

WASO Players Exchange Visit to China



Oliver McAslan in rehearsal with the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra

In December 2007, Rebecca White (violin), Zak Rowntree (violin), Nikola Babic (viola) and Oliver McAslan (cello) travelled to Guangzhou, China to spend a week with the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra. The players rehearsed with the orchestra and performed a public concert on Saturday 8 December at the Xinghai Concert Hall.

This valuable cultural exchange and development opportunity built on the relationships already established between Perth and China during the 2006 WASO China Tour. The second stage of the program will see musicians from the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra visit the WASO for a week this year.

This was an important first step in WASO's cultural exchange program. Programs of this type will assist in developing greater relationships with our neighbours, which is particularly relevant to Western Australia and our business links with China.

"We spend a large proportion of our lives playing with the same group of players in the same concert hall. This can lead to complacency and feeling too comfortable. Playing with a different orchestra in a different environment puts you on the edge of your seat, heightens your awareness of players around you, and also of your own playing," said Zak Rowntree.

"We have had a valuable opportunity to experience the way another orchestra works and it will certainly be a source for many ideas and comparisons in our work in the future," said Nik Babic.

"I realised how lucky we are in WASO and what luxuries we get! I was very intrigued when my desk told me that they all lived in a commune together and travelled to and from work in a coach every day," said Rebecca White.

The exchange program, supported by China National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC), enables the musicians to share experiences and develop artistically. James Li, General Manager of CNOOC in Perth, said, "CNOOC is pleased to be the sponsor of the China Exchange program and I am glad they had a successful and enjoyable visit to China."

The concert with the GSO was led by German conductor Claus Peter Flor who is Principal Guest Conductor of the Dallas Symphony. Russian violinist, Lidia Baich was the guest soloist for Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto. Bruckner's Seventh Symphony was also on the program.



Zak Rowntree in rehearsal with the Guangzhou Symphony Orchestra



Message from the Chairman

Welcome to the first edition of Illuminating Notes for the 2008 season.

In 2008, the West Australian Symphony Orchestra celebrates 80 years of contribution to the musical life of Western Australia. To sustain an orchestra for such a long time requires enormous support from the community in which it resides. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support over the years.

The Perth Concert Hall season began this year with *The Valkyrie*. A wonderful concert enjoyed by almost full houses. Featuring Lisa Gasteen, Harry Peeters with Asher Fisch conducting 100 WASO musicians in Wagner's great opera, as well as the world premiere of James Ledger's *The Madness and Death of King Ludwig*, this was a tremendous start to the concert hall season.

The 80th anniversary will be celebrated with two very special concerts.

The Ballets Russes in July will feature WASO's Conductor Laureate, Vladimir Verbitsky and former principal dancer of the Australian Ballet, Steven Heathcote, who will present the concert.

In August, the Orchestra acknowledges the anniversary with the performance of Dvorak's Symphony No. 9 *From the New World* which was first performed in Perth in 1928 by the 6WF Orchestra, which later became the West Australian Symphony Orchestra.

WASO's season features a broad range of repertoire, well known and unfamiliar, popular and refined, easy and challenging. Favourites by Beethoven, Mozart, Tchaikovsky and Mahler are coupled with masterpieces by Messiaen, Wagner and Sculthorpe.

Our conductors and soloists bring many different qualities with them.

All are of the very highest level. You'll experience the Orchestra in performance with many internationally recognised musical figures of whom Kristijan Järvi, Simon Trpčeski, Simone Young, Jian Wang, Yefim Bronfman and James Ehnes, are but a few.

With such a fantastic program, subscription numbers continue to rise. Many concerts are already heavily booked, so I encourage you to book early to avoid disappointment.

I hope you will join us for a marvellous season of music.

Janet Holmes à Court, AC
Chairman

Talking with Paul Daniel

"I'm particularly happy that in April I will have the chance to meet and get to know some of our most loyal and important supporters both at the concert and at the Patrons' brunch. That will be a real highpoint of my WASO week, which I look forward to greatly."

When did music come into your life?

I owe my music to two strokes of good luck - firstly, the English education system in the 60's which put a musical instrument into every child's hand. My primary school teacher had inspiration and dedication in spades and we played our recorders to her every morning before school. I became a precocious little six year old eating up recorder concertos with my breakfast.

Secondly - a move to Coventry and a chance audition for the Cathedral Choir which had a new tradition for contemporary music making and a fabulous music director who gave us the most dynamic, hardy training, and first hand performing, recording, and foreign touring experience.

Without all this (all before the age of ten!) I would never have heard the call to this wonderful life as a musician.

What can our audience expect from the April concerts?

I've conducted a very wide range of music for WASO however this April we explore a different vein together. We will be presenting two great 'firsts', two great musical and orchestral statements. No overtures, no concertos, just the crowning glories of two 19th century masters.

Sibelius wrote his first symphony amidst the political turmoil of an emerging nation, and he also built titanic sound pictures of the dramatic landscapes he knew into his scores. In his first symphony, these big struggling ideas are given even greater musical space and power than in the famous musical 'poems', like *Finlandia*, which come from the same time.

Brahms wrote his first symphony in very different circumstances, as the culmination of years of personal struggle - to answer the huge responsibility of adding to the symphonic canon of Beethoven and Schubert. His first symphony is so well known, it needs no words of introduction - but played next to the equivalent work from a Finnish composer who also admired and revered his Beethoven, I think we'll hear some fascinating contrasts and similarities - and some overwhelming musical emotions.

