

Tuesday 20 August 2019

Gershwin to Gypsy Baron, *Gladiator* to a German Goliath

Queensland Symphony Orchestra unveils a glorious 2020 season featuring grand concertos and Grammy nominees, world premieres, the celebration of Beethoven's birthday and the spotlight on its own musicians

Breathtaking masterpieces, spine-tingling movie music, intimate chamber music, and classical concerts for the children are amongst the many highlights of Queensland Symphony Orchestra's magnificent 2020 season.

Year 2020 marks 250 years since the birth of the incomparable **Ludwig van Beethoven**, recently voted Australia's favourite composers*, and, to celebrate Queensland Symphony Orchestra joins orchestras across the globe in celebrating, with a series of nine concerts and special tributes featuring the music of the man whose symphonies have been called the 'cornerstones of Western civilisation'.

In a season as welcoming as it is exciting, 2020 stars thrilling soloists including dual Grammy-nominated saxophonist **Amy Dickson** and fellow Australian superstars violinist **Ray Chen**, pianist **Aura Go**, soprano **Emma Pearson**, the young violinist **Grace Clifford**, and the Orchestra's own violist **Imants Larsens**.

As well as home-grown, internationally acclaimed talent, Queensland Symphony Orchestra again welcomes soloists from afar to Brisbane including Principal Horn of the Berlin Philharmonic, German **Stefan Dohr**, the 'dazzlingly brilliant' Armenian cellist, **Narek Hakhnazaryan** and **Behzod Abduraimov** from Uzbekistan, who has been described as 'the most perfectly accomplished pianist of his generation'.

Israeli **Guy Braunstein**, who was the youngest violinist ever appointed concertmaster of the Berlin Philharmonic, will have his formidable talents on full display with the Orchestra as he both plays *and* conducts in two concerts, **Beethoven and Dvořák** and **Happy Birthday Beethoven**.

Three of Queensland Symphony Orchestra's favourite conductors return in 2020 to take on Beethoven's most treasured works - Australian super conductor **Simone Young** leads Beethoven's majestic *Choral Symphony No.9* in August, Sweden's **Daniel Blendulf** conducts Beethoven's *Symphony No.5* in October, and Conductor Laureate **Johannes Fritzsich** leads Beethoven's *Piano Concerto No.5* in November.

The all-star conductor cast is rounded out with **Elena Schwarz** (Switzerland-Australia), **Alexander Prior** (UK), **Eduardo Strausser** (Brazil), **André de Ridder** (Germany), **Giancarlo Guerrero** (Nicaragua), **Giordano Bellincampi** (Italy/Denmark), **Alexandre Bloch** (France), Australians **Benjamin Northey** and **Simon Hewett**, and **Nicholas McGegan** (UK) who has been described as 'one of the finest baroque conductors of his generation'.

Continuing its mission to commission and support new works, Queensland Symphony Orchestra is proud to present two world premieres in 2020; the first in February's **Power and Glory** Maestro concert by talented Australian composer **Melody Eötvös**, and the second in July in **The Music of The Masters** concert by the Orchestra's own violist, **Bernard Hoey**.

In 2020, Queensland Symphony Orchestra truly cements its position as an 'Orchestra for Everyone' with two concerts celebrating famous film scores, **Reel Classics** and **Cinematic**, as well as the latest instalments of the **Harry Potter** and **Star Wars Live** concert series. The youngest of classical music lovers are in for a treat with a

special performance of Abbott's *The Peasant Prince*, an interactive experience for the whole family based on Li Cunxin's best-selling children's book.

"Queensland Symphony Orchestra is an Orchestra for Everyone, which means we want to be an orchestra for all Queenslanders. We want to offer concerts that appeal to a broad range of people that aims to introduce everyone to the magic of orchestral music. Our concerts – whether that is a Shostakovich symphony or the latest Harry Potter film with orchestra – provide immense joy to those attending," said Chief Executive Craig Whitehead.

"There is something unique and magical about the sound of a live orchestra and our 2020 season aims to continue to provide that sense of joy, wonder, and spine tingles. Whether you come for the virtuosity of the performers, the emotional journeys that orchestral music can take us on, or just for a wonderful night out, our Orchestra For Everyone aims to have a concert for everyone in our arsenal for next year."

