



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

—
Sydney
Conservatorium
of Music

GREENWAY SERIES

SCM EARLY MUSIC ENSEMBLE

*LOVE, LOSS, MADNESS AND DEATH: BEL CANTO
INSPIRED BY MANUEL GARCÍA*

NEAL PERES DA COSTA CO-DIRECTOR
ISABELLE WATSON CO-DIRECTOR



VERBRUGGHEN HALL

Friday 31 October 2025 7:00pm

We acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the land on which we meet; the Gadigal 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

DOMENICO CIMAROSA (1749 - 1801)

Sinfonia from *Il matrimonio segreto*
Largo; Allegro moderato

Aria: "Pria che spunti in ciel"
from *Il matrimonio segreto*
- Jordan Sarkis, tenor

Recitative: "Che per pietà mi dice"
Aria: "Ah! Parlate"
from *Il sacrificio d'Abramo*
- Claire Burrell-McDonald, soprano

FRANCESCO MORLACCHI (1784 - 1841)

Aria: "Morir ciel qual concerto"
Romanza from *Teobaldo ed Isolina*
- Anna Fraser, soprano
- Jacob Lawler, flute
- Hannah Lane, harp

GIOACHINO ROSSINI (1792 - 1868)

Recitative: "Si, vi sarà vendetta"
Aria: "Deh ti ferma"
from *Semiramide*
- David Greco, bass

ALISON COLE

*Footsteps in Shadow**

GIROLAMO CRESCENTINI (1783 - 1846)

Recitative: "Idolo del mio cor"
Aria: "Ombra adorata aspetta"
Inserted into Niccolò Antonio Zingarelli's
Romeo e Giulietta
- Anna Fraser, soprano

NICCOLÒ ANTONIO ZINGARELLI (1752 - 1837)

Sinfonia No. 7, Op. 22

* World Premiere

PROGRAM NOTE

In 1840, Manuel García II (1805–1906)—arguably the most famous singing pedagogue of the nineteenth century—published part 1 of his influential singing treatise entitled *Ecole de García: Traité complet de l'art du chant* (Treatise on the Art of Singing). This was followed in 1847 with the second edition of part 1 and the first edition of part 2 of the treatise. In these two parts, García preserved for the future an extraordinary level of detail about the art of bel canto as it had evolved within a continuum of practice that stretched back at least two centuries. His descriptions are forensic in nature, informed by his newly-invented laryngoscope—a device that allowed García to examine the singers' vocal tract and thus to determine for the first time in a scientific way how the emission of different sounds took place physically. García was a member of a famous family of singers, which included his father Manuel García I (1775–1832) and his two sisters Maria Malibran (1808–1836) and Pauline Viardot (1821–1910). His treatise was extremely popular and was published in multiple formats throughout the nineteenth century and in the first decades of the twentieth century. He taught many famous singers, some of whom were captured on early wax sound recordings.

Those early sound recordings tell us much about nineteenth-century singing style which at its heart was declamatory: bel canto singers told stories through their singing, employing the same types of sounds and delivery practices (for example, frequent changes to timing and rhythm) used by actors, narrators and orators. In this era, it was characteristic in bel canto for singers to use the full potential of vocal sounds and colours across their range, including the spectrum of light and dark sounds (*chiaroscuro*) created through varying laryngeal positions and pharyngeal shapes and spaces to convey forcefully and convincingly the meaning of the text.

This art steadily disappeared in the first half of the twentieth century in favour of a more consistently powerful, projected and homogenous sound, with long, smooth and largely uninflected lines. Nineteenth-century singing, like instrumental playing, also relied on *tempo rubato* – rhythm and tempo modification (sometimes extreme by modern standards), sliding effects (*portamento* and *scooping*), trembling effects (*tremolo* and *vibrato*), varied articulation (short notes, connected notes, breaths and pauses) and added notes (*ornamentation*) to underscore and emphasise the text. These practices were, in most cases, not notated by the composer, but it was their expectation that singers would add these according to taste, need and context. What is wonderful about García's treatise is that he gave copious directions to singers about how to apply such practices, marking up five works at the end of the part two with instructions about sound quality (*timbre*), dramatic breaths, *portamenti*, and the most florid of florid ornamentation.

These annotated works form the backbone of tonight's concert, a celebration both of Manuel García and the art of nineteenth-century bel canto. The concert is research in action supported by an Australian Research Council-funded Discovery Project entitled *The shock of the old: Hearing the sounds of bel canto 1700–1900* now in its final stages at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. The project has excavated evidence of singing in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries through the lens of early recorded evidence, brought to life in experimental artistic interpretations by an expert team and disseminated across the globe. Tonight's concert also enhances the ecosystem of research-led education at Sydney Conservatorium with collaboration between the bel canto research project and SCM's Early Music Ensemble – a training ground for period instrument and performance style.

