

# FLINDERS QUARTET

# FQ21


THIBAUD PAVLOVIC-HOBBA violin

WILMA SMITH violin

HELEN IRELAND viola

ZOE KNIGHTON cello

## PHANTASY

 SUNDAY 16 MAY, 2PM  
ARTS CENTRE, WARBURTON

 MONDAY 17 MAY, 11AM & 6PM  
PRIMROSE POTTER SALON

*The Clifford Hocking Concert: music in the memory of Australia's great impresario, Clifford Hocking AM*

### IMOGEN HOLST 1907-1984

Phantasy Quartet (composed 1928)

*"Ah, a composer at last."*

Better known as Benjamin Britten's assistant and the daughter of Gustav Holst, many of Imogen Holst's compositions have only had their first performance in recent years. Her daily life was primarily consumed with other musical activities like teaching and arranging music for educational purposes, so her voice as a composer was often relegated in priority. Like many composers, the search for a musical identity was always in her mind, but it wasn't until her string quintet (composed in 1982) that she said, *"Ah, a composer at last"*.

The Phantasy Quartet, written in 1928 when she was just 20 years old, holds all the characteristics of an English Pastoral style. The focus on a modal sonority rather than a traditional harmonic structure is reminiscent of Ravel and Debussy's forays into the string quartet but one cannot deny the obvious stamp of England's favourite, Vaughan Williams. Having said that, this piece is not merely a hall of mirrors blurring the aural images of other composers; one gets a sense of the generosity, passion and intellect of Imogen in Phantasy. There are many voicings of chords which on first playing seem cumbersome but in fact, they are absolutely perfect in their effectiveness.

### ELLA MACENS 1991-

A Love Worth Fighting For (composed 2020)

*Commissioned by Flinders Quartet with support from Peter and Leila Doyle*

- I. Static, contained
- II. In two minds
- III. Suspecting untruth
- IV. Static

Sydney based Ella Macens is a fast-emerging composer with a passion for choral, orchestral and chamber music

writing. Capturing qualities from both popular and classical music styles as well as that of her Latvian heritage, Ella's music is becoming well-known in Australia and beyond.

Ella has completed a Bachelor of Music (Composition) with first class honours at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, The University of Sydney, and is currently studying a Master of Music (Composition) under the guidance of Professor Matthew Hindson AM. As one of four composers selected to participate in the Sydney Conservatorium of Music's inaugural National Women Composers' Development Program (2016-17), Ella has been fostering connections with some of Australia's most esteemed ensembles and soloists through the creation of a series of solo, chamber, choral and orchestral works.

Her compositions have won awards, including inclusion in ENCORE (2009), the Frank Hutchens Scholarship for Composition in 2012 and the Fine Music FM Young Composer Award (2017) for her first orchestral piece titled FLIGHT.

Ella Macens' ascendancy in recent years since her participation in the 2017 FQ Composer Development Program has resulted in multiple commissions and a full dance card of composition on the horizon. Having surpassed Margaret Sutherland's total number of commissions very early in her career, like Margaret Sutherland and Imogen Holst, Ella finds her compositional home writing for voice. The four part string quartet writing is a natural extension of that innate writing style. Written in 2020 as a commission from Peter and Leila Doyle to commemorate their 20th wedding anniversary, this piece wound up becoming a sort of musical therapy for Ella as she mourned the loss of a significant relationship. A four movement work, it explores various themes of love and grief, quite overt in its musical emotional outpourings. Ella's innate style of improvisatory composition manifests itself in a conversational, exquisitely humane sensibility.

Ella writes:

*"A Love Worth Fighting For is not only about the love we find outside of ourselves through connection with others. It is also about the love within ourselves - the true timeless love that can lead to powerful healing and sustained happiness."*

**FANNY MENDELSSOHN** 1805-1847  
String Quartet in E flat major (composed 1834)

- I. Adagio ma non troppo
- II. Allegretto
- III. Romanze
- IV. Allegro molto vivace

Fanny Mendelssohn (after her marriage, Fanny Hensel) was the older sister of Felix Mendelssohn and together with Felix, enjoyed the upbringing of an intelligent household prioritising the practise of the arts and regularly hosting soirees of poetry and music. She went on to curate many of these gatherings, herself a vastly accomplished composer and pianist. Her relationship

with Felix was incredibly close and the two shared a musical passion. In fact, Felix ensured her compositions were published, attributing them to himself which may seem opportunistic, but evidence suggests his intention was purely to further his sister's creativity. Indeed, assuming them as his own is a sure mark of their validity in creative terms. The fact remains that in her day, a life as a composer was not an option for a woman as her father would point out, "Music will perhaps become his [Felix's] profession, while for you it can and must be only an ornament".

This string quartet was composed in 1834, a number of years after she had married the famous court painter, William Hensel. He was always incredibly encouraging of her talent, supporting her as a prolific composer of over 400 works. Her string quartet in four movements bears the hallmarks of her heroes, J.S. Bach and Beethoven, as well as her brother. From her music, we can imagine her as intelligent, generous and highly skilled.

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Flinders Quartet (FQ) is instantly recognisable as one of Australia's most loved chamber music ensembles. They are a quartet for the 21st century and a highly respected force in Australian chamber music, entering their third decade with acknowledged musical skill and maturity.

*"...clearly a passionate and precise group that give exquisite clarity to each piece performed."*  
- NIGHT WRITES, March 2020

Over twenty years, FQ has followed a unique path and lives up to their motto of "caring for tradition, daring to be different" through a busy schedule encompassing live and online performances, commissioning, recording, education and mentorship programs including the successful Composer Development Program (now in its sixth year), and outreach activities through their artistic patronage of John Noble's Quartet Program and residency at Footscray High School.



PHOTO CREDIT: PIA JOHNSON



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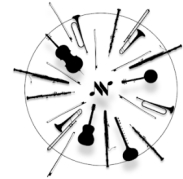
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**Wednesday 2 June 2021, 7:00pm**  
**Melbourne Digital Concert Hall**  
with 2020 Strike a Chord winners, Cousin Quartet  
*streamed online (and available for 72 hours)*

**Wednesday 16 June, 7:30pm**  
**Composer Development Program concert**  
*streamed online*  
*live audience tickets also available*

For program information and bookings, please visit [flindersquartet.com](http://flindersquartet.com)

Flinders Quartet acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work, live and learn, and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.