2012 Season

Thu 10 May 1.30pm
Fri 11 May 8pm
Sat 12 May 2pm

Carnevale

Beethoven, Berlioz & Elgar

Thursday Afternoon Symphony

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2012 SEASON
THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY
Thursday 10 May, 1.30pm

EMIRATES METRO SERIES
Friday 11 May, 8pm

GREAT CLASSICS
Saturday 12 May, 2pm

Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Carnevale:
Beethoven, Berlioz and Elgar

David Zinman CONDUCTOR
Andreas Haefliger PIANO

Hector Berlioz (1803–1869)
Benvenuto Cellini: Overture

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)
Piano Concerto No.2 in B flat, Op.19
Allegro con brio
Adagio
Rondo, molto allegro

INTERVAL

Edward Elgar (1857–1934)
Falstaff – Symphonic Study in C minor, Op.68
I Falstaff and Prince Henry
II Eastcheap – Gadshill – The Boar’s Head, Revelry and Sleep Dream Interlude: ‘Jack Falstaff, now Sir John, a boy and page to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk’
IV King Henry V’s progress – The Repudiation of Falstaff, and his Death
The scenes of Falstaff are played without pause.

Berlioz
Roman Carnival – Characteristic Overture, Op.9

Friday's performance will be recorded by ABC Classic FM for later broadcast on Friday 25 May at 8pm.

Pre-concert talk by Peter Czornyj in the Northern Foyer, 45 minutes before each performance. Visit sydneysymphony.com/talk-bios for speaker biographies.

Estimated durations: 11 minutes, 29 minutes, 20-minute interval, 30 minutes, 8 minutes. The concert will conclude at approximately 3.20pm (Thu), 9.50pm (Fri), 3.50pm (Sat).
'It must not be imagined that my orchestral poem is program music... All I have striven to do is to paint a musical portrait or, rather, a sketch portrait.' In composing *Falstaff*, Elgar was attempting to create the musical equivalent of an artist's study or sketch of a character. This painting of Falstaff (1910) by the German artist Eduard Grützner was, like Elgar's 'symphonic study', inspired by Shakespeare's *Henry IV* history plays.
INTRODUCTION

Carnevale

Carnival, Mardi Gras, Shrove tide... Whatever name it goes by, this is the season of celebration and indulgence – one last fling before Lent. It’s a chance to run wild, bend the rules. Cole Porter would have said anything goes; Goethe described it this way:

_The Roman Carnival is not really a festival given for the people but one the people give themselves... there are no fireworks, no illuminations, no brilliant processions. All that happens is that, at a given signal, everyone has leave to be as mad and foolish as he likes, and almost everything, except fisticuffs and stabbing, is permissible. ...everyone accosts everyone else, all good-naturedly accept whatever happens to them, and the insolence and licence of the feast is balanced only by the universal good humour._

This concert is infused with a Carnival spirit. The program is framed by two overtures, both drawn from Berlioz’s opera _Benvenuto Cellini_, which takes place in Rome at the end of the Carnival season. The overture to the opera sets the scene for a dramatic love story; _Roman Carnival_ puts the whirling saltarello dance in our ears – and perhaps our toes.

Universal good humour and high spirits are the prevailing characteristics of Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No.2. This is music by a youthful virtuoso. Even when the music adopts a more lyrical and meditative mood in the second movement, it’s clear that this twenty-something composer was a force to be reckoned with.

But the heart of this program is Elgar’s musical sketch of Falstaff. It’s an unusual work – not an abstract symphony but, according to its composer, not storytelling program music either. (Elgar rather undermines this claim, though, by providing such a detailed narrative through the movement headings.) What Elgar had set out to do was create a portrait of a character, an artist’s ‘study’, and he succeeds.

Taking the Falstaff of Shakespeare’s history plays as his guide (and ignoring the ‘caricature’ who appears in _The Merry Wives of Windsor_), Elgar paints a picture of a complex personality, made up ‘wholly of incongruities’. Falstaff is ‘a man at once young and old, enterprising and fat, a dupe and a wit, harmless and wicked.’ He is a corrupting rascal, yes, a man for whom Carnival might have run all year, but only hear Elgar’s ‘dream interludes’ and he becomes a character worthy of our compassion.

Cover artwork: Vasily Surikov’s watercolour _Roman Carnival_ (1884). akg-images / RIA Nowosti
Hector Berlioz

Overtures from the opera *Benvenuto Cellini*

Benvenuto Cellini of Florence had what Berlioz called a ‘strange career’. He was a true Renaissance man: a soldier, a musician, an author, a goldsmith and an artist, best known today for his sculptures.

Cellini’s life made a deep impression on Berlioz. So much so, wrote the composer in his autobiography, ‘that I stupidly concluded that it would be both dramatic and interesting to other people’. Berlioz’s enthusiasm was poured into an opera, *Benvenuto Cellini*, which he offered to Henri Duponchel, manager of the Paris Opéra. His report continues: Duponchel ‘who looked upon me as a species of lunatic – read the libretto and agreed to take my opera. After which he went about saying that he was going to put it on, not on account of the music, which was ridiculous, but of the book, which was charming.’

