

# FLINDERS QUARTET

CREATIVE PLAN 2022 AND 2023



photo credit: Pia Johnson

**CARING FOR TRADITION, DARING TO BE DIFFERENT**

# FLINDERS QUARTET

## 2022 AND 2023 CREATIVE PROGRAM

# 2022

### **January**

*A day in January*

Mentorship and side by side workshops with members of Ensemble Dutala, instrumental ensemble of Short Black Opera with Flinders Quartet members.

Ongoing mentorship to Ensemble Dutala scholarship winner, Jackson Worley

Location: Melbourne

### **February-March**

**Musica Viva Australia national tour with Karin Schaupp (guitar)**

*Concert Program:*

Castelnuovo-Tedesco Guitar Quintet

Imogen Holst Phantasy Quartet

Boccherini Fandango

Carl Vine New Work (commissioned by Musica Viva Australia)

*This is an externally presented tour and the program has been chosen in collaboration with Karin Schaupp and Musica Viva Australia.*

Locations: Melbourne (2 performances), Sydney (2 performances), Adelaide, Perth, Hobart, Canberra, Newcastle, Brisbane, Cowra

### **March**

**FQ Margaret Sutherland Festival and recording**

*Concert Program:*

Margaret Sutherland String Quartet No. 2

Margaret Sutherland Quintet for clarinet and string quartet

Margaret Sutherland Quintet for oboe and string quartet

Collaborators: Ben Opie (oboe) and David Griffiths (clarinet)

*FQ has committed to championing the works for string quartet by Margaret Sutherland. This involves the recording (in partnership with ABC Classic), live performance, and filmed performances to be available free online for maximum advocacy opportunity, production of audience engagement material in interviews and “explore the music” lectures as well as the production of performance scores and parts in partnership with Wirripang Press and ensuring these parts are easily accessible for future performers.*

Location: Villa Alba Mansion, Kew, Melbourne (2 performances)

### **April-May**

#### **Tour of Katy Abbott’s “Hidden Thoughts II: Return to Sender”**

*with*

Narrator: Richard Piper

Mezzo Soprano: Dimity Shepherd

Sound Engineer: Jim Atkins

*“Hidden Thoughts II: Return to Sender” was written by Katy Abbott in 2020 and premiered on the Melbourne Digital Concert Hall mid pandemic. It broke ticket sales records, a testament to the way it spoke to many Australians. It uses the text from letters sent by Australians to asylum seekers on Manus Island and Nauru and returned to Julian Burnside AO QC. It is a vital document of our time and needs to be heard by as many Australians as possible*

Locations: Canberra International Festival of Music, Canberra, and MONA, Hobart

### **May**

#### **Subscription series: Program 1 “My Life”**

*Concert Program:*

Katy Abbott Margaret Sutherland Song cycle

Margaret Sutherland String quartet No. 2

Melody Eötvös Camille Claudel song cycle

Clara Schumann Op. 16 arranged by Jessica Wells

Collaborators: Ashlyn Tymms (voice) and Richard Piper (dramaturg)

*Celebrating the lives of three extraordinary women: Margaret Sutherland, Camille Claudel and Clara Schumann. With the permission of Sutherland’s grandson, composer Katy Abbott has gained access to Sutherland’s personal papers and is using her own words to create a song cycle delving into her many obstacles and triumphs in order to help Australians appreciate her legacy. Sutherland’s 2nd string quartet “Discussion” is a 10 minute self contained work which is gloriously jovial and fun, with her signature harmonic complexity and sharp wit.*

*Camille Claudel is best known as Rodin’s muse but she was an outstanding sculpteur in her own right. Using Claudel’s own words (in French), composer Melody*

*Eötvös is creating a song cycle elevating our understanding of Claudel and connecting us with warning to a very familiar story of creative repression.*

