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Maserati is proud to be a part of Maestro Gianluigi Gelmetti's farewell concert, continuing our long-standing relationship with the Sydney Symphony.

Passion is an essential part of the Italian way of life and one of the greatest expressions of this is in the universal language of music. Maestro Gelmetti has brought the vibrancy and dedication of a true genius to Australian audiences during his five acclaimed years as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony.

Maserati's philosophy of 'excellence through passion' extends to every facet of the Maserati experience including our support of the arts. On that note, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you here this evening to experience the final notes of collaboration between two great countries that has resulted in one exultant creative voice.



**EDWARD BUTLER**

**General Manager**

**Maserati Australia & New Zealand**

**SEASON 2008  
GALA CONCERT**

## **GELMETTI'S FAREWELL**

**Friday 19 September | 8pm**  
**Saturday 20 September | 8pm**  
**Sydney Opera House Concert Hall**

**Gianluigi Gelmetti** conductor

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)**  
**Symphony No.7 in A, Op.92**

*Poco sostenuto – Vivace*  
*Allegretto*  
*Presto*  
*Allegro con brio*

### **INTERVAL**

**RICHARD WAGNER (1813–1883)**  
***Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod***

**GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813–1901)**  
***La traviata: Prelude to Act III***

**PIETRO MASCAGNI (1863–1945)**  
***Cavalleria rusticana: Intermezzo***

**VERDI**  
***La forza del destino: Overture***

**MAURICE RAVEL (1875–1937)**  
***Pavane pour une infante défunte –***  
***Bolero***



This concert will be recorded for broadcast across Australia on ABC Classic FM 92.9 on Saturday 20 September at 12.05pm



Saturday night's performance will be webcast by BigPond. Visit: [sydneyorchestra.bigpondmusic.com](http://sydneyorchestra.bigpondmusic.com)

Pre-concert talk by David Garrett at 7.15pm in the Northern Foyer. Visit [www.sydneyorchestra.com/talk-bios](http://www.sydneyorchestra.com/talk-bios) for biographies of pre-concert speakers.

Estimated timings:  
40 minutes, 20-minute interval,  
17 minutes, 4 minutes, 3 minutes,  
8 minutes, 6 minutes, 13 minutes

The performance will conclude at approximately 10.15pm.

CO-PRESENTING PARTNER





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# INTRODUCTION

## Gelmetti's Farewell

Tonight's concert is a farewell, which gives it a note of sadness, but it is also a celebration of Gianluigi Gelmetti's tenure as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director. And the best way to celebrate is with music, in a program that recalls the highlights of the past five years and demonstrates the distinctive qualities that Maestro Gelmetti has brought to his work with this orchestra.

Beethoven's Seventh Symphony reminds us that just last year, for our 75th anniversary, Gelmetti conducted a marathon festival of all the symphonies – no mean feat for the orchestra or its conductor. This is powerful and substantial music, propelled by sheer rhythmic energy.

The second half is more of a potpourri, in the best sense. Maestro Gelmetti is also Music Director for Rome Opera, one of the greatest opera companies in the world, and among the highlights of his time in Sydney have been performances of concert and dramatic works by the great Italian opera composers – Rossini, Verdi, Puccini. There are no singers in tonight's preludes and intermezzi, but these pieces show how an orchestra can sing too, *and* make musical drama. Finally, we hear Ravel, a composer to whom Maestro Gelmetti brings a subtle instinct.

Each chief conductor of the Sydney Symphony leaves a legacy that contributes to our strength, and we hope that it is the spirit of celebration that you take with you from the concert hall this evening.

*Grazie Gianluigi e arrivederci.*



# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No.7 in A, Op.92

*Poco sostenuto – Vivace*

*Allegretto*

*Presto*

*Allegro con brio*

Beethoven's Seventh Symphony received its first performances in December 1813 in an atmosphere of triumph and euphoria: Napoleon's imperial ambitions had been squashed; the composer was at the height of his popularity. The symphony had been completed in the summer of 1812 so its joyous spirit had nothing to do with liberation or military victory, but nonetheless audiences heard in it the enthusiastic mood of the 'battle symphony' that Beethoven *had* composed for the occasion. One critic went so far as to describe the symphony as a 'companion piece' to the overwhelmingly popular *Wellington's Victory*.

Despite the competition, the Seventh Symphony made a genuine impression of its own. Louis Spohr, assistant concertmaster for the premiere, noted that the symphony was exceptionally well received and that the 'wonderful second movement had to be repeated'.

The key to the symphony's direct appeal – then and now – lies in a single musical element: rhythm. Never before had rhythm been given such a fundamental role in Beethoven's music. It generates the symphony's structure, its melodic and harmonic gestures, and ultimately its powerful rhetoric. But unlike the Fifth Symphony, where the opening rhythmic motif is developed, fragmented and expanded, the Seventh Symphony adopts a treatment of rhythm and pulse that emphasises obsessive repetition of distinctive patterns.

Rhythm – and the gesture of the repeated note – defines the Seventh Symphony from the outset. After an imposing slow introduction, almost a movement in itself, Beethoven spins his first main theme from a skipping rhythm on a single note, at once relentless and static. At least, most listeners today are likely to hear it as a 'skipping rhythm', complicit in Wagner's description of the symphony as the 'apotheosis of the dance'. For us, as for Wagner, the experience of Beethoven's Seventh is a kinetic one.

