspiring to be able to bounce off their musical ideas and channel their energy into my playing during rehearsals and performances.



*Alison Pratt, Guest Percussionist*

**How did you stay connected to music in isolation last year?** Initially I enjoyed not thinking about music for a while. It was actually a relief to be forced to slow down and to have more time to do the things I love, such as reading and spending quality time with the family. I admit I became a bit of a Netflix/ABC iView and SBS on Demand addict for the first time ever! After a while I started missing playing, began practicing again and spent more time teaching, conducting and performing with my students.

**The Puts was originally programmed for the 2020 season, what was it like preparing the piece again? Can you give the audience a taste of the music?** When I recommenced practicing the Puts earlier this year after several months break, the piece felt fresh and I was more energised when returning to work on it. Luckily, I remembered a lot from my preparation in the previous year! Puts' *And Legions Will Rise* is "about the power in all of us to transcend during times of tragedy and personal crisis" (a quote from Kevin Puts himself). It seemed a very apt time to be performing this work, during the current global pandemic crisis. The piece, scored for violin, clarinet and marimba, is performed in one continuous 17-minute long movement. It blends these 3 instruments' timbres beautifully, at times combining the slow, lyrical lines of the clarinet and violin with the gentle rhythmic ostinatos of the marimba, and at other times all 3 instruments are in rapid energetic counterpoint, almost like they are in battle with each other.

# New Music Soars at UNSW

Ian Munro loves Australian birds, something he found he shared with Australia Ensemble subscriber and donor Norma Hawkins. Some in our audience will remember Munro's 2016 commission, *Three Birds* for soprano, clarinet, cello and piano, performed with guest artist Sara Macliver, supported by Norma Hawkins in memory of her husband Bruce. The work was a setting of texts of Judith Wright, the wonderful Queensland poet and campaigner for environmental conservation and indigenous land rights. Wright published an entire volume of poems about birds, which Munro has again turned to for a new work for soprano and choir.

Norma Hawkins received an Honorary Fellowship from UNSW in 2020 for her eminent service to the arts, to social justice and to UNSW, which included her commitment to the conservation of the habitat for blue wrens in her home suburb of Glebe. In discussing a new commission project, Ian Munro suggested that, rather than a song cycle for voice and piano or another chamber work, he instead write a song cycle for soprano and choir. And thus a choral project was born.

Ian Munro's *Five Birds* was due for performance on Sunday 8 August, but has been sadly deferred due to the recent COVID-19 related lockdown. However, the sopranos and altos of the Collegium Musicum Choir have been diligently learning the



John Peterson, Composer

work through online rehearsal sessions for ten weeks, the five movements each representing a different native bird using one of Judith Wright's vivid poems. Unsurprisingly, Munro has captured the character of each bird in the choral parts and the sometimes chirruping and virtuosic piano writing.

The men of the choir have not been left out of this celebration of Australian music, of course. Former UNSW music academic and a favoured composer of the Australia Ensemble, Dr. John Peterson, agreed that two of his *Songs for the Moon* (also from 2016), could be arranged for tenor, tenor-bass choir and piano, rather than their original scoring for soprano and piano. Peterson entrusted this work to the very capable talents of Harrison Collins, casual music academic and repetiteur for the Collegium Musicum Choir, whom our audience may recognise for his student work as baritone soloist, pianist, and page turner for Ian Munro. Harrison reworked two movements, on texts of Li Po and Judith Wright, challenging the choristers with soloistic and luminous harmonic writing.

Across the term, around 75 singers of the Collegium Musicum Choir have continued to work through these new Australian pieces - we remain hopeful that these can be shared later in the year, in celebration of Australian music and poetry, and the magic of their combination.



Ian Munro, Composer and Pianist

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