What have you been doing since October?

A lot of planning with Marshall McGuire, for the 2009 season, my first as principal conductor, and just a few musical experiences away from Perth.

I shot back last October to conduct Elgar and Beethoven 9 with the London Philharmonic at the official re-opening of the Royal Festival Hall for the Queen (we also performed *Zadok the Priest* which was the first work played for her when she came as a young girl with her father at the official opening ceremony in 1951). Then off to Frankfurt opera for a new production of Britten's *Billy Budd* with my great friend the director Richard Jones. Concerts in Santiago de Compostela then off to Frankfurt for a big gala concert, followed by a visit to Antwerp for the traditional TV Christmas concerts in the beautiful Rubens church.

First up in 2008 was a wonderful tour in Tuscany, playing Beethoven 8 in Florence, Pisa, and Bologna, and then nearly 2 months at home for a new production at my old stamping ground, ENO, of *Lucia di Lammermoor*, which turned out to be a great success.

These last few weeks I had my first chance to work with the legendary *Staatskapelle* orchestra. So - all in all, not too busy...

Paul Daniel's position is supported by Wesfarmers Arts.

WASO Chamber Players

This year sees the introduction of a new series - the Blake Dawson WASO Chamber Players - Live & Intimate. Following on from the success of WASO at the Gallery, this series of three intimate concerts will provide a unique and new experience for lovers of chamber music.

We are delighted to welcome back newly retired Alan Dodge as presenter for these concerts. We sat down with Alan to talk about the concerts and here is what he said:

"I am thrilled to be asked to present each of the concerts in the WASO Chamber Players Series. For its first concert, which is already sold out, how fitting to have a night of J.S. Bach in the hallowed and resonant halls of St George's Cathedral.

The second concert will be at the Art Gallery of Western Australia, and for me, this will be the highlight of the season. The Art Gallery of Western Australia has spent two years planning to completely re-present the permanent collection in a totally new and unexpected way. A newly integrated installation of the collection throughout the Gallery spaces will provide totally unexpected juxtapositions of works of art based on a series of themes. All will be revealed on the night of 15 August for the concert, *Through New Eyes*. For the occasion, WASO composer in-residence James Ledger spent time with me looking at works to be featured in the new display and the result of his hours in the storage areas of the Gallery will be the premiere of a new piece based on his selection.

We end the series at historic Perth Town Hall on Friday, 7 November with a celebration of music for strings, which includes works such as Grieg's beautiful *Holberg Suite*. As usual, I shall be there to introduce the concerts and share some background to the composers and works in the concert, with just a touch of irreverence!

Please come join the WASO and me for three wonderful nights of adventure."



Alan Dodge

Subscriber Benefits 2008

Use your West Australian Symphony Orchestra subscriber card and take advantage of discounts and special privileges.

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Receive concession prices to all Adelaide Symphony Orchestra concerts by calling Bass Dial and Charge 131 246. At time of purchase or pick up Subscriber cards must be shown. See www.aso.com.au for concert information.

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Visit www.thequeenslandorchestra.com.au for concert details.

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Receive adult tickets to the West Australian Opera's main house productions at His Majesty's Theatre for the concession price. 2008 Season - *The Magic Flute*, *The Barber of Seville* and *Aida*. This offer is not valid on opening or Saturday nights. Bookings via BOCS on 9484 1133.

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Receive a 25% discount off full price and concession tickets to WA Youth Music Association performances (excluding children's concerts). Bookings 9328 9859.

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Receive 10% off 1 semester of course fees for music lessons for children 3-8 years old (cost of course materials not included). Phone 1300 139 506 or visit www.yamahamusic.com.au/education

WASO Chorus



The WASO Chorus is part of WASO that is not often acknowledged but works tirelessly almost all year round with weekly rehearsals and a hectic schedule. The Chorus is made up entirely of volunteers and is one of the largest choruses attached to an Australian orchestra.

WASO Chorus director Marilyn Phillips is the impetus behind the fantastic and lively sound that this group delivers. Marilyn has worked with numerous choirs both professional and amateur. This year is the third year that she has been involved with the WASO Chorus. Prior to this she was most recently the Head of Music of the WA Opera. Before moving to Australia and while living in London, Marilyn was an accompanist for the BBC Singers and the BBC Chorus. She also worked as an accompanist and musical director at the Royal Shakespeare Company, and was involved in several productions at Royal National Theatre, as well as being a vocal coach for the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

Marilyn's resume is impressive but she is quick to mention that the criteria for WASO Chorus members are not as rigorous as some from her previous posts. While entry is by audition, sight reading is not required, although it is essential for members to be able to sing in time, in tune and be able to read music. Members also need to be team players. Singing in a chorus is not dissimilar to playing in an orchestra; a sense of ensemble is required and blending of voices is a must. Members must also be able to follow a conductor. Marilyn laughs, "In rehearsal I sometimes take ridiculously fast or slow tempi in order to make the choristers watch. This way we avoid a train wreck at the conductor's first rehearsal."

This year the Chorus has some new challenges to tackle. The text for the Bernstein *Chichester Psalms* is in Hebrew so the Chorus will work closely with a language coach in the lead up to the concerts. Previously the Chorus has sung in Latin, Russian and German. In fact, after the Brahms Requiem in 2007 the conductor, Lothar Zagrosek, and the German soloists commented on the impressive tone and diction of the Chorus: "They really sound like they know what they're saying". Marilyn readily admits to being a Consonant Queen! – "If you have the gift of text, you must communicate the message; otherwise, play an instrument."