There followed three miserable months of rehearsals. Berlioz complains of indifferent actors, a bad-tempered and incompetent conductor (François-Antoine Habeneck) and an atmosphere of vague rumours and general hostility. But the ‘ridiculous’ music did win some supporters. ‘Gradually the larger part of the orchestra came over to my side,’ writes Berlioz, ‘and several declared that this was the most original score they had ever played…Still some malcontents remained, and two were found one night playing ‘J’ai du bon tabac’ [a children’s song] instead of their parts. It was just the same on the stage. The dancers pinched their partners, who, by their shrieks, upset the chorus. When, in despair, I sent for Duponchel, he was never to be found…’

Despite the obstacles, the opera was premiered in 1838 – ‘the overture made a furore, the rest was unmercifully hissed’. In all it received four performances – a ‘deadly failure’ – and Berlioz waited in vain for the opera’s rehabilitation. Although Franz Liszt mounted a successful production in Weimar in 1852 and there have been notable modern revivals since, the opera hasn’t entered the standard repertoire. But the music survives and is loved in the form of the two overtures heard in this concert.

**Benvenuto Cellini: Overture**

The overture to the opera begins with a bold flourish suggesting the turbulent personality of the hero and the drama to come. This is followed by an extended slow section based on two themes from the opera: the first is a solemn melody associated with the Pope, which is first played by...
plucked strings; the second is a wistful woodwind theme associated with Harlequin at Carnival time. Berlioz’s instinct for orchestral colour is demonstrated when the Papal theme appears a second time, sepulchral on low woodwinds with a sotto voce embroidery of festive sounds in the high woodwinds and muted violins.

This slow section turns out to be a large-scale introduction to the overture as a whole, the main theme of which is based on the boisterous opening flourish. Contrast comes with a second theme based on love music from the first act, and after the themes are briefly developed they are returned in reverse order – first the love music, then the swaggering main theme. The overture builds to a powerful climax with the Papal theme resounding thunderously in the brass.

**Roman Carnival, Op.9**

*Roman Carnival* (Le Carnaval romain) was never part of *Benvenuto Cellini*. It represents a rescue mission: giving music from the failed opera new life on the concert stage. Six years after the premiere, Berlioz – having given up hope of a revival – drew on material from the opera to compose an ‘ouverture caractéristique’ depicting the merry turmoil of Carnival time in Rome.

Except for an interlude near the beginning, the mood is of unashamed gaiety. The overture begins with a whirlwind saltarello, taken from the scene in the opera which presents the Lenten Carnival. Then there is a pause and the cor anglais plays a melody from the opera’s love duet. After more bustling and brilliantly coloured music, the dancing saltarello returns, dominating the overture to its tempestuous and exhilarating end.

Adapted from notes by Yvonne Frindle and Symphony Australia

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The overture to *Benvenuto Cellini* calls for two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet) and four bassoons (a trademark of theatre orchestras in 19th-century Paris); four horns, four trumpets, two cornets, three trombones and tuba; timpani (two players) and percussion; and strings.

*Roman Carnival* calls for a very similar ensemble, but as a concert work it uses only two bassoons; the brass section is smaller and only one timpanist is required.

The Sydney Symphony first performed the *Benvenuto Cellini* overture in 1945 conducted by Malcolm Sargent, and most recently in 1988 under Hiroyuki Iwaki. The orchestra first performed *Roman Carnival* in 1939 under George Szell, and most recently in 2009, conducted by Hugh Wolff.

**Carnival in Rome**

‘Carnevale Romano’ has not been fully celebrated for more than a hundred years. Originally a pagan celebration of the coming of spring, it was adapted by the Christians, but the tradition of running wild remained. Masks, disguises, sweetmeats, confetti, candles and torches, drums, bands, horse racing, *commedia dell’arte*, dangerous liaisons… the Roman Carnival was a chance to shake off winter greyness and burst into colour.
Ludwig van Beethoven
Piano Concerto No.2 in B flat major, Op.19

Allegro con brio
Adagio
Rondo, molto allegro

Andreas Haefliger PIANO

When Beethoven sent the final version of this concerto to his publisher, he gave this estimate of its worth: ‘The concerto I value at ten ducats...I do not give it out as one of my best’. No doubt Beethoven was admitting that he had not solved entirely to his satisfaction the problem of apportioning the roles between soloist and orchestra in his first concerto to be played in Vienna. We also know that uppermost in his mind in composing it may have been consolidating his position as a virtuoso pianist, and that his admiration for the achievement of Mozart in composing piano concertos would lead him to judge his own efforts severely.

Fortunately, we can forget Beethoven’s self-criticism and enjoy this fresh, unpretentious concerto. Mozart was a good model, and we need not remind ourselves that Beethoven later achieved, in his fourth and fifth piano concertos, his own answer to the concerto challenge; we should imagine instead the young virtuoso glorying in his own powers, using this vehicle to conquer the Viennese public.

The occasion was a concert in the Burgtheater in 1795. Beethoven’s playing in the salons of the aristocracy had already gained him a reputation as a solo pianist of extraordinary skill and daring, and a remarkable improviser – his skill in this direction may even have extended to his playing of the solo part in the concerto, for, when he was introducing a concerto himself, he did not bother to write out the solo part. Later Beethoven revised the concerto for performances in Vienna and Prague with different soloists, and he withheld it from publication until 1801, which explains why it is numbered 2 although it was written before the published No.1.

Listening Guide
The concerto was the first ‘symphonic’ work of Beethoven’s to be heard in Vienna, and, not surprisingly, the orchestra spreads its wings at the outset. One commentator has identified as many as five themes before the piano comes in with a sixth. The crucial phrases are the opening ones: a
short flourish from tonic to dominant and back, followed by a reflective lyrical phrase. Once the piano is in it dominates the discourse, with many passages obviously designed to show off Beethoven's pianism – especially his legato runs, played with the thumb under, a technique he pioneered. The cadenza for this movement was not written until 1809, perhaps for Beethoven's pupil, the Archduke Rudolf.

