



**sydney symphony
orchestra**

David Robertson
The Lowy Chair of
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

2016
SEASON



Ashkenazy's Beethoven Celebration
BEETHOVEN TRIUMPHANT

APT MASTER SERIES

Wednesday 10 February 8pm

Friday 12 February 8pm

Saturday 13 February 8pm





sydney symphony orchestra

David Robertson Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

CLASSICAL



Beethoven Triumphant

Ashkenazy's Beethoven Celebration

BEETHOVEN Piano Concerto No.5 (Emperor)

BEETHOVEN Symphony No.4

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor

Garrick Ohlsson piano

APT Master Series

Wed 10 Feb 8pm

Fri 12 Feb 8pm

Sat 13 Feb 8pm

Pre-concert talk 45 minutes before each performance



Garrick Ohlsson in Recital

GRANADOS Oriental from 12 Spanish Dances

GRANADOS Goyescas

MUSSORGSKY Pictures at an Exhibition

International Pianists in Recital

Mon 15 Feb 7pm

City Recital Hall Angel Place



Beethoven Ascendant

Ashkenazy's Beethoven Celebration

BEETHOVEN Violin Concerto

BEETHOVEN Symphony No.5

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor

James Ehnes violin

Special Event
Premier Partner Credit Suisse

Wed 17 Feb 8pm

Thu 18 Feb 8pm

Fri 19 Feb 8pm



Serenade

Mozart & Strauss

R STRAUSS Serenade in E flat for 13 winds

MOZART Violin Rondo in B flat, K269

R STRAUSS Metamorphosen

MOZART Violin Rondo in C, K373

James Ehnes violin-director

2016 SSO Fellows & SSO Musicians

Tea and Symphony

Fri 19 Feb 11 am

complimentary morning tea from 10am



Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra

An evening of jazz standards

Wynton Marsalis trumpet

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra

Special Event

Wed 24 Feb 8pm

Wynton Marsalis's Swing Symphony

BERNSTEIN Fancy Free – Ballet

BERNSTEIN Prelude, Fugue and Riffs

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David Robertson conductor

Wynton Marsalis trumpet

Francesco Celata clarinet

Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra

Meet the Music

Thu 25 Feb 6.30pm

Kaleidoscope

Fri 26 Feb 8pm

A BMW Season Highlight

Sat 27 Feb 8pm



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ADAMS Scheherazade.2 – Dramatic Symphony

for violin and orchestra **AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE**

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Wed 2 Mar 6.30pm

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Thu 3 Mar 1.30pm

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Principal Partner



WELCOME



Welcome to Sydney Opera House Concert Hall for the first program in the APT Master Series for 2016. This year of music with the SSO begins with a great composer – Beethoven – and two of the finest musicians of our time – Vladimir Ashkenazy and pianist Garrick Ohlsson.

Together these inspiring artists make for the ultimate concert experience. In the same way, flying by private jet is the ultimate travel experience. My friend and business associate Phil Asker is the founder and director of Captain's Choice, and he and his team are true pioneers: personally curating handcrafted travel experiences to uncover every corner of the globe. Their innovative itineraries see the Captain's Choice flag flying above all that's remote and exotic.

Sydneysiders are privileged to have an inspiring opera house and a world-class orchestra literally on the doorstep. Nearly every week of the year, there's great music-making to be enjoyed in this very concert hall. But when you seek inspiration further afield – through fresh destinations and new experiences – Captain's Choice Private Jet offers something exceptional and memorable, whether travelling from London to Sydney on the 'Equatorial Explorer' journey or making a round trip with 'Ultimate South America'.

We hope you enjoy this evening's performance and look forward to seeing you at more concerts in 2016.

