

# The SUN Queen

Powerhouse violinist Emily Sun will take to the stage with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra three times this year as part of its Artist in Association program. And she can't wait

Acclaimed violinist Emily Sun is in Adelaide this month. Picture: Claudio Raschella



**Who inspires you?** I am inspired by the musicians I am lucky enough to collaborate with. The joys of performing are only possible and amplified by the collective unity of artists and musicians coming together to create a unique and fleeting moment in performance – which can't ever be replicated the same way again.

**Last year saw you play with the ASO on two occasions. What sets the ASO apart from other orchestras?** There is something very unique about the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra which I have experienced – there is an incredible energy from all the musicians which creates inspiring and stirring musical moments. They are so supportive of one another and guests such as myself; such a positive working environment with world-class conductors and always wanting to deliver the best for their audiences. It feels like a big family.

**Musicians often describe their instruments as becoming an extension of yourself. Do you agree or disagree and why?** I absolutely agree. Without the instrument, as violinists, we don't have a voice. The sound we create is the only form of communication we have with our audiences during performance.

**What is your emotional connection to music?** For me, music is one of the purest forms of human expression. When we hear a piece of music, it might take us back to a particular moment or feeling – the music can bring all of that rushing back. Music can also teach us to empathise with one another. When you live through the music, you are trying to live through the composer and with other musicians, understanding and listening to each other's story and imagination. To really experience that deeply, no matter where they are from or where they live, is truly amazing. Music is a universal language.

**Tell us about your violin.** I play on a 1760 Nicolo Gagliano, generously loaned to me by Beares International Violin Society in London. It is a fine example of the Neapolitan tradition and Nicolo's craftsmanship, which were often mistaken for work by Stradivari. The higher registers soar with brilliant clarity, and the lower strings have a dark and rich timbre. For many years I played a beautiful Australian violin, made by A.E. Smith.

**You'll be performing the world premiere ASO commission of one of Australia's favourite composers Elena Kats-Chernin's new Violin Concerto in Symphony Series 2**

**Wild – how does it feel to be playing a piece specially written for you?** It is a thrill to be performing the world premiere of Elena Kats-Chernin's Violin Concerto. I have always loved Elena's music – there is something very honest and generous about the way that she connects with music.

**How important is it to you to play repertoire from female composers?** What an exciting time of revival we are living in, to have unearthed so much wonderful music written by female composers which were almost mostly forgotten or severely underplayed. On my last disc, I recorded works by Lili Boulanger, and often perform works by Clara Schumann, Amy Beach, Florence Price just to name a few. It is so exciting to have female composers at the forefront of creativity today, including our very own Elena Kats-Chernin.

**You will be joined on stage during your recital concert by pianist Andrea Lam to perform Sibelius Selection from Six Pieces. Have you performed with Andrea before? What do you love about Sibelius's music?** Andrea and I have worked and performed very closely for the past couple of years, culminating in the release of our ARIA nominated album Nocturnes on ABC Classics. In this recital, we will perform

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works inspired by nature and the composers who drew inspiration from the natural beauty surrounding them. Sibelius had an incredible ability to represent nature through his musical language and each of these Six Pieces depicts a completely different landscape through sound.

**Your recital also features the Australian premiere of Fazil Say's Violin Sonata No. 2 Kaz Daglari. Are you familiar with the work? What can audiences expect of this and Greig's Violin Sonata No 3?** Fazil Say's Violin Sonata No. 2, Kaz Daglari was written in response to the massacre of nature in gold mining activities in Mount Ida, Turkey, that led to widespread deforestation. The first movement is titled Decimation of Nature, the second Wounded Bird, and the third movement Rite of Hope which Fazil Say says “each movement represents the situations created by the destruction of ecosystems. The music conveys the messages of uprising against those who have desecrated the land, and solidarity with those who stand with nature.” As with the Sibelius, Grieg was another composer who depicted nature through his music, and we are reminded of the beauty and boundlessness of our natural world.

**When you are not on stage performing or practising where can we find you?** I am a Professor of Violin at the Royal College of Music in London. It is a real privilege to work with talented students who come from all over the world to train in London – mostly in the capacity as their teacher, but it also becomes a genuine dialogue and discovery of the music together with as much of their input. This is what becomes most interesting and develops artistry.

**Do you have any superstitions or routines before you perform?** A few deep breaths just before going on stage.

**What are you most looking forward to doing when you are in Adelaide?** It will be such a joy to reconnect with the musicians of the ASO, and the rest of the artistic team of this fantastic orchestra. And sampling some fine South Australian wines from Barossa Valley and Adelaide Hills.

**Emily Sun performs with the ASO Symphony Series 2 Wild in the Town Hall on April 21 and 22. Details and tickets: [aso.com.au](https://aso.com.au)**