## Keynotes

### BEETHOVEN

*Born Bonn, 1770*

*Died Vienna, 1827*

Beethoven's work is traditionally divided into three periods – often disputed in detail, but prevailing as a way of tracing the progress of his life and musical style. The Seventh Symphony represents the middle 'Heroic' period (beginning in 1803 with the completion of the *Eroica* Symphony and ending in 1812 with the composition of the Seventh and Eighth symphonies) – the period in which Beethoven, devastated by irreversible deafness but 'saved' by his art, produced six of his nine symphonies and three of his five piano concertos.

### SEVENTH SYMPHONY

Rhythm is the heart and essence of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. In each of its four movements, whether fast or slow, is the rhetoric of repeated rhythmic patterns and a propelling energy. The Seventh Symphony has a pulse; more than that, it moves. There is the skipping of the first movement, the throbbing tread of the second, a relentless scherzo, and a finale that Maestro Gelmetti describes as 'vexing' and 'fickle' as well as one of his favourites. The most famous part of the Seventh Symphony is the *Allegretto* second movement. Hypnotic and irresistible, the *Allegretto* was encored – right then and there, between movements! – at the premiere.

But Beethoven's listeners, Romantics all and therefore attuned to the niceties of classicism, would also have recognised the dactylic metre of classical Greek poetry. Beethoven's student Carl Czerny was among the first to detail the extensive use of poetic metres in the symphony. Czerny points out the 'weighty spondees' of the introduction, the dactylic figures in the first movement, the combination of these two patterns in the *Allegretto*, and other poetic foundations for the musical content, concluding: 'It isn't improbable that Beethoven...was thinking about the forms of heroic poetry and must have deliberately turned toward the same in his musical epic.'

Other writers of Beethoven's generation interpreted the conspicuous use of poetic metre as deliberate evocation of Greek music and poetry, and of the ancient world in general. Henri de Castil-Blaze, for example, heard in the much-loved *Allegretto* 'an antique physiognomy'. A.B. Marx described the massive opening of the first movement as 'the kind of invocation with which we are particularly familiar in epic poets', and the finale as a 'Bacchic ecstasy' – this last interpretation given the seal of approval by Wagner (who also recognised an 'orgiastic' character in the music), and in the 20th century by Donald Tovey.

Beethoven himself is silent on the Seventh Symphony. We don't know whether he was trying to evoke the ancient world, but such an aim would have been in keeping with the spirit of Romanticism, which sought the fusion of the Modern and the Antique, the simultaneous stewardship and redefinition of classicism.

Nowhere is this more strikingly conveyed than in the hypnotic second movement, 'the menacing chorus of ancient tragedy'. Not a true slow movement but an *Allegretto*, its point of departure – and indeed its point of return – is uncertainty, with harmonically unstable chords that draw us forward from stasis to metamorphosis. The movement proper adopts the simplest of means: the throbbing tread of an austere ostinato and the piling on of instrumental weight and transforming woodwind colour for ever increasing intensity.

The dazzling scherzo shows Beethoven at play: setting his basic rhythms against each other, inverting and varying them, and cultivating ambiguity within a relentless pulse.



Bust of Beethoven after a plaster life-mask, made in 1812 when he was working on the Seventh Symphony. (Franz Klein)

The vehemence of the *Presto* comes from repeated notes that subdivide the melody into its most basic rhythmic unit; in the trio these repeated notes join to create a sustained figure, more expansive and lyrical but equally insistent.

For his finale, Beethoven compresses the contrasts of the first movement into the opening bars: two explosive gestures unleash whirling figurations above unremitting syncopation in the bass. Once more he spins a web of interlocking rhythms, ensnaring us in what his contemporaries described as ‘absurd, untamed music’ and a ‘delirium’. As Beethoven himself claimed: ‘Music is the wine which inspires us to new acts of generation, and I am Bacchus who presses out this glorious wine to make mankind spiritually drunk.’

On its surface, this symphony conforms to classical structure, but underneath the Apollonian equilibrium of a four-movement symphony Beethoven creates a feeling of spontaneity, motion and Dionysian vitality. The introspective moments of the introduction, the central part of the scherzo, and the second movement only highlight the irrepressible brilliance of the symphony over all. Whether we attribute its magic to Terpsichore, the muse of the dance, or to Clio, the muse of epic poetry, Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony is an inspired invention.

YVONNE FRINDLE ©2004

The Seventh Symphony is fanciful and original; the ‘apotheosis of the dance’, as Wagner remarked. That’s true, but it’s magnificent how Beethoven can be read with so much diversity of approach. I love the *Allegro* finale, for that surprising, exasperated, almost capricious insistence: down with the cutting of repeats!

GELMETTI

## Richard Wagner

### *Tristan und Isolde: Prelude and Liebestod*

In a letter of 1854 to his colleague and mentor Franz Liszt, Wagner wrote: 'As I have never in life felt the real bliss of love, I must erect a monument to the most beautiful of all my dreams, in which, from beginning to end, that love shall be thoroughly satiated. I have in my head *Tristan und Isolde*, the simplest but most full-blooded musical conception; with the "black flag" that floats at its close I shall cover myself – to die.'

It was to be another 11 years before Wagner saw the completion and first production of his love-opera *Tristan und Isolde*, years in which he was absorbed with continuing work on the vast *Ring* cycle and with preparation for the satirical *Mastersingers of Nuremberg*. Yet, in many senses, the preoccupations of *Tristan* are fundamental to the composer's whole creative output. Its central theme – the consummation of passion in death – is one which is shared not only by *The Flying Dutchman* and *Parsifal* but which finds an unstated resonance in the *Ring* also. *Tristan* is, perhaps, Wagner's most perfect expression of the Romantic 'love-death' concept, the notion that only through a physical, earthly death will the spirit be free to find fulfilment in a mystical realm. At the end of *The Flying Dutchman* the character of Senta plunges herself into the waves; in *Götterdämmerung* Brünnhilde goes through fire and water; in *Tristan*, Isolde sings of the flood of oblivion. In each case it is only by returning to the physical, elemental universe that the characters attain wholeness and fulfilment.

