Queensland Symphony Orchestra and NAB present

THE YEAR OF THE MONKEY

CONCERT

THUR 11 FEB
7.30PM
Brisbane City Hall

Patron His Excellency Mr Ma Zhaoxu, Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China in Australia
THE YEAR OF THE MONKEY

Conductor Darrell Ang
Cello Li-Wei Qin
Erhu Ma Xiaohui
Piano Yingdi Sun
Mezzo-Soprano Aoyun Gerile

WANG
Grassland Miss You
Aoyun Gerile

YANG
Introduction, Chant and Allegro
for Erhu and Orchestra
Ma Xiaohui

LISZT
Totentanz, S.126
Yingdi Sun

XIAO
Greeting Guests from Afar
Aoyun Gerile

HUANG
Horse Race
Ma Xiaohui

CHEN
Cello Concerto, Reflet d’un temps disparu
Li-Wei Qin

ROSSINI
The Italian Girl in Algiers, Cruda sorte
Aoyun Gerile

RESPIGHI
Fountains of Rome
II. The Triton Fountain at Morn
III. The Fountain of Trevi at Midday

PROGRAM NOTES

The Chinese New Year, or Spring Festival as it is known to Chinese speakers, marks the turn of the Chinese lunar calendar, and falls between 21 January and 20 February, depending on the lunar cycle. It is celebrated all over the world by billions of native and diaspora Chinese, with festivities typically lasting for 15 days. The specific customs and traditions vary widely, which is to be expected in a culture comprising dozens of ethnicities and reaching back millennia, but in general the Spring Festival is a time spent with family and friends, enjoying food and exchanging gifts (especially red envelopes containing money), putting up auspicious decorations to ward off bad luck, and participating in rituals designed to invite prosperity and longevity, the most conspicuous of which are the lion dances and fireworks seen in most celebrations throughout the Chinese world.

This concert opens with the first of two folksongs that will be performed by Aoyun Gerile. Aoyun is honoured by her fans in China as a legendary mezzo-soprano and she is renowned for her sweet Inner Mongolian grassland songs.

The ancient, two-stringed erhu has traditionally been used to evoke wistful melancholy or meditative reflection, but in the two pieces featuring it in this concert, the full range of the instrument is explored and realised in a cutting-edge sound world. Yang Liqing’s Introduction, Chant and Allegro is an evocative, whimsical work which embraces and elevates the erhu within a palette which is at once Romantic and modern.

Franz Liszt composed Totentanz (Dance of Death), subtitled ‘Paraphrase on Dies irae’, on and off between 1839 and 1849 and then revised twice in the 1850s. It is his final, most concise and stylistically daring piece for piano and orchestra. Constructed in the form of a theme and variations, it casts the Gregorian plainchant Dies irae (Day of Wrath) from the Mass for the Dead in a demonic guise, though not without moments of spiritual levity.
In *Horse Race*, written in 1964 by the erhu virtuoso and composer Huang Haihuai, the instrument is pushed to the limit almost as if being ridden by a jockey. Inspired by Mongolian folk music and meant to capture the atmosphere of the horse race at the traditional Naadam festival, Huang imitates the galloping and neighing of the horse through a variety of tremolo, spiccato (jumping bow) and rapid-fire pizzicato techniques.

Chen Qigang, one of the foremost contemporary Chinese composers, came to prominence as the last student of Olivier Messiaen, who wrote: “Since I left the Conservatory, Chen Qigang has been my only pupil, and if I agreed to work with him for four years, it was because I hold him in high esteem. Endowed with exceptional intelligence and an excellent internal ear, he has very quickly assimilated European music and all contemporary music … his compositions display real inventiveness, very great talent and a total assimilation of Chinese thinking to European musical concepts. All his works … are remarkable by their thought, their poetry and their instrumentation.”

*Reflet d’un temps disparu* (Reflection of a vanished time), commissioned in 1995 by Radio France and first performed by Yo-Yo Ma with the National Orchestra of France under Charles Dutoit, is a soulful work full of virtuosic brilliance and haunting beauty. Veering from Impressionism, to Modernism, to Romanticism, Chen uses the techniques and idioms of Western music as a prism through which to glimpse ancient vistas and heavenly realms.

