

MEDIA KIT 2008



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SEASON 2008

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SYDNEY SYMPHONY ANNOUNCES 2008 SEASON



Sydney, Wednesday 29 August, 2007 - Sydney Symphony is proud to announce Season 2008, the final year under the baton of Artistic Director and Chief Conductor, Maestro Gianluigi Gelmetti, and one he has shaped into a celebration of love and life.

In true Italian style, Maestro Gelmetti brings together the musicians who have become his extended family to share in this special year, and also shines the spotlight on many of the Sydney Symphony players as they feature in solo roles. Much-loved singers and instrumental artists from the Rome Opera join the Orchestra for guest performances. And global superstars who have become part of Sydney Symphony's international family bring the flavours of many countries to the season.

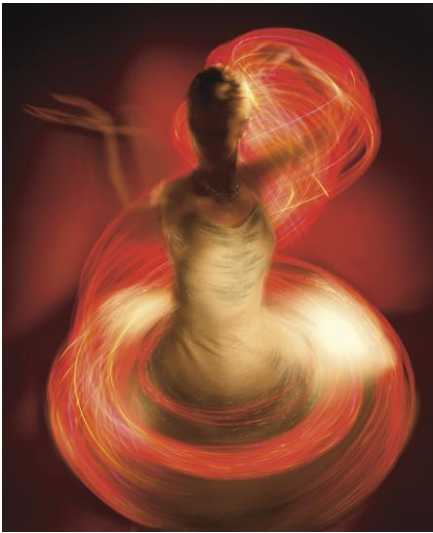
In his final year Maestro Gelmetti pays special tribute to his time in Sydney with the presentation of an original composition, *Cantata della vita*, revealing his most intimate self in a personal 'song of life'. And sharing something of his religious sentiment, he and the Sydney Symphony present Beethoven's glorious mass, the *Missa Solemnis*, in a gala performance held as part of the World Youth Day celebrations.

Sydney Symphony Chairman John Conde AO says "In this special year, we invite audiences to join with us as we honour the warmth and charm of Maestro Gelmetti and bask in the glow of impassioned performances. There are some incredible concerts this year that will appeal to the seasoned music lover and newcomer alike. Music above all things, has the ability to move people from any walk of life. I am very proud in my first year as Chairman to be celebrating such a strong year of musical experiences."

The year begins with the phenomenal Nigel Kennedy. With his trademark cheeky style he joins the Orchestra on tour interstate in addition to three shows at 'home' at the Sydney Opera House. Hot on the heels of this exciting concert tour comes the Sydney Symphony's official Season Opening Gala. It's Valentine's Day and there will be no better way to celebrate it in Sydney than with Maestro Gelmetti and Ravel's *Romances*, followed a week later by the much-loved *Bolero*.

The year unfolds with elegance and themes of unrequited love. Special guest and legendary conductor Charles Dutoit woos audience and orchestra alike with Berlioz' *Romeo et Juliette* then takes us to new heights with the *Jupiter* and *Alpine* Symphonies. Wayne Marshall shares in the romance bringing to life dances from Bernstein's *West Side Story* and young maverick conductor Kristjan Järvi takes a hot-blooded approach in *Latin American Nights*.

Sensational pianist Emanuel Ax brings some of his favourite pieces to the stage in both concerto and recital performances. One of the world's pre-eminent musicians, he captivates audiences with his dazzling virtuosic talents and emotionally charged performances. He performs under the baton of Robin Ticciati, the youngest conductor ever to appear at La Scala, Milan, who now brings his youthful star quality to Australia, continuing Sydney Symphony's engagement with young performers to watch.



Innovator David Robertson creates a special world for lovers of modern music, joining the Sydney Symphony to present a unique festival that explores colour, sound and sensuousness in music of the past hundred years. This is bound to be an event to remember for audiences keen to deepen their knowledge with a master communicator and conductor. Robertson is renowned for his lateral approach to musical experience; he is a master of reinvention and an inspiring leader in music today.

From Mahler comes an epic symphonic work that can be heard as a metaphor for life's journey. With Maestro Gelmetti, the Sydney Symphony will take Mahler's First Symphony from the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall to regional areas, performing with full orchestra in the Blue Mountains, Orange, Coffs Harbour, the NSW North-West and more. The communities of regional NSW are vital to the life of the Sydney Symphony and close to the heart of Maestro Gelmetti. He's very proud to be sharing with them a true symphonic experience with this magnificent work, written for one hundred instruments.

