PROGRAM

ALCOHOL THINK AGAIN MASTERS SERIES
Fri 27 & Sat 28 Mar 7.30pm
Perth Concert Hall

MISCHA MAISKY IN CONCERT
Save the drama for the stage.
Avoid excess alcohol.

To stay at low risk, have no more than two standard drinks on any day.
To find out more, visit alcoholthinkagain.com.au
“... because he plays it like no one else on earth”.

When Principal Conductor Asher Fisch asked WASO to invite his good friend Mischa Maisky to perform in Perth, we were, of course, delighted to do so. Maisky is quite simply one of the world’s greatest cellists, a legendary musician. These concerts are his first ever performances in Perth and his first visit to Australia in twenty years.

There was, Maestro Fisch decreed, one condition. “If Mischa comes, he must play both Bloch’s Schelomo and Strauss’s Don Quixote.”

When we asked “Why?” the answer was simple: “Because it makes a great program. The Strauss because it is a fantastic work. And Schelomo because Mischa plays it like no one else on earth”.

Really, can there be any greater praise for a musician?

From childhood prodigy to Soviet prisoner to one of the greatest stars in classical music, Mischa Maisky has led an extraordinary life. The only cellist in the world to have studied with both Mstislav Rostropovich and Gregor Piatigorsky, he has performed and recorded with esteemed conductors including Leonard Bernstein and Zubin Mehta and acclaimed chamber music collaborators Martha Agerich and Lang Lang.

It is an incredible privilege to have this legendary musician perform two of the greatest romantic works for cello with WASO. We are immensely proud to share the stage with Mischa Maisky in these concerts and know they will be long remembered.

Evan Kennea
Executive Manager, Artistic Planning
UPCOMING CONCERTS

MORNING SYMPHONY SERIES

Ravishing Rachmaninov
Thurs 16 April 11am Perth Concert Hall

Rachmaninov’s melodic genius is revealed in his passionate Second Symphony. The dynamic young Venezuelan conductor Diego Matheuz brings his trademark energy to this great orchestral showpiece.

RACHMANINOV Symphony No.2
Diego Matheuz conductor (pictured)

MACA LIMITED CLASSICS SERIES

Ravishing Rachmaninov
Fri 17 & Sat 18 April 7.30pm Perth Concert Hall

Rachmaninov’s Second is a richly romantic, mysterious and beautiful symphony. Borodin’s famous Polovtsian Dances feature driving rhythms and exotic melodies. Conductor Diego Matheuz brings his trademark energy to these orchestral showpieces.

CARTER Holiday Overture AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE
BORODIN Prince Igor, Act II: Polovtsian Dances
RACHMANINOV Symphony No.2

Diego Matheuz conductor (pictured)

SPECIAL EVENT

ANZAC Commemorative Concert
Thurs 23 April 7.30pm Perth Concert Hall

To mark the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings, join WASO, the WASO Chorus and special guest artists for an evening filled with beautiful and poignant music.

Christopher Dragon conductor
Sara Macliver soprano
Shaun Lee-Chen violin
Donna Simpson (The Waifs) vocalist
The Australian Army Band Perth, Big Band
WASO Chorus

BOOK NOW CALL 9326 0000 VISIT WASO.COM.AU OR TICKETEK.COM.AU
*Tickets from $27*

*Transaction fees may apply.
Pre-concert Talks
Find out more about the music in the concert with this week’s speaker, Margaret Seares. Pre-concert talks take place at 6.45pm in the Terrace Level Foyer.

Meet the Artists
Enjoy a post-concert conversation with Principal Conductor, Asher Fisch and Mischa Maisky at the corner stage in the Terrace Level Foyer on Saturday evening.

Pre-concert Talks and Meet the Artists are supported by Wesfarmers Arts

Earth Hour
Perth Concert Hall is participating in Earth Hour 2015 on Saturday 28 March. Between 8.30pm and 9.30pm, Perth Concert Hall will turn off external building lights and reduce foyer lighting as much as possible while ensuring patron safety. For more information, visit earthour.org.au.

