

PERTH FESTIVAL

10 February – 5 March

Founder



Principal Partner



MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

WITH WEST AUSTRALIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

perthfestival.com.au

2023

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.

CONTENTS

WELCOME

SHOW DETAILS

CREDITS

REPERTOIRE

A NOTE ON THE PROGRAM

BIOGRAPHIES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Click on the content you want to read to be taken to that page or tap the interactive tabs at the bottom to skip to a specific section.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



Image: Jess Wylde

Welcome to *Music of the Spheres* – a concert of worlds within worlds, of spirituality and science, of knowns and unknowns, of musical responses to the cosmos. There are questions throughout about what is in the darkness between shining stars, and how human imagination seeks explanation and solace in those spaces. Two new commissions bookend this concert, and it is a joy to celebrate these sublime new works from Emma Donovan and Richard Mills, nestled as they are amongst some of the most beautiful musical moments of the past centuries.

IAIN GRANDAGE

PERTH FESTIVAL ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

WITH WEST AUSTRALIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

DYEEDYALLALUP / PERTH CBD

PERTH CONCERT HALL

Fri 10 Feb 7.30pm

Duration 90mins including interval



Sung in German, Italian, Noongar and English with English surtitles



West Australian
Symphony Orchestra



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

CREDITS

Composer & Conductor Richard Mills

Composer & Performer Emma Donovan

Soprano Samantha Clarke

Tenor Shanul Sharma

Baritone Samuel Dundas

Boy Treble William Atkins-Walters

Choir Master Hugh Lydon

Repetiteur Marilyn Phillips

Orchestral Arrangement (Donovan) Iain Grandage

String Realisation (Purcell) Nick Pollock

Choir Joshua Adams, Ry Charleson,
Lydia Gardiner, Katie How, Bonnie de la Hunty,
Amber Lister, Hugh Lydon, Kieran Lynch,
Lucinda Nicholls, David Penco

Baroque Ensemble

Lead Shaun Lee-Chen

Continuo Keyboards Stewart Smith

Continuo Cello Noeleen Wright

with WASO players



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

West Australian Symphony Orchestra

First Violins Riley Skevington (Associate Concertmaster), Semra Lee (Assistant Concertmaster), Stephanie Dean, Beth Hebert, Christina Katsimbardis, Andrea Mendham, Cerys Tooby, Samantha Wickramasinghe

Second Violins Zak Rowntree (Principal 2nd Violin), Kylie Liang (Associate Principal 2nd Violin), Emma Hunt, Sunmi Jung, Akiko Miyazawa, Melanie Pearn, Louise Sandercock, Jane Serrangeli,

Violas Alex Brogan (Associate Principal) Kierstan Arkleymith, Nik Babic, Ben Caddy, Elliot O'Brien, Aaron Dungey

Cellos Eve Silver (Associate Principal), Shigeru Komatsu, Oliver McAslan, Fotis Skordas, Tim South

Basses Andrew Sinclair (Principal), Louise Elaerts, Mark Tooby

Flutes Andrew Nicholson & Mary-Anne Blades

Oboes Liz Chee & Jonathan Ryan

Clarinets Allan Meyer, Alexander Millier, Geoffrey Bourgault du Coudray

Bassoons Jane Kircher-Lindner & Chloe Turner

Horns David Evans & Julia Brooke

Trumpets Jenna Smith, Sophie Kukulies, Peter Miller, Martin Baker

Trombones Joshua Davis, Liam O'Malley, Jeremy Mazurek, Jeremy Alderson, Justin Gross

Timpani Alex Timcke

Percussion Francois Combemorel

Harp Yi-Yun Loei

Keyboard Graeme Gilling



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



REPERTOIRE

Tonight's program has been constructed to provide seamless transitions between the different works. The artists ask that you refrain from applause until the end of the first half.