The **Prelude to Act I** and the **Liebestod** (Love-Death), taken respectively from the beginning and the end of *Tristan*, convey the essence of the whole work. The Prelude commences with a mere wisp of sound which grows and intensifies to symbolise an attraction between hero and heroine, so overwhelming that it dominates their lives and brings them tragedy and death. In the final *Liebestod*, *Tristan* is dead and *Isolde*, dying too of a broken heart, sings of their final, ecstatic union in eternity.

Musically there is, perhaps, no work about whose significance more has been written than *Tristan*. It represents the pinnacle of 19th-century chromaticism, and laid the foundation for a harmonic freedom which culminates in the atonality of Schoenberg. Essential to

## Keynotes

### WAGNER

*Born Leipzig, 1813*

*Died Venice, 1883*

**As a composer, writer and conductor, Wagner was one of the most influential musicians of his generation. He was also one of the most controversial, a composer who polarised listeners even as he changed the nature of opera forever. He was an advocate for the unifying of the arts in opera and cultivated an almost symphonic conception of opera. His monumental creations were sustained by long-range harmonic thinking and the ingenious linking of musical motifs to characters and situations.**

### PRELUDE & LIEBESTOD

**This orchestral selection from *Tristan und Isolde* effectively "tops and tails" the opera by presenting the beginning and the ending, compressing the essence of four-plus hours into 20 minutes. The Prelude establishes the theme of forbidden love and unfulfilled passion by never allowing its harmonies to properly come to rest. The Liebestod or (Love-Death), heard without Isolde's vocal line, heightens the ecstasy still further until finally the oboe theme from the beginning is allowed to resolve.**

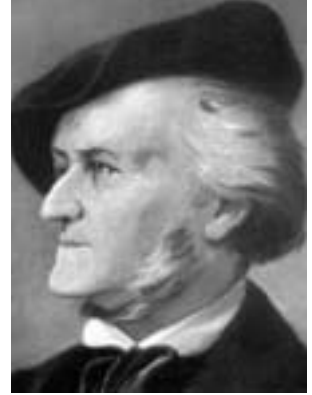
**The Prelude and Liebestod was first performed in Vienna in 1862, three years before the premiere of the opera itself. Johann Strauss II was the conductor.**

the construction and drama of the opera is Wagner's use of the leitmotif: fixed, recurrent musical formulae or themes which gain extra-musical significance by association throughout the course of the work.

For almost a century after its appearance in 1865, *Tristan* aroused passions and reactions as intense as those it contained, unleashing in the artistic world a new kind of expression. Rapturously admired, imitated slavishly or inventively, shunned with intent, *Tristan* demanded a reaction from every musician who grew up in its shadow, and from nearly everyone in Europe's artistic and intellectual milieu. After a performance in 1879, the French composer Emmanuel Chabrier, as if voicing the sentiments of all composers, acclaimed the work: 'There's music there for a hundred years; he hasn't left us chaps anything to do. Who would dare?'

It seems ironic, indeed, that it was not until the premiere of the violently anti-Wagnerian Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* in 1913 that our culture met with a work of such singular significance.

ANTHONY FOGG ©1996



## Giuseppe Verdi

### *La traviata*: Prelude to Act III

*La traviata* (which loosely translates as 'the woman who has erred or strayed') daringly took as its basis a play inspired by the life of a 19th-century courtesan (*La Dame aux camelias* by the younger Alexandre Dumas). In the end Verdi was obliged to change the setting to Paris in 1700, but even so the opera is credited as a forerunner to *verismo*, or contemporary realism, in opera. Not every aspect of *La traviata* is realistic, though – as a London critic observed, 'Consumption for one who is to sing! A ballet with a lame Sylphide would be as rational.'

Violetta, the noble courtesan, is ill in Act I and at death's door by Act III. The orchestral prelude to Act III begins with the same idea as the overture: high string writing that dissolves into breathless sobbing motifs, already in those opening bars suggesting the heroine's decline. The intensely felt music expands on the recurring love theme of the opera.

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ©2008

## Keynotes

### VERDI

*Born Busseto, 1813*

*Died Milan, 1901*

**Verdi was the most important Italian opera composer of the 19th century – a composer with a gift for memorable tunes as well as a keen instinct for drama and an understanding of character not seen since Mozart's operas from the century before. His great legacy was to place the conventions of bel canto opera at the service of the musical drama. *La traviata*, one his most popular operas, was premiered in Venice in 1853.**

## Pietro Mascagni

### *Cavalleria rusticana*: Intermezzo

Mascagni's opera *Cavalleria rusticana* (Rustic Chivalry) shot its composer from provincial obscurity to world-wide fame when it was produced in Rome in 1890, and established a fashion for *verismo* (literally, 'realism'). Mascagni was unable to repeat its success (except to a certain extent with *L'amico Fritz* of 1891), allied himself to the Fascist cause and died in a shabby Roman hotel, discredited and disillusioned.

The plot sets individual passions against the celebration of Easter in a small Sicilian town. Turiddu, having seduced Santuzza, has returned to his first love, Lola, now married to Alfio. Santuzza reproaches him without success and then tells Alfio of the affair. Alfio confronts Turiddu and challenges him to a duel, in which Turiddu is killed.

Much of the action occurs while the Easter Service is taking place in the church. The famous **Intermezzo** occurs after the scene between Santuzza and Alfio. Played as the service is concluding, it continues the action orchestrally, recalling previous events and foreshadowing the final tragedy. It is based on the melody of the Easter Hymn *Regina coeli* with which the service began.