We present an imagined opera commencing with the Sinfonia (overture) to Domenico Cimarosa's opera *Il matrimonio segreto* (1792), widely regarded as the finest Italian comic opera of the late-eighteenth century. Premiered in Vienna at the Burgtheater under Emperor Leopold II's patronage, it was so successful that the emperor commanded an immediate repeat performance—the only known encore of an entire opera in history. The work's witty libretto, centered on a secretly married couple navigating familial pretensions and romantic misunderstandings, sparkles with Cimarosa's graceful melodies, deft ensemble writing, and warmth of character reminiscent of Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro*. This sets the scene for our imagined opera exploring the themes of love, loss, madness and death.

The wranglings of love are explored in Cimarosa's aria "Pria che spunti" from *Il matrimonio segreto*, tonight sung by tenor Jordan Sarkis. García's tells us that:

Carolina, the daughter of a rich merchant, has been asked in marriage, at the moment when she has just secretly married Paolino, an employee of her father. At the point of fleeing with his wife, Paolino tells her of the plans he has made to assure their withdrawal, and seeks to overcome her scruples by the keenest tenderness and the softest persuasion. A gracious and tender voice, ornaments and accents imitative of the delicate or vigorous nuances: such are the means which will give to this admirable piece its true color and will make evident all the charm of it.[i]

After such a gracious aria we are immediately plunged into the depths of despair in which the anguish of loss and death are portrayed in Cimarosa's recitative "Che per pietà mi dice" and aria "Ah! Parlate" from his opera *Sacrificio d'Abraham*, first performed in Naples 1786 and sung tonight by soprano Claire Burrell-McDonald. García explains:

Abraham has left to go to carry out the order which he has received, to immolate his son. Sara, whom the poet supposes has been warned of his misfortune, looks for Isaac everywhere; the ... piece includes the eloquent depiction of her torments.

The most dangerous pitfall in the expression of energetic feelings is exaggeration or triviality; one avoids above all this last fault, by setting off by the purity and perfect correctness of style what the expression would have of excessive simplicity and vulgarity.

From despair and anguish we visit an intimate world of lost love depicted through the ethereal sounds of the glass harmonica imitated by Anna Fraser (soprano), Jacob Lawler (flute) and Hannah Lane (harp) in Francesco Morlacchi's (1784–1841) aria "Morir ciel qual concerto" from the opera *Tebaldo ed Isolina*, premiered in Venice in 1822. According to García: "The aria ... belongs to the style of the past century [eighteenth century] and offers a remarkable example of it. I got it from Giovanni Batista Velluti [1780–1861] who is the only person today who possesses the secrets of that extinct school ... G. B. Velluti, the last famous Italian sopranist, was born in Monterone in the province of Ancona in 1781. He lives retired near the banks of the Brenta."

Opera is nothing without its moments of madness. In Gioachino Rossini's recitativo "Si, vi sarà vendetta" and aria: "Deh ti ferma" from the opera *Semiramide*, first performed Venice 1823, baritone David Greco portrays the insanity of the character Assur. According to García:

Assur, devoured by ambition and arrogance, pursues with an implacable hatred of the one whose rise has just annihilated his power. He has already poisoned the old King Ninus in the hope of securing the sceptre, and he is contemplating the assassination of the newly chosen king. At the moment of entering the tomb of the Assyrian monarch, where he hopes to take his victim by surprise, he suddenly experiences a mysterious uneasiness; his imagination presents to him some frightening phantoms. The desire for vengeance, anger, profound terror, bewilderment, the fear of death, supplication, such is the series of different shades with which this impassioned scene is stamped by turns.

When different but lightly distinct feelings succeed each other, the student should not only characterize them, but he should also space them so-to-say, in order that too much hurry does not cause one effect to destroy another and confuse the impressions of his listeners.

Our opera brings us to the modern era of the Sydney Conservatorium in the world premiere of Alison Cole's *Footsteps and Shadows*. Commissioned for EME, *Footsteps and Shadows* is a new multimedia work created to celebrate 110 years of The Sydney Conservatorium of Music – a place that has nurtured generations of artists, composers, and scholars who have shaped Australia's musical landscape and carried its creative spirit across the world.

The work reflects on the Conservatorium's living legacy – the footsteps that echo through its corridors and the shadow of its history that continues to inspire and protect those who follow. It draws upon the idea that every note, every act of creation within these walls, resonates beyond time, weaving past, present, and future into a shared artistic continuum.

