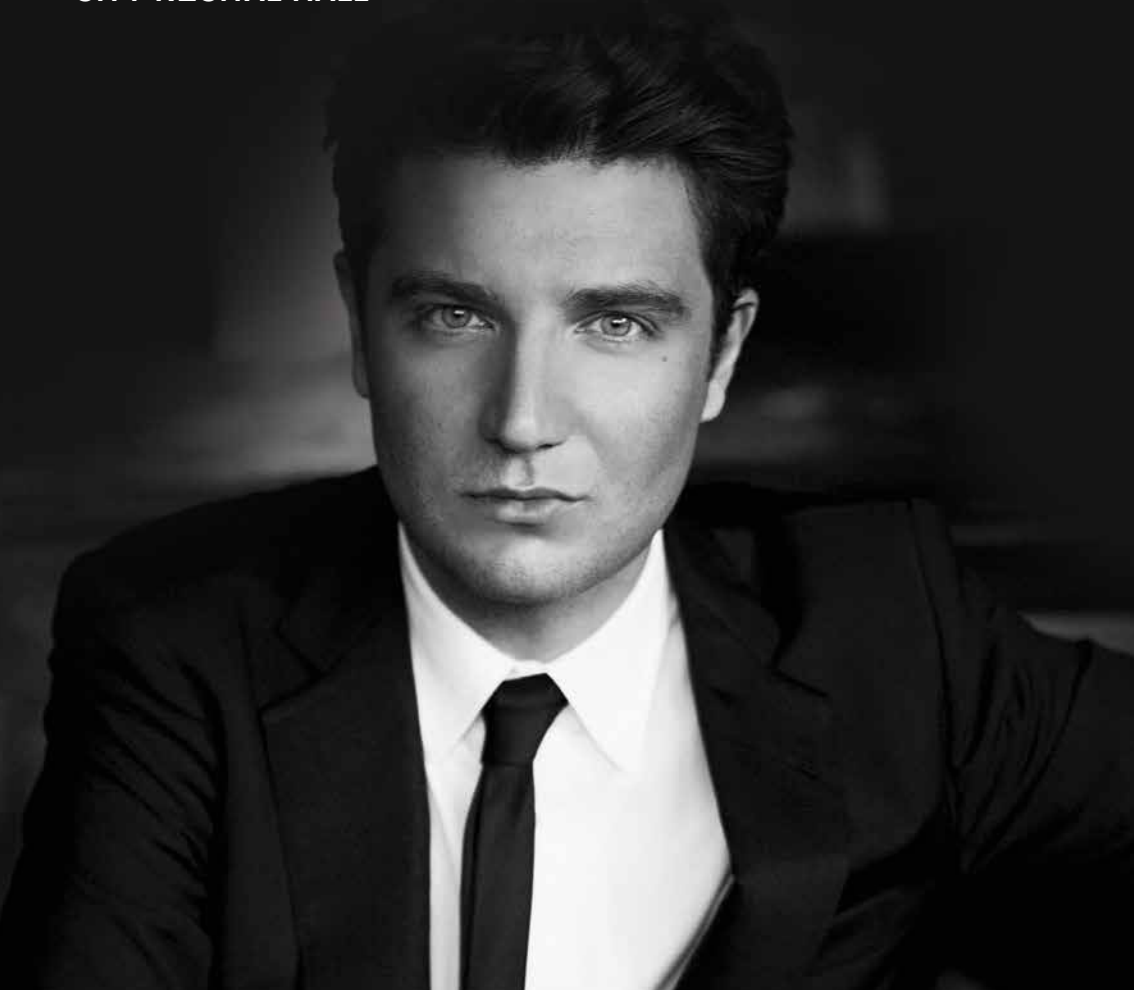


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# Alessio Bax performs Mozart

21 MARCH

CITY RECITAL HALL



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orchestra  
David Robertson  
The Lowy Chair of  
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**David Robertson**  
The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor  
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**MOZART IN THE CITY**  
THURSDAY 21 MARCH, 7PM  
.....  
CITY RECITAL HALL