ABOUT SEASON 2020 - THE MAESTRO SERIES

The Season 2020 Maestro Series features 10 concerts: *Power and Glory*, *Musical Sorcery*, *Mozart's Jupiter*, *Bolero and Beyond*, *Beethoven and Dvořák*, *Don Quixote*, *Music of the Masters*, *Pyrotechnic Violin*, *Beethoven 5* and *Beethoven's Emperor*.

In February *Power and Glory*, will be conducted by the UK's **Alexander Prior** and features three leading Australian soloists in violinist **Emily Sun**, cellist **Caleb Wong** and pianist **Aura Go** performing Beethoven's *Triple Concerto* (the first of many Beethoven works in the 2020 Season), along with Shostakovich's acclaimed *Symphony No. 5* and the WORLD PREMIERE of a new work by Australian composer **Melody Eötvös**.

In March, much loved conductor **Benjamin Northey** presents *Musical Sorcery* featuring Principal Horn of the Berlin Philharmonic, **Stefan Dohr** performing the joyous *Horn Concerto No.1* by Richard Strauss. Audiences are in for a magical treat with the cheeky *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* by Dukas and organist **Andrej Kouznetsov** concludes the program with Saint-Saëns' mighty '*Organ*' *Symphony* (made famous from its appearance in the film *Babe*).

Australian soprano, **Emma Pearson** returns from a 10-year stint wowing audiences in Germany to perform Britten's gorgeous *Les Illuminations* in April's Maestro concert *Mozart's Jupiter*, led by French conductor **Alexandre Bloch**. The concert also includes Mozart's *Symphony No.41*, fondly known as the Jupiter Symphony. Saturday evening audiences will hear another famous work with a nickname: Schubert's '*Unfinished*' *Symphony* and Friday morning audiences will hear the dramatic overture to Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.

May sees the return of Australia's own saxophone superstar, and two-time Grammy nominee, **Amy Dickson** performing her own arrangement of Phillip Glass' hypnotic *Violin Concerto*. Also featuring in *Bolero and Beyond*, led by German conductor **André de Ridder**, is music from *Porgy and Bess* by Gershwin, Debussy's glorious *La Mer* and perhaps the most famous rhythm in classical music history – Ravel's *Bolero*!

The second Maestro in May is *Beethoven and Dvořák*, featuring the inspiring Israeli violinist, **Guy Braunstein**, who is not only the soloist for this Maestro but conducts it! Braunstein will perform Beethoven's melodic *Violin Concerto*, followed by Dvořák's mighty *7th Symphony* – expect a spectacular finale.

In June, audience favourite **Giancarlo Guerrero** leads the Maestro concert *Don Quixote*, featuring two major works for cello in Tchaikovsky's beautiful *Variations on a Rocooco Theme* and *Don Quixote* by Richard Strauss. Armenian cellist **Narek Hakhnazaryan** stars alongside the Orchestra's own violist **Imants Larsens** in this music event which also features either Haydn's *Symphony No. 104* (evening program) or Beethoven's *Egmont Overture* (morning program).

Queensland Symphony Orchestra is excited to premiere a work by one of its own musicians, violist **Bernard Hoey** in July's *Music of The Masters*, a concert led by Italian conductor **Giordano Bellincampi**. Hoey's piece stars alongside Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No.4*, and Sibelius' finger-busting but evocative *Violin Concerto* performed by young Australian violinist protege, **Grace Clifford**.

In August, the Orchestra welcomes back local violin virtuoso, **Ray Chen** for a morning and evening of high-wire virtuosity on his original Stradivarius violin. In *Pyrotechnic Violin* Chen performs Saint-Saëns' *3rd Violin Concerto*, a crowd-pleasing showpiece if there ever was one. Then his partner-in-art for the evening, Brazilian conductor **Eduardo Strausser** – described by New Revolution as 'a real force of nature' – leads the Orchestra into the serene and radiant world of Brahms' *Second Symphony*.