ADAPTED FROM A NOTE BY WARNER WHITEFORD  
SYMPHONY AUSTRALIA ©1995

## Keynotes

### MASCAGNI

*Born Livorno, 1863*

*Died Rome, 1945*

**Mascagni belonged to the generation that went beyond Verdi into operatic verismo or realism. His big break came when he was in his mid-20s: *Cavalleria rusticana* won an important competition in 1889 and enjoyed public and critical acclaim when it was premiered the following year.**

Maestro Gelmetti with the Sydney Symphony, May 2006

KEITH SALINDERS





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## Verdi

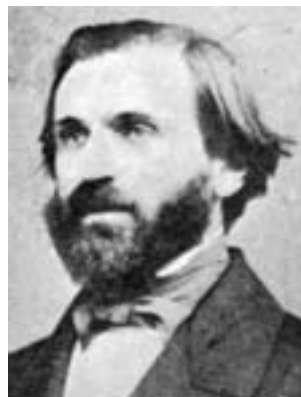
### *La forza del destino*: Overture

*La forza del destino* (The Force of Destiny) is based on a Spanish tragedy by Rivas about the murder of the Marquis di Calatrava and the consequent deaths of the other principal characters in the play: his daughter, Leonora; his son, Don Carlo; and Leonora's lover, Don Alvaro. Calatrava is accidentally killed by Don Alvaro when he discovers that Leonora and her lover are about to elope. Don Carlo swears to avenge his father's death, and his pursuit of Don Alvaro finally ends in a duel in which Don Carlo is mortally wounded. Leonora appears from her nearby refuge and casts herself sobbingly upon her brother's body, but remembering his vow, he stabs her. Thus is a grim destiny fulfilled.

The opera was composed in 1862 for St Petersburg, the end of the four-year lull that followed Verdi's previous opera, *A Masked Ball*. The familiar overture dates from the 1869 revision of the opera for La Scala.

Insofar as the 19th-century overture was a 'trailer' for the evening ahead, the overture to *La forza...* fits the bill perfectly, from its arresting opening to the pot-pourri of themes, including Leonora's prayer from Act II, with its Verdian trademark of high, shimmering violins. It even ends with festive Rossinian triplets that eschew tragedy and ask us, unashamedly, to admire the brilliance of the orchestra.

Yet the dramatic weight of the opera's tragedy is echoed in Verdi's overture, right from the stark octaves of the opening. The opera's victim of fate, Leonora, provides the overture's musical substance, an agitated theme from Act I, when she is cursed by her dying father. This sinister 'fate' motif recurs throughout the opera, but in the overture it takes on a dramatic life of its own, unifying the music even as it reveals the exciting disparate-ness of the themes.



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## Maurice Ravel

### *Pavane pour une infante défunte*

How much notice should we take of composers who become annoyed at the popularity of what they consider their lesser works? Ravel felt that he suffered more than most in this regard. There are still many people whose experience of Ravel's music stops with this *Pavane* and *Bolero*. We may agree with the composer that this is a pity, but need not be too influenced by his later remarks about the *Pavane pour une infante défunte* ('rather poor form' and 'an inconclusive and conventional work'). It was, after all, the piece that first won Ravel wide recognition, in its original version for piano solo (1899). In that form it looks easy to play but isn't, and most musicians feel that Ravel improved it greatly by orchestrating it in 1910.

Many more or less fanciful interpretations have been given of this piece, seemingly based more on the title than on the music. The idea persists that it is about a dead child, even though the Spanish title *infanta* refers to a princess of royal blood, of whatever age, who will not inherit the throne. One critic thought the piece could be an illustration of the 17th-century Spanish painter Velázquez's *Portrait of a Young Girl*. Others have imagined a stately dance in front of the bier of a princess (an old Spanish court custom).

But according to Ravel, he let himself be led into writing the (French) title 'because of the pleasure I got from the assonance of the words'. Perhaps he protested too much: the title does create the right frame of mind for listeners to this gentle, calm piece, which has something mournful about it.

The ancient dance form, the pavane, was much cultivated in 16th- and 17th-century Spain. Its adoption by Ravel therefore evokes a sense of time long past, and reflects his interest in stylised dance rhythms. In spite of his disclaimers, he felt strongly enough about the piece to insist (when he heard how some musicians treated it) that it should be played calmly and in strict time.

DAVID GARRETT ©1988

## Keynotes

### RAVEL

*Born Ciboure, 1875*

*Died Paris, 1937*

**Ravel's music reveals an enthusiasm for jewel-like surface detail, delicacy of expression and exotic effect.**

**As a boy he showed talent as a pianist, although his father (a Swiss engineer) had to bribe him to practise and it was as a composer that he made his greatest contribution. Blessed with an ear for colour and an instinct for orchestral effect, Ravel orchestrated many of his piano works, including the *Pavane*.**

### PAVANE...

**Ravel supposedly chose his title for this music on the basis of how the words *sounded* rather than what they meant. So how to translate it? Should we translate it?**

**Perhaps it's enough that the title – like the music – conveys Ravel's enthusiasm for the dance and the past, and by extension antique dance forms. The 'pavane' is one of those: a stately processional dance from baroque Spain. And its intended 'infante défunte' emphasises the links with Spain as well as suggesting a mournful nostalgia. But this Spanish *infanta* is not necessarily a child, and Ravel's musical language as well as his old-fashioned choice of French (*not* 'infante morte') remind us that we are not her contemporaries. In this regard, perhaps the truest and most satisfying translation is 'Pavane for a long-dead *infanta*'.**

## Ravel

### *Bolero*

Ida Rubinstein wanted to create a Spanish ballet and she invited Ravel to orchestrate music from Albeniz's piano work *Iberia*. But one of Ravel's friends pointed out that such a ballet was already in the making (it was 1928) and that neither he nor Rubinstein would be able to obtain the necessary permissions to repeat the exercise: the ballet, the scenario and the music were 'covered by a network of agreements, signatures and copyrights that could not be broken.'

