

## ANAM RECITAL: TOBY SWARD (TROMBONE)

### Story Telling

THURSDAY 23 OCTOBER 1.30PM

ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

|                                                                    |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>Daniel SCHNYDER (b. 1961)</b> <i>Rhythm in Blue</i> (2009) ^    | 6'  |
| <b>Vincent PERSICHETTI (1915-1987)</b> <i>Parable</i> (1979)       | 5'  |
| <b>Elgar HOWARTH (1935-2025)</b> Trombone Concerto (1960)          | 20' |
| <i>i. Moderato</i>                                                 |     |
| <i>ii. Lento</i>                                                   |     |
| <i>iii. Vivace</i>                                                 |     |
| <b>Stjepan ŠULEK (1914-1986)</b> <i>Sonata Vox Gabrieli</i> (1973) | 9'  |

**Toby Sward** (TAS) trombone

**Aidan Boase** (ANAM Associate Faculty) piano

*Approximate duration: 45 minutes*

### ABOUT TOBY SWARD

Toby is in his first year at ANAM studying under Colin Prichard.

With a love for performing orchestral music, Toby has previously had opportunities to perform alongside the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, the Australian Youth Orchestra and the University of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Of these experiences he has most enjoyed performing ballet suites of Stravinsky and Prokofiev.

Toby also enjoys performing both in chamber ensembles and as a soloist. In particular he seeks out opportunities to play in brass-based chamber ensembles and to perform pieces with unconventional instrumentation and in terms of solo performance he loves playing works for unaccompanied trombone.

In his free time Toby enjoys following YouTube and internet rabbit holes, so that he can become better at knowing only a little bit about a lot of things.

*Toby is supported by ANAM Syndicate donor the Anthony and Sharon Lee Foundation.*

^ *Australian premiere.*

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## PROGRAM NOTES

**Daniel Schnyder** is a jazz saxophonist and composer who has written extensively for both tenor and bass trombone, with his vast catalogue including solo works, trombone ensemble works and duets for trombone and saxophone. Having had new exposure to Schnyder's trombone writing while at ANAM it became clear that his works pose a carefully crafted challenge for the performer. He knows just where and how he can push the virtuosic limits of a trombonist to provide a fulfilling challenge. A version of *Rhythm in Blue*, dedicated to jazz trombonist Jay Jay Jameson, was written as a set piece for the bass trombone section of the Aeolus Brass and Wind Competition in 2006.

**Vincent Persichetti's** series of parables consists of twenty-five works, the majority for unaccompanied solo instruments, as well as one piece for wind ensemble and an opera. In literature, a parable is a short fictional story intended to teach a simple universal lesson on life and truth. In describing his use of the word parable, Persichetti is quite cryptic. His given definition of parable as a novel musical form is a "non-programmatic musical essays about a single germinal idea." Persichetti has also said that "my Parables are music where I'm avoiding a truth in order to make a point. Many of my Parables are music about other things that I have written, or personal things that I have become involved with."

**Elgar Howarth** had an immense impact on the brass world through his work as a trumpet player, a composer/arranger and a conductor based mainly in Britain and his compositional works were a major contributor to the catalogue of the immensely influential Phillip Jones brass ensemble. Howarth's trombone concerto is one of his earliest original compositions. Inspired by the playing of his trombonist brother he set out to showcase that "the trombone was a very noble instrument and rather serious."

On his trombone concerto, Howarth describes how the inspiration for the first movement came from the works of Paul Hindemith, in particular his trumpet sonata, which Howarth had fond memories of playing when he was young. In the last movement, Howarth takes from elements of Schoenberg's twelve-tone system. Throughout the use of these differing styles, Howarth makes the interval of the major seventh a melodic feature. Most commonly in Western music, the major seventh is used to create a dissonance that is resolved soon after. In his concerto, Howarth very skilfully plays with this interval, finding ways to vary how much dissonance it creates and even finding a sense of calm within a normally uncomfortable melodic relationship.

Although not present in modern editions, academic texts claim the concerto to have the subtitle 'Allegorical' – as in having a hidden meaning, in literature usually being with a moral impetus. The unusual thematic structure of the piece seems to me more and more programmatic as I have delved into it and its history and beautifully evokes moments of sorrow and reflection.

One of the most esteemed works in the trombone repertoire is **Stjepan Šulek's** sonata for trombone and piano. Commissioned by the International Trombone Association in 1975, the work is part of an initiative to expand the library of serious works written for trombone. The sonata's subtitle, *Vox Gabrielli*, means 'Voice of Gabriel'. Gabriel refers to the archangel of the same name from the Abrahamic faiths, known as a messenger who speaks the will of God to humanity. The work exudes all the immense power that that theme implies, creating an alarmingly full and sonorous texture from only two instruments. In the Old Testament of the Christian Bible, Gabriel announces the end of times with a trumpet call, and perhaps the transposition of this call onto the trombone is an even more dramatic portrayal of that prophetic sound.

*Words by Toby Sward*