



February 8, 2022

Mary Jo Capps AM new Chair at Australian Festival of Chamber Music

Leading Australian arts and cultural figure **Mary Jo Capps** has been appointed Chair of the Australian Festival of Chamber Music (AFCM). She takes over the leadership baton from **Sandra Yates** who is stepping down after eight years leading the celebrated festival. **Jane Seawright** has been named Deputy Chair.

Sandra Yates AO said her time with the AFCM has been extraordinarily happy. “I have chaired five organizations over the last 35 years (Saatchi & Saatchi, TAFE NSW, YWCA, Chief Executive Women and AFCM) and at 75, as I step away from the last of my corporate responsibilities, I can honestly say that the last eight years as Chair of AFCM have been enormously happy ones for me.”

“I leave the organization in a sound financial position, and with a very strong, skilled and capable board. We have had to battle through the cancellation of the last two Festivals, but I am hopeful that in 2022, I will sit in the audience in Townsville, and let that gorgeous chamber music weave its special magic again,” she said.

Mary Jo Capps brings a wide range of experience, expertise and knowledge to the AFCM Chair, as well as an intimate understanding of the Australian arts and cultural sector. She served for nearly 20 years as CEO of Musica Viva Australia and, over the past 40 years, has held senior management and consultancy roles with all the major Australian orchestras, Create NSW, Company B Belvoir Theatre, Australian Dance Theatre, the Museum of Contemporary Art, and a range of small to medium arts organisations, as well as serving on a number of business and pro bono boards.

She was awarded the first Creative Partnerships Australia Arts Leadership Award in 2016, an honorary Doctor of Visual and Performing Arts from the University of Melbourne in 2017, and Member of the Order of Australia in 2019 in recognition of her services to the arts and business. Board roles have included Chair of the Dean’s Advisory Board, Faculty of Fine Arts and Music, University of Melbourne; Chair, Australian Major Performing Arts Group; and Chair, Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composers House.

“It is a great honour and responsibility to follow in Sandra Yates AO’s footsteps as Chair of AFCM, especially as it coincides with the new artistic leadership of Jack Liebeck and the progressing plans for a built for purpose Concert Hall in Townsville,” said Mary Jo Capps AM.

“I am thrilled to be working with Jane Seawright as Deputy Chair, and the rest of the AFCM Board, to assist artists, audiences, supporters and the leadership team to reach even greater heights for the Festival in the future.”

Tickets to the 2022 AFCM are on sale from 1 March. Artistic Director **Jack Liebeck’s** first program leads with three powerful world premieres, part of a stunning line-up of over 130 works in total, to be staged from 29 July to 7 August in Townsville, Queensland. Over 30 music-filled years, the AFCM has forged a stunning international reputation as one of the best chamber music celebrations in the world.

AFCM principal partners include Queensland Government through Tourism and Events Queensland and Arts Queensland, Australian Government through the Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund and Townsville City Council. AFCM is supported by the Queensland Government, through Tourism and Events Queensland, and features on the *It’s Live! In Queensland* events calendar.

Australian Festival of Chamber Music

29 July to 7 August 2022 in Townsville, North Queensland

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For media enquiries please contact Kath Rose | 0416 291 493 | kath@kathrose.com