PHIL ASKER (LEFT) AND GEOFF MCGEARY



Geoff McGeary OAM
APT Company Owner
and

Phil Asker OAM
Captain's Choice Founder & Director
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**sydney symphony
orchestra**

David Robertson
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

APT MASTER SERIES

WEDNESDAY 10 FEBRUARY, 8PM

FRIDAY 12 FEBRUARY, 8PM

SATURDAY 13 FEBRUARY, 8PM

.....
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL

BEETHOVEN TRIUMPHANT

Vladimir Ashkenazy *conductor*

Garrick Ohlsson *piano*

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No.5 in E flat, Op.73 (Emperor)

Allegro

Adagio un poco mosso –

Rondo (Allegro)

INTERVAL

Symphony No.4 in B flat, Op.60

Adagio – Allegro vivace

Adagio

Allegro vivace – Trio (Un poco meno allegro)

Allegro ma non troppo



92.9 ABC
Classic FM

Saturday's performance will be recorded by ABC Classic FM for broadcast across Australia on 21 February at 1pm

.....
Pre-concert talk at 7.15pm in the Northern Foyer. Visit sydney-symphony.com/speaker-bios for more information.

.....
Estimated durations:
38 minutes, 20-minute interval,
35 minutes
The concert will conclude at approximately 9.50pm

PRESENTED BY



Principal Partner



Engraving by Blasius Höfel after a pencil drawing by Louis Letronne (1814). Beethoven and his friends thought highly of this portrait, regarding it as particularly lifelike.

Ashkenazy's Beethoven Celebration: Beethoven Triumphant

It is with pleasure that we welcome back to the stage of the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall one of the greatest musicians of our time, Vladimir Ashkenazy. And we're delighted to present our former principal conductor in a series of six programs celebrating one of the greatest composers of all time – Beethoven.

It would be rare for a concert season to go by without at least one of Beethoven's symphonies or concertos. But a festival of his music offers a special chance to hear most if not all these works in relatively close succession. The SSO's first Beethoven festival was in 1943. In 1984 Vladimir Ashkenazy brought the Philharmonia Orchestra to the Adelaide Festival where they performed all the Beethoven symphonies and piano concertos, with Ashkenazy as soloist and conductor. More recently, in Sydney, there have been festivals conducted by Edo de Waart (1998 and 2001) and Gianluigi Gelmetti (2007). Beethoven's music enjoys a perennial appeal that's virtually unrivalled.

In 1955 the authors of *The Record Guide* pondered Beethoven's immense popularity and importance as a composer. Their conclusion, no less relevant today, was that in a tormented and troubled world most of us turn to art that springs from conflict, in which disorder resolves into order. Beethoven wrestles with Fate and triumphs; he believes in Freedom. 'Beethoven is, above all things, the poet of heroism.' In addition, we're drawn to the power of Beethoven's music, which combines expressive intensity and personal feeling with ambitious scale and a sense of the sublime.

In tonight's concert, Vladimir Ashkenazy is joined by pianist Garrick Ohlsson for the magnificent 'Emperor' Concerto, and we get to hear Beethoven in a more 'Classical' mood in his Fourth Symphony. We hope you'll join us again next week for the Fifth Symphony and the Violin Concerto, and in October when Ashkenazy will return to complete the celebration.

Beethoven Leadership Circle

The SSO thanks the following patrons who have generously supported Ashkenazy's Beethoven Celebration:

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ABOUT THE MUSIC

Ludwig van Beethoven

Piano Concerto No.5 in E flat, Op.73 (Emperor)

Allegro

Adagio un poco mosso –

Rondo (Allegro)

Garrick Ohlsson *piano*

In May 1809 Napoleon's armies occupied Vienna for the second time and with considerable violence. Beethoven took shelter with his brother Caspar Carl and his wife Johanna and to protect his failing hearing spent the bombardment of 11 and 12 May with pillows over his ears in the cellar. Beethoven wrote to his publisher: 'What a destructive, disorderly life I see and hear around me: nothing but drums, cannons and human misery in every form.'

