

ANAM RECITAL: MADELEINE AARONS (HORN) A self indulgent reflection of my life

WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER 11AM
ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

Gordon JACOB (1895-1984) Horn Concerto (1951) 24'

- i. Allegro moderato*
- ii. Adagio*
- iii. Allegro con spirito, quasi presto*

Elena KATS-CHERNIN (b.1957) *Evolution for Madeleine* (2021)[^] 7'

Robert KAHN (1865-1951) *Serenade* (1922) 11'

Madeleine Aarons (NSW) horn
Daniel Le (ANAM Associate Faculty) piano
Joshua Webster (NZ) oboe

Approximate duration: 50 minutes

ABOUT MADELEINE AARONS

Originally from the UK, Madeleine Aarons is a horn player from Sydney. She completed her Bachelor of Music (Performance) at Queensland Conservatorium, under the tutelage of Peter Luff and Malcolm Stewart. She won the award for best brass recital for her final recital in 2022. In 2023, she studied with Ben Jacks and Robert Johnson, and travelled to Amsterdam for lessons with José Sogorb at the Royal Concertgebouw. At the end of 2023, Madeleine was awarded the position of Associate Fellow with the SSO for 2024 and is very keen to explore more orchestral opportunities. Madeleine is excited to have commenced her studies at ANAM in 2024 studying with Carla Blackwood. Find out more at anam.com.au/musicians

Madeleine is the 2024 Albert Scholar. She is further supported by ANAM Syndicate donors Arnis Dzedins, Mike and Jane Hall, Lee and Greg Ridder, Anna and Mark Yates.

Joshua is supported by an anonymous ANAM Syndicate donor.

[^] *World Premiere*



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PROGRAM NOTES

Gordon Jacob's concerto was originally written in 1951 for horn and string orchestra. Jacob wrote this piece for Dennis Brain who was, if not still, considered one of the greatest horn players of all time. Like many other horn concertos, this piece has three movements. The first is a cheerful introduction to the piece with many repeated notes that bounce along. As Jacob himself was an Englishman, I like to visualise the English countryside whilst playing this music. To pair this music with an English town, I would suggest the Cotswolds! With its simple but elegant melodies and triumphant flares, the horn gets to show off the range of the instrument and the power it possesses. This first movement finishes with a bold cadenza that contrasts beautifully with the second movement.

The second movement is the shortest in the concerto but makes up for its brevity with its depth and colour. This movement starts with a rich string-like legato line unusually played on the piano, which is then passed almost undetectably to the horn. The melody, whilst simple, is filled with deep feeling and romance. This movement is where the horn really gets to show off the more intimate side of the instrument with delicate soft moments and long suspended notes.

In the third movement we are reminded of the beginning of the piece with many fast and repeated notes. This time however, instead of the serious tone we are taken to a far more jovial and jollier place in the English countryside. Perhaps Devon! Whilst this music is light hearted and fun there are also virtuosic and dramatic passages that show off the horn's agility and spryness! This last movement finishes with a bang and will surely leave you with a smile on your face.

Elena Katz-Chernin was commissioned to compose *Evolution for Madeleine* as a surprise for my 21st birthday. Now at 23 I'm finally premiering this fabulous new work for horn. The piece features Katz-Chernin's unique rhythmic ostinatos. Starting with a repeated two note motif, this simple opening deceptively sets the stage for complexity to emerge. In a passage she wrote about *Evolution*, Katz-Chernin stated that "the whole piece is a little bit like a fantasy, growing out of just two notes. One of my favourite composing devices is to start a piece with a limited number of notes." This piece has many influences, including baroque passages at the start and more étude-like passages in the middle of the piece. The repeated syncopated rhythmic pattern first heard in the piano and then later in the horn is like a fragment of a dance. This piece ultimately translates my life story so far from words to music. Katz-Chernin says it best when describing this piece: "I wanted to highlight the lyrical notes of the horn as well as the agility of this warm magnificent instrument."

The last piece in this recital is Serenade by **Robert Kahn**, a fairly compact work with an interesting history. When Kahn submitted the Serenade to his publisher Simrock, the publisher was convinced that the combination of horn, piano and oboe would not sell and told Kahn that he needed to revise the piece for a more traditional ensemble. So, Kahn took the music back to the drawing board and rearranged the music for an additional nine different ensembles! Today, the original combination of instruments will be heard. Serenade is a through composed piece made up of two distinct sections. The first section is marked andante sostenuto, in which the oboe, horn and piano pass around the lamenting melody. This is then abruptly interrupted by a vigorous vivace section before transitioning back into the first melody. The second part of this piece is marked allegro non troppo, in which the horn and oboe share a folk like melody and pass it gracefully between them. This piece ends with a vibrant vivace coda to end the piece with a flourish.

Written by Madeleine Aarons