

ANAM RECITAL: MARIA ZHDANOVICH (FLUTE)

10 Dollars Never Went So Far

WEDNESDAY 30 JULY 11AM
ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

Brenda GIFFORD (b. 1968) <i>Budjaan</i> ('Bird') (2025)*	6'
Béla BARTÓK (1881-1945) <i>Suite Paysanne Hongroise</i> (1956)	13'
Jean-Michel DAMASE (1928-2013) <i>Rhapsodie</i> (1992)	11'
Improvisation	12'
Maria Zhdanovich (SA) flute #	
Sola Hughes (QLD) violin #	
Jack Overall (SA) cello #	
Louisa Breen (ANAM Associate Faculty) piano	

Approximate duration: 50 minutes

ABOUT MARIA ZHDANOVICH

Maria Zhdanovich began learning to play the flute at the age of 6 in her hometown of Saint Petersburg, Russia. After moving to Australia at the age of 8, Maria studied with Alison Rosser, Elizabeth Koch AM, and Julia Grenfell, before commencing her studies with Alison Mitchell at ANAM in 2023.

In her third and final year at ANAM in 2025 under Alison Mitchell, Maria hopes to continue weaving together improvisation, contemporary Australian music and beloved classical repertoire to create unique performance experiences.

Maria is supported by ANAM Syndicate donors Ruth Ball, Annabelle Lundy Wason, Anonymous.

Denotes ANAM musicians supported by ANAM Syndicate donors or foundations.

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

** The 2025 ANAM Set commissions are supported by the Anthony and Sharon Lee Foundation.*

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ANAM respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands spread across Australia on which we work and live. We uphold and honour their continued relationship to these sites, we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

PROGRAM NOTES

Coming to the end of my time here at ANAM, I wanted to showcase a program that encapsulates the last three years: a time spent learning, practicing, listening and sharing. Ultimately, this program celebrates how we, as musicians, have the privilege of becoming vessels for storytelling. To tell stories in need of preservation, stories celebrating the vastness of humanity, stories that connect us across cultural backgrounds and stories that exist momentarily between us, grounded to this exact place and time.

I am very excited to premiere **Brenda Gifford's** *Budjaan* as part of the 2025 ANAM Set. A Yuin woman from Wreck Bay, NSW, Brenda draws deeply upon her indigenous heritage to craft works that reflect the cyclical nature of life, speak to the interconnectedness of everything on this land, and, most importantly, aim to reclaim her Dhurga language. *Budjaan* — the Dhurgha word for "bird" — is not just a flute solo, but a spiritual invocation of the composer's totem. In Indigenous Australian culture, totems can provide guidance, protection, and a deep sense of belonging to the earth. *Budjaan* voices the blessings of Brenda's totem, traverses Yuin Country, and echoes the sacred reciprocal bond between human and spirit. It is an honour to be a small but meaningful part of chronicling Brenda's ancestral knowledge through working on this piece, and I feel privileged to participate in the rich tradition of storytelling that has existed on these lands for thousands of years.

Jean-Michel Damase composed this *Rhapsodie* as a bold and brilliant showcase for flute and piano. Steeped in the lush harmonic world of Fauré, Ravel and Poulenc, Damase is a thorough embodiment of the French musical tradition, demonstrated by his sixty-year career as a pianist, conductor and prolific composer. Originally scored for flute and string orchestra, this virtuosic version of *Rhapsodie* retains its sweeping emotional breadth and dazzling energy whilst being technically demanding, coming together into an expressively joyous and bold show piece. For me, this work embodies French theatrical flair and exuberant story telling.

Suite Paysanne Hongroise is constructed of folk songs of rural Hungary, which **Béla Bartók** collected in person, often by phonograph, from peasant villages in the early 1900s. French-Hungarian flautist Paul Arma, a student of Bartók, reimagined various piano miniatures by Bartok into a vivid narrative for flute and piano. Constantly shifting in mood from rustic playfulness to soulful modal lament, this work combines a sense of magic realism, such as in Gabriel Garcia Márquez's *A Thousand Years of Solitude*, with the type of musical story telling explored in Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. From the very opening I feel I'm stepping into a lineage of music carried by breath, shaped by dance, and passed from ear to ear.

Improvisation as a practice has become a vital part of my musical life. It sharpens the same muscles as chamber music — intonation, rhythm, ensemble awareness, and listening — but perhaps with added vulnerability. There is no score, no safety net, just pure presence. I use improvisation as both a technical and emotional reset. It reminds me that music is not only about precision or perfection, but about risk, responsiveness, and voice. That is why I feel very fortunate to be joined on stage for this last musical performance by Jack Overall and Sola Hughes, two musicians who I deeply respect for their creativity, musical candidness and sincerity as performers.

I would like to thank my peers, the wonderful audience that supports us ardently, all the administrative and musical staff, my syndicate supporters, my family and my flute teacher Alison Mitchell for the joy, experience and learning over my time at ANAM.

Words by Maria Zhdanovich