

Saturday 17th June 1995, 8 pm

Strathfield Town Hall

STRATHFIELD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

founded by Emily Finn in 1969

SOLOMON BARD

Conductor

DONALD WOOLFORD

Concertmaster

KIAN LIM

Deputy Leader

Soloist

WILLIAM CHEN

Piano

ORCHESTRA PATRON

Alderman John Elvy, Mayor of Strathfield

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868 Italy)
Overture to *The Barber of Seville* (1816)

Rossini is one of the few operatic composers whose overtures are more popular and better known than his operas. Of his forty operas, most of which enjoyed great success in nineteenth-century Italy, it is only the buffo opera, *The Barber of Seville*, that is regularly staged today. So today when we hear *The Thieving Magpie*, *Semiramide*, *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, or *William Tell*, we hear them as short orchestral works in the concert hall rather than the opera theatre.

The overtures of Rossini's operas were often written in great haste, sometimes on the day of the first performance. And on several occasions the overture was simply lifted from an earlier opera and 'recycled', as Rossini's own words describe:

'Nothing primes inspiration more than necessity, whether it be the presence of a copyist waiting for your work or the prodding of an impresario tearing his hair. In my time, all the impresarios in Italy were bald at thirty.'

'I wrote the overture to *The Thieving Magpie* the day of its opening in the theatre itself, where I was imprisoned by the director and under the surveillance of four stagehands who were instructed to throw my original text through the window, page by page, to the copyists who were waiting below to transcribe it. In default of pages, they were ordered to throw me out of the window bodily.'

'I did better with *The Barber*. I did not compose an overture, but selected for it one which was meant for a semi-serious opera called *Elisabetta*. The public was completely satisfied.'
Gioacchino Rossini

STRATHFIELD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Miriam Hyde
Village Fair

(born 1913 Australia)
(Adelaide, c. 1940)

This joyous and exuberant work was originally composed as a ballet. The commission fee did not, however, eventuate, and the ballet was never choreographed. For this reason *Village Fair* has shared the fate of so much of Stravinsky's ballet music: it is in the concert hall that we hear it, not the theatre.

The original concept of this short ballet did not extend to a story as such, but it does contain several recognisable character types: a hurdy-gurdy man with his droning barrel organ, a fiery gipsy dancer, a juggler, and a flower seller. Throughout the ballet we hear variations of the traditional English tune, 'Oh dear, what can the matter be, Johnny's so late from the fair.' The use of this melody supports the English flavour of the music, and suggests the influence of composers such as Vaughan Williams, Elgar, and John Ireland.

'Memories of attending a Fair with a friend in Witney, Oxfordshire, came to my aid in conjuring-up this music'.

Miriam Hyde

Franz Liszt (1811-1886 Hungary)
Piano Concerto No. 1 in E flat major (1855)

Liszt was one of the nineteenth century's greatest pianists: a virtuoso with sensational technique and charisma to match. As a composer he was innovative, pushing boundaries both technically and musically, and it was Liszt who effectively invented the solo piano recital. Instead of sharing a concert with other performers and varying combinations of instruments, he would present whole programs of piano music, both original pieces and transcriptions of orchestral music.

'[On Liszt:] The incontestable incarnation of the modern piano'.
Camille Saint-Saëns

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Liszt's piano concertos were begun when he was touring as a soloist, but were frequently revised up to the 1850s. As was characteristic of his large-scale works, Liszt's first concerto uses a kind of four-movements-in-one form, with the four sections thematically linked but contrasting in mood and tempo. The music is brilliant and showy, yet manages to avoid shallowness of expression.

Johann Strauss Jr
Emperor Waltzes Op. 437

(1825-1899 Austria)
(1889)

Strauss and his music represents brilliance and prosperity of nineteenth-century imperial Vienna. In his dance music, and especially in his waltze we can hear the charm, elegance, vivacity, and sophistication of the society in which he lived. The waltz was to reach a pinnacle in his hands, combining both rhythmic verve and impulse of his father's waltzes with an exceptional lyricism. Somehow Strauss was able float great sweeping melodies above the ingeniously softened tyranny of the regular oom-pah-pah accompaniments.

In the Emperor Waltzes—one of Strauss's mature sets—we can hear the structure of the 'classical' waltz: a slow, evocative introduction, followed by five waltzes and a coda.

'Brahms est l'âme [spirit] de Vienne, Strauss en est le parfum.'
Jules Massenet

DUE TO THE ABSENCE OVERSEAS OF SOLOMON
BARD, THE NEXT CONCERT WILL BE CONDUCTED
BY DR. STEVE WATSON

STRATHFIELD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Symphony No. 40 in G minor K.550

(1756-1791 Austria)
(1788)

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- I Molto Allegro
II Andante
III Menuetto
IV Allegro Assai
-

By 1788, Vienna's interest in Mozart as a pianist-composer had decreased. So for the concerts that Mozart had planned for that year he composed not piano concertos but three symphonies. Although he could not have known at the time, these symphonies were to be his last.

