It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the final concert in the 2007 EnergyAustralia Master Series – Schubert's Great Symphony – with Sydney Symphony Chief Conductor and Artistic Director, Maestro Gianluigi Gelmetti.

Tonight, Maestro Gelmetti will lead the Sydney Symphony through an awe-inspiring program of Romantic masterpieces, from Wagner's rhapsodic Siegfried Idyll to Schubert's Great C Major Symphony, renowned for its grand proportions and glorious melodies. I am also delighted to welcome acclaimed violinist, Frank Peter Zimmermann, who will perform the deeply emotional Violin Concerto ('To the Memory of an Angel') by Alban Berg.

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I hope you have enjoyed the concerts as we have celebrated the 75th anniversary season with the Sydney Symphony and invite you to join us for the EnergyAustralia Master Series in 2008.

George Maltabarow
Managing Director
SEASON 2007
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SCHUBERT’S GREAT SYMPHONY

Wednesday 5 December | 8pm
Friday 7 December | 8pm
Saturday 8 December | 8pm
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Gianluigi Gelmetti conductor
Frank Peter Zimmermann violin

RICHARD WAGNER (1813–1883)
Siegfried Idyll

ALBAN BERG (1885–1935)
Violin Concerto (To the Memory of an Angel)
Andante – Allegretto
Allegro – Adagio

INTERVAL

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)
Symphony No.9 in C, D944 (Great C major)
Andante – Allegro ma non troppo
Andante con moto
Scherzo (Allegro vivace – Trio)
Finale (Allegro vivace)

The Sydney appearance of Frank Peter Zimmermann is supported by

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Estimated timings:
18 minutes, 26 minutes, 20-minute interval, 56 minutes
The performance will conclude at approximately 10.15pm.

Cover images: see page 30 for captions
Program notes begin on page 5
Artist biographies begin on page 20
Trust is proud of its long standing partnership with the Sydney Symphony and is delighted to bring you the Thursday Afternoon Symphony Series in 2007.

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Jonathan Sweeney
Managing Director
Trust Company Limited
SCHUBERT’S GREAT SYMPHONY

Thursday 6 December | 1.30pm
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Gianluigi Gelmetti conductor
Frank Peter Zimmermann violin

RICHARD WAGNER (1813–1883)
Siegfried Idyll

ALBAN BERG (1885–1935)
Violin Concerto (To the Memory of an Angel)
Andante – Allegretto
Allegro – Adagio

INTERVAL

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Schubert’s Great Symphony

What makes a symphony ‘great’? In Schubert’s case the popular label for his Ninth Symphony is simply a convenient way of distinguishing it from the ‘Little C Major’ Symphony (the much shorter Sixth). For Schubert himself ‘grosse’ was an objective reference to the size and scale of the symphony – closer in meaning to ‘grand’ than to ‘great’ with its qualitative implications. Not that Schubert’s Ninth isn’t great in that sense too. ‘Heavenly length,’ said the composer and critic Robert Schumann, drawing both ideas together.

Sadly, in Schubert’s lifetime the sheer length of the symphony prevented it from receiving a public performance; it was too long to rehearse and too long to program. So modest, unassertive Schubert, lacking the aristocratic connections of a composer like Beethoven and the resources to stage his own concerts, never heard its greatness.

Berg never got to hear his Violin Concerto either. He died of blood poisoning just months before the premiere. But he would never have doubted that it would be performed, despite the fact that his musical style pushed more boundaries than Schubert’s ever had. That musical style – let’s call it serialism, or 12-tone music – has attracted more than its share of antagonism, but of all its proponents Berg is the most popular. This is partly because of the reassuring nods he makes to tradition and partly because of his lyricism. In the case of the concerto – written ‘To the Memory of an Angel’ – there is a story behind the music that only enhances its expressive qualities. In short, this is a concerto that lets us forget its technique to be lost in its powerful emotion.

Wagner did hear the first performance of the Siegfried Idyll. It would be odd to call it a ‘premiere’, though, as it took place on the staircase of his home, waking his wife on her birthday. Later Wagner sanctioned its performance by orchestral ensembles, which removes the sense of the intimacy but in no way detracts from its beauty. From this exquisite beginning, then, the concert progresses from private expression to public statement and a truly great symphony.
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Richard Wagner
*Siegfried Idyll*

The *Siegfried Idyll* reveals a touchingly gentle and domestic side of a composer who often displayed the opposite. Wagner’s full title for the piece was *Tribschen Idyll, with Fidi’s Birdsong and Orange Sunrise, as a Symphonic Birthday Greeting from Richard to Cosima.*

Tribschen is the villa near the Swiss town of Lucerne where Wagner was living with his wife Cosima, whom he had recently married when her divorce from Hans von Bülow was finalised. She already had two daughters by Wagner, and in 1869 a son was born, Siegfried, known in the family circle as Fidi. On Christmas Day 1870, which was also Cosima’s birthday, she awoke to the strains of music. As the music died away, Richard came into the room and offered Cosima the score of the ‘symphonic birthday poem’. The 13 musicians stood on various levels of the staircase of Tribschen. They were rehearsed secretly by the young Hans Richter, who played horn, and also the brief trumpet part. Richter, later to become famous as a conductor, was at that stage living in the Wagner household. He had almost given the game away to Cosima, who wondered why he was disappearing every evening, and what on earth he was doing practising the trumpet!

