

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

CONCERT PROGRAM



Beethoven Festival

Piano Concerto No.1
Wednesday 7 September at 7pm

Piano Concerto Nos.2 & 3
Saturday 10 September at 7pm

Piano Concerto No.4
Wednesday 14 September at 7pm

Piano Concerto No.5
Saturday 17 September at 7pm



Principal Partner

FESTIVAL OVERVIEW

Wednesday 7 September

Play Your Own Beethoven

Hamer Hall Foyer, 5.30pm onwards
Free

Find the piano and try your hand at the *Für Elise* or the *Appassionata*.

Streethoven

Outside Hamer Hall, 6pm
Free

Keep your ears and eyes open for Beethoven-inspired pop-ups around Hamer Hall.

Pre-Concert Talk

Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall, 6pm
Free

By Ronald Vermeulen.
It's all about style: the classical style and the sonata form.

Piano Concerto No.1

Hamer Hall, 7pm

Paul Lewis, Douglas Boyd and the MSO begin their Beethoven odyssey with Piano Concerto No.1, composed in 1795. The year before, Haydn composed his Symphony No.102, the tenth of his 12 *London* Symphonies. Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No.1 completes the program.

Interval Conversation

Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall, Concert interval
Free

Special guests join Australian composer and conductor, Gordon Hamilton, for a mid-concert conversation about the artists and works featured in the concert.

Visit mso.com.au/beethoven for more info and to book.

Saturday 10 September

Jams for Juniors: The Emperor

Swanston Hall, Melbourne Town Hall,
10am, 11am, 12pm & 1pm

Featuring Beethoven's *Emperor* Concerto, this is the perfect introduction to the great composer and his music for children up to 5 years.

MSO at NGV: Beethoven & Turner

Exhibition Space, Level 2, NGV International, 2pm – 3pm
Free

See J.M.W. Turner's masterpieces at the NGV and enjoy a Beethoven performance by MSO's Freya Franzen, Christopher Cartlidge and Rachael Tobin, combined with a discussion about these two Romantic artists.

In Search of Beethoven

Clemenger Theatre, NGV International,
3.15pm – 5.40pm
Free, limited seating available

Delve deeper into the life of Beethoven with this screening of the BBC film, *In Search of Beethoven*, by award-winning documentary maker Phil Grabsky.

Play Your Own Beethoven

Hamer Hall Foyer, 5.30pm onwards
Free

Find the piano and try your hand at the *Für Elise* or the *Appassionata*.

Beer, Beethoven & Chat

Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall, 5.30pm – 6.30pm

Meet like-minded Beethovenians for a beverage and chat about the man and his music. Gordon Hamilton will give an introduction to Ludwig, the man, followed by a performance by the Australian String Quartet.

Piano Concerto Nos.2 & 3

Hamer Hall, 7pm

Two classical edifices, Beethoven's Piano Concertos Nos.2 and 3, flank Webern's Five Movements, a work of breathtaking brevity and intensity.

Interval Conversation

Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall Concert interval
Free

Join Australian composer and conductor, Gordon Hamilton for a conversation with members of the Australian String Quartet and MSO musicians.

Wednesday 14 September

Play Your Own Beethoven

Hamer Hall Foyer, 5.30pm onwards
Free

Find the piano and try your hand at the
Für Elise or the *Appassionata*.

Streethoven

Outside Hamer Hall, 6pm
Free

Keep your ears and eyes open for Beethoven-
inspired pop-ups around Hamer Hall.

Pre-Concert Talk

Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall, 6pm
Free

By Ronald Vermeulen.

'Kenner und Liebhaber': the development of concert
life, the orchestra and the piano.

Piano Concerto No.4

Hamer Hall, 7pm

Beethoven's Piano Concerto No.4 is from the
composer's most creative period. It is the only one of
the five concertos in which the piano begins alone.

Haydn's *Drumroll* Symphony and one of
Schoenberg's truly romantic works, *Transfigured
Night*, complete the program.

Interval Conversation

Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall, Concert interval
Free

ABC Classic FM's Christopher Lawrence in
conversation with pianist Paul Lewis.

Saturday 17 September

Beethoven Mash Up

10am & 11.30am

This is the ultimate Jam Session – a chance for
anyone aged 7 and up (including mum and dad!) to
play along with musicians of the MSO and develop
an original piece of music inspired by Beethoven.

Play Your Own Beethoven

Hamer Hall Foyer, 4pm onwards
Free

Find the piano and try your hand at the
Für Elise or the *Appassionata*.

Panel Discussion

Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall, 4:30pm – 5:30pm
Free

A panel of musicians and Beethoven fans listen to,
and discuss, recordings of the Beethoven
piano concertos, referencing key historical
recordings as well as modern performances. Hosted
by ABC Classic FM's Christopher Lawrence.

Pre-Concert Talk

Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall, 6pm
Free

By Ronald Vermeulen.

'Back to school': the Second Viennese School
and the classical style.

Piano Concerto No.5

Hamer Hall, 7pm

This final concert presents Beethoven's mighty
Emperor Concerto. The program begins at the very
end of Haydn's symphonic output, with No.104,
London. A fusion of the Second Viennese School
and present day, Julian Yu's dazzling orchestration
of Alban Berg's Piano Sonata completes this
rich program.

Post-Concert Conversation

Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall, 9pm
Free

Discussion with Paul Lewis, Douglas Boyd,
Julian Yu and MSO musicians, hosted by
ABC Classic FM's Christopher Lawrence.

