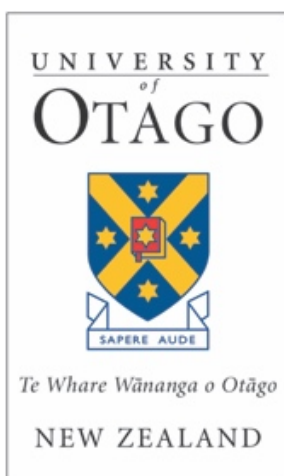




2017 Concert

Sunday June 11, 2pm
The Piano, Christchurch



Many thanks for coming to our concert and
supporting the orchestra and the
Nurse Maude Hospice

Programme

Gioachino Rossini

Overture to The Italian Girl in Algiers

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Flute and Harp Concerto in C maj K299

I: Allegro

II: Andantino

III: Rondeau - Allegro

Soloists: Duncan Watts and Vanessa Souter

INTERVAL

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No. 8 in F maj Op 93

I: Allegro vivace e con brio

II: Allegretto scherzando

III: Tempo di menuetto

IV: Allegro vivace

Programme Notes

Gioachino Rossini (1792 – 1868) **Overture to *The Italian Girl in Algiers***

One of the more successful of the 39 operas that Rossini composed in the space of just 19 years, *The Italian Girl in Algiers* was composed in just 18 days. A comic opera, the plot is suitably convoluted, detailing the attempts of Mustafa, the Bey of Algeria, to marry his wife, Elvina (of whom he is bored) to his Italian slave, Lindoro, so that he may instead find an Italian girl. He finds his apparent opportunity in the arrival of the enchanting Isabella. Unbeknownst to him, Isabella is actually visiting from Italy in search of Lindoro, her true love. Ultimately Mustafa is outwitted by the Italians, and realising his folly, begs Elvina to take him back.

Somewhat unusually for Rossini, the overture is thematically consistent with the opera itself, sharing a suitably light mood, and featuring an allegro drawing on musical material from the second act. The sudden *sforzando* of the opening is thought to have been inspired by Haydn's "surprise" symphony, of which Rossini was an admirer.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791) **Flute and Harp Concerto in C maj K299/297c**

I: Allegro

II: Andantino

III: Rondeau - Allegro

Although now one of his most beloved concerti, Mozart's Concerto for Flute, Harp and Orchestra was, at the time of its composition, an unusual work. Not only does it represent one of Mozart's relatively rare concerti for two soloists, it is the only one of his works to feature the harp – at the time an instrument still in development that had yet to claim its rightful place as a “standard” part of the orchestra. This, in part, accounts for the notoriously difficult harp part, written more as an adapted piano part, and lacking the luscious glissandi for which the instrument is now perhaps best known. Not that the music suffers in the slightest as a result, with the second movement in particular representing Mozart at his most lyrical and graceful.

Mozart wrote the concerto during a seven-month stay in Paris in 1778, part of a wider trip across Europe during which he was attempting to escape the provincial life of Salzburg and “obtain a position or earn some money”. In neither of these endeavours was he entirely successful. One of his major engagements in Paris was to provide composition lessons for Marie-Louise-Philippine, daughter of the Duc de Guînes. By all accounts Mozart found her to be a thoroughly inept student of composition, a situation made worse by the Duke's refusal to pay any more than half of the fee for these lessons. However, he did find her harp playing “magnifique”, and remarked that the Duke played the flute “extremely well”. Prompted by this, and the (ultimately futile) hope for more money, Mozart accepted the Duke's request for a concerto that he could play with his daughter. The result, carefully crafted to cater to the tastes of Parisian audiences, has since moved seamlessly from the intended setting of a royal home to the wider audience of the concert hall.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 – 1827)

Symphony No 8 in F maj Op 93

I: Allegro vivace e con brio

II: Allegretto scherzando

III: Tempo di menuetto

IV: Allegro vivace

One of the more striking aspects of Beethoven's Eighth Symphony is its apparent restraint. Viewed in the context of the dramatic and often expansive Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh symphonies, and as a predecessor (albeit by twelve years) to the groundbreaking Ninth, the compact and light Eighth seems somewhat out of place. Superficially it appears to look back to Haydn and Mozart, at a time when Beethoven was redefining the symphony as a genre. Certainly the initial audiences following its premiere were underwhelmed, although when Beethoven was asked why his Eighth symphony was less successful than his popular Seventh, he is said to have replied, "Because it is so much better".

