

Activism

– Page 2

Q+A with Katy Woolley

– Page 3

Event Calendar

– Page 4 & 5

Sounds of Australia

– Page 6

Giving voice to the unheard – Brisbane Music Festival

– Page 7

ANAM Trombone Quartet: A Journey to Frankfurt

– Page 7

Performing and recording the ANAM Set

– Page 8



Activism

In this year's Brave New Worlds concert series at ANAM, we explore the relationship between some of the most beloved masterpieces in our repertoire and the cultural spaces that surround them. Across the three concerts so far, we've witnessed how the Enlightenment informed Mozart's music, the stylistic clashes that occurred in early 19th century Europe, and, most recently, how the dreadful demise of humanism in the wake of World War II was reflected in music. The final concert in the series delves into the entanglements of activism and music.

The popular narrative of the Western classical canon is overflowing with heroes who were often real activists. Bach was a self-taught and stubborn man who wanted to reform German church music; the divinely gifted Mozart fought to replace stories filled with nobility with sheer "soap" in opera; Beethoven scarcely missed an opportunity to demonstrate his republican beliefs, even basing his only opera (which unfolded over an inner battle lasting 15 years) on a righteous heroine fighting a tyrant; Amy Beach's music comes to us as a demonstration of the awakening of emancipation; and John Cage's silence is a testament to a pacifist agenda on par with Gandhi's, regardless of whether the force to be torn down was a regime of bar lines and key signatures or simply colonial government.

All of the above is true about the actions of our beloved heroes. But human history, and music as one of its most enchanting chapters, is not a coherent great story in which one genius always passes the torch to the next. Despite their roles, it wasn't simply due to those brilliant people that the high Baroque transitioned into the Galant Style, which then cultivated Viennese Classicism, which then (mostly due to Beethoven and Schubert) dissolved into Romanticism, Expressionism, and Neo-Classicism... we all know this creed of music history. We love to experience the past through the art we cherish, and it may also be helpful for studying purposes to identify the various stylistic milieus of the past. But to be sure, reality has always been infinitely more complex, fuzzy, and vague than a simplified timeline suggests. Between the noticeable trends, there were many more countertrends, sometimes successful and often forgotten, but always beautiful paths filled with fruits of creation. The agents of art's perpetuum mobile, the spinners of the never-resting kaleidoscope of stylistic evolution, were infinitely more manifold than the single geniuses we tend to credit.

Rather than focusing on activists, we should focus on activism itself. Identifying Hildegard of Bingen as a role model, an educated woman and a skilful composer, makes a lot of sense. Another great matriarch, and one featured in ANAM's upcoming Brave New Worlds concert, Pauline Oliveros, embedded her ideas of a society she dreamed of into the fabric of her music. Her works bring down the wall between performers and audience, serving as prototypes of a well-functioning democracy. Both women deserve credit for their actions, but what about the people who helped them reach positions where they became so influential? What about the writers of the books they read? And what about the crowd who yearned for their message and amplified it greatly? What about the air they breathed?



Pauline Oliveros and the ♀ Ensemble performing *Teach Yourself to Fly* from *Sonic Meditations*, 1970, Rancho Santa Fe, CA. Photo courtesy Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California, San Diego.

Words by Paavali Jumppanen

Today's concert-goers, whether walking to their nearby church, concert hall, or taking a bus to the Abbotsford Convent, can take pride in participating in an act of community-building, which clearly qualifies as an activist gesture. The hundreds of parents who take their thousands of children to sing in choirs, play in school bands, or perform at Suzuki festivals around Melbourne every weekend are, in fact, a big activist mob fighting against consumerist culture and the tyranny of the digital. Even historical musicology, a discipline which for too long focused on the study of composer geniuses, has now identified "music as a cultural practice" as a powerful starting point for expanding our understanding (and thus enjoyment) of the historic works we love to keep performing.

Do join us on 24 October 2024 to hear the sounds of activism. Come and encounter the Swiss activist William Tell as imagined by Gioachino Rossini. Works by Ukrainian composer Valentyn Silvestrov are also featured. His inquiry into Kitsch is a clear activist deed in a music world that rather expects complexity from contemporary composers. When programming this concert, I asked the ANAM Musicians to tell us what they felt their music-making should respond to in today's world. Their answers were a bit surprising, but they are indeed reflected in the final program. I look forward to sharing with you, in the Brave New Worlds: Activism concert, both a summary of that conversation and the actual works that this dialogue with the ANAM Musicians helped us find.

