MEDIA RELEASE
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2016 MEDIA KIT
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2016 OVERVIEW

NATIONAL CONCERT SEASON

Beethoven's late string quartets are the mighty pillar on which the ACO's 2016 season is built. These remarkably complex quartets are the undisputed pinnacle of chamber music-making, like a musical Everest. Even though they were composed in the depths of deafness, Beethoven was at the height of his creative power.

But not even Beethoven was an island. His debt is to Bach and earlier masters like Handel and Vivaldi, while his own influence on later composers remains unquestioned. With a stellar line-up of international guests joining the ACO, the 2016 season explores the entire canon of classical music, with Beethoven as the centrepiece.

Finnish violinist, Pekka Kuusisto, kicks off the ACO's 2016 national season in his new role as Artistic Director of ACO Collective (formerly known as ACO2).

Kuusisto is the perfect catalyst to ignite the imaginations of the fiery young guns of ACO Collective in their spirited touring adventures across the country. ACO Collective first appeared in an ACO main-stage season in 2013 under the direction of ACO's Artistic Director, Richard Tognetti, with The Australian saying "[it was]...one of the year's must-see concerts."

Richard Tognetti says, "In 2001, a relationship with Pekka was forged, resulting in his being a part of the collective consciousness of the ACO. Pekka has a calling to turn things on their head. A musical insight that is as disturbing as it is compelling. He's a musician for the new world and, therefore, his appointment to ACO Collective couldn't be bettered."

Kuusisto leads ACO Collective in a program that interweaves contemporary works by living composers along with pieces by Tippett, fellow countryman Sibelius, and Beethoven.

Kuusisto says, "Beethoven's Op.95 has a particularly explosive opening statement, so we needed something very intimate to precede it. I chose Sibelius' Rakastava which feels and smells like nature at night. I found another kind of light in Bryce Dessner's Tenebre with its shadows which are very architectural. Tenebre is inspired by ceremonial vocal music, which ties it nicely to Rakastava as well, since the Sibelius work started its life as a suite for male choir, with lyrics from Finnish traditional poetry. Maybe we'll sing a bit in this concert as well."

Sir Michael Tippett's Lament with its amazing handling of a string orchestra was an inspiration to Bryce Dessner and Erkki-Sven Tüür. Tüür's work gives us a healthy reminder to listen to Estonian progressive rock, as well as echoing some moments from Britten's Les Illuminations, which is convenient, since Britten is one of Nico Muhly's heroes.

Cinemusica (2-12 April) showcases the combined forces of the ACO and Synergy Percussion and explores the thrilling possibilities of strings and percussion, and a shared love of film. Bernard Hermann was hailed as "the musical voice for Hitchcock’s imagination" and worked extensively with cinema’s supreme master of suspense, on films that gave shape to the genre of the psychological thriller. From his most famous film of all, Psycho, the ACO performs Hermann's Suite for Strings, indelibly conjuring the horror classic. Thomas Newman has been nominated for a dozen Academy Awards and has won a slew of BAFTAs and Grammys. We hear selections from his hypnotic, yet witty score for the Academy Award-winning film, American Beauty. These works are bookended by the surging wildness of pieces by Iannis Xenakis, avant-garde composer, mathematician and architect, and right-hand man to Le Corbusier. The icy atmospheres of Bartók's Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta found an unforgettable visual accompaniment when Stanley Kubrick used it to chilling effect in The Shining.

The Art of Fugue was Bach's last major project. Beethoven was deeply influenced by Bach, and was driven to explore the fugal form, in works such as the Fugue in D major, and most notably his Grosse Fuge, which The New Yorker music critic Alex Ross called "a musicological Holy Grail", and “the most radical work by the most formidable
composer in history”. In this tour de force directed by Richard Tognetti (5-21 May), the Grosse Fuge takes its original place as the finale of the String Quartet Op.130, a work that veers from torrential passion to aching beauty. Mozart’s last and most dramatic violin concerto, No.5 in A Major is also known as the ‘Turkish’, for the exotic elements of its finale.

“Talent borrows, genius steals”: That this quote has variously been attributed to Wilde, Picasso, Eliot, Stravinsky, Burroughs and Morrissey is entirely apt, as it reinforces the problematic concept of originality and highlights the magpie-like borrowings that pervade cultural production. Theft is directed by Richard Tognetti (3-4 June). A collaboration with musicians, lawyers, experts and thieves, Theft is an expansive program of music that traces the history of appropriation through the centuries: Beethoven lifting from Mozart and being borrowed by Strauss; Bach taking from Vivaldi, in turn taken by Berg; and 21st-century ‘sampling’ technologies enabling direct quotes from every recording ever made. Inspiration or plagiarism, homage or robbery? Theft examines music’s past and present to ask questions about the nature of creativity and ownership.

Firebrand Italian, Giovanni Sollima, cellist, conductor and composer, led the ACO on a national tour in 2014, and our musicians and audiences immediately fell in love with this spirited dextrous soloist, and the infectious exuberance and passion he brings to music and his playing. Sollima’s flair for showmanship can see him go walkabout on the stage as he plays, or ripping out a Jimi Hendrix encore, or performing in an igloo theatre at an elevation of over 3000 metres in the Italian Alps on a cello made of ice that a sculptor friend carved for him. He’s written music for choreographers and film directors, and he blends diverse genres in collaborations with artists ranging from DJ Scanner, American ‘punk poet laureate’ Patti Smith to Claudio Abbado, Philip Glass and Yo-Yo Ma. In 2016, Sollima returns to lead us on a wild joy-ride through 500 years of Italian music-making (25 June-10 July).

Pianist, Elisabeth Leonskaja, is the unrivalled doyenne of the Russian old school, a formidabley distinguished personality and one of the most celebrated pianists of our time. She has earned the moniker ‘lioness of the keyboard’, following in the footsteps of the great Russians of the Soviet era, such as Oistrakh, Richter, and Rostropovich, who never wavered in their focus on the essence of music despite working under a grim political regime. When Israeli musicians realised the extent of her persecution as a Jew - the Soviet authorities having denied her the chance to perform in the West - citizenship in their country was offered to her, but in 1978 she decided to make Austria her home. Even after four decades living away from the land of her birth, she is unequivocal in affirming that her roots are fixed in Russia’s incomparable musical culture. Leonskaja plays Mozart’s Piano Concerto No.9, Mozart’s first real masterpiece, and considered ‘one of the greatest wonders of the world’. Under the direction of Roman Simovic, concertmaster with the London Symphony Orchestra, the ACO plays Beethoven’s String Quartet No.12, the first of his late quartets (26 August-7 September).

The ACO is at its most intimate with two treasures from the giants of music, Mozart and Beethoven (23-26 September). Mozart’s String Quintet in G was a favourite of both Tchaikovsky and Einstein, and Beethoven’s Op.132 quartet is a key reason that spiritual metaphors are often used when discussing the composer’s later quartets, prompting TS Eliot to write of its remarkable capacity to evoke the transcendence of human suffering and bear the “fruit of reconciliation and relief.”

International media have described the 25-year-old Russian soprano Julia Lezhneva as among “...few young singers being widely celebrated so early in their careers.” (The Independent) and as possessing the voice of “...angelic beauty...” (The New York Times). Born into a family of geophysicists on Sakahin Island in the Russian far east, she shot to international prominence at the age of 17 as the Grand Prix winner of the 6th Elena Obraztsova International Competition for Opera Singers, and was immediately in demand in opera houses and concert halls around the world, scoring an exclusive recording deal with Decca. In 2010, she caused a sensation in London at the 2010 Classical Brit Awards, where she slayed Rossini’s Fra il padre at the Royal Albert Hall upon the invitation of her mentor Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, sharing the stage with superstars Angela Gheorghiu, Rolando Villazon and Bryn Terfel. Lezhneva’s voice is a perfect match for the “intricacy and passion of the Baroque masters”. With the ACO, she sings a sacred, forgotten gem from Porpora, and an antiphon from Handel. From Vivaldi’s first opera, Ottone in Villa, she sings an aria which displays the genius of his melodic gift. Handel’s Alessandro is “all lightness and charm, yet holds rich potential for vocal fireworks for a singer of Lezhneva’s abilities.” (8-15 October)

Richard Tognetti directs a program which highlights the melodic invention and dynamic flow of two of the Baroque’s finest composers, Bach and Vivaldi (16-19 October). It includes the world premiere of a new work commissioned from Elena Kats-Chernin, Miniatures for Strings, composed especially for the musicians and superb string instruments of the ACO. Richard Tognetti’s 1743 Guarneri del Gesù violin; Satu Vänskä’s 1728/1729 Stradivarius; the 1610 Giovanni
Paolo Maggini viola; and Maxime Bibeau’s c.1590 Gasparo da Salò double bass. Kats-Chernin says “I am terrifically excited about a very different kind of piece for the ACO’s exceptional group of musicians. My idea is to research the music that was written at the time these instruments were made, particularly which pieces were likely to have been played on these instruments, and I will see where this knowledge takes me in the process of creating the new piece.”

