

Melbourne Conservatorium of Music  
The University of Melbourne  
Presents

## **2011 Master of Music Recital Series**

SHANNON EBELING, saxophones  
with  
AMIR FARID, piano  
KEN MURRAY, guitar  
MERLYN QUAIFFE, soprano

6:00pm  
28 June 2011  
MELBA HALL

# PROGRAM

**Feld, J.**

Sonate pour Saxophone Alto et Piano

I *Allegro ritmico*

II *Cloches de la liberté (1989): Adagio*

III *Scherzo: Allegro vivo*

IV *Allegro con fuoco*

**Greenbaum, S.**

Cloud Eight

**Derr, E.**

I Never Saw Another Butterfly

Prologue: *Terezin [Theresienstadt]*

The Butterfly

The Old Man

Fear

The Garden

INTERVAL (10 minutes)

**Ter Veldhuis, J.**

Grab It!

**Turnage, M.**

Sarabande

**Abbott, K.**

Egyptian Wish

**Ter Veldhuis, J.**

The Garden of Love

To avoid discomfort to yourself and others, please switch off your mobile telephone for the duration of the performance

## **JINDŘICH FELD (1925-2007)**

### **Sonate pour Saxophone Alto et Piano (1990)**

Feld's compositional style evolved over his lifetime from music which reflected ties to European and Czech music from the Romantic period to a more modern style that incorporated compositional techniques such as dodecaphony and serialism. The Alto Saxophone Sonata is of the later style and explores the maximum of the instrument's full capabilities: key slaps, slap tongue, altissimo notes, multiphonics and quarter tones. The work was written for Eugene Rousseau who comments that Feld "uses extended techniques judiciously, tastefully, for musical purposes." The first movement begins with intense rhythmic chords in the piano which is followed by a theme in the saxophone which incorporates octave displacements. The second movement is entitled 'Bells of Liberty (1989)' and was composed during the Czechoslovakian democratic revolution where Feld describes the excitement of people "going out to the squares and ringing their keys like bells". The opening lyrical melody is contrasted with a middle section of tapping and short interjections between the piano and saxophone, like crowds of people coming together. The Scherzo requires agility and control of dynamics and range to maintain a lightness and humour. The final movement combines prominent themes of the previous movements with new material. There are rhythmic motives from the third movement and direct quotes from the second and first movements, with the tense conclusion of the second movement resolving at the end of the work.



## **STUART GREENBAUM (b.1966)**

### **Cloud Eight for Alto Saxophone and Guitar (2005)**



Originally composed for flute and guitar in 1995, in 2005 Irish saxophonist Gerard McChrystal asked for the part to be adapted for saxophone and the opportunity was taken to add some new material to the work as well as techniques idiomatic to the saxophone. The opening's shifting meters and intimate dynamics in both instruments create an improvised atmosphere. This mood reappears throughout the piece, contrasted with more regular rhythmic sections, a brief saxophone cadenza and an uplifting theme. The unusual instrumentation lends itself to a range of textures, the saxophone exploring lyrical sonorities as well as the growls and bends crossed over from popular music. Greenbaum explains in his programme note: "Cloud Eight? There is an aspect of melancholy about the whole idea. Less than one might dream of. Yet it is also an opportunity to think again. To re-evaluate what is worthwhile. In musical terms, this finally leads to a more elated reverie. Not shouting from the roof tops, but perhaps an inner elation while taking a solitary stroll far from the madding crowd."

## ELLWOOD DERR (1932-2008)

I Never Saw Another Butterfly Song Cycle for Soprano Voice, Alto Saxophone, and Piano. On the poems by children who were incarcerated in the Nazi ghetto for Jews in Terezín, Czechoslovakia (1942-1944) and who died in Auschwitz before the end of October 1944. (1966)



Ellwood Derr completed his doctoral residence in composition at the University of Illinois and studied with Carl Orff for two years at the Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in Munich. His research and performance specialty was in eighteenth-century counterpoint, but his most famous composition is ‘I Never Saw Another Butterfly’. The unique instrumentation explores the timbral similarities between the saxophone and soprano voice, as well as different textual settings with the piano. It is a chamber work with three fluctuating instrumental roles: Derr himself notes that “the dramatic effectiveness of the piece is greatly diminished when performed as a work for soprano with two accompanying instruments.” The ‘Prologue’ which opens the work acts as a recitative, setting the dramatic tone of the work and providing insight

