IN CONCERT

WELCOME SIR ANDREW DAVIS

APRIL/MAY 2013

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I have been eagerly anticipating this moment for quite some time. The minute I stepped on to the podium in front of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in 2009, I felt at home. Even in our earliest rehearsals, I felt an instant connection with the musicians that can only be described as chemistry. I am so pleased to be back in this beautiful hall, making music with this amazing Orchestra and Chorus for my first concerts as Chief Conductor.

My relationship with Bryn Terfel dates back some 20 years or more, and I’m delighted that he is making the trip to Australia especially for these concerts. Ji Won Kim, our soloist in the Thus Spake Zarathustra program, is well known to our audiences, and I was thrilled that a member of the MSO family was able to step in when our scheduled soloist was obliged to cancel his Australian tour due to injury.

Over the coming months and years you will, I hope, be part of a great musical journey, exploring landmarks of the orchestral literature by such composers as Berlioz, Elgar, Richard Strauss and Mahler in Melbourne and Geelong. We begin our cycle of the complete Mahler symphonies next year, delving into the mind and spirit of one of the most original and inventive of all composers.

Following these two weeks of concerts I shall return in September for programs that include three performances of Verdi’s Requiem. I am delighted that this moving, exciting work is part of my first season here in this Verdi Anniversary year, and our outstanding cast of soloists will include the superb young American soprano Amber Wagner and one of the world’s great young tenors, René Barbera. The MSO Chorus will be joined by the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs. The term ‘Major Event’ is bandied about fairly freely these days, but I believe each of these performances will be an outstanding occasion, and a fitting celebration of Verdi’s genius.

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this concert, and I look forward to seeing you all again very soon.

Sir Andrew Davis
Chief Conductor

VERDI’S REQUIEM

Experience this dramatic panorama of human hopes and fears, featuring an outstanding international cast.

Verdi Messa da Requiem
Sir Andrew Davis conductor
Amber Wagner soprano
Jamie Barton mezzo-soprano
René Barbera tenor
Brindley Sherratt bass
Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus
Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

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Benjamin Northey
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With a reputation for excellence, versatility and innovation, the internationally acclaimed Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is Australia's oldest orchestra, established in 1906.

This fine Orchestra is renowned for its performances of the great symphonic masterworks with leading international and Australian artists including Maxim Vengerov, John Williams, Osmo Vänskä, Charles Dutoit, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Donald Runnicles, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Yvonne Kenny, Edo de Waart, Lang Lang, Nigel Kennedy, Jeffrey Tate, Midori, Christine Brewer, Richard Tognetti, Emma Matthews and Teddy Tahu Rhodes. It has also enjoyed hugely successful performances with such artists as Sir Elton John, John Farnham, Harry Connick, Jr., Ben Folds, KISS, Burt Bacharach, The Whitlams, Human Nature, Sting and Tim Minchin.

The MSO performs extensively with its own choir, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus, directed by chorus master Jonathan Grieves-Smith. Recent performances together include Walton's Belshazzar's Feast under Bramwell Tovey, Mahler's Symphony No.3 under Markus Stenz, music of Percy Grainger under Sir Andrew Davis and, as part of the 2011 Beethoven Festival, Beethoven's Symphony No.9 under Douglas Boyd.

Key musical figures in the Orchestra's history include Hiroyuki Iwaki – who was Chief Conductor and then Conductor Laureate, between 1974 and his death in 2006 – and Markus Stenz, who was Chief Conductor and Artistic Director from 1998 until 2004. Oleg Caetani was the MSO’s Chief Conductor and Artistic Director from 2005 to 2009. In June 2012 the MSO announced the appointment of Sir Andrew Davis as Chief Conductor, for the 2013 season.

The MSO, the first Australian symphony orchestra to tour abroad, has received widespread international recognition in tours to the USA, Canada, Japan, Korea, Europe, China and St Petersburg, Russia. In addition, the Orchestra tours annually throughout regional Victoria including a concert season in Geelong.

Each year the Orchestra performs to more than 200,000 people, at events ranging from the Sidney Myer Free Concerts in the Sidney Myer Music Bowl to the series of Classic Kids concerts for young children. The MSO reaches an even larger audience through its regular concert broadcasts on ABC Classic FM, and CD recordings on Chandos and ABC Classics. The Orchestra’s considerable ceremonial role in Victoria has included participation in the opening ceremony of the 2006 Commonwealth Games, in the 2009 Bushfire memorial service Together for Victoria, the Prime Minister’s Olympic Dinner and the 2010 and 2011 AFL Grand Final.

The MSO’s extensive education and community outreach activities include the Meet the Orchestra, Meet the Music and Up Close and Musical programs, designed specifically for schools. In 2011 the MSO launched an educational iPhone and iPad App designed to teach children about the inner workings of an orchestra.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is funded principally by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and is generously supported by the Victorian Government through Arts Victoria, Department of Premier and Cabinet. The MSO is also funded by the City of Melbourne, its Principal Partner, Emirates, and individual and corporate sponsors and donors.
SIR ANDREW DAVIS

Sir Andrew Davis is Chief Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. He first conducted the Orchestra in 2009, and makes his first appearances as Chief Conductor with these concerts.

He was appointed Music Director and Principal Conductor of Lyric Opera of Chicago in 2000, and recently extended his contract until the 2020/2021 season. He is also Conductor Laureate of both the Toronto Symphony and BBC Symphony orchestras, and was previously Music Director of Glyndebourne Festival Opera (1988-2000).

Born in 1944 in Hertfordshire, England, he studied at King’s College, Cambridge, where he was an organ scholar before taking up the baton. He subsequently studied conducting with Franco Ferrara in Rome. He made his debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra in 1970 and served as Associate Conductor with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 1973 to 1978. He has since conducted all of the world’s major orchestras, as well as at opera houses and festivals such as the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala and Bayreuth. His 11-year tenure as Chief Conductor of the BBC Symphony, which he led at the Proms and on tour to Europe, the United States and Asia, was the longest since that of the Orchestra’s founder, Sir Adrian Boult. His diverse repertoire ranges from Baroque to contemporary music, and his vast conducting credits span the symphonic, operatic and choral worlds. In addition to the core symphonic and operatic works, he is a great proponent of 20th Century works, including those by Janácek, Messiaen, Boulez, Elgar, Tippett and Britten.

In the 2011-2012 season Sir Andrew conducted Boris Godunov, Ariadne auf Naxos and The Magic Flute at Lyric Opera of Chicago, Arabella at the Santa Fe Opera, and performances of Delius’ A Mass of Life for the opening of the Edinburgh International Festival. 2011-2012 also saw Maestro Davis on the podium with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, the BBC Philharmonic, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia Orchestra in London and the symphony orchestras of Rotterdam, Bergen and Bamberg, as well as the Metropolitan Opera (Don Giovanni) and the Canadian Opera Company (A Florentine Tragedy/Gianni Schicchi).

In the 2012-2013 Lyric Opera season he conducts Strauss’ Elektra, Verdi’s Simon Boccanegra, Massenet’s Werther, and Wagner’s The Mastersingers of Nuremberg. In addition to his commitments with the MSO, his engagements include concerts with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Liceu in Barcelona (Rusalka), Glyndebourne Festival Opera (Billy Budd), Bergen Philharmonic, Orchestra of Bastille Opera, and the BBC, Detroit, Cincinnati and St Louis Symphony Orchestras.