*Clara Schumann's story is perhaps the best known of the three women: a Romantic composer who sadly never wrote a string quartet. As part of its long term strategy to achieve gender balance on the mainstream stage, FQ seeks to grow the string quartet canon so that future generations of quartet have a broader choice of repertoire by female composers from across the centuries. Clara Schumann's 19th century Op. 16 Preludes and Fugues lend themselves perfectly to string quartet and in the hands of expert arranger and composer, Jessica Wells, will be a welcome addition to the string quartet canon*

Locations: Melbourne Recital Centre (2 performances), Montsalvat in Eltham, Mornington Peninsula, Macedon Ranges and other regional touring

## **June**

### **Composer Development Program**

*Since 2016, Flinders Quartet's annual Composer Development Program has workshopped and documented 30 compositions by emerging Australian composers. FQ takes the time to rehearse the works, purposely choosing scores that push boundaries and need time to digest in recognition of the fact that new works need time to be understood. With no age limit, and an anonymous selection process, it is a true indication of the compositional talent in Australia.*

*From the participating composers, FQ selects those showing promise to partake in a week-long residency at All That We Are in Tasmania and identifies composers for future commissioning and other activity. FQ has commissioned 7 composers for future work as a result of this program and launched many new voices including Natalie Nicolas, Ella Macens, Matthew Laing and Lee Bradshaw. It should be noted that while FQ will maintain the anonymous selection process, it is actively promoting this opportunity to female composers to ensure parity in the submission gender ratios. Statistics over the past 5 years show the selection ratio of gender matches the application ratio of gender.*

*To ensure the FQ is attracting and identifying the highest level of emerging composers, CEP investment will enable FQ to offer a stipend for the composers in order to take part in the program.*

Location: Live streamed performance from Tempo Rubato (Melbourne)

### **Footscray High School Residency**

Focusing on Beethoven and Bach and the theme of variations utilising expertise of Andrea Keller to help relate these composers in a contemporary setting to the teenagers taking part.

*FQ began work with Footscray High School in 2019 with the intention of delivering the music of the string quartet canon to teenagers in a way that they could experience it and respond in their chosen medium, recognising that many teenagers in a public high school setting don't have the opportunity to play a string instrument. FQ work with design, art, drama, dance and music students in discovering the ways*

*of understanding the artistic intent of composers like Shostakovich (2019 program) and Bartok (2020-2021 program).*

*In 2022 and 2023, FQ will be focussing on Bach and Beethoven. Rather than dealing with main class groups, FQ will be identifying up to 20 individual students with the help and guidance of staff to enable greater impact and future connectivity with the students. Treated like artistic interns, these students will work closely with FQ members and staff in discovering the myriad of ways one can be a part of the arts industry and respond to music (e.g. designing e-news and sections of the website, taking photographs, artworks for promotion). FQ will work with the teachers to ensure this runs sympathetically with existing coursework for the students.*

Location: Footscray High School

## **August**

### **Subscription series: Program 2**

*Concert Program:*

Haydn String quartet Op. 20 No. 5

Brahms String quartet No. 1

Shostakovich Octet (with Strike a Chord mentee ensemble)

Inclusion of 2021 CDP work

Collaborators: Winners of the 2021 FQ mentorship prize in the Musica Viva Australia Strike a Chord competition

*In recognition of the immense European tradition of the string quartet, FQ celebrates two greats, Haydn and Brahms. As part of this program, FQ will be performing some concerts with the Piruli Quartet, winners of the Flinders Quartet Mentorship Prize for the Musica Viva Strike a Chord competition and testament to FQ's generosity in nurturing the next generation of string quartet. FQ will also include a score from its 2021 Composer Development Program to ensure the emerging composer has maximum chance to gain industry recognition and future opportunities.*

Locations: Port Philip Estate, Montsalvat - Eltham, Flinders, Tempo Rubato - Melbourne, Mornington, Shepparton (side by side JNQP performance), Bendigo (side by side JNQP performance)

