

Beethoven's Symphony No.7

Friday Night Masters

Friday 22 May at 8pm
Arts Centre Melbourne
Hamer Hall

Saturday Matinees

Saturday 23 May at 2pm
Arts Centre Melbourne
Hamer Hall

ANZ Great Classics on Monday

Monday 25 May at 6.30pm
Arts Centre Melbourne
Hamer Hall

What's On June — August



Education Week MONDAY 1 JUNE — SATURDAY 6 JUNE

Join the MSO and internationally acclaimed music educator, Paul Rissmann, for the MSO's fifth annual Education Week at the Melbourne Town Hall and Hamer Hall, with a series of events for schools and families which integrate learning and entertainment, and foster a lifelong love of music.



Britten's War Requiem THURSDAY 11 JUNE FRIDAY 12 JUNE

Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, a haunting piece interweaving the traditional Latin Mass for the Dead with the works of First World War poet Wilfred Owen, is paired with the profoundly moving *Elegy in memoriam Rupert Brooke*.



Mahler 4 FRIDAY 19 JUNE SATURDAY 20 JUNE MONDAY 22 JUNE

A milestone in MSO's musical evolution, Sir Andrew Davis' Mahler Cycle series returns for its fourth chapter, with Mahler's Fourth Symphony alongside Prokofiev's *Sinfonia Concertante*.



Yuja Wang Plays Prokofiev THURSDAY 23 JULY FRIDAY 24 JULY SATURDAY 25 JULY

Chinese piano superstar Yuja Wang brings her acclaimed virtuosity to Prokofiev's tempestuous Second Piano Concerto. Also featuring Tchaikovsky's *Marche Slave* and Brahms' luminous fourth and final symphony.



Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No.1 FRIDAY 7 AUGUST SATURDAY 8 AUGUST MONDAY 10 AUGUST


The very epitome of Romantic music, Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No.1 is performed by Simon Trpčeski. Also featuring Rimsky-Korsakov's *Capriccio espagnol*, and Scriabin's Third Symphony.



Rachmaninov 3 THURSDAY 20 AUGUST FRIDAY 21 AUGUST SATURDAY 22 AUGUST

Russian-American pianist Kirill Gerstein displays his mastery of the formidable 'Rach 3', conducted by Sir Andrew Davis. Also featuring Rimsky-Korsakov's *Dubinushka* and Strauss' autobiographical tone poem, *Ein Heldenleben*.


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Welcome to Beethoven's Symphony No.7

MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The German conductor and composer Matthias Pintscher sees his dual musical existence as entirely complementary, saying, 'My thinking as a conductor is informed by the process of my own writing; and vice versa of course.'

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is pleased to welcome the extraordinary Pintscher back for these concerts. This program typifies his broad repertoire as well as his own creativity.

Pintscher is conducting the Australian premiere of his new work, *idyll* – a co-commission by the MSO, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and The Cleveland Orchestra. After *idyll*'s world premiere in Cleveland late last year, one critic described it as 'a cornucopia for the ear, a quiet stream of ethereal textures and shimmering colours'.

We are also delighted to welcome the Japanese-Canadian violinist Karen Gomyo as soloist in the Violin Concerto No.3 by Saint-Saëns.

What better conclusion to this program than Beethoven's Symphony No.7? It is music that, however often performed, always sounds vivid, exciting and fresh off the page.

I hope you enjoy this concert.



André Gremillet
Managing Director

With a reputation for excellence, versatility and innovation, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is Australia's oldest orchestra, established in 1906. The Orchestra currently performs live to more than 200,000 people annually, in concerts ranging from subscription performances at its home, Hamer Hall at Arts Centre Melbourne, to its annual free concerts at Melbourne's largest outdoor venue, the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

Sir Andrew Davis gave his inaugural concerts as Chief Conductor of the MSO in April 2013, having made his debut with the Orchestra in 2009. Highlights of his tenure have included collaborations with artists including Bryn Terfel, Emanuel Ax and Truls Mørk, the release of recordings of music by Percy Grainger and Eugene Goossens, a 2014 European Festivals tour, and a multi-year cycle of Mahler's Symphonies.

