

Sunday, 27 June 1999, at 2.30pm
Strathfield Town Hall



founded by Emily Finn in 1969

IVAN UNGAR
Guest Conductor

KIAN LIM
Acting Concertmaster

KIAN LIM, Violin
HAYDN SKINNER, Cello
Soloists

ORCHESTRA PATRON
Councillor Laurel O'Toole, Mayor of Strathfield

PROGRAM

Egmont, Overture to Goethes' Drama

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Romance in F for Violin & Orchestra

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

Soloist: Kian Lim

Symphony No. 35 (The Haffner)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Allegro con spirito, Andante, Menuetto, Finale

INTERVAL

Carmen Suites (Selections)

Georges Bizet
(1838-1875)

Prelude, Aragonaise, Intermezzo, Seguedille, Les dragons d'Alcala, Les Toréadors

Kol Nidrei, Adagio for Cello

Max Bruch
(1838-1920)

Soloist: Haydn Skinner

Faust, Ballet Music

Charles François Gounod
(1818-1893)

Allegretto, Adagio, Allegretto, Moderato maestoso, Moderato con moto, Allegretto, Allegro vivo



The Strathfield Symphony Orchestra acknowledges with thanks the assistance of the Strathfield Municipal Council.



PROFILES

KIAN LIM

Kian first studied violin in his native Singapore under the leading soloist and orchestral violinist of the day, concert master of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. Despite excellent grades and encouragement of music teachers, and work with Radio Singapore, Kian came to Australia to study medicine at the University of Sydney. Between his medical studies he had a short course at the Sydney Conservatorium; tutorials with the Scottish concert violinist, Maurice Claire, who auditioned Kian in Singapore; played with the Sydney University Orchestra under the baton of Professor Peart and Eric Gross; and played solos and chamber works for various churches, charities and colleges in NSW.

After graduating from University, Kian worked in various hospitals in NSW and so played in Orchestras such as the Wollongong Symphony, as the leader in the musical production "Showboat" and with the Newcastle Choir production of the "Messiah". Kian joined the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra in 1991. Since 1993, on the invitation of musical director, Gary Stavrou, Kian has been involved as first violinist, participated in two NSW orchestral festivals and won two consecutive gold awards with the Balmain Sinfonia. His current involvement with two orchestras gives him widened musical experience, unique scope to improve his technique and great joy.

HAYDN SKINNER

Haydn first learned the cello at Lismore at age 8 from a violin teacher. His two sisters learned the violin from her. His mother was a piano teacher and father a choral conductor.

He won the open cello section at Murwillumbah Eisteddfod at age 9 and 10. Gave the cello up at age 11 and came to Sydney. Began again at age 12 at the Conservatorium with Gladstone Bell for three years, then stopped before 15 to concentrate on a medical career. In his fifth year of medicine, he had a few lessons from Gladstone Bell from whom he bought his present cello, a 1750 William Foster, England. Won the Sydney Eisteddfod in 1952.

His next lessons were between 1963 and 1966 with Osric Fyfe. Played in the Blacktown Orchestra, then in 1966 the Willoughby Orchestra for ten years, finally as leading cellist. He now studies with Belinda Manwaring. Haydn has been a member of the Amateur Chamber Music Society for about eight years. He joined the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra about three years ago.

PROGRAM NOTES

Egmont is a stirring dramatization of a quintessentially romantic subject: a heroic individual's fatal struggle against injustice. Beethoven composed incidental music to the play by Johann von Goethe in 1809. The overture, rather than merely introducing themes from the later music, recapitulates the plot of the drama. Egmont, a sixteenth-century Flemish nobleman and devout Catholic, protested the cruel persecution of the Protestants of his country by their Spanish rulers. The Spanish Duke of Alba accused him of treason, denied him a fair trial, and had him publicly beheaded. The Flemish people's response to this outrage led to open rebellion and their eventual freedom from the Spanish yoke.

After an opening unison F, the overture introduces a menacing F-minor sarabande rhythm (a slow dance originating in sixteenth-century Spain) that represents the Spanish oppressors. The answering theme in the winds is associated with the spirit of the Flemish people, as well as with Egmont's true love. These two themes battle throughout the piece - until Egmont's life comes to its abrupt end when he is beheaded by the violins. The end of Egmont's life is not the end of the story, though, and the overture concludes with a stirring hymn to the eventual triumph of liberty.

The *Romance in F* by Beethoven lives up to its title of "romance" as being music in a relaxed and tuneful vein. Although designated "No. 2" this is actually the first in order of composition of Beethoven's two Romances for Violin and Orchestra, and dates from about 1800. Solo violin and orchestra enter together, the piece proceeding at the same calm and untroubled pace, with a slightly more animated middle section. We may hear in this music pre-echoes of some of the more lyrical passages in the Violin Concerto, written about two years later. A charming piece with a somewhat wistful main theme, it requires only a small accompanying orchestra of five woodwinds, two horns and strings.

