



Kettering Concerts

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An exciting new commission

Following on the successful première of Elena Kats-Chernin's string quartet "Be.Four.Quartet" in Kettering, September 2024, Dave and Annick have been discussing with Elena the commission of a new piano quartet. Elena is enthusiastic and will aim at a première in September next year.

For that performance, the Kettering Piano Quartet, that played so well in Kettering and elsewhere in the 2014-2019 period, will join together again: Jennifer Marten-Smith (piano), Emma McGrath (violin), William Newbery (viola) and Brett Rutherford (cello).

You can be a part of the creation of a new work through a donation to the [project's fundraising website](#). All donations are income tax deductible, so best to act before the end of the month, end of the financial year.

From Argentina with Love

Our last concert did not fit the typical Kettering Concert mould. Presented by Maria Eugenia Nieva who passionately sang the Spanish songs convincingly conveying the love to an audience who mostly did not understand the words, accompanied by Andrew Blanch whose skill with the guitar supported the words compassionately. Andrew's solo performances left everyone wanting more.

A few comments sent in emails:

- Just to say what a wonderful concert this was!!
- I wanted to thank you and your helpers for the most enjoyable concert on Sunday. I was brought to tears by the remarkable voice of Maria Eugenia Nieva and the great accompanist Andrew Blanch. Her vivid descriptions of each piece she sang created a great understanding of the power of each song's emotions.
- The singer was amazing and it is great to hear an acoustic guitar in the environment for which it was intended.

One member of the audience, the flautist Maria Hincapie Duque (who performed in Kettering in March), certainly did understand the words, and during the encore was dancing in her seat, and had to restrain herself from not singing along!

This is what Keith Anderson wrote about it:

From Argentina with love

The latest Kettering concert was very special, with a presentation of music from Argentina by Maria Eugenia Nieva (mezzo-soprano) and Andrew Blanch (guitar).

The concert began with a guitar solo which presented the acoustic guitar at its best. Usually, except for dedicated aficionados, acoustic guitars are heard only in party environments or in movie clips, where they struggle to compete with distractions. In this venue, with an appreciative audience, the sound was charming and invited thoughts of warm, but not too warm, summer evenings.

With the audience suitably soothed, the vocalist joined the performance, and the concert continued with several duets interspersed with guitar solos. This format worked well and each vocal piece was introduced by the vocalist to provide context for those of the audience who might not be familiar with this genre. Most (all?) songs were about love, with its joys when requited and disappointments when not. The vocalist demonstrated an amazing vocal range, not just of tone, but also of power, delivering blissful joy for the requited love, and anguish and/or anger when someone was disappointed or jilted.

As the concert progressed, the guitar solos became more ambitious, demonstrating skill and finesse and why, in the right environment, the acoustic guitar can be just the right instrument for the occasion.

It is probably unimportant, but the music of Argentina seems to be warmer than its climate. It is easy to forget that the latitude of Buenos Aires is similar to that of Sydney and the country extends a long way south to Tierra del Fuego. Would music from that region sound like Sibelius? Maybe not.

A wonderful afternoon in Kettering, or was it Argentina?

Thanks Keith!

Next: Dance and Romance Around the World

The first concert after our winter break will be presented by Maria Lindsay (violin) who has put together a wonderful programme of violin favourites some of which are known as show-pieces demanding great skill. She will be accompanied by Meriel Owen

(piano). Meriel is perhaps best known for her harp playing, regularly with the TSO and Van Diemen's band, but she is also a great accompanist on the piano; something some will attest to who heard her accompany Jonathan Békés and Andrew Seymour in Kettering a few years ago.

The full programme of the concert is now [available on our website](#). A date for your diary: Sunday 23 August 2026 at 3pm. Tickets available [online](#).

The other 2026 Kettering Concerts

As always, bear in mind that many factors can cause plans to be changed, so be sure to check our website and emails for confirmations of the concerts listed below.

September 20: Piano, Viola and Bass trio. *Jennifer Marten-Smith (piano), William Newbery (viola) and Stuart Thomson (bass).* Jennifer, William and Stuart have all played many times in Kettering, but this is the first time they will be performing as a trio. Seem like an unusual instrument combo? Try this for [a fun example](#).

October 11: Cello and Da Gamba Duo - *Martin Penicka (cello) and Brett Rutherford (viola da gamba).* Another new combination between two who have played many times in Kettering.

November 15: Piano recital - *Shan Deng, from the Tasmanian Conservatorium and Advanced students.* Not sure who will be playing yet, but suffice it to say that Shan has had some spectacular students.