

CAMERATA

QUEENSLAND'S CHAMBER ORCHESTRA



CAMERATA & QPAC PRESENT

Revolution Remixed

Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No.3 in E Flat Major, Op.55 *Eroica*
I. *Allegro con brio*
II. *Marcia Funebre. Adagio assai*
III. *Scherzo. Allegro vivace – Trio*
IV. *Finale. Allegro molto – Poco andante – Presto*

Interval (20 minutes)

Wild Card segment

Modest Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition*
arr. Julian Yu
I. *Promenade*
II. *Gnomes*
III. *Promenade*
IV. *The Old Castle*
V. *Promenade*
VI. *Tuileries – Children’s Dispute After Play*
VII. *Bydlo*
VIII. *Promenade*
IX. *Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks*
X. *Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle*
XI. *Promenade*
XII. *The Market in Limoges – Astounding News*
XIII. *The Catacombs – Roman Sepulchre*
XIV. *Talking with the Dead in the Language of the Dead*
XV. *The Hut on Chickens’ Legs: Baba Yaga*
XVI. *The Great Gale of Kiev*

Brisbane Fri 29 May 7pm
Concert Hall, QPAC

Toowoomba Sat 30 May 7pm
Armitage Theatre, The Empire

1 hour 45 minutes, including a 20 minute interval

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*principal
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**We’d love to meet
you after the concert.
Please join us in the foyer,
the bar will be open.**





From our Artistic Director

The Eroica – a turning point in Western Music!

In my high school days one of my English teachers tasked us to play some music (on the 'stereo boombox') that made some kind of political statement. I chose Beethoven, specifically the end of his "Eroica" Symphony which, in a school that had no music program, conjured teenage-tinged feelings of vulnerability. I was excited to share it though; the symphony was thrilling: its gripping opening chords, bombastic ending, the funeral march and well, all of it really! Beethoven was celebrating egalitarianism and individual liberty, dedicating it to the then-hero, Napoleon. The dedication was short-lived and changed to "celebrate the *memory* of a great man" after Napoleon appointed himself as Emperor. Aside the "Eroica's" history and arresting, emotional expression, the sheer scale and dramatic intent means it remains a relevant artistic wonder.

I'm sure you will love *Pictures at an Exhibition* in this arrangement by Australian composer, Julian Yu. It's an audacious thing to arrange Mussorgsky's original solo piano work in the long, lingering, 104 year shadow of French composer Maurice Ravel's sublime orchestration. However, I hope you'll agree that Julian's totally different approach breathes something new into an old favourite and ought to receive more airings.

Thank you for joining Camerata tonight and hope to see you in the bar afterwards!

Brendan Joyce
Artistic Director

About The Music

Ludwig van Beethoven

Symphony No.3 in E Flat Major, Op.55 *Eroica*

Beethoven liked to tell the story of how one day he and the legendary poet and statesman Goethe were strolling one day through the streets of Vienna arm-in-arm when they chanced upon the entire Austrian imperial family heading in their direction. At the very sight of the approaching entourage, Goethe apparently disengaged himself from Beethoven, doffing his hat and standing to the side of the path to allow the royal family to pass. Beethoven, on the other hand, made no such effort to demonstrate his servility. 'I crushed my hat more furiously on my head, buttoned up my top coat, and walked with my arms folded behind me, right through the thickest of the crowd,' he is reported to have written subsequently. 'Princes and officials made a lane for me: Archduke Rudolph took off his hat. The Empress saluted me the first. These great people know me.' Later, Beethoven berated Goethe for his pusillanimous deference to imperial grandeur.

Child of the Revolution as he was – the Bastille was stormed at the end of his teenage years – Beethoven liked to think of himself as a great champion of modern democracy, freedom and liberty, and an opponent of tyranny. Its imprint is there throughout his career, in the opera *Fidelio* where the political prisoners stagger out of their dungeon into the daylight, in the mighty *Ode to Joy* in his final symphony, and of course in the now-legendary championing of Napoleon during his initial triumphs as First Consul of the new Republic.

The *Eroica* was initially intended as a tribute to the great liberator of Europe, but as Beethoven's friend and first biographer Ferdinand Ries recounted in one of the most famous Beethoven tales of all, when Napoleon declared himself Emperor, all that changed.

Beethoven was well advanced on the score of what was to become the *Eroica* and had taken the opportunity to show it to Ries and their friend Count Lichnowsky. Standing over the orchestral score whose title page read simply 'Buonaparte' at the top and 'Luigi van Beethoven' at the bottom, Ries himself delivered the news that Napoleon had just recently assumed imperial honours, and then stood back as Beethoven exploded: *...he flew into a rage and shouted, 'So he too is nothing more than an ordinary man! Now he also will trample all human rights underfoot, and only pander to his own ambition; he will place himself above everyone else and become a tyrant!' Beethoven went to the table, took hold of the title page at the top, ripped it all the way through, and flung it on the floor. The first page was written anew and only then did the symphony receive the title Eroica.*

It makes a grand tale, this story of how the passion for human rights and the noble dignity of common humanity so possessed the composer. Less well appreciated, however, is the fact that Beethoven sold the resulting score back to the nobility. The *Eroica* was premiered in the palace of the composer's friend and patron Prince Lobkowitz, who had bought the manuscript, and it was performed there on several occasions before the public finally got to hear it for themselves, on 7 April 1805. Beethoven may have been a great champion of the masses, but he was also a loyal employee of the very establishment against which he railed.

