

MOSMAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

'The apotheosis of the dance'

Andrew Del Riccio musical director

John Foster trumpet

WAGNER Overture to Tannhäuser

NERUDA Trumpet Concerto in Eb

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 7



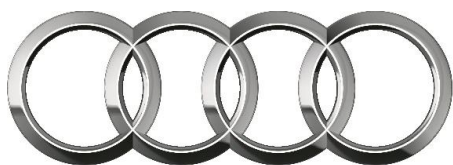
Friday March 17 at 8pm
Sunday March 19 at 2.30pm
Mosman Art Gallery

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Message from Musical Director Andrew Del Riccio



Welcome to 2017 and our very first concerts for the year!

This will be an exciting year, not just for orchestral works and wonderful soloists, but with choral music as well.

Today, we are excited and very honored to have John Foster as our soloist. John is one of the world's foremost exponents of the natural trumpet, much sought after soloist and highly respected pedagogue. The concerto by Neruda that we are performing is a stunning example of late Baroque virtuosity, with some innovative features for the time. What makes it even more amazing is the fact it was written for hunting horn: it's a difficult work

for the modern trumpet, and only virtuosi are game to try it on.

We have braced this piece with two enduring orchestral favourites: Wagner's overture to his opera *Tannhäuser*, and Beethoven's seventh symphony. Both feature the beauty of the horn, though in this case the French horn. The Wagner overture opens with a horn and clarinet chorale playing the melodic line; Beethoven also used the mellow beauty of the French horn, contrasted and complemented by strings, woodwinds and all the other instruments that make up the panoply of the orchestra. His seventh symphony was popular from its first performance, and rightly so.

An exciting development for 2017 is the formation of the Mosman Symphony Chorus. First featured in *Messiah* a couple of years ago, the choir will present works both with the orchestra and by themselves. This is particularly satisfying for me as musical director: we will be able to put on a wider variety of music in different venues, providing ever more opportunity for members of the public to join and be involved in community music making. We are delighted to welcome Sue Briedis to the fold as the chorus's foundation director. Keep an eye (and ear) out for their performances!

Andrew Del Riccio – musical director

Notes on the Program

Overture to 'Tannhäuser' by Richard Wagner (1813-1883)



The overture to Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser* is one of the best known and most frequently performed Wagnerian concert pieces, containing many of the most important and best known themes from the opera.

These days *Tannhäuser* ranks as one of Wagner's most musically accessible operas, which makes its lack of success when premiered in Dresden in 1845 rather puzzling. Even its most beautiful melodies, such as 'Song to the evening star' and the 'Pilgrims' Chorus' were greeted with indifference.

Wagner, who as usual needed a popular success for financial reasons, at once set about revising the opera, maddening his editors by producing four versions, which after further revisions were reduced to two. He tried inserting a ballet into the work, to follow the popular conventions of Parisian opera, but the Parisians were not impressed. Indeed, the 1861 Paris premiere was a debacle. Demonstrations broke out during the first performance against Pauline Metternich, the unpopular wife of the Austrian ambassador to the French court and Wagner's patron; Wagner's decision to place the ballet in the opening scene rather than in the second act also antagonised the members of the Jockey Club, whose

routine was to dine at the club, only arriving at interval to see their mistresses dance before going backstage for sex. By the third night, patrons could buy dog whistles in the street outside the Paris Opera for the express purpose of interrupting the performance. Wagner withdrew the score and wanted nothing more to do with Paris ever again.

Tannhäuser's plot has very little in common with such contemporary and frivolous popular successes as *Don Pasquale* or *The Bohemian Girl*. The opera begins on the mythical mountain of Venusberg, home of Venus, the goddess of love. The knight Tannhäuser has spent a most enjoyable year here, but he has grown tired of the pleasures of the flesh and yearns for home. Venus is reluctant to release him, so to escape he invokes the name of the Virgin Mary, and is immediately transported to a valley below Wartburg Castle.

