Australian Chamber Orchestra

RICHARD TOGNETTI – ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

MOZART & BRITTEN

DIRECTED BY RICHARD TOGNETTI

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WELCOME

Welcome to *Mozart & Britten*, a national tour where we are delighted to celebrate the ACO concerto debut of the Orchestra's newest member, Principal Viola Stefanie Farrands.

Stef was appointed as Principal Viola in early 2020, and now, two years later, will take centre-stage alongside Richard Tognetti to perform one of the most magnificent concertos in the string repertoire, Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante. I am sure that you share my joy and enthusiasm in witnessing Stef give this muchanticipated performance.

I acknowledge our National Tour Partner for these performances, Wesfarmers, for their invaluable support of this tour, as well as for the ACO more broadly as Principal Partner of ACO Collective. Wesfarmers have provided enormous support for the ACO's Learning and Engagement programs over the past twenty-four years and it is fitting that Stef herself is an alumna of ACO Collective, having participated in the ensemble as an Emerging Artist 14 years ago.

On behalf of Richard Tognetti and our ACO colleagues, thank you for joining us in the concert hall. I would particularly like to acknowledge our wonderful Perth audience, who we are reunited with for the first time in over two years – it's great to be back with you once again.



Richard Evans Managing Director

Join the conversation #ACO22Season | f 🖸 🖸 🎔 @AustralianChamberOrchestra

News



Barbican Residency

We are delighted to share that we will be returning to London in October 2022 to perform a threeconcert residency as International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court at the Barbican Centre.

The ACO's Barbican performances are supported by the Australian Government as part of the UK/ Australia Season 2021–22.

Coming up

MAY



ACO Up Close: Timo-Veikko Valve 29 MAY & 31 MAY

Sydney & Melbourne

Get to know our Principal Cello Timo-Veikko 'Tipi' Valve in these intimate recitals at Pier 2/3 and the University of Melbourne.

JUNE



ACO Relaxed Performance: Mozart & Britten 10 JUNE

Pier 2/3, Sydney

A welcoming performance open to anyone who wishes to enjoy an informal, daytime concert experience.



Bach 18-27 JUNE

Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Sydney, Canberra

A Bach family reunion that celebrates this greatest of all musical dynasties.

JULY



There's a Sea in My Bedroom 13-17 JULY Pier 2/3, Sydney

20 JULY – 27 AUGUST On tour in QLD, NSW & VIC

An immersive and theatrical introduction to live classical music, based on the beloved children's book by award-winning author Margaret Wild.



ACO Talks: An Unauthorised History of Classical Music 25 JULY – 15 AUGUST

Pier 2/3, Sydney

Join favourite ABC Classic presenters Genevieve Lang and Russell Torrance for a four-night tour through the remarkable, inspiring and often shocking history of classical music.



ACO Up Close: Richard Tognetti 31 JULY & 18 AUGUST

Sydney & Melbourne

Get to know our Artistic Director & Lead Violin Richard Tognetti in these intimate recitals at Pier 2/3 and the University of Melbourne.

AUGUST



The Crowd & I 6–15 AUGUST Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane

Richard Tognetti, director Nigel Jamieson and cinematographer Jon Frank contemplate the complexity of life on our densely populated planet.

WELCOME FROM WESFARMERS

Twenty-four years after we first collaborated with the ACO, initially to bring this wonderful Orchestra to Perth on a regular basis, we are honoured to support the ACO as National Tour Partner and as Principal Partner of ACO Collective.

After the unprecedented challenges to our national arts community of the last two years, it's a cause for celebration that the ACO is touring nationally again, bringing exceptional live music to the people of Australia.

As Principal Partner of ACO Collective, Wesfarmers is particularly thrilled to hear Principal Viola, Stefanie Farrands, make her ACO concerto debut, joining Richard Tognetti for Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante. As an alumna of the Emerging Artist Program, and having toured regionally with ACO Collective, Stefanie exemplifies the success of these programs.

It is a privilege and a joy to support the tremendous work of the ACO and ACO Collective as part of our commitment to making a broader contribution to the communities in which we live and work. We hope you enjoy this performance as much as we have enjoyed bringing it to you.



