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Paul Lewis in Recital

18 NOVEMBER

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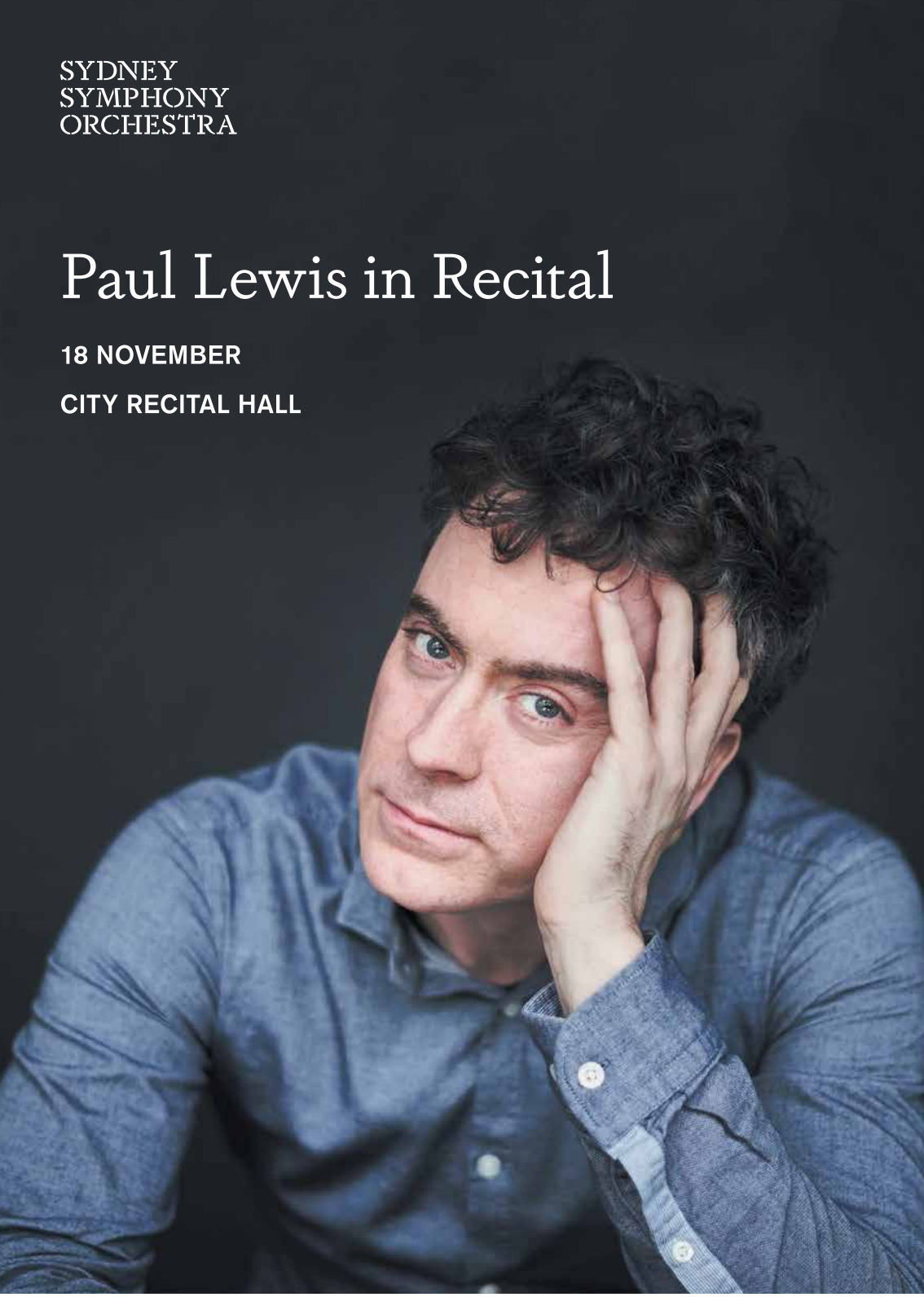

CONCERT DIARY

NOVEMBER

Turangalîla-Symphonie

CELEBRATING DAVID ROBERTSON

MESSIAEN Turangalîla-Symphonie

David Robertson conductor
Tengku Irfan piano
Jacob Abela ondes martenot

Thu 21 Nov, 7pm
Sydney Opera House

Skyfall in Concert

James Bond on the big screen accompanied by the Sydney Symphony performing Thomas Newman's BAFTA-winning score live to the film!