The *Siegfried Idyll* is a kind of pendant to the music drama *Siegfried*, on which Wagner had been working, and many of its themes are to be found in the opera. The peaceful melody with which it begins is associated in the opera’s last act with Brünnhilde’s yielding, her giving up of memories of immortality for love of Siegfried. Another theme, appearing in counterpoint with it, is that of Brünnhilde’s sleep. There is a second theme, not from the opera, based on an old German lullaby, and later the wind instruments present the theme associated with the words ‘Siegfried, Treasure of the World’, from the opera’s love duet. We hear the horn melody associated with the young Siegfried as hero, and the theme of the woodbird who leads Siegfried to Brünnhilde’s fire-surrounded rock.

### ABOUT THE MUSIC

**Richard Wagner**

*The Siegfried Idyll*

Born Leipzig, 1813
Died Venice, 1883

Wagner is best known for his near-complete transformation of opera in the 19th century. He regarded opera as a unity of art forms: music and words inextricably linked and organically developed as ‘music drama’. It was a vision that influenced singers, orchestras, the theatre, and even the science of acoustics. Wagner’s personality, philosophies and music were controversial during his lifetime and after his death, attracting equally passionate fans and detractors within the musical world and beyond. His *Ring* cycle of four operas based on *The Ring of the Nibelung* was his most ambitious creation, composed over 26 years.

**SIEGFRIED IDYLL**

The *Siegfried Idyll* had intimate beginnings. Unlike Wagner’s grand theatrical projects, this was music for a small ensemble (originally 13 musicians) and private performance – intended to wake his wife, Cosima, on her birthday. It contains motifs Wagner was developing for the *Ring* opera, *Siegfried*, but it also includes a theme from a string quartet that Wagner had planned early in his relationship with Cosima. The Idyll was later published for performance with orchestral strings, as we hear it in these concerts.
Listening Guide

Although it began as private chamber music (Wagner later sanctioned its publication and performance with orchestral strings), the *Siegfried Idyll* is really an early example of the symphonic poem. Liszt invented this genre and Richard Strauss developed it; Wagner here depends less on an extraneous program than either of these composers. The *Siegfried Idyll* (which Wagner originally planned to call ‘Symphony’) can be heard as a single movement in a kind of expanded sonata form. The first theme, in fact, comes from a planned string quartet Richard had promised to Cosima in the days of their first love. Only later was it incorporated into the opera *Siegfried*.

The second group of themes ends with the lullaby, played by the oboe and accompanied by string figures which, Wagner explained, represent sheep. The surprise performance of this piece was the most ambitious of a number of pantomimes mounted in the Wagner household. Although containing many private meanings for the family, the *Siegfried Idyll* is an application to instrumental music of a method Wagner developed in his music dramas – the building of broad melodies out of constantly repeated single phrases.

As Donald Tovey has written, the *Siegfried Idyll* is ‘a gigantic though intensely quiet piece of purely instrumental music, connected with the opera only by a private undercurrent of poetic allusion’. Cosima herself recalled Richard telling her that ‘all that he had set out to do was to work the theme which had come to him in Starnberg (where we were living together), and which he had promised me as a quartet, into a morning serenade, and then he had unconsciously woven our whole life into it – Fidi’s birth, my recuperation, Fidi’s bird, etc. As Schopenhauer said, this is the way a musician works – he expresses life in a language which reason does not understand.’

DAVID GARRETT ©1991

The *Siegfried Idyll* is scored for flute, oboe, two clarinets, bassoon, two horns, trumpet and strings.

The Sydney Symphony first performed the *Siegfried Idyll* in 1942, conducted by Percy Code, and most recently in a 2003 gala concert conducted by Edo de Waart.
Alban Berg
Violin Concerto (To the Memory of an Angel)

Andante – Allegretto
Allegro – Adagio

Frank Peter Zimmermann violin

Alban Berg’s Violin Concerto is one of the most compelling demonstrations of the lyrical and emotional potential inherent in the 12-tone technique. It is one of those works which transcend style and period, and speak directly to the heart of the listener.

In 1935, Alban Berg was in dire financial straits, trying to complete his opera Lulu, even though it had few prospects for performance, owing to the Nazis’ antagonism to the new musical language Berg represented.

Louis Krasner, an American violinist studying in Europe, had fallen in love with the music of Schoenberg and his pupils Berg and Webern – the so-called Second Viennese School. He asked for a concerto from Berg, believing him to be the most lyrical of the 12-tone composers, and the composer most able to reconcile audiences with the Schoenbergien method.

