

A young man with dark hair is shown in profile, playing a violin. He is wearing a light-colored shirt. The background is a soft, yellowish glow. The overall image has a blue and yellow color scheme.

**ZM** Zelman  
**SO** Memorial  
Symphony  
Orchestra

# A Future Star

**Nicholas Feng**  
Violin

**Rick Prakhoff**  
Conductor

**Natalia Carter**  
Assistant Conductor

**Saturday 7 December | 7.30pm**

Performing Arts Centre,  
Camberwell Grammar School

# Zelman Memorial Symphony Orchestra Members

## Concertmaster

Susan Pierotti

## Violin I

Susan Pierotti\*  
Anne Martonyi  
Katie Hardcastle  
Sylvia Winfield  
Kären Love  
Pamela Fewster  
David Chan  
Judith Cotterill  
Cameron Hough

## Violin II

Marika Wanklyn\*  
Michael Poulton  
Geoffrey Menon  
Amelia In  
Celia Callan  
Samantha Richardson  
Rebecca Worth  
Boris Chan  
Devon Buy  
Kiwon Lee  
Peter Hiew

## Viola

Garry Zhu\*  
Daniel Kirkham  
Alice Choate  
Phil Poulton  
David Kellam  
George Deutsch OAM  
Nicholas Wong

## Violoncello

Lily Rayner\*\*  
Adrian Binkert\*  
Jenny Rowlands  
Elizabeth Radcliffe  
Fiona Chorovski  
Jane Whitelock  
Nicola Vaughan  
Rosemary Ingram  
Helen Alonso  
Dennis Vaughan

## Double Bass

David Williams OAM\*  
Leanne Power  
Brenden Morris  
Cian Channon-Ling  
Michael Addis

## Flute

Carol Galea\*  
David Rowlands

## Piccolo

Sophie Burgess\*

## Oboe

Serena Chen\*\*  
Ruby Khuu

## Cor Anglais

Kailen Cresp\*

## Clarinet

Gary Kirby\*  
Toby Bell

## Eb Clarinet

Sam Webber\*\*

## Bass Clarinet

Brendan Toohey\*\*

## Bassoon

Joshua Elrom\*  
Dominique Mirabella

## Contrabassoon

Jo Angus\*\*

## Horn

Henry Eames\*\*  
Clynton Royle  
Jo Spencer\*  
Megan Spragg

## Trumpet

Bridie Golding\*  
Lulu Lamont  
Grace Robertson

## Trombone

Jamie Grima\*  
Oscar Milic

## Bass Trombone

Luke Adams\*\*

## Tuba

Rowan Taylor\*\*

## Timpani

Sasha Wee\*\*

## Percussion

Tirion Luff-White\*\*  
Benjamin Smith  
Christine Flood  
Brynn Jacka

## Harp

Vanessa McKeand\*\*

## Pianoforte & Celeste

Marie Saito\*

## Program Notes

Roger Howell

\* Principal Player

\*\* Guest Principal Player

# Today's Program

**Linda Kouvaras** Eidyllion for Orchestra 10 mins

**Mendelssohn** Violin Concerto in E minor, Op. 64, MWV O 14 30 mins

- I. *Allegro molto appassionato*
- II. *Andante*
- III. *Allegretto non troppo – Allegro molto vivace*

– *Interval* –

**Prokofiev** Symphony no. 5 in B flat, Op. 100 45 mins

- I. *Andante*
- II. *Allegro marcato*
- III. *Adagio*
- IV. *Allegro giocoso*

## Acknowledging Country

Our musical Acknowledgment of Country, *Long Time Living Here* by Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO, will be performed at this concert. The welcome will be spoken by Peter Nicholson.

