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BRODSKY QUARTET & WILLIAM BARTON, DIDGERIDOO

Thursday 16 April, 7.30pm
Djanogly Recital Hall

PROGRAMME

Soundscape	William Barton (b.1981)
Fantasia	Henry Purcell (1659-1695)
String Quartet No.11 'Jabiru Dreaming' 1. <i>Deciso – Ancora deciso – Deciso</i> 2. <i>Liberamente – Poco estatico – Estatico</i>	Peter Sculthorpe (1929-2014)
Minjerribah	Robert Davidson (b.1965)
String Quartet No.1 'The Kreutzer Sonata' 1. <i>Adagio con moto</i> 2. <i>Con moto</i> 3. <i>Con moto – Vivace – Andante – Tempo I</i> 4. <i>Con moto</i>	Leoš Janáček (1854-1928)
Interval	
Three Pieces for String Quartet: 1. Dance	Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)
String Quartet No.7 'Eden Blaze'	Andrew Ford (b.1957)
Tōrino	Salina Fisher (b.1993)
She Moved Through the Fair	Traditional Irish Folk
Square Circles	William Barton

Please ensure all mobile phones are switched off. Photographs and videos of the performance are not permitted. There is a Sennheiser Infrared enhanced hearing system in the Djanogly Recital Hall; please request a headset from our front-of-house staff to enhance your enjoyment of this evening's concert.

Please ensure hearing aids are switched to the appropriate concert setting.

BRODSKY QUARTET

Krycia Osostowicz, violin

Ian Belton, violin

Paul Cassidy, viola

Jacqueline Thomas, cello

Since forming in 1972, the Brodsky Quartet have performed over 3,500 concerts on the major stages of the world and released more than 70 recordings. Having recently celebrated their 50th anniversary, the Brodsky Quartet continue to enjoy a busy international performing schedule, extensively touring the major festivals and venues throughout Australasia, North and South America, Asia and Europe as well as in the UK, where the quartet is based. Their prominent presence on the international chamber music scene, as well as in a range of educational affiliations, has been ensured by their never-ending energy and craftsmanship, attracting numerous awards and accolades worldwide.

Shostakovich has become synonymous with the Brodsky Quartet name: their 2012 London performance of the complete string quartet cycle resulted in their taking the prestigious title 'Artistic Associate' at London's Kings Place – a residency which lasted ten years, culminating in a triumphant repeat cycle of the fifteen works over two days. It therefore seems fitting that the legacy to their inimitable 50 years as a quartet has been to offer complete Shostakovich cycles around the world, allowing the full immersive experience to be accessible to all in the coming seasons.

The Brodsky Quartet have always had a busy recording career and enjoyed an exclusive and fruitful relationship with Chandos Records for many years. Releases on the label include a live recording of the complete Shostakovich cycle as well as quartets and quintets by Brahms, Elgar, Janacek, Debussy and more, with a stellar line-up of fellow musicians. Their set of the Late String Quartets of Beethoven was released in 2020 to great critical acclaim and one of their most recent releases, *Homage to Bach*, comprises the phenomenal premiere recordings of Bach's three Solo Violin Sonatas arranged by Paul Cassidy. The Quartet marked their 50th anniversary with three diverse releases: the hugely celebrated Schubert Quintet with cellist Laura van der Heijden, *Rocking Horse Road* with long-term collaborator Jacqui Dankworth and *Golden Oldies*, a compendium of encores arranged by the Quartet in celebration of this milestone.

The quartet took their name from the great Russian violinist Adolf Brodsky, the dedicatee of Tchaikovsky's violin concerto and a passionate chamber musician. Krycia Osostowicz plays a violin made by Francesco Gofriller, 1720; Ian Belton's violin is by Giovanni Paolo Maggini, c.1615. Paul Cassidy plays on La Delfina viola, c.1720, courtesy of Sra. Delfina Entrecanales and Jacqueline Thomas's cello is by Thomas Perry of Dublin, 1785.

WILLIAM BARTON, DIDGERIDOO

William Barton is widely recognised as Australia's leading didgeridoo player as well as a highly esteemed composer, instrumentalist and vocalist. He has composed works for didgeridoo and orchestras, string quartets, jazz and rock bands, as well as collaborative contributions with some of Australia's leading composers. He started learning the instrument from his uncle, Arthur Peterson, an elder of the Wannyi, Lardil and Kalkadunga people. His mother, Delmae Barton, a singer, songwriter and poet who learnt to sing as a small child from listening to the bird calls, also encouraged his love of music, leading William to work from an early age with traditional dance groups and fusion/rock jazz bands, orchestras, string quartets, and mixed ensembles. His passion is to create a journey for people through music and present them with a diversity of musical styles using the didgeridoo. He utilises his cultural heritage to present his didgeridoo fusion as a storyteller, engaging audiences in the uniqueness of Australia, its Aboriginal heritage, and to challenge perspectives of the didgeridoo as an instrument. He works closely with classical music performers and composers to develop and sustain music for the didgeridoo in this environment.

