LIOR & WESTLAKE
songs with orchestra

Friday 6 September 2013
Saturday 7 September 2013
Mozart’s Jupiter Symphony

MOZART The Magic Flute: Overture
FINSTERER Lake Ice – Double Bass Concerto Premiere
MOZART Symphony No.41 (Jupiter)
Jessica Cottis conductor
Kees Boersma double bass

Lior & Westlake
Songs with orchestra

LIOR Leaving the Western Shadows
WESTLAKE & LIOR Compassion Premiere
Nigel Westlake conductor
Lior Attar vocalist

Wagner’s Ring Adventure

CHOPIN Piano Concerto No.2
WAGNER arr. de Vlieger The Ring – An Orchestral Adventure
Mark Wigglesworth conductor
Ingrid Fliter piano

Ingrid Fliter in Recital

HAYDN Sonata in E minor, Hob.XVI:34
SCHUBERT Sonata in A major, D958
CHOPIN Complete Preludes, Op.28
Ingrid Fliter piano

Last Night of the Proms
Includes Elgar’s Pomp & Circumstance
March No.1 (Land of Hope and Glory), Nimrod
from the Enigma Variations, The Lark Ascending,
Rule Britannia and Jerusalem.
Guy Noble conductor
Penelope Mills soprano / Cantillation
Fri 13 Sep 8pm
Sun 15 Sep 2pm

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2013 Season
Kaleidoscope
Friday 6 September, 8pm
Saturday 7 September, 8pm
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Lior and Westlake

Nigel Westlake CONDUCTOR
Lior VOCALS AND GUITAR
Domini Forster VOCALS
Joseph Tawadros OUD
Evan Mannell PERCUSSION
Bree van Reyk PERCUSSION
Brett Hirst BASS

Leaving the Western Shadows
Songs by Lior Attar
arranged for voices, small orchestra and band

Lior will announce the songs from the stage, see page 10 for arranger credits.

INTERVAL

Compassion – Symphony of Songs
Song cycle for voice and orchestra by Lior Attar and Nigel Westlake based on a collection of ancient Hebrew and Arabic texts

Sim Shalom – Grant Peace
Eize Hu Chacham? – Who is Wise?
La Yuminu – Until You Love Your Brother
Inna Ritqa – The Beauty Within
Al Takshu Lvavchem – Don’t Harden Your Hearts
Ma Wadani Ahadun – Until the End of Time
Avinu Malkeinu – Hymn of Compassion

Premiere

92.9 ABC Classic FM
Saturday’s performance will be broadcast live on ABC Classic FM.

Bigpond
Saturday’s performance will also be webcast via BigPond and will be available for later viewing on demand. Visit: bigpondmusic.com/sydneysymphony

Pre-concert talk by Kim Waldock at 7.15pm in the Northern Foyer. Visit sydneysymphony.com/talk-bios for speaker biographies.

Estimated durations: 40 minutes, 20-minute interval, 42 minutes
The concert will conclude at approximately 10pm.
Compassion – Symphony of Songs

A song cycle for voice and orchestra by Lior Attar and Nigel Westlake

Compassion draws from the rich worlds of Islam and Judaism to present a collection of profound and poetic messages surrounding the idea of compassion between human beings.

The texts are largely a collection of poems, proverbs and songs that give us an insight into such wisdom. Their similarities are immense and their universality is undeniable.

Far from the misguided commentaries that have so often steered humanity away from the true enactment of compassion, these texts affirm that attaining a greater sense of compassion is an ultimate goal, and letting it guide our actions is the ultimate wisdom.
The Genesis of Compassion

By Nigel Westlake

The catalyst for Compassion can be traced to a single watershed moment: the occurrence of my first Lior concert.

It was the winter of 2009 in the tiny rural village of St Albans NSW, the occasion being the inaugural fund raising event for the Smugglers of Light, a foundation formed by our family in memory of my son Eli.

At dusk, as the winter mist settled upon the forgotten valley (as it is sometimes known), quietly nestled between the towering ridges of Hawkesbury river sandstone, Lior began to weave his magic upon the crowd, many of whom had travelled long distances to join us for the weekend music festival.

It was a poignant occasion that had been planned to coincide with the 12-month anniversary of Eli’s death, and the music held a very special meaning for our friends and family, many of whom were still grappling with the tragic loss that had befallen us the previous year.

