

THE WEAPONS OF RHETORIC

PROGRAM



Saturday 11th June 7pm
Verbruggen Hall,
Sydney Conservatorium of Music

Sunday 12th June 2:30pm
Our Lady of Dolours Church,
Chatswood

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Our plans for 2022 will most definitely whet your appetite for the amazing music of Johann Sebastian Bach! However, running an arts organisation such as ours presents a huge financial challenge.

We invite you to consider joining our generous family of individual donors by either purchasing a ticket to one of our forthcoming events, or making a donation to support our work and help us to bring the wonderful music of J.S. Bach to life. Unless you wish to remain anonymous, your contribution will be acknowledged on our website and in our concert programs.

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With thoughtful, well-researched performances and an elegantly constructed program, Easton and Bach Akademie Australia offered an opportunity to really dig down deep into Bach's words and music – a profound and rewarding experience.

– LIMELIGHT

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our second concert series of 2022, the Weapons of Rhetoric.

This is a concert series unlike anything we have presented to you before! We have drawn our inspiration for this series directly from a work of literature, *The Weapons of Rhetoric* by my friend and colleague Judy Tarling. Judy is considered the world wide expert on all things to do with Rhetoric, and has written 6 books on the subject! Her book is a wonderful guide to the historical importance of rhetoric and its links to music. The aim of her book is to present us with a guide for musicians and audiences alike to explore the relationship between music and rhetoric, which was incredibly important in the Renaissance and Baroque periods.



Enter J.S. Bach stage left! No other composer in history demonstrated with such skill and heart their ability to both move and delight the listener, to hold their attention in exactly the same way as a classical orator would.

The pieces I have chosen to perform each reveal Bach's genius at conversation in music. His magnificent Sonata No. 2 for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord shows us how 2 instruments can hold a 3 way conversation. His 6 part Ricercar from the famous 'Musical Offering' demonstrates such supreme command in weaving 6 equally important voices in and out of each other. His Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 is a musical representation of lively debate, with our 2 violas sparring with 2 viola da gambas.

His solo Sonata No. 1 in G minor is, for me, a true miracle of composition, demonstrating how one violin can hold a 4 way debate on a single instrument, transforming a traditionally monophonic instrument into a perfect polyphonic vehicle. Returning to the Musical Offering, we present his 10 puzzle canons which represent a true challenge in decoding the rhetorical devices used by Bach.

We conclude our concert with arguably J.S. Bach's most famous concerto, the Concerto for 2 Violins in D minor. Here we see in light and clarity his delight and mastery in the art of musical rhetoric, asking the violins to spar, duck, dive but ultimately delight in each others company.

To guide us along the way of our musical journey through the arts of rhetoric will be the well known Australian actor, writer and presenter Jonathan Biggins, famous for his work on stage and screen. Joining him will be one of Australia's top legal brains Jonathan Horton QC. These two men are masters of their art and use the weapons of rhetoric on a daily basis. We will learn so much from them as well as be delighted in the journey they take us on through the music of Bach.

To quote Judy Tarling, "C.S. Lewis wrote that ignorance of rhetoric is the biggest barrier between us and our understanding of the past." I hope that our performance today will both inform and delight us all into our future.

Madeleine Easton
BACH AKADEMIE AUSTRALIA

PROGRAM

J.S. Bach Sonata No. 2 for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord BWV 1028

1. Adagio
2. Allegro
3. Andante
4. Allegro

Neal Peres Da Costa – harpsichord, Laura Vaughan – Viola Da Gamba

J.S. Bach Ricercar a 6 from The Musical Offering BWV 1079

Madeleine Easton, Julia Fredersdorff, Karina Schmitz, John Ma, Anthea Cottee, Kirsty McCahon

J.S. Bach Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 BWV 1051

1. Alle Breve
2. Adagio ma non tanto
3. Allegro

Soloists: Karina Schmitz, John Ma, Laura Vaughan, Jenny Eriksson

INTERVAL

J.S. Bach Adagio and Fugue from Sonata No.1 in G minor BWV 1001 for unaccompanied violin