Through sound, image, and movement, *Footsteps and Shadows* pays tribute to the lineage of talent and creative leadership that has defined this institution. It honours those who have flourished here and gestures toward the generations yet to come – creative voices who will walk these same corridors, carrying forward the Conservatorium’s enduring spirit of innovation and artistry.

Integrating orchestral textures with processed excerpts of songs and arias captured on old sound recording technology (wax disc recordings) performed by Anna Fraser, Claire Burrell-McDonald and Neal Peres Da Costa in 2024 at Surrey University in the United Kingdom, composer Alison Cole creates a striking timbral blend that merges modern and historical sound worlds. The result is a sonic dialogue between eras – a meditation on continuity, memory, and the resonant legacy of music-making at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

The final vocal number in our imagined opera tells the tale of resounding love in Girolamo Crescentini’s (1762–1846) aria “Idolo del mio cor” sung (likely by Crescentini – a famous castrato and singing teacher) and premiered at La Scala Milan in 1796. The aria was inserted into the opera *Romeo e Giuletta* (1796) by Niccolò Antonio Zingarelli Sung tonight by Anna Fraser. This exquisitely lyrical cavatina epitomises the bel canto ideal of the late-eighteenth century, marrying refined sentiment with elegant melodic ornamentation. Its poised simplicity and expressive nuance made it one of the most admired examples of Crescentini’s art and a model for later vocal style.

Our imagined opera closes with a little-known instrumental sinfonia by Zingarelli, composed in the 1790s, reflecting the elegant transition from late-Classical to early-Romantic orchestral style. Though best known for his operas, Zingarelli here displays a refined command of form, balance, and lyrical invention reminiscent of Haydn and early Rossini. The work’s bright sonorities, rhythmic vitality, and expressive slow movement reveal a composer equally at ease in instrumental as in vocal expression.

© Program note by Neal Peres Da Costa

[i] All excerpts from Manuel García are taken from *A Complete Treatise on the Art of Singing: Part 2* by Manuel García II, Complete and Unabridged, The Editions of 1847 and 1872, collated edited and translated by Donald V. Paschke (New York: Da Capo Press, 1975).

Domenico Cimarosa (1749 – 1801)

“Pria che spunti in ciel l'aurora” from *Il matrimonio segreto* (1792)

Premiered in Vienna

Libretto by Giovanni Bertati (1735 – 1815)

Annotations by Manuel García II (1805 – 1906)

from *École de García Traité complet*, Part 2, 1847

Paolino:

Pria che spunti in ciel l'aurora	<i>Before dawn breaks in the sky,</i>
cheti, cheti, a lento passo,	<i>quietly, quietly, slowly,</i>
scenderemo fin abbasso,	<i>we will descend below,</i>
Che nessun ci sentirà.	<i>so that no one will hear us.</i>
Sortiremo pian pianino	<i>We will slip out quietly</i>
per la porta del giardino:	<i>through the garden gate:</i>
tutta pronta una carrozza	<i>a carriage will be waiting for us,</i>
là da noi si troverà.	<i>all ready to go.</i>
Chiusi in quella, il vetturino,	<i>Locked inside it, the coachman,</i>
per schivar qualunque intoppo,	<i>to avoid any obstacles,</i>
i cavalli di galoppo	<i>will drive the horses at a gallop</i>
senza posa caccierà.	<i>without stopping.</i>
Da una vecchia mia parente,	<i>To an old relative of mine,</i>
buona donna e assai pietosa,	<i>a good and very compassionate woman,</i>
ce n'andremo, cara sposa,	<i>we will go, dear bride,</i>
e staremo cheti là.	<i>and we will stay there quietly.</i>
Come poi s'avrà da fare	<i>As for what to do next,</i>
penseremo a mente cheta.	<i>we will think about it calmly.</i>
Sposa cara, sta pur lieta,	<i>Dear bride, be happy,</i>
che l'amor ci assisterà.	<i>for love will assist us.</i>

Domenico Cimarosa (1749 – 1801)

“Chi per pietà mi dice” from *Il Sacrificio d'Abramo* (1786)

Libretto by Giovanni de Gamerra (1742 – 1803)

Annotations by Manuel García II (1805 – 1906)

from *École de García Traité complet*, Part 2, 1847

Sara:

