

2009 SEASON

ENERGYAUSTRALIA MASTER SERIES

ROMANTIC LIAISONS

Wednesday 23 September | 8pm
Friday 25 September | 8pm
Saturday 26 September | 8pm
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Thomas Zehetmair conductor
Ruth Killius viola

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828)
Alfonso und Estrella: Overture

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881–1945)
edited Tibor Serly
Viola Concerto, Sz120 (Op. Posth.)

Moderato –
Adagio religioso –
Allegro vivace

(The three movements are played without pause)

INTERVAL

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)
Symphony No.3 in F, Op.90

Allegro con brio
Andante
Poco Allegretto
Allegro

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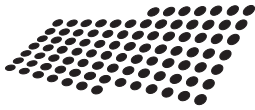


Saturday night's performance will be broadcast live across Australia on ABC Classic FM.

Pre-concert talk by David Garrett at 7.15pm in the Northern Foyer.
Visit sydneySymphony.com/talk-bios for speaker biographies.

Approximate durations: 7 minutes, 21 minutes, 20-minute interval, 33 minutes
The concert will conclude at approximately 9.40pm.


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Orchestral concerts feature plenty of violin and piano soloists, but to hear a viola soloist is a rare privilege. So it's been exciting that the *EnergyAustralia* Master Series has seen two viola soloists in as many years. Last year we heard Tabea Zimmermann play *Monh*, Georges Lentz's awe-inspiring work for viola and orchestra, in concerts conducted by her husband Steven Sloane. This year our guest is Ruth Killius, playing a great classic of the viola repertoire, Bartók's concerto. In a complete coincidence, she too appears with her husband, Thomas Zehetmair, conducting.

The Sydney Symphony is playing only one Brahms symphony this season, so we're delighted that it's appearing in this series, giving us a chance to enjoy the passionate sounds of one of the great masterpieces of symphonic music. We're also looking forward to a piece by Schubert that most of us probably haven't heard before: a fiery opera overture showing the composer in his dramatic style.

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INTRODUCTION

Romantic Liaisons

Music as an art form is completely dependent on interactions and relationships. (Since music education is in the news at present, it's worth keeping in mind that the practice of music develops not only emotional awareness and expressive capacity, but also the highest level of interpersonal skills, 'team-playing' far beyond what is possible in sport.) In tonight's concert some of those relationships come to the fore: relationships between interpreters, between teacher and student, between composer and dedicatee. And in the music itself we have lovers from warring families, the dynamic and exciting relationship between soloist and orchestra, and the nexus of an audience's expectations and a composer's originality.

Schubert's overture to *Alfonso und Estrella* introduces romantic love through the story of the opera. It's dramatically conceived music that suggests tension and struggle before the (happy) resolution can be reached.

Bartók's Viola Concerto, intended for William Primrose, is abstract music but it has a story of its own. Left unfinished at his death, the concerto was completed by Bartók's devoted student and friend, Tibor Serly, who had to draw on his knowledge of the composer's methods in order to decipher the sketches. You could call it a labour of love, and it has given viola players one of their most satisfying concertos.

Then there is Brahms, represented by what is possibly the most warm-hearted and deeply felt of his four symphonies. He may have written these under the shadow of Beethoven – a burdensome relationship if ever there was one – but he knew how to put his own stamp on the tradition.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Franz Schubert

Alfonso und Estrella: Overture

The music begins weightily with octave leaps, sliding down one after another, step by shuddering step. Then, in a foreboding hush, another leap, but this time the tense interval is one semitone less. Dramatic, arresting, powerful, and strongly contrasted, this is the overture to the most ambitious so far of Schubert's many opera projects. He hoped it would be staged at Vienna's Kärntnerthor Theatre (precursor of the Vienna State Opera), but his hope of performance, as in the case of his other operas, was sadly disappointed, and *Alfonso und Estrella* had to wait until 1854, when Franz Liszt presented an adaptation in Weimar.

Frustrated by the 'wretched business' of his opera, and in a hurry to get music together for the play *Rosamunde*, in 1823, Schubert recycled his overture to *Alfonso und Estrella*, which thus became the only part of the opera heard in public during Schubert's life. He was unhappy with this overture as curtain raiser for *Rosamunde*, but never composed a new one. Somehow his overture to another play, *Die Zauberharfe* (The Magic Harp), became attached to *Rosamunde* instead.

