

The Marais Project

directed by
Jennifer Eriksson



Viol Song

3.00pm Sunday 14th August

Recital Hall East, Sydney Conservatorium of Music

www.maraisproject.com.au or join us on Facebook

Program

- **Chacoña** – Juan Arañés (? -1649)
- **Cessés mortels de soupirer** – Pierre Guédron (c. 1570 – c. 1620)
- **Aquarelle** (2009) - Rosalind Page
- **Les voix humaines** (human voices) - Marin Marais (1656-1728)
- **Pièces en Trio** - Marin Marais; transcribed by Jennifer Eriksson
 - Simphonie
 - Sarabande de Grave
 - Bransle de village
 - Rigaudon
 - Menuet 2
 - Meunet 4
- **From Silent Night** - John Dowland (1563 – 1626)
- **Aurora Prone (2011)** - Dan Walker
 - Cell DNA
 - Lotus Dam
 - Aurora Prone
- **Revolving Doors** – Elena Kats - Chernin (b1957); arranged by Tommie Andersson with permission
- **Ah, Nastasya** - Traditional; arranged by Dan Walker

Welcome from Jennifer Eriksson

Today we explore a key aspect of our mission as an ensemble: to present music for the viola da gamba in a contemporary Australian context. Together with works by Marais, three fine Australian composers are represented in Dan Walker, Rosalind Page and Elena Kats-Chernin along with one of Australia's greatest poets, Les Murray. Our thanks go to Father Arthur Bridges from Ars Musica Australis who supported the commissioning of both "Aquarelle" and "Aurora Prone."

Background to the music

"Viol Song" is a journey through music for viol and voice that spans five countries and four centuries. Juan Arañés' Chacona was the first piece for voices by a Spanish composer to appear in print. Pierre Guédron was the greatest composer of "Airs de cour", courtly songs which dominated secular music France in the early 17th century. John Dowland was one of the finest lutenists and song composers of all time. He held Court appointments in Europe and England and is considered to be the English master of the lute song. "Ah, Nastasya" is a traditional

Russian folk song sung to Andrei by his grandfather when we was a young boy.

Dan Walker writes about "Aurora Prone": "The piece is a three-movement work based on three quite different Les Murray texts. I was immediately drawn to these works by their fabulous imagery and the inherent clarity in the writing. Musically, I've attempted to match the vivacity of Murray's poems with instrumental flourishes and harmonious lines. The text, sung by a solo tenor voice, is set rather simply and plaintively, and I thoroughly enjoyed

the challenge presented with writing for Baroque instruments in a decidedly non-baroque fashion. Discovering the idiosyncrasies of the gamba and theorbo was a joy: chordal qualities lending themselves well to shimmering, rich harmonic figures; dexterous enough for the most filigree of ornamental gestures; with everything in between. The opportunity to workshop the music with such fine players has also meant that the music I've written can truly do these beautiful and in many ways under-appreciated instruments justice".

The instrumental pieces have been chosen to complement the songs. The theorist Jean Rousseau states the viol player should "imitate everything charming and agreeable that the voice can do with tenderness and delicacy". In Marais' "Les voix humaines" the performer is not only required to make the melodies sing but also to sustain several independent voices. Marais is remembered mostly for the suites he wrote for the viola da gamba. However, he also wrote some delightful trio sonatas. The D major trio which you will hear today was originally written for flute, violin and continuo. Following the baroque tradition of arranging music for the available instruments I have adapted this piece for violin, viola da gamba and continuo.

Likewise, with permission, Tommie has arranged Elena Kats-Chernin's "Revolving Doors" which was originally a solo piano piece. There is a lovely link between the last two pieces on the program in that Elena was born in what was at the time Soviet-controlled, Russian speaking Uzbekistan, while Andrei has Russian parents and speaks the language fluently.

Rosalind Page comments on "Aquarelle": "Whilst undertaking an artist residency January-February 2009 at CAMAC, Marnay-sur-Seine, France, I was perpetually entranced by the movement and evocative moods, through mist, snow and the contrasted clarity of reflected winter light, of the river Seine. Throughout time, La Seine has been the source of inspiration for painters, including les grands aquarellistes. Like the river, Aquarelle traverses a similar watercolour palette to that of Marin Marais and seeks a dialogue across history and place, linking new Australian composition with the luminescent flowing sources of French artistic creativity."



Biographies



Andrei Laptev has been choirmaster of Holy Protection Russian Orthodox Church in Cabramatta since 2006. He is a member of Cantillation, The Brandenburg Choir, Sydney Chamber Choir and The Parsons Affayre. In 2009 he

appeared in the role of Osmano in Pinchgut Opera's production of L'Ormino, and has been a featured soloist in Opera Australia's productions of Acis and Galatea and La Boheme. Recent solo performances include the Lieutenant Kije Suite with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in 2009 and in 2010 with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra in their Coronation concert series in Sydney and Melbourne. Andrei has been a featured soloist on recent recordings on the ABC Classics label including the albums Exaltate Dominum, featuring music by George Palmer, Spain: Great Guitar Concertos with Karen Shaupp and David and Jonathan with Pinchgut Opera.

Alice Evans was born in Perth and at fifteen she became a student at the Western Australian Conservatorium of Music, from which she graduated. Alice became a core member of the Australian Chamber Orchestra in 1990. In 1997, she was awarded a Churchill Fellowship to spend a year in Europe studying Baroque Violin. During this time she studied in England, Holland and France and also played with various leading period ensembles including Florilegium, The Hanover Band and King's Consort. Alice has played with most of the leading period instrument ensembles around Australia. She recently joined Concerto Copenhagen for their Australian debut tour with Musica Viva.

