

MEDIA RELEASE

**PIANO LEGEND EMANUEL AX TO PERFORM WITH THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY,
CONDUCTED BY 24 YEAR-OLD WHIZ**

18 – 21 June 2008 | Sydney Opera House

“Ax’s greatness, his overwhelming authority as musician, technician and probing intellect emerges quick as he plays. Within minutes, we are totally captured by his intensity and pianistic achievement.”

- Los Angeles Times

This June, legendary pianist and seven-time Grammy award-winner Emanuel Ax returns to Sydney for the first time since 2002 to perform with the Sydney Symphony, conducted by 24 year-old English conductor Robin Ticciati. Possibly the most prolific artist to perform with the Sydney Symphony this year, Ax is recognised for the refinement, nobility and lyricism he brings to the stage. Sydney audiences are lucky to have the chance to see Ax in three performances with the Orchestra plus a solo recital.



Born in Lvov, Poland in 1949, Ax first came to prominence in 1974 when he was awarded first prize in the inaugural Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Competition in Tel Aviv. Since this time, he has forged out a piano career which is unparalleled in the world today.

Ax has been exclusive recording artist with Sony Classical for over 20 years and has performed on seven Grammy-award winning releases, two of which were solo collections and the remaining five being performances with his on-stage partner of two decades, cellist Yo-Yo Ma. In 2004, he contributed to a BBC holocaust documentary that was commemoratively aired on the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

In 2005-06, Ax served as Pianist-in-Residence with the Berlin Philharmonic and performed with the orchestra in Berlin and on tour to New York. Such is his standing in the musical world that numerous composers have written works specifically for Ax to play. Currently based in New York with his wife and fellow-pianist, Yoko Nozaki, Ax is also the proud father of two young children, Joseph and Sarah. He juggles family life with performances with the world’s best orchestras.

Remarkably, Ax’s upcoming concerts with the Sydney Symphony will be under the direction of 24-year old British wunderkind conductor, Robin Ticciati (pictured). Hailing from the UK, Ticciati is an accomplished



violinist, pianist and percussionist who turned to conducting at only 15-years old and since 2006 has served as Music Director and Artistic Advisor to the Gävle Symphony Orchestra in Sweden. He remains the youngest person to ever conduct at La Scala, Milan, and is the youngest conductor to make his debut at the famous Austrian Festival in Salzburg.

The repertoire for the concerts includes Mozart's good humoured though substantive *Piano Concerto No. 22 in E Flat*, an ideal work to demonstrate Ax's poetic virtuosity. Also , *Clouds Now and Then* by Australian conductor Richard Meale, a work inspired by a Japanese poem about the necessity of sorrow in order to truly appreciate life's joys – a notion reflected in Sibelius' seventh and final symphony, also to be performed. is the Orchestra will also perform the overture from Schubert's *The Devil's Pleasure Palace*.

In addition to his performances with the Orchestra, Ax will also perform a one-off solo recital as a part of the Sydney Symphony International Pianists in Recital series at the City Recital Hall. The series sees the most distinguished virtuosos perform the heart and soul of the piano repertoire. Other performers in this year's series are Gabriela Montero (September) and Kirill Gerstein (October).

Tickets to these performances can be purchased by phoning the Sydney Symphony Box Office on 02 8215 4600 or visiting www.sydney-symphony.com.

"If the audience walks out of a concert thinking 'What a wonderful experience', then we have done our job."

- Emanuel Ax

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Further information on Emanuel Ax
www.emmanuelax.com

Watch footage of Emanuel Ax and Yo-Yo Ma performing together:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BMDU28eZVKE>

Note to editors: Program Details

Emanuel Ax Plays Mozart
EnergyAustralia Master Series
Wed 18 Jun, 8pm
Fri 20 Jun, 8pm

Sat 21 Jun, 8pm

Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Robin Ticciati conductor

Emanuel Ax piano

SCHUBERT The Devil's Pleasure Palace: Overture

MOZART Piano Concerto No.22 in E flat, K482

MEALE Clouds Now And Then

SIBELIUS Symphony No.7 (Discover Sibelius, 10 Jun)

Tickets from \$66*

Emanuel Ax in Recital

International Pianists in Recital series

Thu 19 Jun, 8pm

City Recital Hall Angel Place

Emanuel Ax piano

SCHUBERT

Sonata in A, D664

Four Impromptus, D935

LISZT

Vallee d'Oberman

Sonnetto del Petrarca No.123

Mephisto Waltz No.1

Tickets from \$49*

Sydney Symphony concert programs are now available online in the week of a performance. Just visit www.sydney-symphony.com and click on calendar date for the concert program you'd like to see.

*Booking fees may apply