# Alessio Bax performs Mozart

**Andrew Haveron** *violin-director*

**Alessio Bax** *piano*

**WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)**

**Piano Concerto No.27 in B flat, K.595**

*Allegro*

*Larghetto*

*Allegro*

**LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)**

**Symphony No.8 in F, Op.93**

*Allegro vivace e con brio*

*Allegretto scherzando*

*Tempo di minuetto*

*Allegro vivace*



Thursday's concert will be broadcast on  
ABC Classic on Sunday 31 March at 2pm

.....  
Estimated durations: 32 minutes;  
26 minutes

.....  
The concert will be performed without  
interval and will conclude at  
approximately 8.10pm



Cover image: Alessio Bax  
(Photo by Lisa-Marie Mazzucco)



Principal Partner

# CONCERT DIARY

## MARCH



### Alessio Bax in Recital

**JS BACH** Concerto in D minor, BWV 974 (after Marcello)  
**RACHMANINOFF** Corelli Variations  
**DALLAPICCOLA** Annalibera's Musical Notebook  
**LISZT** St Francis of Assisi's Sermon to the Birds, S175/1  
**LISZT** Dante Sonata

Alessio Bax piano

International Pianists in Recital  
**Mon 25 Mar, 7pm**  
City Recital Hall



### Barry Douglas performs Brahms

**MILLS** Aeolian Caprices  
**SIBELIUS** Symphony No.7  
**BRAHMS** Piano Concerto No.2

Lawrence Renes conductor  
Barry Douglas piano

Meet The Music  
**Wed 27 Mar, 6.30pm**  
Thursday Afternoon Symphony  
**Thu 28 Mar, 1.30pm**  
Emirates Metro Series  
**Fri 29 Mar, 8pm**  
Great Classics  
**Sat 30 Mar, 2pm**  
Sydney Opera House



### Haydn and Beethoven

**HILDEGARD OF BINGEN**  
Improvisation on 'Ave Generosa'  
**HAYDN** arr. Oguey  
Cor Anglais Quintet (after the 'Gypsy Rondo' Piano Trio)  
**BEETHOVEN** arr. Boersma Serenade in D, Op.8

Musicians of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Cocktail Hour  
**Fri 29 Mar, 6pm**  
**Sat 30 Mar, 8pm**  
Utzon Room,  
Sydney Opera House

## APRIL



### Simone Lamsma performs Beethoven's Violin Concerto

**BEETHOVEN** Violin Concerto  
**TCHAIKOVSKY** Symphony No.4

Alexander Shelley conductor  
Simone Lamsma violin

Abercrombie & Kent  
Masters Series  
**Wed 3 Apr, 8pm**  
**Fri 5 Apr, 8pm**  
**Sat 6 Apr, 8pm**  
Mondays @ 7  
**Mon 8 Apr, 7pm**  
Sydney Opera House



### David Drury

CONCERT HALL GRAND ORGAN RECITAL

Program includes...

**JS BACH** Prelude and Fugue in C minor, BWV 546  
**SAINT-SAËNS** Fantaisie No.1  
**SAINT-SAËNS** arr. Lemare Danse macabre

David Drury organ

Tea & Symphony  
**Fri 5 Apr, 11am**  
Sydney Opera House



### Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix™ in Concert

Let the wizarding world enchant you as the fifth film is projected onto a giant screen and the orchestra perform Nicholas Hooper's wonderful score. *Classified M.*

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**Wed 10 Apr, 7pm**  
**Thu 11 Apr, 7pm**  
**Fri 12 Apr, 7pm**  
**Sat 13 Apr, 2pm**  
**Sat 13 Apr, 7pm**  
Sydney Opera House



### Lisa Moore in Recital

**GLASS** Etude No.2  
**JANÁČEK** In the Mists  
**BEETHOVEN** Sonata in E flat, Op.31 No.3  
**BRESNICK** Ishi's Song  
**SCHUMANN** Waldszenen (Forest Scenes)  
**RZEWSKI** Piano Piece No.4

Lisa Moore piano

International Pianists in Recital  
**Mon 29 Apr, 7pm**  
City Recital Hall



# THE ARTISTS



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## Andrew Haveron *violin-director*

CONCERTMASTER, VICKI OLSSON CHAIR

---

Andrew Haveron joined the Sydney Symphony Orchestra as Concertmaster in 2013. With his unrivalled versatility, he is highly respected as a soloist, chamber musician and concertmaster.

