



Duets of LOSS & HOPE

FEATURING GUEST ARTISTS LUTHER AND ZACHARY WILSON

MUSIC BY BACH, MOZART, FAURE, PÄRT, SCULTHORPE, WILCOX

SATURDAY 8 MARCH

Palmerston, Gray Community Hall
Cuppa @ 3:30pm | Music @ 4:00pm

SUNDAY 9 MARCH

Darwin, NT Supreme Court
5:00pm



ARAFURA MUSIC COLLECTIVE ACKNOWLEDGES THE LARRAKIA PEOPLE, the first musicians of the Garramilla lands and seas. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of all the lands on which we perform and create music. We pay respects to Elders past and present, and recognise the importance of cultural heritage and the ongoing contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

PROGRAM

Welcome to Country - Nicole Brown

Honouring Country

Garramilla Ground – Improvisation by Les Huddleston and Rebecca Harris

Lament and Connection to Nature

Djilile - Peter Sculthorpe (1929 - 2014)

Despair and Sweet Yearning

Flow My Tears - John Dowland (1556 - 1626)
Grave, Trio Sonata in F Major, Op2, No 4 - Handel
HWV 40 (1685-1759)

Sweet Longing and Playful Joy

Duet In G for Violin and Viola K423, Adagio and Allegro - W.A Mozart (1756 - 1791)

Meditations on Displacement, Transience and the Pain of Otherness

Fragments I-IV from *Gouttes d'un Sang Etranger* (Blood of a Foreigner) - Felicity Wilcox (1968 - present) and Marin Marais (1656 - 1728)

Suffering, Consolation, Gratitude and Awe

Seufzer, Tränen, Kummer, Not (Sighs, Tears, Sorrow, Longing), Cantata BWV 21 - JS Bach (1685-1750)
Weep No More - David Childs (1957 - present)
For the Beauty of the Earth - John Rutter (1945 - present)

Reflections on Loss and Hope

Spiegel im Spiegel - Arvo Pärt (1935 - present)

ARTISTS

Luther Wilson | Dance

Zachary Wilson | Dance

Les Huddleston | Didjeridu

Merrilee Mills | Recorder, Voice

Claire Kilgariff | Baroque Flute

Nick Yates | Clarinet

Jess Anderson | Trumpet, Voice

Lucy Vallentine | Violin, Voice

Annette Anderson | Viola, Voice

Rebecca Harris | Cello

Kate Stephens | Cello

Ben Bradtke | Keyboard

Ingrid Purich | Marimba



PROGRAM NOTES

This afternoon we invite you to enter a space of contemplation with us, as we present *Duets of Loss and Hope*. Through the evocative power of music and movement, our performance today aims to offer a meditation on grief and nostalgia as catalysts for resilience and self-reflection, while celebrating joy and the fragile, transformative nature of hope.

The architecture of the performance is based on the enduring connections within the artistic community of Arafura Music Collective, and we have invited players whose connections with the ensemble have been shaped by their relationships in real life. We have intergenerational artists who have been 'raised by the village' of Arafura, we have marital, familial and collegial relationships, and we have new and enduring friendships within our intercultural community, including with our First Nations collaborators.

As we ruminate upon, and celebrate these relationships, and the inevitable ebbs and flows of human life, we welcome you to *Duets of Loss and Hope*.

Our performance begins with a *Welcome to Country* by Larrakia leader Nicole Brown, followed by an improvisation with Didgeridoo and Cello. This sequence honours the Custodians of the Land on which we meet and create music and community.

LAMENT AND CONNECTION TO NATURE

Djilile - Peter Sculthorpe (1929-2014)

Peter Sculthorpe's *Djilile*, composed in 1986, is a deeply expressive work whose opening melody draws inspiration from an Arnhem Land song. This motif recurs throughout many of Sculthorpe's compositions, including *Port Essington*, a featured work our *The Edge of North* performance in November 2024.

Originally written for piano, this version, for cello and marimba, begins as a lament, with the cello's voice carrying a deep, yearning quality. Beneath it, the marimba's resonant timbres create a shimmering, atmospheric soundscape, reminiscent of rippling water or distant echoes. As the piece unfolds, it moves gently from sorrow toward hope.

The score Rebecca is performing from today bears a personal inscription from Peter Sculthorpe: "with love," written after she performed *Djilile* for him. Sculthorpe had a deep affection for the Northern Territory and was a passionate supporter of its cultural life, composing several works for the Darwin Symphony Orchestra. He strongly believed in the spirit of place, holding that what is "truly and intensely local has the greatest power to speak universally"—a sentiment that inspires Arafura Music Collective.

