



Fairy Tales

Schumann, Bruch and Borodin

2:30pm | Sunday | 17 June 2018
Utzon Room, Sydney Opera House



What's On



Love: Weber and Franck

Elgar Romance for Bassoon and Strings

Weber Quintet for Clarinet and Strings

Brophy We Two Boys Together Clinging

Franck Sonata for Violin and Piano

Virtuoso Series

7:30pm | Wed | 18 Jul

City Recital Hall

cityrecitalhall.com

02 8256 2222



Vocalise: Rachmaninoff and Poulenc

Special Guest: Lee Abrahmsen, soprano

Poulenc Selected Chansons, Banalités and Poemes

Rachmaninoff Selections from 14 Romances, Op.34

Munro A Forest of Birds [Australian Premiere]

Master Series

2:30pm | Sun | 21 Oct

Utzon Room, Sydney

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sydneyoperahouse.com

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Joy: Farrenc and Beethoven

Schubert Notturmo in E flat major

Beethoven Violin Sonata No.5 in F major

Farrenc Nonet in E flat Major

Kats-Chernin Russian Rag (Nonet arrangement)

Virtuoso Series

7:30pm | Tue | 25 Sep

City Recital Hall

cityrecitalhall.com

02 8256 2222



Momentum: Schubert and Mendelssohn

Bruce "Gumboots" for Clarinet and String Quartet
[Australian Premiere]

Schubert String Quintet in C major

Mendelssohn String Quintet No. 2 in B flat major

Virtuoso Series

7:30pm | Tue | 13 Nov

City Recital Hall

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Maria Raspopova in Recital: From Bach to Satie

Debussy Claire de Lune

Chopin Ballade No. 4 in F minor, Op. 52

Satie Trois Gymnopédies

Liszt Grandes études de Paganini No.3 in G sharp minor, "La campanella"

Rachmaninoff Etudes-Tableaux Op.33 No.8

J.S. Bach Partita in C minor, BWV 826

Master Series

2:30pm | Sun | 2 Dec

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Fairy Tales

Schumann, Bruch and Borodin

Sunday 17 June 2018

2:30pm

Utzon Room, Sydney Opera House

Presented as part of the

2018 Master Series

Robert Schumann

Märchenerzählungen (Fairy Tales) for Clarinet,
Viola and Piano, Op. 132

Max Bruch

Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola and Piano, Op. 83

Interval

Samuel Hoggarth

Trio (2018) [Australian Premiere]

Alexander Borodin

String Quartet No. 2 in D major

The concert will last approximately 100 minutes, including a
20 minute interval.

Approximate work durations (minutes):

15 - 20 - Interval - 15 - 30



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About the music

Robert Schumann (1810–1856)

Märchenerzählungen, Op.132

- I. Lebhaft, nicht zu schnell (Lively, not too fast)
- II. Lebhaft und sehr markiert (Lively and very marked)
- III. Ruhiges Tempo, mit zartem Ausdruck (Peaceful tempo, with sweet expression)
- IV. Lebhaft, sehr markiert (Lively, very marked)

Fairy tales, such as those published by the brothers Grimm from 1812 on, can be pretty scary. But the narrator of Schumann's song-cycle *Dichterliebe* conjures up a fairy tale land, with flowers and music and dancing lights, which he sees in dreams. In despair at the collapse of his love affair, he sings that if he went there his agony would abate, and he would finally be happy. But the vision fades like froth when he wakes up.

In 1853 the Schumann household in Düsseldorf was visited by a 20-year pianist and composer whom Robert immediately and publicly hailed a genius. Brahms' visit and subsequent friendship were immensely valuable to Schumann, especially as his relations with both the Allgemeiner Musikverein, of which he was Director, and the municipal authorities who funded it, were deteriorating. His conducting was increasingly wayward, and he was beset on occasion by visual and aural hallucinations as well as bouts of deep depression.

The *Märchenerzählungen*, or Fairy tales were composed, for the idiosyncratic Mozart

'Kegelstatt' instrumentation of clarinet, viola and piano, in the weeks after Schumann had become friends with Brahms. Indeed, it isn't hard to hear prefigurings of Brahms in the motif that the viola plays, with its falling third, in the opening of the first piece, or the limpid melody of the third.