A group of pilgrims pass by on their way to Rome, and Tannhäuser recognises his old friend Wolfram, who tells him that Elisabeth, Tannhäuser's former love, has grieved for him ever since his departure for Venusberg. Wolfram convinces the knight to go to Wartburg and rejoin Elisabeth, as well as taking part in the upcoming local singing competition.

Tannhäuser agrees and the lovers are reunited. However, Tannhäuser has chosen to sing an ode in praise of Venus and his own erotic experience. This does not go down well. The ladies flee in horror and the knights draw swords against the knight. Elisabeth pleads for his life and saves him.

Full of remorse, Tannhäuser decides to join the pilgrims on their journey to Rome, where he will seek redemption and atonement from the Pope. However, he returns with the news that the Pope has turned him down, saying that someone being forgiven for living in Venusberg is about as likely as the papal staff sprouting leaves. The knight considers returning to Venusberg, where at least he is appreciated, until Wolfram reminds him of Elisabeth's love. Sadly, Elisabeth has not heard of Tannhäuser's return and dies of a broken heart. Her coffin is carried past Tannhäuser who sees it, falls to his knees and dies. The following morning the pilgrims return from Rome carrying the papal staff, which has suddenly sprouted leaves. Tannhäuser has been redeemed.

As happened with other works by Wagner, *Tannhäuser* had to wait for success; its glorification of the dichotomy between flesh and spirit was very much before its time, and did not find acceptance until much later in the nineteenth century. In Oscar Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* the eponymous hero goes to see *Tannhäuser* and takes 'rapt pleasure' in 'seeing ... a presentation of the tragedy of his own soul'. Other admirers included Queen Victoria, Baudelaire and Freud; the opera appealed above all to those who felt outlawed by their sexuality. Wilde, in prison at the end of his life, used the image of the flowering staff in 'The Ballad of Reading Gaol' to signify his own wish for redemption.

Concerto for Trumpet and Strings in E flat Major by Johann Neruda (1708—c.1780)

- I. **Allegro**
- II. **Largo**
- III. **Vivace**

Johann Baptist Georg Neruda was a composer of the Classical music era whose work is seldom recognised these days, and his birth and death dates are only approximate. He was born in Bohemia, now part of the Czech Republic, to a respected musical family. He spent his earlier years studying violin and conducting, and worked in Prague and Germany, eventually becoming concertmaster at the Dresden court orchestra.

Neruda's compositional output was large and varied. He wrote eighteen symphonies, fourteen instrumental concertos, sonatas, sacred works and an opera *Les Troqueurs*. However, all are rarely performed, except for this concerto for trumpet and strings.

This work in three movements was originally written for the high register of a hunting horn or *corno de caccia*, a valveless horn coiled rather like a modern French horn and used in the works of J. S. Bach, Handel and others. The mouthpiece was shallow and shaped like a cup, like that of the modern trumpet, and the instrument was as long as the eighteenth-century trumpet, with the same bore size. The concerto is therefore playable by the modern trumpet.

The opening movement, in 2/4 time, seems straightforward for its period: the theme and articulation are introduced by the orchestra and seem rather Mozartian. However, in developing this Neruda introduces some unexpected harmonies and dynamic contrasts before the trumpet enters with the main theme, which is stated with all the previous development, then traditionally modulated into the key of the relative minor, and recapitulated. A brief open cadenza is built upon fragments from the orchestral and trumpet themes, and the orchestra concludes by nobly restating much of the introduction.

The second, slow movement in the home key of E flat has a lyrical quality, with many subtle inflections and varied articulations. It features two short cadenzas with a singing quality, one midway through the movement and the other just before the orchestra brings the movement to a brief conclusion.

The last movement, once again in E flat, is in 3/4 time and is flowing and powerful. The theme incorporates some of the first movement, though here it is associated with a vibrant orchestral tutti. The trumpet cadence summarises the primary idea of this movement, with its contrast of duple and triple time and driving rhythms.