As a soloist, he has played concertos with conductors such as Colin Davis, Roger Norrington, Jiří Bělohlávek, Stanisław Skrowaczewski and John Wilson, as well as David Robertson, performing a broad range of well-known and less familiar repertoire with many of the UK's finest orchestras.

As first violinist of the internationally acclaimed Brodsky Quartet (1999–2007), his work included collaborations with artists ranging from Anne-Sofie von Otter and Alexander Baillie to iconic crossover work with Elvis Costello, Björk, Paul McCartney and Sting, and many prize-winning recordings. He has also appeared with numerous other chamber groups, such as the Nash and Hebrides ensembles, the Logos Chamber Group, Kathy Selby, and the Omega Ensemble.

Andrew Haveron is in great demand as a concertmaster and director and has worked with all the major symphony orchestras in the UK and many others around the world. In 2007 he became concertmaster of the BBC Symphony Orchestra and in 2012 he joined the Philharmonia Orchestra. He also led the World Orchestra for Peace at the request of Valery Gergiev, has been the leader of the John Wilson Orchestra since its inception, and has toured with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.



© MARCO BORGREVE

## Alessio Bax *piano*

---

Alessio Bax came to world prominence with First Prize wins at both the Leeds and Hamamatsu International Piano Competitions. He is known now on four continents, not only as a recitalist and chamber musician, but as a concerto soloist who has appeared with more than 100 orchestras, including the London and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras, Dallas Symphony, and the St. Petersburg Philharmonic with Yuri Temirkanov. Recent appearances have included Brahms' Second Piano Concerto with the Fort Worth Symphony and Samuel Barber's concerto with the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra.

This season, Bax revisits the two concertos heard on his album, *Alessio Bax Plays Mozart*. He made his Boston Symphony Orchestra debut in January playing Mozart's C minor concerto (K.491) with Sir Andrew Davis. On this tour, he leads Mozart's B flat concerto (K.595) from the keyboard in his first performances with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Alessio Bax graduated with top honors at the age of 14 from the conservatory of Bari, his hometown in Italy, where his teacher was Angela Montemurro. He studied in France with Francois-Joël Thiollier and attended the Chigiana Academy in Siena under Joaquín Achúcarro. In 1994 he moved to Dallas to continue his studies with Achúcarro at Southern Methodist University's Meadows School of the Arts, where he is now the Johnson-Prothro Artist-in-Residence.

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

### Piano Concerto No.27 in B flat, K.595

*Allegro*

*Larghetto*

*Allegro*

#### Alessio Bax *piano*

This concerto, Mozart's last, has little in it to attract the virtuoso out to impress, or the audience in search of the sensational. Almost all commentators have found in it, if not a feeling of leave-taking, at least resignation and nostalgia. Its composition follows an exceptionally difficult period in Mozart's life, when he was afflicted by poverty and wrote comparatively little. This concerto, finished on 5 January 1791, heralds a new tone in Mozart's work – one of simpler, unassuming, sometimes even popular expression. The title of the song on which the theme of the rondo is based, *Longing for Spring*, expresses both the yearning for a fresh world and the hope of its beginning.

Although Mozart gave the first documented performance of his concerto in a public concert, this, more than any other Mozart concerto, has the character (in mood if not in scoring) of chamber music, to be heard in an intimate circle of music lovers. It begins – as no other music of Mozart's does except the G minor Symphony No.40 – with several bars of accompaniment. In few of Mozart's concertos does the first theme so completely set the mood of the composition: it is free and expressive, yet perhaps a little weary, too, in the way each of its three phrases sinks to rest before being roused again by an interruption of the wind instruments. The soloist's handling of the material intensifies it rather than contrasting with the opening tutti. The development ranges through ceaseless modulations, entirely related to the themes of the movement, and carried forward by the wind instruments and strings in imitation, with arabesques from the piano.