Friends counselled Krasner not to get his hopes up, knowing that Berg had recently knocked back a commission for a string quartet from the Library of Congress. But Krasner persisted. Having already proven his clout by persuading Serge Koussevitsky and the Boston Symphony to perform Berg’s Lyric Suite, Krasner had whetted Berg’s interest and they met on several occasions to discuss the possibility of a commission. As Krasner said:

The personal tone between Berg and myself gradually grew in relaxation and harmony and during a conversation at his home, I soon felt able to broach directly the subject of a full-scale Violin Concerto...[Berg’s] reaction was not unfriendly but he seemed surprised at the idea...: ‘You are a young violinist in the beginnings of a promising concert career,’ he told me. ‘What you require for your programs are brilliant compositions by Wieniawski and Vieuxtemps...’ My response was not difficult to conceive: ‘Meister – Beethoven and Mozart also wrote Violin Concertos.’ ‘Ah, ja,’ he said softly and smiled. I pursued my momentary vantage and spoke on: ‘The attacking criticism of 12-tone music everywhere is that this music is only cerebral and without feeling or emotion. If you undertake to write a Violin Concerto, it certainly will have to be a very serious, deliberate

Keynotes

BERG
Born Vienna, 1885
Died Vienna, 1935

A student of Arnold Schoenberg, Berg followed his teacher’s lead from the rich tonality of the late 19th century to free atonality and the formal processes of 12-tone music. His greatest works include the Lyric Suite for orchestra, the operas Wozzeck and Lulu, and the Violin Concerto, his last composition. As a result of his lyrical inclinations and an apparent lack of absolute strictness in his use of the 12-tone technique, he has always been more popular with audiences than either Schoenberg or his fellow pupil Anton Webern.

VIOLIN CONCERTO

Berg’s Violin Concerto was dedicated “To the Memory of an Angel” – a reference to Manon Gropius, who had died of polio. It was commissioned and premiered by an American violinist attracted to the innate lyricism of Berg’s style.

Each of the two movements falls into two sections defined by changes in tempo. Berg adopts a tone row that outlines four chords from conventional harmony, and in which the last four notes match the beginning of a Bach chorale. Other traditional elements offset the disorienting effects of the 12-tone technique: the violinist enters playing open strings, and Berg quotes both the Bach chorale and a folksong.
and communicative work – for the violin is a lyrical and songful instrument which I know you love.’

Stimulus for the work soon arrived, however, in the death on 22 April 1935 of Manon Gropius, 19-year-old daughter of the architect Walter Gropius and Gustav Mahler’s widow, Alma. Berg was particularly close to Manon, loving her almost as a daughter. At her death he was grief-stricken, and ideas for the work began to crystallise. It acquired an underlying poetic idea: it would commemorate Manon’s life. Berg called on Alma to ask permission to dedicate what he now called his ‘Requiem for an Angel’ to Mutzi (as Manon had affectionately been known). He began writing feverishly, completing the work in time for Alma’s birthday on 31 August. The work was premiered at the Barcelona International Society for Contemporary Music Festival in April 1936. The soloist was Krasner, with Hermann Scherchen conducting. But Berg did not live to hear the premiere. He had died of blood poisoning on Christmas Eve 1935. Ironically, the work proved also to be a requiem for him.

Berg’s Violin Concerto owes much of its appeal, not just to its palpable grief and consolatory radiance, but to a musical language that re-incorporates the music of the immediate past within Schoenberg’s 12-tone system. There are references here that the traditional listener can respond to on an intuitive level. As Anthony Pople, writing in the Cambridge Music Handbook to the work says, ‘Key features of [classical-romantic] stereotypes are placed in focus just sufficiently for the listener to be alert to the ongoing play of near-repetitions, developments, variations and near-recapitulations.’

The concerto is also based on a tone row which, in keeping with Schoenberg’s system, sets out all 12 notes of the chromatic scale in an order which will remain unique to the piece, but also harks back to tradition in its outlining of common chords.

Berg’s harmonisation of this row can sound Brahmsian at times, as in a passage very soon after the beginning. Nor did it escape Berg’s notice that the last four notes of the row form a whole-tone sequence. The discovery that these four notes are identical to the first four notes of J.S. Bach’s chorale ‘Es ist genug’ (It is enough) from the cantata O Ewigkeit, du Donnerwort, BWV60, was therefore a particularly fruitful one.
Listening Guide

The work is introduced with a poignant sequence derived from the open strings of the violin. It is one of the masterstrokes of this work that Berg makes such an expressive virtue of this ‘given’ feature.

The opening Andante is in ternary form. With a varied repetition of the chordal material we move into the Allegretto. This contains two Trios in a ternary form and the parody of a waltz, before the bittersweet quotation of a folk tune ‘Ein Voger’l auf’m Zwetschgenbaum’ – which flows from the horn ‘come una pastorale’, and is then answered by a celestially high violin. The quotation of a Carinthian folksong at this point is intriguing. Could it refer to Berg’s home on the Wörthersee, where he wrote the work? Unlike the Bach chorale, Berg doesn’t quote the words, which originally referred to a girl called Mizzi. The movement comes to an almost-indecisive end with a dissonant F sharp added to ‘tonic’ G minor chords.

Part II of the concerto, described as a ‘catastrophe’ in Willi Reich’s officially sanctioned program, begins with an accompanied cadenza for the solo violin which leads into a highly rhythmic section (Rondo material which had originally been intended for the ending of the work). In his sketches Berg had headed this section à la marcia, and it was meant to take on the characteristics of groaning (stöhnen). The rhythm assumes greater importance as the Allegro progresses. The solo violin takes it over. One of the superb examples of the work’s orchestration is revealed in the wailing of bassoons, bass clarinet, clarinet and saxophone which accompanies the soloist. There is a lull in the music which recalls part of the first movement, and this eventually leads to a four-part canon for the solo violin. The opening material of the movement returns and the emotional pitch builds until the characteristic rhythm is beaten out, almost brutally, by the full orchestra.