Symphony No 7 in A major Op. 92 by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

I Poco sostenuto – Vivace

II Allegretto

III Presto – Assai meno presto

IV Allegro con brio



Beethoven at the Piano; Schloesser 1811

Beethoven said he thought that his seventh symphony was one of his best works, and since its premiere orchestras and audiences have generally agreed with him. He composed it in 1811 and 1812, while he stayed in the Bohemian spa town of Teplice to convalesce after a long stint of composition resulted in debilitating headaches. While there, he made many new friends and perhaps conducted an amorous dalliance with a young woman named Amalie Sebald, although he was rather coy about this in his letters to friends in Vienna.

However, such distractions did not prevent him from working on this symphony, which was premiered in Vienna on 8 December 1813.

Composer and music broadcaster Anthony Hopkins wrote, 'The Seventh Symphony perhaps more than any of the others gives us a feeling of true spontaneity, the notes seem to fly off the page as we are borne along on a floodtide of inspired invention. Beethoven himself spoke of it fondly as "one of my best works". Who are we to dispute his judgment?' The work as a whole is known for its use of rhythmic devices, such as dotted rhythms and repetition which make it almost irresistible – indeed, Wagner referred to it as 'the apotheosis of the dance'. It also has a great deal of tonal subtlety, making use of tensions between the central keys of A, C and F major.

The first movement begins with a long, expanded and fairly slow introduction, notable for its long ascending scales and modulations. From the last episode in F major, the movement makes the transition to a lively section marked *vivace*, which is in sonata form, dominated by lively dance-like rhythms, sudden dynamic changes and abrupt modulations. The movement finishes with a long coda, which begins similarly to the development section. The coda contains a famous passage consisting of a two-bar motif repeated ten times to a background E.

The second movement is the most famous of the symphony, and was encored on first performance. It is often played separate from the complete symphony, and these days it is often heard in the most unexpected places: as background to suspenseful TV programs, for instance. While its tempo marking is *Allegretto* – a little lively – it seems slow, but only in comparison to the other three movements. Musicologists have noted that its reliance on the string section makes it a good example of Beethoven's advances in orchestral writing, building on Haydn's experimental work for strings.

The movement begins with the main melody played on violas and cellos, which then goes to the second violins while the violas and cellos play a second melody, described by George Grove of *Grove's Dictionary of Music* as 'a string of beauties hand in hand.' The first violins then take the first melody, while the second violins play the second. The clarinets then play a calmer melody, and the section ends with a quick descent of the strings on an A minor scale; the first melody is resumed and elaborated upon in the movement's conclusion.

The third movement is a scherzo in F major and trio in D major. The trio is based on an Austrian pilgrims' hymn, and is played twice, which is unusual for works of this period. However, Beethoven used this sort of musical device several times in other works, such as his previous symphony, the 'Pastoral'.

The fourth movement is in sonata form, and its whirling dance energy has inspired several critics to liken it to 'Bacchic fury', with George Groves commenting that it had enough fire in its belly to burn up the entire world. One writer of program notes said it 'zips along at an irrepressible pace that threatens to sweep the entire audience off its feet and around the theatre, caught up in the sheer joy of performing one of the most perfect symphonies ever written.'

Naturally, though audiences loved the Seventh from its first performance, approval from the critics, and some of the players, was not universal. One musician who was present during rehearsals, said he and his colleagues concluded that Beethoven must have composed the work while drunk. The conductor Thomas Beecham observed about the fourth movement, 'What can you do with it? It's like a lot of yaks jumping about.'

The work has also attracted legions of commentators who have taken it upon themselves to explain its 'meaning'. Perhaps the most incoherent comes from one Dr Karl Iken, a contemporary of Beethoven, who decided that the symphony was really the description of a political revolution: 'The sign of revolt is given, there is a rushing and running about of the multitude, an innocent man, or party, is surrounded, overpowered after a struggle and hauled before a legal tribunal. Innocency weeps, the judge produces a harsh sentence, sympathetic voices mingle in laments and denunciations ... The uprising is suppressed, but the people are not quieted, hope smiles cheerily.' No wonder Beethoven, who had to endure a lot of this sort of thing, was disgusted and enraged. In 1819 he dictated a letter, protesting energetically about people interpreting his music.

