

**MAROONDAH
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA INC**

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The *Maroondah Symphony Orchestra*
gratefully acknowledges the
support of the *Maroondah City Council* and
Arts Nunawading Inc

NEXT CONCERT

Sunday 9 November 2014
2.30pm

PROGRAMME

Rossini :
The Barber of Seville Overture

Mozart:
Symphony No 39 in E flat, K543

Beethoven:
*Piano Concerto No 5 in E flat,
Op. 73 'Emperor'*

Soloist
Martin Lamb
Piano

George Wood Performing Arts Centre
Yarra Valley Grammar
Kalinda Road, Ringwood

Enquiries: Elaine 0418 620 479



**ORCHESTRAL
CONCERT**

Conductor
Willem van der Vis

Leader
Tania Vethanayagam

Soloist
Leon Wang

Sunday, 17 August, 2014
2:30PM

George Wood Performing
Arts Centre
Yarra Valley Grammar



**Maroondah Symphony Orchestra
Celebrating 50 Years of Music**



LEON WANG

Born in Shanghai in 1990 and raised in Melbourne, Leon began playing the cello at the age of 8, studying with Henry Wenig.

After completing his AMusA at the age of 16, Leon entered the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music to study a Bachelor of Music with scholarships for performance. He began his primary cello studies with Kalina Krusteva and has since performed with the Conservatorium of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Youth Orchestra, Chamber Strings of Melbourne and the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra under many established and renowned conductors, such as Fabian Russell and Benjamin Northey.

In 2013 and early 2014, Leon was part of the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic and Chamber Strings of Melbourne tour to China and Europe.

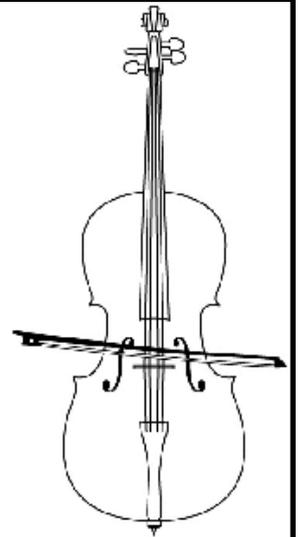
The Chamber Strings of Melbourne performed in a multitude of European cities including Frankfurt, Cologne, Paris, Innsbruck and Venice.

Throughout the years he has also participated in numerous masterclasses, including those with renowned cellists, Howard Penny and Li Wei Qin.

He lists Mstislav Rostropovich and Janos Starker as his favourite and most influential cellists.

Leon currently plays on a 18th century German cello by an unknown maker, which was restored in 2010.

The Maroondah Symphony Orchestra is delighted to have Leon as our soloist in today's concert.



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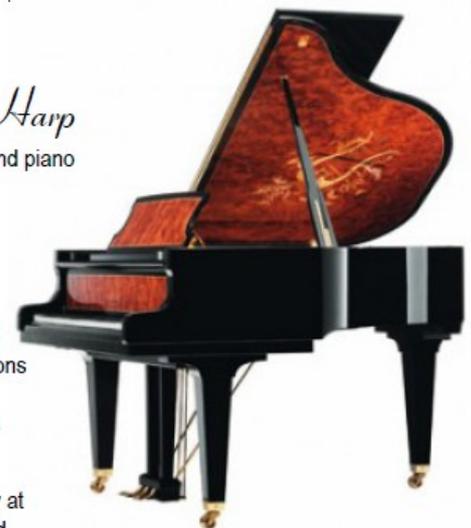
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Maroondah Symphony Orchestra

The Maroondah Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1964. It prides itself on providing local access to quality classical music. It presents four to six concerts each year featuring works from both the classical and lighter music repertoires. Concert performances are given at local venues and additional concerts can be arranged for charity and other organisations.

The Orchestra has a growing reputation. Much of this is due to the enthusiastic guidance and expertise of conductor, Willem van der Vis, and the quality of musicians the Orchestra attracts.

The Orchestra is based in Ringwood, although membership is not restricted to residents of the City of Maroondah and is open to musicians from senior secondary students through to mature age. Rehearsals are held each Tuesday at Maroondah Federation Estate, Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood from 8pm to 10:15pm. New members are warmly welcomed.