Nicholas Buc conductor

Fri 22 Nov, 8pm
Sat 23 Nov, 2pm
Sat 23 Nov, 8pm
Sydney Opera House

MGM

American Harmonies

CELEBRATING DAVID ROBERTSON

COPLAND Appalachian Spring: Suite
ROUSE Bassoon Concerto *Australian premiere*
ADAMS Harmonielehre

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Thursday Afternoon Symphony
Thu 28 Nov, 1.30pm
Emirates Metro Series
Fri 29 Nov, 8pm
Great Classics
Sat 30 Nov, 5pm
Sydney Opera House

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DECEMBER

All That Jazz

WITH THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY FELLOWS

Program includes:
HINDEMITH Kammermusik No.1
EISLER Overture to a Comedy
SHOSTAKOVICH Jazz Suite No.1

Roger Benedict conductor
Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellows
Guest Musicians from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music

Sun 1 Dec, 3pm
Verbrugghen Hall, Sydney Conservatorium of Music

THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
Sydney Conservatorium of Music

Mahler's Klagende Lied

SIMONE YOUNG'S VISIONS OF VIENNA

MAHLER Das klagende Lied (The Sorrowful Song)

Simone Young conductor
Eleanor Lyons soprano
Michaela Schuster mezzo-soprano
Steve Davislim tenor
Andrew Collis bass-baritone
Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Abercrombie & Kent Masters Series
Wed 4 Dec, 8pm
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Sat 7 Dec, 8pm
Sydney Opera House

Abercrombie & Kent

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Program includes:
GERSHWIN Cuban Overture
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BERNSTEIN West Side Story – Mambo

Guy Noble conductor
Imogen Kelly dancer
Ali McGregor soprano

Wed 5 Feb, 7pm
Thu 6 Feb, 7pm
Sat 8 Feb, 7pm
Sydney Town Hall

CREDIT SUISSE
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The Rite of Spring

RIOT AT THE BALLET

WAGNER Die Meistersinger – Prelude
STRAVINSKY The Rite of Spring

Pietari Inkinen conductor

Symphony Hour
Wed 19 Feb, 7pm
Thu 20 Feb, 7pm
Sydney Town Hall

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We are very proud to present the Sydney Symphony's International Pianists in Recital series. This four-part series boasts a variety of composers that illustrates each pianist's individual style and interpretation of these classical masterpieces. We're thrilled that the pianos being used are in themselves masterpieces of great craft and ingenuity and are delighted that their acoustic beauty supports performances of such brilliance.

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These recitals will be truly unforgettable, and we hope you will be thrilled by the pianistic brilliance in this year's program. We look forward to sharing this experience with you and congratulate the Sydney Symphony Orchestra once again for bringing these fine, inspirational artists to our city.

Ara Vartoukian OAM
Director, Theme & Variations
Piano Services

INTERNATIONAL PIANISTS IN RECITAL
MONDAY 18 NOVEMBER, 7PM
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sydney symphony orchestra
David Robertson
The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

Paul Lewis in Recital

Paul Lewis *piano*

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828)
Piano Sonata in G Major
Molto moderato e cantabile
Andante
Menuetto. Allegro moderato – Trio
Allegretto

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)
Thirty-three Variations in C on a Waltz by Diabelli

ABC CLASSIC

This concert will be broadcast on ABC Classic on 1 December at 5pm.

Pre-concert talk by Stephanie McCallum in the First Floor Reception Room at 6.15pm.

Estimated durations: 32 minutes; 20 minute interval; 50 minutes.

The concert will conclude at approximately 9pm.

Cover image: Paul Lewis
Credit: Kaupo Kikkas

Paul Lewis *piano*

Paul Lewis works regularly as soloist with the world's great orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, London Symphony, NHK Symphony, Royal Concertgebouw, Tonhalle Zurich, Leipzig Gewandhaus, and Philharmonia Orchestras. His cycles of core piano works by Beethoven and Schubert have received critical and public acclaim worldwide, and consolidated his reputation as one of the world's foremost interpreters of the central European classical repertoire.