Emma Donovan (born 1981)

Yira Djinang*

Emma Donovan, singer

Thomas Tallis (c.1505 – 85)

O nata lux

Henry Purcell (1659 – 95)

An Evening Hymn, Z193

William Atkins-Walters, treble

Claudio Monteverdi (1567 – 1643)

O stellae coruscantes

George Frideric Handel (1685 – 1759)

Samson (HWV 57): Total Eclipse

Shanul Sharma, tenor

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (c.1525 – 94)

Exultate Deo

Antonín Dvořák (1841 – 1904)

Rusalka, Op.114: 'Song to the Moon'

Samantha Clarke, soprano

Juan Esquivel de Barahona (c.1560 – c1623)

Ego sum panis vivus



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

Gustav Mahler (1860 – 1911)

Rückert Lieder:

IV: Um Mitternacht

Samuel Dundas, baritone

Morten Lauridsen (born 1943)

O nata lux

Richard Strauss (1864 – 1949)

Morgen! Op.27 No.4

Samantha Clarke, soprano

INTERVAL

Richard Mills (born 1949)

'Glimpses and Dialogues' from Galileo*

I. Visione degli angeli della musica

II. Soliloquio di Galileo

III. Aria di rabbia

IV. Scena, preghiera e riflessione penitenziale

Sister Maria Celeste – Samantha Clarke, soprano

Boy Galileo – William Atkins-Walters, treble

Pope Urban VIII – Shanul Sharma, tenor

Galileo / Galileo's Father – Samuel Dundas,
baritone

Angels and Demons of Music – Choir

*World Premiere

Commissioned by Perth Festival



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



A NOTE ON THE PROGRAM

Since 2017, the fifth-brightest star in the Southern Cross has been officially known as Ginan. In the language of the Wardaman people, Ginan denotes 'a red dilly-bag filled with special songs of knowledge', part of a creation story playing out eternally in the night sky above Wardaman country west of present-day Katherine in the Northern Territory. Emma Donovan's *Yira Djinang* reflects First Nations' cosmological wisdom and the passing of knowledge from elders to the young, sung in part in her father's Noongar language.

The Hebrew Psalmist reflected a similar Middle Eastern cosmology, writing that 'the heavens declare the glory of God', an idea happily taken up by Christianity. Announced by a star, Jesus himself 'came down from heaven', in the words of the Creed, and is 'light from light', an image that informs Thomas Tallis's 1575 a cappella motet, *O nata lux* (O light born of light). Tallis sets a 10th-century hymn to the mystery of Jesus, born of light but fully human, whose body is the Church itself.

Written over a century after Tallis's piece, Purcell's *An Evening Hymn* sets a poem by his Bishop William Fuller that replaces cosmic awe with a physical intimacy: as the body reposes in a soft bed at night, the soul



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

will rest in the arms of God, singing ornate hallelujahs.

Monteverdi's motet *O stellae coruscantes* (O glittering stars) from 1607 is a 'contrafact', recycling music to new words. The original piece, *Sfogava con le stelle*, is a thoroughly secular madrigal published in Venice three years earlier, where a young man, seeing the image of his beloved in the stars, complains (in Italian) of unrequited love. Aquilino Coppini's text for the sacred motet again addresses the stars, (now in Latin), seeing there the image of 'the soul who made you' and urging them to join in praising God.

Coppini's stars 'blind the darkness with light'; for Samson, mighty hero of the biblical book of *Judges*, blindness is all about absence of divine light. Handel's 1743 oratorio is based on John Milton's dramatic poem *Samson agonistes*. Samson, having been betrayed, his head shaved and thus weakened, is a prisoner of the Philistines who have blinded him. Milton himself was blind by the time he published the poem in 1671 and Handel, too, lost his sight in later life, but as we hear in the aria 'Total Eclipse', for Samson blindness is a symbol of his alienation from God. This is repaired when he miraculously destroys the Philistine palace, and himself, in an act of vindication whose praise will be sounded, at the end, by bright cherubim playing uplifted



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

angel trumpets.

That image comes originally from Psalm 81, which calls for noisy, joyful worship with instruments including the ram's-horn trumpet or shofar. Palestrina's motet-setting of the psalm's first verses, *Exultate Deo*, published in Rome in 1584, was probably for Easter use, and is rather more decorous – a fine example of his serene, cool, effortlessly-wrought polyphony.