Chi per pietà mi dice il mio figlio che fa?	<i>Who, for pity's sake, will tell me what my son is doing?</i>
Servie pastori invio d'intorno	<i>I send shepherds all around,</i>
e alcun nin riede!	<i>but none return.</i>
Ah! forse pietoso ogn'un m'evita	<i>Ah! perhaps everyone is pitifully avoiding me.</i>
Ah! l'innocente gia spirò forse l'alma	<i>Ah! perhaps the innocent one has already breathed his last</i>
in man del padre	<i>in his father's arms.</i>
ah forse oh dio! che dolor!	<i>Ah, perchance, oh God! What pain!</i>
chi mi consoli non si trova per me	<i>There is no one to console me.</i>
almen di tanti! almeno tornar vedessi!	<i>At least, of so many, I would like to see some return!</i>
Ecco ne un si cerchi chiedasi non ho cor pastori	<i>Here is one, let us ask him, I have no heart, shepherds.</i>
ah! tremo d'ascoltar la risposta	<i>Ah! I tremble to hear the answer.</i>
ah! perchè mai sì confusi tornate dov'è Abram?	<i>Ah! why are you return confused? Where is Abraham?</i>
che vedeste? oh! Dio parlate.	<i>What did you see? Oh! God, speak.</i>

Ah! parlate!

Ah! Speak!

Deh! parlate che forse tacendo

Please! Speak, for perhaps by remaining silent

men pietosi più barbari siete

you are even more pitiless and barbaric.

ah! v'intendo tacete

Ah! I understand, be silent,

non mi dite che il figlio morì

do not tell me that my son has died.

So che spira quell'ostia sì cara,

I know that dear victim is dying,

veggo il sangue che tingue quell'ara

I see the blood staining that altar.

Sento il ferro che il sen le ferì

I feel the iron that wounded his breast.

Già spira oh Dio!

He is already dying, oh God!

Francesco Morlacchi (1784 – 1841)

“Morir ciel qual contento” from *Tebaldo ed Isolina* (1822).

Premiered in Naples.

Libretto by Gaetano Rossi (1774 – 1855)

Annotations by Manuel García II (1805 – 1906)

from *École de García Traité complet, Part 2, 1847*

Scene and Romance (Notte tremenda)

Tebaldo:

Morir!

To die!

Ciel, qual contento

Heaven, what concourse

Lo conosco,

I know it,

lo sento nel mio cor

I hear it in my heart,

è la mano d’Isolina, è il suon d’amore.

it is Isolina's hand, it is the sound of love.

Ah! se la prima volta ch’io l’intesi

Ah! yes, the first time that I heard her

e che di lei m’accesi,

and that I was inflamed by her,

era un incanto,

it was an enchantment,

ma allor’era felice;

then she was happy;

or trista, e sola

but now sad and lonely,

forse a me pensa

perhaps she thinks of me

e il suo dolor consola.

and her sorrow consoles her.

Caro suono lusinghier, dolce ognor mi
scendi al cor,

*Dear sweet flattering sound that descends
each time to my heart,*

Tu richiami al mio pensier i piacer d'un
casto amor.

*You call me to my thoughts of the
pleasures of a chaste love,*

Quel bel dì che ci rapì di sua pura volontà,

*that fair one who ravishes with its pure
voluptuousness,*

dove andò mio ben quel dì?

where did that love of mine go?

Ah mai più, no mai più ritornerà.

Ah! never more, never more shall it return.

Gioachino Rossini (1792 – 1868)

“Si, vi sarà vendetta” from *Semiramide* (1823).

Premiered in La Venice, Venice.

Libretto by Gaetano Rossi (1774 – 1855)

Annotations by Manuel García II (1805 – 1906)

from *École de García Traité complet*, Part 2, 1847

Assur:

Sì, vi sarà vendetta.

Yes, there will be vengeance.

Io vivo ancora:

I am still alive:

io solo basto.

I alone am enough.

Per ignota via,

By unknown means,

di Nino nella tomba

Nino's tomb

là si discende...

is reached...

io solo l'empio a svenar,

I alone will slay the wicked man,

a vendicarvi io volo.

I fly to avenge you.

Trema, Arsace... Ah! Che miro!

Tremble, Arsace... Ah! What do I see!

(s'avvia alla tomba... s'arresta ad un tratto,

(He starts towards the tomb... suddenly stops,

come colpito da un oggetto terribile...

as if struck by a terrible sight...

da visione spaventevole)

by a frightening vision)

Là su quella soglia!... e che!... folle!

On that threshold!... What!... Madness!

Deliro?

Am I delirious?

(s'avvanza, e con raccapriccio)

(advances, and with horror)

Qual mano!... man di ferro mi respinge?...

What hand!... An iron hand pushes me back?...

E chi? Desso!

And who? Desso!

Oh! quai sguardi!... un brando ei stringe...

Oh! What a look!... He clutches a sword...

S'avventa a me - fuggiamo...

He lunges at me - let's flee...

Ah! Ch'ei m'arresta...

Ah! He's stopping me...

Lasciami -

Let me go -

Il crin m'afferra

He grabs my hair

D'un piè sfonda la terra

With one foot he breaks through the earth

L'abisso!... ei me l'addita...

