

2009 SEASON

INTERNATIONAL PIANISTS IN RECITAL
PRESENTED BY THEME & VARIATIONS

IMOGEN COOPER

Monday 1 June | 8pm
City Recital Hall Angel Place

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828)

16 German Dances, D783

Sonata in G, D894

Molto moderato e cantabile

Andante

Menuetto (Allegretto moderato)

Allegretto

INTERVAL

Moments Musicaux, D780

Moderato

Andantino

Allegro moderato

Moderato

Allegro vivace

Allegretto

Sonata in C minor, D958

Allegro

Adagio

Menuetto (Allegro) – Trio

Allegro



This concert will be broadcast
live across Australia on
ABC Classic FM 92.9.

Pre-concert talk by Scott Davie
at 7.15pm in the First Floor
Reception Room.

Estimated timings:

12 minutes, 32 minutes,
20-minute interval, 28 minutes,
30 minutes

The performance will conclude
at approximately 10.10pm.

Artist biography on page 24.

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INTRODUCTION

Imogen Cooper plays Schubert

Last year in an interview Imogen Cooper recalled a concert she'd given in Buenos Aires. 'It was an all-Schubert recital,' she said, 'A young girl, she must have been about 18, came and saw me afterwards. She said "I've never been to a classical concert before; can I tell you what I heard? I heard fear, horror, death, tenderness; I heard somebody who was very solitary."' She described exactly what this music is about, yet she knew nothing about Schubert at all. That's miraculous. Within this unspoken language of music, you can somehow find a language of the human psyche.'

That miracle was something that Schubert's own friends recognised. It was Robert Schumann – pianist, composer and critic – who wrote 'what a diary is to others, in which their momentary emotions and so forth are recorded, so to Schubert was music paper, to which he entrusted all his moods.' And it could be said that nowhere are those moods more compellingly communicated than in Schubert's late piano music. This is repertoire that Imogen Cooper has been performing for the past season, immersing herself and her audiences in the powerful expression of this often shy and self-effacing composer.

In tonight's concert we're able to hear the extent of Schubert's range. The recital begins with the music of his social circle – simple, jewel-like dances. The *Moments Musicaux* also demonstrate the perfection that Schubert could achieve in genial miniature forms. At the other extreme are two late sonatas – ambitious but moody, sombre but impassioned.



Portrait of Schubert by Franz Eybl (1827)

LEEMAGHLEBRECHT MUSIC & ARTS

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

16 German Dances, D783

In tonight's recital Imogen Cooper performs the dances in the following sequence:

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 6

Spare a thought for the lovable genius, sociable but introverted, who finds himself at one of those parties where the dancing goes on until six in the morning. He's inclined to watch the charades from the piano bench, probably as bemused as the family dog that sits at his side. But even so, once the singing and the dancing begins he is in his element.

When the artists Moritz von Schwind and Leopold Kupelwieser conjure up the parties and 'Schubertiades' of their social circle (in Schwind's case, years later) Schubert is at their heart. But he is never shown singing, or dancing, or joining in the games. Instead their 'little mushroom' (*Schwammerl*, as he was called) sits at the piano, spinning musical magic.

The hours of dances that Schubert improvised for the delight of his friends found their way into formal compositions – 'written down distillations' as Brian Newbould calls them. These were true to their origins: music that could, with a very few exceptions, be danced to. And they found their way into print during his lifetime when so little of Schubert's other instrumental music did. This was unsurprising in dance-crazed Vienna, where, at the peak of the 1821 Carnival season more than 1600 balls took place in a single night, and where the dancing very often did go on until dawn.



Schubert's handwritten music for a waltz from Opus 9

Enterprising publishers took advantage of this, and tonight's set of German dances (a predecessor to the waltz) was issued as 'Opus 33' in time for Carnival in January 1825. Schwind, however, recalls that they were completed the year before. In March, he wrote, Schubert had been very industrious, writing an octet, a quartet and the song cycle *Die schöne Müllerin*, as well as 'some 20 German dances, each finer than the last, courtly, charming, bacchic and fugal'.

That brief description captures the sheer variety and range of character that Schubert is able to give his dance music, even as he observes the necessarily regular structure of two balanced sections, each repeated. It is easy, of course, to compose short, simple pieces like this. It is not so easy to make a gem, complete in every way, within the constraints of extreme brevity, and this is where Schubert's genius shows itself.

