

ANAM RECITAL: LIAM FUREY (PIANO)

Furey plays with 'Whimsey'!

WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 1.30PM

ROSINA AUDITORIUM, ABBOTSFORD CONVENT

Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART (1756-1791) Piano Concerto No. 12 in A Major, K. 414 (1782) 23'

- i. Allegro
- ii. Andante
- iii. Allegretto

Jean FRANÇAIX (1912-1997) Trio (1994) 16'

- i. Adagio – Allegro moderato
- ii. Risoluto
- iii. Andante
- iv. Finale

Carl VINE (b. 1954) Five Bagatelles (1994) 14'

- i. —
- ii. —
- iii. —
- iv. —
- v. Threnody (for all the innocent victims)

Rodion SHCHEDRIN (1932-2025) Humoresque, op. 20 no. 4 (1957) 3'

Liam Furey * (NZ) piano
Shannon Rhodes * (WA) violin
Olivia Bartlett * (WA) violin
Jamie Miles * (VIC) viola
Ariel Volovelsky * (NSW) cello
Allan McBean * (SA) double bass
Shelby MacRae * (NSW) bassoon
Alexandra King (alum 2023) oboe

Approximate duration: 60 minutes

Liam is supported by ANAM Syndicate donors Aurel Dessewffy and Olga Vujovic, Tony and Alison Kelly, Anthony Knight OAM & Beverly Knight, Laurel and Lyndsay Mott, Robert Whitehead.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Playing with 'Whimsey' presents works from four composers, each work showcasing intricacy of writing, subverting musical expectations, and evoking playfulness. The program begins with Mozart's quintessential writing, harkening to opera buffa in a concerto setting. Françaix's chamber trio, written after the twentieth century revival of classical forms, presents a larger range of tone and harmonic colours. Vine's *Bagatelles* for solo piano is inspired by the composer's history of playing for dancers, heard in its syncopated rhythm. Finally, Shchedrin's *Humoresque* is instructed to be played in the opera buffa style, contrasting elegance with vulgarity, resulting in something remarkably theatrical.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 12 was composed in the autumn of 1782, to be played in a set of concerts that winter. Programmed alongside other works of his own, one can imagine buzzing patrons excited to hear music from the master: adults in conversation, children playing, and overarching joy felt. This concerto evokes different moods in each movement; the first movement serenity, the second movement radiant love, and the third movement cheekiness, interspersed with moodier *Sturm und Drang* episodes. Interestingly, the second movement quotes J.C. Bach's overture from *La calamita de' cuori*. Johann Christoph died in January 1782, and the concerto is a fitting tribute for a musician that influenced Mozart when he was a young boy.

"Among the child's gifts I observe above all the most fruitful an artist can possess, that of curiosity: you must not stifle these precious gifts now or ever, or risk letting this young sensibility wither." —Maurice Ravel, on the young Jean Françaix

The precocious **Jean Françaix** went from impressing Maurice Ravel and studying with Nadia Boulanger to become one of France's most vibrant and prolific composers, in his own words "constantly composing" throughout his life. Françaix wrote his trio for oboe, bassoon and piano as part of a commission for the 24th Festival of the Double Reed Society. Though this trio is one of his last works written in his life, it still bursts with an incredibly youthful sound. The outer movements, both quite care-free and agile in nature, sandwich a capricious, episodic scherzo and a lush, yet subdued andante.

In 1995, **Carl Vine** was asked to play for The Australian National AIDS Trust's annual fundraising dinner. He decided to write a work for the occasion, resulting in *Threnody*. To not make *Threnody* seem "redundant" (in the composer's own words), Vine later wrote four additional pieces to form his Five Bagatelles. The first four bagatelles play with ever-evolving rhythms, harmonies and textures, typical of Vine's music. *Threnody* concludes the set, presenting a radical contrast from the prior bagatelles: sparse yet wide in texture, simple in rhythm, and delicate in sentiment. The context for the first four movements is changed, revealing a message on the delicacy of life, especially for LGBTQ+ communities living through the AIDS crisis. Perhaps because of life's fleeting nature, the joy we experience becomes infinitely more valuable.

Rodion Shchedrin was a Soviet-born virtuoso composer, pianist and conductor. A pivotal figure in the Soviet cultural scene, Shchedrin won the USSR State Prize and Lenin Prize, becoming president of the Union of Russian Composers in 1973. However, he was also critical of the Soviet regime, incorporating western experimental trends in his music and working in the Inter-Regional Deputies Group, inspired by opposition to the Soviet Union. His op. 20 collection of piano pieces represented one of his many attempts to break from the strict expectations of Soviet Russia, playing with dissonance and gesture in a Stravinsky-esque fashion. His *Humouresque* instructs the performer to play the work in an opera buffa style, inviting interpretations that are not very serious. The light, dance-light figure that is throughout the left hand is constantly interrupted with quirky (and at times, ugly) dissonances.

Words by Liam Furey