

World Premiere Works

Presented by Robert Wallace Laird & Stuart James



Until the RSMC's concert in April, I'd not heard any works by either Robert Wallace Laird or Stuart James. I had no idea what to expect. Would the music be aggressive, emotionally dark, superficially trivial, austere or dauntingly complex?

With Paul Wright leading the *Sartory String Quartet*, we listened to four works by Laird, all being given their first public performances. There was an almost palpable sense of anticipation as the musicians gripped their bows and took us into a quiet sonic world. So often, music of the 21st century – and earlier, for that matter – can, and does, sound violently confrontational and gratingly dissonant. But this was a sonic experience of a very different kind: soothing, introspective music that caressed the ear. (Laird's Quartet No 4 [Variations on Kai's Theme] is incomplete: the composer hopes to write a further three variations.)

Stuart James was at the keyboard for the first performance of his piano quintet – *A Song for my Beloved*. It unfolded very slowly, an essay in quietness.

Laird's Lullaby (also for piano quintet) with the composer at the keyboard was informed by harmonies that called the orient to mind. Pizzicato was a feature in music that came across as a gently melancholic statement.

Neville Cohn

To read reviews of some of the *Royal Schools Music Club* concerts see www.ozartsreview.com

Special Thanks

to Judy Cumming for her generous donation to the *Royal Schools Music Club*



MUSIC NEWS

May 2017 No 495

Next Meeting
Castanets, C(h)ords and Keys

Saturday 13th May 2017
7.00pm for 7.30pm

Callaway Music Auditorium
School of Music, UWA

Established 1926

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RSMC, PO Box 275, Nedlands 6909

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From your President

Dear Friends of Music,

As a busy professional with many commitments, my job can often get in the way of experiencing special moments in life. For example, when I missed my Masters' degree graduation ceremony. I don't remember what urgent job caused me to miss it, only that I had to meet a deadline and that meant putting work first. I have a framed testamur on my wall, received in the post some weeks after the ceremony, to forever remind me that I skipped a ritual of celebration that

was important to family and friends, because of a task that I have long forgotten. What I have tried to do since then, with variable success, is to put those special things in my diary and hope that life does not get in the way. One of those special things coming up is Deanna Blacher's concert with the RSMC this May. Deanna is one of those rare treasures of Perth - a sublime musician of such acclaim that she has been honoured with orders of chivalry from the sovereigns of both Australia and Spain, and is also a warm and generous artist. Her concert will be one to share with friends.

This year, the club is pleased to continue its support of local young musicians through the backing of generous members and sponsors. For those of you with young singers in your life, I commend to you our Royal Over-Seas League Award for Young Singers, made possible once again by the WA Branch of the Royal Over-Seas League, with entries closing on 7 July. We so appreciate our partnership with the Royal Over-Seas League, and their commitment to arts and culture in Western Australia.

Best wishes

Andrew

Call for Performers: Showcasing Emerging Musicians (at all levels)

Are you looking for a non-competitive performance opportunity with an appreciative audience? If so, this is a perfect opportunity for you. The Juniors and Seniors concerts will again be combined, in one performance on Saturday 11th June at 2.30 pm in the Eileen Joyce Studio at School of Music, UWA.

Priority will be given to members' students and/or student members of the Club. Limited spots are available due to time constraints.

Please send an expression of interest, with the following information by 9th May: your name, instrument on which you will be performing, the piece you are going to perform, number of minutes actual performing time, teacher's name and the name of your accompanist (if you are using one).

Contact: rsmc@iinet.net.au or call 9386 2654.

Castanets, C(h)ords & Keys

Deanna Blacher OAM is that rarity: a virtuoso on the castanets. Believed to be the only such musician in Australia, Deanna has performed internationally as soloist with chamber and symphony orchestras and to piano accompaniment.



A recital for castanets and piano in Cape Town launched a career originally in parallel with her work as dancer, choreographer and dance company director. Zubin Mehta heard her in performance and invited her to perform as castanets soloist with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra which launched an international career. Conductor Enrique Garcia Asensio has often presided over orchestral concerts featuring Deanna as soloist. Numbers of composers - Spanish, British and South African - have written castanets concertos for Deanna.

At her recital for the *Royal Schools Music Club* Deanna will be accompanied at the piano by Neville Cohn. A fascinating program includes sonatas by Spanish baroque composers such as Padre Antonio Soler, Narciso Casanovas (a rather awkward name for a Benedictine monk) and Cantallos. There will also be music by Granados and Manuel de Falla.

For her services to Spanish dance and her astonishing skills as a castanets virtuoso, Deanna was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by Ausdance. In 2011 she received an OAM for services to the performing arts and also the Cross of the Order of Civil Merit from King Juan Carlos of Spain.

TIME: 7.00pm (pre-concert refreshments) for 7.30pm start

DATE: Saturday 13th May 2017

VENUE: Callaway Music Auditorium, School of Music, UWA

WELCOME: Guests - \$20 at the door, includes programme and refreshments

Royal Over-Seas League Award for Young Singers

Presented by the Royal Schools Music Club

ADJUDICATOR: Naomi Johns

Closing Date For Entries: Friday 7th July 2017

FIRST PRIZE \$1000 - SECOND PRIZE \$600 - THIRD PRIZE \$400

Prizes are all generously donated by the WA Branch of the Royal Over-Seas League

ENTRY FORMS AND DETAILS FROM: www.rsmc.info

ENQUIRIES: Judy Thönell; Email: rsmc@iinet.net.au Tel: 9386 2654