

27 & 28 July 2024

BEETHOVEN'S FIFTH SYMPHONY



SYDNEY
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

Principal Partner



SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PATRON Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC

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.

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, followed by David Robertson as Chief Conductor from 2014 to 2019. Australian-born Simone Young commenced her role as Chief Conductor in 2022, a year in which the Orchestra made its return to a renewed Sydney Opera House Concert Hall. The Sydney Symphony Orchestra’s concerts encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, and collaborations with guest artists from all genres, reflecting the Orchestra’s versatility and diverse appeal. Its award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, and the Orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program.

PERFORMING IN THIS CONCERT

FIRST VIOLINS

Andrew Haveron
Concertmaster
Harry Bennetts
Associate Concertmaster
Alexandra Osborne
Associate Concertmaster
Lerida Delbridge
Assistant Concertmaster
Jennifer Booth
Brielle Clapson
Claire Herrick
Georges Lentz
Emily Long
Alexandra Mitchell
Alexander Norton
Léone Ziegler
Benjamin Tjoa°
Dominic Azzi†

SECOND VIOLINS

Kirsty Hilton
Principal
Marina Marsden
Principal
Emma Jezek
Acting Associate Principal
Wendy Kong
Acting Assistant Principal
Alice Bartsch
Victoria Bihun
Monique Irik
Marcus Michelsen°
Emily Qin°
Tamara Elias*
Caroline Hopson*
Elizabeth Jones*
Lydia Sawires*

VIOLAS

Tobias Breider
Principal
Anne-Louise Comerford
Associate Principal
Justin Williams
Assistant Principal
Rosemary Curtin
Jane Hazelwood
Stuart Johnson
Felicity Tsai
Leonid Volovelsky
Stephen Wright°
Andrew Jezek°

CELLOS

Catherine Hewgill
Principal
Simon Cobcroft
Associate Principal
Leah Lynn
Assistant Principal
Timothy Nankervis
Elizabeth Neville
Christopher Pidcock
Adrian Wallis
Eliza Sdraulig°

DOUBLE BASSES

Alex Henery
Principal
David Campbell
Dylan Holly
Steven Larson
Richard Lynn
Alexandra Elvin†

FLUTES

Emma Sholl
Acting Principal
Carolyn Harris
Laura Cliff†

OBOES

Diana Doherty
Principal
Alexandre Oguey
Principal Cor Anglais

CLARINETS

Francesco Celata
Acting Principal
Alexander Morris
Principal Bass Clarinet

BASSOONS

Matthew Wilkie
Principal Emeritus
Fiona McNamara
Noriko Shimada
Principal Contrabassoon

HORNS

Euan Harvey
Acting Principal
Marnie Sebire

TRUMPETS

David Elton
Principal
Anthony Heinrichs

TROMBONES

Scott Kinmont
Acting Principal
Jordan Mattinson†
Christopher Harris
Principal Bass Trombone

TIMPANI

Antoine Siguré
Principal

Bold Principal
* Guest Musician
° Contract Musician
† Sydney Symphony Fellow

2024 CONCERT SEASON

Great Classics

Saturday 27 July, 2pm

Sunday Afternoon Symphony

Sunday 28 July, 2pm

Concert Hall,
Sydney Opera House

BEETHOVEN'S FIFTH SYMPHONY

PORTRAITS OF BEETHOVEN

JAIME MARTÍN conductor

JAVIER PERIANES piano

CHRISTOPHER SAINSBURY (born 1963)

String Talk (2024)

World Premiere

*Made possible through the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's
50 Fanfares Project, supported by Government Partner,
the City of Sydney.*

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No.1, Op.15 (1795/1800)

i. Allegro con brio

ii. Largo

iii. Rondo (Allegro)

INTERVAL

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827)

Symphony No.5, Op.67 (1804–1808)

i. Allegro con brio

ii. Andante con moto

iii. Scherzo and Trio (Allegro)

iv. Finale (Allegretto)

Pre-concert talk

By Scott Kinmont in the
Northern Foyer at 1.15pm,
including an interview with
Christopher Sainsbury.

Estimated durations

Sainsbury – 8 minutes

Concerto – 38 minutes

Interval – 20 minutes

Symphony – 35 minutes

The concert will run for
approximately 1 hour and
50 minutes

Cover image

Jaime Martín conducting the
Sydney Symphony Orchestra
in 2019.

Photo by Tim Levy.

Principal Partner



CONCERT DIARY

Visit sydneyphilharmonicsymphony.com for more information,
or call our Box Office on (02) 8215 4600

AUGUST 2024

Royal Caribbean
Classics Under the Sails

Friday 2 August, 7pm
Saturday 3 August, 7pm

Concert Hall,
Sydney Opera House

TCHAIKOVSKY'S FOURTH SYMPHONY

HEARTFELT AND HUMAN

The iconic blast of the horns at the beginning of Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony is the first of many power-packed moments in this program of dramatic contrasts, also featuring Prokofiev's Sinfonia Concertante featuring soloist Alban Gerhardt and the world premiere of a new work by acclaimed Australian composer Liza Lim.

LIZA LIM Salutation to the Shells
50 Fanfares Commission
PROKOFIEV Sinfonia Concertante
TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No.4

PIETARI INKINEN conductor
ALBAN GERHARDT cello



Emirates Masters Series
Emirates Thursday Afternoon
Symphony

Wednesday 7 August, 8pm
Thursday 8 August, 1.30pm
Friday 9 August, 8pm
Saturday 10 August, 8pm

Concert Hall,
Sydney Opera House

AUGUSTIN HADELICH PERFORMS MENDELSSOHN'S VIOLIN CONCERTO

Violin sensation Augustin Hadelich returns with Mendelssohn's exquisite Violin Concerto, the ultimate star vehicle, equal parts richly expressive and dizzyingly virtuosic.

