

# AE News

August 2020

## What's Online

Meet Harry Sdraulig, our 2020 Layton Emerging Composer Fellow!

[music.unsw.edu.au/meet-harry-2019-2020-layton-emerging-composer-fellow](https://music.unsw.edu.au/meet-harry-2019-2020-layton-emerging-composer-fellow)

Meet Philip Eames! 2020 Willgoss Choral Composition Prize recipient

[music.unsw.edu.au/meet-philip](https://music.unsw.edu.au/meet-philip)

Meet Adele! Alumni and Co-Director of MDCH

[music.unsw.edu.au/meet-adele](https://music.unsw.edu.au/meet-adele)

Meet Production Assistant and UNSW Student Kyra!

[music.unsw.edu.au/meet-kyra](https://music.unsw.edu.au/meet-kyra)

**Although the subscription concert of 15 August 2020 is cancelled, we will be broadcasting live on the night via MDCH. See links in MDCH article on Page 2.**



## A Partnership to Celebrate

At the end of May, the Music Performance Unit and UNSW Hospitality announced an exciting new partnership with Melbourne Digital Concert Hall (MDCH). This new partnership has so far seen six live-stream concerts broadcast direct from Sir John Clancy Auditorium UNSW with more scheduled to come.



*David Griffiths & Ian Munro  
[photo: Keith Saunders]*

MDCH was originally set up at the end of March in response to the employment crisis the classical music sector was thrown into when concert halls closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the last three months, MDCH has raised over \$450,000 in ticket revenue, and engaged over 200 musicians in Melbourne, Perth, Sydney and Berlin. UNSW is thrilled to partner with the Sydney leg of this initiative and provide a home for these performances.

Members of the Australia Ensemble UNSW will appear in concert via MDCH in July and August. Our Victorian based musicians Ian Munro and David Griffiths are first up and will perform a recital from The Athenaeum in Melbourne on July 31 at 8.30pm. This thought-provoking program will take listeners on a musical journey through Argentina, Cuba, America, Ireland and Australia, capturing all the colours and dances of these global snapshots featuring works by Gershwin, Munro and Guastavino. As a subscriber you should have received an email outlining a special offer to this event. The email offer included a promotional code which will provide you access to a special ticket price of \$14 at checkout. To book tickets, click on the link provided and follow the prompts: <https://watch.melbournedigitalconcerthall.com/#/item/54558>

In August, we will live stream a second performance with MDCH from our very own Sir John Clancy Auditorium at UNSW. We will broadcast this concert direct to the comfort of your home on August 15 at 7pm. This MDCH program will feature our brilliant string players Dene Olding, Dimity Hall, Irina Morozova and Julian Smiles. The program will include works by Puccini, Beethoven, Edwards (a world premiere!) & Sculthorpe.

As a special thank you for their ongoing support, subscribers will receive a special promotional code via their inboxes enabling them to tune in from the comfort of their home and view this performance for free. To register for a ticket, check your email before the concert date, and then click on the link provided below and follow the prompts: <https://watch.melbournedigitalconcerthall.com/#/item/55385>

The MDCH events would not have been possible without the extraordinary vision of MDCH co-directors Chris Howlett and Adele Schonhardt! We express our deepest gratitude for the work they have done in supporting our industry through these trying times.



Dene Olding, Irina Morozova, Dimity Hall and Julian Smiles [photo: Keith Saunders]

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## Tall stories with Alex

written by Yvette Goodchild, Artistic and Operations Coordinator

***Returning from a year's secondment, I was greeted by our new effervescent and thoroughly engaging colleague who was taller than me!! Outrageous! After happily relinquishing the tallest person in the office title, I would love to introduce Alex to those who may not have already met.***

Alex Siegers joined the MPU in March 2019 having worked previously at Sydney Youth Orchestras after graduating from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Music/Bachelor of Arts majoring in Jazz Voice, Linguistics and Asian Studies. We noticed that no matter the weather she would arrive at work by bike, which begged the question, Why? Alex I learned, is passionate about Active Transport.



'We don't own a car and I ride my bicycle everywhere - to work, to the supermarket, to Bunnings, to gigs and even to the airport! My partner walks or runs most places. If we want to go somewhere further afield or transport something large, we just get a ride share or hire a car - they have Uber pets now, too, so I can take the dogs!'

***Alex has many wonderful and varied hobbies:*** 'Gardening on my balcony and apartment rooftop, dog sitting for my mum and my friends. My newest iso-hobby is trying to bake sourdough. Our house's sourdough starter is named Christiano Ronaldough (after the soccer player). We feed him every day. He lives in the cupboard above the stove. My housemate Kyle has been more successful baking edible bread than I have, though.'

***Having travelled a lot following your final year at school, do you have a particularly interesting travel tale?***

'Again, so many to choose from. One that I think will appeal to Australia Ensemble subscribers - I took a gap year after my HSC and worked at a school in London. In my summer holidays I went to visit my friends who lived in Berlin, composer Brett Dean's daughters - Kiki and Lotte Betts-Dean. One evening when all the family were back in town Kiki told me that we were going to a family friend's house for dinner. Their friend Simon, who lived in Potsdam. So I chucked on a pair of sandals and jumped on the train. We arrived and it wasn't until he opened the front door that I realised that I was at the house of SIR SIMON RATTLE and Czech soprano Magdalena Kožená. So that night, I ate orecchiette, hand-made by Simon, and played Pictionary with Sir Simon, Magdalena, and Brett! And from what I remember, Simon was not very good at Pictionary - it was nice to know that he is still only human!'