Lior’s music had been introduced to me several years earlier by my son Joel, and had quickly become absorbed into the family playlist, underscoring many happy times and celebratory moments. As it happened, Autumn Flow, the album that rocketed Lior to prominence in 2005 was among the last music I shared with my son Eli the week before his death, thereby forever imbuing these sweet songs with a very unique and deeply personal significance for me.

A fortuitous family connection with a dear friend had facilitated a personal introduction and Lior had graciously accepted our request to perform for the foundation.

It was one of those special nights that people talk about for years afterwards and also featured some wonderful performances from the Grigoryan Brothers and the Goldner String Quartet.

Lior concluded the proceedings with one of his best known songs, ‘This Old Love’. As he was brought back on stage for the encore, little did I realise that his final offering for the night would hold the germ of an idea that would become the catalyst for a life-changing and enriching journey.

Coaxing us gently into another world, as if possessed by unseen forces, and without accompaniment, Lior began to embrace the plaintive and heartfelt strains of the ancient Hebrew hymn of compassion Avinu Malkeinu.

Compassion was commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, for the SSO and the other Australian symphony orchestras, with the support of Symphony Services International.
In stark contrast to what had preceded, here was another side to Lior’s artistry, his keening and emotionally charged voice allowing us an intimate glimpse into the rich vein of middle eastern heritage that is his birthright.

The power and spirituality of the song struck a deep resonance amongst the crowd, all of whom were captivated in spellbound rapture. For my own part, I had just experienced a small taste of a tantalizing and exotic sound world and was overcome by a strange yearning to be a part of it.

Following the concert I suggested to Lior that I take a solo vocal recording of his performance and create a symphonic arrangement around it. Neither of us were sure where this might lead, but I had a hunch it was at least worth a shot.

Weaving my orchestration around Lior’s voice was a little like writing a movie score, the vocal part an intractable dramatic narrative, the orchestral accompaniment a fluid underscore replete with abundant possibilities.

We could both sense potential in the finished idea and it seemed a natural progression to expand the material into a song cycle for voice and orchestra. In passing, I casually mentioned our plan to Peter Czornyj (the Sydney Symphony Orchestra’s director of artistic planning) and he suggested the orchestra would be interested in bringing the idea to fruition through a commission. We set to work.

Just as our first attempt *Avinu Malkeinu* had begun life as a solo vocal, we now followed a similar pattern for the rest of the composition process, and using the concept of compassion as a common theme, Lior proposed the texts be sourced from a combination of Hebrew and Arabic writings.

In the context of a troubled and divisive history, the drawing together of these common threads of Judaism and Islam struck me as a bold and courageous strategy, and a perfect fit for Lior’s middle eastern ancestry and family history.

Through painstaking research, he managed to unearth a wonderful collection of ancient proverbs, writings and poetry. For each text he devised a vocal part which he sent me as a solo recording, sometimes embodying the germ of a melodic fragment and at other times as a complete series of mellifluous phrases.

Many of the songs sounded for all the world like ancient chants exhumed from a long lost tomb somewhere on the
shores of the Red Sea, yet the melodies were very much alive and fresh, full of richness, vibrancy and spontaneity.

It was inspiring to hear Lior working outside his comfort zone, experimenting with new vocal timbres and using his extraordinary three-octave vocal range to great effect.

Every few weeks we would get together to review progress and examine the overall form of each piece. Given our dissimilar experiences in music, I couldn’t believe how we both seemed to be on the same wave length, striving toward a common goal, critical of the same issues and agreeing on the ideas that seemed to work.

Some of the songs evolved over a period of months, others over days, but what has emerged is a true collaboration, and music that neither of us could ever have written on our own.

Compassion inhabits a vast array of emotions and colours, at times pulsating and riotous, at others reflective and textural, and draws upon the myriad influences the two of us have been able to bring to the table from our incredibly diverse backgrounds.

With the utmost respect, we have tried to imbue these ancient texts with a contemporary interpretation, adhering to the purity of a single voice and orchestra, and although the songs are all sung in their original language, there are no conscious references to traditional Hebrew or Arabic musical forms, melodies or scales (with the exception for Avinu Malkeinu, which is based on a traditional melody).

The support of the SSO in bringing this project to the stage has been absolutely extraordinary and Lior and I are profoundly grateful to Peter Czornyj and the orchestral management for their enthusiasm and encouragement.

We would also like to thank the wonderful musicians of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for the commitment and finesse they bring to this music.

