JOHN ADAMS
CONDUCTS ADAMS

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Thursday 22 August 2013

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Estimated durations:
- 6 minutes, 33 minutes,
- 20-minute interval, 25 minutes,
- 23 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 3.35pm (Thu), 10.05 pm (Fri).

John Adams conducts Adams

John Adams CONDUCTOR
Leila Josefowicz VIOLIN
Timothy McAllister SAXOPHONE

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1727)
Fidelio: Overture

John Adams (born 1947)
Violin Concerto
I. [tempo: crotchet = 78] –
II. Chaconne. Body through which the dream flows
III. Toccare
AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

INTERVAL

Adams
Saxophone Concerto
I. Animato – Moderato – Tranquillo, suave
II. Molto vivo (a hard driving pulse)
PREMIERE

Ottorino Respighi (1879–1936)
Pines of Rome – Symphonic Poem
Pines of the Villa Borghese –
Pines near a Catacomb –
Pines of the Janiculum –
Pines of the Appian Way
John Adams conducts Adams

Composer John Adams is a familiar presence here in Sydney. The SSO performance history includes several co-commissions, numerous first Australian performances and, with this week’s concerts, a world premiere.

Conductor John Adams, however, is making his SSO debut. On his previous visit here (in 2000) he was in the audience while Edo de Waart conducted. This time the composer is on the podium. Adams balances his composing and conducting schedule carefully – describing it as a Jekyll and Hyde relationship. But even though conducting occasionally threatens to steal time and energy from the more introverted activity of composing, Adams stresses its benefits: he can play a direct part in polishing his music for performance, and when he conducts the music of others, he brings a composer’s perspective to the work.

In this week’s concerts, it’s Beethoven and Respighi who benefit from this, with the overture to Fidelio as well-judged concert opener and Pines of Rome as the spectacular conclusion. Those who’ve heard Adams conduct Respighi’s music before talk about the thrilling freshness and scrupulous attention to detail in his performances.

But the real highlights are the two concertos. The Violin Concerto was Adams’ first concerto and in many ways represented a turning point in his career. Since its premiere in 1993 it has received more than 300 performances and in 1995 it won him the Grawemeyer Award, a ‘Nobel Prize’ for composers. Surprisingly, it has never been performed in Australia; this week we correct the omission with one of its most committed interpreters as soloist.

The Saxophone Concerto, composed for Timothy McAllister, provides the excitement of something new and, for those of us familiar with Adams’ more ‘minimalist’ early works, a chance to hear where his imagination has taken his style since the Sydney Symphony Orchestra first performed Shaker Loops back in the 1980s.

John Adams in Sydney

First Australian performances by the SSO:
1986 Shaker Loops
1986 Harmonium
1988 Short Ride in a Fast Machine
1990 The Wound Dresser
2000 Naive and Sentimental Music*
2001 Century Rolls – Piano Concerto
2003 Guide to Strange Places*
2004 On the Transmigration of Souls
2010 Doctor Atomic Symphony
2013 Violin Concerto
2013 Saxophone Concerto†

* SSO co-commission
† World premiere

bravo!

Turn to page 35 to read Bravo! – musician profiles, articles and news from the orchestra. There are nine issues through the year, also available at sydneysymphony.com/bravo
Ludwig van Beethoven
Fidelio: Overture

Beethoven wrote only one opera, but he wrote it three times over a period of a decade. Finally, in 1814, Fidelio took its present, triumphant, form. Beethoven’s revisions left a legacy of four overtures: the three Leonore overtures and the final overture to Fidelio that stands with the opera today.

Overture No.1 was discarded before performance by Beethoven, so the opera first appeared in 1805 with Leonore No.2 as its overture. After this failed, Beethoven was prepared to write off the whole business, but his friends persuaded him to allow Stephan von Breuning to revise Joseph Sonnleithner’s libretto. Fidelio was presented in its revised form in 1806, with Leonore No.3 as its overture, but this version was performed only twice.

The third overture was more than a hundred bars longer than the second. It can be heard as a kind of dramatic ‘tone poem’ – almost too effective at tracing the action of the opera. Which is why Beethoven abandoned this masterpiece to write yet one more overture – a much simpler prelude that would function as a curtain raiser – for the revival of the opera in 1814. There was a practical reason too: the revised opera now began in a different key.

Although shorter and lighter than its Leonore predecessor, the Fidelio overture is a satisfying work that couples a Classical sonata-form structure (including slow introduction and coda) with a joyous expression. Crucial to its function as a theatrical overture, there is nothing in the music that overtly links it to the opera that follows. Gone, for example are the dramatic trumpet calls of Leonore No.3. As effective as they might be in the concert hall, in the theatre they are simply spoilers for the most suspenseful moment in the opera. The general theme of the opera, however, is established in the slow introduction, which alternates music of great power with quiet pleading from the horns.

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA © 2013

The Fidelio Overture calls for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons; four horns, two trumpets and two trombones; timpani and strings.

The SSO first performed the overture in 1946, conducted by Eugene Goossens, and most recently in 2010, in a Parramatta Park concert conducted by Alexander Briger.
Adams the Composer

In 1971 Adams moved from the US East Coast to California where he taught at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. The next big thing in music was minimalism, but while Adams felt it was ‘the only really interesting, important stylistic development in the past 30 years’, he was aware of its expressive limitations. As Anthony Fogg has written:

_Instead of the trance-like Eastern rhythms and mechanical repetitiveness of much early minimalism, Adams’ music began to establish much clearer directions, with climaxes and more clearly defined structures underlying the minimalist method._

Adams was also receptive to a wide range of influences that shaped his style and musical architecture. An example appears as early as the triptych, _American Standard_ (1973), which looks to the particular kind of minimalism espoused by Cornelius Cardew in England, but which at the same time abstracts and enshrines, with loving nostalgia, American vernacular music such as the march, hymn and jazz ballad. A similar impulse is at work in the iridescent string writing of _Shaker Loops_ (1979, 1983) or the rolling, big-hearted tune that appears at the climax of _Grand Pianola Music_ (1982).