Madeleine Easton

J.S. Bach Puzzle Canons from Musical Offering BWV 1079

- Canon 1. *a 2 cancrizans (crab)*
- Canon 2. *a 2 Violini in unisono*
- Canon 3. *a 2 per Motum contrarium*
- Canon 4. *a 2 per Augmentationem contrario Motu (Notulis crescentibus crescat Fortuna Regis)*
- Canon 5. *a 2 per Tonus*
- Canon 6. *Fuga canonica in Epi diapente*
- Canon 7. *Canon perpetuus super Thema Regium*
- Canon 8. *Canon perpetuus*
- Canon 9. *Canon a 2 Quaerendo invenietis*
- Canon 10. *Canon a 4 Quaerendo invenietis*

J.S. Bach Concerto for 2 violins in D minor BWV 1043

1. Vivace
2. Allegro ma non tanto
3. Allegro

Soloists: Madeleine Easton, Julia Fredersdorff

GUEST PRESENTERS

Jonathan Biggins OAM and Jonathan Horton QC

BACH AKADEMIE AUSTRALIA



Artistic Director **Madeleine Easton** has performed world wide as both soloist and concertmaster with some of the worlds leading ensembles such as the English Baroque Soloists, The Gabrieli Concert, The Academy of Ancient Music, the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, the Gulbenkian Symphony Orchestra of Lisbon, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfonia de Madrid, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and the Australian World Orchestra. She was concertmaster of the Hanover Band from 2006 - 2016. Madeleine directed the Ralf Cohen Bach Cantata series at the Royal Academy of Music from 2009 - 2019. Her discography includes many famous recordings including the Bach Cantata series with the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists under Sir John Eliot Gardiner. She returned to Australia in 2019 to dedicate herself to the formation of Bach Akademie Australia.

Photo courtesy of Bridgette Cambridge



Melbourne-born violinist **Julia Fredersdorff** studied baroque violin with Lucinda Moon at the Victorian College of the Arts, before travelling to the Netherlands to study with Enrico Gatti at The Royal Conservatorium in The Hague. Based in Paris for almost ten years, Julia freelanced with some of the finest European ensembles, such as Les Talens Lyriques, Le Concert d'Astrée, Le Parlement de Musique, Les Paladins, Il Complesso Barocco, New Dutch Academy, Ensemble Aurora and Bach Concentus. Now resident again in Australia, Julia performs regularly as concertmaster for the Orchestra of the Antipodes and is the Artistic Director of the Tasmanian baroque ensemble, Van Diemen's Band. She is a founding member of period string quartet Ironwood, and the twice ARIA-nominated baroque trio, Latitude 37 and is a core-member of Ludovico's Band.

Photo courtesy of Albert Comper Photography



Melbourne-based viola da gamba specialist **Laura Vaughan** is well-recognised member of the early music movement in Australia. Following studies with Miriam Morris at the University of Melbourne and Wieland Kuijken and Philippe Pierlot at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, she has established an active performing career on viol and violone, encompassing a wide range of solo and chamber repertoire across Australasia. Passionate about the unique sound world of the viol, Laura is committed to bringing this exquisite repertoire to audiences around the world. She is also one of the few exponents of the rare lirone. Laura can be heard regularly on ABC Classic FM and appears on numerous CD recordings. She performs regularly with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Orchestra of the Antipodes, Genesis Baroque, Van Diemen's Band, Adelaide Baroque, Accademia Arcadia, Consortium and is a founding member of the multiple ARIA award nominated trio Latitude 37. Laura has appeared with Tasmanian and Adelaide Symphony Orchestras, Auckland Philharmonia, has appeared in most of Australia's major festivals and teaches regularly at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. *Photo courtesy of Albert Comper*



A graduate of the University of Sydney, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, the City University London and the University of Leeds, **Neal Peres Da Costa** is a world-renowned performing scholar and educator. He is Professor of Historical Performance within the Historical Performance Division and Program Leader of Postgraduate Research at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. His monograph *Off the Record: Performing Practices in Romantic Piano Playing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012) is hailed as a book that 'no serious pianist should be without' (*Limelight*). Neal regularly performs with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Pinchgut Opera, the Song Company, the Australian Haydn Ensemble, Ironwood and Bach Akademie Australia. Winner of the 2008 Fine Arts ARIA for Best Classical Recording for Bach's Sonatas for violin and obbligato harpsichord (ABC Classics, 2007) with Richard Tognetti and Daniel Yeadon, Neal's discography includes: Bach's Complete Sonatas for Viola Da Gamba and Harpsichord with Daniel Yeadon (ABC Classics, 2009), *The Baroque Trombone* with Christian Lindberg and the ACO (BIS, 2009); *Baroque Duets (Vexations 840, 2011)* which he directed with Fiona Campbell, David Walker and Ironwood; *3* with Genevieve Lacey and Daniel Yeadon (ABC Classics, 2012); Mozart: *Stolen Beauties* with Anneke Scott and Ironwood (ABC Classics, 2015) and most recently Brahms: *Tones of Romantic Extravagance* (ABC Classics, 2016). He has also recorded extensively on the Channel Classics label with Florilegium, the British ensemble which he co-founded in 1991 and of which he was a member for 10 years.

