



THE FESTIVAL OF AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER MUSIC IN CAIRNS

with Rachel Whealy

Take a musical break from winter at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Cairns, enjoying an in-depth experience thanks to the connoisseurship of *Limelight* magazine

HIGHLIGHTS

- Delight in a comprehensive experience of the Australian Festival of Chamber Music at its inaugural Cairns edition, with 13 performances over one week
- Benefit from the connoisseurship of *Limelight* magazine, a Festival media partner and a trusted source of Australian arts news and reviews for over fifty years
- Relax over post-performance debriefs, taking the opportunity to discuss your experiences and meet Festival artists in informal settings
- Enjoy a new perspective on the musical program, thanks to the guidance of arts professional and experienced tour leader Rachel Whealy
- Take a day trip to delightful Green Island, a unique rainforest and reef environment that lies just off Cairns, and then hear about its preservation in a talk by its manager

IN A NUTSHELL

DATES: 24-30 July 2026

ITINERARY: Cairns (6 nights)

PRICE: \$7,800pp twinshare

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: \$1,030 for sole use of a double room

FITNESS: Moderate

GROUP SIZE: max. 20 places

OVERVIEW

Jack Liebeck returns as Artistic Director of the Australian Festival of Chamber Music for the fifth year at this first iteration of the Festival in Cairns, the perfect destination for a winter getaway filled with outstanding chamber music. Festival media partner *Limelight* magazine is delighted to offer a curated 7-day experience, including 14 performances, pre-performance talks, opportunities to meet the performers, a sunset cruise with the AFCM and an excursion to Green Island.

From our comfortable base in a 5* hotel just minutes from the Festival venues, we unpack for a feast of performances, ranging from intimate piano trios to an atmospheric concert in St Monica's Cathedral and an exciting multimedia performance featuring works by contemporary composers Philip Glass and Ludovico Einaudi. An impressive range of artists join Artistic Director Jack Liebeck on stage, both in performance and in conversations that go behind the compositions, including French cellist Christian-Pierre La Marca and internationally acclaimed pianist Piers Lane AO.

Our accommodation in the same hotel as Festival performers ensures that there will be plenty of opportunities for informal, social discussions with the artists. Your tour leader is Rachel Whealy, the Executive Director of The Song Company. Rachel has led numerous tours to performing arts festivals in Australia and overseas.

This tour is operated for Limelight magazine by its sister company, Limelight Arts Travel. Hero image courtesy the AFCM and Brian Cassey.

TOUR LEADER

Rachel Whealy has more than 20 years' expertise in arts management and philanthropy, and national and international tour direction. Currently Executive Director of Australia's premier vocal ensemble, The Song Company, Rachel has previously been Executive Director of Canberra International Music Festival, Orchestra Manager of Sydney Symphony Orchestra and National Program Manager of Music Australia. A cellist, Rachel brings a broad and deep musical knowledge to her tours.



From top to bottom: Festival Artistic Director Jack Liebeck; Cairns, a perfect winter destination for a musical celebration (credit, Tourism Tropical North Queensland); your tour leader Rachel Whealy

DETAILED ITINERARY

NOTE: THE MUSICAL PROGRAM IS CURRENT AT THE TIME OF PUBLICATION

FRIDAY 24 JULY 2026 – ARRIVAL

Make your way to our hotel in central Cairns, to meet fellow group members and tour leader Rachel Whealy over **welcome drinks**. Afterwards, we make the short walk to Cairns Performing Arts Centre (CPAC) and take our seats in the Gold category for the **opening night concert** of the Australian Festival of Chamber Music.

Performance 1: Cairns Crescendo

Venue: CPAC Theatre

Program: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik*; Sam Wu, world premiere of a Cairns new commission; Astor Piazzolla, *Libertango* arr. Jeff Scott; Carl Czerny, Variations on Mozart Arias for Six Hands; Antonín Dvořák, *Serenade for Winds*

Performers: Jack Liebeck (violin), Alexander Sitkovetsky (violin), Christian-Pierre La Marca (cello), Piers Lane AO (piano) and others

We return to our hotel. First of six nights in Cairns.

