



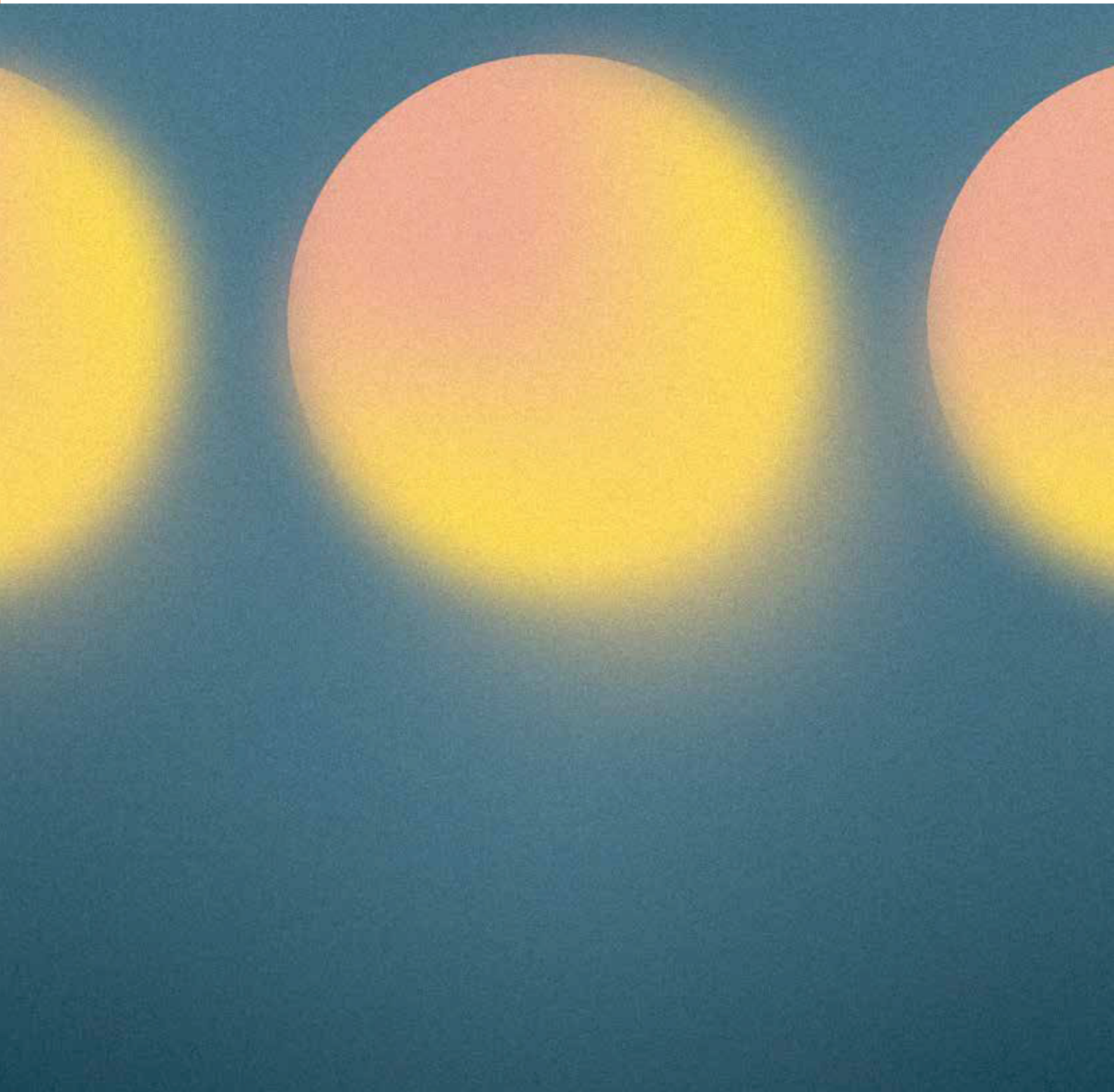
Emily Sun in Recital

Storm and sunlight

Sat 9 September
Elder Hall

Adelaide
Symphony
Orchestra

Season
2023



Emily Sun in Recital

Storm and sunlight

Emily Sun
Violin
ASO Artist in Association:
Supported by Sally Gordon

Andrea Lam
Piano

Duration
1 hr 40 mins

Sat 9 September
Elder Hall

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) arr. J Heifetz/E Sun [10']
Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune,

