

Matinée *Series*

3 – Grace

Wed 11 September
Elder Hall



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3

Grace

Elizabeth Layton
Director/Violin

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Duration
60 mins (no interval)

Wed 11 September
11.30am
Elder Hall

Fauré [14']

Masques et bergamasques Op.112

I. Ouverture

II. Menuet

III. Gavotte

IV. Pastorale

Beethoven [9']

Romance No.2 in F Op.50

Haydn [24']

Symphony No.49 in F Minor

I. Adagio

II. Allegro di molto

III. Menuet

IV. Presto

Listen Later ABC Classic is recording this concert for later broadcast. You can hear it again on Monday 28 October at 1pm.

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.

About the Program

Some of the greatest music has emerged not from the mind of a solitary genius, but from the relationships shared between artists who encouraged each other to develop their skills; who supported the pursuit of opportunities that arose from industry connections. Gabriel Fauré and Camille Saint-Saëns are two such composers who not only crossed paths on their ways to stardom – they became the best of friends. They met in the mid-19th Century when Saint-Saëns taught Fauré in the École Niedermeyer music school. Not dissimilar in age, they clicked beyond the confines of their Paris classroom, and Saint-Saëns helped him in everything from networking to finding commissions.

It was with Saint-Saëns' encouragement that Fauré composed *Masques et bergamasques*. At this point, we leap about six decades into their friendship and arrive in the 20th Century. The ageing Fauré was experiencing hearing loss, lamenting to his wife that 'music is passing me by!'. He had difficulty identifying pitch, and some sounds were entirely lost to him. But this did not stop him from receiving a commission from Prince Albert I of Monaco, made possible at the suggestion of Saint-Saëns. So Fauré made the most of it, and in spite of – or perhaps because of – his hearing loss, the *Masques et bergamasques* was a triumph. To accommodate his needs, Fauré revisited music he had composed when he was younger, fashioning his new divertissement from his unpublished musical ideas. The result was a comedy that premiered on the stages of Monte Carlo in 1919 – the first of many performances.

Fauré also shared a fruitful creative partnership with French writer René Fauchois, who penned the text for *Masques et bergamasques*; he had

already crafted the libretto for *Pénélope* – Fauré's opera dedicated to Saint-Saëns. The title of their new collaboration came from a line in the poem *Claire de Lune*, which described a dance that masked deeper emotions. This is not to suggest their production was melancholic: Harlequin, Colombine, and Gilles are jester-like characters who, in a reversal of fortune, find themselves laughing at the pompous audience they would normally entertain!

The enduring success of *Masques et bergamasques* reveals how much can be achieved when an artist works to their needs. It is nevertheless a trying connection that links Fauré to Beethoven, the composer who next appears on this program. Fauré felt draped in a 'cloak of misery' when describing the impact of hearing loss on his music, and stated that such an experience had brought Beethoven before him 'nothing but despair'. Beethoven used similar language when describing his own hearing loss as 'utterly miserable'. Yet remarkably, both composers continued to produce music that would survive for generations – and Beethoven felt driven to pursue the 'opportunity of developing all my artistic powers' despite the physical and emotional toll of his experiences.

Beethoven's Romance No.2 in F major coincided with a significant progression in his hearing loss, which worsened between the time of its composition in 1798 and publication in 1805. But he could draw from his internal catalogue of sounds and from his years of understanding the pitch and intervals between notes. The Romance features solo violin, an instrument he knew how to play. Beethoven notated a songlike (*cantabile*) melody that exudes serenity – though this was far from his state of mind at the time. Though



Elizabeth Layton
Director/Violin

Described as 'one of the most outstanding performers of her generation' (*The Strad*), UK-born violinist Elizabeth Layton has appeared as soloist with major international orchestras, also touring chamber music worldwide with the Nash Ensemble. She is a regular participant at festivals including the Australian Festival of Chamber Music and Music by the Springs.

CD recordings include the complete Beethoven piano trios (nominated for a Gramophone Classical Music Award), violin and piano works by Schubert (*Daily Telegraph* 'CD Choice') and chamber music recordings for Deutsche Grammophon, Naxos, BIS, Chandos, Hyperion, and Artaria. CD releases in 2024 include Boccherini's chamber music with flautist Sally Walker (Avie Records), and a three-CD set of complete string chamber music by English composer William Shield (Naxos). Concerts in the current season include performances in New Zealand, Thailand, Sydney Opera House, and Melbourne Recital Centre. A former Associate Leader of the Academy of St Martin in the Fields and Concertmaster of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Elizabeth also appears as guest concertmaster with orchestras throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Elizabeth is Head of Classical Performance at the Elder Conservatorium of Music, University of Adelaide where she was awarded a doctorate in 2019.

the centre of his Romance feels higher strung, the tension does not last long, and his work concludes with the sense of optimism for which he grew so beloved.

In the decade of his Romance, Beethoven took up studies with a prominent teacher: Joseph Haydn. But their student-teacher relationship existed only a short while as Beethoven did not enjoy his lessons! Nevertheless, the impact of this educational experience – and of Beethoven's rejection of it, in favour of lessons with Antonio Salieri – would leave its legacy. Though he was not the right fit for Beethoven, Haydn did have a lot to share: he had composed close to 100 symphonies at the time. Here we venture into this collection to find the Symphony No.49 in F minor, *La passione*.

The nickname of Haydn's 1768 composition may refer to the passion of Christ, or the spirit of the music itself, depending on the musicologist you ask. The slow (*Adagio*) pace of the first movement cleverly accommodates a shift in mood from laborious to leisurely. It also reveals Haydn's focus on the expressive potential of his music, from stormy to stressful (*Sturm und Drang*). We hear angst in the second movement, which continues in this minor key – a useful framework when conveying darker and more complex emotions. The heat is on when it comes to the final *Presto*, but do we notice a hint of light peeping through the raging storm?

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Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Violins

Elizabeth Layton**
Guest Concertmaster
Cameron Hill**
Associate Concertmaster
Janet Anderson*
Acting Principal 1st Violin
Alison Heike**
Principal 2nd Violin
Lachlan Bramble~
Associate Principal 2nd Violin
Minas Berberyan
Gillian Braithwaite
Belinda Gehlert
Danielle Jaquillard
Lucy Macourt
Ambra Nesa
Alexander Permezal
Alison Rayner
Kemeru Spurr

Violas

David Wicks**
Guest Section Principal
Rosi McGowran~
Acting Associate
Anna Hansen
Natalie Maegraith
Michael Robertson

Cellos

Martin Smith**
Guest Section Principal
Sharon Grigoryan~
Andrew Leask
Gemma Phillips

Double Basses

David Schilling**
Belinda Kendall-Smith~
Acting Associate
Jacky Chang
Holly Little

Flutes

Kim Falconer**
Julia Grenfell*

Oboes

Joshua Oates**
Renae Stavelly~

Clarinets

Mitchell Berick*
Acting Section Principal
Darren Skelton

Bassoons

Mark Gaydon**
Jackie Newcomb*

Horns

Sarah Barrett~
Emma Gregan

Trumpets

David Khafagi**
Martin Phillipson~

Timpani

Andrew Penrose*

Harp

Jessica Fotinos*
Guest Principal

Harpichord

Joshua van Konkelenberg*
Guest Principal

** denotes Section Principal

~ denotes Associate Principal

* denotes Principal Player

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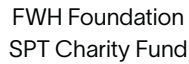


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