



Advance Program Notes

Australian Chamber Orchestra
Friday, April 17, 2015, 7:30 PM

These Advance Program Notes are provided online for our patrons who like to read about performances ahead of time. Printed programs will be provided to patrons at the performances. Programs are subject to change.

Australian Chamber Orchestra

Richard Tognetti, *artistic director and lead violin*
Charles Neidich, *clarinet*

Visions fugitives, op. 22

Sergei Prokofiev (*arr. Barshai/Tognetti*)

Clarinet Concerto in A major, K. 622

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Charles Neidich, *clarinet*

Intermission

Water

Jonny Greenwood

Symphony no. 83 in G minor *La poule*

Joseph Haydn

Australian Chamber Orchestra

VIOLINS

Richard Tognetti
Satu Vänskä
Aiko Goto
Ilya Isakovich
Liisa Pallandi
Ike See
Alexandra Osborne
Janez Podlesek
Maja Savnik
Susanne von Gutzeit

VIOLAS

Christopher Moore
Alexandru-Mihai Bota
Nicole Divall

CELLOS

Timo-Veikko Valve
Julian Thompson
Paul Stender

DOUBLE BASS

Maxime Bibeau

FLUTES

Sally Walker
Alistair Howlett

OBOES

Shefali Pryor
Huw Jones

BASSOONS

Jane Gower
Jackie Hansen

HORNS

Jonathan Williams
Alex Love

KEYBOARD

Jacob Greenberg

TANPURA

Vinod Prasanna

STAFF

Timothy Calnin, *general manager*
Megan Russell, *tour manager*
Simon Lear, *sound engineer*

About Australian Chamber Orchestra

"If there's a better chamber orchestra in the world today, I haven't heard it." —*The Guardian* (U.K.)

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. From the first concert in November 1975 to the first concert of 2015, the orchestra has travelled a remarkable road. Inspiring programming and unrivalled virtuosity, energy, and individuality, the Australian Chamber Orchestra's (ACO) performances span popular masterworks, adventurous cross artform projects, and pieces specially commissioned for the ensemble.

Founded by the cellist John Painter, the ACO originally comprised just 13 players, who came together for concerts as they were invited. Today the ACO has grown to 20 players (three part-time), giving more than 100 performances in Australia each year, as well as touring internationally.

The ACO has performed around the world from red-dust regional centers of Australia to New York night clubs, from Australian capital cities to the world's most prestigious concert halls, including Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, London's Wigmore Hall, Vienna's Musikverein, New York's Carnegie Hall, Birmingham's Symphony Hall, and Frankfurt's Alte Oper.

Since the ACO was formed in 1975, it has toured Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, Italy, France, Austria, Switzerland, England, Belgium, The Netherlands, Germany, China, Greece, the U.S., Scotland, Chile, Argentina, Croatia, the former Yugoslavia, Slovenia, Brazil, Uruguay, New Caledonia, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Spain, Luxembourg, Macau, Taiwan, Estonia, Canada, Poland, Puerto Rico, and Ireland.

The ACO's dedication and musicianship has created warm relationships with such celebrated soloists as Emmanuel Pahud, Steven Isserlis, Dawn Upshaw, Imogen Cooper, Christian Lindberg, Joseph Tawadros, Melvyn Tan, and Pieter Wispelwey. The ACO is renowned for collaborating with artists from diverse genres, including singers Tim Freedman, Neil Finn, Katie Noonan, Paul Casis, Danny Spooner, and Barry Humphries and visual artists Michael Leunig, Bill Henson, Shaun Tan, and Jon Frank.

The ACO has recorded for the world's top labels. Recent recordings have won three consecutive ARIA Awards, and documentaries featuring the ACO have been shown on television worldwide and won awards at film festivals on four continents.

Richard Tognetti, *artistic director and leader*

Helena Rathbone, *principal violin*

Satu Vänskä, *principal violin*

Glenn Christensen, *violin*

Aiko Goto, *violin*

Mark Ingwersen, *violin*

Ilya Isakovich, *violin*

Liisa Pallandi, *violin*

Ike See, *violin*

Christopher Moore, *principal viola*

Alexandru-Mihai Bota, *viola*

Nicole Divall, *viola*

Timo-Veikko Valve, *principal cello*

Melissa Barnard, *cello*

Julian Thompson, *cello*

Maxime Bibeau, *principal double bass*

PART-TIME MUSICIANS

Zoë Black, *violin*

Caroline Henbest, *viola*

Daniel Yeadon, *cello*

Program Notes

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)