In No.15 of this set, for example, Schubert takes just 16 bars of music – under a minute – to trace a little harmonic journey from minor to major, underneath a yearning melody that barely leaves the note on which it begins. In another dance, No.13, he plays musical games with his dancers by giving them an accented upbeat at the beginning of each phrase.

Schwind wasn't the only one to recognise the brilliance of Schubert's characterisation. Robert Schumann, reviewing the set in 1836, fell into raptures of imagination, inventing his own ballroom narrative. 'Wouldn't it be fine,' Schumann's Florestan says, 'if you fetched out your magic lantern and shadowed forth the whole masked ball upon the wall as we hear them played' – whereupon the music embarks in his mind on a succession of masqueraders and comic figures, a somersaulting Harlequin (No.3), slender knights and pretty guitarists, young country lovers, lords and ladies, even (in No.10) a Spaniard and an Ursuline nun. The best-known dance (No.6), which ends the set tonight, is heard as a proudly plumed hussar. There is no need to follow Schumann to the letter, but in the absence of a dance floor why not follow him in spirit and imagine a ballroom of your own?

YVONNE FRINDLE
SYDNEY SYMPHONY ©2009



Detail from a watercolour by Kupelwieser, "The family of Franz von Schober playing charades" (1821)

Schubert

Piano Sonata in G, D894 (Op.78)

Molto moderato e cantabile

Andante

Menuetto (Allegretto moderato)

Allegretto

When Schubert sold this sonata, one of the few of his works to be published in his lifetime, the publisher, Haslinger, brought it out as four separate pieces. In one edition the first movement only, in others the whole sonata, were titled 'Fantasia'. The most likely explanation is that by 1827 'sonatas' had become unfashionable, and pianists preferred short characteristic pieces. Schubert, grateful for any attention to his works, may not have minded too much. The second movement of this sonata was probably what Schubert played at a party at the home of his friend Josef Spaun, in December 1826, 'a magnificent but melancholy piece of his own composition'. Spaun was the dedicatee of the published sonata.

The publisher's caution was justified by the character of the sonata, which is as unlike as could be any sonatas his public could have known, especially Beethoven's. When we have finished playing or hearing it, the impression is above all of intimacy, of serene breadth, of 'rapt communication'. It was left to one of the most perceptive musicians of the next generation, Robert Schumann, to recognise that in this four-movement sonata, 'all is organic, all breathes the same life'. Reviewing it with the sonatas in A minor (D845) and D major (D850), all 'absolutely wonderful', he found it 'the most perfect in form and substance'. It is a judgment endorsed by the Schubert authority Alfred Einstein, who also finds this G major sonata Schubert's most perfect, and his most individual.

It does demand a new kind of listening, rather beyond the first reviewers, one of whom wrote: 'the popular and talented song composer here gives to the musical world a Fantasy, wherein he has given free play to his imagination and offers the player harmonious enjoyment...' Another, encouraging the 'still young

...the impression is above all of intimacy, of serene breadth, of 'rapt communication'.

artist who has raised the most pleasurable hopes', warns him not to imitate Beethoven too closely.

Beethoven may have been the starting point, but Schubert was here no imitator. In the same key, G major, Schubert's opening does recall that of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto, but even here there is in Beethoven more potential for dramatic development, more rhythmic energy, and though both composers soon venture into a distant key, Schubert does so in a way already presaging a long journey. Then again, Beethoven's 'moderato' is a qualification of 'allegro' – Schubert's has the additions 'molto' (very restrained), 'e cantabile' (songful). These indications will turn out to be characteristic of the whole sonata. Schubert in this piece takes a big step towards the leisurely breadth necessary to accommodate a musical thinking conceived not as drama, but as an adventure, where long-range harmonic thinking, allied to extensions and embellishments of the themes, will be the delightful discoveries. A step, in fact, towards Schubert's last sonata of all, in B flat, D960.

That was only a year or two in the future – the G major sonata is 'late' Schubert, though its composer was not yet 30. It is one of the few major works Schubert composed in the year 1826, another being a string quartet in the same key, whose powerful drama of tonal conflict makes a strong contrast with the piano sonata. The baffling bleakness of much of the song cycle *Die Winterreise* (The Winter's Journey) was to follow early the next year.