In 1979, Adams began the series of large-scale orchestral works that have marked the development of his musical language. Works of the early 1980s such as _Short Ride in a Fast Machine_ spring from a confident, optimistic energy embodied in the use of large-scale fields of stable diatonic harmony; by the early 1990s, in such works as the Chamber Symphony, Adams explores more introspective, and occasionally darker, worlds. He also works closely with particular musicians and this in turn affects the work: the piano concerto _Century Rolls_ (1996) celebrates the artistry and repertoire of Emanuel Ax.

Adams’ distinguished career in the opera theatre began in earnest with _Nixon in China_ in 1982. This was followed by the still-controversial _The Death of Klinghoffer_ and several other works including _Doctor Atomic_ (2005). The operas all have a direct concern with contemporary life; the essential humanism of Adams’ works is also manifest in works such as _On the Transmigration of Souls_ of 2002, his response to the appalling events of 11 September 2001.

ABRIDGED FROM AN ARTICLE BY GORDON KERRY © 2013
John Adams
Violin Concerto

I. [tempo: crotchet = 78] –
II. Chaconne. Body through which the dream flows
III. Toccata

Leila Josefowicz violin

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

John Adams writes…

The proposal to write a violin concerto came from the violinist Jorja Fleezanis, a close friend and enthusiastic champion of new music. Composers who are not string players are seriously challenged when it comes to writing a concerto, and close collaborations are the rule, as it was in this case. For those who have not played a violin or a cello, the physical relation of the turned-over left wrist and grasping fingers defies logic. Intervals that ought to be simple are awkward, while gestures that seem humanly impossible turn out to be rudimentary.

A concerto without a strong melodic statement is hard to imagine. I knew that if I were to compose a violin concerto I would have to solve the issue of melody. I could not possibly have produced such a thing in the 1980s because my compositional language was principally one of massed sonorities riding on great rippling waves of energy. Harmony and rhythm were the driving forces in my music of that decade; melody was almost non-existent. The ‘News’ aria in Nixon in China, for example, is less melody than it is declamation riding over what feels like the chords of a giant ukulele.

But in the early 1990s, during the composition of The Death of Klinghoffer, I began to think more about melody. This was perhaps a result of being partially liberated by a new chromatic richness that was creeping into my sound, but it was more likely due to the need to find a melodic means to set Alice Goodman’s psychologically complex libretto.

As if to compensate for years of neglecting the ‘singing line’, the Violin Concerto (1993) emerged as an almost implacably melodic piece – an example of ‘hypermelody’. The violin spins one long phrase after another without pause for nearly the full 35 minutes of the piece. I adopted the classic form of the concerto as a kind of Platonic model, even to the point of placing a brief cadenza for the soloist at the traditional locus near the end of the first movement.
The concerto opens with a long extended rhapsody for the violin, a free, fantastical ‘endless melody’ over the regularly pulsing staircase of upwardly rising figures in the orchestra. The second movement takes a received form, the chaconne, and gently stretches, compresses, and transfigures its contours and modalities while the violin floats like a disembodied spirit around and about the orchestral tissue. The chaconne’s title, ‘Body through which the dream flows’, is a phrase from a poem by Robert Haas, words that suggested to me the duality of flesh and spirit that permeates the movement. It is as if the violin is the ‘dream’ that flows through the slow, regular heartbeat of the orchestral ‘body’. The Toccare utilises the surging, motoric power of Shaker Loops to create a virtuoso vehicle for the solo violin.

Jorja Fleezanis gave the premiere with the Minnesota Orchestra under Edo de Waart in 1994. Since this memorable performance, many violinists have taken on the piece, each playing it with unique flair and understanding. Among them are Gidon Kremer (who made the first recording with the London Symphony Orchestra), Vadim Repin, Robert McDuffie, Midori and, perhaps most astonishingly of all, Leila Josefowicz, who made the piece a personal calling card for years.

The concerto is dedicated to the memory of David Huntley, long-time enthusiast and great champion of my and much other contemporary music.

JOHN ADAMS © 2010

The orchestra in the Adams Violin Concerto comprises two flutes (doubling alto flute and piccolo), two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets, bass clarinet and two bassoons; two horns and trumpet (but no trombones or tuba); percussion, two synthesizers; and strings.

This is the Australian premiere of the concerto.
Adams
Saxophone Concerto
I. *Animato – Moderato – Tranquillo, suave*
II. *Molto vivo (a hard driving pulse)*

Timothy McAllister saxophone
PREMIERE

*John Adams writes…*
My Saxophone Concerto was composed in early 2013, the first work to follow the huge, three-hour oratorio, *The Gospel According to the Other Mary*. One would normally be hard put to draw lines between two such disparate creations. The first work deals with such matters as crucifixion, raising the dead and the trials of battered women. The other has as its source my life-long exposure to the great jazz saxophonists, from the swing era through the likes of Coltrane, Eric Dolphy and Wayne Shorter. Nonetheless there are peculiar affinities shared by both works, particularly in the use of modal scales and the way they colour the emotional atmosphere of the music. Both works are launched by a series of ascending scales that energetically bounce back and forth among various modal harmonies.

American audiences know the saxophone almost exclusively via its use in jazz, soul and pop music. The instances of the saxophone in the classical repertory are rare, and the most famous appearances amount to only a handful of solos in works by Ravel (his *Boléro* and his orchestration of Mussorgsky’s *Pictures at an Exhibition*), Prokofiev (*Lieutenant Kijé* and *Romeo and Juliet*) and Milhaud (*La Création du monde*), and of course the Jet Song solo in Leonard Bernstein’s *West Side Story*, probably one of the most immediately recognisable five-note mottos in all of music.

Beyond that, the saxophone appears to be an instrument that classical composers employ at best occasionally and usually only for ‘special’ effect. It is hard to believe that an instrument that originated in such straight-laced circumstances – it was designed in the mid-19th century principally for use in military bands in France and Belgium and was intended to be an extension of the brass family – should have ended up as the transformative vehicle for vernacular music (jazz, rock, blues and funk) in the 20th century. Nonetheless, its integration into the world of classical music has been a slow and begrudged one.