ALCOHOL.THINK AGAIN MASTERS SERIES
MISCHA MAISKY IN CONCERT

BEETHOVEN Leonore Overture No.3 (13 mins)
BLOCH Schelomo – Hebraic Rhapsody (20 mins)

Interval (25 mins)

STRAUSS, R. Don Quixote (40 mins)
Introduction: Don Quixote sinks into madness
Theme: Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance
Maggiore: Sancho Pansa
Variation 1: Adventure of the windmills
Variation 2: Battle with the sheep
Variation 3: Dialogue of Knight and Squire
Variation 4: Adventure with the procession of penitents
Variation 5: Don Quixote’s vigil
Variation 6: The Meeting with Dulcinea
Variation 7: Ride through the air
Variation 8: Adventure of the enchanted boat
Variation 9: Contest with the magicians
Variation 10: Joust with the Knight of the White Moon. Defeated Don Quixote’s journey
Finale: Death of Don Quixote

Asher Fisch conductor
Mischa Maisky cello
Join WASO, the WASO Chorus and special guest artists for a moving and reflective concert marking the 100th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings.

Featuring beautiful and poignant music including Vaughan Williams’ *The Lark Ascending* and Albinoni’s *Adagio*.

Christopher Dragon conductor
Sara Macliver soprano
Shaun Lee-Chen violin
Donna Simpson (The Waifs) vocalist
The Australian Army Band Perth, Big Band
WASO Chorus

**BOOK NOW**

Tickets from $30*

Call 9326 0000 quoting 1258
Visit waso.com.au or ticketek.com.au

*Transaction fees may apply.*
Inspiring Kwinana Students Through Music

As the new school year started, so did WASO’s El Sistema-inspired Music Education program. After a successful 8-week pilot program in three Kwinana primary schools in Term 4, 2014, WASO has begun its first full year of teaching, introducing a new group of Pre-Primary students and welcoming back the Year 1 students.

With nearly 200 students participating from Medina Primary School, North Parmelia Primary School and Kwinana Christian School there is already a lot of excitement from students, teachers and parents. Vocal lessons are held once a week at the schools with two WASO Teaching Artists who teach students music basics such as tempo (fast and slow) and pitch (high and low) through a variety of songs and movement games. And as Kwinana is quite culturally diverse the songs are often in the different languages spoken by students.

Open Rehearsals

WASO Education will share three very special Open Rehearsals with students this year, all featuring world-class artists performing as part of the Masters and Classics programs.

Open Rehearsals are a unique opportunity for school students to see the Orchestra in work-mode as they place the final touches to the concert program. An informal pre-concert talk with one of WASO’s musicians gives students an insiders view into the program being rehearsed, and what life on-stage is all about.

The opportunity to see WASO “behind the scenes” working with incredible artists and conductors, including Principal Conductor Asher Fisch with Mischa Maisky and Ingrid Fliter and visiting conductor Nicholas Carter with Diana Doherty, is one that is not only inspirational, but brings the music – and the musicians – to life.
YOUR WASO EXPERIENCE

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WHEN TO APPLAUD
Musicians love applause. As a guide, audience members normally applaud:
• When the conductor or soloist walks onto the stage
• After the completion of each piece and at the end of the performance

WHEN YOU NEED TO COUGH
Please try to muffle your cough in a handkerchief during a louder section of the music. Cough lozenges are available from the WASO Customer Service Desk before each performance and at the interval.

TOILETS
Male and female toilets are located on each of the four foyer levels of Perth Concert Hall. The largest number of toilets are available on the ground floor of the venue, with further toilets on the Terrace Level, Lower Gallery and Upper Gallery levels. A universal accessible toilet is available on the ground floor of the venue.

FIRST AID
There are St John Ambulance officers present at every concert so please speak to them if you require any first aid assistance.

FEEDBACK
Please send your feedback to PO Box 3041, East Perth WA 6892, call 9326 0000, email waso@waso.com.au or leave us a message on Facebook or Twitter.

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WASO ON 720 ABC PERTH
Tune in to 720 ABC Perth on Friday mornings when Prue Ashurst joins Eoin Cameron to provide the latest on classical music and WASO’s upcoming concerts.