Thwarted and put out, Ravel came up with something 'rather unusual'. *Bolero* was born. Rubinstein responded by creating a tableau in the manner of Goya: a moody interior, in which a flamenco dancer performs a stylised bolero on a table, its languid beginning building to a representation of inflamed desire.

Ravel accepted her interpretation, but its orgiastic sensuality was not what he had in mind. (His own visions had included factory assembly lines to mirror the mechanistic repetition and chain-like linking of themes in the music.) And he offered what is perhaps the most famous disclaimer in music:

*I am particularly desirous that there should be no misunderstanding as to my Bolero. It is an experiment in a very special and limited direction... Before the first performance, I issued a warning to the effect that what I had written was a piece lasting 17 minutes and consisting wholly of orchestral tissue without music...*

Ravel goes on to point out that there are no contrasts, the themes are 'impersonal', and there is 'practically no invention except in the plan and the manner of the execution'. And he was not exaggerating when he described *Bolero* as one long crescendo: the music builds inexorably from the voice of a lone snare drum to the overwhelming effect of the full orchestra. Whatever Ravel might say, *Bolero* is a tour de force.

YVONNE FRINDLE, SYDNEY SYMPHONY ©2008

## Keynotes

### BOLERO

Whether it brings to mind images of Bo Derek or Torvill and Dean, *Bolero* needs little introduction. It begins with a snare drum rhythm then builds irresistibly and hypnotically to a frenzied climax. Along the way Ravel demonstrates his absolute mastery of 'orchestral tissue', in this order:

solo flute

solo clarinet

bassoon

the high E-flat clarinet

oboe d'amore

flute

muted trumpet

tenor saxophone

soprano saxophone

*then groups of instruments...*

two piccolos, horn and celesta

the oboe family, clarinet and bass clarinet

solo trombone (with its characteristic slide)

woodwinds

joined by the first violins

then the second violins and tenor saxophone

flutes, oboes, violins and trumpet

joined by a horn

clarinets, trombone and soprano sax return to the mix, together with violas and cellos

and ultimately the full ensemble, including a second snare drum

# GIANLUIGI GELMETTI: HAIL AND FAREWELL

There comes a tide in the affairs of orchestras which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. When an artistic relationship moves into a new phase – a parting of sorts, it is good to remember how it began. Or even before... We didn't know what to expect when Gianluigi Gelmetti first came to Australia, and it was quite hard to find out – such pre-tour interviews as were able to be conducted took place in an atmosphere of cigar smoke, in the backstage of a London opera house, and gave the sense that we were in for something unpredictable, perhaps an atmosphere of Mediterranean spontaneity – something very different from the level-headed approach to the use of time and musical control to which we were accustomed. And yet, at those very first rehearsals, the orchestra encountered a conductor who knew Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* inside out, and how to rehearse it. We were reminded, if we were thinking about such things, that Gianluigi Gelmetti's experience was not only the opera houses of Italy, but a stint as musical director of one of the best of the very systematic German radio orchestras.

Those first concerts in 1993 were exciting, and a return seemed the best of ideas. Gianluigi himself appeared to like us and our country. Already he was forming relationships with the players, and was persuaded, when he came back, to conduct not only the grown-up orchestras, but at the National Music Camp as well.

**Maestro Gelmetti with the Sydney Symphony in 2007.**



The second visit brought another speciality: the music of Ravel, which he had recorded for CD in Frankfurt. A picture was emerging of his musical personality – composer as well as conductor, who introduced us to one of his compositions, *Algos*. The players enjoyed him, if anything, even more. Here was a performer whose technique was equal to all demands, yet who trusted the players to express their own skill and musicianship, ready to help them out when needed.

A winning formula for a welcome guest conductor. But it was a surprise to those outside the circle of the orchestra when Gelmetti was appointed chief conductor. How would his spontaneous and personally charming ways translate into the detailed planning and interaction necessary for guiding an orchestra's musical life? Both when he was here and, especially, in the long-distance interaction of the interim periods? The element of surprise is the opposite of predictable planning. Perhaps the orchestra sensed that their recent experience had given them the confidence to take risks, and looked forward to some exciting concerts, where their chief would give them their head.

And so it proved, but the repertoire was not what might have been guessed from an Italian. One need only mention Toscanini to realise that Gelmetti was in a lineage of his fellow-countrymen who brought great insight to the core symphonic repertoire. Sergiu Celibidache was his mentor, and we had from him a similar repertoire to that of the Rumanian: Beethoven (all the symphonies in 2007), the *Missa solemnis*; Brahms, all the symphonies and the German Requiem; Mahler's First, Fifth and Ninth Symphonies; Schubert's Great C major (but no Bruckner). This was in addition to the Ravel and Debussy – Ravel in particular being comprehensively surveyed in performances which happily balanced surface sheen with structural clarity. Some of these pieces reappeared during the course of Gianluigi Gelmetti's courtship and marriage with the orchestra. His repertoire was substantial and central, but for a chief it was a selective one.

