



Sydney Conservatorium of Music

Greenway Series

SCM Early Music Ensemble: Re-engaging the Art of Story Telling in Music

Director: Neal Peres Da Costa

Verbugghen Hall
Friday 8 September 2023, 7pm



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY



SYDNEY
CONSERVATORIUM
OF MUSIC

Program

J.W. von Goethe (1749–1832)

Sound scape: Excerpt from *Erlkönig*

Recited by Moissi

W.A. Mozart (1756–1791)

Symphony No. 25 in G Minor

Allegro con brio

Sound scape: *Voi che sapete*

Recorded by Adelina Patti, 1905,

Craig y Nos, Wales

“Voi che sapete” from Marriage of Figaro

Emulation by Anna Fraser

J.C. Bach (1735–1782)

“In the Shady Blest Retreat” from

Cantata Vauxhall Song W.H. 28,

Version by Domenico Corri,

The Singing Preceptor

Sung by Anna Fraser

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

Sound scape: *“Aufenthalt” from*

Schwanengesang

Recorded by Lev Sibiakov, 1912,

St Petersburg

“Aufenthalt” from Schwanengesang

Emulation by Anna Fraser and Neal

Peres Da Costa

Johann Anton André (1775–1842)

“Liebe” from Lieder und Gesänge

Performed by Anna Fraser and Neal

Peres Da Costa

Symphony in E flat Op. 25

Adagio – Tempo di Recitativo

Andantino moderato, quasi larghetto,

ma con moto

Jan Ladislav Dussek (1760–1812)

Molto adagio con anima ed

espressione from Piano Sonata Op. 70

Performed by Benedikt Holter

W.A. Mozart (1756–1791)

“Batti Batti” from Don Giovanni, Act 1,

Scene 16, No. 12

Sung by Alexandra McDougall Sharp

Emulation of recording by Adelina Patti,

1905, Craig y Nos, Wales

L. van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Sound scape: **Symphony No. 5 first movement**

Recorded by Friederich Kark and Berlin

Odeon Streich Orchester, 1910, Berlin

Symphony No. 5

Allegro con brio

Emulation by EME

We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the land on which we meet; the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. It is upon their ancestral lands that the University of Sydney is built.

As we share our own knowledge, teaching, learning and research practices within this university, may we also pay respect to the knowledge embedded forever within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.

Program note

What did Beethoven's famous Fifth Symphony sound like at the first Viennese performance in 1808? And how did the Italian soprano Dorotea Bussani (1763–1809) transmit Cherubino's crazed infatuation for the Countess to the audience, in Mozart's aria "Voi che sapete" at the 1787 premier of his opera *The Marriage of Figaro* in Vienna? Without a time machine we will never find the answers to these questions. But, one thing is certain: musicians (singers and instrumentalists) from the eras of Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert and other composers of the 18th and 19th centuries delivered music in imaginatively expressive ways that projected stories to the audience. Through the employment of myriad expressive devices including inflections of tone and timing, musicians took their listeners on scintillating journeys, sometimes whispering, sometimes shouting, at times calm, sorrowful or languid, at others frantic or angry.

These devices are well documented in historical written sources (both theatrical and musical), which reveal a 'continuum'—continuous but evolving sequence—over several centuries of expressive practices, applied judiciously at the will of the highly-skilled musician. At one end of the continuum we might consider the advice of Carl Philipp Emmanuel Bach (1714–1788) who, in 1753, listed the constituents of successful musical delivery as "the loudness and softness of the notes, their accentuation, Schnellen [a finger technique on the clavichord], portamento [audible sliding effects], staccato [shortening of notes], vibrato [audible trembling effects], arpeggiation [playing notes one after the other which are aligned in the notation], sustaining [smooth or legato], holding back [getting slower], and pushing forward [getting faster]. These techniques were seldom marked by the composer in the score but were expected to be added by the performer. Bach warns that "Whoever either does not use these things at all or who uses them at the wrong time **has a bad performance style.**" At the other end of the continuum we can look to the words of the German cellist Hugo Becker (1863–1941) who explained in 1929: "Animato [getting faster] is the marking for that feeling that makes us talk faster when relating events that affect us very strongly [...] Meno or più tranquillo [less or more tranquil], on the other hand, should check the flow of the narrative; it can be used either as a calming effect, or to underline the meaning of a particular place, in order to bring out something musically significant."

