

2009 SEASON
TEA & SYMPHONY
PRESENTED BY KAMBLY

TWO SYMPHONIES AND A FUNERAL

Friday 24 July | 11am
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Michael Dauth director and violin
Clemens Leske piano

JOHANN CHRISTIAN BACH (1735–1782)
Symphony in G minor, Op.6 No.6

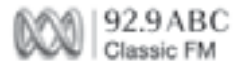
Allegro
Andante più tosto adagio
Allegro molto

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)
Piano Concerto No.11 in F, K413

Allegro
Larghetto
Tempo di menuetto

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732–1809)
Symphony No.44 in E minor, *Mourning*

Allegro con brio
Menuetto e trio (Allegretto. Canone in diapason)
Adagio
Finale (Presto)



Music from this program has been recorded for broadcast across Australia on ABC Classic FM 92.9.

Estimated timings:
13 minutes, 23 minutes,
22 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 12.05pm.

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It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this concert in the 2009 Tea & Symphony series.

When Johann Christian Bach (the “London Bach”) took the eight-year-old Mozart on his knee and played duets with him it was a meeting of generations in one of the great centres of concert-giving. Mozart – genius that he was – learned a great deal from the older composer, including how to delight an audience and how to create striking musical effects in the new Classical genres, the symphony and the piano concerto.

In this concert we get to hear these two composers together, alongside that great luminary of the 18th century, Joseph Haydn. And we hope you’ll enjoy the way the music ranges from stormy and intense emotion to exquisite elegance, without ever straying from the traditions of the Classical style that we love so much.

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Kambly is a way of life, dedicated to all those who appreciate the difference between the best and the merely good. In this way it is fitting that we partner with the internationally acclaimed Sydney Symphony, whose vision is to ignite and deepen people’s love of live symphonic music.

We hope you enjoy this morning’s program, and look forward to welcoming you to future concerts in the Tea & Symphony series in 2009.



Oscar A. Kambly
Chairman
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ABOUT THE MUSIC

JC BACH Symphony in G minor, Op.6 No.6

As a boy, Christian Bach, youngest son of the great Sebastian, left the parental home in Leipzig on the death of his father, and went to study in Berlin with his elder brother Carl Philipp Emanuel. Then the young Christian travelled to Italy and, in order to secure the appointment as organist of Milan Cathedral, converted to Catholicism. Yet this composer is known to history as the 'London' Bach. That's because from 1762 until his early death he was based in the English metropolis.

He quickly became a favourite of London audiences, first as an opera composer, but even more significantly as the co-promoter with another German, the gamba player Carl Friedrich Abel, of a series of orchestral concerts, the Bach-Abel concerts. It may well be in one of those concerts that the remarkable symphony opening this concert was first played. It is one of a set of six symphonies published in Amsterdam in 1770 as the Opus 6 of Johann Christian Bach, 'Master of Music to Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain'.

This symphony has attracted attention and performances because it is atypical of Johann Christian Bach. The music is stormy and intense, full of tension-raising tremolos and themes of dramatic, almost stark outline, many of them presented in challenging unison. It has been suggested that Wolfgang Mozart, who was befriended by Christian Bach when he came to London as an eight-year-old, was recalling this symphony, as well as the Symphony No.39 of Joseph Haydn (c.1770), when he composed his own 'little' G minor Symphony, No.25, around 1773.

What these three symphonies have in common is the tonality of G minor, and it evoked from all three composers the same style of writing. This is sometimes called the 'Storm and Stress' style, for its parallels with a tendency in the literature of Central Europe, which declared itself later than the musical style, being particularly symbolised by Goethe's confessional novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, of 1774.

Apart from this single piece, the London Bach's influence on Mozart helped the younger composer develop, by imitation, a very different style. Absorbing the Italian atmosphere and studying with Sammartini, Christian Bach had blended 'Italian melody and German science' in a style especially marked by balance, smooth transitions, and the 'singing allegro' finding an equivalent



Thomas Gainsborough's portrait of Johann Christian Bach

Mozart admired J.C. Bach, and when he heard of his death, wrote to his father, 'What a loss to the musical world!'

in instrumental music for the lyricism of which Italians were the masters. J.C. Bach was one of the creators of the *galant* style, which was poised and elegant, but usually, until Mozart made it his own, avoiding the deeper feelings.

This symphony may, then, be atypical, but it is masterly. The minor mode is emphasised in all three movements, which is unusual in itself. In the **first movement**, the second subject seems, at its first appearance, to be escaping into a more graceful world, that of the 'singing *allegro*', but on its reappearance it declares its true character, and the movement ends, as it began, with uncompromising unisons. The development is made up of a chromatic figure followed by widely spaced arpeggios, against held notes for the oboes and scrubbing from the lower strings.

The C minor of Bach's **slow movement** is also recalled by Mozart in works in the same key (Piano Fantasia K475, the Sonata K457 in C minor, and the Piano Concerto K491). If the first movement sometimes gives the impression of a game with the darkness of the minor key, this slow movement emphasises both the melodic and harmonic forms of the minor scale with real pathos, desolate and gloomy.