ARIA award-winning, Slava Grigoryan, born in Khazakstan to Russian-trained violinists of Armenian heritage, is considered the leading Australian classical guitarist of his generation. Grigoryan says, “Although my parents were trained classically, they played all styles of music. One day I’d be listening to Beethoven, and the next day it’d be Miles Davis, a lot of everything really.” His really big break came when the legendary guitarist Pepe Romero pulled out of a tour, and the then 18 year-old Grigoryan found himself sharing the stage with the kings of guitar-playing, Paco Peña and Leo Kottke. With the ACO, Grigoryan plays Rodrigo’s Concierto de Aranjuez (30 October-7 November), which he considers it to be “a fantastic jewel in the repertoire.” Also on the bill is Beethoven’s Symphony No.7, which the composer called “one of the happiest products of my poor talents.”

Italian violinist, and concertmaster of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Lorenza Borrani, directs the Beethoven Quartets Season Finale (18-28 November). Borrani is a founding member and key driver of Spira Mirabilis, an orchestra with a twist, and “possibly the world’s most democratic orchestra.” They never work with conductors; there are no soloists, and no management. The lead violin is not in charge, but is just one voice in the mix. Borrani says, “It is like a musical laboratory.” Others have said “…they are remaking the modern classical music concert with a remarkable spirit that crosses world-class performance standards with a rebellious, almost anarchistic, streak. More socialist collective than musical organisation…”

Borrani says, “Feeling close is the best way of approaching the enlarged chamber music program that the ACO and I have planned for our first date.” Borrani directs a program including Beethoven’s Opus 131 quartet, some Schubert minuets and trios, and Schnittke’s Sonata for violin and chamber orchestra.

ACO TAKES ON THE WORLD

Having notched up 550 concerts in 262 cities across 39 countries on 57 international tours, ACO players will add many more stamps to their passports in 2016, courtesy of two huge international tours.

After huge critical acclaim in 2012 and 2013 in Australia The Reef returns, and this time Richard Tognetti shares this genre-defying mix of music, film and the natural world with the USA 16-20 February.

Richard Tognetti and the Orchestra spend three weeks in Europe in 2016 during the Northern Hemisphere summer, with concerts planned in the UK and Europe.

FESTIVALS

In 2016, the ACO returns to two of its favourite destinations for its popular and intimate weekend-long festivals: the TarraWarra Museum of Art in the Yarra Valley for just 200 guests (19-20 March), and the Vasse Felix Festival in Western Australia’s picturesque Margaret River region (9-11 December).

ACO COLLECTIVE CROSSES AUSTRALIA

PRINCIPAL PARTNER WESFARMERS ARTS

ACO Collective is the ACO’s critically acclaimed 17-piece string ensemble which delivers the ACO’s regional touring and education programs Australia-wide. ACO Collective (formerly known as ACO2) combines musicians of the ACO with Australia’s most talented young professional musicians at the outset of their careers, creating a combined ensemble with a fresh, energetic performance style.

In 2016, internationally acclaimed Finnish violinist Pekka Kuusisto takes up the position of inaugural ACO Collective Artistic Director. As well as opening the ACO’s 2016 National Subscription season, an 11-concert national tour, ACO Collective will also undertake a tour of regional Western Australia (29 April-8 May), under the direction of Pekka Kuusisto, and a tour of regional New South Wales, under the direction of special guests, the celebrated string quartet, Meta4 (2-16 September).
ACO VIRTUAL

Imagine standing on stage during a live performance by the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Cutting-edge audio-visual installation ACO VIRTUAL takes you there.

Built using state-of-the-art technology, ACO VIRTUAL features projections of 13 musicians surrounding you on all sides, with the sound of each player coming from the direction of their projection. It’s like standing in the middle of the Orchestra during a concert.

Immerse yourself in performances of music by Bach, Grieg, Smalley and Piazzolla or take charge of the band via a controller inside the installation. You can choose to spotlight one musician or many; listen to just the violins; or just the bass - the possibilities are endless.


PREMIERES

Long-time associate, much awarded, and internationally renowned composer, Elena Kats-Chernin, has been commissioned by the ACO to compose Miniatures for Strings, written especially for the musicians and superb string instruments of the ACO: Richard Tognetti’s 1743 Guarneri del Gesù violin; Satu Vänskä’s 1728/1729 Stradivarius; the 1610 Giovanni Paolo Maggini viola; and Maxime Bibeau’s c.1590; and the Gasparo da Salò double bass.

The ACO has commissioned Timothy Constable, award-winning percussionist, electronica producer, singer, performer, and Artistic Director of Synergy Percussion, to create a new work written especially for the combined forces of the ACO and Synergy in Cinemusica.

Author and internationally acclaimed composer, Gordon Kerry’s dream thy sails, was commissioned by ACO supporters, Andrew and Fiona Johnson, to mark the 90th birthday of Andrew’s father.

ACO EDUCATION

Our diverse programs provide students and young musicians with the skills and inspiration to continue their lifelong musical journey. We work with children and young people all over Australia, at every stage of their musical development, with the same commitment and energy that we bring to the concert platform. With a broad range of concerts, workshops, open rehearsal and groundbreaking online and virtual reality education events throughout the year, we offer unique educational experiences for young Australians.

Our Education Program is organised according to the development of the student: Schools’ Program for Primary and Secondary students, Emerging Artists Program for students at tertiary level and above, and ACO Collective for selected graduates of the Emerging Artists’ Program. In addition, we offer programs for students with disability, special projects in some regions, and a diverse range of hands-on and online resources for students and teachers alike.
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NATIONAL CONCERT SEASON

BEETHOVEN & THE 21ST CENTURY
9–19 February
Tour presented by Wesfarmers Arts

NICO MUHLY (arr. strings) Part I from Drones & Violin
ERKKI-SVEN TÜÜR Action–Passion–Illusion
TIPPETT A Lament from Variations on an Elizabethan Theme
BRYCE DESSNER (arr. strings) Tenebre
SIBELIUS Rakastava
BEETHOVEN (arr. strings) String Quartet in F minor, Op.95 ‘Serioso’

Pekka Kuusisto Director & Violin
ACO Collective (formerly ACO2)

Finnish violinist, Pekka Kuusisto, kicks off the ACO’s 2016 national season in his new role as Artistic Director of ACO Collective (formerly known as ACO2).

When Kuusisto first toured with us in 2001, we fell in love with this musical maverick’s exuberant style of music-making, bristling with invention and energy, taking “every piece he performs, however familiar, back to first principles, stripping any vestige of interpretative tradition and playing it as though he were hearing it for the first time.”

Kuusisto’s sense of musical adventure and highly individualistic style sees him equally adept at playing folk, electronic, jazz, rock, and improvising, alongside classical music. His ability to direct his musicianship so unswervingly in a multiplicity of directions sets him apart from many of his contemporaries. “It’s more that he’s a very rare example of a musician who can focus his puckish intensity in several different directions without diluting what he does in any of them.” This most versatile of artists directs his own music festival, is in demand internationally as a soloist and director, and is evangelistic in his promotion of new music.

With a pedigree like this, Kuusisto is the perfect catalyst to ignite the imaginations of the fiery young guns of ACO Collective in their spirited touring adventures across the country. ACO Collective first appeared in an ACO main-stage season in 2013 under the direction of ACO’s Artistic Director, Richard Tognetti, with The Australian saying “[it was]...one of the year’s must-hear concerts.”

Richard Tognetti says, “I first met and heard Pekka shortly after his historic win at the International Jean Sibelius Violin Competition in 1995. He was the first Finn to win the competition which is one of the top three in the world. Pekka was invited to direct the ACO and a relationship was forged, resulting in his being a part of the collective consciousness of the ACO. It’s in no small part due to Pekka that we have Timo-Veikko Valve as our beloved Principal Cello, and a profound connection with his musical, mythical homeland. Pekka has a calling to turn things on their head. A musical insight that is as disturbing as it is compelling. He’s a musician for the new world and, therefore, his appointment to the newly branded ACO Collective couldn’t be bettered. I look forward to working with Pekka and eagerly anticipate how he will evolve new forms from ancient traditions. This is a big appointment for the ACO, and for the future of music in Australia, and we confidently entrust Pekka with these responsibilities.”

Kuusisto leads ACO Collective in our season-opener in 2016 in a program that interweaves contemporary works by living composers along with pieces by Tippett, fellow countryman Sibelius, and Beethoven.

