

Australian Chamber Orchestra

RICHARD TOGNETTI – ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



# BAROQUE REVELRY

Directed by Richard Tognetti

## Luminous Women of the Baroque

Kate Holden on Baroque female composers

**p.18**

## An Audience of Passions

Richard Tognetti and Erin Helyard  
in conversation

**p.32**

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A close-up, cinematic photograph of a woman with short, reddish-brown hair playing a violin. She is looking down at her instrument with a focused expression. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting her face and the wood of the violin against a dark background.

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Inside you'll find features and interviews that shine a spotlight on our players and the music you are about to hear. Enjoy the read.

## INSIDE



### Welcome

From the ACO's Managing Director Richard Evans

p.2



### Program in Short

Your five-minute read before lights down

p.6



### Musicians on Stage

Players on stage for this performance

p.14



### Luminous Women of the Baroque

Kate Holden on Barbara Strozzi, Isabella Leonarda and Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre

p.18



### An Audience of Passions

Erin Helyard and Richard Tognetti on the "sordid Baroque"

p.32



### Acknowledgements

The ACO thanks our generous supporters

p.48

# WELCOME

Welcome to *Baroque Revelry*, a concert where we will take you on a sordid musical romp through Baroque Europe.

We'll be delving into the ultra-vibrant world of the 17th- and 18th-century concert hall, a period that was alive with chaotic energy and trailblazing artistic splendour.

To bring this concept to life, we have collaborated with Belvoir, harnessing theatrical elements alongside the musical to engage our multiple senses. Our musicians take centre stage in works that include Tartini's fiendishly difficult *Devil's Trill*, and in music by pioneering composers Barbara Strozzi and Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre.

Later this year you can also experience the magnificence of this concert series from another perspective through our digital concert film series, ACO StudioCasts. Our latest release in the series, *Love & Transfiguration*, was premiered just last month and I encourage you to experience this moving and musically rewarding production for yourself at **[acostudiocasts.com.au](http://acostudiocasts.com.au)**.

After this concert series, we're excited to premiere our collaboration with the team behind our record-breaking production *Mountain* with a new musical and cinematic experience, *River*. This extraordinary exploration into our relationship with these natural wonders is not to be missed.

I look forward to sharing it with you.



**Richard Evans**  
Managing Director

## Coming up

## JULY



### River

29 JULY–10 AUGUST

Newcastle, Sydney, Brisbane,  
Melbourne, Canberra

Working again with the creative team behind our record-breaking production, *Mountain*, this musical and cinematic journey sees Richard Tognetti performing and directing the Orchestra through a sweeping musical score of his own compositions alongside Bach, Vivaldi, Ravel, Jonny Greenwood, and a new collaboration with William Barton. From director Jennifer Peedom, *River* tells an extraordinary tale of nature and humans as partners and adversaries.



### ACO StudioCast: Tchaikovsky's Serenade

7 JULY (PREMIERE)

Then available on demand.

This magical film celebrates composers who write music from the heart. Featuring Tchaikovsky's beloved *Serenade for Strings* and George Walker's *Lyric for Strings*, this is music that gives something truly special back to the world.

## AUGUST



### Music for Healing

26 AUGUST–8 SEPTEMBER

Wollongong, Sydney, Newcastle,  
Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth

This concert series is a meditation on wellbeing, exploring the depth of human experience through Pēteris Vasks' *Vox amoris* and examining emotions and the fragility of mental health. The program also includes music by Grandage, Albéniz and Pink Floyd.



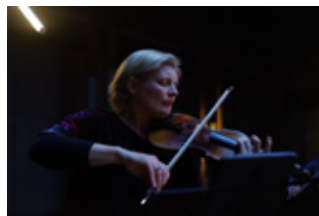
### ACO StudioCast: Tabula Rasa

18 AUGUST (PREMIERE)

Then available on demand.

This joyful concert film shows the ability of music to prevail, with the music of the great composers that emerged from some of the world's more bracing environments: Russia's Shostakovich and Estonia's Arvo Pärt.

## SEPTEMBER



### ACO StudioCast: Schubert's Quintet

15 SEPTEMBER (PREMIERE)

Then available on demand.

A cinematic music experience with an ACO ensemble led by Richard Tognetti performing a monumental gem of the chamber repertoire: Schubert's beloved String Quintet in C major – a magnificent feast of joy and melody. Awe and wonder meet majesty and intimacy.

## NOVEMBER



### The Four Seasons

13–24 NOVEMBER

A sensory exploration of Vivaldi and the Middle East through Vivaldi's extravagant *Four Seasons*. Such a work could only be created from the melting pot of cultures Vivaldi surrounded himself with, giving life to each season of the year.

# PROGRAM

Richard Tognetti Director and Violin  
 Chloe Lankshear Soprano  
 Australian Chamber Orchestra

Carissa Licciardello Staging Director  
 Rebecca Massey  
 Alex Stylianou  
 George Zhao

## PRELUDE

CPE BACH	Cello Concerto in A major, Wq.172: I. Allegro Timo-Veikko Valve, Cello	7
REBEL	Les éléments: I. Le cahos	1

## THE IRREVERENT

PURCELL	"Pox on you for a fop", Z.268	2
ANONYMOUS	lag Bari Maja Savnik, Violin	2
STROZZI	"Amor dormiglione", Op.2, No.22	3
LEONARDA	Sonata for 2 Violins in F major, Op.16, No.10 Helena Rathbone & Ike See, Violins <i>I. Spiritoso – Presto</i> <i>II. Presto</i> <i>III. Adagio – Presto</i> <i>IV. Presto</i> <i>V. Adagio – Presto</i> <i>VI. Presto – Spiritoso</i>	4

## THE THEATRICAL

RAMEAU	Les Boréades: Entr'acte, Suite des vents	3
DOWLAND	"Flow, my teares" Stefanie Farrands, Viola	4
LE SIEUR DE MACHY	Suite No.1 in D minor: I. Prelude Maxime Bibeau, Double Bass	3
DE LA GUERRE	Harpichord Suite No.3 in A minor: I. Prelude Erin Helyard, Harpichord	2
HANDEL	Semele, HWV58: "Myself I shall adore"	7

## THE DIABOLICAL

TARTINI	Violin Sonata in G minor "Devil's Trill" (abridged) Satu Vänskä, Violin	5
BOCCHERINI	Sinfonia in D minor, Op.12, No.4 "La casa del Diavolo": <i>IV. Allegro assai con moto</i>	5

## THE SUBLIME

CPE BACH	Cello Concerto in A major, Wq.172: Timo-Veikko Valve, Cello <i>II. Largo</i> <i>III. Allegro assai</i>	13
STROZZI	"Che si può fare", Op.8, No.6	4

## THE GROTESQUE

MORLEY	"Will you buy a fine dog?"	2
BIBER	Sonata violino solo rappresentativa (selections) <i>Nachtigal (Nightingale)</i> <i>Cu Cu (Cuckoo)</i> <i>Fresch (Frog)</i> <i>Die Henn &amp; Der Hann (Cock &amp; Hen)</i> <i>Die Wachtel (Quail)</i> <i>Die Katz (Cat)</i> <i>Musquetir Mars (Musketeer's March)</i>	8

## FINALE

BOCCHERINI	String Quintet in C major, G.324 "Musica notturna delle strade di Madrid" (selections)	5
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We thank our colleagues at Belvoir for this collaboration.

