



Kettering Concerts

KetteringConcerts.au

Chrysantha Transfigured

The Kettering Concert scheduled for 13 April was to be presented by the Chrysantha Quartet - Yue-Hong Cha (violin), Frances Davies (violin), Janet Rutherford (viola), Brett Rutherford (cello) - but outside forces became involved. A long-awaited medical appointment for Janet suddenly came up meaning the Rutherfords would be in Sydney on the day, so William Newbery (viola) and Martin Penicka (cello) stepped up, then unexpectedly Yue-Hong had to be in China on the day, so Elinor Lea agreed to fill in. Frances remained the anchor. These four players are well known to Kettering Concert audience regulars.

The programme has had only a minor change. The "transfigured" quartet will play Matthew Locke's Fantasia and Corant in D minor, part of Schubert's Five Minuets with Six Trios, D89, and Mozart's String Quartet No. 19 in C major, K. 465. Tickets are available at <https://www.trybooking.com/DAEQA>. or by cash at the door.

Other coming concerts

May 18: Rohana O'Malley (violin), Karen Smithies (piano) and Martin Penicka (cello). This will be a first performance of this group, though the three members of the group have all played in Kettering.

August 17: Jonathan Békés (cello) and Stefan Cassomenos (piano). A first appearance for the highly acclaimed Cassomenos.

September 21: French Delights. Jennifer Marten-Smith (piano) and William Newbery (viola). A welcome return.

October 19: Sequenza. David Malone (Lute and Guitar), Matt Goddard (Percussion), and Brett Rutherford (Viola da Gamba). This will be a first appearance of Sequenza.

November 23: Piano trio. Karen Smithies (piano), Christopher Nicolas (violin), Ivan James (cello). Another new group for Kettering, and a first for Christopher in Kettering.

Piano Recital - Sheng-Yuan Lynch

The last concert of 2024 was a stunning recital by Sheng-Yuan Lynch. It was Sheng-Yuan's second appearance in Kettering. His developing maturity of playing was a delight to here. Here is Peter Donnelly's review:

The now 19-year-old Sheng-Yuan Lynch has been steadily gaining recognition both nationally and internationally for his prodigious keyboard talent and range of musical interests. This recital provided a brilliant exposition of his current level of attainment in the most challenging of repertoire choices.

JS Bach's Toccata in G major, BWV 916 immediately revealed an impressive security of pacing and sense of line; a finely judged clarity in the balancing of voices in this polyphonic music was also a strong feature.

For two Chopin pieces – Étude No. 11, Op. 25 "Winter Wind" and Nocturne No. 20 in C sharp minor, Op. posth. – there was Romantic warmth and expressiveness allied to clarity of articulation and sharpness of attack. Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12 provided the opportunity for a display of virtuosity and flair and it was delivered here in spades.

However, the real benchmark for Sheng-Yuan Lynch's present standard of performance was to be one of the most technically and musically stretching pieces in the solo piano repertoire – Ravel's Gaspard de la Nuit. Sheng spoke self-disparagingly of his attempt to learn the work in three weeks for a recent piano competition. He certainly delivered on this occasion in a splendid rendition that was undoubtedly the highlight of this concert. From the crystalline textures of Ondine to the relentless insistence and sombre mood of Le Gibet and the diabolical demands of Scarbo, this was a hugely impressive achievement.

There were finely accomplished Schumann/Liszt and Chopin pieces to follow and two encores – improvisations by the pianist on popular songs – the Lloyd Webber/Nunn 'Memory' from 'Cats' and Revaux/Thibault/Anka 'My Way'.

Brass, Wood & Keys

The first Kettering Concert for the year was a great success. Here is what Peter Donnelly wrote:

Eighteen-year-old twin brothers Zachary and Reuben Allen have been wowing local audiences as an amazing double act with wonderful musical versatility and charm. Though performing since the age of 6, these young musicians have been recently studying piano with Jennifer Marten-Smith and playing trumpet with the Tasmanian Youth Orchestra. Making a second Kettering Concerts

appearance, they undertook between them works for trumpet, clarinet and piano; the program a delightful one, selected to demonstrate the young players' range and virtuosity.