WASO ON ABC CLASSIC FM
This performance is being recorded for delayed broadcast on ABC Classic FM. For further details visit abc.net.au/classic
Eating and drinking at Perth Concert Hall

At the beginning of this year, leading West Australian catering consultancy service Heyder & Shears were awarded the food and beverage contract for Perth Concert Hall and have been revitalising the food and beverage options with new menus and a bigger choice of small meals and snacks.

Heyder & Shears, dedicated to providing a catering and event consultancy service with precision and flair, are a welcome addition to the team at Perth Concert Hall. Hospitality has been Heyder & Shears passion for over 20 years and they specialise in working with their clients to deliver on particular needs in both the corporate and private market. The ultimate goal for Heyder & Shears is to impress beyond all expectations, and the management at Perth Concert Hall is looking forward to working with Heyder & Shears to deliver on that goal!

Some changes you may have already noticed include:

- The new Grab & Go Menu, which includes smaller servings of hot and cold food priced between $5 and $10
- New menus are being trialled for the buffet available prior to WASO evening and after WASO Morning Symphony concerts.
- A new range of alcoholic beverages featuring premium beers and ciders and a carefully selected list of red, white and sparkling wines.

After completing a period of maintenance work, the Café at the Concert Hall reopens on 27 March with a fresh look and a modern Australian menu. The full menu is available on the WASO website at http://www.waso.com.au/visit/restaurants.

The team is very keen to hear your thoughts on the changes so far and get any feedback or suggestions you may have – feel free to speak to any usher or member of the Front-of-House team or contact us at info@perthconcerthall.com.au.
About the Artists

Asher Fisch
Principal Conductor

Asher Fisch’s first season with the WASO included a range of classical repertoire, as well as a West Australian first; Beethoven’s nine symphonies performed over two weekends in August. A seasoned conductor in both the operatic and symphonic worlds, he is known best for his interpretative command of German and Italian repertoire of the Romantic and post-Romantic era, in particular Wagner, Brahms, Strauss and Verdi. He is currently Principal Guest Conductor of the Seattle Opera, where he conducted its quadrennial Wagner Ring cycle in 2013, and his former posts include Music Director of the New Israeli Opera (1998-2008) and the Vienna Volksoper (1995-2000). He first worked with WASO in 1999.

He has long maintained strong ties to the Bavarian State Opera, and in the 2013-14 season conducted a new production by Martin Kušej of The Force of Destiny, plus revival performances of Parsifal, Salome, Ariadne auf Naxos, La bohème and Turandot. Other highlights of the 2013-14 season include concerts with the Munich Philharmonic, Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, National Orchestra of Belgium, Aarhus Symphony Orchestra (Denmark), a tour in Italy with the Orchestra della Toscana, and a visit to the Melbourne Festival in October 2013, where he conducted an all-Wagner program with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

He conducted the State Opera of South Australia’s Wagner Ring cycle in 2005, which won ten Helpmann Awards.

Asher Fisch began his conducting career as Daniel Barenboim’s assistant and kapellmeister at the Berlin State Opera. He is an accomplished pianist and released his first solo disc of Wagner piano transcriptions in 2012.

Asher Fisch appears courtesy of Wesfarmers Arts.
Mischa Maisky
Cello

Mischa Maisky has collaborated with such conductors as Leonard Bernstein, Carlo Maria Giulini, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Giuseppe Sinopoli, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Daniel Barenboim, James Levine, Charles Dutoit, Mariss Jansons, Valery Gergiev, and Gustavo Dudamel. His partnerships have included such artists as Martha Argerich, Radu Lupu, Nelson Freire, Evgeny Kissin, Lang Lang, Peter Serkin, Gidon Kremer, Yuri Bashmet, Vadim Repin, Maxim Vengerov, Joshua Bell, Julian Rachlin, and Janine Jansen, among others.

Over the last 25 years he has made over 30 recordings with such orchestras as the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Berlin Philharmonic, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, and Chamber Orchestra of Europe. One of the highlights of his career was a worldwide Bach tour which included over 100 concerts, and in order to express his deep admiration for the composer, Mischa Maisky has recorded Bach's cello suites for a third time.

