

FINE MUSIC RADIO



OPUS NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER

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101.3 FM
GREATER CAPE TOWN

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PURE JOY

What makes radio, for me, so special is it's an immediate medium (I know we now have podcasts that extend its life, but that's another story). Radio is about the now. We hear sad news and we grieve together, we celebrate together and we also just get through the day-to-day thing called life together.

Rodney Trudgeon has been doing that for fifty years. His passion is infectious and we're celebrating Rodney this September (see *Opuscast*). In fact, we could call September "Rodneymania", see below for all the Rodney happenings.

Someone else who loved radio was a former FMR presenter the late Sheila Chisholm. I found an email she wrote to me after the Covid lockdown: "My happiest musical moment came [today] as I sat in front of the microphone to present my *Classical Choice* compilation. Pure joy!" Thanks to former station manager Mark Jennings for his words below.

In the spirit of that pure joy, Fine Music Radio celebrated the wonderful talent of young musicians at the Fine Music Radio 2026 Music Awards.

I'm always delighted by not only the performers, but also the audience: parents, friends, teachers and FMR listeners. At the finals of the Classical section, I sat next to some young people from a youth organisation called Langaformen – their mission is to educate and inspire young boys. What lovely people to share the evening with!

Another milestone in September is Exclusive Books, our *Book Choice* sponsor, celebrating their 75th anniversary.

In a time when AI is trying to rewrite our narrative (creepy stuff), Exclusive Books is a testament to a book-loving world with real writers and real readers.

And staying with AI, allow me a little rant. Each month I PDF *Opus*, then open it to check it, and as I do, AI gives me this message: "This is a long document. Do you want me to summarise it?"

"No, thank you!"

Because here's the thing: Fine Music Radio listeners listen. They also read and (sorry, have to sneak this in) share generously and become FMR members (hint, hint).

This spring, we hope you'll join us in celebrating our very real superstar, Rodney Trudgeon. We hope you'll find comfort when you need it, and joy too.

This edition of *Opus* is dedicated to the memory of our dear friend and colleague Sheila Chisholm.



Vanessa Levenstein
Opus Editor

CELEBRATING RODNEY'S FIFTY YEARS IN BROADCASTING



BEHIND THE MUSIC: THE THIRD MOVEMENT WITH RODNEY TRUDGEON

Join Rodney Trudgeon for *Behind the Music – The Third Movement*.

In this final talk in the series, Rodney will reflect on the experiences and music that have shaped his five decades in broadcasting, revisit some of the highlights, and share his hopes for what lies ahead.

And there's a treat in store – NanoVOX, an intimate group of singers selected from VOX Cape Town, will perform live during the evening.

It takes place on **Monday 14 September, at 6.30 for 7 pm**, in Artscape's Opera Bar. Tickets include a complimentary glass of wine on arrival. Book now through Webtickets. Discounts are available for FMR members.



RODNEY'S FAVOURITE FIFTY

As part of his fifty years in radio celebrations, Rodney Trudgeon shares his top fifty favourite works, spanning all genres of classical music, with some surprises along the way.

The works will be presented in no particular order, except during the last week of September, when Rodney will play his top ten favourites in ascending order.

Listen to *Rodney's Classic Morning* this September, between 9 am and 12 noon, for his fifty favourite pieces.

OPUSCAST WITH: RODNEY TRUDGEON – HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INTERVIEW

Vanessa: There's a lot of celebration happening around your fiftieth, but today I want to touch on something very close to my heart, and that's mentorship. You've been mentored, and, in turn, you've mentored all of us. Let's start with who mentored you.

Rodney: Well, I was lucky because I joined the SABC on 1 September 1976 – hence the fiftieth. And in those days, what was then the English Service was full of really professional broadcasters who'd trained at the BBC, or who'd come from the Rhodesian Broadcasting Corporation and then down to the SABC in Johannesburg.

So, the likes of Paddy O'Byrne, Christopher Bennett, Stephen O'Reilly and Humphrey Gilbert – those were distinguished names in the world of broadcasting. And I came under the mentorship of all of them, depending on what I was doing.

If I was doing music, it would be David Lloyd or Stephen O'Reilly. If it was news reading, it would be Christopher Bennett. If it was general presentation of music programmes or interview programmes, it would be Paddy O'Byrne.

