

MEDIA RELEASE

Sydney Symphony to visit Sydney Hospitals

17 November: The Children's Hospital, Westmead | 21 November: Lady Davidson Hospital, Turrumurra
28 November: St Vincent's Hospital, Darlinghurst

Musicians from the Sydney Symphony will visit three hospitals around the city this November as part of the award-winning Sydney Symphony & MBF *music4health* program. Harnessing the therapeutic power of live classical music, *music4health* provides uplifting and entertaining experiences for the patients, their carers and hospital staff.



Research in Australia, the USA and the UK increasingly points toward classical music as a valuable supplement to traditional forms of treatment for a variety of ailments. From the alleviation of pain to reducing high blood pressure and strengthening the immune system, it has also been linked to a reduction in fits in epileptics and to unlocking memories in dementia sufferers.

“Research has shown that among many potential health benefits, music has the ability to relax patients, improving their responses to treatment and therapy,” Dr Christine Bennett, MBF Chief Medical Officer explains. “In addition to experiencing the therapeutic power of music, the *music4health* concerts are great fun and a welcome break for the patients from the routine of hospital life.”

The *music4health* program is the first known instance of a large health organisation and an established music institution partnering to utilise and promote the association between music and wellbeing. Since the program was originally devised in 2003, Sydney Symphony musicians have made over 25 visits to hospitals across New South Wales, including areas as far reaching as Bathurst, Tamworth and Orange.

“*music4health* has developed into the cornerstone of our outreach and community work,” says Sydney Symphony Managing Director, Libby Christie. “And the feedback we get shows just what a powerful impact music can have on people’s lives.”

At those concerts with young children, such as at The Children’s Hospital, Westmead, the young patients are provided with percussion instruments and encouraged to play along as part of a ‘Toy Symphony’,

adding an interactive and educational aspect to the experience. For the Sydney Symphony musicians, the response from the young patients adds to their own experience in taking part.

“This program brings to me and the other musicians the awareness that even the smallest contribution in making music for the ill and hurt children can be such a source of joy and a greater gift than most material things,” says Sydney Symphony violinist, Stand Kornel, who frequently conducts the hospital performances. “It’s so encouraging to see the children’s faces light up.”

The hospital visits this month will include performances for the young patients of The Children’s Hospital, Westmead, the war veterans at Lady Davidson Hospital in Turrumurra and the patients in General Admission at St Vincent’s Hospital in Darlinghurst.

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Please note: these are not public concerts, however, media are welcome to attend and photograph the performances.

Please contact:

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Note to editors: performance details

**17 November The Children’s Hospital, Westmead
11am, The Starlight Room**

**21 November Lady Davidson Hospital, Turrumurra
11am, near main entrance**

**28 November St Vincent’s Hospital, Darlinghurst
11am, Foyer, General Admission**