His awards include the Royal Philharmonic Society's Instrumentalist of the Year, two Edison awards, three *Gramophone* awards, the Diapason D'Or de l'Annee, the Preis Der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik, the Premio Internazionale Accademia Musicale Chigiana, and the South Bank Show Classical Music award.

Recordings include the complete Beethoven piano sonatas, concertos, and *Diabelli* Variations, Liszt's B minor sonata and other late works, all of Schubert's major piano works from the last six years of his life including three song cycles with tenor Mark Padmore, and Brahms' First Piano Concerto with the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra and Daniel Harding.

Recent performances have included recitals at New York's 92nd Street Y and in Hong Kong, with forthcoming orchestral appearances including his debut with the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Grieg's Piano Concerto with Daniel Harding and the New York Philharmonic, Mozart's Two-Piano Concerto with Angela Hewitt and the Montreal Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kent Nagano, and Beethoven's Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 4 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Sir Andrew Davis.

Paul Lewis studied with Joan Havill at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama before going on to study privately with Alfred Brendel. He is co-Artistic Director of Midsummer Music, an annual chamber music festival held in Buckinghamshire, UK. He holds honorary degrees from Liverpool, Edge Hill, and Southampton Universities, and was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2016 Queen's Birthday Honours.

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The Late Beethoven Sonatas
Elisabeth Leonskaja in Recital

23 MAR 2020, 7PM

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Beethoven's Appassionata
Jonathan Biss in Recital

18 MAY 2020, 7PM

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Dynamic young American artist Jonathan Biss performs Beethoven's volatile, tender, witty and moving sonatas.

Cédric Tiberghien in Recital

14 SEP 2020, 7PM

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Witness Tiberghien's refinement of sound and dazzling musical intelligence as he explores the theme and variation form in music by Schumann, Beethoven, Webern and Schoenberg.

The Young Virtuoso
Lauren Zhang in Recital

26 OCT 2020, 7PM

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Zhang demonstrates her gift for finding the musical core of virtuoso works in this superhuman display of keyboard virtuosity.

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Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Piano Sonata in G major, D894

Molto moderato e cantabile
Andante
Menuetto. Allegro moderato – Trio
Allegretto

Heir to the Viennese tradition, Schubert began composing piano sonatas early, partly under the tutelage of the conservative (though sane, and by no means murderous), Antonio Salieri. Perhaps owing to Salieri's influence, the young Schubert had little time for Beethoven whose music he felt contained an 'eccentricity which confuses and confounds [the] tragic and comic, sacred and profane, pleasant and unpleasant, heroic strains and mere noise'. Of those of Schubert's early sonatas that survive, all but four were left unfinished, and it is only after Schubert overcame an initial antipathy to Beethoven that he truly mastered the genre.

Schubert first became debilitated by the disease that would kill him in 1823, but experienced something of a remission for much of the year 1825. But the symptoms returned in 1826, not helped by Schubert's inability to find meaningfully paid employment. Nevertheless, that year he enjoyed some successes with the publication of several works for solo piano and a number of his best-known songs, and composed, among other things, two of his most extraordinary works, both in G major, the String Quartet, D887 and this sonata. Unlike the quartet, the sonata is a model of serenity. Indeed, its apparent lack of conventional drama may have caused its eventual publisher to issue the piece as *Fantasie, Andante, Menuetto und Allegretto*.

The first movement, for all its unusual character is a more or less conventional 'sonata design'. Marked Moderato, rather than allegro, it is in the relatively unusual tempo of 12/8 – giving the sense of a barcarolle, though not without impassioned outbursts – its first subject a gently lapping motif over a largely static harmony that is answered by a simple scale passage in harmony. The second theme is characterised by a more developed melody in the right hand, with a persistent dotted rhythm in the left. It is this rhythm that is occasionally allowed to assert itself in the movement's more forceful moments, but in general, even in this substantive movement's central development section, the emphasis is on a poised stillness.

Franz Schubert

IN BRIEF

Schubert's G major sonata dates from 1826 – the second-last year of his short life – and is unusual for the degree to which it cultivates an overall sense of serenity. But don't be fooled: Schubert's mercurial genius takes the music into places we might not expect, and blends his signature lyricism, fluid harmony and strongly profiled rhythms. It is above all superbly pianistic.