And so I was lucky. They very often used to sit in the studio with me when I was a young broadcaster. And at the end of a link, they'd say, "I don't know why you said that. Why don't you rather say it this way?" Those were my early mentors, the real professional broadcasters that they were.

Vanessa: And when you were being mentored, did you ever think that one day you would be in the Radio Hall of Fame and people would be saying, "The distinguished broadcaster Rodney Trudgeon"?

Rodney: No, never, ever, ever. It never crossed my mind at all. Because, also, in those days, I felt very young and insignificant because I was surrounded by all these great stars of radio. So, if some fortune teller had told me I was going to end up like this, I simply wouldn't have believed him or her.

Vanessa: I think I speak for everyone at Fine Music Radio. You've taught us everything.

Rodney: I think that's slightly exaggerated because everyone here at our little radio station has their own special skill.

There's Jordan, for example, who's recording this very interview and who works with me on *People of Note* and is a superb editor. So, I'm not sure how much I've mentored him.

But then there are people like Wesley, who is now our programme manager and who's been a great friend of mine ever since I joined. And he has so many natural talents that I think I just encourage them here and there.

Vanessa: I'm going to speak with authority here and say you're being very modest. You've taught us everything we know about classical music, and you've taught us an enormous amount about broadcasting.

And I suppose my next question is then totally irrelevant, because I was going to say, is your mentoring conscious? But if you're not giving yourself credit for being our mentor ...

Rodney: No, I'm not. I don't think of myself as being a mentor. Interestingly, I'm sure I've helped, advised people and suggested things, but I've never thought of myself as a mentor. But I suppose I am.

Vanessa: You're able to distil your vast knowledge and just share it in an unpretentious way, but in an exciting way. I think that's the X factor. I'm answering my own question.

Rodney: You are. Now I know what my X factor is. Thank you.

Vanessa: Was *Rodney Trudgeon's Concert Notes* an extension of your sharing of music?

Rodney: I would never have dreamt of anybody being interested in a book of my programme notes. But, as you saw, I had so many. I had a whole bank of them, a whole archive. And so, yes, I have had good feedback from the book. So that makes me feel that I have indeed continued sharing my knowledge and what I've worked on all over these years. And it's a kind of a legacy as well.

Vanessa: In another world, if we weren't working at a community radio station and money weren't an issue and we wanted to give you this beautiful present as a thank you for all you've done for classical music in this country, for all you've done for us at Fine Music Radio – and either you could go back in time and have a fabulous dinner party with a whole lot of composers, or we could buy you a ticket to Germany or Italy to watch some wonderful Wagnerian opera, which would it be?

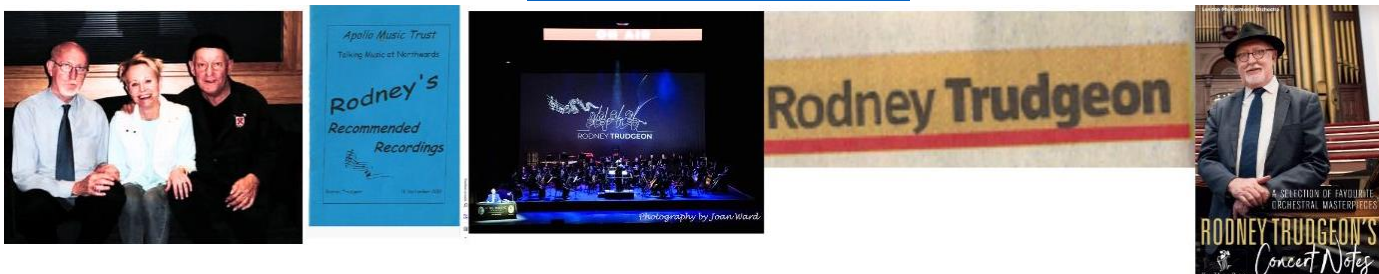
Rodney: It would certainly be the ticket to Germany to watch a Wagnerian opera. Germany is a great favourite country of mine. I have a very good friend who lives in Germany with his partner and their children in Berlin. And I have a very good contact at the Philharmonie in Berlin, where the Berlin Philharmonic plays. I've also been to Bayreuth, the great Wagner festivals. So it would be that. It wouldn't be going backwards in time. It would be going forward.