Then it's back to the driving tremolos and sequences, in a whirling **finale** in 12/8, which, in one last unison, mysteriously vanishes into silence, as tragedies should end: 'Take up the bodies: such a sight as this becomes the field, but here shows much amiss...' (*Hamlet*).

DAVID GARRETT ©2003

MOZART Piano Concerto No.11 in F, K413

None of Mozart's piano concertos of his maturity is negligible, but this one is more neglected than most. To appreciate it marks an audience attuned to Mozartian subtleties. It is one of the first three concertos Mozart composed for his subscription concerts in his new city of residence, Vienna. In these piano concertos we may witness, as Mozart biographer Maynard Solomon observes, 'the transformation and perfection of a major musical genre'.

Mozart made a cautious beginning, or rather, knowing his success would come from performing, he was careful to tailor his writing to his assessment of his public. Writing to his father on 28 December 1782 about the concertos K413, 414 and 415, Wolfgang describes them as: 'a happy medium between what is too easy and too difficult; they are very brilliant, pleasing to the ear, and natural, without being vapid. There are passages here and there from



which the connoisseurs alone can derive satisfaction; but these passages are written in such a way that the less learned cannot fail to be pleased, though without knowing why.' Alfred Einstein comments that this shows Mozart's awareness that the composer must make things hard for himself, and easy for the listener.

Mozart's starting point was music his audience already knew and liked. This might be described as the Christian Bach tradition, making it fitting and illuminating to play this concerto in the same concert as music by J.C. Bach. But tonight's Bach symphony gives little clue to his influence on Mozart's concertos. Bach's own keyboard concertos, on the other hand, embody a galant ideal, much imitated, notably by the Paris-based composer Johann Samuel Schreoter, whose concertos Mozart admired. Schreoter was regarded as the successor to the 'London' Bach, a melancholy observation, since that master died in 1782 at the age of 47, an event Mozart described to his father as a great loss for the world of music.

As Mozart indicated, the pleasing aspects of this concerto are obvious. For those not sure whether they are learned enough to rate as connoisseurs, the subtleties can be signposted. The **first movement** is in triple time, three beats to the bar, as in only two other Mozart piano concertos. As many as nine themes have been counted in this movement – but lest his audience become disoriented, Mozart gives them kinship, and the sometimes fragmentary themes are linked. The soloist's entry, on the tail of one of these themes, is one of Mozart's subtlest and most graceful. The cadenzas for this concerto are thought to be Wolfgang's own. The first movement cadenza is followed by what may be a joke: an unexpected return after the cadenza of the soloist's theme, suggesting we are beginning again, only to end, quite suddenly.

Describing this concerto as a typical product of the Ancien Régime, the pre-revolutionary world ruled by aristocrats, Cuthbert Girdlestone also remarks that its ideal is that of a gentleman in a drawing room, who liked everything measured and well-ordered. If that gentleman played the piano, he would have felt at home with the continuous broken-chord pattern in the left hand of the **slow movement**, an 'Alberti bass', which provides the continuity to support the right hand's flow of melodies. This is where the listener is lulled into pleasure – but Mozart is never vapid: listen, for example, to the idea which leads back to the first subject, in this piece in binary form.

The **third movement** pays tribute to J.C. Bach by adopting the minuet, which that composer often used for finales. Having by now, surely, won his audience over, Mozart gives them the weightiest and most interesting

Mozart intended this concerto and its companions (K414 and 415) for a French publisher. With an eye for the market and hoping for maximum sales, Mozart gave them a 'modular' form, indicating that they could be performed 'a quattro'. In other words, they can be played with strings only, even single strings. But the conception is orchestral and the presence of the wind instruments enhances the music.

movement of the three, notable for the subtle variation of the refrain on each of its appearances in a rondo form; for the imitative contrapuntal writing; and for a conclusion which seeks the audience's applause not for loudness or emphasis, but for a quiet fade, like dancers bowing off the stage.

DAVID GARRETT ©2003

HAYDN Symphony No.44, *Mourning*

The Symphony No.44, composed probably in 1771, is in many ways the crowning achievement among the many intense and stormy works Haydn wrote as he approached middle age. These works date mostly from the decade 1765–75, and include symphonies such as the 'Lamentatione' (No.26) and 'Farewell' (No.45), as well as the epoch-making string quartets of Op.20. Though conveniently labelled *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress) compositions, they seem not to be inspired by the German literary movement of the same name which was, if anything, a slightly later development.

As H.C. Robbins Landon points out, whatever troubled Haydn at this time was not unique, even though he lived most of the year in the remoteness of the great Eszterháza estate in Hungary. There was a widespread romantic crisis in Austrian music which affected other composers such as Gassmann, Ordonez, Dittersdorf and Vanhal. To some extent, they probably found examples in Gluck and the wilfully brilliant C.P.E. Bach. In Haydn's case, however, there are perhaps also seeds of drama in his earlier music which begin to bloom as his command of form reaches maturity and he gains the confidence to range more widely in dramatic inventiveness.