For the first time, in 2008, the WASO Chorus will present its very own concert.

They will travel to Mandurah to perform a variety of works that they might not otherwise have the opportunity to sing. This concert also provides the Chorus with the chance to perform with some guest soloists as well as some soloists from the Chorus itself.

Marilyn is very pleased with the direction that the WASO Chorus is taking. She also commented on the positive attitude of the Chorus, which produces a good working atmosphere. "The abilities of individuals are obviously varied, but despite this, the overall desire to produce a polished final musical result is what makes the Chorus such an enjoyable group to work with."

The Chorus can be heard singing in Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* as part of the Classics Series Remembrance concert, Thursday April 24 and Saturday April 26; and the 'WASO Chorus Sings', at the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre, Saturday July 26.

The WASO Chorus is proudly supported by the Alcoa Foundation



Marilyn Phillips

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For more details, call our Customer Service staff on 9326 0000



Travelling in Style to Venice

The winner of the 2008 subscriber trip for two to Venice was Mrs Pamela Platt. She is a long time Masters subscriber and a Patron of WASO. WASO and Emirates congratulates you.



L - R: Keith Venning, WASO CEO; Pamela Platt; Darren Tyrrell, Emirates WA State Sales Manager.

Tune in to ABC Local Radio



Listen to breakfast on 720 ABC Perth at 6.20am each Friday when Prue Ashurst joins Eoin Cameron to provide the latest on classical music and to learn more about WASO's upcoming concerts.

You can also purchase the CD *Prue and the Maestro*, a collection of their favourite classics, through ABC shops.

Patrons & Friends of WASO

From the President

This is my last contribution to Illuminating Notes. After four wonderful years, I hand over the reins to a new President of the Patrons and Friends of WASO. Nothing I have ever done in the realm of charitable and public service has been so much fun, nor given me so much satisfaction.

These years have seen the Friends of WASO become the Patrons and Friends of WASO. With a huge leap in membership, we now have a good claim to being the largest orchestral support group in Australia, contributing more than \$600,000 to WASO since 2005. Given this success there is every reason to think we will go from strength to strength.

Much of my enjoyment has come from the close relationship Patrons and Friends have developed with the Orchestra and its management. I take my hat off to Keith Venning, James Boyd, Sarah Gallinagh and Monique Beaudoire, who have given the Patrons and Friends of WASO their complete support and confidence.

In addition, I have enjoyed working with a committee who have remained consistently positive, enthusiastic and full of good ideas. Special thanks go to Vice President Max Collins and Secretary Margaret Lalchere who have never failed to deliver the goods. I look forward to carrying on my association with the committee in the capacity of Immediate Past President.



Norman Etherington, President 2004 - 2007

Professor Fred Affleck was elected President of the Patrons and Friends of WASO at the Annual Meeting on March 11.

Born in Vancouver Canada, Fred has a London PhD in history, but spent most of his career in executive roles in the Australian railway industry. He came to Perth to join the world of academe in 2003 and is now working at Curtin University of Technology in Organisation Research and Development.

His passion for music was ignited when he played clarinet and oboe in his school band in Vancouver, then in the Vancouver Junior Symphony Orchestra. He has a strong interest in opera and was involved in developing the Australian Opera Studio in Perth. Fred's wife Margaret is a musician and music teacher.

"The Patrons and Friends of WASO have become a very important supporter of the Orchestra. Inaugural President Prof. Norman Etherington got us off to a very strong start, but there is still great potential as we grow in numbers to give more support to the Orchestra at all levels," said Prof. Affleck.



Fred Affleck, President

2008 Patrons and Friends of WASO Committee

The committee would like to take this opportunity to welcome new committee members James Alexander and Clare Moore and thank outgoing committee members Charlotte Jennings and Louis Moyser.

Viola player Kathie Drake is the new Orchestra Representative. Kathie has been a member of the WASO for 20 years and for the past 18 months been Acting Associate Principal Viola.

A very warm thank you to outgoing Orchestra Representative Louise Sandercock. Louise has served on the committee since February 2003, providing information and feedback to the Committee on behalf of the musicians of the WASO.

Also, for several years she served on the Players' Association and Artistic Committee. When she isn't performing with WASO, Kathie is active in Perth's chamber music scene.

President	Fred Affleck
Vice President	Michael Harding
Honorary Treasurer	Sue Marshman
Honorary Secretary	Margaret Lalchere
Committee Members	James Alexander Diane Brennan Max Collins John Isherwood Berendt Johansson Dianne Martin Clare Moore Stan Vicich
Co-opted Members	Vin Brennan Norman Etherington Eric Lawson
Orchestra Representative	Katherine Drake

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2007 Events Wrap Up

The Great Organ Crawl

Some say that few people are seriously interested in organ music. We would argue otherwise! In September over 70 Friends attended *The Great Organ Crawl*, strolling through Perth and visiting three of the city's great church organs. Our guide was John Beaverstock, one of Western Australia's best known organists.

We began at Wesley Church, then to Trinity Church and concluded at St George's Cathedral. John summarised the history of the organ over the centuries, briefly describing each organ and giving a polished performance at each church. Unlike the piano, no two large organs are the same, having different layouts, tones and characteristics so an intimate knowledge of each instrument is necessary for the player.

