

Dr SOPHIA KIRSANOVA, Violin

15 8 Westbury St, Melbourne VIC 3183
sofjakirsanova@gmail.com
+61 404 723 460
sophiakirsanova.com



PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2022-present **Founder and Lead Violinist** *MELBOURNE STRINGS*

*The recipient of the **City of Melbourne Arts Grant**, Melbourne Strings comprise the leading string players in Melbourne and have presented orchestral and chamber music programs throughout Melbourne and regional Victoria (Hanson Dyer Hall, Wyselaskie Yuma Auditorium, the Brunswick Music Festival, National Gallery of Victoria). www.sophiakirsanova.com/melbourne-strings*

2021-present **Teaching Associate, Violin**
Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, The University of Melbourne

2020-21 **Graduate Teaching Assistant**
Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, The University of Melbourne

2009-18 **1st Violin Tutti / Principal 2nd Violin**
The Israel Camerata chamber orchestra

2006-07 **1st Violin Tutti**
Sinfonietta Rīga (Latvia) chamber orchestra

Casual orchestra engagements

Guest Concertmaster - Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, Darwin Symphony Orchestra. **Guest Tutti:** Orchestra Victoria (Melbourne) / Latvian National Symphony Orchestra / The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra / Nordic Symphony Orchestra / The Riga Festival Orchestra

EDUCATION

2023 **Doctor of Philosophy** (Music Performance)
Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, The University of Melbourne

Studio solo album: *The Morning Mist*, record label: SKANI (2024). Contemporary violin music by Latvian composers, including commissions. <https://skani.lnk.to/TMM>

Thesis: *Latvian Classical Violin Music in Transition, c.1980-2000.*

Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship recipient,
MacGeorge Traveling Scholarship (the University of Melbourne) recipient,
The Faculty Graduate Researcher Fund Scholarship (the University of Melbourne) recipient.
Commissions by composers Linda Leimane and Ēriks Ešenvalds as part of the research supported by **private donation** to the University of Melbourne and the **State Culture Capital Foundation** (Latvia).

GUEST LECTURE-RECITALS: Royal Academy of Music, London; Latvian Academy of Music, Amherst College (MA, US), Sigulda International music course in Latvia.

2015 **Artist Diploma.** The Buchtmann – Mehta School of Music, Tel Aviv University.
Principal teacher Prof. Hagai Shaham.

2013 **Master of Music.** The Jerusalem Academy of Music.
Principal teacher Prof. Michael Gaisler.

2011 **Bachelor of Music.** The Jerusalem Academy of Music.
Principal teacher Prof. Michael Gaisler.
Chamber Music Scholarship recipient 2008-2011.

2004-7 Studies towards Bachelor of Music. Latvian Academy of Music.
Principal teacher Prof. Juris Švolkovskis.

1993-2004 **Specialist Music School Diploma.** *Em. Dārziņš* Music School; Riga, Latvia
Principal teacher Nelli Sarkisian

Masterclasses

Itzhak Perlman, Christian Tetzlaff, Zakhar Bron, Miriam Fried, Ivry Gitlis, Shmuel Ashkenasi, Silvia Marcovici, Boris Garlitsky, Rudolf Koelman, Gyorgy Pauk, Grigory Kalinovsky and others.

Music Courses

2010	The Perlman Music Program (Israel/US)
2008 / 2009	Music in the Valley summer music course (Israel)
2006	Aurora Masterclasses and Festival (Sweden)
2006 / 2007	The International Holland Music Sessions Masterclasses and Festival (Holland)
2004 - 2007	<i>Collegium Musicum Pommersfelden</i> (Germany), orchestra and chamber music 4-week course.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Areas of Specialization: *Classical violin performance - solo / chamber music / symphony and chamber orchestra.*

Research interests: *Latvian classical violin music, post-Soviet music in the Baltics, 21st century string instrument repertoire, string instrument history and pedagogy, violin teaching methods.*

Teaching Associate at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music (MCM)