Vanessa: We are very grateful to you, all of us at Fine Music Radio, and wish you the very happiest fiftieth anniversary.

Rodney: Thank you. It's very kind. And thank you for inviting me to do this interview. And also, you know, at some stage I'm going to have to retire. But when I am forced to retire – because I won't retire of my own accord – I will miss my colleagues terribly, and miss the environment of Fine Music Radio, which is a very special, talented, creative and friendly environment. I'd miss that terribly if I were sitting at home on my own.

Vanessa: P.S. That's never going to happen.

To listen to the full interview visit <https://iono.fm/e/1710304>



ANNA'S BAROQUE BON BONS

All is Vanity, by Anna Stoddard

A recent visit to the Michaelis Collection in the Old Town House left me standing slightly perplexed in front of two Dutch 17th-century paintings showing oysters piled high on plates. It was only when I noticed a timepiece in each painting that I realised I was looking at vanitas paintings. This genre of painting was popular in the Netherlands in the 17th century and served as a reminder of the fleeting nature of life and earthly pleasures, taking its name from a passage from Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Oysters feature in vanitas paintings as one of the symbols of transience, along with other reminders such as fruit, flowers, snuffed-out candles and, less subtly, skulls.

Musical instruments are often used in vanitas paintings because sound itself is transient. A note hangs in the air and then is gone. Violins, lutes, violas da gamba and musical scores are frequent centrepieces to this type of art. The depictions of the flute and recorder add another layer of symbolism. They depend on breath to produce sound; the moment that breath stops, the note dies. Abandoned on a table, these woodwind instruments become a stark reminder of mortality.

The use of the flute and recorder in Baroque art is the subject of my lecture, "The Painted Flute", which is part of the Baroque Woodwind Study Day opening this year's Cape Town Baroque Festival. I will be talking about the prevalence of flutes in scenes moving from the pastoral to aristocratic portraiture and vanitas, as well as exploring "Girl with a Flute" – the famous painting that caused a stir recently when it was found not to be by Vermeer.

The theme of this year's Baroque Festival, on from **19 to 27 September**, is Instrumental Explorations. The programme includes motets and madrigals reimaged for the instrumental ensemble There Be Dragons, as well as consort music exploring the intimate combination of voice and viola da gamba.

The centrepiece is a performance of early symphonies played by the Cape Town Baroque Orchestra on period-appropriate instruments. The festival concludes with *Meditatio Sonorum*, a contemplative journey from the Middle Ages to the Baroque, performed on nyckelharpa, viola da gamba and Baroque violin.

On *Anna's Festival Baroque Bon Bons* in September, each programme offers some background to the music that will feature in the festival. More details about this highlight in Cape Town's Baroque music scene can be found at <https://ctbaroque.co.za/festival/>

Anna's Baroque Bon Bons is on **Tuesdays at 7.15 am** and available as a podcast at www.fmr.co.za/podcasts/annas-baroque-bon-bons



Jan Davidsz. de Heem (c. 1652), *Vanitas still life with books, fruit and a flute*. Oil on canvas, 88 × 116 cm. Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels.

EVENTS

cpo
2026 SPRING SYMPHONIES AT CITY HALL

27 AUG VISIONS IN SOUND
DANIEL RAISKIN CONDUCTOR
LEO GEVISSER PIANO
R. Strauss *Don Juan*, Op. 20
Ravel Piano Concerto in G Major
Murphy *Dark Nights, Bright Stars, Vast Universe*
Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition* (orch. Ravel)

03 SEP RESONANCE AND REFLECTIONS
CPYWE Curtainraiser
DANIEL RAISKIN CONDUCTOR
JORDAN BROOKS VIOLIN
Pärt *Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten*
Britten *Violin Concerto*, Op. 15
Schumann *Symphony No. 3 in E-flat Major*, Op. 97, "Rhenish"

10 SEP RACHMANINOFF'S THIRD
DANIEL RAISKIN CONDUCTOR
LISE DE LA SALLE PIANO
Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 3 in D Minor, Op. 30
Shostakovich *Symphony No. 15 in A Major*, Op. 141

17 SEP BURNISHED BRAHMS
BERNHARD GUELLER CONDUCTOR
ANNA GENIUSHENE PIANO
Brahms *Hungarian Dances No. 1 in G Minor and No. 6 in D Major* (with the Cape Town Philharmonic Youth Orchestra)
Brahms *Symphony No. 3 in F Major*, Op. 90
Brahms *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major*, Op. 83