*The concert lasts approximately two hours including a 20 minute interval.  
Complimentary supper (hot drinks and biscuits) will be served at interval.*

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# Rick Prakhoff

**Artistic Director and  
Principal Conductor**



Conducting was the obvious choice for Rick to allow him to perform the music which first engaged him as a child. It was during his second extended stay in London, seeking a career as a classical guitarist, that he realised he had heard far more orchestral, choral and operatic performances than guitar concerts. Conducting was the only career path which would allow him to finally perform the repertoire he truly loved.

Following his BMus in Perth at WAAPA (majoring in conducting) Rick's training continued in Melbourne when he was selected for Symphony Australia's Young Conductor programme, working for five years in intensive workshops with renowned conducting teachers Jorma Panula, Gustav Meier, Noam Sherif, Vernon Handley and Johannes Fritzsich, working with WASO, OV, QSO, ASO and the AOBO.

As a freelance conductor Rick has performed with orchestras, choirs and opera companies in Sydney, Canberra, Perth and Melbourne.

Rick was appointed as Artistic Director of the Zelman Memorial Symphony Orchestra in 2018 and has been the Artistic Director of the Melbourne Bach Choir since its inception in 2005.

Following their first collaboration with a performance in the Melbourne Town Hall of the Verdi Requiem in 2019, Zelman, the MBC and bass Adrian Tamburini joined for a memorable performance in the Myer Music Bowl in March 2021 by Zelman's commission of composer Luke Styles' No Friend But the Mountains: A Symphonic Song Cycle, based on the remarkable book by Kurdish refugee Behrouz Bouchani, detailing his incarceration by the Australian Government.

Rick was honoured to lead Zelman and the MBC in their performance of Mahler's epic Symphony no. 2 in September 2023 to highlight Zelman's 90th anniversary.

# Nicholas Feng

Violin



Nicholas Feng is a 13-year-old Melbourne-born violinist who studies with Professor Dr Robin Wilson, Professor of Violin at the Royal Academy of Music London and the Yehudi Menuhin School UK.

Nicholas started his musical journey on piano at the age of four and began learning the violin at eight. Within just two years he earned numerous awards in national competitions, including first prizes at the Boroondara Eisteddfod, the Monash Music Festival, the Bendigo Music Competition and the Latrobe Valley Eisteddfod. In 2022, Nicholas was awarded the first prize in the Musical Society of Victoria (MSV) *Stella Nemet Award for strings* and a full music scholarship to Camberwell Grammar School. In 2023, Nicholas won the Audience Prize in the 34th Preston Youth Concerto Competition and was invited to perform Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole* with the Whitehorse Orchestra.

Recently, Nicholas was the first prize winner of the 2024 Baroque Competition held at the Melbourne Recital Centre and was invited to play on 3MBS Radio's morning recital.

Nicholas currently studies the violin at the Yehudi Menuhin School in the UK.

Nicholas has previously received guidance from Sophie Rowell, Mark Mogilevski, Lisa Grosman, Christine Johnson, Dr Kenji Fujimura and Sinky Xu. He has also attended masterclasses with Prof. Kirill Troussov (Germany), Anna Dorothea Mutterer (Germany), Alexandre Da Costa (Canada), Stephen Rose (USA), Rachael Beesley (Australia) and Dr Anna McMichael (Australia).

Nicholas has embraced collaborative opportunities, participating in chamber music ensembles and orchestras. He is also a passionate pianist who has been showcased on MSV's special concert at the Maxwell Grove House Studio, 3MBS' *The Talent* and the *Kawai Piano Live*. Beyond music, he has a deep love for animals and enjoys reading, table tennis, swimming and travelling.

# Natalia Carter

Assistant Conductor



Natalia Carter is a conductor and pianist from Brisbane, who is currently based in Melbourne. She recently completed a Master of Music (Performance Teaching) at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music. Throughout this degree, Natalia specialised in conducting and piano performance, while furthering her music teaching education. Earlier this year, she was invited to conduct the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra through the Australian Conducting Academy launchpad program. The 23-year-old was awarded the University of Melbourne conducting prize and was invited to conduct the exceptional student orchestras at the State Music Camp. Previously, in her Bachelor of Music (Honours), she was awarded the University of Queensland conducting prize, which involved a mentorship with Maestro Dane Lam. Presently, Natalia proudly holds the position of assistant conductor to the Zelman Memorial Symphony Orchestra.