Having grown up hearing the sound of the saxophone
virtually every day – my father had played alto in swing bands during the 1930s and our family record collection was well stocked with albums by the great jazz masters – I never considered the saxophone an alien instrument. My 1987 opera *Nixon in China* is almost immediately recognisable by its sax quartet, which gives the orchestration its special timbre. I followed *Nixon* with another work, *Fearful Symmetries*, that also features a sax quartet in an even more salient role.

In 2010 I composed *City Noir*, a jazz-influenced symphony that featured a fiendishly difficult solo part for alto sax, a trope indebted to the wild and skittish styles of the great bebop and post-bop artists such as Charlie Parker, Lennie Tristano and Eric Dolphy. Finding a sax soloist who could play in this style but who was sufficiently trained to be able to sit in the middle of a modern symphony orchestra was a difficult assignment. But fortunately I met Tim McAllister, who is quite likely the reigning master of the classical saxophone, an artist who while rigorously trained is also aware of the jazz tradition.

When one evening during a dinner conversation Tim mentioned that during high school he had been a champion stunt bicycle rider, I knew that I must compose a concerto for this fearless musician and risk-taker. His exceptional musical personality had been the key ingredient in performances and recordings of *City Noir*, and I felt that I’d only begun to scratch the surface of his capacities with that work.

A composer writing a violin or piano concerto can access a gigantic repository of past models for reference, inspiration or even cautionary models. But there are precious few worthy concertos for saxophone, and the extant ones did not especially speak to me. But I knew many great recordings from the jazz past that could form a basis for my compositional thinking, among them *Focus*, a 1961 album by Stan Getz for tenor sax and an orchestra of harp and strings arranged by Eddie Sauter. Although clearly a ‘studio’ creation, this album featured writing for the strings that referred to Stravinsky, Bartók and Ravel. Another album, *Charlie Parker with Strings* from 1950, although more conventional in format, nonetheless helped to set a scenario in my mind for a way the alto sax could float and soar above an orchestra. Another album that I’d known since I was a teenager, *New Bottle Old Wine*, with Cannonball Adderley and that greatest of all jazz arrangers, Gil Evans, remained in mind throughout the composing of the new concerto as a model to aspire to.

'It’s breathtaking… literally…30 minutes long! Imagine Stravinsky, Bernstein and Stan Getz sharing a taxi.'

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Classical saxophonists are normally taught a ‘French’ style of producing a sound with a fast vibrato very much at odds with the looser, grittier style of a jazz player. Needless to say, my preference is for the latter ‘jazz’ style playing, and in the discussions we had during the creation of the piece, I returned over and over to the idea of an ‘American’ sound for Tim to use as his model. Such a change is no small thing for a virtuoso schooled in an entirely different style of playing. It would be like asking a singer used to singing Bach cantatas to cover a Billy Holiday song.

While the concerto is not meant to sound jazzy per se, its jazz influences lie only slightly below the surface. I make constant use of the instrument’s vaunted agility as well as its capacity for a lyrical utterance that is only a short step away from that of the human voice.

The form is by now a familiar one for those who know my orchestral pieces, as I’ve used it in my Violin Concerto, in City Noir and in my piano concerto Century Rolls. It begins with one long first part combining a fast movement with a slow, lyrical one. This is followed by a shorter second part with its ‘fast, driving pulse’.

The concerto lasts roughly 32 minutes, making it an unusually expansive statement for an instrument that is still looking for its rightful place in the symphonic repertory.

JOHN ADAMS © 2013

The orchestra for the Saxophone Concerto comprises two flutes, piccolo, three oboes (one doubling cor anglais), two clarinets, bass clarinet and two bassoons; three horns and two trumpets (as in the Violin Concerto, there are no trombones or tuba); harp, piano and celesta; and strings.

The Saxophone Concerto was commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, in collaboration with the St Louis Symphony, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Fundação Orquestra Sinfônica do estado de São Paulo, with the generous support of Andrew Kaldor AM and Renata Kaldor AO. This is the world premiere.
Ottorino Respighi
Pines of Rome – Symphonic poem

Pines of the Villa Borghese –
Pines near a Catacomb –
Pines of the Janiculum –
Pines of the Appian Way

Although he was born in Bologna, Ottorino Respighi adored Rome and spent much of his later life there teaching at the Accademia di Santa Cecilia. His fascination with the various landscapes and lifestyles associated with the city ultimately resulted in three of his best-known pieces: Fountains of Rome (1916), Pines of Rome (1924) and Roman Festivals (1928). Despite their obviously Italian topics, these symphonic poems bear the direct influence of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, with whom Respighi studied in Russia. From Rimsky-Korsakov, Respighi developed a thorough knowledge of orchestration techniques which was coupled with his own innate ability to present strikingly visual imagery through musical forms.

Respighi was not an ‘intellectual’ composer, preferring instead to rely on his brilliant orchestration to convey his musical meaning. When he indulged in deeper emotions, there tended to be an almost childlike quality to them. This quality may have been a reflection of the composer’s personality: although able to hold his own in cultural circles, Respighi (so his wife once remarked!) was a man who basically remained a child at heart.

Despite the occasional criticisms which have been directed at Respighi’s music, his symphonic work Pini di Roma (Pines of Rome) remains a perennial favourite on the concert platform. The music begins at the gate to the Villa Borghese, which was located just 500 yards from the composer’s residence. The gate is thrown open to reveal a playground full of children scurrying about. They are depicted (at first in the woodwinds) by a traditional Italian nursery rhyme, similar to ‘Ring Around a Rosy’. Towards the end of this first movement, raucous blasts on trumpets and a military theme portray the young children mimicking soldiers.