Before, during and after the invasion and despite his misery, Beethoven managed to work. He composed the Op.70 piano trios and three piano sonatas including Op.81a, *Das Lebwohl* (or 'Les Adieux') which reflects Beethoven's sorrow at seeing his

Keynotes

BEETHOVEN

Born Bonn, 1770

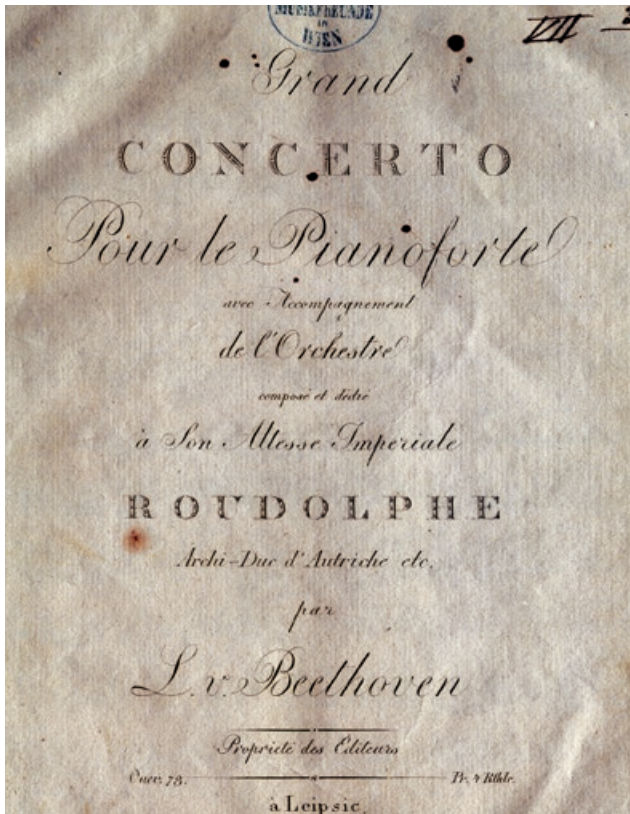
Died Vienna, 1827

Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto is one of the works that is central to his reputation. It was composed when Beethoven was in his late 30s – at a time when his hearing was already radically diminished. It was an astonishingly productive time that has become known as his 'heroic' period.

EMPEROR CONCERTO

'Emperor' wasn't Beethoven's nickname for the Fifth Piano Concerto – it was bestowed by others responding to the majesty of the work and its often commanding character. The concerto begins in a way that would have surprised its first listeners: with flourishes of ever increasing length punctuated by grand chords from the orchestra. And it was the first concerto in which the cadenza – traditionally improvised by the soloist – was written out in full. Beethoven would have had the integrity of his music in mind, but there was another motivation: this was the first of his concertos that he had been unable to play himself – his deafness making public performance impossible.

The second movement continues straight into the finale without pause, emphasising a sense of unity and momentum in the music. Dedicated to Archduke Rudolph, the Fifth Concerto was completed in 1809 and premiered in 1811.



Title page of Piano Concerto No.5, Op.73, with its dedication to Beethoven's patron and friend, the Archduke Rudolph.

young patron the Archduke Rudolph leaving Vienna, as did so many of the aristocracy during the invasion. He also composed the String Quartet Op.74, popularly known as the *Harp* Quartet, and completed the Fifth Piano Concerto (also dedicated to Rudolph). Curiously, most of these are in the key of E flat major – the key of *The Magic Flute* and other music where Mozart sought to create a sense of solemnity, and one that Beethoven used at his most Promethean in works like the *Eroica* Symphony. These works don't bear any obvious resemblance to one another: the transcendent serenity of the Harp Quartet seems miles away from the high style of the outer movements of the Emperor concerto. But all of these works break new ground in some way.

By this time Beethoven's deafness made it impossible for him to perform with an orchestra, so the concerto's first performance in Leipzig in 1811 was given by a young organist, Friedrich Schneider. At the Viennese premiere in 1812, Carl Czerny was soloist. Given the political circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the concerto is, in Alfred Einstein's word, the 'apotheosis of the military concept' in Beethoven's music. Biographer Maynard Solomon quotes Einstein as saying that the audience 'expected a first movement in four-four time of a military character; and they reacted with unmixed pleasure when Beethoven not only fulfilled but far surpassed their expectations'.

