



Kettering Concerts

KetteringConcerts.au

Date change Sheng-Yuan Lynch Recital

Sheng-Yuan's performance originally scheduled for 10 November has been delayed until **17 November**. This was to avoid the clash with the vigil on 10 November - see next item. So the last Kettering Concert for 2024 will be on 17 November, at 3pm as usual. It will be given by the remarkable young pianist Sheng-Yuan Lynch with a challenging programme of works by Bach, Chopin, Liszt, Ravel and Schumann. This should be an exciting and rewarding concert. Tickets can be booked at

<https://www.trybooking.com/CWIFB>.

Cenotaph Vigil

Most will be aware of the many concerns raised about the proposed new stadium. It would stand over the historic skyline adjacent to Victoria Dock and block the sight line to the Cenotaph. It is the latter point that led to the RSL to plan a vigil at the Cenotaph next Sunday at 10:30am.

But music lovers should also be concerned about the impact the stadium would have on the Federation Concert Hall. Caroline Sharpen, CEO of the TSO put it this way:

"We are deeply concerned about the impact of a 23,000-seat stadium just 170 metres from Federation Concert Hall and our rehearsal, recording and film studios. We have been unable to find a precedent in the world of a government choosing to locate a stadium so close to state concert hall. Furthermore, the proponent's submission to the Tasmanian Planning Commission (TPC) doesn't tell us anything about the expected noise spectrum we will experience outside or inside our facility, and whether it might adversely impact our ability to perform, rehearse, record, and film in our home. As it stands, the facts are not sufficient to help commissioners make an informed decision about the stadium and the existing assets they are prepared to sacrifice.

"At the TSO we are supporters of the Tasmania Devils - a long overdue AFL club carrying the Tasmanian name and aspirations of our community. With 76 years of international high performance under our belt, we understand the need for fit-for-purpose facilities. We invested \$1.3 million in the acoustic upgrade of Federation Hall in 2020 to reveal the true lustre of the orchestra, making it one of the finest music venues in the world.

"We support a stadium - but of this we are certain: there must be a less terrible option. One that does not

detract from the solemnity and cultural significance of our Cenotaph and state war memorial. One that doesn't devalue the precious maritime heritage of our waterfront."

There is more information available on the [TSO website https://www.tso.com.au/macquarie-point/](https://www.tso.com.au/macquarie-point/).

Please join us on Sunday!

Be.Four.Quartet Première Performance

After planning for it for two years, we finally heard the Elena Kats-Chernin commission performed in Kettering on 22 September. We think it was worth waiting for!

The days before the concert were very busy for the Tasmanian String Quartet (TSQ) and Elena. An early rehearsal was recorded and sent to Elena who was in Germany. She studied the recording on her flight to Australia and by the time she arrived in Hobart - tired and jet-lagged - already had feed-back for the TSQ, who were working in the TSO Studio.



Jennifer Owen, Tobias Chisnall, Douglas Coghill, William Hewer

On Thursday, Elena and the TSQ worked more on the score. Quite a few more changes were made. Elena would scribble changes on her version on an i-pad. Later these would be made clear for her copyist. The result was emailed, and at the next rehearsal the musicians would have new PDF versions on their i-pads. The technology certainly works well.

A few more changes at the Sunday morning rehearsal, just before the concert. In discussions subsequent to the performance it was decided that two parts of the score were a bit too long. The next performance in April at Woolmers Estate, Longford will make use of the final score. Details/bookings at the TSO website <https://www.tso.com.au/concerts/bassoon-romance/>

Elena's Introduction

At the concert, Elena delighted the audience with an overview of what was to come, and a bit of background. There was an unexpected change to the order of works in the programme, so Elena was a bit surprised at being called to the stage.

Thank you so much. I had no idea what order the pieces, sorry. So change the order to confuse people. I want to thank everyone for welcoming me here. I've had a wonderful time at Dave & Annick's house. They look after me. They cook for me. They make sure I'm awake, because I came from Germany - long flight from a different time zone. Thank you to the quartet for putting so much work into this work.



Elena Kats-Chernin and the TSQ

Two years ago Dave & Annick came to me and said they would like a piece based on the great B composers of the few last centuries, that is Bach, Beethoven, Brahms and Borodin. And I said OK and how am I going to do this? And so I researched, listened to pieces and I came with some ideas, some of them good and some not, some odd ones and long ones not here. It is not chronological because I believe that music does not need to be logical. That's very important because logical music for me is boring.

The first movement is for Beethoven. I based it on the famous quartet opus 127. Just the first chord. That's all we get. The rest is something else. And the Waldstein Sonata which I loved as a child. So you'll hear that and other tunes fast and in your face.

The second one is Bach. It's subdued, starting with just the cello: tum... tum... tum... tum..., so just very pacing as if someone walking - a walking base. Then it unfolds we hear the violin double concerto. Everything has my take on it, so it gets faster.

And then we have Borodin. That's very famous, and I think that was one of the first ideas I had - I knew it - the nocturne had to be in it. You'll hear actually the nocturne after a certain section. It starts a little bit in an abstract way, because I think after the first two movements you need a break. I call it palate cleanser. You need sounds that are not quite clear so you kind of drift somewhere else. And then a bit of a storm happens.