Plus, Simone Young celebrates Bruckner's 200th anniversary with his Eighth Symphony, declared by *The Guardian* to be 'one of the most existentially thrilling experiences a symphony has ever created.'

MENDELSSOHN Violin Concerto
BRUCKNER Symphony No.8 (1887 edition)

SIMONE YOUNG conductor
AUGUSTIN HADELICH violin



Classics in the City

Thursday 15 August, 7pm
City Recital Hall

AUGUSTIN HADELICH AND THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA DAZZLING CENTURIES OF VIRTUOSITY

One of the most exciting violinists performing today, Augustin Hadelich has created a rich concert experience displaying the virtuosity demanded across the centuries, with this selection of truly captivating pieces that celebrates the full expressive potential of this elegant, poetic instrument, and the richness of works for small orchestra.

Don't miss this rare opportunity to see a superstar in a more intimate setting, showcasing the full range of his abilities.

Works by **DAVID LANG**, **SHOSTAKOVICH**,
JS BACH and **SAINT-GEORGES**

ANDREW HAVERON director
AUGUSTIN HADELICH violin



YOUR CONCERT AT A GLANCE

CHRISTOPHER SAINSBURY (born 1963) ***String Talk* (2024)**

String Talk is, as its name suggests, scored for the orchestra's string section, and is an eight-minute larghetto that explores the juxtaposition of solo and tutti sections, and cultivates at times a sense of improvisation. Sainsbury captures something of the atmosphere of interaction that surrounds collective crafts – weaving, knitting, fishing – across cultures be they Indigenous or settler.

The piece was composed in 2020, a year dominated by the COVID pandemic, a stock market crash and the election of Joe Biden as US president. Other new music included Unsuk Chin's *Spira* – Concerto for orchestra, György Kurtág's ...*concertante*... and Liza Lim's *Sex Magic*.



Christopher Sainsbury

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770–1827) **Piano Concerto No.1, Op.15 (1795/1801)**

Beethoven's first concerto – actually his second – remains within the classical model of the three-movement work: the first, a dramatic working out of contrasting themes, the second, a central slow movement, and finally a boisterous rondo finale. But we can hear Beethoven straining on the rope: the piece is over half an hour long and uses an orchestra enriched by clarinets and trumpets.

The concerto may have been premiered in 1795 in Vienna, or more likely in 1798 in Prague. We can be certain, though, that it was published in 1801. That year saw Thomas Jefferson's inauguration as President of the United States, as Lord Elgin began stealing the Parthenon Marbles and the union of Great Britain and Ireland came into force. Beethoven dominated new music that year, though it also saw Haydn's *The Seasons*.

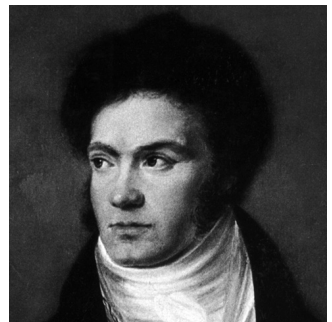


An engraving of Beethoven, aged 26, for his publisher Artaria. Design by G Stainhauser; engraving by Johann Josef Neidl.

Symphony No.5, Op.67 (1804-1808)

Beethoven had already upended Viennese notions of the symphony with his *Eroica*, but the Fifth in some ways went further, spinning intricate structures out of the simplest motifs (the famous da-da-da-DA, which has come to symbolise 'fate knocking at the door'). In four movements (the third and fourth linked) Beethoven traces an arc from emphatic, dark music to bright C major.

The piece appeared in 1808, a year famous for the election of James Madison to the US Presidency, the war that saw Finland ceded to Russia by the Swedes, and the Rum Rebellion in the colony of New South Wales. Goethe published *Faust* (Part I), Goya painted his *Prison Interior*, Alexander von Humboldt published *Ansichten der Natur*.



An oil painting of a young Ludwig van Beethoven from 1806 by Isidor Neugass (c.1780-after 1847).

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

JAIME MARTÍN conductor

Chief Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra since 2022, and Music Director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra since 2019, with those roles currently extended until 2028 and 2027 respectively, Spanish conductor Jaime Martín has also held the positions of Chief Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland (2019–2024), Principal Guest Conductor of the Orquesta y Coro Nacionales de España (Spanish National Orchestra) (2022–2024) and Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of Gävle Symphony Orchestra (2013–2022).

Recent highlights include acclaimed debut performances with the Dallas and Indianapolis Symphonies and the Dresden Philharmonic, an extensive UK tour with Gavle Symphony, and his debut conducting appearance at the BBC Proms, leading the BBC National Orchestra of Wales. In the 2023/24 season he will make his debut with the prestigious Budapest Festival Orchestra, and return to lead the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Queensland Symphony, Colorado Symphony, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the Orquesta Sinfonica de Galicia and the Orquesta Sinfonica de Castilla y Leon. His programming with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra ranges from Pergolesi to Danny Elfman, including surveys of Mozart's final symphonies, Schubert's and Shostakovich's Ninth symphonies, and with the Melbourne Symphony he conducts major symphonic repertoire including Holst's *Planets*, Mahler's Third Symphony, Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben*, and the first of a series of recordings of Dvořák symphonies, as well as taking the orchestra on a residency in Indonesia.

