

VAN DIEMEN'S FIDDLES

SIRENS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Van Diemen's Fiddles acknowledges with deep respect the traditional custodians of the land lutruwita (Tasmania) on which we have the privilege to make music.

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The figure of the Siren permeates ancient and modern culture for seemingly unrelated reasons, yet the more we researched these fascinating and evocative stories, the more commonalities came to the surface. Almost every siren story from around the world is associated with bodies of water, warning us of the dangers within a world in which we do not belong.

This program features original music inspired by some of these stories: the bird-like siren of Greek myths, luring sailors to their deaths with the promise of knowledge; the Kairai of the Sea of Japan which, while terrifying, brought happiness and prosperity; the Lorelei of the Rhine River, believed to be inspired by the murmuring sound of the water on the rocks; the Blue Men of the British Isles who would challenge sailors to complete lines of poems to save themselves from drowning; and an allegorical 'fish out of water' story from the perspective of modern-day Lutruwitan queer composer, Quin Thomson.

These stories are bound together with a Lutruwitan adaptation of the ancient Greek myth of Daphne and Apollo, crafted into prose by Lutruwitan writer, Isabel Howard. Her re-imagining of the story will lure you to the deepest depths of the oceanic underworld, where an existential challenge is fought and won, only to return you back to the world in which we belong, perhaps with a new perspective.

PROGRAM

RACHEL MEYERS (b.1981)	Diurnality (2024)
MARCO UCCELLINI (1603-1680)	<i>Questa Bella Sirena</i> from Sonate, correnti et arie Op.4 (1645)
KERRY ANDREW (b.1978) arr. VDF and Donald Nicolson (2025)	Blue Men (2023)
EMILY SHEPPARD (b.1993)	Descent into Sirens* (2025)
KATIE YAP (b.1990) & YYAN NG (b.1985)	Kairai* (2025)
QUIN THOMSON (b.1974)	Perceived / Real* (2025)
R. MEYERS	Ginosko* (2025)
FREDRIK SJÖLIN (b.1982)	Shore (2017)
TRAD. arr. R. Meyers (2025)	Land on the Shore * World premiere

DURATION

This performance is one hour with no interval.
We request that you hold all applause until the end of the performance.

ARTISTS

VAN DIEMEN'S FIDDLES

JULIA FREDERSDORFF

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR / BAROQUE VIOLIN, VOCALS

EMILY SHEPPARD

VIOLIN, OCTAVE VIOLIN, EELHU, TAIKO, VOCALS

RACHEL MEYERS

VIOLIN, OCTAVE VIOLIN, VOCALS

KATIE YAP

VIOLIN, ELECTRIC VIOLIN, VIOLA, KANE, VOCALS

CREATIVE TEAM

MATTHEW MARSHALL LIGHTING DESIGN

LINDY HUME OAM DRAMATURGICAL ADVICE

LUKE PLUMB AUDIO PRODUCTION

ISABEL HOWARD &

EMILY SHEPPARD DAPHNE MYTH TEXT

JANE LONGHURST NARRATION

VAN DIEMEN'S BAND

JULIA FREDERSDORFF ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

JENNIFER KERR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DIRK LORENZEN OPERATIONS MANAGER

KATIE YAP ARTISTIC COORDINATOR

NATALYA BING EDUCATION & COMMUNITY

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Van Diemen's Fiddles (VDF) is a multi-disciplinary art music ensemble combining the exceptional talents of VDB Artistic Director **Julia Fredersdorff** on Baroque violin, Klezmer and folk fiddler **Rachel Meyers**, and Classical/ folk/ experimental violinist **Emily Sheppard**. In 2024 they were joined by modern/Baroque violist **Katie Yap**.

Equally at home performing in concert halls or pubs, VDF tour across Lutruwita/Tasmania creating community projects and accessible cultural events across a variety of audience demographics. They have appeared at Ten Days on the Island, Cygnet Folk Festival, MONA FOMA and Four Winds. Their debut album will be released in 2025.

THE STORY OF DAPHNE & APOLLO

Apollo, powerful Olympian god of music, poetry, and archery, dares to mock Cupid's archery skills. In retaliation, Cupid takes two arrows from his quiver - one gold-tipped, to ignite infatuation, and one lead-tipped, to command revulsion.

He shoots Apollo with the golden arrow, then turns to the beautiful nymph Daphne, and shoots her with the leaden one. Thus begins a chase of unrequited lust. Daphne avoids Apollo's pursuit by turning into a laurel tree.

This story explores themes of power dynamics, consent, and the lengths one might go to remain free. In the original myth, Daphne's ultimate expression of her own will is to become a tree.

In SIRENS, we explore an alternate ending, where Daphne instead seeks refuge in the sea...

MORE INFO

For more information about *Sirens*, including song lyrics and the full Daphne & Apollo Myth text, please scan the QR code or visit:

<https://www.vandiemensband.com.au/program/sirens-program-notes/>



SUPPORTERS



Works by Rachel Meyers and Emily Sheppard were assisted by a King Island Council Artist Residency.

Emily Sheppard *Descent into sirens* was created with support from APRA AMCOS Art Music Fund.

Sirens was supported by a creative development residency at Four Winds.

THANKYOU

VDB would like to thank the following people for their generous help with this program:

Uncle Jim-puralia Everett-meenamatta, Aunty Lola Greeno, HLA Management, Calic Carpentry & Building, Access Plastics.

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