His recordings have been awarded the prestigious Record Academy Prize (Tokyo), the Echo Deutscher Schallplattenpreis, Grand Prix du Disque, and Diapason d'Or de l'Année. His CD Live in Japan with Martha Argerich was nominated for a Grammy Award.

Mischa Maisky was born in Latvia and studied with both Mstislav Rostropovich and Gregor Piatigorsky. Since his repatriation to Israel, he has been enthusiastically received in the world's major music centres.
WASO ON STAGE TONIGHT

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| Caleb Wright | Andrew Nicholson*  | Brent Grapes |}

*Instruments used by these musicians are on loan from Janet Holmes à Court AC.
Andrew Tait
Double Bass

Can you remember your first WASO concert?
Yes, I remember it clearly. It was Shostakovich’s 5th Symphony conducted by Vladimir Verbitsky in June 1989. At the time Vladimir’s grasp of the English language was rudimentary but he clearly articulated his musical intentions to the Orchestra through his passionate conducting. His rapport with the orchestra was electric and the rest is history.

Do you have any stand out performances in your time with WASO?
There are many, but I really enjoyed taking part in the Beethoven Festival with Asher Fisch last year.

It was also a great privilege to work with the composers on the Compassion – Songs with Orchestra concert in 2013. Compassion is a song cycle for voice and orchestra by Lior Attar and Nigel Westlake based on a collection of ancient Hebrew and Arabic texts. A powerful and moving composition and performance.

Tonight we welcome Mischa Maisky to Perth for the first time. Who else would you love to see come and perform their debut with WASO?
I would love to see WASO perform Mark-Anthony Turnage’s Double Bass Concerto with John Patitucci. The piece was written for him and last year he performed it with the London Symphony Orchestra and the Swedish Chamber Orchestra.

Do you play any other musical instruments?
I play the Viola Da Gamba and the Violone (or Great Bass Viol). Last year I formed the Perth Viol Consort (PVC) with three other musicians (Shaun Ng, Makoto Harris Takao and Clare Tunney).

PVC is dedicated to the revival and sharing of music written for consorts throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

What is the best advice you’ve received during your career?
As a teenager I played bass guitar in a rock band with friends from school. I desperately wanted to play Jazz double bass after hearing Percy Heath and the Modern Jazz Quartet. So I boldly fronted up to Ed Gaston while he was packing up his double bass after a great performance with Don Burrows. His advice was to, “Go find the best teacher you can and get a classical technique which will enable you to play whatever you want!”

I am most proud of … my contribution to WASO as both a musician and a luthier.

As a musician I have been a part of this orchestra for the last 26 years and have seen the Orchestra grow and develop artistically. As a luthier I am proud of my contribution to the sound of the double bass section, in particular by having made five of the seven instruments that appear on stage during our major concert series. This is an Australian record only rivalled by A.E. Smith who had made the majority of violas used in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra during the 1950s.
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Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770 – 1827)

Leonore Overture No.3, Op.72

Beethoven’s only opera, Fidelio, had a tortuous gestation. The first performance in 1805 was a flop. It was far too long, but more importantly, the occupation of Vienna by Napoleon’s troops had caused the evacuation of local aristocrats so the small audience was made up mainly of French officers. Cuts and revisions followed for a revival the following year, but in 1814, three librettists and four overtures later, Beethoven made the final, triumphant version.

The story was based on an actual incident that took place in France during the post-revolutionary Reign of Terror: an aristocratic woman, portrayed in the opera as Leonore, disguises herself as a boy (Fidelio) in order to save her husband from wrongful execution at the hand of a tyrant. Jean-Nicolas Bouilly found himself in the position of Don Fernando (the government minister in the opera whose arrival signals the release of the prisoners), and later wrote the story.

The three Leonore Overtures are now often heard as curtain-raisers in the concert hall. The first dates from 1805 and the second and third were both composed for the ill-fated revival of the following year. Both of those works are substantial compositions in their own right and are arguably too long to serve as overture to the opera.