BRAVE NEW WORLDS: ACTIVISM

Thursday 24 October 3pm

ANAM Musicians

Venue Rosina Auditorium, Abbotsford Convent

Tickets from \$20

Bookings anam.com.au or 03 9645 7911

THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who generously donated to the ANAM *Nurture a Musician Appeal* earlier this year. Your generous contribution to such a vital aspect of our musicians' training is hugely valued, and reveals the strong band of supporters around them. Your gift ensures each musician receives the necessary supports when needed – whether mental or physical – and provides preventative education and resources through ANAM's Health and Wellbeing Program. Thank you!

Q+A with Katy Woolley

Guest artist interview



Katy Woolley is considered one of the most exciting horn players of her generation. She is currently the Principal Horn of Amsterdam's Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and holds the position of International Visiting Professor at the Royal Academy of Music in London. Before she arrives at ANAM for a residency this October, we got the chance to ask her some questions about the horn and her career so far.

Your journey with the French horn began at a young age. Can you share what initially drew you to the instrument and how your relationship with it has evolved over the years?

While there were a number of chancy circumstances that brought me to the horn, looking back I think I was drawn by the fact it appealed to all of the senses; the smooth feel of the metal and the way it changed temperature as you played, it is so visually beautiful, the smell of the brass and oil combined with the slightly mysterious mustiness of the case which clacked as it opened, then of course the sound! I had already played the cornet and comparatively the rich soulfulness was just magical. And I'm really happy to say that's where the relationship is back to now! Although it's taken a while to get there with big bumps along the way to overcome disappointments, technical challenges and the ups and downs of life stages...

As Principal Horn of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, you've worked with some of the world's finest conductors and soloists. How have these experiences shaped your approach to performance and interpretation?

Working with anyone at the height of their potential is just the most life-enhancing and inspiring thing. There are absolute standout moments, which are sometimes whole performances like when Daniil Trifonov somehow created a whole new world in 30 minutes, down to tiny moments like Isabelle Faust playing an encore where the last note seemed to float like a silk thread out into the hall, then the way Mariss Jansons started a week with such determined strictness but melted into allowing such beautiful freedom from his players. Each one just makes me think "how can I bring that to my horn playing?". Then in terms of interpretations, it's actually very freeing! Everyone plays so uniquely and differently that it makes you really realise there is no right or wrong, so why are we so obsessed with it? The best players simply play from the heart.

The horn is often described as one of the most challenging instruments to master. What are some of the most significant technical or mental challenges you've faced in your career, and how have you overcome them?

Yes they do say that don't they! I'm not sure it is inherently the most challenging, but I do think it holds up the strongest mirror to the player if that makes sense... however you are feeling, however your body is responding, your horn will hold up a mirror to that. So if you're feeling stressed (which can be often!) and your body is tight or air isn't flowing or you've got the shakes, then the horn will respond to that in undesirable ways. I certainly experienced that when both the technical and mental sides of my playing spiralled together: playing became simply about surviving which pushed the cycle further down... I had to take time off playing to reconnect to why I wanted to play the horn again.

You've been an inspiration to many young horn players. What advice would you give to students and emerging artists who aspire to have a career in orchestral music?

Know why you love it!! And love what makes you you (musically speaking but I suppose everything else too)! And develop a growth mindset. With auditions and potentially hundreds of concerts a year, there will always be variation in 'success', but if you can define success as growth, development or learning then you are charting your strongest path towards a musically satisfying, happy and healthy life.

In addition to your orchestral work, you're also active as a soloist and chamber musician. How do you balance these different roles, and what do you find most fulfilling about each?

They all enhance each other really! The orchestral is my biggest love where you can explore the most in terms of repertoire, instrument/sound combinations, etc. But then chamber stuff is when you learn how vital and fun it can be to play multiple rolls, both sound wise and personality, a bit like an actor using different voices. Solo works are where I get the most nervous so that's often when I technically learn the most, as the foundations need to be so much stronger, and then that just feeds back into the orchestral stuff – lovely!

Looking ahead to your time at ANAM, tell us about what your plans are with the ANAM musicians.

I'm hoping we're going to have fun and create something beautiful together! The program we're playing is absolutely heavenly. I'm so excited to work with each individual musician, the ANAM musicians are world famous for their level and dedication. Then coming together and creating something greater than the individual parts – that's where the magic happens.

And finally, how do you see your role as an artist evolving in the coming years?

Tricky to know! I just hope that I will continue to learn and grow to find new ways of bringing special moments to audiences, will that be simply in the orchestra, through teaching, multi-art disciplines? Who knows! But coming to ANAM in October and working with the musicians here will definitely be a moment when evolution is inevitable. I'm definitely going to learn so much from their unique talents and the work we do together.