The MSO is thrilled to be collaborating with the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) during Beethoven Festival, providing a unique opportunity for a select number of string musicians to gain experience within a professional orchestra and perform side-by-side with MSO musicians. Make sure you keep an eye out for ANAM's players on stage with the MSO over the course of the Festival!

ANAM
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL
ACADEMY OF MUSIC

The Beethoven Festival
was made possible
thanks to the generous
contribution made by
Joy Selby-Smith.

MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO) was established in 1906 and is Australia's oldest orchestra. It currently performs live to more than 250,000 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. The Orchestra also delivers innovative and engaging programs to audiences of all ages through its Education and Outreach initiatives.

Sir Andrew Davis gave his inaugural concerts as the MSO's Chief Conductor in 2013, having made his debut with the Orchestra in 2009. Highlights of his tenure have included collaborations with artists such as Bryn Terfel, Emanuel Ax, Truls Mørk and Renée Fleming, and the Orchestra's European Tour in 2014 which included appearances at the Edinburgh Festival, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival and Copenhagen's Tivoli Concert Hall. Further current and future highlights with Sir Andrew Davis include a complete cycle of the Mahler symphonies. Sir Andrew will maintain the role of Chief Conductor until the end of 2019.

The MSO also works with Associate Conductor Benjamin Northey and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus, as well as with such eminent recent guest conductors as Thomas Adès, John Adams, Tan Dun, Charles Dutoit, Jakub Hrůša, Mark Wigglesworth, Markus Stenz and Simone Young. It has also collaborated with non-classical musicians including Burt Bacharach, Nick Cave, Sting, Tim Minchin, Ben Folds, DJ Jeff Mills and Flight Facilities.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra reaches a wider audience through regular radio broadcasts, recordings and CD releases, including a Strauss cycle on ABC Classics which includes *Four Last Songs*, *Don Juan* and *Also sprach Zarathustra*, as well as *Ein Heldenleben* and Four Symphonic Interludes from *Intermezzo*, both led by Sir Andrew Davis. On the Chandos label the MSO has recently released Berlioz' *Harold en Italie* with James Ehnes and music by Charles Ives which includes Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2, as well as a range of orchestral works including *Three Places in New England*, again led by Sir Andrew Davis.

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.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Land on which we perform – The Kulin Nation – and would like to pay our respects to their Elders and Community both past and present.

DOUGLAS BOYD
CONDUCTOR

Douglas Boyd is currently Chief Conductor of the Musikkollegium Winterthur, Artistic Director of Garsington Opera and Music Director of L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris.

In recent years he has held the positions of Music Director of Manchester Camerata, Principal Guest Conductor of the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Artistic Partner of St Paul Chamber Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of City of London Sinfonia.

Boyd was born in Glasgow and studied oboe at the Royal Academy of Music in London and with Maurice Bourgue in Paris. He was a founder member and, until 2002, principal oboist of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, which he has also conducted on several occasions.

He has worked with many of the major orchestras in the UK, and is a frequent guest conductor in Europe and the US. His engagements with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in recent years include the complete cycle of Beethoven symphonies in 2011 and Mozart's last three symphonies in 2013.



PAUL LEWIS
PIANO

Paul Lewis' recent cycles of piano works by Beethoven and Schubert have received unanimous acclaim worldwide and consolidated his reputation as one of the world's foremost interpreters of the central European repertoire.

His numerous awards include the Royal Philharmonic Society's Instrumentalist of the Year, two Edison awards, three Gramophone awards, the Diapason d'or de l'année, the Premio Internazionale Accademia Musicale Chigiana, and the South Bank Show Classical Music award. He is currently joint artistic director of the Leeds International Piano Competition.

He performs regularly as soloist with the world's great orchestras and is a frequent guest at the most prestigious international festivals, including Lucerne, Mostly Mozart (New York), Tanglewood, Schubertiade, Salzburg, Edinburgh, and the BBC Proms where in 2010 he became the first pianist to perform a complete Beethoven piano concerto cycle in one season.

Paul Lewis attended London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama before studying privately with Alfred Brendel.





Daring Originality

Five Piano Concertos, written over a period of 15 years. And yet, Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Concertos are without doubt the most influential and iconic works in the genre. Each of the concertos speaks with its own voice and each has a distinct personality.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's first Beethoven Festival in 2011 was dedicated to the nine Symphonies. This year, MSO's Beethoven Festival will put the five Piano Concertos in the spotlight, played by British pianist Paul Lewis. Celebrating daring originality and inquisitive creative minds, the Festival offers newcomers and regular concertgoers alike the opportunity to encounter these great works as performed by one of the best pianists of his generation.

Paul Lewis, a former pupil of Alfred Brendel, has dedicated most of his career so far to the music of Beethoven and Schubert, given impressive performances of Beethoven's 32 Piano Sonatas as well as the Piano Concerto cycle at the BBC Proms.

With the exception of No.5, Beethoven wrote the Concertos for himself to play. Contemporary accounts tell about his virtuosic keyboard skills that went beyond what anybody thought possible on the pianos of his time. His improvisation skills were legendary. At the first performance of the Third Piano Concerto, Beethoven apparently improvised most of the solo part on the spot, since he didn't have the time to write his part out and his sheet music only contained some undecipherable hieroglyphs!

Beethoven's five Piano Concertos document the evolution of the piano from a simple five and a half octave specimen with knee levers instead of pedals, to much more powerful instruments with real pedals that enabled Beethoven to experiment with new colors, textures and techniques.