His discography includes Mozart's Wind Concertos with the London Symphony Orchestra and a series of discs for Ondine Records with the Gävle Symphony Orchestra including the Brahms Serenades, *Songs of Destiny*, Brahms choral works with the Eric Ericson Chamber Choir, and the Brahms/Schoenberg Piano Quartet, as well as most recently works by Swedish composer Melcher Melchers.

Before turning to conducting full-time in 2013, Martín was principal flute of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, English National Opera, Academy of St Martin the Fields and London Philharmonic Orchestra, and also sought-after as a soloist. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Music in London, and in 2022 the jury of Spain's Premios Nacionales de Música awarded him their annual prize for his contribution to classical music.



Photo by Paul Marc Mitchell

ABOUT THE MUSIC

JAVIER PERIANES piano

The international career of Javier Perianes has led him to perform in the most prestigious concert halls, with the world's foremost orchestras, working with celebrated conductors including Daniel Barenboim, Charles Dutoit, Zubin Mehta, Gustavo Dudamel, Klaus Mäkelä, Gianandrea Noseda, Gustavo Gimeno, Santtu-Matias Rouvali, Simone Young, Vladimir Jurowski and François-Xavier Roth.

The 2023/24 season features an array of high-profile concerts including the US and Canadian premieres of Jimmy López Bellido's *Ephemeræ* with The Philadelphia Orchestra and Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, and the world premiere of a new concerto by Francisco Coll with London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Canadian premiere with Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Other highlights include Royal Concertgebouwworkest, Orquesta Nacional de España, Brussels Philharmonic, NDR Radio Philharmonie, Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, Iceland Symphony, Bern Symphonieorchester, and play/directing Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, Orquesta Ciudad de Granada, Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra and Orquesta Sinfonica del Principado de Asturias.

Career highlights have included concerts with Wiener Philhamoniker, Leipzig Gewandhausorchester, Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, Washington's National, Yomiuri Nippon and Danish National symphony orchestras, Oslo, London, New York, Los Angeles and Czech philharmonic orchestras, Orchestre de Paris, Cleveland, Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal and Philharmonia orchestras, Swedish and Norwegian Radio orchestras, Mahler Chamber Orchestra and Budapest Festival Orchestra.

Recording exclusively for harmonia mundi, Perianes has developed a diverse discography ranging from Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Grieg, Chopin, Debussy, Ravel and Bartók to Blasco de

Nebra, Mompou, Falla, Granados and Turina. The 2020/21 season saw the release of *Jeux de Miroirs* and *Cantilena*. *Jeux de Miroirs* centres around Ravel's Concerto in G recorded with Orchestre de Paris and Josep Pons and includes the piano and orchestral versions of *Le tombeau de Couperin* and *Alborada del gracioso*. Together with Tabea Zimmermann, he released *Cantilena* in April 2020, an album which is a celebration of music from Spanish and Latin America. His other recent albums pay tribute to Claude Debussy on the centenary of his death with a recording of the first book of his *Préludes* and *Estampes*, and *Les Trois Sonates - The Late Works* (with Jean-Guihen Queyras), which won a *Gramophone* Award in 2019. In July 2021 Perianes released his latest album featuring Chopin's Sonatas No.2 and No.3 interspersed with the three Mazurkas from Op.63.

Perianes was awarded the National Music Prize in 2012 by the Ministry of Culture of Spain and named Artist of the Year at the International Classical Music Awards (ICMA) in 2019.



Photo by Marco Borggreve

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT CHRISTOPHER SAINSBURY



Christopher Sainsbury

Passionately interested in the interpretation of his home region of the Central Coast of NSW and Sydney, Christopher Sainsbury explores many inspirations and forms of expressions in his music. He is of mixed Irish, English, Dutch and Aboriginal heritage. As a member of the Dharug peoples of Sydney and surrounds (also commonly known as Eora), he draws upon motives and images from his local region and reconstitutes them in new ways through creative works that in turn fortify a sense of regional identity. Its 'stuff' is largely to do with the natural and cultural geography of a region. Working as a regionalist composer has resulted in many works, from *First Light* (Winner of the 2010-11 New England Philharmonic Orchestra Open Call for Scores), and most recently the commissioned piece *Singing Stone* for Ensemble Three – Joel Brennan, Don Immel and Ken Murray, based at the Conservatorium of Music, Melbourne University.

Sainsbury is Associate Professor in Composition at the Australian National University. Maintaining a commitment to lifting the profile of Indigenous Australian composers, he was previously Head of Department in Aboriginal Visual and Performing Arts at the Eora Centre, an Indigenous Tertiary College in Sydney for 23 years. An extension of that work is now the Ngarra-burria First Peoples Composers program, a program for the creative and professional development of Indigenous Australian composers, of which he is founder and director. He also plays a part as a composer mentor for young Australian composers with Artology.

In 2020 he won an Australian music leadership award – the inaugural APRA National Luminary Award – in acknowledgement of his work in the profiling of First Nations composers and effecting a much-needed change in the landscape of the classical and new music industries in Australia, namely establishing the commissioning and programming of First Nations composers. In 2022 the program received international industry endorsement at the Classical:NEXT conference (the largest industry gathering of classical and new music professionals in the world) where it won the Classical:NEXT Innovation Award.

Sainsbury's recent commissions include works for the Canberra International Music Festival (2019 and 2021), Sydney Symphony Orchestra (2019), Victorian Opera (2023), Australian Voices (2021), Melbourne String Ensemble (2021), Canberra Symphony Orchestra, the University of British Columbia's Future Minerals Working Group, for the Axiom Brass Quintet (Chicago), and Bel A Cappella Sydney.