Celebrating Second Fiddles

Many concertgoers tend to take the Second Violins for granted, perhaps as some sort of appendage to the First Violins, without understanding their role in the orchestra. It was therefore quite educational for the Friends to hear first-hand from Section Principal John Ford and Jane Serrangeli at *Celebrating Second Fiddles* at the UWA New Fortune Theatre in October.

We learned that the Second Violins are an integral part of the string section. While they may be the same instrument, the music they play is quite different from the First Violins, and each section has its own separate parts of a composition. "Many works would not be the same without the second fiddle part," said John. He and Jane demonstrated this point, with special accompaniment from one of the New Fortune Theatre's resident peacocks.



Jane Serrangeli and John Ford demonstrate the work of the second fiddles.

An Evening with Ashkenazy

On 29 October ten Patrons of WASO attended *An Evening with Ashkenazy* which was supported by BHP Billiton Petroleum and the Ardross Group of Companies. The evening commenced with pre-concert drinks and canapés in the WASO Corporate Lounge, followed by a breathtaking concert conducted by the great Vladimir Ashkenazy, and concluding with a supper with the Maestro himself in the Wardle Room.

Principal Patron Judy Sienkiewicz said "It was a wonderful privilege for me, as a long-time fan of Ashkenazy, to watch him here in Perth conducting the Orchestra which responded so excitingly. And to be able to meet him afterwards at the very elegant dinner was an unbelievable experience. Such a warm and direct person. I shall never forget this unexpected opportunity and am very grateful to WASO for making it possible."

Our Tristan by the Sea

In November a most unusual combination of music and history attracted a large number of Patrons and Friends to the new Maritime Museum for a glittering event hosted by WASO Corporate Partner, the Woodside Valley Foundation. Founded in 2003, the Foundation is dedicated to preserving the documents, maps and artefacts that are the physical remains of Western Australian's expansive pre-settlement maritime exploration history.



Marshall McGuire, Woodside Valley Foundation Founder Peter Woods and WASO CEO Keith Venning.

The musical attraction of the occasion was renowned harpist and WASO's Executive Manager Artistic Planning, Marshall McGuire, who spoke on the 2008 concert season and performed pieces by Handel and Paradies.

Perth historian and Patron of the Foundation, Professor Tom Stannage, gave a fascinating insight into the State's maritime history. Particularly interesting was the early Dutch and French exploration which preceded British interest in Australia's west coast. He emphasised the need to retain and document the maritime artefacts that bring our history to life. Guests then visited the 'Voyages of Grand Discovery' exhibition, which included items from the Foundation's collection.

Christmas Party

The annual Patrons and Friends Christmas Party with the Orchestra was bigger and better than ever! Many Patrons and Friends joined past and present players and management to celebrate another wonderful concert season. The party was in the Perth Concert Hall following a rehearsal for WASO's Symphony in the City with 'conductor alfresco' Guy Noble.



A rare gathering of three former WASO Concertmasters: Ashley Arbuckle, Robert Cooper and Vaughan Hanly.

Message from the CEO

I would like to sincerely thank Norman Etherington (President) and Max Collins (Vice President) for their dedication in developing the Patrons and Friends of WASO program from its launch on 16 January 2005.

Congratulations to the new committee headed by Fred Affleck (President) and Michael Harding (Vice President) following their elections at the Annual Meeting on 11 March 2008.

I wish the new committee great success in supporting the ongoing operations of WASO. Your voluntary support of our Orchestra is greatly appreciated. In 2007 the Patrons and Friends, with support from our Corporate Development staff, raised \$305,979. These funds have been used to assist the ongoing operations and development of the Orchestra as well as for specific causes, including:

- The purchase of a set of four Wagner Tubas.
- The purchase of musical scores of 13 orchestral works including Elgar's Cello Concerto and Rachmaninov Piano Concertos.

- The provision of free concert programs for audiences of the Masters, Classics, Morning Symphony and Contempo concerts.
- The support of the Melbourne Chorale's visit to Perth to perform Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* and contributions to the cost of other guest artists in 2007.

As we move forward, and as the level of annual donations increase, WASO will look to introduce a system to retain funds for the future. I look forward to working with the new committee to further enhance our Patrons and Friends programs.



Keith Venning
Chief Executive Officer

WASO Musician Grant Recipient

WASO Trumpet Peter Miller

In September 2007, with the generous assistance of the Patrons and Friends of WASO, Peter undertook a professional development tour to the USA.

Peter says "My trip began in Cleveland, where in 2002 I completed a Master of Music at the Cleveland Institute of Music (CIM). It was exciting to return to a city where I had many wonderful experiences musically and otherwise. It was a great thrill to spend time with my teacher Michael Sachs (Principal Trumpet, Cleveland Orchestra).

He invited me to his weekly CIM trumpet class to share my experiences with students. Apprehensive about 'teaching' in front of such a fine pedagogue and performer,

I accepted his offer and lead the students through a reading of Bartok's *Concerto For Orchestra*. Fortunately, WASO performed this work in July 2007!

As well as attending concerts by the renowned Cleveland Orchestra, I travelled to Vincent Bach trumpet factory in Bloomington. Their Stradavarius model trumpet is used by orchestral trumpeters worldwide. To see this trumpet in production from sheet metal to the finished product and the detailed craftsmanship was a remarkable experience.

My trip concluded in New York City where I attended lessons at the Juilliard School of Music and experienced a very fine concert by the New York Philharmonic.

I travelled to New Jersey to visit one of America's largest brass instrument stores. There was a room devoted entirely to trumpets; hundreds of instruments hanging from the wall all waiting to have the cobwebs blown out of them! Ranging from 19th Century cornets and original Baroque trumpets to elaborate creations that resembled more of a plumbing disaster than a musical instrument.