Kuusisto says, “The ACO’s 2016 season is themed around Beethoven’s late string quartets, and so this formed the basis of the programme. After much discussion, Opus. 95 was chosen as the closing work of the concert. I was then given the extremely delicate task of exploring repertoire which would both complement and introduce this highly experimental work.”
“Op.95 has a particularly explosive opening statement, so we needed something very intimate and gentle to precede it, in order not to steal Beethoven’s thunder. Rakastava by Sibelius is the perfect thing. Rakastava is a piece that has a feel of very distinct lighting to it. At the risk of sounding like a tourist advert for my part of the planet, I’d say that it’s very much about dusk in a Fennoscandian forest, around mid-June. Everything in Rakastava feels and smells like nature at night, so we needed another kind of light before it. Cue Tenebre by Bryce Dessner. It’s originally written as a gift for the lighting designer of the Kronos Quartet, and its shadows are very architectural. Tenebre is inspired by ceremonial vocal music, which ties it nicely to Rakastava as well, since the Sibelius work started its life as a suite for male choir, with lyrics from Finnish traditional poetry. Maybe we’ll sing a bit in this concert as well.”

“The massive nod that Tenebre gives to earlier music is mirrored from Tippett’s Lament, which contains a direct quote from Ah, Belinda by Henry Purcell. Sir Michael Tippett’s amazing handling of a string orchestra has certainly been an inspiration to Bryce Dessner and Erkki-Sven Tüür. Tüür’s work also has some delicious Purcellian clashings, especially in the middle movement, and the warm and fuzzy activities in the low register constantly remind me of Vaughan Williams and Britten. The outer movements give us a healthy reminder to listen to Estonian prog rock, as well as echoing some moments from Britten’s Les Illuminations, which is convenient, since Britten is one of the heroes of Nico Muhly.”

“Nico’s beautiful collection of violin gestures is originally the first movement of a suite for violin and piano, and includes an element of contained improvisation, which is a lovely way to begin a concert. Both Nico and Bryce are dear friends of mine, and I’m ecstatic to get to bring their music to ACO Collective.”

At the end of Beethoven’s ‘middle period’, he used his Op.95 Serioso quartet as a springboard into the completely new language that would exemplify his final quartets. Kuusisto says “In the case of Op.95, we are faced with a dilemma - Beethoven himself wrote that the work should not be performed to the general public, but only for a small circle of connoisseurs. I’m excited about the challenge and will dive into it trusting that Beethoven would have changed his mind upon hearing ACO Collective.”
CINEMUSICA
2-12 April
Tour presented by Virgin Australia

XENAKIS Voile
THOMAS NEWMAN American Beauty (selections)
HERRMANN Psycho: A Suite for Strings
XENAKIS Psappha
TIMOTHY CONSTABLE New work for strings and percussion (World Premiere)
BARTÓK Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Timothy Constable Artistic Director, Synergy Percussion
Synergy Percussion

The ACO last collaborated with Timothy Constable on Timeline, a visual and sonic journey through the history of music, which was a sell-out hit in 2014. This time we’re bringing back this award-winning percussionist, composer, electronica producer and singer, not only as a performer, but as Artistic Director of Synergy Percussion, and as the creator of a new work especially written for the combined forces of the ACO and Synergy.

Cinemusica marks the first collaboration between Synergy, an Australian percussion sonic identity, and the ACO, showcasing the thrilling possibilities of strings and percussion, and a shared love of film.

“I am really looking forward to this project”, says Constable. “It’s an absolute kaleidoscope of wonderful sounds. Richard and I tabled some of our mutual favourite composers, and this beautiful filmic musical journey started to coalesce. From intimate, fragile, crystalline stories by Thomas Newman, to epic blockbuster narratives of Xenakis, and Bartók’s staggering masterwork of brilliant technique and emotive force, the possibilities with this combination are just endless. It will be such a joy to share the stage with the brilliant, hugely creative ACO.”

Bernard Herrmann worked extensively with cinema’s supreme master of suspense, Alfred Hitchcock, on films that gave shape to the genre of the psychological thriller. Outstanding film collaborations include The Man Who Knew Too Much, Vertigo and North by Northwest. But perhaps his most famous of all was Psycho. The ACO performs Herrmann’s Suite for Strings from Psycho, viscerally familiar and indelibly conjuring the Hitchcock horror classic. Of Herrmann’s contribution to the art-form, others have said “Hermann was the musical voice for Hitchcock’s imagination.”

Thomas Newman is descended from Hollywood film music royalty. He has been nominated for a dozen Academy Awards and several Golden Globes, and has won a slew of BAFTAs and Grammys. For TV, he’s composed for The Newsroom, Boston Public and Six Feet Under, and his music has been used at both summer and winter Olympic Games. Newman has created soundtracks for more than 50 films, and rose to fame for his scoring of Desperately Seeking Susan, which starred Madonna. We hear selections from his hypnotic, yet witty score for the Academy Award-winning film, American Beauty, a vibrant and cynically humorous character film about American suburbia with a script to die for, eliciting superb acting from stars Kevin Spacey and Annette Bening. The ACO and Synergy combine to bring selections from the score to the stage.

The Herrmann and Newman works are bookended by the surging wildness of two works by Iannis Xenakis. Voile for strings and Psappha for percussion. Romanian-born, Greek by descent, and ultimately French composer, Xenakis was a polymath. As well as one of the most important post-war avante-garde composers, he was a mathematician and architect, and for more than a dozen years right-hand man to architect, Le Corbusier.

Composing in the same decade that stereo sound was invented, Bartók places the orchestra on stage in two symmetrical halves in Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta. making the piece fascinating to watch and hear. The icy atmospherics of the Bartók found an unforgettable visual accompaniment when Stanley Kubrick used it to chilling effect in The Shining. It was also used in a couple of Dr Who episodes in 1968, and cult classic, Being John Malkovich.
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BEETHOVEN & MOZART V
5-21 May
Tour presented by Commonwealth Bank

BEETHOVEN (arr. strings) Fugue in D major, Op.137
BACH Contrapunctus 1–4 from The Art of Fugue
MOZART Violin Concerto No.5 in A major ‘Turkish’
BEETHOVEN (arr. strings) String Quartet in B-flat major, Op.130
BEETHOVEN (arr. strings) Grosse Fuge, Op.133

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin

The Art of Fugue was Bach’s last major project and this definitive exploration of the possibilities of counterpoint is perhaps his most ambitious undertaking, transcending mere theory to achieve rapturous heights.

Beethoven was deeply influenced by Bach, studying his scores in the library of the Archduke Rudolph. He was driven to explore the fugal form, in works such as the Fugue in D major – his only late work completed for string quintet – and notably his Grosse Fuge, which The New Yorker music critic Alex Ross called “a musicological Holy Grail”, and “the most radical work by the most formidable composer in history”.

In this tour de force directed by Richard Tognetti, the Grosse Fuge takes its original place as the finale of the String Quartet Op.130, a work that veers from torrential passion to aching beauty.

Mozart’s last and most dramatic violin concerto, No.5 in A Major is also known as the ‘Turkish’, for the exotic elements of its finale. It is dramatic yet playful, with an Adagio that is rightly considered one of the most moving passages Mozart ever composed.
THEFT
3-4 June

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Ignatius Jones Director
Kim Moyes DJ

Presented in partnership with Vivid LIVE, part of Vivid Sydney, Festival of Light, Music and Ideas

“Talent borrows, genius steals”. That this quote has variously been attributed to Wilde, Picasso, Eliot, Stravinsky, Burroughs and Morrissey is entirely apt, as it reinforces the problematic concept of originality and highlights the magpie-like borrowings that pervade cultural production.

Devised in the artistic laboratory of Festival Maribor, Theft is directed by Richard Tognetti. A collaboration with musicians, lawyers, experts and thieves, Theft is in an expansive program of incredible music that traces the history of appropriation through the centuries: Beethoven lifting from Mozart and being borrowed by Strauss; Bach taking from Vivaldi, in turn taken by Berg; and 21st-century ‘sampling’ technologies enabling direct quotes from every recording ever made.

Inspiration or plagiarism, homage or robbery? Theft examines music’s past and present to ask questions about the nature of creativity and ownership, taking the audience on a highly entertaining exploration of this secret history.

“The lawsuit between Marvin Gaye’s estate and Pharrell Williams is still playing out over basic questions of genre and musical inspiration. This project could be a timely defence of appropriation and influence in music-making. When comparing examples across 1000+ years of classical/art music and popular music, there is definitely the case to be made that originality relies on theft.”