For information about the Orchestra or membership enquiries: Phone: Lyn 9849 0987 or Geoff 9808 4184



Willem van der Vis Musical Director

New Zealand born Willem van der Vis gained a B.Sc (Hons) in physics before he decided to focus on his real passion, which was music. Soon he was playing principal cello with the Scola Musica (New Zealand Symphony Training Orchestra) and the Dunedin Sinfonia.

In 1979 he moved to Australia, where he became a member of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra for 7 years. In addition he has played with Orchestra Victoria and the New Zealand, Tasmanian and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras. As an orchestral cellist, he was always fascinated by how a conductor interacted with and communicated music to an orchestra and this led him to complete his B.Mus (conducting) at the WAAPA and the VCA (Robert Rosen). Conducting studies followed in Moscow, England and the Czech Republic. He enjoyed further studies with Professor John Hopkins in Melbourne.

Willem has conducted the Stonnington, Heidelberg, New Monash, Ballarat and Derwent (Hobart) Symphony Orchestras. In addition, he has conducted the Murray Conservatorium Chamber Orchestra and Choral Society (Albury, NSW), Two Murray River "Three Choirs" Festivals, Percy Grainger Youth Orchestra, Margaret Sutherland Strings as well as many stage shows.

Willem is now Musical Director of the Maroondah Symphony Orchestra and Assistant Conductor of the Heidelberg Symphony Orchestra. He regularly conducts the U3A Symphony Orchestra as well as the Kooyong Chamber Players. Every year he conducts at orchestral workshops and music camps around Australia. Willem is also in demand as an adjudicator and holds workshops in orchestral conducting.

MAROONDAH SYMPHONY

1st Violin

Tania Vethanayagam *
Ilona von Möller

Michela Scully

Suneith Sukumar

Lauren Hancock

Fiona Cooper-White

Shahriar Shams

Alicia Donnelly

2nd Violin

Helga Lindemann *

Ina Koetsier

Gerry Tan

Anne Lacey

Mereta Eichberger

Kathleen Prohasky

Ella O'Hagan

Lilian Shum

Viola

Gitta Green *

Joella Gould

Paul Watson

Helen Jeske

Caitlin Lyons

Cello

Felicity Schÿf *

Kendra Bousfield

Michael Bonsall

Elaine Neely

Arthur Braun

KerenSmith

Judy Fox-Smith

John Ferwerda

Leah Walsh

Tony Hayes

Double Bass

Hilton Vermaas *

Michael Taylor

Josh Vandenburg

Flute

Melanie Smith *

Caroline Barron

Fiona O'Callaghan

Oboe

Hilary Edwards *

Geoff Oakes

Clarinet

Robert Dorin *

Annie Fairweather

Lyn Farnworth

Bassoon

Robert Weiss *

Karen Martin

Trumpet

Steve Burns *

Ruth Collins

French Horn

David Keeffe *

Emily Kepert

Trombone

Basil Rizopoulos *

Sol Everts

Dean Chanel

Tuba

Tim Kelly

Tympani

Simon Kepert *

* Section Leader

Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld (1858)
Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880)

German born Jacques Offenbach was a prolific composer of about 100 French operettas that satirised French society of his time. *Orpheus in the Underworld* is an irreverent parody of Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice*. The overture concludes with the risqué *Galop Infernal*, (you'll recognise it by another name!), which shocked the Parisian audiences of the day!

The Enchanted Lake Op. 62 (1909)
Anatole Liadov (1855-1914)

Liadov was a friend of Stravinsky with a reputation for laziness. When Liadov failed to fulfil his contract with Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*, Stravinsky stepped in with the first of his four revolutionary ballet scores. Meanwhile, Liadov, who had been expelled from the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1876, went on to write a series of orchestral tone poems, which were highly regarded by his contemporaries, including his mentor, Rimsky-Korsakov.

Liadov's love of nature combined with his research into Russian folk music formed the basis for many of these tone poems. *The Enchanted Lake* dreamily represents Lake Ilmen shimmering by starlight, effectively evoked through the use of slow trills and subtle changes of harmony.