In the Fifth Concerto, Beethoven solved the problem of how to exploit the soloist's virtuosity without downgrading the role of the orchestra, while constructing the kind of musical argument and drama which was so crucial to the Classical style. This is achieved partly through masterstrokes like the opening gesture of the **first movement**: a single chord is sounded by the orchestra, to which the piano responds in such flamboyant style, creating a sense of uncertainty about how and when the orchestra will rejoin the music, and what form the actual thematic material will take.

A standard practice in much Classical music was to get louder and more agitated in the lead-up to a point of structural significance, but Beethoven made those moments even more dramatic. The overwhelming impression left by the first movement of the Fifth Concerto is of ceremonial grandeur and pomp – hence the nickname (not authorised by Beethoven) of *Emperor*. But the massive scale of the first movement is made possible by the frequent contrast of the 'military', with its characteristic march rhythms, and the reflective. Moreover, Beethoven prepares the movement's climactic moments with what scholar William Kinderman calls 'the withdrawal of the

Dictating the Cadenza

Beethoven gave the premieres of his first four piano concertos, but by 1811 he was too deaf to play in public. Perhaps because he knew he wouldn't be playing the 'Emperor' Concerto himself, Beethoven did something new that turned out to be extremely influential: he removed the traditional opportunities for the pianist to improvise a virtuoso cadenza. There are still moments in the concerto that sound improvisatory, including the very beginning, which sounds like a set of three mini-cadenzas, but Beethoven carefully writes these out. And at the point in the first movement where pianists might have expected to improvise a cadenza, Beethoven writes: 'Do not make up a cadenza, but go straight on to what follows.' What follows is cadenza-like, but tightly integrated into the fabric of the music. None of the great concertos since, apart from the Brahms Violin Concerto, has left room for an improvised cadenza.



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music into a mysterious stillness'. The piano's opening flourishes, for instance, seem for a moment to be about to wander off into realms of improvisation before the energetic first theme is announced impatiently by the band. To prepare the moment of recapitulation, where the opening material returns, Beethoven again allows the music to become rarified and serene: a passage of ever-quieter scales and trills gives way to a pastoral dialogue between the winds and the bell-tones of the piano.

The short, central **Adagio** movement, rightly described as dreamlike by one writer, is in B major, which in terms of Classical tonal logic is a fair way away from the 'home' key of E flat. And its mood couldn't be further from the military episodes, despite its material being dominated by the scales and trills that featured in the first movement. It may have been a passage such as this that Australian poet Gwen Harwood was remembering when she wrote:

*Pain breaks upon
these notes in splintering trills; here, changed to song,
wears the calm aspect of divinity.*

A justly celebrated instance of 'the withdrawal of the music into a mysterious stillness' occurs at the transition from the slow movement into the **finale**. The transition is almost imperceptible – Beethoven changes a note here or there to subtly change the direction of the music as it seems to fade, and the piano begins ruminating on a common chord which will ultimately flower as the final movement's bounding theme, which again is contrasted with moments of deep calm. Whatever the misery in which Beethoven wrote this work, or its immediate political context, it turns out to be another ode to joy.

GORDON KERRY © 2003

The orchestra in Beethoven's 'Emperor' Concerto comprises pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns and trumpets; timpani and strings.

The SSO was the first ABC orchestra to perform the 'Emperor' Concerto, with pianist Artur Schnabel and conductor George Szell in 1939. Our most recent performance of the concerto was in the 2014 Beethoven piano concerto cycle with soloist Emanuel Ax and conductor David Robertson.