Richard Tognetti Artistic Director & Violin
SEQUENZA ITALIANA
25 June - 10 July
Tour presented by Johnson Winter & Slattery

MONTEVERDI (arr. strings) Lamento della ninfa
BERIO Sequenzas for Violin, Viola and Double Bass
LEO Cello Concerto No.3 in D minor
PAGANINI Introduction and Variations on ‘Dal tuo stellate soglio’ from Rossini’s Moses in Egypt
ROSSINI (arr. Eliodoro Sollima) ‘Une larme’ Theme and Variations for Cello and Strings
SCELSI C’est bien la nuit from Nuits
GIOVANNI SOLLIMA Fecit Neap 17… for Cello, Strings and Continuo

Giovanni Sollima Director & Cello
Satu Vänskä Leader & Violin
Maxime Bibeau Double bass

ACO Artistic Director Richard Tognetti met Giovanni Sollima at the Festival Maribor in Slovenia in 2011, and it was immediately clear the pair were kindred spirits. This peripatetic Italian cellist, conductor and composer was invited to lead the ACO on a national tour in 2014, and our musicians and audiences immediately fell in love with this spirited dextrous soloist and the infectious exuberance and passion he brings to music and his playing. In 2016, Sollima returns to lead us on a wild joy-ride through 500 years of Italian music-making.

Sollima’s flair for showmanship can see him go walkabout on the stage as he plays, a leftover from days of practice “when he’d fancy a cup of coffee or had to answer the doorbell and didn’t want to stop playing”, or ripping out a Jimi Hendrix encore, or performing in an igloo theatre at an elevation of over 3,000 metres in the Italian Alps on a cello made of ice that a sculptor friend carved for him. Mesmerised by the cello’s “magical sound”, Sollima keeps it in a deep-freeze, and has plans to record Bach on it.

Sollima has a voracious musical appetite and thrives on a wide-ranging and ever-changing diet: he composes for electric and acoustic instruments, and has written music for film directors and choreographers including Peter Greenaway, Wim Wenders and Karole Armitage. His influences are take in jazz and rock, as well as ethnic traditions, drawing upon European and especially Mediterranean folk, Middle Eastern music, electronica, and more to enliven his art. He blends diverse genres in collaborations with artists ranging from DJ Scanner and American ‘punk poet laureate’ and artist Patti Smith to Claudio Abbado, Philip Glass and Yo-Yo Ma, working with the latter on his Silk Road Project. Ma has said of his energetic collaborator: “He makes me look like a pussycat!”

In 2013, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra commissioned Sollima to write a double cello concerto. Playing alongside his colleague Yo Yo Ma, The Chicago Tribune said “Sollima may well go down in history as the only composer of consequence after Vivaldi to pen a double concerto”, and that the work was a “knockout showpiece”.

Sollima is the instigator and prime mover behind the annual 100 Cellos project which began at the Teatro Valle Occupato in Rome in 2011. Cellists from age five to 80, from all over the world and different disciplines descended on Rome – from rock cellists to Baroque cellists – to play 72 hours of music. 100 cellos met at the Teatro Regio in Turin 2014 to mark the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, playing ‘Berlin 1989 – The Sound of Falling Walls’, as well as Bach and other German Baroque composers, an arrangement of music from Pink Floyd’s The Wall, readings, and showing a film of Rostropovich’s impromptu performance at the fall of The Wall. Sollima used Facebook to recruit cellists who were born on 9 November 1989 to take part.

Sollima says “I am happy not only to return to Australia, but also to be with such a fantastic ensemble with great musicians who are also beautiful people. I have carried memories of them in my heart since my wonderful experience in 2014. I often have the role of composer, conductor, and soloist. But my way of conducting is not formal; it hearkens back to an older approach, perhaps from the Baroque era before the modern concept of conductor emerged. The program that the ACO and I are playing is of Italian composers, and includes influences from Naples. I like to think
of a program as a narrative, a tale, with connections, contrasts, stories, mysteries, secrets, love, and more. In the 18th century, the ‘cradle’ of the cello was Bologna, and later Naples which had an incredible number of musicians and cello virtuosi. Their music was like ‘singing stories’ – operatic or theatrical – although written for cello. They had temperament, and at the same time, elegance and subtle irony. With all this, I like to experiment, and I’m looking forward to coming back to Australia to ‘sing’, as ‘singing’ is what the cello has in its DNA.

Rossini’s Une larme (A tear) was part of a series of works which he dubbed Péchés de Vieillesse (Sins of My Old Age) which conveys the sadness of the theme, but makes a brilliant showcase for the cellist. Berio’s Sequenzas are “compositional love-letters from Berio to the repertoires and possibilities for each instrument”; with many of them setting standards for performance prowess and stamina, and this program’s ‘collage’ enables Satu Vänskä and Maxime Bibeau to take virtuosic flight. Vänskä also features in a precision-demanding piece by Paganini, and Bibeau in Scelsi’s incantatory double bass solo.

Though Sicilian himself, Sollima’s love of Neapolitan style comes to the fore in fellow cellist and composer Leonardo Leo’s third Cello Concerto, a cutting-edge work of its time, and also in his own work, Fecit Neap 17. Very much of today, it also registers Neapolitan heritage with its title mirroring the common inscription found on manuscripts of the 18th century.
Russian pianist, Elisabeth Leonskaja, is the unrivalled doyenne of the Russian old school, a formidably distinguished personality and one of the most celebrated pianists of our time. She has earned the moniker ‘lioness of the keyboard’, her every move signifying vast experience, and has remained true to herself and to her music. In doing so, she is following in the footsteps of the great Russians of the Soviet era, such as Oistrakh, Richter, Rostropovich and Gilels, who never wavered in their focus on the essence of music despite working under a grim political regime.

Leonskaja brings more experience to the stage than almost any other living pianist. Born in Tbilisi, Georgia, to a Russian family, she was a child prodigy and gave her first concerts at age 11. Her exceptional talent soon brought her to study at the Moscow Conservatory where she forged an enduring friendship and musical partnership with the late great and legendary Sviatoslav Richter. Her performances of core repertoire link with a pianism of the past in which her musical gravitas eclipses anything as potentially pedestrian as showy technique or eccentric presentation. When Israeli musicians realised the extent of her persecution as a Jew - the Soviet authorities having denied her the chance to perform in the West - the Soviet authorities having denied her the chance to perform in the West - citizenship in their country was offered to her, but in 1978 she decided to make Austria her home. That said, even after four decades living away from the land of her birth, she is unequivocal in affirming that her roots are fixed in Russia’s incomparable musical culture.

“If you speak Russian, if you are steeped in Russian culture, all your spirit, all your heart is different, and you hear differently. My first concert in the West was in Vienna, and all the reviews said things like “her playing of Mozart or Beethoven is so Russian,” said Leonskaja.

Her stellar performance at the Salzburg Festival in 1979 heralded her rapid ascent as a leading concert pianist in the West. Her adopted homeland honoured her artistry, and she was awarded the Austrian Cross of Honor, First Class, for her services to the cultural life of the nation - the highest award of its kind in the land. Today Leonskaja has matured into an exceptional pianist, one who has appeared as a soloist with virtually all the leading orchestras in the world, and who is above emphasizing her virtuosity, and who enjoys the warmest of receptions wherever she appears. With the ACO, Leonskaja plays Mozart’s Piano Concerto No.9, written when he was just 21. It is considered Mozart’s first real masterpiece, a musical coming of age. Scholars such as Charles Rosen have called it “perhaps the first unequivocal masterpiece of the classical style.” Alfred Brendel considered it “one of the greatest wonders of the world.” For its day, it was a work of remarkable ambition, originality and wit, and it was not only “the first of Mozart’s mature piano concertos, but the maturing of the form itself – one that the composer would dominate until the appearance of Beethoven.”

Under the direction of Roman Simovic, concertmaster with the London Symphony Orchestra, the ACO plays Beethoven’s String Quartet No.12, the first of his late quartets which heralded for him a new phase of intimacy and sophistication. It appears alongside Richard Strauss’ Sextet from Capriccio, a piece of pure chamber music for strings.
INTIMATE BEETHOVEN
23-26 September

MOZART String Quintet in G minor
BEETHOVEN String Quartet in A minor, Op.132

Helena Rathbone Violin
Liisa Pallandi Violin
Alexandru-Mihai Bota Viola
Nicole Divall Viola
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello

Experience the ACO at its most intimate with two haunting treasures from the giants of music, Mozart and Beethoven, that journey from meditation to elation.

A particular favourite of both Tchaikovsky and Einstein, Mozart's String Quintet in G minor is filled with extraordinary moments and dramatic emotions, moving from foreboding to sorrow, and from tenderness to wistful resignation.