My experiences were rewarding and enlightening. I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to learn from and listen to musicians performing with some of the worlds finest orchestras".

Coming Events

2008 promises to be another exciting year for Patrons and Friends. You will have the opportunity to attend open rehearsals, celebrate sections of the Orchestra, and other special events throughout the year, all of which will bring you, our greatest supporters, closer to the music and musicians you love. Further information will be mailed throughout the year.

Patrons' Brunch

Patrons of WASO will be invited to attend a special brunch on 20 April 2008 to meet WASO's new Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser Designate Paul Daniel. The brunch, once again kindly hosted by Classics Series Partner Plan B Wealth Management, is held to thank Patrons for their generous support of the 2008 concert season.

To become a Patron of WASO and receive an invitation to what promises to be a wonderful event contact Sarah Gallinagh, Donations & Bequests Coordinator on 08 9326 0075 or gallinaghs@waso.com.au

June Tea & Symphony

The second Tea and Symphony for 2008 on Friday 20 June will be the final rehearsal for the Romantic Rachmaninov concert conducted by Alexander Lazarev and featuring Alexey Yemtsov. The concert will feature Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto and Glazunov's beautiful architectural poem, his Fifth Symphony. To book for this exciting event contact the Patrons and Friends Office on 9326 0016 by Wednesday 18 June.

Patrons and Friends of WASO

Musical Wanderings...

Michael Returns To Manchester

In May and June 2007 Patrons and Friends Vice President Michael Harding returned to England for the first time in nearly 20 years. As well as seeing old friends, he hoped to catch some good music. We convinced him to tell all for *Illuminating Notes*:

I timed my holiday badly. Not only because it was the wettest summer in the UK since 1766 and floods were everywhere, but also because it was the tail end of the concert season.

London was not on my itinerary, hailing as I do from Lancashire, but Manchester certainly was, as were the Hallé Orchestra and the BBC Philharmonic. Both Orchestras have thrived of late, with each having dynamic and relatively young conductors in Mark Elder and Gianandrea Noseda respectively.

Interestingly, Noseda and the BBC Philharmonic staggered the world in 2005 by offering free downloads of live recordings of the Orchestra performing the nine Beethoven symphonies.

Extraordinarily tall and angular, Noseda was a mixture of German conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler and American conductor

Leonard Bernstein, the latter sharing Noseda's propensity to crouch down and jump to an alarming degree!

The concerts I attended were interestingly programmed and based around the Brahms Concertos and the Schumann Symphonies, each concert with a concerto and a symphony. It worked well, with exceptionally alert and dynamic performances from the BBC Philharmonic, though the excessive amount of 19th Century German Romanticism was clearly too much for many and The Bridgewater Hall was rarely more than half full.

Which brings me neatly to the Hall itself. For many decades Manchester's orchestral concerts were held in the Free Trade Hall, a monolithic entity built in the Victorian days when cotton was king.



Bridgewater Hall auditorium (photo by Len Grant)

It was in this hallowed hall that I grew up loving music, tutored under the unforgettable and inimitable baton of Hallé Orchestra's Conductor in Chief, Sir John Barbirolli.

How he would be staggered today at The Bridgewater Hall. No expense seems to have been spared and its modern architecture is perfectly suited to its surroundings, with wonderful acoustics. The most amazing feature is the roof which is a continuously exposed system of stainless steel and pulleys across a huge span. Barbirolli's sculpted bust has pride of place in the foyer and it is nice to think his spirit listens in to all the many wonderful concerts the new Hall is heir to.

WASO Musician Grant Recipient

WASO Associate Principal Horn Malcolm Stewart

In November WASO Associate Principal Horn Malcolm Stewart travelled to Germany to purchase a new horn. His travel was supported by a greatly appreciated grant from the Patrons and Friends of WASO.

"It was a fantastic experience," was Malcolm's description of his task of selecting a new horn at the Alexander factory in Mainz, Germany. There was a wall covered with horns for him to select from. "So I sat down and played all 20 of them for as long as I liked."



Malcolm Stewart with his new horn.

The horn Malcolm selected was the same model he played early in his career. The new one is identical, but made with modern technology. It's very similar to the traditional German French Horn that many German players use. The Alexander factory has been making these instruments for 225 years. After some final touches by the factory the horn arrived in Perth in time for him to play it at the Orchestra's first 2008 concert, Glen Campbell with WASO.

After testing the wall full of horns, Malcolm returned to the factory to test the two sets of Wagner Tubas to be purchased by WASO. You may ask why a horn player was testing tubas...

In the mid 19th century the instrument maker Adolphe Sax produced the Wagner Tuba. He demonstrated it to German composer Richard Wagner when they met in 1853. Wagner was struck by the horn's rich sound and soon began to incorporate it into his orchestral composition.

At the time Wagner met Sax he had just begun work on *Das Rheingold* and it is in the opening of Scene 2 where we find him using the instrument to announce the Valhalla theme.

The *Ring* became the first major orchestral work to feature the instrument. They have since been known as the Wagner Tuba.

It may carry the word tuba in its name, but this instrument is in fact a horn; it uses the same mouthpiece as a horn and is played by traditional horn players. Most horn players do not have a Wagner Tuba of their own. Usually, orchestras, music colleges and opera houses purchase four Wagner Tubas as a set for use as and when required.