In late 1821 and early 1822, Schubert was in the midst of a three-year period of concentrating on operatic composition, so much so that, to write this particular opera, he took the unusual step of leaving Vienna. Schubert and his bosom friend Johann von Schober spent several months at St Pölten, holed up in a castle, an appropriate setting for the subject of *Alfonso und Estrella*. Schober wrote the libretto, keeping just ahead of Schubert. Unlike the magic and ballad operas Schubert had composed up until then, *Alfonso und Estrella* was 'a grand romantic opera', through-composed. The treatment, according to Schubert authority Brian Newbould, is 'mediæval chivalry with a touch of up-to-date Romantic nostalgia'.

The two names in the title represent two different worlds. In 8th-century Spain the King of Leon, Froila, deposed by an usurper, lives in a valley isolated by high rocks – an idyllic, pastoral setting where wisdom and kindness reign. Froila has a son, Alfonso, who on a hunting party meets by chance the usurper Mauregato's daughter, Estrella. It is love at first sight. Eventually Alfonso and Estrella reconcile the two kings, but not before Alfonso has to save his beloved from the designs of Mauregato's dastardly army chief. To appreciate the overture, retain only the strong contrast of the two worlds, the love interest, and

Keynotes

SCHUBERT

Born Vienna, 1797

Died Vienna, 1828

Schubert inherited the Classical tradition of Haydn and Mozart and pushed the boundaries of emerging Romanticism. He was the son of a schoolmaster, and initially followed his father into this poorly paid profession. As a composer, his ambitions included symphonic writing and the theatre, but during his lifetime he was regarded principally as a writer of songs. Nowadays those songs are still regarded as masterpieces and his symphonies – none of which received professional performances when he was alive – have found their proper place in the concert hall, but his theatrical works remain neglected.

ALFONSO UND ESTRELLA

This dramatic and powerful overture belongs to an opera that wasn't performed in Schubert's lifetime. The overture, however, received an outing in 1823 as part of the music for a play, *Rosamunde*. This is dramatic music, and its natural tensions and contrasts reflect the essence of a plot concerning lovers from warring families.



Schubert: Portrait by J. Kriehuber, 1846

‘mediæval chivalry with a touch of up-to-date Romantic nostalgia’

BRIAN NEWBOULD

the high drama. Schubert’s opera failed mainly because of the contribution of Schober, who as an old man in 1876 admitted his libretto was ‘such a miserable, stillborn, bungling piece of work that even so great a genius as Schubert was not able to bring it to life’.

The overture acquired a life of its own, not only in *Rosamunde*, but in Schubert’s arrangement for piano four hands (D773, published in 1823). It reflects the intended theatricality of the opera, and its adventurous harmony. The passages for full orchestra, with trombones, have a weight suggesting that Schubert, like Beethoven, learnt from the overtures to Cherubini’s operas performed in Vienna. An idyllic contrast comes in the second subject, varied each time in its distribution to winds and strings. The development section is longer and more important than usual in Schubert’s overtures. Here Schubert screws up the tension – suggesting, several times in succession, a new key, a semitone higher, but never actually reaching it. This overture, another Schubert authority, Alfred Einstein, rightly feels, is ‘magnificently passionate’.

DAVID GARRETT ©2009

Schubert’s Overture to *Alfonso und Estrella* calls for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns and trumpets, three trombones, timpani and strings.

This is the first Sydney Symphony performance on record of the overture.

Béla Bartók

edited Tibor Serly

Viola Concerto, Sz120 (Op. Posth.)

Moderato –

Adagio religioso –

Allegro vivace

Ruth Killius viola

We are so keen for viola and orchestral works from the big names in composition that we are apt to downplay the fact that Béla Bartók, one of the biggest names in composition in the early 20th century, did not complete this work. It was, in fact, completed by his good friend and pupil Tibor Serly, drawing admittedly on a deep knowledge of Bartók's style, from the 13 pages of sketches left by the composer at his death.

1945 was shaping up to be a good year for Bartók. After several dispiriting years in the USA, the premiere of his Sonata for solo violin, together with the Boston Symphony Orchestra's premiere of the Concerto for Orchestra, combined with the remission of his leukemia and a more settled financial situation, had left him in high spirits. Moreover he now received a number of requests for new compositions – his publisher Ralph Hawkes hoped for a new string quartet, there were feelers from various people for concertos, either for one or two pianos, and the famous violist William Primrose (eventually to retire to Wollongong, of all places) asked for a viola concerto.

Bartók did not know when he would be able to write all this music, but, after rejecting the two-piano proposal, he accepted an advance payment for the quartet, and agreed to undertake the viola work – a letter from Primrose dated 22 January, says how delighted he is that Bartók has accepted the commission, and only a matter of days later, on 27 January, Bartók wrote to his publisher, Hawkes, requesting *Harold in Italy*, Berlioz's great work for solo viola and orchestra, presumably as a study guide.

