

Born in Newcastle, **Christopher Moore**'s strongest memory from childhood was seeing his mother Patricia (a long time subscriber to ACO concerts in Newcastle) pulling up in the driveway of his Valentine home with a tiny blue violin case on the back seat. Pat was and still is a dedicated amateur musician and would take Chris to concerts in Newcastle and Sydney long before he had even learned to tie his shoelaces. After studying with two prominent Sydney Suzuki teachers, Marjorie Hystek and the late Harold Brissenden, he completed his Bachelor of Music in Newcastle with violinist and pedagogue Elizabeth Holowell.

After working with Adelaide and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras as a rank and file violinist, Chris decided to take up a less highly strung string instrument and moved his musical focus and energy to the viola. He had always thought that the violin made his head look big! He accepted a position in the viola section of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra - a position he held for one and a half years before successfully auditioning for the position of Associate Principal Viola with the same orchestra. During his association with MSO, Chris performed regularly as a chamber musician with other colleagues from the MSO and counts among his many highlights sharing the stage with KISS.

During the 2006 ACO season, Chris appeared as Guest Principal Violist with the ACO for their March National Subscription tour and their tour to Malaysia. It was during this time that Chris successfully auditioned for the ACO's Principal Viola position.

In 2013 **Craig Hill** celebrates 22 years with the Melbourne Symphony. After formative studies with Phillip Miechel at the Victorian College of the Arts, Craig was a recipient of a German Academic Exchange scholarship, completing studies with Dieter Kloecker at the Freiburg Musikhochschule in 1991.

Following his outstanding solo debut with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra in 1997, Craig has appeared at festivals throughout Australia, the United States and Denmark. Regular seasons as the ABO's Principal Clarinet and performances as Guest Principal with the Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Orchestra of the Antipodes have become a favourite feature of his calendar. His live recording of Mozart's Clarinet Concerto with the ABO under the direction of Paul Dyer has been released by ABC Classics.

Since 2004 Craig is a Guest Principal clarinet of the period instrument orchestra Concerto Copenhagen. Under the direction of Lars Ulrik Mortensen he has given over twenty performances of the celebrated clarinet solos in Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito* at the Royal Danish Opera, as well as joining the orchestra in the recording studio and as a guest of the chamber music festival "Vinter- Klassik" at the Garnison Church in Copenhagen.

In April 2009 he directed a mini-festival of period instrument chamber music, Concertino Copenhagen, which brought together musicians from Australia and Europe for concerts at the newly opened Melbourne Recital Centre. In 2010 Craig toured nationally as a guest artist with the ACO, performing chamber works by Beethoven, Schubert and Brahms on instruments of each period to critical acclaim.

THE BACHMANN PIANOFORTE

The Friends of Eusebius and Florestan is launching a campaign to restore a magnificent 1841 Viennese action grand piano built by Wilhelm Bachmann in Brno. This is the perfect instrument for the chamber repertoire by Schumann and Brahms. We invite you to become a friend of the "Friends" by making a contribution through the Pozible.com/rarepiano website, where you can find photos and further information about the Bachmann piano.



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The assistance of Melbourne Recital Centre staff in presenting this concert is gratefully acknowledged.

THE FRIENDS OF EUSEBIUS AND FLORESTAN

"prepare for and hasten the advent of a new, poetic future"
Robert Schumann, January 2, 1835. *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*

Program

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) String Quartet in A, Opus 41 no. 3

Andante espressivo - Allegro molto moderato
Assai agitato
Adagio molto
Finale: Allegro molto vivace - Quasi Trio

Interval of twenty minutes

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Opus 115

Allegro
Adagio
Andantino - Presto non assai, ma con sentimento
Con moto

Sarah Curro – violin | Monica Curro – violin

Christopher Moore – viola | Daniel Curro – cello

Craig Hill – romantic clarinet

THE FRIENDS OF EUSEBIUS AND FLORESTAN is a new ensemble based in Melbourne which brings together members of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra who share a passion for music of the 19th century played on period instruments and in the spirit of the first Romantics. Our name takes its cue from the two opposing alter egos of Robert Schumann: *Eusebius* - the dreamer and *Florestan* - the passionate and volatile romantic. While employing aspects of performance style which lost favour during the twentieth century: bowing styles, selective vibrato, subtle *portamento* or sliding, use of gut strings, art of *rubato* and tempo modification, of greater importance is music making in which (in the words of Schumann) "the poet speaks".

Thursday April 4, 2013

Elisabeth Murdoch Hall, Melbourne Recital Centre

Robert Schumann (1810 - 1856) String Quartet in A, Opus 41 no. 3

After several years gestation, Schumann's three string quartets op 41 were composed in the space of five weeks in the Summer of 1842 and dedicated to his friend and colleague Felix Mendelssohn. The first movement opens with a dreamy two note sigh (a falling fifth) which has been called the "Clara motive" [Cla-ra]. In 1844 Mendelssohn recalled the idea in his opus 62 which adopts a similar opening and is expressly dedicated to Clara. A second theme develops this idea into an ardent melody featuring rising phrases, each ending with the Clara motive, and a breathless, pulsating offbeat accompaniment.

The following movement presents a theme and four variations, with the somewhat unusual device of withholding the theme itself until after the first three variations are heard. The final variation can only be described as harrowing, with its barrage of accents, jagged harmonies and unwanted leaps. This variation leads directly to a coda where an uneasy truce between distant keys provides only partial resolution.