Between 2020 until present my teaching duties have included:

- **Individual Tutorials** - Individual violin lessons for undergraduate and graduate Performance and Performance Teaching students.
- **Lecture Tutorial** – teaching Violin Class (cohort of approx. 50 violin students)
- **String Ensemble** – coaching string quartets
- **Chamber Music** – coaching chamber music groups
- **Orchestral studies** –
 - conducting sectionals for the MCM Symphony Orchestra and Philharmonic Orchestra
 - selection of orchestral excerpts for the MCM Symphonic Ensemble violin auditions
 - Playing as Concertmaster / Principal in MCM Orchestra projects
- **Examiner** for the Conservatorium of Music Practical Examinations
- **Administrative** support in the String Area

The MCM Concertmaster Mentorship Program (2020-2022)

Development of the course content / Audition coaching, orchestral repertoire/ mock auditions / orchestral career mentoring

MASTERCLASSES / ADJUDICATING

Masterclass at the Em. Darzins Music School, Latvia	2025
Guest lecture in violin pedagogy at the Sigula Music School	
String workshop for the Young Artist Program of the Darwin Symphony Orchestra	2024
Audition coaching /AYO audition coaching – group and individual sessions	
VCE Melbourne Conservatorium Experience Day – performance and masterclass <i>MCM teaching staff presentations and masterclasses for the highschool music students in regional Victoria.</i>	
Violin faculty , the International Latvian Young Musicians' Master Courses, Sigulda	2023
Mentor , the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music, Monash University orchestra	
Masterclasses , the CRASHENDO! music education centre in East Gippsland, AU	
Jury member at the Boroondara Eisteddfod Competition for strings, Melbourne	2022

Private teaching

2019 -present Private violin studio in Melbourne (approx.10 students)

2016-8 Private violin teaching studio, Jerusalem

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

Recording

Solo Album **THE MORNING MIST**, the Record Label **SKANI** (release 15 Nov 2024)
Latvian violin music and premiere recordings of commissioned works by Linda Leimane and Ēriks Ešenvalds.

NAXOS. Ignaz Pleyel Violin Duos. C. Thompson, S. Kirsanova, violins. (*Forthcoming*)
As part of the complete collection of Pleyel's chamber music for strings.

Kirsanova-Lewis Duo. (with pianist Georgina Lewis). (*Forthcoming 2025*)
Works for violin and piano by Auerbach, Messiaen, Richter, J.S.Bach, Rachmaninoff, Apeŗāne, Coleridge-Taylor.

ABC CLASSIC. (2023) *This Earthly Round.* Music by Miriama Young recorded with Syzygy Ensemble.

Sergiu Shapira, Chamber Music. *Music Centre-Music Publishin, Israel.* (2017)
Shapira's String Quartet. P.Galaganov, S.Kirsanova (violins), A.Tumarinson (viola), O.Stolpner (violoncello).

Latvian Classical Radio. (2005) Michal Spisak Suite for Two Violins, Op.10.
Ilze Kirsanova and Sophia Kirsanova, violins.

February 2025 recording of **Violin Sonatas with pianist Agnese Eglina by Zemzaris, Ābols and Kalsons** for the Record Label SKANI.

Publications and presentations / lecture-recitals

Musica Baltica. An edition and preface for the collection of sonatas for violin and piano by Latvian composers I. Zemzaris, J.Ābols and R.Kalsons.	<i>Forthcoming</i> (2025)
---	------------------------------

University of Tartu Press. <i>Baltic Musics Beyond the Post-Soviet.</i> Edited by J.Engelhardt and K.Pukinskis. Conversation III (213-226) Latvian Music in Transition, 1980-2000. https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/90965	2024
---	------

LIMELIGHT. A Q&A on Melbourne Strings debut concert in Melbourne and the post-Soviet music in the Baltics. https://limelight-arts.com.au/news/melbourne-strings-announces-debut-concert/	2022
---	------

