

Mark Bennett: Conductor

Mark studied violin at University of Auckland and the Royal Academy of Music in London. He then worked for several years in the vibrant London freelance scene, travelling and performing extensively through Europe with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra and The Philharmonia.

Mark returned to Auckland where he took up a position with the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra during which time he was also active as a chamber musician, freelance orchestral leader, violin teacher and orchestra director. He has now taken the role as Teaching Fellow on Violin and Viola and Head of Strings at The School of Music, University of Auckland.

ORCHESTRA

Violins I	Selena Sun, Brecon Carter, Helen Crook, Joe Pinto, Helen van Druten, Alison Sorley, Takashi Schwarz, Arthur Ranford, Ellie Wyatt
Violins II	Michael Hunter, Heidi Bowmast, Tenwei Liu, Tsui-Wen Chen, Quin McClean, David Kayrouz, Averil Griffin, Susie Kasza
Violas	Neil Shepherd, Michael Vidulich, Daniel Poloha, Henrietta Reid, Stephanie Thomas, Andrea Smith
Cellos	Claire Postlethwaite, Emily Giles, John Early, Graham Falla, Andrea McCracken, Kate Parker, Mary Greig-Clayton, Michelle Caldicott
Basses	Andrew Kincaid, Ted Malan
Harpichord	Patrick Cornfield

Acknowledgements and thanks to:

The Vicar and parish of Holy Trinity Church who always make us welcome.

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Devonport Chamber Orchestra

Conductor:
Mark Bennett

Bassoon:
Sam Brough



Vivaldi: Bassoon Concerto in Emin. RV484
Vivaldi: Bassoon Concerto in Gmaj. RV493
Grieg: Holberg Suite, Op 40

2pm, Sunday 19th November, 2023
Holy Trinity, 20 Church St, Devonport
Adults: \$20, Seniors/Students \$15,
Children under 12 free

Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741): Bassoon Concerto in E minor, RV 484

(1. *Allegro poco*, 2. *Andante*, 3. *Allegro*)

By the beginning of the 18th century, the concerto grosso was the dominant concerto form, dividing the performers into the *concertino*, a small group of soloists (often 2 violin and cello as in Corelli's Christmas Concerto) and the *ripieno*, the rest of the orchestra. The *concertino* would take turns playing musical material as soloists and play together as a small group, while the *ripieno* played between episodes of the *concertino*. However, several newer composers of the time, notably Giuseppe Torelli, Tomaso Albinoni and Antonio Vivaldi, influenced by the great opera arias felt the need to use solo instruments in a different and more individual way. Thus was born the solo concerto.

For many years, Vivaldi served as violin teacher and then 'master of concerts' for the orchestra of the Ospedale della Pietà of Venice which became one of Europe's most famous instrumental ensembles. Vivaldi was required to compose a regular supply of works for the group and his prodigious output included over 500 solo concertos - 230 for violin and 39 for bassoon. It is surprising that he composed so many bassoon concertos because the predecessor of the bassoon, the dulcian, was going out of fashion in the 1600s and a newer form of the bassoon, that was developed between 1660 and 1680 and became popular across Europe, didn't reach Venice until much later. This newer bassoon however was still not as versatile as the modern bassoon, which makes Vivaldi's concertos written for it even more challenging. All 39 of the bassoon concertos were probably composed between 1728 and 1737, and it is clear from the nature of the compositions that Vivaldi had a good understanding of the instrument's capabilities but didn't shy away from making considerable technical demands on the soloist.

The concerto in E minor (RV 484) remains one of Vivaldi's most popular bassoon concertos, and the soloist's part is a real challenge for any bassoonist. From the fast fingerings to the sheer stamina required, this concerto celebrates all the best aspects of the instrument.

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907): Holberg Suite

(1. *Prelude*, 2. *Sarabande*, 3. *Gavotte*, 4. *Air*, 5. *Rigaudon*)

Norwegian Edvard Grieg ranks as the preeminent Scandinavian composer of the late 19th century. He had a gift for lyricism and a keen ear for folk song, and was a prolific composer of songs and piano pieces, as well as a large number of choral works, many of them for unaccompanied male voices.