Just as the first movement isn't conventionally fast, the second isn't conventionally slow, beginning with a passage that suggests Schubert at his most song-writerly, with a melody played by both hands in octaves and relatively simple harmony. Occasionally-accented notes hint at what is to come, though, as the music moves in effortlessly Schubertian fashion between major and minor keys, and between moods of extreme tenderness and dark turbulence.

The Menuetto contains some almost Beethovenian hammering of repeated chords (patterns of repeated chords feature in all four movements), with sharp contrasts of dynamics, subtle changes of mode and rhythmic displacement. This, the kind of music that Dvořák heard as Hungarian in Schubert, provides a foil for the charming simplicity of the central trio, with its repeated bell tones in the top line and the simple 'long-short-short-short' motif in the 'alto' register.

The finale immediately suggests a Viennese street song in its apparently regular shape (but note those repeated chords) but, again, Schubert wastes no time in taking the music on a series of unexpected tangents, with often highly comic effect, and cultivating an understated virtuosity and avoiding triumphalism at the end.

A Schubert evening - Moritz von Schwind

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The Monarch of the Instrument

Beethoven's life coincided with one of the most important events in the history of keyboard music; the superseding of the harpsichord by the piano. A social revolution saw the pianoforte marketed en masse to the middle-classes. This market for pianos developed as technology improved and prices dropped, and a voracious appetite arose for keyboard literature that was not too hard to play. Beethoven's Diabelli Variations, possibly the greatest work for piano of the early 19th century, was an unexpected by-product of the publisher Diabelli's scheme for increasing this literature.

Academics and performers alike have been fascinated to know how Beethoven's pianos really sounded and were played. It cannot be denied that the construction advantages of the modern piano have been gained at the expense of the rich overtones and 'personality' of the different registers of Beethoven's pianos. Modern pianists must also confront the question of how to bring out the natural tonal contrasts of Beethoven's melodies on modern keyboards which simply aren't built to make these distinctions. Although it increased in scale during Beethoven's lifetime, the compass of Beethoven's pianos was relatively small, just over five or six octaves. Apart from smaller compasses, the pianos of Beethoven's day also had shallower actions and were quicker-speaking. The importance of this lies in the passages for which Beethoven has given pedalling instructions, such as in the Waldstein and the Tempest Sonatas: when these are played as written on a modern piano, they sound 'muddy', but on the early, quicker speaking piano they produce a clear and appropriate 'singing' tone. Pianists of Beethoven's time were more likely to be struggling to encourage sustain than to eliminate it. Clearly Beethoven's pedalling instructions need to be looked at in the context of his original instruments if there is to be clarity of texture on the modern piano.

Beethoven is believed to have been able to conjure a clear, fluent legato from his instruments. Willibrord Joseph Mähler, a contemporary of Beethoven, gave this description in 1803: 'Beethoven played with hands so very still; wonderful as his execution was, there was no tossing of them to and fro, up and down; they seemed to glide left and right over the keys, the fingers alone doing the work.' Stravinsky put it well: Beethoven was the 'Monarch of the Instrument'.

ABRIDGED FROM KYLIE BURTLAND

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
Thirty-three Variations in C on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op.120

Theme. Vivace
Variation 1. Alla marcia maestoso
Variation 2. Poco allegro
Variation 3. L'istesso tempo
Variation 4. Un poco più vivace
Variation 5. Allegro vivace
Variation 6. Allegro ma non troppo e serioso
Variation 7. Un poco più allegro
Variation 8. Poco vivace
Variation 9. Allegro pesante e risoluto
Variation 10. Presto
Variation 11. Allegretto
Variation 12. Un poco più moto
Variation 13. Vivace
Variation 14. Grave e maestoso
Variation 15. Presto scherzando
Variation 16. Allegro
Variation 17. [Allegro]
Variation 18. Poco moderato
Variation 19. Presto
Variation 20. Andante
Variation 21. Allegro con brio – Meno allegro
Variation 22. Allegro molto, alla 'Notte e giorno faticar' di Mozart
Variation 23. Allegro assai
Variation 24. Fughetta. Andante
Variation 25. Allegro
Variation 26. Piacevole
Variation 27. Vivace
Variation 28. Allegro
Variation 29. Adagio ma non troppo
Variation 30. Andante, sempre cantabile
Variation 31. Largo, molto espressivo
Variation 32. Fugue: Allegro
Variation 33. Tempo di Minuet moderato