The Adagio is a truly slow movement, whereas Mozart's concerto slow movements are usually more moderate andantes. As in many such movements in early Beethoven, the treatment of the theme by the piano becomes increasingly elaborate and decorative. The movement is distinguished by an eloquent – and prophetic – ending, where the soloist has a recitative-like utterance, marked con gran espressione (‘with great expression’), alternating with the orchestra's statement of the theme in broken phrases.

The infectious last movement is a galloping rondo, whose hunting style is familiar from some of Mozart's concertos in B flat; but it is more boisterous than anything in Mozart, mainly through Beethoven's handling of the off-beat accents. The rhythmic placement of these accents is an important building block of the movement – they are shifted for effect at the beginning of the first couplet of the rondo, and in many other places. There is a pleasant surprise at the end, where Beethoven again follows Mozart's precedent by introducing a new theme in the coda, a popular touch, followed by some Beethovenian humour. This is Beethoven the eloquent entertainer indeed, not much loved by his fellow-pianists, and we can see why if we compare this concerto he wrote to display his wares with the contemporary products of Hummel, Dussek, Clementi and others.

© DAVID GARRETT

The orchestra for this concert calls for flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns and strings.

The Sydney Symphony's first performance on record of this concerto was in the 1943 Beethoven Festival, with pianist Eunice Gardiner and conductor Bernard Heinze. The most recent performance was in 2009 with Paul Lewis and conductor Douglas Boyd.
Anyone can do the expected. It’s the unexpected that sets you apart.
Edward Elgar

Falstaff – Symphonic Study in C minor, Op.68

I Falstaff and Prince Henry

II Eastcheap – Gadshill – The Boar’s Head, Revelry and Sleep Dream Interlude: ‘Jack Falstaff, now Sir John, a boy and page to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk’

III Falstaff’s March – The Return through Gloucestershire Interlude: Gloucestershire, Shallow’s Orchard

   The New King – The Hurried Ride to London

IV King Henry V’s progress – The Repudiation of Falstaff, and his Death

The scenes of Falstaff are played without pause.

There is a great temptation to view Elgar as the embodiment of Edwardian musical society: the Master of the King’s Musick and the composer of Nimrod and Land of Hope and Glory. This is not, however, a view which would have been shared at the time. Until relatively late in his career, Elgar was regarded as a provincial talent, who had served as the former bandmaster at a local lunatic asylum and whose reputation had been forged in the music festivals around his Midlands home. Compared with pillars of London-based musical society, like the Eton-and-Oxford-educated Sir Hubert Parry, Elgar always considered himself as an outsider.

Perhaps it was this state of mind that drew Elgar to the subject matter of Sir John Falstaff, Shakespeare’s portly, vain and cowardly Knight, who is ultimately rejected by society and by the King. Elgar was an avid Shakespearean and was at pains to point out that ‘his’ Falstaff bore no relation to the caricature that the Bard painted in The Merry Wives of Windsor. Elgar’s Knight is taken from the historical plays: from Henry IV: Part 1 and Part 2 and from the description of the death of Falstaff in Henry V.

The resultant work was commissioned by the Leeds Festival in 1913 and, outside his symphonies, is Elgar’s most extended piece of orchestral music; although Elgar was to live for another 20 years, it also proved to be his last work for orchestra alone. There are clear parallels between Shakespeare’s text and Elgar’s music. The composer wrote, however, that ‘it must not be imagined that my orchestral poem is program music – that it provides a series of incidents with connecting links such as we have, for example, in Richard Strauss’ Ein Heldenleben or in the same composer’s Domestic Symphony. Nothing has been farther from my intention. All I have striven to do is to paint a musical portrait or, rather, a sketch portrait’. Such a statement clearly belies Elgar’s sensitivity to the contemporary view of

Keynotes

ELGAR

Born Broadheath, 1857

Died Worcester, 1934

Edward Elgar was arguably the first major British composer after Henry Purcell in the 17th century. He came to prominence at the age of 42 with the Enigma Variations; this was followed by The Dream of Gerontius, the violin and cello concertos, and two symphonies – powerful and inventive works that combined the inspiration of his homeland with the technique and musical vision of his European peers.

FALSTAFF

Falstaff was composed in 1913 as a commission from the Leeds Festival and Elgar considered it his best work. As the movement headings reveal, the music follows a highly detailed narrative, drawn from Shakespeare. And yet Elgar (who had declared that abstract works such as symphonies represented the highest development in art) defensively claimed that Falstaff should not be listened to as program music. Instead, we are meant to hear it as a musical portrait or character sketch that develops along symphonic lines.

Even so, the best way to navigate Falstaff is to follow Elgar’s narrative clues. The music falls into four sections, although there are no distinct breaks between them. The two lyrical ‘dream interludes’ in the second and third sections provide helpful landmarks, and Elgar’s vivid musical gestures and orchestral effects make easy work for the imagination.
program music as ‘degenerate’ in comparison to the purer realm of the symphony. But Elgar’s score is clearly symphonic in scale and structure: its two main themes are presented in the opening section, developed through two extended episodic sections and are then recapitulated towards the end.