...a musical thinking
conceived not as drama,
but as an adventure...

Listening Guide

On the autograph of the sonata Schubert wrote 'sonata for pianoforte only', which may mean that it could only be performed on one of the new grand pianos. The very broad tempo of the **first movement** seems to require that instrument's sustaining power, and the sonata abounds in markings of '*ppp*' – the softest of soft, with pedalling – as in the new idea in B minor which follows the first theme. At the other extreme of dynamics are the massive climaxes of the development

section, where the first theme receives unexpected emphasis, a necessary contrast to an otherwise placid movement. There is brilliant elaboration of the almost waltz-like second subject, exploiting the upper reaches of the keyboard. A Vienna review of 1827 commended Schubert for not sacrificing variety in this 'good pianoforte composition which by no means aims at being mere dancing lessons for the fingers'.

The **slow movement**'s achievement of a telling simplicity – persisting despite two quite forceful episodes contrasting minor and major, loud and soft – was hard won by Schubert, who rejected two earlier versions. The publisher may have sold most copies of the **minuet**, whose stately feeling justifies the backward-looking title, and whose defining figure is four repeated notes, a pattern which will also mark the last movement. The trio is more up to date – a Ländler of the most delicate quietness, with magical modulation from minor to major of the same key, B, near the end.

Schumann wrote 'Let him avoid the last movement who lacks the imagination to solve its riddle'. A Leipzig reviewer called this **finale** 'a fiery, curious, and here and there somewhat freakish bravura movement, devised like a great, free rondo'. Underneath an apparently limpid movement with a feeling, writes Philip Radcliffe, of rather rustic open-air, are subtleties, such as excursions into distant keys and harmonies – romantic novelties to ears hearing this vein in Schubert for the first time. Perhaps Schumann's riddle is in the most visionary passages of a visionary sonata, the delicate pianism which for Einstein recalls early Debussy. 'Just before the end', writes Einstein, 'a quiet passage of purely impressionistic character winds its way up the keyboard and down again, producing a cloudy effect which only clears away to allow a few bars of the refrain to be recollected in tranquillity.'

...the most visionary passages of a visionary sonata...

Schubert

Moments Musicaux, D780

Moderato

Andantino

Allegro moderato

Moderato

Allegro vivace

Allegretto

Tonight's concert began with dances – social, 'functional' music – and will end with a sonata of the most serious kind. Falling between these two extremes is the kind of piano music represented by the *Moments Musicaux*. These are shorter pieces, self-contained, less technically demanding than the sometimes pianistically awkward sonatas, and exactly the music that you can imagine Schubert himself performing in the company of his friends. Occupying this middle ground, writes Brian Newbould, they sometimes touch the world of the sonata and sometimes embody the dance spirit.

The one that's closest to dance music was the first to reach the public and is the piece that remains the most popular – No.3. It now goes by its tempo indication, *Allegro moderato* (moderately fast), but a fanciful publisher issued it in a Christmas album of 1823 as 'Air russe' or Russian Song. This was clearly a success because the same publisher, Sauer & Leidersdorf, published a second piece by Schubert, together with a song by him, in the Christmas album for the following year. This was No.6, under the florid title, 'Plaintes d'un troubadour' (Complaint of the troubadour). The albums placed Schubert in diverse company with Carl Maria von Weber and the wildly popular Rossini as well as now obscure names.

These two pieces from 1823–24 were among the first of Schubert's short piano pieces. As David Garrett suggests in his note for the Sonata in G (D894), the sonata as a genre was becoming unfashionable in the face of short character pieces such as impromptus, brought to Vienna from Bohemia by Jan Voříšek. Not only did this kind of music suit Schubert's personal



Schubert, a sketch portrait by Leopold Kupelwieser (1821)

playing, it fed a growing appetite amongst gifted amateurs and was perfectly attuned to a Romantic fondness for miniature forms and intimate characterisation.