Out of this, clearly intended to represent the disaster of Manon’s death, Bach’s chorale theme appears. The words of Bach’s original speak to the point: ‘It is enough!’

Lord, when it pleases Thee
relieve me of my yoke!
My Jesus comes:
So goodnight now, O world!
I’m going to my Heavenly home.
I’ll surely journey there in peace,
My great distress will stay below.
It is enough. It is enough.
FRANK PETER ZIMMERMANN ON SONY CLASSICAL

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The chorale is first heard in Bach’s original harmonisation, played on clarinets and bass clarinet as if in imitation of a small church organ. Only wisps of dissonant phrases in the violins represent the distinctive stamp of Berg’s own style. The soloist answers (‘I’ll surely journey there in peace’), and the clarinets respond (‘My great distress will stay below’).

The chorale is subjected to two variations. In the first, the soloist draws a beautiful plaintive melody out of the row, while the bass trombone, milked for all its tragic ungainliness, plays the chorale melody. We enter the second variation, and, as if magically, in one of the work’s most moving touches, the soloist has become the leader of the entire violin section.

Towards the end, the Carinthian folksong reappears. There is a brief closing reference to the Bach chorale melody, and arpeggiated open fifths bring the music full circle to a close.

And perhaps we may wonder: why does the Carinthian folksong reappear? It may pay to look closer at the words. We may see why they have been deleted. They refer to oversleeping in Mizzi’s bed. Was the subject inappropriately lewd for Berg’s requiem-concerto, or was the reason more personal? Pople points out that there was a Mizzi, a Marie Scheuchl, working in the Berg household, who bore Berg an illegitimate child in the spring of 1902 when Berg was the same age as Manon Gropius when she contracted polio. Mutzi/Mizzi – we can at least twig there is a personal reference here – Berg’s youthful indiscretions/Manon’s innocence… Perhaps Berg’s use of this folksong guaranteed that when his Violin Concerto fulfilled its destiny as a requiem hidden personal references would make it all the more poignant.

GORDON KALTON WILLIAMS
SYMPHONY AUSTRALIA ©1997

The orchestra for the Berg Violin Concerto calls for two flutes (doubling piccolos), two clarinets (one doubling cor anglais), 3 clarinets (one doubling alto saxophone), bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon; four horns, two trumpets, two trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion (bass drum, cymbals, snare drum, triangle, tam-tam, gong); harp and strings.

The Sydney Symphony first performed Berg’s Violin Concerto in 1963 with conductor Joseph Post and violinist Tibor Varga; earlier that year Varga had been the soloist for the Australian premiere in Melbourne. The Sydney Symphony most recently performed the concerto in the 2004 Thursday Afternoon Symphony and Master Series with conductor Markus Stenz and soloist Viviane Hagner.
Franz Schubert
Symphony No.9 in C, D944 (Great C major)

Andante – Allegro ma non troppo  
Andante con moto  
Scherzo (Allegro vivace – Trio)  
Finale (Allegro vivace)

More than a decade after Schubert’s death, his Symphony No.9 received its premiere. Even then, the performance was not in his native Vienna – where he was regarded principally as a writer of songs – but in Leipzig, and it had taken the efforts of fellow composers Felix Mendelssohn and Robert Schumann to bring this magnificent and monumental symphony to the attention of audiences.

It was a great success. Following that first performance in 1839, Mendelssohn, who had conducted, wrote to Schubert’s older brother Ferdinand: ‘There was great and sustained applause after each movement and, more important than that, all the musicians in the orchestra were moved and delighted by the splendid work.’

But earlier attempts at performances had been plagued with difficulties, not least the refusal of professional players to devote the necessary rehearsal time to the symphony. When Schubert first presented it to Vienna’s Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde (in late 1826) it was played through at a rehearsal, but ‘provisionally put aside, because of its length and difficulty.’

In Vienna, and later in London, 19th-century concert programming and the practicalities of rehearsing an hour-long work had delayed performances of the symphony. Certain technical difficulties in the string writing only compounded its fate. Anton Schindler complained that the second and fourth movements were lengthy to the point of boredom, criticising the ‘too frequent repetition’ of musical ideas. On the other hand, Robert Schumann – who had discovered the symphony in the keeping of the composer’s brother – referred to its ‘heavenly length’ in letters and in his review for the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik.

For 21st-century listeners an hour may not be all that long. After all, we have symphonies of Bruckner or Mahler for comparison. But in 1828, the longest symphony was Beethoven’s Ninth, and even this monumental work – while received with some enthusiasm – had lost its composer money at the premiere in May 1824.

The following year, Schubert began work on a ‘grosse Symphonie’ – a ‘grand symphony’, although this was never

Keynotes

SCHUBERT  
Born Vienna, 1797  
Died Vienna, 1828  

Like Beethoven, Schubert inherited the Classical tradition of Haydn and Mozart and pushed the boundaries of emerging Romanticism; like Mozart he died young. His greatest ambition was for symphonic writing, but during his lifetime he was regarded principally as a writer of songs. Nowadays those songs are still regarded as masterpieces, but his symphonies – none of which received professional performances when he was alive – have also found their proper place in the concert hall.

