

2024 REGIONAL TOUR  
29 May Port Macquarie  
30 May Tamworth  
31 May Taree

THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY PERFORMS

# COMPASSION



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

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### FIRST VIOLINS

**Harry Bennetts**

*Associate Concertmaster*

**Alexandra Osborne**

*Associate Concertmaster*

Sophie Cole

Léone Ziegler

### SECOND VIOLINS

**Emma Jezek**

*Acting Associate Principal*

Victoria Bihun

Emma Hayes

Maja Verunica

### VIOLAS

**Justin Williams**

*Assistant Principal*

Rosemary Curtin

Andrew Jezek\*

### CELLOS

**Catherine Hewgill**

*Principal*

**Kaori Yamagami**

*Principal*

Timothy Nankervis

### DOUBLE BASSES

**Kees Boersma**

*Principal*

David Campbell

### PERCUSSION

**Rebecca Lagos**

*Principal*

**Bold** Principal

\* Guest Musician

° Contract Musician

† Sydney Symphony Fellow



# 2024 REGIONAL TOUR

## Port Macquarie Glasshouse

Wednesday 29 May, 7.30pm

## Tamworth Memorial Town Hall

Thursday 30 May, 7.30pm

## Taree Manning Entertainment Centre

Friday 31 May, 7.30pm

# THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY PERFORMS *COMPASSION* FEATURING LIOR & NIGEL WESTLAKE

**NIGEL WESTLAKE** conductor

**BRENT GRAPES** trumpet

**LIOR** vocals

**ANDREA LAM** piano

**ARVO PÄRT (BORN 1935)**

*Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten (1977)*

**NIGEL WESTLAKE (BORN 1958)**

*Psyche: Concerto for Trumpet and Chamber Orchestra (2024)*

i. *Goddess of the Soul*

ii. *Launch*

iii. *Mars Gravity Assist*

iv. *Arrival*

## Estimated durations

Pärt – 10 minutes

Psyche – 21 minutes

Interval – 20 minutes

Compassion – 40 minutes

The concert will run for  
approximately 90 minutes

## Cover image

Lior and Nigel Westlake  
performing with the Sydney  
Symphony Orchestra in 2022  
Photo by Craig Abercrombie

INTERVAL

**NIGEL WESTLAKE & LIOR**

*Compassion*

i. *Sim Shalom / Grant Peace*

ii. *Eize Hu Chacham? / Who is Wise?*

iii. *La Yu'minu / Until You Love Your Brother*

iv. *Inna Rifqa / The Beauty Within*

v. *Al Takshu L'avachem / Don't Harden Your Hearts*

vi. *Ma Wadani Ahudun / Until the End of Time*

vii. *Avinu Malkeinu / Hymn of Compassion*

Principal Partner



# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## **NIGEL WESTLAKE** conductor

Nigel Westlake's career, spanning almost five decades, began as a clarinetist touring Australia and the world with many orchestras, ensembles and bands.

He began composing from 1980, receiving offers to write for radio, theatre, circus, TV and film and was appointed composer in residence for ABC Radio in 1984. From 1987-1992 he was a core member of the Australia Ensemble (resident at UNSW) and in 1992 was invited by guitarist John Williams to join his septet Attacca as performer and composer.

His film credits include *Blueback* (2023), *Babe*, *Ali's Wedding*, *Paper Planes*, *Miss Potter*, *Babe: Pig in the City*, *Children of the Revolution*, *The Nugget*, *A Little Bit of Soul* and the IMAX films *Antarctica*, *Solarmax*, *The Edge* and *Imagine*. His television credits include numerous documentaries, telemovies, news themes and station idents.

He writes extensively for the concert hall, receiving commissions to write for orchestras, ensembles and soloists, and has received many awards, including two ARIA Awards, fifteen APRA awards across both Classical and Screen categories, the 2022 APRA Distinguished Services to the Australian Screen Award and the Gold Medal for Best Original Music at the New York International Radio Festival.