We know that Bartók got to work very quickly. But work on the Third Piano Concerto, intended as a money-earner for his wife, soon took priority. Bartók wrote reassuringly to Primrose on 5 August:

However embryonic the state of the work still is, the general plan and ideas are already fixed. So I can tell you that it will be in 4 movements: a serious Allegro, a Scherzo, a (rather

Keynotes

BARTÓK

*Born Nagyszentmiklós (Hungary) now Sinnicolau Mare (Romania), 1881
Died New York, 1945*

Bartók is one of Hungary's most famous composers and an important figure in 20th-century music. He was also an avid collector and student of folk music (an early ethnomusicologist) and this influenced many of his works, especially in his use of melody, ornamentation and compelling, non-standard rhythms. He was also influenced by Debussy, Stravinsky and even Schoenberg. He is best known in the concert hall for his brilliant and evocative Concerto for Orchestra, while piano students will probably recall his *Mikrokosmos*.

VIOLA CONCERTO

This concerto keeps company with music such as Mozart's Requiem and Elgar's Third Symphony: works that were left unfinished, interrupted by the composer's untimely death. Like the Requiem, Bartók's Viola Concerto was completed by a student, giving the world a profoundly moving work as well as one of the great pieces in the viola repertoire. The concerto is in three movements, played without pause, which between them carry many of Bartók's musical signatures: rhythmic propulsion in some places contrasting with an almost vocal freedom of pulse in others; his 'night music' effects; and infectious folk-influenced melodies.

short) slow movement, and a finale beginning Allegretto and developing the tempo to an Allegro molto. Each movement, or at least 3 of them, will be preceded by a (short) recurring introduction (mostly solo of the viola), a kind of ritornello.

He further informed Primrose on 8 September that the work was ready in draft 'so that only the score has to be written, which means a purely mechanical work...in five or six weeks.'

But Bartók became ill again. On 21 September, five days before his death, he was visited by Serly (also a violist) to whom he showed the almost completed score of the piano concerto. Asked whether the viola concerto would be ready, Bartók answered enigmatically: 'Yes, and no.' When he died on 26 September, it lay beside his bed on 13 pages of densely written manuscript.

After Bartók's death, his widow and son asked Serly to complete both works. The Third Piano Concerto was easy; only 17 bars remained to be filled in. But the Viola Concerto was another story.

While for its creator the job of scoring the work may have been 'purely mechanical', only he knew what his hieroglyphics meant. Serly could not be sure what Bartók might not have bothered to notate. Sketches were written on any available space on unnumbered pages. Corrections had been made by rewriting elsewhere on the manuscript or by scratching out the errors and writing over the existing material. Moreover, as Sándor Kovács points out in *The Bartók Companion*, the draft of the slow movement was only two-thirds of a page, with the closing movement in most places merely an outline of the viola part.

Yet there were clues. Bartók had calculated movement lengths: for the first movement, 10 minutes 20 seconds; 5 minutes 10 seconds for the second movement; and 4 minutes 45 seconds for the third. Clearly he had given up August's idea of four movements, but was still sticking to a '(rather short)' second movement. Serly knew that Bartók had also mentioned to Primrose that the orchestration would be 'rather...more transparent than in the Violin Concerto'.

It took Serly many months just to work out which was the first bar. The entire reconstruction took four years.

There have been criticisms of Serly's reconstruction. Kovacs suggests that the pounding minims which precede the final movement were intended by Bartók to precede the slow movement, but that Serly, unaware that there



When asked if the viola concerto would be ready, Bartók answered: 'Yes, and no'.

was meant to be a 'kind of ritornello' preceding each movement, could not have risked reading so much into Bartók's manuscript. (A modern listener, however, may feel that an earlier appearance of these pounding minims would ruin their later effect of propelling us into the last movement.) Serly also apparently ignored one of Bartók's few specific mentions of instrumentation when he gave the strings rather than the timpani the accompaniment to the viola's opening solo, and Kovács bemoans the loss of a truly original effect.

Serly's reconstruction of the concerto contains many of Bartók's 'trademark' features – the use of cadenzas to mark important structural divisions in the first movement (one cadenza is almost a recitative); the 'night music' (Bartók's typical evocation of the sporadic sounds of the night) in the middle of the second movement; and a vigorous rondo finale in perpetual motion, capturing the nature of Hungarian folk dance, with a central trio presenting a bagpipe tune, complete with drones in the bass.