The cavatina ‘Cruda sorte!’ (Cruel fate!) comes from Rossini’s opera *The Italian Girl in Algiers*. Here the protagonist Isabella laments the danger she faces in attempting to rescue her lover Lindoro from the Bey of Algiers, but regains her composure in realising that the pirates she faces are only men and, therefore, no match for her wits.

Respighi in his *Fountains of Rome* of 1915-16 sought to capture the atmosphere of contemporary Rome, he was drawn to the music of the past if only by virtue of the antiquity of the city itself. ‘I wonder why no one has ever thought of making the fountains of Rome “sing”,’ he wrote to his wife, ‘for they are, after all, the very voice of the city’. In these movements, Respighi captures the sentiments and imagery suggested by the fountains at the hour in which their character ‘is most in harmony with the surrounding landscape, or their beauty appears most suggestive to the observer’.

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Darrell Ang
Conductor
Darrell Ang’s triumph at the 50th Besançon International Young Conductor’s Competition, where he took all three top awards – Grand Prize, Audience Prize and Orchestra Prize – launched his international career, leading to the music directorship of the Orchestre Symphonique de Bretagne and numerous guest conducting engagements with Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Orchestre National de Lyon, and Orchestre Philharmonique du Strasbourg, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano “Giuseppe Verdi”, St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Konzerthaus Orchestra Berlin, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Copenhagen Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Hong Kong Philharmonic, among others. Three years later Ang was selected to join the prestigious International Conductors’ Academy of the Allianz Cultural Foundation and invited to take on residencies with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Philharmonia Orchestra. In his native Singapore he became the youngest Associate Conductor of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra and served as the Music Director of the Singapore National Youth Orchestra. Darrell Ang’s uncommon gift was discovered at the age of four when he began to play violin and piano. His training as a conductor was in St Petersburg, followed by study at Yale. Highlights from the current season include performances with the Singapore Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and the Bordeaux Opera.

Li-Wei Qin
Cello
Li-Wei Qin has appeared all over the world as a soloist and as a chamber musician, with the LA, BBC, and HK Philharmonic Orchestras, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester and Konzerthausorchester Berlin, NDR Sinfonieorchester Hamburg, and BBC Symphony, also with the Kremerata Baltika, the Munich, Zurich, and Australian Chamber Orchestras; and at the Wigmore Hall, BBC Proms, Jerusalem, Rheingau and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Music Festivals, and the Lincoln Centre Chamber Music Society, New York, with musicians including Daniel Hope, Nabuko Imai, Mischa Maisky, David Finckel, Wu Han and Peter Frankel. Recent/Forthcoming engagements include a return to the ASO, MSO and in Shanghai with the MSO and Shanghai Symphonies, APO, AFCM, La Verdi Orchestra Milan, at the Konzerthaus Berlin, LA Chamber Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony, China and Guangzhou Philharmonic. He has recordings on Universal Music/Decca with Singapore Symphony, on Sony Classical (courtesy of Universal Music) with the Shanghai Symphony, and in 2014 on ABC Classics with the LPO.

Ma Xiaohui
Erhu
Ma Xiaohui speaks with the world through her Erhu (Chinese violin). She has received numerous honours and awards, such as the Kennedy Center’s “Best Performance” award in Washington, D.C. In 2008, she performed in Carnegie Weill Recital Hall – a performance that was “rapturously received” according to the New York media. In 2014 she was selected to play for an international conference in Shanghai that included many heads of state. Ma Xiaohui is perhaps best recognized for her famous duet with cellist Yo-Yo Ma on the Oscar-winning soundtrack for the film Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon in 2000. She has worked with famous conductors such as Zubin Mehta, Lorin Maazel and David Stern, and has performed in such venues as the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra Ensemble, the French International Orchestra, and the Vienna Golden Hall. Recently, she was asked to act in a film (Daughter of the Mountains, released January 2016) which explores Sino-Japanese relations. The entire soundtrack comes from Ma Xiaohui’s Erhu. Ma Xiaohui says that her desire is to spread peace and harmony throughout the world with her beautiful Erhu music – one soul at a time.
BIOGRAPHIES