But both may be heard as symphonic précis of the opera: Leonore No.3 sets the baleful mood of the prison with sombre chords, before essaying some of the turmoil and ultimate triumph of the story. The third overture is perhaps the most symphonic, recapitulating the triumphant allegro music at its end.

Abridged from a note by Gordon Kerry © 2004

Beethoven created the overture we now know as Leonore No. 3 for the revised performance of Fidelio that first took place in Vienna in March 1806. The West Australian Symphony Orchestra first performed it on 27 May 1944 with conductor Ernest J. Roberts. WASO last performed this work on 21 June, 1997, conducted by Vladimir Verbitsky.

YOU MAY ALSO ENJOY

VERDI La forza del destino, Act I: Overture featured in Carmina Burana Fri 19 & Sat 20 June
Ernest Bloch  
(1880 – 1959)  

Schelomo – Hebraic Rhapsody

If it were absolutely necessary to pigeonhole Ernest Bloch’s work in some way, he could be described as a product of the height of the Romantic era, who continued to develop innovatively within that broad framework, undeterred by the more radical approach of his colleagues. Most of his major works have strong connections with his Jewish faith, both in subject matter and musical idiosyncrasies. His melodies and themes often carry the flavour of his family background: even when they are not direct quotes from Jewish sources, they come from what Bloch described as ‘the age-old inner voice’.

Despite early lessons with Jacques-Dalcroze and violin studies with Ysaïe, the young Bloch, married and not wealthy, seemed to be ambling gently towards life in the family clock business. Eventually, music won the day, as he became increasingly involved with composing and conducting in his native Geneva and then further afield. The New World beckoned in 1916, and Bloch found his niche in the United States where he held several high positions in tertiary institutions.

There are two stories about how Bloch came to write Schelomo. The first has the 36-year-old composer, still in Geneva, wrestling with the words of Solomon (‘Schelomo’ in Hebrew), trying to write a vocal work but encountering difficulty with the relatively unfamiliar language. His friend Alexandre Barjansky, a fine cellist, suggests reworking the sketches into a piece for cello and orchestra.

The second story has Barjansky again asking for a work for cello. Bloch’s eye alights on a wax figurine of Solomon, made by Barjansky’s wife Catherine, a sculptor. Inspired, he completes Schelomo. Whatever the case, Bloch dedicated the work to both Barjanskys for their part in its creation.

What is certain about both these stories is that Bloch was initially interested in using the text of the Book of Ecclesiastes, usually attributed to Solomon, and in particular the dark texts which surround the most famous quote: ‘Vanity of vanities; all is vanity … I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.’ Other writers have also detected elements of the more famous and sensual Song of Solomon in certain musical figures. As noted in the Old Testament, Solomon had ‘… seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray’.
ABOUT THE MUSIC

The subtitle of ‘Hebraic Rhapsody’ is also significant. Not only does it highlight the Jewish core of the work, but ‘Rhapsody’ implies an expressive freedom born of strong emotion. Strict form is not the foundation of this work. Its power lies in the horrors of the First World War and their parallels with Old Testament bloodletting, expressed in a direct manner that mirrors the illogical progression of troubled thoughts.

Although Bloch went on to write other works on Jewish subjects, Schelomo is probably the piece that drew most heavily on his background. Jewish-style popular and religious melodies appear, as do motifs reminiscent of shofar (ram’s horn) ceremonial calls. Even the instrumentation occasionally seems deliberately coloured to suggest Jewish origins: the solo oboe plays a prominent part, as do solo violins. Use of augmented intervals of seconds and fourths imply ‘The East’ to Western ears. Similarly, a harmonic structure based on fourths and fifths implies a foreignness or antiquity.

It is interesting to consider why so many works by Jewish composers give the cello a role not dissimilar to its vocal equivalent, the cantor in the synagogue. Bloch did not intend this work to be programmatic. However, he did allow that ‘If one likes, one may imagine that the voice of the solo cello is the voice of the King Schelomo. The complex voice of the orchestra is the voice of his age, his world, his experience …’.