But this continuum of expressive devices in musical delivery were all but expunged during the first half of the twentieth century with the rise of modernism, a time of unprecedented change across the arts and other disciplines, in which the 'sentimentality' of the 19th century was expressly rejected. In classical music this resulted in styles of delivery which were much more closely bound to the composer's score notation and markings (which depending on the era could be

quite scant), leaving little room for improvised musical creativity from the performer. Thus, the palate of expression available to artists was severely reduced to the extent that performers became “a disappearing transmitter of canonic works and [composers’] identities” to borrow the words of Anna Scott. The development of sound recording at the turn of the 20th century accelerated this change allowing musicians and audiences around the globe quick and easy access to a multitude of performances. This together with the effects of globalization have led overall to a homogeneity in classical music performance; we know how Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony sounds: it should sound the way we hear it on recordings, on the radio, and in the concert hall!

Alas, all is not lost! Early sound recordings preserve the artistry of many revered musicians, some of whom were trained in the middle of the 19th century or a little before. These recordings allow us to experience how musicians within a half century of the passing of Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert expressed musical stories. We hear their performance practices “unearthed from a time capsule” to quote David Kjar. They provide rich opportunity for us to learn from bygone artists by emulating (imitating) and embodying their interpretations to make them our own: not for the sake of creating museum performances, but to inspire fresh and novel approaches, paving the way for reimagining music of the past creatively and with appropriately improvisatory spirit.

Tonight, for your delectation, we have assembled a program that intersperses a sound scape of early recordings with live performances. We invite you to listen to the past while experiencing the present.

The program opens with an extract from a recording of the Austrian actor Alexander Moissi (1879–1935) reciting Goethe’s *Erlkönig* (Erlking), a tragic story in which a child’s life is taken by the terrifying king of the elves. It is truly ear-opening to hear how a 19th-century actor such as Moissi modifies his sounds and pacing to characterise the four protagonists—the narrator, the father, the child and the Erlking—inflecting his speech in myriad ways seldom heard today. Read the English translation given below while you listen.

Moissi’s thought-provoking recitation sets the scene for the turbulent first movement of Mozart’s *Sturm und Drang* (storm and stress) Symphony No. 25. To enhance the movements syncopations, jagged rhythms and arching figures portraying extreme unrest, we have experimented with making gruff accents and ferocious timbres and in changing of tempo (sometimes violently) to emphasise the alarming nature of the music. Relief from the devilish strains of this movement comes in Mozart’s delectable aria “Voi che sapete” recorded in 1905 by Adelina Patti (1843–1927), arguably the most celebrated soprano of the 19th-century. Patti’s way of expressing the feverish adoration of Cherubino for the Countess is

extraordinary by modern standards. She makes frequent changes of tempo to underscore sentimental words or to ignite passionate phrases, modifies vocal timbre to match ever-changing emotions, and employs sliding effects and expressive tremolo to provide particular poetic colouring. It is tantalising to ponder that Patti's singing preserves remnants at least of the style of singing Mozart heard and expected from a singer such as Dorotea Bussani! Patti's recording is followed by our performance of the aria, sung by Anna Fraser who is currently exploring historical bel canto techniques in her doctoral studies at SCM as team member on the Australian Research Council funded Discovery Project *The shock of the old: rediscovering the sounds of bel canto 1700–1900*. Anna has emulated and embodied Patti's style of singing this aria in a very detailed manner to understand her sound world. Likewise, the Early Music Ensemble has emulated orchestrally the effects evident in the playing of Patti's collaborative pianist.

From Mozart we are transported into the magical world of a forest grove in J. C. Bach's (1735–1782) gentle aria "In the Shady Blest Retreat". For the performance tonight, Anna Fraser brings to life a 19th-century version of this aria marked up by the renowned singing teacher Domenico Corri (1746–1825), littered with expressive indications and ornamental figures that are eye-opening about ways in which singers of the era enhanced text and story. We hear next an extract from Schubert's brooding song "Aufenthalt" (Resting Place) from his song cycle *Schwanengesang* in a stirring rendition replete with noticeable changes of tempo and rhythm, and other expressive devices by the Russian singer Lev Sibiakov (1869–1942) recorded in St Petersburg in 1912. Anna Fraser and Neal Peres Da Costa perform an emulation of Sibiakov's (and his accompanist's) interpretation followed by a beautiful little song called "Liebe" (Love) from the third book of *Lieder und Gesänge* (1818) by Johann Anton André (1775–1842), best known for being Mozart's publisher. "Liebe" takes us into a fascinating world of expressive possibilities. André's extensive markings provide a treasure trove of information, a veritable masterclass in methods of storytelling in musical delivery with frequent changes of tempo, a plethora of accent, crescendo and diminuendo signs that underscore the words and their meaning. For example, the first stanza has three changes of tempo in the space of 5 bars (see translation below):

