SELBY PLAYS MOZART

TEA & SYMPHONY
Fri 5 Apr 11am
Pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet brings impeccable flair to his performances and you'll want to hear him in George Gershwin's jazz-inflected piano concerto.

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SHOSTAKOVICH Jazz Suite No.1
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James Gaffigan conductor
Jean-Yves Thibaudet piano
2013 SEASON
TEA & SYMPHONY
Friday 5 April | 11am
Sydney Opera House

Selby plays Mozart

Roger Benedict CONDUCTOR
Kathryn Selby PIANO

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)
Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K546

Franz Schreker (1878–1934)
Kammersymphonie (Chamber Symphony)
Langsam, schwebend (Slow, floating) –
Allegro vivace – Adagio –
Scherzo (Allegro vivace) –
Ziemlich bewegt (Fairly agitated) –
Langsam, schwebend
The Chamber Symphony is in one movement

Mozart
Piano Concerto No.27 in B flat, K595
Allegro
Larghetto
Allegro

Some of the music heard in this program was recorded on 28 February for later broadcast on ABC Classic FM.

Estimated durations: 9 minutes, 16 minutes, 35 minutes
The concert will conclude at approximately 12.10pm.

In February we learned, with regret, that Geoffrey Lancaster would need to withdraw from his concerts with the Sydney Symphony for health reasons. We are grateful to Kathryn Selby for agreeing to take over the program.
ABOUT THE MUSIC

Longing for Spring and a distant music
SCHRECKER and MOZART

The Chamber Symphony is Schreker’s only completed symphonic work. He was primarily a composer of operas, in which the orchestra plays a rich and elaborate part. Schreker was also a teacher of composition. In 1912 he was teaching at the Vienna Conservatorium. The Chamber Symphony was completed in December 1916 to mark the centenary of the institution where Schreker had himself studied years earlier, and was intended ‘for the faculty of the Royal and Imperial Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna’. Schreker himself conducted the first performance on March 12, 1917. The players were professors at the Academy and members of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. The importance the music gives to individual instruments might be a tribute to Schreker’s colleagues, but in any case it suited his inclination, also heard in his operas, for varying timbre constantly in a shifting, shimmering textural web.

Mozart’s last piano concerto was premiered by him on 4 March 1791. It was his last performance in a public concert, not one of his own but given by the clarinettist Joseph Beer at Jahn’s Hall in Vienna. Mozart at this time had enough commissions to be able to devote himself almost entirely to composition, writing two operas (The Magic Flute and La Clemenza di Tito), a large part of a Requiem Mass, a clarinet concerto for Anton Stadler, and other works. Mozart biographer Maynard Solomon suggests that the completion of the piano concerto, his first for three years, marks a renewal of Mozart’s creative impulse. The first two movements may have been composed in 1788 – lying fallow until January 1791, when Mozart wrote a last movement on the same theme as a song he composed for a collection of songs for children (a commission from a bookseller). The song, ‘Longing for Spring’, begins with the words: ‘Come, dear May, and clothe the trees in green once more.’

Mozart’s last piano concerto has little in it to attract the virtuoso, or the audience in search of the sensational. Many commentators have found in it, if not a feeling of leave-taking, at least resignation and nostalgia. For others it heralds a new tone in Mozart’s work – one of simpler, unassuming, sometimes even popular expression.

We think we know how to listen to Mozart…but who is this Schreker? The title of his first staged opera is suggestive: Der ferne Klang – The Distant Sound. The libretto, written by the composer, tells of a young creative artist, Fritz, who leaves his girlfriend to search for his goal, ‘the distant sound’ – too late he realises that the secret of this distant sound lies in nature...
Who was Schreker?

Schreker in 1916 was an up-and-coming opera composer. His operas (of which his first, *The Distant Sound*, is best-known), blend realism and ‘adult themes’ with near-surrealism. But in the Chamber Symphony, where there are no words, what impresses is the dream-like dramatic effect and the resourcefulness of Schreker’s orchestral writing.

Schreker’s music went out of fashion along with his post-romantic style. The Nazis considered his operas degenerate, and hounded him to an early death. In recent years there has been a Schreker revival.

FRANZ SCHREKER
Austrian composer
(1878–1934)

itself. Schreker’s mixture of realism, some daringly explicit subject matter, in an atmosphere of sensuality, seduction, opulence and subliminal danger, appealed to his contemporaries. In 1912 *Der ferne Klang* brought Schreker, at the quite advanced age of 34, overnight fame as a leading composer of new opera. This fame was confirmed by the operas he wrote at the time of composing the Chamber Symphony: *Die Gezeichneten* (The Marked Ones) and *Der Schatzgräber* (The Treasure Seeker).

