



LIMESTONE COAST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SEASON 2016

Introducing the Limestone Coast Symphonic Chorus

**SIR ROBERT HELPMANN THEATRE
Mount Gambier**

7.30pm. Sat. 2nd July

NARACOORTE TOWN HALL

2.00pm. Sun. 3rd July





Australian Government

Regional Arts Fund



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Country Arts SA is proud to support the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra through the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre Artist in Residence program.

As part of the program the orchestra is granted access to the Helpmann Theatre and the Varcoe Foundry for rehearsals, workshops and performances, and is supported through creative development opportunities.

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Season 2016

The Committee of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra take great pride in welcoming you to Season 2016. In this, our fourth season, the Orchestra is by now an established part of the music community of the region. Although based in Mount Gambier, it comprises talented musicians and singers, who travel from across the region to participate. We also welcome talented guest colleagues who play in those hard-to-fill seats to support the orchestra and express their love of orchestral music.

Regional orchestras such as the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra present a set of unique challenges including long distances travelled, limited resources and many other complications associated with presenting music in rural areas. Side-by-side with these challenges are the rewards, including fostering and celebrating the value of friendship, community and shared artistic expression. After all, the Limestone Coast Symphony exists for the sheer joy of playing, singing and listening to orchestral music!

To that end, the Orchestra is well served by a strong and well-coordinated committee and a team of dedicated volunteers. There is an established two-concert season, in Mount Gambier as the Orchestra in Residence at the Sir Robert Helpmann Theatre, and in Naracoorte Town Hall to provide a wonderful venue for our audiences and our musicians in the mid and upper Limestone Coast region.

Our incorporation in 2015 brings with it independence and sustainability for the organisation in the long term. The Orchestra is greatly appreciative of the sponsorship and support we receive from local businesses, and looks to grow these community partnerships into the future.

Season 2016 sees an ambitious development in programming with a longer work included on a program which has, until now featured a variety of shorter works. We are delighted to welcome world-class concert pianist **Dr. Kenji Fujimura** from Monash University to play the Grieg Piano Concerto in A minor as well as violinist **Virginia Weekes** and promising young Mount Gambier Baritone **Bronson Pfeiler**, who are this year's local guest soloists

This year, we are proud to launch the **Limestone Coast Symphonic Chorus** with Choir Director Jodi Swiggs, a dedicated teacher and choir trainer based in Mount Gambier. Jodi's enthusiasm and experience make her an ideal leader for this new ensemble. Although a choir has participated in each of the last three LCSO Seasons, the Symphonic Chorus opens increased opportunity for regional participation. In the first season a combination of existing choirs came together for the last rehearsals with the orchestra, having trained separately each under their own directors. This scheme provided a host of singers, but was difficult to coordinate so in the following two seasons, a single choir was invited. The Naracoorte Singers under Choir trainer Erika Vickery joined us in 2014 and Jodi Swiggs' Phoenix choir in 2015. The new Symphonic Chorus is open to any interested choristers in the region, whether or not they are currently part of a choir. If you would like to join the Symphonic Chorus for the 2017 season and enjoy the camaraderie and joy of singing with an orchestra, please send an email to the LCSO via our website to express your interest.

We trust you will enjoy our Season 2016 concert.

The LCSO Committee

PROGRAM

Richard Wagner

March of the Meistersingers

From the opera Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg (1868)
Orchestra

Edvard Grieg

Piano Concerto in A minor O.p. 16 for piano and orchestra

Allegro molto moderato, Adagio, Allegro Moderato
Kenji Fujimura—Piano
Orchestra

INTERVAL

Guiseppe Verdi

Va Pensiero or Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves

From Act 3 of the opera Nabucco (1842)
Orchestra and Chorus

Jules Massenet

Meditation

from Act 2 of the opera Thais (1894)
Virginia Weekes—Violin
Orchestra

Andrew Lloyd Webber

Music of the Night

From the Act 1 of the musical Phantom of the Opera (1986)