24 SEP A WAGNER SPECTACULAR
JEREMY SILVER CONDUCTOR
VALERIJA ILJIN SOPRANO **OWEN METSILENG** TENOR
Overture to *Der fliegende Holländer*
Entry of the Gods into Valhalla from *Das Rheingold*
Scene 3 from Act I of *Die Walküre*
Ride of the Valkyries from Act III of *Die Walküre*
Siegfried's Death and Funeral March from *Götterdämmerung*
Prelude and Liebestod from *Tristan und Isolde*

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Tickets from R210 to R495. Existing subscribers may renew from 18 June through Artscape Dial-A-Seat on 021 421 7695. New subscriptions, including a 10% discount, and single-concert tickets will be available through Artscape Dial-A-Seat and single concert tickets from Webtickets, all from 2 July. Dress rehearsals at 11am on the day of the concert with tickets at Quicket.

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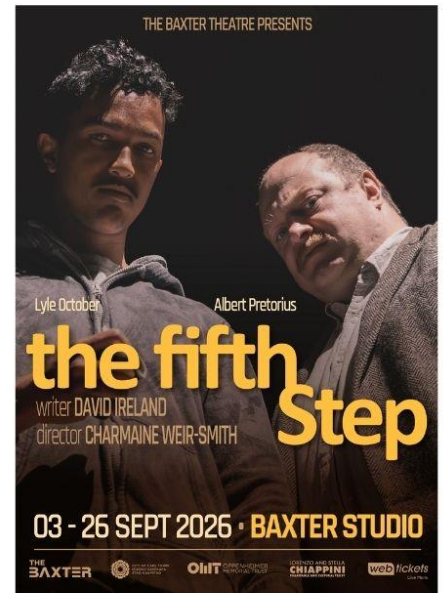
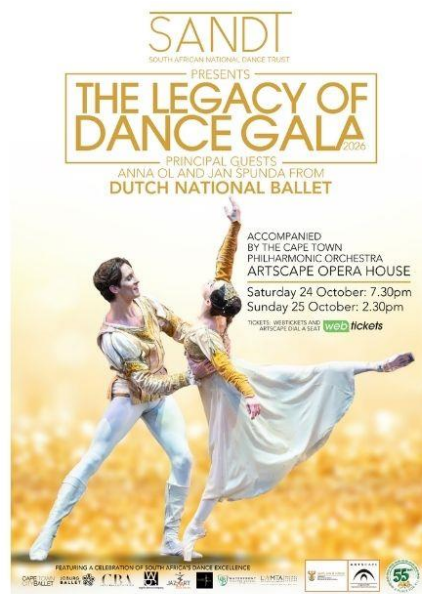
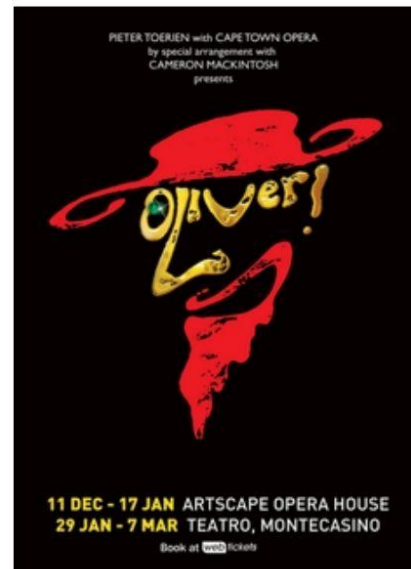
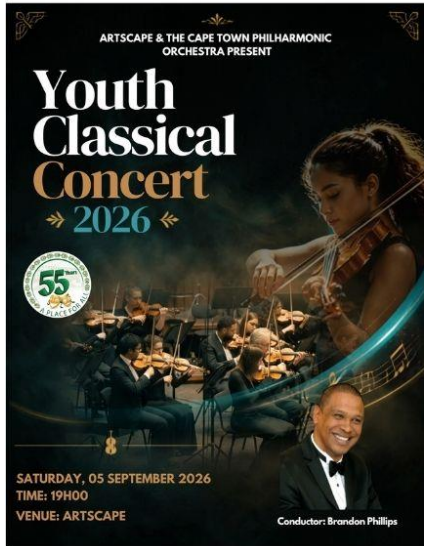
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ROCKY HORROR Show