He has recorded the Elgar Violin Concerto with both Tasmin Little and James Ehnes, the latter (with the Philharmonia Orchestra) a recipient of the 2008 Gramophone Award for Best Concerto. Recent additions to his extensive discography include Delius’ Piano Concerto with Howard Shelley and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra; the Elgar Cello Concerto with Paul Watkins and the BBC Philharmonic; Elgar’s The Starlight Express with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, narrated by Simon Callow; and Berlioz overtures with the Bergen Philharmonic.

He has recorded two discs with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, just released on Chandos, with which he has an exclusive recording contract: an album of music by Eugene Goossens, and the CD Percy Grainger: Works for Large Chorus and Orchestra, with the MSO Chorus and Sydney Chamber Choir.

He was made a Commander of the British Empire in 1992, and a Knight Bachelor in 1999. He is a recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society/Charles Heidsieck Music Award, and in June 2012 received an honorary doctorate from Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois.

He and his wife, soprano Gianna Rolandi, live in Chicago where she is the director of the Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Opera Center at Lyric Opera of Chicago.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra programs can be read on-line or downloaded up to a week before each concert, from mso.com.au.

If you do not need this printed program after your concert, we encourage you to return it to a member of staff.

This program has been printed on recycled paper.
Friday 26 and Saturday 27 April at 8pm
Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall

Wagner
Das Rheingold: Final Scene
Die Walküre: The Ride of the Valkyries
Wotan’s Farewell and Magic Fire Music
Bryn Terfel bass-baritone
INTERVAL 20 MINUTES
Beethoven Symphony No.9

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
Sir Andrew Davis conductor
Bryn Terfel bass-baritone
Tracy Cantin soprano
Sally-Anne Russell mezzo-soprano
John Irvin tenor
Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus
Jonathan Grieves-Smith chorus master

This concert has a duration of approximately two hours and 15 minutes, including one interval of 20 minutes.

Saturday evening’s performance will be broadcast and streamed live around Australia on ABC Classic FM.

Please turn off your mobile phone and all other electronic devices before the performance commences.
BRYN TERFEL bass-baritone

Welsh bass-baritone Bryn Terfel has performed in all the great opera houses of the world, and is especially renowned for his portrayals of Figaro, Falstaff and Wotan. He made his operatic debut in 1990 as Guglielmo in *Così fan tutte* for Welsh National Opera, and his international career began in 1991 when he sang the Speaker in *The Magic Flute* at La Monnaie. That same year he made his US debut as Figaro at Santa Fe Opera. His other roles have included the Dutchman (*The Flying Dutchman*), Méphistophélès (*Faust*), Jochanaan (*Salome*), Scarpia (*Tosca*), Nick Shadow (*The Rake’s Progress*), Wolfram (*Tannhäuser*), Balstrode (*Peter Grimes*), Four Villains (*The Tales of Hoffmann*), Dulcamara (*The Elixir of Love*), and the title roles in *Don Giovanni*, *Gianni Schicchi* and *Sweeney Todd*.

He is also a versatile concert performer whose appearances include the opening ceremony of the Wales Millennium Centre, Last Night of the Proms, the UK Royal Variety Performance, and a gala concert with Andrea Bocelli in Central Park. He has given recitals in the world’s major cities and for nine years hosted his own festival in Faenol, North Wales.

He is a Grammy, Classical BRIT and Gramophone Award winner with a discography encompassing the operas of Mozart, Wagner and Strauss, and more than ten solo discs featuring lieder, American musical theatre, Welsh songs and sacred repertoire.

His engagements last season included the role of Wotan in *Ring* cycles for the Metropolitan Opera and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; the Dutchman in Zurich, and Scarpia for Bavarian State Opera; and Brynfest, a four-day festival at the Southbank Centre. This year he makes his debut at the Abu Dhabi Festival.

Bryn Terfel was made a CBE in 2003 and in 2006 he received the Queen’s Medal for Music and the final Shakespeare Prize awarded by the Alfred Toepfer Foundation.

EMIRATES CELEBRATES TEN YEARS AS PRINCIPAL PARTNER OF THE MSO

The ten-year partnership showcases Emirates’ support for music lovers in Melbourne, across Australia, and around the globe, highlighting the airline’s shared commitment with the MSO to deliver first-class experiences.

Whilst fostering the growth of the arts in one of the world’s most diverse and liveable cities, Emirates has steadily grown its services between Melbourne and Dubai, and onwards to more than 130 destinations globally.

Emirates is equally proud to have brought its state-of-the-art Emirates Airbus A380 to Melbourne, now offering the ultimate in travelling comfort to passengers travelling daily to Dubai and Auckland.

Emirates is proud to support organisations like the MSO, which make Melbourne such a wonderful place to live, playing host to talented musicians and bringing the best in classical music to people in all parts of Victoria.

Emirates is proud to enter its tenth year as Principal Partner of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Emirates’ long-standing partnership with the MSO is a shining example of how commercial and artistic partners can work together to achieve rewarding results that benefit both the partners and their communities.
TRACY CANTIN soprano

Tracy Cantin is rapidly becoming one of Canada’s leading young artists. She holds Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Voice Performance from the Universities of Alberta and Western Ontario and is a recent graduate of the Schulich School of Music (McGill University) in Montreal. With Opera McGill she sang Mimi (La bohème), the Governess (The Turn of the Screw) and Donna Anna (Don Giovanni).

In the 2012-2013 season, she joined Lyric Opera of Chicago as an ensemble member at the Ryan Opera Center. She made her professional operatic debut with the company as Fifth Maid in David McVicar’s acclaimed production of Elektra conducted by Sir Andrew Davis, and recently sang Countess Ceprano in Rigoletto. Other engagements this season have included Fiordiligi (Così fan tutte) and the Marschallin (Der Rosenkavalier) in concert excerpts for the Grant Park Music Festival in Chicago.

Recent recitals in London and Montreal have featured Strauss’ Four Last Songs, Barber’s Despite and Still, Britten’s Les Illuminations and Debussy’s Proses lyriques.

Forthcoming performances in 2013/2014 include soprano soloist in Beethoven’s Symphony No.9 with the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra, and a Flower Maiden (Parsifal) and Berta (The Barber of Seville) for Lyric Opera of Chicago.

This is Tracy Cantin’s Australian debut.

SALLY-ANNE RUSSELL mezzo-soprano

In demand internationally on the operatic stage and concert platform, Sally-Anne is a principal guest with all the Australian opera companies, symphony orchestras, major festivals and choral societies. An ARIA Award winner, she has recorded on ABC Classics, Chandos and DECCA labels.

She has performed in 15 countries and has over 50 operatic roles and an array of awards to her credit.

Recent appearances include Carmen (Opera Queensland), Falstaff (West Australian Opera), La Sonnambula, Orpheus in the Underworld (State Opera of South Australia), Das Kaiser von Atlantis (Adelaide) and Das Rheingold (Auckland Philharmonia).