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Fazil Say (born 1970) [22']
Violin Sonata No.2, Op.82 *Kaz dağları (Mount Ida)*
Decimation of Nature
Wounded Bird
Rite of Hope

Interval

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) [15']
Six Pieces for Violin and Piano, Op.79 (Excerpts)
I. Souvenir
III. Danse caractéristique
VI. Berceuse

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) [25']
Violin Sonata No.3 in C minor, Op.45
Allegro molto ed appassionato
Allegretto espressivo alla Romanza
Allegro animato

The ASO acknowledges that the land we make music on is the traditional country of the Kurna people of the Adelaide Plains. We pay respect to Elders past and present and recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land. We acknowledge that this is of continuing importance to the Kurna people living today. We extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are with us for this performance today.



Emily Sun
Violin

'Possessed of a superb talent' (*The Australian*), with 'a searing and poetic tone' (*The Guardian*), Emily Sun's powerful sound and compelling interpretations have earned her international renown, winning the Royal Overseas League Competition (UK), ABC Young Performers Award (Australia), and violin competitions Italy, Austria and Russia.

As the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra's Artist-in-Association for 2023, Emily's appearances have included the world premiere of Elena Kats-Chernin's violin concerto *Fantasia im Wintergarten*, described as 'engrossing' and 'magical' (*Limelight*). Emily has also played Bruch, Tchaikovsky and Beethoven concertos with the Sydney, Melbourne and West Australian Symphony orchestras and conductors Mark Wigglesworth, Jaime Martín, and Asher Fisch; and the Melbourne Symphony's ABC Classic 100 concert conducted by Benjamin Northey, along with chamber music concerts for the Australian Festival of Chamber Music, Musica Viva Tasmania, Bendigo Chamber Music Festival and more.

Recent highlights include concerto performances with the West Australian, Adelaide and Melbourne Symphony orchestras and London Mozart Players with conductors Vasily Petrenko, Benjamin Northey, Tan Dun and Howard Griffiths; for Musica Viva Australia, Sydney Festival (with the European Union Chamber Orchestra), Shanghai and Qingdao Symphony orchestras, and alongside Maxim Vengerov at Buckingham Palace.

Emily's debut album *Nocturnes* (ABC Classics) with pianist Andrea Lam was nominated for a 2021 ARIA for *Best Classical Album*, and her follow-up album, featuring *Fantasia im Wintergarten*, is due for release in early 2024.

Emily is a Violin Professor at London's Royal College of Music, and plays on a 1760 Nicolò Gagliano violin, kindly loaned by Beares International Violin Society.



Andrea Lam
Piano

Australian pianist Andrea Lam performs with leading orchestras and conductors across Asia, Australasia and the USA including the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, and the major Australian symphony orchestras. Having recently returned after two decades in New York, Andrea has played venues from Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Centre to the Sydney Opera House, in repertoire ranging from Bach, Mozart and Schumann to Aaron Jay Kernis, Liliya Ugay and Nigel Westlake.

2023 engagements include Schumann and Rachmaninov with the Sydney and Melbourne Symphony orchestras and conductors Sir Donald Runnicles and Jaime Martín; the Sydney Opera House' Utzon Music Series; Adelaide Festival (including the world premiere of *Ngapa William Cooper* by Nigel Westlake, Lior, and Lou Bennett), and Newcastle Music Festival. In 2022 Andrea toured Bach's Goldberg Variations nationally for Musica Viva Australia, appeared as concerto soloist with the Sydney, Adelaide and Tasmanian Symphony orchestras, and as pianist alongside baritone Bo Skovhus at the Sydney Opera House.

