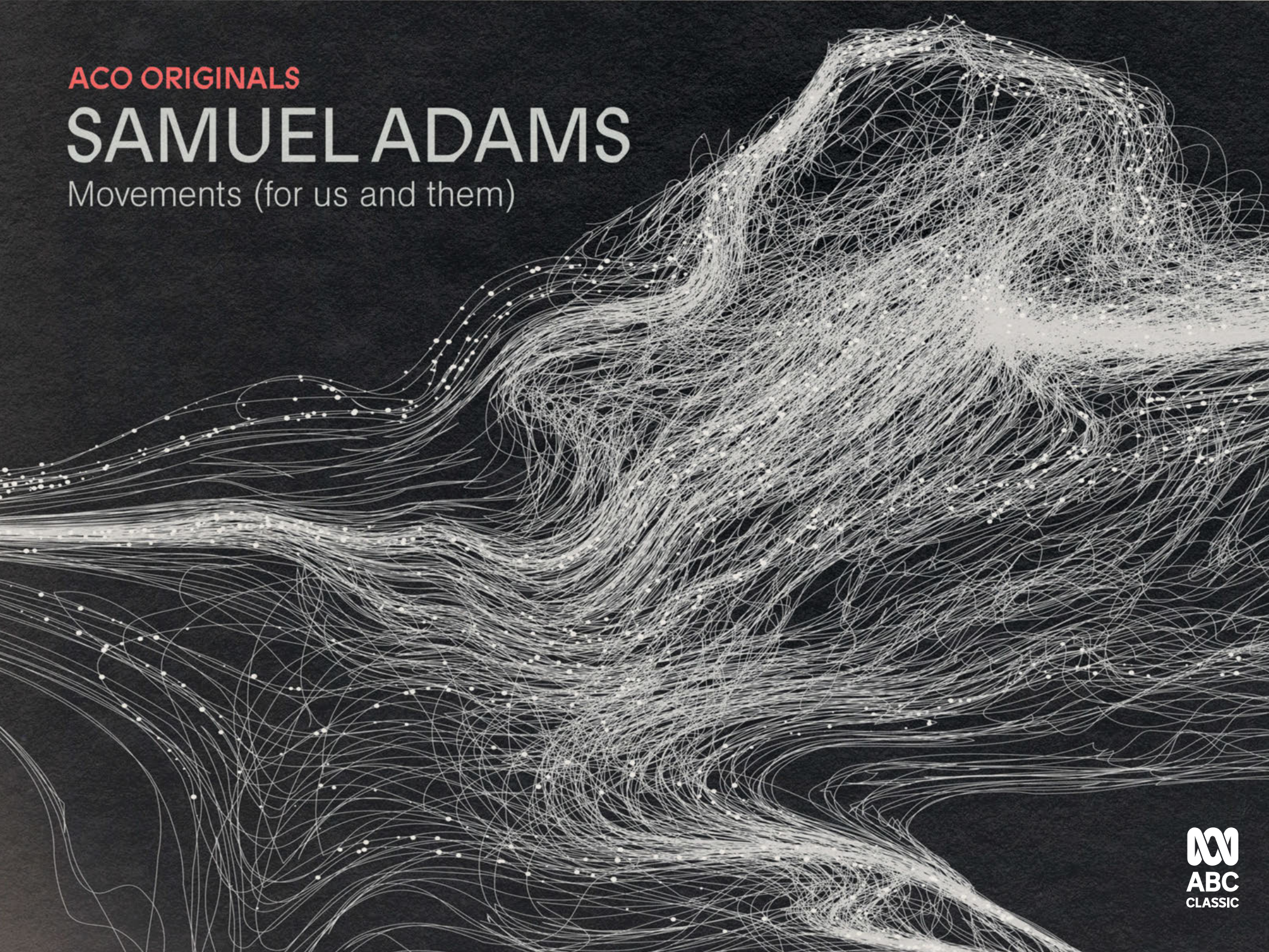


ACO ORIGINALS

# SAMUEL ADAMS

Movements (for us and them)





SAMUEL ADAMS born 1985  
**Movements (for us and them)** 17'45

**Richard Tognetti** violin  
**Helena Rathbone** violin  
**Florian Peelman** viola  
**Timo-Veikko Valve** cello

**Australian Chamber Orchestra**  
**Richard Tognetti** Artistic Director and Lead Violin

*Movements (for us and them)* by Samuel Adams  
was commissioned by The Australian Chamber Orchestra and  
Stanford Live and premiered on 23 June 2018 at Llewellyn Hall, Canberra.