Seeing this piece come together over the past couple of years has been a major highlight in my career and it is my hope that this music might offer its listeners the space and opportunity to reflect upon the qualities of that most noble of human sentiments, the good stuff that enriches our lives with meaning, insight, depth and intrinsic worth. The virtue of compassion.
Leaving the Western Shadows – Creative Credits

Lyrics and music by Lior Attar, unless otherwise noted

April Bloom – arranged for orchestra by François (Franc) Tétaz
Bedouin Song – arranged by Franc Tétaz
Daniel – arranged by Franc Tétaz
Days to Remember – arranged by Lachlan Carrick
Grey Ocean – arranged by Franc Tétaz with additional arranging by Wally Gunn
If I Lost Your Love – arranged by Iain Grandage
I’ll Forget You – music and lyrics by Lior Attar and B. Fink, arranged by Franc Tétaz with additional arranging by Wally Gunn
My Grandfather – Lior Attar
Safety of Distance – arranged by Franc Tétaz and Nigel Westlake
This Old Love – arranged by Franc Tétaz and Nigel Westlake
Tumbling into the Dawn – arranged by Benjamin Northey
We’re Almost There – arranged by Nigel Westlake

COLE PORTER, LET’S MISBEHAVE (1927)

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Two Worlds in Common

By Lior Attar

The research that eventually led me to the texts threaded through Compassion took me far and wide, from conversations with religious leaders and linguists, to regular consultations with my good friend Waleed Aly, who took me through the finer details of Arabic pronunciation and the subtleties of the Arabic texts.

Being a fluent Hebrew speaker, I initially thought that singing some of the texts in Arabic would feel foreign and disingenuous, yet to my surprise, many of the words I encountered were common to both languages. It became clear in learning these texts that these two languages shared a deep and common source. Just as experience often validates the existence of a well-worn cliché, it is difficult to escape the analogy of two brothers starting from a common source and branching out to gather their own rich experience and identity to become what we now know as modern Hebrew and Arabic.

In time, I would also come to learn not only of the similarities in language, but in the very essence of the messages embodied throughout these proverbs and poems. What began with a feeling of trepidation as to whether Nigel and I could sincerely encapsulate the artistic concept and vision we shared for this undertaking, has ended with a full embrace and a somewhat unexpected sense of renewed optimism.

It may seem strange in the context of this work, but neither Nigel nor I consider ourselves religious people. We do, however, share a firm belief that much of the beauty and wisdom found within so many works of art and philosophy attributed to a certain religion need not lie exclusive to those who subscribe to its faith, or only to those who seek a connection with God through directional prayer. They have so much to offer to those who might accept them without bias or judgement.

Imagination is not only the uniquely human capacity to envision that which is not, and, therefore, the foundation of all invention and innovation. In its arguably most transformative and revelatory capacity, it is the power that enables us to empathise with humans whose experiences we have never shared.

JK ROWLING
1. Sim Shalom – Grant Peace

More than any of the texts used in Compassion, ‘Sim Shalom’ demonstrates that a literal translation is often inadequate in conveying the depth and richness of these texts. An example can be found in one of the stanzas relating to the vital virtues of character – ‘chesed, tzedakah, u’vracha’, v’rachamim’ – ‘charity, integrity and compassion’.

The word ‘rachamim’ can be quite simply translated as ‘compassion’. When uncovered however, this word has far richer and deeper meaning, being a derivation of the Hebrew word for ‘womb’. More importantly, a closely related word of the same origin – ‘Rachaman’ – which can be translated as ‘the Compassionate One’, is one of the three names for God in the Jewish religion.

Interestingly, the origin, meaning and use of ‘Rachaman’ is almost identical between the two worlds of Judaism and Islam. Such is the centrality and esteem these two religions place on the virtue of compassion, that it is in fact one of the names given to God.

2. Eize Hu Chacham? – Who is Wise?

‘Who is wise? One who learns from every man.’
Ben Zoma – Pirkei Avot 4:1

‘Who is a hero? One who turns an enemy into a friend.’
Avot d’Rabbi Natan, Chapter 23: True Heroism

‘Do not scorn any person and do not discount any thing. For there is no one who has not their hour, and no thing that has not its place.’
Ben Azzai – Pirkei Avot 4:3

‘Eize Hu Chacham’ is a collection of ethical and moral statements of the Sages taken from Pirkei Avot – Ethics of our Fathers. Pirkei Avot is a section of the Mishna, one of the fundamental works of the Jewish Oral Law.
3. La Yu'minu – Until You Love Your Brother

‘None of you will have faith until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.’
_Sahih al-Bukhari, Vol.1 No.12; reported by Hadhrat Anas_

‘Those who are merciful will be granted mercy from the Most Merciful; be merciful to those on the earth and those in the heavens will have mercy on you.’
_Sunan At-Tirmidhi, Book of Righteousness, No.1924, Sahih; reported by Abdullah ibn Amr_

A Hadith is a report of something the Prophet Muhammad said or did. Hundreds of thousands of these reports have been gathered together in the Hadith collections that form the basis of so much Islamic thought and teaching.

