**Program**

*Johann Sebastian Bach: Partita no 1 in B flat Major BWV 825*

Praeludium

Allemande

Courante

Sarabande

Menuet I – Menuet II

Gigue

*Béla Bartók: Suite Op 14*

Allegretto

Scherzo

Allegro molto – Sostenuto

*Frédéric Chopin: Ballade no 4 in F minor Op 52*

**Interval**

*Ludwig van Beethoven: Sonata no 15 in D major Op 28 “Pastoral”*

Allegro

Andante

Scherzo: Allegro vivace

Rondo: Allegro ma no troppo - Più allegro quasi presto

Bach wrote three sets of six suites known as the French and English suites, and the Partitas. These all include dance movements including an Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Gigue, in addition to other dance movements. The partitas begin with an introductory movement, which can vary considerably in length. They are less strict in form than the other suites, and some movements in this set differ from the conventional form. Hence the allemande in the first partita is a fast-flowing piece in semiquavers rather than a stately dance, the courante is written in triplets, and the gigue is a virtuoso piece with crossing of the hands. This is one of Bach’s best known keyboard suites, and the gigue is often used as an encore in all-Bach recitals.

Béla Bartók was a Hungarian composer and was one of the founders of what became ethnomusicology. He travelled around the countryside with a tape recorder and recorded folk music, on which much of his music is based. His study became difficult after the first world war when regions that he loved, such as Transylvania, were removed from Hungary. Unlike much of Bartók’s works, the Suite Op 14 does not contain folk melodies but uses Romanian rhythms in the first movement, and Middle Eastern and North African influences in the third movement. It originally consisted of five movements, but an *Andante* was removed and published posthumously.

Chopin wrote four Ballades, which were inspired by stories of his native Poland. Although they suggest a story told in music, it is left up to the listener to imagine the events. They are written in free form and can be regarded as archetypal “romantic” music. Many regard the fourth ballade as the best of the four, and it has been described as the epitome of romantic music. A short introductory passage in a major key leads to the main theme, which is Slavonic in nature, and appears throughout the piece. The drama builds up in the later part of the piece, and it ends in a fiery virtuosic coda.

Unlike Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony, the title of the “Pastoral Sonata” was given by an editor. Although it was probably not conceived as a “pastoral” piece, the first movement has an atmosphere of calm, and the last movement has a definite rustic theme. The second movement, in D minor was said to be a favourite of the composer, who frequently played it for his pleasure. The scherzo is very short and impish. The last movement is written at a laid-back tempo, but ends with a flourish.

**Robert Schmidli**

Robert Studied with Alice Farquhar, Iola Shelley and Johannes Giessen in New Zealand and later with Steven MacIntyre and Jean Starling in Melbourne. He passed his LTCL and LRSM diplomas in New Zealand while studying medicine. In his first year of Medicine in Christchurch he was awarded the Union in Graduates in Music prize at Canterbury University. During his medical studies in Dunedin he performed on national and local radio. He has played works including the Liszt second piano concerto and the Rachmaninov Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini with orchestras in New Zealand and Australia. He has performed with a number of international artists including David Pereira, Jack Glatzer and George Zukerman. He moved to Melbourne in 1991 and undertook PhD studies at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research. Since moving to Canberra in 1996 he has appeared as a soloist, accompanist and chamber music player. Robert is a Fellow of the Wesley Music Centre. He currently practices as a specialist in endocrinology and diabetes in Canberra and rural New South Wales.