
ANAM ORCHESTRA GALA

WITH ASHER FISCH

Friday 21 March 2025, 7pm
Elisabeth Murdoch Hall,
Melbourne Recital Centre

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.

MESSAGE FROM ANAM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

All of us at ANAM are truly excited about this orchestral opening of our season in Melbourne, and I also want to warmly welcome everyone who is present to share in the excitement. It feels profoundly satisfying to be back after some years with a full symphonic program in the gorgeous Elisabeth Murdoch Hall, and especially so under the brilliant baton of maestro Asher Fisch, a dear friend and a cherished collaborator from our many projects with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra.

This evening's program captures elements that are important to the ANAM ethos. We take it as our mission to bring the next generation of musicians into an artform that is anchored in the best that tradition can offer and allied with the most innovative composers of our time. Music is a force that has limitless power, it speaks to all of us together and to every one of us individually. It joins people in and across time. Music is also a phenomenon that is sensitive to its surroundings, like all art it cannot but reflect the world around. I invite you to thoroughly enjoy tonight's program and join in taking pride in what we have been able to accomplish on our way here.

Paavali Jumppanen

ANAM Artistic Director

The position of ANAM Artistic Director is supported by Janet Holmes à Court AC, and John and Rosemary Macleod.

GALA PROGRAM

Asher Fisch conductor

ANAM Orchestra

Anna CLYNE (b. 1980) *This Midnight Hour* (2015) 12'

Lachlan SKIPWORTH (b. 1982) Flute Concerto (2024) 23'

i. Misterioso

ii. Larghetto espressivo

iii. Misterioso – Tranquillo

iv. Molto allegro – Presto subito

Andrew Nicholson flute

INTERVAL 20'

Johannes BRAHMS (1833-1897) Symphony No. 2 in D Major, op. 73 (1877) 39'

i. Allegro non troppo

ii. Adagio non troppo

iii. Allegretto grazioso

iv. Allegro con spirito

Approximate duration: 2 hours including interval

Asher Fisch's Artistic Residency at ANAM is supported by David and Gai Taylor.

This performance will be available as a delayed broadcast by our broadcast partner, ABC Classic, on Wednesday 16 April, 1pm AEST.



ASHER FISCH CONDUCTOR

Asher Fisch is a renowned symphonic and operatic conductor, celebrated for his interpretative mastery of the core German and Italian repertoire of the Romantic and post-Romantic eras. Since 2014, he has been the Principal Conductor & Artistic Adviser of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO).

Born in Israel, Fisch began his career as Daniel Barenboim's assistant and Kappellmeister at the Berlin Staatsoper. He has conducted at major opera houses worldwide, including the Metropolitan Opera, Vienna Staatsoper, and Semperoper Dresden. He has led prestigious orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, and London Symphony Orchestra.

In 2023, Fisch was appointed Music Director of the Tiroler Festspiele in Ebn, Austria. Known for its dedication to the works of Wagner, the Tiroler Festspiele will present *Parsifal* during Easter 2025.

In 2025, Fisch's engagements include *La Bohème*, *Parsifal*, and three Verdi operas at the Tiroler Festspiele, *Il Trovatore* with the West Australian Opera, Britten's *War Requiem* in Düsseldorf, among others.



ANDREW NICHOLSON SOLOIST

Andrew Nicholson is currently Principal Flute of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO).

Andrew studied at Chetham's School of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. Since the age of 22, he has held Principal Flute positions with the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, the Halle Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and WASO, and regularly appears as guest Principal Flautist with ensembles around the world.

Andrew gives masterclasses at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) and the University of Western Australia (UWA), and has given masterclasses in the UK, Europe, North America, Asia, and Australia. He has coached the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain, Australian World Youth Orchestra, the National Youth Orchestra of Wales, and the Australian Youth Orchestra.

Andrew Nicholson is a Global Ambassador for Trevor James Flutes, and plays on a Recital ST-3 Trevor James flute.

Andrew Nicholson appears courtesy of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO).

ABOUT ANAM

The Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) is an international, dynamic and outward-facing cultural institution, training and performance company, with a demonstrated commitment to engaging with its communities. It is internationally renowned as the only purely classical music performance training academy in Australia, and one of the few in the world.

ANAM has industry partnerships with over 20 organisations, including the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Melbourne, Sydney, Tasmanian and West Australian Symphony Orchestras, the Auckland Philharmonia, Musica Viva Australia, a range of national music and arts festivals, and internationally with the Berliner Philharmoniker, the Bayerische Staatsorchester (Munich), Mahler Chamber Orchestra (Berlin) and London's Royal College of Music.

