



**sydney symphony  
orchestra**

**David Robertson**  
The Lowy Chair of  
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

**2016**  
SEASON



**COCKTAIL HOUR**  
*Chamber Music in the Utzon Room*

Strings Attached  
**SATURDAY 9 APRIL 6PM**

Winds of Change  
**SATURDAY 14 MAY 6PM**

Pastorale  
**SATURDAY 2 JULY 6PM**



Principal Partner

## COCKTAIL HOUR – CONCERT 1

## Strings Attached

*The string quartet like you've never heard before...*

World War I was raging, Stravinsky was living in Switzerland, the scandalous success of *The Rite of Spring* was just behind him, and he was composing works for much smaller forces: *Les Noces*, *The Soldier's Tale*, *Renard*. Near where the composer was living on the banks of Lake Geneva was the base of the prominent Flonzaley String Quartet. In 1914 Stravinsky's friend the conductor Ernest Ansermet, knowing that Stravinsky was writing these pieces for string quartet, secured him a commission from the Flonzaleys. Stravinsky's movement headings, just a set of metronome markings to indicate tempo, present the three pieces as abstract music, but they are contrasting studies in moods: popular, fantastic, and liturgical. When later he orchestrated the pieces, Stravinsky gave them titles. The 'Dance' is like the Russian folk music in irregular metres the homesick Stravinsky enjoyed imitating in those early years of his exile. The at times nearly atonal second piece 'Eccentric', Stravinsky recalled, was suggested by seeing the music hall comedian Little Tich, in London in summer 1914: 'the jerky, spastic movements, the ups and downs, the rhythm – even the mood or joke of the music'. 'Canticle' echoes certain hymn-like passages in *The Rite of Spring*, and looks forward to the Symphonies of Wind Instruments of 1920.

Stravinsky, ignoring tradition, invented a new way of writing for quartet. Like all the Stravinsky pieces in these concerts, the Three Pieces are offcuts from the workshop where he was inventing musical modernism.

*Beethoven makes it better...*

Even musicians who know the repertoire very well are mostly unaware of this quintet by Beethoven (his Op.29 string quintet is more familiar). Part of the story turns on this in Vikram Seth's novel *An Equal Music*. The narrator, a professional violinist, expresses disbelief when his student and girlfriend Virginie, who is French, tells him about the Op.104 quintet. So she translates from her *Guide de la musique de chambre*:

*...it says that in 1817 he rearranged the third piano trio in opus 1 as a string quintet...Some amateur did it first and Beethoven wrote down a, how do you say, a humoristical appreciation that the amateur's horrible arrangement was*

SATURDAY 9 APRIL | 6PM

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE  
UTZON ROOM

**IGOR STRAVINSKY**  
**(1882–1971)**

**Three Pieces for string quartet**

1. ♩ = 126 (*Dance*)
2. ♩ = 76 (*Eccentric*)
3. ♩ = 40 (*Canticle*)

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN**  
**(1770–1827)**

**String Quintet in C minor,**  
**Op.104**

[arr. from his Piano Trio  
Op.1 No.3]

*Allegro con brio*  
*Andante cantabile con*  
*variazione*  
*Menuetto quasi allegro*  
*Prestissimo*



Stravinsky in 1921



The music hall comedian Little Tich performing his 'big boot dance' at the Phono-Cinéma-Théâtre in France. The image is taken from a film recorded in 1900, 14 years before Stravinsky saw him in London. (You can find this footage on YouTube.)

*a quintet in three voices, and Beethoven had made it properly into five voices, and converted it from a big miserability to a presentable aspect. And the original three-voice arrangement is now offered in a solemn holocaust to the infernal gods.*

This quintet, then, is Beethoven's arrangement of his Piano Trio in C minor, Op.1 No.3, the most striking of the trios he considered deserving of his first opus number. Beethoven considered the third trio the best of the set, and was aggrieved when Haydn advised him not to publish it, attributing his teacher's attitude to jealousy (Haydn prudently thought the public might not understand this music). Beethoven was goaded by the incompetent arrangement by an amateur. In Seth's novel, Michael the violinist mentions that he has been listening to Op.1 No.3 – he used to play it in a trio with the pianist who was the love of his life. Virginie turns out to know something about it that he doesn't.

For both his string quintets Beethoven follows Mozart in adding a second viola to the string quartet.