In many of Sainsbury's works one may expect to hear the guitar, his main instrument. As a guitarist he has played in all the south-eastern states at various clubs, pubs, cafes, surf clubs and festivals going back to 1979. His solo guitar album *Anima* is a favourite of many guitarists.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

The composer writes:

String Talk is in a tradition of slow-movements for strings. I explore the idea that we gather around string and talk and share there, no matter what culture we are from. I first observed my mother and grandmother doing this while knitting and sewing; my daughter and my wife learned from our Aboriginal elder women the art of weaving lomandra to make baskets, a tradition of my Dharug-Eora ancestors in NSW. Such sharing was the same with my brothers and me when fishing, and for any fishing family. Similarly, I observed my elder cousin repairing massive nets for his commercial fishing business, and sharing stories and work concerns around the nets. There are so many ways that we gather around string to share. In string music it is much the same, and in it the sharing is via sound.

In this work I suggest conversations between differing types of scales, between soloists and ensemble, and between lines. There is a gentle accompaniment pattern, over which the central motivic ideas are developed. These are first stated in the first violins and cellos in the early bars of the work. I use two pitch material groups: a) common scales and modes, and b) a bi-tone scale, where the intervals widen as the scale series ascends, beginning with semi-tones and tones and finishing with 4ths and augmented 4ths towards the end of the scale. (It is not to be confused with bi-tonal music). The bi-tone scale I mainly use is based on the E string of the violin – being E F F# G A B C# E G C F# ascending. (Bi-tones are found behind stopped tones on the fingerboard of stringed instruments). The development of the motivic ideas is consistent with a Western sense of development, yet tempered with some freedoms suggestive of composed improvisations, which I think add nicely, and is ‘very me’, being an improviser. The violin and cello solos particularly feature the ‘sense of the improvised’ at times. Enjoy!

ABOUT LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

In the late eighteenth century Germany was a loose grouping of small principalities. The city of Bonn was the seat of the Archbishop Elector of Cologne and Beethoven was born here in 1770. His grandfather was a chief musician in the Elector’s household; his father Johann was also a musician employed there. Johann was a violent alcoholic, and family life was far from happy, but young Ludwig nonetheless showed early promise as a musician and soon joined the Archbishop’s retinue.

Beethoven almost certainly met Mozart briefly in Vienna in 1787, but in 1792 returned to that city to study with Joseph Haydn. They didn’t get on. Late in life, Haydn was suddenly enjoying superstar status throughout Europe. Beethoven could be extremely rude and arrogant and felt that Haydn wasn’t paying him enough attention.

Beethoven’s status in Vienna was helped by the relative ease with which he was accepted into aristocratic circles. This is partly because he allowed people to think that the ‘van’ in his name meant he himself was noble (in German, ‘von’ indicates nobility), and he allowed a rumour to circulate that he was the illegitimate son of the King of Prussia! But it was mostly about the music, and a group of Viennese nobles supported him for the rest of his life (despite appallingly bad behaviour on occasions).

ABOUT THE MUSIC



An engraving of Beethoven c. 1796, aged 26, for his publisher Artaria. Design by G Stainhauser; engraving by Johann Josef Neidl.

From the later 1790s he had been aware of the deterioration of his hearing, and by the early years of the new century his deafness caused him gradually to retreat from society. He was also chronically unlucky in love. This, along with his deafness, led him to the point of suicide and the heroic resolution to carry on which is documented in a kind of will he wrote at Heiligenstadt, his favourite holiday village, in the summer of 1802. The crisis launched his middle or 'heroic' period.

Beethoven's deafness was only part of the chronic ill-health which dogged him for most of his life, but it certainly made things worse. He retreated from society, became grumpy and paranoid (occasionally to the point of violence) and despite relative financial security often lived in squalor. His music, though, tells a completely different story. Beethoven's late works encompass a bewildering array of moods and styles, leaving classical music changed forever.

THE FIRST PIANO CONCERTO

When Beethoven first performed this concerto, it had a demoralising effect on his peers. 'Beethoven's magnificent playing and particularly daring flights of his improvisation moved me strangely,' the Czech pianist and composer Václav Jan Tomášek wrote subsequently. 'Indeed I felt so humbled that I did not touch my own piano for several days afterwards.'

Given an impact like that, together with the fact that Beethoven himself thought highly enough of the concerto to write out three different cadenzas for it, it's surprising that he described it to a publisher as 'not one of my best compositions of that type'. (He'd said a similar thing about his first concerto, now known as No.2. Evidently the young Beethoven had a lot to learn about stimulating a publisher's interest and negotiating a fee!) In any case, despite having been composed at least two years after the B flat concerto, this C major work was the first to be published and hence bears the title of 'No.1'.

In fact Beethoven had performed both of his first two concertos on that visit to Prague in 1798, playing this one on the first night and 'No.2' on the second. This C major concerto calls for a slightly larger orchestra than its predecessor, employing clarinets, trumpets and timpani, and while they are used quite sparingly, they bring with them a greater expressive range within the orchestra.

Where the opening movement of the B flat work uses up to nine themes, here in the opening to the C major work this is reduced to a rather more manageable four. Again there is a lengthy orchestral ritornello. Indeed we hear the second subject, in the comparatively distant key of E flat, before the soloist enters. When at last we do hear the piano, it's with an entirely new idea which makes only a fleeting appearance in the concerto as a whole.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

This opening movement is laid out on a grand scale and calls for extreme virtuosity from the soloist. It's in movements like this that we gain some idea of just what a good pianist Beethoven himself must have been. It and the *Largo* which follows were singled out for particular praise when the work was reviewed in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1800.