The Concertos also document the change from the 'classical' style, influenced by Joseph Haydn to what later generations would call the 'romantic' esthetic.

Even if you have heard the Piano Concertos many times, each performance will reveal new layers and new meaning of these timeless masterpieces. It will be a journey of discovery for audience and musicians alike, as our soloist Paul Lewis puts it: 'There's no arrival with these pieces. You never think you've created the definitive performance. It's only ever a sort of work in progress. There are some places, like the opening of the 4th [where the piano has a short solo before the orchestra play a note] where you open the score and think: "Oh, s**t!"'

To complement the concertos, the Festival features the last three *London* symphonies by Joseph Haydn, being the epitome of classical style; the style Beethoven inherited and developed further. And to demonstrate the influence of Beethoven on the later generation of Viennese composers, you will also hear four works by members of the so-called 'Second Viennese School': Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg and Anton Webern. Although some of their works may seem to come from a different planet, closer examination will bring to light that their music in essence is just another step on the same path.

Join us on this fascinating journey through time and discover Beethoven's masterworks!

Ronald Vermeulen, MSO's Director of Artistic Planning

Piano Concerto No.1

Wednesday 7 September at 7pm

ARTISTS

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Douglas Boyd conductor

Paul Lewis piano

REPERTOIRE

Haydn

Symphony No.102

Schoenberg

Chamber Symphony No.1

— Interval —

Beethoven

Piano Concerto No.1

This concert has a duration of approximately 1 hour and 55 minutes, including a 30-minute interval.

This performance will be recorded for broadcast on ABC Classic FM on Friday 23 September at 8pm.

This information is correct at time of print, however please visit mso.com.au/broadcast for the most current information about upcoming concert broadcasts.

 105.9 ABC
Classic FM
abc.net.au/classic

Pre-Concert Talk

6pm Wednesday 7 September, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall

Join MSO Director of Artistic Planning, Ronald Vermeulen, for a pre-concert talk. It's all about style: the classical style and the sonata form.

Interval Conversation

Interval, Wednesday 7 September, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall

Join Gordon Hamilton and special guests for a mid-concert conversation about the artists and works featured in the program.

JOSEPH HAYDN
(1732–1809)

Symphony No.102 in B flat, Hob. I:102

Largo – Vivace

Adagio

Menuetto e Trio (Allegro)

Finale (Presto)

It was with an imposing, newly composed symphony in B flat that Haydn launched what would be his last season as a symphonic composer; it was February 1795. For the fourth, and final, season of his glorious summer in England, the so-called 'Father of the Symphony' found himself with a bigger orchestra (more than 60 players) and a new concert room, capacity 800, in the King's Theatre, Haymarket.

It was there, during an encore of the new symphony's finale, that a chandelier crashed into space vacated by listeners pressing forward to better see Haydn directing from the keyboard. Cries of 'Miracle!' confirmed that no-one was injured. But posterity mistakenly pinned the nickname *Miracle* to the earlier Symphony No.96.

Like all but one of the 12 *London* symphonies (Nos. 93-104) which culminate Haydn's symphonic career, No.102 begins with a slow introduction. Yet from the very melody of the introduction, its first five notes transformed and accelerated, Haydn creates an electrifying main theme for one of his tautest, most concentrated – indeed, one of his loudest – movements. Ushered in by an elegant solo flute, the *Vivace* theme bursts forth irresistibly on full orchestra. The score abounds with abrupt *sforzato* (direction to play with a sudden accent) markings and sustained loud passages but the impression is of contrast, not sheer force. From a development section of unprecedented concentration, a thrilling timpani *crescendo* precipitates a recapitulation which is less an orthodox restatement of the original material than a grand coda to end the movement.

The slow movement examines rhapsodically a single heartfelt theme which Haydn also used in a piano trio for a dear friend and pupil, the widow Rebecca Schroeter.

The fast 'symphonic' minuet is ebullient, scherzo-like, with a heavy peasant tread. A solo oboe and bassoon in tandem sound strangely solemn in the central trio section.

In the finale, however, Haydn plays ducks and drakes with a perky 'rat-a-tat' motif which keeps leading off the main theme, the timpani recalling the 'rat-a-tat' rhythm at the end. This is a movement of high comedy. It ends one of Haydn's most learned and serious symphonies. Who else but he would dare?

Abridged from a note by Anthony Cane © 2010

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this symphony on 14 May 1940 under conductor Antal Dorati, and most recently in May 1986 with Albert Rosen.

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG
(1874–1951)

Chamber Symphony No.1 in E, Op.9

Schoenberg's First Chamber Symphony (1906) appeared after the hyper-Romantic *Transfigured Night* and the gargantuan *Gurrelieder*, and between his first two string quartets. The Op.7 Quartet rethinks Classical form by interpolating distinct movements as episodes in an extended 'first movement' structure. The second quartet (Op.10) is a watershed: it begins in F sharp minor, but by the end Schoenberg has dispensed with any sense of traditional diatonic, or major/minor, harmony.

The Chamber Symphony for 15 instruments forms a link between the two quartets. Like Op.7, it is in one continuous span, but falls into five clearly defined sections which correspond to more traditional free-standing movements. Its use of a large mixed ensemble makes for the clear presentation of often complex textures, as well as a palette of sound which was to dominate much music in the first half of the 20th century.

Alban Berg, Schoenberg's pupil, analysed the piece as:

1. Sonata exposition, corresponding to the opening section of a symphonic first movement
2. Scherzo
3. Development of the thematic material in section 1
4. Quasi adagio, or slow movement
5. Finale, in which elements from section 1 are recapitulated.

