

MOSMAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Andrew Del Riccio | musical director

Mark Brown | guest conductor

Ben Blunt & James Blunt | trumpets

Winter 2022

MENDELSSOHN Trumpet Overture

VIVALDI Concerto for 2 Trumpets

BEETHOVEN Symphony No. 2



SAT JUNE 4 at 7.30 pm

SUN JUNE 5 at 2.30 pm

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Message from the Musical Director



Welcome to what feels like an unprecedented (or is it uninterrupted?) second concert program for 2022. Mosman Symphony Orchestra has now been back in full rehearsals for some 4 months, with 2 concerts under our belts already and another two this weekend. Regardless of your attending our Saturday evening or Sunday afternoon performances we trust you are going to enjoy our musical offering.

I wish to warmly welcome back our guest conductor, Mark Brown. Having grown up with Mark back last century I know just how much musicality and warmth he brings to the different bands and orchestras he works with: be prepared to feel the chill of winter fade away!

Our music should help do the trick as well! While seemingly unknown, Mendelssohn's Trumpet Overture is a bright, jovial and positive piece which just feels like it captures the brilliance and glow of not just trumpets, but of the whole orchestra. I'd like to know if anyone in the audience has been to a concert where this piece has played. What is well known are the other works on the program. Vivaldi, the prolific composer of music for orphans in Venice wrote little for the trumpet. What he did write was one of the most loved and often played double concertos in the repertoire. Today's soloists, father and son team of James and Benjamin Blunt will thrill you with their playing - on a

pair of matching piccolo trumpets no less. The piece feels like both a duet and a duel, with answering calls, ever rising lines and changes of pace.

That leaves our final work, Beethoven's Second Symphony. I am reminded of a discussion many years ago with musical friends. We talked about how it seemed there were so many hoops to jump through for some events which really needed just a name drop or two. Someone asked how would Louis Armstrong apply to part of the (let's call it) XYZ Festival. (The forms were very long) We all agreed that a business card, 'Satchmo' and a phone number should just about do it. It's the same with Beethoven. 'What's on the program and what is it about', one asks.

The answer is - Beethoven. Enjoy!

Andrew Del Riccio June 2022

Mosman Symphony Orchestra Concert Dates

Concert 3: Sep 10 & 11 *Bernstein, Gershwin and Dvorak*

Concert 4: Nov 19 & 20 *Debussy, Beethoven, Rossini, Glinka, Humperdinck, and Tchaikovsky*

Concert 5: Dec 11 *Christmas Concert with Mosman Symphony Chorus*

Choral Concert: Jul 24 *Includes works by Handel, Telemann and Fauré*

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Notes on the Program

Trumpet Overture Op 101; Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Mendelssohn was only sixteen when he composed this C major work; he revised it seven years later for performances in Dusseldorf and London.

Mendelssohn was an extraordinarily precocious composer. During his boyhood he wrote five operas, eleven symphonies, concerti, sonatas and fugues. He also became a well-known pianist, making his first public appearance at the age of nine. At twelve he was taken to Weimar to meet Germany's greatest poet J.W. von Goethe, to whom he dedicated his piano quartet. He reached his full stature of a composer with the overture to 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in 1826, the same year as he composed his so-called 'Trumpet' Overture.



Less well known than his other overtures, this work is a study in contradictions. As has been pointed out, there is no particular reason for its popular title: its exuberance and energy belong to the strings, brass and wind sections of the orchestra, and in fact the horns have a greater role to play than the trumpets.

The strings carry a great deal of the piece's thematic weight, perhaps not surprisingly, as Mendelssohn had already composed an octet and a quintet and might well have been more comfortable in writing for the string section. One critic, in fact, has described the 'Trumpet' as an overture for strings with wind backup, as the winds are silent for quite a few passages. However, there are a few places where wind instruments break out of the general orchestral texture and embark on tunes of their own. This overture is immensely enjoyable and, with Mendelssohn's better known orchestral works, helps mark him as one of the first great nineteenth-century Romantic composers. **JK**

Concerto for Two Trumpets; Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)

I Allegro

II Largo

III Allegro

This enduringly popular double concerto for trumpets and strings is one of the few solo works of the early eighteenth century to feature brass instruments, and it is the only such piece that Vivaldi wrote. This may well be because it was composed for the natural or baroque trumpet, a valveless and diabolically difficult instrument often used for military purposes, with a restricted range that depended on the player's lip control, like the modern bugle. The texture of the piece shows Vivaldi's triumphant transcendence of the instrument's limitations.