**Listening Guide**

*Falstaff* opens with a crab-like descending melody in the cellos, bass clarinet and bassoon, representing Sir John himself; Elgar describes his subject as ‘in a green old age, mellow, frank, gay, easy, corpulent, loose, unprincipled and luxurious’. This is almost immediately answered by the thematic material for Hal – a melody as ‘nobilmente’ as anything in Elgar’s output but with a seriousness that hints at the future that is his destiny. The two melodies contrast the characters wonderfully; Hal is heroic, long-lined and diatonic while Falstaff is a shuffling, somewhat chaotic and chromatic.
After the initial exposition of the main themes, the scene turns to the Boar’s Head Tavern in **Eastcheap** in the city of London, where Falstaff is in his element among the bawdy revellers. We hear Falstaff boasting of his ‘cheerful look, a pleasing eye and a most noble carriage’ as the music starts to sway as unmistakably as the drunken Knight. As the musical texture thins out, the setting changes to Gadshill in Kent, where Falstaff and his entourage are lying in wait to ambush a convoy of bullion; the scene is set by rustling strings and night-time calls in the horns. However, unbeknownst to Falstaff, a disguised Hal (also musically disguised in a variant of his theme) is also lying in wait to rob Falstaff in turn and, amid cymbal crashes and fugal textures in the strings, a short struggle ensues.

With nothing to show for his efforts, Falstaff returns to the Boar’s Head boasting a fictional account of his evening’s activities. As the evening gets later and later, we hear the drunken Falstaff in a series of recitatives on the solo bassoon, answered by the derisive laughter of the ‘honest gentlewomen’ of the tavern in the wind section and then full orchestra. Eventually, Falstaff’s body can take no more punishment and he falls fast sleep; his snoring is clearly audible in the double basses and contrabassoon.

With Falstaff fast asleep, we enter the **first dream interlude** – ‘Jack Falstaff, now Sir John, a boy and page to Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk’. This short section is lightly scored for reduced strings with solo violin, harp and limited winds and sees Sir John in more innocent times, dreaming of what might have been.

Falstaff is awakened by a call to arms and charged with raising an army due to the impending civil war. (**Falstaff’s March.**) Amid the sound of military trumpets, Falstaff is only able to gather what Shakespeare describes as ‘a scarecrow army’ and the motley crew – Wart, Mouldy and Feeble – gather at Justice Shallow’s house. Falstaff leads his forces to fight for the king – their march to battle characterised by a suitably disorganized rhythmic pattern. The battle scene is brief, culminating in a series of percussive clashes. Falstaff’s forces have been ‘soundly peppered’ and Sir John is given permission to retire to Shallow house as the tension drains from Elgar’s writing and it becomes increasingly pastoral. Resting in the orchard at Shallow’s house, Falstaff again slips into reverie, dreaming of former, idyllic times. This **interlude** alternates music for pipe and tabor with passages for muted violas and cellos, which Elgar hoped would summon up the ‘sadly-merry’ spirit of the English countryside.

Falstaff’s slumber is again interrupted, this time by a...
Andreas Haefliger in Recital

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flurry of violins and with the news that King Henry IV has died; as Pistol tells Falstaff: ‘Thy tender lambkin now is King – Harry the Fifth’s the man.’ (The New King.) With music of increasing excitement, Falstaff wastes no time and rides for London and imagines the power, influence and riches that his new status as England’s second most powerful man will bring. With a full blast of pomp and ceremony, the Hal theme is heard in its new regal splendour as King Henry V’s coronation line processes past. Falstaff steps out of the crowd to address his old friend, but is immediately met with scorn and the words: ‘I know thee not, old man: fall to thy prayers. How ill white hairs become a fool and jester...I banish thee on pain of death.’ Despite all of Falstaff’s protestations and entreaties, the King rejects Falstaff and orders the procession to move on.

Falstaff retires to the tavern a broken man. The last bars of Elgar’s score are filled with remembrances from earlier episodes, nostalgia for Eastcheap and Gloucestershire; Falstaff’s final thoughts are of Hal, played pianissimo in the strings. With a final cadence in the brass and drum roll, Falstaff breathes his last. The final word, however, belongs to Henry and the work ends with a soft, plucked chord; as Elgar wrote, ‘the man of stern reality has triumphed’.

Elgar composed Falstaff between April and September 1913. He later wrote: ‘I have, I think, enjoyed writing it more than any other music I have ever composed, and perhaps, for that reason, it may prove to be among my best efforts. ...I shall say good-bye to it with regret, for the hours I have spent on it have brought me a great deal of happiness.’

HUW HUMPHREYS © 2009

Elgar’s Falstaff calls for an orchestra of two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon; four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and timpani; timpani and percussion; two harps and strings.

The Sydney Symphony first performed Falstaff in 1941, conducted by Percy Code, and most recently in 1984 by Charles Mackerras.
‘That Shakespeherian Rag’

The Globe was a low-tech theatre. Its tiny open-air could be transformed into fair Verona or Birnam Wood only by a poet’s language. The one special effect at Shakespeare’s disposal was music, and when he wants us to understand that a miraculous transformation has taken place – a statue restored to life as a woman, four noble lovers waking from what they think was a crazy dream, a prince cast ashore on a desert island – he does so by calling for music.

Shakespeare was as magical for music as music was for Shakespeare, at least when the temper of the times allowed it. The mere handful of Shakespeare-derived musical entertainments from the later 17th century includes John Blow’s *Venus and Adonis* and the unconscionably bowdlerised version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* which became Henry Purcell’s *Fairy Queen*. The Enlightenment had little use for a poet of verbal ambiguity, supernatural visitations and unhappy endings, though Beethoven acknowledged the influence of *Romeo and Juliet* on the slow movement of his String Quartet in F, Op.18 No.1, and his plan for an opera on *Macbeth* seems to have left its mark on the so-called *Ghost* Trio, Op.70 No.1.