The abyss!... He points it out to me...

Ei mi vi spinge...

He pushes me towards it...

Ah! no... Ciel! né poss'io

Ah! No... Heaven! Can I not

Da lui fuggir?...

Escape from him?...

Come salvarmi! Oh Dio!

How can I save myself! Oh God!

Deh!... ti ferma... ti placa... perdona...

Please!... stop him... calm him... forgive him...

Togli a me quel terribile aspetto:

Take away that terrible look from me:

Quell'acciario già sento nel petto...

I can already feel that pain in my chest...

Quell'abisso mi colma d'orror.

That abyss fills me with horror.

Alla pace dell'ombre ritorna...

Return to the peace of the shadows...

Ah! pietà dell'oppresso mio cor.

Ah! Have mercy on my oppressed heart.

Girolamo Crescentini (1762 – 1846)

“Idolo del mio cor” sung (likely by Crescentini).

Premiered at La Scala, Milan, 1796.

Aria inserted into *Romeo e Giuletta* (1796) by Niccolò Antonio Zingarelli (1752 – 1837)

Libretto by Giuseppe Maria Foppa (1760 – 1845)

Annotations by Manuel García II (1805 – 1906)

from *École de García Traité complet*, Part 2, 1847

Romeo:

Idolo del mio cor,

Idol of my heart,

deh vedi il pianto mio,

ah, see the weeping of mine,

i gemiti, il dolor del tuo fedel.

the groans are the sorrow of your faithful one.

Ma che vale il mio duol!

But what is my grief worth!

Mia bella speme io ti sento

My beautiful hope, I feel you,

mi chiami a seguirti fra l'ombre.

call me to follow you in the shadows.

Ebben, m'aspetta, ti seguirò,

Well then, wait for me, I'll follow you,

se a te compagno in vita

if you are my companion in life

non mi volle la sorte,

fate did not favour me,

teco m'unisca almen pietosa morte.

let me at least be united with you in merciful death.

Tranquillo io son, fra poco teco sarò mia vita.

I am tranquil, in a little while my life will be with you.

Accogli intanto mia speme, anima mia,

Receive, in the meantime, my hope, my soul,

questo ch'io per tè verso ultimo pianto.

this is my final tear for you.

Ombra adorata aspetta, teco sarò
indiviso,

*Beloved shadow awaits, I'll be undivided
from you,*

nel fortunato Eliso avrà contento il cor.

*in the fortunate Elysium I shall have
contentment in my heart.*

Là fra i fedeli amanti ci appresta amor
diletti,

*There, among faithful lovers lend us
delighted love,*

godremo i dolci istanti,

we shall enjoy the sweet moments,

de' più innocenti affetti

of more innocent affections,

e l'eco a noi d'intorno

and the echo around us

risuonerà d'amor

will resound of love.

BIOGRAPHIES

NEAL PERES DA COSTA CO-DIRECTOR



Neal Peres Da Costa is Associate Dean of Research and Professor of Historical Performance at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (SCM), University of Sydney. In 2023 he was appointed Fellow of the Australian Academy of Humanities. He is a graduate of the University of Sydney, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the City University (London), and the University of Leeds (UK). A performing scholar and world-recognised authority on piano performing practice of the 18th and 19th centuries, Neal's monograph *Off the Record: Performing Practices in Romantic Piano Playing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) has received high praise and is considered a 'go-to' text globally. He co-edited (with Clive Brown and Kate Bennett-Wadsworth) the 9-volume set of Urtext/performing editions of Brahms'

Sonatas for solo instrument and piano (Bärenreiter-Verlag, 2015/16), and co-authored (with Clive Brown) the online Performance Practice Commentary for Beethoven's Sonatas for Piano and Violin (Bärenreiter-Verlag, 2020). He was also co-editor of *Creative Research in Music: Informed Practice, Innovation and Transendance* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022). Additionally, he has produced various ground-breaking chapters including "The Case for Un-Notated Arpeggiation in Beethoven's Compositions for or Involving the Piano" in *Beethoven and the Piano: Philology, Context and Performance Practice*, Leonardo Miucci, Claudio Bacciagaluppi, Daniel Allenbach and Martin Skamletz (eds.) (Schliengen: Argus, 2023), "Performing Practices for Romantic and Modern Repertoire" in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Performance*, Gary McPherson (ed) (New York, Oxford

University Press, 2022), and “Carl Reinecke’s Performance of his Arrangement of the Second Movement from Mozart’s Piano Concerto k. 488. Some Thoughts on Style and the Hidden Messages in Musical Notation” in *Rund um Beethoven Interpretationsforschung heute*, Martin Skamletz and Thomas Gartmann eds. (Schliengen: Argus, 2018).