SATURDAY 25 JULY 2026 – GOVERNOR'S GALA CONCERT (B, L)

This morning we have a **performance briefing** by tour leader Rachel Whealy to orient us to today's rich musical program, before we walk to CPAC for the first in our series of **Concert Conversations**. The Festival's Artistic Director Jack Liebeck and a panel of artists offer music, insight and conversation, followed by a short concert and tea and coffee with the artists.

Performance 2: Concert Conversations

Venue: CPAC Theatre

Program: JS Bach, Cantata BWV 106; Claude Debussy, *Clair de lune*; Vittorio Monti, *Csárdás*; Sergei Porkofiev, *Sonata in D major*

Performers: featured artists include Alexander Sitkovetsky (violin), Isang Enders (cello), Karin Schaupp (guitar) and Wu Qian (piano)

After the performance, we enjoy lunch together in a nearby restaurant, before some time at leisure; you may wish to attend the **AFCM Illuminates talk** at nearby Bulmba-ja Arts Centre at 3.00pm. In the late afternoon we return to CPAC for our first Sunset Series concert.

Performance 3: Twilight's Embrace

Venue: CPAC Theatre

Program: Margaret Sutherland, Nocturne for Violin and Piano; Lennox Berkley, *Song of the Half Light*; Arvo Pärt, *Spiegel im Spiegel*; Ernest Bloch, Three Nocturnes for Piano Trio, Frédéric Chopin, Nocturne

Performers: featured artists include Karin Schaupp (guitar), Alexander Sitkovetsky (violin), Wu Qian (cello) and Piers Lane (piano)

There is time at leisure afterwards to rest or have a light meal before we take our seats at CPAC for the **Governor's Gala Concert**. Afterwards, we walk back to our hotel.

Performance 4: Governor's Gala Concert

Venue: CPAC

Program: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *The Marriage of Figaro*, arr. Johann Wendt

Performers: featured artists include Bethany Simons (narrator), Emmanuel Cassimatis (oboe), Gahyun Lee (oboe), Lloyd van't Hoff (clarinet) and Jackie Newcomb (bassoon)

SUNDAY 26 JULY 2026 – ST MONICA'S CATHEDRAL (B)

After breakfast, we meet in our hotel for a **pre-performance briefing** by Rachel Whealy. Afterwards, we walk to the nearby Bulmba-ja Arts Centre for a **Sunday Special** by the internationally acclaimed **Sitkovetsky Trio**. There is time at leisure for lunch, before our **Sunday Church Concert** at St Monica's Cathedral, a beautiful acoustic venue for an uplifting performance.

Performance 5: Sunday Special – The Sitkovetsky Trio

Venue: Bulmba-ja Arts Centre

Program: Cécile Chaminade, Piano Trio No. 2, Op. 34; Lena Sierova, Piano Trio; Robert Schumann, Piano Trio No. 3 in G minor, Op. 110

Performers: Alexander Sitkovetsky (violin), Wu Qian (piano) and Isang Enders (cello)

Performance 6: Sunday Cathedral Concert – All At Sixes and Sevens

Venue: St Monica's Cathedral

Program: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Divertimento* No. 11 K251; Johannes Brahms, Sextet No. 1 Op. 18

Performers: featured artists include Emmanuel Cassimatis (oboe), Ben Jacks (French horn), Jack Liebeck (violin), Stefanie Farrands (viola), Christian-Pierre La Marca (cello)

The later afternoon is at leisure, and you might like to explore the nearby Cairns Botanic Gardens, a tropical paradise with a rainforest boardwalk. In the early evening, we meet for a concert at CPAC.

