

MEDIA RELEASE

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CSO GOES SOUTH

Tuggeranong Arts Centre is delighted to announce a new collaboration with the Canberra Symphony Orchestra, beginning with a Thursday evening chamber concert series kicking off in early March.

TAC CEO Caroline Downer says it is an important addition to the cultural landscape of the Tuggeranong Valley. "It's even more exciting that the series features one of Australia's leading violinists, CSO Concertmaster and Tuggeranong local, Kirsten Williams," Downer said.

Kirsten Williams has performed widely as a soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician. Her impressive bio has taken her around the globe, as a member of the Royal Opera House Orchestra at Covent Garden and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

From 2000–2019, Kirsten was Associate Concertmaster with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. In 2019, she was appointed Concertmaster of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra and in 2021, she led the Australian National University's Women in Music program.

But Kirsten says the new collaboration with Tuggeranong Arts Centre is extra special because she now calls Tuggeranong home. "I am a Tuggeranong local and that for me is exciting. It's wonderful that local audiences will be able to come and enjoy our music without having to head into the city," Williams said.

Tickets are on sale now for the inaugural concert in the Tuggeranong Arts Centre Theatre on March 9. *CSO Goes South: A Twilight Soiree with Kirsten Williams and Edward Neeman*, offers a French inspired program featuring Debussy Sonata in G minor for Violin and Piano, Amy Beach Ballade, op. 6 and Fauré Violin Sonata No. 1 in A major, op. 13.

The second concert in the series, on Thursday May 25, will feature *Piano Trio* Kirsten Williams (Violin), Patrick Suthers (Cello) and Edward Neeman (Piano). On Thursday August 31, String Quartet Kirsten Williams (Violin), Doreen Cumming (Violin), Tor Fromyhr (Viola) and Sam Payne (Cello) will present the final concert in the chamber concert series.

With planning underway for a creative collaboration that will see the Arts Centre and CSO co-producing a program for children aged 2-8 years, Downer says Tuggeranong residents can expect more opportunities to enjoy Canberra's symphony orchestra.

"Planning has begun for delivery of a multi-faceted arts program that will introduce orchestral music to young children, and next month musicians of the *Canberra Symphony Youth Chamber Orchestra (CSYCO)* will perform at our *Creative Seniors Day*," Downer said.

A dedicated teacher, Kirsten Williams plays a central role in the CSYCO program for advanced players aged 12 to 19. CSYCO forms part of the CSO's broader Kingsland Pathways Program for emerging artists.

The CSO collaboration continues to strengthen Tuggeranong Arts Centre's music program, which recently expanded to include the new community choir *Sing with Toby*. Led by Opera singer and choir conductor extraordinaire, Tobias Cole, the new choir commenced weekly Tuesday night rehearsals on February 28, with more than 60 people gathering to explore the joy of singing. *Sing with Toby* has been made possible through a new partnership with the ANU Open School of Music, and so far, more than sixty people have signed up.

"This amazing response shows that we're delivering programs that resonates with the local community," Downer said.

The return of monthly live music in the Lodge has also seen dozens of local music enthusiasts heading to TAC for a relaxed Friday evening of music by the lake. Full details of TAC's music program are published on the Tuggeranong Arts Centre website.

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Kirsten Williams
VIOLIN

One of Australia's leading violinists, Kirsten Williams has performed widely as a soloist, recitalist and chamber musician, in concert and on ABC radio. In 2019, she was appointed Concertmaster of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra. In 2021, she led the Australian National University's Women in Music program.

Kirsten studied with Alice Waten at the Sydney Conservatorium and with Igor Ozim in Switzerland. She then joined the Royal Opera House Orchestra at Covent Garden and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields, touring and recording widely. On returning to Australia, Kirsten was appointed Associate Leader of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. She has also appeared as guest Concertmaster of the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, the Sydney Philharmonia and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. From 2000–2019, Kirsten was Associate Concertmaster with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

A dedicated teacher, Kirsten has a central role in the CSO's Kingsland Pathways Program, leading the Canberra Symphony Youth Chamber Orchestra for advanced players aged 12 to 19, and working with the Kingsland Fellows. She has also worked with the Sydney and Australian youth orchestras and has joined the teaching staff at the Australian National University's School of Music.

Kirsten has a passion for music for healing: she has recorded two CDs for the Australian Bush Flower Essences and, in 2014, was named Volunteer of the Year for her work playing in the Intensive Care Unit at Westmead Children's Hospital. That same year, she became patron of the Goulburn Strings Project, designed to bring music education to children in low-socioeconomic, regional contexts.

Edward Neeman
PIANO

The Australian-American pianist Edward Neeman has performed across five continents. Critics have lauded him as a 'true artist' with 'an excellent technique' who 'isn't afraid to put a distinctive stamp on whatever he touches, without resorting to mannerism.'

A top prize-winner of numerous international piano competitions, including first prize in the Joaquín Rodrigo Competition in Madrid, Edward has appeared as a soloist with the Prague Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony, Melbourne Symphony, Canberra Symphony, Kentucky Symphony, Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, and the American West Symphony, among others.

An enthusiastic collaborative artist, he has performed with musicians including Itamar Zorman, Kristian Winther, the New Zealand String Quartet, and members of the JACK quartet. Edward has made numerous piano duet arrangements for the Neeman Piano Duo, in which he performs with his wife, the Indonesian pianist Stephanie Neeman.

Edward holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the Australian National University, a Master of Music from the Manhattan School of Music, and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from The Juilliard School. His teachers have included James Tocco, Jerome Lowenthal, Solomon Mikowsky, and Larry Sitsky. He is on the piano faculty at the Australian National University in Canberra.

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