He is a two-time winner of the prestigious Paul Lowin Orchestral prize, in 2013 for *Missa Solis – Requiem for Eli* and in 2019 for *Spirit of the Wild – Concerto for oboe and orchestra*. In 2020 he was awarded the Albert H. Maggs Composition Award by the University of Melbourne for his third string quartet, *Sacred Sky*.

He has conducted all the major symphony orchestras in Australia in performances and recordings of his own works, made his US conducting debut at the Lincoln Centre with the New York Philharmonic in 2016 and his European debut with the RTÉ Concert Orchestra at the National Concert Hall in Dublin in 2018.

He holds an honorary doctorate in music awarded in 2013 by the University of NSW and was the recipient of the HC Coombs Creative Arts Fellowship at the Australian National University in 2004.



Photo by Simon Westlake

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## **BRENT GRAPES** trumpet

Brent Grapes is the Associate Principal Trumpet of the Sydney Symphony. He received his musical training in his hometown of Perth, Australia, and at the Juilliard School in New York, studying under Raymond Mase, and Mark Gould.

Brent served as the Principal Trumpet of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra from 2013 until 2022. Prior to this, he was the Principal Trumpet of the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra (2009-2013) and a member of the Australian Army Band Corps as both a reservist and full-time musician (2002-2007).

Brent has performed as a guest Principal Trumpet for the Australian World Orchestra and as a member of the Australian Brass Quintet. As a soloist, Brent has performed concerti in Australia, New Zealand, China, and the United States. In 2022, he premiered a newly commissioned trumpet concerto by the renowned Australian composer Nigel Westlake. Brent also won the Juilliard School concerto competition in 2007 and the US National Trumpet Competition graduate soloist division in 2007 and 2008.

When not practicing the trumpet, Brent loves to spend time with his kids, kicking the footy, or bowling at the cricket nets. Brent is also a keen student pilot and enjoys taking to the sky whenever he gets the chance.



Photo by Jez Smith

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## LIOR vocals

Lior burst on to the Australian music scene in 2005 with his debut album *Autumn Flow*, achieving high rotation on Triple J, which cemented this album into the hearts of the Australian public. *Autumn Flow* achieved Platinum status and went on to become one of the most successful independent debuts in Australian music history. A swag of accolades followed, including three ARIA Award nominations as well as a nomination for Album of the Year in Triple J's prestigious J Awards. Recorded and released entirely independently at a time when that was still a rarity, Lior paved the way for a model that is now deemed common place.

Lior's 2008 sophomore album, *Corner of an Endless Road*, debuted at #2 on the Australian Albums chart and topped the Independent charts for several weeks. The album gave a greater indication of Lior's rich cultural background with a number of tracks featuring Middle Eastern influences. Lior picked up another two ARIA Award nominations including Best Independent Release.

Lior has released a further three studio albums – *Tumbling Into the Dawn* (2010), *Scattered Reflections* (2014) and *Between You and Me* (2018). These albums traverse broader territory and showcase Lior's fertile musical palate.

Over the past decade, Lior has toured extensively both in Australia and internationally and has been a regular performer at WOMAD and art festivals around the world, including an entire season at the Edinburgh Festival. Alongside his own tours, Lior has also toured in collaboration with artists such as Melbourne vocal group Invenio, headed by Gian Slater, as well as several visual artists, string quartets and full symphony orchestras nationally. Lior is renowned for the exceptional quality of his live performances.

Aside from writing and releasing original albums, Lior has developed a keen interest in collaboration and diversification. In 2013, Lior collaborated with renowned composer Nigel Westlake in writing *Compassion*, a song cycle for voice and orchestra consisting of original melodies and orchestration set to ancient Hebrew and Arabic texts centred on the idea of compassion. Commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the work was premiered by Lior along with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra at the Sydney Opera House in late 2013 and subsequently went on to tour nationally with all the major state orchestras, including a performance at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in early 2014. A recording of *Compassion* was released in 2014 and went to #1 on both the Classical and Classical/Crossover charts. Lior and Nigel went on to win the ARIA Award for Best Classical Album in 2014. In 2016, Lior premiered *Compassion* in the US with the Austin Symphony Orchestra and went on to win the Austin Table Critics' Award for Best Symphonic Performance of 2015-16 for this performance.