Vladimir Ashkenazy's
**BEETHOVEN
CELEBRATION
CONTINUES IN OCTOBER**

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- The *Eroica*, *Pastoral* and *Choral* symphonies
- Piano Concerto No.3 & No.4

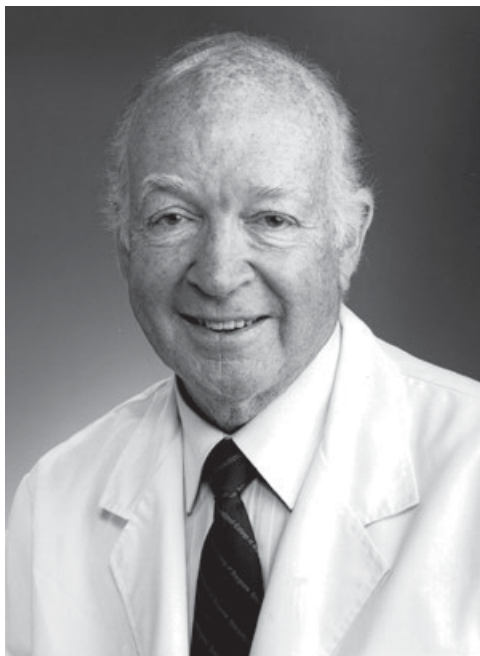
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Professor Earl Owen (1933–2014)

This week's concerts are dedicated to the memory of Professor Earl R Owen – microsurgeon, music lover and a longstanding friend of Vladimir Ashkenazy.

Prof. Owen was a man of many extraordinary talents who changed the lives of many through his work as a microsurgeon and fertility specialist. As the 'Father of Microsurgery', he and his team developed new techniques to successfully transplant limbs – restoring independence to many. His world firsts include reattaching the finger of a young boy in 1970, the first hand transplant and the first double hand transplant. As a pioneer in the field of male fertility, he developed new vasectomy reversal techniques, giving the precious gift of a child to thousands of couples worldwide. Nothing brought him more joy – or pride – and – his office walls were plastered with photos of tiny smiling faces and their beaming parents.

Medicine was Prof. Owen's greatest focus in life, but music was his greatest love. He had been a promising pianist before pursuing medicine as a career, and he never operated, consulted or wrote a paper (or a poem) without classical music playing in the background.



When he moved to London in the 1960s, he counted among his friends Vladimir Ashkenazy, also newly arrived in the city. Later, in 1979, Prof. Owen saved the leg – and very likely the life – of Ashkenazy's son Dimitri after a freak water-skiing accident.

The two men were firm friends – whenever Ashkenazy was conducting and Prof. Owen was in the same city, he could be found sneaking into the concert hall during rehearsals to listen.

Prof. Owen also enjoyed a longstanding relationship with the SSO and the Sydney Opera House. He consulted on musicians' posture and designed chairs for performers. He also designed the Concert Hall seats on which you are sitting.

A charismatic and compassionate man, he would be thrilled to share this evening's concert with you, as Ashkenazy and the SSO perform masterpieces by Beethoven.



Vladimir Ashkenazy with Prof. Owen

MORE MUSIC

BEETHOVEN'S FOURTH

Last year the SSO gave the Australian premiere of Jörg Widmann's *Con brio* on motifs by Beethoven. That work was part of a group of commissions intended to complement the Beethoven symphonies and recorded by the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Mariss Jansons. The Fourth and Fifth symphonies were matched to *Fires* by Lithuanian composer Raminta Šerkšnytė and the three works are available on the Br Klassik label, as one of the volumes in an exceptional set: Beethoven Symphonies and Reflections.

BR KLASSIK 900135

If you're after the complete Beethoven symphonies, look for the acclaimed collection by Osmo Vänskä with the Minnesota Orchestra.

BIS 1825/26

Or try the more recent recording of the complete symphonies by the Royal Flemish Philharmonic, conducted by Philippe Herreweghe, who brings period instrument insight to a modern instrument performance distinguished by its clarity and energy.

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OHLSSON PLAYS BEETHOVEN

Garrick Ohlsson has recorded the complete Beethoven piano sonatas, with nine volumes released on the Bridge label between 2006 and 2010. The first three volumes include the sonatas composed in 1809, around the same time as the 'Emperor' Concerto: No.24 in F sharp major, Op.78 (Vol.1), 25 in G major, Op.79 (Vol.3) and 26 in E flat major, Op.81a, *Les Adieux* (Vol.2).