Beethoven's Op.132 quartet is a key reason that spiritual metaphors are often used when discussing the composer's later quartets. It brims with profundity and intensity, prompting TS Eliot to write of its remarkable capacity to evoke the transcendence of human suffering and bear the “fruit of reconciliation and relief.”
MEDIA RELEASE
EMBARGOED until 1am
Tuesday 18 August 2015

JULIA LEZHNeva - BAROQUE BRILLIANCE
8-18 October
Tour presented by BNP Paribas

PORPORA In caelo stelle clare, motet for soprano and strings
BACH Orchestral Suite No.1 in C major
HANDEL Salve Regina
HANDEL Alessandro (selections)
Alla sua gabbia d’oro
Solitudine amate in cui sfogarmi vive una flamma infelice
Aure, fonti, ombre gradite
Brilla nell’alma
VIVALDI Leggi almeno, tiranna infedele from Ottone in Villa
HANDEL Sonata a 5 in B-flat major

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Julia Lezhneva Soprano

International media have described the 25-year old-Russian soprano Julia Lezhneva as among “…few young singers being widely celebrated so early in their careers.” (The Independent) and as possessing the voice of “…angelic beauty…” (The New York Times), “…pure tone…” (Die Welt) and “…flawless technique…” (The Guardian). Alex Ross in the New Yorker commented: “She sent me scurrying to the internet to find out more... Lezhneva has extraordinary potential as a Baroque and bel canto singer,” while Norman Lebrecht declared Lezhneva as “…heading for the stratosphere.”

She was born into a family of geophysicists on Sakahin Island in the Russian far east, and her career might well have taken quite a different turn, were it not for her family. They noticed her talent when she started playing the piano at the age of five. Moving to Moscow to further her studies, this wunderkind completed an honours degree in voice and piano by the age of 15, and is an alumni of many other prestigious music institutes.

Lezhneva has scooped the pools in the world of international singing competitions. She shot to international prominence at the age of 17 as the Grand Prix winner of the 6th Elena Obraztsova International Competition for Opera Singers. And from there, she was immediately in demand in opera houses and concert halls around the world, and scored an exclusive recording deal with Decca. In 2010, she caused a sensation in London at the 2010 Classical Brit Awards, where she slayed Rossini’s Fra il padre at the Royal Albert Hall upon the invitation of her mentor Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, sharing the stage with superstars Angela Gheorghiu, Rolando Villazon and Bryn Terfel. Te Kanawa said “From time to time a really outstanding talent appears and I believe that Julia Lezhneva is just that. The brilliance of her voice and technique are extremely impressive.” The trajectory for the meteoric rise of this “indecently talented” musician was set.

Lezhneva says “I treasure the fact that if we are born with talent, we shouldn’t keep it to ourselves. It’s something you need to give. Of course, not to overdo it, in order not to lose it. Because it’s a gift and you will not get it back if you lose it. It’s for people. Otherwise why would we work hard for so many years? For ourselves? That wouldn’t be fair! We have to give. With the hope that people find what they are looking for and afterwards, leave with a peaceful soul.”

Lezhneva’s voice is a perfect match for the ‘intricacy and passion of the Baroque masters’. With the ACO, she sings a sacred, forgotten gem from Porpora, and an antiphon from Handel. From Vivaldi’s first opera, Ottone in Villa, she sings an aria which displays the genius of his melodic gift. Handel’s Alessandro is “all lightness and charm, yet holds rich potential for vocal fireworks for a singer of Lezhneva’s abilities.”
RICHARD TOGNETTI & ACO SOLOISTS - GUT STRINGS
16-19 October
Tour presented by BNP Paribas

BACH Orchestral Suite No.1 in C major
VIVALDI Concerto for two violins and cello in D minor
ELENA KATS-CHERNIN Miniatures for Strings (World Premiere)
VIVALDI Concerto for four violins and cello in D major, RV549
BACH Orchestral Suite No.2 in B minor

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Satu Vänskä Violin
Helena Rathbone Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello
Maxime Bibeau Double bass
Genevieve Lacey Recorder

Richard Tognetti directs a program which highlights the melodic invention and dynamic flow of two of the Baroque’s finest composers, Bach and Vivaldi (16-19 October). It includes the world premiere of a new work commissioned from Elena Kats-Chernin, Miniatures for Strings, composed especially for the musicians and superb string instruments of the ACO: Richard Tognetti’s 1743 Guarneri del Gesù violin; Satu Vänskä’s 1728/1729 Stradivarius; the 1610 Giovanni Paolo Maggini viola; and Maxime Bibeau’s c.1590 Gasparo da Salò double bass. Kats-Chernin says “I am terrifically excited about a very different kind of piece for the ACO’s exceptional group of musicians. My idea is to research the music that was written at the time these instruments were made, particularly which pieces were likely to have been played on these instruments, and I will see where this knowledge takes me in the process of creating the new piece.”
SLAVA, RODRIGO & BEETHOVEN VII
30 October - 7 November
Tour presented by Total

GORDON KERRY
So dream thy sails, (World Premiere)
RAVEL
Le tombeau de Couperin,
RODRIGO
Concierto de Aranjuez
BEETHOVEN
Symphony No.7

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Slava Grigoryan Guitar
Helena Rathbone Violin

1 Melbourne only
2 Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Perth and Sydney

“I’m immensely excited about working with the ACO again. It’s been many years since I toured with them - the last
time was during the Sydney Olympic games! They continue to be one of the world’s great chamber orchestras and
are always an inspiration to collaborate with,” says Slava Grigoryan

ARIA award-winning Grigoryan is considered the leading Australian classical guitarist of his generation. Of Armenian
heritage, born in Khazakstan, his Russian-trained violinist parents emigrated to Australia when Slava was five years
old.

“Both of my parents were musicians, and although they studied as violinists classically, they played all styles of music,
and branched out into fusion. They continued playing in orchestras, but dad was a professional jazz drummer for 20
years, so I didn’t follow just one path of music, I had all these different influences. One day I’d be listening to Beethoven
symphonies, and the next day it’d be Chick Corea and Return to Forever or Miles Davis, all the avant-garde stuff, Jimi
Hendrix, a lot of rock, a lot of everything really. So I’ve been influenced by so many different people, obviously all the
great classical guitarists - Segovia, John Williams and Julian Bream. I’m a big fan of Paco de Lucia, in fact if for some
reason I ever had to single one of the guitarists out of everyone, in any style, I’d probably have to say he’s my guy.”

“When I was seven, my father gave me a guitar and started to teach me. I can remember when I was younger
than that always being surrounded by music, because they were always practising and playing; there were always
musicians in the house. I think the first big concert I was taken to when I was about nine was Paco Peña. I remember
that like yesterday. From then on I had a huge interest in improvising. And I think over the next few years, I was just
coming to grips with the technical side of playing, and then I started playing with Australian orchestras.”

As a major prize-winner at the Tokyo International Classical Guitar Competition when he was 15, interest in Grigoryan
sky-rocketed, and he was signed by the Sony Classical Label. His really big break came when the legendary guitarist
Pepe Romero pulled out of a tour, and the then 18 year-old Grigoryan found himself sharing the stage with the kings
of guitar-playing, Paco Peña and Leo Kottke, an opportunity from which he has never looked back. “To me it stands
out as a really important event in my life, because that was the first time I was playing alongside these guys, on big
tours, in big halls. And so for me that was my first taste of big gigs and that sort of exposure. It was incredible. It’s
always going to be a big memory for me.”

A dyed-in-the-wool classicist, who's created his own aural universe says while “classical music is still my biggest love,
I do a lot of other things.” Others have said “He may have a classical grounding as his palette, but his brushstrokes
take in many colours, such as South American styles, jazz, the European canon and the sheen and lustre of Australian
compositions.”

Grigoryan has appeared as soloist at the crème of international festivals, with the world’s leading orchestras, string
quartets and chamber ensembles; he’s done solo recordings, recorded with his guitarist brother, Leonard, and he’s
toured and put down tracks with the musical luminaries, Wolfgang Muthspiel and Ralph Towner.

Grigoryan has also appeared at many of the most prestigious international festivals. He is also the Artistic Director of
the Adelaide International Guitar Festival which celebrates the guitar in all of its forms. He’s developed a partnership
with Spain’s Cordoba Guitar Festival and launched the Adelaide International Guitar Orchestra.
With the ACO, Grigoryan plays Rodrigo’s Concierto de Aranjuez. He considers it to be “a fantastic jewel in the repertoire, an exceptionally important piece for all guitarists, without doubt the most popular work for guitar and orchestra. I've had a long history with this wonderful work and after almost twenty years since my last performance of this with the ACO, I can’t wait to explore it with them again.”