GREAT C MAJOR SYMPHONY  
Completed two years before Schubert’s death, the Ninth Symphony [the Eighth in German-speaking countries] was also his final symphony. It represents Schubert’s desire to write a grand symphony of monumental proportions, and for many years its length stood between it and a public performance, although at least one orchestra did play through it. After Schubert’s death it languished in the keeping of his brother until it was discovered by the composer Schumann. Together with Mendelssohn, Schumann organised the premiere in 1839. The symphony was acclaimed and its length – as well as the long-range development of musical ideas that it encompasses within its classical structure – became a virtue.
his formal name for the work. The final result (following closely on four abandoned attempts, including the *Unfinished* Symphony No.8), was the fruit of a long-held ambition to write a symphonic work of the proportions of Beethoven’s Ninth. In many ways, the originality of the *Unfinished* Symphony – particularly in the broad unfurling of long-range harmonic thinking – reflects Schubert’s personal struggle to reconcile new ideas with inherited forms and musical language.

The *Great C major* displays that same tension between flourishing Romanticism and Schubert’s Classical background. (His teacher Antonio Salieri had raised him on the music of Haydn and Mozart.) Surrounded on either side by Beethoven’s Ninth and Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* (1830), the *Great C major* has been described equally as the last great Classical symphony and the first of the Romantic symphonies. Perhaps it was this synthesis and bridging of styles that was slow to be valued. As Schindler pointed out, the structure of the music is built up of seamless repetitions of smaller material. This need not, of course, be seen as a weakness, rather as a source of colour and variation, a rhetorical device.

At the same time, it is in its structure that the symphony is at its most Classical. Not only does Schubert return (as in his piano sonatas) to the traditional four-movement pattern of the late 18th century, but his use of sonata form in not one but three of the movements imparts a Classical sense of drama achieved through formal conflict between harmonic centres. The traditional forms are enlarged and enriched in Schubert’s treatment. As Schumann wrote in his review of the symphony: ‘Herein is revealed the finest technical skill, life in every fibre of the music, the finest gradations of colouring and care for the minutest detail; the whole structure is shrouded in the cloak of Romanticism which has now become familiar to us in Schubert’s compositions.’

**Listening Guide**

The introduction of the first movement is Romantic in its function as well as its feeling. In the manner of Beethoven’s Seventh and Ninth Symphonies, Schubert integrates the introduction (Andante) with the main Allegro section, to the point where, as Brian Newbould observes, the concept of an ‘introduction’ must be redefined. The distinctive opening motif, played by unison horns, is more than a call for attention. It is a pivotal musical idea, reappearing at the end of the movement without reverting to the introductory tempo.

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**Work on the Ninth**

Until the mid-1970s it was believed that Schubert’s Ninth Symphony was the product of the last few months of his life, supposedly written in one inspired burst of creative energy. It is now accepted that, in spite of the date on Schubert’s autograph score (March 1828), the *Great C major* Symphony was composed in 1825 and 1826. Furthermore, the outer movements show evidence of substantial revision during the compositional process.
The second movement (*Andante con moto*) is a curious blend of rondo and variation form within a sonata-form context. Here, the opening oboe theme is developed by tireless winds above a measured accompaniment. Relentlessly the strings occupy every beat until the climax of the movement, where the sudden hush is rendered all the more dramatic.

While a symphonic scherzo is traditionally light in spirit, Schubert’s ambitious *Allegro vivace* is both vibrant and weighty on a scale to match the surrounding movements. The composer’s leaning towards waltz themes is evident – perhaps the only suggestion of the fondly held ‘Biedermeier’ image of Schubert to present itself in the symphony. The weight of the Scherzo comes from its rhythmic drive and Schubert’s unusual and brilliant orchestration. The harmonic support and colour given by the three trombones reminds us of Schubert’s instinctive writing for wind and brass – surpassing, as Schumann and later writers have assured us, even Beethoven.

The scoring of the Finale (*Allegro vivace*) harks back to the outer movements of Schubert’s Fourth Symphony, with the strings sustaining the fierce energy of a galloping combination of triplet and dotted rhythms. In contrast with Schubert’s supposed introvert nature and the private tone of the Unfinished Symphony, this finale is, in every sense, spacious and extrovert music – not only in its scale but in its uplifting joyousness.

‘Among more recent works,’ wrote Mendelssohn shortly after the Leipzig premiere of the symphony, ‘it is certainly one of the best we have; lively, piquant and original throughout, it stands at the very summit of Schubert’s instrumental works.’ And Schumann could say quite frankly to a readership perhaps more familiar with Schubert’s songs than his instrumental works that ‘he who is not acquainted with this symphony knows but little of Schubert...’

ADAPTED FROM A NOTE BY YVONNE FRINDLE
SYMPHONY AUSTRALIA ©1997

The symphony is scored for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons; in this performance Maestro Gelmetti has chosen to double the woodwinds, assigning two players to each part. The rest of the orchestra comprises two horns, two trumpets and three trombones; timpani and strings.