Pines near a Catacomb, the second movement, is based on an Advent plainchant – Veni, veni, Emmanuel – which depicts the solemn atmosphere inside the Catacombs. The hymn builds slowly, starting with fragments of the melody played by the horns, winds and strings. It is not until the arrival of the trumpets, however, that the hymn is fully realised, allowing the melody to swell to a climax before the ‘dead-
stillness’ of the Catacombs is restored. Respighi was to become fascinated with using sacred music as the basis for his own compositions, as demonstrated in the use of Gregorian chant in several of his later pieces, including Church Windows and the Concerto Gregoriano.

The third movement, Pines of the Janiculum (whose piano introduction is not unlike music used for dream or flashback sequences on television), also deals with the subject of darkness, but in a context quite different from that of the previous movement. Gone is the sombre, almost mystical atmosphere, replaced by a nocturnal scene. Respighi evokes the image of the moonlight outlining the pine trees, and does so with a pensive clarinet melody that dominates the first half of the movement. The nocturne concludes with the awakening of a nightingale. To achieve this, Respighi requested that the sound of a real nightingale should be used from a gramophone recording.

The final movement, Pines of the Appian Way, begins with the distant rumble of soldiers marching in step, signalling their triumphant return from battle. The movement is a sustained crescendo, culminating in resplendent writing for brass, at which point Respighi introduces six extra brass parts (often played by pairs of soprano, tenor and bass flugelhorns, or, as in this concert, by trumpets, bass trumpets and trombones). He calls these buccine in reference to the martial brass instruments of ancient Rome.

BURHAN GÜNER © 1998

Pines of Rome calls for an orchestra of three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon; four horns, three trumpets and four trombones; six ‘buccine’; timpani and a large percussion section that includes a recording of a nightingale; harp, celesta, piano and organ; and strings.

The SSO first performed the Pines of Rome in 1946 with Eugene Goossens, and most recently in 2009 conducted by Arvo Volmer.
Composing as an Adventure
Gordon Kalton Williams spoke to John Adams in California

John Adams has had a longstanding presence in Australia and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has co-commissioned several Adams works over the years. At the time of the Australian premiere of one of these, *Naive and Sentimental Music*, in 2000, I interviewed him in the Northern Foyer of the Sydney Opera House.

Adams says he feels badly that he hasn’t been out here since, because he knows what a great musical culture Australia has. But there have been major additions to his output in the intervening years, including the 2005 opera *Doctor Atomic*, so it’s a good opportunity to see how his views might have changed over the years.

In 2000, Adams was almost patriotically proud of minimalism, an ‘-ism’ which had done much to bring audiences back to contemporary classical music in the 1970s and 80s. This time he was bemused that I began by asking him about it.

‘I think that it was a very important stylistic development or invention…but I haven’t really thought in terms of minimalism myself since the early 1980s. I’m surprised when the subject comes up, but then, of course, audiences know my early pieces, like *Shaker Loops*, and think about them and listen to them more than I do, so it’s understandable. It’s a style of composition that is defined by three specific things – it’s emphatically tonal; it’s got a regular pulse; it uses repetition to create its musical structures. But that said: I sublimated minimalism. I was very restless with its confines and tried to break out of it early on.’

Anyone who witnessed the rapturous reaction of a young audience to *Harmonielehre* in Sydney in 1999 will realise that Adams is a living orchestral composer with the magnetic pull of a Beethoven or Mahler; and a great deal of that power can be credited to Adams’ ability to create tension and climax in the way that has been exciting in Western music since at least the Classical period. I put it to him that he’d come back to traditional cadential motion refreshed by minimalism.

‘My music is definitely harmonic and it has a sense of tonality, but it’s too elusive and evasive and it moves so quickly that I don’t think it can be defined in any particular traditional terms. What’s interesting in recent pieces is my
use of mode. I’m not unlike a jazz performer in that I create modes using various combinations of whole steps and half steps and they generate both the harmonic and melodic feel of the piece. It’s not a new development but I think I’ve given a new spin to it. I really think that if there’s been a success with audiences with, for example, the music of Steve Reich or Philip Glass or myself, it first and foremost relies on the beauty of the harmonic relationships. That rhythmic thing is very important, the sense of atmosphere with all of us, but if you took Steve Reich’s music and made it atonal or made it harmonically indifferent, nobody would want to listen to it.’

‘I really don’t believe that you can be a good composer unless your music has a very strong, harmonic...let’s say “profile”’, he says. ‘The problem is that harmony is not taught seriously anymore. I sound like the sort of old guy I never wanted to be, but I look back on my life and realise I was lucky because my parents found a teacher who could teach harmony. He exposed me to harmonic practice and then I studied with a student of Nadia Boulanger when I was in college so I’ve had this developed sense of harmonic awareness all my life.’

‘My music is definitely harmonic and it has a sense of tonality, but it’s too elusive and evasive... I don’t think it can be defined in any particular traditional terms.’

JOHN ADAMS
It might be argued that Adams broke out of minimalism partly through what has been described as 'hypermelody', a melodic line that, in certain works, began to float over the top over the mosaic of repeated motifs that you otherwise find in minimalism. As critic Paul Griffiths has pointed out, the solo part in the first movement of the Violin Concerto is a supreme example of this technique.

Perhaps Adams’ development of a sense of line was inherently American, with a straightforwardness learnt from songwriters like George Gershwin or Richard Rodgers. I asked Adams about the artistic influence of America.

‘Well, we’re an intensely musical culture and part of the reason for that is the ethnic mix. I can’t imagine how pale and uninteresting American music would be if it hadn’t been for African-American culture. We’ve mixed it up in many ways....And it’s fair to say that I am in a certain way very conscious of what I’m doing when I incorporate elements of the music that’s around me. But I’m first and foremost a classical musician. I’m doing City Noir in Melbourne and that’s a really good example of what I do....It’s full of my experiences with jazz and particularly jazz as it appears in the movies, circa 1940 and 50.’

When City Noir was premiered in 2009, the important saxophone part was played by Timothy McAllister. Now Adams has written this virtuoso player a concerto.