This restrained detachment in much Renaissance polyphony was described by some contemporary theorists as *ars perfecta* (a perfect art). Nineteenth-century Romanticism, by contrast, celebrated often decidedly imperfect emotions.

The heroine of *Dvořák's Rusalka*, for instance, is a nymph who lives in an enchanted lake but falls in love with a handsome prince. With the help of a witch, she becomes human, which means losing the power of speech, and has tragic consequences. Before that happens, however, Rusalka sings the 'Song to the Moon', asking the moon to tell the prince that she waits for him.

The motets of Monteverdi's Spanish contemporary, Juan Esquivel de Barahona, reflect a growing sense in the Catholic Church that liturgical music should not be



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

too elaborate. Relatively simple, *Ego sum panis vivus* (I am the bread of life) sets Jesus' words as he institutes the sacrament of the Eucharist in John's gospel, likening himself to the bread, or manna, which miraculously fell from heaven, saving the Israelites as Moses led them out of captivity in Egypt.

Mahler's *Um Mitternacht* (At Midnight) dramatises the soul's experience of existential despair in imagery of an empty universe and eternally suffering humanity. Eschewing any orchestral warmth, the song's climax arrives as the poet commends all things into the hand of God.

In his 'O nata lux', American composer Morten Lauridsen sets the same text as Tallis in a movement from his *Lux aeterna* cycle of 1997.

Strauss's *Morgen!*, sets a text by John Henry Mackay, a gay anarchist Scot who grown up in Germany. The singer enters mid-sentence; a violin solo represents the bliss of the lovers' reunion, but as this is still in the future, Strauss ends the song on a note of erotic optimism.

Baroque music grew out of the attempts by a group of humanists in Florence in the 1570s who sought to revive ancient Greek drama. They knew it had been sung, but clearly the fastidious and serene polyphony of the ars



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

perfecta would not do. Monody, in which individuals could express their feelings in long melodies over a solid bass, was born. One of the Florentine musicians, Vincenzo Galilei, produced a son who would do for science what humanism did for art. Galileo ran afoul of the Church, whose cosmology didn't allow for imperfection in the realms of heaven. Not only did he accept that the sun, not the earth, was the centre of the solar system, Galileo announced that there were mountains on the moon, satellites around Jupiter and innumerable stars beyond. Richard Mills' new opera, *Galileo*, is 'a love letter to Italy and Italian opera, and my love/hate letter to the Catholic Church and an exploration of a spiritual quest for truth and salvation'. These four extracts depict a chorus of the angels of music – rather like the prologue of a Baroque opera in which the Gods set things up; a soliloquy in which Galileo readies himself for confrontation with Rome; an aria of rage from Pope Urban VIII; and finally in a vision of his daughter Sister Maria Celeste, angels and devils, Galileo's prayer and penitential reflection, having recanted his 'heresy'.

– Gordon Kerry © 2023



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



BIOGRAPHIES



RICHARD MILLS AM

Composer & Conductor

Richard pursues a diverse career as a composer, conductor and artistic director with an extensive discography, of both his own and contemporary works and the film music of Franz Waxman with the QSO (*Preis der Deutschen Schallplatten Kritik*, 1992). Richard has held the posts of Artistic Director of West Australian Opera, Musica Viva's Composer of the Year, Director of the Australian Music Project for the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, and since 2013, Artistic Director of Victorian Opera.

Richard's commissioned operas include *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, *Batavia* and *The Love of the Nightingale*. Some of



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

his more significant compositions include *Snugglepot and Cuddlepie* for the Australian Ballet; *Earth Poem-Sky* for Aboriginal Dancers, Singers, electronic sound and the Darwin Symphony; *Soundscapes for Percussion and Orchestra* (filmed with Evelyn Glennie and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra); *Tenebrae, Emblems and Totemic Journeys* for Sydney Symphony; *Requiem Diptych* for the Chicago Chamber Musicians Brass and *The Little Mermaid*.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



EMMA DONOVAN

Composer & Performer

Highly celebrated, ARIA-nominated, award-winning Indigenous singer and songwriter Emma Donovan has been touring the country for over 20 years, performing soulful songs and sharing powerful stories with audiences around the globe.