With the rise of Romanticism in the 19th century, however, the Bard was back – the ‘gothic’ world of *King Lear*, *Macbeth* or *Hamlet*; the passion of *Romeo and Juliet*; the magical realms of the *Dream* or *The Tempest*. One of the first to succumb was the young Hector Berlioz – partly no doubt as a side effect of his passion for the Irish actress Harriet Smithson whom he saw act the role of Juliet. Shakespeare remained a potent and profound force in Berlioz’s music throughout his life, in the ‘dramatic symphony’ *Romeo and Juliet*, the fantasy on *The Tempest*, the *King Lear* overture and the gentle comedy of his last opera *Béatrice et Bénédict*, but also in what he called the ‘Shakespeareanised Virgil’ of his operatic masterpiece, *The Trojans*.

In the first part of the 19th century Schlegel and Tieck – themselves in the vanguard of the Romantic movement – were translating Shakespeare into German, inspiring the young Felix Mendelssohn to write his celebrated *Midsummer Night’s Dream* overture in 1826 and, many years later, his incidental music to the play. Shakespeare’s blend of broad-brush dramaturgy and exploration of individual characters’ inmost thoughts was attractive to composers like Berlioz and Franz Liszt, whose (wordless) symphonic poem *Hamlet* likewise balances a sense of dramatic action with that of profound soliloquy. Liszt’s model proved invaluable to Richard Strauss in his symphonic poem *Macbeth* of 1892 and an influence on Tchaikovsky in his concert overture (a symphonic poem by any other name…) *Romeo and Juliet*. 
\textit{Romeo and Juliet} was irresistible to a number of composers: Charles Gounod made an opera of it, as did Leonard Bernstein in \textit{West Side Story} (1957). One of the more spectacular ‘translations’ of \textit{Romeo and Juliet} is into Sergei Prokofiev’s ballet score of 1938. Russian interest in Shakespeare grew hugely during the Soviet period, with the music that Dmitri Shostakovich contributed to the burgeoning film industry including an astonishing score for \textit{Hamlet}. Like Shostakovich, William Walton had a gift for capturing Shakespeare as filmed – in \textit{Henry V}, \textit{Hamlet} and \textit{Richard III} – by Laurence Olivier.

Giuseppe Verdi looked to Shakespeare for his blood and thunder \textit{Macbeth} and for the late masterpieces \textit{Otello} and \textit{Falstaff}, based on \textit{The Merry Wives of Windsor}. (Elgar’s \textit{Falstaff} draws instead on the history plays.) Ralph Vaughan Williams had a go at \textit{The Merry Wives} in his \textit{Sir John in Love}, a work which tests the orthodox view that Shakespeare’s actual words should not be set to music, as if they contain sufficient inherent music of their own. Benjamin Britten likewise felt that this was an empty taboo, noting drily (he began cutting \textit{A Midsummer Night’s Dream} down to a manageable length in 1960) that ‘the original Shakespeare will survive’. Tan Dun, using fragments of \textit{The Tempest} alongside Chinese folksong in his \textit{Ghost Opera} for Chinese lute and string quartet (1994) might have said the same thing.

Shakespeare does of course survive. What Keats called Shakespeare’s ‘negative capability’ – the ability to seem completely removed from his poetry – makes his work endlessly interpretable, and particularly suited to the fluid responses of music.

Abridged from an article by GORDON KERRY ©2002
BERLIOZ
If the two overtures in this concert have made you curious to hear more from Berlioz's opera Benvenuto Cellini, then Colin Davis's electrifying 1972 recording starring tenor Nicolai Gedda is an excellent place to begin. Out of print, but available as an ArkivCD (3 CDs) from arkivmusic.com or as a download in various formats from deccaclassics.com.
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There are nearly two-hundred recordings of Beethoven's Piano Concerto No.2, but if you’re looking for this concerto and a musical treat, seek out the recently released collection of Radu Lupu's complete concerto recordings for Decca. Six CDs at an unbeatable price. The five Beethoven recordings were made with the Israel Philharmonic and Zubin Mehta in 1979.
DECCA 478 2922
David Zinman conducts the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra and soloist Yefim Bronfman in the first two Beethoven piano concertos. This recording has been praised for its lightness and elegance, permitting 'a splendidly integrated, witty, and emotionally affecting interplay between solo and orchestra'.
ARTE NOVA 825870

ELGAR'S FALSTAFF
It was Elgar who encouraged Sir John Barbirolli to take up conducting, and Barbirolli became a champion of the composer's work. A generous 5-CD collection of Barbirolli’s recordings – made with a variety of English orchestras – makes an excellent introduction to Elgar's music. Falstaff is represented by a recording with the Hallé Orchestra, and all the favourites are included: the Cello Concerto with Jacqueline Du Pré, the Serenade for Strings, the Pomp and Circumstance marches and the Enigma Variations, as well as both symphonies.
EMI CLASSICS 95444
And if you’re curious as to Elgar's own approach to Falstaff – one of his favourite compositions – look for his recording with the London Symphony Orchestra, on a Dutton Laboratories/ Vocalion disc, Elgar Conducts Elgar, with the Cello Concerto (soloist Beatrice Harrison) and the Nursery Suite.
DUTTON 9776