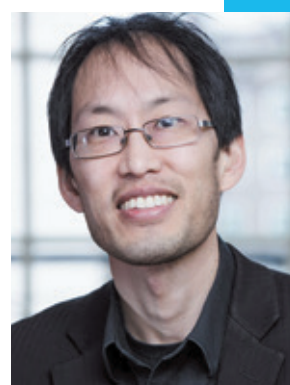
Photo courtesy of The University of Sydney / Louise M Cooper

Jenny Eriksson has forged an international career as a performer, teacher, composer and arranger of the viola da gamba. She founded the “The Marais Project” in 2000 to play the great French baroque repertoire for the viola da gamba with particular focus on the music of Marais himself. The Project has released seven CDs and recorded for ABC Classic and Fine Music 102.5 and commissioned many new works by Australian composers including Dan Walker, Rosalind Page, Kevin Hunt, Matthew Perry, Paul Cutlan, Emily-Rose Sarkova, Stephen Yates and Paul Stanhope. The Marais Project has toured widely across Australia and in New Zealand. She has also toured extensively for the Musica Viva in Schools program. The most recent show being “Da Vinci’s Apprentice”, a specially commissioned music theatre piece which features an original score by Sally Greenaway with script by Catherine Prosser and Paul Bissett. Jenny has expanded her activities to include the electric viola da gamba through Elysian Fields, a six-piece ensemble with improvising musicians Matt Keegan and Matt McMahon performing original works by its members. Our 2018 debut CD, “What should I say”, was Australia’s first electric viola da gamba recording.

Photo courtesy of Karen Steains



John Ma is a musician specialising in Early Music based in Canberra. He has performed and recorded on Violin, Viola and Viola d’amore with many groups including Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Pinchgut Opera, Academia Montis Regalis, Bach Collegium Japan, Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Helsinki Baroque Orchestra, B’Rock, Trondheim Baroque Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria, Sinfonia Australis, and Aark New Music Ensemble. He has also appeared as a soloist in Brahms’s Violin Concerto with the National Capital Orchestra. In the Netherlands, John has also appeared and recorded with groups such as Musica Poetica, Farinelli’s Ground, de Utrechtse Spelers, Concerto d’Amsterdam, Apollo Ensemble, Fantasticus, Collegium Musicum Den Haag, Florilegium Musicum, BarokOpera Amsterdam, Opera Studio Nederland and Barokorkest de Swaen. John currently plays on a Kloz violin on loan from the collection of the Dutch Musical Instrument Foundation. *Photo courtesy of Joris Jan Bos Photography*



Jonathan Biggins OAM is an actor, writer and director with a wide and varied stage career, perhaps best known for The Wharf Revue and most recently his one-man show The Gospel According to Paul. Jonathan’s notable acting credits include Travesties, The White Guard and Ying Tong for STC, The Importance of Being Earnest for MTC, and The Mikado and Orpheus in the Underworld for Opera Australia. Film and TV credits include Manny Lewis, A Few Best Men and Three Men and a Baby Grand. Jonathan has written for Fairfax’s Good Weekend magazine, the musicals Living in the 70s and The Republic of Myopia, and the plays Australia Day and Talk. Winner of two AWGIES, he is also the author of three books, including The 700 Habits of Highly Ineffective People. His other directing credits include Orpheus in the Underworld for Opera Australia, Avenue Q, for which he received a Helpmann Award, Pete the Sheep and Josephine Wants to Dance for Monkey Baa Theatre and Noises Off and Talk for STC.