Neal has been the recipient of three prestigious Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Projects: i) *Deciphering 19th-century pianism: Reinvigorating global practices; Hearing the music of early NSW 1788-1860*; and, *The shock of the old: Rediscovering the sounds of bel canto 1700-1900*. He is currently appointed to the ARC College of Experts until the end of 2026. He has given many keynote presentations at research meetings and is regularly called upon to advise professional musicians around the world on matters of 18th- and 19th-century performance practice.

Neal regularly performs with ensembles in Australia including Ironwood and the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra (ARCO) of which he is Artistic Advisor. Winner of the 2008 Fine Arts ARIA for Bach’s Sonatas for Violin and Obligato Keyboard (ABC Classics, 2007) with Richard Tognetti and Daniel Yeadon, Neal’s discography also includes: *Bach’s Complete Sonatas for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord* with Daniel Yeadon (ABC Classics, 2009); *The Baroque Trombone* with Christian Lindberg and the ACO (BIS, 2009); *The Galant Bassoon* with Matthew Wilke and Kees Boersma (Melba, 2009); *Baroque Duets* (Vexations 840, 2011) with Fiona Campbell, David Walker and Ironwood; *Music for a While* with Ironwood and Miriam Allan (2012); *3* with Genevieve Lacey and Daniel Yeadon (ABC Classics, 2012); *Stolen Beauties* with Anneke Scott and Ironwood (ABC Classics, 2015); *Brahms: Tones of Romantic Extravagance* (ABC Classics, 2016) which was awarded “Recommended CD” by The Strad (UK); *Beethoven Piano Concertos 1 and 3* (AHE, 2017; licensed by ABC Classics), *Pastoral Fables* with Alexandre Oguey – cor anglais (ABC Classics, 2018), and, *Romantic Dreams - Piano Quintets* by Louise Farrenc and Camille Saint-Säens (ABC Classics, 2020). 2023 saw CD release of a ground breaking recording with tenor Koenraad von Stade of Schumann’s song cycle *Dichterliebe* for the UK label Deux-Elles, and Mozart’s K 488 Piano Concerto with ARCO, both experimenting with practices heard on early recordings sound recordings. He has also recorded extensively on the Channel Classics label with Florilegium, the British ensemble which he co-founded in 1991 and of which he was a member for 10 years.

ISABELLE WATSON

CO-DIRECTOR

Originally from Brisbane, **Isabelle Watson** is a violinist and artistic researcher well versed in both modern and historically informed performance. She graduated from a Bachelor of Music with First Class Honours at the University of Queensland in 2023, learning violin from Adam Chalabi and Natsuko Yoshimoto. She is currently a Master of Philosophy candidate at Elder Conservatorium in Adelaide, where her practice-led research seeks to experiment with nineteenth-century performance practices in Robert Schumann's violin sonatas. In 2024, she was awarded the Elder Conservatorium Prize for Excellence in Postgraduate Research.



Issie initially grew her knowledge and skills relating to nineteenth-century performance practice as concertmaster of the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra's Young Mannheim Symphonists National Academies (2022 – 2024), then as an emerging artist touring an all-Mozart program with ARCO (2022), and this year as an ARCO fellow in an Australian HIP premiere of the Mendelssohn/Bach St Matthew Passion. In 2025, she is an emerging artist with Australian Haydn Ensemble. Issie also carries a breadth of orchestral experience from Queensland Youth Symphony (Principal Second Violin in 2023), Australian Youth Orchestra National Music Camps, and as Elder Conservatorium Trainee with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

Recently, Issie was the recipient of Elder Conservatorium Decie Denholm and Athol Lykke Scholarships which supported her to undertake short courses in Italy, Scotland, and Switzerland on baroque violin with Enrico Gatti, Rachel Podger, and Lucy Russell, and others, as well as having lessons and workshops on nineteenth-century performance practice with leading scholar performers in the UK and the Netherlands.

ANNA FRASER SOPRANO



Anna Fraser has gained a reputation as a multifaceted Sydney based soprano specialising in the colourful and expressive interpretation of early, classical and contemporary repertoire. Performing in a myriad of traditional and exploratory programming in Australia and abroad, Anna was a core ensemble member of the Song Company for over a decade and regularly performs with a number of Australia's specialist ensembles: Pinchgut Opera and Cantillation, Sydney Chamber Opera, Bach Akademie Australia, Australian Haydn Ensemble, Australian Classical and Romantic Orchestra, Ironwood, Salut! Baroque, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, and Ensemble Offspring, to name a few. Anna has collaborated with international ensembles including The Wallfisch Band, AskolSchönberg Ensemble and the New Zealand String Quartet.