Yingdi Sun

Piano

Yingdi Sun won the First Prize in the 7th International Franz Liszt Piano Competition held in Utrecht, the Netherlands in April 2005, the first Chinese pianist to win this prestigious competition. In recent years, Yingdi has has performed in preeminent venues including Amsterdam Royal Concertgebouw, Wigmore Hall, Konzerthaus Berlin, Tonhalle Zurich and Musikverein Vienna, among others. He has performed with many renowned orchestras including Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Mariinsky Symphony Orchestra, Czech National Symphony Orchestra, along with the Sydney, Melbourne and Queensland Symphony Orchestras. He has enjoyed collaboration with conductors including Valery Gergiev, Myung-Whun Chung, Michel Plasson, Edo de Waart, Zoltan Kocsis, Stephane Dénève, David Stern, Long Yu, Muhai Tang, Tan Dun, Petr Altrichter, Ronald Zollman, among others. His outstanding interpretation of Liszt is praised by major media reports as the “Liszt in primary colours”. In 2017, Yingdi will be an international jury member of the 11th Franz Liszt International Piano Competition in Utrecht, Netherlands.

Aoyun Gerile

Mezzo-Soprano

Aoyun Gerile is honoured in China as a legendary mezzo-soprano. Since 2000, she has performed internationally as a lead soloist in the China Opera and Dance Drama Theatre (CNODDT). Performance highlights include solos in Aida, Turandot, Romeo and Juliet, Messiah, Beethoven’s Symphony No.9 and Mahler’s Symphony No.8. However, in China, Aoyun is best known as one of the most welcomed pop stars and she is admired very much for her sweet China Inner Mongolian grassland songs. Aoyun has won numerous awards including the gold award of bel-canto group by the Ministry of Culture for China’s Singer Television Contest, and first prize in the National Excellent Song Competitions for her original song Only One China. Aoyun’s first album Flower Lake and Grassland became the top selling album on China Audio and Video Network in the first week of its release. Her recent new album Love of Nature has included all her popular single top ranking songs in recent years.
QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PATRON
His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC, Governor of Queensland

MUSIC DIRECTOR DESIGNATE
Alondra de la Parra

CONDUCTOR LAUREATE
Johannes Fritzsch

ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR
Natalia Raspopova

CONDUCTOR EMERITUS
Werner Andreas Albert

SOLOIST-IN-RESIDENCE
Nikolai Demidenko

CONCERTMASTER
Warwick Adeney

ASSOCIATE CONCERTMASTER
Alan Smith

VIOLIN 1
Stephen Tooke*
Linda Carello
Lynn Cole
Priscilla Hocking
Ann Holtzapffel
Stephen Phillips
Rebecca Seymour
Joan Shih
Brenda Sullivan
Brynley White

VIOLIN 2
Gail Aitken*
Wayne Brennan
Jane Burroughs
Faina Dobrenko
Simon Dobrenko
Deia Kinmont
Natalie Low
Tim Marchmont
Helen Travers
Harold Wilson

VIOLA
Yoko Okayasu*
Bernard Hoey*
Jann Keir-Haantera
Charlotte Burbrook de Vere
Kirsten Hulin-Bobart
Helen Poggioali
Graham Simpson
Nicholas Tomkin

CELLO
David Lale*
Kathryn Close
Andre Duthoit
Matthew Jones
Matthew Kinmont
Kaja Skorka
Craig Allister Young

DOUBLE BASS
Dushan Walkowicz*
Anne Buchanan
Justin Bullock
Paul O’Brien
Ken Poggioli

FLUTE
Hayley Radke>>

OBOE
Huw Jones*
Sarah Meagher**
Alexa Murray

COR ANGLAIS
Vivienne Brooke*

CLARINET
Irit Silver*
Brian Catchlove*
Kate Travers

BASS CLARINET
Nicholas Harmsen*

BASSOON
Nicole Tait*
David Mitchell**
Evan Lewis

CONTRABASSOON
Claire Ramuscak*

FRENCH HORN
Malcolm Stewart*
Peter Luff**
Ian O’Brien*
Vivienne Collier-Vickers
Lauren Manuel

TROMPET
Sarah Butler*
Richard Madden>>
Paul Rawson

TROMBONE
Jason Redman*
Dale Truscott>>

BASS TROMBONE
Tom Coyle*

HARP
Jill Atkinson*

TIMPANI
Tim Corkeron*

PERCUSSION
David Montgomery*
Josh DeMarchi>>

~ Section Principal
= Acting Section Principal
>> Associate Principal
* Acting Associate Principal
* Principal
^ Acting Principal

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