

Australian Festival of Chamber Music

February 14, 2022

Three powerful world premieres to open the 2022 Australian Festival of Chamber Music

Tickets on sale Tuesday 1 March at 10am AEDT via afcm.com.au

Australian Festival of Chamber Music (AFCM) Artistic Director **Jack Liebeck** today unveiled his first program, and it leads with three powerful world premieres over the first three days, part of a stunning line-up of over 130 works in total, to be staged from 29 July to 7 August in Townsville, Queensland.

The 31st AFCM boasts 32 events, 33 world class artists including five international and 28 Australian musicians, and three major new festival experiences including *Guilty Pleasures*, *AFCM Illuminates* and *Festival Garden*. A joyous 10-day celebration hosted during North Queensland's famous wintersun, the 2022 AFCM is the music event the world needs this year!

The Festival opens with three world premieres over three days. On opening Night, 29 July, **Deborah Cheetham's** work *Nginda Ngarrini Bi Ngya*, which was especially commissioned for AFCM, will be performed. Written in the language of the local Indigenous people, it features Deborah singing with the Goldner String Quartet.

The **Governor's Gala concert on Saturday 30 July** will deliver an epic world premiere music moment - 25 Australian composers were commissioned to write short variations on Beethoven's iconic '*Ode to Joy*' to mark the 25th anniversary of the famous **Goldner String Quartet**; the work will be premiered by the Goldners at this event!

Rounding out the trio of world firsts, Australian composer **Paul Dean** will unveil his premiere during the Sunday evening concert, aptly titled *The 22's*, and featuring pieces straddling 400 years, from 1722 (Albinoni's *Concerto for oboe in D minor, Op. 9, No. 2*), 1822 (Mendelssohn's *Piano Quartet No 1 Op 1 in C minor*), 1922 (Peter Warlock's *The Curlew*) and Dean's specially written *Concerto for Chamber Orchestra* representing 2022.

That's not all for Paul Dean, he is also Composer-in-Residence for the Festival and leads a strong Dean family presence at the AFCM; his niece, soprano **Lotte Betts-Dean** as a guest artist will perform her father Brett Dean's work, and his wife **Trish Dean** (cello) makes her AFCM debut.

The artist line-up is led by internationally applauded didgeridoo star **William Barton** returning to the Festival with his own compositions, and soprano and composer **Deborah Cheetham**, joined by **Kirsty McCahon** (double bass), **James Crabb** (accordion), **Lloyd Van't Hoff** (clarinet), **Daniel de Borah** (piano), **Alice Giles** (harp), **Imants Larsens** (viola), **Natsuko Yoshimoto** (violin), **Kristian Chong** (piano) and the **Goldner String Quartet**, among others.

Australian musicians heading north for the first time include **Phoebe Russell** (double bass), **Alison Mitchell** (flute), **David Mitchell** (bassoon), **Jacob Enoka** (percussion), **Brigid Coleridge** (violin, and now residing in Boston), **Elina Faskhi** (cello) and **Emmanuel Cassimatis** (oboe).

International musicians making their AFCM and Australian debut include **Charlotte Bonneton** (violin and viola) from France, **Daniel Grimwood** (piano) from the UK and the famed Turkish cellist **Jamal Aliyev** while Canadian violinist **Corey Cerovsek** makes his AFCM debut. **Daniel Grimwood** and **Jamal Aliyev** are ONLY performing at AFCM in Australia. Festival Host will be ABC Classic's **Damien Beaumont**.

Minister for the Arts Leeanne Enoch said the Australian Festival of Chamber Music will make a triumphant return to Townsville with more than 30 of the world's finest classical musicians bringing marvellous music to the magical setting of North Queensland. "This long-running renowned festival presents chamber music that sounds like paradise, played in paradise," Minister Enoch said.