Performance 7: Horrible Histories – Composer Edition

Venue: CPAC Theatre

Program: Henry Purcell, Suite Z.661 in G minor; Jean-Baptiste Lully, *Chanson des Harlequins*; Isaac Nathan, *Queen of Evening* and *Thou art another's*; Ernest Chausson, Concert in D major for violin, piano and string quartet, Op. 21

Performers: Karin Schaupp (guitar), Robin Tritschler (tenor), Wu Qian (piano), Alexander Krichel (piano), Jack Liebeck (violin) and Simon Martyn-Ellis (lute)

MONDAY 27 JULY 2026 – A BAROQUE SUNSET (B)

This morning we join Artistic Director Jack Liebeck and a panel of artists for music and conversation, followed by a short concert and tea and coffee with the artists.

Performance 8: Concert Conversations 2

Venue: CPAC Studio

Program: Antonio Vivaldi, Concerto in D major for guitar, two violins and continuo, RV 93; Django Reinhardt (Stéphane Grappelli), *Minor Swing*; Jorge Morel, *Danza Brasilera*; Robert Kahn, Serenade in F minor, Op. 73

Performers: Emmanuel Cassimatis (oboe), Stefan Dohr (French horn), Alexander Krichel (piano), Jack Liebeck (violin), Simon Martyn-Ellis (lute) and Karin Schaupp (guitar)

Afterwards, we travel by private coach to fashionable Palm Cove. There is time for a light lunch at leisure, to wander the palm-lined esplanade, or to take a quick dip. We return to Cairns in time for the AFCM Illuminates talk with Prof. Brian Foster on **Einstein the Musician** at Bulmba-ja Arts Centre, and then make the short walk to CPAC for our **Sunset Concert**. Afterwards, there is time for a rest or bite to eat at our hotel, before our evening concert, **Cairns' Colossal 150th**.

Performance 9: Sunset Series 2

Venue: CPAC Theatre

Program: Johann Friedrich Fasch, Lute concerto; Henry Purcell, *If music be the food of love, Now that the sun hath veiled his Light, Tis nature's voice, Music for a while*; Antonio Vivaldi, Trio Sonata in G minor, RV 85; JS Bach, *Cantata Ich armer Mensch* BWV 55

Performers: featured artists include Stefanie Ferrands (viola), Jack Liebeck (violin), Emmalena Huning (violin), Simon Martyn-Ellis (lute, gallichon and theorbo), Robin Tritschler (tenor), Joshua Batty (flute)

Performance 10: Evening Concert – Cairns' Colossal 150th

Venue: CPAC Theatre

Program: Ludwig van Beethoven, Sextet in E flat major, Op. 81b; Gustav Mahler, Piano quartet; Gabriel Fauré, Violin sonata no. 1; Joaquin Turina, *Sevillana*,

Performers: featured artists include Stefanie Ferrands (viola), Emmalena Huning (violin), Stefan Dohr (French horn), Ben Jacks (French horn), Lise Berthaud (viola) and Christian-Pierre La Marca (cello)

TUESDAY 28 JULY 2026 – THE CORAL SEA (B, D)

After breakfast in our hotel, we make the short walk to the Cairns boat terminal and travel by fast boat to **Green Island**. As we will learn in tomorrow's AFCM Illuminates presentation, this 6,000-year-old cay, just 27km offshore, has a fascinating ecology, ranging from coral gardens to tropical rainforest. There is time for a walk among the lush vegetation, or to take a swim on the white sand beaches, before a simple lunch at leisure in one of two cafes on the island. We return to Cairns with time to freshen up before tonight's special event: a **sunset cruise with AFCM artists**, including dinner and performances. Seats are strictly limited for this intimate musical experience, and we are delighted to have secured them for our group.

WEDNESDAY 29 JULY 2026 – OUR WONDERFUL WORLD (B, FINGER FOOD)

Our final day at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music allows us to explore the connections between music and the stunning natural environment around us. We begin with our final **Concert Conversation** at CPAC, before time at leisure to rest or have a light lunch. In the afternoon, we take our seats for a fascinating **AFCM Illuminates talk** on marine conservation, an opportunity to hear from Bekki Hull, the manager of Green Island, which we visited yesterday. Afterwards, there is a **Sunset Concert** at CPAC, with music by Brahms, Elgar and Sam Wu.