The final two Maestro Concerts in 2020 celebrate the immense talent of the birthday boy himself, Ludwig van Beethoven. *Beethoven 5* in October features his incomparable *Fifth Symphony* in a concert also showcasing the QPAC pipe organ in the Concert Hall. Conducted by **Daniel Blendulf**, and featuring organist **Joseph Nolan**, audiences will enjoy a rendition of Bach's *Passacaglia and Fugue* in the Friday morning concert, and on Saturday night, a rare outing of Poulenc's highly enjoyable *Organ Concerto*.

The Beethoven series concludes with his mighty '*Emperor*' *Concerto*, one of the most stirring, thrilling and moving musical experiences for piano and orchestra, performed by Uzbek pianist **Behzod Abduraimov**. Another highlight of *Beethoven's Emperor* is the return of Queensland Symphony Orchestra Conductor Laureate and former Chief Conductor, **Johannes Fritzsich**, who brings the 2020 Maestro Season to a close with the soaring heights of Sibelius' *Symphony No.2*.

See full program detailed in the Queensland Symphony Orchestra 2020 Calendar.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Season 2020 opens with arguably the greatest in the Star Wars concert series, *Return of the Jedi In Concert* in February and the fifth instalment of the Harry Potter series, *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix™ in Concert* later in August. Film buffs get another treat with a return of the popular *Cinematic* in May, this time exploring the powerful film scores that depict the heroism and heartbreak of battle.

A special family event takes place in March with Abbott's *The Peasant Prince*, an interactive experience complete with storytelling and big-screen projections, based on Li Cunxin's best-selling children's book. 2020 sees the return of popular concerts *Opera Gala* in April, *The Last Night of the Proms* in June and Handel's *Messiah* in November.

In August, Queensland Symphony Orchestra's 250th birthday celebration Beethoven comes to a climax with *Ode to Joy*. Conducted by the incomparable **Simone Young** and featuring a range of soloists and a breathtaking chorus, this performance of the majestic Choral Symphony No.9 (arguably Beethoven's greatest masterpiece) will be epic.

MUSIC ON SUNDAYS

Under the always-entertaining baton of **Guy Noble**, Season 2020's Music on Sundays opens in March with *The Ballet Beautiful*, taking audiences on a journey through the history of French ballet. *Happy Birthday Beethoven* in May will feature the multi-talented **Guy Braunstein** as conductor *and* soloist in a concert that includes several highlights of Beethoven's music, concluding with a rendition of his funniest work, his *Symphony No.8*.

Vienna and Beyond in August highlights music from Viennese composers as well as music from eastern European countries that influenced music written in Vienna – just like a road trip around Europe without the hassle of passports! This concert is conducted by **Elena Schwarz** and features Queensland Symphony Orchestra

Concertmaster **Warwick Adeney** on violin. In September, Guy Noble hosts *Reel Classics* featuring the stirring Overture to *Lawrence of Arabia*, the exhilaration of the flying bikes in E.T.'s *Adventures on Earth*, and Michael Giacchino's lively Bond-inspired theme to *The Incredibles*.

CHAMBER PLAYERS SERIES

The intimate Chamber Players series gives audiences the chance to be up-close and personal with the talented Orchestra musicians in their home studio and in 2020 features five concerts, beginning with *Beethoven and Brahms* in February; *Beethoven, Rossini and Weber* in April; *Mozart and Golijov* in June; *Brahms, Muczynski and Martinů* in August, and *Mozart, Strauss and Adams* in September.

HOW TO EXPERIENCE QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA IN 2020

- **Wednesday August 21 at 9am:** Subscriptions open with a range of packages available.
- **Monday October 28 at 9am:** tickets on sale for all individual concerts in 2020.

Booking details

- Online at qso.com.au
- Telephone the Box Office direct on 07 3833 5044
- Buy in person at the Queensland Symphony Orchestra Box Office - 114 Grey Street, South Brisbane
- Post your order to Queensland Symphony Orchestra Box Office - GPO Box 9994, Brisbane Q 4001

ENDS

For more information, imagery, interviews and access to artists please contact Kath Rose & Associates on 07 3357 9054 or 0416 291 493 or email kath@kathrose.com

* *ABC Classic's Top 100 Composer Countdown 2019*