

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

CONCERT PROGRAM



An Evening with the MSO

Tuesday 11 October at 8pm
Ulumbarra Theatre, Bendigo

Thursday 13 October at 7.30pm
Wangaratta Performing Arts Centre

Wednesday 12 October at 8pm
Eastbank Centre, Shepparton

Saturday 15 October at 8pm
Frankston Arts Centre



Principal Partner

ARTISTS

Brett Kelly
conductor

Sophie Rowell
violin

Christopher Cartlidge
viola

REPERTOIRE

Mendelssohn
*A Midsummer Night's
Dream: Overture*

Mozart
Sinfonia concertante,
for violin and viola

Haydn
Symphony No.104
London

SUPPORTERS

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FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY

(1809–1847)

A Midsummer Night's Dream: Overture, Op.21

Mendelssohn's overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* begins with four woodwind chords, poised and shimmering in the night air, an evocation of Hippolyta's first lines in Shakespeare's play:

*Four days will quickly steep themselves in night;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow new bent in heaven,
shall behold the night of our solemnities.*

Then the fairies enter: feathery whisperings from the violins. This is magical music from a composer who lived and breathed Shakespeare. Felix Mendelssohn's family entertained themselves with readings of Shakespeare plays, not just in German translations but in English too. And one day, when he was 17, Felix decided he'd go into the garden and 'dream there' music for his 'favourite among old Will's beloved plays'. He knew this was 'an enormous audacity', but the result – a 12-minute overture – is an undisputed masterpiece, worthy of the inspiration.

It wasn't all written during that afternoon in the garden. Typically for Mendelssohn, he made painstaking revisions, striving to 'to imitate the content of the play in tones' and bring its character to life. Where the original draft (according to his friend Adolph Bernhard Marx) was simply delightful and charming, the final version is dreamlike, full of elfin humor and musical enchantments.

To those opening chords and fairy music Mendelssohn added the lyrical wanderings of the mortal lovers in the forest, the horns of the hunting party and the boisterous rustics. And although he was tempted to leave it out, his friends persuaded him to keep the comical braying of Bottom with his ass's head (listen for the downward swooping 'ee-yore' in the violins). Within the conventions of classical form, Mendelssohn evokes the whimsy and confusion of the plot, and the fairies have the last word (as in the play) with the return of the four woodwind chords from the opening.

© Yvonne Frindle

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed Mendelssohn's Midsummer Night's Dream Overture on 21 May 1938, conducted by George Szell. The MSO most recently performed it in July 2016 under Alexander Shelley.



Principal Partner

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART
(1756–1791)

Sinfonia concertante in E flat for violin,
viola and orchestra, K364

Allegro maestoso

Andante

Presto

Sophie Rowell violin
Christopher Carlidge viola

Mozart was an accomplished violinist, good enough to play his own concertos in public, but it was mainly pressure from his father which led him to write the concertos and to keep up his practising. His main instrument was the piano, and in string quartets, like many a string-playing composer, he preferred to play the viola. If his violin concertos were a duty, this 'Concertante Symphony' for violin with viola was obviously a labour of love. It is one of a sheaf of masterpieces composed after Mozart's travels of 1778, during which he had begun writing for musicians outside Salzburg, at Mannheim and in Paris. This Sinfonia concertante, however, was probably intended for musicians in Salzburg, most likely Antonio Brunetti and Joseph Hafeneder of the court orchestra there.

The sinfonia concertante was a form enormously popular at the time, showing off the skills of a group of instrumentalists from within the fine orchestras which were developing for public concerts. Mozart had recently been in Paris, where the sinfonia concertante craze was at its height. Usually such works were less tightly written than a symphony, and made more concessions to virtuosity, but Mozart's K364 is an exception. It reveals elements of the Baroque concerto grosso in the close interplay between the soloists and the band, but the writing is on the scale of a symphony.

The first movement, marked 'majestically', includes a lengthy orchestral build-up of the kind then being made famous by the Mannheim Orchestra. A magical moment is the emergence of the two solo instruments from the orchestral mass, and their interplay affectionately and songfully explores the characteristic sound registers of violin and viola in turn.