Not that the public necessarily missed out on anything during those first performances of what was at the time the longest, most ambitious symphony ever composed. Rehearsals went abysmally, with the musicians confused by a work whose musical gestures and intellectual scope seemed to verge on madness. During a rehearsal of the famous moment in the first movement where two violins hold a chord and the horn enters in an intentionally unexpected manner, Ries blamed the horn player for what he told Beethoven was a terrible sound.

Beethoven, knowing it had been played exactly as written, was insulted and took a long time to forgive his friend. During another palace performance which Beethoven conducted, he himself had difficulty keeping the rhythm in the first movement, the thing fell apart, and the under-rehearsed orchestra had to start the whole symphony all over again.

But it's not surprising that the work encountered such difficulties early in its career. Even today, it sounds like a new world of music opening up, and charts far greater emotional and thematic territory than either of its two Classically-structured predecessors. And yet it did so with just the addition of an extra (third) horn and nothing else to augment the standard Classical orchestra.

Beethoven composed the bulk of it at Heiligenstadt, the small village just outside of Vienna, in 1802 and 1803, completing it in the spring of the following year. It was a difficult time for him, with the composer penning the quasi-suicidal 'Heiligenstadt Testament' signing over his possessions to his brothers in 1802, his disillusionment with the Revolution and struggles over *Fidelio* plaguing him, and then with Napoleon making the first of his two assaults on Vienna as the work was publicly premiered in 1805. Most of all, of course, his deafness was becoming truly problematic for a man trying to pursue his career as a performing musician.

As his hearing deteriorated, his stage performances became increasingly eccentric around this time, on one occasion causing him to forget he was playing the solo piano in a concerto and instead beginning to conduct, whereupon he sent the lights on the piano flying, and the audience into hysterics.

But for all its troubled origins, there's nothing comic or unruly about the *Eroica*. It begins with two mighty chords, the 'noble' key of E flat major well and truly established at the outset, before the famous theme in the cellos gets the epic journey underway with a little sting in the tail as a disconcerting C sharp finds its way into the fifth bar of the theme. From there, this grand movement demonstrates the stuff that made Beethoven a legend – the violent mood swings, the stormy and dissonant fugal passages, the emphatic chords played off the beat, the dramatic and increasingly heroic reappearances of the main theme, and a Coda whose scope and originality make it almost suggest the beginning of another full-scale movement in itself.

As the symphony looks forward nearly a century to Gustav Mahler, a funeral march follows as the second movement, presumably in honour of some imaginary military hero. (The slight and swarthy Napoleon, now dead and buried as Beethoven's heroic icon, would soon be replaced in the German consciousness by Wagner's all-conquering blonde Siegfried.) The low strings provide the rumble in the absence of timpani, the tempo just avoids becoming leaden, but every so often a ray of light emerges as major keys drift by. And at the end, there is no march beat left. Where did the hero go?



Suddenly, though, the *Scherzo* (the term Beethoven had introduced in his previous symphony) bursts forth with renewed vigour and with a brio which is all the more compelling through contrast with the slough of despond which preceded it. The oboe chirrup away and the strings play a jaunty little rhythmic patter, and for pages at a time Beethoven steadfastly avoids the home key, until at last its long-anticipated arrival becomes inevitable. And then there is the (for once) appropriately-named Trio, and its famous passage for the three horns. For all its power and spectacle, though, the Trio ends quietly, and soon we are back into the scherzo proper, its easy-going passage now disrupted only by some unexpected rhythmic disruptions in the main theme.

Beethoven used the theme of the *Eroica's* finale in a variety of different compositions – in the ballet *Prometheus*, for instance, in which it represents the fire and creativity of the mythical hero – but its use here is rather enigmatic. What we think is the initial theme actually reveals itself to be the bass line. (Beethoven's sense of humour can be an acquired taste.) Eventually, though, the contrapuntal textures develop extraordinary richness and the characteristic mood-swings emerge, with marches, skitty variations on the main theme, and then, towards the end, an imposing change of tempo. Now at last all the pieces of the puzzle come together, and with majestic power, we reach the final *Presto*, with the horns once more to the fore and the home chord returning with emphatic force.

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About The Music

Modest Mussorgsky arr. Julian Yu

Pictures at an Exhibition

Mussorgsky wrote his piano suite *Pictures at an Exhibition* in 1874. By the year 2000 Mussorgsky's work had already been arranged for orchestra by over 70 different composers, to say nothing of the numerous non-orchestral arrangements.