So how came Schreker to be almost completely forgotten, until a revival in recent years? The Nazis disrupted performances of his operas, and forced his resignation from 1931 to 1933 from the headship of music institutions in Berlin. This contributed to the stroke that brought Schreker’s early death. For the Nazis, Schreker’s art was an exhibit of what they considered decadent, degenerate. What stood in the way of reassessment of Schreker’s achievement after the War was that modernists, then in the ascendance, also had problems with his musical style. The following generation – like his Berlin colleague Hindemith – thought Schreker’s music too ornate and lacking a clear melodic line. Even in Vienna, Schoenberg followers found that Schreker clung too strongly to tonal harmony, and that his interest in tone colour as the main structural feature of music ran counter to their own
preoccupation with intervals (and ultimately the ‘twelve tone row’). This, despite Schreker’s closeness to Schoenberg – he was the first to conduct Gurrelieder, in 1913.

Schoenberg had composed his own Chamber Symphony in 1906, for 15 solo instruments. Schreker’s piece similarly condenses the usual four-movement form of a symphony into one. One could try to hear in Schreker’s Chamber Symphony, as did one advocate of Schoenbergian modernism: ‘a sonata allegro exposition. An adagio, a relatively lengthy scherzo. In place of a finale there is a recapitulation of the exposition and adagio.’ But surface is more compelling in Schreker’s piece than underlying structure. By comparison with the music of Schoenberg, Schreker’s seems indeterminate, more like a series of images and states. If sonata and symphony appear at all, it is as ghosts. This is almost ‘sound for sound’s sake’ – one recent writer refers to Schreker’s sound-bites.

Eventually he called this piece ‘Chamber Symphony’, but in the sketches Schreker referred to it as a tone poem. Knowing that it uses material from an incomplete opera called The Sounding Spheres, some find it more like latent opera. Every question this music poses seems to open the door to another enigma. Is the opening an introduction, or is it the main theme? By the end we may feel that the question posed at the beginning is the conclusion, as in the search for the distant sound.

The recently renewed attraction to Schreker comes from the sense that he shows a way out of late-romanticism, different from the modernist paths – whether neo-classical, atonal or serial. Aspects of romanticism appear, floating in Schreker’s Chamber Symphony (1916) is a single-movement piece in which the four movements of conventional symphonic structure are condensed and blurred in a fluid music of shifting tempos, colours and textures rather than clearly discernible and worked out themes.

On the stage you’ll see seven winds, eleven strings, harp, celesta, piano, harmonium, timpani and percussion – a relatively large ensemble for a ‘chamber symphony’.

Portraiture of Mozart by his brother-in-law Joseph Lange. The painting is an incomplete enlargement of a miniature portrait from 1782–83, and would have shown Mozart seated at a piano.
an eclectic suspended reality. Schreker may have been pointing the way to post-modernism.

If we go with its flow, listening to Mozart’s concerto can also be a dream-like experience. This concerto begins – as no other music of Mozart’s does except the G minor Symphony No.40 – with several bars of accompaniment. The first theme sets the mood: free and expressive, yet perhaps a little weary, too, each of its three phases sinking to rest before being roused by the wind instruments. The slow movement is simple, like a celestially beautiful romance. The last movement has elements of the hunt, mostly cheerful but with shadows, and with some of the longing expressed in the words of the song on which the music is based.

DAVID GARRETT © 2013

MOZART Adagio and Fugue, K546

The Adagio and Fugue is an ingenious piece of musical craftsmanship and recycling. The fugue portion was originally composed for two pianos; the Adagio was added as a prelude when Mozart transcribed the Fugue for an ensemble of two violins, viola and bass. The Fugue is a masterly display piece of contrapuntal writing – old-fashioned by the end of the 18th century, but still considered central to a composer’s craft. The Adagio plumbs the depths of remote keys in some of the most daring harmonic progressions Mozart ever wrote. And the work as a whole is deeply impressive, though startling if you’ve never before encountered Mozart in ‘contrapuntal’ style.

Mozart entered the Adagio and Fugue into his composing diary on 26 June 1788: ‘A short Adagio...for a fugue which I had already written a long time ago for two pianos.’ The ‘long time ago’ was five years: in 1783 Mozart was coming to grips for the first time with the contrapuntal genius of Johann Sebastian Bach, to whose music he'd been introduced by Baron Gottfried van Swieten, Vienna’s Imperial Court Librarian and patron of the arts. The Fugue, in four voices, is strictly worked out with all the technical devices of the genre and uses a deeply serious theme.