DAVID ZINMAN
David Zinman and the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra have recently released three recordings, including a beautifully played and much-praised Brahms symphonies set.
RCA 793349
An earlier recording with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra shows David Zinman's affinity for Elgar, with an enticing program of the Enigma Variations, Cockaigne Overture, Salut d’amour, and Serenade for Strings.
TELARC 80192

HAEFFLIGER PLAYS BEETHOVEN
Andreas Haefliger's provocative series of recordings for Avie, Perspectives is worthy of attention. It matches selected Beethoven piano sonatas with complementary or illuminating repertoire. The fifth and most recent volume in the series contains elements of his Sydney program, combining the Hammerklavier sonata with the Swiss book from Liszt's Years of Pilgrimage.
AVIE 2239

Broadcast Diary
May
Saturday 12 May, 8pm
MOZART'S REQUIEM: CHORAL CONTRASTS
David Zinman conductor
Jennifer Welch-Babidge, Fiona Campbell,
Paul McMahon, Paul Whelan vocal soloists
Sydney Philharmonia Choirs
Poulenc, Mozart

Monday 21 May, 7pm
A GERSHWIN TRIBUTE
Bramwell Tovey piano-conductor
Tracy Dahl soprano

Friday 25 May, 8pm
CARNEVALE
David Zinman conductor
Andreas Haefliger piano
Berlioz, Beethoven, Elgar

2MBS-FM 102.5
SYDNEY SYMPHONY 2012
Tuesday 15 May, 6pm
Musicians, staff and guest artists discuss what’s in store in our forthcoming concerts.
Webcasts

Selected Sydney Symphony concerts are webcast live on BigPond and Telstra T-box and made available for later viewing On Demand.

Coming up next:

**A GERSHWIN TRIBUTE**
Monday 21 May at 7pm
Visit: bigpondmusic.com/sydneysymphony
Live webcasts can also be viewed via our mobile app.

Sydney Symphony Live

The Sydney Symphony Live label was founded in 2006 and we’ve since released more than a dozen recordings featuring the orchestra in live concert performances with our titled conductors and leading guest artists, including the Mahler Odyssey cycle, begun in 2010. To purchase, visit sydneysymphony.com/shop

**Glazunov & Shostakovich**
Alexander Lazarev conducts a thrilling performance of Shostakovich 9 and Glazunov’s Seasons. SSO 201003

**Strauss & Schubert**
Gianluigi Gelmetti conducts Schubert’s *Unfinished* and R Strauss’s *Four Last Songs* with Ricarda Merbeth. SSO 200801

**Sir Charles Mackerras**
A 2CD set featuring Sir Charles’s final performances with the orchestra, in October 2007. SSO 200705

**Brett Dean**
Brett Dean performs his own viola concerto, conducted by Simone Young, in this all-Dean release. SSO 200702

**Ravel**
Gelmetti conducts music by one of his favourite composers: Maurice Ravel. Includes *Bolero*. SSO 200801

**Rare Rachmaninoff**
Rachmaninoff chamber music with Dene Olding, the Goldner Quartet, soprano Joan Rodgers and Vladimir Ashkenazy at the piano. SSO 200901

MAHLER ODYSSEY ON CD

During the 2010 and 2011 concert seasons, the Sydney Symphony and Vladimir Ashkenazy set out to perform all the Mahler symphonies, together with some of the song cycles. These concerts were recorded for CD, with nine releases so far and more to come.

**Mahler 9** OUT NOW
In March, Mahler’s Ninth, his last completed symphony, was released. SSO 201201

**ALSO CURRENTLY AVAILABLE**

**Mahler 1 & Songs of a Wayfarer**
SSO 201001

**Mahler 8** *(Symphony of a Thousand)*
SSO 201002

**Mahler 5**
SSO 201003

**Song of the Earth**
SSO 201004

**Mahler 3**
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**Mahler 4**
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**Mahler 6**
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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

David Zinman CONDUCTOR

David Zinman is in his 17th season as Music Director of the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich. His conducting career has been distinguished by his extraordinarily broad repertoire, strong commitment to contemporary music and introduction of historically informed performance practice.

He has conducted all the leading North American orchestras, including the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras, and the New York Philharmonic. In Europe he has conducted the Berlin Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam, Vienna Symphony, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Philharmonia Orchestra and Orchestre National de France, as well as other leading orchestras. He has toured widely, including tours in Europe, Asia and the United States with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich. He also conducts opera, most recently Offenbach’s Les contes d’Hoffmann for Geneva Opera in 2010.

He has more than 100 recordings, which have earned him five Grammy awards, two Grand Prix du Disque, two Edison Prizes, the Deutsche Schallplattenpreis and a Gramophone Award. He recently completed a Mahler symphony cycle with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, following symphonic cycles by Beethoven, Strauss, Schumann and most recently Brahms. Their current project is the Schubert symphonies.

David Zinman studied conducting with Pierre Monteux, and made his major debut with the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1967. He has been Music Director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Principal Conductor of the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra. He has also been Music Director of the Aspen Music Festival and School, and of the American Academy of Conducting.

In 2000 the French Ministry of Culture made David Zinman a Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and in 2002 the City of Zurich awarded him its Art Prize – the first conductor and the first non-Swiss to receive it. In 1997 he received Columbia University’s Ditson Award for performing works by American composers, and in 2008 he was named Midem Classical Artist of the Year for his work with the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich.