The concert will last approximately one hour and 20 minutes, with no interval.

The Australian Chamber Orchestra reserves the right to alter scheduled artists and programs as necessary.



ACO concerts are regularly broadcast on ABC Classic.  
*Baroque Revelry* will be recorded at City Recital Hall, Sydney,  
on 30 June, and broadcast on ABC Classic on 15 August at 1pm.



6

# PROGRAM IN SHORT

Your five-minute read before lights down.



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The Pit Door at Drury Lane Theatre, London, 1784  
Robert Dighton the Elder

The 17th-century Baroque concert hall typically brings to mind clichéd images of pomp and splendour, where aristocratic men and women adorned in wigs and powdered makeup revelled in the height of artistic culture and sophistication. However, the reality was anything but neat and pretty. Yes, there was lavish splendour, but beyond the gold-encrusted halls lay the sordid and the bawdy.

This was a society where the sacred coexisted with the secular, the rich intermingled with the poor, and trailblazing female composers were celebrated alongside their male counterparts in concerts that embraced the chaotic and the florid. *Baroque Revelry* revisits this ultra-vibrant world in an immersive collaboration with Belvoir that celebrates the world of the “sordid” Baroque.

*Baroque Revelry* begins like any other ACO concert: audience seated, stage set, musicians poised for performance. Over the course of the evening, members of the audience will lose their 21st-century inhibitions, and become inhabited by the spirit of a Baroque audience. With music ranging from the irreverent to the theatrical, from the diabolical to the sublime, and even the obscenely grotesque, no facet of the Baroque will go untouched.

**You are encouraged to take part.**

## Prelude

Manners maketh the modern concert audience. With its stately ritornelli and elegant virtuosity, **CPE Bach's Cello Concerto in A major, Wq.172** is exactly the kind of late-Baroque masterpiece we might expect to listen to in polite silence. In his own day, however, Carl Philipp Emanuel did not always enjoy such a well-mannered audience. He had a reputation for his "singular taste, verging on the bizarre" compared to the well-mannered music of his contemporaries.

Even more shocking would have been the opening chord of "**Le cahos**" from **Jean-Féry Rebel's** 1737 suite *Les éléments*. Composed hundreds of years before Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, 17th-century audiences would have been similarly incensed by Rebel's relentless dissonances.

## The Irreverent

A state of elemental poignance is finally shattered by **Henry Purcell's "Pox on you for a fop"**, a "catch" (think "Row, row, row your boat") that quite literally depicts the belching and farting of rowdy 17th-century Londoners.

Not far from England, Italy had become an artistic melting pot, with trade routes from the east and west converging in Venice. Increasingly, modern scholarship suggests Venice's most famous composer, Antonio Vivaldi, was influenced by music of the Orient and the Slavic hinterlands. The 1730 Uhrovska collection of Slavic gypsy music includes such raucous dance pieces as *lag Bari*, ideal for an irreverent Baroque romp.

Venice's most significant female composer, **Barbara Strozzi**, had more music in print than any other composer of the era, but her reputation has, perhaps unjustly, become tarnished by claims she was a courtesan. Her cantata "**Amor dormiglione**" (Sleepyhead Cupid!) sarcastically laments Cupid's inability to fire his arrow.

**Isabella Leonarda** lays claim to having composed the first sonatas ever published by a woman. Her Opus 16 sonatas are her most notable achievements, with the **Sonata for Two Violins No.10 in F major** positively dancing with florid double violin passages.

## The Theatrical

The dizzying frenzy of **Jean-Philippe Rameau's "Les vents"** (the winds) serves as an entr'acte in his opera *Les Boréades*, and as a prelude to this chapter which explores performance spectacle, beginning with **John Dowland's** exquisite song "Flow, my teares".

The era saw an abundance of performing virtuoso composers, from Locatelli to JS Bach himself. In France, a golden age in viol music produced solo showpieces such as the **Prelude from Le Sieur de Machy's 1685 Suite for Violle** in D minor, one of the earliest pieces for viol ever published. **Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre** was a musician in the court of Louis XIV (the Sun King) and composed France's first opera by a woman. She captures a sense of virtuosic spontaneity in her "unmeasured" **Prelude in A minor**, unhindered by the usual constraints of barlines.

However, there was no greater embodiment of Baroque theatricality than in opera. In **Handel's 1744 drama Semele**, the title character is fooled into believing she is immortal, and given a magical mirror that tricks her into thinking she is more beautiful than usual. Unable to hide her vanity, Semele sings "**Myself I shall adore**" in adoration of her own beauty, insisting nothing could be half as pleasing as her own face.

## The Diabolical

The Baroque could be theatrical to the point of being diabolical. The Devil's most famous connection to music is **Giuseppe Tartini's** Violin Sonata in G minor, nicknamed the "**Devil's Trill**". In a vivid dream, Tartini dreamt he had sold his soul to the Devil and, handing his violin to the creature, heard the most sublime melody he had ever heard. Upon waking, he attempted to transcribe what he heard, with the Devil's fiendish double trills appearing in the final movement.

**Luigi Boccherini's** most famous symphony, nicknamed "**The House of the Devil**", transfers the myths of *Don Juan* and *Orpheus and Eurydice* from the stage to the concert hall, imitating the theme from Christoph Willibald Gluck's "Dance of the Furies" in the process.



## The Sublime

Although it could be a path to the diabolical, Baroque music was more frequently a path to the heavenly and the sublime. In the central movement of his **Cello Concerto in A major**, **CPE Bach** delivers an engrossing lament with muted strings and a weeping cello in one of his most personal slow movements, before the frenzied ecstasy of the Finale. In the cantata “**Che si può fare?**” (What can you do?) **Barbara Strozzi** laments the sorrows of life and love.