This movement, _La Yu’minu_, is a melding of two central hadiths. These two proverbs relay a simple yet universal truth, the closest approximation of the first being that of ‘the golden rule’: ‘do unto others as you would have them do unto you’, while the second speaks of what some of us might otherwise call ‘karma’.

4. Inna Rifqa – The Beauty Within

‘Compassion does not enter into anything without beautifying it, and is not removed from anything without making it ugly.’

For several hundred years, the narrations of the Prophet were passed down via word of mouth. As time passed, and the chain of narration grew, it became more difficult to be certain of the authenticity of a hadith, and hence a rigorous science of examining the authenticity of hadiths grew.

Such was the importance placed on the science of verifying the credibility of Hadith, that it grew to become a complex academic field and for many, a lifetime’s dedication and pursuit. The most authentic collection of

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_Bytes: 24891_
Hadith is widely recognised as those based on the study of Imam al-Bukhari. There is a famous story highlighting the level of Imam al-Bukhari’s rigorous approach. Upon one of his journeys to seek out and examine the character of those involved in the chain of narration, al-Bukhari noticed one such person gesturing to his horse to come over to him by tricking him that there was food when in fact there was not. Al-Bukhari cited this act of trickery towards the animal as behaviour not worth of trustworthiness, and hence the chain of narration to which this man was involved in was thereby deemed inauthentic.

5. Al Takshu L’vavchem – Don’t Harden Your Hearts

‘Don’t harden your hearts.’
_Tehilim – Book of Psalms 95:8_

‘Teach us to number our days, that we may get a heart of wisdom.’
_Tehilim – Book of Psalms 90:12_

‘And if a stranger is among you in your land, you shall not do him wrong.’
_Leviticus 19:33_

‘The stranger that is among you, shall be unto you as the home-born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself, for you once were also strangers.’
_Leviticus 19:34_

There is a beautiful quote by the Dalai Lama: ‘There are no strangers, only friends you haven’t yet met.’

‘Fear makes strangers of people who would be friends.’ – Shirley MacLaine

Al takshu l’vavchem.
Limnot yameinu ken hoda venavi l’vav chochma.
Vekhi yagur itcha ger, be’artzchem lo tonu oto.
K’ezrach mikem yihiyeh lachem hager hagar itchem.
Ve’ahavta lo kamocha ki gerim ha’item.
6. Ma Wadani Ahadun – Until the End of Time

‘None ever showed me compassion
Except that I showed them compassion until the end of time
And if someone were to show me harshness
I would pray to the most merciful to give him wisdom.’

Ma Wadani Ahadun is a poem written by Ali Ibn Abi Talib, a cousin of the Prophet Muhammad and the fourth Caliph after the Prophet some 1400 years ago. Widely known for his calm wisdom and use of reason in place of hot-headedness, Ali is a universally revered figure in the Muslim world: a man through whom both the Sunni and Shi’ite traditions pass, whose strong character of kindness and compassion inspires people across sectarian divides.

7. Avinu Malkeinu – Hymn of Compassion

I have vivid memories of hearing Avinu Malkeinu emanating from synagogues in my childhood. The prayer is recited on Yom Kippur – The Day of Atonement, the holiest day of the Jewish year. What initially drew me to the prayer was its haunting melody, yet it was only later in life, when I learnt of its meaning and universal resonance, that I felt drawn to perform it. One such performance later came to be the very seed of this project, as Nigel and I entertained the notion of orchestrating this beautiful ancient melody which I had only ever previously performed a cappella.

The text of Avinu Malkeinu houses a beautiful link between not only compassion and wisdom, but that of freedom. It highlights the notion of compassion being the path to liberation, a concept that has always stayed with me.
LIOR
Lior’s discography includes three original albums, and he is in the process of bringing a fourth album to fruition. (You can pledge to support this project here: www.pledgemusic.com/projects/lior)

Look for his 2005 debut album Autumn Flow, Corner of an Endless Road (2008) and Tumbling into the Dawn (2010). These and the live album Doorways of My Mind (2006) as well as several singles can all be found in the iTunes Store.