In common with most of Vivaldi's concertos, this one has a quick and sparkling first movement that displays the bright tones of the solo trumpets, who often work as a pair rather than against each other. This is followed by a very brief, slower and more languid second movement; it acts as an interlude, and was originally composed to give the soloists time to adjust their instruments. For the final movement, Vivaldi – as he often did – returns to brilliance, with fast, energetic and intricate passages for the two soloists and the string accompaniment. The driving rhythm enhances the exhilaration of this virtuosic piece, and brings the concerto to a satisfying conclusion. **JK**

INTERVAL

Symphony No. 2; Ludwig von Beethoven (1770-1827)

I. Adagio molto – Allegro con brio

II. Larghetto

III. Scherzo

IV. Allegro molto



This music was composed by Beethoven in 1802 and premiered in 1803 in a concert which included his first symphony with which this piece was unfavourably compared - apparently because it appeared to value novelty over beauty. This same concert incidentally also included the first performance of Beethoven's third piano concerto in which he was the soloist. The whole event must indeed have been a lengthy affair as it apparently also

included the premiere of the oratorio, 'Christ on the Mount of Olives'. It hopefully took people's minds off the evolving threat of Napoleon Bonaparte at that time.

Beethoven's symphonies are often felt as a whole, to contain somewhat interlocked expressive features and harmonies which continue to evolve together with a degree of plain heroism considering his deteriorating health. The following symphony (Eroica) written soon after, shows similar characteristics relying on the juxtapositions of extremes and surprises typical of much of Beethoven's music. The very controlled brooding commencement of the first movement of this piece resembles many classical pieces, for instance Mozart's Prague symphony and some of Haydn's many symphonies, the latter also being notable for their sometimes quirky compositional ideas and vigour.

Most of this symphony was composed during the summer of 1802 when Beethoven had moved to the Viennese suburb of Heiligenstadt where he wrote of his despair about his increasing deafness and resultant social isolation.

Following its slow commencement, the first movement of this work ticks along in the manner of a good classical symphony with characteristically vividly contrasting dynamics and some harmonic traps. The following larghetto suggests a degree of serenity and contains elements of chamber music with segments resembling string quartets and wind serenades. It is one of his longest slow movements with a somewhat sonata-like architecture. A number of themes comprise the exposition followed by a development containing some subtle unusual harmonic progressions in a similar pattern to those he was to use in later work. Berlioz described this movement as “a delineation of happiness hardly clouded by a few melancholy accents”.

The scherzo again reflects darker emotions with an early modulation into a minor key but overall, has a playfulness and energy with quickly shifting dynamics - a continuation of the evolution of the graceful minuet expected in the typical Classical symphony. The trio has an often Haydnesque quality particularly in a segment where strings playing arpeggios compete with the woodwinds and brass.

The finale commences with a whoop and then a low gurgle ending in a rowdy coda which was one Beethoven's longest, comprising a third of the length of the movement. This coda has been described in terms of the tail of a dog not so much wagging the latter as tickling it into yelping submission. **CT**

James Blunt – trumpet



James began to play the trumpet at age 12 at high school. Early teachers included Geoff Bailey and John Robertson, the latter of whom had just retired from 35 years as Principal Trumpet with the SSO. James was the first Principal Trumpet with the Sydney Youth Orchestra when it was founded in 1973 by Peter Seymour. James later attended Sydney University where he graduated with a Bachelor of Music in 1978. During these tertiary years, he continued his trumpet studies under

Gordon Webb, and then subsequently spent a year as a Winston Churchill Scholarship recipient studying with Edward Tarr in Switzerland. Upon his return in 1981, he took up the position of Principal Trumpet with the Elizabethan Trust Sydney Orchestra – later to become known as the Opera Oaustralia Orchestra – a position he held for the next 20 years, stepping down in 2001 to 2nd trumpet, which position he held until retiring from the orchestra in 2006. He has taught extensively throughout Sydney, including 20 years at the Conservatorium of Music, and 30 years in the Music Department at UNSW. Mosman Symphony Orchestra conductor Andrew Del Riccio, and James' son Benjamin are numbered among his many former students. He was also an AMEB Brass Examiner for NSW for more than 20 years.

Benjamin Blunt - trumpet



Benjamin started playing the trumpet at age 7 under the tutelage of his father, James Blunt (principal trumpet of the A.O.B.O for 25 Years). In his younger years, Benjamin had much success in the world of brass playing, and in particular, excelled at an early age in upper-register playing on both the Piccolo trumpet and Soprano Cornet. This led to several wins at various solo competitions on his chosen instrument, at both a State and National level. He was also a regular performing member of the Sydney Youth Philharmonic Orchestra (2004-2009), and of several A-grade Brass Bands in Sydney during his youth.