"Strong is the rough hand of death" crotchet = 54

"but stronger still is love" crotchet = 66

"and tightly embraces the band of the grave,
but firmer hearts love" crotchet = 76

Such changes of tempo to enhance the increasingly positive message of the text would hardly have been envisaged but for this information. We follow it immediately with the beautiful second movement from André's little-known E flat Symphony (1805), an instrumental recitative and aria to which we are applying the principles of expression discovered in "Liebe". This is likely to be the first time André's "Liebe" and his symphonic movement will be heard in Australia.

Next, we are transported to an intimate European salon of the early-19th century (in Paris, London or Vienna) in a highly expressive solo piano movement *Molto adagio con anima ed espressione* from Jan Ladislav Dussek's (1760–1812) Piano Sonata Op. 70. Several historical accounts attest to the highly-sophisticated style with which Dussek applied expressive techniques. Describing Dussek's flexibility of rhythm in song like passages, the French pianist Henri Herz, explained that he "produced a hazy and melancholy tint on certain sequences by letting the right-hand sing in a vague and nonchalant manner, whereas the left executed the arpeggiated chords [in the accompaniment] rigorously in time." In his piano sonatas Dussek used the word *espressivo* to indicate this style. In this performance given by our exchange student, the Viennese pianist Benedikt Holter, we experience effusions of brooding emotion vividly brought out through his experimentation with 19th-century piano techniques (arpeggiation, tempo fluctuation and rhythmic freedom), all given special colouring by the varying timbral qualities available on SCM's c.1819 Viennese grand piano. This piano is a replica of an original by Conrad Graf (1782–1851) sporting a single and double moderator (a stop producing veiled sounds by causing felt to come between hammer and string) and a truly *una corda* shift pedal in which the hammers engage a single string, evoking a ghostly sound world.

A scene change, and we are back in the world of Mozart, this time a coquettish aria "Batti Batti, o bel Masetto" from his opera *Don Giovanni* (in which Zerlina mocks Masetto while imploring him to beat her). For this performance, Honours student Alexandra McDougall Sharp has courageously emulated and embodied Adelina Patti's 1905 recording. Our concert concludes with an extract from the first-known recording of the well-known *Allegro con brio* movement from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony recorded in Berlin in 1910 by the Grosse Odeon Streich Orchester directed by Friederich Kark (1869–1939). In this rendition, Beethoven's fate knocking motive, and the inherent anger and despair of the music are expressed through wild and dramatic shifts of tempo and rhythm. We've had enormous fun adopting these ways of telling story into our interpretation of this powerful work.

The use of gut-strung stringed instruments, period wind instruments, timpani and a Viennese piano add historical colours that help in our story telling efforts. Our singers, too, are experimenting with the raising and lowering of their larynx position and soft palette to attain myriad hues ranging from clear and light to dark and heavy as was the expectation in bel canto before the 20th century. We hope you enjoy our story telling.

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Song Texts

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1842)

Erlkönig (English translation: Richard Wigmore)

*Wer reitet so spät durch Nacht und
Wind?*

*Es ist der Vater mit seinem Kind;
Er hat den Knaben wohl in dem Arm,
Er faßt ihn sicher, er hält ihn warm.*

Who rides so late through the night
and wind?

It is the father with his child.
He has the boy in his arms;
he holds him safely, he keeps him
warm.

*Mein Sohn, was birgst du so bang dein
Gesicht?*

*Siehst, Vater, du den Erlkönig nicht?
Den Erlenkönig mit Kron' und Schweif?
Mein Sohn, es ist ein Nebelstreif.*

'My son, why do you hide your face in
fear?'

'Father, can you not see the Erlking?
The Erlking with his crown and tail?'
'My son, it is a streak of mist.'

*Du liebes Kind, komm, geh mit mir!
Gar schöne Spiele spiel' ich mit dir;
Manch' bunte Blumen sind an dem
Strand;
Meine Mutter hat manch' gülden Ge-
wand.*

'Sweet child, come with me.
I'll play wonderful games with you.
Many a pretty flower grows on the
shore;
my mother has many a golden robe.'