In addition to opera, he has performed many concert works, including Messiah, Puccini’s Messa di Gloria, Bach’s Magnificat, Mendelssohn’s Elijah and Mozart’s Vesperae solennes de confessore.

Future plans include performances of The Marriage of Figaro with the Los Angeles Philharmonic under Dudamel and, for Lyric Opera’s 2013-2014 season, Parsifal, The Barber of Seville, Otello and La traviata.

These performances mark his international debut.

JOHN IRVIN tenor

A native of Atlanta, John Irvin studied as a pianist before turning to opera in 2008. After completing his undergraduate studies at Georgia State University in 2010, he attended Boston University’s Opera Institute before becoming an apprentice with the Santa Fe Opera, where he was awarded the Agnes M. Canning Memorial Award for Singers.

Chosen as a Boston Lyric Opera Emerging Young Artist, he made his professional debut in 2011 as Malcolm in that company’s production of Macbeth.

He is currently a member of the Ryan Opera Center at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, and was seen in that company’s 2012-2013 season as Borsa (Rigoletto), Vogelgesang (The Mastersingers of Nuremberg) and Schmidt (Werther).

He also sang Ferrando in Act I of Così fan tutte for the Grant Park Music Festival in Chicago.

In addition to opera, he has performed many concert works, including Messiah, Puccini’s Messa di Gloria, Bach’s Magnificat, Mendelssohn’s Elijah and Mozart’s Vesperae solennes de confessore.

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These performances mark his international debut.
MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CHORUS

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus is renowned for its excellence in repertoire from the baroque to the present day. Known as the Melbourne Chorale until 2008, it has since then been integrated with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. It sings with the finest conductors, including Sir Andrew Davis, Mark Wigglesworth, Bernard Labadie, Stephen Layton, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Masaaki Suzuki and Manfred Honeck. Recent highlights include Britten’s *War Requiem*, Kancheli’s *Styx*, Haydn’s *The Creation*, Elgar’s *The Dream of Gerontius*, Westlake’s *Missa Solis* and Wagner’s *The Flying Dutchman*.

The Chorus is committed to developing and performing new repertoire. Recent commissions include Brett Dean’s *Katz und Spatz* (commissioned with the Swedish Radio Choir), Ross Edwards’ *Mountain Chant*, Paul Stanhope’s *Exile Lamentations* (with Sydney Chamber Choir and London’s Elyson Singers), and Gabriel Jackson’s *To the Field of Stars* (with the Netherlands Chamber Choir and Stockholm’s St Jacob’s Chamber Choir). The Chorus has also premiered works by MacMillan, Pärt, Henze, Schnittke, Bryars, Silvestrov, Maskats, Machuel, Vasks and more.

The Chorus has performed in Brazil, and in Kuala Lumpur with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, with The Australian Ballet, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, with Barbra Streisand, at the 2011 AFL Grand Final and at the Sydney Olympic Arts Festival. The Chorus records for ABC Classics and MSO Live, and continues its relationship with Chandos with the recent release of Grainger’s choral works with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Sir Andrew Davis.

JONATHAN GRIEVES-SMITH

English conductor and chorus master, Jonathan Grieves-Smith has established an international reputation for his compelling performances and artistic leadership. He is Chorus Master of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus and Artistic Director of Hallelujah Junction, Australia’s national professional chamber choir.

Jonathan has trained choirs for the world’s leading conductors including Sir Simon Rattle, Seiji Ozawa, Valery Gergiev, Pierre Boulez, James Levine and Sir Roger Norrington, and has premiered music by composers including Brett Dean, Paul Stanhope, Gabriel Jackson, Giya Kancheli, Richard Mills, Alfred Schnittke, Ross Edwards, Krzysztof Penderecki, Arvo Pärt and Peteris Vasks.

Jonathan was Chorus Master of the Huddersfield Choral Society, the Hallé Choir, and Music Director of Brighton Festival Chorus and as guest conductor has worked with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields Chorus, Sydney Chamber Choir and Stockholm’s St Jacob’s Chamber Choir. The Chorus has also premiered works by MacMillan, Pärt, Henze, Schnittke, Bryars, Silvestrov, Maskats, Machuel, Vasks and more.

Conducting highlights include tours of Brazil with the Chorus of Rome’s Academy of Santa Cecilia, with pianist Nelson Freire and the London Mozart Players, and with the Melbourne Chorale (now MSO Chorus). With the Hallé Orchestra and soloists Bryn Terfel and Tasmin Little he conducted Walton’s *Belshazzar’s Feast* and the Elgar Violin Concerto; and with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, he conducted Mendelssohn’s Symphony No.2 *Lobgesang* at the Brighton Festival.
In pairing Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony with excerpts from the first two music dramas of Wagner’s Ring cycle, this concert pays tribute to two towering geniuses of 19th century music. Wagner considered himself Beethoven’s heir, believing that Beethoven had increased the expressive capability of music as far as possible in symphonic music but then resorted to words in the last movement of his Ninth Symphony, the ode To Joy, in order to go beyond music’s limits. In many respects, this was the impetus behind Wagner’s own dedication to opera.

Wagner also considered opera the successor to Ancient Greek drama, in which members of that society had come together to bear witness to and draw sustenance from dramatised renderings of their most important myths. Wagner felt that opera, or music drama, drawn on German myth would enrich and galvanise his own German society. Therefore, Wagner was aiming for a Gesamtkunstwerk, a superlative new and powerful art-form created from a union of all the arts. His early operas – Rienzi, The Flying Dutchman, Tannhäuser, Lohengrin – retained elements of traditional grand opera. But in 1851 Wagner set out his new ideas in a theoretical text, Oper und Drama. Here, he outlined ways that the music should follow the words – modulations that would underline changes of mood, key relationships that would highlight correspondences in the text. He also conceived a system of ‘leitmotifs’, musical themes identified with characters, objects or events, whose transformation throughout an opera could track the evolution of the drama.

Since 1848, Wagner had been working on the idea of an opera based on the hero Siegfried and his murder at the hands of his in-laws as told in the ancient Germanic epic, the Nibelungenlied. As his work on this progressed, he found that he needed more backstory. What had been mooted as a single opera, Siegfried’s Death, required a prequel, The Young Siegfried, and then two further operas explaining why the need for a hero arose. In the end, Das Rheingold and Die Walküre, the first two operas of what would become the Ring cycle, explained how Wotan, king of the gods, needed to find a hero, one untainted by Wotan’s actions. This hero would free the gods of a curse Wotan had incurred in trying to extricate himself from a bad deal made with the giants Fasolt and Faltn in exchange for the building of the gods’ citadel, Valhalla. Das Rheingold and Die Walküre were premiered in Munich in 1869 and 1870 respectively and then, with the other two operas, as part of the complete Ring at Wagner’s specially-built theatre at Bayreuth in 1876.

The full story of the Ring tells how Alberich the dwarf, denied love...
by the Rhinemaidens, steals their gold and forges from it a ring that will give dominion over the world. Wotan, king of the gods, steals the gold to pay the giants, but incurs the curse of Alberich as the gold – and a ring made from that gold – are torn from Alberich's grasp. This creates a need for humans to free Wotan from the curse. But Siegmund falls in love with his sister Sieglinde, and the goddess Fricka, guardian of marriage, demands that Wotan let him die. The gods will not find their saviour until the next generation.

