Melbourne Symphony Orchestra
Joshua Weilerstein conductor
Jayson Gillham piano

Beethoven Piano Concerto No.3

INTERVAL

Brahms Intermezzo Op.117 No.1
Brahms Piano Quartet No.1

Running time: Two hours, including a 20-minute interval

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Established in 1906, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO) is an arts leader and Australia’s oldest professional orchestra. Chief Conductor Sir Andrew Davis has been at the helm of MSO since 2013. Engaging more than 4 million people each year, the MSO reaches diverse audiences through live performances, recordings, TV and radio broadcasts and live streaming. Its international audiences include China, where MSO has performed in 2012, 2016 and most recently in May 2018, Europe (2014) and Indonesia, where in 2017 it performed at the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Prambanan Temple.

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Joshua Weilerstein is Artistic Director of the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra. He served as Assistant Conductor at the New York Philharmonic (2011-14), and won the Malko Competition for Young Conductors in 2009.

As a conductor, he covers a wide repertoire. Recent appearances have seen Weilerstein conduct the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen in music of Ravel, Sibelius and Caroline Shaw, the world-premiere of Igudesman & Joo’s concert-theatre piece *Clash of the Soloists* with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, music of Berg, Pärt and Dvořák with Sweden’s Lahti Symphony, and a rare performance, with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra, of the Symphony in E minor of Florence Beatrice Price (1887-1953).

Weilerstein is also committed to music education and audience-performer communication, particularly through *Sticky Notes*, his regular podcast.
Winner of the 2014 Montreal International Musical Competition, London-based Australian pianist Jayson Gillham performs with the world’s leading orchestras and conductors.

Recent concerts have included Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No.3 and Chopin’s Concerto No.2 with Alexander Shelley and the Royal Philharmonic and Grieg’s Piano Concerto with Victor Aviat and the Bournemouth Symphony. Later this year he appears with the Auckland Philharmonia and Christchurch Symphony, and at the Huntington Festival.

In May 2015 Jayson Gillham signed a three-album recording deal with ABC Classics. 2016 saw the release of his debut recital album featuring works by Bach, Schubert and Chopin, and in 2017 Jayson recorded works by Medtner and Rachmaninov with the MSO and Benjamin Northey.

A graduate of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Jayson relocated to London in 2007. In 2012 Jayson was named Commonwealth Musician of the Year.
LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN
(1770-1827)
Piano Concerto No.3 in C minor, Op.37
Allegro con brio
Largo
Rondo (Allegro)

‘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). Beethoven’s reaction may have seemed incredible to the Beethoven-worshipping generations whose appreciation of Mozart was partial and patronising, but great musicians know how to appraise each other, and Beethoven’s admiration for Mozart is obvious from his music as well as from his words. 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 of music.

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 essential musical material of this movement is all in the opening phrases, which consist of an upward arpeggio, a downward scale, then a figure of a drum-tap. This last figure becomes almost dominant in the development, and its character is confirmed in the coda of the movement, when it is at last played by the kettledrums. This coda, incidentally, follows Mozart’s C minor concerto in bringing the piano back to join the orchestra after the cadenza has ended on an almost suspended chord, which leads the music into an unexpected key.

Like the end of the movement, its beginning is notable: a very long orchestral presentation of the themes, including a flowing, warm and lyrical one: fine music, but like a symphony rather than a concerto – when will the piano play? Its eventual entry is a bold one, rushing furiously up the keyboard in a scale of C minor, but it is no surprise to find that in his subsequent two piano concertos Beethoven brought the piano in at the start.

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. In the middle part of the movement the sonorities are romantically
atmospheric, as flute and bassoon exchange antiphonal phrases over rolling piano arpeggios, the piano below and pizzicato strings playing above.

The Rondo shows Beethoven in his ‘unbuttoned’ mood – a rollicking theme of rustic flavour, with the irregular accents of some peasant dance. The snapping rhythm continues in the second theme, separated from the first by a striking passage of C minor wind chords alternating with piano arpeggios. 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.

David Garrett © 2005

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this work in February 1944, conducted by Sir Bernard Heinze with soloist Raymond Lambert, and most recently on 10 September 2016, with Douglas Boyd and Paul Lewis.

JOHANNES BRAHMS
(1833-1897)
arr. PAUL KLENGEL
(1854-1935)
Intermezzo in E flat, Op.117 No.1

In 1891, the 58-year-old Brahms began to feel that he had completed his life’s work; he would write no more orchestral music, and had brought his chamber music to a pinnacle in the String Quintet, Op.111. He put his personal affairs in order, but, fortunately, circumstances inspired him to compose more. From 1892 he returned to the piano miniature, a staple of the Romantic repertoire, and created several new works for young pianist Ilona Eibenschütz, a student of Brahms’ lifelong friend Clara Schumann. These fantasies, capriccios, ballades, romances and intermezzos of Opp.116, 117, 118 and 119 are charming and seemingly simple, but contain a wealth of sophisticated musical invention and harmonic daring, as Clara Schumann noted; they are, as Jan Swafford puts it, ‘almost scientific studies of compositional craft and of piano writing, disguised as pretty little salon pieces’ despite being mainly gentle in character and mostly in a simple ternary (A-B-A) form.