In 2010 Benjamin commenced studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, studying Orchestral Trumpet Performance under the tutelage of Leanne Sullivan, and was awarded a Bachelor of Music (Performance) in 2015. During this time, Benjamin devoted much of his studies to Baroque Music, particularly on Baroque and Piccolo trumpet repertoire.

Benjamin enjoys a busy schedule as a music tutor and freelance musician, performing regularly with several ensembles across Sydney. These ensembles include the Balmain Symphony Orchestra, Mosman Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra '143', Mosman Musical Society, Willoughby Symphony Orchestra, Manly/Warringah Choir & Orchestra and the Eastern Sydney Chamber Orchestra.

Benjamin has also performed with every A-grade brass band in Sydney, and is currently a performing member of Warringah Concert Brass.

When not busy performing, or teaching in various schools across Sydney, in his free time Benjamin enjoys a passion for fine craft beer, wine and spirits.

Mark Brown – guest conductor

Mark is a double graduate of the NSW State Conservatorium of Music, having gained both a Bachelor of Music (Honours) in Trombone Performance (1996) and a Certificate of Piano Tuning and Technology (1982). He studied trombone with Arthur Hubbard and Ron Prussing as well as conducting with Henryk Pisarek.

Professional trombone credits include The Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, English National Ballet, Sydney Philharmonia, professional Sydney Seasons of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Mary Poppins, The Phantom of the Opera, Les Miserables, Beauty and the Beast, Miss Saigon, Crazy for You, My Fair Lady, The Merry Widow, and The Mikado. He has also played for Dr. Who the Symphonic Spectacular, Wallace and Gromit, Giorgio Moroder, Michael Crawford Australian Tours, Ed Wilson Big Band and three international contracts with P. & O. Cruises. For the last 5 years he



has played trombone on the Bravo Cruise of the Performing Arts, backing Opera Superstars Sir Bryn Terfel, Jose Carreras, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, plus a host of local Artists including Marina Prior, James Morrison, Mark Vincent and The Idea of North.

During undergraduate studies at Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Mark was awarded the Bellhouse Memorial Conducting Scholarship to further his studies and was also selected for the Ku-ring-gai Philharmonic Orchestra Conductor in Training program under Maestro Henryk Pisarek. While at the Conservatorium he was assistant conductor to Steve Williams with the Conservatorium Wind Orchestra. He later travelled to the Czech Republic and attended the Symphonic Workshops International School for Conducting, studying under Maestros Kirk Trevor, Tsung Ye and Johannes Schafli.

As a leading music educator, Mark is constantly in demand as a guest conductor, working with orchestras, wind bands and stage bands of all levels.

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 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 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 piece “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*), Rosemary Byron, Soojin Anna Choi, James Dong, Julian Dresser, Talitha Fishburn, Nicole Gillespie, Bettina Minogue, Peter Purches, Justin White

Second violin: John Philp (leader), Margaret Duncan, Sarah Hatton, Annika Herbert, Macarena Herbert, Ernie Hurst, Elizabeth Kalotay, Daniel McNamara, Shauna Moloney, Kate Robertson, Darrell Wood

Viola: Eda Talu (leader), Mark Berriman, Zhiliang Chen, Bob Clampett, Anthony Dooley

Cello: Michal Wieczorek (leader), Scott Rowe, Rachel Terry, Jennifer Thompson, Lewis Wand

Double bass: Clare Cory, Jeremy Fox

Flute: Linda Entwistle, Jacqueline Kent

Oboe: Kim d'Espiney, Rachel Tolmie (Sat), Jasper Wand (Sun)

Clarinet: Judy Hart, Sally Lucas

Bassoon: Bob Chen, Graham Cormack

French horn: Adrian Barnes, Scott Rowe

Trumpet: Rachel Moshel, Lachlan Mahoney

Trombone: Greg Hanna, Peter Purches

Timpani: Lisa Beins

*** Chair of Concertmaster in memory of Carolyn Clampett**



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Would you like to join the choir?

Mosman Symphony Chorus rehearses at Mosman Art Gallery on Monday nights from 7.30 till 9.30.

New members are very welcome. There are no formal auditions but you do need to be able to read music. Apart from that all you need is energy, enthusiasm and a love of singing beautiful music.

If you are interested in joining, please email: mosmanchorus@gmail.com



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