David Zinman’s previous visit to Sydney was in 2002 when he conducted an all-Brahms program in the Master Series and Pictures at an Exhibition in Meet the Music. Last week he conducted a choral program of Poulenc and Mozart.
Andreas Haefliger was born into a distinguished Swiss musical family and grew up in Germany, before studying at the Juilliard School in New York. With his formidable technique and musicality, and his innate sense of architecture and phrasing, he was quickly recognised as a pianist of the first rank.

Engagements with major orchestras followed swiftly. He appeared in the United States with the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony and the Boston, Chicago and Pittsburgh symphony orchestras, and in Europe with the Royal Concertgebouw, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, Budapest Festival Orchestra, German Symphony Orchestra Berlin, Orchestre de Paris, London Symphony Orchestra and Vienna Symphony, as well as leading festivals. He also established himself as a superb recitalist, making his New York debut in 1988, and became a frequent performer at leading recital venues and festivals around the world, notably the Lucerne and Salzburg festivals, the BBC Proms and the Wiener Festwochen.

Recent engagement highlights have included Bartók’s Piano Concerto No.3 with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Jonathan Nott, Chopin’s Piano Concerto No.2 with the Toronto Symphony and Music Director Peter Oundjian, and Mozart concertos with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Günter Herbig and with the Tonkünstlerorchester in Vienna’s Musikverein. In 2012 his plans include Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No.4 with the Philharmonia Orchestra and Christoph von Dohnányi and the first Brahms concerto with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Vasily Petrenko. He also appears with the Takács Quartet at the Mostly Mozart Festival, with violinist Gil Shaham in La Jolla, and with the Tokyo Quartet at Wigmore Hall.

The focus of his recital appearances in recent years has been Perspectives on Beethoven, in which he performs Beethoven sonatas alongside works by other composers including Mozart, Schubert, Bartók, Brahms, Janáček, Schoenberg and Ligeti. These programs are also the basis for a critically acclaimed series of recordings.

Andreas Haefliger made his Australian debut with the Sydney Symphony in 2004, performing Beethoven’s Piano Concerto No.3.
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The men of the Sydney Symphony are proudly outfitted by Van Heusen.
Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, 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 it gives more than 100 performances each year, the Sydney Symphony also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence, most recently in the 2011 tour of Japan and Korea.

The Sydney Symphony’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, most recently, Gianluigi Gelmetti. The orchestra’s history also boasts collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

The Sydney Symphony's award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, developing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. The Sydney Symphony promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Liza Lim, Lee Bracegirdle, Gordon Kerry and Georges Lentz, and a recording of works by Brett Dean was released on both the BIS and Sydney Symphony Live labels.

Other releases on the Sydney Symphony Live label, established in 2006, include performances with Alexander Lazarev, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Sir Charles Mackerras and Vladimir Ashkenazy. The orchestra has recently completed recording the Mahler symphonies, and has also released recordings with Ashkenazy of Rachmaninoff and Elgar orchestral works on the Exton/Triton labels, as well as numerous recordings on the ABC Classics label.

This is the fourth year of Ashkenazy’s tenure as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor.
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| 2MBS 102.5 Sydney’s Fine Music Station |
Ten years ago, two young bass players from Minneapolis, whose mothers had taught at the same school, auditioned for the Sydney Symphony on the same day. David Murray was in Sydney on a job swap from his orchestra in Bergen, Norway when the audition was announced. Steven Larson, working in Spain, heard through the international music grapevine. Here’s a snapshot of where they’re at.

Besides playing in the orchestra, David Murray has another big string to his… er… bass? Jazz. ‘It’s a strict discipline in terms of what notes you can put over what chords, what beat you should emphasise. The difference with classical is in the style of learning: the tools are the same – like scales and arpeggios – but with jazz you learn how to use them for your own purposes, you get creative with an arpeggio, maybe even turn it into a melody.’

The similarities with classical music are in the listening. ‘You’re actively listening to the harmony, to what everyone else is doing. In many respects it isn’t that different [to playing in the orchestra].’

Steven and David agree it’s the role of the bass in the orchestra that they like. ‘It’s a supporting instrument, the backbone of the sound,’ says Steve. ‘It’s funny – I don’t like the solo sound of the instrument at all! But it’s the sound that they make as a section that I really get.’

So which composers write best for the bass? ‘Beethoven, Mozart, Shostakovich,’ says Steven. ‘They write well because they keep it as a fundamental harmonic instrument. They understand that it’s important within the context of the orchestra – a bit like the rhythm section of the orchestra.’

Steven has just bought a second bass. ‘I’ve been waiting 30 years to buy this instrument – it was the one I learned on when I was young, belonged to my teacher. He promised me first shot at buying it when he retired.’ It took Steve’s teacher a little longer than expected to honour his promise. ‘Ten years!’ But his ‘brand new’ 300-year-old bass was worth waiting for: ‘It looks like it’s been through the wars, but the sound is solid. It’s an instrument from Italy that was made before Italy was Italy!’
Your Say

In Harold in Italy [March 2012] I was intrigued to see an ophicleide in the brass section. I cannot remember seeing one in action before. There are other less common instruments that appear in the orchestra from time to time. When they are included, would you consider putting a little note in the program, explaining what they are and why the composer chose to include them?

Richard W Manuell

This is something we do from time to time, although not in every program. Meanwhile you’ve given us an idea for Ask a Musician... At recent concerts, announcements have been made thanking the audience for their support. We are told how many have been subscribing for 10 and 20 years, but not for 30, 40 or even 50 years. I am sure there must be many who fit into this unannounced group. We have been subscribers since 1971 at least!