Yet, as noted Bartók scholar Halsey Stevens has said, 'there will always be a reluctance to accept the Viola Concerto as an authentic work'. And since Bartók wrote 'vege' (Hungarian for 'the end') after the double bar lines of the Third Piano Concerto, even with 17 bars to go, it could be considered that Bartók himself drew a boundary line around his oeuvre, with the Viola Concerto deliberately omitted.

But Serly was convinced that what he worked from 'contained' the finished draft – it's one of the reasons why he composed no extra music to fill in what gaps there were. And what he produced has entered the repertoire as one of Bartók's most often played works.

Without Serly's efforts on his departed friend's behalf, the world might have been deprived, as William Primrose noted, 'of a sensitive and inspired work and a real contribution to the literature of the viola'.

GORDON KALTON WILLIAMS
SYMPHONY AUSTRALIA ©1998

The concerto calls for an orchestra of three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets and two bassoons; three horns, three trumpets, two trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; and strings.

The Sydney Symphony first performed the concerto in 1958 with soloist Robert Pikler, conducted by Bernard Heinze, and most recently in 1985 with Wolfram Christ and conductor Robert Rosen.

Tibor Serly made the first attempt to complete the Viola Concerto, but his is not the only version in existence. The violist Paul Neubauer, for example, endorsed a revision prepared by Bartók's son, Peter, and Nelson Dellamaggiore, and there is another, more recent, by Hungarian-born violist Csaba Erdélyi. To read a brief history of the versions visit: <http://www.stringsmagazine.com/issues/Strings102/bartok.html>

GLOSSARY

PIANISSIMO – very soft.

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. The scherzo as a genre was a creation of Beethoven. In earlier symphonies by composers such as Mozart and Haydn the third movement of a symphony had typically been a *minuet* (also featuring a trio); in Beethoven's hands it acquired a joking and playful character as well as a much faster tempo.

SONATA FORM – this term 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 religioso – slow, with a hymn-like character

Allegro – fast

Allegro con brio – fast, with spirit

Allegro molto – very fast

Allegro vivace – fast and lively

Andante – at a walking pace

Poco Allegretto – somewhat lively, not so fast as *Allegro*

Moderato – moderately

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.



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Johannes Brahms

Symphony No.3 in F, Op.90

Allegro con brio

Andante

Poco Allegretto

Allegro

The premiere of Brahms' Third Symphony in 1883 was such a triumph that its overwhelmed composer felt the urge to cancel all his engagements. The first and second symphonies had also enjoyed success, but with the Third audiences and critics responded to a new directness of expression and immediacy in the musical ideas. Despite his innovations and bold moves, Brahms had written the kind of symphony of which a listener might say, then and now: 'I can finally understand Brahms straightaway.'

The critic Eduard Hanslick praised the Third Symphony for the 'clear direct impact it makes the first time one hears it'; furthermore, 'it seems to have been created in the flush of an inspired hour'. The 'inspired hour' was in fact an inspired summer in the spa town of Wiesbaden – quite a different scenario to the 14 years that Brahms spent labouring at his first symphony.

Wiesbaden had offered Brahms the idyllic pleasures of country life, not to mention proximity to the contralto Hermine Spies. It's possible Brahms contemplated marriage, but Spies was considerably younger than his 50 years and in the end there was no proposal. Perhaps the more wistful moments in the Third Symphony suggest Brahms' resigned attitude to yet another unrequited love.

Perhaps. More than any other Brahms symphony, the Third attracted speculative – and wildly differing – interpretations from the outset: thwarted love; Leander swimming the Hellespont to his beloved Hero; a possible connection with Goethe's Faust; a nationalist 'Germania Symphony'; a celebration of bachelor freedoms. And after the premiere Clara Schumann wrote to Brahms with a pastoral reverie:

How the mysterious magic of sylvan life surrounds one from beginning to end! ...In the first movement, I am immediately enchanted by the brilliance of the new-born day, by the rays of the sun sparkling through the trees, by the life that awakens everything, by the cheerfulness radiating from all things – how wonderfully blissful! In the second movement, an unblemished idyll, I hear the faithful praying next to a little forest chapel,

Keynotes

BRAHMS

**German composer
born 1833, Hamburg
died 1897, Vienna**

Brahms might not have considered himself primarily an orchestral composer, but his symphonies occupy a firm place in the orchestral repertoire. By the time he wrote his third symphony, in the summer of 1883, he had come to terms with the 'giant' Beethoven but he was still exploring the possibilities the large scale symphonic form.

THIRD SYMPHONY

To understand this symphony listen carefully to the very beginning and to the end. The symphony opens with three grand chords, which support a rising three-note motif. Brahms then sends the motif to the bass line and continues to use it as a unifying element through the symphony. The conclusion of the finale marks a bold departure from convention: Brahms' listeners wouldn't have expected a symphony to end in this quiet, wistful way – the tension of the symphony released through a kind of musical transfiguration rather than grand, cathartic gestures.