Then we have Brahms. Brahms has one of the pieces which has a lot of harmonics. It's beautiful violin and shades shimmering. It's very high and very hard. Jennifer does it amazingly - she has to do it and she loves me for that. Brahms has beautiful melodies and has to compete but I decided to have one of my own at first and then his famous horn melody from one of his symphonies comes in. I thought not just strings or

piano, give the horn a bit of showing.

And then we have gigue. But there we don't have one 'B'. Except I decided to write gigue of the bees - the insects. I thought that's kind of a nice play on words, and I like bees, and I like honey. We all do. And we like the bzzzzz sound they make and also they sting. So the very beginning of that gigue is a bit of a buzzing sound and a sting sound. And then we have kind of a tarantella in a way. It's a fast rondo; the motif keeps coming back. And I decided to throw in all the famous tunes from all the composers. It's as if they all get together and have a jam session. I hope you recognise those.

Review of the whole concert

The concert included other works. Thanks to Keith Anderson for his overview.

What a wonderful way to enjoy a Sunday afternoon.

Who would believe that in a small community hall in a small seaside village south of the smallest State capital in Australia, an enthusiastic audience could enjoy a world première composed by a famous composer, Elena Kats-Chernin, and played by a quartet of top shelf musicians, Jennifer Owens, Tobias Chisnall, Douglas Coghill and William Hewer?

Yes. It was a real concert, not a dream, with beautiful music. Even the weather behaved itself. No wind in the windows, no rain falling on the window panes.

As an entrée, we heard an unusual composition, "Brudertykke Part II". The program notes told us it was wedding music. It was quite pretty, but it was easy to suspect that at least one of the happy couple might have been having second thoughts.

The highlight piece, "Be.Four.Quartet" was described well in the program notes and in an introduction by the composer. It is a special treat to have the composer describe what they composed and why they composed it. The first of five movements honoured Beethoven. Explicit tunes were inconspicuous, but the work still conveyed the feeling of mischief and surprise that makes Beethoven so, — so, — well, so Beethoven.

The second piece, referencing Bach, was more obviously Bach, but still delivering the look and feel of Bach without stealing Bach or becoming like PDQ Bach. Members of the audience familiar with Bach might have detected something a little more familiar, but mostly, the experience was both fresh and familiar.

The third piece quoted the famous tune from the famous Nocturne by Borodin in the style of "variations on a theme". For this piece, this was appropriate, and provided a familiar handle to soothe the senses. The variations were suitably subtle and empathetic. Many might have wished it could have become a "perpetuum mobile".

Brahms is a greatly admired composer, but even his most enthusiastic fans struggle to define a "Brahms sound". His Hungarian Dances sound mutually similar, but they are more "Hungarian" than "Brahms". His

Second and Third symphonies might sound a bit alike to some listeners, but his First is not at all like either of them, or like his Fourth. Possibly, this absence of a "Brahms sound" is the Brahms sound. Nevertheless, the fourth movement of this quartet was filled with rich and satisfying music. Who could ask for more.

The fifth movement was a bit like a coda. The program notes implied that it might be a medley, but it was such a clever medley that it was not at all like any cloying medley that a wallpaper entertainer might play in a rarely frequented bar. Instead, it was a jolly good romp of jolly good tunes leaving everyone very satisfied.

What a wonderful way to enjoy a Sunday afternoon.

Oh. Hang on. There is more.

The enthusiasm of enthusiastic musicians knows no bounds, so after a little pause, they played the most famous of the string quartets by Dvořák. The first two movements contain the tunes that have been stolen by almost everyone, particularly when trying to hint of something American or something Slavonic or Bohemian. The concluding two movements are more original and have been stolen less often, so in some ways are more enjoyable.

And as if we weren't already filled to the brim with harmonies and melodies, we received an extra treat, more variations, this time on a familiar tune about a sheep and a billabong.

Other comments

Quite a number of audience members sent comments. Here are a few.

- a superb concert - made all the more memorable with having the composer there
- What a brilliant concert! Congratulations
- Superb concert today! Having Elena Kats-Chernin actually present for the première of her work was just amazing.
In fact I said to her "It's like being in Salzburg with Mozart, or Leipzig with Bach!"
- Thank you, organisers! Brilliant!
- brilliant concert yet again!!! Thank you!!
- the most exhilarating, transformative, wondrous and beautiful concert. Today's concert will be a hard one to ever better, it was just extraordinary.
- thoroughly enjoyed the Kettering Concert by the Tasmanian String Quartet; it was a wonderful experience

Other Chamber Music Concerts

If you want to find chamber music concerts, including the Kettering ones, use the [ChamberMusicTas website](#). If you know of any concerts that are not listed, please let webmaster@chambermusicTas.au know.

Can you help?

Absolutely. Note we are all volunteers. Without volunteers there will be no concerts.

There is a lot our volunteers must do. There are the obvious activities on the day: putting up the sails and artwork; putting the platforms in place; getting the chairs out; setting up for the afternoon tea, checking and sometimes cleaning the toilets. That all has to be done in the morning before the musicians arrive for their rehearsal. Then there is the food preparation, assisting the musicians with their set-up, managing the heating, scanning or selling the tickets. Then that all-important afternoon tea that requires a small army of people. Afterwards there is the bumping out, the washing up and the hall cleaning.

But there are other activities: e.g. preparing posters, flyers and programmes; preparing and erecting the roadside signs etc.

So assistance will always be appreciated.