Lior also appears on the album They Will Have Their Way – The Songs of Tim and Neil Finn (2011), performing ‘It’s Only Natural’ with Emma Louise.

WESTLAKE
In 2011 Nigel Westlake conducted the SSO in two powerful performances of his Missa Solis – Requiem for Eli. He subsequently recorded it with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. If you seek out nothing else, look for this deeply moving work.

ABC CLASSICS 476 5057

In the international percussion repertoire, Westlake’s Omphalo Centric Lecture for percussion quartet is the most frequently performed work of all. And you only have to listen to a few minutes of this rhythmically infectious music to understand why it’s so popular. Synergy Percussion perform it on the all-Westlake disc Onomatopoeia, which also features the composer playing bass clarinet.

TALL POPPIES 47

Westlake’s score for the Imax film Antarctica, with its adorable ‘Penguin Ballet’, is also worth seeking out. The soundtrack is conducted by Carl Vine on a Tall Poppies release.

TALL POPPIES 12

Westlake subsequently developed the Antarctica suite for guitar and orchestra, and this has been recorded by the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and David Porcelijn with guitarist Timothy Kain. On the same release: Out of the Blue and Westlake performing his Concerto for Bass Clarinet.

ABC CLASSICS 462 0172

If you like the guitar sound, look for Shadow Dances, with Slava Grigoryan accompanied by his brother Leonard, pianist Michael Kieran Harvey and Joel Westlake on double bass, with the Saffire Guitar Quartet and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

ABC CLASSICS 476 5744

For highlights from Westlake’s recent film scores, including Babe – Pig in the City and Miss Potter, look for Shimmering Light.

ABC CLASSICS 476 3588

These recordings and others are also available through the iTunes Store.

Broadcast Diary
September–October

abc.net.au/classicFM

Saturday 7 September, 8pm
LIOR & WESTLAKE
See this program for details.

Friday 27 September, 8pm
WAGNER’S RING ADVENTURE
Mark Wigglesworth conductor
Ingrid Fliter piano
Chopin, Wagner arr. Henk de Vlieger

Friday 11 October, 8pm
FRENCH LIAISONS
Lionel Bringuier conductor
Gautier Capuçon cello
Dutilleux, Saint-Saëns, Berlioz

Tuesday 22 October, 1.05pm
BOHEMIAN ADVENTURE
Antonello Manacorda conductor
Jonathan Biss piano
Bartók, Mozart, Dvořák

Thursday 31 October, 9.30pm
ALL STOPS OUT!
David Drury organ
Female voices of VOX
Elizabeth Scott chorus director
Rebecca Gill violin
JS Bach, Mozart, Vierne, Brahms, Karg-Elert

Fine Music 102.5
SYDNEY SYMPHONY 2013
Tuesday 10 September, 6pm
Musicians, staff and guest artists discuss what’s in store in our forthcoming concerts.

Webcasts

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LIOR & WESTLAKE
from Saturday 7 September at 8pm
Visit: bigpondmusic.com/sydneysymphony

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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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Nigel Westlake CONDUCTOR

Following clarinet studies with his father, Donald Westlake (former principal clarinettist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra), Nigel Westlake left the Sydney Conservatorium High School early to pursue a performance career. He toured Australia and the world performing as a freelance clarinettist, bass clarinettist and saxophonist with ballet companies, a circus troupe, chamber music ensembles, fusion bands and orchestras. He went on to perform with the Australia Ensemble (1987–1992) and was later a member of guitarist John Williams’ group Attacca, as both performer and composer.

His interest in composition dates from the late 1970s, when he formed a classical/jazz-rock/world music/fusion band to play original compositions. It was during this time he began to receive offers to compose for radio, circus, television and film. In 1983 he studied bass clarinet with Harry Sparnaay and composition with Theo Leovendie in the Netherlands. The following year he was appointed composer in residence for ABC Radio. At first he balanced his life as a composer with a busy international performing schedule, but in the early 1990s he turned his focus to composition.

His film credits include Miss Potter, Babe, Babe – Pig in the City, Children of the Revolution and Imax films such as Antarctica, The Edge and Solarmax, and his composing accolades include the Gold Medal at the New York International Radio Festival and 15 APRA awards. His Opus 1, Omphalo Centric Lecture for percussion quartet (1984) has become one of the most frequently performed and recorded works in the international percussion repertoire.