*Mein Vater, mein Vater, und hörest du
nicht,*

*Was Erlenkönig mir leise verspricht?
Sey ruhig, bleibe ruhig, mein Kind;
In dürrn Blättern säuselt der Wind.*

'Father, father, do you not hear

what the Erlking softly promises me?'
'Calm, be calm, my child:
the wind is rustling in the withered
leaves.'

*Willst, feiner Knabe, du mit mir gehn?
Meine Töchter sollen dich warten schön;
Meine Töchter führen den nächtlichen
Reihn,
Und wiegen und tanzen und singen dich
ein.*

*Mein Vater, mein Vater, und siehst du
nicht dort
Erlkönigs Töchter am düstern Ort?*

*Mein Sohn, mein Sohn, ich seh' es
genau;
Es scheinen die alten Weiden so grau.*

*Ich liebe dich, mich reizt deine schöne
Gestalt;
Und bist du nicht willig, so brauch' ich
Gewalt.
Mein Vater, mein Vater, jetzt faßt er
mich an!
Erlkönig hat mir ein Leids gethan!*

*Dem Vater grauset's, er reitet ge-
schwind,
Er hält in Armen das ächzende Kind,
Erreicht den Hof mit Mühe und Noth;
In seinen Armen das Kind war todt.*

*'Won't you come with me, my fine lad?
My daughters shall wait upon you;
my daughters lead the nightly dance,
and will rock you, and dance, and sing
you to sleep.'*

*'Father, father, can you not see
Erlking's daughters there in the dark-
ness?'
'My son, my son, I can see clearly:
it is the old grey willows gleaming.'*

*'I love you, your fair form allures me,
and if you don't come willingly, I'll use
force.'
'Father, father, now he's seizing me!
The Erlking has hurt me!'*

*The father shudders, he rides swiftly,
he holds the moaning child in his arms;
with one last effort he reaches home;
the child lay dead in his arms.*

Lorenzo da Ponte (1749–1838)

"Voi che sapete" (English translation: <https://www.liveabout.com/voi-che-sapete-che-cosa-e-amor-lyrics-and-text-translation-724036>)

*Voi che sapete che cosa è amor,
donne, vedete s'io l'ho nel cor.
Quello ch'io provo vi ridirò,
è per me nuovo, capir nol so.*

*Sento un affetto pien di desir,
ch'ora è diletto, ch'ora è martir.*

*You who know what love is,
Women, see whether it's in my heart.
What I am experiencing I will tell you,
It is new to me and I do not understand
it.
I have a feeling full of desire,
That now, is both pleasure and suffer-
ing.*

*Gelo e poi sento l'alma avvampar,
e in un momento torno a gelar.*

*Ricerco un bene fuori di me,
non so chi'l tiene, non so cos'è.*

*Sospiro e gemo senza voler,
palpito e tremosenza saper.
Non trovo pace notte né dì,
ma pur mi piace languir così.
Voi che sapete che cosa è amor,
donne, vedete s'io l'ho nel cor.*

At first frost, then I feel the soul burn-
ing,
And in a moment I'm freezing again.
Seek a blessing outside myself,
I do not know how to hold it, I do not
know what it is.

I sigh and moan without meaning to,
Throb and tremble without knowing,
I find no peace both night or day,
But even still, I like to languish.
You who know what love is,
Women, see whether it's in my heart.

Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803)

“Liebe” (English translation: Anna Fraser)

*Stark ist des Todes rauhe Hand,
Doch stärker noch ist Liebe;
Und fest umarmt des Grabes Band,
Doch fester herzt die Liebe.
Die Kohle glimmt, das Feuer sprüht,
Doch höher flammt und tiefer glüht
Die Wonne süßer Liebe.*

*Kein Wasser löscht ihr Feuer aus,
Kein Strom ertränkt die Liebe.
Böt' ein Verschmähter Hof und Haus
Für ungeschminkte Liebe,
Umsonst wär' alles Gut und Geld,*

*Denn fern von Kauf und Gold und Welt,

Bleibt ewig frei die Liebe.*

Strong is death's rough hand,
But love is even stronger;
And tightly embraced the grave's band,
But love is stronger.
The coal glows, the fire sparkles,
But higher flames and deeper glows
The bliss of sweet love.

