

Choice players bring cohesion, empathy, shared musical intent

Rodney Smith

The Advertiser, subscriber only

3 September 2018



OUR Adelaide Symphony Orchestra is a precious resource but it can be so much more than the sum of its parts.

Two weeks ago its concertmaster, violinist Natsuko Yoshimoto directed a much reduced ASO in a highly successful chamber orchestra format at Elder Hall and at this event she led just eight choice ASO players in a brilliantly executed chamber music concert comprising Prokofiev's *Quintet Op 39* and Beethoven's *Septet Op 20*.

This was a golden opportunity to enjoy some of the ASO's very finest in musicianly dialogue with each other without distractions from 50 or 60 other players, and listeners were entranced with the result.

Most gratifying was undoubtedly the obvious familiarity of all with each other's musical style. The resulting cohesion, empathy and shared musical intent were tremendous.

Beethoven's *Septet* finds the composer in the sunniest of moods, waxing lyrical with some of his best tunes, even rivalling Schubert at times.

For many, hearing an extended duet between Yoshimoto and clarinetist Dean Newcomb in its deeply expressive *Adagio Cantabile* must have proved pretty heavenly.

But Beethoven gave ample opportunities for cellist Simon Cobcroft to shine as well, not to mention Adrian Uren's rich tonalities and spirited horn calls in the *Scherzo*.

Earlier, oboist Ranae Stavely gave consistently virtuosic renditions during the group's translucent performance of Prokofiev's *Quintet*.

A standout among standouts was also Jonathan Coco who transformed his potentially ugly duckling contra bass into a stunningly musical swan.

Natsuko Yoshimoto and Friends

UKARIA Cultural Centre

September 2