

## ANAM RECITAL: OLIVIA KOWALIK (VIOLIN) A Journey from Handel to Lutosławski

FRIDAY 8 NOVEMBER 3.30PM  
ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

**George Frideric HANDEL (1685-1759)** Violin Sonata in D major, HWV 371 13'  
(c.1750)

- i. Affettuoso*
- ii. Allegro*
- iii. Larghetto*
- iv. Allegro*

**Olivia Kowalik\*** (NSW) violin  
**Ariel Volovelsky\*** (NSW) cello  
**Louisa Breen** (ANAM Associate Faculty) harpsichord

**Witold LUTOSŁAWSKI (1913-1994)** *Subito* (1992) 5'

**Olivia Kowalik\*** (NSW) violin  
**Matthew Garvie\*** (NSW) piano

**Johannes BRAHMS (1833-1897)** Violin Sonata No. 1 in G Major, op. 78 26'  
'Regensontate' (1878-1879)

- i. Vivace ma non troppo*
- ii. Allegro – Più andante – Adagio*
- iii. Allegro molto moderato*

**Olivia Kowalik\*** (NSW) violin  
**Louisa Breen** (ANAM Associate Faculty) piano

*Approximate duration: 50 minutes*

### ABOUT OLIVIA KOWALIK

Olivia Kowalik is a violinist from Sydney and is a recent graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music where she completed her Bachelor of Music Performance studying with Janet Davies. Olivia was born into a musical family and started learning violin with her father George Kowalik from the age of four. She always knew that music was the path that she wanted to take. Olivia commenced her studies at ANAM in 2024, studying with Adam Chalabi. Find out more at [anam.com.au/musicians](https://anam.com.au/musicians)

*Olivia is supported by ANAM Syndicate donors Jeanne McMullin, Rosalind Price, Geoff and Margaret Stewart.*

*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

**George Frideric Handel's** 'Great' D Major sonata for violin is the fourth of seven sonatas that Handel wrote for solo violin. Although the set of sonatas have gone through a publication and authenticity battle throughout the centuries, these remarkable works display Handel's unquestionably sensational writing for chamber music.

The *Affetuoso*, meaning affectionate, opens with a glorious and strikingly exciting tonic chord with a ninth. This dissonant interval becomes a recurring harmonic effect throughout the first movement. The excitement continues into the second movement, but this time with fugal writing and rhythmic diminution. Lively motifs are passed around between the solo violin, the continuo and harpsichord. After this joyous display in the first two movements, the *Larghetto* creeps in with a darker tone. The violin stretches this aria-like melodic line over the gentle grounding accompaniment, before once again bursting with energy in the fourth and final movement.

**Witold Lutosławski's** *Subito* is a staple in violin repertoire that has kept growing in popularity since its composition in 1992. It was the last work he wrote for violin before his death, yet the work is an exceptional representation of Lutosławski's development in composition style across the twentieth century. In August this year, I had the delight to work on this piece with Jakub Jakowicz during his ANAM residency, and we navigated the tumultuous whiplash effect of Lutosławski's musical writing. As the title suggests, the piece features outbursts of fragments, with sudden and immediate contrasts of dynamics, tempi, and characters – a back and forth bickering of the ugly and the pretty. The piece is a flashing display of violin virtuosity and central European violinistic styles. Flavours of Wieniawski, Bartok, and Szymanowski are sprinkled within, and yet, could not have been written by anyone but Lutosławski.

When one thinks of **Johannes Brahms**, this sonata for violin and piano is exactly it. The sonata is packed with lyricism, and each movement permeates a deep nostalgic effect of motifs that are weaved in and out with a delicate chatter between the two instruments. Brahms, being the perfectionist that he is, scrapped five sonatas before publishing this one, the second work he had ever published for solo violin, the first being the famous violin concerto.

The sonata, also known as 'Regensonate', features thematic material from his own *Regenlied* (rain song) from the op. 59 set of songs, and the sonata truly shows the singing quality of the violin. It has three movements, unlike the traditional four movement structure for a sonata, opening with a glorious dotted three note motto figure over a delicate bed of chords by the piano before evolving into a lush wave of notes. This gentle configuration provides the atmosphere for the whole sonata, and the figure is revisited in the second and third movements.

The second movement begins in a solemn tempo that allows the instruments to breathe. A serene motif on the piano appears, which is then repeated in a timid whisper by the violin. The melody fights to ascend, pulling back and forth, before a dramatic outpour of the dotted figure once again, this time in the style of a funeral march. This is where we hear the *Regenlied*; the ominous E minor tune entails this "rainy" effect before the skies open once again for a rich restatement of the theme. The final movement is a rondo in G minor, and Brahms takes us through another journey of the dotted theme, this time with a bit more nerve. The *Regenlied* theme cries out once again in the middle of the movement, and an accumulation of all the themes from the previous movements are reignited by the coda.

The sonata captures some of Brahms' wonderfully expressive writing of motifs and musical conversations, offering a beautifully intimate work for the violin and piano.

*Written by Olivia Kowalik*