1782, Mozart was living in Vienna and decided to arrange some concerts of his own music to be performed in his adopted city, and symphonies, particularly, were needed. Apparently he mentioned the pressing need of such music to his father in a letter. The *Haffner Serenade* score, written several years earlier for the wedding of a friend's sister, had slipped Wolfgang's mind and he was delighted when his father found it. He removed, massaged and rewrote the parts and himself conducted the D Major Symphony for the first time on 23 March 1783. Not surprisingly, in view of this symphony's origins, there is much that is courtly and elegant about the music. The abrupt, almost brusque, opening evokes a fairly dignified mood which pervades much of the first movement (and recurs later) but does not preclude contrasting lyrical passages. The graceful second movement is followed by a minuet which includes a relaxed, easy-going middle section, and the final movement is a *tour de force* of energetic high spirits.

The opera *Carmen*, is not only Bizet's masterpiece but also one of the greatest operas of the 19th century. Set in Spain, it tells the story of a passionate gypsy girl who falls in love with a young soldier. But after he has given up everything for her, she casts him aside - with tragic consequences. The arrangement of this orchestral suite captures the exciting atmosphere of the original opera. The *Prelude* to this suite opens with a broad theme introduced by the cellos against a background of shimmering violins above and pizzicato strings below. This at once establishes the underlying mood of the story - its tensions, drama and passions. The *Aragonesa* which follows, is a scene-setting piece conjuring up the sunny world of southern Spain in which the drama is set. The brass, with its castanet-like backing beats out the jaunty rhythms with a confident swagger. Only towards the end does the music darken momentarily, as strings, clarinets and bassoons sombrely hint at the oncoming tragedy, before returning to the lilting Moorish tune.

The *Intermezzo*, a haunting melody of great beauty, opens on a solo flute with harp accompaniment. They are joined first by the clarinet, and then by the horns and strings, all of which add warmth and richness without disturbing the perfect tranquility of this lovely movement. In the *Seguedille*, a traditional Spanish dance, the flute introduces the melody and then engages in a flirtatious little exchange with the woodwind and brass before the orchestra joins in Carmen's famous and beguiling dance. The *Dragons of Alcala*, a short piece, begins with the bassoons, but is soon taken up by the clarinet with a bassoon accompaniment. Fragments of the theme are adopted by the woodwind, but essentially, this march is a witty dialogue between clarinet and bassoons.

The *Toreadors* opens with a wild gypsy dance in which brass and cymbals play a major role. But this ceases as a repeated chord announces the entrance of the toreador. He is represented by a strident and manly tune - for he is the hero of the bullring and knows it. But soon the music returns to the swirling gypsy dance, as Carmen seductively charms the toreador.

Max Bruch was born in Cologne, where he had his early musical training, going on to a career as a teacher, conductor and composer that included a short spell as conductor of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society. From 1891, he was principally occupied in Berlin as professor of composition at the Berlin Academy. Known in his life-time as a composer of choral works, he is now remembered chiefly for a handful of orchestral compositions. *Kol Nidrei* means "all the vows", the words taken from a prayer used on the Day of Atonement. Bruch wasn't Jewish and his knowledge of things Hebraic was all second-hand, but it hasn't stopped this piece being a favourite piece of cello recitals. The work is a succession of meditative themes on the cello, ideal for the darker expressive recesses of the instrument. It's been recorded dozens of times by all the great cellists, and quite a few violinists as well.

In The legendary Faust, who sells his soul to the Devil (Mephistopheles) for youth, knowledge and power, fascinated 19th-century composers. Gounod's opera concentrates on the romance between Faust and the lovely Marguerite, though the baleful presence of Mephistopheles is never far away. The ever-popular ballet music conjures up the spectres of figures from ancient history, though Gounod's prime aim here is to entrance his audience rather than disturb it.

In the *Allegretto*, strong chords on the brass herald an enchanting waltz. The *Adagio* offers a slow, stately melody on the strings, with a lighter middle section. The *Allegretto* is a perky, faintly exotic little tune for the woodwind, backed by the tambourine. It is followed by a *Moderato maestoso*, a broadly paced melody for the violins, again with a brighter central section. In the *Moderato con moto*, the violins enter with a light and airy melody, accompanied by the harp. Next comes an *Allegretto*, an even brighter, prettier string tune, with a contrasted episode for the woodwind, followed by an *Allegro vivo*, the only dance with a real hint of diablerie (devilry) - stamping chords on full orchestra, a lilting melody on the strings, then a barnstorming finish.