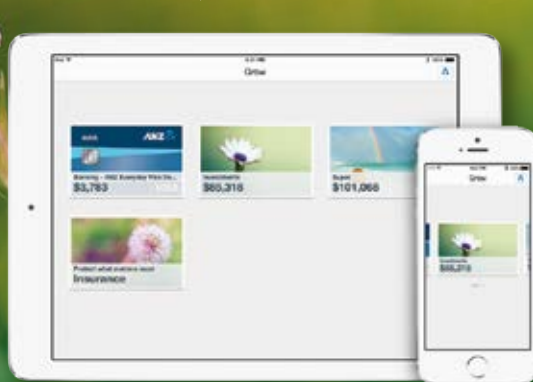
The MSO also works each season with Principal Guest Conductor Diego Matheuz, Associate Conductor Benjamin Northey and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus. Recent guest conductors to the MSO have included Thomas Adès, John Adams, Tan Dun, Charles Dutoit, Jakub Hrůša, Mark Wigglesworth, Markus Stenz and Simone Young. The Orchestra has also collaborated with non-classical musicians including Burt Bacharach, Ben Folds, Nick Cave, Sting and Tim Minchin.

The MSO reaches an even larger audience through its regular concert broadcasts on ABC Classic FM, also streamed online, and through recordings on Chandos and ABC Classics. The MSO's Education and Community Engagement initiatives deliver innovative and engaging programs to audiences of all ages, including MSO Learn, 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 Creative Victoria, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources. The MSO is also funded by the City of Melbourne, its Principal Partner, Emirates, corporate sponsors and individual donors, trusts and foundations.



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2015 EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EDUCATION WEEK 1 - 6 JUNE



Events for children, students, teachers and all the family

OPENING NIGHT CONCERT THE YOUNG PERSON'S GUIDE TO THE ORCHESTRA

Mon 1 June at 6.30pm
Arts Centre Melbourne,
Hamer Hall



MEET THE ORCHESTRA PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

Tue 2 June at 12pm
Wed 3 June at 10am & 12pm
Arts Centre Melbourne,
Hamer Hall



CLASSIC KIDS 1 STAN AND MABEL

Thu 4 June at 10am & 11.30am
Arts Centre Melbourne,
Hamer Hall

Sat 6 June at 10am & 11.15am
Melbourne Town Hall



SECONDARY SYMPHONY PROJECT WITH JOHANNES FRITZSCH

Thu 4 June at 6.30pm
Arts Centre Melbourne,
Hamer Hall



THE WIGGLES MEET THE MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Fri 5 June at 12.30pm
& 2.30pm
Melbourne Town Hall



SYMPHONY IN A DAY WITH SIR ANDREW DAVIS

Sat 6 June at 8.30pm
Melbourne Town Hall



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Beethoven's Symphony No.7

**Melbourne Symphony
Orchestra**

Matthias Pintscher
conductor

Karen Gomyo
violin

—
PINTSCHER

idyll

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

SAINT-SAËNS

Violin Concerto No.3

—
Interval 20 minutes

—
BEETHOVEN

Symphony No.7

This concert runs for a duration of two hours including one 20 minute interval. Saturday afternoon's concert will be recorded for later broadcast around Australia on ABC Classic FM.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Matthias Pintscher
conductor

Matthias Pintscher is the Music Director of the Ensemble Intercontemporain; Artist-in-Association with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra; and Artist-in-Residence with the orchestras of the Danish National Symphony. Conducting highlights this season include performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra, National Arts Centre Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Hamburg Philharmonic, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, Cologne Philharmonie, and the Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras. The 2014/15 season concludes with appearances at the Lucerne, Avanti and Grafenegg music festivals.

An equally accomplished composer, Matthias Pintscher's works have been performed by orchestras such as The Cleveland Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, NDR Symphony Orchestra Hamburg, BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra and Orchestre de Paris. He is the recipient of the prestigious 2012 Roche Commission, and in September 2014 he joined the composition faculty at The Juilliard School.

Karen Gomyo
violin

Karen Gomyo was the recipient of the Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2008, and has established herself in recent years as an in-demand international soloist. She has performed with orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, The Philadelphia Orchestra, The Cleveland Orchestra, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo Symphony and Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

In February she performed the U.S. premiere of Matthias Pintscher's violin concerto *Mar'eh* with the National Symphony Orchestra. Other 2014-2015 highlights include returns to the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Oregon Symphony, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, and a return to Australia, where she makes her debut with the Tasmanian and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras. She also appears with the Staatsoper Hannover, Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Aalborg Symphony Orchestra in the premiere of Anders Koppel's new concerto.

Karen Gomyo plays the 'Aurora, ex-Foulis' Stradivarius violin of 1703.



‘...exceptional young violinist, Karen Gomyo.. gave a vivid performance that was full of interesting detail as well as a sense of drama. Some moments were downright spine-tingling.’

THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

MATTHIAS PINTSCHER
(Born 1971)

idyll
AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

German-born Matthias Pintscher studied in Detmold before attending Franz Werner Henze’s summer school in Italy at the invitation of the composer. He came to international recognition following featured performances of his works at the Salzburg Festival in 1997 and the premiere of his opera *Thomas Chatterton* in Dresden the following year. He is now one of the world’s most sought-after composers, in addition to forging an international career as a conductor and curator. Among his works previously performed by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra are *a twilight’s song*, *Osiris*, *Reflections on Narcissus* and *Transir*.

While some of Pintscher’s works refer to Egyptian or Greek mythology, *idyll* has no declared allusions – so interpretation is open to the listener’s individual response. The title implies serenity, but regular pulse, familiar harmony, and retrievable melody are not to be found here. Instead, the composer’s strategy is to build sonic textures out of intricately

blended instrumental effects as background, while the foreground features individual instruments with elaborate flourishes that sometimes extend into solo passages or figures by a full section of instruments. The alto flute, for example, is heard early on taking centre stage, only to be ‘replaced’ by a passage of muted violins. Such solos are given also to the contrabassoon, horn and flute. After the main stormy climax of the work, the piano plays a cadenza in free rhythm that brings the music back to calmer waters.

Water, indeed, may be in the composer’s mind here, for he calls for three tam-tams (gongs) to be gently brushed to suggest, as stated in the score, ‘images of waves and the deep profound quiet of the sea’. This is only one of countless special sonorities to be provided by a percussion section of extraordinary variety and richness (the traditional timpani are conspicuously silent). The orchestra as a whole, percussion included, is treated as an enormous chamber ensemble, and the orchestration is as intricate and precise as advanced complex electronics.

Hugh MacDonald © 2014

idyll was co-commissioned by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and The Cleveland Orchestra, who gave the first performance in October 2014 under Franz Welser-Möst. This is the first performance of the work in Australia.



**CAMILLE SAINT-SAËNS
(1835-1921)**

**Violin Concerto No.3 in B minor,
Op.61**

Allegro non troppo
Andantino quasi allegretto -
Molto moderato e maestoso - Allegro
non troppo - Più allegro

Karen Gomyo violin

Saint-Saëns' interest in the violin was first stimulated by his acquaintance with George Bridgetower, the original dedicatee of Beethoven's 'Kreutzer' Sonata. However, it was the great Spanish-born, Paris-educated virtuoso Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908) who directly inspired the composition of Saint-Saëns' Violin Concertos Nos 1 and 3 and the *Introduction and Rondo capriccioso*, and who can mostly be credited with forming the composer's view of the instrument.

As Saint-Saëns' biographer James Harding says, the Violin Concerto No.1 - actually the second to be written (in 1859) - was 'tailor-made for Sarasate's bewitchingly elegant style, all silver sheen and ice-cold sweetness'. Some 20 years later, Saint-Saëns wrote the Concerto No.3

for Sarasate, and it was premiered by the violinist in 1880.

Over a string tremolo, the soloist brings in a powerfully searching theme, which contrasts perfectly with a second theme of meditative tenderness. The second movement is effectively a barcarolle. An accompanied cadenza begins the third movement. In place of a development section Saint-Saëns inserts a chorale (*pianissimo*) before reintroducing the cadenza which leads to the recapitulation. Chromatic touches in the harmony simply steer the melody in an occasional intriguing new direction; the prominence of the violin is assured by an uncluttered accompaniment.

It has been claimed that Saint-Saëns' music exhibits great craftsmanship but little personality. However, the facility with which Saint-Saëns was able to compose can be readily appreciated and enjoyed by this concerto's listeners. It is something he may have achieved in emulation of Mozart. On the other hand, Saint-Saëns himself once said 'I compose music as easily as an apple tree

produces apples.' This is music which shines when presented with great deftness of technique and a certain degree of suavity.

Saint-Saëns' reputation suffered during the 20th century, his negative reaction to the premiere of *The Rite of Spring* having typecast him as a stubborn conservative. In an era which has valued musical innovation, a compensating emphasis has been placed on his many eclectic non-musical interests. But in Saint-Saëns' music may be found a steadfast adherence to the perennial values of French music: clarity, lucidity and order - from a composer whose musical career began in the France of Berlioz and Gounod.

Adapted from a note by Gordon Williams

Symphony Australia © 1994

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this work in September 1957 with conductor Efrem Kurtz and soloist Ruggiero Ricci, and most recently in March 2009 with Vladimir Ashkenazy and Janine Jansen.