Photo by Carlo Santone

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## ANDREA LAM piano

Pronounced a 'real talent' by the *Wall Street Journal*, New York-based Australian pianist Andrea Lam performs with orchestras and leading conductors in Australasia, Japan, China and the United States, including the San Francisco Ballet Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, and all major Australian symphony orchestras. From New York's Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center to the Sydney Opera House, she has played for Sydney Festival, Musica Viva's Huntington Festival (Australia), Orford Festival (Canada), and Chelsea Music Festival (USA) with works from Bach, Schumann and Chopin to Aaron Jay Kernis, Lilya Ugar, and Nigel Westlake.

The 2024 season includes soloist engagements with Queensland Symphony Orchestra with conductor Umberto Clerici, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra with conductor André de Ridder, Sydney Symphony Orchestra for works by Nigel Westlake and Lior, and with Orchestra Victoria for Arts Centre Melbourne. Chamber concerts include a return with the Australian String Quartet at UKARIA, and the Australia Ensemble@UNSW (Sydney), as well as solo performances of Matthew Hindson's new works, including at Melbourne Recital Centre.

In 2023, Andrea featured in acclaimed performances of Schumann and Rachmaninov concerti with the Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras with conductors Sir Donald Runnicles and Jaime Martín, and featured in Adelaide Festival in both the Chamber Landscapes weekend curated by Paavali Jumppanen, and the *Ngapa William Cooper Project*, commissioned by UKARIA and Finding Our Voice, composed by Lior and Nigel Westlake and performed with the Australian String Quartet. Engagements also included Sydney Opera House' Utzon Music Series, Newcastle and Sanguine Estate Music Festivals, with the Australia Ensemble@UNSW, in recital at Elder Hall (Adelaide) with violinist Emily Sun, alongside several regional concerts. In 2022 Andrea toured Bach's *Goldberg Variations* nationally

for Musica Viva Australia alongside Paul Grabowsky, performed as soloist with the Sydney, Adelaide and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, as pianist alongside baritone Bo Skovhus at Sydney Opera House, and for Sydney Opera House' 2022 International Piano Day livestream, as well as numerous solo concerts and masterclasses in regional and metropolitan centres Australia-wide.

Andrea Lam was a semi-finalist in the 2009 Van Cliburn Competition, Silver Medallist in the 2009 San Antonio Piano Competition, and winner of the ABC's 'Young Performer of the Year' Award in the Keyboard section, and the Yale Woolsey Hall Competition. Recently appointed Lecturer in Piano at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, Andrea holds degrees from both the Yale, and the Manhattan Schools of Music. Recordings include Mozart concerti with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, with cellist Matt Haimovitz (Pentatone Oxingale), and as part of New York's acclaimed Claremont Trio. Pianist for violinist Emily Sun on the ARIA-nominated album *Nocturnes* (ABC Classics), earning a rare 5 star review in *The Australian* and described as 'a winner on every count' (*Sydney Morning Herald*), Andrea's next album features solo piano works by Matthew Hindson, due for 2024 release.



Photo by Keith Saunders



# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## ARVO PÄRT

### *Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten* (1977)

At the time he wrote *Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten*, Arvo Pärt had never met the great British composer, and, living then behind the Iron Curtain in Soviet-occupied Estonia, was hardly familiar with his music.

It is a work that begins quietly – a gentle bell, soft strings – before plunging to the very depths of grief. Pärt said of the piece:

Why did the date of Benjamin Britten's death – December 4, 1976 – touch such a chord in me? During this time I was obviously at the point where I could recognise the magnitude of such a loss. Inexplicable feelings of guilt, more than that even, arose in me. I had just discovered Britten for myself. Just before his death I began to appreciate the unusual purity of his music...And besides, for a long time I had wanted to meet Britten personally – and now it would not come to that.

This deceptively simple piece evokes such tragedy that it was chosen by Michael Moore as the soundtrack to the scene, in his film *Fahrenheit 9/11*, where the twin towers of the World Trade Center crash to the ground. Terrible images, matched with music so powerful it needs no visual accompaniment to create images of mourning, sorrow and pity.