No water quenches their fire,
No river drowns love.
Offer a scorned farm and house
for unvarnished love,
Everything would be good and money
for free
Because far from purchase and gold
and world,
Love stays free forever.

Lorenzo da Ponte

"Batti Batti, o bel Masetto" (English translation: <https://lyricstranslate.com>)

*Batti, batti, o bel Masetto,
la tua povera Zerlina:
starò qui come agnellina
le tue bòtte ad aspettar.
Lascero straziarmi il crine,
lascero cavarmi gli occhi;*

*e le tue care manine
lieta poi saprò bacciar.
Ah, lo vedo, non hai core!
Pace, pace, o vita mia!
In contento ed allegria
notte e dì vogliam passar.*

Beat, beat, oh handsome Masetto
Your poor Zerlina;
I'll stay here, as a little sheep,
To wait for your blows.
I'll let (you) lacerate my (horse) hair,
I'll let (you) take out my eyes,

And your dear little hands
I'll be then be happily able to kiss.
Ah, I see that, you have no heart!
Peace, peace, oh my life,
In happiness and in gaiety
Night and day – we want to spend,

With Thanks

With special thanks to Rachael Beesley and Daniel Yeadon who have tutored the strings, and to Nathan Cox for fortepiano preparation and maintenance.

Fortepiano: Viennese Grand Piano after Conrad Graf (c.1819) made by Paul McNulty (Divisov, Czech Republic)

SCM Early Music Ensemble

Vocalists

Anna Fraser
Alexandra McDougall Sharp

Violin 1

Jared Adams
Miranda Ilchef
Beverly Kwan
Hugo Hui

Violin 2

Lucy Clarke-Randazzo
Catherine Jang
Rachael Beesley (tutor)

Viola

Justin Chen
India Culey
Joseph Clemmit

Cello

Harry Wagstaff
Belvina Bai
Rachel Lee
Daniel Yeadon (tutor)

Double Bass

Sascha Bakker

Flute

Ruth Crosby
Jacob Lawler

Oboe

Kirsten Barry
Hamish Spicer

Clarinet

Andrew Doyle

Bassoon

Max Huang
Shengbo Zhao

Horn

Bridget Darby
Chris Peters
McKenzie Robinson
Emily Hackney

Trumpet

Jude MacArthur
Liz Dawson

Fortepiano

Benedikt Holter
Liam Green

Timpani

Bryn Wood

**Correct as of 8th September*

What's On at the Con | September

Student Concert

Too School For Cool

Saturday 9 September, 10:00am
Ampitheatre, Royal Botanic
Gardens Sydney, free entry

Sydney Secondary College

Instrumental Music Program

Showcase 2023

Saturday 9 September, 11:30am
Vebrugghen Hall, Tickets \$25.30

Open Academy

Rising Stars

Saturday 9 September, 11:00am,
2:00pm and 3:00pm
Recital Hall East and West, free
entry

Staff Recital and Chamber Series

Australian Piano Trios Reborn

Tuesday 12 September 7:00pm
Recital Hall West, Adult \$25 Conc
\$15

Lunchbreak Concert

Piano Division

Wednesday 13 September, 12.30pm
Verbrugghen Hall, free - gold coin
donation

Lunchbreak Concert

Vocal Division

Thursday 14 September, 12:30pm
Verbrugghen Hall, free - gold coin
donation

Contemporary Music Series

Noise in the Café

Friday 15 September, 1:00pm
Music Cafe, free entry

Trumpet Masterclass

Jeroen Berwaerts

Tuesday 19 September 11:00am
Recital Hall West, free - online
registration

Staff Recital and Chamber Series

French Connections

Tuesday 19 September 7:00pm
Recital Hall West, Adult \$25 Conc
\$15

Lunchbreak Concert

Classical Guitar

Wednesday 20 September, 12.30pm
Verbrugghen Hall, free - gold coin
donation

Lunchbreak Concert

Harp

Thursday 21 September, 12:30pm
Verbrugghen Hall, free - gold coin
donation

Greenway Series

SCM Wind Symphony

Friday 22 September 7:00pm
Verbrugghen Hall, Adult \$25 Conc
\$15

Conservatorium Festival

Festival of Art Song 2023

Saturday 23 September -
Wednesday 27 September
Recital Hall West, Passes \$50-\$150

More information and tickets

available online now:

sydney.edu.au/music/boxoffice