***Alex Siegers is the Operations & Communications Assistant for the Music Performance Unit.***

# Never shone brighter - Mona Hessing's Banner

written by Elena Taylor, Senior Curator UNSW Art Collection

Mona Hessing's star never shone brighter than in August 1970 when the thirty-eight-year-old artist was commissioned to create a woven tapestry for the Sir John Clancy Auditorium. The building had been completed several months earlier, however it was felt that the stark concrete interior of the foyer needed to be softened by a work that was 'lively in colour and strong in texture' and the University Architect had put forward her name for consideration.



*Mona Hessing 'Banner'*

Hessing was an inspired choice that matched to mood of the times. Her large-scale fibre art was attracting attention, with her woven work *Vestment* exhibited in the 2nd Biennale of Contemporary Tapestry in Lausanne in 1969

and immediately purchased by the National Gallery of Victoria. Hessing was also as emblematic of a generation of newly liberated women, in 1971 described by POL magazine as 'one of the new breed women...alone, creative and passionately involved in the living of her life on her own terms.'

In 1967, after the breakdown of her marriage, Hessing had undertaken a twelve-month world tour, spending most of this time living and working in India. She was fascinated by its textile traditions, and the impact of her time there is apparent in much of her subsequent work, for example in the rich colours of her tapestry for the Clancy foyer. Consisting of 126 individual pieces, *Banner* is woven of thick wool, overlaid with knotted and looped elements. Hessing worked with weavers in Panipat, India who hand-loomed the coloured panels, while she made the knotted sections and assembled the work in her Woolloomooloo studio. *Banner* took over nine months to create and was installed in the Clancy foyer in mid-1971, in time for the building's official opening in August. *Banner* received much praise from within the University and wider community, with leading art critic Elwyn Lynn considering that 'Universities need such evidence of the humanities in creative activity'.

Hessing specified that the individual elements of *Banner* could be configured in different ways to keep the work fresh and lively, and this has occurred several times during the work's history. Coinciding with the recent refurbishment of the Sir John Clancy Auditorium, the tapestry was removed and cleaned off-site by a specialist conservator. *Banner* is the largest work by Hessing to remain in its original setting, and one of the most significant examples of the harmonious integration of craft and architecture that was a feature of this decade.

To find out about other works of art in the University's collection, see the online exhibition *The view from here: women artists in the UNSW Art Collection*

[exhibitions.library.unsw.edu.au/the-view-from-here](http://exhibitions.library.unsw.edu.au/the-view-from-here)

## UNSW Culture's New Instagram Account!

UNSW Culture now has an Instagram account. This sparkling new account will feature the latest photos and combined stories from the UNSW Art Unit, Music Performance Unit, and the Religious Centre, which fall under the Cultural Networks and Communities portfolio at UNSW.

Stay in touch with UNSW Culture via [instagram.com/unswculture](https://www.instagram.com/unswculture)

# You Can't Stop the Music

During Term 2, our in-person Large Instrumental Music Ensemble (LIME) program has had to temporarily pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of UNSW's Orchestra and Wind Symphony have found new ways to keep the music going and have headed online to present their own concert series to the student body and a wider audience. The concert series produced by the Society of Orchestra and Pipers can be viewed on their facebook page with repertoire ranging from an arrangement of 'The Simpsons' theme through to Dvořák's Piano Trio. Past performances can be viewed here:

[facebook.com/UNSWSOAP](https://www.facebook.com/UNSWSOAP)



Photographer: Melinda Saputera (UNSW PhotoClub)

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## Willgoss strikes a chord with the Art of Giving

At the start of July, we announced that the Music Performance Unit would be accepting entries for the Willgoss Ensemble Composition Prize for 2020, aimed at encouraging and promoting the creation of an original work for ensembles. This special new Prize will be offered for one year only and includes the opportunity for a composer to have a new work commissioned and performed by members of UNSW Orchestra, Wind Symphony or the Collegium Musicum Choir in 2021. More information is available at [music.unsw.edu.au](https://music.unsw.edu.au) and applications close on August 2, 2020.

The month of July also saw for the fifth year running, the announcement of the Willgoss Choral Composition Prize. This Prize, open for applications until 29 January 2021, will result in the selection of an original choral work premiered by the Burgundian Consort UNSW in the 2021 season.

Without the incredible generosity of Sue and Richard Willgoss, we would be unable to offer these wonderful career building opportunities. We extend our deepest thanks to Sue and Richard for their ongoing vision, generosity, and significant contribution to the commissioning of new Australian works.

We recently interviewed the winner of the 2019 Willgoss Choral Composition Prize, Philip Eames. Full video of interview available here [music.unsw.edu.au/meet-philip](https://music.unsw.edu.au/meet-philip)

## Take a minute to complete our Audience Survey!

By now you should have received from us an online survey via email about returning to the concert hall. Please take a minute to complete the survey. Your feedback will greatly assist us in our preparations for when concerts are able to resume on campus.

We very much look forward to welcoming you back to UNSW as soon as it is safe to do so.