The Eighth also seems out of place in its discordance with Beethoven's reported state of mind in 1812, the time of its composition. Although a notoriously unhappy man in general, he was particularly despondent as he grappled with rejection by an unknown woman, who he would come to term the "immortal beloved". Shortly after completing the Eighth, Beethoven entered a creative lull, a two-year period during which his output was minimal.

Understanding Beethoven's intent for this symphony then, is always going to be difficult. But we can say this – there is much more to this work than its apparent classicism would suggest. Indeed, its unusual compactness provides a canvas for structural radicalism fitting of a revolutionary composer.

For a start, the symphony is highly unusual in its absence of a slow movement, which is substituted for by the *Allegretto scherzando*. This movement, with its persistent and even staccato chords, is widely believed to have been composed as a parody of the recently invented metronome. The apparently conservative choice of a *minuet* for the third movement belies the fact that this movement, with its coarse and thumping rhythms, is stylistically unlike any symphonic minuet that Mozart or Haydn wrote. Yet, by providing a minuet rather than a scherzo, Beethoven supplies some of the relaxation that we would traditionally seek in a slow movement. The outer movements are more predictably fast and based around sonata form, but even here there are several (often humorous) departures from the “standard” progression of events – such as the unexpected intrusion of the distant key of F sharp minor just before the finale emphatically states the home key of F major to bring the symphony to a close.

Programme notes by Tom Wilkinson

The Soloists

Duncan Watts started learning the flute at the age of nine at the Dunedin Saturday Morning Music Classes. Throughout the 1970s he played in a wide variety of chamber and orchestral ensembles, including the Dunedin Youth Orchestra as principal flute, and the Dunedin Civic Orchestra.

In 1977 his family spent a year in the UK, during which time he played in the Surrey County Wind Orchestra, which won the wind orchestra section of the UK National Festival of Music for Youth.

Duncan continued to play with the Dunedin Civic Orchestra into the early 1980s, but retired from active involvement in music to concentrate on medical studies. He did not play again until 2008 when his daughter (after several attempts) persuaded him to come out of retirement and join the Otago Symphonic Band. He is now flute section principal with this band and has been a member of the New Zealand Doctors' Orchestra for the past three years.

Duncan works as an anaesthetist at Dunedin Hospital.

Vanessa Souter started learning the harp in Wellington from the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO) harpist Jan Christensen when she 14 years old, and started playing with the NZSO when she was just 17. She gained a Young Achiever award in 1988, was admitted to a Bachelor of Music in 1988, attended the Salzedo Harp Colony under Alice Chalifoux in Maine USA from 1989 to 1992, and attended the Pacific Music Festival under Leonard Bernstein and Michael Tilson-Thomas in Sapporo Japan in 1990 and 1991.

She was contract specialist soloist harpist for the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra from 1992 to 1995, principal harpist with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra from 1995 to 1998, and freelanced with the Australian Ensemble, the Australian Chamber orchestra, and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra until 2004, when she stopped to focus on her medical studies.

Vanessa returned to New Zealand and is currently a GP-in-training in Wellington and mother of two children.

She has been lucky to have had a few playing opportunities in the past couple of years but none as exciting as preparing for this concert today. Vanessa says "It had been a daunting prospect to prepare to play this tricky and beautiful concerto that is now a delight as my fingers remember how to work again! I am lucky to be back on the stage after so many years away. Music definitely soothes the soul."

The Conductor

Mark Hodgkinson is a Christchurch free-lance conductor and teacher.

He studied performance trumpet at Canterbury University and in Sweden, and played with the Auckland Philharmonia for three years before returning to Christchurch.