Most analysts today seem content to ignore this nonsense; Donald Francis Tovey summed up the current attitude in the 1930s when he wrote that for many generations the music has been treated quite reasonably as a piece of music, not an excuse for discussing the French Revolution.

Thank you for your company today. We hope to see you again. Please join us for refreshments after the concert

John Foster – trumpet

"...with an established and international solo career, John Foster is a deservedly acclaimed performer." Fine Music Magazine



John Foster is widely regarded as one of the world's leading exponents of performance on historical trumpets, and is the Artistic Director of the renowned ensemble Australian Baroque Brass. He has appeared as soloist at festivals and concert series worldwide and performed as soloist with many leading orchestras and ensembles including the Sydney Symphony, Queensland Symphony, Norwich Baroque Orchestra, the Royal College of Music Orchestra (United Kingdom) among others. In 2011 John also performed J.S.Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No.2 with Belgium's leading baroque orchestra 'Il Fundamento'. John was also a soloist for the launch of the Kammerorchester Basel (Switzerland) 2012 season. He has made several solo recordings including: *Flourish* (ABC Classics), *Music of a Golden Age* (Tubicium Records), *17th Century Music for Trumpets, Strings and Organ* (Centaur Records).

John has given master classes throughout the world, including at the Juilliard School of Music (USA), Sydney Conservatorium of Music, the Royal Northern College of Music (Manchester), the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts, Northwestern University (Chicago), Indiana University, Bern University of Applied Sciences (Switzerland), and Conservatorio da Belo Horizonte (Brazil) among numerous others. John Foster is also the director of the Australasian Trumpet Academy, which draws artists from across the world to Australia.

In 2010 John released a book: *'The Natural Trumpet and Other Related Instruments'*, which has received great critical acclaim. He is also the owner and curator of Australia's largest collection of historical trumpets, which he enjoys exhibiting throughout Australia, and has made a guest appearances on ABC television series the "Collectors" and on Channel 7's 'The Morning Show'.

In 2013 John was invited to Brazil to perform as soloist and be a guest artist at the early music festival in Belo Horizonte. In 2014 John was soloist with the Adelaide Symphony and

the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra (New Zealand). In 2015 John undertook an extensive tour of the USA, where in addition to giving numerous concerts, he was guest lecturer at Juilliard, Oberlin Conservatory, Cleveland Institute of Music, Cincinnati Conservatory and many other universities. In 2016, John embarked on a concert tour of the USA with legendary trumpeter and friend Vincent DiMartino

Most recently John has released a new book, *The Baroque Trumpet Revival*, which has been met with great critical acclaim throughout the world. He has consulted with several instrument making firms on the design and construction of historical trumpets, and has recently been working with Norwich Natural Trumpets (UK) to design the new 'John Foster Model' Baroque Trumpet.

Mosman Symphony Orchestra Concert Dates 2017

May 26 & 28

'The French Connection'

