ADELAIDE FESTIVAL AF
1-17 March 2019

A note from Erin Helyard

The history of the violin sonata, like most chamber music, is rooted in the mating rituals of the eighteenth-century middle class. Only certain instruments and activities were deemed acceptable for men and women. Male composer/performers were exempted from these restrictions by nature of their profession, but the average male or female amateur had to conform to social norms or fear being ridiculed. Men played the violin, cello, or flute and women played the keyboard and the harp. Music provided one of the few occasions in which the two sexes could intermingle and so it took on an important role in courtship. Female amateurs were much better musicians than their male counterparts.

Hence the violin sonata in the first part of its history is generally a brilliant or expressive sonata for the lady at the keyboard with violin accompaniments for the gentlemen that are easy, dispensable, and optional. Mozart's earliest violin sonatas are of this kind.

Female violinists were extremely rare. In Italy, female violinists were far better known, even if they did not appear publicly. In convents like Vivaldi's *Ospedale della Pietà*, cloistered female violinists were a tourist attraction. Some students ventured out publicly, and the most famous of them, Regina Strinasacchi, toured Europe. Mozart was very impressed with her playing, saying "she has a great deal of taste and feeling in her playing." He composed the Sonata in B-flat (K. 454) for a public performance for himself and Strinasacchi. Here, both violin and piano are on an equal footing, with the traditional gender roles being reversed. Not only was it a chamber work in a public setting: it was also a man playing the keyboard and a woman the violin.

But events and sonatas like this were exceptional, even in the 1780s. Things begin to change in the 1790s. First, courtship rituals became less centered on female "accomplishments" and this encouraged composers to start treating the violin sonata as a real duo. Second, the (quite literally) revolutionary nature of the Paris conservatoire encouraged musical education for both sexes. Beethoven was very much influenced by composers, performers, and trends emanating from revolutionary Paris. In 1803, the year of the publication of his Op. 30 violin sonatas, Beethoven ordered an Erard grand piano from Paris. If this set puts violin and piano on a firmly equal footing, then the "Kreutzer" goes even further in establishing the dominance of the violin.

Probably destined for or inspired by his Erard piano, the "Kreutzer" sonata of the same year self-consciously breaks with the (now ancient) courtship rituals. Duos for violin and piano were still advertised as being "grand sonatas" for the piano with "accompaniment for the violin." In order to definitively break with this fading tradition, Beethoven himself stresses the concerto-like nature of this 'Grand Sonata' (as Carl Beethoven called it) in a notation in a sketch that we also find on the title-page of the first edition. Beethoven says: "Sonata scritta in un stilo brillante molto concertante quasi come d'un Concerto" which means "Sonata written in a brilliant [this crossed out], very concerted style, almost like that of a Concerto." This quite detailed description underlines the virtuosic nature of the solo violin part, the epic architecture of the sonata as well as signifying a significant departure from the typical 'Grand Sonata' form then in vogue—the "Kreutzer" is not just grand, it's really grand.

Beethoven originally wrote the sonata for the virtuoso George Polgreen Bridgetower (1779-1860). His father was African and was the personal page to Haydn's patron Prince Nicolaus I Esterházy. As his mother was Polish, he was described at the time as a mulatto. The dedication to Bridgetower by Beethoven still exists: "Mulattick Sonata. Composed for the mulatto Brischdauer [sic], great lunatick and mulattick composer." But they quarreled about a girl and Beethoven dedicated the sonata, famously, to Rudolphe Kreutzer (who never played the work).

12 March / Adelaide Town Hall

Duration 1hr 15mins, including one 20min interval

Richard Tognetti **Violin**
Erin Helyard **Fortepiano**

FIN DE SIECLE VIENNA...

...saw a turning of the tide, a change in style and sensibilities as one era closed, and the next emerged. Mozart's music epitomises the 'Age of Reason' – clarity, elegance and intelligence of form. Beethoven takes us musically into another epoch, with his tumultuous, deeply individual musical language and view of the world... This current foray, of Richard Tognetti, famed for his insatiable appetite for musical exploration, and long-time collaborator fortepianist Erin Helyard, is the perfect vehicle for their skills at giving voice to wildly different musical styles, on period instruments.

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Program

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Violin Sonata in G major Op. 30 No. 3
Allegro assai – Tempo di Minuetto, ma molto moderato e grazioso – Allegro vivace

W. A. Mozart (1756-1791)

Sonata in B-flat major, K. 454
Largo – Allegro – Andante – Allegretto

Interval

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Violin Sonata in A major, Op. 47 No.9 'Kreutzer'
Adagio sostenuto – Presto – Andante con variazioni – Finale: Presto

RICHARD TOGNETTI

Richard Tognetti is Artistic Director of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. He has established an international reputation for his compelling performances and artistic individualism.