Schoenberg also flags the new approach to harmony right at the beginning of the Chamber Symphony. He builds up a chord of superimposed fourths – the characteristic interval of horn calls and fanfares, rather than the thirds which make up major/minor chords – that 'spread architectonically over the entire work, and leave their imprint on all that occurs'. In other words, the distinction between melody and harmony is blurred, a necessary condition for the development of atonal, and later of twelve-note serial music. But it should be remembered that Schoenberg always thought of himself as 'a natural continuer of a properly understood, good, old tradition'. Not that early audiences in Vienna always appreciated this. One listener confessed, 'I do not understand his music, but he is young; perhaps he is right,' but nonetheless confronted and silenced other noisily protesting patrons. His name was Gustav Mahler.

Abridged from a note by Gordon Kerry
Symphony Australia © 2004

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this work in June 2004 and most recently in January 2009 at the Melbourne Recital Centre. The conductor on both occasions was Oleg Caetani.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No.1 in C, Op.15

Allegro con brio

Largo

Rondo (Allegro)

Paul Lewis piano

When Beethoven first performed this concerto in Prague in 1798, it had a demoralising effect on his peers. 'Beethoven's magnificent playing and particularly daring flights of his improvisation moved me strangely,' the Czech pianist and composer Václav Jan Tomášek wrote subsequently. 'Indeed I felt so humbled that I did not touch my own piano for several days afterwards.'

Given an impact like that, together with the fact that Beethoven himself thought highly enough of the concerto to write out three different cadenzas for it, it's surprising that he described it to a publisher as 'not one of my best compositions of that type'. Despite having been composed after the concerto now known as No.2, this work was the first to be published and hence bears the title of 'No.1'.

In fact, Beethoven had performed both of his first two concertos on that visit to Prague in 1798, playing this one on the first night and 'No.2' on the second. This C major concerto calls for a slightly larger orchestra than its predecessor, employing clarinets, trumpets and timpani, and while they are used quite sparingly, they bring with them a greater expressive range within the orchestra.

Where the opening movement of Concerto No.2 uses up to nine themes, in this work this is reduced to four. Again there is a lengthy orchestral ritornello. When we do hear the piano, it's with an entirely new idea which makes only a fleeting appearance in the concerto as a whole. This opening movement is laid out on a grand scale and calls for extreme virtuosity from the soloist.

The *Largo* moves into the key of A flat with a glorious melody which generates great richness of tone throughout the orchestra. There is an inherently 'poetic' feeling in the rapt stillness of this movement and it's filled with subtle lyrical invention, ending with a coda in which the piano weaves in and out of the clarinets.

Then Beethoven repeats the formula not only of his 'Second' Concerto but also of those of Mozart in finishing with a boisterous *Rondo*.

Abridged from a note by Martin Buzacott © 2003

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this concerto in 1939 with pianist Artur Schnabel conducted by George Szell. The Orchestra most recently performed it in April 2012 with soloist/director Olli Mustonen.

'Beethoven's magnificent playing and particularly daring flights of his improvisation moved me strangely... Indeed I felt so humbled that I did not touch my own piano for several days afterwards.'

Czech pianist and composer Václav Jan Tomášek upon first hearing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No.1 in 1798.

Piano Concerto Nos.2 & 3

Saturday 10 September at 7pm

ARTISTS

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Douglas Boyd conductor

Paul Lewis piano

REPERTOIRE

Beethoven

Piano Concerto No.2

Webern

Five Movements

— Interval —

Beethoven

Piano Concerto No.3

This concert has a duration of approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes, including a 30-minute interval.

This performance will be recorded for broadcast on ABC Classic FM on Saturday 24 September at 1pm.

This information is correct at time of print, however please visit mso.com.au/broadcast for the most current information about upcoming concert broadcasts.



Pre-Concert Talk – Beer, Beethoven & Chat

5.30pm – 6.30pm Saturday 10 September, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall

Join Gordon Hamilton for a pre-concert talk about Beethoven with examples and performances by the Australian String Quartet.

Interval Conversation

Interval, Saturday 10 September, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall

Join Gordon Hamilton for a mid-concert conversation with members of the Australian String Quartet and MSO musicians.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

(1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No.2 in B flat, Op.19

Allegro con brio

Adagio

Rondo, molto Allegro

Paul Lewis piano

The Piano Concerto No.2 was Beethoven's first concerto to be played in Vienna. The occasion was a concert in the Burgtheater in 1795. Beethoven's playing in the salons of the aristocracy had already gained him a reputation as a solo pianist of extraordinary skill and daring, and a remarkable improviser – his skill in this direction may even have extended to his playing of the solo part in the concerto, for, when he was introducing a concerto himself, he did not bother to write out the solo part. Beethoven later revised the concerto for performances in Vienna and Prague with different soloists, and he withheld it from publication until 1801, which explains why it is numbered 2 although it was written before the published No.1.

The concerto was the first 'symphonic' work of Beethoven's to be heard in Vienna, and, not surprisingly, the orchestra spreads its wings at the outset. Once the piano starts playing it dominates the discourse, with many passages obviously designed to show off Beethoven's pianistic skills. The cadenza for this movement was not written until 1809, perhaps for Beethoven's pupil the Archduke Rudolf.