Visions Fugitives, op. 22

Arranged for strings by Rudolf Barshai, realised by Richard Tognetti

Composed 1915-17

I. <i>Lentamente</i>	X. <i>Ridicolosamente</i>
II. <i>Andante</i>	XI. <i>Con vivacita</i>
III. <i>Allegretto</i>	XII. <i>Assai moderato</i>
IV. <i>Animato</i>	XIII. <i>Allegretto</i>
V. <i>Molto giocoso</i>	XIV. <i>Feroce</i>
VI. <i>Con eleganza</i>	XV. <i>Inquieto</i>
VIII. <i>Commodo</i>	XVI. <i>Dolente</i>
IX. <i>Allegretto tranquillo</i>	XVIII. <i>Con una dolce lentezza</i>

With his mother, Maria Grigorievna, giving him piano and theory lessons from soon after toddlerhood, Prokofiev's compositional juvenalia had reached generous proportions by his teens. His first piano piece, *Indian Gallop*, trotted in when he was just six, and there were dozens of other works, including six piano sonatas, before his official First Piano Sonata, op.1, appeared in 1909.

The 20 short piano pieces *Visions Fugitives (Mimoletnosti)* were written during a particularly fertile period from 1915-17 (1917 was the year of the First Violin Concerto, Piano Sonatas Three and Four, and the celebrated *Classical Symphony*), and followed on from the Second Sonata (1912) and *Sarcasms* (1912-14). Still only in his early 20s, the composer-pianist had already attracted much attention and controversy. After the premiere of his Second Piano Concerto in September 1913, a journalist wrote of the "astonished public" that "some express their indignation out loud, some get up and find salvation in retreat," and at the end "most of the audience are whistling and shouting angrily."

Such disapproval merely fired Prokofiev's enthusiasm to compose—something which he was able to do through persistent avoidance of military service by enrollment in successive classes at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. Later he wrote of this dizzily active, politically oblivious time, "I would blacken about 10 pages of manuscript a day. In the easy passages, I would cover as many as 18."

Prokofiev drew his title for this set of pieces from some lines of verse by Balmont:

*Tout ce qui est fugitif me fait voir des mondes
Qui dans leur jeu chatoyant
Ont pour moi la valeur du transitoire.*

*All that is fleeting makes me see worlds
Which have in their shimmering play
The merit of transience.*

Each of the *Visions* teems with a discrete, vibrant personality, and among the movements' headings are some more colourful descriptions such as *pittoresco*, *ridicolosamente*, *feroce*, and *inquieto*. With a range of moods taking in sobriety and boisterousness, wit and violence, the composer's phenomenal pianism is reflected at every turn. Prokofiev premiered these pieces on April 15, 1918, in the newly named, post-revolution Petrograd; the next month he departed for the U.S.A., apparently with the intention of staying only a few months, but in fact remaining there until 1922.

The arrangements were made by the Russian violist and conductor Rudolf Barshai. Born in 1924, a period of study at the Moscow Conservatorium was followed by periods in the Borodin and Tchaikovsky Quartets. In 1955 he became director of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, for which he subsequently arranged 15 of the 20 *Visions*.

Program Notes, continued

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Clarinet Concerto in A, K. 622

Composed 1791

I. Allegro

II. Adagio

III. Rondo

The Clarinet Concerto dates from the last months of Mozart's life and stands as the last purely instrumental work the composer produced; only the unfinished *Requiem* and *Laut verkünde unsre Freude*, K. 623, (known as the *Little Masonic Cantata*), received the composer's attention between the completion of the concerto in October 1791 and his sudden death on December 5. Like almost all of his late music for clarinet, Mozart's concerto was inspired by and written for the virtuoso Anton Stadler, a slightly seedy character and a close—if unreliable—friend of Mozart's, who shared the composer's love of food, drink, and (to the dismay of Mozart's family) gambling. Stadler's artistry, however, won universal approval and acclaim, sometimes rhapsodically so: "Never have I heard the like of what you contrive with your instrument," wrote critic Johann Friedrich Schink. "Never should I have imagined that a clarinet might be capable of imitating the human voice as faithfully as it was imitated by you. Verily, your instrument has so soft and so lovely a tone that none can resist it who has a heart, and I have one, dear Virtuoso. Let me thank you!"

