

ANJA & ZLATNA

Letters from Abroad

Wednesday 16 March 2pm & 6pm, Salon

Presented by Melbourne Recital Centre and Anja & Zlatna

LOCAL
HEROES

ARTISTS

Aleksandra "Anja" Acker, Artistic Director, voice

Kirsty Morphett, voice

Donald Nicolson, harpsichord

Andrew Tanner, acoustic bass, mouth harp

Michael O'Connor, flute

Matthew Horsley, percussion

PROGRAM

Serbian Traditional

Gusta mi magla padnala

Serbian Romani

Pena

Greek traditional

Mi Mou Themoneis

Dimitri Cantemir

Der makâm-l' Uzzâl uşules Berevsan (Music in the Uzzal melodic mode and Berevsan rhythmic mode)

Bosnian Traditional

Moj Dilbere

Macedonian Traditional

Jano, mori!

Macedonian Traditional

Ajde dali znaeš

Macedonian Traditional

Makedonko Devojče

Bulgarian Traditional

Večeraj Rado

Bulgarian Traditional

Ergen Deda

Moldavian and Serbian Traditional Medley

Hora

Kad sam mladjan lovac bio ja

Elena Vaenga

Kuryu

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Letters from Abroad was inspired by hand-typed letters written by Donald's dad, Mr Alistair Nicolson, to his mother and the sisters, more than 50 years ago. Mr Nicolson and his friend travelled around the Balkans, exploring the culture, food and the life-style of people who welcomed their stay. Each letter began with 'Dear Ladies...' disclosing the beauty, passion and turmoils of the Balkans – just as the name suggests, the region of honey and blood. Anja & Zlatna will take you through a journey these two young fellows took upon so many years ago. The diary keeps it alive and the stories will be remembered, just as they happened yesterday.

The ensemble includes songs from Serbia, Greece, Turkey, Bosnia, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Moldova and even Russia, which have sprung from centuries long past and which have remained powerful threads and themes reaching to present day communities. Some of the music is remarkably connected whether in rhythm, mode or simply in character. This is rather typical for the Balkan region as people continue to exchange their colourful musical heritage.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Formed in 2013, the ensemble **Anja & Zlatna** seeks to preserve the beauty of traditional melodies and enhance them with the structural architecture of Baroque, whilst fusing the practices of 17th century and folk improvisational languages. It has a unique sound, due in part to original approach to instrumentation; the use of harpsichord in a predominant role is a key factor – sometimes one hears multiple guitars, sometimes a cimbalom or the texture of an accordion. The various possibilities of the modern flute are explored, the sounds ranging from baroque flute to Eastern wind instruments such as kaval or ney with their intriguing vibrato and intonations. The techniques used by the vocalists vary from traditional European technique to Bulgarian chest voice. The versatility of the double-bass is derived from folk instruments such as the Russian balalaika family (and look out for a cameo appearance from the ever-popular mouth harp, also referred to as a Jew's Harp). The ensemble has released two albums of this moving music: *Ruse Kose* and *Oj, Vesela Veselice*. The group is also pleased to welcome the talents of a new percussionist, Matthew Horsley, who as you'll will hear in this performance, brings with him a variety of new and unexpected timbres.

ABOUT LOCAL HEROES 2016

Local Heroes is the easiest way to rediscover your love of chamber music or take delight in experiencing it for the first time. From strings to piano, early music to contemporary, art song to tango, there's something for every musical taste. This year Local Heroes showcases 19 acclaimed ensembles in 44 concerts in the award-winning acoustics of Melbourne Recital Centre's Salon and Elisabeth Murdoch Hall. Visit melbournerecital.com.au/heroes for more information.

NEXT CONCERT

Letters From Beyond

Wednesday 3 August 6pm, Salon

A note on environmental friendliness:

In an effort to commit to greener performances, stories are printed to share one between two people. If you would like to download additional copies of these program notes, please visit melbournerecital.com.au/programs



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