*Cantus in memoriam Benjamin Britten* is an early example of the 'tintinnabulation' style Pärt developed in 1976. He describes tintinnabulation thus:



Arvo Pärt

I have discovered that it is enough when a single note is beautifully played. This one note, or a silent beat, or a moment of silence, comforts me. I work with very few elements – with one voice, two voices. I build with primitive materials – with the triad, with one specific tonality. The three notes of a triad are like bells and that is why I call it tintinnabulation.

A bell sounds, very quietly, three times, before the first violins begin their sad descent on an A minor scale. One by one, each level of strings enters, each one an octave lower and twice as slow as the one before, so that by the time the double basses enter, their pace is one-sixteenth that of the first violins. Eventually, the strings come to rest on the notes of the chord of A minor. And all the while a bell tolls its despair, lingering even after the notes of the strings have faded into the ether.



# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## NIGEL WESTLAKE

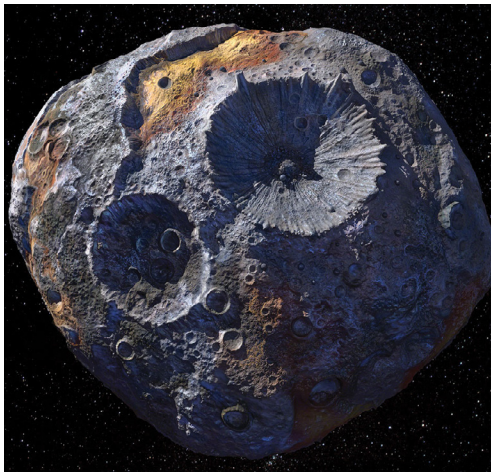
### ***Psyche*: Concerto for Trumpet and Chamber Orchestra (2024)**

Nigel Westlake writes:

The rare metal asteroid known as 16 Psyche lies in the main asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. Named after the ancient Greek Goddess of the soul by the Italian astronomer Annibale de Gasparis in 1852, Psyche was the sixteenth asteroid to be discovered.

On 12 October 2023, NASA launched a 3.6 billion km, 6 year mission to Psyche in the hope of providing a window into the evolution of the solar system and to examine its mysterious metallic exterior (the ore of which is thought to be valued at around \$10 quintillion.)

The concerto is an imaginary fantasy which uses the idea of the NASA expedition as a departure point with which to explore a dialogue between trumpet and chamber orchestra.



Artist's impression of Psyche asteroid

#### i. *Goddess of the Soul*

Opening with a gentle slow moving elegy, the first movement is a token of remembrance for Paul Goodchild, Associate Principal Trumpet with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra from 1979 to 2021. Written the day of Paul's funeral in April 2022, the solo is played offstage thereby conjuring an elusive and other worldly presence.

#### ii. *Launch*

The NASA launch of the Psyche mission is reimagined here in musical form, offering a brief, intense burst of driving energy and pulsing 5/8 rhythms that support an agile trumpet solo characterised by rapid fire articulated note groupings & dexterous flourishes.

#### iii. *Mars Gravity Assist*

Appearing to be suspended in space (despite travelling at 21,000 kph), the craft is tentatively pulled toward Mars where, using the red planets gravity to swing itself toward the outer part of the main asteroid belt, it gathers momentum and continues its journey toward Psyche's orbit.

#### iv. *Arrival*

Depicting the safe arrival of the NASA spacecraft, the upbeat finale is based on a series of typical 'clarion call' trumpet motifs that are teased and exchanged between soloist and orchestra in a playful dialogue. The forward momentum of the music is driven by the use of strong displaced accents and irregular time signatures.

*Psyche* was co-commissioned by the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra (with soloist Owen Morris) and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (with soloist Brent Grapes) and is a reworking and development of my Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra, which was commissioned for the West Australian Symphony Orchestra and soloist Brent Grapes by Geoff Stearn and Janet Holmes á Court AC.