On her mother's side, Emma is part of the famed Donovan family of singers of the Gumbaynggirr people, of what is now known as Northern New South Wales. On her father's side, Emma is of the Yamatji people, of what is now known as Western Australia.

Emma is now best known for her work with greatly admired Melbourne rhythm combo



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

The Putbacks and the extraordinary Black Arm Band project. Emma has toured and recorded with the best in the Australian music scene including Paul Kelly, The Teskey Brothers, Yothu Yindi, Kee'ahn, The Meltdown, Paul Grabowsky, Jen Cloher, Spinifex Gum and the late Uncle Archie Roach and Aunty Ruby Hunter.

Emma regularly performs songs in Gumbaynggirr and Noongar traditional languages, and shares stories to provide her audiences with an understanding of Country and community.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



SAMANTHA CLARKE

Soprano

A recent graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama Samantha sings the title role in *La traviata* for West Australian Opera, *Fiordiligi Così fan tutte* for Opera Queensland and the Grange Festival, Marzeline in concert performances of *Fidelio* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Britten's *War Requiem* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in the 2022/23 season.

Samantha's recent highlights have included *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Tytania) for the Grange Festival; *La bohème* (Musetta) and *Parsifal* (Flower Maiden) for Opera North; *L'elisir d'amore* (Adina) for West Green House Opera; the title role in *The Golden Cockerel*



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

for Adelaide Festival; the title role in the Buxton Festival's award-winning pasticcio *Georgiana; The Rake's Progress* (Anne Trulove) for British Youth Opera; Mozart's Requiem with the Britten Sinfonia/David Bates at the BBC Proms and Beethoven's Symphony no. 9 with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra/Eivind Aadland.

Samantha will make her debut with Opera Australia in the 2023/24 season.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



SHANUL SHARMA

Tenor

Shanul made his debut with Opera Australia as Don Ramiro in Rossini's *La Cenerentola*, followed by the Madman in Berg's *Wozzeck*, Il Conte di Libenskof in Rossini's *Il viaggio a Reims*, and the Student in Reimann's *The Ghost Sonata*. He has also appeared as Il Conte di Libenskof for the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, and the Rossini Opera Festival in Pesaro; in the title role of Mozart's *Mitridate*, at Teatro Olimpico for Festival Vicenza; Count Almaviva in *Il barbiere di Siviglia* for Teatro del Giglio, Lucca; and Ernesto in *Don Pasquale* in Pavia, Italy. He has also performed the roles of Florville in *Il Signor Bruschino*, the title role in *Werther* and



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

appeared as tenor soloist in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. Most recently he has been seen as Gennaro (*Lucrezia Borgia*) with Melbourne Opera and in *Butterfly Lovers* for Victorian Opera.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



SAMUEL DUNDAS

Baritone

A graduate of the Melba Conservatorium of Music, Samuel was a member of Victorian Opera's Artist Development Program and subsequently Opera Australia's Moffatt Oxenbould Young Artist Program. Samuel has since performed leading roles with Opera Australia, Victorian Opera, State Opera South Australia, West Australian Opera, Opera Queensland and New Zealand Opera. In concert, Samuel has sung with all the major Australian symphony orchestras, the Australian Youth Orchestra, the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

Most recently Samuel has been heard in Mozart's Requiem and Beethoven's 9th Symphony with the TSO, as Aphron (*The Golden Cockerel*) for Adelaide Festival, the title role in Voss and Marcello (*La Boheme*) for State Opera South Australia, concerts at Uluru for Opera Australia, as Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*, for Victorian Opera, *Carmina Burana* with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Landscapes for Adelaide Festival.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



SHAUN LEE-CHEN

Baroque Ensemble Lead

Shaun is an internationally celebrated performer with a special interest in historical performance and 19th-century violin pedagogy. He has been Concertmaster at the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra since 2016 and is currently Artist in Residence at the UWA Conservatorium of Music.

