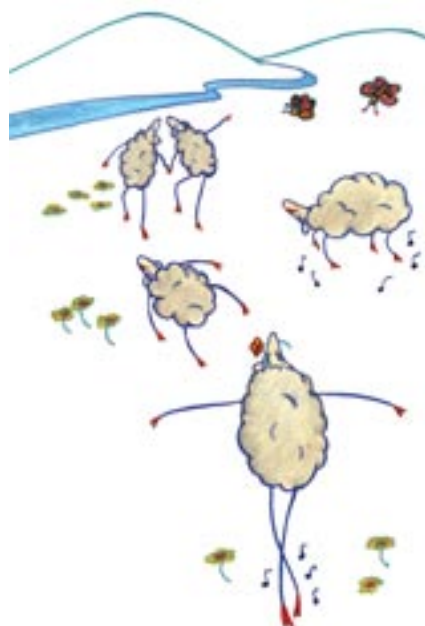


# BALMAIN SINFONIA

in association with



## BEETHOVEN PASTORAL SYMPHONY



Sunday March 18th 2007, 2.30pm  
Macquarie University Theatre

**Borodin:** Prince Igor Overture  
**Brahms:** Piano Concerto No. 2  
**Beethoven:** Symphony No. 6

**Soloist:** Benjamin Kopp  
**Conductor:** Gary Stavrou

FREE PARKING FOR CONCERT-GOERS IN CARPARKS W4 AND X3 ONLY

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## FEATURED ARTIST **Benjamin Kopp**

Pianist Benjamin Kopp has made a mark on the Australian music scene in recent years. His concert activities have seen him perform with all the major Australian symphony orchestras, including playing Prokofiev's Concerto No. 2 with Vladimir Verbitsky as conductor and Mozart's Concerto K488 under the baton of Marco Zuccarini. His performance of Mozart's K414 with John Harding received two repeat performances.

Highlights of 2005 included a self-conducted performance of K414 with the ANAM orchestra, performances as part

of the newly formed and already highly acclaimed Emerald Trio, a performance of Messiaen's mammoth two-piano work 'Visions de l'Amen' with Leigh Harrold and a performance of the Don Banks Horn Trio in the Melbourne Arts Festival.

Kopp's recent CD releases include appearances on the hugely successful Hush CD, which was made to raise money for the Royal Children's Hospital, and a CD of Australian two-piano works with Jennifer Hammond.

# FROM THE PODIUM

## Gary Stavrou

Welcome to our second year at Macquarie University. There is much to like about our new venue. The acoustics are good, the view of the orchestra is excellent and the free parking is very welcome.

Our concerto for the next program is one of the greatest piano works in the repertoire, Brahms's second. This is a work on a grand scale, almost a "symphony with piano". It requires musical maturity from the soloist.

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Although Ben Kopp is young in years, he has had the experience needed to tackle this work. I'm greatly looking forward to it.

Zhu Wen, who has recently been our concertmaster has had to withdraw as her career is taking her overseas. We are delighted to welcome her replacement, Jeremy Williams. Jeremy is a very experienced orchestral musician and is violist with the Grainger Quartet.

2007 is a concerto competition year for us. If you know of good string players under 24 years of age who might be interested, please ask them to get in touch with us.

## OUR NEXT CONCERT

### The Music

#### **Borodin : Overture to Prince Igor**

Alexander Borodin was a chemist by profession, but is more readily remembered as one of the finest of nineteenth century Russian composers. Borodin's dual life prevented him from completing a number of important musical works, among them the opera Prince Igor which was completed by Rimsky-Korsakov and his pupil Glazunov, and three years after his death received its first performance. Borodin never wrote down the overture, but Glazunov heard him play it so frequently that it was an easy matter for him to orchestrate it according to Borodin's wishes.

#### **Brahms : Piano Concerto No. 2**

Unlike his first Piano Concerto, which was rather coolly received, Brahms's Piano Concerto No. 2 was a great success. In the more than twenty years between the two works, Brahms had become a self-confident and internationally acknowledged master of symphonic form. While his youthful first concerto had been a brilliant and somewhat autobiographical work, Brahms himself was aware of its shortcomings, most of which resulted from his inexperience in orchestration. In contrast, the second concerto is a more mature and emotionally reserved work that makes skilful use of the orchestra. The work was composed directly after the completion of his second symphony, and the elements of his mature symphonic style are heard in this concerto. Brahms even adds a fourth movement,

expanding the typical three-movement concerto form to symphonic proportions. It is considered one of the most difficult works in the repertoire.

#### **Beethoven : Symphony No. 6**

At the start of the 19th century, the city of Vienna was surrounded by villages and spa-towns, nestling amid the rolling hills of the Danube valley. The Viennese would escape each summer to Baden, Heiligenstadt and Döbling, and Beethoven took particular solace in these rural retreats. The peace and solitude he found amid nature gave him a happy escape from the worries and conflicts of his life in the city. He was acutely aware of his declining hearing and worried by the political turmoil of the time, as Vienna was bombarded and captured by Napoleon in November 1805, and again in May 1809. Beethoven seems to have seen in nature a revelation of a higher and better state of being, and numerous contemporaries have recorded how much the countryside meant to him. Vincent D'Indy wrote: "Nature was to Beethoven not only a consoler for his sorrows and disenchantments; she was also a friend with whom he took pleasure in familiar talk, the only intercourse to which his deafness interposed no obstacle." Beethoven's feeling for the countryside finally blossomed in the composition of his sixth symphony between the summers of 1807 and 1808. He himself gave it the title "Pastoral" to reveal the source of his inspiration.