RETURN SEASON
28 AUG - 18 OCT
THEATRE ON THE BAY

RETURN SEASON
23 OCT - 20 DEC
Princess Theatre's MONTECASINO THEATRE and Studio



COMBRINK'S CORNER: A LOT CAN CHANGE IN FIFTY YEARS

by Albert Combrink – pianist, agent and concert promoter

I am often asked about the future of music. Parents of my students, young graduates, or veterans already decades in the pit – all share similar concerns. We face many challenges: the avalanche of AI slop polluting our creative beaches, the vast shift in media consumption that occurred post-Covid, the apathy of governments worldwide as they try to dress up indifference as austerity, and the very real economic truth that global buying power is under intense downward pressure from an economy that loudly plays a soundtrack which it is as unwilling to acknowledge as it is to pay for.

To get to where you're going, you first have to know where you are ... The current Tygerberg Eisteddfod, now running in its 79th year, had more participants than ever before. Just the choir section had over 120. Did you know there were that many choirs in Cape Town? And good ones, too. So we take the wins where we can. At an adjudication session, one of the parents came to me with a list of queries about whether their child should pursue music at all, let alone professionally, and I suddenly realised that it is 40 years since my father went to my music teacher with the exact same list of concerns. We were told that video and MTV were going to end us all. Television was already killing "all" radio, and live performance would be dead by century's end. Gosh, you should have heard the conversation the day I graduated with my MMus – everyone was talking about this new thing that was going to end our entire industry, consigning live music to a mere late-20th-century historical footnote: The I.n.t.e.r.n.e.t. You would plug your landline phone into it and it would suck up life as you know it, and in exchange, would spit out everything you ever needed. Or something like that.

It is thus with great curiosity and joy that we celebrate South Africa's "Mister Classical Radio", Rodney Trudgeon, as he celebrates his fiftieth year in radio this month, with various events, talks and broadcasts. The CPO is still going strong – despite persistent predictions of the death of orchestral music which permeated my entire student life and early career. The Friends of Orchestral Music (FOM) held a soirée sponsored by Bowmans, both to honour Rodney and to feature the supporting role of FOM, but primarily to celebrate these connections, with a performance by the Mizar Trio. CPO flute and piccolo player Louisa Theart has an interest in contemporary music, unusual instrument combinations and collaborations. She was inspired by finding a score for this unusual combination (flute, cello & percussion) and then proceeded to commission around 20 brand-new compositions for the group, from composers around the globe. They generate their own events and concerts and play that game all artists play, twirling around somewhere between secured income and artistic joy. And in the process, almost incidentally, they have created a catalogue of brand-new musical works by the next generation of composers.

The event threw into relief where we find ourselves today, which is pretty much where music has always been situated: that anxious but exhilarating creative space where art and audience meet and mingle; where we adapt to technology and new delivery mechanisms, chase "bums on seats" and "eyeballs, ears and wallets", so that we can keep playing this juggling game of us needing the dough to keep us kneading the dough. FMR still needs financial support and is an official beneficiary of FOM. Financial and practical support comes in all forms: musicians need new music, so they commission it. Audiences buy tickets. Advertisers buy



FOM Soirée

L to R: Dylan Tabisher, John Woodland, Rosamund Roth, Rodney Trudgeon and Louise Theart

airtime with a side-order of new customers. Anything from new headphones and a microphone for a presenter like Rodney, or some more soundproofing to keep the hustle and bustle of the Artscape foyer out of earshot of the listener at home; all require both emotional and financial support.

Yet again, I am struck by the interconnectedness of this ecosystem, our mus(e)co system. We support each other, we employ each other, we perform together – held together by the audience – the listeners ... like you.