## **October/November**

### **Subscription series: Program 3**

*Concert Program:*

Beethoven string quartet Op. 18 No. 1 in F

FQ Grosse Fugue Vignettes project with works by:

Natalie Nicolas

Claire Higgins

Clare Strong

Claire Farrell

Naomi Brown

Beethoven Op. 133 Grosse Fugue

*Flinders Quartet's mission is to carry on the strong tradition of the string quartet in Australia into the 21st century so generations to come can have an idea of Australia's culture through the music created at the time. The commissioning of five emerging female composers to write a vignette in response to Beethoven's Grosse Fugue creates contemporary relevance for this seminal work and ensures that the future generations have an awareness of Beethoven's string quartet canon. The five short works will be recorded to ensure these composers receive the industry recognition they deserve. Beethoven's Grosse Fugue is seen by some as an unapproachable composition, but by pairing it with the five short works inspired by it, the audience will have a new way of listening to this vital work with fresh insights. Beethoven's Opus 18 were his first works in the genre and his development of one small motif was revolutionary in compositional terms. This same idea is connected to the task ascribed to the emerging composers and 200 years on, connects them with the young Beethoven.*

Locations: Melbourne Recital Centre (2 performances) Montsalvat - Eltham, Flinders, Bendigo, Warburton, Avenel

### **John Noble Quartet Program and regional quartet in residence activity**

*Throughout the year, FQ engages in ongoing mentorship and side by side performances with ensembles from around Victoria. Ensembles are based in Mildura, Bendigo, Shepparton, Bairnsdale, Warragul, Traralgon, Wyndham Vale and Werribee.*

*In 2022, FQ has named the Mallee string quartet in Mildura as regional quartet in residence. FQ will be focussing on developing their repertoire in a way that reflects their regional and community needs and delivering intensive mentoring as well as residency opportunities.*

Locations: Mildura, Bendigo, Shepparton, Bairnsdale, Warragul, Traralgon, Wyndham Vale and Werribee / Side by Side major performance with all regional ensembles at Melbourne Recital Centre in December

# 2023

## **Subscription series: Program 1 “From Bach to Beijing”**

### *Concert Program:*

Julian Yu Goldberg Variations arranged for erhu and string quartet (with guest artist, Dong Ma, erhu)

Andrea Keller inspired by Bach and infusing with jazz

*As Flinders Quartet asserts its creative maturity and authority, it is looking at ways to challenge its artistic growth as well as connect with other genres. Julian Yu has arranged Bach’s Goldberg Variations for erhu and string quartet. While this piece has been arranged a number of times for different ensembles, this blending of cultures adds new layers to this multidimensional work in a way that truly makes it relevant in 21st century Australia. Andrea Keller is a composer and performer that matches our artistic aesthetic and sensibility. Her first work for string quartet alone is long overdue as she continues to lead the way in Australian composition. Flinders Quartet is excited to have the opportunity to be creatively stretched into the world of improvisation and jazz.*

Locations: Melbourne Recital Centre (2 performances) Montsalvat - Eltham, Flinders, New Subscription Venue + Regional Touring

## **Subscription series: Program 2**

### *Concert Program:*

FQ 2022 Composer Development Program participant

Beethoven String Quartet Op. 59 No. 1

Clare Strong new work for string quartet (commissioned with support from Julian Burnside)

Octet with FQ winners of Strike a Chord program

*Combining many varying elements of FQ’s activity, this program celebrates an emerging-mid career composer, one of the great masterworks of the string quartet canon in Beethoven’s Op, 59 No. 1, the 2022 winners of the Flinders Quartet mentoring prize as part of the Musica Viva Strike a Chord competition, and one of the 2022 compositions from the Composer Development Program. This is a concert program to celebrate the intense relevance of everything FQ sets out to achieve.*

Locations: Melbourne Recital Centre (2 performances) Montsalvat - Eltham, Flinders, New Subscription Venue + Regional Touring