## The Grotesque

Not content to be a sanctuary of purity and the profound, the refined melodies of the age could mask the most grotesque themes. In **Thomas Morley's** innuendo-filled “**Will you buy a fine dog?**” a merchant offers an assortment of trinkets, including one item whose name would have had multiple meanings to



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"Tartini's Dream"  
Louis-Léopold Boilly  
1761–1845

its original audiences (one of many cheeky puns). Alternatively, Heinrich Ignaz Franz Biber's *Sonata Representativa* offers listeners a zoo of birds and beasts including nightingale, a cuckoo and a frog; a hen and rooster; and a quail, and a cat, all eventually rounded up by an army of Musketeers with music coming from his 1673 composition *Battalia*.

### Finale

To end festivities, an ACO favourite: Luigi Boccherini's "Night music of the streets of Madrid", which evokes the sights and sounds of a hot Madrid evening, from the tolling of local church bells, blind beggars in the streets, guitars (the cellists are directed to turn their instruments on their sides like guitars), street singers, and drum rolls from Madrid's military night watch, attempting to bring in the curfew and close down riots on the streets.





Teresa Oaxaca is a contemporary realist painter living in Washington DC, USA. Her work combines human and still life elements and draws inspiration from Victorian and Baroque costumes and lifestyle.

Teresa Oaxaca, *Girl In Pink*, 2010  
[teresaoaxaca.com](http://teresaoaxaca.com)



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Richard Tognetti

### Director and Violin

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



Helena Rathbone

### Principal Violin

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Helena plays a 1759 Giovanni Battista Guadagnini violin kindly on loan from the Commonwealth Bank Group. Her Chair is sponsored by Margaret Gibbs & Rodney Cameron.

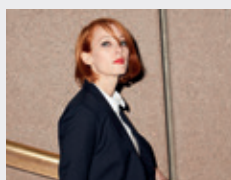


Satu Vänskä

### Principal Violin

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



Maja Savnik

### Violin

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



Ilya Isakovich

### Violin

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

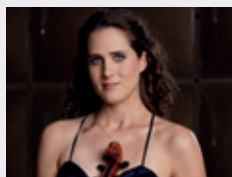


Ike See

### Violin

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



Stefanie Farrands  
**Principal Viola**

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



Elizabeth Woolnough  
**Viola**

Elizabeth plays her own 1968 Parisian viola by Pierre M. Audinot. Her Chair is sponsored by Philip Bacon AM.



Timo-Veikko Valve  
**Principal Cello**

Tipi plays a 1616 Brothers Amati cello kindly 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 Peter Weiss AO. His Chair is sponsored by The Grist & Stewart Families.



Maxime Bibeau  
**Principal Bass**

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



Erin Helyard #^  
**Harpsichord**

Erin plays a Ruckers double harpsichord by Carey Beebe, 2003. Supplied and prepared by Carey Beebe.



Brian Nixon #  
**Percussion**

Brian's Chair is sponsored by Robert Albert AO & Libby Albert.

# Guest Principal

^ Appears courtesy of Pinchgut Opera



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# RIVER

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# PERFORMERS & CREATIVES



Chloe Lankshear

**Soprano**

Chloe Lankshear is a Sydney-based soprano who enjoys a varied career of performative mediums from operatic productions to classical contemporary performances. Chloe has performed with South Australia State Opera, and Pinchgut Opera, and has been a featured soloist with Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and Bach Akademie Australia. She is also a Principal Artist with The Song Company, a permanent member of the Choir of St James', King Street, and co-founder of chamber trio Ensemble Assorti. Recently Chloe has performed as soprano soloist for the premiere of Paul Stanhope's *Requiem* at City Recital Hall, as well as Pinchgut Opera's program of Monteverdi's *Vespers*.



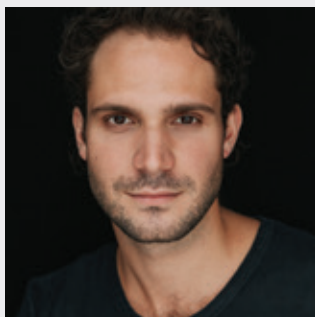
Carissa Licciardello

**Staging Director**

Carissa Licciardello graduated from NIDA's MFA Directing Course in 2017. She was Belvoir's inaugural Andrew Cameron Fellow in 2018–19, and is currently an Artistic Associate with the company. Her credits for Belvoir include, as Director/Co-Adaptor, *A Room of One's Own*; as Associate Director, *Fangirls 2019*; as Assistant Director, *Counting & Cracking* and *Ghosts*. For Sydney Theatre Company she was Assistant Director of *Rules of Living*, and for 25A Downstairs Belvoir she directed *Extinction of the Learned Response* and *The Maids*.



Rebecca Massey



Alex Stylianou



George Zhao

# LUMINOUS WOMEN OF THE BAROQUE

“In their own time, composers such as Barbara Strozzi, Isabella Leonarda and Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre were highly celebrated. But when they died, their reputations faded with them – until now.”

Kate Holden



The luscious, luminous 17th century was both a wonderful and a dreadful time to be a woman composer and musician.

It was splendid because a woman could be the most prolific, one of the most innovative and celebrated musical figures of her society, as were Barbara Strozzi and Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre in the worlds of Venice and Versailles. They could be actively sheltered in creative privilege, as was Isabella Leonarda, a renowned composer and nun in Lombardy who offered her music to the religious community and laity for the burnishing of faith.

These womens' reputes were enormous, their art delighted in, their patrons pleased. They played to duchesses, humble sisters in Christ, fops, intellectuals, archbishops and kings; they taught noble protégé and sang lyrics they had written themselves accompanied by their own compositions. They commanded respect that their sisters could only envy.

It was also one of many awful times to be a woman musician, because almost all of their art was soon obliterated. Much of their work was lost forever, and their names came close to extinction. Their music was loud, full, rich and defiant: and then it was silenced.

Strozzi, de La Guerre and Leonarda all had the good fortune to be part of a historical instant when the music of Italy and France was surging and flashing in bold flares of innovation. Each claimed titles of superlative achievement: the most prolific, the "first woman to..."; the pioneer, no matter what sex, of a musical form. De La Guerre staged the first opera by a French woman. Barbara Strozzi published eight collections of her songs, more music in print than anyone else at the time. From the effacement of a convent, Leonarda was Strozzi's peer in publishing.