The Third Symphony received a triumphant premiere on 2 December 1883, with Hans Richter conducting the Vienna Philharmonic. Its directness of expression, newfound variety of orchestral colour and wealth of melody ensured its success with audiences, then and now.

*the babbling brook, the games of the ladybugs and the gnats
– there is such a humming and buzzing around me that I feel
enveloped by all the delights of nature.*

There is indeed something blissful about the Third Symphony, and something heroic, and self-confident, and melancholy... But these fanciful interpretations are simply personal expressions of the impact the symphony had on listeners; none begins to explain the appeal and power of the symphony as a whole.

Listening Guide

First there is Brahms' sense of structure. The symphony is extraordinarily compact and tautly argued, and Brahms develops an organic unity with the intricate use of themes and ideas that are developed and alluded to throughout the symphony. In fact, he launches into the symphony with its single most important gesture: three dramatic chords supporting a rising three-note motto (F, A flat, F). Our attention captured, Brahms sends the motto to the bass line, where it underpins one of the most impassioned ideas in symphonic music: a plunging violin theme, hovering, like the motto, between F major and F minor.

From the beginning Brahms indulges in teasing harmonic and rhythmic ambiguities, sufficiently daring to delight the listener but handled so deftly that, in Hanslick's words, the symphony 'manages to make an impact without detriment to its comprehensibility'. Brahms is able to combine different rhythms and float his themes between major and minor tonalities without losing us long the way.

There is Brahms' use of the orchestral sound: 'more generously endowed with attractive new blends of colour than the earlier [symphonies],' wrote Hanslick. The winds enjoy new independence in the Third Symphony, as in the **second movement** (*Andante*) where Brahms juxtaposes wind and string choirs. Overall there is greater transparency, more detail, and a sense of chamber-music intimacy to the textures, even within the rich orchestral sonorities that Brahms creates. And in introducing his themes Brahms is drawn to the 'warmest' instruments of the main families: he gives important music to the clarinets (the mellowest of the winds), the horn (his own instrument), and the cello.

Then there is Brahms' unflinching melodic gift. True, Brahms appeals to the intellect and has an 'enterprising



...Brahms' unflinching melodic gift

strength', but his deeply lyrical music also brims with impassioned expression and rich sensuality. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the **third movement** (*Poco Allegretto*). The main theme of this gentle 'intermezzo' is one of Brahms' most perfect melodies – disarmingly simple, but full of artful irregularities – and it is given to the cellos, who are asked to play 'half voice' *and* expressively. The result is a glorious melancholy unparalleled in the symphonies.

Finally, there is the coda of the **fourth movement**: Brahms' the boldest departure from convention, and the most unexpected. Beethoven's legacy ensured that weight of a Romantic symphony would be found in its final movement. No longer could a composer end with a frothy, spirited rondo, instead the musical tensions and thematic ideas of the symphony would seek resolution in a magnificent finale.

Brahms understands this, but with tremendous ingenuity he gives the finale of his Third Symphony a twist in the tail. It begins with suppressed agitation and stark textures, alludes to a sighing theme from the *Andante*, and builds to the expected stormy exhilaration as full orchestra and a wealth of musical ideas 'jostle for supremacy'. Then the tempo slows. Shimmering colours from muted and pizzicato strings, the flute in its high register, and floating wind chords transfigure the opening ideas of the symphony: the three-note motif and the plunging violin theme. The *pianissimo* ending may not be triumphant but it is sublime.

YVONNE FRINDLE
SYDNEY SYMPHONY ©2007

The orchestra for Brahms' Third Symphony comprises pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and contrabassoon; four horns, two trumpets and three trombones; timpani and strings.

The Sydney Symphony first performed Brahms' Third Symphony in 1939 under Malcolm Sargent, and most recently in 2007 under Gianluigi Gelmetti.

Brahms' Eroica

After the Third's premiere, the conductor Hans Richter hailed it as 'Brahm's *Eroica*'. An elaborate compliment making reference to Beethoven's Third, the nickname inevitably invites comparison with the real *Eroica*. The two symphonies are vastly different, of course – they are in different keys, are structured differently and are of very different characters. There is no hero's funeral march in Brahms, no wild scherzo; the finale comes to a gentle conclusion rather than a fiercely cathartic one. And far from being his longest symphony to date (as Beethoven's *Eroica* was) the Third was Brahms' shortest and most compact. At the same time, there is a heroic quality in the strength and assuredness of Brahms' music, in the assertive opening, and in the initial exhilaration of the finale.