Shaun was an outstanding student, completing a Bachelor of Music at UWA and receiving numerous prizes upon graduation. In 2007 he was the winner of the prestigious ABC Young Performer of the Year Award.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

Shaun is at home on both modern and period instruments and has appeared as soloist with West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO), Queensland Orchestra and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra (TSO) and he has been guest Assistant and Associate Concertmaster with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the TSO and WASO. Shaun is a founding member of the Irwin Street Collective, a period chamber ensemble based in Western Australia.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES



WEST AUSTRALIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO) has provided the soundtrack to life in WA since 1928.

From concert halls to classrooms, hospitals to aged care, WASO brings joy, inspires learning and nurtures participation in our community, because everybody deserves the opportunity to experience live music.

WASO celebrates our rich classical music heritage with great musicians from all over the world and commissions new repertoire to expand it. The Orchestra collaborates widely with local arts companies and artists, performing opera to ballet, movies to musicals, and jazz to rock for all West Australians to enjoy.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

Founder



Principal Partner



Festival Partner



PERTH

Community Partner



Civic Partner



Visual Arts Partner



Leadership Partners



Production Partners



Lead Media Partner



Legal Partner

CLAYTON UTZ

Premier Partners



Major Partners



Supporting Partners

Adina
Alex Hotel
All Saints' College
Alliance Française de Perth
The Backlot Perth
Bravo
British Council
City of Albany
Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions
Digital Loop

DoubleTree by Hilton
Perth Northbridge
HotHouse Company
Instant Toilets and Showers
Institut Français
My Place
OKMG
Ovant Distillations
RTRFM
See Subiaco
Snadens Pianos
The University Club of WA

Arts Industry Partners

Performing Lines WA

With thanks to Perth Concert Hall staff, management and board.



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

THANKS TO OUR DONORS

We thank our community of donors for helping us achieve our bold artistic vision and making an impact on the cultural narrative of our State.

LEADERSHIP PARTNERS

Fine Music



Regional Touring



Major Events



PATRONS

Local Heroes

ADRIAN AND
MICHAELA FINI

Creative Learning



Community Engagement

CARLA MARKS

WA Arts Sector Development



TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS



CONTENTS



PROGRAM NOTES



BIOGRAPHIES

CHAIR'S CIRCLE

Our Chair's Circle is a committed network of Donors who, along with our Chair, support the Festival's long-term strategy of growing the WA arts sector with a minimum donation of \$20,000 per annum.

ANNUAL ARTISTIC PROGRAM

Perth Festival is the longest running multi-arts Festival in Australia. Each year our Annual Artistic Program donors help us continue to share extraordinary cultural experiences with our audiences. From our deeply embedded tradition of free large-scale events to theatre, dance, visual arts and music offerings, our loyal donors provide world-class arts for all to enjoy.

MEDICI

Our Medici donors are a passionate, art-loving group who make an annual donation towards enabling a specific, ambitious Festival performance each year. The 2023 Medici supported performance is *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

COMMISSIONING FUND

Our Commissioning Fund supports the development of new work to feature in the Festival. Donations to this fund enable us to develop and present Festival works that give voice to the people, artists, and stories of this place.

CONNECT

Perth Festival's Connect program creates deeper opportunities for people across our community to engage, create and learn. It provides pathways into the Festival for young people, community, and arts industry professionals. Connect donors support the development of local artistic talent, encourage the next generation of artists, and ensure Perth Festival is a festival for all people.

LEGACY CIRCLE

Our Legacy Circle recognises those who have provided for Perth Festival with a gift in their Will. These meaningful gifts will support the future of Perth Festival and together we can celebrate a powerful legacy of artistic vibrancy here in Western Australia.



[CONTENTS](#)



[PROGRAM NOTES](#)



[BIOGRAPHIES](#)

[PERTHFESTIVAL.COM.AU](https://perthfestival.com.au)