Latvietis. (Australian-Latvian newspaper). An article on violin sonatas by Latvian and Australian composers I.Zemzaris, J.Ābols and Ella Macens.	2021
---	------

Latvietis. Concert review on the Youth Choir <i>BALSIS</i> (Latvia) concert at the Tempo Rubato in Melbourne as part of their Australian tour.	2019
---	------

University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia. Guest Lecture-recital. (2024)

Royal Academy of Music, London. "Doctors in Performance" Conference and Festival. Lecture-recital. (2023)

The International Young Musician Music Course in Sigulda. Lecture-recital. (2023)

Latvian Academy of Music. LMT Chamber Hall. Guest Lecture-recital. (2023)

Amherst College (Massachusetts, US) Conference "Baltic Musics After the Post-Soviet". Lecture-Recital. (2022)

Fine Arts and Music Faculty Research Symposium, the University of Melbourne / Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. Lecture-recital. (2021)

Solo with Orchestra

P.VASKS "Lonely Angel" Meditation for Violin Solo and Orchestra, Melbourne Strings	<i>2023</i>
P.VASKS Violin Concerto No.1 "Distant Light", Melbourne Strings	<i>2022</i>
L.BEETHOVEN Romanza in F Major, the Israel Camerata	<i>2018</i>
A.VIVALDI Concerto for Four Violins in B minor RV 580, the Israel Camerata	<i>2014</i>
J.S. BACH Violin Concerto in E Major BWV 1042, Sinfonia Concertante (Latvia)	<i>2014</i>
A.VIVALDI The Four Seasons, the Israel Camerata	<i>2011</i>
J. SIBELIUS Violin Concerto, the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra	<i>2008</i>
J.S. BACH Concerto for Two Violins in D Minor, Collegium Musicum (Germany)	<i>2006</i>
H. WIENAWSKI Polonaise Brillante in D, the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra	<i>2004</i>

Solo Recitals / Chamber Music

Most notable concert engagements 2024-2019

- 2024
- Tempo Rubato, Solo recital - J.S.Bach, L.Auerbach, E.Ysaÿe
Lyrebird Music Society: Vasks, J.S. Bach, Caroline Shaw with *Melbourne Strings*
National Gallery of Victoria, Great Hall: Vasks, Bach, Shaw with *Melbourne Strings*
Recital, Tempo Rubato: Beethoven, Janáček, Sutherland
Lyrebird Music Society, Recital,: Vasks, L. Boulanger, Franck
Melba Hall, Recital: L. Boulanger, Franck
Forty-Five Downstairs: Schubert String Quintet in C Major D 956
Langley Estate Concert Series: Piano Quartets by Mozart and Mel Bonis
All Saints Windsor Concert Series, Recital: Debussy, Franck, L. Boulanger
Brunswick Music Festival: Shaw, Smith, Lanzilotti, Schoenberg with *Melbourne Strings*
Brighton Town Hall: Shaw, Smith, Lanzilotti, Schoenberg with *Melbourne Strings*
Guest Concertmaster, Royal Melbourne Philharmonic and Choir: Carl Vine, K. Orff
Guest Concertmaster, Darwin Symphony Orchestra: Prokofiev 5th, Ledger, Chance, Mizrahi
- 2023
- Australian-Latvian Arts Festival, Chamber music concert featuring Latvian classical composers
Melbourne Recital Centre, Recital: Vasks (AU premiere), Adams, Mazzoli, Pärt, Buravicky
London, The Royal Academy of Music, Lecture-recital: *the Doctors in Performance Conference*
Mildura Arts Centre, Recital: Messiaen, Richter, J. Adams, Rachmaninoff, Buravicky
Melbourne Recital Centre, Recital: Beethoven, L. Boulanger, Bacewicz, Kreisler, Rosalind Page
The Latvian Academy of Music, Lecture-recital: Latvian classical violin music, 1980-2000.
Concert tour in Latvia with pianist Agnese supported by the Latvian Cultural Fund: Mark Rothko
Centre (Daugavpils), the Latvian National Library Concert Hall KORE (Riga) and Cēsis
Exhibition Hall (Cesis).
Melba Hall, Recital: Schnittke, Ešenvalds, Rachmaninoff, Stravinsky
Hanson Dyer Hall, NMS: Pēteris Vasks *Lonely Angel* (Soloist), Melody Eötvös, H.Genzmer,
Caroline Shaw with *Melbourne Strings*
St Paul's Cathedral, Recital: Pēteris Vasks Sonata for Violin Solo and Vasks' *Lonely Angel*
- 2022
- Carlton Uniting Church, Recital: Brahms, Franck, L.Boulanger
Canberra, National Gallery of Australia: The Latvian Embassy to Australia Inaugural Concert
Amherst College (US), Lecture-recital, *Conference* (Online)
Melbourne Recital Centre, Recital: J.S.Bach, Auerbach, Messiaen, Richter, Ešenvalds
Melba Hall, Recital: Vasks, Vaughan-Williams, Aleksejeva-Birze, Buravicky
Hanson Dyer Hall, New Music Studio: Vasks Violin Concerto no.1 (Soloist), Grieg, Aleksejeva-Birze with *Melbourne Strings*
Hanson Dyer Hall New Music Studio: Leimane, Riše, Young, Page with Syzygy Ensemble
Tempo Rubato, Recital: Vasks, Vaughan-Williams, Coleridge-Taylor, Richter, M. De Falla
Yarragon Studio, Recital: J.S.Bach, Auerbach, Messiaen, Richter, Ešenvalds
Melbourne Recital Centre, Ensemble Liaison: Dvorak Piano Quintet no. 2, Op.81
Australian Ballet, Dance X Festival: World Premiere by M.Hindson for four Solo Violins
Guest Concertmaster, Hanson Dyer Hall: Trombone Hero, music for solo trombone and orchestra
Guest Concertmaster: Britten A Midsummer Night's Dream, MCM and VCA production