Sculthorpe believed profoundly in music's ability to express the vastness and spirit of Australia. *Djilile* encapsulates this vision, offering a meditative and timeless experience that speaks of longing, reverence, and harmony with the land and between cultures. It stands as a lasting reflection of Australia's cultural and natural heritage from the 20th century.

DESPAIR AND SWEET YEARNING

Flow My Tears - John Dowland (1556-1626)

John Dowland composed *Flow My Tears* around 1596, during the Elizabethan era, a time when themes of melancholy and longing were deeply woven into the arts. This song quickly became one of Dowland's most famous works, admired for its profound expression of sorrow and its ability to give voice to deep emotional pain.

Verse 1 Flow, My Tears

Flow, my tears, fall from your springs!
Exiled forever, let me mourn;
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,
There let me live forlorn.

Dowland was a master of word painting, a technique in which the music directly reflects the meaning of the words, enhancing the emotional impact of the text. In *Flow, my tears*, this is heard immediately in the opening line: the melody falls in a slow, descending pattern illustrating the words "Flow, my tears," by mirroring the physical act of tears falling. This gentle, downward motion continues on "fall from your springs," where the notes cascade like an unending stream of grief and despair.

Grave, Trio Sonata in F Major, Op2, No 4 - Handel HWV 40 (1685-1759)

The *Grave* movement from Handel's Trio Sonata in F major, composed between 1717 and 1719, is a perfect example of how Handel, a master of melody, could create music of great emotional depth using seemingly simple materials.

He was particularly skilled in using suspensions—a musical technique where a note is held over from a previous chord, creating a brief moment of tension or discord before resolving softly. These gentle clashes and resolutions add a sighing, expressive quality to the music, filling even the simplest lines with emotion. The graceful, flowing melodies are full of sweet yearning, as voices intertwine with lingering suspensions that feel like musical breaths or hesitations. The music never rushes, instead unfolding tenderly, as if longing for something just out of reach.

SWEET LONGING AND PLAYFUL JOY

Duet for Violin and Viola, K 423 Adagio and Allegro - W.A Mozart (1756-1791)

Mozart composed the *Duet for Violin and Viola in G major, K. 423* in 1783, to help his friend Michael Haydn, who had fallen ill and was unable to complete a set of duets commissioned by the Archbishop of Salzburg. Today mother and daughter duo Annette and Lucy perform two movements of this three-movement work.

The second movement (Adagio) expresses loss through its slow, tender, and introspective character. The long, lyrical lines and gentle, minor-inflected harmonies create a sense of sweet longing, as if reflecting on absence or sorrow. The close, intimate dialogue between violin and viola emphasises vulnerability and sense of loss.

In contrast, the third movement (Allegro) embodies hope through its lively energy and playful exchanges. With bright, spirited rhythms and joyful interactions between the instruments, it suggests renewal, optimism, and forward motion. Mozart offers us a sense of resolution and the uplifting possibility of moving beyond sadness into lightness and joy.

MEDITATIONS ON DISPLACEMENT, TRANSIENCE AND THE PAIN OF OTHERNESS

Fragments I-IV from Gouttes d'un Sang Etranger (Blood of a Foreigner) - Felicity Wilcox (1968 - present) and Marin Marais (1656 - 1728)

Fragments I-IV is drawn from Wilcox's larger work *Gouttes d'un Sang Étranger* (Drops of Foreign Blood). Drawing inspiration from the story of her great-great-grandfather, Pierre Claude Louat, who emigrated from the Rhône Valley to Balmain, Wilcox explores themes of displacement and the layered nature of identity and place, while reflecting a broader interest in musical quotation and borrowing.

The work takes its name and inspiration from Marin Marais' *Suite d'un Goût Étranger* (Suite with a Foreign Flavour), composed in 1717 for viola da gamba and continuo. Wilcox reimagines the title as *Gouttes d'un Sang Étranger*, shifting the meaning from "foreign taste" to "drops of foreign blood," and incorporates fragments of Marais' music into her own composition. Fragments I-IV are separate miniatures that thread throughout the larger work, containing disparate chunks of material from the Marais.

Echoes of Marais surface as fleeting gestures—ornamental figures, melodic contours, and harmonic shades—woven into spacious, atmospheric textures. The result is music that feels both ancient and modern, as Wilcox crafts dialogue between past and present through a meditation on history, place, and the layered nature of identity.

SUFFERING, CONSOLATION, GRATITUDE AND AWE

Seufzer, Tränen, Kummer, Not (Sighs, Tears, Sorrow, Longing) - Cantata BWV 21 - JS Bach (1685-1750) *Sighs, Tears, Sorrows Longing (Seufzer, Tränen, Kummer, Not)* is an Aria (song) from Bach's Cantata BWV 21, *Ich Hatte Viel Bekümmernis*, (I Was Full of Sorrow). Composed in 1713.

