

ENSEMBLE LIAISON

Serenade

Wednesday 19 October 7pm, Elisabeth Murdoch Hall

Presented by Melbourne Recital Centre and Ensemble Liaison

LOCAL
HEROES

ARTISTS

Ensemble Liaison

David Griffiths, clarinet

Svetlana Bogosavljevic, cello

Timothy Young, piano

With guest artists:

Fiona Campbell, mezzo-soprano

Elizabeth Sellars, violin

PROGRAM

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Two Songs, Op.91

Gestillte Sehnsucht (Stilled Longing)

Geistliches Wiegenlied (Sacred Lullaby)

Intermezzi Op.116 No.4, Op.118 No.2

Emil Hartmann (1836–1898)

Serenade in A Major, Op.24

Idyll: *Andante – Allegro*

Romance: *Andante – Allegretto Scherzando – Andante*

Rondo – Finale

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937)

Sonata for Violin and Cello M.73

Allegro

Très vif

Lent

Vif, avec entrain

Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) arr. Griffiths/Young

Five Songs to poems of Friedrich Rückert

Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder

Ich atmet einen linden Duft

Um Mitternacht

Liebst du um Schönheit

Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen

INTERVAL

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Johannes Brahms wrote the cradle song 'Geistliches Wiegenlied' in 1863 for the son of his close musical friends violinist Joseph Joachim and singer Amalie Schneeweiss. He reworked the lullaby and wrote a new song, *Gestillte Sehnsucht (Stilled Longing)* later on in an attempt to bring hope to the couples failed marriage. Friedrich Rückert's 'Gestillte Sehnsucht' was the perfect kind of nature poem to which Brahms warmed, with woods and birds and winds summoned to whisper the world and yearning desires to sleep. Brahms published these songs in 1884 as his Op.91. The Intermezzi was written late in his life and the four sets of piano pieces Opp.116–119 appeared in 1892–93. 14 of these 20 pieces are named *Intermezzo* and tend to be reflective or introspective miniatures of intense expression. Brahms gave one of his *Intermezzi* to Clara Schumann as a birthday present in 1893 and wrote: "I am tempted to have a short piece of music copied for you, as I should very much like to know how you get on with it. It teems with discords... It is exceptionally melancholy, and to say 'to be played very slowly' is not sufficient. Every bar and every note must be played as if *ritardando* were indicated, and one wished to draw the melancholy out of each one of them, and voluptuous joy and comfort out of the discords. My God, how this description will whet your appetite!"

Emil Hartmann was born into a family of Danish musicians and along with his father was active in creating national music, inspired by the legends and folk music of Scandinavia. The 'Serenade', written in 1877 for clarinet, cello and piano has as its centre piece a beautiful *Romance*. The opening movement begins with a pastorale theme in the clarinet which leads to an *Allegro* in a folk dance style. Brilliant craftsmanship throughout hints at a deep understanding of Schumann and Brahms and a virtuosic *Rondo* ends the piece emphatically. Dedicated to the memory of Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel's Sonata for violin and cello was composed between 1920 and 1922. Ravel writes: "I think this Sonata marks a turning point in my career. The music is stripped to the bone. The allure of harmony is rejected and more and more there is a return of the emphasis on melody." The work is characterised by the interplay of the two melodic lines and features aggressive, even violent rhythms. There is perhaps nothing comfortable about the piece as it embraces the post-war neoclassicism in its striving for technical perfection.

Gustav Mahler started setting poetry by Rückert in 1901 and produced two sets of songs: *Kindertotenlieder* and this group of five Rückert poems. Not considered a song cycle, there is no overarching narrative or central theme and therefore can be sung in any order. Some insight into Mahler is the subject of two songs: *'Blicke mir nicht in die Lieder'* (*Do not look into my songs*), speaks of the notion that a poem should not be seen until it is completed, worked on in secrecy, as bees make honey in the privacy of their hive. *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen* (*I am lost to the world*) talks of the artists necessary withdrawal from the world. The reward for creation being to live alone: "in my heaven... My love... My song".

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Ensemble Liaison is a unique chamber music partnership formed in 2006 between **David Griffiths** (clarinet), **Svetlana Bogosavljevic** (cello) and **Timothy Young** (piano). Collaborations and partners to-date have included Nemanja Radulovic, Peter Coleman-Wright, Cheryl Barker, Emma Matthews, Ray Chen, Henning Kraggerud, Anthony Marwood, Katie Noonan, Hervé Joulain, Roderick Williams, Wilma Smith, Christopher Moore, Tony Gould, Caroline Henbest, Paul Wright, Natsuko Yoshimoto, Elizabeth Sellars, Caroline Almonte, David Jones, Peter Wilson, Paul Grabowsky, Michael Leighton Jones, Greta Bradman, and principal members of the Australian Ballet.

Ensemble Liaison performed their debut concert for ABC Classic FM in 2006, which featured in "The best of Sunday Live" for that year, and their inaugural Concert Series was held at The Edge, Federation Square, Melbourne in 2007. The Ensemble Liaison & Friends series has recently completed its 10th anniversary season at the Melbourne Recital Centre. Described by Limelight magazine as a 'national treasure', they have performed across Australia and New Zealand including a ten-concert tour for Chamber Music New Zealand, appearances at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music, Townsville, Port Fairy Spring Music Festival and the Woodend Winter Arts Festival, and in 2012 gave a series of festival performances in Central Europe. Critics have hailed their performances with superlatives such as "spellbinding", "flawless", "a revelation", "moving", "joyous", "polished", "stunningly blended", "engaging", "powerful and having boundless lyricism, enthusiasm and dexterity". They have been regularly recorded for broadcast on ABC Classic FM and 3MBS and have released recordings on both the Melba Recordings and Tall Poppies labels. ENSEMBLE LIAISON was appointed Ensemble in Residence at Monash University in 2010.

Fiona Campbell is one of Australia's most versatile and beloved classical singers - a producer and guest ABC presenter, accomplished international performer, recitalist and recording artist. She was the winner of the national Limelight Award for Best Solo Performance 2011 (with the ABO in their Haunting Handel concert series), vocal winner of the ABC Young Performer of the Year Award and the ASC Opera Awards. Fiona sings regularly as a principal artist with all of the major ensembles and orchestras in Australia; her international collaborators have included the Brodsky Quartet, Tokyo Philharmonic, Manchester Camerata, Hong Kong Philharmonic and many others. In 2015, Fiona will appear as soloist with the Sydney Symphony, Melbourne Symphony, Auckland Philharmonia and sing major roles in *The Barber of Seville*, *The Marriage of Figaro* and *Faust* for West Australian Opera.

Elizabeth Sellars is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music in London where she studied with David Takeno (violin) and the Takacs String Quartet (chamber music). A multiple prize-winner, Elizabeth has performed in festivals worldwide and has broadcast on radio in Australia, the UK, Mongolia, Germany and the USA. As a recognized advocate for new music, Elizabeth is the dedicatee of many world premieres. She has recorded for ABC Classics and NAXOS and her musicianship has been described as "glowing, compelling" and "exquisite". Elizabeth is a founding member of Sutherland Trio with pianist Caroline Almonte and Cellist Molly Kadarau and is currently Co-ordinator of Strings at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music, Monash University.

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. Want to get to know the artists and learn more about the music they love to perform? Visit localheroes.melbourne to discover more.

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Melbourne Recital Centre acknowledges the people of the Kulin nation on whose land this concert is being presented.



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