Tonight's excerpts describe an arc in Wotan's emotional development. In his first monologue, 'Abendlich strahlt der Sonne Auge', Wotan ignores the consequences of his deceitful behaviour as he contemplates Valhalla. Modulations underline changes of mood as Wotan moves from pure contemplation of the citadel's splendour to consideration of the care and worry which accompanied its completion, and resolve that it should shelter the gods from terror and dread. The gods enter Valhalla to a blaze of brass that is one of the most famous orchestral passages in the Ring cycle.

In the context of the opera, the glorious entrance is ironic: the gods are unaware of the end toward which they are heading. By the end of Die Walküre Wotan is seriously counting the cost of his actions. Wotan's Valkyrie daughter Brünnhilde has defied him and attempted to protect Siegmund in his duel with Hunding. As Brünnhilde's Valkyrie sisters bring fallen warriors to Valhalla as is their function ('Ride of the Valkyries'), Brünnhilde brings the woman Sieglinde (pregnant with the ultimate hero, Siegfried). For her punishment, Wotan determines that Brünnhilde will be stripped of immortality and put to sleep on a rock until woken by the first person who finds her. ‘Farewell’ he wails, as the Valkyrie leitmotif rears up as an outward expression of his emotion. The only concession he will make to her former status as a Valkyrie is to surround the rock with magic fire that only the greatest hero would dare penetrate.

Gordon Kalton Williams © 2013
**DAS RHEINGOLD: ‘ABENDLICH STRAHLT DER SONNE AUGE’**

**WOTAN**

Abendlich strahlt
der Sonne Auge;
in prächt’ger Glut
prangt glänzend die Burg.
In des Morgens Scheine
mutig erschimmernd,
lag sie herrenlos
hehr verlockend vor mir.
Von Morgen bis Abend
in Mühl und Angst
nicht wonnig ward sie gewonnen!

Von Morgen bis Abend
in Mühl und Angst
nicht wonnig ward sie gewonnen!

Er naht die Nacht:
vor ihrem Neid
biete sie Bergung nun.

So grüß ich die Burg,
sicher vor Bang und Graun
Folge mir, Frau:
In Walhall wohne mit mir!

**THE SUN’S ORB SHINES IN THE EVENING**

The sun’s orb shines
In the evening;
The castle sparkles
In a magnificent glow.

In the morning
Shimmering bravely,
It stood abandoned,
Seductively in front of me.

From morning till evening
With struggle and fear,
Not with pleasure was it won!

Night is near:
Against its evils
It will provide shelter now.

I thus greet this castle,
Protected from horror and dread
Follow me, wife:
Live with me in Valhalla!

English translation by Birgit Balean
© Symphony Services International 2013

**DIE WALKÜRE: ‘LEB’ WOHL, DU KÜHNES, HERRLICHES KIND!’**

**WOTAN**

(‘Blickt ihr ergrissen in’s Auge and hebt sie auf)

Leb’ wohl, du kühnes, herrliches Kind!
Du meines Herzens heiliger Stolz!
Leb’ wohl! Leb’ wohl! Leb’ wohl!

Muss ich dich meiden, und darf nicht minnig
mein Gruss dich mehr grüssen;
sollst du nun nicht mehr neben mir reiten,
noch Met beim Mahl mir reichen;

Muss ich verlieren dich, die ich liebe,
du lachende Lust meines Auges:
ein bräutliches Feuer soll dir nun brennen,
wie nie einer Braut es gebrannt!

Flammende Glut umgülhe den Fels;
mit zehrenden Schrecken scheuch’ es den Zagen;
der Feige fliehe Brünnhildes Fels!

Denn Einer nur freie die Braut,
der freier als ich, der Gott!

(‘Overcome and deeply moved, turns eagerly towards
Brünnhilde, raises her to her feet and gazes with emotion into her eyes.’)

Farewell, my bold, wonderful child!
You, my heart’s holiest pride!
Farewell! Farewell! Farewell!

If I must reject you and not lovingly
greet you once more with my greetings;
if you may no longer ride with me,

If I must lose you, whom I love,
you, laughing joy of my eyes:
a bridal fire shall burn around you
that never yet surrounded a bride.

Flaming gleams shall girdle the rock,
with terrible scorches scaring the timid.
The fearful will flee Brünnhilde’s rock!
Only one shall free the bride,
one freer than I, the god!
Der Augen leuchtendes Paar,
das oft ich lächelnd gekost,
when Kampfeslust ein Kuss dir lohn'te,
when kindisch lallend der Helden Lob
von holden Lippen dir floss:
Diese Augen strahlendes Paar,
das oft im Sturm mir geglänzt,
when Hoffnungssehnen das Herz mir senkte,
when Weltenwonne mein Wunsch verlangte
aus wild webendem Bangen:
Dieser Augen strahlendes Paar,
das oft im Sturm mir geglänzt,
when Hoffnungssehnen das Herz mir sengte,
when Weltenwonne mein Wunsch verlangte
aus wild webendem Bangen:
Zum letztenmal letz' es mich heut'
mit des Lebewohles letztem Kuss!
Dem glücklichern Manne
glänze sein Stern:
dem unseligen Ew'gen
muss es scheidend sich schliessen!
Denn so kehrt der Gott sich dir ab:
Thus does the God now leave you.
Thus does he kiss your godhood away!
Er küsst sie auf beide Augen, die ihr sogleich verschlos
senbleiben: sie sinkt sanft ermattend in seinen Armen
zurück. Er geleitet sie zart auf einen niedrigen Moos hügel
to liegen, über dem sich eine breitstämmige Tanne ausstreckt.
Noch einmal betrachtet er ihre Züge und schliesst ihr dann
den Helm fest zu; dann schreitet er mit feuerleichen Entschlusse
in die Mitte der Bühne and kehrt die Spitze seines Speeres gegen einen mächtigen Felsstein.
Loge, hör'! Lausche hierher!
Wie zuerst ich dich fand, als feurige Glut,
wie dann einst du mir schwandest
als schweifende Lohe;
wie ich dich band, bann' ich dich heut'!
Herauf, wabernde Lohe,
umlodre mir feurig den Fels!
Loge! Loge! Hieher!
(Bei der letzten Anrufung schlägt er mit der Spitze des Speeres dreimal auf den Stein, worauf diesem ein Feuerstrahl entfährt, der schnell zu einem Flammenmeer anschwillt, den Wotan mit einem Winke seiner Speerspitze den Umkreis des Felsens als Strömung zuweist.)
Wer meines Speeres Spitze fürchtet,
werde nie in die Flammen hineinfließen!
Translation © ABC

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra was the first of the former ABC orchestras to perform Wotan's Farewell from Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, on 1 August 1938 under conductor Edwin McArthur. Bryn Terfel sang Wotan's Farewell with the MSO conducted by Richard Hickox in February 1999. The MSO's most recent performance was on 5 December 2009 with conductor Tadaaki Otaka and John Wegner.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed 'Abendlich strahl't der Sonne Auge', from Das Rheingold on 2 November 1955 with conductor Walter Susskind and soloist Hans Høyer. This is the orchestra's first performance since then.
In 1793 Batholomäus Fischenich, of the University of Bonn, wrote to the wife of the great German poet Friedrich von Schiller, telling her of ‘a young man whose musical talents are universally praised and whom the Elector has sent to Haydn in Vienna. He proposes also to compose Schiller’s “Freude” verse by verse.’