The *Adagio* is a truly slow movement, whereas Mozart's concerto slow movements are usually marked *Andante*. As in many such movements in early Beethoven, the treatment of the theme by the piano becomes increasingly elaborate and decorative. The movement is distinguished by an eloquent – and prophetic – ending, where the soloist has a recitative-like utterance alternating with the orchestra's statement of the theme in broken phrases.

The infectious last movement is a *Rondo*, whose hunting style is familiar from some of Mozart's concertos in B flat; but it is more boisterous than anything in Mozart, mainly through Beethoven's handling of the off-beat accents. The rhythmic placement of these accents is an important building block of the movement. There is a pleasant surprise at the end, where Beethoven again follows Mozart's precedent by introducing a new theme in the *coda*, a popular touch, followed by some Beethovenian humour. This is Beethoven the eloquent entertainer indeed, not much loved by his fellow-pianists, and we can see why if we compare this concerto he wrote to display his wares with the contemporary products of Hummel, Dussek, Clementi and others!

Abridged from a note © David Garrett

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's first performance of this concerto took place on 2 February 1944. The pianist was Edward Goll and conductor, Bernard Heinze. The Orchestra's most recent performance was in March 2014, with Benjamin Northey and soloist Jayson Gillham.

ANTON VON WEBERN

(1883–1945)

Five Movements for string orchestra, Op.5

Heftig bewegt

Sehr langsam

Sehr bewegt

Sehr langsam

In zarter Bewegung

In one of the great 'what if...?' scenarios of music history, Webern approached Hans Pfitzner in Berlin for composition lessons in 1904. Pfitzner's reactionary views on the music of Richard Strauss and Mahler gave Webern pause, and he returned to Vienna where he began his association with Arnold Schoenberg. Webern's period of formal study with Schoenberg lasted from 1904 to 1908, after which he began to compose in earnest, producing two sets of five songs on texts by the Expressionist poet Stefan George and then the Five Movements for string quartet, Op.5 in 1909 (in 1928 he created the string orchestra version which will be performed in this concert). These pieces, not yet as aphoristic as the Op.9 Bagatelles, are nonetheless striking in their economy and brevity, while at the same time exploring a huge range of colour and emotional territory.

This is clear in the first movement. While exploring atonality – the principle where the composer avoids making any specific note or chord into a point of repose – Webern's music retains traces of the emotive language of late Romantic music. Similarly, in the second and fifth pieces in the set there is a sense of the music's wanting to create longer lines rather than terse gestures. Not that these are absent, however: the tiny third movement has a pithy, assertive and perhaps ironic quality; the fourth – whose 'mystical opiated quality' reminded Glenn Gould of the paintings of Kandinsky – introduces a number of new colours which, as we have heard, Webern would go on to exploit further in later works.

Gould went on to argue that the sensuality of these pieces reflects 'the very essence of the romantic ideal of emotional intensity in art ... Almost more than any other music this work symbolises, for me, the instability of its period, the close of an epoch, and the over-lapping of ideals from a new era.' What would Pfitzner have thought?

Gordon Kerry © 2004

The only previous performance of this work by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra took place under the direction of Brett Dean in April 2011.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

(1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No.3 in C minor, Op.37

Allegro con brio

Largo

Rondo (Allegro)

Paul Lewis piano

'You and I will never be able to do anything like that!' exclaimed Beethoven to fellow-pianist and composer Johann Baptist Cramer, as they listened to a rehearsal of the last movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto in C minor (K491). When in 1803 he composed for the first time a piano concerto in a minor key, Beethoven chose the key of Mozart's great tragic C minor concerto. No work illustrates better than Beethoven's Third Piano Concerto the similarities and contrasts between his concertos and those of his greatest predecessor in this form.

Beethoven's Third Concerto is altogether more expansive than its part-model by Mozart, but also less concentrated in effect, more varied in mood and less dominated by the minor key. The first movement's orchestral exposition shifts early into the major, and this alternation becomes a feature of the concerto. The energy of the first movement is remarkable: it has the confidence, the robustness of Beethoven's first maturity, the period of the *Kreutzer* Sonata for piano and violin, and the *Eroica* Variations for piano solo.

The *Largo* begins in extraordinary calm, a mysterious effect like unearthly suspended motion, heightened by the choice of a key – E major – very distant from the C minor of the first movement. The theme, spacious, sublime yet emotional in expression, sounds a new voice which Beethoven brought to music. Later it is decorated in a richly florid manner, developing into an imitation of an operatic singer's cadenza.

The *Rondo* shows Beethoven in his 'unbuttoned' mood – a rollicking theme of rustic flavour, with the irregular accents of some peasant dance. Some of the episodes of this *Rondo* are predominantly lyrical, others more forceful, and there is a passage of fugato development. Beethoven must have enjoyed playing this concerto, which reveals the lyrical, assertive and humorous aspects of his musical personality in such equable balance – the piano keeps the lead to the end in a presto C major *coda*, with off-beat interjections for the woodwinds: a high-spirited ending, like an opera *buffa* finale, in which the composer again joins hands with Mozart.

Abridged from a note by David Garrett © 2003

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this work in February 1944, conducted by Bernard Heinze with soloist Raymond Lambert, and most recently in June 2014 with conductor Olari Elts and pianist Piers Lane.



Beethoven Piano Concerto No.3;
Title page from first edition,
and Cadenza of the first movement
from original score.

Piano Concerto No.4

Wednesday 14 September at 7pm

ARTISTS

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Douglas Boyd conductor

Paul Lewis piano

REPERTOIRE

Haydn

Symphony No.103 *Drumroll*

Beethoven

Piano Concerto No.4

— Interval —

Schoenberg

Transfigured Night

This concert has a duration of approximately 1 hours and 55 minutes, including a 30-minute interval.