Felix Mendelssohn conducted the premiere of Schubert’s Great C major Symphony at the Leipzig Gewandhaus on 21 March 1839. The Sydney Symphony first performed it in 1938 with conductor George Szell, and most recently in 2002 under Gianluigi Gelmetti.

Too long, too difficult

In October 1826 Schubert wrote to the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde venturing ‘as a native artist, to dedicate to them this, my Symphony, and to commend it most politely to their protection.’ The Society did play through the symphony but was unwilling, or unable, to undertake a performance. But despite complaining of its ‘length and difficulty’, the Society was not entirely unappreciative and Schubert was given (‘not as a fee’) an honorarium of 100 florins.

Heavenly length

The symphony ‘had a success in spite of some voices being raised against its length, for it lasted a full hour...’

Publisher Raymund Härtel in a letter to Schumann

‘...all the instruments are human voices. It is gifted beyond measure, this instrumentation, Beethoven notwithstanding – and this length, the heavenly length, like a novel in four volumes, longer than [Beethoven’s] Ninth Symphony.’

Schumann in a letter to Clara Wieck
GLOSSARY

12-TONE TECHNIQUE – see serialism

BIEDERMEIER – a style in art and interiors that flourished in Germany 1815–48, and was named for ‘Biedermaier’, a fictitious poet created in 1854. It is strongly associated with comfort, convention and general ‘cosiness’; the term was also used in a negative sense to refer to bourgeois style and values.

CANON – music in which a melody is presented by one ‘voice’ and then repeated by one or more other voices, each entering before the previous voice has finished. Childhood singing rounds are the most common form of canon. A four-part canon is one in which there are four distinct voices or parts.

SCHERZO – literally, a joke; generally referring to a movement in a fast, light triple time, with whimsical, startling or playful elements and a contrasting central section called a TRIO.

SECOND VIENNESE SCHOOL – a collective reference for Arnold Schoenberg and his students Alban Berg and Anton von Webern, and the style they championed in the first part of the 20th century. In different ways these composers explored the idea of atonality together with the compositional technique of the 12-note ‘tone row’ (also known as serialism), a formal system that allowed the composer to avoid creating any sense of conventional tonal centre in the music. (The corresponding “first” Viennese School is, by implication, Haydn and Mozart and their Classical contemporaries.)

SERIALISM – serialism commonly refers to the technique (devised by Arnold Schoenberg) of organising a musical composition by means of a TONE ROW, in which each of the 12 available notes in the octave (‘black’ and ‘white’ notes) must be played in the given sequence before any note can be repeated. Rows can be transposed, inverted, mirrored and so on, giving an almost limitless number of pitch combinations. The goal in a ‘pure’ use of the 12-NOTE TECHNIQUE is to undermine conventional tonality and to thwart the ear’s natural inclination to hear tonal relationships between different pitches.

SONATA FORM – this term was conceived in the 19th century to describe the harmonically based structure most Classical composers had adopted for the first movements of their sonatas and symphonies. It involves the EXPOSITION, or presentation of themes and subjects: the first in the tonic or home key, the second in a contrasting key. The tension between the two keys is intensified in the DEVELOPMENT, where the themes are manipulated and varied as the music moves further and further away from the ultimate goal of the home key. Tension is resolved in the RECAPITULATION, where both subjects are restated in the tonic. Sometimes a CODA (‘tail’) is added to enhance the sense of finality.

SYMPHONIC POEM – a genre of orchestral music that is symphonic in scope but adopts a freer structure in service of an extra-musical ‘program’ that provides the narrative or scene. Liszt was the first to use the term and Richard Strauss also championed the symphonic poem in preference to writing regular symphonies.

TERNARY FORM – a more or less symmetrical three-part structure in which the material of the first section returns after a contrasting middle section.

TONE ROW – see serialism

À LA MARCIA – in the style of a march

In much of the classical repertoire, movement titles are taken from the Italian words that indicate the tempo and mood. A selection of terms from this program is included here.

Adagio – slow
Allegro – fast
Allegro ma non troppo – fast but not too much
Allegro vivace – fast and lively
Andante – at a walking pace

This glossary is intended only as a quick and easy guide, not as a set of comprehensive and absolute definitions. Most of these terms have many subtle shades of meaning which cannot be included for reasons of space.
MORE MUSIC

Selected Discography

GELMETTI & ZIMMERMANN PLAY BERG
Zimmermann and Gelmetti recorded the Berg Violin Concerto with the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra in 1990 (with Stravinsky’s concerto and Ravel’s Tzigane). The original release is now out of print, but the performance can be found in a Berg portrait collection that includes the Lyric Suite, Lulu Suite, songs, the Piano Sonata Op.1 and other works.
EMI CLASSICS 81771

GIANLUIGI GELMETTI
Among Gelmetti’s more recent releases is a recording of an opera by Antonio Salieri, Schubert’s teacher. Les Danaïdes with Monserrat Caballé and the RAI Orchestra.
DYNAMIC 489/1-2

Strauss and Schubert – recorded live at the Sydney Opera House. R. Strauss Four Last Songs; Schubert Symphony No.8 (Unfinished); J. Strauss II Blue Danube Waltz. Gianluigi Gelmetti (conductor), Ricarda Merbeth (soprano)
SSO1