In that regard they are examples of what Edward Said identified as ‘late style’, showing ‘mature subjectivity, stripped of hubris and pomposity, unashamed either of its fallibility or of the modest assurance it has gained as a result of age and exile’.

The E flat major Intermezzo deliberately conjures folk-song – its score is prefaced by lines from a Scottish
lullaby, ‘Lady Anne Bothwell’s Lament’, translated and paraphrased by the great philosopher and theologian Johann Gottfried Herder:

‘Schlaf sanft, mein Kind, schlaf sanft und schön! Mich dauert’s sehr, dich weinen seh’n.’ (Sleep softly my child, sleep softly and lovely. It makes me so sad to see you cry.)

Brahms responds with a slowly rocking 6/8 pulse, where the simple, stepwise melody is stated in the alto register, under a series of repeated notes in the top line; as so often in these late works, he then unobtrusively moves the melody from one voice to another, with call and response between bass and treble. By means of subtle but radical harmonic movement, he takes the music into E flat minor for the contrasting ‘B’ section, where gently rolling arpeggios in the bass support simple iterations, off the beat, of a three-note motif. The ‘A’ section that returns is a highly decorated version of the simple material with which the work opens.

Technically fairly simple, the piano writing lends itself to arrangement. Paul Klengel, part of a musical family based in Leipzig, made his arrangement for Brahms’ publisher, Simrock, in 1893, soon after the work’s composition. Brahms hated it, asking Simrock if ‘the utterly inartistic insipidity is absolutely necessary’ for the money it made.

But Brahms may have been overreacting: Klengel’s orchestration is certainly delicate, using only one flute, pairs of clarinets, bassoons and horns, and strings. The palette is, therefore, warm in tone. The flute helps to etch out the melodic lines on the rare occasions that they escape the treble stave; the paired horns and bassoons give a perfectly Brahmsian richness to alto and tenor registers especially when, as often, they are doubled in sixths or thirds.

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

JOHANNES BRAHMS
(1833-1897)
orch. ARNOLD SCHOENBERG
(1874-1951)
Piano Quartet in G minor, Op.25
Allegro
Intermezzo (Allegro ma non troppo) – Trio (Animato) – Intermezzo
Andante con moto
Rondo alla zingarese (Presto)

Late in life, Brahms was so impressed by a young Viennese composer’s work that he helped arrange a stipend, which the young man then turned down. Half a century later, in 1947, the composer, Arnold Schoenberg, wrote his famous article Brahms the Progressive, in which he argued that the conventional view of Brahms as an academic classicist was wrong: Brahms’ command of chromatic harmony was as advanced as that of Wagner, and his elaboration of large structures from small motivic cells was greater. Numerous scholars have pointed out that Schoenberg played down the conservative elements in Brahms, like his adherence to classical forms and genres, in favour of those that appeared in his own music, and in a sense a more searching tribute can be found in the orchestration of Brahms’ G minor Piano Quartet that Schoenberg made in Los Angeles in 1937. His
motivation for making the arrangement was simply that he liked the piece, but that it was, at the time, rarely heard and usually played badly.

In 1857, Brahms received his first professional position. For three months’ work each year in the prince’s court at Detmold, Brahms received the equivalent of a year’s salary: his duties included performing as pianist at court concerts, giving lessons to the Princess Friederike, and conducting the amateur choral society which Brahms described as ‘richly adorned with Serene Highnesses’ and other music-loving aristocrats.

It was at this time (which was in the wake of Robert Schumann’s tragic death in 1856), that Brahms began work on, among other things, the two piano quartets in G minor and A major. Both works were ultimately completed in 1861, the year before Brahms, with the considerable advice and support of Clara Schumann, made his debut in Vienna with the G minor Quartet.

The scale of the first movement, and the roiling emotions it unleashes, mask how rigorously Brahms derives his material from the initial mosaic of four-note motifs – something of which Schoenberg greatly approved. In his version, Schoenberg uses a much larger and more varied orchestra than Brahms ever had, but despite some of the opulence of Mahler and Richard Strauss, the piece displays a deep knowledge of the Brahmsian sound. The opening use of winds has several precedents in Brahms (though admittedly not the inclusion of E flat and bass clarinets) as does the warm writing for strings and solo horn.

Schoenberg, moreover, reflects what he called Brahms’ technique of ‘developing variation’ in a kind of developing orchestration throughout the work. The recapitulation of this movement is rendered in significantly different colouring including the fleeting glitter of the glockenspiel.

At Clara Schumann’s suggestion Brahms changed the title of his scherzo to Intermezzo, and it is certainly a far cry from some of the boisterous early Brahms scherzos, preferring instead quiet suggestion and nuance. Schoenberg responds with the pastoral sound of oboe and cor anglais, followed by flutes, who dominate again at the movement’s end.