Alongside NIDA, the Australian Ballet School, NAISDA Dance College and other leading institutions, ANAM is a member of the Australian Government-funded Arts8 group of performing arts training organisations. The Arts8 are committed to providing the high level and intense studio-based training necessary to ensuring that the national performing arts sector has a pipeline of creative talent that will enable it to continue telling Australian stories for generations.

ANAM alumni are found in many of the world's leading orchestras and ensembles, and ANAM's intensive schedule brings together a global network of artists and performers who provide invaluable mentorship and guidance for emerging young musicians through public performances, in-residence masterclasses and other programs.

Find out more anam.com.au

WHAT'S COMING UP

ANAM AT THE CONVENT: BOULEZ RULES!

Boulez's commitment to pushing the boundaries of the traditional concert experience and his fierce advocacy for the avant-garde marked him as a pivotal figure in the 20th-century music scene. Experience a whole evening of concerts and talks dedicated to Boulez's music featuring ANAM Musicians, ANAM Artistic Director Paavali Jumppanen, and conductor Fabian Russell.

Friday 11 April 2025, 6pm, 8pm, 10pm

Abbotsford Convent

Tickets from \$20

More info and bookings anam.com.au

ANAM IN VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

ANAM Musicians will continue their dynamic start to the year, performing at Beleura House and Garden in Mornington, and in side-by-side projects with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra in March and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in April.

Find out more anam.com.au

ANAM ORCHESTRA

In alphabetical order

Violin

James Armstrong (ANAM alum)
Olivia Bartlett * (WA)
Adrian Biemmi (ANAM alum)
Raistlin Chan (guest)
Ian Chiao * (NZ)
Noah Coyne * (VIC)
Peter Gjelsten (ANAM alum)
Sola Hughes * (QLD)
Concertmaster #
Sophia Jones * (QLD)
Concertmaster -
Principal 2nd +
Natalie Kendy (guest)
Olivia Kowalik * (NSW)
Benjamin Lam (guest)
Lachlan MacLaren * (VIC)
Jasmine Milton * (SA)
Miriam Niessl * (QLD)
Principal 2nd # -
Najia Hanna (guest)
Shannon Rhodes * (WA)
Lydia Sawires * (NSW)
Lili Stephens * (QLD)
Louise Turnbull * (VIC)
Hannah Tyrrell * (VIC)
Ezra Uxo Williams (guest)
Theonie Wang * (QLD)
Concertmaster +
Daisy Wong * (NSW)

Viola

Helena Burns * (QLD)
Daniel Casey (VIC)
Sebastian Coyne (ANAM alum)
Angelina Kim * (QLD) +
Lachlan McKie * (VIC)
Jamie Miles * (VIC)
Mattea Osenk * (SA) #
Hanna Wallace * (NSW) -
Daniel You * (QLD)

Cello

Fergus Ascot * (VIC)
Isaac Davis * (NSW) -
Boudewijn Keenan * (NZ)
Heesoo Kim * (QLD)
Cindy Masterman * (QLD)
Jack Overall * (SA) #
Ariel Volovelsky * (NSW) +
Max Wung * (WA)

Double Bass

Sophia Buchanan (guest)
Damien Eckersley (ANAM Faculty)
Maddison Furlan * (VIC) # -
Allan McBean * (SA) +

Flute

Braden Simm * (QLD) -
Emica Taylor * (NZ) #
Maria Zhdanovich * (SA) +

Oboe

Ethan Seto (QLD)
Alex Tsang * (NSW) +
Joshua Webster * (NZ) #

Clarinet

Karen Chen * (NSW) #
Josephine Daniel * (QLD) -
Georgia White * (VIC) +

Bassoon

William Hanna (VIC) #
Shelby MacRae * (NSW)
Stephanie Sheridan * (WA) +

Horn

Madeleine Aarons * (NSW) +
Tom Allen * (VIC)
Oliver Harris * (NSW)
Emma John * (WA) #
Emily Miers (VIC) -

Trumpet

Elizabeth Dawson * (NSW) #
Lewis Grey * (NZ)
Stephen Mosa'ati * (NZ) +
Koominka * (NSW) -

Trombone Tenor

Max Gregg (NSW) #
Harrison Steele-Holmes (VIC) +
Toby Sward (TAS) -

Trombone Bass

Angus Pace * (VIC) # +

Tuba

Robin Hall * (NSW) # +

Timpani

Steven Bryer (QLD) # +

Percussion

Caleb Goldsmith * (NZ) # -
Jonathan Parker * (WA)