In Brisbane, Natalia was the resident conductor of the UQ Sketch ensemble who primarily focussed on premiering new Australian works. She was also appointed resident conductor of the Queensland University of Technology Orchestra and Concert Band. She has guest-conducted the University of Queensland Symphony Orchestra, the Queensland Youth Orchestra Wind Symphony, the Orchestra Concertino and The Australian Voices.

Natalia studied piano under the tutelage of Dr Anna Grinberg for four years. In that time, she gave yearly recitals, that featured music by women, underrepresented composers, and she premiered several new works. As well as performing, Natalia has worked as a music educator for the past seven years. She is immensely passionate about nurturing the next generation of musicians.

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# Linda Kouvaras

Composer



Dr Linda Kouvaras, composer/musicologist/pianist/educator, is Professor at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, the University of Melbourne. She is one of Australia's increasingly sought-after composers and leading scholars in postmodernism and feminist musicology.

Kouvaras has over 50 significant, strong-impact further publications through leading international publishing houses and refereed journals. She is recognised in forty-plus Grants/Residencies/Awards.

Kouvaras has over 60 recordings and publications of her compositions and as pianist on prestigious international and national labels, with more than 100 performances at major festivals and other concerts, frequent radio broadcasts across Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, USA, Asia and Europe, and she also publishes with Reed Music.. Kouvaras has full artist representation at the Australian Music Centre and with the Australasian Performing Rights Association.

*Kouvaras: PianoWorks* (2000), a solo CD of original piano works, was *CD of the Week* on ABC Classic. Kouvaras' compositions receive numerous and positive reviews (incl. *Records International, Limelight, the Age, New Classics: Modern, Amazon UK, Libretto, Association of Independent Record Labels, Classic Melbourne and Music Trust*). An 8-CD project is in progress, commissioned and curated by concert pianist Coady Green of all Kouvaras' instrumental works, chamber music and songs written since 1991, through Toccata Classics (London).

Kouvaras is a piano examiner for the Australian Music Examinations Board and was Senior Resident Tutor in Music and a Research Fellow at Ormond College 1993–2021. Linda has enjoyed several artist-in-residence positions at Bundanon, NSW, the Arthur and Yvonne Boyd Estate since 1999, and she is the 2024 Artist-in-Residence at the Lyceum Club, Melbourne.

# Program Notes

## Eidyllion for Orchestra

Linda Kouvaras  
(born 1960)

Having been writing intensively to commissions for solo and chamber music works over the past several years, it was lovely to be approached by Rick Prakhoff to write a piece for Zelman Symphony. The word *idyll* is from the Greek *eidyllion*, 'little picture', a short poem of a pastoral or rural character in which something of the element of landscape is depicted or suggested. I wanted to write a work that was predominantly bucolic and soothing in affect, in response to the precarity and volatility of the current times.

For the majority of the piece, which is in one continuous movement, my pastoral scene is an interior imagining: it takes place in the mind, rather than in response to any specific pictorial tableau. That said, one part of *Eydillion* does recall an actual place. The middle section is an

elaborated quote from my *Bundanon Sonata for Violin and Piano* (2011) — the fourth movement, *Earth Art Could Fall From the Skies*. I composed this work on my fourth Artist Residency at Bundanon, bequeathed to the nation by the Arthur and Yvonne Boyd estate, situated near Nowra, NSW. This movement refers to the plethora of contemporary site-specific artworks around the vast property, not only on the ground but also up in the trees.