The ‘young man’ in question was of course the 23-year-old Beethoven. His dream of setting Schiller’s An die Freude would not be fulfilled for another three decades, when it formed the basis for the finale of his Ninth Symphony, though he did use some of it in a cantata celebrating the Emperor Leopold in 1790.

When the Ninth Symphony was premiered in 1824 there had been nothing quite like it before. The first movement is almost a musical tabula rasa, a shimmering of undifferentiated sound which only gradually forms itself into motives and themes and which reaches an extraordinary climax in the major key. The scherzo which – fairly unusually – follows, has a demonic energy imparted by such arresting sounds as that of the timpani (the audience at the premiere applauded at such points), but also because of Beethoven’s way of alternating groups of bars into sets of four and three. The Adagio is a set of double variations reflecting perhaps one of Beethoven’s earlier ideas for the work, a ‘pious song…in the ancient modes’. But the finale begins with a symbol of extraordinary musical crisis, the so-called Schreckensfanfare (‘Horror Fanfare’) which leads to a brief reminiscence of the preceding movements. These are figuratively dismissed as the baritone soloist reminds us (in Beethoven’s own words) ‘O friends, no more these sounds! Instead let us sing out more pleasingly...’ The finale thus launched is formally a set of variations and a double fugue combining the Joy theme with that of the words ‘Be enfolded, all ye millions, in this kiss of the whole world’. It is one of the great achievements of the piece that despite the formal elaboration, the effect is often like popular music. The Ninth is a profoundly humane work in its ability to make the sublime and the comic its indissoluble components as in Schiller’s text.

Schiller was a powerful influence on Beethoven’s thinking. The poet’s conception of tragedy, which celebrates the capacity of reason to withstand suffering, is at the basis of such works as Fidelio and the
Fifth Symphony. At first glance, the Ninth seems the apogee of this utopian aspect of Beethoven's work, breaking the mould of the classical symphony, sweeping aside the pain of human existence and bursting into song to create its image of the ideal world of universal brotherhood under the eyes of a benevolent father above the stars. For that reason it has become an iconic work. When the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 Leonard Bernstein rushed to Berlin to conduct the Ninth. He substituted Freiheit (‘Freedom’) for Freude (‘Joy’) in the text, ‘sure that Beethoven would have given us his blessing’.

In fact there is some evidence that Schiller actually wrote ‘freedom’ in his original poem, but to avoid censorship changed it to ‘joy’ himself. By the time the Ninth Symphony was composed, the French Revolution was a distant event whose ideals had been corrupted by violence and despotism. And Beethoven himself was no democrat. In his ideal polity, justice and personal freedom were guaranteed by the enlightened authority of a noble ruler. The Ninth Symphony is not about freedom in a narrow political sense, but in the universal joy which ‘all beings drink…at Nature’s bosom’.

Schiller himself was in later life embarrassed by the naïve idealism of his youthful poem, but more surprising is the fact that, according to Carl Czerny, Beethoven himself wondered if he hadn’t made a ‘blunder’ in writing a choral finale for the symphony. During the planning of the Ninth he had sketched themes for an instrumental finale, some of which ended up in his String Quartet Op.132. Perhaps he suspected that his vision of the great and the sublime was unlikely to be realised.

Utopias are always ambiguous and this work has been used to sanctify some bizarre events. It is now the official anthem of the European Union, but graced Hitler’s birthday celebrations in 1938. In 1972 Sir Michael Tippett produced his Third Symphony, in which Beethoven’s music is distorted grotesquely, underlining that the dream of universal fraternity is further away than ever. Beethoven biographer, Maynard Solomon, however, regards it as ‘a fatal and destructive error’ to write off such works as the Ninth:

…if we lose our awareness of the transcendent realms of play, beauty and brotherhood…if we lose the dream of the Ninth Symphony, there remains no counterpoise against the engulfing terrors of civilisation, nothing to set against Auschwitz and Vietnam as a paradigm of humanity’s potentialities. Masterpieces of art are instilled with a surplus of constantly renewable energy – because they contain projections of human desires and goals which have not yet been achieved.

Abridged from a note by Gordon Kerry © 2005
O Freunde, nicht diese Töne! Sondern lasst uns angenehmere anstimmen, und freudenvollere.

Freude, schöner Götterfunken, Tochter aus Elysium, alle Menschen werden Brüder wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

Wem der grosse Wurf gelungen, der ein holdes Weib errungen, mische seinen Jubel ein! Ja, wer auch nur eine Seele sein nennt auf dem Erdenrund!


Froh, wie seine Sonnen fliegen durch des Himmels prächtgen Plan, lauft, Brüder, eure Bahn, freudig, wie ein Held zum Siegen!

Seid umschlungen, Millionen, diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt! Brüder, über’m Sternenzelt muss ein lieber Vater wohnen.

Ihr stürzt nieder, Millionen? Ahnest du den Schöpfer, Welt? Such’ ihn über’m Sternenzelt! Über Sternen muss er wohnen.

English translation © Anthony Cane 1995/2011

The first performance of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra took place on 13 November 1941, under conductor Bernard Heinze. The soloists were Thea Philips, Frances Forbes, William Herbert and Raymond Beatty, with the Melbourne Philharmonic Society Choir. The MSO’s most recent performance was on 22 August 2011; the conductor was Douglas Boyd, and the soloists Anita Watson, Sally-Anne Russell, Steve Davislim and Peter Rose, with the MSO Chorus.
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My earliest musical memory is... Listening to Vaughan Williams’ *The Lark Ascending* in the kitchen, and my mother explaining how the music resembled the lark flying higher and higher – I think I was about five years old.

What is your greatest performance experience so far? Singing Mahler’s *Resurrection* Symphony was pretty spectacular for the sheer beauty of the music, but singing with a choir in South Africa in a farewell concert for their conductor of 30 years was very special.

What songs are playing on your iPod/CD player right now? Nick Cave’s latest *Push the Sky Away* (particularly ‘Jubilee Street,’) Phyllis Dillon ’Don’t stay away’ and ’I Don’t Know’ by Lisa Hannigan.

When not singing in the MSO Chorus, I... work as a Law Librarian in the city.

The composer’s music I most enjoy singing in the MSO Chorus is... Mahler is always a joy to sing, or anything by Verdi.

What are three of your favourite possessions? My cat, my iPad and my signed copy of *Good Omens* (by Neil Gaiman and Terry Prachett).

What is your favourite place in the world to “just be”? My parents’ house in the country – no noise, big garden, dogs at my feet, glass of wine and a book.

What is your favourite MSO Chorus memory? Our tour to Malaysia in 2008 was a lot of fun – great food, shopping, lots of monkeys and an opportunity to sing overseas.