WORDSMITHS: NIC'S DOODLE OF THE MONTH

Wordsmiths is an insert on *Nic's Classic Drive* weekdays just after **5.15 pm**. Nic Ciro chooses weird and wonderfully obscure words and Hadley Tituss has to guess their meaning. Nic's doodles are created to give Hadley clues.

synapsids – reptilian-like ancestors of mammals

superstructure – a structure or building constructed on top of a foundation

superfruits – fruits rich in vitamins, minerals, fibre and antioxidants

THE FINE MUSIC RADIO 2026 MUSIC AWARDS

The awards celebrate South Africa's outstanding young musical talent across four categories – Classical Instrumental, Classical Vocal, Jazz and African Music. The competition took place in August with a total of R120 000 in prize money. Congratulations to all the finalists and thanks to the Rolf-Stephan Nussbaum Foundation. See images on the final page.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNERS

Classical Vocal:

Chloë Loggenberg: soprano

Classical Instrumental:

Kyrah Adams: marimba

African Vocal / Instrumental:

Laphakade Myataza: uhadi, umrhubhe

Jazz Vocal / Instrumental:

Nomvuselelo Phoswa: vocals



PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION, BY SAAN MAHOMED

JOHN COLTRANE – BLUE TRAIN AND BALLADS

“FIRE AND REFLECTION”

For Coltrane’s birthday month, I couldn’t think of a better pairing than *Blue Train* and *Ballads*. They feel like two sides of the same coin – one full of fire and drive, the other steeped in calm and reflection. Together, they’ve become part of my morning ritual, setting the tone for how I move through the day. *Blue Train* gives me that jolt of energy I need to get going, while *Ballads* slows me down just enough to remind me to breathe. It’s like Coltrane himself is guiding me – first urging me to rise with boldness, then teaching me to carry patience and grace.

Blue Train, recorded in 1957 for Blue Note, is Coltrane stepping into the spotlight as a leader. The horns glow, the rhythm section swings with urgency, and every solo feels like a statement of intent. There’s ambition in every note, the sound of a young artist carving out his place in jazz history. What makes *Blue Train* so special to me is the balance between structure and freedom. Coltrane assembled a dream team – Lee Morgan on trumpet, Curtis Fuller on trombone, Kenny Drew on piano, Paul Chambers on bass, and Philly Joe Jones on drums. Each player brings their own fire, but they never overshadow Coltrane. Instead, they orbit around him, pushing and pulling, creating this dynamic conversation. What’s fascinating is that *Blue Train* was Coltrane’s only album as a leader for Blue Note, and you can feel how much he wanted to make it count. There’s a sense that he knew exactly what he wanted to say at that moment in his career. It’s not yet the cosmic, boundary-breaking Coltrane of *A Love Supreme* or *Ascension*, but you can hear the seeds being planted. He’s stretching, he’s testing, he’s laying the groundwork for the spiritual and avant-garde explorations that would come later.

Fast forward five years, and *Ballads* shows Coltrane in a completely different light. Recorded in 1962 for Impulse! Records, it strips away complexity and leans into melody. The quartet plays with restraint, giving space for every phrase to breathe. McCoy Tyner’s piano cushions him, Jimmy Garrison’s bass anchors the mood, and Elvin Jones plays with brushes, soft and subtle. It’s the quartet at their most personal, almost cosy – like they’ve set up in your living room instead of a studio. The songs feel intimate, almost whispered, as if Coltrane is speaking directly to you. It’s not about speed or virtuosity – it’s about honesty and connection. After the rush of *Blue Train*, it helps me ease into a calmer rhythm, reminding me that beauty often lies in stillness.

Coltrane’s *Blue Train* and *Ballads* show both sides of his genius. He could burn with intensity and still stay clear, or play with tenderness and never lose depth. That range is what makes him timeless. Together, the two albums feel like a conversation – one about ambition, the other about pause. They mirror everyday life, reminding me that growth isn’t just about charging ahead, but also about knowing when to slow down.

On a personal level, this pairing is more than music – it’s a ritual. Coltrane’s work doesn’t just belong to history; it lives in us, shaping the way we listen and move through our days.

Peace and blessings till next time.



PEOPLE OF NOTE

Discover previous *People of Note* guests and listen to their full conversations at www.fmr.co.za/podcasts/people-of-note/

People of Note is brought to you by Pieter Toerien Productions.