To complement his prodigious talents and advance the development of his instrument, Stadler developed a clarinet with an extended lower register, completing its deepest octave by adding length and extra keys. Though he didn't have a special name for it (presumably hoping that it would simply become the standard clarinet), it is now referred to as a "basset clarinet." It was for this extended instrument that Mozart wrote his concerto. Unfortunately, the original manuscript was lost soon after its completion, and the version known to audiences ever since is a slightly adjusted transcription for standard clarinet made by publishers in the years following Mozart's death. In the last 50 years or so, scholars and performers have attempted to reconstruct the original version, but none of these has gained much traction. Barring a new manuscript discovery, the version for standard clarinet will continue its primacy.

Mozart prudently scored his concerto for an orchestra with a full assortment of strings but a wind section of just two flutes and two horns, sparing the solo clarinet any competition from instruments with a similar timbre. Or perhaps timbres would be more accurate, as the clarinet's greatest strength is its wide range, each register of which has a distinct and striking voice. Mozart took full advantage of this timbral abundance, including extended sections to showcase each of them—from the crystalline upper register to the husky resonance of the deepest—as well as passages that emphasize the contrast by requiring the soloist to quickly jump between registers. The concerto is also a tribute to the clarinet's and Mozart's lyric abilities. Judging from Schink's praise of Stadler's voice-like playing, this work was perfectly designed for its intended soloist; at times, its ravishing music sounds like it was written for orchestra and voice—if that voice somehow had the combined range of a baritone, tenor, mezzo-soprano, and soprano.

Jay Goodwin © 2013

Program Notes, continued

Jonny Greenwood (b. Oxford, 1971)

Water

Composed 2013

Jonny Greenwood joined the band Radiohead while still at school in the U.K. and left university after one term to pursue a recording career with Radiohead for the EMI label. A one-time violist, Greenwood's early musical interests included contemporary composers like Messiaen and Ligeti; the influence of the former is evident in the use that Greenwood made of the ondes Martenot (an electronic instrument beloved of Messiaen) on Radiohead's immaculately engineered album *Kid A* (2000), and the slewing, ondes-like string writing that creates a dissolving sheen of sound towards the end of a track like *How to Disappear Completely*. His first published composition, *smear*, features two ondes Martenots and ensemble and has been recorded by the London Sinfonietta.

Greenwood has subsequently been composer in residence with the BBC Concert Orchestra and, more recently, the London Contemporary Orchestra. He has composed in a variety of classical genres and in 2007 was nominated for Breakout Composer of the Year by the International Film Music Critics Association. His film scores include *Bodysong*, *There Will be Blood*, *Norwegian Wood*, *We Need to Talk about Kevin*, and *The Master*.

Water is the result of collaboration with the Australian Chamber Orchestra when Greenwood was in residence with the orchestra in 2013. Writing in *The Guardian*, Greenwood described composing "for concerts instead of recordings, which is a new way of thinking about music for me. ...I love the impermanence of the music live: it's played in the room—which is itself infinitely variable from one concert to another—and then it's gone, soaked into the walls. Unlike recordings, it isn't identical to the previous performance or the next one."

Water is scored for piano and keyboard, two flutes, two tanpuras (which are played in these performances by one musician on one tanpura, with the sound of the second instrument produced electronically), and strings. The score has as a superscription the final couplet from British poet Phillip Larkin's short lyric *Water* from *The Whitsun Weddings*. The poem begins:

*If I were called in
To construct a religion
I should make use of water.*

It ends with an image of a glass of clear water:

*Where any angled light
Would congregate endlessly.*

Greenwood's work begins with five overlapping *ostinatos*, or repeated figures, in 6/4 time in the violins and keyboard. Each figure is restricted to a few notes from the C major Lydian scale (that is, with an F-sharp in the mix), so the texture, while active, is essentially consonant, like ripples in water. This music adds long notes from lower strings, and the tanpuras (long-necked fretless lutes), which outline C major tonality in free rhythm throughout the piece. Flutes and violas add chromatic colouring, and ornate figures from the solo first violin lead to the work's first major climax. The section continues with string *tutti* contrasting with leaner ensemble episodes, increasingly elaborate solo writing, and an exploration of the icy timbre of string harmonics. This last sound is used for a passage where the players are given rhythmic freedom to create glinting pile-ups of sonority.