Rob Scott Managing Director Wesfarmers Limited



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PROGRAM

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin Stefanie Farrands Viola Australian Chamber Orchestra

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WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (arr. strings)	Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat major, K.364 I. Allegro maestoso II. Andante III. Presto	30
INTERVAL		20
WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART	Divertimento in D major, K.136 I. Allegro maestoso II. Andante III. Presto	12
BENJAMIN BRITTEN	Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge, Op.10 I. Introduction and Theme II. Adagio III. March IV. Romance V. Aria Italiana VI. Bourrée Classique VII. Wiener Waltzer VIII. Moto Perpetuo IX. Funeral March X. Chant XI. Fugue and Finale	25

The concert will last approximately one hour and 50 minutes, including a 20-minute interval. The Australian Chamber Orchestra reserves the right to alter scheduled artists and programs as necessary.



ACO concerts are regularly broadcast on ABC Classic. Mozart & Britten will be broadcast on Sunday 29 May at 1pm.

MUSICIANS

The musicians on stage for this performance.

Discover more

Learn more about our musicians, go behind the scenes and listen to playlists at: aco.com.au





Richard Tognetti Director and Violin

Richard plays the 1743 'Carrodus' Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù violin kindly on Ioan from an anonymous Australian private benefactor. His Chair is sponsored by Wendy Edwards, Peter McMullin Am & Ruth McMullin, Louise Myer & Martyn Myer Ao, Andrew & Andrea Roberts.

Satu Vänskä Principal Violin

Satu plays the 1726 'Belgiorno' Stradivarius violin kindly on Ioan from Guido Belgiorno-Nettis AM & Michelle Belgiorno-Nettis. Her Chair is sponsored by David Thomas AM.



Aiko Goto Violin

Aiko plays her own French violin by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume. Her Chair is sponsored by Anthony & Sharon Lee Foundation.



Mark Ingwersen Violin

Mark plays a 1728/29 Stradivarius violin on Ioan from the ACO Instrument Fund. His Chair is sponsored by Prof Judyth Sachs & Julie Steiner AM.



Ilya Isakovich Violin

Ilya plays his own 1600 Marcin Groblicz violin made in Poland. His Chair is sponsored by Meg Meldrum.



Liisa Pallandi Violin

Liisa currently plays Helena Rathbone's violin which is a c.1760 Giovanni Battista Gabrielli. Her Chair is sponsored by the Melbourne Medical Syndicate.



Maja Savnik Violin

Maja plays the 1714 'ex-Isolde Menges' Giuseppe Guarneri filius Andreæ violin kindly on Ioan from the ACO Instrument Fund. Her Chair is sponsored by Alenka Tindale.



Ike See Violin

Ike plays a 1590 Brothers Amati violin on Ioan from the ACO Instrument Fund. His Chair is sponsored by Ian Lansdown & Tricia Bell.



Stefanie Farrands Principal Viola

Stefanie plays her own 2016 viola made by Ragnar Hayn in Berlin. Her Chair is sponsored by peckvonhartel architects.



Timo-Veikko Valve Principal Cello

Tipi plays a 1616 Brothers Amati cello on loan from the ACO Instrument Fund. His Chair is sponsored by Prof Doug Jones Ao & Prof Janet Walker.



Julian Thompson Cello

Julian plays a 1729 Giuseppe Guarneri filius Andreæ cello with elements of the instrument crafted by his son, Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù, kindly donated to the ACO by the late Peter Weiss Ao. His Chair is sponsored by the Grist & Stewart Families.



Tim Yu # Violin



Riley Skevington # Violin



Elizabeth Woolnough Viola

Elizabeth plays her own 1968 Parisian viola by Pierre M. Audinot. Her Chair is sponsored by Terry Campbell Ao & Christine Campbell.



Meagan Turner # Viola

Meagan plays a 2019 viola by Samuel Zygmuntowicz on private loan.



Melissa Barnard Cello

Melissa plays a cello by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume made in 1846. Her Chair is sponsored by Dr & Mrs J Wenderoth.



Maxime Bibeau Principal Bass

Max plays a late-16thcentury Gasparo da Salò bass kindly on loan from a private Australian benefactor. His Chair is sponsored by Darin Cooper Foundation.

Guest Musicians

Egon Schiele (1890–1918) was an Austrian Expressionist painter who helped to change the face of Austrian art in the early 20th century. We have included a selection of highly atmospheric works depicting urban Austria.

FROM



PROGRAM IN SHORT

Your five-minute read before lights down.

Pre-concert talks take place 45 minutes before the start of every concert. See the ACO information desk for location details.

