

the firm

p r e s e n t s

8 solos

a n d

a t r i o

featuring

The Players of

the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

PROGRAMME

fantasia **raymond chapman smith**
solo 'cello (5 min)

music for shadows **david kotlowy**
solo viola (2 min)

variations **john polglase**
solo viola (8 min)

fantasia **raymond chapman smith**
solo violin (9 min)

– short break –

can dy lu **melita white**
minous
solo flute (3 min)

string trio no. 2 (12 min) **quentin s d grant**

partita **raymond chapman smith**
solo flute (4 min)

– short break –

the winter path **david kotlowy**
solo viola (10 min)

Ab tenebrae ad lucem **john polglase**
solo 'cello (10 min)

raymond chapman smith
fantasia for solo 'cello (5 min)

Allegro vivace
Andante con moto
Allegro molto
Adagio non troppo

My Cello Fantasia was composed in 1995.

Four short sections form a set of variations which are heard in reverse order, i.e. the final piece is the 'theme', in itself a set of variations in the manner of a chaconne.

raymond chapman smith

david kotlowy
music for shadows for solo viola (2 min)

This little ditty dates from 1981; I have only made a couple of minor alterations bringing it from the closet. The melodic material is generated by a three-note cell that contains the intervals of both a perfect and augmented fourth. This material is only barely developed, as my primary concern (then as now) is with sound production. Particular attention is paid to the diverse tones of each string and the distinction between pizzicato and arco pitch production. The piece is dark and elusive, like molten earth or a flickering of shadows.

david kotlowy

john polglase
variations for solo viola (8 min)

Written in 1995 this work bears the dedication *for Juris Ezergailis*. It is based on the form theme and variations with the sections following each other segue to create a single movement work.

A subdued, meditative sound of a muted viola is used to introduce the theme and the first two of the variations. The theme, marked *tranquillamente*, begins with a simple statement - four identical major thirds, a gentle chant as if from afar, developing into a meditative conversation fading into the distance. Variation one, almost a second subject in its own right, still calm, marked *un poco piu mosso*, is a

gentle *legatissimo* stroll in 5/4 that develops into a sweet, expressive contemplation. In variation two the dynamic rises momentarily for the first time to a moderate *mf*. It is in a lilting 12/8 grouped 4+2+3+3, juxtaposing duplet with triplet rhythms, played largely with double stops to create an unusual sounding duet. A short 4 bar bridge follows - a little reminiscence of the theme, ending again with a major third.

The mute is now removed for variation three, creating a new brighter timbre. It is in a moderate 3/4, still marked *p*, consisting of a rising motif with the open C string used as a pedal figure.

We now enter a 12/8, a gentle waltz that cascades across semi-quavers before beginning a quiet *meno mosso* that gradually transforms and accelerates, taking us into the final variation, a blistering fortissimo of semiquavers in 12/16 dotted throughout with sharp accents. The 4+2+3+3 of the second variation enters now in loud semiquavers that suddenly take off into quadruplets and quintuplets, seeming to skid on the 'black ice'. The final approach changes up another gear, from blistering semiquavers to frantic quadruple semiquavers grouped 5+3+4+4, ending in a mad flurry of double stopped semiquavers.

juris ezergailis

raymond chapman smith
fantasia for solo violin (9 min)

The Fantasia for Solo Violin was completed in May '96 and continues the series of "Variations towards a Theme" begun in the cello piece. There are seven brief movements:

Molto Moderato, Allegro Risoluto, Andante Teneramente, Vivace, Adagio, Presto and Largo

raymond chapman smith

— please remain in the church for a short break following this piece —

melita white

can dy lu

minous

for solo flute (3 min)

This short piece for solo flute is based on the following poem by e.e.cummings; it attempts to translate into music cumming's colourful and innovative use of the language, both structurally and expressively.

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(from Impressions, by e.e. cummings)

"The goal is unrealism. The method is destructive. To break up the white light of objective realism, into the secret glories which it contains".

e.e. cummings

melita white

quentin s d grant

string trio no 2 (12 min)

This trio, being the second that I've written for the combination, is closely related to the first in style, texture and mood.

My ambition was to use simple and distinct material and to keep the textures as clear as possible to allow the transformations to the material to be as obvious as possible. In each of the three sections the foundation idea is stated immediately and is then continued, in varied repetition, with a series of 'treatments' of shifting harmonic and melodic fragments being set against that idea. The first section has a simple oscillating ostinato (mostly played by the viola) as its foundation, the second a repeated minor third, and the third section a variation of the ostinato of the first section.

My aesthetic ambitions with the work are more difficult to articulate, but involve an interest in the language of music from two perspectives.

Firstly, as information - how music is received by a listener and sense is made of it by what is familiar, and how less familiar sound is 'made sense of'. Starting each section with simple familiar-sounding patterns I then try to 'disguise' the more unfamiliar material as it appears through the course of events.