The *Largo* moves into the key of A flat with a glorious melody which generates great richness of tone throughout the orchestra. There is an inherently 'poetic' feeling in the rapt stillness of this movement and it's filled with subtle lyrical invention, ending with a coda in which the piano weaves in and out of the clarinets.

Then Beethoven repeats the formula not only of his 'Second' Concerto but also of those of Mozart in finishing with a boisterous *Rondo*. Its 'scherzando' nature is characterised by an almost vulgar main theme on piano and then a series of folk-like dance episodes, as if the listener is transported into some local holiday celebration.

This concerto is scored for flute, two oboes, two clarinets and two bassoons; two horns and two trumpets; timpani, strings and piano soloist.

It may – though it's unlikely – have been premiered in 1795 in Vienna, or more likely in 1798 in Prague. We can be certain, though, that it was published in 1801, when Beethoven dedicated it to a former piano student of his, Anna Luise Barbara Princess Odeskalchi.

The Sydney Symphony's first performance was in November 1940, with pianist Maureen Jones conducted by Joseph Post.

There have been a great many subsequent performances, but among the most memorable are those with Manfred Clynes/Walter Susskind (1946), Paul Badura-Skoda/Bernard Heinze (1952), Andor Földes/Bernard Heinze (1959), Claudio Arrau/John Hopkins (1968), Roger Woodward/Myer Fredman (1982), Vladimir Ashkenazy/Hopkins (1982), Kathryn Selby/Sergiu Comissiona (1991), Richard Goode/Christopher Hogwood (1993), Stephen Kovacevich/John Fiore (1994) and Paul Lewis/Douglas Boyd (2009).

Numerous Chief Conductors have performed the work, including Nikolai Malko with soloist Ingrid Haebler (1959), Dean Dixon/Mindru Katz (1966), Willem van Otterloo/Stephen Kovacevich (1975), Charles Mackerras/Leslie Howard (1983), Edo de Waart/Christian Zacharias (1998 Beethoven festival) and David Robertson/Emanuel Ax (2014).

Our most recent performances were in 2017, with soloist Yuja Wang conducted by Charles Dutoit.

THE FIFTH SYMPHONY

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is arguably the work which is most emblematic of Western classical music, and its opening motto comprises probably the most famous four notes in the world. The Fifth was first performed at the Theater an der Wien on Thursday 22 December 1808. One wonders what sort of effect it can have made.

No composer had ever reduced thematic material to such essentials as the terse opening motif of this work, and the effect of the structure built from this motif on an audience accustomed to Haydn and Mozart must have been overwhelming, and probably exhilarating.



An oil painting of a young Ludwig van Beethoven from 1806 by Isidor Neugass (c.1780–after 1847).

ABOUT THE MUSIC

On the other hand, one is staggered by the surfeit of riches that made up the program on the first night – a program lasting an exhausting four hours (6.30–10.30pm)! Beethoven himself was the soloist in the first performance of his Piano Concerto No.4, and, besides the Fifth Symphony, the evening saw the premieres of the Symphony No.6 (*Pastoral*), the Choral Fantasia, and some vocal works including the concert aria *Ah, perfido!*. Yet in spite of the (to modern audiences) daunting length of the concert, and the extraordinary emotional and even physical demands that such an unrelenting program of new masterpieces must have placed on its listeners, there can be little doubt that the Fifth would have made an impact.



Theater an der Wien

In any case, following its premiere on that bitterly cold night in 1808, the Fifth soon established itself as a work to be reckoned with. ETA Hoffmann, writing his famous review of July 1810, considered that this work revealed a new world, before which the listener could only stand in awe, and even terror. Adolph Bernhard Marx (c.1795–1866) formulated the view of the work that prevails to this day – that it moves from night to daylight, from struggle to victory – yet he saw this depiction of struggle leading to a transcendence of worldly reality.

The work opens with those famous four notes, a motto that, more than 130 years later, came to symbolise victory in Second World War radio broadcasts. Beethoven immediately demonstrates the plasticity of this motto in a series of phrases, based closely on the opening rhythm, which pause on a long-held note in the first violins. The original motto is then stated a tone higher by winds and strings, and the material is again developed, before coming to another halt. With a melodic extension of the opening motif, the horns announce the second subject, a melody played on first violins. The listener may think that Beethoven has let go of his motto, but it is there, as subtle emphasis, in the cellos and double basses. The second subject shifts into a more ominous chromatic mode, before bursting into a tumbling figure in the violins which leads to the close of the first section.

Beethoven called for a repeat at this point, yet many modern conductors drop it in favour of maintaining the momentum.

The development begins with a loud utterance of the motto on clarinets and horns, answered by strings. Beethoven's initial idea is so simple that a mere restatement and answer is enough to keep up a sense of growth. The idea is again built up. New developments include reversal of the direction of the motto idea: an ascending melody now. Repeated series of notes, the motto reduced to a single pitch and flogged for all its iterative value, lead to a section in which the horn motto from before the second subject is developed. Much is then made of another simple variation of the motto as an extra minim is added to it, and these two minims are then passed from winds to strings. We are lulled into a feeling of false security, before an outburst of the motto leads us back to a reprise of the opening section. AB Marx heard this section, these lulls and outbursts, as the most strife-ridden in the movement; Berlioz heard the exchanges from winds to strings as the painful breathing of a dying man.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

The normal course of the recapitulation (in Classical times, a consolidation of the argument so far) is interrupted in this instance by an oboe cadenza, a sign of Beethoven's poetic depth and humanity according to Marx, and then at the point where we would expect the movement to end (if the work were following Classical precepts), Beethoven keeps going, further developing and elaborating material until a postponed but then ultimately abrupt ending.