**'If this...has any proper place in the art of the string quartet, then the end is near.'**

English composer George Dyson on a passage from No.2 of Stravinsky's Three Pieces



**Miniature portrait of Beethoven from 1802 by Christian Horneman.**

## COCKTAIL HOUR – CONCERT 2

## Winds of Change

*Bach, but which?*

The trio sonata was so common a form in Baroque music that a whole book could be written on the subject (and was, by the late Christopher Hogwood). Yet the trio sonatas attributed to the great Sebastian Bach are mostly of uncertain authorship. The sonata in D minor in this concert represents the genre: two melodic instruments (which could be violins or, as tonight, flutes) supported by a thoroughbass (basso continuo) played on a bass instrument (cello perhaps, or bassoon) with a keyboard instrument (harpsichord or organ) doubling the bass line and filling in the harmonic texture as seems best to the player.

This music sounded as if it might be by old Bach, and was initially attributed to him as BWV 1036. Later it was speculated that he and his son Emanuel (CPE Bach) may have composed it together. Nowadays it is fairly confidently attributed to Emanuel alone – admittedly channelling his father's musical idiom at times.

That's poetic justice – the son was more celebrated in his day than the father, but was overshadowed in the 19th-century Bach revival. Whoever wrote it, this is wonderful music, combining instrumental virtuosity, deep expression, and artistic certainty. The four movement form follows that of the church sonatas of earlier years: slow – fast – slow – fast.

*Gesualdo restored...*

Carlo Gesualdo was of noble birth and inherited the principality of Venosa. When he caught his wife and her lover 'in flagrante delicto', he had them assassinated. His music also goes to extremes – in his madrigals, and to a lesser extent in his sacred pieces he pushes chromatic harmony to the limits, even as far as controlled dissonance. Avant-garde 20th-century musicians like Stravinsky found in Gesualdo a kindred spirit.

The third of the pieces Stravinsky chose from Gesualdo's collection of *Sacrae cantiones* for 6 and 7 voices, published in 1603, was missing two of the parts. In 1956 Stravinsky decided to complete it by adding what was missing, so that *Illumina nos* could be performed in St Mark's Venice along with his own similarly titled *Canticum Sacrum* (1955 – another title referring to sacred song). The church would not grant permission for the work of the Naples-born Gesualdo to be performed in Venice's main church (did Gesualdo's notoriety have something to do with this?). In 1959 Stravinsky chose another two 'sacred songs', also missing parts.

SATURDAY 14 MAY | 6PM

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE  
UTZON ROOM**BACH****Trio Sonata in D minor**

Formerly attributed to Johann Sebastian Bach as BWV 1036 but now attributed to Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714–1788)

*Adagio**Allegro**Largo**Vivace***CARLO GESUALDO  
(c.1560–1615)****arr. Stravinsky****Tres Sacrae Cantiones  
(Three Sacred Songs)***Da pacem, Domine*

(Grant peace, O Lord)

*Assumpta est Maria*

(Mary is taken up)

*Illumina nos* (Enlighten us)

Transcribed by Scott Kinmont  
for the instrumentation of  
Stravinsky's Octet

**IGOR STRAVINSKY  
(1882–1971)****Octet for winds***Sinfonia* (*Lento – Allegro  
moderato*)*Tema con variazione –  
Finale* (*Tempo giusto*)





The three songs as completed by Stravinsky were published in 1960 to mark the 400th anniversary of Gesualdo's birth. Stravinsky's assistant Robert Craft claimed in the preface that Stravinsky actually recomposed Gesualdo 'from the point of view of his added parts', resulting in a fusion of the two composers. At the same time, Stravinsky recomposed for instruments, without voices, three Gesualdo madrigals, under the title *Monumentum pro Gesualdo*. For this concert, SSO Associate Principal Trombone Scott Kinmont, taking a leaf out of Stravinsky's book, has arranged the Three Sacred Songs for the same instruments as play in Stravinsky's Octet.

*Dream team...*

In 1922 Stravinsky had a dream: 'I found myself [in my dream state] in a small room surrounded by a small number of instrumentalists who were playing some very agreeable music.' On waking, he couldn't recall the music, but remembered counting eight instruments – pairs of bassoons, trumpets and trombones, and one each of flute and clarinet. 'I awoke from this little dream concert in a state of delight, and the next morning I began to compose the Octet.'