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## **NIGEL WESTLAKE & LIOR** ***Compassion* (2013)**

*Compassion* is a song cycle in seven movements based on a collection of ancient Hebrew and Arabic texts by Lior and Nigel Westlake. It draws from the rich worlds of Islam and Judaism to present a collection of profound and poetic messages surrounding the idea of compassion between human beings. The texts are largely a collection of poems, proverbs and songs that give us an insight into such wisdom. Their similarities are immense and their universality is undeniable. Far from the misguided commentaries that have so often steered humanity away from the true enactment of compassion, these texts affirm that attaining a greater sense of compassion is an ultimate goal, and letting it guide our actions is the ultimate wisdom. *Compassion* was awarded the 2014 ARIA Award for *Best Classical Album* in 2014.

### **The Genesis of the Work** by Nigel Westlake

The catalyst for *Compassion* can be traced to a single watershed moment, the occurrence of my first Lior concert. It was the winter of 2009 in the tiny rural village of St Albans, New South Wales, the occasion being the inaugural fund-raising event for Smugglers of Light, a foundation formed by our family in memory of my son Eli.

At dusk, as the winter mist settled upon the forgotten valley (as it is sometimes known), quietly nestled between the towering ridges of Hawkesbury river sandstone, Lior began to weave his magic upon the crowd, many of whom had travelled long distances to join us for the weekend music festival.

It was a poignant occasion that had been planned to coincide with the 12 month anniversary of Eli's death, and the music held a very special meaning for our friends and family, many of whom were still grappling with the tragic loss that had befallen us the previous year.

Lior's music had been introduced to me several years earlier by my son Joel, and had quickly become absorbed into the family playlist, underscoring many happy times and celebratory moments. As it happened, 'Autumn Flow', the album that rocketed Lior to prominence in 2005 was among the last music I shared with my son Eli the week before his death, thereby forever imbuing these sweet songs with a very unique and deeply personal significance for me.

A fortuitous family connection with a dear friend had facilitated a personal introduction and Lior had graciously accepted our request to perform for the foundation. It was one of those special nights that people talk about for years afterwards and also featured some wonderful performances from the Grigoryan Brothers and the Goldner String Quartet. Lior concluded the proceedings with one of his best known songs, 'This Old Love.' As he was brought back on stage for the encore, little did I realize that his final offering for the night would hold the germ of an idea that would become the catalyst for a life changing and enriching journey.

Coaxing us gently into another world, as if possessed by unseen forces, and without accompaniment, Lior began to embrace the plaintive and heartfelt strains of the ancient Hebrew hymn of compassion 'Avinu Malkeinu'.

In stark contrast to what had preceded, here was another side to Lior's artistry, his keening and emotionally-charged voice allowing us an intimate glimpse into the rich vein of middle eastern heritage that is his birthright.

The power and spirituality of the song struck a deep resonance amongst the crowd, all of whom were captivated in spellbound rapture. For my own part, I had just experienced a small taste of a tantalizing and exotic sound world and was overcome by a strange yearning to be a part of it. Following the concert I suggested to Lior that I take a solo vocal recording of his performance and create a symphonic

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

arrangement around it. Neither of us were sure where this might lead, but I had a hunch it was at least worth a shot.

Weaving my orchestration around Lior's voice was a little like writing a movie score, the vocal part an intractable dramatic narrative, the orchestral accompaniment a fluid underscore replete with abundant possibilities. We could both sense potential in the finished idea and it seemed a natural progression to expand the material into a song cycle for voice and orchestra. In passing, I casually mentioned our plan to Peter Czornyj (then director of artistic planning, Sydney Symphony Orchestra) and he suggested the orchestra would be interested in bringing the idea to fruition through a commission. We set to work just as our first attempt 'Avinu Malkeinu' had begun life as a solo vocal, we now followed a similar pattern for the rest of the composition process, and using the concept of compassion as a common theme, Lior proposed the texts be sourced from a combination of Hebrew and Arabic writings.