City Recital Hall, Sydney Genevieve Lang Sat 7 May, 6.15pm Sun 8 May, 1.15pm Tue 10 May, 7.15pm Wed 11 May, 6.15pm

Wollongong Town Hall Genevieve Lang Thu 12 May, 6.45pm

Llewellyn Hall, Canberra Kim Cunio Sat 14 May, 7.15pm

Arts Centre Melbourne Andrew Aronowicz Sun 15 May, 1.45pm

Melbourne Recital Centre Andrew Aronowicz Mon 16 May, 6.45pm Sat 21 May, 6.45pm

Adelaide Town Hall Russell Torrance Tue 17 May, 6.45pm

Perth Concert Hall Cassandra Lake Wed 18 May, 6.45pm

QPAC Concert Hall, Brisbane Lucas Burns Mon 23 May, 6.15pm

Pre-concert speakers are subject to change.



Benjamin Britten

(1913–76)

Elegy for Strings (Australian premiere)

By the age of 14, Britten had begun regular lessons with Frank Bridge in London and was already composing remarkably assured works, including this Elegy for Strings, composed from 16 to 23 April 1928. The Elegy is notable for its feeling of urgency and intensity rather than of lamentation. The work shares few of the personal stylistic traits which Britten would develop over the next four years, culminating in his *Simple Symphony*, but the work clearly demonstrates that Frank Bridge was overseeing a pupil of the greatest potential. The Elegy was never performed in Britten's lifetime, only receiving its world premiere in a 2013 BBC Proms concert on the occasion of Britten's centenary.



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(1756–91)

Sinfonia Concertante in E-flat major, K.364 Arranged for violin, viola and string orchestra

By his 23rd year, the young Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was exceptionally well travelled. He had completed a grand tour of Europe as a child, and made three trips to Italy as a teenager, refining his art. Mozart embarked on yet another journey from 1777 to 1779. By now, life's pressures were weighing heavily on him: commissions and job offers were scarce, he was unlucky in love, and his already frail mother fell ill and died on the journey.

On his return to Salzburg, Mozart commenced a series of concertos for two or more instruments, a form that was all the rage in Mannheim and Paris thanks to the likes of Carl Stamitz. Of these, only the Sinfonia Concertante for violin and viola survives in a completed version. It stands out as one of Mozart's most sublime compositions, with its majestic, jubilant, and sometimes humorous outer movements framing a second movement that appears to recall his mother's passing. The work is also one of the most celebrated showpieces in the repertoire for the viola, Mozart's preferred instrument to play.

Mozart frequently reworked pieces for different combinations of instruments. The Divertimento in D major featured in this program is a showcase for strings, but also likely served as a "skeleton" upon which winds and brass could be added at a later date. This tradition continued well after Mozart's death, with the Sinfonia Concertante being arranged for string sextet by an anonymous early-19th-century composer under the title Grande Sestetto Concertante.

Our arrangement of the Sinfonia Concertante for violin, viola and strings takes inspiration from this tradition, exploring one of Mozart's masterpieces through the lens of the string orchestra, following the practice of both the composer and many musicians since.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Divertimento in D major, K.136

By the age of 15, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was already a musical sensation. As a child he had completed a grand tour of Europe that established his reputation as one of history's great child prodigies. As a teenager, the young Mozart continued to travel and was already composing symphonies and operas with miraculous ease.

When Mozart completed the three Divertimenti, K.136-8, he was about to turn 16. He had recently returned home to Salzburg after the premiere of his opera *Ascanio in Alba* in Milan, and was due back within the year for the premiere of another opera, *Lucio Silla*. The flamboyance and lyricism of Italian opera was a major influence on Mozart's early compositions, and the Divertimento in D major is no exception. It is brimming with youthful exuberance, warmth and charm, but also gives us more than a glimpse of the incomparable maturity that was to come.

15

Benjamin Britten

Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge, Op.10

Frank Bridge was a notable figure in the British music scene of the early 20th century, and when Benjamin Britten encountered Bridge's music for the first time at the 1924 Norfolk and Norwich Festival, the effect was immediate: Britten "was knocked sideways". Britten returned to the Festival as a 13-year-old in 1927, finally meeting Bridge in person. As they say, the rest is history: Britten became Bridge's only composition student, taking day trips to visit his London house. There, he took in all he could from Bridge's principles of composition.