What attracted you to join the MSO Chorus? I moved to Melbourne when I was 18, straight from school, and I just asked my old singing teacher which choir I should try and join. She suggested the Melbourne Chorale (as we were then) and the rest is history!

Where in Victoria do you most like to perform? I’m pretty excited to be back in Hamer Hall.
RENDER UNTO POETRY: SCHILLER AND MUSIC

Andrew Riemer discusses the German poet and dramatist – a leading figure in the European Romantic movement – whose work would be set to music by Beethoven, Rossini, Donizetti and Verdi.

A neighbour’s child is learning the recorder. From time to time you can hear her struggling with a simple four-in-a-bar tune, probably identified by her tutor as ‘Ode to Joy’. At present her rendition does not sound particularly joyful, but she is improving every day, so these may be her first steps towards a life in which music will provide a source of deep joy and consolation.

She may have been told that the tune was written by a famous composer called Ludwig van Beethoven, and perhaps even that it comes at the climax of a great symphony. One day, in ten or 20 years’ time, she may sit in this hall and remember her efforts to get her fingers over the right holes at the right moment as she is listening to the exultant cry:

Freude, schöner Götterfunken
Tochter aus Elysium
Wir betreten feuertrunken Himmlische, dein Heiligtum!

But even if she should spend the rest of her life zombified by hip-hop (or whatever will replace it in the future) she will at least have come into contact – briefly and unknowingly – with aspirations that remain noble, despite the many efforts to corrupt and cheapen them.

By the time Beethoven’s Symphony No.9 in D minor (sometimes called the Choral) was first performed at the Kärntnertor Theatre in Vienna on 7 May 1824, the high ideals of Schiller’s poem To Joy, with which the symphony comes to a triumphant end, had become compromised by the folly, vanity and brutality of those drunk with power. Three decades earlier in 1793, when 23-year-old Beethoven announced his intention of setting Schiller’s poem – written in 1785 – to music, that hymn to universal brotherhood and justice may not have sounded as hollow as it must have sounded to at least some of the audience in that long-vanished Viennese theatre on a street now devoted to the contemporary world’s obsession with designer clothes.

In 1793 Beethoven may not yet have known that the great revolution in France four years earlier had declined into a carnival of bloodshed. Napoleon had not yet succumbed to imperial folly, and the restitution of the oppressive policies of the old monarchies of Europe after the Congress of Vienna lay in the future. In 1793 you could still believe that the sentiment behind Schiller’s words

Your divine powers reunite
Those the world has forced apart;
All mankind become brothers
Beneath your sheltering wing

represented something more than late 18th-century wishful thinking, and could usher in universal joy, brotherhood and harmony under the benevolent care of Schiller’s vague, non-sectarian godhead, the Creator invoked in To Joy.
Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller was born at Marbach on the river Neckar in 1759. His father, an army surgeon, was determined that his son should become a Lutheran pastor, but Schiller chose instead to study law, abandoning it ultimately to follow his father's profession, medicine. Nevertheless, law, medicine and the church always took second place to Schiller's real vocation: poetry, drama and philosophy. A meeting with Goethe in 1779 and the impact of the ferment of ideas in late 18th century Europe finally prompted him to follow his true vocation.

In 1782, while serving as surgeon to a Württemberg regiment, his first play, The Robbers (the basis of Verdi's opera I masnadieri), was performed with astonishing success. The theatre was filled to capacity five hours before the performance began. The audience cheered and stamped, intoxicated by the verve and excitement of the young surgeon's rollicking tale. To the late 20th century The Robbers – or the libretto of I masnadieri, which follows its original fairly faithfully – seems rather naïve: an unfunny precursor to The Pirates of Penzance, perhaps. In 1782 it seemed to embody the hopes and ideals that were to result in the French Revolution seven years later: the inalienable right of all people to liberty, to be free of the shackles of ignorance and tyranny. In its way The Robbers was as thrillingly iconoclastic as Beaumarchais' The Marriage of Figaro, which was to enchant and scandalise Vienna four years later in 1786.

Schiller was, in other words, a child of the Enlightenment. He fell under the influence of those idealistic theories of the dignity of humankind that arose in the quarter century or so before his birth. Even in such a relatively immature piece as The Robbers, the praise of liberty, justice and universal brotherhood that were to achieve a triumphantly poetic embodiment in To Joy in 1785 can be clearly discerned beneath the play's melodramatic trappings. In 1793, just as it was declining into the barbarism of the Terror, France conferred honorary citizenship on the somewhat amazed and embarrassed poet.

Yet the fame Schiller was to achieve in the course of a curiously peripatetic life, moving from city to city, from court to court until his death in 1805, and also his influence throughout the 19th century and after, did not rest merely on his political and philosophical idealism. He became the most celebrated and best loved of German writers because of the streak of Romanticism that ran through his essentially 18th century dedication to the ideals of the Enlightenment. His fame rests on a series of splendidly Romantic tragedies which have held the stage in Germany for two centuries or so, and provided the material for some of the best-known operas of the 19th century.
When, in 1866, Verdi accepted a commission to write a grand work for the Paris Opéra, he chose Schiller's tragedy *Don Carlos* (completed in 1787) as a suitable vehicle with which to make his mark in a city that had relished the cumbersome spectacles of Meyerbeer – *The Huguenots*, *The Prophet* and *The African Girl*. Schiller's huge historical tragedy set in the time of Philip II of Spain provided Verdi with opportunities for grandeur, drama and spectacle of the kind without which no opera in Paris could hope to succeed. Yet Verdi's great work is as much distinguished by idealism as by a wish to cater for the Parisians' love of grand spectacle.

Before *Don Carlos*, Verdi had set plays by Schiller on two occasions besides *I masnadieri: Joan of Arc* (an unsatisfactory work) and *Luisa Miller*, based on Kabale und Liebe – an untranslatable title playing with notions of intrigue and love. The mingling of high Romanticism and noble ideas that render *Don Carlos* one of Verdi's greatest operas is intermittently present in his earlier works based on Schiller – as it is in Donizetti's *Mary Stuart* and Rossini's *William Tell*, two operas based on or inspired by famous Schiller plays. Yet if we are to understand why Schiller stood as a beacon of inspiration for Beethoven – or, for that matter, for my father, who was not particularly literary but could quote slabs of Schiller at the least provocation, even though German was not his first language – we should look to *Don Carlos*, both the play and the opera. In his setting Verdi incorporated within the gorgeous raiment of Parisian grand opera a vision of freedom, liberty and human dignity in the figure of the Marquis of Posa, the champion of the enslaved people of Flanders, just as Schiller had achieved in his tragedy a marriage of 'Shakespearian' Romanticism and high philosophical ideals.

My father, who learnt those snippets of Schiller in a Budapest gymnasium [high school] in the years just after the First World War, never lost his respect for the great, universal achievements of German culture, despite what he saw committed in the name of the German nation in the first half of the 20th century. Perhaps the little girl tootling away at the 'Ode to Joy' on her recorder in this crass and materialistic age may also find inspiration in that simple tune and the grand ideals it echoes. Schiller would certainly have shared that hope, for he was among the first to realise that if anything were to have lasting value in the world it had to be art, poetry and music, not the strutting of emperors or the pomp of empires.