The version you hear tonight is a unique one for chamber orchestra by Australian-Chinese composer Julian Yu. A Japanese critic has said of Yu's arrangement: "Ravel's position is unshakeable, but from an intellectual point of view, this new arrangement surpasses that of Ravel".

The uniqueness of Yu's version is due at least in part to his background in Chinese music with its refined elegance and its tradition of ornamentation, of 'making something new from the old'. He does not aim for grandeur but contrast, and gives himself the freedom to diverge from and develop Mussorgsky's original ideas. His orchestration is rich and varied, with a refinement of timbre often heard in chamber music and in Chinese instrumental music. The pentatonic nature of Mussorgsky's Promenade theme lends itself to oriental

treatment, and in one spot Yu even breaks into fragments of a well-known Chinese melody, Han Tian Lei. But mostly the oriental influence occurs on a subtle level.

This version is far more than clever copying. Yu uses solo instruments to represent characters: Yu has added a newly composed viola cadenza in the last occurrence of the Promenade. Samuel Goldenberg, the rich Jew, is portrayed by solo double bass, the poor Jew by the clarinet, and the children playing in the Tuilleries Gardens by the xylophone.

Sometimes several instruments each take one note of the melody, which they sustain to create an artificial echo such as might be heard in a large cathedral.

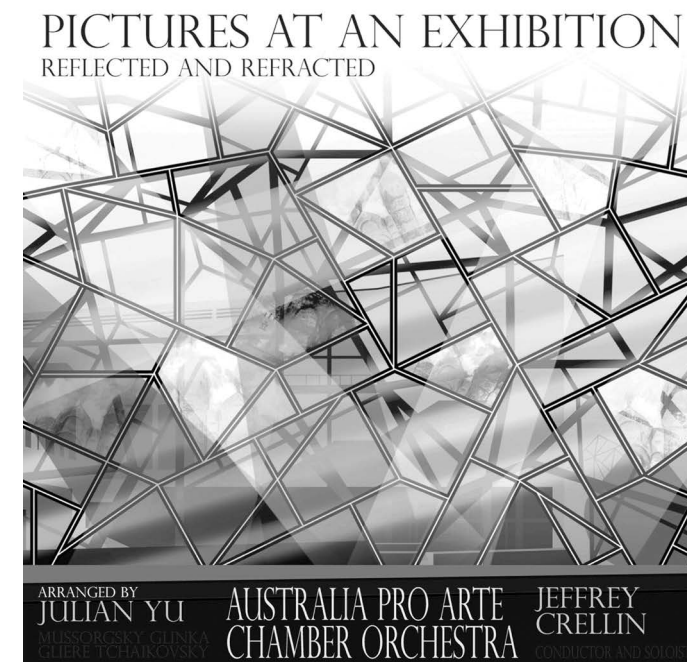
Yu achieves a highly original sound through the traditional method of hocket (distribution of the notes of a melody between two or more players). Often the effect is heightened by Webern-like pointillism, resulting in big jumps in pitch albeit here in a tonal context.



Often throughout the work a specific sound effect is used to convey a certain image. A few examples are the tone clusters with crescendo and trombone glissandi describing the straining of the oxen pulling the cart in *Bydlo*; the parallel major and minor second intervals imitating the high-pitched voices of children arguing and bickering in the *Tuileries*; and the pitchless sound of rushing air and rhythmic pitchless tonguing describing the witch flying over the forest at night in *Babayaga*.

There are many new elements in this piece, most notably the inclusion of snatches of the Chinese melody Han Tian Lei in the *Promenade*, and a new layer of chords creating a mysterious sound in the *Catacombs*. In *Talking with the dead* in the *Language of the Dead*, the celesta plays a few tinkling arpeggio notes to convey the glowing of the skulls, and the whole work concludes with a peal of bell chimes.

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Julian Yu's arrangement of "Pictures" is available on CD for \$25.

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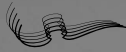
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“ Combination of classical, modern and quirky. Just how memories work! Words carefully curated and beautifully delivered. Kate also delivered something very special to the evening – and the combination of Kate and Camerata was quite magical.

Noela L'Estrange, 2025 *Your Eternal Memories*

“ Great repertoire. Good commentary. Friendly and great to talk to. Excellent sound mix. Magnificent musicians, who obviously love playing and performing.

Lynelle Hahn, 2025 *Regional Tour*

“ The interesting combination of the choir with Camerata. I have attended other events in which Camerata have incorporated other artists into their concerts and each has been a wonderful creative collaboration. I was sure this would also be a wonderful night out.

Bronwen Howson, 2025 *Celestial Choral Baroque*

“ Everything! The baroque music including the bonus encore, the modern music, some ethereal, some quirky; the inclusion of the excellent choir, and the always high standard of Camerata.

Marie Cameron, 2025 *Celestial Choral Baroque*



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