What was new? 'Shock of the New' was one thing. This is where the big adventures happened, unannounced – deliberately. It was not that Gianluigi did not commit to new music. Under his direction, the orchestra continued its engagement with Australia's composers, moving it towards the cutting edge of modernism by championing Liza Lim as resident composer. It may fairly be said that this music had to stand on the evidence of musical ears. Gianluigi's endearing use of the English language didn't



GREG BARETT

extend to extended advocacy and explanation. He wanted us to trust our ears, and to surprise us – by playing new and old pieces in unusual juxtapositions, only revealing what each was once it had finished. Beethoven with Varèse, Bach with Webern. Gelmetti knew that a measure of flexibility, spontaneity, is good for us – musicians *and* audience.

The measure of a chief conductor is not only in his own concerts but in what the orchestra puts around them – both as to artists and as to repertoire. Artistic planning in these years was a challenge, when the Sydney Symphony was in a network of Australian orchestras moving to establish their distinctive profiles, and collaborating less than of yore. Change was all around, and what audiences experienced in concerts had a scaffolding in the work of planners and jugglers – Timothy Calnin, who helped cement the relationship with Gelmetti, eventually was persuaded to follow the orchestra’s previous chief, Edo de Waart, to the Hong Kong Philharmonic. Franco Bottone, whose relationship with Gelmetti included working at the Rome Opera, began a pattern of immigrant artistic planners, which continued with Wolfgang Fink, whose previous experience of working with Gelmetti in Frankfurt now transmuted into planning, along with Gianluigi Gelmetti’s most recent period with the orchestra, for the post-Gelmetti era.

Among important developments in the orchestra’s life during Gelmetti’s tenure, audiences may have noticed the increase in numbers of double basses, and the reseating of the players – visible signs of addressing the challenges posed by the acoustic of the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall. They will also have enjoyed the first releases on the Sydney Symphony Live label from 2006, many of the CDs conducted by Gianluigi Gelmetti himself.

Now for the future. Remaining here in Sydney, most of us will not experience the nice symbolic gesture of Gianluigi Gelmetti, as he enters a new relationship with the orchestra, taking it to Italy to show off the artistic results of a long partnership. It seems appropriate that it should be Italy, since counterbalancing Gianluigi’s now familiar interpretations of the standard classical repertoire in recent years have been Italian delights which have rarely been presented here with such affectionate authority. We salute some distinguished conductors and soloists who have come under Gelmetti patronage, and recent Italian music including some by Gelmetti himself. The singers included Ricarda Merbeth, Roberto Scandiuzzi, Daniela Barcellona, and Anna Rita Taliento. Mentioning the singers



KEITH SAUNDERS

Maestro Gelmetti with his daughter, Biancalaura



GREG GARRETT

with Italian connections is a reminder that music from Italy has given Sydney some of its most memorable concerts in recent years. Rossini has featured twice – the second time with Gianluigi revealing his proficiency on the guitar! There has been Verdi’s Requiem with the Rome Opera Chorus, and a concert performance of Puccini’s rarely heard *La Rondine*, a complement to past performances of Wagner in concert, which tells much of the rewarding contrast Gelmetti has brought into our musical life.

Relationships are like this – each partner takes from the other what they are ready to give and to receive. When we know each other better, even when the excitement of novelty has worn off, we take stock of what has enriched us. This is not a balance sheet – the Gianluigi Gelmetti we have come to know is a personality who cannot be so prosaically assessed. What can be said with due historical judgment is that no Australian orchestra has had a chief conductor like him, and the Sydney Symphony will never be quite the same again. This is how remarkable people affect our lives and music. The story isn’t over...

DAVID GARRETT ©2008

*David Garrett was one of the artistic planners for the network of Australian orchestras when Gianluigi Gelmetti first visited Australia. He is now studying the history of the ABC’s role in music.*

**For the opening of the Sydney Symphony’s 75th anniversary season, Gelmetti conducted all the Brahms symphonies, and *A German Requiem* with soprano Marlis Petersen and baritone Markus Werba.**

# MORE MUSIC

## Selected Discography

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### GIANLUIGI GELMETTI

#### Nino Rota Film Music

Music from *The Leopard*, *War and Peace*, *La Strada*, *Waterloo*.

Monte Carlo Philharmonic .

EMI ENCORE 5 74987-2

#### Rossini Overtures and highlights from The Barber of Seville

Thomas Hampson, Susanne Mentzer; Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, Toscana Orchestra.

EMI 74752-2

#### Strauss and Schubert

From the 2006 season opening gala, Gianluigi Gelmetti conducts *The Blue Danube* waltz and Schubert's *Unfinished* Symphony. Ricarda Merbeth is the soprano soloist in Richard Strauss' *Four Last Songs*.

SSO 200803

#### Ravel

Gianluigi Gelmetti conducts Ravel masterpieces, including *La Valse*, *Daphnis et Chloé*, and *Bolero*.

SSO 200801

#### Song of Life

Gianluigi Gelmetti conducts the Australian premiere of his *Cantata della vita*.

SSO 200802

#### Debussy

Gelmetti conducts *La Mer* in the Sydney Symphony's 75th Anniversary Collection.

ABC CLASSICS 476 5957

## OTHER RECORDINGS ON SYDNEY SYMPHONY LIVE

### Sir Charles Mackerras

The Sydney Symphony's former Chief Conductor directs the Czech repertoire that is close to his heart – Dvořák, Smetana and Janáček – as well as *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.

SSO 200705

### Brett Dean

A celebration of the music and performances of Brett Dean, including his award-winning Viola Concerto (with composer as soloist). Simone Young and Hugh Wolff conduct the Sydney Symphony.

SSO 200702

and online...