Joaquín Rodrigo was born in Sagunto on St Cecilia’s day, the patron saint of music. At the age of 3, after contracting diphtheria, Rodrigo lost his sight almost completely. As he himself was later to affirm, this event undoubtedly led him to pursue a life in music. From the outset of his career, Rodrigo wrote all his works in braille, dictating them subsequently to a copyist.

Rodrigo’s specific inspiration for the Concierto de Aranjuez came from the Palacio Real de Aranjuez, the palace and gardens built by Philip II in the 16th century, and rebuilt two centuries later by Ferdinand VI. Rodrigo was not able to perceive the visual beauty of the gardens, but instead attempted to transport the listener to another place and time depicting the sounds of nature “the fragrance of magnolias, the singing of birds and the gushing of fountains.” Immediately, it became internationally popular, a feat that no other guitar concerto had ever achieved, and its popularity has remained unsurpassed to this day, thanks in no small measure to the extraordinary beauty of its central Adagio, which has been arranged for everything from mouth organ to brass band.

Also on the bill is Beethoven’s Symphony No.7, written to benefit soldiers wounded in the battle of Hanau. Beethoven himself called it “one of the happiest products of my poor talents.” What he had written, in fact, was something that was immediately recognised as both artistically remarkable and hugely popular.

Ravel’s Le tombeau de Couperin, which began as an homage to a golden era of French music - the age of François Couperin and the 18th century in general - became a personal memorial to colleagues and friends killed during The Great War; he dedicated a movement to each of his fallen comrades.

The program opens with a commission from Australian composer, Gordon Kerry, one of three works that the ACO will premiere in 2016.
BEETHOVEN FINALE
18-28 November
Tour presented by Maserati

SCHNITTKESonata for violin and chamber orchestra
SCHUBERT5 Minuets and 6 Trios, D.89
BEETHOVEN(arr. strings) String Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op.131

Lorenza Borrani Director & Violin

“When I received the invitation to play with the ACO, I didn’t focus so much on where I was going to be, but rather with whom I’d be working. The ACO is an orchestra I have always followed and admired over the years. They have a way of working and thinking that is close to several groups I love to play with here in Europe. I feel like the ACO and I are really close cousins,” says Italian violinist, Lorenza Barrani, coming to Australia to direct the ACO for the Beethoven Quartets Season Finale.

When Borrani is not at her day job as concertmaster of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, she is in demand as a teacher, leader and soloist with a host of other high-profile orchestras. Most remarkably, she is a founding member and key driver of Spira Mirabilis, “possibly the world’s most democratic orchestra.”

Spira is an orchestra with a twist. They never work with conductors; there are no soloists, and no management. The lead violin is not in charge, but is just one voice in the mix. No-one relies on someone else to take the lead; they all do it, and there are no passengers. Borrani says “We wanted to find time and space to continue to study; to meet, to learn and to rehearse together; and then to share music with an audience. But performing is not the point of Spira. It is founded on the idea of self-improvement. Each musician has to convince the group why their vision is right; the players can only win their case through rigorous argument.” Yet, as well as all these individual ideas, there’s a collective energy at work. Whatever their personal feelings, the players arrive at a scintillating result because of the closeness of their relationships. As Borrani says, “It is more like a musical laboratory.” Others have said “…they are remaking the modern classical music concert with a remarkable spirit that crosses world-class performance standards with a rebellious, almost anarchistic, streak. More socialist collective than musical organisation…”

Borrani says, ‘Feeling close is the best way of approaching the enlarged chamber music program that the ACO and I have planned for our ‘first date’. All of the composers in this program - Schnittke, Schubert, Beethoven - have been a big part of my life from very early days.” Borrani studied at Scuola di Musica di Fiesole, a music school founded by Piero Farulli, the violist of Quartetto Italiano. This was one of the most important string quartets of the 20th century. It stayed together, studying and playing even during the Second World War. Its mission, its raison d’être was to produce the highest possible standard of string quartet performance. Borrani says “I grew up with this ethos and started playing in string quartets when I was nine years old - with Farulli reminding me, daily, how lucky I should feel, and that there is nothing more important than Schubert and Beethoven string quartets.”

Borrani says “Working on Beethoven Opus 131 as a bigger string ensemble could feel, from my perspective, like a betrayal against the pure string quartet original version. But what I have learned over the years is that nothing is to be avoided. From different perspectives you can discover new viewpoints, find more depth in the score, and by working, in a humble way, with a larger group of people on this towering masterpiece, it can only result in something that enriches all of us. I expect to learn a lot from the piece, from the process of rehearsing and playing with a bigger group of extremely committed musicians at the ACO.” Borrani’s desire is to be able to communicate with the audience. She wants to create a ‘magical moment’ with the listener who, through their listening, becomes almost a player and will now find the right door through which to enter Beethoven.

Schubert’s Minuets and Trios are also originally written for string quartet. There is something simple and poetical in the Schubert. Some people still need to know and some even need to learn to love these pieces. And when it happens, they will be luckier people, as I felt when I discovered them for the first time.
And there will be also a Sonata from Schnittke, a composer Borrani adored during her teenage years, and to whom she got even closer when she had the opportunity to play with his wife, Irina Schnittke, and with cellist, writer, academic and conductor, Alexander Ivaskin. Borrani says, “We did a kind of ‘Schnittkiade’ with the Sonata, Piano Trio, Piano Quartet and Piano Quintet. The amazing surprise was to see how the audience loved it. It made us realise how much Schnittke really is a composer of our time. It’s interesting not only how quite different the orchestral version of the Sonata is, but how the feeling of a sonata can remain, even with an orchestra playing the piano part.”

“It is my hope our audiences will come out of the concerts without the memory of an orchestra, but rather with the feeling of having taken part to a chamber music night with wonderful pieces of music and poetry.”
RICHARD TOGNETTI ACO SOLOISTS
VIVALDI & BACH
7 December

BACH  
Violin Concerto in E major
VIVALDI  
Concerto for two violins and cello in D minor, RV565
ELENA KATS-CHERNIN  
Miniatures for Strings
VIVALDI  
Concerto for four violins and cello in D major, RV549
BACH  
Orchestral Suite No.2 in B minor

Richard Tognetti  
Director & Violin
Satu Vänskä  
Violin
Helena Rathborne  
Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve  
Cello
Maxime Bibeau  
Double bass
Genevieve Lacey  
Recorder

Melbourne audiences will celebrate the ACO’s 2016 season finale with two Baroque greats and a distinctive Australian composer, in one of the finest acoustic spaces in the southern hemisphere: Melbourne Recital Centre.

Directed by Richard Tognetti, this enchanting program includes two ever-popular and immediately appealing works by Bach, while two concertos from Vivaldi will invite the ACO’s violins and cello to take energetic flight.

It includes the world premiere of a new work commissioned from Elena Kats-Chernin, Miniatures for Strings, composed especially for the musicians and superb string instruments of the ACO: Richard Tognetti’s 1743 Guarneri del Gesù violin; Satu Vänskä’s 1728/1729 Stradivarius; the 1610 Giovanni Paolo Maggini viola; and Maxime Bibeau’s c.1590 Gasparo da Salò double bass. Kats-Chernin says “I am terrifically excited about a very different kind of piece for the ACO’s exceptional group of musicians. My idea is to research the music that was written at the time these instruments were made, particularly which pieces were likely to have been played on these instruments, and I will see where this knowledge takes me in the process of creating the new piece.”
ACO TAKES ON THE WORLD

USA TOUR, THE REEF
16-20 February

After huge critical acclaim in 2012 and 2013 in Australia The Reef returns, and this time Richard Tognetti shares this genre-defying mix of music, film and the natural world with the USA.

Richard Tognetti Artistic Director & Violin
Jon Frank Photographic Images & Footage
Mick Sowry Director
Mark Atkins Didgeridoo
Derek Hynd Director of Surfing
Stephen Pigram Voice

Tuesday 16 February, 8pm Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles
Thursday 18 February, 7.30pm 92nd Street Y, New York City
Saturday 20 February, 7.30pm Camp Concert Hall, University of Virginia, Richmond

EUROPEAN TOUR JULY & AUGUST

Richard Tognetti and the Orchestra spend three weeks in Europe in 2016 during the Northern Hemisphere summer, with concerts planned in the UK, Switzerland and other European destinations. The tour dates will be announced in March 2016.

FESTIVALS

Tarrawarra Festival, Victoria, 19-20 March
With a blend of fine art, live music and stunning views, this weekend-long festival in the Yarra Valley, only an hour from Melbourne, features intimate concerts directed by Richard Tognetti. Limited to 200 guests, the Festival experience includes a masterclass, guided tours of the museum’s exquisite Panorama exhibition and, of course, music from the ACO.

Vasse Felix Festival, Western Australia, 9-11 December
Award-winning wines, superb food and music from the musicians of the ACO. There are three days of music and art amongst the vines in Western Australia’s picturesque Margaret River region.