## Samuel Adams – Movements (for us and them)

The music that affects Samuel Adams the most is experimental. It is the kind of music, he says, where you feel the psychology of the artist changing over time. When he started composing *Movements (for us and them)*, he didn't know what would happen, or which direction the piece would take. 'I try to keep things open as I write. I find that the more flexibility I give myself, the more interesting the piece becomes.'

He says that what fascinates him about creating a new piece of music is that it can mean something to one person, and something completely different to someone else. 'With every piece of mine I try to create flexibility and volubility with the music. I never try to be too specific about my intentions.'

Every piece he writes is a response to the world at the moment, some obliquely, others purely through abstraction. He likes the idea of using the dynamic of a group to potentially model a utopian vision.

There are universal syntonic ideas in art, Adams says. When composing the piece, he was inspired by Italo Calvino's *Six Memos for the Next Millennium*. The series of lectures outlines the virtues in literature to which the novelist aspired, as a way to handle the weight of the world. In the writing of his own piece, Adams searched for the same: quickness, exactitude and levity.

The piece is a response to the tradition of investigating the relationship between the composer, the orchestra and the audience. 'I am really interested in the possibilities of working in a kind of musical context that explores interpersonal relationships. What fascinates me about the concerto grosso is that it suggests a different kind of narrative – it isn't necessarily about one individual trying to overcome or join some kind of opposing force, but much more about cooperation and fluidity. That's what I explore in this piece.'

Adams forced himself to reimagine the process of material generation. He spent a lot of time improvising. The material came out of the process of listening to himself improvise, transcribing those dramatisations, playing different ascriptions, and improvising again.

The piece has a lot of forward momentum and energy, much like some music from the 17th and early 18th centuries. 'It is built on repetitive triplet motifs, which, with the exception of one part, drive the piece forward. One thing I really wanted to explore was the concept of role fluidity. You will hear passages where the two ensembles are very gradually morphing into one another. Movements flow very easily from one section to another.'

Adams sought to explore 'emotionally available' melodies. He wanted to give the musicians something deeply expressive to play. 'What strikes me about the ACO is the personality of the ensemble. They have a wonderful profile when they come on stage. So much of this piece is about exploring interpersonal dynamics. I would be happy if an audience member leaves the concert feeling like they understand something, that they didn't previously, of the personality of the ensemble.'

**Sarah Price, Schwartz Media** © 2018

## Australian Chamber Orchestra

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

– *The Australian*, 2017

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.

Testament to its international reputation, the ACO was invited to commence a three-year residency as International Associate Ensemble at Milton Court in partnership with London's Barbican Centre from the 2018/19 season.

The Orchestra regularly collaborates with artists and musicians who share its ideology: from Emmanuel Pahud, Steven Isserlis, Dawn Upshaw, Olli Mustonen, Brett Dean and Ivry Gitlis, to Neil Finn, Jonny Greenwood, Barry Humphries and Meow Meow; to visual artists and film makers such as Michael Leunig, Bill Henson, Shaun Tan, Jon Frank and Jennifer Peedom, who have co-created unique, hybrid productions for which the ACO has become renowned.

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, *Beethoven*, a collection of the ACO's acclaimed Beethoven recordings, and the soundtrack to the acclaimed cinematic collaboration, *Mountain*.

[aco.com.au](http://aco.com.au)

**Producer** Maxime Bibeau  
**Assistant Producer** Bernard Rofe  
**Engineer** Bob Scott  
**Editing** Bob Scott and Maxime Bibeau  
**Mixing and Mastering** Bob Scott

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