Nigel Westlake made his conducting debut with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in 1997 and has since conducted concerts and recordings of his works with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Youth Orchestra. He made his SSO debut in 2011, conducting his Missa Solis – Requiem for Eli in two memorable concerts. (Missa Solis was named Orchestral Work of the Year at the APRA–AMC 2012 Art Music Awards.)

Last year the University of New South Wales awarded him an honorary Doctorate in Music, and he was appointed composer in residence for the 2012 Australian Festival of Chamber Music.

In 2008 Nigel Westlake formed the Smugglers of Light Foundation in memory of his son Eli.
Lior VOCALS AND GUITAR

Lior burst on to the Australian music scene in 2005 with his stunning debut album *Autumn Flow*. Recorded and released entirely independently – and spearheaded by ‘This Old Love’ and subsequent singles ‘Daniel’ and ‘Autumn Flow’ – the album became one of the most successful independent debuts in Australian history, with sales surpassing Platinum. A swag of accolades followed, among them three Aria nominations (including Best Male Artist), as well as the prestigious J Award nomination for triple j Australian Album of the Year.

Lior’s sophomore album *Corner of an Endless Road* (2008) followed on where *Autumn Flow* left off and was a huge success, debuting at #2 on the Australian Albums chart and topping the Independent charts for several weeks. The release was followed by a string of sold-out national tours, including the hugely successful *Shadows and Light* tour – a stunning collaboration with live performance shadow artistry built specifically to Lior’s music. The tour showcased at the Sydney Opera House to wide critical acclaim.

2010 marked the beginning of a new chapter for Lior with the release of his third studio album, *Tumbling into the Dawn*. The album was written and recorded in numerous locations between his home town of Sydney and his current home in Melbourne, and cemented his long-time collaboration with producer François Tétaz.

If *Corner of an Endless Road* represented Lior’s rich eastern musical heritage, *Tumbling into the Dawn* traversed broader territory. The album represented a return to the art of writing a great song based around a simple hook, a beautiful melody and a distinctive voice. Combined with the bittersweet lyrical explorations of themes such as the underlying duality of existence and the vulnerabilities and strength of the human spirit, the album represented a wide and intense journey with a diverse appeal.

Most artists set out with an ambition to build a career based on musical credibility and integrity while maintaining an independence and individuality in their craft. Lior is certainly part of that rare breed that has achieved this while garnering a great degree of success and critical acclaim.
FIRST VIOLINS
Sun Yi
Associate Concertmaster
Fiona Ziegler
Assistant Concertmaster
Jenny Booth
Marianne Broadfoot
Brielle Clapson
Amber Davis
Jennifer Hoy
Nicola Lewis
Alexandra Mitchell
Léone Ziegler
Emily Qin*
Kelly Tang†
Andrew Haveron
Concertmaster
Dene Olding
Concertmaster
Kirsten Williams
Associate Concertmaster
Julie Batty
Sophie Cole
Georges Lentz
Alexander Norton

SECOND VIOLINS
Emma Jezek
A/ Assistant Principal
Emily Long
A/ Assistant Principal
Susan Dobbie
Principal Emeritus
Maria Durek
Emma Hayes
Shuti Huang
Stan W Kornel
Benjamin Li
Maja Verunica
Rebecca Gill†
Kirsty Hilton
Marina Marsden
Nicole Masters
Philippa Paige
Biyana Rozenblit

VIOLAS
Roger Benedict
Tobias Breider
Anne-Louise Cornerford
Robyn Brookfield
Sandro Costantino
Jane Hazelwood
Stuart Johnson
Leonid Volovelsky
Justin Williams
Assistant Principal
Graham Hennings
Justine Marsden
Felicity Tsai
Amanda Verner

CELLOS
Catherine Hewgill
Leah Lynn
Assistant Principal
Fenella Gill
Christopher Pidcock
Adrian Wallis
David Wickham
James sang-o-yoo
Kristy Conraas
Timothy Nankervis
Elizabeth Neville

DOUBLE BASSES
Alex Henery
David Campbell
Steven Larson
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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 Orchestra is assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body. The Sydney Symphony Orchestra is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.


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.

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.’
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.

‘[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.

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.’
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 programing 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 Is, 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 Hardenberger
- 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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SPRIRIT 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. cellaowards.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 in Guangzhou will join the Sydney Symphony 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/HanselGreetelSSO

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 Sydney Symphony Sprint in their custom-designed Ashkenazy 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.

BRAVO EDITOR Genevieve Lang Huppert
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