Mozart must have considered it important, since he returned to it and gave it an introduction of matching significance and weight. The original form of the Fugue does not exploit the potential of two keyboards, so the arrangement for strings is probably preferable. Mozart’s entry in his diary seems to imply performance by a string quartet, but a sketch in the manuscript dividing the bass stave for cellos and double basses leaves open the possibility that he had in mind a string orchestra, a medium which better brings out the music’s expressive weight.

ADAPTED FROM A NOTE BY DAVID GARRETT © 2013
Roger Benedict CONDUCTOR

Roger Benedict has worked as a soloist, chamber musician, orchestral player, teacher and conductor. He studied at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester (where he was later a professor), and the International Musicians’ Seminar, Prussia Cove. In 1991 he was appointed Principal Viola of the Philharmonia Orchestra, and in 2002 Principal Viola of the Sydney Symphony. He is also Artistic Director of the orchestra’s Fellowship program, and has performed as guest principal with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

As a soloist he has appeared with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra, and Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa, Japan. He has performed Strauss’s *Don Quixote* many times, and with the Sydney Symphony he has performed Mozart’s *Sinfonia concertante*, Berlioz’s *Harold in Italy*, Ford’s *Unquiet Grave* and Vaughan Williams’ *Flos Campi*.

Other solo highlights include performances with cellists Lynn Harrell and Steven Isserlis, and concerts for the opening of the Melbourne Recital Centre in 2009. He has appeared at London’s Wigmore Hall and Purcell Room, and in all the major festivals and concert series in the UK. His chamber music partners have included Lorin Maazel, Simon Rattle, Louis Lortie and Leif Ove Andsnes, and he has performed as a guest with the Tinalley String Quartet and Sydney Soloists.

He has recorded several concertante works for BBC Radio 3, including Michael Berkeley’s Viola Concerto, of which he gave the premiere, and he is frequently heard on ABC Classic FM. His recordings include the recital disc *Volupté* (2010) and *Flos Campi* with the Sydney Symphony (2011).

Roger Benedict regularly directs orchestras at the Sydney Conservatorium and Australian National Academy of Music, the National Youth Orchestra in London and Aldeburgh, and the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra. In addition to leading the Sydney Symphony Fellowship program, he is a Senior Lecturer at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, a European Union Orchestra tutor, and was an orchestral mentor for the YouTube Symphony Orchestra 2011 in Sydney.
Kathryn Selby PIANO

Kathryn Selby studied at the Sydney Conservatorium, Curtis Institute of Music and Bryn Mawr College in Philadelphia, and earned her master’s degree at the Juilliard School. She was a prize winner at the Van Cliburn, William Kapell and Young Concert Artists competitions, Bruce Hungerford Memorial Award, and the Ferruccio Busoni Competition, giving her a recital debut at Carnegie Hall. She has also been a recipient of Churchill and Australia Council fellowships and an Astral Foundation of New York career development grant.

While in the United States, she performed with the American Chamber Orchestra as well as appearing as a soloist with orchestras such as the Philadelphia, Boston Pops and San Francisco Symphony. In Australia she has appeared for most of the major symphony orchestras and the Australian Chamber Orchestra, as well as appearing in the Sydney Mozart and Sydney festivals.

On her return to Australia in 1988, she was appointed the first Musician in Residence at Macquarie University. Since then she has founded several chamber music ensembles and series, including Selby & Friends and the popular Macquarie Trio (1992–2006), and most recently the series A Little Lunch Music at City Recital Hall Angel Place. Her trio TRIOZ was the first ensemble in residence at Angel Place (2008–11).

Her recordings include an all-Gershwin disc and a solo recital disc, as well as chamber music recordings with the Canberra Wind Soloists. With the Macquarie Trio she recorded piano trios by Beethoven, Piazzolla, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Brahms and Dvořák. In January Kathryn Selby was named a Member of the Order of Australia.
To see photographs of the full roster of permanent musicians and find out more about the orchestra, visit our website: www.sydneysymphony.com/SSO_musicians

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SYDNEY SYMPHONY
Vladimir Ashkenazy, Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor
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Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony has evolved into one of the world’s finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world’s great cities.

Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, where it gives more than 100 performances each year, the Sydney Symphony also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence, most recently in the 2012 tour to China.

The Sydney Symphony’s first Chief Conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdenék 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’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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“…our section needs to play louder than the first violins”

Orchestra, which means that I go back to work with them four times a year.' Combined with her job in the Sydney Symphony, that means almost no time for holidays! 'It doesn’t matter, because I’m so restless – the change feels like a holiday.'