Dotted rhythms and yearning semitones predominate the first half of the work. The brass section takes on a military flavour when given the chance (a far from irrelevant matter in a work dated 1916). The solo cello, in a series of cadenza-like statements, introduces motifs and inspires the orchestra to ever-greater heights, depths and dynamics – but it dies, at the end, lonely in its grief. To give Bloch the final word: ‘This work alone concludes in complete negation. But the subject demanded it!’

Abridged from a note by Katherine Kemp
Symphony Australia ©1998

The first performance of Schelomo was given by cellist Hans Kindler in New York in May 1917. The West Australian Symphony Orchestra first performed it on 4 and 5 October 1991 with conductor Vernon Handley and soloist Colin Carr.

RACHMANINOV Vocalise
featured in
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You may also enjoy

Glossary

Motifs A short, distinctive melodic or rhythmic figure, often part of or derived from a theme.

Cadenza A virtuoso passage by a solo instrument, usually towards the end of a concerto movement. Originally, cadenzas were improvised by the soloist to show off their brilliant technique.
Richard Strauss
(1864 – 1949)

Don Quixote – Fantastic Variations on a Theme of Knightly Character, Op.35
Introduction: Don Quixote sinks into madness
Theme: Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance
Maggiore: Sancho Pansa
Variation 1: Adventure of the windmills
Variation 2: Battle with the sheep
Variation 3: Dialogue of Knight and Squire
Variation 4: Adventure with the procession of penitents
Variation 5: Don Quixote’s vigil
Variation 6: The Meeting with Dulcinea
Variation 7: Ride through the air
Variation 8: Adventure of the enchanted boat
Variation 9: Contest with the magicians
Variation 10: Joust with the Knight of the White Moon. Defeated Don Quixote’s journey
Finale: Death of Don Quixote

There have been many musical settings of Cervantes’ 17th-century classic Don Quixote. Why? Because of the two immortal principal characters and the graphic nature of their adventures? Strauss’ Don Quixote is a symphonic poem but takes the form of theme and variations (representing adventurous episodes). Strauss’ designation of the work as being for grosses Orchester conceals the extent of soloistic work. The oboe is immediately noticeable in the Introduction, but, more significantly, a solo cello (played these days by virtuoso soloists) represents the Don, and a solo viola embodies his squire, Sancho Panza. Other sides to these characters are presented by solo violin (for Quixote), and bass clarinet and tenor tuba (for Sancho). The score exhibits the musical wit and illustrative skills of a symphonic poet of the highest order – think, for example, of the ‘bleating sheep’ in Variation II.

The opening theme consists of a wind flourish and then a galant violin theme suggesting the Don’s chivalric nature. A clarinet figure expresses the Don’s dreamy personality. Strauss next pursues the events leading to Quixote’s insanity, with violas playing a variant of the opening theme until the oboe presents his idealised woman, the farm girl whom the Don has christened Dulcinea. Trumpets summon the Don to exploits. From this point a certain nightmarish quality invests the Introduction.

Strauss now presents his themes for variation – a character study by solo cello of the famous ‘Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance’; Sancho is depicted by three themes: a rolling figure on bass clarinet and tuba, a scampering theme on viola, and finally, Sancho’s proverbs and platitudes (stock figures on solo viola).

Variation I comes from the famous episode where Don Quixote mistakes windmills for giants and attacks them. You can hear the breeze stirring the windmills’ arms in the quick repeated notes on piccolo and flute and trilling violins. The Don’s failure is sharp and the music depicts his limping recovery.
Variation II: Against ‘bleating’ flutter-tongueing on winds and brass, a pastoral theme suggests sheep which the Don mistakes for mighty armies and attacks. A victorious outcome fits in nicely with Strauss’ musical scheme, but Cervantes’ shepherds threw stones at his hero.

Strauss called Variation III ‘Sancho’s conversations, questions, demands and proverbs; Don Quixote’s instructing, appeasing and promises’. It is an amusing picture of the two of them bantering for miles. Finally the Don ‘explodes’ and Strauss shifts the scene, giving us a portrait of Knight Errantry through Don Quixote’s eyes.