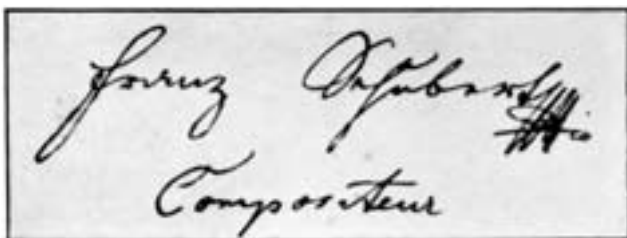
The remaining four pieces were probably composed towards the end of 1827, and Leidersdorf published the complete collection in July of 1828, Schubert's final year. It's not clear whether the name (initially misspelled as 'Momens Musicals') was Schubert's or, again, a publisher's, but regardless it captures the spontaneity and jewel-like quality of the music.

Schubert knew Voříšek's pieces; another influence would have been the bagatelles of Beethoven, perhaps most evident in the first of the *Moments Musicaux* (**Moderato**). This begins with the bright, clarity of a symphonic announcement: octaves outlining a simple C major fanfare that's been compared to the call of a magic horn. A gentle 'yodelling' theme follows, and a contrasting middle section with a rippling accompaniment.

No.2 in the set (**Andantino**, A flat major) adopts the rocking rhythm of the ancient siciliano for an idyllic opening idea. This theme returns twice more in the piece, alternating – almost abruptly – with darker, more turbulent music in F sharp minor.

The so-called 'Russian Song' (**No.3 Allegro moderato**) exudes an air of familiarity not only on its own account but through its affinity with ballet music Schubert wrote for the play *Rosamunde* in the same year, 1823. (The piece in question is the Ballet Music No.2 in G.) Despite being cast in the gloomy key of F minor, the piece has a cheerful grace that would not be out of place in a Tchaikovsky ballet divertissement – Schubert's publisher couldn't have foreseen this, of course, but from our vantage point 'Air russe' may not be so inappropriate a title.

...a Romantic fondness for miniature forms and intimate characterisation.





Moritz von Schwind, "An evening at Josef von Spaun's: Schubert at the piano with baritone Johann Michael Vogl" (sepia drawing, 1868)

No.4 (**Allegro**) has the character of a baroque toccata – a piece for the keyboardist's fingers! An urgent drama is conveyed through non-stop figurations and the C sharp minor key, offset only by the distinct contrast of the softly lilting central section. This idea is echoed briefly at the end in a mood of nostalgia.

The fifth piece in the set (**Allegro vivace**) is bold and impassioned, returning again to the turbulence of F minor, a key associated in the 1820s with extremes of emotion: grief, depression, 'gloomy melancholy' and 'emotional shocks'. There is no relief from the driving rhythms and powerful chords.

No.6 (**Allegretto**) is an unlikely finale: its mood is thoughtful and its textures simple, and at the same time its expansive harmonic wanderings undermine any hint of conclusiveness. The contrasts implied by its three-part structure are discreetly drawn, with subtle shifts between music that is sometimes sorrowful, sometimes consoling. Here, more than anywhere else in the set, there is a feeling of lyrical intimacy, and Franz Liszt's assessment is borne out to the full: Schubert is 'the most poetic of all musicians'.

YVONNE FRINDLE
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Portrait of Schubert, from a lithograph by Josef Kriehuber (1846)

Schubert

Sonata in C minor, D958

Allegro

Adagio

Menuetto (Allegro) – Trio

Allegro

There's no doubt that Schubert saw himself, in 1828, the year after Beethoven's death, as appointed to continue that composer's legacy. Schubert's intention was to dedicate the three sonatas he composed in that year to Beethoven's erstwhile rival as a virtuoso pianist, Hummel. Of the three sonatas, which turned out to be Schubert's last, the one in C minor is on first appearance most like Beethoven. The declamatory initial idea strongly recalls the theme of Beethoven's 32 Variations in C minor, but already Schubert's extension of his theme, which explodes into a downward-rushing scale, suggests a freedom in expansion very different from Beethoven. Rather than having capacity for strict variation or development, Schubert's themes become increasingly lyrical and chromatic. Lyrical, in the extensions and repetitions of the themes, and in the more meditative second theme in the relative major key. Chromatic, especially in the middle of the movement, where a mysterious theme appears, under unceasing semiquavers, suggesting to Philip Radcliffe a new character in the drama, and issuing in fragmented forms of the second subject. This pattern of free associations, wandering into distant harmonic realms, climaxes in chromatic runs, pianissimo at first, in the upper reaches of the keyboard. Under these, the declamatory idea's characteristic rhythm is heard once again, presaging the recapitulation. The chromatic theme, and the atmosphere of mystery it brings, have the last word.