As in several of Mozart's great piano concertos in E flat, the slow movement is in C minor, the relative minor, for Mozart a key of brooding and profound pathos. In the finale, which is in the rhythm of a contredanse, the two soloists bid farewell in turn in a rising passage of considerable virtuosity.

Abridged from a note © David Garrett

The first performance by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra took place on 3 March 1956 in a Mozart Festival concert to commemorate the bicentenary of Mozart's birth conducted by Bernard Heinze. The soloists were Sybil Copeland and John Glickman.

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.

In his last symphonic movement Europe's most feted composer turns 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 September 2016 with Douglas Boyd.

BRETT KELLY
CONDUCTOR

Brett Kelly is regularly engaged to conduct the Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Tasmanian, Queensland and West Australian symphony orchestras, the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, and Dunedin's Southern Sinfonia, has conducted for Victorian Opera and has been resident conductor for Chamber Made Opera. He has been the featured conductor on numerous recordings for NAXOS, Tall Poppies and ABC Classics with his recording of the Rodrigo Guitar Concertos featuring Slava and Leonard Grigoryan nominated for a 2006 Aria Award. In 1989 he founded The Academy of Melbourne which, over some fifteen years, became widely regarded as one of Australia's most outstanding chamber ensembles. He holds the position of Principal Trombonist with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

SOPHIE ROWELL
VIOLIN

Associate Concertmaster with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, violinist Sophie Rowell has had an extensive performing career as a soloist, chamber musician and principal orchestral violinist both in Australia and abroad. After winning the ABC Young Performer's Award in 2000, Sophie founded the Tankstream Quartet which in 2006 were appointed to the Australian String Quartet. Sophie studied with Beryl Kimber in her hometown of Adelaide then with Alice Waten in Sydney. She now teaches at the Australian National Academy of Music.

CHRISTOPHER CARTLIDGE
VIOLA

Sydney-born violist Christopher Cartlidge studied on a full scholarship at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music and the Australian National Academy of Music, and was the recipient of several awards including the UTas Director's Prize, and the UTas Dean's Roll of Excellence. Chris has been a full-time member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra since 2011, where he has also appeared on numerous occasions as Principal Viola. He has appeared as Guest Principal with Orchestra Victoria and Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, and Guest Associate Principal with both Victorian Opera and the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra. He has also worked with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, and is regularly invited to perform with the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

ORCHESTRA

First Violins

Sophie Rowell
Associate Concertmaster
(The Ullmer Family Foundation^o)

Peter Edwards
Assistant Principal

Kirsty Bremner

Peter Fellin

Deborah Goodall

Lorraine Hook

Kirstin Kenny

Michelle Ruffolo

Kathryn Taylor
(Michael Aquilina^o)

Robert John*

Second Violins

Monica Curro
Assistant Principal
(Danny Gorog & Lindy Susskind^o)

Mary Allison

Freya Franzen

Andrew Hall

Rachel Homburg

Isy Wasserman

Roger Young

Amy Brookman*

Violas

Lauren Brigden
Acting Assistant Principal

Christopher Cartlidge

Trevor Jones

Cindy Watkin

Simon Collins*

Isabel Morse*

Cellos

David Berlin
Principal
(MS Newman Family^o)

Miranda Brockman

Michelle Wood
(Andrew & Theresa Dyer^o)

Simon Svoboda*

Double Basses

Steve Reeves
Principal

Benjamin Hanlon

Stuart Riley*

Flutes

Prudence Davis
Principal
(Anonymous^o)

Sarah Beggs

Piccolo

Andrew Macleod
Principal

Oboes

Jeffrey Crellin
Principal

Ann Blackburn

Cor Anglais

Michael Pisani
Principal

Clarinets

Philip Arkininstall
Associate Principal

Bass Clarinet

Jon Craven
Principal

Bassoons

Jack Schiller
Principal

Contrabassoon

Brock Imison
Principal

Horns

Saul Lewis
Principal Third

Abbey Edlin

Trinette McClimont

Robert Shirley*

Trumpets

Geoffrey Payne
Principal

Julie Payne

Bass Trombone

Elijah Cornish*

Tuba

Alex Hurst*

Timpani

Christine Turpin
Principal

Percussion

Robert Clarke
Principal

* Guest Musician
^o Position supported by