Although used primarily for liturgical purposes, this cantata marks a transition between the use of an older style based solely on biblical and hymn texts, to a more lyrical, operatic style using contemporary poetry. The themes of grief, loss, and longing are heightened by Bach's use of a flowing, sorrowful melody. The trumpet and voice take turns echoing each other, creating a musical conversation that deepens the emotion of the piece.

Weep No More - David Childs(1957 - present)

In *Weep No More*, contemporary American choral composer David Childs gives us a setting of the first of John Keats arcadian Faery Poems. The poem captures this era's fascination with romanticism and the connection between nature and human emotions, and, like the Bach, makes use of dynamic contrast and echo to create a sense of fragile acceptance and growing hope in the face of loss.

For the Beauty of the Earth - John Rutter (1945 - present)

Written in 1984, and performed countless times across the globe since then, John Rutter's *For the Beauty of the Earth* offers an unapologetically optimistic and joyful hymn of praise to all Creation.

REFLECTIONS ON LOSS AND HOPE

Spiegel im Spiegel - Arvo Pärt (1935 - present)

In *Spiegel im Spiegel*, Estonian composer Arvo Pärt (born 1935) shows how simplicity can be deeply moving and how stretching time and space can create a profound effect.

In German, "Spiegel im Spiegel" means both "mirror in the mirror" and "mirrors in the mirror", conjuring an infinite mirror: one which produces an infinity of images reflecting into eternity.

Pärt uses a unique musical style called tintinnabuli, inspired by his spiritual connection to chant music.

His compositions follow a simple structure with two types of melodies: one that plays broken chords and another that moves smoothly up and down the scale. His music is often slow, meditative, and minimalist, using only a few notes and instructions for performers.

In Pärt's own words,

"Tintinnabulation is an area I sometimes wander into when I am searching for answers – in my life, my music, my work. In my dark hours, I have the certain feeling that everything outside this one thing has no meaning. The complex and many-faceted only confuses me, and I must search for unity. What is it, this one thing, and how do I find my way to it? Traces of this perfect thing appear in many guises and everything that is unimportant falls away."

Notes by Merrilee Mills (Co-Curator) and Claire Kilgariff (Creative Director)

Our performance is dedicated to John Axel Eriksson - 29/04/1934 to 26/02/2025

GUEST ARTISTS

LUTHER WILSON

Luther is a contemporary dancer and performer based in Perth. He began his training in 2015 in Darwin, before moving to Perth to study at WAAPA. He has since performed in works created by Claudia Alessi, Cass Eipper, Graeme Watson, and Raewyn Hill, training under a myriad of experienced industry professionals. His recent NT performances include the lead role in *Messenger* at Browns Mart in 2022, and in *POD* in the 2024 Darwin Festival.

ZACHARY WILSON

Zachary is a Māori Australian performer who graduated from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) in 2020. Following this, he was a member of LINK Dance Company, completing the year with his Bachelor and Honours Degree. Since graduating, Zachary has performed with Co3 in their 2021 Perth Festival work *Archives of Humanity*, as well as their 2022 re-staging of Douglas Wright's *GLORIA*. For the 2022 Darwin Festival, Zachary appeared as a core cast member with NT Dance Company, performing alongside traditional Yolŋu dancers and songmen in Gary Lang's celebrated bi-cultural work, *Wanja*. Most recently he has performed as a Guest Artist in Ophelia Young and Marigia Maggipinto's remounting of Pina Bausch's *Tannhäuser Bacchanal* for WAAPA, and in Crystal Pite's *Ten Duets on a Theme of Rescue* for the 2023 Perth Festival.

MERRILEE MILLS

Merrilee Mills holds a double degree in Music and Education (NSW Conservatorium/Newcastle University), and a Masters in Theatre and Performance (UNE). A respected actor, director, composer, multi-instrumentalist and classically trained singer, she has worked across the spectrum of the performing arts with all of the NT's major performing arts bodies, including Arafura Music Collective (co-founder), the DSO, Brown's Mart, KeDT, Tracks, Darwin Chorale, Vocalective, DCA, CIYA and Darwin Festival. As an artist and educator, Merrilee has worked in a diverse range of contexts, including in international, indigenous and multicultural settings. Recent work includes *The Crucible*, *The Messenger* (director), *The Turquoise Elephant* (actor) and *Manfred Karge's Man to Man*, directed and performed as the centrepiece of her performative research into the phenomenology of gender embodiment.

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