The Octet is the first work in which Stravinsky's neo-classical style declares itself in all its purity. In form it harks back to the divertimento music of 18th-century composers. The first movement is a sonata allegro with a slow introduction, a form to be found in late Haydn symphonies. For the second movement, Stravinsky's first idea was a waltz, one of the variations. From this he derived the theme. The first variation, heard several times, Stravinsky called the 'ribbon of scales'. The final variation, a fugato, is developed in counterpoint at some length (this has affinities with passages in the Bach trio sonata). Then a flute cadenza makes the link to the final movement, a rondo, leading to a typically Stravinskian way of saying 'the end': chords in compound metre, hesitant yet final.

DAVID GARRETT © 2016

**Emanuel Bach, seated at the keyboard, plays continuo for his employer Frederick the Great in this famous representation of a musical evening at Sans Souci, painted in 1850–52 by Adolph Menzel.**



**Detail from an altarpiece *Il perdono di Gesualdo* (1609) by Giovanni Balducci, which was commissioned by Gesualdo for the private chapel of his church, Santa Maria delle Grazie. The kneeling figure represents Gesualdo (his uncle Carlo Borromeo stands behind) and it is thought to be the only authentic portrait of the composer-prince.**

## COCKTAIL HOUR – CONCERT 3

## Pastorale

*Shepherd's song without words...*

In its original form the Pastorale is very early Stravinsky. In 1907 he was still a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov and, over a drone-like bass, writes an oriental-tinged type of Russian melody, recalling similar ideas from the composer of *Scheherazade*, and still to be heard a few years later in the pupil's *Firebird* ballet (which the SSO performs in August). This Pastorale was first composed for wordless soprano voice and piano (think Rachmaninoff's Vocalise). In 1923 (just after he composed his Octet), Stravinsky made a version for soprano and wind instruments. Then in 1933, for his concerts with Samuel Dushkin, came a version for violin and piano. In the same year Stravinsky adapted and lengthened the 1923 version with a violin as soloist, and the same winds: oboe, cor anglais, clarinet and bassoon. This is the version heard in this evening's concert.

*A favourite, but not with Beethoven...*

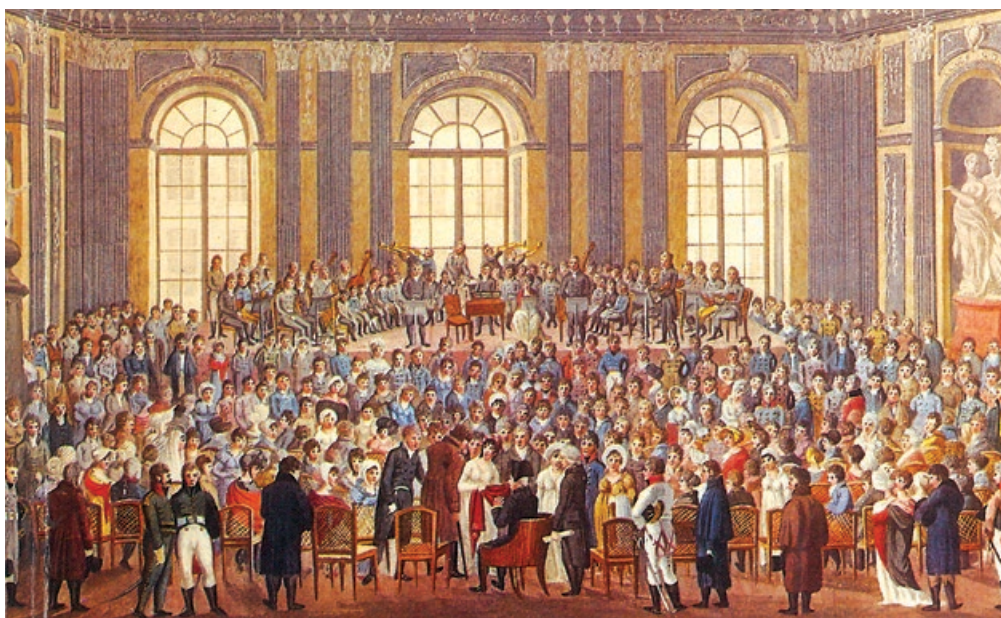
This concert series is crowned by the longest work – one of Beethoven's most popular, in his lifetime. Beethoven was annoyed by this popularity, spluttering: 'in those days I didn't know how to compose!' 'Those days' were the years 1799–1800,

