

## Alice Chance (1994 –) A Sundried String Quartet

Alice Chance is one of Australia's fast-emerging young composers. She holds a Bachelor of Music in Composition from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, where she was awarded the 2012 Ignaz Friedman prize for academic merit. Her music with its own distinct character encompasses several genres as she works with all kinds of musicians and is often invited to lead workshops as a composition or choral specialist. Alice has had works commissioned by the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellowship, Sydney Children's Choir, Australian Youth Choir and Sydney Youth Orchestras. She has completed composition residences in India and the USA, and worked as composer-in-residence with the Moorambilla Festival from 2013-2015. Her work is featured in the 2014 ABC documentary, *Outback Choir* and in the 2015 film, *Wide Open Sky*.

*A Sundried String Quartet* is her latest composition, specially commissioned for Acacia Quartet and was premièred at the 2019 Bowral Autumn Music Festival. Alice describes her inspiration for the work and the sounds she has created to represent her ideas:

"As a person with synesthesia, I conceptualise music in vivid colours and textures. The idea of music gradually drying, burning, fermenting and wrinkling in the sun is hugely intriguing. For an audience member, listening to my work is the sonic equivalent of watching a time-lapse of a sun-drying tomato, and getting to taste its increasingly intense deliciousness all the while. If we imagine the composition process as picking raw ingredients from our brains' vines and trees, and bringing them out into the air and onto the page, we can see how environmental aspects can strongly affect an idea's growth. Primarily, this work plays with those ideas, however subtle commentary can be gleaned on our national struggle with drought, bushfires, climate change, and skin cancer.

### Movement 1 – Exposure

This is the time-lapse movement. Stillness and transparency are portrayed by diaphanous light sounds with glinting harmonics, intervals of fourths and fifths, occasionally disorienting additive metres, increased dissonance that always finds breathing space and reprieve. Crystalline, watery material gradually dries in the sun and ferments into a spicy and surprisingly delicious crisped ending.

### Movement 2 – Dribble Castle

In this playful movement the music mirrors the process of building a sand-castle by

"dribbling" wet sand into a pile, resulting in a bulbous, elegant castle. The momentum builds and then falls away. Playful, snappy pizzicati add to the funky music soundscape.

### Movement 3 - Tomatoes

If eating tomatoes had a soundtrack, it would be this movement. Imagine shaking a plant and hundreds of cherry tomatoes falling off. Bursting, fast passages, of scuttling semi-quavers are interspersed with spiky and sweet motifs.

### Movement 4 – Aloe Vera

This is the cool salve, a soothing, mentholic antidote to the heat of the sun - the antithesis of the first movement. The music is homophonic with a simple ballad-like mantra of repeating and slowly

developing phrases creating feelings of alleviation and relief – an exhalation, a lullaby, the refreshment of a huge glass of water or falling into bed after a day in the sun.”

Elizabeth Dalton, 2019