In 1937, the British conductor Boyd Neel commissioned a new work for that year's Salzburg Festival. His orchestra, which performed repertoire from Corelli to Stravinsky, would comprise "the best 18 string players in the country", much like the ACO. Britten completed the commission in a little over a month. He selected a simple theme from his teacher's 1906 *Three Idylls* for string quartet, on which he produced a series of ten short variations – turning a daunting assignment into a manageable task. Endearingly, Britten decided that each variation should represent an aspect of his teacher's personality, using musical styles and techniques that his teacher had so lovingly introduced him to. As well as the principal theme, Britten alluded to five other works by Bridge, including *The Sea* (the work that introduced Britten to Bridge's music), *Enter Spring, Summer, There is a Willow Grows Aslant a Brook*, and the Piano Trio.

The work launched Britten's career, and he would go on to become the pre-eminent British composer of his day. But the real triumph of his *Variations*, however, was that it ensured his teacher's legacy would never be forgotten. Writing to Britten, Bridge said "It is one of the few lovely things that has ever happened to me, and I feel the richer in spirit for it all, including the charming dedication." History often forgets great teachers, but Britten's tribute ensures that his own composition teacher will always be remembered.

Houses and Colorful Laundry (Two Blocks of Houses with Clothes Line), 1914. Leopold Museum. Artwork by Egon Schiele (1890–1918).

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A MUSICAL LODESTAR

For the precociously talented young Benjamin Britten, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was an inspiration who became an eternal spiritual presence.

Written by Paul Kildea

Paul Kildea is a writer and musician. He has written three books on Benjamin Britten, including the internationally acclaimed *Benjamin Britten: A Life in the Twentieth Century*. He has been Artistic Director of Musica Viva Australia since 2019.



e was the boy who adored Beethoven – aping the great man's bold gestures and crashing climaxes in the original works he was chalking up at pace – until he turned to Mozart, attracted to his transparency and control. He was the young man who, during the final years of World War II and hard at work on his first opera, sat in opera performances presented by Sadler's Wells, punchdrunk on Mozart's wit, stagecraft and humanity. And he was the pre-eminent English composer who, in the magnificent concert hall he had just fashioned from the hulk of an old Suffolk maltings, perched alongside Sviatoslav Richter to play Mozart's Sonata for Two Pianos, K.448 – a performance that crackled with adrenalin, insight and intensity – the scanty rehearsal time assuaged by the two men's astonishing musicality.

When asked about his musical villains, Benjamin Britten would respond with weary regret and no little wit ("It's not bad Brahms I mind, it's good Brahms I can't stand"). His heroes – Schubert, Bridge, Mahler, Purcell – received gentle reverence. Yet Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was in a category of his own – an eternal spiritual presence in Britten's life and music, a brilliant lodestar never occluded by fast-changing tastes and trends as the young composer journeyed from prodigy to elder statesman.

Without Mozart, it is difficult to see how Britten could have transformed the post-war operatic culture in his homeland as fundamentally as he did. Britten considered Puccini a good opera composer – though not a good composer – for the simple reason that he knew how long it took a person to cross the room. Yet Mozart taught him something altogether more profound: the moral significance of the characters he put on stage and the importance of their lives and stories for all time. When he articulated these thoughts, Britten was thinking of the character of Figaro, of his relationships with the Countess and Susanna. Yet even then Britten was dimly aware that *Billy Budd*, the opera he had composed nine years earlier and was now revising – a process that prompted this neat train of thought – could eventually assume a similar mantle.

Left: Portrait of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart at the age of 13 in Verona, 1770; School of Verona, attributed to Giambettino Cignaroli (Salo, Verona 1706–70).

Without Mozart, it is difficult to see how Britten could have transformed the post-war operatic culture in his homeland as fundamentally as he did. Long before he arrived at this position, though, there were demons to exorcise, not all of them dispatched in early 1928 when he composed his *Elegy* (the manuscript specifying 68 strings!). This was the year of his *Quatre chansons françaises*: those deft, exquisite miniatures, perfumed by Debussy, Ravel and Wagner, composed a few weeks before the 14-year-old commenced as a boarder at W. H. Auden's old school, Gresham's in Norfolk. "So *you* are the little boy who likes Stravinsky!", the music master greeted him – ominously, so Britten thought.