A TRIBUTE TO REX ELLIS (1922–2009)

In August, those associated with the ABC and Australia's symphony orchestras were saddened to learn of the death of Rex Ellis at the age of 86. He had joined the ABC as a cadet shortly before the outbreak of World War II and returned to the NSW Concerts division after serving in the RAAF. He was appointed Assistant Concert Manager then, in rapid succession in 1952, Concert Manager for Queensland then Victoria. In 1960 he returned to Sydney as Concert Manager for New South Wales and later became ABC Federal Director of Concerts. By the early 1980s he was ABC Controller of Administrative Services and then Acting Assistant General Manager. Rex Ellis was always pro-music. His interests lay in the promotion and presentation of the ABC's orchestras and his efforts were always in the interests of the orchestras and building their audiences. When he retired from the ABC in 1985 he left behind countless invaluable systems for the efficient operation of the concert division and the general operation of the corporate body.

Alan Ziegler, whose career in concert administration has included 21 years in ABC concerts – separated by 25 years in publishing – including six years as New South Wales Concert Manager and eight years as ABC National Program Co-ordinator, worked closely with Rex Ellis and came to consider him a dear friend. He writes in tribute...

“REE” – Rex Ernest Ellis

I first met Rex when I was 16, in March 1947. For the first three years I would see him at Sydney Town Hall. The Youth Concerts (now Meet the Music) had just begun and my position of President of the newly formed Youth Concerts Committee brought us in contact. At first I found him very reserved and not easy to get to know. I didn't appreciate then – I wasn't even aware until I learned some 12 years later – that a harrowing three years navigating and piloting Wembley bombers in 33 operations over Europe doesn't lead to effortless warm handshakes and instant mateship. By no means did Rex accept all of those with whom he worked as friends – one had to earn his friendship. But with his friendship came a trust and a loyalty which I had cause to value on more than one occasion.

Rex had his own language and his own sense of humour – one of the many things which made Rex worth knowing. An impertinent or unwarranted suggestion would earn 'I'll drop ya, ya mug.' Concert work often required tact in awkward situations, and Rex would offer helpful advice so you wouldn't 'hit them over the head with a baseball bat.' On the other hand, when one was on the receiving end of a disappointing decision – and there were many such occasions – his consolation was less than meagre: the result was always 'better than a poke in the eye with a sharp stick.'

I soon came to appreciate Rex as a highly organised and efficient officer. He believed an efficient filing system made for an efficient office where everything worked well and quickly. But when he arrived



Rex Ellis was awarded: "Ellis, Rex Ernest, AM, 1988, for services to music, particularly as an organiser of concerts". This photo shows him in Canberra after his investiture – the only occasion on which he wore the decoration.

in Melbourne – he told me over a rare quiet beer in 1955 – he had a field day. For the first few days he was frustrated that the aged filing clerk – who was also the typist attending to office enquiries and subscription lists in the under-staffed department of four – would take eons to unearth a letter. When in desperation he demanded to see the filing cabinet he found four drawers, only one occupied – with two enormous bulging manila folders, approaching six inches thick. The larger was labelled: MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS, the other: MISCELLEANEOUS MEMOS.

Many of his associates were unaware that the middle E was for Ernest, and earnest he most certainly was in everything he did. He was an excellent cricketer, an award-winning dancer, carried out every project with extreme care and

precision – in his home life as well as in work – omitted no details, and drew every activity to a successful conclusion, much to the envy of those around him. In his later life as he occupied higher and even more demanding positions, he instituted reforms and systems which would greatly benefit the ABC, its senior officers and departments well into the future.

One of Rex's most endearing qualities was his innate modesty; he rarely discussed his achievements, which were many. Apart from knowing nothing about his wartime record until it cropped up quite casually in conversation at the end of the fifties, I was completely unaware, until the day of his funeral, that he had been awarded an AM in 1988!

Rex was a great family man. I saw his five children grow up, all a credit to him, and admired his perfect marriage to his lovely and ever-loving wife, Bette. Only a few weeks before Rex passed away, Bette told me he had been a wonderful man. In his working life, Rex had left a trail of achievements behind him. At the service in Our Lady of Lourdes, Earlwood, his children and their spouses, his 13 grandchildren and two great grandchildren occupied six long pews.

Rex became a friend to many overseas artists, with whom he regularly corresponded. He was greatly respected by his ABC colleagues, senior and junior, some of whom became very close friends; almost all of these have passed on before him. For me, Rex was my very best friend.