Andrea Lam was a Semi-finalist in the 2009 Van Cliburn Competition, Silver Medallist in the 2009 San Antonio Piano Competition, winner of the Keyboard section of the ABC's Young Performer Award and the Yale Woolsey Hall Competition. She holds degrees from the Yale and Manhattan Schools of Music. Recordings include Mozart with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra; with cellist Matt Haimovitz, and for New York's Claremont Trio. Pianist with violinist Emily Sun on the 2022 ARIA-nominated album *Nocturnes* (ABC Classics), Andrea's forthcoming album release features new piano works by Matthew Hindson.

Storm and sunlight

In the late 1870s, a young Debussy frequented the illustrious Tuesday evening soirees hosted by poet Stéphane Mallarmé. Debussy's communion with this lofty circle – which included the likes of Rodin, Monet, and Proust – had a formative influence on his compositional output, and it was during this time he became enchanted by Mallarmé's epic poem *L'après-midi d'un faune*.

Mallarmé's poem describes the dreamy monologue of a faun as he recalls erotic encounters with forest nymphs. It became the genesis for Debussy's own epochal work, *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*.

Completed in 1894, Debussy's orchestral evocation of Mallarmé's poem not just shifted but shattered the trajectory of Western art music. As its achingly seductive chromaticism steadily unravelled tonality, so too did the expectations established by the Western tradition come undone.

The work evokes a dreamlike liminality, emphasising the tritone to mirror the poem's ambiguities and dissonances. It takes a fluid, freeform approach, defying any attempt to define it as a single structure.

Contrastingly, the **Violin Sonata No.2** by Turkish composer Fazil Say is rooted in the confronting reality of modern environmental crises. Say's compositions blend Eastern and Western musical influences, often with a political focus. This sonata was inspired by the environmental destruction wreaked on Mount Ida in Turkey during the construction of a mine in 2019.

The carnage of the ecological massacre is described vividly in the first movement. The violin's guttural articulation, synchronised with the piano in angular phrasing, depicts the violent hammering of machines. Distorted birdsong haunts the more elegiac second movement, while the third, *Rite of Hope*, is an acknowledgment to those who resisted the destruction.

Sibelius completed his **Six Pieces for Violin and Piano** between 1915-17, during a period of intense productivity in which he catered to a steady demand for good salon music. The First World War had brought with it the suspension of Sibelius'

overseas royalties, and he was forced to turn his efforts towards works with the greatest commercial appeal in his native Finland. These pieces – jewel-like in their size and value – capitalise on Sibelius' nationalist sensibilities, featuring his distinctly folk-inspired touch. Despite being considered 'light music', they punch above their weight in both virtuosity and sensitivity.

After a grave introduction, *Souvenir* blossoms out with a sweet and wistful melody, soaring atop rippling chords. *Danse caractéristique* reveals the aspirational side to Sibelius' violin writing, skipping deftly between a slow, brooding theme and a skittish Russian folk dance – the 'gopak'. In its fiendish technical demands, it gives us a glimpse of the ambition he once fiercely harboured towards the instrument. *Berceuse*, the gentle lullaby, is sweet and indulgent, with fleeting impulsive moments and Lisztian harmonies.

Like Sibelius, Grieg was inspired by nature and folklore, and holds a cherished place in the national identity of his country, Norway. Each of Grieg's three violin sonatas represent a different era in his compositional development – 'wider horizons' being the self-described age of his **Violin Sonata No.3**, which he completed in 1887.

The first movement introduces a dramatic C minor theme, which sets the darker tone for the rest of the work. It's counterpoised by a gentle second idea in the relative major before the tranquil second subject undergoes stormy development. A lively dance is nestled in between the more lyrical sections of the second movement, and Grieg's characteristic rustic spirit carries the final movement along, propelled by a thrumming accompaniment.

Grieg was, at heart, a miniaturist. The instinctive lyricism and brevity of thematic ideas, for which he's renowned, don't lend themselves well to large-scale works. His final violin sonata is, therefore, rare and treasured proof of his success in larger forms.

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