This heady perfume would soon be replaced by a more original scent, though the four songs presaged the clarity and pared-down textures of Britten's late works, composed with such urgency as his clackety heart gave up on him. And for a short while, before they were replaced by others, these scents managed to overpower the Elgarian strains evident in the *Elegy*, no matter that mere months separated the two works.

The broad stylistic experimentation and gradual emergence of his own voice in 1928 came about because Britten had begun lessons with Frank Bridge the previous year, his mentor gamely working through the satchel full of new works his pupil brought to each session. Bridge taught him craft, and discipline too, but most importantly he encouraged his young pupil to dive into the deep, rich pool of European Modernism, a pool Britten would otherwise have approached with trepidation.



Frank Bridge, 1921

Right: Benjamin Britten conducting rehearsals for *Albert Herring.*

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There is a lyrical tenderness to the solo writing that is indebted to Mozart, a quality that would soon characterise much of his work.

When Britten began working with Bridge, he was still four years from writing his opus one (the Sinfonietta, lightly flecked with the colours of Schoenberg's Kammersymphonie, an unimaginable influence pre-Bridge), and there were high and low mountains to climb before he got there. But so too were there constants: his schoolboy diary charts his deep love of Mozart, a grand passion illuminated by a magical sequence of orchestral scores, concerts, radio broadcast, gramophone recordings, piano music, and more besides. In November 1931 he attended a performance of Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante, with Albert Sammons and Lionel Tertis as soloists (the latter a disappointment, he thought), the whole thing way too sloppy under his bête noire Adrian Boult. And at Christmas his family gave him miniature scores of *Petrushka* and the Sinfonia Concertante, the latter now a favourite work.

Perhaps inevitably, early the following year he set up his stall on Mozart's patch. With his Christmas gift close to hand, he composed a concerto for violin and viola (published 70 years later as his Double Concerto), with which he was quickly dissatisfied, but nevertheless hints at the absolute breakout work to come, his Violin Concerto of 1939. There is a lyrical tenderness to the solo writing that is indebted to Mozart, a quality that would soon characterise much of his work.

Works such as the Double Concerto – less so the *Elegy* – did one more thing: they acted as a time capsule, containing compositional ideas that had been fully worked out before being discarded, reluctantly, and which Britten occasionally dug up for inspiration. He repurposed a melody in the finale of the Double Concerto in *Billy Budd*, and the movement itself is his first successful use of *moto perpetuo*, a technique he'd return to so successfully in many works, including the astounding Cello Sonata (1961), his third cello suite (1971), and the *Variations on a theme of Frank Bridge* (1937) – the year in which his music began to get *really* interesting.



Above: E.M. Forster, Benjamin Britten, and Eric Crozier at work on the libretto of *Billy Budd*, 1950. Does any of this apply to the Mozart of the *Divertimento* (1772)? He composed the piece as 15-year-old – Britten wrote his *Elegy* at a similar age – at home in Salzburg, fresh from two trips to Italy in the company of his father. It's not strictly a divertimento, which tended to be more ragtag in shape than the cohesive symphonic design of this early work.

The Mozart scholar Alfred Einstein once speculated that perhaps the piece was in fact the skeleton of a symphony, should a third trip to Italy require such a work; Mozart would then merely need to punctuate it with winds and brass (the key of D would facilitate such manoeuvres). And Mozart himself labelled the work a "Salzburg Symphony", no matter the designation under which it was published. Yet even this looseness with genre at such an early age would pay enormous dividends in mature works. As Britten would do 150 years later in London, Mozart transformed the operatic culture of his adopted city, Vienna, precisely because he knew so well the rules he broke so freely, an iconoclast to the core.

They both shared Vienna, an antidote to the provincialism each identified in his hometown: a glamorous, daring character in her own right.

There were tributes, too, in his music, some acknowledged, others implicit. Here the young Mozart was like the young Britten, absorbing everything he could - from ecclesiastical music to antiguarian scores - and letting it colour his own imagination and output. Haydn was merely his most obvious hero and cheerleader, the younger composer dedicating a series of six string guartets to the older, prompting Haydn's famous observation to Mozart's father: "Before God and as an honest man, your son is the greatest composer known to me in person or by name..."