Moreover, each furthered musical evolution. As with women of our time, they had to go earlier, harder and better than men. Women of the 17th century seized opportunities, found sisterly support in courts and convents and wrote for female audiences and for female musicians. The stories of the three women featured in this program exemplify a brilliant moment when a few dazzling figures pushed their luck and found success. Each woman found herself in one of the most exciting, valued and prestigious scenes of the baroque era, amid the clamour of a gorgeous music made for princes and popes but also, overwhelmingly, for and by real people.

“Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre in France and Barbara Strozzi in Venice were cherished daughters of musical masters, raised amid salons and musical clans...”

While figures like Claudio Monteverdi and John Dowland can seem impressively austere in their black jerkins and dour male melancholy, women like de La Guerre, Leonarda and Strozzi were at once powerful, sorrowful, successful, and very mortal. Their exquisite music remains, but in their vanished lifetimes they were also mothers, lovers, leaders, mentors and insecurely-employed jobbing artists, raising children and forging careers amid war, plague, court intrigues, religious contention, the culture and wars of the Counter Reformation, and all the other extravagant frenzies of 17th-century Europe. With strong bonds to their childhood families and challenges in their own, these women are recognisable as humans with biographies. They were working women, complicated, poignant and intriguing – perhaps even more so than their stern male contemporaries.

They emerged from conditions prescribed by men, but their talent soon surpassed such subordination. Élisabeth Jacquet de La Guerre in France and Barbara Strozzi in Venice were the cherished daughters of musical masters, raised in salons and musical clans and projected into the professional world by their fathers. Leonarda (born Isabella Calegari in 1620) was from a noble and cultured family, and she too obediently following her patriarch's directions.

De La Guerre, born in Paris in 1665 into a family of master instrument builders and musicians, was chosen at the age of five by the Sun King Louis XIV himself to perform as a prodigy at Versailles as *la petite merveille* (“the small wonder”) and “the marvel of our century”. Educated at court and a favourite of *maîtresse-en-titre* Madame de Montespan, de La Guerre worked at the very heart of the French royal court, protégée – literally, protected one – of the most powerful woman there. Strozzi, born earlier in 1619, was also a treasured daughter



“Strozzi, the supposed harlot, was acclaimed in her time as one of Europe’s finest singers and most prolific composers.”

although, unlike the wealthy Élisabeth, she was illegitimate. She was “adopted” by her poet father, who raised her amid several groups of creative intellectuals he founded or joined, including the *Accademia degli Incogniti*, which can be credited with the innovation and popularising of what became known as opera. Among its poets and philosophers was Claudio Monteverdi. Strozzi herself, a handsome young woman enjoying the best of a Venice still in its Golden Age, debuted as an adolescent when she sang informally at *Incogniti* meetings, where the composer Nicolò Fontei called her “the most kind and virtuosic damsel, Signora Barbara”. When her father founded a sub-branch called the *Unisoni*, Strozzi hosted and performed. She could accompany her own voice on lute or theorbo.

Female presence in such meetings was rare, and there were slurs on her chastity. Rumours spread that she was a courtesan; one account says she was raped by a nobleman, but this may have been a strange euphemism to cover her longterm relationship and parenthood with him, a married man. There is an extant portrait of her with one breast uncovered, holding a viola da gamba with duet music and a violin nearby. She is blushing but her gaze is steady, and perhaps is shown as an incarnation of Flora. As her reputation as a singer grew, she was called la *virtuosissima cantatrice*, “the greatest virtuoso singer”. But soon her career turned to composition.

Isabella Leonarda was very different. Born a year after Strozzi in nearby Piedmont into high-status establishment clan, she was donated in adolescence, like her five sisters, to an Ursuline convent. She was to remain there for the rest of her life, rising over her long life to the rank of *superiora*, as well as *magistra musicae*, a teaching role. Convents were common residences for both regular and noble daughters, often endowed by powerful women. They were known



Isabella Leonarda  
1620–1704

for their cultivation of female talent in music, where it was made by, for and about women. The value of this music was cherished beyond the walls, where its origin with “sacred virgins” was especially respected. Leonarda appears to have been mentored by Elizabeth Casata, an organist in the convent, and Gasparo Casati, perhaps her husband, who published two of her early works amongst his own.

In time, encouraged by the security of her small world, Leonarda would compose much religious music: motets and sacred *concerti*, Latin dialogues, magnificats, masses, litanies, responsories, psalm settings. She innovated boldly, using vernacular texts, textless instrumental music in solo sonata for violin and continuo. Her opus 16, the 11 *sonatas da chiesa*, was extraordinarily the first published set of instrumental works by a woman. We know very little about her, or what provoked her ambition, but over 60 years she created in her rest hours nearly 200 compositions and 20 volumes of music, making her, like Strozzi, one of the most prolific women composers of the time.

“The last, lost volume of her work was apparently dedicated to the Duke of Mantua, but by 1665 the court that had cultivated Monteverdi had lost its lustre.”

Publication was unusual: women’s music was commonly hemmed in the live and domestic realms and rarely preserved, much less sold. Strozzi produced eight volumes, each of the seven numbered editions dedicated to a different noble in hope of patronage, although this didn’t seem to result in secure employment. Strozzi, the supposed harlot, was acclaimed in her time as one of Europe’s finest singers and most prolific composers. She had three children to her partner, a patron of the arts, and lived with her parents until their deaths. She is thought to have supported herself with composing and of course was busy with caregiving; having a professional career under the circumstances seems extraordinary. She died in obscurity at 58 without leaving a will and further unpublished music is scattered across European collections.

Her two daughters, like Leonarda, went into a convent, and a son into a monastery. The last, lost volume of her work was apparently dedicated to the Duke of Mantua, but by 1665 the court that had cultivated Monteverdi had lost its lustre. And envy could bring injury. Strozzi had written plaintively, as a young woman, in the preface of her Opus 1, *Il primo libro de’ madrigali* her hopes for the work, “which I, as a woman, all too ardently send forth into the light... so that under your Oak of Gold it may rest secure from the lightning bolts of slander prepared for it”. One wonders whether it was female or male malevolence she most dreaded; certainly she struggled with calumny from the first appearance of her talent. *Che si può fare*, “what can you do?”, begins her aria: “The stars, intractable, have no pity... I must suffer, I must sigh, in order to eternalise my trials...”

De La Guerre had far better fortune. At Versailles she wrote most of her first works for the Sun King himself, then in 1684 at the age of 19 married a fellow musician and moved back to Paris, where she was soon teaching and giving concerts to high

praise. By her mid-20s she was ranked along Lully, Lalande and Marais by chronicler of the court Titon du Tillet, who mentioned how she could improvise for hours with preludes and fantasies, “in quite the best possible taste, quite charming her listeners”.