*Andrew Riemer's books include Inside Outside, The Hapsburg Café and A Family History of Smoking.*
Thursday 2 May at 8pm  
Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall  
Presented as part of Master Series Thursday

Friday 3 May at 8pm  
Costa Hall, Deakin University, Geelong  
Presented as part of the Geelong Series

Saturday 4 May at 2pm  
Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall  
Presented as part of the Saturday Matinees series

THUS SPAKE ZARATHUSTRA

Berlioz  
Beatrice and Benedict: Overture

Mozart  
Violin Concerto No.5

INTERVAL 20 MINUTES

Strauss  
Thus Spake Zarathustra

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Sir Andrew Davis conductor  
Ji Won Kim violin

Due to injury, Stefan Jackiw has cancelled his 2013 Australian tour, including his concerts with the MSO. The soloist in this program will now be recent ABC/Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year, Ji Won Kim. Ji Won Kim recently appeared as soloist in Lalo’s Symphonie espagnole with the MSO and conductor Benjamin Northey, and is a member of the Orchestra’s First Violin section.

This concert has a duration of approximately two hours and 15 minutes, including one interval of 20 minutes.

Saturday afternoon’s performance will be recorded for later broadcast and streaming around Australia on ABC Classic FM.

Please turn off your mobile phone and all other electronic devices before the performance commences.

BEYOND THE STAGE

Learn more about the music in these free events.

Thursday 2 May at 7pm  
Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall  
Sir Andrew Davis will be in conversation with the MSO’s Director of Artistic Planning, Huw Humphreys.

Friday 3 May at 7pm  
Costa Hall

Saturday 4 May at 1pm  
Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall  
Robert Murray will present a pre-concert talk on the artists and the works featured in the program.
JI WON KIM violin

Ji Won Kim has established an extensive performing career in Australia, and increasingly overseas, as both a soloist and chamber musician.

Her teachers have included Mark Mogilevski, Sook Yoon, Nelli Shkolnikova and Alice Waten. She is a graduate of the University of Vienna and has a master’s degree from the University Of Melbourne.

Her awards include the ABC Symphony Australia Young Performers Award, the Johannes Brahms Competition and second prize at the Lisbon International Violin Competition.

She performs regularly as a concerto soloist with the Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Queensland and Tasmanian Symphony orchestras, and the Canberra Symphony Orchestra. Overseas she has appeared as soloist with the Swietokrzyska Philharmonic in Warsaw, Bruckner University Orchestra (Linz), Janáček Philharmonic Orchestra and the Prime Philharmonic Orchestra in Seoul.

In addition to her solo work, she has toured nationally and internationally as a member of the Melbourne Piano Trio and gives regular recital performances with the Trio’s pianist, Hoang Pham.

She is currently a member of the First Violin section of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and later this year she begins a temporary placement as Third Concertmaster with the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra.

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Berlioz ended his composing career in 1860-2 with a comedy, Béatrice et Bénédict – an Indian summer, following his epic opera Les Troyens (The Trojans). The Overture fits Berlioz’s description of the opera: ‘a caprice written with the point of a needle, and demanding excessive delicacy of execution’.

Berlioz was obsessed with Shakespeare. His infatuation with the actress Harriet Smithson, whom he married, is well-known, and his Shakespeare-inspired music includes Roméo et Juliette and the King Lear Overture. He had been contemplating a Romeo and Juliet opera, or an Antony and Cleopatra, when the commission for a new opera came from Edouard Bénazet, to inaugurate the theatre he was building at the fashionable spa in Baden-Baden.

Berlioz chose to base the opera on his adaptation of a Shakespeare comedy – light relief after his struggles getting The Trojans finished and performed. He had been toying with the idea of setting Shakespeare’s Much Ado about Nothing since as early as 1833, when he made a few preliminary sketches. His life since then had made Shakespeare’s play even more meaningful. A tragi-comedy, originally called Benedick and Beatrice, the play celebrates a marriage between two high-spirited young people. Beatrice and Benedict achieve a true partnership in spite of themselves, love triumphing in the end over independent-mindedness, cynicism and raillery. Berlioz saw the irony of his choice of subject, as his own marriages, with Harriet Smithson and Marie Rééco, brought him much unhappiness.

The opera, premiered in 1862, was a success, but the Overture remains its best-known music. Composed last, it is a brilliant précis, a weaving together of melodies from the opera (at least seven of them); a quicksilver scherzo, with episodes of soft emotion. ‘Racing, headlong, yet ironically poised, brilliant but touched with warmth of heart and a delicate spirit of fantasy’ is Berlioz biographer David Cairns’ summary of the piece, and he comments with wonder that it was the creation of a man in pain and longing for death. Though Berlioz lived seven more years, Béatrice et Bénédict was his last major composition. The Overture quotes at the beginning the duet Beatrice and Benedict sing about the love that has broken down their defences: ‘a flame, a will o’ the wisp, coming from no one knows where, gleaming and vanishing to distract our souls’.

David Garrett © 2011

The MSO was the first of the ABC orchestras to perform the Overture from Béatrice et Bénédict, on 25 August 1939 under conductor Malcolm Sargent. The MSO’s most recent performance, conducted by Niklaus Wyss, took place on 15 February 1978 at a Sidney Myer Free Concert.
Mozart’s violin concertos are masterly. This is too easy to overlook, when they are compared to his admittedly even more wonderful piano concertos. An often-quoted letter from Mozart’s father – one of the leading violin pedagogues of his time – exhorts his son not to give up his practice, and claims that young Mozart could, if he worked at it, be the finest violinist in Europe. All but one of the five violin concertos by Mozart which are unquestionably by him were written in a sustained burst in 1775, when Mozart was 19. They have been considered by some as attempts to please his father rather than himself. Whatever his motivation, these concertos are a major achievement, especially the last three, K.216, 218 and 219. It is important to remember the date, because none of the piano concertos Mozart had written up to this time shows the maturity of conception of the best of the violin concertos. It was after Mozart left Salzburg for Vienna, which he himself called ‘the land of the piano’, that almost all his concerto writing was for keyboard soloists. He wrote no further concertos for violin.

Mozart’s violin concertos may have been intended at least as much for his Salzburg colleague Antonio Brunetti as for himself. Brunetti was the solo first violin in the Salzburg Court Orchestra. Certain features of the Concerto in A, K.219, strongly suggest the atmosphere of Salzburg and the showcasing of a fellow musician. The extraordinary ‘Turkish’ episode in the finale, in which Mozart re-uses ideas from his 1772 ballet Le gelosie del Serraglio (‘Jealousy in the harem’, an entr’acte for the Milan opera Lucio Silla), also has the same flavour as several Turkish pieces by Mozart’s fellow Salzburg composer Michael Haydn. Haydn (brother of the more famous Joseph) may have collected the tunes in Hungary, which still had a strong Turkish presence, and which he had just visited. Perhaps this kind of music went down particularly well in Salzburg, with its imitation of the music of the janissaries (elite troops of the Ottoman Empire), including drumming by the basses beating the strings with the wood of their bows.