Off goes Rocinante, Quixote’s tired old nag, in a decrepit gallop (Variation IV). The Don mistakes penitents carrying a statue of the Virgin for ‘villainous and unmannerly scoundrels’ abducting a lady. We hear a liturgical chant and little ‘Ave Marias’ in the woodwinds.

Variation V depicts the Don’s vigil over his armour. Variation VI portrays the episode of Dulcinea’s ‘enchantment’. The Don commands Sancho to find his Lady, and Sancho passes off three peasant girls on donkeys as Dulcinea and her serving girls (trotting oboe duet).

In Variation VII the audience is taken on an entertaining orchestral ride as the Don imagines himself travelling 9,681 leagues on a flying horse. Variation VIII contains one of Strauss’ most graphic pieces of tone-painting. A boat Quixote and Sancho take from a riverbank drifts amidst water mills and is smashed to pieces.

Uncannily appropriate pizzicatos depict the Don and Sancho shaking off drops of water after they are fetched ashore.

In Variation IX the Don thinks two Benedictine monks, masked against a dust storm, are sorcerers bearing off a princess, and puts them to flight. The final variation follows – fellow-villager Sampson Carrasco disguises himself as the Knight of the White Moon and defeats the Don in battle, shattering his illusions. The orchestra depicts the Don’s leaden-footed return home. One of Strauss’ most sublime melodies expresses the Don’s death.

Critics have commented on the two-dimensionality of Cervantes’ Don. Strauss fleshed out the portraiture in a manner befitting a composer who would soon turn to opera.

Gordon Kalton Williams

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The first performance of Don Quixote was given on 8 March 1898 by Cologne’s Gürzenich Orchestra under Franz Wüllner, with cello soloist Friedrich Grützmacher. The West Australian Symphony Orchestra first performed it on 22 and 23 May 1987 with conductor Nicholas Braithwaite and cellist Antonio Meneses. WASO last performed this work on 3 July, 1993, performed by Ralph Kirshbaum and conducted by Jorge Mester.

Glossary

Symphonic poem A piece of music, most popular in the late 19th century, that is based on an extra-musical theme, such as a story or particular scene, and usually consists of a single extended movement for a symphony orchestra. Frequently such a work has a descriptive title. Also called tone poem.

Pizzicato Plucking, rather than bowing, the strings.

MUSSORGSKY orch. RAVEL Pictures at an Exhibition featured in Pictures at an Exhibition Fri 5 & Sat 6 June
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The flute and its high-pitched relative the piccolo, are the highest-pitched members of the woodwind family.

Although instruments have been found dating back thousands of years in the form of hollowed-out bones and wood, the modern-day flute was developed in 19th-century Germany by inventor and flute virtuoso Theobald Boehm. Flutes today are predominantly made out of a range of metals such as silver-plated brass or even solid gold, silver and platinum.

The flute is unique amongst the wind instruments as sound is created by blowing across the top of the mouth plate rather than directly into the instrument, as with clarinets and oboes. The act of blowing into a flute is similar to blowing across the top of a bottle and it is a firmly held belief amongst musicians that flutes require the same amount of air volume as tubas to perform.

Pitch is altered by opening and closing the keys in the body of the instrument, changing the length and inner resonance of the body; performers can also vary pitch by blowing more or less forcefully. Dynamics are also controlled by the speed of the air passing across the mouth hole: faster air flow produces a louder sound and slower air flow creates a softer volume.

Flautists use a variety of techniques to create different sounds, including flutter tonguing, multiphonics and microtones.

The flute is almost unrivalled for its ability to create colouristic effects, and it is often paired with the harp in passages of great delicacy. Favourite works for flute include Debussy’s Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun, Gluck’s Dance of the Blessed Spirits from Orfeo ed Euridice, Mozart’s Concerto in C for Flute and Harp, K.299 and Bach’s Badinerie from Orchestral Suite No.2.

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Thank you to Liz Rushton for her recent donation for WASO to purchase a wooden flute which will be used by Andrew Nicholson, Principal Flute.

The range of pitches on a standard flute:
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RACHMANINOV Symphony No.2

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