The Sydney Symphony family has an opportunity to shine in 2008 with many talents aptly showcased throughout the year, both in composition and performance. Individual musicians take the spotlight as featured artists, including the Orchestra's youngest member, oboist Shefali Pryor and her colleague, Principal Oboe Diana Doherty, cellists Catherine Hewill and Nathan Waks, concertmasters Dene Olding and Michael Dauth, trombonist Scott Kinmont on the euphonium, and bassoonist Matthew Wilkie.

Three generations of Australian composers are featured in Sydney Symphony's 2008 season. Two members of the Orchestra are well established composers and it will be a proud moment when their works are presented in 2008. Horn player Lee Bracegirdle's Euphonium Concerto has its world premiere in February, and violinist George Lentz's work *Monh*, written for special guest performer, viola player Tabea Zimmermann, has its Australian premiere in March.

Important pioneers in Australian music, Richard Meale and Peter Sculthorpe, feature in the season, as well as John Antill, whose landmark work *Corroboree* was one of the first attempts to create a truly Australian music, inspired by the distinctive sounds of Aboriginal song and dance. Originally recorded by the Sydney Symphony in 1955, it was recently added to the National Film and Sound Archive as a classified symbolic sound of Australia. *Corroboree*, which has been called the Australian *Rite of Spring*, will receive a thrilling performance conducted by Maestro Gelmetti. The next generation is represented by two young musicians, composer Matthew Hindson and didgeridoo player William Barton, who join forces in a collaboration that blends traditional aboriginal chant with the orchestral palette to create a uniquely Australian work.

An important collaborator with the Sydney Symphony is trumpet virtuoso, jazz legend James Morrison. Jazz and film music collide in four new concert presentations for the Kaleidoscope series in 2008, under the artistic direction of Morrison, who also performs in the last of these exciting shows. In the capable hands of specialist conductor Frank Strobel (who presents *Gold Rush* in 2007) comes *Crime Time*, a concert which captures the sinister and the scary with performances of film scores from *The Godfather*, *James Bond*, *Psycho*, *Rebecca*, even *Harry Potter*! Jazz lovers who swooned at Chick Corea and Gary Burton last season will clamour to see seven-time Grammy nominee, jazz baritone Kurt Elling. He brings his four-octave range and sensational trio to Sydney Symphony for a show comprising both ensemble and orchestral jazz performances. Finally, James Morrison and friends present a very special Tribute to Duke Ellington.

A special farewell concert to bid *arrivederci* to Maestro Gelmetti will mark the end of an era, and pay tribute to the warmth and colour that has been the hallmark of his work with the Sydney Symphony. Maestro Gelmetti presents a survey of his favourite works from the dancing energy of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony to the drama of Verdi and Mascagni's masterpieces and the dazzling colours of Ravel.

In October Maestro Ashkenazy joins Sydney Symphony for a spectacular Elgar Festival, on the eve of his appointment as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor, which begins in 2009. In the hands of such a sensitive and acclaimed musician, the works of Elgar are destined to have their fullest expression, from quiet lyricism to overwhelming grandeur. In 1904 Elgar said, 'People yearn for things which can stir them'. Under the baton of Maestro Ashkenazy, Sydney Symphony's Elgar Festival aims to give our audiences just that.

Throughout the year there are concerts for those with specialist tastes: the International Piano Recital series and the Mozart in the City series continue to offer intimate experiences at the City Recital Hall. Acclaimed educator and musician Richard Gill plays host to the Discovery series, which continues to guide newcomers to classical music with its successful blend of music, humour and talk. The Meet the Music series, tailored to the needs of students, has met with demand amongst the wider public and offers another great opportunity to those keen to get to know more about symphonic music with an approach that is equally stimulating and educational.

Sydney Symphony continues to reach audiences across the state with touring activities for the full orchestra, the Sydney Sinfonia and the Sydney Symphony Fellows, and its regional fundraising concerts. A busy recording schedule ensures the constant development and release of CD recordings, and broadband users can watch performances on demand from the comfort of their homes (or offices!) with web streaming available on BigPond.

Full details of Sydney Symphony's 2008 season and variety of subscription packages are available online at www.sydneyorchestra.com or call the box office for a season brochure on (02) 8215 4600. Subscriptions offer concert-goers the best seats in the house, with savings of up to 44% on the regular price of concert tickets. Subscribers also receive 10% off additional ticket purchases. Subscriptions start from \$179 and concessions are available.

Ends.



For images, further information or interviews with Sydney Symphony spokespeople about the 2008 Season, please contact:

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Note to editors

In 2008 Sydney Symphony concert programs will again be distributed free of charge to audiences. They are also available online for download before the concert.