Variations on a Rococo Theme Op. 33 (1876)
Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Tchaikovsky was admitted to the first class of the newly opened St Petersburg Conservatory aged 21, shortly after commencing his formal musical studies. After graduating, Tchaikovsky was recruited by Nikolai Rubinstein, brother of Tchaikovsky's teacher Anton, to join the new Moscow Conservatory. Here he met fellow teacher, the German cellist Wilhelm Fitzenhagen, who inspired Tchaikovsky to write the Variations on a Rococo Theme.

This period in Tchaikovsky's life was mired by financial troubles (prior to the later patronage of Nadeja von Meck that allowed Tchaikovsky the freedom to compose), and he fell into one of his periodic bouts of depression. During 1876 he composed his popular and showy *Marche Slave*, the dark and brooding *Francesca da Rimini* and these cheerful and elegant variations. More starkly contrasting works are difficult to imagine.

Tchaikovsky sought help from his friend for advice on the technicalities of writing for the cello, but got rather more than he bargained for! Fitzenhagen ended up writing much of the virtuosic cello part himself, rearranged the order of the variations (possibly to draw more applause), and deleted one in the process. This is the most common version performed today, although a reconstruction of Tchaikovsky's original was made in 1941.

"Rococo" here refers to "old-fashioned" rather than "florid" and the tuneful theme that Tchaikovsky composed is simple and elegant. However, the seven variations that follow make this one of the most challenging works in the cello repertoire, and span the entire range of the instrument. Most of the variations include a brief codetta played by the woodwind, providing an overall unity to the structure of the work.

INTERVAL (20 minutes)

Academic Festival Overture Op. 80 (1880)
Johannes Brahms (1833-1896)

Brahms had a happy childhood in Hamburg, receiving a solid musical education, although not attending university. Thus it was a considerable honour to be offered an honorary doctorate from the University of Cambridge in 1877. However, not desiring to travel across salt water in order to receive the degree, Brahms turned it down. Two years later, the University of Breslau, in a notable display of one-upmanship, offered Brahms the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The Latin citation acknowledged Brahms to be "Now the leader in Germany of music of the more severe order". Brahms accepted with a postcard, but more was required. As befits a musical prodigy who had played the bordellos of Hamburg by the age of thirteen, Brahms responded instead with a skilful setting of four well-known student drinking songs! The last is the most famous - *Gaudeamus Igatur*. More a mini-symphony than a mere overture, the Academic Festival Overture is a fine example of Brahms' masterful techniques of orchestration, counterpoint and thematic manipulation.

Andante Cantabile for Cello and Strings
(from String Quartet No. 1 Op. 11) (1871)
Pyotr Illyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Short of money as usual at this time in his life, Tchaikovsky arranged a concert of chamber music to support himself. Lacking a suitable work, he composed his first string quartet, which became the first great Russian string quartet. This immediately became hugely popular, largely due to its *Andante Cantabile* slow movement. Capitalising on its popularity, Tchaikovsky later arranged it for cello and strings. It is based on a Ukrainian folk song "*Sidel Vanya*" which brackets an original theme by Tchaikovsky.

Blue Danube Waltz Op. 314 (1867)
Johann Strauss II (1825-1899)

The most famous waltz of all time started inauspiciously as a choral piece with lyrics by a policeman celebrating the glories of electric street lighting! For some reason this failed to inspire all except the most dedicated of engineers, and was soon forgotten. However, when Johann Strauss Jr. needed a work for the Paris Exposition, he converted it to a purely orchestral concert waltz, its title flattering the rather muddy Danube. The first of many waltzes by the "Waltz King", it soon became famous and established itself as an emblem of Vienna, and a fixture in the famous New Years Day concerts. Its five distinct sections each include two waltz themes, a new standard for this genre.

Slavonic Dance No. 8 Op. 46 (1878)
Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Following the success of Brahms's *Hungarian Dances* written for two pianos, Brahms suggested to Dvořák that he write some similar pieces. These became the first suite of Slavonic dances, later arranged by Dvořák for orchestra. Although employing characteristic Czech rhythms, Dvořák used his own melodies to evoke his deep feeling for Bohemian life. The famous 8th is a lively furiant, featuring off-beats and a contrasting 2/4 - 3/4 rhythm.

Robert Weiss