

# RESONANT ARTEFACTS

10:00 AM  
SATURDAY 11 OCTOBER 2025  
REARDON THEATRE



**Igor STRAVINSKY (1882 – 1971)**  
***Three Movements from Petrushka***

Peter de Jager, *Piano*

1. *Russian Dance*
2. *Petrushka's Room*
3. *The Shrovetide Fair*

**Paul DEAN (b. 1966)**  
***Punch and Judy (world premiere)***

PLEXUS  
- Monica Curro, *Violin*  
- Philip Arkinstall, *Clarinet*  
- Stefan Cassomenos, *Piano*

1. *Punch Takes the Stage*
2. *Adagio*
3. *Scherzo and Trio*
4. *Nocturne*

**Igor STRAVINSKY (1882 – 1971)**  
***Suite italienne***

Zoë Black, *Violin*  
Peter de Jager, *Piano*

1. *Introduction*
2. *Serenade*
3. *Tarantella*
4. *Gavotte with Two Variations*
5. *Scherzino*
6. *Minuet and Finale*

## **Igor STRAVINSKY (1882 – 1971)**

### ***Three Movements from Petrushka***

1. *Russian Dance*
2. *Petrushka's Room*
3. *The Shrovetide Fair*

Composed during the winter of 1910/11 for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes dance company, *Petrushka* is one of Stravinsky's most famous ballets, along with *The Rite of Spring* (which followed it) and *The Firebird* (which preceded it). Ten years after its successful premiere, Stravinsky arranged some of the ballet's most captivating music into a suite for piano at the behest of the great Arthur Rubinstein (and in collaboration with him). Far from streamlining the orchestral score into a piano reduction, Stravinsky reimagined the ballet afresh, creating a formidably difficult solo work that pushed the limits of even Rubinstein's technique. All three movements include complex polyrhythms, extremely fast scales, relentless trills and tremolos, and wild, rapid jumps over two octaves.

The structure of the *Three Movements* essentially mirrors the action of the ballet, which unfolds at a bustling Shrovetide fair in old Saint Petersburg. Three puppets – the wistful, lovesick Petrushka, the graceful yet shallow Ballerina, and the gaudy, swaggering Moor – are brought to life by a Magician's magic flute. Petrushka longs for the Ballerina, but she has eyes only for the Moor. A jealous fight breaks out, ending in Petrushka's death at the hands of the Moor. As night falls and the crowds disperse, Petrushka's ghost appears above the theatre booth, mocking the Magician, and blurring the lines between puppet and human.

The opening *Russian Dance* is taken from near the end of the ballet's first scene. The fairgoers have already gathered around the puppet theatre, where they watch as the Magician's puppets spring to life with an electrifying dance. The second movement ensues with Petrushka being kicked off the stage and falling into his 'room' inside the puppet theatre. Here he veers between self-pity, hatred for the Magician and love for the Ballerina. Finally, the third movement returns us to the swirl of the fairground with a dazzling array of dances. Stravinsky justifiably chose to omit the relatively subdued music of Petrushka's death, instead ending the suite in a precipitous surge of carnival frenzy.

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## **Paul DEAN (born 1966)**

### ***Punch and Judy (world premiere)***

1. *Punch Takes the Stage (Introduction – the slapstick – the standoff – the real games begin)*
2. *Adagio (Aria – Judy's broken heart)*
3. *Scherzo and Trio (The battle of Punch and the Crocodile – Punch and Judy's awkward dance)*
4. *Nocturne (Night falls on another shallow and unearned victory for Punch)*

Brisbane born and bred composer and clarinettist Paul Dean is regarded as one of Australia's foremost musicians in his multiple capacities as soloist, chamber musician, composer and artistic director. He is currently Kinnane Professor of Music at the University of Queensland, a member of the Australian World Orchestra, a founding member of the Endeavour Trio, and co-Artistic Director of Ensemble Q with his wife Trish Dean. He was a founding member and Artistic Director of Southern Cross Soloists and the Bangalow Music Festival, before serving as Artistic Director of the Australian National Academy of Music from 2010 – 2015.