Debussy, Saint-Saens, Dukas

Georgia Lowe – harp

September 1 & 3

Rimsky, Ravel, Brahms

Gregory Kinda – piano

November 10 & 12, Bach, Beethoven & Brahms

Anthony Aarons – trumpet, Brian Kim – flute, Rachel Tolmie – oboe

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Choral concert

December 10

Christmas concert with Mosman Symphony Chorus

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Mosman Symphony Orchestra

Andrew Del Riccio – Musical Director



Andrew Del Riccio holds degrees in performance from the NSW State Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney, in conducting from the University of British Columbia and education from the University of Western Sydney. He has studied at the Schola Canorum Basiliensis in Switzerland and the Boston Conservatory, conducting master courses in the Czech Republic and in London. While completing a Masters in Opera Conducting in Canada, Andrew conducted many performances, including two seasons of *Hansel und Gretel*, and seasons of *La Finta Giardinera*, *Turandot* 127 (world premiere at Summerstock Festival), *L'histoire du Soldat*, *The Medium*, numerous premieres of student works, new music reading workshops, and student ensembles for recitals and juries. In Australia, Andrew's conducting interests have led to the formation of ensembles including the St Peters Chamber Orchestra and The Unexpected Orchestra. He has been Musical Director of the Mosman Symphony Orchestra since 1999, conducting world premieres of works by Michiel Irik and Mathew Chilmaid with them. He has also worked with the Lane Cove Youth Symphony, North Sydney, Strathfield and Sydney University Symphony Orchestras and conducted concerts as an assistant conductor with the Willoughby Symphony Orchestra. Andrew currently teaches music at Trinity Grammar School and also has a busy private teaching practice.

Anny Bing Xia – concertmaster

Anny Bing Xia is a highly experienced professional violinist with an impressive record of achievements in China and Australia. After graduate studies in Shanghai Conservatorium of Music, Anny pursued the degree of Master of Performance in Music and moved to Sydney from 1998. She was first taught by Peter Zhang, continued her studies with Alice Waten and completed her post-graduate studies under Charmian Gadd at Australian Institute of Music.

Anny is actively involved as a performer with the Australia Opera and Ballet Orchestra, Australia Violin Ensemble and WIN Wollongong Symphony Orchestra (WWSO). She has recorded for ABC radio, TV shows and done solo performance recordings for the Australian Fox Studio.



As a student, Anny has won numerous awards and has performed as a soloist internationally, as well as in a recent tour of China with Russian pianist Konstantin Shamray (Sydney International Piano Competition winner) that was highly successful. She has received critical acclaim for her performance of works by Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Beethoven, Schubert and Debussy as well as special praise for her playing of the famous Chinese traditional concerto *Butterfly Lovers*, described as ‘ [the] sweet, soft tones of her violin sound which brings out our inner-most poetic yearnings’.

Orchestra Musicians

First violin: Anny Bing Xia (concertmaster), Julian Dresser, Talitha Fishburn, Armine Gargrtsyan, Nicole Gillespie, Annika Herbert, Johnny Lim, Calvin Ng, John Philp, Sarah Sellars

Second violin: Emily Jones (leader), Shari Amery, Paul Bartels, Margaret Duncan, Sarah Hatton, Melissa Lee, Daniel McNamara, Meryl Rahme, Kate Robertson, Bridget Wilcken

Viola: Daniel Morris (leader), Mark Berriman, Zhiliang Chen, Bob Clampett, Gemma Grayson, Haemi Lee, Sara Powell, Brett Richards, Hannah Shephard

Cello: Michal Wieczorek (leader), Yvette Leonard, Ian Macourt, Karly Melas, Michaela Williams

Double bass: Clare Cory, Cosimo Gunaratna, Amanda Stead

Flute: Linda Entwistle, Meghan Fitzgerald, Jan Squire

Piccolo: Meghan Fitzgerald, Jan Squire

Clarinet: Allan Kirk, Judy Hart

Oboe: Kim D’Espiney, Cate Trebeck

Bassoon: Bob Chen, Graham Cormack

French horn: Stefan Grant, Sam Lee, Rafael Salgado, Derek Shangdian Wang

Trumpet: William Sandwell, Mark Hornibrook

Trombone: Greg Hanna, Lauren Smith

Tuba: Greg Moloney

Percussion: Lisa Beins, Rufina Ismail, Michelle MacDonald, Robert Oetomo

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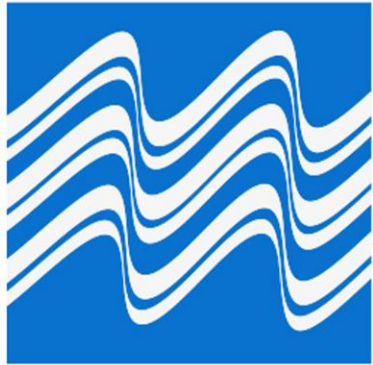
When the student is ready the teacher will appear. ZEN

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