And a live concert recording of Debussy’s La Mer with the Sydney Symphony, recorded in 2005, appears on 75th Anniversary Collection: A Recording Heritage
ABC CLASSICS 476 5962

FRANK PETER ZIMMERMANN
Zimmermann’s recent releases include two works by Ferrucio Busoni: the Violin Concerto (with RAI Orchestra Milan and John Storgårds) and the Second Violin Sonata (with Enrico Pace)
SONY SK94497

And Bach’s Violin Sonatas, also with Enrico Pace
SONY 88697112432

SIEGFRIED IDYLL
Georg Solti and the Vienna Philharmonic conveniently couple Wagner’s Siegfried Idyll with Schubert’s Great C Major Symphony.
DECCA LEGENDS 460 311-2

SCHUBERT’S GREAT C MAJOR
In addition to the Solti performance mentioned above...
Karl Böhm’s distinguished and broadly conceived interpretations of Schubert symphonies with the Berlin Philharmonic have been assembled in a mid-price boxed set.
DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 471307

For a more athletic approach, try Frans Brüggen and the Orchestra of the 18th Century in their collection of the complete Schubert symphonies.
PHILIPS 000725802

Broadcast Diary

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

10 December, 1pm
ELGAR SYMPHONY NO.1 (2002)
Edo de Waart conductor
ELGAR CELLO CONCERTO (2005)
Truls Mørk cello
Jeffrey Tate conductor

14 December, 11am
SERENADE FOR STRINGS
Louis Lortie piano/director
Mozart, Tchaikovsky

14 December, 8pm
TCHAIKOVSKY FANTASY
Gianluigi Gelmetti conductor
Louis Lortie piano

19 December, 1.05pm
IMAGES FOR ORCHESTRA
Yannick Nézet-Séguin conductor
Haydn, Meale, Debussy

28 December, 9am
ROGER MURARO IN RECITAL
Ravel, Albeniz, Debussy, Messiaen

31 December, 9am
CÉDRIC TIBERGHIEIN IN RECITAL
Brahms, Chopin, Ravel

Webcast Diary

Selected Sydney Symphony concerts are recorded for webcast by Bigpond.
Visit: www.sydneysymphony.bigpondmusic.com
December webcast:
A TCHAIKOVSKY FANTASY
Live on Friday 14 December at 8pm
Available On Demand from late December

sydneysymphony.com
Visit the Sydney Symphony online for concert information, podcasts, and to read the program book in advance of the concert.
History records, music flows on

As Sydney Symphony’s 75th Anniversary year comes to a close, it’s time to look both forward and backward. How will history remember the orchestra? Every concertgoer will have memories of wonderful events. An orchestra is a complex beast, in peak form as often as possible, but, let’s admit it, not always. There can be a downside, but that’s part of what makes the concert experience a ‘live’ one. Will the recording angel determine what is remembered? Those who attended the composer festivals this year will no doubt have been encouraged to note that all the concerts were recorded for CD, and the printed programs remind us that the Sydney Symphony has started its own label, documenting some of the orchestra’s best performances.

It was high time, since the most important record of an orchestra is the sound of its music-making. The orchestra’s recently issued 5-CD retrospective [see page 4] brings the frustrating realisation that in addition to the many wonderful things it includes – such as Mahler’s Resurrection Symphony conducted by Klemperer, or the orchestra at the newly opened Sydney Opera House with Birgit Nilsson and Sir Charles Mackerras – many other things remembered fondly and with excitement have been lost. Especially disappointing is the knowledge that so many musical highlights were indeed recorded, but not kept.

It’s true that memory can play tricks: trawling such aural trove as has survived, it can be disconcerting to discover that not everything that was remembered as treasure measures up. But that shouldn’t worry anyone – the nexus between an orchestra and its public lies in things more fundamental than whether a standard worthy of repeated listening is always achieved.

Above all, an orchestra’s life is the exploration of one of the supreme achievements of our culture, an exploration it makes in a kind of dialogue with its audiences. Both parties have needs, not least of which are the orchestra’s need for a supportive public and the public’s need to discover both old and new music performed live. If we listened to the Beethoven Festival concerts given in World War II under Bernard Heinze, to large and grateful audiences, we might find the sound of little more than curiosity value, and the Proms concerts under John Hopkins, in the 1960s and 70s, surely would be heard as surveys of a great deal of music new to orchestra and audience, under the pressures of short rehearsal time – a condition of their happening at all. This writer’s memory stretches that far back, but the microphone can still bring surprises.

What can’t change is ‘that’s the first time I was there when that music was played’ – ‘that’s when I first played that music’. We trust each other – orchestra and audience – and the history tells us that there is a future.

David Garrett, a historian and former programmer for Australia’s symphony orchestras, is studying the history of the ABC as a musical organisation. The complete nine-part series of snapshots can be read at sydneysymphony.com/history
Gianluigi Gelmetti
CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Gianluigi Gelmetti, Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony, studied with Sergiu Celibidache, Franco Ferrara and Hans Swarowsky. For ten years he conducted the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra; he has conducted many of the leading orchestras in the world and appears regularly at international festivals. Since 2000 he has been Music Director of the Teatro dell’Opera di Roma.