As one of Australia's most celebrated composers, Paul Dean is the recipient of the coveted Paul Lowin Prize in 2022 for his Symphony No. 1 "Black Summer", and the APRA Work of the Year (Large Ensemble) in 2023 for his Double Bass Concerto. His Symphony No. 2, commissioned by the Queensland Youth Symphony, and Symphony No. 3, commissioned by the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, were both performed on the same night, in Brisbane and Port Douglas respectively. Upcoming commissions include works for the Hong Kong and Oslo Philharmonic Orchestras, and an opera for Opera Queensland.

Dean's new trio takes its cue from the raucous, chaotic world of the traditional Punch and Judy show. Like Stravinsky in *Pulcinella* or Debussy in his *Fêtes galantes*, Dean draws on the *commedia dell'arte* tradition as a frame for music that is at once playful, grotesque, and deeply affecting. In this ballet-trio, sharp wit and lyrical depth mingle, throwing the players into a spirited dialogue that blends comedy and tragedy. *Punch and Judy* is dedicated to PLEXUS – Monica, Philip and Stefan – in celebration of their tireless devotion to new music, and in memory of Jan Grant.

Though written for clarinet, violin, and piano, the score is structured like a ballet – four contrasting scenes that could easily spring to life on stage. Punch lurches into view in an opening movement full of swagger, slapstick and conflict, before the music plunges into a heartfelt aria for Judy, the sole moment of tenderness in an otherwise sardonic drama. A ferocious scherzo then pits Punch against a crocodile, before he and Judy attempt a hilariously awkward dance. The closing nocturne casts a sardonic shadow – another shallow ‘victory’ for Punch – though the composer hints that justice might yet await him in some future version.

© Paul Dean 2025 (adapted)

## **Igor STRAVINSKY (1882 – 1971)**

### ***Suite italienne***

1. *Introduction*
2. *Serenade*
3. *Tarantella*
4. *Gavotte with Two Variations*
5. *Scherzino*
6. *Minuet and Finale*

By the time Stravinsky set to work on *Pulcinella* towards the end of 1919, he was in a curious position – still the celebrated *enfant terrible* of musical modernism in the wake of *The Rite of Spring*, yet also living in exile since the outbreak of war, with few recent compositions to his name and even fewer successes. And no one could have predicted that for this new ballet, Stravinsky would turn to obscure and forgotten music of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, not even Stravinsky himself.

It was his long-time collaborator Diaghilev who initially suggested the idea of adapting music attributed to Pergolesi into a *commedia dell'arte* themed ballet. Stravinsky (no fan of Pergolesi) thought Diaghilev had lost his mind. But after looking through the manuscript copies that Diaghilev gave him, Stravinsky had an epiphany, what he called his “discovery of the past”, and out of this unlikely seed grew not only *Pulcinella*, but a whole new stage in his creative evolution – his so-called neoclassical period.

Over the following decade or so, Stravinsky made several arrangements and adaptations of the music from the ballet, first into an orchestral suite in 1922, and then twice for violin and piano, in 1925 and 1932. The *Suite italienne* is the later and more popular version, crafted in collaboration with Polish-American violinist Samuel Dushkin, for whom Stravinsky composed a number of works, including his Violin Concerto.

Like the *Three Movements from Petrushka*, the *Suite italienne* is not a mere transcription; it takes the essence of the original and recreates it in the spirit of the violin, transmuting the ballet's playful spirit in a sequence of dances that shift between elegance, mischief and exuberance. We hear Pulcinella – the quick-witted trickster of the *commedia dell'arte* – swaggering, scheming, and ultimately winning his beloved Pimpinella. And, of course, as Stravinsky's first neoclassical work, much of the allure lies in its Janus-faced gaze: antique dances glimpsed through a modern lens, and Italian grace imbued with Russian fire, or, as Richard Taruskin put it, “Scythian eyes glinting from behind the mask of European urbanity.”

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