## **Composer Development Program**

*Since 2016, Flinders Quartet’s annual Composer Development Program has workshopped and documented 30 compositions by emerging Australian composers. FQ takes the time to rehearse the works, purposely choosing scores that push boundaries and need time to digest in recognition of the fact that new works need time to be understood. With no age limit, and an anonymous selection process, it is a true indication of the compositional talent in Australia. From the participating*

*composers, FQ selects those showing promise to partake in a week-long residency at All That We Are in Tasmania and identifies composers for future commissioning and other activity. FQ has commissioned 7 composers for future work as a result of this program and launched many new voices including Natalie Nicolas, Ella Macens, Matthew Laing and Lee Bradshaw. It should be noted that while FQ will maintain the anonymous selection process, it is actively promoting this opportunity to female composers to ensure parity in the submission gender ratios. Statistics over the past 5 years show the selection ratio of gender matches the application ratio of gender. To ensure the FQ is attracting and identifying the highest level of emerging composers, CEP investment will enable FQ to offer a stipend for the composers in order to take part in the program.*

Location: Live streamed performance Tempo Rubato - Melbourne

### **Footscray High School Residency**

Focusing on Bach and variations utilising expertise of Andrea Keller  
Comprises Footscray High School public presentation

*Following on from work with individual students in 2022, FQ will be working with classes of students towards a public presentation in August 2023 where the performing arts students (dance, drama and music as well as a live performance by senior art students) collaborate with FQ in response to Bach's Magnificent Goldberg Variations.*

Locations: Onsite mentoring with Live Performance Footscray High School Theatre

### **Subscription series: Program 3**

*Concert Program:*

Brenda Gifford New work commission  
Florence Price String Quartet No. 2

*Florence Price was the first African American woman to have her work performed by a symphony orchestra, yet she is largely unknown in Australia. Brenda Gifford is quoted to have said, "Strong independent women who think outside the box inspire me". By matching these two brilliant compositional and revolutionary minds, we are celebrating the past and the future with the firm intention of inspiring more strong independent women to think outside the box in their creative practise.*

Locations: Melbourne Recital Centre (2 performances) Montsalvat - Eltham, Flinders, New Subscription Venue + Regional Touring

### **Creative Development: Deborah Cheetham new work for string quartet and children's choir**

*Flinders Quartet have commissioned Deborah Cheetham AO to write a work for children's choir and string quartet of secondary high school level (approximately grade 6-8 AMEB or equivalent.). The text will be in the language used by Wurundjeri people to enable school children to learn the language with intent and meaning. It will be designed to be a piece that can be played by a school string quartet or staff string quartet to enable it to become a piece*



*that is widely performed and utilised within schools' performing curriculum. FQ will workshop this piece with children from Dhungala (Short Black Opera's children's choir) and give the premiere performances as part of the 2023 subscription concert season. FQ will use this project as an opportunity to further the relationship with Ensemble Dutala, engaging Dutala members in the development process and further performances.*

Location: Melbourne

### **John Noble Quartet Program and regional quartet in residence activity**

*Throughout the year, FQ engages in ongoing mentorship and side by side performances with ensembles from around Victoria. Ensembles are based in Mildura, Bendigo, Shepparton, Bairnsdale, Warragul, Traralgon, Wyndham Vale and Werribee.*

*In 2023, FQ will assess the needs of Mallee string quartet as regional string quartet in residence and either continue with the Mallee string quartet for a second year or award the residency to another regional ensemble. FQ will be focussing on discovering ways the Mallee String Quartet can have further community impact as well as delivering intensive mentoring as well as residency opportunities.*

Locations: Mildura, Bendigo, Shepparton, Bairnsdale, Warragul, Traralgon, Wyndham Vale and Werribee / Side by Side major performance with all regional ensembles at Melbourne Recital Centre in December