



— MCP —  
MARK'S COUNTRY PLACE  
EST. 2020



# Classical Music Concert Programme

Concert Advisor  
**Arzu Yuvarlak-Danaher**

Artistic Director  
**Işın Çakmakçioğlu**

**Proceeds to Mark's Country Place.**

A welcoming, all-access garden facility in the heart of Kyneton for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy, relax and connect.



[www.markscountryplace.org](http://www.markscountryplace.org)



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[donations@markscountryplace.org](mailto:donations@markscountryplace.org)

**In the spirit of reconciliation, *A Rounded Music Education* and *Mark's Country Place* acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to the land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today.**

## Foreword

My journey as a music educator began in Türkiye, where I learned a principle that has guided me ever since: half of our learning happens in schools, and the other half is shaped by the environments and communities in which we live. Music and the arts are powerful parts of that second fifty percent — they create spaces where we connect, support one another, and feel valued.

For nearly three decades across Türkiye and Australia, music has given me knowledge, purpose, and a deep sense of belonging. It has also shown me how many people miss out on quality arts education simply due to lack of resources. This is why I advocate for accessible music education and serve on the Board of the Victorian Music Teachers' Association.

When I met Sue and Stuart Colvin in 2025 and learned about their vision for Mark's Country Place, I was deeply moved. Their commitment to creating a much-needed place for people with disability inspired me to contribute through what I know best — music. This concert is one example of the learning, connection, and community that happens outside the classroom, in that vital second half of our life-long learning.

I am grateful to have collaborated with Mezzo-Soprano Kristen Leich and the outstanding musicians of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra — Işın Çakmakçioğlu, Michael Loftus-Hill, Gabriella Halloran, and Rohan de Korte — to bring this event to life. My heartfelt thanks go to everyone involved, especially the President of the VMTA Josie Thomas, Sue and Stuart Colvin, and to Işın for his leadership as Artistic Director.

**Arzu Yuvarlak-Danaher**



## Message from Sue and Stuart Colvin

Thank you for your support by attending this very special concert.

Through conversations with other parents and relatives with intellectually disabled or special needs family members in Australia, we found that there is a lack of appropriate recreational facilities in our country.



Sue and Stuart on the site of Mark's Country Place.

Mark's Country Place addresses a critical gap in accessible outdoor facilities for people with special needs by offering an **inclusive, safe, accessible environment** where individuals of all abilities can connect with nature, build skills, and



participate in social and

community events. Our garden fosters a sense of **belonging, confidence, and purpose**, particularly for those who are often marginalised from mainstream activities or public spaces that do not meet their needs.

*Mark sends his greetings.*

Thus was born the idea of creating Mark's Country Place. A garden sanctuary suitable for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy, rest, learn and connect.



*Design for Mark's Country Place*

To find out more about Mark's Country Place go to <https://markscountryplace.org>

# Concert Programme

**Mezzo Soprano - *Kristen Leich***

**Violin 1 - *Isin Cakmakcioglu***

**Violin 2 – *Michael Loftus-Hills***

**Viola - *Gabriella Halloran***

**Cello - *Rohan de Korte***

- Vivaldi** Concerto no.11, d minor, RV 565 from L'estro Armonico  
Allegro  
Largo e Spiccato  
Allegro
- Handel** As With Rosy Steps The Morn  
Where Er' You Walk  
Ombra Mai Fu
- Bach** Prelude, Allemande and Courante  
from Suite no.1, G major, BWV 1007 for solo cello
- Biber** Sonata no.11 from Fidicinium Sacro-Profanum  
Adagio  
Piu Presto  
Adagio  
Allegro  
Adagio
- Handel** Concerto Grosso HWV 323 no.5, d major  
Largo e Staccato  
Allegro  
Presto  
Largo  
Menuet  
Allegro

## Biographies

### Arzu Yuvarlak-Danaher – Arts Manager, A Rounded Music Education



BA (Music Education) (AIB University, Türkiye), MA (Arts Management) (RMIT)

Arzu was born in Hatay in southern Türkiye and began her musical career in Ankara, specialising in Turkish Classical music and performing as a vocalist for TRT, Türkiye’s national broadcaster. Alongside her performance work, she completed a BA in Music Education and taught in two private schools before migrating to Australia in 2012.

In Melbourne, Arzu became an active contributor to the local music community, joining the Scots’ Church Choir and teaching violin through the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra’s Pizzicato Effect program. She continued performing and arranging Turkish Classical music while completing a Master of Arts Management at RMIT, graduating with distinction in 2017. She later returned to the MSO in a management role before establishing **A Rounded Music Education**, her consultancy dedicated to building music programs in schools and providing accessible music learning opportunities for children and adults.

Arzu became an Australian citizen in 2022 and soon after gained VIT registration, enabling her to teach in Victorian schools. She has since held specialist music teaching roles in both government and independent sectors, including Geelong Grammar School. In 2026, she commenced her current position as Head of Senior School Music and the Performing Arts at St John’s College Preston.

### Kristen Leich – Mezzo Soprano



Kristen is an American Mezzo Soprano, who resides with her family locally in Kyneton. Kristen completed her preparatory studies at The Colorado Springs Conservatory and received her BM from Oberlin Conservatory of Music. As a student at The Academy of Vocal Arts she was the recipient of the American Business Fellowship and Giardiniera in addition to the Barbara Stanley Richman Memorial Award and Metropolitan Opera National Council Violette G. McCarthy Study Award.