This performance will be recorded for broadcast on ABC Classic FM on Saturday 24 September at 8pm.

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Pre-Concert Talk

6pm Wednesday 14 September, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall

Join MSO Director of Artistic Planning, Ronald Vermeulen, for a pre-concert talk about the development of the orchestra, concert life and the piano.

Interval Conversation

Interval, Wednesday 14 September, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall

Join host Christopher Lawrence and pianist Paul Lewis for a mid-concert conversation.

JOSEPH HAYDN
(1732–1809)

Symphony No.103 in E flat, Hob. I:103 *Drumroll*

Adagio – Allegro con spirito

Andante

Menuetto (Allegro)

Allegro con spirito

Haydn's work became increasingly available throughout Europe from the early 1780s when he began publishing his works abroad. He himself, however, was obliged to remain at the splendid but isolated Eszterháza Castle in rural Hungary, overseeing the huge amount of music performed there for his employer, Prince Nikolaus. Nikolaus died in 1790, and his successor, Prince Anton, was not overly fond of music. So, in 1791-92 the sexagenarian composer was able to visit London at the request of the impresario Johann Peter Salomon and was feted as the greatest composer of his day.

For his second visit in 1794-95 Haydn composed six symphonies which are the crowning achievement of his work in that genre: the second set (Nos 99-104) of his so-called *London* symphonies.

The gesture which gives his penultimate symphony its nickname is, of course, the opening unaccompanied timpani roll. This is followed by a mysterious slow introduction that outlines the first four notes of the Gregorian *Dies irae* chant and leads to the succeeding *Allegro con spirito*. Towards the end of the movement Haydn reminds us of the introduction, both by using themes derived from it, and by literally revisiting it after an extraordinary passage of string tremolos.

For sophistication we can't go past the double variations which make up the *Andante*, except that the two themes of the movement seem to be derived from Slavonic or Hungarian folk-tunes.

The grace notes, short motives and leaping and falling intervals of the *Menuetto* make it, as Haydn scholar H.C. Robbins Landon puts it, 'a genuine Austrian yodel' which contrasts with the much more genteel trio section.

The Finale begins with a horn call which turns effortlessly into the accompaniment for another Croatian melody. One of Haydn's most extended and sophisticated finales, it is based entirely on that one theme, put through all the paces of a symphonic sonata-rondo. Robbins Landon has pointed out that one of the many details which make this movement great is Haydn's subtle writing for the timpani, with which, of course, the work began, freeing it from merely underlining the bass parts, and contributing to the marvellous rush of energy with which the piece concludes.

Abridged from a note by Gordon Kerry
Symphony Australia © 2002

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed Haydn's Drumroll Symphony in April 1956 under the direction of Kurt Woess, and most recently in August 1992 with Richard Mills.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No.4 in G, Op.58

Allegro moderato

Andante con moto

Rondo (Vivace)

Paul Lewis piano

The question of how to begin is a judicious one and, for a composer so attuned to the effect of novelty on audiences as Beethoven, one of some consequence. Accordingly, in his Fourth Piano Concerto he broke with established traditions and allowed the soloist to have the first word. Given this innovation, it seems surprising that after two performances the work remained obscure until Mendelssohn's famous 1836 revival. Its first performance had been before a select audience in March 1807 at the home of Prince Lobkowitz about a year after its completion. Its second outing was at a marathon concert at the Theater an der Wien in December 1808, during which were also heard the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, the Mass in C and the *Choral Fantasy*, the composer appearing as conductor and soloist.

The pianist's introduction of the principal theme is subdued, and like many of Beethoven's works from the time it is built on repeated-note patterns. The orchestra responds quietly in the distant key of B major, although a return to the tonic is swiftly engineered for the customary orchestral *tutti*. Beethoven was highly esteemed for his keyboard skills, and the soloist's passagework is appropriately detailed and refined. While cadenzas were later penned by a rollcall of greats (Brahms, Anton Rubinstein, Busoni and Godowsky among them), the concerto is now typically heard with the longer of two written by the composer.

The second movement is notable for its innovative structure and stands in contrast to the expansive opening movement through its relative brevity. It takes the form of a dialogue between piano and orchestra, in which the latter's forceful insistency is slowly tempered by the former's muted entreaties, a setting which drew comparisons to Gluck's portrayal of Orfeo calming the Furies in his opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*.

Although it begins quietly, the theme of the final movement is driven by a pervasive rhythm (a repeated-note pattern again at its core), while the overall buoyant character is enhanced by the introduction of trumpets and timpani. Through changes in tempo and mood (and a further cadenza), the coda balances in its novelty, while the orchestra's insistent restating of the movement's rhythmic motto over the final bars ensures a triumphant close.

Abridged from a note by Scott Davie © 2015

The Melbourne Symphony was the first of the Australian state orchestras to perform this concerto, on 7 May 1938 with pianist Marjorie Summers, conducted by Georg Szell. The Orchestra most recently performed it in June 2014 with Diego Matheuz and Saleem Ashkar.

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG

(1874–1951)

Transfigured Night (Verklärte Nacht), Op.4

Transfigured Night was premiered in Vienna in 1902. The first audience was baffled, but it soon became Schoenberg's most frequently performed work.