**‘During the Second World War,
the Seventh was one of the Beethoven
works enlisted to help boost patriotic
fervour here in Australia.’**

GRAEME SKINNER

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827)**

Symphony No.7 in A, Op.92

Poco sostenuto – Vivace

Allegretto

Presto – Trio – Presto – Trio – Presto

Allegro con brio

—

Five years after the premieres of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, Beethoven introduced the Seventh, together with ‘battle symphony’ *Wellington’s Victory*, Op.91, on 8 December 1813. The occasion was a concert in Vienna’s University Hall to raise money for Austrian soldiers recently wounded helping to expel Napoleon’s army from Germany. Beethoven wrote an open letter of thanks to eminent colleagues who generously condescended to play under his direction, including Hummel, Meyerbeer, Spohr, and Salieri:

It was a rare assembly of first-class musicians, each impelled not only by craft but also patriotic fervor to benefit the Fatherland, without concern for rank or precedence Had I not composed the music myself, I would have been as happy as Mr. Hummel to take my place at the drum!

The third-last symphony is a kind of mirror image of the Third. The Napoleonic Third is spacious and heroic (in E flat, a minor third above C), the Seventh (in A major, a minor third below C) all energy and bluster, animated by sheer rhythmic

propulsion. Wagner labelled it ‘the apotheosis of the dance’, though so intense is Beethoven’s focus on distinctive rhythms that it often leaves conventional dance far behind. That Beethoven might have been drunk, deaf, or daft when he composed it were all possibilities reportedly considered by his colleagues. Weber is supposed to have said ‘ripe for the madhouse’, and another wondered later whether ‘in the last period, he succumbed to a kind of insanity, that his assertive contrasts, vehement expressiveness, and sheer insistence, rankle so?’

Beethoven composed the Seventh during two high summers – sketching it in 1811 and finishing it in 1812 – while, on doctor’s orders, visiting a succession of picturesque Czech health resorts. In August 1812, he reported to his pupil, Archduke Rudolph: ‘In Teplitz I heard the military band play four times a day — the only musical report to offer you. Otherwise, I spent a good deal of time with Goethe.’

Goethe wrote to his wife that he had seldom met a ‘more focused, fervent artist’, though to a musical friend he added:



'But he is completely uncontrollable although because of his loss of hearing he can be excused, and pitied. As it is, he is naturally laconic, doubly so because of his misfortune.' Meanwhile, Beethoven boasted he gave his senior a lesson in egalitarianism. Strolling through the spa gardens, they saw a crowd form as the imperial family walked by. Goethe, by far the more eminent of the pair and a seasoned courtier, removed his hat and was ignored. But Beethoven, 'hat firmly on my head pushed through the crowd, Archduke Rudolph doffed his hat, and the Empress herself came to greet me'.

Resonances of an idealised Teplitz military band and Beethoven's egalitarian spirit can be heard especially in the minor-key *Allegretto*, whose simple, solemn tune and straightforward treatment struck such a popular chord that it was regularly excerpted by real bands for use as a funeral march. He introduces another disarmingly simple tune in the middle of the scherzo's trio, according to one of Beethoven's

clerical friends, borrowed from a hymn traditionally sung by pilgrims to the shrine at Mariazell.

During the Second World War, the Seventh was one of the Beethoven works enlisted to help boost patriotic fervour here in Australia. The Melbourne Symphony's then chief conductor, Bernard Heinze, also conducted performances and radio broadcasts of it with other orchestras around the country as part of a nationwide Beethoven Festival. Reaching Perth in winter 1944, its effect on audience morale was electric, as the *West Australian* reviewer noted: 'Even the desolate anti-climax of a late bus, and frigid lower extremities, was mitigated by the persistence in one's pulse and brain of the finale. Professor Heinze had whirled his forces up-to-time through these tremendous Olympian transports, ending on a note of high exhilaration.'

Graeme Skinner © 2014

The Melbourne Symphony was the first of the Australian state orchestras to perform Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, on 7 May 1938 under Georg Szell. The Orchestra most recently performed it in November 2014 under Sir Andrew Davis.



MSO Education Week

MSO Associate Conductor Benjamin Northey talks to international music educator Paul Rissmann.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra will welcome internationally acclaimed music educator, Paul Rissmann, back for the Orchestra's fifth annual Education Week at Hamer Hall and the Melbourne Town Hall from 1 to 6 June.

A flagship event in MSO's Education and Community Engagement calendar, Education Week features events which integrate learning and entertainment, and foster a lifelong love of music.

MSO's Benjamin Northey, caught up with Paul Rissmann about his plans for the week and the process of creating pitch-perfect programming for young people and newcomers of all ages to the Orchestra.

What are the things you enjoy most about working in orchestral music education?