Photograph Credit: Keith Saunders

Judged in the 2007 Australian Business Arts Foundations Awards as one of the three best partnerships in the state, Tenix's major partnership of the Sydney Symphony education program has helped deliver music appreciation and education to the youth of NSW.

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Bartók's Viola Concerto was intended for William Primrose, and there is a recording of him playing it in concert in 1951 with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and Otto Klemperer. Visit www.pristineclassical.com for either a CD-quality download or purchase in disc form.

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For a modern sound, try the acclaimed recording made by Ruth Killius' teacher, Kim Kashkashian, with Netherlands Radio Chamber Orchestra and Peter Eötvös.

ECM 465 420

BRAHMS

Nikolaus Harnoncourt's recording of the complete Brahms symphonies with the Berlin Philharmonic won him the 1999 Grammy Award for Best Orchestral Performance.

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The Zehetmair String Quartet plays Bartók's first and fourth quartets for the ECM label.

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And they pair Bartók's String Quartet No.5 with Hindemith's fourth quartet for the same label.

ECM 476 5779

Thomas Zehetmair plays the five Mozart violin concertos with the Orchestra of the 18th Century and Frans Brüggen. Ruth Killius joins them for the masterpiece on the disc: Mozart's Sinfonia concertante, K364.

GLOSSA 921108

Zehetmair's most recent solo release is a recording of the 24 Caprices by Paganini.

ECM 001326402

And he has recorded the Bartók violin concertos with Iván Fischer and the Budapest Festival Orchestra.

BERLIN CLASSICS 1134

Zehetmair's recordings as a conductor include Schumann's Fourth Symphony with the Northern Sinfonia. On the same disc he plays Brahms' Violin Concerto, directing from the violin.

AVIE 2125

More recently he has recorded the third and sixth symphonies of Sibelius with the same orchestra, matching it with Stravinsky's Violin Concerto in D, again directed from the violin.

AVIE 2150

Broadcast Diary



OCTOBER

2 Oct, 8pm

LONDON CALLING

Mark Wigglesworth conductor

Michael Dauth violin

Roger Benedict viola

Cantillation chorus

Britten, Vaughan Williams, Elgar

23 Oct, 8pm

A TRIBUTE TO LOUIS ARMSTRONG

Marc Taddei conductor

James Morrison trumpet

Emma Pask vocals

with **Carl Dewhurst**, **Gordon Rytmeister** and

Cameron Undy

23 Oct, 10pm

MENDELSSOHN VIOLIN CONCERTO

Hugh Wolff conductor

Isabelle Faust violin

2MBS-FM 102.5

SYDNEY SYMPHONY 2009

13 October, 6pm

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

Webcast Diary



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

Visit: sydneysymphony.bigpondmusic.com

September webcasts:

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DIANNE REEVES

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Sydney Symphony Online

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or email: yoursay@sydneysymphony.com

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Thomas Zehetmair conductor

Thomas Zehetmair is highly respected worldwide as a violinist, conductor, and chamber musician. He appears regularly as a soloist with the leading orchestras on all five continents, and has recorded nearly the entire violin repertoire.

He is particularly committed to performing contemporary music and has given a number of premieres, including the violin concerto written for him by Heinz Holliger and concertos by James Dillon and Hans-Jürgen von Bose. Last season he also performed the Zimmermann Violin Concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic as well as appearing with the Berlin Konzerthaus Orchestra (Berg) and the Staatskapelle Berlin (Carter), and he presented a chamber music program at the Lincoln Center in honour of Elliott Carter's 100th birthday.

He has attracted international attention as a chamber musician with the Zehetmair Quartet, which he co-founded in 1994, and which has won numerous awards for its recordings.

In 2002 his work as a conductor was recognised with his appointment as music director of the Northern Sinfonia. International touring and recordings document this successful artistic collaboration. As a guest conductor he works closely with such orchestras as the Vienna and Basel Chamber Orchestras, the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also made guest appearances with the Camerata Academica Salzburg, Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, MDR Sinfonie Orchester Leipzig, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris and the Budapest Festival Orchestra, and he maintains a close association with the Orchestra of the 18th Century.

In recognition of his varied artistic activities Thomas Zehetmair received the certificate of honour of the German Record Critics' Award (2005) and the Karl Böhm Interpretation Award (2005) of the Austrian state of Styria. He also holds an honorary doctorate from the Franz Liszt Music Academy in Weimar.

This is Thomas Zehetmair's first appearance with the Sydney Symphony.