The piece is neo-Wagnerian and late Romantic, but in retrospect we can see that there is continuity between the 12-note Schoenberg and the style of *Transfigured Night* – both in expressive content and musical technique. The tension between chromatic and diatonic harmonies in a complex polyphonic web illustrates the problems which Schoenberg would face as he pushed further along the same line of stylistic development.

Originally composed for string sextet (tonight you will hear Schoenberg's 1943 version for orchestral strings), *Transfigured Night* loads great expression into each line in the texture. Egon Wellesz felt that this intensity was better conveyed with more than one player to each part, and Schoenberg's arrangements suggest that he agreed. Each strand is essential, and needs tensile strength to bear the weight of musical development and emotional expression. When played by larger forces it seems even closer to being, as has been suggested, a tone-poem or a music drama without words.

The work was inspired by a Richard Dehmel poem concerning a conversation in a moonlit forest between two lovers, in which the woman tells the man she has conceived a child by another. The man, inspired by the radiance of the natural world, tells her that the warmth now uniting them will transfigure the child and make it theirs. They embrace, and walk on through the 'bright, lofty night'.

The structure of the 'symphonic' drama follows that of the poem itself: five sections, of which the first, third and fifth, describing the lovers' walking and the setting, frame two more extended statements, one by the woman, one by the man. The music can equally well be experienced as a large-scale single movement, in which the basic thematic motives heard at the beginning are transformed. Schoenberg learnt this method from Wagner, to whose music he had recently been introduced, having previously regarded himself as a Brahmsian. The most telling example of thematic transformation is in the closing pages, where the opening motif is delicately yet radiantly reworked: a *Liebesleben* (Love-Life) rather than a *Liebestod* (Love-Death).

Abridged from a note by David Garrett © 2001

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this work in April 1951 under the direction of Bernard Heinze, and most recently in April 2003 with Kolja Blacher.

Transfigured Night (Verklärte Nacht)

Richard Dehmel (1863–1920)

Two figures pass through the bare, cold grove;
the moon accompanies them, they gaze into it.
The moon races above some tall oaks;
No trace of a cloud filters the sky's light,
into which the dark treetops stretch.
A female voice speaks:

I am carrying a child, and not yours;
I walk in sin beside you.
I have deeply sinned against myself.
I no longer believed in happiness
And yet was full of longing
For a life with meaning, for the joy
And duty of maternity; so I dared
And, quaking, let my sex
Be taken by a stranger,
And was blessed by it.
Now life has taken its revenge,
For now I have met you, yes you.

She takes an awkward step.
She looks up: the moon races alongside her.
Her dark glance is saturated with light.
A male voice speaks:

Let the child you have conceived
Be no trouble to your soul.
How brilliantly the universe shines!
It casts a luminosity on everything;
you float with me upon a cold sea,
but a peculiar warmth glimmers
from you to me, and then from me to you.
Thus is transfigured the child of another man;
You will bear it for me, as my own;
You have brought your luminosity to me,
You have made me a child myself.

He clasps her round her strong hips.
Their kisses mingle breath in the night air.
Two humans pass through the high, clear night.

Piano Concerto No.5

Saturday 17 September at 7pm

ARTISTS

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Douglas Boyd conductor

Paul Lewis piano

REPERTOIRE

Haydn

Symphony No.104 *London*

Berg/Yu

Piano Sonata

— Interval —

Beethoven

Piano Concerto No.5 *Emperor*

This concert has a duration of approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes, including a 20-minute interval.

This performance will be recorded for broadcast on ABC Classic FM on Sunday 25 September at 1pm.

This information is correct at time of print, however please visit mso.com.au/broadcast for the most current information about upcoming concert broadcasts.



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6pm Saturday 17 September, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall

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Post-Concert Conversation

9pm Saturday 17 September, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall

Join us for a post-concert discussion with host Christopher Lawrence, Paul Lewis, Douglas Boyd, Julian Yu and MSO musicians.

FRANZ JOSEPH HAYDN
(1732–1809)

Symphony No.104 in D, Hob. I:104 *London*

Adagio – Allegro

Andante

Menuet – Trio

Finale (Spiritoso)

The *Adagio* introduction to Haydn's last symphony portends a statement of some finality. We can recognise with hindsight that Haydn knew this work would be not only his symphonic farewell to London – the city that had accorded him his greatest honour and acclaim – but also his farewell to the symphony. It was premiered on 4 May 1795 in the King's Theatre, Haymarket, in possibly the greatest concert of Haydn's life, the benefit concert which crowned his fourth and final London season.

The fanfare-like motto that opens the work determines the terms on which the music will unfold. The entire orchestra leaps up a fifth and then down a fourth; the strings then quietly play with this four-note motto, moving up and down the interval of a second. These three basic intervals (second, fourth and fifth), which will unify the whole symphony, are then immediately evident in an exhilarating *Allegro* which evolves from the stern introduction.

The slow movement is introduced with utter simplicity and elegance by strings alone, later joined by bassoons, before an angry interjection from the full orchestra; a general pause allows peace to be restored in the wake of the turbulent development. In the recapitulation, solo winds take over the theme from the strings and shift the harmony through remote realms, before spiralling gently back to the home key.

Sforzato accents impart something of a gypsy flavour to the *Menuet*, a dance here far removed from its elegant social origins.

Europe's most feted composer turns in his last symphonic movement to something completely down to earth: over a sustained drone bass he introduces a folk-like melody now believed to be of Croatian origin. No light-hearted romp, this finale grows into a broad symphonic movement to balance the opening *Allegro*.