‘I wrote City Noir,’ he explains, ‘because I wanted to evoke that kind of nervous bebop sound that you occasionally heard in the background in film noir and so I wrote a virtuoso solo part in City Noir for alto saxophone and it sounds like it’s being improvised but in fact isn’t. And Tim played it so brilliantly that I thought, gee maybe I should write a concerto for this guy because there aren’t many good saxophone concertos.

‘The biggest issue we had in the course of collaborating on this piece is the sound. He was trained as a classical sax player and they have a different kind of sound. It’s not the looser jazz sound, it’s a more kind of formal sound with a very fast vibrato, which I don’t like. So he’s had to retrain himself and I know he’s been working on that.’

I ask whether he had to rethink his approach in writing a concerto for saxophone.

‘When I enter into a piece I don’t have formal plans. I look at composing as an adventure, like Magellan going out. I think there might be some continents out there but
I don’t know what they look like and I really launch an expedition, so the form usually ends up being the result of the materials that I’ve chosen.

‘I could say that this piece shares a certain formal familiarity with both my violin concerto and my piano concerto in the sense that it starts out fairly up-tempo and has a substantial, what feels like a first movement and then it melds into a slow movement. And then there’s a clean break followed by a last movement. The only problem with that is that audiences who don’t know those pieces think they’ve only heard the first movement and think they’re in for a really long evening. But, usually, if I think there’s any danger of that I make an announcement from the podium just so they have a rough idea how long the piece is. I think it’s good for audiences to know how many minutes to expect because it’s hard work absorbing a new piece, even in music that’s fundamentally tonal and accessible.’

Talk of the podium prompts me to ask Adams about his work as a conductor. The last time he came to Australia he was in the audience listening, as Edo de Waart conducted his music.

‘I’ve been conducting all of my professional life... I try to control the amount of it each year because, not only does it take time away from my composing, but it also takes psychological energy. I have to become almost like a

‘...I don’t have formal plans. I look at composing as an adventure, like Magellan going out.’

JOHN ADAMS
Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. When you’re composing you’re very inward and introverted and solitary, and when you’re conducting you have to be a very public person and outward. And that’s why, when I read about Mahler I’m amazed that he could do both, but I’m also aware of why people thought that he was a very difficult personality because it’s a real challenge to move from one activity to the other. On the other hand, it’s also tremendously fruitful for me, because not only am I able to polish my own pieces but when I do music that isn’t my own I think I can bring a certain perception to the performance of it.’

Adams’ music has often been inspired by big themes. Orchestral works such as 2010’s Absolute Jest [which the SSO will perform in 2014] might pay respect to masterworks of the European repertoire; the stage works cover the meeting of civilisations (Nixon in China), the Atomic Bomb (Doctor Atomic), and several new takes on Christianity (El Niño, The Gospel According to the Other Mary). I ask Adams what’s next?

‘I wish I could tell you. Every book I read, every story I encounter, I’m always kind of prospecting for a story because I think that, if people remember me in a hundred years, it’ll be more for my stage works and my operatic works, because they do really kind of put their finger on the pulse of our time, whether it’s politics or nuclear war or terrorism…. It’s just very hard to find the right spin. It has to be, on the one hand, universal in its theme and yet at the same time something that can be localised in terms of the story into an extremely compact time and group of characters. I know I’ll find something but it’s very frustrating not to have it right in front of me. …Sometimes I think I read too much. I look around and think there are other things to do in life, but I was at a farmer’s market you know, shopping for vegetables, and this guy had a T-shirt that said, “Eat, Sleep, Read”.

He laughs. It almost sounds like ‘eat, sleep, read’ is precisely what Adams wishes he could do now, but I know that pretty soon after I get off the phone he’s going to ‘hunker down’ (his agent’s words) to write, something he’ll be doing between this interview and preparing for his Australian concert tour. I can kind of understand how he answered my question about minimalism by saying that his music ‘moves so quickly that I don’t think it can be defined in any particular traditional terms’.
JOHN ADAMS

If you enjoyed Leila Josefowicz’s performance of the Adams Violin Concerto – a piece that she made her calling card for many years – look for her recording with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the composer conducting. Available on the BBC’s contemporary classical and world music label, Late Junction.

BBCLJ 30012

The first recording of the Adams Violin Concerto was made by Gidon Kremer, with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kent Nagano.

NONSEUCH 79360

There’s no recording of the new Saxophone Concerto – yet – but you can listen to some of the classic jazz albums that influenced John Adams in its composition, especially the recordings by saxophonist Stan Getz.

Avid Records has re-issued four albums in a 2-CD set, *Four Classic Albums – Stan Getz*. The collection includes *Focus* from 1961 – Getz’s tenor sax accompanied by strings and harp in writing that sometimes echoes Stravinsky, Bartók and Ravel.

AVID RECORDS AMSC 1058

Also influential was the 1950 album *Charlie Parker with Strings* – arrangements for jazz standards that demonstrated for Adams how his alto sax could float and soar above an orchestra. A master takes reissue is available on the Verve label.

VERVE 523984

iTUNES

Next week Timothy McAllister heads to Melbourne to perform the saxophone part in *City Noir* with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and John Adams. The concert will be recorded by ABC Classic FM, so look out for the as yet unscheduled concert broadcast.

Meanwhile, you can find *City Noir* in the recording of the premiere performance by Gustavo Dudamel and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, which commissioned the work.

iTUNES

And for still more John Adams, look for *Hallelujah Junction: A Nonesuch Retrospective*, a 2-CD set bringing together highlights from Adams’ concert music and stage works. An excellent introduction to his range and stylistic development if you’re just beginning to explore his music.

NONSEUCH 512396

READING AND ONLINE

John Adams’ official website is an excellent resource. Especially his blog, *Hell Mouth*. He covers music (mostly contemporary), literature (mostly good), politics (mostly pernicious) and culture (mostly American), all in a deeply rewarding style. One classic post from 2009, ‘Hocking a Hooey at the Concert’, offers an entertaining and deeply insightful discussion of that perplexing subject: coughing during concerts – www.earbox.com/posts/28

www.earbox.com


**Broadcast Diary**

**August–September**

**BBC**

Friday 23 August, 8pm

**ADAMS CONDUCTS ADAMS**

See this program for details.