Program notes supplied by:

Collins Encyclopedia of Music, Sir Jack Westrup and F. Ll. Harrison, revised by Conrad Wilson, 1984 (Chancellor Press, London)
The Classical Collection, 1993 (Orbis Publishing Ltd)

The Reader's Digest "Favourites from the Classics", 1991, (Reader's Digest (Australia) Pty Limited)

PROFILES

IVAN UNGAR

Music has always been a part of Ivan Ungar's life - in fact he cannot ever recall the absence of it. At the age of 6, he saw the Italian film, "The Little Conductor" and the image left him with such a lasting impression that he decided he would one day conduct a full symphony orchestra. The opportunity came along when at the ABC Radio Symphony Ball he was the successful bidder in the auction for the opportunity to conduct the Sydney Symphony Orchestra at a Family Concert in December 1992. It was a turning point in his life and he decided to become a competent amateur conductor.

Born in Budapest, Hungary into a musical family, both Ivan and his brother Tamas studied the piano at an early age. After immigrating to Australia with his family, Tamas went on to study the piano and has become one of the most successful and respected piano teachers in the USA. Ivan established his own leathersgoods company (Amalco Group) which has prospered in the small leathersgoods industry. It was Tamas and two close friends who rekindled Ivan's interest in conducting.

Ivan started studying conducting with Neil Flottman in 1994 and appeared with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra conducting part of Mendelssohn's "Midsummernight Suite". After Neil's move to Brisbane he continued with Henryk Pisarek. He has conducted performances with the Sydney Youth Orchestra, Kuringgai Philharmonic Orchestra, East-West Philharmonic, Queensland Youth Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra and the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra. In June 1998 he had his first European concert tour with all professional orchestras. Back in Australia in July 1998, he became a founding member and co-sponsor with Peter Marks of a new Symphony Orchestra called the Australian Classical Players (ACP), located in Melbourne.

Ivan intends to celebrate his 60th Birthday in the year 2000 with a number of concerts beginning in Vienna, a number of different cities in Hungary and finishing in Budapest, his birthplace. The actual birthday concert will be in Sydney with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

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BARON



BARONESS

THE ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

VIOLIN I

Kian Lim *Acting Concertmaster**
Levina Walters-Roozemond
Carol Henson
Belisario Hernandes
Beatrice Iacono
Beatrice Ip
Henry Avila+
Greg McGarity+

VIOLIN II

Dorita Orzaes*
Wolf Frishling
Pamela Allen
Solomon Bard
Antonia Canaris
Helen Isbister
Chris Kotsaris
Teresa Rogers
Margaret Simpson

VIOLA

Fflur Harvey*
Chris Elenor
Michael Canaris
Ted Davis
Thomas Talmacs

CELLO

Haydn Skinner*
Roger Barker
Bill Dankbaa
Iris Hooper
Geoff Widmer

DOUBLE BASS

Darryl Neve*
Peter Isbister
Manfred Schoen

HARP

Marie-Schantal Bertinazzi+

FLUTE

Prue Page*
Sue-Ellen Monaghan

PICCOLO

Prue Page*

OBOE

Margaret Shirley*
Eva Griffith

COR ANGLAIS

Margaret Shirley

CLARINET

Rachael Clarke*
Joe Davies

BASSOON

Graeme Widmer*
Alex Thorburn

FRENCH HORN

Terry Dewhurst*
Elizabeth Dalton
Colin Dunn
Jill Hobbs

TRUMPET

David Young*
Andrew Hooogvliet

TROMBONE

Lindsay Smartt*
Ross Bliim

BASS TROMBONE

Brian Sedgwick*

TUBA

Chris Shirley*

TIMPANI AND PERCUSSION

Merrilee McNaught*
Sarah Blackwell
Damien Freeman
Amanda Gillard

* Denotes Principal

+ Denotes Freelance

STRATHFIELD ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY

PATRON:

Councillor Laurel O'Toole
Mayor of Strathfield

SOCIETY MEMBERS:

Dr N A Andersen
Mrs G Clarke
Mr T Davis*
Dr S Dickinson
Mr D B Dunlop*
Mrs J Dunlop
Miss C Edwards
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Mrs G Hawkshaw
Mr R A Knight
Mr J B Linley
Mr B McBurney*

Brother J McGlade
Miss P A McPhillamy
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Mrs S Mahableshwarwalla*
Mrs J C Moroney
Mrs S Myers*
Mr & Mrs I G Nicol
Mr & Mrs P Smith
Mr R Watson
Mrs J Widmer
Ms N C Woods

* Life Member

We require three volunteers to assist on each concert night with the supper.
Please give us your name and telephone number if you can assist. Thank you.
We wish to thank Teresa Rogers for preparing this program.

FUTURE CONCERTS IN 1999

Saturday, 4 September 1999 at 8.00pm

Saturday, 27 November 1999 at 8.00pm

Become a member of the Society and save money.
New Playing Members are welcome. We would welcome especially new, competent string players.
Rehearsals take place every Monday evening at 7.45pm in the Strathfield Town Hall.
For further information, please call Solomon Bard on (02) 9327 3439.