The opening theme of *Eydillion* returns in various guises, one of which affords an obligato piano moment in the spotlight. I wanted to give the sense of travelling through this interior journey, time unfolding, terrain — of a non-specified nature — traversed. A triumphant, ecstatic end is presented by the orchestra, in tutti.

*Linda Kouvaras, November 2024*

*Zelman Symphony is grateful to the City of Boroondara (as a part of the 2023–26 Triennial Operational Grant) and, Kathy and George Deutsch for generously funding the composition of Eidyllion for Orchestra by Linda Kouvaras.*

In the first project of its kind in Australia, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra has developed a musical Acknowledgment of Country with music composed by Yorta Yorta composer Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO, featuring Indigenous languages from across Victoria. Generously supported by Helen Macpherson Smith Trust and the Commonwealth Government through the Australian National Commission for UNESCO, the MSO is working in partnership with Short Black Opera and Indigenous language custodians who are generously sharing their cultural knowledge.

The Acknowledgement of Country allows us to pay our respects to the traditional owners of the land on which we perform in the language of that country and in the orchestral language of music.



## **Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64**

Felix Mendelssohn  
(1809–1847)

- I. Allegro molto appassionato                      II. Andante  
III. Finale: Allegretto non troppo – Allegro molto vivace

In 1838, Felix Mendelssohn began work on his Violin Concerto, Op. 64. It was written for his close friend, violinist Ferdinand David, who the composer had appointed as the concertmaster of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra three years earlier. Mendelssohn's friendship with David began in 1825 when they became regular chamber music partners whilst the Mendelssohn family were living in Berlin. In addition to David's appointment as the Gewandhaus Orchestra's concertmaster ten years later, Mendelssohn also founded the Leipzig Conservatory and appointed David to the staff.

Although Mendelssohn had written to David in 1838 announcing that he had planned to write a concerto for him, work didn't begin in earnest until 1844. The composer consulted David frequently on technical and compositional issues and it was completed ready for publishing in September that year – or so Mendelssohn thought. Although he had sent the score to his publisher, he was still asking David's advice on certain passages as late as November. David then successfully premiered the concerto in March 1845 with Mendelssohn's assistant, Danish composer Niels Gade, conducting the Gewandhaus Orchestra. With Mendelssohn too ill to conduct on this first occasion, his chance came in the concerto's second performance in October that year.

To a gently pulsating accompaniment from the lower strings, the first movement opens with a lonely, but sweet melody from the soloist. This theme is then explored further by the soloist with only the occasional refrain

from the orchestra. When the second subject arrives, it is initiated by the orchestra alone with a warm chorale-like melody from the flutes and clarinets before the soloist takes over. In the development section, both themes are developed in an atmosphere of thunderous outbursts contrasted with more tender passages which lead directly to the soloist's cadenza. The dramatic effect created by the positioning of the cadenza here is further heightened by the virtuosic activity continuing into the recapitulation as a restatement of the first subject. In another surprise, a solo bassoon links the dramatic ending of the first movement to the dreamy lyricism of the second.

The second movement (Andante) is in ternary form (A-B-A). After a delicately orchestrated introduction where the texture gradually thickens, the soloist opens with a lyrical melody constructed in long phrases in the violin's upper register. Soon, the trumpets and timpani announce a more disturbing theme in which the soloist plays a restless accompaniment on the lower strings over a soaring high-register melody. Following a return of the opening melody, the soloist begins a new theme reminiscent of the concerto's opening in preparation for the third movement.

Following a trumpet fanfare, the soloist launches into a chirpy theme of joyful spirit. Soon a second theme emerges characterised by a slightly more danceable rhythm. Following a brief development section, both themes return heralding a coda of frenetic virtuosity.