Though initially appointed Associate Concertmaster with the Sydney Symphony, Kirsty soon made the switch to leading the second violins. ‘I like playing the inner parts, and sitting in the middle of the orchestra. I don’t like being stuck physically on the edge of the stage.’

Ironically, the challenges for the second violins are inherent in where that section sits, and the musical material they have to play. ‘Really, our section needs to play louder than the first violins,’ explains Kirsty. Depending on the string section's configuration, the Seconds are either tucked in behind the first violins, or seated antiphonally (on the opposite side of the conductor’s podium), with their instruments facing away from the audience. Either way, they need to 'beef it up'. ‘The firsts often rely on us because we’ll be playing the motor semiquavers,’ explains Kirsty. Occasionally, there might be disagreement within the ensemble about where to play. ‘It’s tricky because we don’t often have the melody. We have to decide in a split second about whether to follow the cellos, or the firsts.’
Artistic Highlight

Introducing S. Katy Tucker

Come July, Chief Conductor designate David Robertson will embark on his annual opera-in-concert series, with a semi-staged performance of Wagner’s *Flying Dutchman*. For this project, there will be a new face in the house with a very important role to play.

‘I don’t have any musical talent,’ says S. Katy Tucker. ‘But I do have a deep, deep love of music that I can connect with in an unconventional way through video projections.’

Katy has been engaged to create a dramatic environment for the orchestra and soloists for our performances of Wagner’s first great opera. She’ll do this through the projection of images and abstractions on a large screen, cut to resemble the sails of a square-rigger. ‘We want to make the performance of *Dutchman* more “splashy”.’

Katy describes her projections as holistic. ‘It’s up to me to balance the attention and focus of the audience. I don’t want my visuals to compete with, or detract from, the music.’

skatytucker.com

Ask a Musician

Every concert we see the ‘crew in black’ busily preparing the stage for the performance and shifting instruments and gear around between pieces. But what do they do behind the scenes?

Production preparations are a team effort, and begin the moment the orchestra’s roster is released, which can be 6 to 16 months before a concert. The production manager first liaises with the artistic team, technical suppliers, venues and musicians (in particular percussion!), who together identify every item needed for a program. In the case of a concert like *Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, that might include a screen, projector, audio system, sconce lights, and of course instruments – bodrums, taiko drums, and cimbalom anyone?

When the ‘bump-in’ day arrives the production manager, stage manager and two production coordinators implement the set-up. With rehearsals underway, the stage manager monitors the comfort and safety of everyone on stage, through a window at side of stage, and via a ‘spy mike’ near the conductor. The production team needs to react to a variety of situations; from replacing a chair (easy!), to attending to a medical emergency (scary!). The SM will also call all performers to the stage, make front of house announcements (‘Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to tonight’s performance by the Sydney Symphony…’), monitor sound levels on stage, and time the length of movements for broadcast planning.

Key to the entire production team is an ability to multi-task and to communicate effectively with a broad range of personalities. From musicians to soloists, conductors to technical crew, everyone involved has their own needs (and occasionally demands!), which need to be met in a calm, cool-headed, and friendly way.

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

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Education Focus

TRUE GRIT

Eight young musicians on the cusp of musical careers have secured a place in the Sydney Symphony’s hotly contested Fellowship program.

Hundreds of graduate musicians across the country dream of performing in professional orchestras. Despite this, full-time orchestral positions are rare and competition is fierce. But for the eight young musicians selected for this year’s Sydney Symphony Fellowship program, that dream is much closer to becoming reality.

‘I was so excited when I heard I’d been accepted into the 2013 Fellowship!’ said viola Fellow Nicole Greentree, at their first get-together this year. ‘I keep thinking about how much I’m going to learn from working with the Sydney Symphony.’

Chosen from nearly 300 applicants nation-wide, the Fellows represent the most talented emerging musicians of their generation. But in order to develop into well-rounded professionals, these young musicians require skills and experiences that cannot be taught in an academic environment. The purpose of the Fellowship program is to provide these musicians with the training and mentoring they need to bridge the divide between student and professional.

For horn Fellow Brendan Parravicini, originally from Perth, it’s the diversity of the program that makes it so valuable. ‘We’ll perform chamber music together on a regular basis, benefit from individual mentoring and have the opportunity of working with a professional orchestra. This combination ensures that we’ll all come out of the program as musically balanced, experienced and inspired individuals.’

