

MEDIA RELEASE

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra announce 15 young musicians selected for 2017 Fellowship



Monday 20 February 2017: Fifteen of Australia's best and brightest classical musicians have been selected from hundreds of applicants to participate in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's (SSO) internationally-renowned Fellowship program in 2017. Over the next 12-months these talented young performers will be mentored by members of Australia's flagship orchestra, gaining experience and training that is critical to secure highly-coveted positions in professional orchestras around the world.

Fellowship Artistic Director Roger Benedict said the program demonstrates the SSO's commitment to nurturing the next generation of classical musicians in Australia.

"For 16 years, the SSO Fellowship has equipped young musicians with the tools they need to sustain long and fruitful careers as professional musicians," Benedict said. "Participating in the program will not only ensure that these young musicians are job-ready and capable of winning positions in prestigious orchestras all over the world, but even more importantly lead them to become inspiring, imaginative and innovative artists who are able to transform lives through music."

The 2017 Fellows are:

Gemma Lee, 21, violin (NSW)
Bridget O'Donnell, 24, violin (ACT)
Martin Alexander, 26, viola (VIC)
Joseph Cohen, 22, viola (NSW)
Nils Hobiger, 24, cello (VIC)
Ruben Palma, 27, cello (NSW)
Alanna Jones, 28, double bass (NZ)
Kim Falconer, 24, flute (VIC)

Joshua Oates, 24, oboe (SA)
David McGregor, 24, clarinet (TAS)
Christopher Haycroft, 23, bassoon (VIC)
Alice Yang, 26, horn (NSW)
Jenna Smith, 22, trumpet (NSW)
Amanda Tillet, 23, trombone (SA)
Samuel Butler, 22, Percussion (SA)

The Fellows will spend one year with the SSO immersed in invaluable professional opportunities including working with SSO Chief Conductor and Artistic Director David Robertson, rehearsing and performing concerts with the full orchestra at the Sydney Opera House, receiving one-on-one lessons with SSO musicians, and participating in master classes with the orchestra's guest artists.

John Knox, Chief Executive Officer of Credit Suisse in Australia, said the Fellowship shares Credit Suisse's global philosophy of nurturing young talent and supporting excellence.

"We are extremely proud to continue our support of the SSO Fellowship program, which is very much in line with Credit Suisse's values of developing promising young talent," Knox said. "The Fellowship has long been recognised as one of the leading musician-training programs in the world and with such a talented group of young musicians participating in this year's program, will continue to progress from strength to strength."

Twenty-four year old clarinettist David McGregor describes himself as being ecstatic to have been selected for the Fellowship program: "I'm absolutely over the moon to have been selected for the Fellowship program. I was in a rehearsal when I received the news that I'd been accepted and nearly dropped my phone with excitement! I'm really looking forward to working with the inspiring musicians from the SSO, as well as my Fellowship colleagues."

The lasting success of the Fellowship was recently recognised in an independent report by BYP group, which found that the Fellowship is addressing an unmet need in the Australian orchestral sector and that 86 per cent of alumni since the program started in 2001 are working in symphony orchestras around Australia and internationally.

"Without the SSO Fellowship program, it is questionable whether there would be the same number of high quality musicians available to work in Australia's symphony orchestras," stated the report by BYP Group, Sydney-based specialist impact evaluation consultants. "This is because there are no other programs in Australia that so specifically and comprehensively meet the needs of orchestral playing."

The Fellowship forms part of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's award-winning education program and is supported by funding from Credit Suisse, Create NSW and individual donors who support each position. For more information on the 2017 Fellowship, visit <https://www.sydneysymphony.com/learning-and-engagement/emerging-artists/sso-fellowship>

The full BYP report on the Fellowship program is available for download here:

<http://d32h38l3ag6ns6.cloudfront.net/pdf/Learning%20%26%20Engagement/sso-fellowship-evaluation-report.pdf>

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