### Very High Kings

This recording captures an exhilarating performance of Richard Meale's *Very High Kings*, conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Brilliant and splendid music – available through Apple's iTunes Store and at [www.emusic.com](http://www.emusic.com)

## Broadcast Diary

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### SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER

20 September, 12.05pm

#### GELMETTI'S FAREWELL

**Gianluigi Gelmetti** conductor

Beethoven, Wagner, Verdi, Mascagni, Verdi, Ravel

24 September, 1.05pm

#### WEST SIDE STORY

**Wayne Marshall** conductor

Goldmark, Bernstein

27 September, 8pm

#### MOZART & GRIEG

**Michael Dauth** violin-director

**Jasminka Stancul** piano

Grieg, Mozart, Bridge

25 October, 8pm

#### A TRIBUTE TO DUKE ELLINGTON

**Hamish McKeich** conductor

**James Morrison Quartet**

27 October, 1pm

#### Edo de Waart conductor

BARTÓK Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta  
R STRAUSS Metamorphosen

*Performances recorded in 1997 and 2001*

31 October, 1pm

#### MIDORI GALA (2006)

**Miguel Harth-Bedoya** conductor

**Midori** violin

Britten

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2MBS-FM 102.5

#### SYDNEY SYMPHONY 2008

Tue 14 October, 6pm

What's on in concerts, with interviews and music.

## Webcast Diary

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*Selected Sydney Symphony concerts are recorded for webcast by BigPond and are available On Demand.*

*Visit: [sydneysymphony.bigpondmusic.com](http://sydneysymphony.bigpondmusic.com)*

Current webcast:

#### GELMETTI'S FAREWELL

*Available On Demand from Saturday 20 September, 8pm*

## [sydneysymphony.com](http://sydneysymphony.com)

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*Visit the Sydney Symphony online for concert information, podcasts, and to read the program book in advance of the concert.*

# ABOUT THE ARTIST

## Gianluigi Gelmetti

CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Gianluigi Gelmetti studied with Sergiu Celibidache, Franco Ferrara and Hans Swarowsky. Since making his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic he has regularly appeared in the major venues worldwide and at international festivals, and conducted many of the world's leading orchestras. For ten years he was Principal Conductor of the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra. He has been Music Director of the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma (Rome Opera) since 2000, and Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony since 2004.

Gianluigi Gelmetti is deeply involved in the Italian and French operatic repertoire of the 19th and 20th centuries, including revivals and premieres of rarely performed works. In Italy he has conducted many productions for the Rossini Opera Festival and in 1999 he received the Rossini d'Oro Prize for *William Tell*. He also works regularly at Monte Carlo Opera and Covent Garden.

In 2006 he toured the Rome Opera's production of *Tosca* to Japan and conducted an acclaimed production of *Tristan und Isolde* in their main season. In 1997 he won the Tokyo critics' prize for the best performance of the year with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

His recording catalogue includes operas by Rossini, Puccini and Mozart, Ravel's orchestral music, Mozart symphonies and works by Stravinsky, Berg, Webern, Varèse and Rota, as well as recordings of Bruckner's Sixth Symphony and Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. For the Sydney Symphony Live label he has recorded Beethoven symphonies, Ravel orchestral works and the soon-to-be-released *Cantata della vita*.

Gianluigi Gelmetti is also a composer; his works include *In Paradisum Deducant Te Angeli*, commemorating the tenth anniversary of Franco Ferrara's death, *Algos*, *Prasanta Atma*, in memory of Celibidache, and *Cantata della vita*. He has taught conducting at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena since 1997 and is an Accademico effettivo of the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. He has been honoured as Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in France and Cavaliere di Gran Croce in Italy.



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# THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY

PATRON Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales

JOHN MARMARAS



Founded in 1932, the Sydney Symphony has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Last year the Orchestra celebrated its 75th anniversary and the milestone achievements during its distinguished history.

Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, where it gives more than 100 performances each year, the Sydney Symphony also performs concerts in a variety of venues around Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra world-wide recognition for artistic excellence.

Critical to the success of the Sydney Symphony has been the leadership given by its former Chief Conductors including: Sir Eugene Goossens, Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Stuart Challender and Edo de Waart. Also contributing to the outstanding success of the Orchestra have been collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

Maestro Gianluigi Gelmetti, whose appointment followed a ten-year relationship with the Orchestra as Guest Conductor, is now in his fifth and final year as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony, a position he holds in tandem with that of Music Director at Rome Opera. Maestro Gelmetti's particularly strong rapport with French and German repertoire is complemented by his innovative programming in the Shock of the New concerts.

The Sydney Symphony's award-winning Education Program is central to the Orchestra's commitment to the future of live symphonic music, developing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. The Sydney Symphony also maintains an active commissioning program promoting the work of Australian composers, and recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards and Brett Dean, as well as Liza Lim, who was composer-in-residence from 2004 to 2006.

In 2009 Maestro Vladimir Ashkenazy will begin his three-year tenure as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor.