Brunetti must have been pleased with his first entry in this concerto: six bars of quasi-recitative in a slow tempo over murmuring strings. It is similar to Joseph Haydn’s devices in some of his early symphonies for showing off the leader of the Esterhazy orchestra. Mozart’s first movement is dominated by a rising arpeggio figure, referred to by one commentator as a springboard of the movement. This is a familiar ‘tag’ in Baroque and Classical violin music, found also in the concertos of Bach, who may have got it from Vivaldi. The interest is in the treatment: Mozart’s is all grace and wit, as in the throwaway endings on the same rising arpeggio, an idea he repeats in the last movement.

Here the influence of the French galant style conceals strength and structural coherence, obvious when the development of the first movement reverses the arpeggios in downward-turning modulations. Mozart’s slow movement is a rapturous one in E major. Even though the soloist’s singing part dominates, Brunetti was apparently not satisfied; according to a letter from Leopold Mozart to his son, Brunetti found this movement ‘too artificial’ (or, in another translation, ‘too studied’). Mozart may have composed his Adagio K.261 as a substitute movement for Brunetti – it is beautiful in its own way, but it lacks the occasional harmonic subtleties of the original movement, heard in this performance.

The capricious-sounding interruption of the Rondeau’s triple rhythm by episodes in duple time, and the exotic colouring of the episodes, including the spectacular ‘Turkish’ music, shows how the Classical style, in Mozart’s hands, could accommodate a game which is dramatic in conception.

David Garrett © 2006

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this concerto on 30 January 1943 with conductor William Cade and soloist Elise Steels. The MSO most recently performed it in April 2003 with director/soloist Kolja Blacher.

INTERVAL 20 MINUTES
In 1891-92 the usually robust Strauss suffered a period of serious illness, including bouts of pneumonia, bronchitis and pleurisy. In the summer of 1892 he took leave of his duties at the Weimar Opera and travelled extensively through Italy, Greece and Egypt, soaking up the sun, but more importantly enjoying the awesome physical remains of the ancient pagan civilisations in those countries. It was at this time that he began to think about a musical response to some of the ideas of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, particularly those expressed in his poem *Also sprach Zarathustra*, though the work’s composition had to wait until 1896.

Zarathustra, or Zoroaster (as he was known to the ancient Greeks) was a Persian prophet living in the sixth century BCE who taught that the universe, and humankind in particular, is subject to the eternal struggle of two gods, represented by light and darkness; his religion survives among the Parsees of modern India.

Nietzsche’s relationship to Zoroastrian ideas is fairly loose, and as conductor and Strauss scholar Norman Del Mar put it, he used these ‘as a prop on which to clothe his own ideas on the purpose and destiny of mankind’. The most famous – indeed, notorious – of these is the idea of the *Übermensch* or Superman. ‘Man,’ in Nietzsche’s words, ‘is a thing to be surmounted...what is the ape to man? A jest or a thing of shame. So shall man be to the Superman.’ While Nietzsche (and, it must be admitted, the younger Strauss) were disdainful of Christianity’s compassion for weakness, it is drawing a long bow to make Nietzsche responsible for the atrocities of Nazism. Indeed, Nietzsche scholar Joachim Köhler argues that *Also sprach Zarathustra*, with its celebration of the individual will, partly grew out of the poet’s freeing himself from the dominating personality of the composer Richard Wagner. And Wagner’s widow Cosima, writing to her son-in-law Houston Stewart Chamberlain (whose racist ideas definitely did influence Hitler), condemned Nietzsche’s book for its ‘Jewishness’.
Strauss’ work is, as he said, ‘freely after Fr. Nietzsche’ which afforded him ‘much aesthetic enjoyment’ rather than any profound philosophical conversion. Strauss takes some of the chapter headings of the poem as the defining images for each section of his tone-poem. It begins with the famous invocation to the sun, with low rumbling accompanying the trumpets’ simple C-G-C theme (which in much of Strauss represents primeval nature). The increasing blaze of full chords establishes C major as one pole of the work.

Of the Back-worlds-men depicts humanity in its primitive, or rather naïve state (in B minor, significantly – B being the other tonal pole of the piece). Strauss includes those who profess Christianity in this category, quoting a fragment of the plainchant for the Credo to underline his point, but the movement still reaches a gorgeous climax for multi-divided strings.

Of the Great Longing, which follows, is a depiction of humanity’s search for something beyond mere superstition, but Strauss’ music dramatises the conflict between nature (the trumpet theme) and humanity’s tendency to create dogma with more hints of plainchant and the unresolved conflict between the keys of C and B. A new chromatic motif leads into the Of Joys and Passions section with a theme that Strauss described as ‘A flat (brass: dark blue).’ Actually the section tends to be in C minor, linking it to the idea of nature, whereas the following Funeral Song is in B minor, and therefore linked to the idea of man.

Of Science is based on a deeply-voiced fugue that Strauss described as ‘spine-chilling’ and Del Mar regarded as having a ‘strangely mysterious quality’ despite its dour timbre.

In The Convalescent, part of which Mahler sets in his Third Symphony, Nietzsche describes Zoroaster’s spiritual and physical collapse, after which he emerges as the Superman. The Dance Song of the Superman is, like the ‘Dance of Seven Veils’ in Salome, a Viennese waltz – a Straussian joke, perhaps. Here poet and composer part company: Strauss’ Zoroaster displays none of the triumphalism that Nietzsche’s does, and the work closes with a mysterious and tranquil Night Wanderer’s Song in which the keys of nature and man still quietly contend.

After the final rehearsal for the premiere, Strauss, with characteristic modesty, wrote to his wife: ‘Zarathustra is glorious… of all my pieces, the most perfect in form, the richest in content and the most individual in character… I’m a fine fellow after all, and feel just a little pleased with myself.’

Gordon Kerry © 2004

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed Thus Spake Zarathustra on 16 July 1955 under Sir Eugene Goossens, and most recently in March 2009 under Vladimir Ashkenazy.
The MSO officially welcomed the MSO Friend Patrons in March, with a cocktail reception held in the Iwaki Auditorium. Joined by Managing Director André Gremillet, board members and several musicians and staff, it was a wonderful opportunity for all to catch up with familiar faces as well as meet and welcome new ones. By way of thanking everyone who contributed to last year’s Instrument Fund Appeal, attendees were treated to performances by the MSO’s woodwind section on the new instruments purchased with funds from the 2012 appeal.

The event also heralded the launch of the MSO’s 2013 Instrument Fund Appeal, which this year turns its attention to the ‘big’ instruments of the orchestra, and the urgent need to replace our decades-old transportation cases. MSO Double Bass player Stephen Newton’s new instrument received special attention, with guests ‘meeting’ it in person. Crafted in 1835 by Thomas Kennedy, Stephen’s precious double bass is a great case in point (no pun intended) for the MSO’s current Appeal, which is seeking to raise $50,000 towards new travelling cases for these powerful but fragile instruments.

Many thanks from the MSO to all the generous donors who have already contributed to this important Appeal, and who have already assisted in helping us raise $34,000. For more information on our Annual Instrument Fund, or to donate, visit mso.com.au/2013appeal or contact our Philanthropy team on 9626 1107, philanthropy@mso.com.au.
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