Performance 11: Concert Conversations 3

Venue: CPAC Studio

Program: Henry Mancini, *Moon River*; Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Sinfonia Concertante*, second movement; Harry Sdraulig, *Cantilena*; Gustav Mahler, Piano Quartet in A minor

Performers: Jackie Newcomb (bassoon), Alexander Krichel (piano), Christian-Pierre La Marca (cello), Charlotte Miles (cello) and Jack Liebeck (violin)

Performance 12: Sunset Series 3 – A Tale of Two

Venue: CPAC Theatre

Program: Johannes Brahms, Violin sonata in D minor; Sam Wu, *Travelogues*; Edward Elgar, Violin sonata

Performers: Jack Liebeck (violin) and Piers Lane AO (piano)

There is time to freshen up at our nearby hotel before we return to CPAC for our final performance, a multimedia program devised by French cellist Christian-Pierre La Marca to cinematography by Yann Arthus-Bertrand and featuring works by Strauss, Saint-Saëns, Philip Glass and Ludovico Einaudi.

Performance 13: Evening Concert – Wonderful World

Venue: CPAC Theatre

Program: works by Strauss, Saint-Saëns, Dvořák, Philip Glass, Ludovico Einaudi and others

Performers: Jack Liebeck (violin), Christian-Pierre La Marca (cello), Piers Lane AO (piano)

Afterwards, we enjoy **farewell drinks and finger food** together, an opportunity to discuss our experiences and to toast the artists and performers of the Australian Festival of Chamber Music's inaugural presentation in Cairns. Final night of six nights in Cairns.

THURSDAY 30 JULY 2026 – DEPART CAIRNS (B)

Tour arrangements conclude after breakfast in our hotel. While no group departure transfers are included, there are numerous flights to major Australian cities from Cairns airport daily. The trip to the airport by taxi takes approximately 15 minutes, and your tour manager and hotel concierge will be happy to assist with your arrangements.

INCLUSIONS

- 6 nights' accommodation at a 5* hotel, just minutes from the Festival venues
- Tickets to 13 performances in the AFCM's Category 1 (Gold Member), and to those on a sunset cruise
- All breakfasts, 2 lunches or dinners, and post-performance drinks with finger food
- All ground transport, guided tours and boat cruises as mentioned in the itinerary, and tipping
- Pre-performance briefings by and expertise of Rachel Whealy throughout
- Services of a tour manager throughout
- A one-year subscription to *Limelight* magazine

HOTELS

Crystalbrook Bailey Hotel 5* Cairns, 6 nights

<https://www.crystalbrookcollection.com/bailey>

There are a number of 5* resort-style properties by The Crystalbrook Collection in Cairns. We have chosen Crystalbrook Bailey, located within walking distance of all the Festival venues and particularly close to CPAC. We have also chosen this hotel as it is the accommodation base for the AFCM artists, giving us access to both private and informal meetings with the performers.

The hotel has a patio café, wine bar and restaurant, offering opportunities for light refreshments before the evening performances. There are two swimming pools, one for the exclusive use of hotel guests, and the style throughout is bright and modern.

We have reserved rooms for our group in the Urban category, which range from 23-30sqm in size.

NB: hotels of a similar standard may be substituted.

TOUR DETAILS

DATES

24-30 July 2026

TOUR LEADER

Rachel Whealy

ITINERARY

Cairns (6 nights)

PRICE

\$7,800pp twinshare

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

\$1,030 for sole use of a double room

FITNESS

Moderate: late nights, embarking and disembarking a cruise boat

GROUP SIZE

Maximum 20 places

DEPOSITS

\$2,000pp at the time of booking

FINAL PAYMENT DUE

08 May 2026

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By booking on this tour, you accept our terms and conditions, which can be found on our website:

<https://www.limelight-arts-travel.com.au/terms-and-conditions-tours>