Of the three last sonatas of Schubert, this one is the least often played. Perhaps that is because, of the three, it seems the least characteristic of Schubert the lyrical harmonic visionary. This has made the A major and B flat sonatas touchstones of Schubert at his most profound and original, since they were brought back into the repertoire in the 20th century, by pianists such as Eduard Erdmann and Artur Schnabel. Yet the present

...it seems the least characteristic of Schubert the lyrical harmonic visionary.

writer counts himself fortunate that this was the first of the three sonatas he got to know. Its minor key and sombre tone made it striking, and its echoes of Beethoven made it intriguing. But there is here something quite distinctive – an almost magical and unpredictable invention quite unlike Beethoven, seeming to well up out of the unconscious: what led pianist Alfred Brendel to call the Schubert of these sonatas a ‘sleepwalker’. And Schubert’s darkness and sternness are quite unlike Beethoven’s.

Listening Guide

The **second movement** begins with a theme often compared to a hymn or a prayer, but the second idea is more fraught, almost a lament, and soon leads to outbursts, as it becomes clear that semiquaver rhythms will give unity to this part of a rondo structure. After an elaborated return of the opening, and a magical modulation, the music rises to intense climaxes, and motion invades all the musical material, before the relative calm returns.

In spite of the title ‘Minuet’, the subtly varied phrase lengths of the **third movement**, the continuing dark, C minor colour, and the telling pauses, give a ‘scherzo’ character. The trio in A flat major, is a Ländler of wistful tone, but with a Viennese lilt.

The **finale** is, in terms of bar numbers if not in duration, the longest movement in Schubert’s sonatas. The pace is a not-too-fast *Allegro*, to allow the harmonic adventures to register, and the excursions into remote keys. The affinity is with the finale of Schubert’s own D minor string quartet, ‘Death and the Maiden’ (D810), in which some find a dance of death, rather than with the ostensible model, the finale of Beethoven’s piano sonata Op.31 No.3. This ‘haunted and breathless gallop’ confirms the view that the three last sonatas are associated in Schubert’s mind with ideas of death. But the final effect is exhilarating in its dynamic propulsion, and makes us grateful, as the concert reaches its end, that Beethoven had so original a successor.

...an almost magical and unpredictable invention...

GLOSSARY

CARNIVAL – in Catholic countries, a pre-Lenten festival (January–February), involving a mix of public celebrations and private parties, and characterised by masquerading to mark the ‘overturning’ of daily life. In Austria also known as Fasching.

CHROMATIC – in tonal music, the use of foreign notes and harmonies that do not belong to the key, together with frequent modulation to other keys. The impression is one of harmonic richness and while chromaticism has been used as an expressive effect since the 16th century, it is most strongly associated with the Romantic style of the 19th century.

FANTASIA – a solo instrumental composition characterised by freedom of form and an improvisational character.

GERMAN DANCE – (*Deutscher Tanz*) a type of slow waltz, cultivated in the late 18th century and early 19th century by composers such as Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert. Similar to the *ländler*.

LÄNDLER – a popular Austrian country dance in triple time. A forerunner of the waltz, it is slower and ‘heavier’ than the Viennese waltz.

MENUETTO – from minuet, a French court dance from the Baroque period. Adopted in the 18th century as a tempo direction, it suggests a dance-like movement in a moderately fast triple time. In concert music a minuet would usually include a contrasting central section known as a trio.

MODULATION – a transition from one key to another within the course of a movement.

RONDO – a musical form in which a main idea (refrain) alternates with a series of musical episodes. Not dissimilar in concept to the verse and chorus structure of many songs.

SCHERZO – literally, a joke; the term generally refers to a movement in a fast, light triple time, which may involve whimsical, startling or playful elements.

SCHUBERTIAD – an evening of private music-making featuring Schubert’s music and

hosted by his friends; since his death, a term sometimes adopted for concerts or festivals dedicated to Schubert’s music.

SEMIQUAVER – a rhythmic unit that divides the crotchet beat into four quick notes.

SONATA – can refer to both a musical genre and a musical form. The classical **SONATA** is a three- or four-movement work for solo instrument – usually with piano accompaniment (unless the solo instrument is piano!) – in which the first movement, and sometimes the last movement, is in sonata form.