In 1819 the publisher Anton Diabelli sent a small waltz, of his own composition, to 50 Austro-Hungarian composers with the request for a variation for a 'patriotic' album. Many responded, including Moscheles, Schubert, Czerny and the 11-year-old Liszt. Beethoven had had a bad experience with an earlier collectively-composed work, and moreover affected to dislike Diabelli's quotidian tune. He soon realised that Diabelli's waltz was, as Donald Tovey put it, 'rich in sold musical facts', and asked his friend Anton Schindler to sound out the possibility of Diabelli supporting a whole set of variations. Diabelli was, naturally enough, delighted, and offered Beethoven the generous fee of 80 ducats for 'six or seven' variations.

Beethoven by Stieler

IN BRIEF

It started as a joke – Beethoven was asked to write for a group-composed project using a truly banal tune written by a publisher and dismissed the idea out of hand. Fortunately he changed his mind, and instead of the six or seven variations for which he was paid, came up with 33 of the widest possible range of feeling and technique.

Variation form becomes increasingly important to Beethoven in his later music: the finales of works as different as the late piano sonatas, such as Op.109 and that of the Ninth Symphony are massive, and seemingly infinitely extensible, variation sets. The great Beethoven scholar Maynard Solomon has written eloquently on the importance of variation form in late Beethoven saying:

Variation is potentially the most open of music procedures, one which gives the greatest freedom to the composer's fantasy. It mirrors the unpredictability and chance nature of human experience and keeps alive the openness of human expectation. Fate cannot knock on the door in the variation form...

Variations, in other words, do not have to come to an end as do 'closed' forms like sonata design, which mandates a beginning, a middle and an end in which the material from the beginning is reprised. Variations can last as long as the composer's inspiration holds out, which in Beethoven's case is practically endless. Moreover Beethoven adds to this most free of formal designs some of the most rigorous: the finale of Ninth, for instance, has its share of fugal writing, learned from a lifetime's study of J S Bach.

Taking his cue from Bach's 'Goldberg Variations', Beethoven produced 33 variations on Diabelli's waltz, completing the work in 1823. An advertisement in the *Wiener Zeitung* in June was unusually close to the truth, describing the piece as a great and important masterpiece...as only Beethoven, the greatest living representative of true art, can produce. The most original forms and ideas, the most audacious turns of phrase and harmonies are exhausted in it, all pianistic effects based on a well-grounded manner of playing are employed, and the work is made still more interesting by the fact that it was produced on a theme which surely no one else would have considered capable of such treatment...

Beethoven certainly explored the full range of his expression and technique. His initial impulse was, as William Kinderman puts it, 'basically comic' – to parody the lumpen tune and various composers and pay homage to others (and sometimes both: Beethoven reaches for the powdered wig at one point in a variation that is at a playful dig at Bach but done in great affection.) He extracts significant aspects of the theme and varies those, so that the theme itself is often absent. Solomon notes that, 'the tawdry and the sublime rub shoulders, Leporello [from Mozart's *Don Giovanni*] materialises amidst music of the spheres, the miniature and the fresco merge into one...' And then, in one of the most enigmatic endings in his music, Beethoven scatters his material 'into dust' as one commentator has it, and closes with a peremptory C-major chord.


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"I will be forever grateful for the support that Jane Mathews gave the Orchestra, and to The Friends of Jane Mathews who have been inspired by Jane in the support of my Chair. We will never forget her, or the significant impact that she had on our music community." — Paul Goodchild, Associate Principal Trumpet

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Each year – both alone and in collaboration with other orchestras worldwide – the Sydney Symphony Orchestra commissions new works for the mainstage concert season. These commissions represent Australian and international composers, established and new voices, and reflect our commitment to the nurturing of orchestral music.

STEVE REICH Music for Ensemble and Orchestra
Premiered February 2019
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Premiering 28, 29, 30 November 2019
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