The pastoral associations of the clarinet's tone and its resemblance to the singing voice had already made it attractive to Schumann in 1849 with his three Fantasy Pieces, Op.73. For clarinet and piano, these avoid formal abstraction, concentrating instead on feeling. This comes even more to the fore, among the numerous works with illustrative titles that Schumann cultivated through his career, in the *Märchenbilder* (fairy tale pictures), Op.113, for viola and piano of 1851.

In neither case does Schumann refer to explicit stories, however. The first *Märchenerzählung* is a genial dialogue between two clearly profiled voices set in a rippling texture. There might be giants in the heavy tread that opens the second, though this is soon contrasted with fleeter material. The lyrical third piece, which, like the opening, begins its theme with a Brahmsian falling minor third, is another duet without words for the viola and clarinet, while the finale is a march in which the piano is given thematic precedence. It is tempted to hear these fairy tale worlds as a retreat, for Schumann, from a far scarier real life.

Max Bruch (1838–1920)

Eight pieces for clarinet, viola and piano, Op.83

- I. Andante
- II. Allegro con moto
- III. Andante con moto
- IV. Allegro agitato
- V. Rumänische melodie: Andante *
- VI. Nachtgesang: andante con moto
- VII. Allegro vivace, ma non troppo
- VIII. Moderato *

Born in Cologne in 1838, Max Bruch was a direct contemporary of Brahms, whom he outlived by 20 years. In some respects he trod a middle path between Brahms' resuscitation of classical forms and the 'music of the future' touted by Liszt and Wagner. His works tend to be Romantic in feeling, with rich harmony and orchestration and often built on a large scale. As a conductor he held posts at Koblenz and Berlin, in Liverpool in England and Breslau in present day Poland. Like many composers he was cursed with early success: his *Violin Concerto in G minor*, Op.26, dates from the mid-1860s, and the acclaim it immediately attracted meant that his subsequent achievement, with the possible exceptions of his *Scottish Fantasy* for violin and orchestra or the *Kol Nidrei* for cello and orchestra, was neglected. Those major works feature strings, which, Bruch said, 'sing a melody better than a piano, and melody is the soul of music'; and likewise wrote a number of works which feature the viola (often alongside the clarinet): the *Romance for Viola and Piano*, Op.85, the only-known *Concerto for Clarinet and Viola*, Op.88 and this series of pieces for clarinet, viola and piano, Op.83. The latter two were probably inspired by Bruch's son, Max Felix, who was a gifted clarinettist. The viola, clarinet and piano combination was invented by Mozart in his *Kegelstatt Trio*, composed for a musical evening at the home of a friend and using the available instrumentation. The felicitous combination suited the Romantic

palette, though, in this work and Schumann's *Märchenerzählungen*, especially in the warm blend of alto register lines against the colourful background of the piano.

The *Eight Pieces*, Op.83, date from 1910 and show Bruch holding to an aesthetic and musical language that were under siege from the modernisms of Schoenberg and Stravinsky. Each of Op.83's movements is a short, strongly profiled character piece. All but one (No.7) are in minor keys and most fall into simple formal designs.

The third is the most expansive and formally sophisticated, with extended solo and duo passages. Two of the pieces are named: No.5 is in the style of a Romanian song, while No.6 is a Nocturne. The major-key No.7 has something of the quality of a classical finale in its use of dance rhythms, but the actual final piece is marked moderato, returning the work to the mood of the opening.

* Movement not included in today's performance

Samuel Hogarth (1984–)

Trio for Clarinet, Piano and Cello (2017)

- I. Rapido. Andante tenebroso (dark, gloomy, mysterious)
- II. Scherzando (Playful)
- III. Expansive and very free
- IV. Passacaglia

This trio, by the English composer Samuel Hogarth, was co-commissioned by Omega Ensemble and the London-based group Chamber Music Box. It is dedicated to Simone Young, former Chief Conductor of the Hamburg State Opera, and Omega Ensemble's patron. Samuel Hogarth worked at the Hamburg State Opera as a répétiteur during Young's tenure and was commissioned by her to write a children's opera, *Little Long-Nose*, since published by Boosey & Hawkes. She has continued to support

I.

Rapido, senza tempo

Clarinet in Bb

Opening passage from Samuel Hogarth's Trio (2018)

his career and this dedication recognises his debt to her.

The work is cast in four movements. In each of the first three movements, one instrument takes on a more prominent solo role, before they all come together as equal partners in the fourth. The first movement explores the possibilities of the clarinet, giving the first movement its initially lyrical and romantic character, which however builds to a stormier middle section, allowing the clarinet to show a more strident side. This is followed by a virtuosic clarinet cadenza, before returning to the more reflective material heard at the start.