the loss of innocence felt by a young Jewish boy who has had his childhood stolen by the Nazis. The soprano increases in pitch and dynamic intensity before consigning herself “to weep”, whereupon the saxophone quietly joins with an emotional vibrato. The saxophone begins the second movement with a representation of the butterfly and the chromatic runs and trills are supported by the piano before the entry of the voice. There is a shift in intensity in the middle of the piece with a heavy dissonance in the piano and a brief saxophone cadenza which incorporates musical material from the opening. The soprano uses spoken text for the remainder of the movement, highlighting the despair of the author’s situation. ‘The Old Man’ is a resigned waltz which features the soprano and saxophone, often with melodic lines that have key pitches only a semitone or tone apart. The emotional climax of the song cycle is reached in ‘Fear’, beginning with aggressive and angular lines in the saxophone and piano. The glissandi in the different parts become more wild, the saxophone uses fluttertongue and finally the voice begins to sing with the piano and saxophone playing a macabre version of the German national anthem. ‘The Garden’ reflects the inevitable fate of the children from the ghetto, comparing the growing of a young boy to the blooming of a rose. The soprano has a lyrical melodic line with the saxophone using motives to emphasise the word “boy”. As the piano fades away to nothingness at the end of the piece, we realise the little boy will be dead before the roses bloom. This song cycle is dedicated to “the everlasting memory of the children who suffered and made these poems, and to all others who shared their fate.”

### **Terezín**

Terezín, that bit of filth in dirty walls,  
And all around barbed wire,  
And thirty thousand souls who sleep,  
Who once will wake  
And once will see  
Their own blood spilled.

I was once a little child,  
Three years ago.  
That child who longed for other worlds.  
But now I am no more a child  
For I have learned to hate.  
I am a grown-up person now,  
I have known fear.

But anyway, I still believe I only sleep today,  
That I'll wake up a child again,  
and start to laugh and play.

Somewhere, far away out there, childhood  
sweetly sleeps,  
Along that path among the trees,  
There o'er that house  
Which was once my pride and joy.  
There my mother gave me birth into this world  
So I could weep...  
*Hanuš Hachenburg*

### **The Butterfly**

A butterfly,  
The last, the very last,  
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.  
As if the sun's tears would sing  
against a white stone...

Such, such a yellow  
Is carried lightly 'way up high.  
It went away, I'm sure,  
for it wished to kiss the world goodbye...

For seven weeks I've lived in here,  
Penned up inside this ghetto  
But I have found my people here.  
The dandelions have befriended me  
And the white chestnut candles in the court.  
Only I never saw another butterfly

That butterfly was the last one.  
Butterflies don't live in here, in the ghetto.  
*Pavel Friedmann*

### **Yes, That's The Way Things Are**

A queer old granddad sits  
Somewhere there in the so-called park.  
He wears a beard down to his lap  
And on his head, a little cap.

Hard crusts he crumbles in his gums,  
He's only got one single tooth.  
My poor old man with working gums.  
There's no soft roll or lentil soup  
For you, my poor old greybeard.

*M. Košek, H Löwy, Bachner*

### **Fear**

Today the ghetto knows a different fear,  
Close in its grip, Death wields an icy scythe.  
An evil sickness spreads terror, in its wake,  
the victims its shadow weep, and writhe.

Today a father's heartbeat tells his fright.  
And mothers bend their heads in their hands.  
Now children choke and die with typhus  
here...

No, oh God, we want to live!  
Not watch our numbers melt away  
We want to have a better world,  
We want to work -- We must not die!  
*Eva Picková*

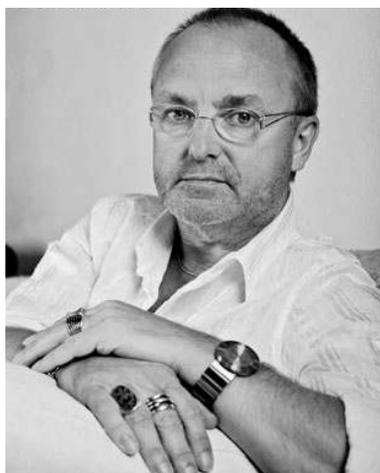
### **The Garden**

A little garden,  
Fragrant and full of roses.  
The path is narrow  
And a little boy walks along it.

A little boy, a sweet boy,  
Like that growing blossom.  
But when that blossom comes to bloom.  
The little boy will be no more  
*František Bass*

## **JACOB TER VELDHUIS (b.1951)**

### **Grab It! for Tenor Saxophone and Boombox (1999)**



Ter Veldhuis' first composition for saxophone, *Grab It!* was commissioned by Arno Bornkamp as a comment on French composer Christian Lauba's solo saxophone piece, *Hard*. Rather than attempt to surpass the technical virtuosity of Lauba's piece, ter Veldhuis aimed to create a piece that was even **HARDER** in an emotional and dramatic sense. The soundtrack features spoken word audio samples from American prisoners sentenced for life, recorded for a documentary called 'Scared Straight'. This work is a duet (or duel) between the harsh and powerful sound of the tenor saxophone and the rough vitality of shouting life sentenced prisoners, where the saxophone competes with an unrelenting onslaught of syllables, words and sentences, demanding endurance of the performer and listener. The influence of blues and jazz music in this work is obvious with directions in the score for the performer to vary their timbre in the styles of famous saxophonists such as Sonny Rollins (loud, hard, rough), Ben Webster (soft and mellow, with air) and Clarence Clemons ('macho', rocking).