BRIDGE 9198, 9201, 9207

ASHKENAZY'S BEETHOVEN

Vladimir Ashkenazy made three recordings of the complete Beethoven piano concertos, including a cycle with the Cleveland Orchestra that he directed from the piano. (Australian concertgoers might remember him doing the same thing with the Philharmonia Orchestra at the 1984 Adelaide Festival.) The Cleveland cycle is available as an ArkivCD release together with Beethoven's Choral Fantasia. And the 'Emperor' Concerto and the Choral Fantasia can be found in the 50-CD set *Ashkenazy: 50 Years on Decca*.

DECCA 421 718 (Concertos)

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Broadcast Diary

February–March



92.9 ABC
Classic FM

abc.net.au/classic

Friday 19 February, 8pm

BEETHOVEN ALIVE

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor
Symphony No.1, No.8, No.7

Saturday 20 February, 8pm

BEETHOVEN ASCENDANT

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor
James Ehnes violin
Violin Concerto, Symphony No.5

Sunday 21 February, 1pm

BEETHOVEN TRIUMPHANT

See this program for details.

Wednesday 24 February, 9:30pm

VÄNSKÄ CONDUCTS BRAHMS

Osmo Vänskä conductor
Colin Currie percussion
Beethoven, Aho, Brahms

Friday 26 February, 8pm

SWING SYMPHONY

David Robertson conductor
Wynton Marsalis trumpet
Francesco Celata clarinet
Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra
Bernstein, Marsalis

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SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA HOUR

Tuesday 8 March, 6pm

Musicians and staff of the SSO talk about the life of the orchestra and forthcoming concerts. Hosted by Andrew Bukenya.

finemusicfm.com

Beethoven

Symphony No.4 in B flat, Op.60

Adagio – Allegro vivace

Adagio

Allegro vivace – Trio (Un poco meno allegro)

Allegro ma non troppo

The deceptively spontaneous surge of creativity on which Beethoven had realised the mighty *Eroica* impelled him onward almost immediately into the fierce energy of a new symphony in C minor. But when in 1806 Count Franz von Oppersdorff commissioned a symphony from him, Beethoven laid aside the two movements he had already completed of the C minor work and produced for the Count an altogether different, less titanic symphony in B flat major.

Having achieved symphonic strength on a grand scale in the *Eroica*, Beethoven was striving for an equivalent level of concentrated intensity in the new, more compact C minor work. But the scherzo was giving him problems, and the Oppersdorff commission, which he appears to have executed with uncommon speed, gave him breathing space in which to work them out.

The new symphony, which thus became the Fourth, is also compact and concentrated. Ostensibly sunny in character, its brightness is relative to the shadowy world from which it springs and which occasionally darkens its path. The allegro of the first movement, evolving from the slow introduction (*Adagio*), bursts forth in brilliance out of the gloom, a realm of mysteriously shifting harmonies, of strangely detached notes and chords. The recapitulation similarly emerges from a dramatically hushed reminiscence of the introduction and a crescendo over menacing drum rolls – procedures which may well have given Beethoven the clue to his problems with the Fifth and inspired the breathtaking link in the later symphony from scherzo into finale.

The core of the Fourth, as in the *Eroica*, is probably the slow movement (**Adagio**), a spacious rondo of profound poetic qualities. Had Beethoven been given to revealing himself in his music, this serene idyll, based on a gentle rocking pulse, might well be seen as reflecting his attachment at the time to the young Countess Therese von Brunsvik – one of the more special of the many women in his life. With a passionate outburst in the central section, the music is subjectively 'romantic' in the widest sense.

The **third movement** scherzo – though Beethoven no longer calls it that – brusquely dispels the calm of the *Adagio* with a vigorous, angular melody, copiously sprinkled with off-beat accents. A reflective trio section, marked fractionally slower than

Keynotes

BEETHOVEN

In 1806, around the time he was composing his Fourth Symphony, Beethoven had reconciled himself to his deafness. He was no longer keeping it a secret, but had begun 'plunging into the whirlpool of society', as he put it, and spending time in the country estates of his noble friends. A fellow composer noted that around this time Beethoven was 'cheerful to every jest laid, deeply happy, fun-loving, witty, and satirical'.

