

FLINDERS QUARTET INC.
ARTISTIC REPORT
prepared by Zoe Knighton
1 February 2023

PERSONNEL UPDATE AND 2023 SUMMARY OF GUEST MUSICIANS

- Dong Ma (erhu) - guest artist for regional touring of Julian Yu new work
- 2023 guest violinists
 - Liz Sellars - Program 1 and Northern Tasmania Tour
 - Natsuko Yoshimoto - Program 2 and Mildura tour
 - Cameron Hill - Program 3
 - Brigid Colledge - regional touring (August)
 - Jackie Wong (2022 FQ intern and first of the early career musicians) - Itet side by side regional concerts in May
- Appointment of violinist for 2024
 - It is unlikely that we will be confident enough to make a permanent violin appointment this year, and will look to appoint a violinist for a 12 month trial period; we are currently hoping this person will be Brigid Colledge

PROGRAMMING AND COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

Mendelssohn hybrid production telling the story of Felix through the eyes of his sister Fanny; Richard Piper to be engaged as researcher (alongside Zoe) and dramaturg

- Development with Richard has commenced
- Presentation in 2024

Dance collaboration with a collection of composers comprising Emerge and Ascend past participants and established composers, curated along with sections of standard repertoire

- Meeting with Lucy Guerin scheduled for Feb 7
- Presentation in 2025

Beethoven Cycle

- To be programmed in the 2025 FQ subscription season with the potential to have matching vignettes, i.e. the creation of an FQ Beethoven vignette cycle
- Presentation of Beethoven cycle at significant national festival and potential of taking the cycle to regional Victoria (Bendigo)

COMPOSERS

Current commissions:

- Brenda Gifford - creative development and premiere in 2023 regional touring program (August)
- Julian Yu - creative development and premiere in 2023 regional touring program (August)

- Maria Grenfell - creative development and premiere in 2023 subscription series concerts (October)
- Clare Strong - creative development and premiere in 2023 Itet concert (December)
This is a new work suitable for high level amateur musicians to be workshopped throughout the year and premiered in December as part of John Noble Itet program. It will then be used in mentoring activity and promoted through Strike a Chord to enable student groups to have something satisfying by a female Australian composer to play (commissioned supported by by Julian)
- Natalie Nicolas - creative development and premiere in 2023 private concert for commissioner (November)
A new work commissioned by Andrew Domasevicius to commemorate his wife, Aida's 55th birthday, dependent on the work's suitability, it may be included in future concert seasons
- Gordon Kerry - creative development and premiere currently scheduled for 2024

Commission wishlist:

- Melody Eötvös
- Carl Vine
- Nigel Westlake
- Ollie Mustonen
- Caroline Shaw

Ascend and Emerge composer programs:

- Request for feedback from the Emerge submission process was immense, and Zoe has conducted 25 conversations with unsuccessful composers. Summary of findings:
 - Grateful for the conversation, even if Zoe didn't give specific feedback
 - Zoe sent list of scores for composers to study to all who requested
 - Desire for open source information
 - Zoe connected a number of composers with other ensembles and musicians
 - Score study a large reason for many applying
- Inaugural year-long Emerge composer program has begun
 - 6 score study sessions, 3 optional extras to be recorded for future reference
 - In-person workshops with FQ in second half of 2023
 - Premiere performances in early 2024
- Ascend call for submissions will commence in May 2023 for the 2024 program

EXTRA PROJECT ACTIVITY

- Bryony Marks recording project - Film composer Bryony Marks has engaged the quartet to record the music she composed for films found in the National Film and Sound Archive. It is external to our activity but aligns with our artistic direction and is a fee for service engagement.
- Monash residency - FQ will be mentoring the string sections of the Monash orchestra in August 2023. Wilma and Helen will be away, Jenny Khafagi and Brigid Colleridge have been approached to take part. Monash is comfortable with three replacement musicians as FQ is not featured in this instance.

EDUCATION ACTIVITY

- Zoe and Helen are working with Fiona to consolidate and evaluate education activity with an assessment of time spent and impact
- Strike a Chord (SAC) ensemble mentoring
 - 2022 winners of the FQ prize Piccolo Quartet from Sydney will join FQ for a side by side concert of Mendelssohn Octet in July (Montsalvat subs concert)
 - No SAC competition in 2023, possibility of doing a side by side program with Eureka Quartet in 2024 (2020 FQ SAC prize winners)
- John Noble's Itet program
 - Ensembles continuing in Bendigo, Shepparton, Mildura, Warragul/Traralgon, Bairnsdale, Western Suburbs
 - Mallee Quartet (Mildura) continuing as regional ensemble in residence
 - Side by side concerts in May, July and November
 - Final concert December
 - Mentoring by Helen and Zoe as part of their Education Coordinator and Artistic Director roles
- Evaluation of secondary school residency program and its impact versus time
 - City of Melbourne funding allows for the funding of secondary students and their family members to attend FQ concerts (30 tickets for each MRC concert)
- Resonance String Orchestra - 2 string quartets
 - Castlemaine and Woodend
 - Regular coaching from Zoe
 - Testing of the sequential string quartet repertoire
- Ensemble Dutala mentoring
 - Ensemble Dutala activity moved to Sydney in 2023
 - Zoe still mentoring Jackson Worley as an FQ scholarship winner
 - In discussion with Fiona about the possibility of developing relationships with First Nations musicians in the Geelong area through Mark Rose (Deakin University)

FQ DIGITAL

- FQ Digital subscriptions continue in 2023, with new single-concert purchase option to be made available. Customers can access digital versions of the MRC performances. After 12 months, these videos will be made available on FQ Digital Free.
- FQ Digital Free will continue with the relevant updates and development of the curated FQ experience.
- Evaluation of FQ Digital will occur in September 2023 to make decisions on 2024 activity. Organisations are moving away from digital concerts, but regardless of the means of distribution, properly videoing the programs is proving to have real value for us in accumulating quality online content.