The *Adagio* features a hymn-like melody which is given an intense, emotionally-charged treatment. A dotted rhythm introduced by the viola leads to an exchange of three note interjections by the other instruments. A sublimely beautiful *pizzicato* passage for the cello accompanies the return of the first theme, with richly elaborated inner voices in waves of fresh emotion.

The concluding rondo opens in a typically Schumannesque manner with emphatic, relentless dotted rhythms across the beat. The contrasting section is outwardly simple, but harbours layers of joy and bitterness beneath a bucolic exterior. The coda is overwhelmed by the dotted rhythms of the theme and harmonies which attempt to push the music in different directions.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Opus 115

Brahms had intended to cease his creative output with the String Quintet op 111; it would have been a fitting summation of his art. It was the artistry and friendship of the Meiningen clarinettist, Richard Mühlfeld, which renewed Brahms' creative energy.

In May 1891 Brahms heard several performances by Mühlfeld; in particular Mozart's Quintet, K581, made a deep impression. By July he was at his favourite Summer retreat, Bad Ischl, and at work on two compositions for the clarinet: the Trio op 114 and, "a far greater folly", the Quintet op 115. Both works were premiered by Mühlfeld in Meiningen the following November, with Brahms at the piano and Joseph Joachim leading the quartet. Robert Hausmann, the cellist from Joachim's usual quartet, played in both works. The success of the quintet was immediate. In December Joachim insisted the program be repeated with his quartet in Berlin and over the next two years the Quintet received over fifty performances.

The affinity of Brahms' work with its Mozartian model is apparent from the outset: both begin with violins in thirds and sixths, the clarinet entering with a rising arpeggio; in both works there is a predominance of falling themes; they share a gently pervading melancholy (to which Brahms adds a good measure of sentimentality and a dash of gypsy soul); a variation movement concludes each work. But beyond these similarities lies Brahms' extraordinary compositional mastery, the themes organically evolving from one another in a thread which unites the four movements. The final re-appearance of the first movement at the very end is all the more touching because (in varied guise) it has been with us throughout.

Sarah Curro first started playing with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra as a casual in 2001 before securing her spot in the First Violin section. Sarah grew up in Queensland and completed her Bachelor of Music in 1994 at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, winning the Conservatorium Medal for Excellence. Subsequently Sarah studied, and then taught at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and was instrumental in introducing period performance practice concepts to the school. From 1999-2002 Sarah was a member of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and during her time in Hong Kong was also concertmaster of the Hong Kong Bach Society Orchestra and a member of the Fiorini String Trio founded by Jeremy Williams.

In Australia, she has performed many times with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and has been Guest Associate Concertmaster for the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and Guest Principal Second Violin, Associate Concertmaster and Concertmaster with Orchestra Victoria. More recently her association with the instruments made by Arts Music has inspired her to explore contemporary artistic possibilities by commissioning works of art, music, instruments and costume to encourage living Australian talent.

Monica Curro has held the position of Assistant Principal Second Violin with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra since 1998.

She grew up in Queensland and attended the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, studying with John Curro, before going to Michigan State University to study with Walter Verdehr, achieving a Masters of Music. Before taking up her position with the MSO she performed with the Australian Chamber Orchestra and has also played with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Philharmonic Orchestra, Sydney Symphony, and was Principal Second Violin of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

Monica is also a keen chamber musician and has been the concertmaster and soloist with the Auckland Chamber Orchestra as well as a member of the Australia Pro Arte, the Academy of Melbourne and the Southbank Players. Monica teaches at the University of Melbourne, and previously taught at the Victorian College of the Arts and the Australian National Academy of Music, where in 2004 she played in the resident string quartet and tutored chamber music.

Dan Curro studied the cello first with Helen Holt and later with Matthew Farrell, Rosanne Hunt and Howard Penny. For seven years Dan was a member of one of the world's most acclaimed youth orchestras, the Queensland Youth Symphony. Dan was Principal Cello of the QYO for four years and participated in tours to Japan, Korea, Austria, Germany and Italy.

Dan's musical interests are eclectic and his activities diverse. At the Queensland Conservatorium he studied contemporary improvisation under John Rogers and Ken Edie. He has recorded two albums with his contemporary vocal group, Plub. Reviewers described him as a "star performer" for a concert he gave with avant-garde/electronic musician Oxford Parker, in which he improvised on 6-string fretless bass guitar and completed Super Mario Bros. (Nintendo Entertainment System) in approximately six minutes as it was as projected onto a screen for a live audience.

Dan has also played baroque cello in many groups including the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and the Badinerie Players. In 2005 Dan was invited to play in the Sydney Festival's 12 Angry Cellos concert in which he performed alongside some of the country's most highly regarded cellists. In 2007 Dan accepted a full-time contract with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, making his debut as principal cellist. In 2009 he elected to return to his former freelance lifestyle and has subsequently performed in many varied musical contexts in an abundance of musical styles including baroque, classical, latin, jazz, hip hop, contemporary and what has become his (not so) secret passion: the historically informed performance of nineteenth century western art music.

Clarinet in A by Schwenk & Seggelke (Bamberg, 1998) after Georg Ottensteiner, Munnich 1875. Copied from Mühlfeld's clarinet preserved at Schloss Elisabethenburg, Meiningen.

Program notes by Craig Hill, April 2013

Further information on playing 19th century period instruments can be found on our website: www.friendsofeusebiusandflorestan.com