In the context of a troubled and divisive history, the drawing together of these common threads of Judaism and Islam struck me as a bold and courageous strategy, and a perfect fit for Lior's middle eastern ancestry and family history. Through painstaking research, he managed to unearth a wonderful collection of ancient proverbs, writings and poetry. For each text he devised a vocal part which he sent me as a solo recording, sometimes embodying the germ of a melodic fragment and at other times as a complete series of mellifluous phrases.

Many of the songs sounded for all the world like ancient chants exhumed from a long lost tomb somewhere on the shores of the Red Sea, yet the melodies were very much alive and fresh, full of richness, vibrancy and spontaneity. It was inspiring to hear Lior working outside his comfort zone, experimenting with new vocal timbres and using his extraordinary three octave vocal

range to great effect. Every few weeks we would get together to review progress and examine the overall form of each piece. Given our dissimilar experiences in music, I couldn't believe how we both seemed to be on the same wave length, striving toward a common goal, critical of the same issues and agreeing on the ideas that seemed to work.

Some of the songs evolved over a period of months, others over days, but what has emerged is a true collaboration, and music that neither of us could ever have written on our own.

*Compassion* inhabits a vast array of emotions and colours, at times pulsating and riotous, at others reflective and textural, and draws upon the myriad of influences the two of us have been able to bring to the table from our incredibly diverse backgrounds. With the utmost respect, we have tried to imbue these ancient texts with a contemporary interpretation, adhering to the purity of a single voice and orchestra, and although the songs are all sung in their original language, there are no conscious references to traditional Hebrew or Arabic musical forms, melodies or scales (with the exception for 'Avinu Malkeinu' which is based on a traditional melody).

The support of the SSO in bringing this project to the stage has been absolutely extraordinary and Lior and I are profoundly grateful to Peter Czornyj and the orchestral management for their enthusiasm and encouragement. We would also like to thank the wonderful musicians of the Sydney Symphony for the commitment and finesse they bring to this music. Seeing this piece come together over the last couple of years has been a major highlight in my career and it is my hope that this music might offer its listeners the space and opportunity to reflect upon the qualities of that most noble of human sentiments, the good stuff that enriches our lives with meaning, insight, depth and intrinsic worth. The virtue of compassion.



# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## *Two Worlds in Common*

by Lior

The research that eventually led me to the texts threaded through *Compassion* took me far and wide, from conversations with religious leaders and linguists, to regular consultations with my good friend Waleed Aly, who took me through the finer details of Arabic pronunciation and the subtleties of the Arabic texts.

Being a fluent Hebrew speaker, I initially thought that singing some of the texts in Arabic would feel foreign and disingenuous, yet to my surprise, many of the words I encountered were common to both languages. It became clear in learning these texts that these two languages shared a deep and common source. Just as experience often validates the existence of a well-worn cliché, it is difficult to escape the analogy of two brothers starting from a common source and branching out to gather their own rich experience and identity to become what we now know as modern Hebrew and Arabic.

In time, I would also come to learn not only of the similarities in language, but in the very essence of the messages embodied throughout these proverbs and poems. What began with a feeling of trepidation as to whether Nigel and I could sincerely encapsulate the artistic concept and vision we shared for this undertaking, has ended with a full embrace and a somewhat unexpected sense of renewed optimism.

It may seem strange in the context of this work, yet neither Nigel nor I consider ourselves religious people. We do however share a firm belief that much of the beauty and wisdom found within so many works of art and philosophy attributed to a certain religion need not lie exclusive to those who subscribe to its faith, or only to those who seek a connection with God through directional prayer. They have so much to offer to those who might accept them without bias or judgement.

‘Imagination is not only the uniquely human capacity to envision that which is not, and, therefore, the foundation of all invention and innovation. In its arguably most transformative and revelatory capacity, it is the power that enables us to empathize with humans whose experiences we have never shared.’ – JK Rowling

### i. *Sim Shalom – Grant Peace*

*Sim Shalom*

*Chen vachesed v'rachamim*

*Aleinu ve'al kol am*

*V'imru Amen*

*Sim Shalom*

*Aleinu ve'al kol am*

*Tova u'vracha*

*Ahavat chesed u'tzdaka u'vracha*

*verachamim*

*Vecha'im veshalom*

*Barchenu Avinu*

*Kulanu k'echad*

More than any of the texts used in *Compassion*, ‘Sim Shalom’ demonstrates that a literal translation is often inadequate in conveying the depth and richness of these texts. An example can be found in one of the stanzas relating to the vital virtues of character – ‘chesed, tzedakah, u'vracha', v'rachamim', – ‘charity, integrity and compassion’.