Bronson Pfeiler—Voice
Chorus and Orchestra

Andrew Lloyd Webber

Masquerade

From the Act 2 of the musical Phantom of the Opera (1986)
Chorus and Orchestra

Nick Shirrefs

Origin - A Cosmic Voyage

In 4 movements
The Universe Expands – The Creation of the Galaxy –
Impact - Earth



Photo courtesy of Frank Monger

CONDUCTOR ANGUS CHRISTIE

Angus Christie studied conducting at the Vienna Academy and the Kodaly Institute in Hungary. He was teacher of orchestral conducting at the University of Oslo and conductor of the University of Oslo Symphony Orchestra and the University of Bergen Symphony Orchestra for eight years.

Angus is currently the conductor of the Limestone Coast Symphony Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor of the Warrnambool Symphony Orchestra and also Conductor of both the Hamilton Symphony Orchestra and the Hamilton Strings.

SOLOISTS FOR 2016



Photo courtesy of Mark Chew

KENJI FUJIMURA Piano **Grieg Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 16**

Dr Kenji Fujimura has received numerous major prizes and awards as pianist and composer, including the Australian National Piano Award and the William Lincer Foundation International Composition Award. Kenji has been described as 'a grand artist with a magical sound, an accomplished technique and a superb understanding of all musical styles. He adds to this a vision of deep profundity'.

Kenji's recent CD releases have received international acclaim, winning awards including the 2013 Musicweb International Recording of the Year ('Romantic Piano Trios' - Trio Anima Mundi), 2014 Limelight Chamber Music Recording of the Year, ('The Messiaen Nexus' with Violinist Elizabeth Sellars), Musicweb International Recording of the Month (May 2015—'William Hurlstone Complete Piano Music').



Photo courtesy of Tam Vu

Kenji's own compositions were most recently performed in the USA, Australia and Singapore, where his 'Matsuri no Asa' was a winning work at the 2015 Singapore Asian Composers Festival. 2016 sees teaching and performance engagements throughout South-East Asia, a new CD release (G.F.Pinto Sonatas) and the premiere performance of a new work for piano solo.

Kenji is also a highly respected pedagogue; his teaching career at the tertiary level began while he himself was an undergraduate. He is currently Acting Head of School, Coordinator of Classical Performance and of Chamber Music, at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music, Monash University. In 2015 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music, London.

Kenji will be performing on a 9 foot Yamaha CF Concert Grand Piano in the SRH Theatre venue and a 7 foot Yamaha Grand Piano in the Naracoorte Town Hall.

VIRGINIA WEEKES Violin

Virginia Weekes studied with Gutman and Glickman at Melbourne University, with Pikler at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and with Vegh in Salzburg. She studied the chamber music of Beethoven and Schubert in Penzance under Vegh and Antonio Janigro.

As a soloist, her engagements have included performances of major concerti from the romantic era (Brahms, Tchaikowsky, Lalo etc.) along with repertoire ranging from Vivaldi to Sculthorpe. She gave the first Victorian performance of the Berg Chamber Concerto under Geoffrey Simon.

Virginia has held permanent positions with the Melbourne and Sydney Symphony Orchestras, Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, and Victorian String Quartet. She played with the Robert Pikler Chamber and Australian Chamber Orchestras, Seymour Ensemble, and AZ Contemporary Music Ensemble.

As a freelance musician, she has worked she has worked with innumerable artists including Liberace, Charles Azanavour, Jack Jones, Shirley Bassey, Jose Feliciano, Dionne Warwick, The Village People, George Benson and Sammy Davis Jnr.

Virginia has tutored at several State Music Camps, and taught violin, viola and chamber music both privately and in the public and private school systems. Virginia has a private teaching studio in Mount Gambier and teaches violin to groups of newly arrived children at a local primary school.



Photo courtesy of Monica Hart

GUEST VIOLIST Martin Butler Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Martin Butler was born in London and began learning the violin at the age of eight. When he was 11, Martin received a scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music. After leaving school he studied music composition at Surrey University, graduating with a first class Honours and a Masters Degree.