Most criticism of this work has dwelt on the first movement, because it is that movement which is truly extraordinary in terms of its concision and power. If Classical music is, by definition, argument, then no other music sets out the dynamics of debate as starkly as this. Stravinsky considered the later movements anti-climactic compared with the structural tour-de-force of this opening. Early 19th-century critics also devoted most of their discussion to this section. Berlioz compared it to his beloved Shakespeare: 'This is...the terrible fury of Othello receiving from Iago's mouth the poisoned calumnies which persuade him of Desdemona's crime.' ETA Hoffmann heard in it the inexpressible, inexhaustible longing for the spirit world, which was one of the animating motives of the German Romantic period. One of the results, however, was that Hoffmann tended to highlight the passages that a modern listener hears as transitional; not the powerful statements of the motto, but the several crescendos leading up to those statements.

The second movement – a set of double variations – has received less comment, though AB Marx heard the blaring C major passage which first occurs around bar 30 as indicative of eventual triumph. It is in the third movement that we return to the world of innovation. In some of his earlier symphonies Beethoven had already replaced the traditional minuet and trio with a scherzo and trio, but this *Scherzo* (Italian for 'joke') plays with the listener's expectations in a sinister or

ominous, rather than playful, manner. This movement sounds like the prelude to something bigger; something is brewing beneath the surface.

The movement begins with a ghostly arpeggiated melody, arching nearly two octaves, in cellos and double basses. The relationship to the opening movement's motto is perhaps not as clear here as in the loud tattoo beaten out by winds and strings some 20 bars later. The *Trio* is famous for the prominence accorded the cellos and double basses. The false scrubbing starts of the second part of this trio, seen as musical jokes these days, had threatening overtones to some of the early critics. We don't get a straightforward repeat of the opening material when the *Scherzo* proper returns. Instead the theme is virtually deconstructed before our eyes. (Is it going to peter out?) Finally the movement is reduced to a quiet timpani beat over which the violins wind increasingly discordant phrases until a roaring tremolo launches us into the *Finale*.



1823 watercoloured pencil drawing of Beethoven by Joseph Weidner (1801-1870).

ABOUT THE MUSIC

With this last movement Beethoven altered the relative importance of symphonic movements. Whereas previously, musical weight had tended to reside in the first movement, here the last movement is the culmination of a psychological program, establishing a precedent for works such as Tchaikovsky's Fifth and Mahler's First which expressed the idea that struggle leads to eventual victory. The motto idea is here reduced to an accompanying role, and Beethoven introduces several important new themes. This may explain Stravinsky's disappointment: Beethoven loosened his tight thematic focus. However the work comes to a breathtaking climax. Beethoven has taken his listeners on such a wide-ranging musical journey that he must indulge in near-'overkill' to ground the work in its home key of C. Interestingly, though Marx and Berlioz perceived the struggle-to-triumph programmatic basis of this work, Hoffmann, perhaps describing the work from the vantage-point of the astonished newcomer, saw this movement as picking up the threads of the first, getting no closer to the goal, but in those final chords depositing the listener on the edge of the awesome unknown.

This symphony is scored for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon; two horns, two trumpets and three trombones; timpani and strings.

It was first performed on 22 December 1808 at Theater an der Wien, Vienna, with Beethoven himself conducting.

The Sydney Symphony's first performance of the work was in September 1938, conducted by Malcolm Sargent. Notable performances since then are numerous, including those led by guest conductors Eugene Ormandy (1944), Walter Susskind (1954), Josef Krips (1959), Georg Tintner (1974 & 1984), Kurt Sanderling (1976), Yan Pascal Tortelier (1994) and Lawrence Renes (1996).

Unsurprisingly it has been frequently performed under our Chief Conductors over the years, and interestingly often many years before their tenures as Chief began – perhaps as something of an audition piece. Those performances are here indicated 'BC'. It has been led by Eugene Goossens (in his welcome concert in 1947, and our Country Tour of 1949), Charles Mackerras (in 1960, 22 years BC), Nikolai Malko (1961), Willem van Otterloo (1965, eight years BC), Dean Dixon (1965), Moshe Atzmon (in 1968 (BC), in 1969 and 1970 as Chief, then again in 1977), Louis Frémaux (1980, 1981), Zdeněk Mácal (1983 BC), Stuart Challender (1984 BC, 1987, 1989, 1990), Edo de Waart (1998, 2001), Gianluigi Gelmetti (2003 BC, 2007), David Robertson (2010 BC) and Vladimir Ashkenazy (2016, after his tenure).

Our most recent performances were under Chief Conductor Simone Young in 2022.

**Notes by Christopher Sainsbury
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(Symphony No.5)**

Scoring and history by Hugh Robertson



FAREWELL DIANA DOHERTY

By Hugh Robertson

One of Australia's most celebrated musicians is poised to play her final note as a member of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

After a career spanning 27 years and five Chief Conductors, Diana Doherty is stepping down as Principal Oboe – not to retire, as she is quick to point out, but to allow room for more than one focus in her life.

'It takes such dedication, this job,' says Doherty, sitting in the sunny living room of her Annandale home. 'It's the best job, but it takes a lot of dedication and a lot of single-mindedness. And I think I am ready to not be so single-minded about one thing anymore.'