Joining Rodney Trudgeon and our audio engineer, Jordan Jones, in the studio are (clockwise from top left):

Aviva Pelham – opera singer, mentor and director

Natasha Sutherland – actor and writer

Jeffrey Armstrong – violinist

Leo Gevisser – pianist



HOOKED ON BOOKS

Thanks to Exclusive Books for sponsoring Fine Music Radio's *Book Choice*. It's broadcast once a month on a Monday at noon. It's also available as a podcast, as is *Book Choice: Shorts*, with individual interviews and reviews. Visit www.fmr.co.za/podcasts/book-choice



THE ONLY CURE: FREUD AND THE NEUROSCIENCE OF MENTAL HEALING, BY MARK SOLMS

Sigmund Freud has been given a bad rap. Think of other great minds – Darwin and Newton – and there isn't a huge pushback. Clearly, their ideas have also evolved, but nobody is sending them hate mail. So why this antagonism towards Freud?

Mark Solms – leading neuropsychologist and psychoanalyst – is the perfect person to demystify Freud and put forward the case for him.

Solms has perhaps spent more time with Freud than anyone else has. He edited and translated the 24-volume *Revised Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of*

Sigmund Freud, published in 2024. He is also currently working on *Freud's Complete Neuroscientific Works*.

And there's more. Solms has a direct lineage from Freud. As part of his training, he was under analysis with Clifford Yorke, who had worked with Anna Freud, Sigmund's daughter.

It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that Mark Solms comfortably takes his place with these brilliant thinkers and is the rightful Freudian heir. His latest book is *The Only Cure: Freud And the Neuroscience of Mental Healing*. Solms writes, "pretty much all forms of therapy are derived from the work of Sigmund Freud" – "the father of therapy-speak". Each chapter begins with a transcript of a case study, a clear way to connect the theory with practice.

His writing is accessible, even humorous – and surely, it's because Solms is comfortable and confident about his place in the psychoanalytic world that he doesn't have to be pompous and pretentious. It's also why he is able to make such a bold statement: that psychotherapy is the only cure.

The subtitle is telling: *Freud and the Neuroscience of Mental Healing*. Solms argues that subjective data can be approached scientifically, and he combines psychoanalysis, neuroscience, clinical case studies and empirical research to make his case. He says that while other forms of therapy may have short-term effects, talking therapy has long-term effects. In fact, once psychoanalysis ends, people can continue to improve. (There is a caveat: Solms does say that, for conditions like schizophrenia, talking isn't the cure; medication is clearly necessary.)

Psychotherapy heals because it helps one to understand the cause. The crux of analysis is to discover why by uncovering that which is unconscious and making it conscious.

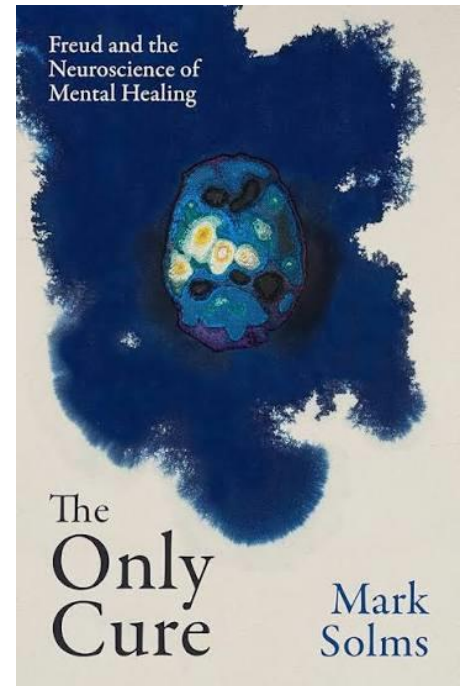
Psychoanalysis does this through dreams. Freud called dream interpretation the "royal road to the unconscious". Only once we are aware of what's really happening within ourselves can we be cured.

The author has no issue pointing out where Freud got it wrong. For example, not all drives are sexual. Instead, he argues that Freud, like all great scientists, put forward discoveries and ideas that are meant to be deconstructed.

Freud, much like Shakespeare, is part of our everyday discourse, and often we quote Freud without even being aware we are doing so. So it makes sense to understand him.

My daughter and her friends are psychology students, and often I've heard them say, "Why are we spending so much time studying Freud?" The answer is in this book.

If you want to understand Freud and the neuroscience of mental health then *The Only Cure* by Mark Solms is a wonderful gateway through which to journey.



By *Book Choice* reviewer Vanessa Levenstein

IN MEMORIAM

REMEMBERING SHEILA CHISHOLM: 1935-2026

Sheila Chisholm, daughter of composer Erik Chisholm and his wife, Diana, was born in Glasgow and came to South Africa with her family in 1946, when her father was appointed Principal and Dean of the College of Music at the University of Cape Town.