Kristen made her New York City Opera debut in the roll of Dorabella in *Cosí fan tutte* under the direction of Julius Rudel and continued her career as a featured soloist with Deutsche Oper am Rhein and Le Grand Théâtre de Genève.

Kristen has performed extensively with both the national and international touring companies of Opera Australia and presently performs with the Bendigo Symphony Orchestra and concert pianist Elyane Laussade.

## Işın Çakmakçioğlu – Violinist, MSO



Işın has been praised by the critics for his expressive lyricism, elegance and brilliance. The *Suddeutsche Zeitung* (Germany) described his playing as “musical fireworks”; The Australian highlighted his depth of tone, intensity and virtuosity.

Işın was born in Germany of Turkish parents and studied in Istanbul, Vienna and London. He performed solo and chamber music for concerts, recitals, recordings and live radio broadcasts in many countries around the globe.

Işın has been a member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra since migrating to Australia in 1993; he taught at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and the University of Melbourne.

As an experienced recitalist, Işın’s repertoire includes many diverse works for violin and piano, ranging from sonatas to little known miniatures.

Işın’s interest in contemporary music led to continuous collaboration with composers around the world whereby he had works written and dedicated for him. He received an Australia-Korea Foundation (DFAT) grant for a concert of contemporary Korean and Australian chamber music in Melbourne, gave overseas performances of violin concertos by British composer Paul Patterson and Turkish composer Sidika Ozdil. In Japan, Isin performed Australian composer Howard Dillon’s composition for solo violin with financial support from the Australia-Japan Foundation (DFAT) and appeared in numerous ABC Classic FM broadcasts featuring works by Australian composers. His live recording of Linda Phillips’ *Rhapsody Sonata* is regularly on air. Isin also appears on the ABC Classic album titled *Women of Note, A Century Of Australian Composers* as well as on a Move Records release, *20<sup>th</sup> Century Piano Trios* featuring compositions by Julian Yu and Peter Sculthorpe.

As a member of the Fidelio Quartet, Işın performed the entire Beethoven String Quartet cycle at the Melbourne Recital Centre over three years. The quartet was resident ensemble at St John’s Camberwell Chamber Music Series. In 2024 the Fidelio Ensemble is continuing their chamber music residency at Christ Church South Yarra with regular concerts.

Işın’s recent album of twelve romantic violin miniatures titled *Souvenirs Nostalgiques* is available on Apple Music, Spotify and other digital platforms.

## Michael Loftus-Hills – Violinist



Michael is a Melbourne violinist, pianist, violin teacher and Alexander Technique teacher who has worked primarily with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra since 1996 and teaches violin at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and the Alexander Technique at the Australian National Academy of Music.

From 2009-2012, Michael was the Head of Strings at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, The University of Melbourne. He is a teacher of all levels and has directed many workshops for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra’s “Outreach” education arm including as Artistic Director of the “Pizzicato Effect” in Broadmeadows; an El Sistema-inspired program. He has managed and performed for the Musica Viva schools’ program with the string quartet “Strung Out” and was a consultant for the Series 9 Violin Syllabus for the Australian Music Examination Board. He is an AMEB examiner and adjudicates at competitions around Melbourne. He tutors for the Australian Youth Orchestra, Border Music Camp in Albury, NSW, and is

an orchestral mentor at Monash University. He also performs in Australia and in South-east Asia as a pianist in a duo with MSO violinist Işın Çakmakçioğlu.

In 2017, he graduated from three years of full-time training where he received the Advanced Diploma of Alexander Technique Teaching and has attracted students and professional musicians from around Australia. He also works with non-musicians to help alleviate pain in everyday life and enjoys exploring broader applications of the technique.

His latest album with Işın Çakmakçioğlu is *Souvenirs Nostalgiques* (2022) available on Spotify and iTunes.

## **Gabriella Halloran – Violist, MSO**



Gabby grew up in Melbourne, studying viola with Rosia Pasteur and Lawrie Jacks (VCA). She then gained a place at the renowned Mozarteum Salzburg, studying with Thomas Riebl. During her time in Salzburg, Gabby performed with chamber groups in Paris and Wien and was tutored by the Hagen String Quartet. In 1993 Gabby became a member of the MSO viola section and relishes the challenges and thrills of orchestral life. Gabby regularly performs with MSO Chamber Players, Ensemble Varie and Fidelio Quartet, and also enjoys teaching at VCASS.

## **Rohan de Korte – Cellist, MSO**



As one of the tallest cellists in the world Rohan de Korte has enjoyed an unobstructed view of nearly every conductor he has ever worked with. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for the musicians who have to sit behind him.

A graduate of the Köln Hochschule für Musik Rohan studied cello with Claus Kanngiesser and chamber music with the Alban Berg Quartet. Other teachers include Valter Despalj, Nelson Cooke and Henry Wenig.

Inspired by a concert given by the MSO in Cologne on their 2000 European tour Rohan returned to Australia. He found work for the next three years playing with the Sydney Symphony, then as the Associate Principal Cellist with Orchestra Victoria before finally joining the MSO in 2009.

He is also an active chamber musician and has recently performed the Brahms sonatas and the cycle of Beethoven works for cello and piano with Darryl Coote for the team of Pianists. He plays with the Australia Octet, Wilma and Friends, and the Roger Young Collective. Rohan is also on the staff at the VCA and Melbourne Uni and has arranged many pieces for cello quartet, including a very popular Bohemian Rhapsody as well as writing his own music- 'The Haunted House' is always a hit with his three sons.