I would be interested to know how many other long-term subscribers there are. It would be an interesting project and reflect the role the orchestra has in the cultural life of this city.

Professor Barry and Dr Judith Batts

Beyond 20 years, our information is patchy and reliant on self-reported information. But we are always glad to hear from concertgoers who can help us update our records.

We like to hear from you. Write to yoursay@sydneysymphony.com or Bravo! Reply Paid 4338, Sydney NSW 2001.
So you think you can't clap?

Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony has a trick up its sleeve: the third movement ends loudly, the finale dies away. Experienced concert-goers are wise to this and know not to clap after the third movement, but is fighting against instinct the right response?

‘I sincerely believe,’ says conductor David Robertson, ‘that Tchaikovsky wants us to release our enthusiasm at the end of the third movement with wild applause, much like we would at a sporting event. What then follows is a movement about the terrible fact that each one of us is an individual, isolated being. That he manages to make an entire audience experience that sense of solitude together is brilliant beyond description.’

The unexpected sequence of extrovert–introvert is one of the ways Tchaikovsky shows his ‘uncanny genius’. It’s also something that can’t be fully experienced except in the live concert setting. Some music, explains Robertson, needs to be experienced in ‘real time’. This way, he says, ‘the emotional impact comes through without any distractions’.

All three works in his July program are examples of this. Tchaikovsky’s meditation on feelings is ‘as personally compelling as when he first wrote it’. Then there’s ‘something about the atmosphere of music from the 1600s inspiring Vaughan Williams and the whole history of the violin inspiring Adès in his *Concentric Paths* violin concerto’.

And in each movement of the Adès, ‘the violin holds our attention from its first note until its last, spinning a magical web of narrative, like some sort of enchanter’.

Tchaikovsky’s *Pathétique*

Conducted by David Robertson

Ausgrid Master Series

Wed 4, Fri 6, Sat 7 July | 8pm

The Score

SOUND INVESTMENTS

For four years, slowly but surely, the orchestra has been improving the quality of instruments in the string section.

Not all musical instruments are created equal, whether in price tag or in quality of sound. ‘The sounds of the individual string instruments must firstly blend well in the section,’ says Sydney Symphony Concertmaster Dene Olding. When new players join the orchestra, they naturally bring their own violin, viola, cello or double bass. ‘Without detracting from the individual worth and sweetness of sound of those instruments, they won’t necessarily be capable of the colours and complexities of sound that we need.’

In 2008, the orchestra set up the Instrument Acquisition Fund to purchase instruments that are then loaned to our musicians. ‘This project is going to help us build a superior sound,’ says Dene.

Many imagine the price tag attached to a violin might reach into the millions. And sometimes that’s true (think Stradivarius). How much, then, do you imagine it would cost to purchase, say, six violins, one viola and a cello, of a standard suitable for a leading symphony orchestra?

Gifts and pledged bequests to the Instrument Acquisition Fund totalling over $1.5m have enabled us so far to purchase seven instruments. As custodians of these instruments – some as old as 150 years – the orchestra now holds these appreciating assets on its balance sheet.

The process of identifying which instruments to buy has been exhaustive and impartial. It’s easy to imagine that a higher price tag or more prestigious maker might bias our assessment of the quality of an instrument and its sound. We’re only human, after all! To eliminate this possibility, every time the orchestra has arranged for a group of instruments to be trialled – within the orchestra and at separate listening sessions – the instruments have been identified only by a number (their true identities known only by a select few, who are sworn to secrecy).

Once a decision is made, the chosen instrument’s maker and age are revealed. The most recent recommendation to the Board is for the purchase of a 1901 Vincenzo Sannino cello, made in Naples. It will be played by Leah Lynn, our Assistant Principal Cello.

Further instrument trials and listening sessions will take place later this year. Perhaps you’d like to attend? Call (02) 8215 4663 or email philanthropy@sydneysymphony.com to register your interest.

In 2009 the orchestra purchased its first three violins, courtesy of the instrument acquisition fund, and these are now played by (from left) Sophie Cole, Alexandra Mitchell and Emma West.
TEACHING THE TEACHERS
This month the Education team visits Coff s Harbour, Graft on, Taree and Newcastle to present professional learning programs for local teachers. These programs enable teachers to be better prepared for bringing their students to hear the orchestra in our regional schools concerts.

The team has also gone halfway around the country preparing teachers and students for this year’s Sinfonia composition project, with workshops in Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne and Hobart. We’re hoping to take the program to Perth in mid-May.

NEW PARTNERSHIP
We’re delighted to announce a new hotel partnership with The Sebel Pier One.

ON TOUR IN NSW
Friday 13 April was a lucky day for the orchestra – marked by a very successful return to the Orange Civic Theatre after several years. We took our Mozart and the French Connection program (from the Mozart in the City series), with pianist Ian Munro as guest soloist. In a bonus treat, the touring party and audience were lured to Robertson Park across the road from the theatre where a night market was being held to open Orange F.O.O.D. Week. Good timing!

Coming up at the end of May is our annual regional tour featuring the Sydney Symphony and our Sinfonia training orchestra in a side-by-side program conducted by Benjamin Northey. Our destinations: Graft on (29 May), Taree (30 May) and Newcastle (1 June). We will also be presenting schools concerts in each city. Our guest soloist is the charismatic young saxophonist Nicholas Russonelli, who was the ABC Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year in 2011. In Graft on we’ll be performing in a fine surviving example of a two-level cinema, the Saraton Theatre, which dates from 1926.

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