Martin has been the longest serving conductor of the Burnside Symphony Orchestra (one of Adelaide's community orchestras) and has also conducted at State Music Camp, workshops for the Australian String Teachers' Association and Suzuki music camps. He has conducted his own arrangements for the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra Christmas Proms concerts and is also involved as a presenter and performer in ASO education and community concerts. He regularly gives pre-concert talks for the ASO Masters concert series.

As well as performing as a violist in the ASO, Martin is currently involved in youth music in Adelaide as an educator, conductor and arranger. He has conducted and arranged music for the ASO in both education and community concerts and is currently the director of the Adelaide Youth Strings (a part of the Adelaide Youth Orchestra organisation) which he started in 2001. He is also head of strings at Concordia College.

Martin's participation is courtesy of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, which has generously supported our regional orchestra since its inception in 2013. We are delighted that Martin was able to accept our invitation to lead the LCSO viola section this season.





BRONSON PFEILER Baritone

Bronson Pfeiler grew up in Mount Gambier and studied singing with Vivienne Dowling. He was a member of Phoenix Choir and performed in local Eisteddfods and functions such as the 'South East Carols by Candlelight'.

During his teens, Bronson was also involved with local productions produced by 'Ovation Centre of Performing Arts' where he starred as Amos in 'Chicago' and Mark in 'Rent'. He graduated from St Martin's Lutheran College in 2015 and successfully auditioned for the Jason Coleman School of Musical Theatre in Melbourne, where he is currently studying vocal technique under Director Deb Mitchelmore.

Photo courtesy of Belinda Strodger

During his study, Bronson has also been successful in expressing his talents at the 'Rod Laver Arena Children's Day', 'Melbourne Committee Dinner', and 'Crown Palladium Racing Cup Ball.' Bronson is a baritone vocalist who specialises in musical theatre repertoire varying between golden ages through to modern musicals.

Instagram bronson_pfeiler

LIMESTONE COAST SYMPHONIC CHORUS



Choir Left to Right

Front Row: Amy Williams, Sharon Pickett, Meredith McArthur, Jodi Swiggs, Fiona Unger, Viv Dowling, Cathy Rochow, Lily Mawson, Aurelie Butcher, Lee Castine, Madison Clissold.

Back Row: Lana Widdison, Nancy Van Reit, Robyn Mencil, Kath Saunders, Rod Sparks, David Holland, Benjie McQuade, Di Bailey-Walters, David Clarkson, Olivia Harrison, Hannah Morrison, Jill Roberts, Diane Jordan.

Absent: Rick Fisher, Simon Fisher, Krista Owen, Chris Summers, Erika Vickery, Michael Holmes, Carol Johnson.

The Limestone Coast Symphonic Chorus was launched this year to perform with the orchestra in its two-concert season. Whilst choirs have performed with the LCSO in previous years, this is the first time there has been an open invitation to singers across all the regional communities to come together and sing under one choir director. Their Choir Director is experienced choir-trainer, Jodi Swiggs who has a private music studio in Mount Gambier and is Director of local choir Phoenix. Jodi has rehearsed the Limestone Coast Symphonic Chorus fortnightly for the ten weeks leading up to the concerts. This year's chorus is made up of members of Phoenix, the SE Choral Society, Naracoorte Singers and Mayfair as well as other distinguished local singers. In early 2017, the invitation will again be extended to singers in the region to re-form the Chorus for the next season.

NICK SHIRREFS **Composer**

Nick Shirrefs was born into a musical family, with a piano/trumpet playing father and brother. He broke the mould however by electing to make trombone his second instrument after piano, but now claims a personally satisfying level of ability on trumpet as well. Nick was the only member of his family to take his music education beyond secondary level, leaving Port Fairy in 2000 to study composition at the Australian Institute of Music in Sydney, graduating with first class honours in 2004.

Nick's music is inspired by many influences, such as nature, science, folklore and film and the music of Rachmaninoff, John Williams and Danny Elfman to name a few. Nick teaches music full time at Horsham College and is married to Catherine, with two kids, Clara and Joey. Somewhere in there he still finds time to write music.