Monday 26 August, 1.05pm

**JOYCE YANG IN RECITAL**

Joyce Yang piano

Bartók, Schumann, Rachmaninoff, Chopin

Friday 30 August, 1.05pm

**SELBY PLAYS MOZART**

Roger Benedict conductor

Kathryn Selby piano

Schreker, Mozart

Saturday 7 September, 8pm

**LIOR & WESTLAKE**

Nigel Westlake conductor

Lior vocalist

Featuring *Compassion – A Symphony of Songs*

Friday 27 September, 8pm

**WAGNER’S RING ADVENTURE**

Mark Wigglesworth conductor

Ingrid Fliter piano

Chopin, Wagner arr. Henk de Vlieger

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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 2

Strauss & Schubert
Gianluigi Gelmetti conducts Schubert’s Unfinished and R Strauss’s Four Last Songs with Ricarda Merbeth.
SSO 200803

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

Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet
Vladimir Ashkenazy conducts the complete Romeo and Juliet ballet music of Prokofiev – a fiery and impassioned performance.
SSO 201205

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto
In May this recording with James Ehnes and Ashkenazy was awarded a Juno (the Canadian Grammy). Lyrical miniatures fill out the disc. SSO 201206

MAHLER ODYSSEY

During the 2010 and 2011 concert seasons, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Vladimir Ashkenazy set out to perform all the Mahler symphonies, together with some of the song cycles. These concerts were recorded for CD and the set is now complete, together with a special disc of historical SSO Mahler performances. Available individually or as a handsome boxed set.

Mahler 1 & Songs of a Wayfarer  SSO 201001
Mahler 2  SSO 201203
Mahler 3  SSO 201101
Mahler 4  SSO 201102
Mahler 5  SSO 201003
Mahler 6  SSO 201103
Mahler 7  SSO 201104
Mahler 8 (Symphony of a Thousand)  SSO 201002
Mahler 9  SSO 201201
Mahler 10 (Barshai completion)  SSO 201202
Song of the Earth  SSO 201004

From the archives:
Rückert-Lieder, Kindertotenlieder, Das Lied von der Erde  SSO 201204

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

John Adams CONDUCTOR

Composer, conductor and creative thinker John Adams was born and raised in New England. He learned the clarinet from his father and played in marching bands and community orchestras during his formative years. He began composing at age ten and heard his first orchestral pieces performed while still a teenager. After graduating from Harvard, he moved in 1971 to the San Francisco Bay area where he has lived ever since.

His orchestral scores are among the most frequently performed and influential compositions by an American since the era of Copland and Bernstein. Works such as Shaker Loops, Harmonielehre, Short Ride in a Fast Machine and his Violin Concerto have become staples of the symphonic repertoire.

His theatrical works, all done in collaboration with director Peter Sellars, include Nixon in China, The Death of Klinghoffer and Doctor Atomic. More recent works include the Passion oratorio The Gospel According to the Other Mary and Absolute Jest for string quartet and orchestra. He is currently composing a new violin concerto for Leila Josefowicz.

John Adams is a much sought-after conductor, appearing with the world’s major orchestras in programs combining his own works with music ranging from Beethoven and Mozart to Ives, Carter, Zappa, Glass and Ellington. He has appeared with the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra and London Symphony Orchestra. This season he will conduct the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Houston Symphony, and preside over a two-week residency of his music in Madrid. He is currently Creative Chair at the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

He has received honorary doctorates from Yale and Harvard, as well as from Cambridge University and the Juilliard School. On the Transmigration of Souls, commissioned by the New York Philharmonic to commemorate the first anniversary of 9/11, received the 2003 Pulitzer Prize in Music.


This is John Adams’ Australian conducting debut and on this tour he also conducts the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in a program of his own music.
Leila Josefowicz VIOLIN

Leila Josefowicz has won the hearts of audiences around the world with her honest, fresh approach to repertoire and her dynamic virtuosity. Since her Carnegie Hall debut at the age of 16, she has appeared with many of the world’s leading orchestras and conductors. A close collaborator with leading composers of the day, she is an enthusiastic advocate of new music – a characteristic reflected in her diverse programs. She is a recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship, joining prominent scientists, writers and musicians who have made unique contributions to contemporary life.

Violin concertos have been written especially for her by Colin Matthews, Steven Mackey and Esa-Pekka Salonen, while Luca Francesconi and John Adams have recently been commissioned to write new pieces for her.

During the 2012–13 season she performed Oliver Knussen’s Concerto with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the composer. She also appeared with the London Philharmonic Orchestra (conducted by Yannick Nézet-Séguin), Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, and the Gothenburg Symphony, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic and Danish National Symphony orchestras. Earlier this year she performed Bernd Alois Zimmermann’s Concerto with the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra and James Gaffigan, and the Stravinsky concerto with the Dutch Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and Susanna Mälkki. She also appeared with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Detroit and Cincinnati symphony orchestras.

Other recent appearances in North America include performances with the Boston, Chicago and Toronto symphony orchestras, the San Francisco Symphony and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Elsewhere, she has appeared with the London Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, Gürzenich Orchestra Cologne and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra.

Leila Josefowicz has released several recordings including the works of John Adams – most recently The Dharma at Big Sur with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the title track on the Grammy-nominated Road Movies album. Her most recent release features Esa-Pekka Salonen’s Violin Concerto with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by the composer.

Leila Josefowicz previously appeared with the SSO in 1997, performing the Glazunov concerto with Edo de Waart conducting.
Timothy McAllister is one of America’s leading concert saxophonists and a champion of contemporary music. He has made numerous solo, orchestral and chamber music recordings, and is credited with more than 150 premieres of new works by eminent and emerging composers worldwide.

He has made concerto appearances with the Albany Symphony Orchestra, Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, Reno Philharmonic, Texas Festival Orchestra at Round Top, Hot Springs Festival Orchestra, Detroit Chamber Winds and Strings, Royal Band of the Belgian Air Force, United States Navy Band, Dallas Wind Symphony, Hong Kong Wind Philharmonia, Tokyo Wind Symphony, Columbus Symphony, Jacksonville Symphony, Nashville Symphony and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, among others.