Prodigious talent, early recognition, mentorship, self-belief, a dash of humility: it's a potent mix. It doesn't always end the way it should: for every Mendelssohn there's a Hummel, for every Mozart there's a sister - in his case the prodigious Maria Anna. Yet planets do sometimes align, and humanity is changed forever. The resulting hat-tips between generations are heartfelt, often gorgeous. The six quartets Mozart dedicated to Haydn redefined the genre. And the score Britten dedicated to his great teacher and mentor, the Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge, was as much an expression of the music he was leaving behind - though he would never lose his fondness for variation form - as it was a stunning example of the music he would now start composing with such confidence and consistency.

The two men had one more thing in common, and not simply that Britten's variations were premiered in Salzburg a matter of three months after the conductor Boyd Neel commissioned them. They both shared Vienna, an antidote to the provincialism each identified in his hometown: a glamorous, daring character in her own right. It was the city Mozart changed, no matter the struggle, and the place that intensified Britten's steely vision when, upon leaving college, he discovered there a level of music-making so foreign to him, putting fire in his belly for the battles to come.



Above: A young Mozart playing celesta; engraving, 1885. In April 1945, as Soviet troops captured Vienna from the Germans, Britten recorded a short BBC radio broadcast in which he reflected on the significance of the city in European cultural imagination. It was the actual or spiritual home of Mozart, Schubert, Gluck, Haydn, Mahler, Berg and Schoenberg, its heritage and legacy too important to be lost as mere spoils of peace. It was a rallying cry for the survival and recovery of both city and culture, a repayment of a debt that had begun accruing when Britten's "childish fingers stumbled through the sonatas of Mozart", the small boy unaware of the lasting significance of these early fumbles.





THE VOICE OF THE VIOLA

At the beginning of the pandemic, Stefanie Farrands was appointed Principal Viola for the Australian Chamber Orchestra and at last she is performing in public.

Written by Romy Ash

Romy Ash is the author of *Floundering*, her first novel, which was shortlisted for the Miles Franklin, Commonwealth Writer's Prize and Prime Minister's literary awards, amongst others.

Photograph by Nic Walker

think the viola is incredibly close to the sound of the human voice, the sonority is just so rich and mellow," says Stefanie Farrands, the Australian Chamber Orchestra's Principal Viola. "It's got a complex character to it – more so, I believe, than the cello and the brilliant shining silver thread of the violin. It's like red wine or dark chocolate. It's got this very special depth to the sound. I fell in love with the viola the minute I picked it up."

Farrands grew up attending ACO concerts in Melbourne, studied at the Australian National Academy of Music, and at 19 years of age was selected to be part of the ACO Emerging Artist program. She continued her studies with the renowned violist Tabea Zimmermann at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin. Most recently, from 2015 she was Principal Viola with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, after a period playing extensively in Europe, Asia and America with orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and Camerata Salzburg.

Farrands was appointed to the Principal Viola position with the ACO after the Orchestra had embarked on an intensive, four-year search. This involved an international callout for players, application, audition and the trial of six other players. Of the rigorous, complex and logistically challenging application process, Farrands says: "You're constantly testing yourself, and every performance; you're putting your whole life on the line, in a way. Even in the initial audition, you are playing chamber music with an ACO quartet – they're hearing you solo, but you're immediately immersed within the Orchestra as well, which is such an important thing. That takes time, to feel what a player is like, working with them, speaking using their instrument as their voice. You can't get to know someone's musical personality until they are sitting in that chair."

"You're constantly testing yourself, and every performance; you're putting your whole life on the line, in a way."



Above: Stefanie Farrands with ACO Emerging Artist mentee Dana Lee. Farrands is speaking to me from her home, where she has a little room upstairs, her viola room, where much of her work is done. "Playing the viola always feels like coming home," she says.

She is rehearsing Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante, which intertwines violin and viola soloists, with the two parts speaking to one another. For the ACO performance, the violin is played by Artistic Director Richard Tognetti. "Sinfonia Concertante is such an incredibly special piece for violas," says Farrands. "It's a gift that Mozart gave to us. It's actually a difficult piece to prepare. One can, of course, spend a lifetime on the individual parts, but there's a really special component of this piece. It's quite rare to do a concerto directly alongside someone else and this creates an extremely intimate and intense form of communication between one part and the other."



Farrands speaks passionately about the art of communicating musically as part of a group, and the differences between playing in a large orchestra and with the ACO, which has 17 players and feels more akin to a string quartet. "For the viola, you're right in the middle, you're in the heart and soul of the group – and violas, we're hybrids, we're morphing. Our role is changing all the time.