FOURTH SYMPHONY

This symphony was likened by the composer Robert Schumann to 'a slender Greek maiden between two Nordic giants' – the giants being the *Eroica* Symphony (No.3) and the Fifth. But it is in no way a slight work, nor is it even particularly 'classical' in a backward looking way.

Its four movements all reveal a level of invention and originality that makes the symphony as progressive as its neighbours. The overall mood is sunny, but there is profound poetry in such moments as the slow introduction and the *Adagio* second movement. Completed in 1806, the Fourth Symphony was premiered in March 1807.

the main movement, makes not one but two appearances, giving the impression that the second-time scherzo impulsively failed to stop. The scherzo is thus obliged to make an unscheduled third appearance, though now severely condensed. In three short but pregnant bars, as Tovey says, the two horns abruptly 'blow the whole movement away'.

The **finale** scurries in with carefree abandon. But here, too, gaiety soon gives way to passages of elegant charm and quixotic strokes of angry, minor-key chords. Beethovenian boldness and power underlie the humour of this music as it runs its exhilarating course.

Despite its superficial similarity in form and scale with the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart, Beethoven's Fourth already inhabits a different spiritual world. Robert Schumann surely saw only half the picture when he likened this utterly masculine symphony, in relation to the *Eroica* and the Fifth, to 'a slender Greek maiden between two Nordic giants'. More to the point is Sir George Grove's assessment of how music to this point had gained at Beethoven's hand, 'not,' as he says, 'in invention, wit or spirit, but in variety of structure, colour and expression'.

ANTHONY CANE © 2011

Beethoven's Fourth Symphony calls for an orchestra comprising flute with pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns and trumpets; timpani and strings.

The earliest known SS0 performance of Beethoven's Fourth Symphony was in 1941, conducted by Percy Code. Our most recent performance was in 2012, conducted by Hannu Lintu.



Beethoven, 1806

'A slender Greek maiden
between two Norse
giants'
SCHUMANN

**sydney symphony
orchestra**
David Robertson
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

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KEITH SAUNDERS

Vladimir Ashkenazy *conductor*

One of the few artists to combine a successful career as a pianist and conductor, Vladimir Ashkenazy inherited his musical gift from both sides of his family: his father David Ashkenazy was a professional light music pianist and his mother Evstolia (née Plotnova) was daughter of a chorusmaster in the Russian Orthodox church.

He first came to prominence in the 1955 Chopin Competition in Warsaw and as winner of the 1956 Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels. Since then he has built an extraordinary career, not only as one of the most outstanding pianists of the 20th century, but as an artist whose creative life encompasses a vast range of activities and continues to offer inspiration to music-lovers across the world.

A regular visitor to Sydney since his Australian debut, as a pianist, in 1969, Vladimir Ashkenazy subsequently conducted subscription concerts and composer festivals for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and from 2009 to 2013 he was Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor. Highlights of his tenure included the Mahler Odyssey project, concert performances of Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* and annual international touring.

Conducting has formed the larger part of his activities for the past 30 years and he appears regularly with major orchestras around the world. He continues his longstanding relationship with the Philharmonia Orchestra, which appointed

him Conductor Laureate in 2000, and he is also Conductor Laureate of both the Iceland and NHK symphony orchestras. He has recently stepped down from the Music Directorship of the EUYO, a post he has held with great satisfaction for 15 years, and he previously held the post of Chief Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. He maintains strong links with other major orchestras including the Cleveland Orchestra (where he was formerly Principal Guest Conductor) and Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin (Chief Conductor and Music Director 1988–96).