WASO's new set of Wagner Tubas were donated by Patrons Robert May and Daniel Lee Shing Kong, in memory of an avid Wagnerite, Manny Lee Chiu Bing. WASO's new instruments are known collectively as "Manny's Golden Horns".

WASO is always in need of new instruments and they make a meaningful gift to the Orchestra. If you would like to discuss this idea, becoming a Patron of WASO, please phone Sarah Gallinagh, Donations and Bequests Coordinator on 9326 0075 or email gallinaghs@waso.com.au

WASO Celebrates the Centenary of Messiaen's Birth

To celebrate the centenary of Olivier Messiaen's birth, Australian conductor Simone Young returns to Perth to conduct *L'Ascension* on July 26 & 27. Audiences may remember Simone's command of the Orchestra in 2007 when she conducted Messiaen's monumental *Turangalila-symphonie*.

Messiaen is considered to be one of the most important French composers of the 20th century. He had a major influence in inspiring the next generation of composers such as Stockhausen, Boulez and Xenakis.

He was a prolific and distinctive composer as well as a deeply religious man who sought to capture in music both the beauty of the nature and the spirituality of his Roman Catholic faith. He remarked that it was "the main aspect of my work, the most noble, without doubt the most useful, the most valid".

Many of Messiaen's works, including *L'Ascension*, can be seen as spiritual meditations. Each of the four movements of *L'Ascension* (subtitled Four symphonic meditations for orchestra) is prefaced by a short liturgical text and reflects on Christ's ascension to heaven following the resurrection. Completed early in his career in 1934, the work was the largest written by Messiaen to that time. The music is infused with evocative orchestral colours and a sense of vastness permeates the work.

Messiaen had the remarkable ability to experience sound as colour. At the age of eleven he describes "being overwhelmed by the colours of the stained glass windows" following a visit to Saint Chapelle. About music he said "When I hear music I see colours, not through my eyes but through my intellect. When I hear chords they are complexes of sound".

Messiaen's music is distinctively original, rich in colour and texture. His style draws on everything from bird song - he reputedly included the songs of more than 250 species in his works - to Indian and Balinese music, as well as more conventional forms of Western compositional techniques.

He was renowned as a highly idiosyncratic composer and whilst being a contemporary writer his music is approachable for the listener. His attitude to the dissonance found in much of the 20th century repertoire was to give it a softness that fits well in contemporary music. His ability to merge aspects of Eastern music with the traditions and language of classical music provides a unique and individual style which is accessible to audiences of the 21st century. It also marks him as one of the pivotal composers of the modern era whose influence reaches to the current generation of composers.



Simone Young

Paired beautifully with *L'Ascension* is Mahler's serene Symphony No. 4. Simone Young will show her deep understanding of the music of Mahler as she continues her survey of his works. Symphony No. 4 is regarded as Mahler's most accessible symphony with its sparkling orchestral colours and effervescent melodies. The symphony's program speaks of a child's innocent view of earthly death and heavenly life, and culminates with a poem sung by soprano Leanne Kenneally.

Simone Young appears courtesy of Lepley Properties

Jim Mann Retires

With the retirement of Jim Mann from WASO after thirty three years, we lose both an eminent Principal Trombone and one of the orchestra's real characters. His timely best, or worst jokes, along with his brilliant fancy dress choices on tour, are legendary.

Jim began his musical career playing tenor horn in Salvation Army junior bands. He emigrated from Britain as a 21 year-old and worked selling electrical products while studying with Tony Federici, WASO's Bass Trombonist.

By 1971 Jim was playing casually with WASO.

In 1973 he took up the position of Bass Trombone in the Tasmanian Orchestra, returning to WASO a year later as 2nd, then Bass Trombone. He became Principal Trombone in 1983. His colleague for many years, ex-Principal Trumpet Kevin Johnston, admired Jim's cooperation and professionalism in everything he played, and feels Jim's playing became ever better, "like a good wine ripening with age"

Jim has taught trombone at the Conservatorium and the University, producing a stream of successful professional trombonists, including WASO's Bruce Thompson.

He has been an integral part of EChO, which he has really enjoyed for the immediate interaction with the young audience. He has also been a great friend and supporter of a large group of WASO Friends.

In retirement Jim is looking forward to having weekends free to go orienteering, extending his bush-walking and bush bike riding, 'fixing all the things that need fixing around the house' and becoming a regular audience member. The Orchestra will miss his musical integrity and cheeky sense of fun dearly.



Jim Mann

WASO Composer-in-Residence

James Ledger



James Ledger

The West Australian Symphony Orchestra's Composer-In-Residence, supported by Australia LNG, is James Ledger. James is capitalizing on this role to push himself and his art, and audiences may remember his Trumpet Concerto for WASO's Principal Trumpet David Elton in Splendour of Brass. This year audiences were treated to the world premiere of his fanfare, *The Madness and Death of King Ludwig* in the opening to the Masters Series.

James is now focused on composing a new work to be premiered in the WASO Chamber Players Series at the Art Gallery of Western Australia. This process began in the Handa Percussion Studio recording strange and exciting sounds to be included in the piece. Tubular bell notes and bass drum hits, even a tam tam (gong) being bowed with a cello bow! James' compositional method does not normally follow this kind of route. He usually sits at his piano and tinkers with ideas and melodies before turning them into completed works. His next step for this particular work will be to listen to the recordings and explore how he can progress with the piece to the next stage.