Three years after her marriage, when another woman might have been buried (literally or figuratively) by childbearing, she published a rare set of harpsichord pieces, one of the first printed in France that century. This included her famous pioneering unmeasured preludes and was followed by ballet scores and, then, like Caccini, an opera, *Céphale et Procris*. Written in 1694, it's claimed as the first opera written by a woman in France. But French audiences, cautious about opera and its innovations, wanted only a few performances, and this was the end of her efforts in that form.

Ten years after this humiliation, de La Guerre was devastated by the deaths of her husband and 10-year-old son, as well as both her parents and her brother. Afterwards she restrained herself to performance, often concerts in her own home, and the development of her works on the sonata. This was an Italian form developed in preceding decades by Leonarda, and she continued to challenge the purity of the French styles with her interest in the rival tradition as a pioneer in particular of the trio sonata. She was exceptional in composing across a medley of forms, including *pastorale en musique* which was, as she wrote to Louis, “something that no one of my sex has attempted”. She was also among the first to write in the form of accompanied harpsichord works and later took up the Italian form of the cantata, beloved by Strozzi. Her last published works were collections of cantatas both secular and sacred.

Her Harpsichord Suite No.3 in A minor, included in her debut *Pièces de clavecin* published at the age of 22, includes one of her famous “unmeasured preludes”, in which the bars and time signature are not indicated, while notes are left whole, meaning that the duration of each note is decided by the performer. The concept, enjoying the sense of the prelude as a renegade “warm-up”, was not invented by de La Guerre – it probably emerged from Renaissance lutenists, as evoked in the terms used in the 17th century, *style lute* or *les choses luthées*, and was popularised in France by Louis Couperin in the 1650s – but it was bold. De La Guerre's printed work flows across the measures like waves on a shore, undulating supply and confidently through their arpeggios and shifting dominants. It's too tempting a metaphor: she

“She had been known for her ferocious talent, her strong and resilient character, and her devotion to music...”

pushes past constraints, she over-runs formal limits, she recovers harmony and meaning: the form is expanded, not broken, and the music continues, uninhibited, liberated.

“You never spurned my youthful offerings,” she wrote shyly to the king in 1707. “My slender talents have since grown...”

When his great-grandson Louis XV survived smallpox she dedicated her last known work, a *Te Deum* of 1721: the bonds of that royal court stayed strong. Within a decade, she died in Paris. She had been known for her ferocious talent, her strong and resilient character, and her devotion to music and a musical career in a period when a woman making music for anything other than diversion seemed a small wonder. In 1729, the year of her death, a medal was made in her honour inscribed, *Aux grands musiciens j'ay dispute le prix*, a proud boast: “with the great musicians I competed for the prize.”

Strozzi was likewise a pusher of form, said to have used irregular barring and daring to add discordant clashing notes for emphasis, drawing out dissonance and establishing uncommon harmonies. Her instinct for lyrics – often her own – and the human voice meant her experiments with cantata used the combination of recitative and a single instrument to gorgeously extend its potential and execution. Her aria *Che si può fare* is one example; *Amor dormiglione* leaps with playful teasing, its lyrics prodding a dozy Cupid, its melodies contrasting a full octave range in the soprano line and the ease of a somnolent basso continuo. Strozzi was lucky because her manuscripts were published and conserved, so that scholars could resuscitate her voice 400 years after her lifetime, and the *virtuosissima cantatrice* might entertain us now.

Leonarda's Sonata for 2 Violins is from her Opus 16, the first female work of sonatas and one of only two works by Italian women in instrumental rather than vocal form, which nevertheless demonstrates the intricate harmonies and plaiting of melody she would have enjoyed in the polyphonic

Prelude in A minor

Élisabeth Jacquet  
de la Guerre

“In 1729, the year of her death,  
a medal was made in her honour  
inscribed *Aux grands musiciens  
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I competed for the prize.*”



Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre  
1665–1729

vocal work associated with convent music since Hildegard of Bingen. Improvised ornamentation was one of the perquisites of polyphony, usually supported by very formal structure. Leonarda eschews the traditional alternation of slow and fast movements, using up to 13 in Sonata No.4 of the collection, and including two refrains in No.10. Her portrait shows a narrow, slightly sardonic face, wise under a wimple, expressive in its silence, the eyes just a little amused.

These women shone in their lifetimes, but when they died their musical legacy quickly began to fade. Leonarda's work – unlike Strozzi's which was sent to various Italian courts – was little known outside her native Novara. But her legacy was kept alive just a little longer when the musicologist and collector Sébastien de Brossard gained some of her works in France around the time of her death at the end of the 17th century. "All the works of this illustrious and incomparable Isabella Leonarda are so beautiful," he wrote, "so gracious, so brilliant and at the same time so learned and so wise, that my great regret is not having them all."

The following century ushered in the classical era, which returned music firmly to the grip of men. Even with 20th-century rediscoveries of female artists, risk-averse orchestras and ensembles hesitated to include now-unknown composers in the repertoire. Perhaps it's only in the past decade or so that glances have been cast back into the annals of baroque and these gleaming illuminated pages reopened.

With its long commitment to including the diverse and the exceptional, the ACO now presents this program to deliver a Baroque that reaches beyond the dainty, solemn or sacred classics we expect. Here we can encounter the music of real people – songs of the human soul and the stuff of sweaty dreams. And among them is the work of extraordinary women who in their own time were celebrated for their talent as much as their sex.

“...the songs of the human soul, the stuff of sweaty dreams and the work of extraordinary women...”







Teresa Oaxaca, *Venetian Carnivale*, 2016  
teresaoaxaca.com



# AN AUDIENCE OF PASSIONS

Baroque music audiences were often noisy, but they were far from apathetic about music. Pinchgut Opera's artistic director Erin Helyard teases out the seductions and energies of the "sordid Baroque" with the ACO's Richard Tognetti.





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**Erin Helyard**

Artistic Director | Pinchgut Opera

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**Richard Tognetti**

Artistic Director | ACO

*Richard Tognetti and I have been close mates for more than two decades. Over many years of conversation, a topic we often return to is the fascinating movement that is “historical performance practice”. Although it’s ostensibly aimed at recreating practices, sounds and instruments of the past, you can argue that much of the movement is rooted in our own contemporary tastes and predispositions.*

*It’s easy to build a period instrument, but very difficult to conjure a period audience, which was often noisy and inattentive but also passionate and engaged.*

*We started our conversation with this idea.*

**Erin Helyard:** You've programmed an eclectic mix of music for *Baroque Revelry*. It spans over 150 years. What binds it all together? I notice you've described it as a "sordid musical romp".