"A highlight this year will be the powerful premiere of *Nginda Ngarrini Bi Ngya*, performed by renowned Yorta Yorta composer and soprano, Deborah Cheetham AO, with the Goldner String Quartet, developed with additional support from the Queensland Government. This performance will be sung in Wulgurukaba language, acknowledging the local Wulgurukaba people of Gurambilbarra.

"The Queensland Government has supported the Australian Festival of Chamber Music for more than three decades, enabling its showcase of music and the festival's growth as a significant cultural tourism experience that delivers economic benefits for the region. I encourage Queenslanders and visitors to the state to embrace the melodic magic of the Australian Festival of Chamber Music 2022," Ms Enoch said.

Member for Townsville and Resources Minister Scott Stewart said the AFCM highlights the diversity of world-class entertainment found in Northern Australia's events capital.

"Townsville's famous visitors experiences provide the perfect backdrop for the 2022 Australian Festival of Chamber Music," Mr Stewart said. "This is a significant cultural festival, delivering thousands of visitor nights and millions of dollars for North Queensland's visitor economy.

"We know spectacular events like the AFCM inspire visitors to sample Townsville's great hospitality and amazing tourism opportunities while providing an important boost to our local businesses. The 2022 Australian Festival of Chamber Music confirms Townsville's credentials as the North's home of cultural tourism. I can't wait to hear the AFCM's aural celebration of culture returning to Townsville."

NEW ADDITIONS FOR 2022

Guilty Pleasures – Jack Liebeck has invited musicians to select a favourite piece of music they like to perform – classical or otherwise – and at some stage during the Festival these resulting *Guilty Pleasures* will appear in concerts. Think accordionist James Crabb playing Bon Jovi's *Living on a Prayer* or cellist Trish O'Brien playing Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah!*

AFCM Illuminates – here Jack Liebeck brings together science and music, with topics including Einstein's Universe and Sea Conservation. The result will be inspiring, entertaining and educational.

Festival Garden – this hugely exciting addition sees the land beside the Townsville Civic Theatre transformed into an enchanting garden where formal and informal concerts and entertaining performances will take place, as well as pre- and post-concert gatherings. Food and wine will help create the hub of AFCM 2022. The full line up will be published closer to the Festival and most events will be free.

CONCERT HIGHLIGHTS

Friday 29 July James Cook University Opening Night Concert – *New Beginnings* includes the world premiere of Deborah Cheetham's work especially commissioned for AFCM. See above for detail.

Saturday 30 July Governor's Gala – in what will be an epic world premiere music event, 25 Australian composers have been commissioned to write short variations on Beethoven's iconic '*Ode to Joy*' to mark the 25th anniversary of the famous Goldner String Quartet.

Monday 1 August Evening Series Concert – *Entente Cordiale* – the historic 1904 agreement between the British and French ended a long period of antagonism. That cross-border cooperation sent Artistic Director Jack Liebeck on a quest to discover music from both sides of The Channel composed in the same year.

Friday 5 August Evening Series Concert – *The Silver Screen* – featuring music from the Silver Screen, from the earliest exponents of the artform to the present-day giants, it is filled with emotion and joy. Includes John Barry's *Out of Africa* theme performed by horn player Peter Luff with the Goldner String Quartet; Charlie Chaplin's *Smile* and Henry Mancini's *Moon River* to be sung by Lotte Betts-Dean with James Crabb on accordion; Morricone's *Gabriel's Oboe* from 'The Mission' performed by Simon Oswell (viola) and Daniel de Borah (piano).

Saturday 6 August - Families' Concert - Saint-Saëns *Carnival of the Animals*. This fun, engaging musical suite of 14 movements, with each movement representing a different animal, will appeal to all ages.

Over 30 music-filled years, the AFCM has forged an impressive international reputation as one of the best chamber music celebrations in the world, and while the last two years have been extremely challenging, Jack Liebeck has created a fascinating program that is as spiritually and intellectually enriching as it is celebratory; and an artistic line-up that is exceptional and exciting.

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

Concert tickets, Festival passes and holiday packages on sale from 1st February for AFCM Friends and 1st March for the general public.

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