ANAM MASTERCLASS: KATY WOOLLEY

Thursday 10 October 10.30am

Repertoire and musicians to be advised

Venue Rosina Auditorium, Abbotsford Convent

Tickets All tickets \$15

Bookings anam.com.au or 03 9645 7911

ANAM Masterclasses are supported by the Robert Salzer Foundation

MOSTLY MOZART: SINFONIA CONCERTANTE

Wednesday 16 October 11am

TOWER *Third Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman*

LAURIDSEN *O Magnum Mysterium*

BARBER *Mutations From Bach*

MOZART Sinfonia Concertante for Four Winds in E-flat Major, K. 297b

ANAM Musicians

Katy Woolley director/horn

Venue Elisabeth Murdoch Hall, Melbourne Recital Centre

Tickets Standard \$49 | Concession \$42

Bookings melbournerecital.com.au or 03 9699 3333

Sounds of Australia

Words by Alex Owens

Making music as a descendent of European immigrants in the context of modern Australia can be a difficult context to faithfully confront. Personally, I often find myself thinking of a piece by Brisbane composer Joseph Twist (b. 1982), *How Shall We Sing in a Strange Land*. Combining texts from Psalm 139 and Indigenous poet Oodgeroo Noonuccal, at first it seemed to me absurd to place the two against each other within the work. But the more I dwell on it, the more powerful I feel the symbolism is, combined with the beauty of the texts and Twist's sincerity of questioning what an Australian culture looks like in the face of British colonialism, irreparable crimes against our First Nations peoples and continued environmental destruction.

How shall we make music in and of this land? This land, which has had music of its own for tens of thousands of years; this soil, blood-soaked and tear-stained; this society, built upon the ripped and ragged shreds of not only our First Nations peoples but immigrants and displaced peoples from around the globe. This is the question every artist, whether composer, performer or of non-musical mediums, has to grapple with in making 'Australian' music.

To start ANAM's year, composer and academic Professor Christopher Sainsbury (b. 1963) gave an insightful keynote address to our musicians. Sainsbury founded the Ngarra-Burria First Nations composition program, and published his thoughts on this very question in his position paper, 'New Music and the Search for an Australian Sound' (Currency House, 2019). Ngarra-Burria (meaning 'to hear, to sing') supports the development of First Nations composers, who he believes are best placed to draw inspiration from "their own history, their country, stories, politics".

Sainsbury describes the "long tail" of European tradition that hangs over art music practices, and harm continues through misappropriation of Indigenous songs and rituals in works by non-Indigenous composers. The tradition of Australian chamber music today is undeniably rooted in European traditions, with a lineage tracing back through Peter Sculthorpe (1929-1991), Margaret Sutherland (1897-1984) and Percy Grainger (1882-1961), each of whom spent time in, and have strong musical links to, Britain. Their influence on the formation of an Australian style leaves a complicated legacy, with their works as landmarks of a different time – such as Sculthorpe's borrowing of First Nations, Indonesian and Japanese melodic material.

Despite what we now understand as flaws in the 'how' of the construction of works of this era, each of these composers uses an undeniable energy that seeks to define Australia through sound. An evolution, rather than revolution, saw European harmonic language adapted to our sparse landscapes and 'sunburnt' country, creating rich imagery through works treading between tonal and dissonant worlds.

As Sculthorpe created his *Sun Music* works for orchestra, compositional rival Richard Meale (1932-2009) found himself at the fore of an alternate tradition for Australian composers to embrace. Fiercely anti-nationalist and rejecting the trend toward nationalism in works such as Sculthorpe's, Meale instead looked to the internationalist ideas of Pierre Boulez, imbuing it with inspiration from the cultures of Asian neighbours. Professor Liza Lim (b. 1966), whose works ANAM musicians explored with ELISION in June, continues this transcultural practice in a collaborative and ethical iteration of this globalist modernism.

This spirit of collaboration runs through many of the more recent works ANAM musicians have been preparing for Sounds of Australia, our chamber music festival, this November. A new commission by Kate Tempny (b. 1967) sees her working with Adrian McNeil to combine reflections on the Wimmera-Mallee, where she grew up, with a lifelong study of Hindustani traditions and McNeil's sarod. The combination of sarod and string quintet gives this piece, developed with ANAM musicians over this year, a unique and evocative sound world.

And new music is in good hands: not only are ANAM musicians collaborating on an entirely new catalogue of short instrumental works through the ANAM Set commissioning program, but several of this year's musicians are composing their own works for recitals. Leveraging improvisation skills developed during ELISION's June residency, the musicians will also come together during Sounds of Australia to create unique soundscapes that will only exist for the moments they are created this November.