Single-mindedness is the theme that emerges when speaking with Diana about her career. From the moment she

decided to follow her oboe teacher from Queensland to Melbourne at the end of her first year of university, her instrument has been a constant companion and animating force in her life – especially because she shares that passion with Alexandre Oguey, her husband of nearly 34 years and the Orchestra's Principal Cor Anglais.

The other thing that comes up is that Diana repeatedly says that she never felt good enough, that she has had to keep evolving just to keep up. That she still feels this way, despite three decades at the very peak of her profession, tells you everything you need to know about how she got there – and stayed there for so long.

Diana grew up in Queensland, the youngest of nine siblings, and was surrounded by music from the outset.

‘Dad played the piano every night,’ she recalls with a smile. ‘All my siblings played something, so music was always happening in in some aspect – violin, cello, clarinet, flute, trumpet, trombone, piano. And then there was the radio as well. So it was just always there.’

‘One funny memory is of my first experience of going to the opera. It was *The Tales of Hoffmann* and I was just blown away. I remember dancing back to the car, saying to my dad, “I’m going to be an opera singer!” I went to choir the next morning, opened my mouth, and the teacher said, “Diana, could you please stop doing that?”’

‘So that was my that was my opera career, done and dusted in less than 24 hours!’

Opera’s loss was the orchestra’s gain. Diana was given a violin for her sixth birthday, then taking up piano. The oboe happened almost by accident: the education department in Queensland launched a program for free tuition for wind instruments, and there happened to be an old oboe lying around the house that had belonged to one of Diana’s brothers.

‘[My mum] said, “I think there’s an oboe there somewhere – if you can get a sound out of that, I guess you can learn that!”’

‘I didn’t know anyone else who played it, so I felt kind of special. And it was very quirky with the whole reed thing – little did I realise what a can of worms I was getting into,’ she says with a knowing laugh.

Throughout high school Diana remained passionate about music, but it was far from the only thing in her life.

‘There were lots of things I loved doing, and oboe was important, but it was always a little bit embarrassing too. I grew up in Brisbane at a time, and in a big state school system, where music just wasn’t really a thing that many people did – certainly not classical music.’

‘But when I was in year 12, I had this wonderful experience where I got to play with the QSO in the ABC Young Performers competition. And it that was a mind-blowing experience. I don’t remember one thing about it – it just whooshed past, like some kind of parallel universe, and the only thought I had was, “I really want to do this again.”’

‘There were all these other things I wanted to do, but I figured, well, I’ve just got to go with music *now*.’

Diana enrolled at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, studying piano and oboe in her first year and having an amazing time. But when her teacher, Stephen Robinson, got a job in Melbourne, Diana knew she had to go with him – even though that meant moving out of home and to a bigger city where she didn’t know anybody.

‘It was pretty hard,’ she admits. ‘I felt like and the way I played the oboe was being completely defragged and put together again. There were days when I felt like I could play well, and other days where I didn’t even know what hand to put where! Everything was being reconstructed.’

‘But at the same time I decided I would do the Young Performers Competition again. So at various intervals I had deadlines where I had to go and perform. It was a funny year, because I was taking everything apart, but then I had to go and perform a concerto – so I would put it together – and then take it apart, over and over. In retrospect, I don’t know how I got through that year. I was probably just stumbling from crisis to crisis.’

Of course she didn’t just get through but thrived – and when she graduated from VCA she was awarded the prize for the top graduating student.

After a few months working on a contract for the opera orchestra in Victoria, Diana moved to Zurich University of Music in Switzerland, to continue her studies with highly-regarded pedagogue Thomas Indermühle.

Incredibly, having finished high school at 17, Diana was only 20 at this point – and now trying to make her way alone on the other side of the world.

‘It was pretty daunting,’ she recalls. ‘But I was so determined. And I was extremely fortunate because I made a fantastic friend, another Australian oboist – Leanne Glover, who’s recently retired from the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra. It was just fantastic having her to speak English to, and to understand each other’s humour.’

Life in Zurich was also made more interesting when Diana met Alexandre, another classmate, and the pair quickly became inseparable. Once their two-year course concluded Diana knew she wanted to stay and see where things went with this guy, so immediately started applying for orchestra jobs – even though, still very young, she didn’t feel at all ready.

‘I really didn’t feel like a finished product. But I knew then that...I wanted to experience having a job. I wanted to move on with life and not be a student anymore.’

So it was something of a shock when Diana won the job of Principal Oboe for the Symphony Orchestra of Lucerne – and shortly afterwards, when Alexandre won the role of Associate Principal Oboe in the same orchestra. All of a sudden, still in their early 20s, Diana and Alexandre were married, learning how to be adults and manage their household, and how to navigate their relationship – all hard enough without the added pressure of one being the other’s boss!

‘We were pretty young,’ says Diana with a smile. ‘I was only 23 when we got married, and he was 25. But we worked it out together and we’re still here.’

‘I don’t think I could have done it without him, actually,’ she continues. ‘It was wonderful for me to have a partner – and still is, and has always been – so interested in oboe playing. I think it would have been very difficult for anyone else to really understand me.’



Diana and Alexandre in rehearsals in 2016. Photo by Keith Saunders.

The next few years flew by, with the pair steeped in their craft. Diana had success in significant international competitions; at home, when Alexandre and Diana weren't performing in the orchestra together, they were working freelance all around Europe.

'Both of us were very interested in developing as players and as musicians,' she recalls. 'We were absolutely passionate about what we were doing. And we lived and breathed it. It was wonderful.'

Then in 1995, Diana fell pregnant with their first child, and all she could think about was coming home to be closer to her sisters, who had their own children, and being part of that environment.