The continued support from premier partner Credit Suisse, as well as from individual donors, has ensured the quality of training our Fellows receive, and helped the Fellowship program reach its 12th year. Testament to the program’s success are the achievements of its alumni, with well over half employed in full-time orchestral positions, including seven past Fellows who are now members of the Sydney Symphony itself. Previous Fellows also include violinist Jane Piper, who is now a full-time member of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, which is touring Australia later this year.

For violinist Kelly Tang, earning a place in the Fellowship program has been her confirmation that her career in music is on the right track. ‘I’ve known that I’ve wanted to be a musician from the age of five. Achieving a place in the Fellowship has made me even more determined and now I can’t imagine doing anything else that I love this much!’

Follow the Fellows on their journey this year: blog.ssofellowship.com

The Score

Playing Favourites

Ask Vladimir Ashkenazy outright about his favourite composers or musical works and the response is usually tactfully non-committal: ‘How could I possibly name one? – they are all so great!’

Genuinely awed by the wonder of musical creation, he comes across like an unswervingly fair parent – refusing to play favourites.

But, of course, there are composers and pieces that are close to his heart, that make his eyes light up, that prompt him to enthusiastic discussion and wonderful anecdotes. And he has chosen three such works for the second of his programs in May.

There’s Russian romanticism in Tchaikovsky’s Romeo and Juliet – the heartfelt storytelling that Ashkenazy does so well. And there’s elegant neoclassicism in the form of Richard Strauss’s late oboe concerto, with soloist Hansjörg Schellenberger. But the real highlight is Walton’s First Symphony.

The choice of an English symphony might seem unexpected, until you remember Ashkenazy’s Elgar festival in 2008, when Russian and English sensibilities met to powerful effect. ‘I love Walton’s First,’ says Ashkenazy, ‘it’s an absolute favourite.’ The appeal is in its ‘tremendous energy’ and Walton’s distinctive style – nostalgic sometimes, but spirited and colourful. And the anecdote? Stay tuned for the story of the trumpet solo...

Ashkenazy’s Favourites

Master Series
15, 17, 18 May | 8pm

Follow the Fellows on their journey this year: blog.ssofellowship.com
APP-TASTIC!
Our Sydney Symphony app has hit 9,000 downloads across 51 countries. If you haven’t tried it yet, why not download to watch videos, listen to music and watch live webstreams – all free, and all on your mobile! Visit the iTunes store, or Google Play to download for Android.

PROGRAM BOOKS ON THE RUN
You can pick up a free program book at nearly every concert we give. But did you know you can also download our programs in advance? For one-stop downloading, bookmark sydney symphony.com/program_library and read the program on your desktop computer or mobile device.

HONOURED
In February our principal conductor, Vladimir Ashkenazy, was awarded the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Music by the University of Leicester. He is a good company: other recipients include Benjamin Britten, Michael Tippett, Malcolm Arnold, John Barbirolli and Colin Davis. Bravo maestro!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY VANGUARD
The Sydney Symphony Vanguard – our membership program for Gen X/Y philanthropists – celebrates its first birthday in March. The program has paired hip-hop dancer Nacho Pop with classical musicians, created a percussion-only performance zone in a Kings Cross car park, and more, and it has attracted 75 members so far. Sound interesting? Contact Amelia Morgan-Hunn on 02 8215 4683 for more info.

WOLGAN WONDERS
Those in search of a special weekend destination might be interested to hear about the Sydney Symphony’s new involvement with Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort and Spa. The first weekend in March saw several of our musicians travel off the beaten track, past the upper Blue Mountains, for the inaugural Sydney Symphony chamber music weekend at Australia’s only six-star resort. Guests were treated to four concerts, including one by the Sydney Symphony Brass Ensemble in which the audience – armed with balloons, paper bags, pots and pans – accompanied a quintet arrangement of Tchaikovsky’s 1812 Overture, to great delight! We hope this new mini festival of music will become a regular feature of the Wolgan Valley calendar.

ON THE ROAD
The Sydney Symphony hits the road in May for two residencies in Canberra and Albury. Associate Conductor Jessica Cottis will lead our merry band of musicians in a series of schools concerts and outreach activities, as well as evening performances. The repertoire will delight young and old, with music from Handel’s Water Music suites, selections from Stravinsky’s Pulcinella and Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony.

CANBERRA
Llewellyn Hall, ANU School of Music
Wed 22 May – 7.30pm concert
Thu 23 May – Primary and secondary schools concerts
ALBURY
Albury Entertainment Centre
Fri 24 May – Primary and secondary schools concerts
Sat 25 May – 8pm concert