"We act as the bridge between the top half of the orchestra and the bottom half of the orchestra – connecting the two together. I'm inspired playing my instrument in this format, because you must keep your mind constantly aware and active – with what role you are playing at what moment." Viola, Farrands says, "is the instrument of communication".

"I think it's worth noting too, an incredible number of composers were violists themselves. Mozart adored playing the viola ... there's something about the viola line which is just so interesting, being right in the middle of everything. You're surrounded by this whole world of sounds, and you can do so much in that role.

"Personally, I feel like I can't express myself any better than when my viola is in my hands. It's simply an extension, part of my soul, part of my arms. And the ACO – they're lightning quick, they can read you."
"We get a lot of energy from the audience; much more than I think they realise. Nothing can replace that magical moment on a stage, and that quiet after the last note of a piece – that you share with an audience".

> Farrands has a new viola, made in 2016 by German luthier Ragnar Hayn. She was struck by "the warmth and classiness of the sound" and although she says it is special to have an old instrument, one that may have been left in attics, gone from one hand to the next and survived world wars, there is also something special about picking up an instrument for the first time: it's a rare opportunity. "It will live beyond me," she says. "Each instrument is such a unique beast."

> Michael Dahlenburg, cellist, conductor and co-artistic director of the Australian String Quartet, has known Farrands since they were students and played together in the Hamer Quartet. Dahlenburg has always admired Farrands' musical voice. He says, "She's a very serious musician. That is evident in her sound. It's not contrived, it's not blasé, it's compassionate. How she fits into the fabric of the sound, even if it's an orchestra, it's very considered." When Farrands plays the viola, he says, she "leads from within".

> Farrands is relishing performing again after a stop-start two years. "The audience plays such a huge role in what we do," she says. "There's something special about the air between the seats and the musicians onstage. This is also a form of communicating. We get a lot of energy from the audience; much more than I think they realise. Nothing can replace that magical moment on a stage, and that quiet after the last note of a piece – that you share with an audience."

RICHARD TOGNETTI



Artistic Director

Richard Tognetti is Artistic Director of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. He has established an international reputation for his compelling performances and artistic individualism.

Richard began his studies in his home town of Wollongong with William Primrose, then with Alice Waten at the Sydney Conservatorium, and Igor Ozim at the Bern Conservatory, where he was awarded the Tschumi Prize as the top graduate soloist in 1989. Later that year he led several performances of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and that November was appointed as the Orchestra's lead violin and, subsequently, Artistic Director.

Richard performs on period, modern and electric instruments and his numerous arrangements, compositions and transcriptions have expanded the chamber orchestra repertoire and been performed throughout the world. As director or soloist, he has appeared with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Academy of Ancient Music, Slovene Philharmonic Orchestra, Handel & Haydn Society (Boston), Hong Kong Philharmonic, Camerata Salzburg, Tapiola Sinfonietta, Irish Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Nordic Chamber Orchestra and all the major Australian symphony orchestras, most recently as soloist and director with the Melbourne and Tasmanian symphony orchestras. Richard also performed the Australian premieres of Ligeti's Violin Concerto and Lutosławski's Partita. He was appointed the Barbican Centre's first Artist-in-Residence at Milton Court Concert Hall in London in 2016. Richard created the Huntington Festival in Mudgee, New South Wales and was Artistic Director of the Festival Maribor in Slovenia from 2008 to 2015.

Richard was the co-composer of the score for Peter Weir's *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*, starring Russell Crowe; he co-composed the soundtrack to Tom Carroll's surf film *Storm Surfers*; and created *The Red Tree*, inspired by Shaun Tan's book. He also created the documentary film *Musica Surfica*, as well as *The Glide*, *The Reef* and *The Crowd*. Richard collaborated with Director Jennifer Peedom and Stranger Than Fiction to create the films *Mountain* and *River* for the ACO, the former of which went on to become the highest-grossing homegrown documentary in Australian cinemas ever following its release.

Richard was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2010. He holds honorary doctorates from three Australian universities and was made a National Living Treasure in 1999. He performs on the 1743 'Carrodus' Guarneri del Gesù violin, lent to him by an anonymous Australian private benefactor.

STEFANIE FARRANDS



Principal Viola

Stefanie Farrands is the ACO's newest member, appointed as Principal Viola in 2020.