The word ‘rachamim’ can be quite simply translated as ‘compassion’. When uncovered however, this word has far richer and deeper meaning, being a derivation of the Hebrew word for ‘womb’. More importantly, a closely related word of the same origin – ‘Rachaman’ – which can be translated as ‘the Compassionate One’, is one of the three names for God in the Jewish religion.

Interestingly, the origin, meaning and use of ‘Rachaman’ is almost identical between the two worlds of Judaism and Islam. Such is the centrality and esteem these two religions place on the virtue of compassion, that it is in fact one of the names given to God.

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## ii. *Eize Hu Chacham? – Who is Wise?*

*Eize Hu Chacham?*  
*Halomed mikol adam*  
*Eize hu gibor shebagiborim*  
*Mi she'ose soneh ohavo*  
*Al tehi baz lechol adam*  
*U'maflig lechol davar*  
*She'ein adam she'ein lo sha'ah*  
*Ve'ein davar she'ein lo makom*  
*Dabru emet ish et re'ehu*  
*Emet u'mishpat shalom*  
*Shiftu b'sha'areichem*  
*Eile hadvarim asher ta'asu*

*Eize Hu Chacham* is a collection of ethical and moral statements of the Sages taken from 'Pirkei Avot' – Ethics of our Fathers. 'Pirkei Avot' is a section of the 'Mishna', one of the fundamental works of the Jewish Oral Law.

'Who is wise? One who learns from every man' (Ben Zoma – Pirkei Avot 4:1)

'Who is a hero? One who turns an enemy into a friend' (Avot d'Rabbi Natan Ch 23: True Heroism)

'Do not scorn any person, and do not discount any thing. For there is no one who has not their hour, and no thing that has not its place' (Ben Azzai – Pirkei Avot 4:3)

## iii. *La Yu'minu – Until You Love Your Brother*

*La yu'minu*  
*Ahadukum hatta yuhibbu li akhihi*  
*Ma yuhibbu li nafsihi*  
*Al rahimuna yarhamuhum*  
*Ar rahman urhamu*  
*Man fil arda yarhamakum*  
*Man fis samaa*

'None of you will have faith until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself'

(Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol. 1 : #12) Reporter – Hadhrat Anas (r)

'Those who are merciful will be granted mercy from the Most Merciful; be merciful to those on the earth and those in the heavens will have mercy on you.'

(Sunan At-Tirmidhi, Book of Righteousness, Number 1924, Sahih]  
Reporter – Abdullah ibn Amr

A Hadith is a report of something the Prophet Muhammad said or did. Hundreds of thousands of these reports have been gathered together in the Hadith collections that form the basis of so much Islamic thought and teaching.

This piece, titled 'La Yu'minu' is a melding of two central hadiths. These two proverbs relay a simple yet universal truth, the closest approximation of the first being that of 'the golden rule' : 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you', while the second speaks of what some of us might otherwise call 'karma'.

## iv. *Inna Rifqa – The Beauty Within*

*'Inna rriifqa la yakunu fi shay*  
*Illa zanahu wa la yunza'u min shay illa shanahu'*  
(Hadith 6767, Sahih Muslim)  
Reported by A'isha

'Compassion does not enter into anything without beautifying it, and is not removed from anything without making it ugly.

For several hundred years, the narrations of the Prophet were passed down via word of mouth. As time passed, and the chain of narration grew, it became more difficult to be certain of the authenticity of a hadith, and hence a rigorous science of examining the authenticity of hadiths grew.