A member of the audience noted in the margin of a surviving 1795 handbill that the 'London' Symphony was 'grand but very noisy'. Of course, Haydn intended his orchestra of 'more than sixty instrumental performers' playing in the small concert room of the King's Theatre to make a considerable impact. The sound his London audience experienced would be virtually unimaginable to those used to so-called 'Classically'-sized orchestras cowering in the vast expanses of modern concert halls.

Adapted from a note © Anthony Cane

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this symphony on 12 October 1949 under conductor Bernard Heinze, and most recently in November 2007 with Markus Stenz.

ALBAN BERG ORCH. JULIAN YU
(1885-1935)

Piano Sonata, Op.1

In the early 1980s I came out of the closed and conservative world of China to the free world of Tokyo to study contemporary music, starting with Schoenberg and Webern. My first impression was that this music was very dissonant, dry and abstract. In such an environment, I was relieved to hear the music of Alban Berg with its late-Romantic style, which seemed more expressive and musical.

Of the works of Berg that I studied, the one that I liked most was his Sonata, Op.1 for piano. I was particularly taken with its texture and voice-leading, which blended the traditional with the modern. As soon as I saw this work I thought that it should be arranged for orchestra.

This piece was Berg's first major instrumental work. Initially he intended it to be in three movements along the lines of the traditional sonata. However, after completing the first movement, he felt that he had nothing more to write. Having just started to learn composition from Schoenberg, he asked the opinion of his teacher, who commented reassuringly, 'You have already said all that is needed.' So the sonata remained as one movement only.

I first orchestrated this piece as a student in the early 1980s, and returned to it in 1992. In preparation for an intended performance by the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra in 2014, I set about creating a computerised copy in order to produce the parts, a process which entailed yet further revision. Berg's musical language is complicated and multi-layered, with all the voices interweaving, so it is an interesting and exhilarating challenge to orchestrate his Piano Sonata, but one to which I have returned many times and enjoyed immensely.

© Julian Yu

This is the first performance of this work by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

(1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No.5 in E flat, Op.73, *Emperor*

Allegro

Adagio un poco mosso –

Rondo (Allegro)

Paul Lewis piano

In May 1809 Napoleon's armies occupied Vienna for the second time. Beethoven took shelter with his brother Carl and his wife Johanna and to protect his failing hearing spent the bombardment with pillows over his ears in the cellar. Before, during and after the invasion and despite his misery, Beethoven managed to work and, among other compositions, completed the Fifth Piano Concerto.

By this time Beethoven's deafness made it impossible for him to perform with an orchestra, so the concerto's first performance in Leipzig in 1811 was given by a young organist, Friedrich Schneider. At the Viennese premiere in 1812, Carl Czerny was soloist. Given the circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the concerto is, in Alfred Einstein's words, the 'apotheosis of the military concept' in Beethoven's music.

In the Fifth Concerto, Beethoven solved the problem of how to exploit the soloist's virtuosity without downgrading the role of the orchestra, while constructing the kind of musical argument and drama which was so crucial to the Classical style. The overwhelming impression left by the first movement is of ceremonial grandeur and pomp – hence the nickname (not authorised by Beethoven) of 'Emperor'. But the movement's massive scale is made possible by the frequent contrast of the 'military' (characteristic march rhythms) and the reflective.

The short central *Adagio*, rightly described as dreamlike by one writer, is in B major, which in terms of Classical tonal logic is a fair way away from the 'home' key of E flat. And its mood couldn't be further from the military episodes, despite its material being dominated by the scales and trills that featured in the first movement.

The transition from the slow movement into the Finale is almost imperceptible – Beethoven changes a note here or there to subtly change the direction of the music as it seems to fade, and the piano begins ruminating on a common chord which will ultimately flower as the final movement's bounding theme, which again is contrasted with moments of deep calm. Whatever the misery in which Beethoven wrote this work, or its immediate political context, it turns out to be another ode to joy.

Abridged from a note by Gordon Kerry © 2003

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto in 1943 with conductor E.J. Roberts and soloist Joyce Greer, and most recently in September 2013 with Bernard Labadie and Marc-André Hamelin.

'Music is the one incorporeal entrance into the higher world of knowledge which comprehends mankind but which mankind cannot comprehend.'

Ludwig van Beethoven

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Grzegorz Curyla**
Guest Principal

Adrian Uren*‡
Guest Principal

Saul Lewis
Principal Third

Jenna Breen

Abbey Edlin

Trinette McClimont

Trumpets

Geoffrey Payne
Principal

Shane Hooton
Associate Principal

William Evans

Julie Payne

Trombones

Brett Kelly
Principal

Iain Faragher*

Bass Trombone

Mike Szabo
Principal

Tuba

Timothy Buzbee
Principal

Timpani

Christine Turpin
Principal

Percussion

Robert Clarke
Principal

John Arcaro

Robert Cossom

Harp

Yinuo Mu
Principal

Alannah Guthrie-Jones*
Guest Principal

^o Position supported by
* Guest Musician

† Courtesy of Sydney
Symphony Orchestra
‡ Courtesy of Malaysian
Philharmonic Orchestra

‡ Courtesy of Adelaide
Symphony Orchestra

£ Appears courtesy of ANAM

MSO and ANAM
Musicians from the Australian National Academy are joining the MSO for these Beethoven Festival performances. The musicians have been carefully selected to participate and received mentoring from members of the MSO in preparation for first concerts with the Orchestra.

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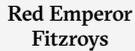
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