**Richard Tognetti:** It all starts from when we began researching 18th-century audience habits for our Sydney Festival production of Mozart's *Mitridate*, way back in 2001. Remember that?

**I think at the time I introduced you to that 1987 anthology film, *Aria* – all those opera arias directed by Derek Jarman, Bruce Beresford, Ken Russell, Jean-Luc Godard...**

Yeah, and Robert Altman's contribution is just superb. I think he's my favourite director. So vast is his repertoire and so deep is his knowledge; you know what he does with the Western in *McCabe & Mrs Miller* ... incredible. But what he does in *Aria* is that trick of turning the camera onto the audience, so you are looking at the audience looking at the stage, and that creates a very dangerous scenario – but an incredibly exciting one.

***Aria* was really seminal to me as a teenager. Because in the Altman all you see is this filthy 18th-century audience having a grand old time at the opera, whoring and eating and cheering and weeping, but you don't see the performers at all. It was music history coming alive.**

He took as his inspiration that the nobility would bring inmates from Bedlam along to their opera performances just to see what would happen. That Altman film was really the beginning of the inspiration for this collaboration with Belvoir, Eamon Flack and Carissa Licciardello. Because what links all these pieces together is the idea that this music isn't "shut up and listen" music, which is how we should describe 19th-century music, but rather it is "have a damned fine time and enjoy" music – and as an audience member you might just glean something more profound from the music with that idea than if you just sit there ...

**... in absorbed listening ...**

... well it isn't even absorbed; it is more like stunned listening. I mean, it all comes from Wagner, right? Party-pooper Richard. He turns the lights down. He puts in a



raked auditorium. He makes all the seats face the stage. He gets people to be quiet. Were they like that during Bach cantatas? Well yeah, they were quiet but there was still audience participation, as it was a church service.

I am the first person to say “shut up” in the right context. Sure, don’t cough and clap like an idiot at the end of Mahler 4. But if you sit there like a stuffed animal at a punk concert you’re also an idiot. As you know, a lot of this baroque music has been decontextualised and we have been left with what our dear comrade Richard Taruskin calls the “text” – and we forget about the “act”. We draw conclusions that are preconceived, in my mind, to suit your notion of the occasion.

So the notion of the sordid baroque – sordid being ... well, look, we’ll wait and see – I’m not sure if it is the right word or not, but it was the best word at the time. I mean with these depictions and descriptions of audiences of how they were in opera houses of the time ... incredible.

**The more I read accounts from opera houses in the 17th and 18th centuries, the more I realise that it was just a social meeting place, like a modern mosh pit or a nightclub. People ate, they drank, they fought, they fucked, they came to the show multiple times, only seeing one act at a time, they went from box to box throughout the evening ... Charles de Brosses mentions how he loved the long recitative bits as it gave him a chance to play chess. And prostitutes roamed the lower levels ... they threw oranges at bad performers ... they had little whistles too, which you could buy, using them instead of booing the singers ...**

Can you imagine the smell of rotting oranges? Apparently, they had this guy come out between acts and sweep the stage of all this putrid fruit. And the urine? The stench?



**There is a great article by Michael Burden at Oxford about all of this stuff. It's called "Crapping at the Opera in London before 1830".**

My favourite bit in that article is that they didn't classify a punch-up as a riot at the opera if they didn't break the chandeliers. So if there was a fight and there is blood everyone and seats ripped up and the harpsichords smashed ... but the chandeliers were fine ... well then it wasn't recorded as a riot!

**Hahaha, can you imagine a modern audience member being transported back then? I mean what would they think of all the noise?**

I have two anecdotes about this. Tom and Nicole go out for an evening of pleasant classical music. Nicole Kidman goes to the opera and Tom Carroll goes to ACO. Nicole – it was in the papers – attends *The Merry Widow* or something ... and she gets excited ... she stands up to applaud ... at the end, it wasn't even in the middle or anything ... she gets shouted down! "Get down!" "We don't do that here!" Classical music has become completely up itself!

My mate Tom Carroll is a world-champion surfer. At one point, I'd say as good as a household name. His daughter is a ballet dancer and he was always talking about the dance of surfing. Anyway, he comes to this concert. Again: the decontextualization that goes on in the mind of the audience is really quite perturbing. There's cellist Giovanni Sollima, he's there being entertaining and scintillating and *Italiano* and he takes a selfie of himself on the stage, you know, completely disarming – anyway my friend Tom says "can I take a photo?" – and I say "of course you can" – and he has a smartphone that doesn't make any noise and he hardly makes any movement. And this lady behind him hit him – she actually hit him!



At the end of the concert, she says to me, “you should be ashamed of yourself; you shouldn’t be encouraging him!” Anyway, she is the cipher in all of this. She symbolises this holier-than-thou approach to music listening, and it doesn’t matter what is being played. You could play her proto-punk, *St John Passion*, Mahler, whatever – and it’s all lumped into the same thing. “I’m in my church! Just shut up!”

In effect, what we are doing, what we are saying in “sordid baroque” is you are not a passive audience, you are an active participant. This program is a means to explore doing that: the idea is that there might be audience participation of a different kind to just sitting there, in sacrosanct silence. Even if we don’t have any audience participation, at least the putrid, pungent, sordid air is there. To use the word “sordid” might be seen to be derogatory – in no way is it derogatory. But compared to our sanitised modern world, you must call it sordid.

**Isn’t it impossible to try and resurrect this different kind of audience behaviour? Isn’t the genie out of the bottle?**

No, I don’t think it is impossible because people were asking exactly the same questions back in the 70s about what they thought might have gone on with performing early music. Can you imagine the sense of impossibility those pioneers of historical performance felt? That’s why I adore those guys – I call them revolutionaries.

**They are our heroes: they single-handedly forged a style which is now a global phenomenon.**

And for many intents and purposes – and for intensive purposes – a lot of the “rules” they formulated were just factually wrong. But it doesn’t matter because they sought out the hardware. As Taruskin points out, the early music movement was in tune with the times, which in the 70s was obsessed with geometry and cleanliness and sterilisation. I used to call it “a dabbling of the Dettol on the music”. I’m not interested in that notion of authenticity anymore. It doesn’t concern me. I like playing on gut strings because they sound good. I don’t care if you play on a brass kazoo or on the instrument that the composer played on the day of the premiere. Back then, they played with whatever instruments were at hand, and we do the same.