The second movement is a playful scherzo. Hogarth says: "I have two young children, and I think of this movement as depicting a scene where three children who don't know each

other very well are left alone in a room full of toys. Sometimes they play together, then maybe one goes off and does their own thing and the other two play, or they all play separately, then here and there they might come together again briefly... It's a bit like a game of hide and seek, with all the instruments trying to catch each other out with different rhythms. This movement features the pianist as soloist, although the clarinet and cello still have virtuosic roles to play."

The third movement features the cello as soloist in an extended cadenza. Hogarth says: "I think of the cello as the narrator of a story, while the clarinet and piano provide the background, sometimes adding their comments, sometimes asking the cello to tell us more."

The final movement is built on a passacaglia (a repeating pattern with a fixed harmonic

IV. Passacaglia

1 Ceremonially (♩ = 63, quasi = old ♩)

Pno.

Harmonic material from Samuel Hogarth's Trio (2018), Mvt. IV

structure). The pattern is heard once on its own, then the instruments are added one by one. Hogarth says, "thinking of my children again, this movement is like a drawing with a fixed outline and the instruments are colouring it in various different ways, experimenting with different colours and seeing what fits best, sometimes rubbing them away and starting again, sometimes adding new layers of complexity as the texture builds up." The work ends with a short coda that recalls the beginning of the first movement.

The trio received its world premiere at Burgh House, London in September 2017 and this performance marks the Australian premiere. We are delighted to welcome the composer to perform the piano part in this concert.

Alexander Borodin (1833–1887)

String Quartet No.2 in D major

- I. Allegro moderato
- II. Scherzo: Allegro
- III. Notturmo: Andante
- IV. Finale: Andante – Vivace

Having had their wicked way with Grieg's music in *The Song of Norway*, Robert Wright and George Forrest turned their sights to that of Borodin for the musical *Kismet*, which opened in San Francisco in 1953. While not quite a fairy tale, the show presented a highly Romanticised picture of Baghdad at the time of the Arabian Nights. Borodin had left plenty of music in what Richard Taruskin describes (in *On Russian Music*) as the 'harem style' from which to pillage, especially in his unfinished 'oriental' opera *Prince Igor* and in some of the symphonies.

The illegitimate son of a Georgian prince, Borodin was educated in St Petersburg. Gifted in both music and science, he chose a career in medicine and chemistry, ultimately becoming Professor of Chemistry at the St Petersburg Medico-Surgical

Academy where he displayed progressive attitudes and personal generosity. In 1859 he was sent by the Academy to Western Europe for further study, and, in Heidelberg in 1861, met Ekaterina Protopopova, a pianist who introduced him to much Western music. Scarcely were they engaged when Ekaterina became ill and had to go to Italy to recuperate. Borodin went with her, studying acid salts by day and playing chamber music at night. Twenty years later, Borodin wrote his second string quartet to recall these youthful days, and dedicated it to Ekaterina. It was premiered at an Imperial Russian Music Society concert in St Petersburg in 1882.

Borodin had been a member of the group often described as the Might Handful (better translated as 'mighty little heap'). Led by Mili Balakirev, these composers tended to avoid studying 'foreign' ideas like elaborate harmony and counterpoint. (Tchaikovsky sneered that Borodin possessed 'a very great talent, which, however, had come to nothing for want of instruction'.) The group as a result tended to eschew the rigours of chamber music.

By 1881, however, Borodin had assimilated techniques from western music, and he wrote the second quartet remarkably quickly. The duet writing between violin and cello in the first movement, and the heart-felt cantilena of the celebrated Notturmo suggest a spirit generous in love as in all else. The second theme of the Scherzo famously made its way into *Kismet* but Borodin's original intent for it went far beyond baubles, bangles and beads. Closer to Borodin's intention, perhaps was *Kismet's* use of the main theme of the Notturmo for *And this is my beloved*.