Harp

Paul Nicolaou (guest) -

Piano

Francis Atkins * (NSW) -

Denotes Principal Players

Clyne
- Skipworth
+ Brahms

* Denotes ANAM musicians supported
by ANAM Syndicate donors or ANAM
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PROGRAM NOTES

*Music —
a naked woman
running mad through the pure night*
(Juan Ramón Jiménez, tr. Robert Bly)

British-born **Anna Clyne** took inspiration from two poems when constructing *This Midnight Hour*: the stanza above paired with Charles Baudelaire's *Harmonie du soir*. Unlike the in-vogue symphonic poem – a series of scenes directly following a chosen or created text – Clyne states that the music does not intend to “depict a specific narrative,” allowing listeners to create their own journeys.

Unexpected orchestration tricks by Clyne make this “mad” dash through the night a more entertaining journey – one moment sees the sound physically sweep from left to right as entries cascade through the strings, and another evokes an accordion (as if on a Parisian street corner, inspired by Baudelaire), created by consecutive quarter-tone clashes in the violas. The final section of the work, reflective and at rest, sees the two trumpets playing antiphonally from the rear of the stage, calling out to each other in an acoustically-forced stereo effect.

Both Clyne and Perth-born **Lachlan Skipworth** have been described as having “rare gifts” as melodists. Though each work is undoubtedly original in sound, there's a merging of past and future with considered construction and a few earworms to help. Strings of melodies and vignette-like structures lend a cinematic quality to each work, with the pacing both visually and emotionally evocative.

Skipworth, who studied clarinet and shakuhachi before turning to composition, approaches his flute concerto with a special affinity for woodwinds. Skipworth aimed to avoid the “textures of impressionism” that airy, ethereal flutes often inspire, and inspiration from the classical clarinet concerti of Weber and Mozart collide with Skipworth's fresh and frequently joyful rhetoric across these four movements, premiered by Fisch and Nicholson in May of last year. Behind the flute, you may notice the piano unusually placed at the centre of the orchestra – a deliberate choice by Skipworth to unify the orchestra around its clear attack and clean, precise sound, which drives the work forward, at times in unison or echoing the flute.

In describing the genesis of the concerto, Skipworth reveals the musical material is largely derived from “a three-note melodic cell... a falling step and then a rising leap.” This insight into the technique used to construct the symphony shows affinity with one of the great symphonic architects: **Johannes Brahms**.

Like a fractal, the closer you look at the music of Brahms, the more detail you find. Like Skipworth's spinning out of one melodic idea, the Second Symphony is constructed from a handful of motifs that, through Brahms's use of variation and mastery of structure, create forty minutes of beauty. The three note “do ti do” cello opening of the Symphony subsequently appears flipped, slower, quicker, higher and lower – any which way, making it a near-constant companion through this first movement. From the aching beauty of the string melodies in the second movement to the forest frolicking in the finale, each movement is a treasure box of detail for the listener to unpick and find fresh details on the second, tenth or fiftieth listen.

From his earliest published chamber works, this technique of motific variation is at the core of Brahms's compositional style. It was remarkable to Clara and Robert Schumann (at whose doorstep Brahms appeared ‘fully formed’ at just twenty, astounding both), remarkable to Arnold Schoenberg (who saw his mastery of variation as the foundation of musical modernism), and remains remarkable today.

Part of this fastidiousness surely stems from his famously strong-willed and uncompromising character (“gruff with a heart of gold”), which saddled him with the weight of perfectionism alongside his unmatched technical skill. Though the Second Symphony took just a few months to write, the First took twenty-one laboured years to finish. As his chamber works gained acclaim, the immense expectation that Brahms could take the symphonic mantle of Ludwig van Beethoven grew. And though the transition from smaller chamber forces to the challenge of the full orchestra was not complete (the first piano concerto was met with disapproval), a growing catalogue that included the Variations on a Theme by Haydn and the German Requiem set the stage for Brahms to triumphantly rise to the challenge of succeeding Beethoven – his first symphony occasionally and affectionately gets called Beethoven's Tenth.

Though the Second took a comparative fraction of the time to write, it is by no means a reduction in care or detail. Both liberated from the weight of expectation and inspired by the surrounds of Pörtlach am Wörthersee, there's a pastoral liveness and verdant joy running through the symphony. Like the Skipworth and Clyne that follow nearly a century and a half after it, Brahms lets the music speak for itself outside of more textual dictations in the veins of symphonic poems, and perhaps through bypassing narrative straight to the humanism he and his fellow Romantics so believed music to hold.

*Program notes written by Alex Owens, ANAM Music Librarian,
Robert Salzer Foundation Library*

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