Photo courtesy of Tracy Schramm



Jonathan Horton QC specialises in public and regulatory law and commercial litigation and advice. He was appointed Queen’s Counsel in 2014. He acts for and against Government agencies across the full spectrum of public law activities. He also advises and appears in a range of environmental, mining and land-related matters, Inquiries and Reviews and policy. His national practice also extends to Native Title, liquor and licensing law, as well as class actions. The child of musical parents, and an accomplished pianist in his own right, his life long love of the piano has led him to be deeply involved in the arts in Australia, most notably as the Chairman of the Lev Vlasseko Piano Competition. Jonathan holds a PhD (Laws) from Edinburgh University, a Bachelor of Laws with First Class Honours from the University of Sydney and a Bachelor of Arts from the Australian National University. Jonathan is a long time supporter of Bach Akademie Australia, and officially became a patron in 2021.





Madeleine Easton
director and solo violin

Julia Fredersdorff
solo violin

Karina Schmitz
violin and solo viola

James Armstrong
violin

John Ma
solo viola

Laura Vaughan
solo viola da gamba

Jenny Eriksson
solo viola da gamba

Anthea Cottee
cello

Kirsty McCahon
violone

Mikaela Oberg
flute

Neal Peres Da Costa
solo harpsichord

It may seem strange to introduce a concert of purely instrumental music with a title borrowed from the art of rhetoric, a speech-based skill, but the association of music with persuasive speaking was frequently mentioned and exploited in the eighteenth century by both composers and performers. The shared language of music and speech is familiar to musicians today: phrase, emphasis, theme, articulation, but the difference between plain speaking and speaking to persuade, encompasses many lesser-known tricks designed to engage the listener's attention and manipulate their emotions to bring about the desired persuasion. Many of these were used by baroque composers, and indeed expected by eighteenth-century listeners 'in the know' about rhetoric and its effects.

Following the sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, a revolution in education took place in northern Europe. The curriculum became focussed on the classical languages and, having become fluent in Latin by the age of seven, pupils learned rhetorical techniques through simple writing and speaking exercises. The same textbooks (in Latin) were used in schools in Germany and England through the following decades, raising the intriguing possibility that both Bach and Shakespeare learned their craft from the same sources. One of these books by the great educational reformer Erasmus describes how to express the same idea in two hundred ways using different forms of language and figures of speech. This command of a variety of expression was the basis of the invention process which was so admired in Bach's music. An idea or theme, such as that presented to Bach by Frederick the Great, could be repeated endlessly without tedium by working it out in a fugue or *ricercar*, turning it backwards, upside down and in contrary motion using forms of canon in a bravura demonstration of invention, which Bach allegedly performed extempore, on the spot. Erasmus described this process as dressing the body in different costumes. The body stayed the same, but the writer or composer could apply a variety of characters and emotions to transform the idea.

Baroque music also borrows from rhetoric various ways of using repetition. A very common phrase structure, where an idea is repeated with a slight difference, invites comparison (a speaker would say 'on the one hand, on the other hand'), before the pattern is broken in an extended conclusion or 'knitting together' of the argument with a cadence. Often a repeated phrase takes a surprising turn, as in the opening of the gamba sonata, which in the second phrase substitutes a surprising augmented fourth for the plain and simple octave already heard. As well as repetition with changes, an idea could be repeated exactly, perhaps many times, expressing 'insistence'. The repetition is meant to stab the

listener like a weapon inflicting a wound until it gains its effect. Bach uses exact repetition in canon in the opening of the third movement of the concerto for two violins, and the whole of the first movement of the sixth Brandenburg. As the second player follows the same path of the first player, the device creates a mesmerising kaleidoscope of sound. Where repeated passages are built into the structure, as in the rondo, the third movement of the Brandenburg, there are opportunities for surprise when the two violas break away, speaking and arguing in their own separate voices before the return of the rondo theme which is played in unison.

The choice of key is another weapon with which to command the emotions of the listener, providing a variety of colours, especially where unequal tuning is used. Commonly used 'home' keys are more comfortable to listen to than others far from home which are reserved for special effects because they sound out of tune, 'cloudy' and disturbing. Bach's contemporaries described D major (as used in the gamba sonata) as joyful; D minor (the concerto for two violins) as serious; G minor (the solo violin partita) sad but magnificent; Bb major (the sixth Brandenburg), joyful and diverting. Having established the basic key affect, the composer could then use a change of key to introduce variety in the following movements, or passages within the movements. For example, the sublime opening theme of the second movement of the D minor concerto is in the related major key of F, but as the movement progresses it is transformed into a disturbing stormy, dark and dissonant version, finally to re-emerge as before, when the sun comes out and we are relieved to return to F major.