Also in-demand as an orchestral saxophonist, he has appeared as a guest in the wind sections of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, St Louis Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Philharmonic, Oregon Symphony, Houston Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Grand Rapids Symphony Orchestra, Colorado Symphony Orchestra and the New World Symphony, and will perform next week with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Timothy McAllister is the soprano saxophonist of the PRISM Saxophone Quartet, appearing frequently on major chamber music series and international festivals and conducting groundbreaking residencies in elite music institutions such as the Curtis Institute and Oberlin Conservatory.

He is also professor of saxophone and co-director of the Institute for New Music at Northwestern University’s Bienen School of Music, and has visited the University of Michigan School of Music, the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris, and Tokyo’s Kunitachi College of Music and Shobi University, among others. He spends his summers as distinguished Valade Fellow at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan.

He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts and other degrees in music education, conducting and performance from the University of Michigan School of Music, where he studied saxophone with Donald Sinta.

This is Timothy McAllister’s Australian debut, and these performances of the new Adams Saxophone Concerto will be followed by North and South American premieres with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and Marin Alsop, and the Orquestra Sinfônica do estado de São Paulo in Brazil. He will also record the concerto with the St Louis Symphony and David Robertson.
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The men of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra are proudly outfitted by Van Heusen.
Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world’s finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world’s great cities.

Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, where it gives more than 100 performances each year, the SSO 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 2012 tour to China.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra’s first Chief Conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. David Robertson will take up the post of Chief Conductor in 2014. 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 Orchestra’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 orchestra 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 the orchestra’s 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. In 2010–11 the orchestra made concert recordings of the complete Mahler symphonies with Ashkenazy, and has also released recordings of Rachmaninoff and Elgar orchestral works on the Exton/Triton labels, as well as numerous recordings on the ABC Classics label.

This is the fifth year of Ashkenazy’s tenure as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor.
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The Sydney Symphony is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.
striving to achieve aural connections…

Sitting in that space means I can better hear the lines from the strings and woodwind, rather than having to rely much more on a visual connection from up behind the brass section.’

The best moments on stage, says Mark, come when something unexpected happens. ‘It won’t have happened in any rehearsal, or another performance. There’s a “collective ego” that happens where someone might play a beautiful line – a perfect trumpet solo, or an incredibly soft passage – and those connections kick in and everyone reacts and really goes for it! It’s guaranteed to send a tingle up my spine.’

Building community and a sense of connection is a strong thread in Mark’s life. He’s closely involved with the Percussive Arts Society, and has twice organised eclectic day-long percussion extravaganzas for all-comers at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

‘Because I’m in the position I’m in, and able to do what I love as a profession, I feel compelled to give something back to the percussion community.’ But, he jokes, he doesn’t do it to fill in his idle hours. ‘I’ve got two gorgeous kids who do that for me.’

Interview rooms (a.k.a. practice rooms) are in short supply when time comes to sit down and chat with assistant principal timpanist Mark Robinson. We make do with the percussion ‘cage’, an annex several floors below the Opera House stage which houses shelves of timbales, bongos and tom-toms. And the rest.

‘In my job,’ explains Mark, ‘much of the time I have my head in the world of timpani, but I also get to delve into percussion, which is a very different headspace. A modern orchestral percussionist not only has to cover the standard instruments and repertoire, but you also have to be able to play a rumba on congas, master the guiro, or get your head into jazz.’

The orchestra often looks to the percussion section to set the style and groove for anything that isn’t mainstream classical, romantic or 20th century.

‘On timpani, even though it’s a percussive instrument, I feel a strong connection to the lower end of the orchestra.’ When playing timps, Mark prefers to be behind the violas, closer to the basses. ‘We’re all striving to achieve aural connections across the orchestra, from point to point.'
Ask a Musician

I’ve been a subscriber for over ten years… and I look forward to every concert in the Master Series. I have a question for you: I’ve noticed Perspex shields between the brass and woodwind – what are they for?

Phil Dutton

The screens you see are in place to protect the hearing of the musicians. Typically, they’re used by the woodwind section, particularly the clarinets and bassoons, and by the back desks of violas and second violins. Brass players sometimes use screens if a piece has particularly loud percussion passages. The screens shield against the direct impact of high-volume sounds. If a piece is loud throughout, you may also see players using specially fitted earplugs, designed to still allow effective listening.

The screens are a necessary evil. It’s a thrilling and almost visceral experience to be sitting directly in front of a brass section in full flight, but it can potentially be very damaging for the hearing, since sound levels at such moments can rise above 110 decibels. It’s a profound irony that musicians’ hearing – integral to the job – can be damaged by the very thing they love to do.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra takes its OH&S responsibilities seriously. Looking after the hearing of our musicians helps ensure that we can all enjoy glorious music making for many years to come.

Have a question about music, instruments or the inner workings of an orchestra? ‘Ask a Musician’ at yoursay@sydneysymphony.com or by writing to Bravo! Reply Paid 4338, Sydney NSW 2001.

Outreach Highlight

As part of recent NAIDOC celebrations, 15 Indigenous students from Palm Island were rewarded for academic achievement with a trip to Sydney, taking in a tour of the Sydney Opera House and a performance by our Fellowship ensemble.

The students are all taking part in the Cathy Freeman Foundation Horizons Program (supported by Credit Suisse, who also support the Fellowship). This program rewards students for merit, attitude and a demonstrated desire to achieve in school. ‘Opportunities like this,’ says Cathy, ‘broaden the students’ understanding of the world and we hope they’ll go home inspired to continue on a positive education pathway.’

Clarinet Fellow Som Howie says it was a great feeling to play for this audience: ‘We were introducing them to something completely different and it was made even better by seeing the kids so engaged and enjoying the experience.’ Violin Fellow Kelly Tang agrees: ‘I love doing smaller, more intimate performances like these. It’s a rare opportunity for us to connect musically and be in community with a young audience.’

