



NEWS RELEASE

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**SYDNEY SYMPHONY AND MBF WIN THE TOYOTA COMMUNITY AWARD IN AUSTRALIA
BUSINESS ARTS FOUNDATION NATIONAL AWARDS**

MBF Music4health, the partnership between the Sydney Symphony and MBF has won the Toyota Community Award at tonight's Australian Business Arts Foundation (AbaF) National Awards for its music4health program.

The initiative, which sees ensembles of Sydney Symphony musicians visit hospitals throughout New South Wales, gives patients, their carers and hospital staff some wonderful entertainment as well as providing an opportunity for respite for long-term patients.

According to Sydney Symphony Managing Director Libby Christie, this is wonderful recognition for the music4health program and everyone associated with it.

"We are very proud of this program and it is wonderful that it has been recognised through this award. The music4health program has developed over the past four years as a cornerstone of our outreach and community work, and the feedback we get shows just what a powerful impact music can have in people's lives. A huge thank you must go to everyone associated with the program, especially the Sydney Symphony musicians who take time out of their busy rehearsal and performance schedule to visit the hospitals and to MBF for their vision in working with us on it," said Christie.

According to MBF National Public Affairs Manager, David Jones, the Sydney Symphony and MBF music4health series is one of a number of community programs conducted by the organisation to promote health and wellbeing.

"MBF's involvement in the concerts is a demonstration of the health industry's recognition of the therapeutic effects of music," said Jones. "In addition to the health benefits, the concerts are a fun and welcome break for patients from the routine of hospital life."

The music4health program was first devised in 2003 when the Sydney Symphony began to consider how to bring music to people who were unable to experience live classical music due to limited mobility, illness or other circumstances. The Orchestra wanted to explore ways of bringing music out of the concert hall and into the community, in particular to hospitals.

Following trial events in 2004, the program developed in collaboration with music therapists, leading to the first music4health concert at Calvary Hospital, Wagga Wagga in 2005.

The format for each program is adapted to suit the audience, which can range from long-term sick children to elderly patients in rehabilitation. A key aspect is participation by the audience, from joining in as honorary members of the Orchestra (complete with certificates to prove it) to Q&A sessions about the life of a professional musician. It is the balance of music and interaction that has proved so successful.

Since its inception, music4health has visited more than 20 hospitals around New South Wales including The Children's Hospital Westmead, Orange Public Hospital, Liverpool Hospital, Tamworth Public Hospital and Royal North Shore Hospital.

The next music4health concert is being held on Tuesday 30 October at 11am at The Children's Hospital, Westmead.

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