The slow movement has the utter simplicity of utterance of a Romance – one rendered celestially beautiful by the quality of its feeling. A sentiment of farewell is difficult to deny here. So unforced and unanimous is the exchange between soloist and orchestra that one seems to hear the other's contribution resonating in the mind even when each is playing alone.

The mood of the finale is ambiguous – there is something of the 'hunting' rondos of several earlier concertos, and an element of light capriciousness too. The tempo is set by that of the song Mozart wrote to a similar melody just eight days after completing the concerto:

'Come, sweet May, and make the trees green again.' The piano writing here is more virtuosic than in the first two movements, but the feeling of rejoicing is tempered by several passages which oscillate between major and minor keys. The concerto as a whole leaves a remarkable effect of rich and integrated emotional communication.

DAVID GARRETT © 2000

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra first presented Mozart's Piano Concerto No.27 with pianist Leonard Hungerford in May 1957 under Nicolai Malko, and most recently in February 2018 under David Robertson with pianist Emanuel Ax.



Mozart portrait from 1789

## Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

### Symphony No.8 in F, Op.93

*Allegro vivace e con brio*

*Allegretto scherzando*

*Tempo di minuetto*

*Allegro vivace*

This symphony was one of Beethoven's own favourites. He described it affectionately as his 'little' symphony. Unfortunately, that description has led many to regard it as slight. Actually, the work may be a listener's best opportunity to get a comprehensive musical portrait of the composer. It is Beethoven's most personal utterance, according to Sir George Grove in his book, *Beethoven and His Nine Symphonies*. And it's not just the popular stereotype of 'Beethoven the thunderer' we hear – although his forceful personality drives the workings-out of the first and last movements – it is Beethoven the rough humourist.

The Eighth is an example of the sort of pithy statement Beethoven could make when he worked quickly. He usually sketched his symphonies in summer before writing them up in detail, in the studio so to speak, during the winter and spring. But that doesn't appear to have been the method this time. The Eighth was composed during the summer months of 1812, close upon the completion of Symphony No.7. The whole composition took only four months.

Beethoven spent the summer of 1812 travelling around the various mineral baths of Bohemia – from Teplitz to Karlsbad to Franzensbrunn and back to Karlsbad and Teplitz. He was hoping to alleviate various stomach ailments by taking the waters, unsuccessfully as it turns out. There were various other disturbances in the composer's life at the time. This was the period of his letter to the 'Immortal Beloved', an artefact of his unrequited love for a woman whose identity still eludes scholars. And he was, as always, struggling with money. The value of his annuity from Archduke Rudolph, Prince Lobkowitz and Count Kinsky had shrunk owing to devaluation of the Austrian currency.

At Teplitz, Beethoven met the great poet and playwright, Goethe, for whose play, *Egmont*, he had provided incidental music in 1810. Goethe's overall impression of Beethoven could be distilled in one word. He is 'uncontrolled' (*ungebändigt*) he wrote to the songwriter, Carl Zelter, on 2 September 1812. Notwithstanding the fact that Goethe noted that Beethoven played for them ('beautifully') on 21 July, he was shocked by Beethoven's personal behaviour. Much of Vienna's aristocracy was present at Teplitz that summer, all anxious about Napoleon's latest exploit: his foray into Russia. Beethoven deliberately snubbed the Austrian royal family in front of Goethe who had stood to one side and bowed as they passed. 'Goethe delights far too much in the court atmosphere, far more than is becoming in a poet,' said Beethoven.