# Symphony No. 5 in B flat, Op. 100

Sergei Prokofiev  
(1891–1953)

I. Andante  
III. Adagio

In the northern summer of 1944, Sergei Prokofiev relocated from Moscow to The Composers' House: a country retreat in Ivanovo, Russia, designed to give leading Soviet composers a chance to escape the wartime bombardment of Moscow and concentrate on their work. It was here where Prokofiev composed his fifth symphony. Fourteen long years had elapsed since the composer had written a symphony and he was keen to demonstrate what he had learned since his exile from Russia in 1917 and his permanent return home in 1936, with a new understanding of the Soviet mantra that all music must be "heroic, bright, and beautiful".

Prokofiev's earlier fourth symphony written for the Boston Symphony Orchestra in 1930 seemed to fit the Soviet mantra, but the work did not please its audiences at the American and Russian premieres. The main problem was that although it was one of the first works in what he called the 'new simplicity', this music was too simple and not balanced emotionally having been recycled from his ballet *The Prodigal Son* (1929). Once he had restored more cordial communication with Soviet authorities in 1932, Prokofiev was able to successfully incorporate the new style into his film music and orchestral suite *Lieutenant Kije* (1934), and his ballet *Romeo and Juliet* (1936), but he still hadn't written the ideal Soviet symphony he dreamed of.

By the time the fifth symphony had been written, Stalin's forces were repelling repeated attacks from the Nazis. As a tribute to Soviet resilience,

II. Allegro marcato  
IV. Allegro giocoso

Prokofiev declared the work to be "a hymn to free and happy man... and his pure and noble spirit". At the premiere on 13th of January 1945, Prokofiev had just lifted his baton to conduct when artillery fire suddenly rang out. He did not begin until the cannons had stopped – such was the importance of this new work.

The first movement is in a modified sonata form. The lyrically infused opening theme from flute and bassoon soon gives way to a slightly more agitated theme from the flute and oboe. The movement concludes with a powerful and percussive coda. The second movement is a scherzo set in toccata style as melodic fragments from the winds and strings weave around a rhythmic accompaniment. The third movement is an introspective Adagio with a lyrical melody from the woodwinds, and later the violins, set to a hypnotic rhythm in the lower strings. The central section is a funereal march which grows to a climax before subsiding. The finale is a joyful Rondo that recalls earlier themes in its introduction before a solo clarinet begins the spirited but lyrical allegro theme. This theme is interrupted twice by interludes from the flute and then a chorale from the strings. The symphony's frenetic final moments are coloured with the addition of a snare drum and woodblock.



The Zelman Memorial Symphony Orchestra's 118 year history goes back to 1906 when Alberto Zelman Jnr founded the first Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. These days, Zelman Symphony is known as amongst Australia's finest not-for-profit community orchestras.

In 1933, the Zelman Memorial Symphony Orchestra was founded and named in honour of maestro Alberto Zelman Jnr after Bernard Heinze invited the professional musicians of Alberto's orchestra to join him and others to create Australia's first fully professional orchestra – the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Following a line of outstanding conductors, Zelman Symphony is now led by artistic

director and principal conductor, Rick Prakhoff, with concertmaster Susan Pierotti. Musicians come from the amateur and professional world and have ranged in age from 12 to 91. Zelman Symphony's concerts are mostly held in accessible eastern suburban venues with major events held at Melbourne's major concert venues including Arts Centre Melbourne, the Melbourne Recital Centre, Melbourne Town Hall and the Sidney Myer Music Bowl.

Zelman Symphony has featured some of Australia's top soloists and works by Australian composers such as Elena Kats-Chernin and Harry Sdraulig. The orchestra has also featured in a two-part ABC TV documentary as well as radio broadcasts.

## Support Zelman Symphony

As a not-for-profit community arts organisation, we rely on the generosity of others to help support Zelman Symphony and to ensure it is here for another 90 years.

Your generosity will ensure Zelman Symphony continues to perform great music, work with Australia's leading soloists, continue the joy of community music-making and be recognised as one of the best community orchestras in Australia.

Zelman Symphony is a registered charity and gifts of \$2 and more are fully tax-deductible.

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