Ashkenazy maintains his devotion to the piano, these days mostly in the recording studio. His comprehensive discography includes the Grammy award-winning Shostakovich Preludes and Fugues, Rautavaara's Piano Concerto No.3 (which he commissioned), Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, Rachmaninoff Transcriptions and Beethoven's Diabelli Variations. Milestone collections include *Ashkenazy: 50 Years on Decca* – a 50-CD box set (2013) and his vast catalogue of Rachmaninoff's piano music, which also includes all of his recordings as a conductor of the composer's orchestral music (2014).

Beyond his performing schedule, Vladimir Ashkenazy has also been involved in many TV projects, inspired by his passionate drive to ensure that serious music retains a platform in the mainstream media and is available to as broad an audience as possible.



MARK MCBETH

Garrick Ohlsson

piano

Since winning the 1970 International Chopin Piano Competition, Garrick Ohlsson has established himself as a musician of magisterial interpretive and technical prowess. In addition to being one of the world's leading exponents of the music of Chopin, he commands an enormous repertoire, ranging over the entire piano literature. A student of the late Claudio Arrau, he has come to be noted for his masterly performances of the music of Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, as well as later Romantic works. His repertoire includes more than 80 concertos, ranging from Haydn to Barber and Busoni and works of the 21st century, many commissioned for him.

In the 2015–16 season he gives recitals in Berkeley, New York, Indianapolis, Seattle, La Jolla, Evanston, Fort Worth, Lincoln and Costa Mesa. In return visits to Australia he appears in Perth, Brisbane, Melbourne and Adelaide as well as Sydney, and he will perform for the first time with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. As a concerto soloist he will perform with orchestras in Boston, Los Angeles, Ottawa, Nashville, Indianapolis, Oregon, Warsaw, St Petersburg, Manchester and Lugano. He will also serve as a judge at the 17th International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw, and in April he will join the Takács Quartet for a brief US tour culminating at Carnegie Hall.

A native of White Plains, New York, Garrick Ohlsson began his piano studies at the age of eight and at 13 he entered the Juilliard School.

Although he won the 1966 Busoni Competition in Italy and the 1968 Montreal Piano Competition, it was his Gold Medal in Warsaw at the 1970 Chopin Competition that brought him worldwide recognition as one of the finest pianists of his generation. In 1994 he was awarded the Avery Fisher Prize and in 1998 he received the University Musical Society Distinguished Artist Award in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He is also the 2014 recipient of the Jean Gimbel Lane Prize in Piano Performance from the Northwestern University Bienen School of Music.

Garrick Ohlsson's most recent appearance with the SSO was in 2012 when he performed the original version of Tchaikovsky's Second Piano Concerto with Vladimir Ashkenazy.

*Beethoven Soloist Supporter for Garrick Ohlsson:
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On Monday 15 February at 7pm Garrick Ohlsson will perform a recital of music by Granados and Mussorgsky.

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SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



DAVID ROBERTSON

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Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra 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 SSO also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA – including three visits to China – have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

The orchestra's first Chief Conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013. The orchestra's history also boasts collaborations with legendary figures

such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

The SSO's award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, developing audiences and engaging the participation of young people.

The orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Lee Bracegirdle, Gordon Kerry, Mary Finsterer, Nigel Westlake and Georges Lentz, and the orchestra's recordings of music by Brett Dean have been released on both the BIS and SSO Live labels.

Other releases on the SSO Live label, established in 2006, include performances with Alexander Lazarev, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Sir Charles Mackerras, Vladimir Ashkenazy and David Robertson. In 2010–11 the orchestra made concert recordings of the complete Mahler symphonies with Ashkenazy, and has also released recordings of Rachmaninoff and Elgar orchestral works on the Exton/Triton labels, as well as numerous recordings on ABC Classics.

This is the third year of David Robertson's tenure as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director.

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Umberto Clerici has been Principal Cello of the SSO since 2014. He has performed as a soloist with orchestras around the world and served as principal cello at the Teatro Regio in Turin in his native Italy before joining the SSO. Umberto's chair is generously supported by Garry and Shiva Rich. Their son Samuel recently started learning the cello and aspires to join the SSO one day.

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