

MOZART & LATHAM

Saturday 22 May, 2pm
Design Tasmania, Launceston

TSO musicians perform chamber music

Emma McGrath violin

Jennifer Owen violin

Doug Coghill viola

Jonathan Békés cello

LATHAM The Sweetest People (World première) (10')

MOZART String Quartet in C, K 465, 'Dissonance' (31')

Adagio – Allegro

Andante cantabile

Menuetto: Allegretto – Trio

Allegro molto

Jabra Latham's music has been performed by the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Southern Cross Soloists, Virtuosi Tasmania, Andrew Seymour, Emily Sheppard, Niels Bijl, Xyris Quartet, Opus House and others, including broadcasts on ABC Classic FM and ABC Local, and recording for ABC Classic. Recent projects include: Fire Music for clarinet and string orchestra, which was commissioned by Marie Heitz; an original album, Play; a collaboration with wilderness cinematographer, Rob Blakers; and Viola Duos for Doug Coghill and Stefanie Farrands. Jabra is a highly accomplished saxophonist with a substantial performance resumé. He has championed the music of Australian composers including Russell Gilmour, Don Kay, Maria Grenfell, Simon Reade and Timothy Coghill. He is published by TSO House. The composer writes:

The Sweetest People was written at the request of the Tasmanian String Quartet for first performances during its 2021 season. The opening of the work references certain chords from the second movement of Bartók's Fifth String Quartet, bringing what sits beautifully in the background (in its original context) to the fore. The chords that Bartók uses, which also make up much of the harmonic basis for The Sweetest People, are all but identical to one of the most frequently used progressions in mainstream and popular music. I like to walk the line between art music and popular music and The Sweetest People is no exception, being something of a meditation on a musical palette that was as attractive to Bartók as it was to Elton John, Paul McCartney, The Smashing Pumpkins or Avril Lavigne.

The 'Dissonance' quartet by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791), which was completed in January 1785, is the sixth and final work in the collection known as the 'Haydn Quartets', so called because Mozart dedicated them to his older contemporary and friend (and quartet partner), Joseph Haydn. Mozart lavished care and attention on this group of quartets (they were composed over a three-year period), mindful as he was that Haydn had brought the genre to a new level of sophistication with his six quartets Op 33 ('Russian') of 1781. The 'Dissonance' derives its nickname from the opening Adagio, an extraordinary paragraph saturated with 'wrong' notes. The home key of C is nowhere in sight until we arrive, finally, on a V7 chord. No such ambiguities cloud the sunny Allegro. The second movement, which is in the key of F, is warm and tender. The Menuetto plays with abrupt changes in dynamics (loud phrases seem to appear from nowhere) while the Trio, which is in the key of C minor, brings a rather agitated mood. The quartet comes to an exhilarating close with a high-spirited finale, which includes some marvellous Sturm und Drang episodes as well as unexpected harmonic shifts. Mozart had written quartets in the years leading up to the six 'Haydn Quartets' but the 'Dissonance' and other works in the collection herald the arrival of a composer of even greater ingenuity and refinement.

Robert Gibson, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, © 2021

**TWENTY
TWENTY
ONE T|S/O**