Program Notes, continued

A section marked *Moderato* follows, beginning with a simple two-part, but dissonant, idea in 3/8 that gathers in intensity and volume as it spreads through the orchestra. This issues in a section of extended techniques for the strings, such as bowing behind the bridge and striking muffled strings with a guitar plectrum. These provide new rhythmic *ostinatos* (repeated patterns), which lead to a texture of simple rhythm but closely chromatic harmony. The final section is in a slow 3/8, where cluster chords swell and recede in the orchestra's middle register, the tanpuras progressively detune, and the faster phrases in the keyboard, winds, and upper strings make use, where possible, of note-bending. This, like earlier passages in free rhythm, creates an effect of deliquescence, illustrating both Larkin's image of light and water and Greenwood's cultivation of the ephemeral nature and the "infinite variability" of live performance.

Gordon Kerry © 2014

Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)

Symphony no. 83 in G minor (*The Hen*)

Composed 1785

I. Allegro spiritoso

II. Andante

III. Menuet (Allegretto) and Trio

IV Finale: Vivace

In the early 1780s, Haydn's attentions began to turn away from his everyday duties as director of music to the Esterházy family to satisfy a burgeoning international demand for his music. For many years, symphonies written originally for the Esterházy household had been finding their way into concert programs not only in nearby Vienna, but in Paris and London. Now these cities were demanding new symphonies tailor-made to their audiences and orchestras. Accordingly, in 1782 Haydn produced his first symphonies (nos. 76-78) especially for London conditions. Apparently this meant limiting the difficulty of the wind parts in particular, for he wrote of the works, "They are all very easy, and without too much concertante for the English gentlemen!"

Three years later in 1785, when Haydn took on a commission from Paris' leading concert organization, the Concert de la Loge Olympique, for a set of six new symphonies, he faced an entirely different set of conditions. The large amount of solo writing for wind instruments in the Paris symphonies (nos. 82-87) suggests that the French wind players were more adept than their English counterparts. Instead it was the Paris strings that might conceivably have posed a problem for Haydn. At home, when he tried out the newly written symphonies with the court orchestra, its small string section of fewer than a dozen players must have guaranteed the works a certain intimacy. In Paris, on the other hand, they would be performed by a string force close to five times that number, including over 40 violins and no fewer than 12 double basses! What sort of sound such a huge, bass-heavy band would have produced in the opening *tutti* of this G minor Symphony can only be imagined.

Despite such a stern beginning, Haydn's Symphony proved so remarkably good-natured that its Parisian audiences quickly dubbed it *La Poule (The Hen)*. No one is quite sure why. Perhaps they got the idea from a moment, not far into the first movement, where the first and second violins, playing alone, launch into an amiable new major-key tune, arguably somewhat reminiscent of farmyard scratchings and cluckings! Then again, the second movement *Andante*, with its repeated-note theme may have been the source, or the slightly eccentric, halting *Menuet*. After all, who can say exactly what, in Haydn's hands, a chook is meant to sound like?

© Australian Chamber Orchestra

Biographies



Charles Neidich, clarinet

Clarinetist and conductor Charles Neidich has gained worldwide recognition as one of the most mesmerizing virtuosos on his instrument. With a tone of hypnotic beauty and a dazzling technique, Neidich has received unanimous accolades from critics and fellow musicians both in the U.S. and abroad, but it is his musical intelligence in scores as diverse as Mozart and Elliott Carter that have earned Neidich a unique place among clarinetists. In the words of *The New Yorker*, "he's an artist of uncommon merit—a master of his instrument and, beyond that, an interpreter who keeps listeners hanging on each phrase."

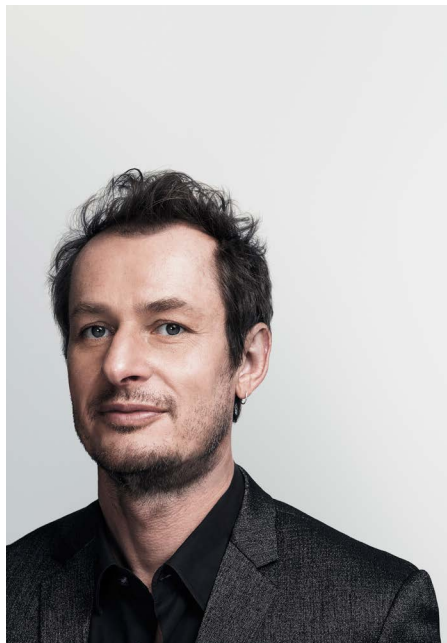
The start of the 14-15 season found Neidich in Tignes, France, conducting masterclasses at the International Academy of Music before traveling to Tokyo to conduct the Finals of the Jacques Lancelot International Clarinet Competition with the Tokyo Philharmonic. His extended Japanese tour in fall 2014 also featured performances of the Mozart and Copland clarinet concerti and chamber music performances with members of the NHK Symphony Orchestra. Further highlights in the U.S. include concerts with the New York Woodwind Quintet; recital, conducting, and chamber music

appearances throughout New York City; and a Tennessee residency with the Gateway Chamber Orchestra and Parker Quartet.

