

THE FRITZI TRIO WINS MUSICA VIVA AUSTRALIA'S STRIKE A CHORD 2024

Musica Viva Australia is thrilled to announce The Fritzi Trio, NSW as the winner of *Strike A Chord* 2024. Hailing from Sydney NSW and Melbourne VIC, the ensemble has been awarded the Robert Salzer First Prize, worth \$5,000.

Wilma Smith, Chair of the Jury and Musica Viva Australia Artistic Director of Competitions said, 'Our team of expert jurors was completely blown away by the level of musicianship and technical prowess on display in today's Grand Final. Fritzi Trio emerged as our worthy 1st prize winners, performing with exciting rhythmic energy, mature warmth of sound and expressive lyricism'

The Fritzi Trio consists of violinist Hannah Tyrrell, cellist Jamie Wallace and pianist Vincent Zhu. The group first met and became friends at the Australian Youth Orchestra's National Music Camp in 2023. Despite the geographical challenge of living in different states, they have enjoyed getting together to rehearse and perform as a Piano Trio as often as their busy schedules allow. All three are planning to pursue their musical studies at a tertiary level and would like to continue to play chamber music together throughout their professional lives.

All members of the Fritzi Trio have participated in previous *Strike A Chord* competition. Jamie Wallace was a member of Cousin Quartet, the inaugural winner in 2020, and returned in 2022 with a piano quintet from Sydney Grammar. Violinist Hannah Tyrrell also competed in 2022 with a trio, although her group did not make the final. Pianist Vincent Zhu has been a finalist twice—first on cello with the Bartholdy Trio in 2021 and now as a pianist in 2024. Remarkably, between them, they have participated in every year of the competition's history, demonstrating how *Strike A Chord* provides a valuable platform for young musicians to refine their skills, persevere, and grow throughout their musical journeys.

Strike A Chord is Australia's national chamber music competition for school ensembles. Established in 2020, it aims to foster a love of chamber music amongst young people and provide an opportunity for students to develop their performance skills and discover the joy of making music with friends.

The 2024 Grand Final jury is comprised of:

- Wilma Smith: Artistic Director of Competitions, Musica Viva Australia; Second Violinist, Flinders Quartet; Guest Concertmaster of orchestras throughout Australia and New Zealand.
- Howard Penny: Cellist, Head of Strings at ANAM; Former Principal Cello, Vienna Chamber Orchestra; chamber musician with global accolades.
- Vatche Jambazian: Pianist, Artistic Director of Bowral Autumn Music Festival; Principal Pianist, Omega Ensemble.
- Tim White OAM: Head of Classical Music at WAAPA; Former Principal Percussionist, Western Australia Symphony Orchestra and award-winning educator.
- Caroline Henbest: Violist, Resident Faculty at ANAM; Former Principal Viola, Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Musica Viva Australia CEO Anne Frankenberg: 'At Musica Viva Australia it is one of our great privileges to play a small role in supporting young artists on their journey of musical discovery and development. We are immensely proud that programs like *Strike A Chord* can recognise, nurture and reward the joy, passion, talent and dedication displayed by participating artists, their teachers and families. Congratulations to all our 2024 *Strike A Chord* musicians.'

The winners of the 2024 *Strike A Chord* Grand Final are:

FIRST PRIZE (\$5,000) The Robert Salzer Prize - The Fritzi Trio, NSW/VIC

SECOND PRIZE (\$4,000) The Paul Morawetz Prize - Take Six, QLD

THIRD PRIZE (\$2,500) - JPMS Ensemble Animato, QLD

Other significant prizes awarded at the Grand Final:

Encouragement Award - Marryatville High School Baroque Ensemble, SA

Monash Chamber Music Prize – Comet Quartet (NSW)

Flinders Quartet Mentorship Prize – Lumina Quartet (NSW)

Firebird Trio Mentorship Prize – Timli Trio (QLD)

3MBS Prize – Aneres Trio and Kingussie Trio (VIC)

Artistic Director of Competitions, Musica Viva Australia, Wilma Smith: 'the quality of these young artists is truly amazing. Chamber music has always been a great joy of my career and it's heartwarming and exhilarating to see a new generation discover that joy. The future is bright in the hands of these wonderful musicians, and I have no doubt that many of them will grace our professional stages in years to come.'

Musica Viva Australia presents *Strike A Chord* with the support of Principal Partner Creative Victoria, Strategic Partner Melbourne Recital Centre, University Partner Monash University, and generous support from private donors and the Robert Salzer Foundation, and the Patricia H Reid Endowment.

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For further information, images or interviews:

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