A good speaker raises and lowers his voice, and music can borrow this natural way of expressing emotion or emphasising an idea by repeating it higher. Bach's contemporary Johann Mattheson thought falling music expressed despair and rising music, hope. When repetitions ascend in a sequence, they can build tension and as they get louder, anticipate the release of tension on the arrival at the summit. The orators called this accumulation of tension by steps the 'scaling ladder', a tool to storm the inner defences of the listener, who is overwhelmed. Downward repetitions will naturally fade away, releasing tension.

Another element which the arts of speaking and music share is rhythm. The lilting triple (third movement of Brandenburg, second movement of the gamba sonata) can dance easily and is more light-hearted than the square and serious duple which is likely to be found in opening movements. The classical orators hated the rhythmic regularity found in poetry because it lulled the listener to sleep, but in music repeated rhythms can lull and then interrupt with surprises.

The choice of instrumental texture offers the composer an additional tool for variety of discourse. For example, a soloist or group of soloists set against the rest of the group can agree with them, argue amongst themselves or make a proposal which is then taken up by the group. The solo orator may also argue with herself, as demonstrated in the solo violin work, or sometimes ask a question in the higher register and answer it in the lower, or vice versa. Many reasons for the unusual choice of instrumentation in the sixth Brandenburg have been suggested, but the inversion of the usual roles of the noble viola da gamba (heard solo in the sonata), reduced to the ripieno role and the humbler viola da braccio promoted to a solo one, prompts us to remember that Bach was reported to have loved playing the viola, usually situated in the middle of the ensemble, and perhaps enjoyed the 'joke' of elevating its role. In this work, the cello is also released from its usual continuo function and invited to join the solo group, which is given its own space in the second movement.

Two works in the programme show how two principal 'speakers' may interact. In classical Greek rhetoric it was accepted practice for the weaker speaker to speak first, so that the stronger could 'out-top' him in the argument. The two solo violins and the two solo violas demonstrate this idea on several occasions, with the second player speaking first, lower in range, enabling the first to then enter in a higher register to take the argument forward.

The confrontational language used in classical rhetoric is used to support the idea of invading the hearts and minds of the listener, by luring them in, then bringing about persuasion by using repetition, contrast and variety to keep them awake, peppered with the occasional surprise by confounding their expectations. Bach had all these techniques at his fingertips and applied them with a skill that was much admired by his contemporaries. I hope you may now enjoy his music even more, being aware of how your emotions are being manipulated by the weapons of rhetoric in the hands of a master. ■

www.judytarling.com





Bach Akademie Australia is dedicated to performing the works of J.S. Bach. It was established in late 2016 by Australian violinist Madeleine Easton who has recently returned after 19 years of living and working in Europe. Its aim is to enrich and enhance the musical life of Australia. The ensemble's focus on mastery of performance, authenticity and originality of interpretation brings the music of J.S. Bach to life. Bach Akademie Australia is also focused on forging close links with academic institutions around the country in order to establish educational and learning opportunities for young musicians.

Having been inspired by the world's leading Bach exponents, Bach Akademie Australia aims to give audiences the very best experience of J.S. Bach's music. Bach Akademie Australia gave its first public performance in April 2017, which sold out in Sydney, and later that year at the Canberra International Music Festival. These concerts were met with glowing reviews in *Limelight Magazine* and *Canberra City News*. The orchestra also made its debut recording for ABC Classic FM of Bach's Cantata BWV 4 'Christ lag in Todesbanden' and Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, both of which have been broadcast nationwide.

The subsequent years saw Bach Akademie Australia consolidate its growing reputation as one of Australia's outstanding period instrument ensembles by further sold out performances in Sydney and Canberra to critical acclaim. 2019 saw the formation of the Bach Akademie Australia Choir which performed to great acclaim with the orchestra in their debut performance of Bach's 'Ascension Oratorio' in March of that year.

After two years of disruption and silence forced upon us by the pandemic, we are overjoyed to be performing to a live audience once again.

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