2014 also saw the release of Neidich's new recording of the Mozart Clarinet Concerto, 26 years after his celebrated recording with Orpheus for Deutsche Grammophon. In this new version, Neidich plays the basset clarinet together with the Slovakian early music orchestra Solamente Naturali. Corinna de Fonseca-Wollheim reviewed the recording in *The New York Times*:

The mellow, woody tone of the basset horn stars in this pleasing recording of works for basset horns and/or clarinets (in various configurations) and orchestra by Mozart and his Bohemian contemporary Jiri Druzecky. Charles Neidich's reading of Mozart's Concerto for Basset Clarinet in A (KV 622) radiates sunny serenity. But over the course of the following works, including Druzecky's Concerto for three basset horns and orchestra in F and a reconstruction of Mozart's Adagio in F for clarinet and three basset horns (KV 580a), the music takes on an inescapably narcotic quality. (February 18, 2015)

Biographies, continued



Richard Tognetti, artistic director and violin

“Richard Tognetti is one of the most characterful, incisive and impassioned violinists to be heard today.” —*The Daily Telegraph* (U.K.)

2015 marks the 25th year of Richard Tognetti’s artistic directorship of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Born and raised in Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia, Tognetti has established an international reputation for his compelling performances and artistic individualism.

He began his studies in his home town 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. He is also artistic director of the Festival Maribor in Slovenia.

Tognetti 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, Tognetti 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 of the Australian symphony orchestras.

Tognetti was 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 *Horrorscopes*; and created *The Red Tree*, inspired by Shaun Tan’s book. He co-created and starred in the 2008 documentary film *Musica Surfica*. Most recently, he provided additional music for *The Water Diviner*, Crowe’s directorial debut.

Tognetti 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 a 1743 Guarneri del Gesu violin, lent to him by an anonymous Australian private benefactor.

He has given more than 2,500 performances with the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Engagement Activities

Friday, April 17, 2015, 5:30-7 PM

Australian Wine Tasting

Balcony Lobby, Street and Davis Performance Hall

Keith Roberts, owner of the Vintage Cellar wine and beer shop in Blacksburg, has personally selected a host of Australian wines for the tasting and will be describing for the participants each wine's special qualities, including complexity and characters within the fermentation process, flavors and ingredients, and the similarities and differences between the selections. With each ticket, six tastings will be given. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served. Space is limited.

Friday, April 17, 2015, 7:30 PM

Tweet Seats Master Class: Australian Chamber Orchestra

Anne and Ellen Fife Theatre

Select students from Virginia Tech's School of Performing Arts will participate in a Twitter-based educational discussion led by Tracy Cowden, associate professor, School of Performing Arts at Virginia Tech, during the performance by Australian Chamber Orchestra. Tweet Seats Master Class participants are seated in the back row of the mezzanine and employ black boxes to prevent the light from their electronic devices from disturbing other patrons.

SPECIAL THANKS:

Tracy Cowden and Keith Roberts

In the Galleries

ICAT: Open (at the) Source

Ruth C. Horton Gallery

Opens Thursday, April 23, 2015 and continues through Sunday, May 17, 2015

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10 AM-6 PM/Saturday-Sunday, 10 AM-4 PM

Opening Reception, Thursday, April 23, 2015, 6-8 PM

ICAT: Open (at the) Source enables visitors to explore and experience the research and innovation that is happening within the Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology (ICAT). Visitors will become more than just viewers, but partners in exploration with the students, faculty, and staff of ICAT and its creative community.

School of Visual Arts Senior Show 2015

Miles C. Horton Jr. Gallery

Opens Thursday, April 30, 2015 and continues through Sunday, May 17, 2015

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10 AM-6 PM/Saturday-Sunday, 10 AM-4 PM

In this capstone exhibition for graduating seniors, emerging artists at Virginia Tech's School of Visual Arts, in the College of Architecture and Urban Studies, display a broad range of art and design practices. Incorporating new and established technologies in material and virtual realms, the exhibition demonstrates the School of Visual Arts' commitment to excellence and innovation in the practice, study, and teaching of arts.