

MEDIA RELEASE

A RIVER OF FINE MUSIC RUNS THROUGH PERTH FESTIVAL

Dreams of Place | One & Many | Koort (Heart) | The Little Mermaid | Opera in the Park

Perth Festival combines ancient, classical and contemporary culture in a joyous affirmation of community and shared music-making in the 2021 **Fine Music Program**.

Spanning the entire three weeks of the Festival, **Festival Artistic Director Iain Grandage** has curated an exciting, exquisitely rounded program to delight classical music aficionados as well as children and those discovering the brilliant world of fine music for the first time.

The signature concerts span a chamber music series with some of Australia's finest soloists to an intimate evening of Noongar songs and a massive 100-player twin orchestra to give audiences a truly special Western Australian musical experience.

The program opens at **Perth Concert Hall** on 5 February with ***Dreams of Place***, a concert featuring two Perth Festival commissions, where the **West Australian Symphony Orchestra** joins forces with the **Western Australian Youth Orchestra** and outstanding Noongar musicians to deliver a concert exploding with evocative images of place.

With world-premiere works delivered by outstanding Noongar singers including Della Rae Morrison alongside classics from **Sibelius**, **Copland** and **Stravinsky's *Firebird***, this magical night of orchestral colour, conducted by **Thaddeus Huang**, will bring audiences a renewed love for the land beneath our feet.

On both the Festival's first weekend and final weekend, the chamber music series ***One & Many*** in the spectacular **WA Museum Boolba Bardip** reflects our journey from solitude to community. Two of WA's most esteemed musicians, violin virtuoso **Shaun Lee-Chen**



Shaun Lee-Chen is a soloist in *One & Many*.

and soprano **Sara Macliver**, perform solo from the floor beneath the magnificent Blue Whale skeleton in Hackett Hall before being joined from the balconies by ensembles of WA's finest chamber musicians.

Lauded for his performances of Baroque and Classical repertoire, the centrepiece of Lee-Chen's concerts on 6 and 7 February is Bach's masterly *Violin Partita No. 2 in D minor*. Joined by **St George's Cathedral Consort** directed by **Joseph Nolan**, this solo violin work is illuminated with entwined chorale melodies in an extraordinary reinvention by German musicologist **Helga Thoene**. Works by **Arvo Pärt** and a new commission from WA composer **Lydia Gardiner**, responding to the majesty of the whale above, complete this beautiful program.

On the Festival's closing weekend of 27 and 28 February, Macliver begins and ends her concert with female composers **Hildegard von Bingen** and a new whale-inspired work from WA composer **Rebecca Erin Smith**. In between, wind and percussion ensemble **WQ+** join her to perform **Canteloube's** *Songs of the Auvergne* and works by **Richard Strauss**, **Schumann** and **Mozart**.



Gina Williams and Guy Ghouse. Image: Owen Gregory Photography

In **Government House Gardens**, in a place where indigenous voices were silenced for so long, award-winning duo **Gina Williams** and **Guy Ghouse** bring us the second instalment of their four-part Noongar song-cycle on 13 February to mark the anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations. After their stunning 2020 Festival performance *Koorlangka*, they return with **Koort (Heart)**, William's musical journey as a child of the Stolen Generations. Bring a blanket and the entire family to share a glorious evening of music-making and community under the stars.

Picnics will also be the order of the evening on the Festival's final weekend when **WA Opera** celebrates the 30th anniversary of **City of Perth Opera in the Park** in the stunning **Supreme Court Gardens**. Igniting emotions and sharing the splendour of live music with thousands of Western Australians, this free gala concert event will be held over two nights – on 26 and 27 February – and feature opera favourites sung by WAO principal artists, the WAO Chorus with the full might of WASO. Remember its free, but you'll need to reserve a place.

Young children will get the perfect introduction to music, opera and theatre when **Freeze Frame Opera** magically transforms the grand arches, balconies and stage of **Government House Ballroom** into a fairy-tale world of rivers, waterfalls and a palace for **The Little Mermaid**. Dvořák's *Rusalka* opera of *The Little Mermaid* story has been adapted to make for an accessible and immersive experience for everyone.

Festival **Artistic Director Iain Grandage** said: 'Having grown up here in Western Australia, many of the featured musicians in this Festival program have been my friends and colleagues for decades. They are not only wondrous musicians, but also generous and warm human beings. This humanity shines through their music-making and is one of many reasons people are drawn to their performances. It's a thrill to celebrate their artistry in the Festival this year.'

Dreams of Place partnership between West Australian Symphony Orchestra and Western Australian Youth Orchestra supported by Woodside. WASO's Indigenous Creative Collaborations supported by Bendat Family Foundation.

One & Many's new works by Lydia Gardiner and Rebecca Erin Smith were commissioned by Tura New Music.

Please note: some of above mentioned dates mentioned were changed due to the COVID lock down which took place in WA in early Feb. Please see below for rescheduled performance dates of the 2021 Fine Music program and the updated performance schedule [here](#).

WHAT: Dreams of Place

WHERE: Perth Concert Hall / Dyeedyallalup / Perth CBD

WHEN: Rescheduled to 23 & 25 July 2021

HOW MUCH: \$39-\$79

WHAT: Koort (Heart)

WHERE: Government House Gardens / Gumap / Perth CBD

WHEN: 6 Mar, 7.30pm

HOW MUCH: \$49

WHAT: One & Many

WHERE: WA Museum Boola Bardip / Yandilup / Northbridge

WHEN: Sara Macliver 26 – 28 Feb, 6pm, Shaun Lee-Chen (rescheduled to) 8 – 10 Mar, 6pm

HOW MUCH: \$49

WHAT: City of Perth Opera in the Park

WHERE: Supreme Court Gardens / Gumap / Perth CBD

WHEN: 26 & 27 Feb, 8pm (gates open 5.30pm)

HOW MUCH: FREE (registration essential)

WHAT: The Little Mermaid

WHERE: Government House Ballroom / Gumap / Perth CBD

WHEN: 20 & 21 Feb (11am & 2pm)

HOW MUCH: \$40, family pack \$110

BOOKINGS AND FESTIVAL INFO: perthfestival.com.au

Click here [images](#). For further information, interviews or images please contact:

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Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise their values, language, beliefs and knowledge on their kwobidak boodjar. They remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect their caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.

ABOUT PERTH FESTIVAL

Founded in 1953 by The University of Western Australia, Perth Festival is the longest running international arts festival in Australia and Western Australia's premier cultural event. The Festival has developed a worldwide reputation for excellence in its international program, the presentation of new works and the highest quality artistic experiences for its audience. For 67 years, the Festival has

welcomed to Perth some of the world's greatest living artists and now connects with hundreds of thousands of people each year.

Iain Grandage is the Artistic Director 2020–23.