Secondly, as psychological signs - how music works as a series of signs, some obvious, some more hidden. Having established a 'easy to receive' foundation in each section, I strive to add a transient progression of melodic and harmonic material rich in emotional associations that hopefully invoke vague hints of memory in subtle ways, much in the way smells can evoke hidden memories. In this way the listener possibly may be taken along their own flickering trail of memory and reminiscence.

quentin grant

raymond chapman smith

partita for solo flute (4 min)

prelude. ludus I, interlude, ludus II. postlude.

My Partita is a reliquary for Igor Stravinsky for whom, particularly in his final works, the flute - in strange, white choirs - became the ground of his instrumental palette.

By the mid 1950's Stravinsky had become a twelve-tone composer and remained so until his death in 1971. It is rarely observed that he

composed at least as many dodecaphonic works as each of the Viennese masters.

For many, partisan commentators Stravinsky's 'conversion' was so stylistically problematic that they simply chose to ignore it and, most regrettably, the many masterpieces of this final phase which culminated in the Variations for Orchestra, the Requiem Canticles and, lastly, the delightful "Owl and the Pussycat".

The last series which Stravinsky made - slowly evolving a fascinating, interlocking melodic structure - is the 'relic' that gave rise to my Partita; material which in its range and linear character seemed already destined for the flute although Stravinsky had made no designation.

The Partita also adopts a favourite, Stravinskian, five part, Latinate symmetrical form in which the Postlude contains the most pure projection of I.S.'s original material.

raymond chapman smith

— please remain in the church for a short break following this piece —

david kotlowy

the winter path for solo viola (10 min)

This viola solo took its inspiration from my 1993 recorder solo Ichido ("this moment"). Musical durations in both pieces are determined by the performer's breath — easy enough for a wind instrument, but more unusual for strings. In this piece the bow acts as an extension of the breath; the music grows from and returns to silence. Sonic material is reduced to a minimum ("Contrast is for people who can't write music." La Monte Young) and particular attention paid to the tonal diversity inherent in each string.

david kotlowy

john polglase

Ab tenebrae ad lucem for solo 'cello (10 min)

This single movement for solo 'cello was originally intended to be the final part of a suite, a work which was never finished past three of the projected five of movements, but the finale stood so complete by itself that I decided to rework it as a 'stand alone' piece.

In my days as a composition student, intense analytical study of the

canons of the 20th century were the order of the day - and an extremely appropriate and profitable period of study it was. There were, however, moments of revelation outside of this exploration which have, if anything, proved to be more meaningful to me in the long run. Thinking of the days spent discovering the last four piano sonatas of Franz Schubert, or the string sextets and quintets of Brahms or the early, intense periods of song writing by Schumann still give rise to a vague feeling of envy that I can never rediscover these works afresh.

One such moment was the delight of the Bach Sonatas and Partitas for unaccompanied violin; who'd have thought that such breadth of vision and profound thought could be wrapped one violin? The title of this 'cello piece, translated from the Latin is *from darkness into light*, the tempo mark reads *in modo di chaconne*: sometimes one has to wear one's influences on one's sleeve.

john polglase

— Please join the players and the composers —
after the concert for drinks and
convivial, entertaining banter.

— PLAYERS OF THE ADELAIDE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA —

Michael Milton	violin
Juris Ezergailis	viola
Janis Laurs	'cello
Sarah Denbigh	'cello (string trio)
Geoffery Collins	flute

An orchestra's place in its community extends much further than the concerts it presents: it is an integral part of the fabric of a town's whole cultural life. Adelaide's orchestra enjoys a much closer interaction with its community than many other orchestras do. The interaction ranges from the highly-visible participation in large-scale community celebrations to activities such as the those of The Firm, where public profile is not so much the issue.

Over a period of years, Adelaide's active and wonderfully self-motivated community of composers have drawn on the members of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra to help in the realisation of their works, building, un-self consciously, a long-term collaboration that has become a fantastic little tradition.

The benefits are mutual: as well as airing the works of local composers, the musicians also develop their skills as chamber musicians and interpreters of contemporary music. What's more, they enjoy the music-making, and the discovery of new music.

James Koehne, Artistic Administrator
Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

— We wish to express our gratitude to the following —
organisations for their support:

Arts SA, the State Government of South Australia's Arts funding advisory body for their ongoing commitment to new music performance in this state.

Kevin Roper and ABC Classic FM for recording tonight's concert.

The Players of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra
for their professionalism and continuing enthusiasm for our music.

The Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

St. Mary Magdelenes Church, and the Rev'd Grant Bullen.
This is the first chamber concert of any kind to be held in this venue,
we hope to continue this this collaboration in the future.

King William Rd Wine Cellars
for the after concert drinks.



Arts SA