ACO COLLECTIVE CROSSES AUSTRALIA

PRINCIPAL PARTNER WESFARMERS ARTS

ACO Collective is the ACO’s critically acclaimed 17-piece string ensemble which delivers the ACO’s regional touring and education programs Australia-wide. ACO Collective (formerly known as ACO2) combines musicians of the ACO with Australia’s most talented young professional musicians at the outset of their careers, creating a combined ensemble with a fresh, energetic performance style.

In 2016, internationally acclaimed Finnish violinist Pekka Kuusisto takes up the position of inaugural ACO Collective Artistic Director. As well as opening the ACO’s 2016 National Subscription season, an 11-concert national tour, ACO Collective will also undertake a tour of regional Western Australia, under the direction of Pekka Kuusisto, and a tour of regional New South Wales, under the direction of special guests, the celebrated string quartet, Meta4.
THE FOUR SEASONS
29 April – 8 May, WA Tour
Tour presented by Westfarmers Arts

VIVALDI The Four Seasons
PIAZZOLLA (arr. Desyatnikov) The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires (Estaciones Porteñas)
PHILIP GLASS Violin Concerto No.2 ‘The American Four Seasons’

Pekka Kuusisto Director & Violin

Friday 29 April, 7.30pm Albany Entertainment Centre
Saturday 1 May, 2.30pm Manjimup Town Hall
Tuesday 3 May, 7pm Margaret River Cultural Centre
Wednesday 4 May, 7pm Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre
Friday 6 May, 7.15pm Mandurah Performing Arts Centre
Sunday 8 May, 3pm Queen’s Park Theatre, Geraldton

BEETHOVEN & MENDELSSOHN
2-16 September, NSW Tour
Tour presented by Virgin Australia

WEBERN Langsamer Satz
JAAKKO KUUSISTO Wiima, Op.27
MENDELSSOHN String Symphony No.6 in E-flat major
SCULTHORPE Djilile
BEETHOVEN (arr. strings) String Quartet in F major, Op.135

META4 Quartet Direction

Friday 2 September, 7.30pm Albury Entertainment Centre
Saturday 3 September, 7.30pm Wagga Wagga Civic Theatre
Tuesday 6 September, 7.30pm Griffith Regional Theatre
Friday 9 September, 7pm Q Theatre, JSPAC, Penrith
Sunday 11 September, 2pm Dubbo Regional Theatre
Wednesday 14 September, 7.30pm The Capitol, Tamworth
Friday 16 September, 8pm Manning Entertainment Centre, Taree

ACO VIRTUAL
Have you always wanted to play with the band?

Well, imagine yourself standing on stage during a live performance by the Australian Chamber Orchestra, directing the musicians or even playing along. This is not just a pipe dream! Thanks to our cutting-edge audio-visual installation, ACO VIRTUAL, we can make it happen.

Built using state-of-the-art technology, ACO VIRTUAL features projections of 13 musicians surrounding you on all sides, with the sound of each player coming from the direction of their projection. It’s like standing in the middle of the Orchestra during a concert.

Take charge of the band via an iPad controller at the centre of the installation. Decide whether you want to spotlight one musician or many; listen to just the violins; or just the bass – the possibilities are endless. Bring your instrument and play along, following the projected musical score and feel the energy of playing with a world-class ensemble. Don’t miss this extraordinary new way to experience music.

ACO VIRTUAL was produced by the Australian Chamber Orchestra and MOD Productions.

Michela Ledwidge Artist & Director
Richard Tognetti ACO Artistic Director & Violin/Leader
ACO VIRTUAL will be installed in a range of spaces throughout 2016 including:

7 Nov 2015 – 17 Jan 2016  Bunbury Regional Arts Gallery
15 Jan – 14 Feb 2016  Griffith Regional Art Galleries
19 Mar – 1 May 2016  Ipswich Art Gallery
30 Apr – 17 Jul 2016  National Museum of Australia, Canberra

PREMIERES

Long-time associate, much awarded, and internationally renowned composer, Elena Kats-Chernin, has been commissioned by the ACO to compose Miniatures for Strings, written especially for the musicians and superb string instruments of the ACO: Richard Tognetti's 1743 Guarneri del Gesu violin; Satu Vanska's 1728/1729 Stradivarius; the 1610 Giovanni Paolo Maggini viola; and Maxime Bibeau's c.1590; and the Gasparo da Salò double bass.

The ACO has commissioned Timothy Constable, award-winning percussionist, electronica producer, singer, performer, and Artistic Director of Synergy Percussion, to create a new work written especially for the combined forces of the ACO and Synergy in Cinemusica.

Author and internationally acclaimed composer, Gordon Kerry's dream thy sails, was commissioned by ACO supporters, Andrew and Fiona Johnson, to mark the 90th birthday of Andrew's father.

ACO EDUCATION

Our National Education Program provides students and young musicians with the skills and inspiration to continue their lifelong musical journey. We work with children and young people all over Australia, at every stage of their musical development, with the same commitment and energy we bring to the concert platform.

The journey begins in primary schools. Our innovative ACO Music & Art Program creates a global digital classroom in which students experience life as an international musician while combining visual art and music curricula. We present concerts for primary schools in partnership with the Australian Children's Music Foundation. These programs have grown to include professional development for teachers and string instrument tuition for children with strong musical potential who otherwise would not have access to these opportunities.

For secondary students, the ACO gives string workshops across Australia, enabling students to play alongside ACO musicians. Our flagship program, ACO Academy, brings together the most talented young musicians from across the country for an intensive week of music-making, culminating in an exciting public concert. Our $20 Schools’ Tickets Program provides discounted tickets to ACO concerts for teachers and their students as well as extensive educational resources that teachers can work through in class.

For post-tertiary string players, our Emerging Artists’ Program is an invaluable mentoring opportunity for Australia’s top string instrumentalists. Emerging Artists rehearse, tour and receive ongoing guidance from their ACO mentors, giving them insight into what it takes to become a professional musician at the highest level.

We also provide programs for young adults and adolescents with disability through our ACO Move workshop series, and have recently commenced an exciting new collaboration with the Penrith Symphony Orchestra and the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre to create a new Penrith Youth Orchestra.

Our digital resources include online instrumental lessons with our musicians, ACO VIRTUAL and much more.
2016 REPERTOIRE

BEETHOVEN & THE 21ST CENTURY
9 – 14 February

Pekka Kuusisto
Director & Violin

ACO Collective
(formerly ACO)

NICO MUHLY
(Arr. Strings) Part 1 from Drones & Violin

ERKKI-SVEN TUUR
Action-Passion-Illusion

TIPPETT
A Lament from Variations on an Elizabethan theme

BRYCE DESSNER
(arr. Strings) Tenebre

SIBELIUS
Rakastava

BEETHOVEN
(arr. Strings) String Quartet in F minor, Op.95 “Serioso”

CINEMUSICA
2 – 12 April

Richard Tognetti
Director & Violin

Timothy Constable
Artistic Director, Synergy Percussion

Synergy Percussion

XENAKIS
Voile

THOMAS NEWMAN
American Beauty (selections)

HERRMANN
Psycho: A Suite for Strings

XENAKIS
Psappha

TIMOTHY CONSTABLE
New work for strings and percussion (World Premiere)

BARTOK
Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta

BEETHOVEN & MOZART V
5 – 21 May

Richard Tognetti
Director & Violin

BEETHOVEN
(arr. strings) Fugue in D major, Op.137

BACH
Contrapunctus 1-4 from “The Art of Fugue”

MOZART
Violin Concerto No.5 in A major “Turkish”

BEETHOVEN
(arr. strings) String Quartet in B-flat major, Op.130

BEETHOVEN
(arr. strings) Gross Fuge, Op.133

THEFT
3 – 4 June

Richard Tognetti
Director & Violin

Ignatius Jones
Director

Kim Moyes
DJ
MEDIA RELEASE
EMBARGOED until 1am
Tuesday 18 August 2015

SEQUENZA ITALIANA
25 June – 10 July

Giovanni Sollima Director & Cello
Satu Vanska Leader & Violin
Maxime Bibeau Double Bass

MONTEVERDI (arr. strings) Lamento della ninfa
BERIO Sequenzas for Violin, Viola and Double Bass
LEO Cello Concerto No.3 in D minor
PAGANINI Introduction and Variations on “Dal tuo stellate soglio” from Rossini’s “Moses in Egypt”
ROSSINI (arr. Egidio Sollima) “Une larme” Theme and Variations for Cello and Strings
SCELSI C’est bien la nuit from “Nuits”
GIOVANNI SOLLIMA Fecit Neap 17...for Cello, Strings and Continuo