‘[David] Robertson is a most expressive presence on the podium, shaping the music with compelling physicality and great style.’ So wrote Clive Paget from Limelight magazine, about our recent performances of Wagner’s Flying Dutchman. S Katy Tucker’s strong, dynamic video art sailed above the stage, complementing the drama and the music, as Eric Owens and our cast told the story of a ghostly ship, love and redemption.
Artistic Focus

MASTERCHEF MAESTRO

Incoming chief conductor David Robertson likens his role to that of a master chef, and talks about what’s on the menu in 2014.

A fine chef, says David Robertson, wants you to come away from each meal feeling ‘nourished, delighted, surprised’. He brings the same approach to his concert programming. His goal: to place every concert ‘high on the pleasure quotient’.

That means satisfying our hearts and minds as well as our ears. And for 2014, he and SSO artistic planner Peter Czornyj have aimed to devise a varied season that’s ‘intellectually as well as aurally stimulating’.

Take the high-octane program with which he opens the year: Absolutely Beethoven. Stravinsky, John Adams and Beethoven’s energetic Seventh Symphony. ‘Every creative person works in the shadow of those who’ve come before,’ says Robertson. So there’s Stravinsky picking up on the use of rhetorical gestures that Beethoven trademarked. And John Adams, influenced by both Stravinsky and Beethoven, with his supercharged scherzo. The whole thing hangs together, he says, with these wonderful parallel worlds.

Robertson is hoping the musical combinations in the 2014 programming will ‘set you up to be aware’. That’s the thinking behind the programs in his Beethoven piano concerto cycle, featuring Emanuel Ax as soloist. And even a ‘vanilla’ program – Robertson’s word! – like Strauss’s Four Last Songs (with Christine Brewer), the Brahms Second Symphony and Frenesia, a new work by Detlev Glanert, promises rich connections and aural delights.

Among the season’s unquestioned highlights is Richard Strauss’s psychodrama Elektra, in a concert hall production featuring dancers from the Sydney Dance Company as well as a stunning cast of singers. For complete contrast, there’s the sheer fun of programs like Robertson conducts John Williams.

He’ll also present Music, Emotion and the Brain, a multi-media concert in August that’s all about ‘listening with the whole self’. It’s a concert for the mind as well as the soul, which just about sums up Robertson’s programming philosophy.

As Professor Marie Bashir said at the season launch event, the arrival of a new chief conductor is a momentous event in the life of an orchestra. And already in this first season, David Robertson is bringing a fresh distinction and new combinations of musical flavours. So join us for the banquet in 2014 – nothing would make the chef happier.

2014 Highlights

- Anne-Sophie Mutter returns to play Mozart violin concertos
- Elektra in the concert hall
- Paul McCreesh recreates the 1846 premiere of Mendelssohn’s Elijah with 300 singers
- Emanuel Ax plays the five Beethoven piano concertos
- Jandamarra – Sing for the Country, a new work by Paul Stanhope and Steve Hawke in collaboration with the Bunuba people
- Simone Young in Harp Legends, with a rare performance of Zemlinsky’s Mermaid
- Pepe Romero plays Rodrigo’s Concierto de Aranjuez.
- Brahms symphonies, conducted by Osmo Vänskä, David Robertson and Jakub Hrůša
- Hear It, Feel It – Music, Emotion and the Brain presented by David Robertson
- Screenings with orchestra of The Matrix and West Side Story
- James Ehnes plays Vivaldi’s Four Seasons
- Brett Dean’s new trumpet concerto, Dramatis Personae, with Håkan Hardenbergh
- Jonathan Nott and Donald Runnicles conduct Mahler symphonies
- Frank Peter Zimmermann plays the Sibelius Violin Concerto
- Truls Mørk plays Dvořák’s Cello Concerto

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**SPRINT OF COMPETITION**

Principal cellist Catherine Hewgill will preside over the final of a new cello competition, the Australian Cello Awards. It’s open to cellists from Australia and New Zealand and the prizes include cash scholarships and concerto opportunities. Entries close Friday 16 August. cellaoawards.org.au

**AUDITION TIPS**

Straight-jackets, metronomes and over-practice. Are you auditioning for the Sydney Symphony’s Fellowship program? Get some tips from Roger Benedict on how to prepare a winning audition: bit.ly/FellowshipAuditionTips

**GUESTS FROM CHINA**

In August, students from the Xinghai Conservatorium will accompany the Sinfonia for a series of activities and concerts. Three senior staff from the Conservatorium will accompany them to study aspects of tertiary training for exceptional musicians.

**HANSEL & GRETEL**

The Sinfonia and Xinghai students will feature in a one-hour matinee performance of Humperdinck’s fairytale opera Hansel and Gretel at the Chatswood Concourse on Saturday 17 August. More info here: bit.ly/HanselGretelSSO

**LEARNING ONLINE**

The SSO Education team has recently produced a series of free online resources for teachers, students and the perpetually curious. Visit the education section of our website, take a look at the curriculum resources and try some of the activities: bit.ly/CurriculumResourcesSSO

**ACCESS ALL AREAS**

Vanguard members were amongst the first in Sydney to meet chief conductor designate David Robertson since his appointment was announced. They enjoyed drinks and canapés in the Sydney Opera House boardroom, and afterwards were treated to a rehearsal of Verdi’s Requiem.

Our final Vanguard event for 2013 is on Monday 16 September. For more information, call Amelia Morgan-Hunn on 02 8215 4663

**RUN!**

We’ll be fielding our biggest-ever team of SSO musicians and staff for the City to Surf on Sunday 11 August. Look out for Team Symphony Sprint in their custom-designed Ashkenasy T-shirts!

**HELP AT HAND**

Do you need help booking a new subscription or renewing your subscription online? Can’t find the answer to your question in our FAQs? Our website now boasts a Live Chat feature which allows you to type your query and get a response from one of our customer service representatives in real time. Just click ‘CHAT NOW’. Available Monday–Friday 9am–5pm, excluding public holidays.