The term **SONATA FORM** was conceived in the 19th century to describe the harmonically based structure most classical composers had adopted for the first movements of their sonatas and symphonies. It involves the **EXPOSITION**, or presentation of themes and subjects: the first in the tonic or home key, the second in a contrasting key. The tension between the two keys is intensified in the **DEVELOPMENT**, where the themes are manipulated and varied as the music moves further and further away from the ultimate goal of the home key. Tension is resolved in the **RECAPITULATION**, where both subjects are restated in the tonic. Sometimes a coda (‘tail’) is added to enhance the sense of finality.

In much of the classical repertoire, movement titles are taken from the Italian words that indicate the tempo and mood. A selection of terms from this program is included here.

Adagio – slow

Allegretto – lively, not so fast as Allegro

Allegretto moderato – lively but moderate tempo

Allegro – fast

Andante – at a walking pace

This glossary is intended only as a quick and easy guide, not as a set of comprehensive and absolute definitions. Most of these terms have many subtle shades of meaning which cannot be included for reasons of space.

MORE MUSIC

Selected Discography

SCHUBERT PIANO MUSIC

In 2006 Imogen Cooper released a series of recordings, *Schubert: The Last Six Years*. She includes the sonatas as well as shorter pieces such as the Impromptus, German Dances and the *Moments musicaux*. In six volumes. OTTAVO 68608; 58714; 128715; 88817; 88821; 78923

More recently the Avie label, in association with the BBC, has begun a similar series of releases, featuring Imogen Cooper in live recordings from London's Southbank Centre. The first release, 2 CDs, contains three sonatas: A major, D595, A minor, D845 and D major, D850, together with the Three Piano Pieces, D946 and 11 Ecosaises, D781.

AVIE AV2156

Imogen Cooper's mentor, Alfred Brendel, can be seen and heard on the 5-DVD set *Alfred Brendel plays and introduces Schubert piano works*. The extensive program (nearly 10 hours) includes both the sonatas on tonight's program as well as the *Moments musicaux*.

EUROARTS 2056558

Alfred Brendel plays three sonatas (C minor, D958, A major, D959, and B flat, D960) and three late pieces in an excellent value 2-CD set, *Schubert: The Last Three Sonatas*.

PHILIPS DUO 438703

And for a comprehensive collection of Schubert sonatas, consider Radu Lupu's 4-CD set.

DECCA 000567802

IMOGEN COOPER

Imogen Cooper's most recent recording features two Mozart concertos (No.24 in C minor, K491 and No.25 in C, K503) accompanied by the Northern Sinfonia and conductor Bradley Creswick. The Fantasia in D minor for solo piano, K397 fills out the disc. *Fanfare's* Michael Ullman praises the 'sensitive and probing and patrician' playing.

AVIE 2175

In 2007 she released a recital disc with Beethoven's Sonata No.28 in A, Op.101, Mozart's Sonata in A minor, K310 and *Miroirs* by Ravel. Recorded live at Wigmore Hall.

WIGMORE HALL LIVE 18

Imogen Cooper has also recorded several discs of lieder with baritone Wolfgang Holzmair for the Philips label, including two discs of Schubert, *Die Winterreise* and *Schwanengesang*.

PHILIPS 446407; 442460

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Broadcast Diary



JUNE

3 June, 1.05pm

BEETHOVEN & BEYOND

Douglas Boyd conductor

Paul Lewis piano

Haydn, Beethoven, Bartók

6 June, 8pm

KURT ELLING: JAZZ & ORCHESTRA (2008)

Kurt Elling vocals

with **Robert Amster**, **Laurence Hobgood**, **Kobie**

Watkins, **Julien Wilson** and the **Sydney Symphony**

conducted by **Benjamin Northey**

12 June, 8pm

ROMANTIC PERFECTION

Hugh Wolff conductor

Isabelle Faust violin

Berlioz, Mendelssohn, Beethoven

13 June, 12.05pm

BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

Vladimir Ashkenazy

Peter Coleman-Wright baritone

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Sculthorpe, Bax, Walton

20 June, 8pm

POWER & PANACHE

Hugh Wolff conductor

Stephen Hough piano

Tchaikovsky, Walton

2MBS-FM 102.5

SYDNEY SYMPHONY 2009

9 June, 6pm

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ABOUT THE ARTIST

Imogen Cooper piano

Recognised worldwide as a pianist of virtuosity and poetic poise, Imogen Cooper has established a reputation as one of the finest interpreters of the classical repertoire. She has dazzled audiences and orchestras throughout her distinguished career, bringing to the concert platform her unique musical understanding and lyrical quality.