Highlights of past seasons include engagements in France, Germany, Great Britain, America, Australia, Japan, Switzerland and Italy, where he conducted Mascagni’s *Iris* and Respighi’s *La fiamma* at the Teatro dell’Opera di Roma and *William Tell* at the Rossini Opera Festival. In 1999 he was awarded the Rossini d’Oro Prize. Gianluigi Gelmetti has also worked regularly at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

His interpretation of Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro* earned him the title Best Conductor of the Year from the German magazine *Opernwelt*, and in 1997 he won the Tokyo critics’ prize for the best performance of the year of Beethoven’s Symphony No.9. He has been honoured as Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in France and Grande Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana in Italy.

Gianluigi Gelmetti’s recording catalogue includes operas by Salieri, Rossini, Puccini and Mozart, the complete orchestral music of Ravel, the late symphonies of Mozart and works by many 20th-century composers, including Stravinsky, Berg, Webern, Varèse and Rota. Among his recent recordings are *William Tell, Iris, La fiamma*, Bruckner’s Symphony No.6 and Rossini’s *Stabat Mater*.

Gianluigi Gelmetti is also a composer; his recent works include *In Paradisum Deducant Te Angeli*, written to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Franco Ferrara’s death, *Algos*, and *Prasanta Atma*, in memory of Sergiu Celibidache.

Since summer 1997 he has been teaching at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena.
Frank Peter Zimmermann violin

Born in 1965 in Germany, Frank Peter Zimmermann started playing violin when he was five years old, giving his first concert with orchestra at the age of ten. Since completing his studies in 1983, he has performed with all the major orchestras, collaborating with some of the world’s most renowned conductors. His concerto and recital engagements have taken him to the major concert venues and international music festivals of Europe, North and South America, Japan and Australia.

Earlier this year he gave the world premiere of Brett Dean’s violin concerto *The Lost Art of Letter Writing* with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by the composer. Previously, in 2003, he gave the world premiere of Matthias Pintscher’s violin concerto *en sourdine* with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and Peter Eötvös.

Apart from his many engagements with orchestra, Frank Peter Zimmermann gives numerous recitals worldwide, performing with artists such as Heinrich Schiff and Christian Zacharias as well as his regular recital partner, Italian pianist Enrico Pace. Together with Emanuel Ax he performed a highly acclaimed all-Beethoven program at summer festivals in Germany in July, and in the 2007/08 season he presents the newly formed string trio with Antoine Tamestit and Christian Poltéra.

He has recorded virtually all the major concerto repertoire from Bach to Weill, as well as many key works from the recital repertoire, including several discs with Enrico Pace and a recording of duo works for violin and cello with Heinrich Schiff.

Frank Peter Zimmermann was awarded the Premio del Accademia Musicale Chigiana, Siena 1990, and the important Rheinischer Kulturpreis in 1994. In 2002 he received the Musikpreis from his home city of Duisburg. He plays a Stradivarius from 1711, which once belonged to Fritz Kreisler, and which is kindly sponsored by the WestLB AG.

His most recent appearances for the Sydney Symphony were in 1993, when he performed the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in Gianluigi Gelmetti’s first concerts with the orchestra, and in 1997 when he performed the Hindemith Violin Concerto with Edo de Waart.
Founded in 1932, the Sydney Symphony 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 where the Sydney Symphony gives more than 100 performances each year, the Orchestra also performs concerts in a variety of venues around Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra world-wide recognition for artistic excellence.

Critical to the success of the Sydney Symphony has been the leadership given by its former Chief Conductors including: Sir Eugene Goossens, Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Stuart Challender and Edo de Waart. Also contributing to the outstanding success of the Orchestra have been collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

Maestro Gianluigi Gelmetti, whose appointment followed a ten-year relationship with the Orchestra as Guest Conductor, is now in his fourth year as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony, a position he holds in tandem with that of Music Director at the prestigious Rome Opera.

The Sydney Symphony is reaping the rewards of Maestro Gelmetti’s directorship through the quality of sound, intensity of playing and flexibility between styles. His particularly strong rapport with French and German repertoire is complemented by his innovative programming in the Shock of the New concerts and performances of contemporary Australian music.

The Sydney Symphony’s award-winning Education Program is central to the Orchestra’s commitment to the future of live symphonic music, developing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. The Sydney Symphony maintains an active commissioning program promoting the work of Australian composers and in 2005 Liza Lim was appointed Composer-in-Residence for three years.

In 2007, the Orchestra celebrates its 75th anniversary and the milestone achievements during its distinguished history.
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What’s on the cover?

During the 2007 season Sydney Symphony program covers will feature photos that celebrate the Orchestra’s history over the past 75 years. The photographs on the covers will change approximately once a month, and if you subscribe to one of our concert series you will be able to collect a set over the course of the year.

**COVER PHOTOGRAPHS** (clockwise from top left):

- Malcolm Sargent arrives in Australia (c.1938);
- First Violin Alexandra Mitchell;
- Streamers fall at the final night celebrations of the 1968 Town Hall Proms;
- The SSO in the television studio (1960s);
- Music Under the Stars in Sydney’s Domain (1984);
- Assistant Concertmaster Fiona Ziegler plays for Music4Health.
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