Performing with Pinchgut Opera since 2004 Fraser's credits include notable roles in *L'Orfeo*, *Dardanus*, *L'Ormino*, *Castor et Pollux* and *Médée*. With Sydney Chamber Opera, performing with the Company since 2017 in staged works and solo recital programs, Anna most recently premiered Mary Finsterer's acclaimed opera *Antarctica* for the Holland Festival (2022) and Sydney Festival (2023).

Equally at home as a dramatist on stage, Anna is a strong exponent of music education, expertly demonstrating the versatility and virtuosity of a cappella singing to inspire and guide the next generation of young vocal artists and composers.

Anna is currently a Sydney Conservatorium of Music Doctorate of Musical Arts candidate with the Historical Performance unit and is a research assistant with the Australian Research Council project Shock of the Old: Rediscovering the Sounds of Bel Canto 1700-1900. The collaborative research work aims to tap into emulative and cyclical investigative processes of historical vocal practices with the aim to ascertain how historical sound effects and colours were achieved in practical terms and how we can actively utilise them in modern creative practices.

CLAIRE BURRELL-MCDONALD

SOPRANO

Claire Burrell-McDonald is a Sydney-based soprano. Specialising in early and sacred music, she is a regular artist with the professional choirs of St James, King Street and St Mary's Cathedral. She has also sung with Cantillation, Sydney Antiphony, Luminescence Chamber Singers, Adelaide Chamber Singers, the Concordia Ensemble and the Song Company LAB, and studied with Suzie LeBlanc through the Lunenburg Academy of Music Performance in Canada. She has performed widely as a soloist and ensemble member across Australia and internationally, including performances for the ANZAC Day Dawn Service on the Gallipoli peninsula, a series of early opera masterclasses in Italy with Dame Emma Kirkby, and multiple interstate and international tours with Sydney Chamber Choir.



Her operatic roles include Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* and Moth in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; she appears on recordings with the Choir of St James, King St, Cantillation, Sydney Chamber Choir and Gondwana Chorale.

In addition to an active performing schedule and teaching studio, Claire is undertaking research into historical vocal technique and Handelian performance practice as part of her PhD through the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University. She is part of the research team on the Australian Research Council Discovery Project "The shock of the old: Rediscovering the sounds of bel canto 1700–1900", and has presented her research at conferences in Sydney, Siena, Vienna, Linz and Surrey. She also holds postgraduate degrees in Opera and Music Performance from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, and in English Literature from the University of Sydney.

JORDAN SARKIS TENOR



Jordan Sarkis is an Australian-born tenor currently in his second year of a Bachelor of Music (Performance) in Classical Voice at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, where he studies under the tutelage of Andrew Goodwin. Over the past four years, Jordan has devoted himself to the art of classical singing, developing a strong foundation in operatic performance, ensemble work, and sacred repertoire.

He recently performed the role of Alexis in *The Sorcerer* with Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Sydney, touring regionally to Yass and Bundanoon. He also appeared as Slender in Rockdale Opera Company's production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, further establishing his presence in the Sydney opera scene.

In addition to his stage work, Jordan has performed as a tenor soloist in Mozart's *Missa Brevis* in D major with St Paul's Anglican Church, Burwood, and sung with the St Paul's College Chapel Choir, featuring in performances of Handel's *Messiah*.

Jordan continues to refine his craft through both solo and collaborative projects, combining musical sensitivity with expressive storytelling. His developing artistry reflects a deep passion for the operatic tradition and a growing commitment to sharing classical music with audiences.

DAVID GRECO BASS

ARIA Award-nominated baritone **David Greco** is internationally regarded for his recordings of Schubert lieder and the works of JS Bach. In demand for opera and concert throughout Australia, he works regularly with the finest orchestras such as the Australian Haydn Ensemble, Australian Chamber Orchestra, and groups such as the Australian String Quartet. His 2019 performances with Sydney Symphony featuring Bach's *Ich habe Genug* received a Helpmann Award.

In 2012 he became the first Australian to be appointed a position with the Sistine Chapel Choir in the Vatican, Rome.

Most recently David received acclaim for his interpretation of Britten's *War Requiem* with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, followed soon after by Verdi's *Requiem* in the Sydney Opera House with Sydney Philharmonia.

In 2020 David received his PhD in 19th century Historical Voice which led to the first complete ABC Classic recordings of Schubert's song cycles *Winterreise* and *Die schöne Müllerin*, the latter disk receiving an ARIA nomination for Best Classical Album. His recording of Schubert's *Schwanengesang* is due for release with ABC Classic in Summer, 2025.