Richard began his studies in his home town of Wollongong with William Primrose, then with Alice Waten at the Sydney Conservatorium, and Igor Ozim at the Bern Conservatory, where he was awarded the Tschumi Prize as the top graduate soloist in 1989. Later that year he led several performances of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and that November was appointed as the Orchestra's lead violin and, subsequently, Artistic Director.

Richard performs on period, modern and electric instruments and his numerous arrangements, compositions and transcriptions have expanded the chamber orchestra repertoire and been performed throughout the world. As director or soloist, Tognetti has appeared with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Academy of Ancient Music, Slovene Philharmonic Orchestra, Handel & Haydn Society (Boston), Hong Kong Philharmonic, Camerata Salzburg, Tapiola Sinfonietta, Irish Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Nordic Chamber Orchestra, Swedish Chamber Orchestra, Orchestre D'Auvergne and all the major Australian symphony orchestras, most recently as soloist and director with the Melbourne and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras. Richard also performed the Australian premieres of Ligeti's *Violin Concerto* and Lutosławski's *Partita*. In November 2016, he became the Barbican Centre's first Artist-in-Residence at Milton Court Concert Hall in London. Richard created the Huntington Festival in Mudgee, New South Wales and was Artistic Director of the Festival Maribor in Slovenia from 2008 to 2015.

Richard was the co-composer of the score for Peter Weir's *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*, starring Russell Crowe and he co-composed the soundtrack to Tom Carroll's surf film *Storm Surfers*. He also created the documentary film *Musica Surfica*, as well as *The Glide, The Reef, and The Crowd*. Most recently, Richard collaborated with Director Jennifer Peedom and Stranger Than Fiction Films to create the film *Mountain* for the ACO.

Richard was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2010. He holds honorary doctorates from three Australian universities and was made a National Living Treasure in 1999.

ERIN HELYARD

The inspiring conductor, expressive virtuoso of harpsichord and fortepiano, graduated in harpsichord performance from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music with first-class honours and the University Medal.

After completing his Masters in fortepiano and a PhD in musicology at the Schulich School of Music, Montreal, he was named the Westfield Concert Scholar (Cornell University) on fortepiano for 2009-2010; and from 2003 to 2012 was a central member of Montreal's award-winning Ensemble Caprice.

As Artistic Director and co-founder of the celebrated Pinchgut Opera and the Orchestra of the Antipodes he has forged new standards of excellence in historically-informed performance in Australia. He has conducted – from the keyboard – performances of Purcell's *Fairy Queen* (Montreal Baroque Festival), Cavalli's *L'Ormindo*, Purcell's *Dioclesian*, Vivaldi's *Griselda*, Cavalli's *Giasone*, Salieri's *The Chimney Sweep*, Vivaldi's *Bajazet*, Grétry's *L'amant jaloux*, Handel's *Theodora*, Rameau's *Pigmalion* and *Anacréon*, Monteverdi's *Coronation of Poppea* (Pinchgut), Handel's *Acis and Galatea* (NZ Opera), Handel's *Orlando* (Hobart Baroque), Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, and Handel's *Faramondo* and *Agrippina* (Brisbane Baroque).

In 2017 Helyard received a Helpmann Award for Best Music Direction for Handel's *Saul* at the Adelaide Festival in a fêted revival of Glyndebourne production directed by Barrie Kosky.

As a conductor Erin has distinguished himself in dynamic performances with the Adelaide, Tasmanian, and Queensland Symphony Orchestras and the Australian Haydn Ensemble. He was recently been described by *Limelight* magazine as 'Australia's most engaging soloist'.

THE FORTEPIANO

To the musically uninitiated, 'fortepiano' might seem like a typographical error for 'pianoforte' – but the instrument, played with consummate skill by Australia's most engaging classical keyboard soloist Erin Helyard, is an early piano radically different from the modern piano. The fortepiano dates from the late-18th to mid-19th century and the instrument Erin is playing is a copy of an instrument Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven would have been familiar with.

Erin plays a fortepiano after Walter by Richard Schaumlöffel, Adelaide 1996, courtesy of Richard Schaumlöffel, prepared by Carey Beebe.

THE CARRODUS VIOLIN

Richard plays the 1743 'Carrodus' violin made by Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù, lent to him by an anonymous Australian private benefactor.