The impetus for this work came from a medium slightly foreign to James. To celebrate the re-hanging of the Art Gallery of WA the then Director of the Gallery, Alan Dodge, invited James to explore the vaults of the Gallery. James was attracted to a few paintings; one was *Purnululu - Bungle Bungle* (1989) by Jack Britten (aka Warnngaryiriny) of his vision of Western Australia's Bungle Bungles. As this painting was being replaced in the climate controlled storage drawer the artwork's sandstone formations appeared to look like skyscrapers lit at night.

The other was a piece called *Monaro* (1989) by Rosalie Gascoigne, a work made from old Schweppes packing crates that depicted the rolling hills of Monaro in New South Wales when viewed from afar. This idea of duality inspired James; however, he still had to choose only one piece and this was a difficult decision.

James muses about his forthcoming work: "Essentially what I'm seeking to express through my music is the striking visual imagery captured in the artworks. The recorded percussion sounds will be manipulated to provide a unique backdrop to the work and will be combined with the live acoustic instruments reflecting the images from the paintings."

James Ledger's new piece will be premiered in the WASO Chamber Players concert at the Art Gallery of WA on Friday August 15. This concert also includes Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony No. 1 and culminates with Mozart's lyrically charged Clarinet Quintet.

New to the WASO Website

WASO are delighted to bring you features that make it easy to keep up to date with our activities.

The latest special features of WASO's website...

Podcasts

Our podcasts will take you behind the scenes and deeper into the music. Podcasts are free and a great source of information about the WASO's artists and the music we perform.

Available early May

On-line Programs

The WASO website will now feature printed programs for the Masters and Classics series. They will be available for free downloading one week prior to the concert and will contain all the information on the music and the artists.

Programs are brought to you courtesy of the *Patrons and Friends of WASO*.

If you have any further ideas on how WASO could improve their website please email your suggestions to waso@waso.com.au.

Visit our website at www.waso.com.au

Orchestra News

WASO would like to welcome the following players on trial with the Orchestra; **Sebastian Eyb** (Principal Viola) joined the WASO in February. **Nicholas Metcalfe** (Tutti Cello) joined the WASO in March.

Stephanie Dean joined the WASO in November 2007 and was recently permanently appointed to the position of Tutti Violin.

Alex Brogan joined the WASO in November 2007 and was recently permanently appointed to the position of Tutti Viola.

William Davis Greatz, new son of Troy Greatz (Associate Principal Percussion & Timpani) was born on 5 October 2007, weight 8lb 7oz.

Callum Moncrieff has joined the Artistic Planning team as Programming Assistant.

Vicki Prince has joined the Marketing team in the WASO Box Office.

Farewell to Jill Haynes

"I have been privileged to share my career with the most congenial, co-operative and humorous Flute Section" says Jill Haynes after more than 27 years with WASO.

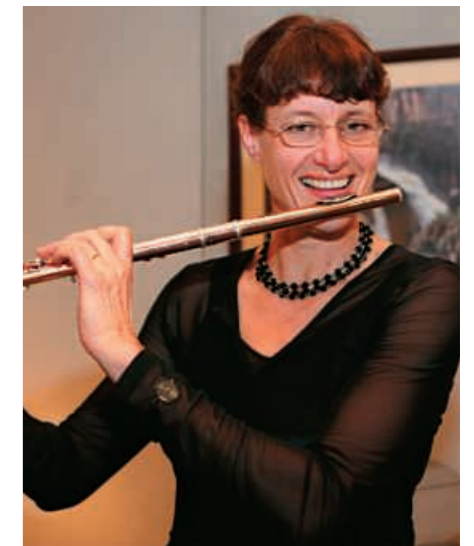
Jill's introduction to the flute was through her doctor in Canberra recommending it to help overcome bronchitis (No-one was more surprised than her family when Jill chose to pursue classical music as a career). She studied with renowned flautist David Cubbin at the Canberra School of Music where she was one of his 'star' students and in 1980, after auditioning for WASO "just for the experience", with no real concept of relocating to Perth, won a trial and the position of Principal Flute. In that same year Jill won the prestigious Australian National Flute Competition.

Jill is best known in WASO for her role as Second Flute where she has, through her skill and discreet support, enabled her Principal Flute to shine. It has also made her the ultimate 'multi-tasker', playing Principal Flute, Piccolo, Second Flute as well as the seductive Alto Flute. Jill's keen eye for detail and strong sense of justice has also led to her serving on the management, marketing and the orchestral dress committees.

Jill has, for many years, fostered the talents of flute performance and education students at UWA, where she is well loved and highly respected.

Jill has always had an almost spiritual interest in the health and wellbeing of those around her and has evolved a broad depth of knowledge in the sphere of alternative medicine and especially 'sound healing', where she intends to concentrate her future energies. For the time being, her dexterous flute fingers are operating a cash register at her local greengrocer's.

WASO will miss Jill's humour, intelligence, extraordinary concert dresses and most of all her musicianship.



Jill Haynes



Margaret Blades

Margaret Blades appointed Co-Concertmaster

The West Australian Symphony Orchestra is pleased to announce that Margaret Blades has taken up the role of Co-Concertmaster of the Orchestra from the start of this year.

Nationally recognised as one of Australia's outstanding violinists, Margaret Blades is well known to WASO's audiences. This new leadership role for Margaret is an exciting opportunity leading on from the position of Associate Concertmaster which she has held with the Orchestra since 2006.

