

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



**2020 Concerts**

**Sunday 15 March 2020**

**Sunday 14 June 2020**

**Sunday 6 September**

**Sunday 15 November**

**Concert Venue**

George Wood Performing Arts Centre  
Yarra Valley Grammar, Kalinda Road. Ringwood at 2.30pm

Bookings: [www.eventtixx.com.au](http://www.eventtixx.com.au)  
Phone Booking: 1300 115 117  
Enquiries: Elaine 0418 620 479  
[www.maroondahsymphony.org.au](http://www.maroondahsymphony.org.au)

It would be appreciated if you could refrain from videoing during the concert to avoid disturbing other concert patrons. Thank you!

*Printing courtesy of Michael Sukkar MP  
Member for Deakin*



*Conductor: Willem van der Vis*

*Leader: Rosalind Burns*

***Piano Fireworks***

***Meng Xia Piano Soloist***

*Sunday 24th November 2019*

*2.30pm*

*George Wood Performing Arts Centre  
Yarra Valley Grammar  
84-90 Kalinda Road, Ringwood*

**MENG XIA**  
Piano Soloist



Meng began playing the piano at the age of six and currently studies at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School with maestro, Glenn Riddle.

Meng enjoys playing chamber music with his peers at VCASS and singing in the choir.

He has also won numerous awards including the Ann and Chris Krans Music Award, the Margaret Green Scholarship at 'Eisteddfod by the Bay' as well as the Reg and Lil Lewis Romantic Era Award.

Meng has been gaining experience by performing and in competitions. He most recently competed overseas in Kuala Lumpur.

Meng intends to continue his music studies at university and aspires to become a concert pianist.

We are delighted to have Meng as our soloist in today's concert.

## *Maroondah Symphony Orchestra*

The Maroondah Symphony Orchestra was founded in 1964 and prides itself on providing local access to quality classical music. It presents four concerts a year at the George Wood Performing Arts Centre, Yarra Valley Grammar in Ringwood. The programs are of classical and lighter classical music where talented young musicians as well as professional soloists of repute are featured. Repeat performances can be arranged for charity and other organisations.

The Orchestra has flourished under the guidance and expertise of conductor, Willem van der Vis and attracts quality musicians. The Orchestra is based in Ringwood and is open to musicians ranging from senior secondary students to mature age. Rehearsals are held each Tuesday evening at Maroondah Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood Avenue, Ringwood from 7:45pm to 10:00pm.

For information about the Orchestra or prospective players:

Phone: Rob 0419 230 344 or Lyn 0411 087 457

or via the website

[www.maroondahsymphony.org.au](http://www.maroondahsymphony.org.au)

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## Willem van der Vis

*Musical Director*

New Zealand born Willem van der Vis gained a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in physics before going on to play principal cello with the New Zealand Symphony Training Orchestra and Southern Sinfonia (Dunedin).

In 1979 he moved to Australia, joining the Western Australian Symphony Orchestra. He also played with Orchestra Victoria and the New Zealand, Tasmanian and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras.

After completing his Bachelor of Music (conducting) at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts and the Victorian College of the Arts (Robert Rosen), he enjoyed further conducting studies in Moscow, England and the Czech Republic and with Professor John Hopkins in Melbourne.

He has conducted the Stonnington, Heidelberg, Preston, New Monash, Ballarat, Derwent (Hobart) and U3A Symphony Orchestras and was Musical Director of the Murray Conservatorium Chamber Orchestra (Albury, NSW).

He conducts at orchestral workshops and music camps around Australia. Willem is also in demand as an adjudicator and holds workshops in orchestral conducting.



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## Maroondah Symphony Orchestra

### **1st Violin**

Rosalind Burns \*  
Yoke-Cheng Vaile  
Michela Scully  
Suneith Sukumar  
Katharine Goodall  
Peta Cope  
Wayne Hsu  
Hiro Mukai

### **2nd Violin**

Kirsty Dixon \*  
Gerry Tan  
Cathy Bills  
Yvette Southall  
Elaine Ogden  
Anne Lacey  
Vincent Fazio  
Bev Smith

### **Viola**

Gitta Green \*  
Paul Watson  
Mat Lim  
Caitlin Lyons

### **Cello**

Kendra Vermaas\*  
Jane Moon  
Michael Bonsall  
Keren Smith  
Judy Fox-Smith  
Brianna Oldmeadow  
Beth Marrocco  
Leah Walsh

### **Double Bass**

Michael Taylor \*  
Hilton Vermaas  
Michaela Reiss

### **Flute**

Melanie Smith \*  
Melissa Ho  
Fiona O'Callaghan

### **Piccolo**

Fiona O'Callaghan

### **Oboe**

Meg Bowker \*  
Raymond Hofer

### **Clarinet**

Brendan Toohey \*  
Melissa Baldwin

### **Bassoon**

Robert Weiss \*  
Bonnie Krisohos

### **French Horn**

David Keeffe \*  
Kim Alford  
Sarah Webster  
Bruce Ikin

### **Trumpet**

Steve Burns \*  
Emily Johnson

### **Trombone**

Anthony Ware \*  
Don Jordan

### **Bass Trombone**

Nicholas Chiselett

### **Timpani**

Gerard Barclay

\* Section Leader

**Overture *The Impresario* (1786)**  
**Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)**

Composed in only two weeks, and first performed a week later, Mozart's comic opera *The Impresario* was a welcome commission for a festival at Schoenbrunn Palace in Vienna to honour the Governor General of the Netherlands. Salieri, Mozart's famous rival, also wrote an opera for the same occasion. *The Impresario* satirised in music and dialogue an audition for an opera. The lively overture features an energetic first theme alternating with a lyrical second theme.

**Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 2 in A (1861)**  
**Franz Liszt (1811-1886)**

Adagio sostenuto assai - Allegro agitato assai - Allegro moderato - Allegro deciso - Marziale, un poco meno allegro - Allegro animato

Franz List was born in Hungary the son of a court musician. In Vienna, under aristocratic patronage, he studied with Carl Czerny, a pupil of Beethoven. At age 16 he moved with his mother to Paris, which was on the cusp of becoming the world centre for pianism. During the 1830s many of the best pianists converged on Paris and formed the "flying-trapeze" school that overcame many technical limitations of the piano leading to the virtuosic technique that we take for granted today.

In 1832 Liszt was mesmerised by a recital by the violin virtuoso Niccolò Paganini and vowed to emulate his virtuosity but on the piano. By the 1840s Liszt had achieved this aim, as "Lisztomania" swept across Europe. In 1847 the 35 year-old Franz met a Polish princess, whom he later attempted unsuccessfully to marry. She persuaded Franz to retire from the concert platform, still at the height of his powers. He then settled in Weimar until 1861, and finally had time to compose.

Although renowned as the foremost pianist of his time, Liszt was also a revolutionary composer. A keen student of Schubert and supporter of Berlioz and of Wagner (whom his daughter Cosima married), he pioneered the symphonic poem, in which the music portrays a story or images of the natural world. This requires a "through-composed" form in which the piece is played without a break. He extended this to his two piano concertos, which were developed in parallel over several decades.

The second concerto was first drafted in 1839 during his virtuoso years and was eventually completed and premiered in 1857. After further revision it attained its final form in 1861, between the deaths of two of his three adult children. During this period prior to its publication in 1863, the score bore the imprint "Concerto Symphonique". The term was coined by Liszt's good friend Henri Litolff who used it to indicate that the orchestra and piano were equals, rather than the more usual situation where the soloist dominated the orchestra.

The concerto is in six sections played without a break. Although Liszt was renowned for his technical mastery and flamboyance, this is somewhat less evident in this concerto, despite its considerable technical demands. Liszt was a pioneer of "thematic transformation". Here the two principal themes are endlessly transformed via variations in tempo, orchestration and key. For example, the opening

romantic first subject on the clarinet eventually is reincarnated as an almost vulgar march and later forms the basis for the thrilling conclusion.

**Scherzo from Concerto Symphonique No 4 in D min, Op 102 (1852)**  
**Henri Litolff (1818-1891)**

Litolff was a virtuoso pianist and composer born in London to a Scottish mother and Alsatian father. He was a good friend of Liszt who dedicated his 1st piano concerto to Litolff. Today he is remembered primarily for a publishing house he inherited and for his four *Concertos Symphoniques* for piano and orchestra. The Scherzo from the fourth of these is a virtuosic pianistic display with close interplay between the soloist and orchestra that unusually features the piccolo and triangle.

**INTERVAL (20 minutes)**

**Symphony No. 8 in G, Op 88 (1885)**  
**Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)**

1. Allegro con brio
2. Adagio
3. Allegretto grazioso
4. Allegro non troppo

Born in Bohemia the son of a butcher, Dvořák left school at 11 and later graduated from the Prague Organ School (in viola!) and played in what became the Provisional Theatre Orchestra, often conducted by Smetana. In his early days, Dvořák was so poor that he could not afford a piano, so had to slip into a friend's house to practise! This would change after the critic Hanslick introduced Dvořák to Brahms, who Dvořák admired enormously. In 1878, Brahms persuaded the publisher Simrock to include Dvořák on his list. With the publication of his *Hungarian Dances for piano four hands*, Dvořák's fame in Bohemia and beyond was established.

Dvořák's later symphonies marked an exception to the eighteenth century trend towards symphonic doom and gloom. Dvořák was an ardent Czech nationalist living under the repressive Hapsburgs, and his eighth symphony is redolent of the bucolic air of his native Bohemia. Simrock offered Dvořák an insultingly low fee to publish, as symphonies sold less than piano works, so Dvořák went to Novello in London instead.

The solemn introduction of the symphony makes way for the predominantly pastoral first movement, typified by bird calls on the flute. However, more foreboding passages occasionally intrude. The reflective opening of the second movement is interrupted by what sounds like a village band that later returns even more passionately. The wistful folk-flavoured third movement is really an intermezzo with a bucolic trio section. A trumpet fanfare introduces the theme and variations of the finale, which is infused with the spirit of the woods around Dvořák's Bohemian country home.