The Andante is the essence of simplicity, a ternary design full of Brahmsian melodising and the constant variation of material, and a Schumannesque ‘march’ (though in 3) as the central trio. Schoenberg’s orchestration is richly Brahmsian here, though soon enough we hear solo violins and wind choruses and an almost Mahlerian intensity in the trio. Schoenberg’s scoring brings out the expressive counterpoint in the return to the opening section.

Like the Intermezzo, the finale looks ahead to later Brahms, this time in his assimilation of ‘Hungarian’ idioms, learned in the taverns in Hamburg but more closely as duo-partner to violinists Eduard Reményi and Joseph Joachim. The latter, also well known as the composer of the Hungarian Concerto, heard this Rondo alla zingarese, and announced that Brahms had beaten him on his own turf. Here Schoenberg (who was of Hungarian descent) has a great deal of fun, with the (in)famous use of
the xylophone for those piano passages, in the original, that imitate the cimbalom, or dulcimer. In some of the slower, syncopated sections, Schoenberg evokes certain klezmer-influenced passages in Mahler, and throughout, chinks in the fully scored tutti reveal fragments of delicate solo writing. The final moments feature extravagant cadenzas for clarinet, that most Brahmsian/Hungarian of instruments, and a rhythmically thrilling finish.

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The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this work on 14 April 1983 under the direction of Hiroyuki Iwaki, and most recently in May 1993 with Matthias Bamert.
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Jennifer Shepherd  
Profs. Gabriela and George Stephenson  
Pamela Swansson  
Lillian Tarry  
Dr Cherilyn Tillman  
Mr and Mrs R P Trebilcock  
Michael Ullmer  
Ilia Vanninen  
The Hon. Rosemary Varty  
Mr Tam Vu  
Marian and Terry Wills Cooke  
Mark Young  
Anonymous (26)

**The MSO gratefully acknowledges the support of the following Estates:**

Angela Beagley  
Neilma Gantner  
The Hon Dr Alan Goldberg AO QC  
Gwen Hunt  
Audrey Jenkins  
Joan Jones  
Pauline Marie Johnston  
Joan Jones  
C P Kemp  
Peter Forbes MacLaren  
Joan Winsome Maslen  
Lorraine Maxine Meldrum  
Prof Andrew McCredie  
Miss Sheila Scotter AM MBE  
Marion A I H M Spence  
Molly Stephens  
Jennifer May Teague  
Jean Tweedie  
Herta and Fred B Vogel  
Dorothy Wood

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The MSO relies on your ongoing philanthropic support to sustain our artists, and support access, education, community engagement and more. We invite our supporters to get close to the MSO through a range of special events.

The MSO welcomes your support at any level. Donations of $2 and over are tax deductible, and supporters are recognised as follows:

- **$1,000+ (Player)**
- **$2,500+ (Associate)**
- **$5,000+ (Principal)**
- **$10,000+ (Maestro)**
- **$20,000+ (Impresario)**
- **$50,000+ (Virtuoso)**
- **$100,000+ (Platinum)**

The **MSO Conductor’s Circle** is our bequest program for members who have notified of a planned gift in their Will.

**Enquiries**  
P (03) 8646 1551  
E philanthropy@mso.com.au
Honorary Appointments

Marc Besen AC and Eva Besen AO
Life Members

Sir Elton John CBE
Life Member

Lady Potter AC CMRI
Life Member

Geoffrey Rush AC
Ambassador

THE MSO HONOURS THE MEMORY OF
John Brockman OAM
Life Member

The Honourable Alan Goldberg AO QC
Life Member

Ila Vanrenen
Life Member

SHARE YOUR LOVE OF MUSIC

Including a gift to MSO in your Will – big or small – is a powerful way to share your love of music with generations to come. By doing so, you will personally become a custodian of a centuries-old art form – one which has the power to inspire, move, and soothe the human spirit – without impacting your current financial situation.

In appreciation, you will be invited to join MSO’s Conductor’s Circle where, through special events, you can become closer to our music and musicians.

To find out how you can honour your love of the MSO, we invite you to join MSO’s Philanthropy team for a complimentary morning tea at our forthcoming information session:

**MSO Gifts in Wills morning tea:**
Thursday 13 September, 10.30–11.45am
Sofitel Melbourne on Collins

RSVP (essential) by Thursday 30 August
(03) 8646 1151 | rsvp@mso.com.au
‘We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams.’

– Arthur O’Shaughnessy

Come dream with us by adopting your own MSO musician!

Support the music and the orchestra you love while getting to know your favourite player. Honour their talent, artistry and life-long commitment to music, and become part of the MSO family.

Adopt Principal Harp, Yinuo Mu, or any of our wonderful musicians today.
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MEDIA AND BROADCAST PARTNERS
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Anytime is a good time to enjoy a relaxing drink or two in our spacious onboard bar*, serving cocktails, canapés, spirits and exclusive wines. You never know who you’ll meet.

*Onboard Bar available on Emirates A380 flights from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth. For more information visit emirates.com/au, call 1300 303 777, or contact your local travel agent.