See the culmination of ANAM Musicians' chamber studies in our Sounds of Australia Chamber Music Festival, November 26-28, featuring works by many of the Australian composers mentioned here and more.

ANAM CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL: SOUNDS OF AUSTRALIA

Thursday 28 November 7pm
Friday 29 November 7pm
Saturday 30 November 3pm & 7pm

ANAM Musicians

Venue Rosina Auditorium, Abbotsford Convent

Tickets from \$20

Bookings anam.com.au or 03 9645 7911

Giving voice to the unheard – Brisbane Music Festival

Words by Laura Panther



Photo by Peter Godfrey Smith

Now in its impressive seventh year, the Brisbane Music Festival has secured its place on Australia's cultural scene. The brainchild of ANAM alum Alex Raineri (piano 2015), the Festival has grown and evolved symbiotically with Alex's own career aspirations. What started out as a forum for Alex to perform alongside his idols, friends and colleagues, the Festival has now established itself as the place to hear new works and artistic collaborations in an intimate yet approachable setting.

The inspiration for the Festival itself came off the back of the energy created by Alex's own projects in Melbourne, through his ANAM Fellowship in 2016. For the Fellowship, which Alex undertook in the year after graduating from the Performance Program, Alex curated and performed in a series of four concerts, with a combination of works for solo piano through to ambitious chamber works by Berg and Schoenberg.

The first Brisbane Music Festival found a similar format, with several of Alex's ANAM colleagues rounding out the ensembles for the 6-concert festival in December 2018. Alex was testing the waters, so to speak, in these early years, pulling together creative ideas and providing opportunities for new and rarely heard works to be performed. "The Festival was a chance for me to organise my creative ideas under one banner," reflects Alex. "I wanted to create a space where artists and friends could play works that would be difficult to program elsewhere, but needed a platform to be heard."

The Festival slowly expanded its number of performances, and this year, each of the 21 concerts have repeated performances. The Festival has an unusual format, with three intense seasons in August, October and December, to accommodate scheduling practicalities and artists' availabilities. ANAM alumni artists performing alongside Alex this year include Lina Andonovska (flute 2011), Lotte Betts-Dean (fellow, voice 2014), Luke Carbon (clarinet 2016), Maxwell Foster (Young ANAM, piano 2008), Gemma Kneale (cello 2015), Tim Munro (flute 2005) and Thea Rossen (percussion 2016).

The Festival has built on its ethos to be a platform for new and recently developed works; now it's primary focus is to showcase new collaborations between Australia's top performers and composers. Not only has the Festival premiered some 40 works over the years, it has also seen subsequent performances of revised and expanded works. "The projects that have developed over time have been particularly rewarding to see," says Alex. He doesn't like to label any of the performances as particular genres or types of contemporary music, with each performance standing equally within the Festival. "Curatorial diversity is important to me."

Regardless of the traction that any type of music has with an audience, it is important that a city has a place where all niche styles and artforms have a voice."

Organising the Festival is no mean feat, and Alex acknowledges the support from government bodies, but in particular, the Festival's dedicated audience members and donors. "Growing not just an audience, a *community* of listeners has been so empowering for the Festival and the creation of new music in Australia. This support has been fundamental to the success of the Festival, and inspiring to see our audience give power to experimentation and risk-taking. The best feedback after our performances is when we hear questions from our audience! But this curious, open listening should apply to all music, old and new. If a work makes you stop, absorb the details and cause a reaction, that connection is something special."

BRISBANE MUSIC FESTIVAL

Part II: Friday 25 – Sunday 27 October
Part III: Friday 13 – Sunday 15 December

Venue FourthWall Arts, 540 Queen St, Brisbane QLD

Tickets \$25 (general admission)

Bookings brismusicfestival.com

ANAM Trombone Quartet: A Journey to Frankfurt

Words by Oxana Sitchuk

The ANAM Trombone Quartet is about to set out on an exciting journey to Frankfurt, where they will be performing at the second round of the LITTIN International Trombone Quartet Competition. It is hosted by the Hoch Conservatorium and brings together the best young trombonists from around the world. In other words, it's a great opportunity for ANAM trombonists to represent Australia internationally as well as to take their musical journey to the next level.

The quartet is made up of four ANAM musicians, each bringing their unique strengths to the ensemble. Jeremy Mazurek, a third-year musician from Perth, studied at the West Australian Academy of Performing Arts before joining ANAM. Harrison Steele-Holmes, from Geelong, is in his second year and previously studied at the Queensland Conservatorium. First-years Max Gregg and Angus Pace come from Sydney and Melbourne, respectively, rounding out this talented group. Together, under the mentorship of ANAM Trombone Faculty Colin Prichard – also principal trombone of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra – they've been preparing intensely for the competition.