KEITH PATTISON

Ruth Killius viola

Ruth Killius studied with Ulrich Koch and Kim Kashkashian, and was principal violist of Camerata Bern from 1993 to 1996. As a soloist she has performed with such orchestras as the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Residentie Orchestra, Basel Symphony Orchestra, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, MDR Symphony Orchestra Leipzig, Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa, and the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and she tours extensively with the Orchestra of the 18th Century. She is an equally welcome guest at international festivals, including Lucerne, Schleswig-Holstein, Edinburgh, and Helsinki, and she appears frequently in duo recitals with Thomas Zehetmair.

Her extensive repertoire encompasses both the standard literature and contemporary music, and she has collaborated in many world premieres, among them Elliott Carter's Oboe Quartet with Heinz Holliger and Brian Ferneyhough's String Trio with members of the Ensemble Contrechamps, Geneva. Last year she took part in the festivities celebrating Elliott Carter's 100th birthday, appearing in two concerts in New York.

In 1994 she was co-founder of the Zehetmair Quartet, which now numbers among the world's leading string quartets. Their recording of the Schumann quartets received several prizes, including the Gramophone Award (Record of the Year), the Diapason d'Or, and the Edison Award. This year the Zehetmair Quartet has appeared at the Hong Kong Festival and been Quartet in Residence at the Printemps des Arts Festival in Monte Carlo.

Ruth Killius was professor of viola at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz from 2001 to 2003.

This is her first appearance with the Sydney Symphony. During this Australian tour she has also appeared with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (Bartók) and with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Thomas Zehetmair in Mozart's Sinfonia concertante, K364.



KEITH PATTISON

THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY

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



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.

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.

MUSICIANS



Vladimir Ashkenazy
Principal Conductor and
Artistic Advisor



Michael Dauth
Concertmaster Chair
supported by the Sydney
Symphony Board and Council



Dene Olding
Concertmaster Chair
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 Jennifer Hoy
- 09 Jennifer Johnson
- 10 Georges Lentz
- 11 Nicola Lewis
- 12 Alexandra Mitchell
- 13 Léone Ziegler
- 14 Brielle Clapson
Marianne Broadfoot

Second Violins

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

Guest Musicians

- Katherine Lukey
First Violin
- Emily Qin
First Violin#
- Robin Wilson
First Violin
- Alexandra D'Elia
Second Violin#
- Alexander Norton
Second Violin

= Contract Musician

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
Stuart Johnson

Cellos

- 01 Catherine Hewgill
Principal Cello
Tony and Fran Meagher
Chair
- 02 Timothy Walden
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
Principal
- 02 Alex Henery
Principal
- 03 Neil Brawley
Principal Emeritus
- 04 David Campbell
- 05 Steven Larson
- 06 Richard Lynn
- 07 David Murray

Harp

- Louise Johnson
Principal Harp
Mulpha Australia Chair

Flutes

- 01 Janet Webb
Principal
- 02 Emma Sholl
Associate Principal
Flute
Robert and Janet
Constable Chair
- 03 Carolyn Harris

Piccolo

- Rosamund Plummer
Principal

MUSICIANS

Oboes



Cor Anglais



Clarinets



Bass Clarinet



Bassoons



Contrabassoon



Horns



04



05



06



Trumpets



Trombones



Percussion



Piano



Nicholas Carter
Assistant Conductor
supported by
Symphony Australia

Oboes

- 01 Diana Doherty
Principal Oboe
Andrew Kaldor and
Renata Kaldor Ao Chair
- 02 Shefali Pryor
Associate Principal
David Papp

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

01 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
Associate Principal
Trumpet
The Hansen Family Chair
- 03 John Foster
- 04 Anthony Heinrichs

Trombone

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

Bass Trombone

Christopher Harris
Principal

Tuba

Steve Rossé
Principal

Timpani

Richard Miller
Principal
Mark Robinson

Percussion

- 01 Rebecca Lagos
Principal
- 02 Colin Piper

Piano

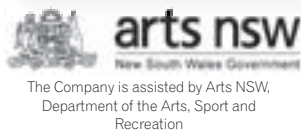
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01



02



03



04



05



06



07



KEITH SAUNDERS

08



KEITH SAUNDERS

09



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02
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03
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NSW Department of
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Development Chair

04
Michael Dauth and
Dene Olding
Board and Council of
the Sydney Symphony
support the Concertmaster
Chairs

05
Nick Byrne
Trombone
RogenSi Chair
with Gerald Tapper,
Managing Director
RogenSi

06
Diana Doherty
Principal Oboe
Andrew Kaldor and
Renata Kaldor AO Chair

07
Paul Goodchild
Associate Principal Trumpet
The Hansen Family Chair

08
Catherine Hewgill
Principal Cello
Tony and Fran Meagher
Chair

09
Emma Sholl
Associate Principal Flute
Robert and Janet Constable
Chair

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