Schumann, Bruch and Borodin notes by Gordon Kerry, 2018.
Hogarth notes by Samuel Cottell, 2018

Samuel Hogarth, composer



Samuel Hogarth is an English composer, conductor and pianist currently working as Kapellmeister (staff conductor) at the Staatstheater Mainz. His work has been performed at venues including the Royal Opera House Linbury Theatre, the Hamburg Staatsoper, Cheltenham Festival, Heidenheimer Festspiele, Royal Academy of Music and Christ Church Cathedral. He received his first commission from Boosey & Hawkes at the age of 14 and studied with Adam Gorb, Matthew Taylor and Paul Patterson and subsequently with Robert Saxton while reading music at Oxford University, where he graduated with the top first in his year. His first opera *David and Goliath* was commissioned and performed by New Chamber Opera in 2006 and had a further production in Cambridge in 2008. A scene from the piece was performed in the Linbury Theatre of the Royal Opera House in February 2012 as part of 'Showcase: Opera'.

Since then commissions have included works for the Hamburg Staatsoper (*Zwerg Nase*, 2014, published by Boosey & Hawkes) and the Heidenheimer Festspiele (*Rocke und die Zaubertrompete*, 2016, published by Bärenreiter). He also wrote two pieces for jazz piano featured in the Paramount Vantage/Angelina Jolie film *A Mighty Heart* (2007) and a celebratory anthem for Queens' College Choir (2009).

Samuel Hogarth is also an active conductor and apart from his engagement in Staatstheater Mainz, where pieces have included *La Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, *Carmina Burana* and *Dialogues des Carmélites*, among others, he has also conducted revivals of *The Nutcracker* and *La Bohème* at the Magdeburg Opera House and performed works such as *Falstaff* and *Don Giovanni* at the Opera Berbiguières. In February 2017 he conducted a new production of *The Pearl Fishers* at the Pfalztheater in Kaiserslautern. Also in demand as a conductor of contemporary music such as Aribert Reimann's *I Am Your Opus* (Hamburg Staatsoper, 2012), he conducted a series of workshops at Glyndebourne on the sketches of Brett Dean's new commission, *Hamlet*, for which he was then cover conductor to Vladimir Jurowski in Glyndebourne for the world premiere production in 2017. He has worked on a wide range of operatic repertoire including key works of Wagner, Verdi, Puccini and Mozart, assisting conductors including Simone Young, Markus Stenz, Patrick Lange and Alexander Joel. He is also active as a jazz pianist and has performed in clubs including *Pizza Express* Dean Street and the *Vortex* in London and *Smalls* in New York, and his recordings have been played on national radio.

samhogarth.net

Musicians

Airena Nakamura, Violin

Orchestras Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra (Principal Second Violin)

Ensembles Australian Chamber Orchestra, Omega Ensemble, Caro String Quartet

Selected Recordings Omega Ensemble: Munro–Mozart–Palmer (ABC classics)

Awards/Study BMus (Honours)

Catalin Ungureanu, Violin

Orchestras Moldova Philharmonic Orchestra, Opera Australia Orchestra

Ensembles Omega Ensemble, La Camerata Chamber Orchestra, Caro String Quartet

Awards/Study Golden Lyra Award

Neil Thompson, Viola

Orchestras Opera Australia Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Ensembles The Nano Symphony, Caro String Quartet, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Skyline String Quartet, Omega Ensemble

Premieres Anthony Pateras, 'Crystalline' String Quartet

Selected Recordings Omega Ensemble: Munro–Mozart–Palmer (ABC classics), Hive (Kammerklang)

Awards/Study BMus (Honours), Elder Conservatorium, Adelaide, ANAM (Full Scholarship), ACO emerging artist, SSO fellowship

Masterclasses Beijing Central Conservatory, JiLin College of Arts, Dalian University

Paul Stender, Cello

Orchestras Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra

Ensembles Australian Chamber Orchestra, ACO Collective

Selected Recordings Omega Ensemble: Munro–Mozart–Palmer (ABC classics)

David Rowden, Clarinet

Orchestras Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, The Queensland Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Ensembles Omega Ensemble, Australia Ensemble, Sydney Soloists

Premieres George Palmer: Clarinet Concerto, Ian Munro: Clarinet Quintet

Selected Recordings Omega Ensemble: Mozart—Munro—Palmer (ABC Classics), Play School 50th Anniversary Special (ABC3).