Daniel Walker is one of Australia's most promising young composers. He has had works commissioned and performed by such groups as the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, The Song Company, Gondwana Voices, Queensland Youth Choir, the Murrumbidgee Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs. He is the current Assistant Conductor for Sydney Children's Choir and Gondwana Voices. As a performer, he is a regular member of Cantillation,



Pinchgut Opera, and a guest member of The Song Company and the Opera Australia chorus.

Rosalind Page has created works for theatre, dance, chamber ensembles, orchestra and electronica, with performances in Europe, USA and Japan. Rosalind's artistic practice includes her M.A. (Theatre and Film Studies) on sound/image relationships in the films of Andrei Tarkovsky. In 2006 her setting of Lorca's *Sonetos del Amor Oscuro* won the Paul Lowin Song Cycle Prize. Rosalind has been an invited composer by ISCM at Visby International Composers Centre, Gotland, Sweden and artist-in-residence at Centre d'Art Marnay Art Centre (CAMAC) in France. Currently Rosalind teaches composition at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Tommie Andersson is highly sought after both as a soloist and as a continuo player and performs with Opera Australia, Sydney Philharmonia, the Song Company, Pinchgut Opera, the Orchestra of the Antipodes, Sydney Chamber Choir, Halcyon and the Australian Chamber Orchestra amongst others. He is a founding member and principal player of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra. In 2007, ABC Classic FM initiated the

Lute Project and commissioned four Australian composers to write for him. Tommie Andersson appears on more than 35 CDs and lectures in Lute at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He is a founding member of The Marais Project.

Jennifer Eriksson completed her initial musical studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She subsequently studied the viola da gamba with Jaap ter Linden at the Rotterdam Conservatorium where she completed post-graduate studies in baroque music. She founded The Marais Project in 2000 and also directs the Musica Viva in Schools ensemble, Sounds Baroque. Jennifer is widely recognised as one of Australia's best known and most versatile viola da gambists.

Cathy Upex completed her Bachelor of Music (Honours) at Sydney University in 1997, performing the Saint-Saëns' cello concerto with the Sydney University Orchestra. She has performed with The Renaissance Players, the Conservatorium Baroque Orchestra, Salût, The Sydney Consort, Lautetia, La Folia, the Opera Project and Zarabanda. Catherine is a founder member of The Marais Project and appears on all three Marais Project CDs.

Texts

Chacoña

One evening in the month of roses
a dancing party was held,
It afforded a thousand pleasures
And was famed both far and wide.
Here's to the good, sweet life,
Let's dance the chaconne.

When Almadan was wed
A grand old party was thrown.
The daughters of Anao danced
With the grandsons of Milan.
The father-in-law of Beltran
And Orpheus's sister-in-law
Began a Guinea dance
And an Amazon finished it off,
As was famed both far and wide.

Cessés, mortels de soupirer (Cease your sighing oh ! mortals)

Cease your sighing oh mortals,
This is no mortal beauty;

It is permitted to adore her,
But not to be in love with her,
Only the gods
May love so highly

Love, in the most distant places
Even where his fires are mistrusted,
With but the fame of her beauty,
Captures the greatest souls:
But only the gods
May love so highly.

He would be too foolish
Some day when his joy aspires,
If her beautiful eyes had wounded him,
To make him dare reveal his suffering;
For only the gods
May love so highly.

In short, these divine qualities
With which the heavens
Glorified her birth,
Forbid even the gods
Not from loving her, but the hope
Of obtaining in loving her
Other than a glorious torment.





Cell DNA

I am the singular
in free fall.

I and my doubles
carry it all:

life's slim volume
spirally bound.

It's what I'm about,
it's what I'm around.

Presence and hungers
imbue a sap mote

with the world as they spin it.
I teach it by rote

but its every command
was once a miscue
that something rose to,
Presence and freedom

re-wording, re-beading
strains on a strand
making I and I more different
than we could stand.

Lotus Dam

Lotus leaves, standing feet above the water,
collect at their centre a perfect lens of rain
and heel, and tip it back into the water.

Their baby leaves are feet again, or slant lips
scrolled in declaration; pointed at toe and heel
they echo an unwalked sole in their pale green crinkles

and under blown and picket blooms, the floor
of floating leaves rolls light rainwater marbles
back and forth on sharkskins of anchored rippling.

Each speculum, pearl and pebble of the first water
rides, sprung with weight, on its live mirroring skin
tipped green and loganberry, till one or other sky

redeems it, beneath bent foils and ferruled canes
where cupped pink bursts all day, above riddled water.

Aurora Prone

The lemon sunlight poured out far between things
inhabits a coolness. Mosquitoes have subsided,
flies are for later heat.

Every tree's an auburn giant with a dazzled face
and the back of its head to an infinite dusk road.

Twilights broaden away from our feet too
as rabbits bounce home up defiles in the grass.
Everything widens with distance, in this perceptivity.

The dog's paws, trotting, rotate his end of infinity
and dam water feels a shiver few willow drapes share.
Bright leaks through their wigwam re-purple the skinny beans
then rapidly the light tops treetops and is shortened
into a day. Everywhere stands pat beside its shadow
for the great bald radiance never seen in dreams.

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