'I reached out to the Sydney Symphony,' says Diana. 'I'd had some contact with them a year earlier because they were sounding out people overseas about jobs that were free in the orchestra, and

were asking what our plans were at that moment, it was not on my radar at all to come back to Australia. But then as soon as I had Julie, I rang the Orchestra back and said, "are those jobs still free?"'

The rest, as they say, is history. Diana and Alexandre moved back to Sydney permanently in 1997, and ever since have been the beating heart of the Orchestra's woodwind section. Of course Diana's star has continued

to rise separate to her role with the Orchestra, maintaining a significant solo career in particular as a recording artist for ABC Classics.

The highlights of Diana's time in Sydney could fill a book – perhaps one day they will – but what first comes to mind is her fierce support of living Australian composers, and the extraordinary works that have come out of that – by Graeme Koehne, Allan Zavod and Nigel Westlake, to name but a few.



Diana Doherty in rehearsals in 2006. Photo by Lorrie Graham

Then of course there's *Bird Spirit Dreaming*, the oboe concerto by Ross Edwards. Commissioned for Diana and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra by Andrew and Renata Kaldor, it was premiered in 2002 under the baton of the great American conductor Lorin Maazel. An immediate hit, Maazel invited Diana to perform it with the New York Philharmonic in 2005; it was also the centrepiece of the Orchestra's celebrations for Edwards' 80th birthday in 2023, with Diana once again featuring as soloist under Simone Young.

'What a leap of faith, really,' says Diana. 'I mean, what an extraordinary idea, and how amazing for Maazel to take that on. Incredible.'

That concerto – complete with Diana's bird-like dancing choreography that was part of the performance – launched her into the stratosphere as an international star. But of course, as she does time and again, Diana had to convince herself that she was actually up for it.

'I used to get really fearful of conductors, really nervous,' she explains. 'I still do. But I remember the first time playing for Lorin Maazel [*Ed. In July 2000, when he conducted Bartók, Brahms and Tchaikovsky*] and being completely starstruck, trying to talk myself through it and saying, "Look, he's amazing, but he's only here this week. It doesn't matter what he thinks of you, just do your best and then life goes on." I remember quite distinctly thinking, "Whether he likes you or not, whether he thinks you're any good or not, it's actually not going to change your life anyway."' "

'So the week went, it was fine. Whatever. And then next time he comes, he's conducting me in the Edwards. And then we do it in New York! And literally it changed my life! It's pretty extraordinary.'

'But I remember being really struck by the faith that the SSO had in me to program the Edwards in that program. And the leap of faith that Maazel took to say yes. And to do it in New York – wow!'

In many ways it seems like a strange time to leave the Sydney Symphony: the renewed Sydney Opera House Concert Hall is now one of the world's great concert halls on the inside as well as the outside; Simone Young's tenure as Chief Conductor is in its infancy but already it is clear something special is happening; and audiences are responding in droves, with concerts regularly selling out weeks in advance.

Diana knows she is walking away from a good thing, but the sense of calm in her voice confirms she is completely at peace with her decision. 'I mean it is a shame to leave now, obviously, because I think it's such a no-brainer, the SSO and Simone Young.'

'I just think she's got the most incredible brain. I don't know how she gets through the amount of repertoire that she does – it's incredible. So, I'm sad to leave the orchestra at this time, but everyone's got their own trajectory – and it's time for me.'

'I'll miss so much. I'll miss that feeling you get after a concert with your colleagues, that we got through it. Even aside from the actual playing, the music takes you on an emotional journey – it's like you've been on a trek together or played a Premier League final. That I will really miss.'

As for what's next?

'I think, in a nutshell, I'm looking to looking forward to having a more creative life,' she says with a faraway look in her eye. 'I think it comes down to just accepting who you are – and that that maybe I've done enough. It's always tempting to want to do more, but I felt like I pushed myself a lot for a long time, to continually keep evolving.'

Diana, from all of us at the Sydney Symphony, thank you for your artistry, leadership and friendship these past three decades. We can't wait to see your next evolution.

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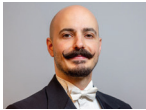
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MUSICIAN PROFILE



MARINA MARSDEN

Principal Second Violin

How long have you been playing with the Sydney Symphony?

29 years

What has been the highlight of your Sydney Symphony career so far?

So many highlights – one that really comes to mind was in my first few weeks of starting with the Orchestra. We performed Beethoven's Second Symphony and Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony with the late Mariss Jansons. A most recent highlight was performing Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* with Simone Young.

Who is your favourite composer to perform, and to listen to?

I love playing anything by Richard Strauss – especially his tone poems and his *Alpine Symphony*, as they are so harmonically and melodically rich, so full of character and also the Second Violin parts are fun to play. I love listening to Bach and Bruckner – there is something quite sublime, spiritual and transporting about the music of both these composers.

Do you have any pre-concert rituals or superstitions?

I like to drink a peppermint tea and eat a banana before concerts and have some quiet time before warming up on stage.

If you didn't play your instrument, what instrument would you like to play - and why?

Either the cello or the cor anglais – they are both such deeply expressive instruments.

What do you like to do with your spare time when you aren't playing or practicing?

I like to walk, either scenic coastal walks or bushwalks.

What was the last book/podcast/TV series you really loved?

Eddie Jaku's book *The Happiest Man on Earth*.

What is the best piece of advice you ever received – either musical or general?

One of my violin teachers used to say to me before a performance, 'sock it to 'em', and my other violin teacher's advice for performing was, 'just let it happen' – quite similar in a way!

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