Mark's conducting experience began with Christchurch School of Music ensembles under Peter Zwartz and continued in Sweden with the Limhamns Brass Band. He gained further experience at the Aspen Music Festival and School in Colorado, supported by Creative New Zealand and an Arts Excellence Award from the Community Trust.

He has conducted for Perkel Opera, Mercury Opera, Christchurch Operatic, Canterbury Music Theatre, Christchurch Youth Orchestra, Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, Nelson Symphony Orchestra, Canterbury Opera, and the chamber orchestras Da Capo and Resonance. He has been the conductor for the Canterbury Philharmonia for over 25 years and for the Christchurch Doctors' Orchestra for many years.

This is the fifth time Mark has conducted the New Zealand Doctors' Orchestra since its first concert in 2012.

The Orchestra

Violin 1

Osman Ozturk~*^{HB}
Justine Bradley ^C
Roy Knill ^A
John Choi ^H
Jasmine Jiang § ^D
Conway Niu ^W
Dylan Truppmann Lattie § ^D
Allister Bush ^W
Nick Pittar + ^C
Stewart Mann ^N

Violin 2

David Choi* ^A
Louise Webster ^A
Daniel Chiou § ^A
Ye Li § ^A
Iain Ward ^C
Michael Wang ^C
Erika Sirisomboonwong § ^C
Rosie Searle § ^A

Viola

Anthony Doyle* ^A
Nicola Austin ^C
Stephanie Cortesi ^A
John Bonifant ^W
Michael Slatter ^H
Hugh Townend ^W
Alex Hurrell ^C
Bena Law § ^A

Cello

Peter Fleischl*^{Ta}
Catherine Kwak § ^A
Paul Van Houtte § ^A
Dominic Monaghan ^W
Clare Woodward ^A
Jo Pinto § ^A
Jane MacDonald ^W
Katy Brett ^C

Double bass

Tim Wilkinson* ^C
Gerald Oliver+ ^C

Flute

Karin Lamb* ^C
Malcolm Carmichael ^H

Oboe

Catherine Loye+* ^C
Ruth Moore ^B

Clarinet

Ryan Cha* ^A
Jonathan Christiansen ^A

Bassoon

Martin Gardner* ^C
James Smythe § ^D

French horn

Rhona Sommerville* ^A
Sally Botur ^C

Trumpet

Tom Wilkinson* ^{HB}
Lucy Page-Dalton ^C

Timpani

Rachel Thomas*§ ^A

* = principal
~ = leader
+ = guest player

§ = student

A:Auckland; B:Blenheim;
C:Christchurch; D:Dunedin;
H:Hamilton; HB:Hawkes Bay;

N:Nelson; Ta:Taupo;
W:Wellington

About the Orchestra

This is the sixth year that the New Zealand Doctors' Orchestra has met – our first two concerts were in Nelson in 2012 and 2013, followed by New Plymouth in 2013 and 2014, and Napier in 2016.

A doctors' orchestra in Christchurch has performed annually for over 25 years and has provided a basis for the NZDO: all the NZDO organisers have played in the Christchurch orchestra. The format and organisation of the NZDO borrows strongly from the well-established Australian Doctors' Orchestra and European Doctors' Orchestra.

With the exception of a small number of guest players, all members of the orchestra are doctors or medical students. All members maintain a strong part-time interest in music, with many having very impressive musical CVs.

All costs incurred in running the orchestra, including the venue hire for this concert, have been paid for by orchestra members. As a result, we are proud to be able to donate all the proceeds from ticket sales to the **Nurse Maude Hospice**.

Acknowledgements

We're very grateful for sponsorship from the University of Otago (Division of Humanities Performing Arts Fund and the Medical School), the University of Auckland (Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences) and MAS, which has been used to subsidise costs for our student players.

Thank-you to Helen Webby for the hire of her harp, to the Canterbury Philharmonia for the hire of their timpani, to the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra for the use of their rehearsal rooms, and the National Library for music hire.