



PSYCHEDELIC FRENZY

Ensemble Offspring

23 MARCH 2024 - THE NEILSON



WELCOME

There was a bit of a tussle in our Ensemble Offspring team meeting last year when we needed to agree on a title for this program - and in the end I was the victor with my slightly out-there suggestion of **Psychedelic Frenzy**. In crafting a title for this program I was hyper aware of the soundworlds and inspirations behind the epicly psychedelic Romitelli works EO has championed in the past including Professor Bad Trip Lessons 1, 2 and 3 and of course his video opera An Index of Metals. For me, all the music on this forward looking program is also somewhat frenzied - probably my favourite type of music! Music that takes its cues from the world around us, the vibrant hues of our city centric fast paced lives in the 21st century. Music that creates mesmerising tapestries of sound which both make us feel new emotions and lead us to reflect with fresh eyes and ears. I implore you to be taken on this joy ride of psychedelic colour, sound and movement along with us - see you on the other side!

Claire Edwardes OAM, Artistic Director



ABOUT ENSEMBLE OFFSPRING

Ensemble Offspring is Australia's leading new music group. Uniting the country's most fearless instrumentalists under the leadership of internationally acclaimed percussionist Claire Edwardes, they subvert classical music traditions and deliver concerts that "burst with imagination, energy and inspiration" (Seesaw Magazine).

As the foremost champions of contemporary music in Australia, Ensemble Offspring have commissioned and premiered over 350 works and have toured new Australian music around the world. Their dedication to excellence and amplifying underrepresented voices has earned multiple APRA Art Music Awards and an ARIA Award nomination.

Through their pioneering spirit and relentless commitment to equality, Ensemble Offspring continue to shape a vibrant and diverse artistic future for Australian music.

ENSEMBLEOFFSPRING.COM

PROGRAM

Bernhard Gander – *beijing* (2024)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Kate Moore – *Joyful Melodies* (2024)

WORLD PREMIERE (*Commissioned with the generous support of Silo Collective*)

Wang Lu – *Cloud Intimacy* (2016)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Hannah Peel – *Neon* (2021)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Neon 1. Shinjuku

Neon 2. Born of Breath

Neon 3. Vanishing

Bernhard Gander – *beijing* (2010)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Fausto Romitelli – *Amok Koma* (2001)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Duration: 70 minutes

PERFORMERS

Roland Peelman - conductor

Claire Edwardes - Artistic Director,
percussion

Lamorna Nightingale - flutes

Jason Noble - clarinet, bass clarinet

Alice Morgan - saxophones (Hatched
Associate Artist)

Claudia Jelic - clarinet

Sonya Lifschitz - piano

Kyla Matsuura-Miller - violin

Andrew Jezek - viola

Blair Harris - cello

Theo Carbo - electric guitar, sampler

David Trumpanis - sound

Veronique Bennett - lighting

Thanks to Carl Dewhurst, Tony David
Cray, Ensemble Linea, Schallfield
Ensemble, Ruari Campbell, Damien
Ricketson and Maddy Briggs for their
support and generosity of spirit.

NOTES **all program notes by the composers*

Bernhard Gander – beijing (2010 rev. 2024)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

bass clarinet/tenor saxophone

Beijing: loud, foggy, smoggy,
chaotic, dense, intense
...still quite charming

Bernhard Gander is an Austrian composer, currently based in Vienna. Gander attended the Franziskanergymnasium in Hall in Tirol where he was able to learn various musical instruments (guitar, piano, drums, saxophone). In addition to his compositional work, Gander is particularly interested in projects that are dedicated to communicating contemporary music.

Kate Moore – Joyful Melodies (2024)

WORLD PREMIERE

Vibraphone

Commissioned with the generous support of Silo Collective.

It was upon Claire's suggestion that I wrote Joyful Melodies. It gave me an interesting palette to work with, partly in response to my previous suite of compositions for solo cello about sadness and partly because I like the symmetry of writing joyful melodies after sad melodies. The subject reminded me of the joyful and sorrowful mysteries of Maria and the Rosary and it gave me a lot to think about. In general, I enjoy sad music and lean towards minor keys in preference over major keys. It is controversial to assign emotion to music and yet historically the two were intertwined especially through temperament theory. Whether one agrees or not, music does have an impact on one's emotions. By writing joyful melodies I reflect upon what it means to be joyful and what the difference is between being joyful and being happy. Joyful is thankful where happy is satisfied, joyful is ecstatic where happy is accepting, joy embraces pain and beauty together. In joy lies the thorn and the rose.