The designation *Trauer-Symphonie* (Mourning Symphony) may be considered authentic, since Haydn is said in later years to have asked that the slow movement of this symphony be played at his funeral. For years he had been trying to translate into a symphonic structure the solemn gravity of the old church sonata (*sonata da chiesa*) form, characterised by an slow opening movement. The 'Philosopher' Symphony (No.22, played in the Mozart in the City series in February) is the best known example. In No.44, though he abandons the opening slow movement, Haydn achieves the synthesis and balance he was seeking. While not opening with the slow movement, he now places it third rather than second, thereby creating a central focus for the symphony which aptly counterbalances the strong opening *Allegro* – just as Beethoven was to do in his ninth symphony.



The symphony opens with a four-note motif, given a sense of urgency through being played in unison, which goes on to play a vital role throughout the movement, driving forward to build the tension to a level unprecedented in Haydn's symphonies at this stage of his career.

Tension is relieved, but not broken, by the switch to triple time for the **second movement** Minuet. For this is no dancing minuet, but rather, as Landon describes it, 'a fantastic piece of contrapuntal prestidigitation'. Under the heading *Canone in diapason* Haydn solemnly has the top and bottom lines of the music moving strictly in relation to each other at the distance of a single bar.

As we come to the central Trio section of the Minuet, all the minor-key drama that has gone before is suddenly released by a lyrical melody in E major, in which the first horn spectacularly soars with the strings to the very top of its range. The second part of the Trio, however, brings dramatic offbeat *sforzati* and violent dynamic contrasts typical of *Sturm und Drang* style.

If the **Adagio** is funeral music, then it conveys a noble sadness. This is an unromantic, dry-eyed act of homage. Haydn uses his wind instruments sparingly against the strings which characteristically, in this context, are muted. The beauty of the strings bears the stamp of rare emotional purity.

Where an appropriate **finale** might once have been a problem after three such compelling movements, Haydn here meets the challenge. There is no emotional letdown, but instead a fierce *presto*, tense and concentrated, which is essentially a monothematic, abbreviated sonata structure.

The *Mourning* Symphony marks a watershed in Haydn's output. It is arguable that without his *Sturm und Drang* adventures into high drama and emotion, Haydn would never have gone on to achieve the London symphonies, *The Creation*, *The Seasons* and the last six masses. Already, in Landon's view, the Viennese classical style was an established fact; music would never be the same again.

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GOVERNMENT SUPPORT



The Sydney Symphony is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council and by Arts NSW, Department of the Arts, Sport and Recreation.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Michael Dauth violin-director
CONCERTMASTER CHAIR SUPPORTED BY THE
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KEITH SAUNDERS



Michael Dauth began violin studies under the direction of his father, later studying with Franz Josef Maier and the Amadeus Quartet in Cologne, and with Yfrah Neaman at the Guildhall School

in London. Soon after, he became Concertmaster of Hanover's North German Radio Orchestra and auditioned for the Berlin Philharmonic, where he was invited to lead the Berlin Philharmonic Octet, Berlin Piano Trio and Chamber Virtuosi. In 1988 he moved to Australia, became Concertmaster of the Melbourne Symphony, and was a founding member, Special Concertmaster and Artistic Director of the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa, Japan, a position he holds today.

Michael Dauth has appeared as a soloist with major orchestras in Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Europe, and at all the major festivals including Salzburg, Lucerne, Berlin and Tokyo. His recordings include the Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and Mendelssohn violin concertos, the premiere recording of Takemitsu's *Nostalghia*, and the Mozart and Brahms Clarinet Quintets with his Japan-based Sunrise String Quartet and Wenzel Fuchs. His recordings with Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa include *Eight Seasons*, a recording of Piazzolla and Vivaldi.

In 2003 he received the Governor-General's Centenary medal for service to Australian society and the advancement of music.

Clemens Leske piano



Clemens Leske has appeared as soloist with all of Australia's state symphony orchestras and worked with such conductors as Werner Andreas Albert, Nicholas Braithwaite, Muhai Tang, Vernon Handley, Rumon Gamba, Vladimir Spivakov and Tommy Tycho.

In 2005, Clemens Leske made his London debut at the Royal Festival Hall, performing Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No.1 with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. He has performed with the Australian String Quartet, Australian Chamber Orchestra, and Moscow Virtuosi, and at the Barossa International, Huntington and Adelaide festivals. He was soloist with the Bangkok Symphony in Schumann's Piano Concerto for the King of Thailand's birthday concert and played Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No.1 with the Sydney Symphony in 2003.

Clemens Leske has released three discs of solo piano and chamber music and has recorded extensively for Australian broadcasters ABC Classic FM, 2MBS and 5UV. Recent appearances include the Eastbourne Festival UK with the LPO, performances in the Steinway Spectacular national tour, Bach's *Goldberg* Variations at the Adelaide Fringe Festival, the world premiere of Carl Vine's *Anne Landa* Preludes and a solo recital as part of Historic Houses Trust House Music series at Government House.

He is currently Lecturer in Keyboard at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

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