Throughout his diverse career, William has forged a path in the classical musical world, with major commissions including for members of the Berlin Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony, Queensland Symphony, as well as for contemporary dance companies and dancers such as Leigh Warren and Dancers, who premiered *Breathe* at both Womadelaide and at the 2012 Edinburgh International Festival.

In 2008, the Beijing Olympics Opening Ceremony committee commissioned him as one of three composers for the Australian segment of the ceremony. A renowned performer, William has performed at historic events including Commonwealth Day 2019 at Westminster Abbey, at Anzac Cove in Gallipoli, the Bob Hawke State Memorial and International Jazz Day with Herbie Hancock and James Morrison.

He has a strong desire to give back to his culture, people and community. One of his greatest enjoyments is his involvement in workshops with schools and children all over Australia, where he teaches the next generation didgeridoo and storytelling. With his prodigious musicality and building on his Kalkadunga heritage, William has vastly expanded the horizons of the didgeridoo and modern Australian music, resulting in numerous awards for his work, as well as receiving the Richard Gill Award for Distinguished Services to Australian Music and the Queensland Australian of the Year Award in 2023.

PROGRAMME NOTES

How many different ways has humankind produced sounds with a hollowed-out piece of wood...from drumming to blowing to plucking and scraping, the variations through the ages and across continents are endless. Thousands of years ago, the Aboriginal yidaki (didgeridoo), possibly the world's oldest musical instrument, was created from eucalyptus trunks hollowed out by termites; not long afterwards ancient lyres emerged in the Middle East and later, viols in Europe paved the way for today's violins, violas and cellos. Around the same time, whilst crumhorns developed into oboes and flutes, the wind instrument of the Māoris, the pūtōrino, was shaped and carved to mimic the cocoon of a case-moth. And the source of all these instruments; the noble tree, the life-breath of the planet, a species endlessly tenacious through millions of years of challenges to its very existence.

Tonight these elements converge, along with the human voice, to bring a rich and varied sound world through a sonic dialogue spanning millennia; an extraordinary arc through time and culture, where First Nations' wisdom converses with the rich tradition of European chamber music and composers of today.

We begin with an improvised introduction on the yidaki, giving way to the pure sounds of the young Henry Purcell's *Fantasia in D minor*, a meandering exploration of falling 4ths and rising 5ths.

William Barton's improvisation takes us seamlessly into Peter Sculthorpe's *Jabiru Dreaming*, a tribute to his beloved Kakadu and featuring the sounds of tribal music, the gait of the Jabiru stork and insects of the Interior. In both yidaki and strings, the boundaries are pushed open to create wind, string and percussive sounds, embracing the inspiration behind this powerful music.

Robert Davidson's evocation of the island *Minjerribah* (or North Stradbroke) pulsates with the heat and rhythms of sea and land, a joyous celebration of life; originally written for strings, this is a specially adapted version by the composer for these forces.

Janáček's String Quartet No.1, titled *The Kreutzer Sonata* after the Tolstoy short story of the same name, is a four-movement work exploring the tragic and murderous tale of a husband's jealousy. It is a fine example of Janáček's unique musical language; fast, often indecipherable patterns mimicking verbal utterances and speech patterns, as well as folk-influenced themes and dramatic outpourings of emotion.

After the interval, a peasant dance from Stravinsky's *Three Pieces for String Quartet*, like a carnival of players each absorbed in their own part in the parade, leads us into Andrew Ford's *Eden Ablaze*. This one-movement work is a lament to the 'Black Summer' of 2019, when the subtropical rain forest of Gondwana was largely destroyed. Unlike regular regenerative bushfires, this forest never usually burns; the notes depict this loss of innocence for the environment and its emotional impact. First a ghostly evocation of Handel's *Xerxes* aria praises the shade of trees whilst burning embers crackle, then comes the raging inferno, exploding and jumping, eventually dying down whilst ashes float in the air.

Next we hear the calling sounds of the pūtōrino, as reimaged by New Zealand composer Salina Fisher in her one-movement String Quartet *Tōrino*. The instrument has three distinct voices; the trumpet (male voice), the flute (female), and a 'middle' voice with an eerie quality, inspired by the case-moth of its origins. Quarter-tones and variations of pitch are used to dramatic effect, echoing the haunting timbres of the instrument.

The calming sounds of ancient folkloric Ireland emerge with the traditional song *She Moved Through the Fair*, transcribed and sung by Paul Cassidy, and the improvised vocals of William Barton take us through to the final work on the programme, his own *Square Circles Beneath the Red Desert Sand*. The piece is deeply connected to the spirits of his country, Mount Isa and Kalkadunga, and plays with the juxtaposition of the different elements –organic, created and spiritual – in this vast arid landscape.

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