

## ANAM RECITAL: MIRIAM NIESSL (VIOLIN) Sweet and Spicy

THURSDAY 31 OCTOBER 3.30PM  
ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

**Franz SCHUBERT (1797-1828)** Sonatina No. 1 in D Major, D. 384 (1816) 12'  
*i. Allegro molto*  
*ii. Andante*  
*iii. Allegro vivace*

**Miriam Niessl** (QLD) violin  
**Louisa Breen** (ANAM Associate Faculty) piano

**Ralph VAUGHAN WILLIAMS (1872-1958)** arr. **GERIGK** *The Lark Ascending* (1914) 16'

**Miriam Niessl** (QLD) violin  
**Louise Turnbull\*** (VIC) violin  
**Sebastian Coyne\*** (VIC) viola  
**Noah Lawrence\*** (VIC) cello

**Edouard LALO (1823-1892)** *Symphnie espagnole, op. 21* (1874) 18'

*i. Allegro non troppo*  
*ii. Scherzando*  
*iii. Intermezzo*  
*iv. Andante*  
*v. Rondo*

**Miriam Niessl** (QLD) violin  
**Louisa Breen** (ANAM Associate Faculty) piano

*Approximate duration: 60 minutes*

### ABOUT MIRIAM NIESSL

Miriam Niessl was born into a large musical family where the passion for music has brought immense joy. From the age of four, she commenced her Suzuki studies under Christine Dunaway and after being awarded her AMusA at thirteen, continued her tutelage with Camerata's Artistic Director Dr Brendan Joyce, and at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University with Michele Walsh. Miriam is excited to have commenced her studies at ANAM in 2024 with Head of Violin, Adam Chalabi. Find out more at [anam.com.au/musicians](http://anam.com.au/musicians)

*Miriam is supported by ANAM Syndicate donors Michael Schwarz and David Clouston, Julie Wehbe, Michael Tyazhky and Mila Tyazhka.*

*Louisa Breen's Associate Faculty position is generously supported by Igor Zambelli.*

*\* Denotes a musician supported by ANAM Syndicate*



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# PROGRAM NOTES

Words by Miriam Niessl

I am so excited to be sharing this recital with you today which I have titled 'sweet and spicy'. It features a mix of lush melodies and all types of flavour!

For our appetiser today, I will present a Schubert signature. **Franz Schubert's** Sonatina in D Major, composed in 1816, is a delightful example of the composer's early mastery. A 19-year-old at the time, Schubert was an emerging composer within the vibrant Viennese art scene. At the time, the Romantic movement was gaining momentum where individual expression and a greater depth for emotional exploration was arising. Renowned for its music, literature and arts, Vienna attracted many artists and intellectuals, providing Schubert with a stimulating environment that shaped his voice in his formative years. After a promising but unspectacular adolescence, Schubert exploded into a burst of creative activity in 1814 that over the next 15 months was virtually unrivalled in the history of Western music. This concentrated approach led to the creation of nearly 150 songs in his eighteenth year, averaging more than one every three days, including masterpieces such as *Gretchen am Spinnrade* (1814) and *Erlkönig* (1815).

The opening movement of his Sonatina in D introduces a charming main theme that is both joyful and reflective. The dialogue between the violin and piano is characterised by thematic interplay and variation, with moments of tension and release that showcase Schubert's gift for melodic development. The second movement contrasts the energetic first movement with both pompous and serene characters, with the violin melody among the most divine and sonorous of the Western canon. With reinforcement from the piano line, Schubert paints a picture of longing which seamlessly melts back into the opening theme. The final movement returns to a lively and playful spirit. This exuberant conclusion features spirited exchanges and playful motifs, drawing us into a joyful and exuberant finale that encapsulates the exuberance of youth. While you listen to this work, I hope you are uplifted by Schubert's portrayal of grace, innocence and charm.

For our main dish, **Ralph Vaughan Williams's** *The Lark Ascending*, inspired by George Meredith's poem of the same name, composed in 1914 for violin and piano and revised for violin and orchestra in 1920. Studying this gem of the violin repertoire with my teacher, Adam Chalabi, has been a delight, as his expert tone and nuance have been an inspiration to crafting my own performance. The piece's improvisatory flourishes, rushes of heroism, and tranquillity, alongside Vaughan Williams' characteristic use of modal harmonies and folk influences, give the piece a uniquely English character. The work is often regarded as a reflection on peace and longing, and a celebration of the beauty of the natural world, making it particularly poignant in the context of its composition during the lead-up to World War I. I hope this experience stirs your imagination.

He rises and begins to sing, The lark has been released; And he will fly up through the spring Where bright is the sun, and sweet Is the song of the lark ascending.	The world is filled with light, And the lark is in the air; The heart of man has come in sight, To sing of love and care, Of joy that is beyond delight.	And so he soars and sings, Above the earth, so high; With every note his spirit brings A peace that cannot die, As he ascends on silver wings.
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For our final dish, I will be performing the first three movements from **Édouard Lalo's** *Symphonie Espagnole*. Musicologist Michael Clive describes it as "a fabulously abundant violin showcase — non-stop fun to hear, and if you happen to be a prodigiously skilled violin virtuoso, a joy to play." While it features five movements and lacks traditional cadenzas, it has nonetheless secured its place alongside the most popular violin concertos. Though French born, Lalo was of Spanish descent, which profoundly influenced this composition. His work is infused with Spanish motifs, contributing to an exciting period in which Spanish-themed music flourished, especially among French composers. Notably, Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen* premiered just a month after *Symphonie Espagnole*. Nineteenth century violin virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate inspired Lalo to compose the work and became its strongest advocate.

The first movement is spirited and fiery, showcasing the violin's technical brilliance and expressive capabilities. The second movement is light and playful, characterised by lively rhythms and charming melodies. Within this movement, the violin introduces a spirited theme reminiscent of traditional Spanish dances like the 'jota'. In contrast, the third movement is infused with flair, embodying the essence of evocative nonchalance and passionate expression. The solo violin enters with a heartfelt melody that prominently features a habanera theme which adds a sensuous, rhythmic quality to the music. Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole* encapsulates extraordinary emotional breadth and stylistic richness that makes his work thrilling to perform.