The middle work in the group, the Symphony in G minor, is one of the most expressive symphonies he wrote; certainly it has attracted more attention than any other. Its key, G minor, suggests urgency, drama, even pathos, and, to quote Charles Rosen, the symphony is a work of 'passion, violence, and grief' and one 'of Mozart's supreme expressions of suffering and terror'. Yet Mozart's symphony remains graceful and good-humoured; the music is eloquent and persuasive rather than forceful, through skillful and delicate use of the instruments.

Although composed in close succession, Mozart's last three symphonies each use a slightly different orchestral configuration. The G minor symphony uses perhaps the most conventional orchestra for the time: the then modern clarinets were at first dropped and the oboes are restored; the trumpets, difficult to manage in G minor, do not appear; there are no drums. Like an earlier G minor symphony, however, Mozart uses in the outer movements two horns, one pitched in G, the other in B flat. Some two or three years later Mozart added clarinet parts, giving them most of the original oboe solos.

'He aroused my admiration when I was young; he casued me to despair when I reached maturity; he is now the comfort of my old age.' Gioachino Rossini

Program notes by Yvonne Frindle
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STRATHFIELD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

THE ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Donald Woolford *Concertmaster*
Kian Lim *Deputy Leader*
Carol Henson
Hee Kyang Lee
Beatrice Ip
Christine Edwards
Veronique Serret

VIOLIN II

Dorita Orzaes
Rohini Thavaravy
Helen Bailey-Cooke
Antonia Canaris
Heather Smith
Guy Elron

VIOLA

Ted Davis
Fflur Harvey
Hae-Hwa Suh
Michelle Rose
Wai-Li Yap

CELLO

Rod Berriman
Geoff Widmer
Joy Lukunic
Christina Beaumont
Elizabeth Goss

DOUBLE BASS

Svetlana Niconishin
Iona Willis
Michael Atkins

FLUTE

Prue Page
Anthony Winter

This project has been made possible
with assistance from the
New South Wales Government
through the Ministry for the Arts.

OBOE

Margaret Shirley
Eva Griffith

CLARINET

Olive Laing
Joe Davies

BASSOON

Pat Taylor
Dawn Nettheim

FRENCH HORN

Terry Dewhurst
Jill Hobbs
Elizabeth Dalton
Wendy Oppen

TRUMPET

David Young
Pauline Walshaw

TROMBONE

Lindsay Smartt
Ross Blum
Barry Pichersgill

PIANO

Fiona Kanera

TIMPANI & PERCUSSION

Merrilee McNaught
Joel Pringle
David Griffith

STRATHFIELD ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY

PATRON: Alderman John Elvy
Mayor of Strathfield

HONORARY AUDITOR:
Mr Bill McBurnie

SOCIETY MEMBERS:

Dr N. A. Andersen

Mr R. Bernie

Mr J. E. Catalano

Mr & Mrs D. B. Dunlop

Miss C. Edwards

Mr & Mrs M. Edwards

Mr & Mrs G. Hawkshaw

Mr J. B. Linley

Miss P. A. McPhillamy

Miss P. J. McPhillamy

Mrs S. Mahableshwarwalla

Mrs J. C. Moroney

Mrs M. Robinson

Mr R. Watson

Mrs J. Widmer

Helpers are required to pour tea and coffee for interval refreshments.
The orchestra welcomes additional players, especially in the
lower string section (viola, cello, and double bass).

Rehearsals take place every Monday evening at 7.45 pm in the
Strathfield Town Hall. For further information please call
Solomon Bard on 327 3439.

CONCERT DATES FOR 1995

Saturday 16th September

Saturday 25th November

PROFILES

WILLIAM CHEN

William Chen was born into a musical family in China, beginning his musical training at the age of five. He made his debut with the Shanghai Orchestra when he was fourteen, performing Beethoven's First Piano Concerto. William came to Sydney in 1988, studying piano with Elizabeth Powell at the Sydney Conservatorium High School. In the following three years, William won numerous prizes including 2MBS-FM Young Performer of the Year, Beale Open Piano Award, Sydney Youth Orchestra Concerto Competition and the BHP Piano Scholarship. He featured twice in the Sydney International Piano Competition's 'Future Stars' concerts, and was also a soloist at the Lord Mayor's Command Concert in the Sydney Town Hall.

Since 1991, William has studied in the USA. During that time, he has won several important prizes, and he performed the Tchaikowsky Piano Concerto as winner of the Indiana University Concerto Competition. He is now at the Juilliard School, New York, studying with Jerome Lowenthal.

SOLOMON BARD

Solomon Bard's musical education began in north China where, aged ten, he commenced violin studies. Later he entered the Music Academy in Harbin and, from the age of fifteen Solomon began playing regularly with the Harbin Symphony Orchestra, and also conducting at the Academy. He pursued medicine as a career, however, graduating in Hong Kong as a medical doctor in 1939.

After serving in World War II, Solomon returned to Hong Kong in 1947 to conduct the newly-formed Sino-British Orchestra (later the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra). He relinquished his post in 1953 to become the orchestra's concertmaster and deputy conductor, a post he held until 1976. In 1969 he was guest conductor with the National Philharmonic Orchestra of the Philippines. Solomon's long-standing interest in Chinese music and Chinese instruments was rewarded by appointment in 1983 as conductor of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, with which he toured Australia, Japan, Korea, and China. He emigrated to Australia in 1993 and was appointed conductor of the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra in December 1994.