This year Imogen Cooper continues a two-year project, performing the last six years of Schubert's solo works as part of the International Piano Series in London.

In the 2008/09 season her performances have included the Philadelphia Orchestra with Simon Rattle, Boston Symphony with Colin Davis, NHK Symphony and a tour with the London Symphony Orchestra and Daniel Harding. She also continues a long-term relationship play-directing with the Britten Sinfonia. Her solo, lieder and chamber recitals this season have included the USA, UK, Netherlands and Japan.

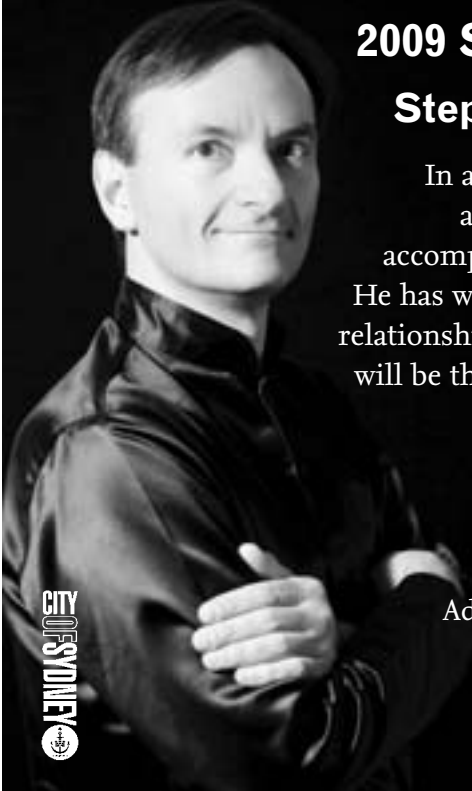
Imogen Cooper has a widespread international career and has appeared with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra with Colin Davis and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra with Simon Rattle. She has also performed with the Royal Concertgebouw, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Dresden Staatskapelle and NKH Symphony Orchestras, and with all the major British orchestras, including the Philharmonia Orchestra (with Christoph Eschenbach) and the London Philharmonic Orchestra (with Mark Elder at the BBC Proms).

She is a committed chamber music player and performs regularly with the Belcea Quartet, as well as in recital with baritone Wolfgang Holzmair and cellist Sonia Wieder-Atherton, both of whom appear in the box set *Imogen Cooper and Friends*, a recording of solo, chamber and lieder works. Her most recent recordings include four Mozart Concertos with the Northern Sinfonia and a solo recital disc recorded at Wigmore Hall.

Imogen Cooper received a CBE in the Queen's New Year Honours in 2007 and an award from the Royal Philharmonic Society in 2008. Her most recent appearance for the Sydney Symphony was in the 1996 Piano Series, and in May she played Mozart with the Queensland, Adelaide and Melbourne symphony orchestras.



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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. Last year the Sydney Symphony toured Italy, and in October 2009 will tour to Asia.

The Sydney Symphony's first Chief Conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by conductors such as Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and, most recently, Gianluigi Gelmetti. The Orchestra's history also boasts collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

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 and promotes the work of Australian composers through performances and recordings. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Liza Lim, Lee Bracegirdle and Georges Lentz, and the Orchestra's recording of works by Brett Dean was released last year on the BIS and Sydney Symphony Live labels.

Other releases on the Orchestra's own label, established in 2006, include performances with Alexander Lazarev, Gianluigi Gelmetti and Sir Charles Mackerras, as well as a recording of rare Rachmaninoff chamber music with Vladimir Ashkenazy.

This year Vladimir Ashkenazy begins his tenure as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor.

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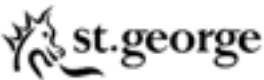
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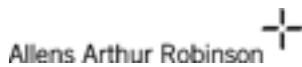
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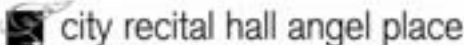
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