I adore music, it's always been part of my life — in fact my mum says my first words were 'record player!' So I can't imagine a better job than introducing new listeners to the sound of the orchestra.

Watching the joy when a young audience hears amazing music (often for the first time) gives me such a buzz. Though I have to say, creatively preparing the young listeners for this experience is just as much fun. Recently, in one of my concerts back in the UK, when I said 'Now it's time for some music by Beethoven' without a hint of embarrassment a child in the hall went 'Yesssss!'. It was an honest and uninhibited reaction to the prospect of listening to classical music. Amazing! Of course, that reaction doesn't happen without a huge commitment from the teachers but it was a gorgeous moment, and believe me — that young fellow's outburst inspired the orchestra to give their absolute

best in performance. Working in this field, you never quite know what will happen next, but that unpredictability can produce astonishing results.

What is it that orchestras bring to an educational experience for young people?

Young people seem to be fascinated by the orchestra yet for many, the ritual of classical music can at first appear quite alien. But of course, every time you switch on a Playstation — you hear the familiar sound of an orchestra tuning up. Video games and Hollywood movies all have blockbuster orchestral scores. Young people experience symphonic colour on a daily basis — even if it is in the background.

Imaginative orchestral music education programs place the orchestra at centre stage — music becomes the main event — and I think this is vitally important — especially in our digitally saturated age. And of course, nothing can ever replace hearing music live in concert. Seeing amazing

‘Recently, in one of my concerts back in the UK, when I said ‘Now it’s time for some music by Beethoven’ without a hint of embarrassment a child in the hall went ‘Yesssss!’.

musicians perform — with energy and commitment — is a joy. I think every orchestra has a responsibility, to make themselves as accessible to as diverse an audience as possible — and that relationship should start right in the early years of a child’s education. That way, the orchestra and its musicians simply become part of a rich life.

How do you go about constructing a program? What kinds of concepts do you think are important to communicate?

It’s a big responsibility. Picking and mixing exactly the right blend of repertoire, which is age-appropriate can be a challenge. However I think the secret is simply to choose the best possible music — not a compromised selection — but the most exciting and engaging repertoire. It’s also vitally important not to think of the audience purely as passive.

I spend a long time dreaming up sophisticated programs to heighten curiosity, enhance listening skills and enable meaningful participation in my work. Why should orchestral concerts remain burdened with the traditions of the 19th century? Who wants to sit down, remain silent and not move a muscle for 2.5 hours? Bringing the audience into the heart of the orchestra, connecting them to wonderful music but also inviting them to be part of that sound too is the cornerstone of my work.

You use visual elements and animations on your presentation. How is this incorporated? How does this enhance the learning experience for the audience?

I’m a geek. I love technology and very early on in my career I started experimenting with projection during concerts. As technology advanced, the potential for incorporating sophisticated visuals has become embedded in my delivery. So for example, in an early years concert, where I am telling a musical story, I project the colourful pictures from the book above the orchestra. To the child, the music and images become one, so they know exactly what is happening in the piece and so feel the music more in their body. Using projection, I have also taught an audience of 2000 primary school kids to read music in around ten seconds and then have them perform one of the percussion parts perfectly in time with the orchestra.

While in my music discovery concerts for adults, the possibility of visualising complex musical structures enables people, even without any previous musical knowledge, to grasp sophisticated concepts. In all of these examples, I utilise visuals, not to distract or simply entertain the audience, but to focus their listening and enhance their understanding of music.

You compose interactive works for orchestra and audience. Why are these experiences so important for learning engagement?

I think there is something really special for a child, not just to come and listen to the orchestra, but to be invited to perform with them as well. Orchestral music shouldn’t be regarded as elitist or exclusive —

it’s for everyone. Over the years, I’ve composed a series of works which enable large numbers of young people (sometimes thousands) to make music with the orchestra. In these pieces, every single person in the concert hall is a performer — the audience are just as important as the musicians on stage.

You’ve presented education concerts for The London Symphony, the New York Philharmonic and many of the world’s great orchestras. How does the MSO’s Education Week compare to some of the global activities in orchestral music education?

I absolutely love MSO Education Week. The quality and quantity of work that takes place is extraordinary. And of course, each event is carefully crafted for its target audience — so the range of work and level of engagement is so impressive. The attention to detail that goes into making this week such a success is the best I’ve witnessed anywhere in the world. For MSO to set aside an entire week to entertain, educate and engage new audiences is wonderful.

Interview with Paul Rissman by MSO Patricia Riordan Associate Conductor Chair Benjamin Northey.

MSO’s Fifth annual Education week is at Melbourne Town Hall from 1 to 6 June. For more information visit mso.com.au




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