Awards/Study BMus (London), LRAM, Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM)

Masterclasses Beijing Central Conservatory, JiLin College of Arts, Dalian University

Maria Raspopova, Piano

Ensembles Omega Ensemble, Regional tour with Paul Meyer, Recital in AGNSW, Government House performance with Emma Matthews

Premieres Mark Grandison: Riffraction; Andrew Ford: Contradance; Mark Issacs: Chamber Symphony

Awards/Study Khabarovsk College of Arts Scholarship, Masonic Youth Welfare Fund scholarship, Sydney

Conservatorium of Music, BArts (UNSW)

Masterclasses Beijing Central Conservatory, JiLin College of Arts, Dalian University

Samuel Hogarth, piano

Premieres Hamburg Staatsoper: Zwerg Nase, Royal Opera House/Linbury Theatre: David and Goliath (excerpt), Heidenheimer Festspiele: Rocke und die Zaubertrompete, Chamber Music Box, New College Choir

Conductor Mainz State Opera, Magdeburg State Opera, Pfalztheater Kaiserslautern, Heilbronn, Opera Stabile/Hamburg Staatsoper, Berbiguières

Orchestras Hamburg Philharmoniker, Gürzenich Orchester Cologne, Mainz Philharmoniker

Awards/Study MA (Oxford), MSt. (Oxford), National Opera Studio London

Masterclasses London Masterclasses, Royal Academy of Music

Selected Recordings Sam Hogarth Trio: Everything I Love, Sam Hogarth & Aisling Lavelle: While We're a Young

Omega Ensemble

The Ensemble

Alexandra Osborne, violin
Veronique Serret, violin
Catalin Ungureanu, violin
Airena Nakamura, violin
Neil Thompson, viola
David Wicks, viola
Paul Stender, cello
Howard Penny, cello †
Alex Henery, double bass
Sally Walker, flute
David Rowden, clarinet
Lloyd Van't Hoff, clarinet †
Celia Craig, oboe
Josh Oates, oboe
Ben Hoadley, bassoon
Michael Dixon, horn
Maria Raspopova, piano
Samuel Hogarth, piano †
Lee Abrahmsen, soprano †

† = Guest Artist

Founded in 2005, Omega Ensemble is one of Australia's finest chamber groups. With a dedication to presenting the finest Australian musicians, as well as engaging international guest artists, Omega presents outstanding musicians in an intimate and stimulating chamber setting. Its mission is to showcase outstanding artists who captivate and excite audiences through a revelatory program of chamber music.

Ranging from large chamber orchestras to duos, trios and quartets Omega performs a diverse range of repertoire; whether it is an iconic gem, a neglected beauty or a world premiere. The passion and commitment to the highest level of craft is still deployed.

To date, Omega has commissioned and performed over twenty new works from notable Australian and International composers, including Daniel Rojas, Mark Isaacs, Cyrus Meurant, George Palmer, Elena Kats-Chernin, Anne Boyd, Matthew Hindson, Christopher Gordon, John Peterson, Margery Smith, Stuart Greenbaum, Paul Stanhope, Ben Hoadley and Andrew Ford.

As well as performing premiere works, Omega also endeavours to uncover works that have been lost to time. Omega's ability to find these pieces and bring them to life spells out a deep love and passion not only for well-known chamber music, but also for exploring gems that delight, entertain and enrich their audiences.

In addition to concert performances, Omega also maintains a growing digital concert hall in which audiences can relive the magic of a live performance. Beyond these videos, Omega Ensemble's performances are now included as part of Qantas's inflight entertainment.

In addition to performances in Sydney the Ensemble regularly tours to country towns including Newcastle, Orange and Bathurst. The Ensemble toured to China for the first time in November 2017 performing and giving masterclasses at the Beijing Central Conservatory, Chang Chun's JiLin College of Arts and Dalian University. In March this year, the Ensemble returned to China to perform in the Sanya International Festival of Arts in Haitang Bay.

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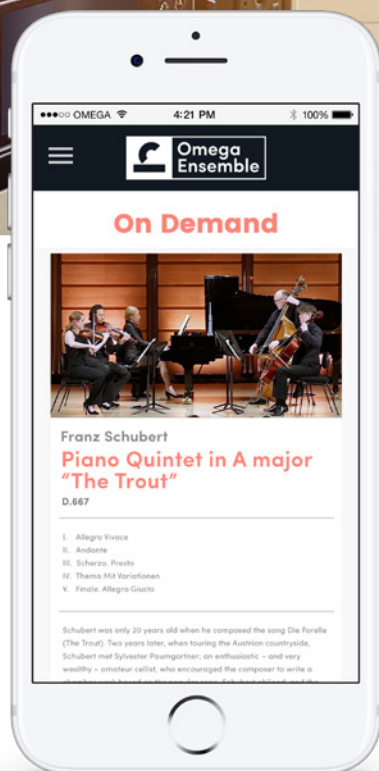


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