Such was the importance placed on the science of verifying the credibility of Hadith, that it grew to become a complex academic field and for many, a lifetime's dedication and pursuit. The most authentic collection of Hadith is widely recognized as those based on the study of Imam al-Bukhari.

There is a famous story highlighting the level of Imam al-Bukhari's rigorous approach. Upon one of his journeys to seek out and examine the character of those involved in the chain of narration,

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

al-Bukhari noticed one such person gesturing to his horse to come over to him by tricking him that there was food when in fact there was not. Al-Bukhari cited this act of trickery towards the animal as behavior not worth of trustworthiness, and hence the chain of narration to which this man was involved in was thereby deemed inauthentic.

## v. *Al Takshu L'vavchem – Don't Harden Your Hearts*

*'Al takshu l'vavachem'* (Tehilim – Book of Psalms 95:8)

*'Limnot yameinu ken hoda venavi l'vav chochma'* (Tehilim – Book of Psalms 90:12)

*'Vekhi yagur itcha ger, be'artzechem lo tonu oto'* (Lev 19:33)

*'K'ezrach mikem yihiyeh lachem hager hager itchem. Ve'ahavta lo kamocha ki gerim ha'item'* (Lev 19:34)

*'Don't harden your hearts'*

*'Teach us to number our days, that we may get a heart of wisdom'*

*'And if a stranger is among you in your land, you shall not do him wrong.'*

*'The stranger that is among you, shall be unto you as the home-born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself, for you once were also strangers'*

There is a beautiful quote by The Dalai Lama – *'There are no strangers, only friends you haven't yet met'*

*'Fear makes strangers of people who would be friends.'* – Shirley Maclaine.

## vi. *Ma Wadani Ahadun – Until the End of Time*

*'Ma Wadani ahadun illa bathaltu lahu Ssafwal mawadati minni akhiral abadi Wala qalani wa in kana almasi'u bina Illa da'awtu lahu rahmanu bil rushdi Wala tumintu ala sirrin fabuhtu bihi Wala madattu illa li ghayr aljameel yadi'*

*'None ever showed me compassion Except that I showed them compassion until the end of time And if someone were to show me harshness I would pray to the most merciful to give him wisdom'*

*'Ma Wadani Ahadun'* is a poem written by Ali Ibn Abi Talib, a cousin of the Prophet Muhammad and the fourth Caliph after the Prophet some 1400 years ago. Widely known for his calm wisdom and use of reason in place of hot-headedness, Ali is a universally revered figure in the Muslim world: a man through whom both the Sunni and Shi'ite traditions pass, whose strong character of kindness and compassion inspires people across sectarian divides.

## vii. *Avinu Malkeinu – Hymn of Compassion*

*'Avinu Malkeinu chanenu v'aneinu ki ein banu ma'asim*

*Aseh imanu tzedakah vachessed ve'hoshi'enu'*

I have vivid memories of hearing *'Avinu Malkeinu'* emanating out of synagogues in my childhood. The prayer is recited on Yom Kippur – The Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the Jewish year. What initially drew me to the prayer was its haunting melody, yet it was only later in life when I learnt of its meaning and universal resonance, that I felt drawn to perform it. One such performance later came to be the very seed of this project, as Nigel and I entertained the notion of orchestrating this beautiful ancient melody which I had only ever previously performed acapella.

The text of *'Avinu Malkeinu'* houses a beautiful link between not only compassion and wisdom, but that of freedom. It highlights the notion of compassion being the path to liberation, a concept that has always stayed with me.

**Notes © Lior, Nigel Westlake**



## FROM THE ARCHIVES



Sydney Symphony Orchestra musicians relax with a game of chess at Sydney Airport before boarding the plane to Launceston for the Orchestra's first visit to Tasmania, November 20-23, 1967.

From left to right are violinists Tony Bonetti, viola player Mascot Blake, and violinists Helen Bainton and Jeffrey Black.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra's commitment to taking music to the towns and cities of New South Wales and Australia stretches almost as far back as the Orchestra's founding in 1932. On our first Regional Tour in 1938 we performed in Wollongong, Katoomba, Orange and Bathurst to celebrate the 150th anniversary of New South Wales.

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