

March 2019 Newsletter of the



BLUE MOUNTAINS

Management Office Bearers

President: Elizabeth Cooney
Treasurer: Frank Kosztelnik
Secretary: Colin Semmler

Friends Office Bearers

Chairperson: Colin Semmler Ph: 47825765
Secretary: Cheryl Herman

www.orpheusstrings.org

The Orpheus Strings Orchestra performs at the
Pat Heffernan Hall of Katoomba Public School, Merriwa Street, Katoomba.
Admission at the door is \$15 full, \$10 pensioners, children free with supervising adult.



PROGRAMME FOR ORPHEUS STRINGS ORCHESTRA CONCERT
SUNDAY 24th MARCH at 3:00pm

The works to be performed in this concert are linked by common themes; youthfulness and exuberance, with three of the represented composers completing their works in their teens or 20s. The programme spans from High Baroque to the 21st century world of technology.

Benjamin BRITTEN (1913-1976): Benjamin Britten composed his **Simple Symphony** in 1934 when 21 years old. The melodies are based on material that he composed between the ages of 9 and 12. He began unguided composing at the age of 5. Although there are some new developments, large sections of the work are taken from his earlier pieces. The movement titles are aptly descriptive; Boisterous Bourrée, Playful Pizzicato, Sentimental Saraband and Frolicsome Finale. *Simple Symphony* was used for the Walter Gore 1944 ballet, *Pleasures at the Seaside*. The movements, especially the Pizzicato and Sarabande, are sometimes performed and/or broadcast as separate pieces.

Felix MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847): Felix Mendelssohn composed twelve symphonies for string orchestra between 1821 and 1823, with his **Sinfonia VII in D-minor** completed in 1822 when he was 12 years old. Like the other compositions in the set, it was an assignment in composition set by his teacher, Carl Zelter. None of the compositions was meant for public performance or publication, but to be played by small ensembles of up to six players at private gatherings and soireés. Unlike most of the others, this work has four movements. It opens with an energetic Allegro with lyrical passages, followed by a graceful Andante. The Menuetto displays Mendelssohn's early artistry in counterpoint with the exciting Allegro molto conclusion.

Austin WINTORY (1984): Austin Wintory is an award-winning American composer who has written over 300 scores for film, TV and video games. His **Apotheosis** was composed in

2012 for the computer game, *Journey*. Critically acclaimed for its artistic and visionary development, the game's story is about a lone figure travelling through a mysterious world to reach a light atop a distant mountain. The story has no words, using only sounds and landscapes in a desolate and vast world. Austin worked closely with the programming team and sound designers so the music would tie into both the actions of the player and the sound effects of nearby objects in the game. The game features a cello motif representing the player which persists through an ever-changing musical landscape. Austin described the music as "a big cello concerto where you are the soloist and the rest of the instruments represent the world around you." The piece was nominated for a Grammy Award in the category of "Best score soundtrack for visual media". It was the first time a score for a game had been nominated. The title comes from the Greek word meaning "climax" or "highest point" as well as "the elevation of someone to divine status".

Johann Sebastian BACH (1685-1750): The **Brandenburg Concerto No 3** is one of six composed for small orchestra in 1721 for Christian Margrave of Brandenburg. Apparently, Margrave neither paid for nor liked the compositions but fortunately, stored them in his library. The concertos did not enjoy popularity again until the promotion of recorded music in the 20th century. The well-known *Concerto No 3* is written for ten string parts in various combinations, including solos. The parts constantly complement each other with their weaving and intoxicating rhythmic patterns and counterpoint. There are two Allegro movements, separated by a short Largo. The second movement, in the form of a Gigue, passes motives from one section to another, maintaining a continuous flow. Unlike the other three composers represented in our concert, JS Bach was in his 30s when he wrote this piece, but it is full of exuberance typical of a young composer full of positiveness and excitement. The orchestra will be joined by Mary Smallhorn, a Blue Mountains Grammar School student, who will provide the harpsichord continuo.

Colin Semmler and Julie Cooney



2019 CONCERT DATES

Sunday March 24th

Sunday June 23rd

Sunday September 15th

Sunday December 1st

Ensemble Concert Sunday August 18th

Hospital Concert Sunday November 3rd