*For Baroque men and women, music – by virtue of its direct appeal to the senses – was considered to be useful as well as problematic. For many, this paradox was understood to be resolved primarily through performance, through music-making itself. At that time, all composers were performers, and all performers were composers. The ideal Enlightened musician of this sort should move an audience through representations of its own humanity.*

*The freedom to think for oneself, following Kant and Rousseau, went hand-in-hand with one's intense and sustained engagement with art and music (sensibilité). The pursuit of reason was to be regulated by a careful attention to one's own feelings, just as an intellect unfettered by prejudice was to be guided by an individual's emotions. Accordingly, as the century progressed Enlightenment thinkers encouraged people to pay careful attention to the way instrumental music was put together. Understanding music as a kind of language stood in for the loss of a text. The ways in which musical motifs jostled and interacted encouraged listeners to conceive of musical works as being organic, of having living and breathing components that underwent development and change. There are works of this type in tonight's program too.*

*On the surface, period audiences might appear noisy and inattentive, but there were also moments when they were enraptured in electrified concentration and listening to every note. Maybe these days, we need a bit of both.*

Erin Helyard





Teresa Oaxaca, *Cornucopia*, 2016  
[teresaoaxaca.com](http://teresaoaxaca.com)

# THE ACO

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

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 acclaimed cinematic collaboration, *Mountain*.

In 2020 the ACO launched its inaugural digital subscription ‘ACO StudioCasts’ – a year-long season of cinematic and immersive concert films.

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



Photograph Lukas Beck

## ENGLISH TEXTS

### Pox on you for a fop

Pox on you for a fop,  
Your Stomach too queasy.  
Cannot I Belch and Fart,  
You Coxcomb, to ease me?  
What if I let fly in your Face,  
And shall please ye?

Fogh, fogh, how sour he smells,  
Now he's at it again;  
Out ye Beast,  
I never met so nasty a Man.  
I'm not able to bear it.  
What the Devil d'ye mean?

No less than a Caesar decree'd  
With great reason,  
No restraint should be laid  
On the Bum or the Weason,  
For Belching and Farting  
Were always in season.

### Will you buy a fine dog?

Will you buy a fine dog, with a hole in his head?  
With a dildo, dildo, dildo;  
Muffs, cuffs, ribatos, and fine sisters' thread,  
With a dildo, dildo;  
I stand not on points, pins,  
periwigs, combs, glasses,  
Gloves, garters, girdles, busks,  
for the brisk lasses;  
But I have other dainty tricks,  
Sleek stones and potting sticks,  
With a dildo, diddle, dildo;  
And for a need my pretty pods,  
Amber, civet, and musk cods,  
With a dildo, with a diddle, dildo!

### Myself I shall adore

Myself I shall adore,  
If I persist in gazing.  
No object sure before  
Was ever half so pleasing.

### Flow my teares

Flow, my tears, fall from your springs!  
Exiled for ever, let me mourn;  
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,  
There let me live forlorn.

Down vain lights, shine you no more!  
No nights are dark enough for those  
That in despair their last fortunes deplore.  
Light doth but shame disclose.

Never may my woes be relieved,  
Since pity is fled;  
And tears and sighs and groans my  
weary days, my weary days  
Of all joys have deprived.

From the highest spire of contentment  
My fortune is thrown;  
And fear and grief and pain for  
my deserts, for my deserts  
Are my hopes, since hope is gone.

Hark! you shadows that in darkness dwell,  
Learn to contemn light  
Happy, happy they that in hell  
Feel not the world's despite.

---

## ITALIAN TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

### Amor Dormiglione

Amor, non dormir più!  
Sù, sù, svegliati homai,  
Che mentre dormi tù,

Dormon le gioie mie, vegliono i guai.  
Non esser Amor, dappoco!  
Strali, strali, foco,  
Strali, strali, sù, sù,  
Foco, foco, sù, sù!  
Non dormir più, svegliati sù!

### Sleepyhead Cupid

Cupid, no more sleeping!  
Up, up, wake up right now,  
for while you sleep

my joys sleep, troubles are wakeful,  
don't be useless, Cupid!  
Arrows, arrows, fire,  
arrows, arrows, get up, get up,  
fire, fire, get up, get up!  
Sleep no more, wake up!

Oh pigro oh tardo  
 Tù non hai senso!  
 Amor melenso,  
 Amor codardo,  
 Ahi, quale io resto!  
 Che nel mio ardore  
 Tù dorma, Amore:  
 Mancava questo!

### Che si può fare?

Che si può fare?  
 Le stelle  
 Rubelle  
 Non hanno pietà.  
 Che s'el cielo non dà  
 Un influxo di pace al mio penare,  
 Che si può fare?

Che si può dire?  
 Da gl'astri  
 Disastri  
 Mi piovano ogn'hor;  
 Che le perfido amor  
 Un respiro diniega al mio martire,  
 Che si può dire?

Così va rio destin forte tiranna,  
 Gl'innocenti condanna:  
 Così l'oro più fido  
 Di costanza e di fè, lasso conviene,  
 lo raffini d'ogn'hor fuoco di pene.

Sì, sì, penar deggio,  
 Sì, che darei sospiri,  
 Deggio trarne i respiri.  
 In aspri guai per eternarmi  
 Il ciel nega mia sorte  
 Al periodo vital  
 Punto di morte.

Voi spirti dannati  
 Ne sete beati  
 S'ogni eumenide ria  
 Sol' è intenta a crucciar l'anima mia.

Se sono sparite  
 Le furie di Dite,  
 Voi ne gl'elisi eterni  
 I di trahete io coverò gl'inferni.

Così avvien a chi tocca  
 Calcar l'orme d'un cieco,  
 al fin trabocca.

Oh you idle laggard,  
 you've got no sense!  
 Foolish Cupid,  
 cowardly Cupid,  
 ah, what can I do?  
 In spite of all my ardor  
 you slumber:  
 that's all I need!

Translation © by Richard Kolb.

### What can you do?

What can you do?  
 The stars,  
 contrary/intractable,  
 have no pity.  
 Since the gods don't give  
 a measure of peace in my suffering,  
 what can I do?

What can you say?  
 From the heavens  
 disasters  
 keep raining down on me;  
 Since that treacherous Cupid  
 denies respite to my torture,  
 what can I say?

That's how it is with cruel destiny  
 the powerful tyrant,  
 it condemns the innocent:  
 thus the purest gold  
 of constancy and faithfulness, alas,  
 is continually refined in the fire of pain.

Yes, yes, I have to suffer,  
 yes, I must sigh,  
 I must breathe with difficulty.  
 In order to eternalise my trials  
 heaven denies the final period of death  
 on the sentence of my lifespan  
 to my destiny .