Commissioned Works

- ♦ Nir Tsfaty, Melbourne Strings, 2024. *World Premiere, Great Hall, National Gallery of Victoria.*
- ♦ Rosalind Page EMPATIA for violin and piano, 2023. *WP at the Melbourne Recital Centre.*
- ♦ Ēriks Ešenvalds *The Morning Mist*, 2022. *WP Melbourne Recital Centre, Kirsanova-Lewis Duo.*
- ♦ Linda Leimane *The Architectonics of a Chrystal Soul* for violin solo and ensemble, 2021.

WP at the MCM New Music Studio with Syzygy Ensemble.

- ♦ Sandra Aleksejeva-Birze the Ballade for Strings and Voices, 2022.

WP at the Hanson Dyer Hall with Melbourne Strings and Latvian community choir Daina soloists

- ♦ Sandra Aleksejeva-Birze Variations for Violin Solo on *DivDūjiņas Gaisā Skrēja*, 2021.

WP at the Latvian-Australian the June 14th Commemoration Online Concert, 2021

Forthcoming –

- ♦ Rosalind Page, *Melbourne Strings*, 2025 /2026
- ♦ Melody Eötvös, *Melbourne Strings*, 2025
- ♦ Kate Kneal for violin and piano, 2025
- ♦ Dimitris Maronidis, violin and electronics, 2025