They've already aced the preliminary round with recorded performances, and now they're polishing their repertoire, which includes works by Bozza and Sparke, along with Heaven's Gate, a new piece commissioned for this competition specifically by Christian Lindberg. Tackling a piece without any previous recordings to guide them has been a thrilling challenge for the quartet.

To help them get to the competition, the quartet ran a fundraising campaign to help cover flights and other expenses which has allowed them to fully focus on their performance and putting their best foot forward in Frankfurt.

As Jeremy puts it: "We are incredibly humbled and thrilled by the overwhelming support we've received from the community. It's truly heartwarming to witness the enduring love for chamber music in Australia firsthand. We can't wait to showcase our efforts and bring the spirit of Australian music to Europe!"

This competition is more than just a performance – it's a learning experience that will ripple through Australia's music community. When the quartet returns, they plan to share their knowledge through workshops and performances, inspiring the next generation of musicians.



ANAM Trombone Quartet

Performing and recording the ANAM Set

Words by Jasmin Bardel

An extraordinary journey of artistic expression, ANAM Set 2024 celebrates the harmonious blend of innovation and tradition. A unique platform launched during the 2021 lockdowns to cultivate creative collaboration, the ANAM Set 2024 continues to inspire. ANAM musicians tackle a new work written especially for them, while composers showcase their talent for enhancing our contemporary music climate.

With newly commissioned works announced earlier this year, 10 ANAM Set 2024 pieces had world premiere performances during ANAM musician Recitals in Melbourne from June to August. And ANAM Alumnus Rohan Dasika (double bass, 2014) performed the premiere of Peggy Polias' *Anguilla for double bass (2024)* at The Church, Sydney, on the 21st of September.

The remaining ANAM Set 2024 – a plethora of diverse new compositions, including solo and accompanied pieces, electronics and audio tapes, and even an out of tune piano – will be performed in the upcoming musician Recitals this year.

In addition to the evocative premiere performances, this year ANAM musicians gain invaluable experience at the Melbourne Recital Centre recording their ANAM Set piece. In August, ANAM musicians Harry Egerton, Liam Freisberg, Oakley Paul, Liam Pilgrim, Anna Rabinowicz, and ANAM alum Rohan Dasika each had 40 minutes in the Primrose Potter Salon, supported by ABC sound engineer Alexander Stinson and the Melbourne Recital Centre tech team.

"August's recording session had it all - swooning neo-Romanticism, shimmering impressionism and one piece that stumped even our seasoned ABC recording technician with its novel intonation. Undertaking a recording of a piece commissioned for you in the Primrose Potter Salon was just another day to ANAM musicians recording their works, who were the picture of professionalism – some even arriving from interstate that day to make it happen. Each were rostered into a 40-minute block, playing through their piece a few times, patching any moments identified by the technician, and then went on their way. If the recording session is anything to go by, this will be a special collection of recordings for all involved." – Alex Owens, ANAM Librarian, Robert Salzer Foundation Library.

The 2025 Set has been announced with each work to be performed in the 2025 Recital season.

The 2024 ANAM Set commissions are generously supported by the Australian Government through Creative Australia and the Anthony and Sharon Lee Foundation

WHAT IS 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. Accepting musicians from across Australia and New Zealand, it is internationally renowned as the only purely performance classical music training academy in Australia, and one of the few in the world.

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, alongside an esteemed Faculty, who provide invaluable mentorship and guidance for emerging young musicians through public performances, in-residence masterclasses and other programs.

In addition, ANAM has industry partnerships with organisations including the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Sydney, Tasmanian, Melbourne and West Australian Symphony Orchestras, the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Musica Viva Australia, a range of national music and arts festivals, and internationally with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, the Bavarian State Opera Orchestra (Munich), Mahler Chamber Orchestra (Berlin) and London's Royal College of Music.

ANAM is a member of the Australian Government-funded Arts8 group of performing arts training organisations who are committed to providing the high level and intense studio-based training necessary to ensuring that the performing arts sector has a pipeline of creative talent that will enable it to continue telling stories for generations.

MUSIC MAKERS CREDITS

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Page 2: Pauline Oliveros and the ♀ Ensemble performing *Teach Yourself to Fly* from *Sonic Meditations, 1970*, Rancho Santa Fe, CA. Photo courtesy Mandeville Special Collections Library, University of California, San Diego.

Page 3: Katy Woolley, photo supplied

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