ORIGIN—A COSMIC VOYAGE

The original version of Origin came to life whilst I was still studying at University. I had just completed 2 years of orchestration classes and wanted to try my hand at composing my first orchestral work. I chose to write about the creation of the Universe, as the history and ideas surrounding how we came into being are something I find endlessly fascinating. I am a keen amateur astronomer and love to get my telescope out and stare at the stars and planets. The sheer scale of things always blows my mind, and it always reminds me how insignificant our little blue rock is in the grand scheme of things.

This performance will include 4 movements of Origin, including “The Universe Expands”, “The Creation of the Galaxy”, “Impact” and “Earth”. After some re-writes and much appreciated guidance from Angus Christie, my personal interpretation of several billion years of history is to be performed for you.

I hope you enjoy!

Nick Shirrefs June 2016

Photo courtesy of Justine Drew





LIMESTONE COAST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

VIOLINS

Cathy Foster
Virginia Weekes
Gabrielle Scherrer
Ivan Skawronski
Rahel-Bunge-Tanner
Tiana Pietrafesa
Courtney Holmes
Angelica Pietrafesa

Emily Hewitt
Michelle McColl
Tristan Skawronski
Sam Clode
Meg Sleeman
Marianna Van Der Berg
Geraldine Herweijer

VIOLA

Martin Butler*
John Pratt
Kate Treloar
Michael Lofting
Lee Anne

DOUBLE BASS

Geoff Kilminster
Laura Small
Callum Unger

CELLO

Susan Giles
Daniel Caton
Rebecca Marriott
Jane Van Eyk
Michelle McIntosh
Megan Bentley
Catherine Maguire

KEYBOARD

Daniel Lynn



2016 Conductor Angus Christie

FLUTE

Penny Mansell
Kinta Wilson
(piccolo)
Isabelle Williamson
Wendy Roeters
Kinta Wilson

OBOE

Jennie Matthews
Kate Wright
Bassoon
Matt Toffolon
John Cruise

BASSOON

Matt Toffolon
John Cruise
Stephen Walther

CLARINET

Geoff Stevens
Coralee McPhee
Helen Drinkell

BASS CLARINET

Stephen Walther

FRENCH HORN

Tameka Nube
Charis Horsburgh

TRUMPET

Jarrod Harrison
Lisa Pointon
Sam Baker

TROMBONE

Evelyn Wood
Rob Mutton
Geoff Trevenen

TUBA

Tom Dermody

PERCUSSION

Karen Maxwell
Daniel Lynn
Bob Mackley
Sam Baker

MALLET PERCUSSION

Kaye Fitton

TIMPANI

Karen Maxwell
Daniel Lynn

*courtesy of Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

MARCH FROM DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG

Richard Wagner 1868

For his 1868 opera, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Wagner typically looks to Teutonic traditions for his subject matter. In this case, the material is more genuinely historic than the mythical stories of his previous operas.

The craft guilds of Medieval German cities held annual song contests for their members. These events were tightly circumscribed by rules and tradition – eligibility to compete, song texts, musical conventions and manner of performance were all highly governed. Wagner takes the annual contest at Nurnberg in the 16th century as his setting and uses as his characters the names of real guildsmen of the period.

The subject allows Wagner to write many “set pieces” where singers compose, audition or compete within the context of the plot line. The high point of the opera is the singer Walter von Stolzing’s so called “Prize Song” (ie prize-winning) *Morgenlich leuchtend im rosigen schein*, an aria often excerpted for stand-alone concert performances.

The processional music on this programme comes from Act 3, shortly before the Prize Song, as guildsmen and apprentices ceremonially parade to their positions for the contest.

PIANO CONCERTO in A minor Op. 16

Edvard Grieg (1869)

The Grieg Piano Concerto in A minor is one of the most popular pieces in the piano concerto repertoire. It was first performed in 1869 when Grieg was 25 years old. Over the subsequent 46 years of his life he made continual small revisions of the work but it remained the only concerto he wrote.