"I am honoured to accept the role of Co-Concertmaster with WASO and to work beside John Harding," said Margaret Blades. Margaret moved to work with WASO from the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra at the end of 2005 and cited John Harding as a major reason for doing this. "It has been a never ending education sitting next to John Harding and I feel privileged to have learned from one of the best", she said.

The Co-Concertmaster position will allow WASO flexibility in rostering and programming and help further the connection between the Orchestra, the company and the community.

Post Concert Talks

New in 2008, the WASO is introducing free Post-Concert Talks.

Join guest artists in the Terrace level foyer in the Perth Concert Hall for an informative interview hosted by Marshall McGuire, WASO Executive Manager of Artistic Planning.

Discover how the concert repertoire is selected and get an insight into the life of a conductor, soloist or composer.

Post Concerts Talks are brought to you courtesy of the *Patrons and Friends of WASO*

Friday 18 April

Paul Daniel Conducts The Symphony. Post-Concert Talk with Paul Daniel.

Friday 10 October

Brahms & Shostakovich. Post-Concert Talk with Alexander Briger.

Friday 14 November

Jian Wang. Post-Concert Talk with Arvo Volmer and Carl Vine.



Paul Daniel



Alexander Briger



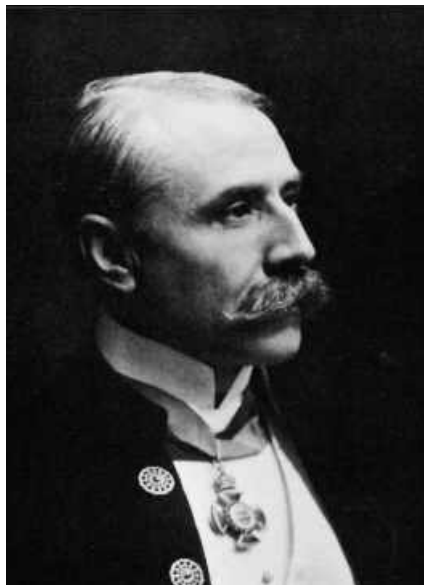
Arvo Volmer

A WASO Tribute to Anzac Day

The unique opportunity arose this year to schedule a concert program in the same week as Anzac Day. This provided the perfect occasion to program works that reflect the sentiments and emotions that are evoked by war and the theme of remembrance. Sadness and sorrow at the tragedy of war and its aftermath merge with hope and confidence for a peace filled future.

Written in 1919, Elgar's Cello Concerto is one of the masterpieces of the cello repertoire. The elegiac *Adagio* conveys a sense of melancholy and sorrow, yet its beauty and expression transcends the death and destruction caused by the Great War. Recovering from a bout of depression and illness, Elgar penned his rhapsodic Cello Concerto as the world emerged from the shadows of World War I. "Everything good & nice & clean & fresh & sweet is far away—never to return," he wrote to his friend Alice Stuart-Wortley in 1917. The composer skillfully uses the cello's power to speak with an almost human voice to express the regret and nostalgia he felt. Although the work calls for a fairly large orchestra, Elgar uses the instruments in such a succinct and subtle way that the cello is never overpowered.

Moving forward some 20 years as World War II was overtaking Europe in 1940, Britten wrote the *Sinfonia da requiem* on a commission by the Japanese Government to commemorate the 2,600th anniversary of the founding of the Japanese Empire (taken to be 11 February, 660 BC). An uncomfortable diplomatic exchange ensued even before the first performance, with the Japanese authorities regarding Britten's use of Christian liturgical movement titles as offensive and therefore rejecting the work. Expecting a joyous celebratory work, the Japanese were disappointed with a piece that resonated with the gravity and destruction of the unfolding world events of the time.



Edward Elgar

Britten himself was an avowed pacifist and a conscientious objector during World War II. In titling the work a requiem he clearly reflected the inspiration for his composition. Yet the work is not without hope as the passionate emotion, searing harmonies and incisive rhythms find closure in a tranquil conclusion which offers consolation and peace.

The WASO Chorus will join the Orchestra in the *Chichester Psalms* by Bernstein. Performed in Hebrew, this work is an ardent prayer for peace and echoes a heartfelt plea for unity in response to the Vietnam War and the turbulence of the 1960s. The serene and joyous mood of the *Psalms* contain to a sense of optimism and joy.

Bernstein wrote the *Psalms* whilst on sabbatical leave from his position as director of the New York Philharmonic. When asked by The New York Times to report on his leave, Bernstein wittily responded:

*"For hours on end I brooded and mused
On materiae musicae, used and abused;
On aspects of unconventionality,
Over the death in our time of tonality,
Over the fads of Dada and Chance,
The serial stricture, the dearth of romance,
Pieces for nattering, clucking sopranos,
With squadrons of vibraphones, fleets of pianos,
Played with the forearms, the fists and the palms
And then I came up with the 'Chichester Psalms.'
These psalms are a simple and modest affair,
Tonal and tuneful and somewhat square,
Certain to sicken a stout John Cager,
With its tonics and triad in B flat major.
But there it stands the result of my pondering,
Two long months of avant-garde wandering
My youngest child, old-fashioned and sweet
And he stands on his own two tonal feet."*

For all the seriousness and contemplation surrounding the theme of this concert, listeners will be delighted by the composers' responses to the diversity of emotions. The music carries us on a journey upwards through a wide range of colours and shades culminating with Chorus transporting us to a pinnacle of optimism.

The WASO Chorus is partnered by the Alcoa Foundation.



Natalie Clein will perform Elgar's Cello Concerto

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