# MUSICIANS



**Gianluigi Gelmetti**  
Chief Conductor and  
Artistic Director



**Michael Dauth**  
Chair of Concertmaster  
supported by the Sydney  
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**Dene Olding**  
Chair of Concertmaster  
supported by the Sydney  
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## First Violins



## Second Violins



## First Violins

- 01 Sun Yi  
Associate Concertmaster
- 02 Kirsten Williams  
Associate Concertmaster
- 03 Kirsty Hilton  
Assistant Concertmaster
- 04 Fiona Ziegler  
Assistant Concertmaster
- 05 Julie Batty
- 06 Sophie Cole
- 07 Amber Gunther
- 08 Rosalind Horton
- 09 Jennifer Hoy
- 10 Jennifer Johnson
- 11 Georges Lentz
- 12 Nicola Lewis
- 13 Alexandra Mitchell  
Moon Design Chair of Violin
- 14 Léone Ziegler

## Second Violins

- 01 Marina Marsden  
Principal
- 02 Emma West  
A/Associate Principal
- 03 Shuti Huang  
A/Assistant Principal
- 04 Susan Dobbie  
Principal Emeritus
- 05 Pieter Bersée
- 06 Maria Durek
- 07 Emma Hayes
- 08 Stan W Kornel
- 09 Benjamin Li
- 10 Nicole Masters
- 11 Philippa Paige
- 12 Biyana Rozenblit
- 13 Maja Verunica

## Guest Musicians

- |                                  |                               |                                |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Martin Silverton<br>First Violin | Maxime Bibeau<br>Double Bass  | Genevieve Lang<br>Harp         |
| Leigh Middenway<br>Second Violin | Lauren Brandon<br>Double Bass | David Drury<br>Keyboard        |
| Jacqueline Cronin<br>Viola#      | Gordon Hill<br>Double Bass#   | Christina Leonard<br>Saxophone |
| Jennifer Curl<br>Viola#          | David Papp<br>Oboe†           | James Nightingale<br>Saxophone |
| Rosemary Curtin<br>Viola#        | Andrew Bain<br>Horn           | # = Contract Musician          |
| Rowena Crouch<br>Cello#          | John Douglas<br>Percussion    | † = Sydney Symphony<br>Fellow  |
| Patrick Murphy<br>Cello#         | Kevin Man<br>Percussion       |                                |
| Patrick Suthers<br>Cello†        | Brian Nixon<br>Percussion#    |                                |

# MUSICIANS

## Violas



## Cellos



## Double Basses



## Harp

## Flutes

## Piccolo



### Violas

- 01 Roger Benedict  
Andrew Turner and  
Vivian Chang Chair of  
Principal Viola
- 02 Anne Louise Comerford  
Associate Principal
- 03 Yvette Goodchild  
Assistant Principal
- 04 Robyn Brookfield
- 05 Sandro Costantino
- 06 Jane Hazelwood
- 07 Graham Hennings
- 08 Mary McVarish
- 09 Justine Marsden
- 10 Leonid Volovelsky
- 11 Felicity Wytthe

### Cellos

- 01 Catherine Hewgill  
Tony and Fran Meagher  
Chair of Principal Cello
- 02 Nathan Waks  
Principal
- 03 Leah Lynn  
Assistant Principal
- 04 Kristy Conrau
- 05 Fenella Gill
- 06 Timothy Nankervis
- 07 Elizabeth Neville
- 08 Adrian Wallis
- 09 David Wickham

### Double Basses

- 01 Kees Boersma  
Brian and Rosemary  
White Chair of Principal  
Double Bass
- 02 Alex Henery  
Principal
- 03 Neil Brawley  
Principal Emeritus
- 04 David Campbell
- 05 Steven Larson
- 06 Richard Lynn
- 07 David Murray  
Gordon Hill  
(contract, courtesy  
Auckland Philharmonia)

### Harp

- Louise Johnson  
Mulpha Australia Chair  
of Principal Harp

### Flutes

- 01 Janet Webb  
Principal
- 02 Emma Sholl  
Mr Harcourt Gough  
Chair of Associate  
Principal Flute
- 03 Carolyn Harris

### Piccolo

- Rosamund Plummer  
Principal

# MUSICIANS

## Oboes



## Cor Anglais



## Clarinets



## 03



## Bass Clarinet



## Bassoons



## 03



## Contrabassoon



## Horns



## 02



## 03



## 04



## 05



## 06



## Trumpets



## 02



## 03



## 04



## Trombones



## 02



## 03



## Bass Trombone



## Tuba



## Timpani



## Percussion



## 02



## Piano



### Oboes

- 01 Diana Doherty  
Andrew Kaldor and  
Renata Kaldor AO Chair  
of Principal Oboe
- 02 Shefali Pryor  
Associate Principal

### Cor Anglais

- Alexandre Oguey  
Principal

### Clarinets

- 01 Lawrence Dobell  
Principal
- 02 Francesco Celata  
Associate Principal
- 03 Christopher Tingay

### Bass Clarinet

- Craig Wernicke  
Principal

### Bassoons

- 01 Matthew Wilkie  
Principal
- 02 Roger Brooke  
Associate Principal
- 03 Fiona McNamara

### Contrabassoon

- Noriko Shimada  
Principal

### Horns

- 01 Robert Johnson  
Principal
- 02 Ben Jacks  
Principal
- 03 Geoff O'Reilly  
Principal 3rd
- 04 Lee Bracegirdle
- 05 Euan Harvey
- 06 Marnie Sebire

### Trumpets

- 01 Daniel Mendelow  
Principal
- 02 Paul Goodchild  
The Hansen Family Chair  
of Associate Principal  
Trumpet
- 03 John Foster
- 04 Anthony Heinrichs

### Trombone

- 01 Ronald Prussing  
NSW Department of  
State and Regional  
Development Chair of  
Principal Trombone
- 02 Scott Kinmont  
Associate Principal
- 03 Nick Byrne  
Rogen International  
Chair of Trombone

### Bass Trombone

- Christopher Harris  
Trust Foundation Chair  
of Principal Bass  
Trombone

### Tuba

- Steve Rossé  
Principal

### Timpani

- 01 Richard Miller  
Principal

### Percussion

- 01 Rebecca Lagos  
Principal
- 02 Colin Piper

### Piano

- Josephine Allan  
Principal (contract)

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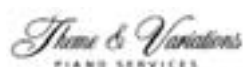
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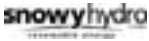
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