The first movement opens with a spectacular tympani roll followed directly by the entry of the piano with a dramatic flourish. Only after that does the orchestra enter with the bright, dance-like theme which many musicians can be heard singing in the dressing rooms before and after a performance.

The second movement, an adagio, has a reflective, meditative quality. It is memorable for the motif played in very high notes on the piano which appears midway through the movement.

The final movement, which usually follows the second without a break, opens with a vigorous theme based on a traditional Norwegian folk dance rhythm. It modulates to a lyrical theme which re-appears at the conclusion of the work but in a grand and dramatic variation (*Andante Maestoso*). A variation on the opening theme of the movement divides the two treatments of the second subject.

A piece so popular and so often played, the work has accumulated a considerable body of anecdotal lore. It is generally credited as being the first piano concerto to be recorded – in 1909. The famous Percy Grainger piano roll was made in 1919. One of the more bizarre stories associated with the work is that of the death of the pianist Simon Barere at Carnegie Hall in 1951. Barere played the opening piano flourish then collapsed as Eugene Ormandy brought the orchestra in. He died backstage a few minutes later.

MUSICAL CONNECTIONS

At the time of his death in 1907 Grieg was working on yet another revision of the piano concerto. It was intended to be played by the Australian pianist Percy Grainger who had spent some time as a guest of the Grieg family a few weeks earlier. Grainger was later to leave a piano roll recording of the piano part. In the late 1980’s Stuart Challender staged a celebrated performance of the work with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Percy Grainger – via the piano roll. It was an innovation that was to be emulated by a number of orchestras around the world. In the orchestra that night at the Sydney Opera House was violinist Virginia Weekes, tonight’s Guest Violinist.

CHORUS OF THE HEBREW SLAVES

Guiseppe Verdi (1842)

Va Pensiero, or *Chorus Of The Hebrew Slaves*, comes from Act 3 of Verdi's opera *Nabucco*. Based on the text of Psalm 137 ("By the rivers of Babylon....") it expresses the aspirations of the enslaved Hebrew people to live in freedom in a land of their own. As such, it became a powerful metaphor for the people of the Italian states living under the dominion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Verdi himself studiously avoided the question of whether or not the chorus was intended to have a hidden significance for the rising movement of Italian Nationalism that came to be known as the Risorgimento. In any event, it became an anthem of that movement. At various times since its composition in 1842 it has been proposed as the official Italian national anthem, and whilst the suggestion has never been put into effect, the song serves as a de facto national anthem at events ranging from football matches to trade union rallies.

It was composed at a time of great stress in Verdi's life. Following the deaths of his wife and two young children, he doubted whether he would ever be able to compose again. When he was given the libretto of *Nabucco*, he is said to have opened it by chance at *Va Pensiero*. The text so resonated with his emotional state that the music came to him unconsciously and his composing career was reignited.

Upon Verdi's death in 1901 people lined the streets of Milan in their hundreds of thousands to witness his funeral cortege. Verdi went to his grave to the sound of the people of Milan singing *Va Pensiero*.

MEDITATION FROM THAIS

Jules Massenet (1894)

The opera *Thais* was composed by Jules Massenet to a libretto based on the novel of the same title by Anatole France. The plot is largely concerned with the emotional disturbances to the life of the monk Athanael occasioned by carnal visions of the voluptuous heathen Thais. Athanael's mission, rather improbably, becomes one of converting Thais to the life of a Christian nun.

The *Meditation* at the end of the first scene of Act 2 is an orchestral accompaniment to Thais's reflections on the good monk's appeal to abandon the pleasures of the flesh in favour of an ascetic life. The audience hangs on every note as she approaches her impending decision.

Massenet's tempo marking of the opening of the *Meditation*, "Andante religioso", presumably indicates the spiritual cast of Thais's thoughts – rather than "adhere religiously to a walking speed". The intensity builds ("poco a poco appassionato"), reaching a climax ("poco a piu appassionato") in the form of a mini cadenza ahead of a return to the main theme. The interlude ends with the soloist playing harmonics above the orchestral strings. Thais has decided. She's off to a nunnery.