LEONSKAJA & MOZART
26 August – 7 September

Elisabeth Leonskaja Piano
Roman Simovic Guest Leader
R STRAUSS Sextet from Capriccio
MOZART Piano Concerto No.9 in E-flat major “Jeunehomme”
BEETHOVEN (arr. strings) String Quartet in E-flat major, Op.127

INTIMATE BEETHOVEN
23 & 26 September

Helena Rathbone Violin
Liisa Pallandi Violin
Alexandru-Mihai Bota Viola
Nicole Divall Viola
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello

MOZART String Quartet in G minor
BEETHOVEN String Quartet in A minor, Op.132

JULIA LEZHNEVA – BAROQUE BRILLIANCE
8 – 18 October

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Julia Lezhneva Soprano

PORPORA In caelo stele clare, motet for soprano and strings
BACH Orchestral Suite No.1 in C major
HANDEL Salve Regina
HANDEL Alessandro (selections)
Alla sua gabbia d’oro
Solitudine amate in cui sfogarmi le una flamma infelice
Aure, fonti, ombre gradite
Brilla nell’alma
VIVALDI Leggi almeno, tiranna infedele from “Ottone in Villa”
HANDEL Sonate a 5 in B-flat major
MEDIA RELEASE
EMBARGOED until 1am
Tuesday 18 August 2015

RICHARD TOGNETTI & ACO SOLOISTS - GUT STRINGS
16 & 19 October

Richard Tognetti  Director & Violin
Satu Vanska        Violin
Helena Rathbone    Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve  Cello
Maxime Bibeau      Double Bass
Genevieve Lacey    Recorder

BACH               Orchestral Suite No.1 in C major
VIVALDI            Concerto for two violins and cello in D minor
ELENA KATS-CHERNIN Miniatures for Strings (World Premiere)
VIVALDI            Concerto for four violins and cello in D major, RV549
BACH               Orchestral suite No.2 in B minor

SLAVA, RODRIGO & BEETHOVEN VII
30 October – 7 November

Richard Tognetti  Director & Violin
Slava Grigoryan   Guitar
Helena Rathbone   Violin

GORDON KERRY      “So dream thy sails”¹ (World Premiere)
RAVEL             Le tombeau de Couperin²
RODRIGO           Concierto de Aranjuez
BEETHOVEN         Symphony No.7

¹ Melbourne only
Gordon Kerry's So dream thy sails was commissioned
by Andrew & Fiona Johnstone to mark the 90th birthday of Andrew's father.
² Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Perth and Sydney

BEETHOVEN FINALE
18 – 27 November

Lorenza Borrani   Director & Violin
Helena Rathbone  Violin

SCHNITTK    Sonata for Violin and chamber orchestra
SCHUBERT     5 Minuets and 6 Trios, D.89
BEETHOVEN    (arr. strings) String Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op.131

RICHARD TOGNETTI ACO SOLOISTS – VIVALDI & BACH
7 December

Richard Tognetti  Director & Violin
Satu Vanska       Violin
Helena Rathbone   Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello
Maxime Bibeau     Double Bass
Genevieve Lacey   Recorder

BACH               Violin Concerto in E major
VIVALDI            Concerto for two violins and cello in D minor, RV565
ELENA KATS-CHERNIN Miniatures for Strings
VIVALDI            Concerto for four violins and cello in D major, RV549
BACH               Orchestral Suite No.2 in B minor
## 2016 – PERFORMANCE DATES IN EACH CITY

### Adelaide
- **Tuesday**
  - 9 February at 7.30pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
  - 12 April at 7.30pm: Cinemusica
  - 10 May at 7.30pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
  - 28 June at 7.30pm: Sequenza Italiana
  - 6 September at 7.30pm: Leonskaja & Mozart
  - 1 November at 7.30pm: Slava, Rodrigo & Beethoven VII

### Brisbane
- **Monday**
  - 15 February at 7.00pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
  - 4 April at 7.00pm: Cinemusica
  - 16 May at 7.00pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
  - 9 July at 7.00pm: Sequenza Italiana
  - 10 October at 7.00pm: Julia Lezhneva - Baroque Brilliance
  - 7 November at 7.00pm: Slava, Rodrigo & Beethoven VII

### Canberra
- **Saturday**
  - 6 February at 8.00pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
  - 9 April at 8.00pm: Cinemusica
  - 7 May at 8.00pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
  - 25 June at 8.00pm: Sequenza Italiana
  - 5 November at 8.00pm: Slava, Rodrigo & Beethoven VII
  - 26 November at 8.00pm: Beethoven Finale

### Melbourne
- **Sunday**
  - 7 February at 2.30pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
  - 8 February at 7.30pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
  - 10 April at 2.30pm: Cinemusica
  - 11 April at 7.30pm: Cinemusica
  - 8 May at 2.30pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
  - 9 May at 7.30pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
  - 3 July at 2.30pm: Sequenza Italiana
  - 4 July at 7.30pm: Sequenza Italiana
  - 4 September at 2.30pm: Leonskaja & Mozart
  - 5 September at 7.30pm: Leonskaja & Mozart
  - 26 September at 7.30pm: Intimate Beethoven
  - 15 October at 7.30pm: Julia Lezhneva - Baroque Brilliance
  - 30 October at 2.30pm: Slava, Rodrigo & Beethoven VII
  - 31 October at 7.30pm: Slava, Rodrigo & Beethoven VII
  - 27 November at 2.30pm: Beethoven Finale
  - 28 November at 7.30pm: Beethoven Finale
  - 7 December at 7.30pm: Richard Tognetti & ACO Soloists - Vivaldi & Bach

### Newcastle
- **Thursday**
  - 4 February at 7.30pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
  - 5 May at 7.30pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
  - 23 September at 7.30pm: Intimate Beethoven
### Perth
- **Wednesday** 11 May at 7.30pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
- **Wednesday** 29 June at 7.30pm: Sequenza Italiana
- **Wednesday** 7 September at 7.30pm: Leonskaja & Mozart
- **Wednesday** 19 October at 7.30pm: Richard ognetti & ACO Soloists - Gut Strings
- **Wednesday** 2 November at 7.30pm: Slava, Rodrigo & Beethoven VII

### Sydney
- **Saturday** 13 February at 7.00pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
- **Sunday** 14 February at 2.00pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
- **Tuesday** 16 February at 8.00pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
- **Wednesday** 17 February at 7.00pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
- **Friday** 19 February at 1.30pm: Beethoven & The 21st Century
- **Saturday** 2 April at 7.00pm: Cinemusica
- **Sunday** 3 April at 2.00pm: Cinemusica
- **Tuesday** 5 April at 8.00pm: Cinemusica
- **Wednesday** 6 April at 7.00pm: Cinemusica
- **Saturday** 14 May at 7.00pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
- **Sunday** 15 May at 2.00pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
- **Tuesday** 17 May at 8.00pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
- **Wednesday** 18 May at 7.00pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
- **Friday** 20 May at 1.30pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
- **Friday** 3 June at 7.00pm: Theft
- **Saturday** 4 June at 2.00pm: Theft
- **Saturday** 2 July at 7.00pm: Sequenza Italiana
- **Tuesday** 5 July at 8.00pm: Sequenza Italiana
- **Wednesday** 6 July at 7.00pm: Sequenza Italiana
- **Friday** 8 July at 1.30pm: Sequenza Italiana
- **Sunday** 10 July at 2.00pm: Sequenza Italiana
- **Friday** 26 August at 1.30pm: Leonskaja & Mozart
- **Tuesday** 30 August at 8.00pm: Leonskaja & Mozart
- **Wednesday** 31 August at 7.00pm: Leonskaja & Mozart
- **Saturday** 3 September at 7.00pm: Leonskaja & Mozart
- **Saturday** 8 October at 7.00pm: Julia Lezhneva - Baroque Brilliance
- **Wednesday** 12 October at 7.00pm: Julia Lezhneva - Baroque Brilliance
- **Sunday** 16 October at 2.00pm: Richard Tognetti & ACO Soloists - Gut Strings
- **Tuesday** 18 October at 8.00pm: Julia Lezhneva - Baroque Brilliance
- **Sunday** 6 November at 2.00pm: Slava, Rodrigo & Beethoven VII
- **Friday** 18 November at 1.30pm: Beethoven Finale
- **Saturday** 19 November at 7.00pm: Beethoven Finale
- **Tuesday** 22 November at 8.00pm: Beethoven Finale
- **Wednesday** 23 November at 7.00pm: Beethoven Finale

### Wollongong
- **Saturday** 21 May at 7.30pm: Beethoven & Mozart V
- **Saturday** 27 August at 7.30pm: Leonskaja & Mozart
- **Thursday** 24 November at 7.30pm: Beethoven Finale