In 1884, for the 200th anniversary of the birth of Danish-Norwegian playwright Ludvig Holberg (nicknamed "*the Molière of the North*"), Holberg's hometown Bergen, planned a grand celebration and commissioned a cantata for male voices from Grieg to be performed outdoors beside a new monument to the playwright. About the commission, Grieg wrote to a friend, "*I can see it all before me, snow, hail, storm and every kind of foul weather, huge male choir with open mouths, the rain streaming into them, myself conducting with waterproof cape, winter coat, galoshes, and umbrella! And a cold afterward, of course, or goodness knows what kind of illness! Oh well, it's one way of dying for one's country!*" His weather forecast turned out to be correct and, although the cantata was performed, it didn't persist in the repertoire and is rarely heard today.

However in 1884, Grieg composed a second work in Holberg's honour, "*Fra Holbergs tid*" ("*From Holberg's Time: Suite in Olden Style*"), a five-movement French baroque dance

suite originally written for solo piano and arranged for string orchestra a year later. Alongside his piano concerto and his incidental music to the play "*Peer Gynt*", the Holberg suite has become one of Grieg's most popular and beloved works.

The opening Prelude creates a mood of excited anticipation with agitated rhythms accompanying a lyrical series of melodies. The Sarabande which follows is a slow, reflective interlude featuring solo passages for cellos. A sparkling Gavotte and its contrasting Musette feature a bagpipe-like drone in the lower strings. The melancholy Air, the only movement in a minor key, combines a baroque style and poignant cello solos with Grieg's love of wistful melodies. In the closing Rigaudon, solo violin and viola evoke the rowdy folk sonorities of the Hardanger fiddle, a traditional stringed instrument considered to be the national instrument of Norway.

Antonio Vivaldi: Bassoon Concerto in G major, RV 493

(1. *Allegro ma poco*, 2. *Largo*, 3. *Allegro*)

The concerto in G Major is written in the simpler melodious manner of the "*style galant*" and features a hauntingly lyrical Largo between two gaily serene fast outer movements.

Programme notes by Roger Booth from sources including William E. Runyan, Patrick Castillo, early-music.com, Jessica Getman, Mario Lord, Alan Beggerow

Sam Brough: Bassoon Soloist

Sam joined the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra as Principal Contrabassoonist in September 2022 following three years as Principal Bassoon with Swedish chamber orchestra, Dalasinfoniettan.

He has been a guest player with major orchestras throughout the UK and Scandinavia, and has completed trials with City of Birmingham Symphony orchestra (Principal No.2), Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (Principal) and Royal Northern Sinfonia (2nd bassoon) as well as regularly performing with Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra (2nd/Contrabassoon), Manchester Camerata (Principal) and recently the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

Highlights of Sam's training at the Royal Northern College of Music (Manchester UK) and Hochschule für Musik, Mannheim (Germany) include joining the Mahler Chamber Orchestra Academy on a two-week tour of Germany; principal bassoon with Britten Pears Orchestra under Marin Alsop for concerts of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* at the Royal Festival Hall London; and performing on the Faroe Islands with Faroese rock metal band, Týr.

Off the stage, Sam spear-headed '*Mixtape*' – an immersive music experience with his orchestra in Sweden, taking curated chamber music programmes into museums, galleries and libraries as 'live playlists' which mutually enhanced the exhibitions and aurally drew audiences through the spaces.

His competition successes include the Royal Overseas League - wind section finalist in 2017, and winning the RNCM concerto competition in 2014. Also a seasoned recording artist, Sam features on numerous records with Chandos, Naxos and Deutsche Gramophon - performing the Villa Lobos Concerto Grosso as bassoon soloist and Mozart's piano concertos with Manchester Camerata and Jean-Efflam Bavouzet amongst others.

<https://www.sambroughbassoon.com>