SATURDAY 2 JULY | 6PM

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE  
UTZON ROOM**IGOR STRAVINSKY  
(1882–1971)****Pastorale (1933)**

Version for violin and wind instruments

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN  
(1770–1827)****Septet in E flat, Op.20***Adagio – Allegro con brio**Adagio cantabile**Tempo di minuetto**Tema con variazioni**Scherzo**Andante con moto alla Marcia –**Presto*◀ Beethoven in a portrait by  
Ferdinand Waldmüller from 1823



and the Septet was heard in the same concert as the First Symphony, but not before it had been played in a private concert at Prince Schwarzenberg's. This genre of music, related to the serenades and divertimentos of Mozart, Haydn (and countless late-18th-century composers) provided music for pleasure in well-off households. In 1824 Count Troyer, an amateur clarinettist, commissioned a work from Schubert specifying it should be just like that popular favourite, Beethoven's Septet. Schubert obliged, adding a second violin, but following the same schema as Beethoven: six movements, with slow introductions to the first and last (these march-like measures allude to the serenading musicians playing as they arrive and depart), and two minuet-like movements. If the first of these sounds familiar, that's because Beethoven borrowed it from his 'easy sonata' for piano, Op.49 No.2.

Beethoven's later annoyance at the Septet's popularity hardly matches his high opinion of it when it was new, reflected in its dedication to the Empress Maria Theresia. Perhaps the most popular single part of the Septet was the theme of the variations movement, which is identical with a folksong from the Rhineland, *Ach Schiffer, lieber Schiffer* (Ah boatman, dear boatman). It is just possible that it's the other way round, and Beethoven's theme became a folksong. Beethoven capitalised on the Septet's popularity by arranging it for piano trio (Opus 38), long before he made the string quintet arrangement of his third piano trio, heard in the first of this year's Cocktail Hour concerts.

**Beethoven's Septet was first performed at Prince Schwarzenberg's and, reported one witness 'was much admired'. 'That is my Creation!' the composer declared. He was alluding to Haydn's oratorio, which had also received its first performance in the Schwarzenberg palace, depicted here with (it is traditionally thought) the figure of Beethoven in a black coat standing in the foreground with his back to the viewer.**





# THE MUSICIANS

## APRIL – Strings Attached

Sophie Cole *violin*

Nicole Masters *violin*

Stuart Johnson<sup>°</sup> *viola*

Jane Hazelwood *viola*

Kristy Conrau *cello*

<sup>°</sup> Beethoven only

## MAY – Winds of Change

**Bach**

Rosamund Plummer *flute*

Carolyn Harris *flute*

Catherine Davis\* *harpsichord*

Justin Sun† *bassoon*

**Gesualdo and Stravinsky**

Carolyn Harris *flute*

Francesco Celata *clarinet*

Justin Sun† *bassoon*

Matthew Ockenden\* *bassoon*

David Elton *trumpet*

Anthony Heinrichs *trumpet*

Scott Kinmont *trombone*

Christopher Harris *bass trombone*

## JULY – Pastorale

**Stravinsky**

Marina Marsden *violin*

David Papp *oboe*

Alexandre Oguey *cor anglais*

Francesco Celata *clarinet*

Matthew Wilkie *bassoon*

**Beethoven**

Francesco Celata *clarinet*

Matthew Wilkie *bassoon*

Robert Johnson *horn*

Marina Marsden *violin*

Justine Marsden *viola*

Adrian Wallis *cello*

Kees Boersma *double bass*

\* Guest Musician

† SSO Fellow

# ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA

## SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

David Robertson *The Lowly Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director*

Founded in 1932 by the ABC, the SSO evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the Sydney Opera House, the SSO gives more than a hundred performances throughout Sydney and NSW each year, and its international tours have earned it worldwide recognition.

The SSO's orchestral performances encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, special events, and collaborations with guest artists and ensembles from all genres, reflecting the orchestra's versatility and diverse appeal.

The musicians of the orchestra also perform in chamber music, both in independent presentations as well as under the auspices of the SSO, appearing over the years in concerts at City Recital Hall Angel Place, the Sydney Opera House, Verbrugghen Hall at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, in venues on tour and in suburban Sydney, and in regular lunchtime concerts at St James' King Street.



SSO musicians also present regular post-concert Night Lounge events in the Northern Foyer of the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall.

### The SSO Online

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