

## MEDIA RELEASE

# Outgoing Sydney Symphony Orchestra Concertmaster Dene Olding to be honoured



*Image: Yoonbae Kim*

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The Sydney Symphony Orchestra will honour the significant contribution of Concertmaster Dene Olding by naming him Concertmaster Emeritus after his final concerts with the Orchestra in October.

Mr Olding recently announced his decision to step down after 23 years as Concertmaster of the SSO and will take his final bow with the orchestra in Beethoven's Symphony No.9 on 29 October at the Sydney Opera House.

The violinist said the time had come to step down as Concertmaster because, in a long association with the orchestra as soloist and Concertmaster spanning 36 years, he had achieved everything he had hoped for and more and now needed to focus on his family and other professional commitments.

"Of course it's with mixed feelings that I've made this decision," said Mr Olding, who turns 60 this year. "Orchestral playing has been a hugely rewarding part of my life and the SSO has occupied a central position in that. I'm really proud of what the orchestra has achieved during my tenure, its current reputation as an orchestra of world-standing and I will really miss working with my esteemed colleagues and friends. Sydney is most fortunate to have an orchestra of this calibre resident here. In fact, it is a necessity for the city as I feel that any major metropolis without a fine orchestra is artistically dead."

"It is a tremendous source of satisfaction to me that I have been able to be involved with and contributed to the growth of the SSO in this exciting period of its history."

"To be awarded the title Concertmaster Emeritus is a great honour and I will happily wear that badge as I continue to be an enthusiastic advocate for the SSO – I'm still very active in the music community concertizing in Australia and overseas and I will endeavour to promote the orchestra and Australian music in general in numerous ways."

"I now see the orchestra in the most capable hands with my fellow Concertmaster Andrew Haveron and Chief Conductor David Robertson, and I am sure that the orchestra will reach ever greater artistic heights under their leadership".

David Robertson, who is also the SSO's Artistic Director, said Mr Olding would be missed by his colleagues, not only as an incredible musician, but as an inclusive and generous leader and friend.

"Dene is a world-class musician of the highest calibre and his talent, gracious poise, deep knowledge, and gentle sense of good humour has helped make the SSO the ensemble that it is today," Mr Robertson said.

"In his work as Concertmaster of the SSO, as a founding member of the Goldner String Quartet, and as a passionate advocate for living composers, he has consistently demonstrated the amazing richness of the Australian musical landscape. Dene's great interest in and attention to young instrumentalists has contributed to nurturing a wonderful new generation of musicians. I feel blessed to have been able to work with him."

SSO Managing Director Rory Jeffes said Mr Olding's contribution to the organisation had been enormous: "Throughout his time as Concertmaster at the SSO, Dene has provided artistic leadership to the orchestra during a period in which it has undergone fundamental change, from being an orchestra of the ABC, to now one of the leading orchestras in the world. He has contributed enormously through his playing and leadership as Concertmaster, but has gone above and beyond his job description to become a leading member of the musical community in Australia and internationally."

Audiences will have the chance to celebrate Mr Olding's career when the Goldner String Quartet performs with the SSO at City Recital Hall on 6 October in the *Mad About Mozart* program with Assistant Conductor Toby Thatcher.

**#ENDS#**

**MAD ABOUT MOZART**

**City Recital Hall**

Thurs 6 Oct, 7pm

**VERBEY** Shadow

**MOZART** Symphony No.28

**HINDSON** The Rave and the Nightingale

**Toby Thatcher** conductor

**Goldner String Quartet**

**BEETHOVEN FINALE**

**Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House**

Wed 26 Oct, 8pm

Fri 28 Oct, 8pm

Sat 29 Oct, 8pm

**BEETHOVEN** Symphony No.2,  
Symphony No.9 (Choral)

**Vladimir Ashkenazy** conductor

**Christiane Oelze** soprano

**Fiona Campbell** mezzo-soprano

**Steve Davislim** tenor

**Teddy Tahu Rhodes** baritone

**Sydney Philharmonia Choirs**

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Principal Partner



## ABOUT DENE OLDING

One of Australia's most outstanding violinists, Mr Olding has achieved a distinguished career in many aspects of musical life. During his more than 40 year career he has done an enormous amount to raise the profile of Australian performers and music on the international stage, nurture young Australian musicians and champion the highest of performance standards in music. He is also Artistic Director of the Michael Hill International Violin Competition in New Zealand and sees that role as an ideal way to foster the next generation of outstanding violinists and to preserve the art of violin playing.

A graduate of the Juilliard School, in 1985 Mr Olding was awarded a Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship and is a Laureate of the Queen Elisabeth of Belgium International Violin Competition. He rejoined the SSO as Co-Concertmaster in 2002, having held the position from 1987 to 1994. He was also leader and director of the Australian Chamber Orchestra and frequent Guest Concertmaster with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Mr Olding is also familiar to Sydney audiences as first violinist in the Australia Ensemble (resident @UNSW) and as a founding member of the internationally renowned Goldner String Quartet (formed in 1995).

As a soloist Mr Olding has won many awards and has performed more than 40 concertos, including many premieres with leading conductors and orchestras in Australia and on the international stage. He has an extensive list of recordings of solo and chamber music on the ABC, Tall Poppies, Hyperion, CPO and SSO labels. Mr Olding within the Goldner String Quartet has recorded all the Beethoven String Quartets and those of the late Australian composer Peter Sculthorpe and helped produce a television documentary on those works.



Principal Partner