Notable Collaborations with Composers

- ♦ Workshop with the MCM composition students, **Sutherland Trio**, 2024.
- ♦ **Leilehua Lanzilotti**'s concert at the Hanson Dyer Hall as part of her residency at the Melbourne Conservatorium. Collaboration and performance of her music.
- ♦ Australian premiere, **Pēteris Vasks** *Sonata estiva* for violin solo at Melbourne Recital Centre, 2023.
- ♦ World premiere of **Joseph Franklin**'s *the Horror of the Avant-garde(s)* concerto for piano, percussion and large ensemble. Chapter House, Melbourne, 2023.
- ♦ Workshops and concert performances of music by the composition students towards at the **International Latvian Young Musicians' Master Courses**, Sigulda, Latvia 2023.
- ♦ Workshops with composers **Pēteris Vasks**, **Ēriks Ešenvalds**, **Linda Leimane** and **Imants Zemzaris** on their music in Latvia, June / July 2023.
- ♦ World premiere, **Mathew Hindson**'s IMPOSTER for 4 Solo Violins at the Australian Ballet Festival, Melbourne Arts Centre, 2022 (Soloists Sulki Yu, Zoe Black, Jenny Kafhagi, Sophia Kirsanova)
- ♦ Workshop with the Melbourne Conservatorium composition students, **Syzygy Ensemble**, 2022.
- ♦ World premiers of works by **Miriama Young**, **Rosalind Page** and **Linda Leimane** at the New Music Studio concert series with Syzygy Ensemble, 2021.

Notable Chamber Music Experience

Melbourne Strings , lead violinist	2022-present
Kirsanova- Brozgul Duo (violin and piano)	2022-present
Kirsanova-Lewis Duo (violin and piano)	2019-present
Paino Trio RAM with pianist Arik Halevy and cellist Michael Assaf	2008-2012
Violin Duo with Ilze Kirsanova	2004-present

Guest violinist: **Syzygy Ensemble**, contemporary music ensemble (2020-22), **Sutherland Trio** (2024), **Ensemble Liaison** (2022)

Festivals and International / National Tours

SOLO and CHAMBER MUSIC:

Brunswick Beethoven Festival, (AU), 2025

Albury Chamber Music Festival (AU), 2024

Brunswick Music Festival (AU) 2024, Melbourne Strings.

Solo recital tour in Latvia with pianist Agnese Eglina (Mark Rothko Centre in Daugavpils, Cēsis Art Gallery, Sigulda Concert Hall, LNB Concert Hall in Riga).

The 59th Australian Latvian Arts Festival, 2023

Musica Viva Australia regional touring program, Kirsanova-Lewis Duo, 2023

Melbourne Recital Centre regional touring program, Kirsanova-Lewis Duo, 2023

Australian National Violin Conference, 2022.

Front Beach, Back Beach Festival 2022, with Kirsanova-Lewis Duo.

Music, She Wrote Festival, (Melbourne) 2022, with Syzygy Ensemble.

Mimir Chamber Music Festival (US) 2021, Online Premiere of A.Kalējs Toccata for Violin Solo, Op.40.

Kfar Blum Chamber Music Festival 2009, Piano Trio RAM.

Holland Music Sessions Festival, recitals with pianist Ruslan Perezilo.

As part of ORCHESTRAS:

Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, Musica Viva Australian tour, Concert tours in France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Thailand. The Arthur Rubinstein International Music Society competition and concerts.

AWARDS AND GRANTS

Krišjāņa Barona Balva 2024, Award from the World Federation of Free Latvians for the research and investments in Latvian culture, in particularly Latvian violin and chamber music.

Honorary Acknowledgment 2023, the Latvian Association in Australia, and New Zealand for the promotion of Latvian violin music.

First Prize, The Dina Turgeman Chamber Music Competition, Israel.

First Prize, Chamber Music Competition Buchmann-Mehta School of Music.

First Prize, Chamber Music Competition, the Latvian Academy of Music.

Special Jury Prize, A. Dombrovskis International Violin Competition, Riga, Latvia.

Laureate, The IV Heino Eller International Violin Competition; Tallinn, Estonia.

Second Prize, The National All-State Latvian Music College Competition for Strings.

Scholarship Winner, International Holland Music Sessions, Netherlands, 2006 and 2007.

City of Melbourne Quick Response **Arts Grant** for the project Melbourne Strings.

MacGeorge Traveling Scholarship, The University of Melbourne.

Australian Government Research Training Program **Scholarship**.

LANGUAGES

Latvian (native), Hebrew, English, Russian, French *intermediate*, German (A2)