Upcoming performances in 2025 include a recital of Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* with acclaimed early keyboardist Chad Kelly at Melbourne Recital Centre, Durufle's *Requiem* with Sydney Symphony and *Messiah* with Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

www.davidgreco.info



ALISON COLE COMPOSER



Dr Alison Cole is a multi-award-winning composer and sound designer based in Sydney, Australia, and the CEO of Signature Sound – the city’s first female-led composition and sound studio. Her film scores have been featured at the Cannes, Berlin, and Sydney Film Festivals, and her work has been recognised with multiple ProMax ANZ “Best Composition” Awards, a Tropfest win, and the B&T “People’s Choice” Award.

Alison was awarded her Doctorate in Composition from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in 2023, where she now lectures in screen composition. Her practice spans film, television, dance, multimedia installation, and large-scale experiential projects, including works for *Vivid*, *Burning Man*, and international theme park collaborations.

In 2025, Alison has performed her electro-acoustic work *Fabric of Memory* and now premieres her new orchestral–electronic–multimedia composition, *Footsteps & Shadows*. Her recent commissions include works for The Australian Ballet, Disney+, SBS, and ABC TV.

SCM EARLY MUSIC ENSEMBLE

NEAL PERES DA COSTA
CO-DIRECTOR
ISABELLE WATSON
CO-DIRECTOR

FIRST VIOLIN

Hana Yusoff
Vienna Li
Candice Buchanan
Zac Choi

SECOND VIOLIN

Lara Dowdeswell
Kaito Deed
Alessandra Delaguiado
Julia Russoniello*

VIOLA

India Culey
Zifu Zhang
Neil Wang

VIOLONCELLO

Emily Wang
Nyah Cockle
Lucas Choi

CONTRABASS

Jude Hill

FLUTE

Jacob Lawler
Melissa Farrow*

OBOE

Fiona McMillan*

CLARINET

Nicole van Bruggen*
Andrew Doyle*

BASSOON

Hayden Burge*

HORN

Rory McClelland
Douglass Ross

TRUMPET

Tilly Deardon
Harvey de Koster

SACKBUT

Josh De Haan
Luke Berlee
Sylvia Nanziri

HARP

Hannah Lane*

TIMPANI

Bill Chen

*Guest Performer

THANK YOU

Thank you to tutors Rafael Font, Isabelle Laura Watson, Danny Yeadon, Julia Russoniello, Melissa Farrow, Nicole van Bruggen.

Nathan Cox for tuning and preparation of the Collard and Collard Square Piano (c. 1840) from SCM's Historical Keyboard Collection, and for preparation of parts and scores for this project.

Special thanks to Tina Courtenay for the loan of the Erard Gothic double-action pedal harp, London: 1847 played by Hannah Lane.



WHAT'S ON AT THE CON?

OPEN ACADEMY

Rising Stars

Saturday 1 November
11:00am, 2:00pm and 3:00pm
Recital Hall East and Recital Hall West, free entry

SYDNEY UNIVERSITY WIND ORCHESTRA

Rebellion and Resistance

Saturday 1 November 7:00pm
Verbrugghen Hall, \$25 Adult, \$15 Conc

SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM OF MUSIC & NIDA

Orpheus in the Underworld

Monday 3 November - Saturday 8 November
NIDA Theatres

LUNCHBREAK CONCERT

Brass Division

Wednesday 5 November 12:30pm
Verbrugghen Hall, free entry - gold coin donation

STAFF RECITAL CHAMBER SERIES

Messiaen Visions de L'Amen

Wednesday 5 November 7:30pm
Recital Hall West, \$25 Adult \$15 Conc

LUNCHBREAK CONCERT

Flute Ensemble

Thursday 6 November 12:30pm
Verbrugghen Hall, free entry - gold coin donation

GREENWAY SERIES

SCM Symphony Orchestra and SCM Choir (SCM110)

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

SCM CONTEMPORARY MUSIC PRACTICE

SCM Contemporary Showcases 2025

Monday 10 November - Friday 14 November
Footbridge Theatre, free entry - online registration required

OPEN ACADEMY

Rising Stars

Saturday 15 November
11:00am, 2:00pm and 3:00pm
Recital Hall East and Recital Hall West, free entry

OPEN ACADEMY

Rising Stars

Saturday 22 November
11:00am, 2:00pm and 3:00pm
Recital Hall East and Recital Hall West, free entry

OPEN ACADEMY

Rising Stars Gala Concert 2025

Friday 28 November 7:00pm
Recital Hall West, free entry - online registration required

MORE INFORMATION AND TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE NOW:
[SYDNEY.EDU.AU/MUSIC/BOXOFFICE](https://www.sydney.edu.au/music/boxoffice)