After attending Rustenburg Girls' High School, she studied ballet at the UCT Ballet School under Dulcie Howes and became a soloist with the UCT Ballet Company. A back injury ended her ballet career, after which she established and ran dance studios in Rondebosch, Tulbagh and Malmesbury while also studying drama.

In 1976, she was appointed head of the ballet department of the then Department of Coloured Affairs (later the House of Representatives), overseeing 140 ballet schools in South Africa and Namibia. She later worked as Principal Advisor of Ballet until taking early retirement.

She began writing dance reviews for the *Cape Times* in 1994 and joined Fine Music Radio as a presenter in 1997 until her retirement in 2022.

Sheila also researched the history of the Maynardville Open Air Theatre. Her research formed the basis of *Dances in the Park: The pre-history of the Maynardville Open Air Theatre*, co-authored with Temple Hauptfleisch and published in *Shakespeare in Southern Africa* in 2022.

Sheila is survived by her three daughters, seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. In her final article for *Opus*, published in September 2022 following her retirement, Sheila reflected on her 25 years at Fine Music Radio and signed off: "So ... until we meet again this is Sheila Chisholm wishing you well and goodbye."



A Tribute from Mark Jennings, former FMR station manager

I had met and chatted with Sheila, the theatre critic, at various community theatres many times before we became colleagues and friends at FMR. And, in fact, on the evening I heard from the FMR Board in late 2014 that they had decided to appoint me as the new Station Manager on Victoria Cawood's retirement, I was working as a volunteer in the bar at the Masque Theatre.

Sheila was one of the first people I gave the news to, as I handed her a chardonnay in the show interval. She was very kind and supportive, but I also got the impression there was a bit of, "Hmm, let's wait and see what this new kid is going to get up to at FMR!" She was, after all, a theatre critic with the most enquiring of minds!

I so looked forward to Tuesday mornings at FMR when Sheila came in to present *Classical Choice*. Each week she arrived very early to beat the morning traffic – and would sit in the green room putting the finishing touches to her broadcast script and playlist for the day. She always brought a banana loaf with her, which we all enjoyed – and we always had uplifting and positive chats.

Sheila was one of the original group of FMR volunteers at the inception of the station in 1996. The sound of her voice on air was a breath of fresh air. Even well into her 80s, she was able to enthuse life and vitality into her on-air delivery.

She was an enthusiastic supporter of FMR's community outreach projects and never missed a beach clean-up – even when the Cape Doctor was howling and blowing beach sand like sandpaper against the legs of the volunteers. She would be first on the beach and last off, her sun hat secured by a scarf from the top, tied under her chin – with just a smile and sunglasses poking through! She was made of tough Scottish stock!

Sheila, we miss you! You dedicated your long life to the service of others. Your support of FMR was legendary. I feel so proud and privileged to have shared some of that part of your journey, and above all to be your friend. The world seems much emptier without you in it. Go well, Sheila, with love and gratitude.

Editor's note:

On behalf of everyone at FMR, our condolences to Sheila's family, friends and colleagues. Sheila would always say "cheery-bye": this is a sad goodbye.



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**FINE MUSIC RADIO 2026 MUSIC AWARDS
CLASSICAL VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL SECTION**
With thanks to Joan Ward Photography



Top left: Classical Vocal

Erin Beck, Chloë Loggenberg and Nomgqibelo Sukwana

Top right: Classical Instrumental

Trygve Nissen, Kyrach Adams and Madison le Roux

Middle:

Winners Chloë Loggenberg and Kyrach Adams

Bottom:

Left: Station manager Vasili Vass, performers and the judges: Clara Hugo, Jan Hugo, Johanna Roos

**FINE MUSIC RADIO 2026 MUSIC AWARDS
AFRICAN AND JAZZ MUSIC SECTION**
With thanks to Joan Ward Photography



Top Left: African Music

Likho Yonto, Laphakade Myataza and Sinovuyo Balintulo

Top Right: Jazz

Adam Powell, Sarah Pengilly and Nomvuselelo Phoswa

Middle:

Winners Laphakade Myataza and Nomvuselelo Phoswa

Bottom:

Vasili Vass (station manager), the winners and host Richard Green