## **MARK-ANTHONY TURNAGE (b.1960)**

### **Sarabande for Soprano Saxophone and Piano (1985)**

Royal College of Music graduate Turnage wrote *Sarabande* for Martin Robertson, a saxophonist equally at home with jazz and classical repertoire. Originally titled 'Adagio, Adagio', the work is from his early compositional period and draws on thematic material from the sarabande in the final movement of his 1984 chamber work, 'On all Fours'. The performers are directed to be spaced 'as far apart as possible' and the ringing of desk bells punctuate the calls between the instruments. The influence of Miles Davis can be heard in the exploration of timbre, sparse texture, use of space and jazz ornaments. The bell-like opening of large intervals in the piano and saxophone are contrasted with a dark and stately section with some subtle use of 'blues' notes in the melody. The *Da Capo* completes the form of the work, ending with the ringing of bells off into the distance.



## **KATY ABBOTT (b.1971)**

### **Egyptian Wish for Soprano Saxophone and CD (2002)**

Abbott explains in her programme notes that the initial inspiration for this work came from her personal experience of travelling in the middle east and in particular hearing the regular prayer calls that were sung and amplified over the cities throughout the day. The melodic lines have a vocal nature with melisma, bends and glissandi. I have chosen to explore the textual nuances of this piece by placing the different layers in separate acoustic spaces. The improvisatory feel of the work has been made more personal through my own recording of the two accompanying layers, allowing for my own musical choices regarding timbre, pitch and phrasing. Abbott encourages the performer to maintain the sense of mystery in the piece in their performance.



## **JACOB TER VELDHUIS (b.1951)**

### **The Garden of Love for Soprano Saxophone and Boombox (2003)**

Originally composed by ter Veldhuis for oboist Bart Scheemann, The Garden of Love was re-arranged for the soprano saxophone with the addition of idiomatic saxophone sounds and techniques, such as slap-tongue and altissimo notes. The text is from William Blake's 'Songs of Innocence' (1789) and is heard in its entirety at the beginning of the piece as read by Sir Ralph Richardson. The composition then explores different musical settings for the text, in the manner of a story where you know the plot, just not how it is being told. Ter Veldhuis has composed a complex soundtrack design with a large set of instruments and bird sounds used for melodic material, percussive effects and in free song. The role of the soprano saxophone fluctuates between melodic and rhythmic sequences before having a dialogue with the text where both parts are of equal importance.

## **SHANNON EBELING**

Australian saxophonist Shannon Ebeling graduated with first class honours in the Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Teaching degrees from the University of Melbourne in 2007. He was awarded the Melbourne Education Excellence in Music Teaching Award in 2005 and the AMUSE Tertiary Music Student award for outstanding achievement in Music Education Studied in 2006. Shannon has performed with Australian Youth Orchestra, the Australian Classical Players and the Melbourne Royal Philharmonic as well as being broadcast live on 3MBS and Classic FM. Shannon received the Australian Postgraduate Award in 2010 and recently participated in the International Saxophone Week in Amsterdam with Arno Bornkamp, Claude Delangle and Nicholas Prost.

## **AMIR FARID**

Winner of the 2006 Australian National Piano Award, pianist Amir Farid has been described as “a highly creative musician – a pianist of great intelligence and integrity.” He has performed concerti with the Sydney Symphony, Melbourne Symphony, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria, Melbourne Youth and ANAM Orchestras. In 2004 Amir completed his B.Mus (Hon) at the University of Melbourne and later attended the Australian National Academy of Music. In 2009, he graduated with distinction at the Royal College of Music London, studying with Andrew Ball.

## **KEN MURRAY**

Ken Murray has developed a singular path as a guitarist combining performance, composition, teaching and research. He has championed and recorded Spanish music from the early twentieth century, worked extensively with contemporary composers and has been active as a performer of Brazilian and other South American musical styles. He studied guitar with John Griffiths, Susan Ellis and Michael Christoforidis and holds a Master of Music Degree from the University of Melbourne. He has a strong commitment to performing contemporary music and has premiered over 100 works. He has performed with many ensembles as a guitarist and mandolinist including: Elision, Libra, re-sound, the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Orchestra Victoria.

## **MERLYN QUAIFFE**

A performer of great versatility, the distinguished soprano Merlyn Quaiife has performed opera, oratorio, Lieder, chamber music and contemporary music to great acclaim throughout Australia and Europe. She has also performed as soloist with the Singapore Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic and the Voronesz Philharmonic in Russia. She has performed with all the Symphony Australia orchestras, featured in repertoire of every conceivable style from Handel to Ligeti, as well as recorded a number of CDs including Aria for John Edward Eyre by David Lumsdaine which won her a Sounds Australia Award. Of recording labels, she appears on Naxos, Move, Tall Poppies and ABC Classics.

Technical assistance -- Les Craythorn (Tonmeister)

Stage manager -- Robert Simone

I would particularly like to thank the following people for their support and assistance in creating this recital.

Bianca Ebeling  
Ian Godfrey  
Amir Farid  
Merlyn Quaiife  
Ken Murray  
Les Craythorn  
Robert Simone