Yet this work gives the lie to any perception that Beethoven was 'uncontrolled' in his musical mind. It is probably more important to note that Beethoven the composer was able to master violent contradictory impulses in this music. Goethe's 'ungebändigt' refers, of course, to Beethoven's personality. But it is also true that Goethe might not have recognised the immense control Beethoven exercised in curbing his



Beethoven, a portrait by Carl Jaeger, 1818

violent musical impulses. This symphony is arguably Beethoven's most disciplined. Its containment of jokes and distortions within the prevailing classical style reveals immense intellectual power.

The symphony begins with a phrase that sounds like the posing of a rhetorical question and its various answers. A consequent development in a series of long notes could be considered deepening of the subject matter except that it goes on so long you wonder if Beethoven is pulling our legs. And then the music peters out in staccato leaps leaving the solo bassoon exposed just prior to the second subject. All jokes aside, the development almost rises to the intense heights of some of Beethoven's longer first movements. There is dissonant drama, fugal intensity, dizzying displacement of metre, a whiff of victory...then the sustained notes from the exposition return. We hear the petering-out prior to the return of the 'second subject'. But are we already in the recapitulation? We haven't heard the return of the first subject yet! Yes, we have: disguised as development. Beethoven has played expertly with classical sonata form in this first movement, and it ends pertly with an exact repetition of the symphony's opening phrase: a neat punchline.

Perhaps the genuine novelty in this symphony is the second movement. Not a typical slow movement, it has almost a 'comic opera' feel. The 'tock-tock-tock' woodwind accompaniment to the opening theme was said to have been inspired by a new time-keeping instrument, Mälzel's chronometer.

It was Beethoven who had pioneered the replacement of the standard third-movement minuet and trio with the scherzo and trio in his Second Symphony. Such was the *Allegretto scherzando's* level of whimsy here, however, that Beethoven reverted to a minuet and trio – albeit a robust one – for this work.

The final movement is a sonata rondo, but once again Beethoven is not content to work safely within a standard form. The movement makes its way to the end via the expedient of a march – joking? Or intensifying the form?

In October 1812, Beethoven left the spas and moved on to Linz. There he finished this work, but his real purpose in travelling south was to intervene in his brother's personal life. Beethoven was scandalised by the fact that his brother was living 'in sin' with his housekeeper, Therese Obermeyer; he took unjustified steps to put an end to it; the brothers came to blows. We have already noted Goethe's judgement of Beethoven as 'uncontrolled'. At least he was disciplined in the music, and, as Goethe concedes, his playing was 'beautiful'.

The Eighth premiered on 27 February 1814 in a concert which saw repeats of the Symphony No.7 and *Wellington's Victory*, a display piece Beethoven had originally written for another of Mälzel's inventions, the panharmonicon. In Beethoven's day, the Seventh Symphony was much admired, and *Wellington's Victory* (celebrating the defeat of Napoleon) made quite a splash. But Beethoven's 'kleine' symphony deserved, and still deserves, more appreciation.

GORDON KALTON WILLIAMS © 2011

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra first performed Beethoven's Symphony No.8 in March 1941 under Percy Code, and most recently in February 2016 under conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy.

**Beethoven the composer was able to master violent contradictory impulses in this music.**

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# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS



## DAVID ROBERTSON

THE LOWY CHAIR OF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

PATRON Professor The Hon. Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO

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, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

Well on its way to becoming the premier orchestra of the Asia Pacific region, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has toured China on five occasions, and in 2014 won the arts category in the Australian Government's inaugural Australia-China Achievement Awards, recognising ground-breaking work in nurturing the cultural and artistic relationship between the two nations.

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 Sydney Symphony's award-winning Learning and Engagement 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 commissions. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Lee Bracegirdle, Gordon Kerry, Mary Finsterer, Nigel Westlake, Paul Stanhope and Georges Lentz, and 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 conducted by Alexander Lazarev, Sir Charles Mackerras and David Robertson, as well as the complete Mahler symphonies conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy.

2019 is David Robertson's sixth season as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director.

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PHOTO: JAY FRAM

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PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS

*Justice Jane Mathews AO pictured with percussionist  
Timothy Constable, who says "the Orchestra is very lucky  
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