Photos courtesy of Frank Monger

PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Andrew Lloyd Webber 1986

The phenomenal success of the Lloyd-Webber version of *Phantom* would surely make that old showman P.T. Barnum (of Barnum and Bailey fame) turn in his grave with envy. Its mixture of gothic melodrama, popular music and elaborate staging has made it one of the biggest successes in box office history. It currently ranks in the top three stage productions by box office takings together with *The Lion King* and *Les Miserables* and has been seen by an estimated 130 million people worldwide.

Music Of The Night is said to include remnants of Alan J Lerner's work on the libretto before he handed the project to Charles Hart. Because of similarities between the song and a recurring melody in Giacomo Puccini's 1910 opera, "La fanciulla del West" (The Girl of the Golden West), the Puccini estate filed suit against Webber, accusing him of plagiarism, but the suit was settled out of court and details were not released to the public. In this song, the Phantom sings to Christine, the young soprano lead, as he lures her into his ghostly realm under the Opera House. In it he sensuously conflates love, lust and the power of music with a compelling melody-line designed to reduce her to a trance-like state.

Masquerade is sung as a gala masked ball is in progress in which the Phantom appears as Red Death. The music, with its strong rhythmic beat is a fitting accompaniment to the strutting and prancing of the masked figures, while the accompanying orchestration features quirky snatches and fragments of melody from the instruments, which punctuate the vocal line and give an impression of mischief, mystery and even malice. Apart from the musical interest, the main function of *Masquerade* is to provide a vehicle for the sumptuous costuming that is part of the appeal of the show. The New York Times reviewer of the first Broadway production quipped, in relation to the *Masquerade* scene, that the Phantom of the Opera "...might in fact be Liberace's ghost!"



The Paris Opera House 1875



Photos courtesy of Georgia Kelly Bakker



Photo courtesy of Frank Monger 2015

LCSSO PERSONNEL 2016 SEASON

CONDUCTOR: Angus Christie

CONCERT MASTER: Cathy Foster

CHOOIR DIRECTOR: Jodi Swiggs

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Jennie Matthews

STAGE MANAGER: Monica Hart

LIBRARIAN: John Pratt

ASST STAGE MANAGER: Sebastien Pratt

WEBSITE MANAGER: Dr Chris Waite

SEASON LAUNCH MANAGER: Ann Aldersey

SPONSORSHIP: Ann Aldersey

PROGRAM RESEARCH: Tom Dermody

ACCOMMODATION: John Pratt

FINANCES: Jennie Matthews, Dr Chris Waite, Brad Tilley

BUS DRIVER: Stephen Maxwell

PUBLICITY: Helen Drinkell, Monica Hart, Tom Dermody, Jennie Matthews, Marianna Van Der Berg.

REHEARSAL and ONSTAGE PHOTOGRAPHY: Frank Monger Photography

REHEARSAL CATERING: Liz Ferguson and Linda

FLOWERS: Linda Cruise

BACKSTAGE CREW: Monica Hart, Sebastien Pratt, John Pratt, Rob Mutton, Elizabeth Ferguson, Des Pluckhahn, Martin Witney

REHEARSAL SET-UP: Jennie Matthews, Helen Drinkell, Karen Maxwell, John Pratt.

TRANSPORT OF EQUIPMENT:

Rob Mutton, Tom Dermody, Paul Brill, John Pratt, Des Pluckhahn.

NARACOORTE CONCERT: Front of House Manager : Ann Aldersey and volunteers

Town Hall Manager: Nigel Nisbett, Ticket sales: Ann Aldersey, Vicki Modistach and staff

PROGRAM DESIGN: Jennie Matthews

FRONT COVER AND POSTER DESIGN: Julia Reader

THE LCSO SEASON 2016 LCSO MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



Photo courtesy of Frank Monger

Pictured left to right: Ann Aldersey, - President, Jennie Matthews - Music Director, John Pratt - Librarian, Monica Hart - Vice - President, Dr. Chris Waite - Website Manager.



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its gratitude to the major sponsors for 2016***

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