Prior to her appointment with the ACO, Stefanie was Principal Viola with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra from 2015. She has performed extensively throughout Europe, America, Asia and Australia with orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and Camerata Salzburg and has performed as Guest Principal Viola with the Strasbourg Philharmonic, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Australian World Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Stefanie has appeared as soloist with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra and ACO Collective. She has recorded both solo and chamber works for the ABC and is regularly featured as a performer on ABC Classic, Fine Music FM and 3MBS. Stefanie has won numerous awards and chamber music prizes including the Asia Pacific Chamber Music Competition (as a member of the Hamer Quartet) and has been recipient of the Freedman Classic Fellowship.

She grew up in Melbourne and studied at the Australian National Academy of Music with Roger Benedict and Alice Waten. She was selected as an ACO Emerging Artist in 2008 before continuing her studies with the renowned violist Tabea Zimmermann at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin.

THE ACO



"The Australian Chamber Orchestra is uniformly high-octane, arresting and never ordinary."

- The Australian

The Australian Chamber Orchestra lives and breathes music, making waves around the world for its explosive performances and brave interpretations. Steeped in history but always looking to the future, ACO programs embrace celebrated classics alongside new commissions, and adventurous cross-artform collaborations.

Led by Artistic Director Richard Tognetti since 1990, the ACO performs more than 100 concerts each year. Whether performing in Manhattan, New York, or Wollongong, NSW, the ACO is unwavering in its commitment to creating transformative musical experiences. The Orchestra regularly collaborates with artists and musicians who share its ideology, from instrumentalists, to vocalists, to cabaret performers, to visual artists and film makers.

In addition to its national and international touring schedule, the Orchestra has an active recording program across CD, vinyl and digital formats. Recent releases include *Water | Night Music*, the first Australian-produced classical vinyl for two decades, *Brahms Symphonies 3 & 4*, and the soundtrack to the cinematic collaboration, *River*.

In 2020 the ACO launched its inaugural digital subscription 'ACO StudioCasts', an acclaimed awardwinning season of cinematic and immersive concert films.

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SPOTLIGHT ON TAITTINGER



A legacy since 1734, Champagne Taittinger is the largest eponymous family-owned Champagne House and one of the top, independent champagne brands in the world.

Taittinger is a family of growers and craftspeople and owners of the second largest vineyards in Champagne. Champagne Taittinger's unique signature style is driven by Chardonnay to provide finesse, freshness and elegance in every glass.

Vitalie Taittinger, the daughter of Pierre-Emmanuel, greatly admired her father's brave decision to regain ownership of the Taittinger Champagne House and wishing to support him in this new family adventure, joined the business in 2007. After eight years working at the heart of the Communication and Marketing department, she was appointed Head of this department in 2015. Her mission was to develop and strengthen the brand's image and reputation. Vitalie was also acting as an ambassador for Taittinger around the world, in addition to being an inspiration for the House. As part of her ongoing commitment at Taittinger, Vitalie was offered the role of President in 2020. Vitalie Taittinger, the President of Champagne Taittinger took some time to answer a few questions about the alignment of Champagne and Music.

What impact has Covid had on Taittinger and the champagne industry in general?

The impact of Covid covers many different aspects. It happened for Taittinger in a transition period, I had just arrived as the new President of the company which has been rich in terms of development. We improved a lot in many ways and took the time to look to the future, working closely with my brother Clovis and the team. On the economic aspect, the resistance of champagne gives me faith in the future. I am convinced that everyone realised the power of symbol during this difficult time. We all need joy and celebration.

What are the similarities between Taittinger and the ACO?

Expert craftsmanship, respecting a long tradition. The complicity between our two worlds is very strong. We all act for joy, dream for excellency, taking roots in the traditions and knowledge of our heritage. We cultivate the art of blending notes, people and emotions to achieve great things. Future and innovation is key, we must always reinvent ourselves to be able to obtain tradition. If we are not moving, champagne will become old.

What does the art of living mean to Taittinger?

This is the art of putting what we love in terms of culture into everything we create. Champagne is always better surrounded by music, full of authenticity. It is about involving art in life.

Why do music and champagne go so well together?

Champagne is already music in itself. We never take time to hear the precious sound of bubbles. Each champagne has its own song. Music is the reward of one of our most important senses of emotion, for champagne this is the same. Played both together, Music and champagne are pure luxury.

What are you listening to right now?

Django Reinhardt and Bach's solo cello suites, with a glass of Comtes de Champagne 2008. It works!



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