Firstly, they premièred a piece recently composed for them by Tasmanian Don Kay – 'Forest Filigrees'. Accompanied by gentle shifting harmonies on piano from Jennifer Marten-Smith, two trumpets presented predominantly muted fanfare-like patterns representing the tops of Tasmania's eucalypt forests. The mood created was serene and contemplative. Jennifer again accompanied Zachary's trumpet in a splendidly confident Solo de Concours by Théo Charlier. Reuben followed with some fine toned and expressive clarinet in Muczynski's Time Pieces Op. 43 (4th movement).

Perhaps the highlights of the concert were their solo piano turns in Liszt's Tarantella from Venezia e Napoli, S159 (Zachary) and Debussy's L'Isle Joyeuse, L. 106 (Reuben). In each case there was a mature feeling for style, sense of line and expressive phrasing that belied the age of the performers.

The arrangement of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C-sharp minor, S244/2 for 4 hands produced a spectacular display of virtuosity and a deserved standing ovation. As an encore all three players presented an unlikely and highly amusing arrangement of Liszt's La Campanella for one piano, six hands!

Thanks Peter!

Ticket Prices

While not wanting to contribute to inflation, we have had to face the inflation affecting our musicians, and raise our ticket prices to \$20 plus booking fee online, or \$25 cash at the door. Our major costs, hall rental, piano tuning and insurance have all gone up so to maintain reasonable payments going to the musicians, we have had no option but to make this increase. And just a reminder, Kettering Concerts Inc. is a registered not-for-profit organisation, so all the money raised by the ticket sales go to the musicians, save for our expenses. All the people organising the concerts are unpaid volunteers.

Senator Catrina Bilyk

Since 2010, Senator Bilyk's office staff have printed the Kettering Concert programmes, posters and flyers. This has been a major money-saver, but has also made arranging for the printing extraordinarily simple - a single email with PDF attachments sent to her office was all that was needed. Though we do recall once instance when we arrived at her office in Kingston to pick up the print-out to learn that a stuff-up meant the printout was not to be found. It happened that the Senator was the only person there at the time, and rather than apologising, she said "Well you better come in" and proceeded to do the printing herself while we watched on. She commented "Bet you never thought you would see a Senator doing this for you!"

So we have nothing but thanks to the Senator who is standing down at the end of June. We hope she will now have the time to join our audience in Kettering after that. She has given advice on who might be able to help in future.

Printed Programmes

Considerable effort goes into the preparation of the Kettering Concert programmes, especially by Annick Anselin who writes the notes on the music to be performed. We do not often get much feedback on the programmes, except for the occasional comment about the font size being too small. The loss of Senator Bilyk's support raises the question of whether printed programmes should be continued, especially if we should have to pay for the printing. One possibility would be for the programme notes to be available on our website before the concerts, in a format that could be easily printed at home, or read on a phone or tablet at the concert. Ideas welcome.

Be.Four.Quartet

The première of Elena Kats-Chernin's string quartet, commissioned by Kettering Concerts, was a great success (22 September 2024). We've hoped for an opportunity to hear it again. There's good news and bad news. The good news is that the Tasmanian String Quartet will play the quartet as a part of their concert to be given at Woolmer's Estate on 12 April. The bad news is that the concert is sold-out.

But there is more good news. The ABC plans to record the concert and to broadcast it on ABC Classic at 1pm on Friday 18 April. If you are interested, Elena's notes on the Quartet appeared in the Kettering Concerts Newsletter of September 2024, <https://ketteringconcerts.au/newsletters/2024-09.pdf> and her comments before the performance were included in the November Newsletter available at <https://ketteringconcerts.au/newsletters/2024-11.pdf>.

Newsletters available on website

There is a new tab on the banner of the Kettering Concerts Website <https://ketteringconcerts.au/Newsletters>. There you can find Newsletters going back to 2018.

Afternoon Tea - Help Needed!

The after concert afternoon tea is an important part of the Kettering Concerts. It gives an opportunity for musicians and audience members to meet in a casual setting. The musicians love it! But there is work involved: setting up; serving tea and coffee; cleaning up afterwards. At the last concert the small number of volunteers was hard pressed. Help is needed.

Also, part of the success of the post-concert gathering is the goodies on offer. Contributions, sweet or savoury, greatly accepted.