Kate Moore is an internationally acclaimed Australian composer based in Amsterdam. Her works are performed by AskolSchönberg, Bang on a Can, Icebreaker, Slagwerk Den Haag, Ensemble Offspring, the Australian String Quartet, The Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and Groot Omroepkoor, among others.

Wang Lu – Cloud Intimacy (2016)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

clarinet/bass clarinet, soprano saxophone/alto saxophone, viola, piano, electric guitar, percussion/electronics

We often live richer and more engaged online lives than real ones, and the distinction between them has blurred. Social networks allow us to meet and expand our circles and feel included while easily ignoring friends right next to us. Other apps give us the power to simply slide right or left on someone's photo to decide whether we like the person or not. Dating has become an outdated word for teenagers. Unbounded and uncommitted intimacy are new and legitimised ways of feeling. Online, everyone has a chance to construct a perfect social profile separate from the imperfections of reality to console their mind and boost their confidence.

Cloud Intimacy brings together the constant buzz of this frantic digital reality (endless notification sounds from messages and updates, the theatrics of "swiping") with the supposed intimacy and familiarity of ambient cafe sounds, as well as faint echoes from Wagner's *liebested* from *Tristan and Isolde*, that ultimate expression of unattainable love through mortality that feels so disconnected to the instant gratifications of our time. It's a musical commentary on absurd internet social phenomena and the reality of deeply felt loneliness and isolation.

Wang Lu writes music that reflects urban environmental sounds, linguistic intonation and contours, traditional Chinese music, and freely improvised practices. She is an Associate Professor of Music at Brown University in USA. Her works have been performed internationally, by Ensemble Modern, the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, Boston Lyric Opera among others.

Hannah Peel – Neon (2021)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, vibraphone, electronics

Neon 1. Shinjuku

Neon 2. Born of Breath

Neon 3. Vanishing

Born of breath, heat and a spark, neon has an enigmatic presence of meaning and significance, all things and nothing.

A symbol of the city at night, iconic landmarks and urban design - ablaze light waves vibrating through the air. Ever present through the smog, the rain, in film and still-imagery. Neon has become a metaphor in popular culture and subculture;

opulence and decadence; bustling activity and loneliness.

What started as an interest in the wonder of this natural gas element, led me to the beauty and significance of the human touch to create it. I developed an admiration for the time, labour and diverse knowledge needed in order to work with light, science and glass bending that had sustained an industry of makers, pre the digital age. Yet the present-day stories of once buzzing workshops now reduced to a singular elderly creator because of our desire for all things faster bigger, cheaper and flexible; opened a doorway for me to write about the collective memory, the melancholy and eventual vanishing of this beautiful art form.

I hope the interplay in this piece between the 'digital tape' performer and the acoustic instruments, allows for a reflection on the presence and value of the hand, as we move ever quickly forward, into the future.

Hannah Peel is a British artist, music producer, Emmy-nominated composer, late night broadcaster... She's also the type of collaborator we are immediately drawn to – someone who carves their own path in search of new sound worlds, operating at the boundaries of electronic and contemporary classical music making.

Fausto Romitelli – Amok Koma (2001)

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

flute, clarinet, clarinet/bass clarinet, violin, viola, cello, piano, percussion, keyboard/MIDI sampler

In this work **Amok Koma** (sharing the palindromic title of a 1980 album by a German punk rock band called Abwärts), I started from a very simple idea: that of the repetition/degradation of the material. Linear processes, predictable and therefore reassuring, will be gradually oriented towards the extreme poles of silence and saturation, thanks to slowing down to immobility or acceleration to paroxysm. The idea of "musical process" is only a pretext allowing me to make perceptible what really interests me: the advent of a hidden violence which is revealed only by the chaotic drift of the material, by the ritual of its destruction as discursive element carrying form and its resurrection as incandescent material, therefore, beyond all control.

Fausto Romitelli was born in Italy in 1963 and tragically passed away at the age of 41 in 2004. At the age of 28, he moved to Paris to take courses in computer music at IRCAM, also studying spectral techniques with Gérard Grisey and Tristan Murail. It was at IRCAM that Romitelli became aware of the potential connections between the world of psychedelic rock and classically composed music.

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