You spirits of the damned,  
 you're blessed,  
 since all the cruel Eumenides  
 are intent only on torturing my soul.

Since the furies of Diss  
 have disappeared,  
 you spend your days in the Elysian fields  
 while I molder in hell.

Thus it happens that he who follows  
 the shadow of a blind god  
 stumbles in the end.

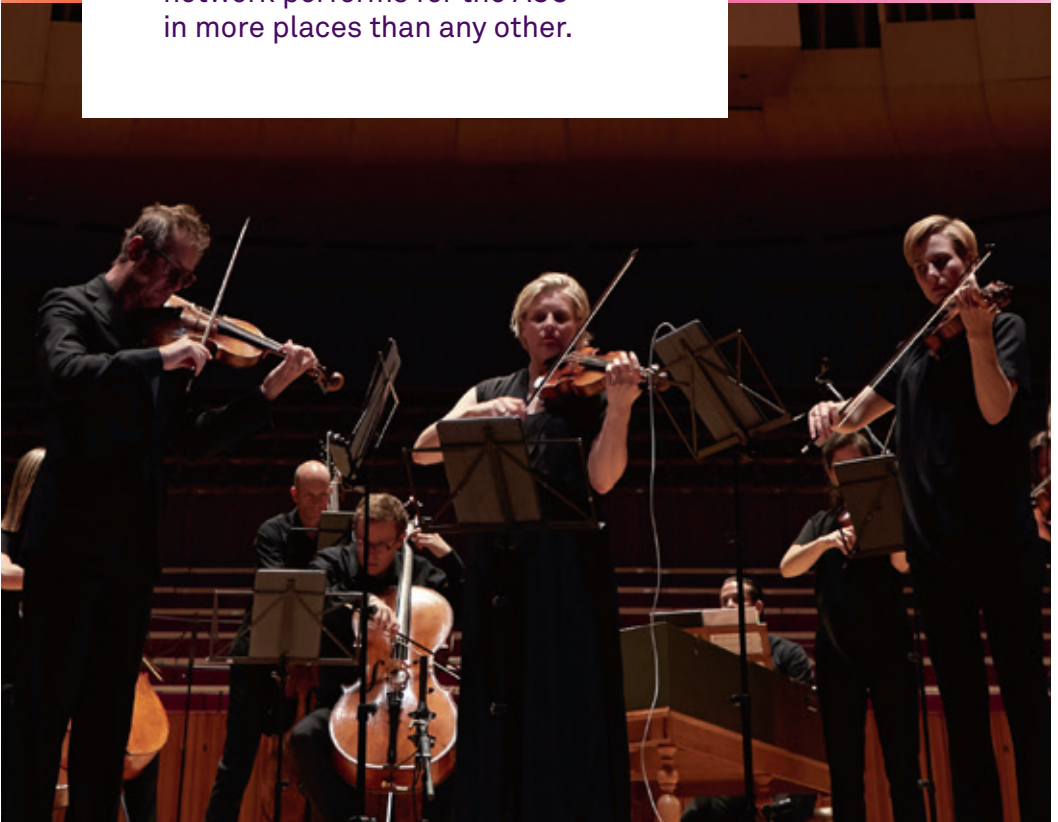
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The ACO thanks Dame Margaret Scott AC DBE for establishing the Dame Margaret Scott AC DBE Fund for International Guests and Composition

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The Chairman's Council is a limited membership association which supports the ACO's international touring program and enjoys private events in the company of Richard Tognetti and the Orchestra. For more information please call Tom Tansey, Philanthropy and Partnerships Manager, on (02) 8274 3828.

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This philanthropic program for young supporters engages with Australia's next generation of great musicians while offering unique musical and networking experiences. For more information please call Katie Henebery, Philanthropy Manager, on (02) 8274 3803.

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Thank you to all the generous donors who contribute to our Learning & Engagement, Renewal, Instruments, International and Regional Touring and Commissioning programs. We are extremely grateful for the support we receive to maintain these annual programs.

To discuss making a donation to the ACO, or if you would like to direct your support in other ways, please contact Jill Colvin, Director of Philanthropy & Partnerships, on (02) 8274 3835.

*Program names as at 7 May 2021*

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**ACO Instrument Fund**

The Instrument Fund offers investors the opportunity to participate in the ownership of a bank of historic stringed instruments. The Fund's assets are the 1728/29 Stradivarius violin, the 1714 'ex Isolde Menges' Joseph Guarnerius filius Andreae violin, the 1616 'ex-Fleming' Brothers Amati Cello and the 1590 Brothers Amati Violin. For more information please call Yeehwan Yeoh, Investor Relations Manager on (02) 8274 3878.

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We thank our Government Partners for their generous support



The ACO is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



The ACO is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.





# PROGRAM DONATION

We hope you are enjoying your free printed program.

We rely on donations to support their continued production. Facilities are available in the venue, should you wish to make a tax-deductible donation.

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# SPOTLIGHT ON BNP PARIBAS



This year BNP Paribas and the ACO celebrate 15 years of partnership. We caught up with Karine Delvallée, CEO of BNP Paribas Australia and New Zealand, to chat about this historic milestone.

**BNP Paribas has partnered with the ACO for 15 years now, why is this partnership so important to the Bank?**

The Bank believes that artistic creation is vital to our society. It nurtures us to better understand the world around us, provides shared experiences, all while challenging our beliefs, opening our minds and developing our creativity. Partnering with the ACO is one way that we can live this value locally in Australia.

**And is this belief in the power of the arts why BNP Paribas is supporting the Pathway Scholarship?**

Exactly. The ACO BNP Paribas Pathway Scholarship has been created as an accessible pathway to specialist string training and development for promising school aged musicians who otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity. We are proud to be playing our role in investing in the next generation of Australian musicians.

**How else does BNP Paribas invest in the next generation?**

This year BNP Paribas in Australia and New Zealand is excited to be celebrating 140 years of supporting the local economy. Our position as the bank for a changing world and the depth of our product offering reflects the growing importance of the financial services sector in Australia and our commitment to supporting the local economy. By supporting and developing a strong economy, we're setting strong foundations for the next generation.

**What about yourself Karine – what's your relationship with music like?**

I enjoy listening to all forms of music from Baroque musician Jordi Savall to my favourite rock band U2, and I adore the opera. For me, there is something special about the connection you get from watching any genre of live performance and that's why I feel lucky to be in Australia where live music is coming back after COVID-19.



**BNP PARIBAS**

The bank for a changing world

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