



HECTOR BERLIOZ 1803-1869

**Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14**

		[49'18]
1	I. Daydreams (Largo) – Passions (Allegro agitato e appassionato assai)	13'19
2	II. A Ball (Valse. Allegro non troppo)	6'00
3	III. In the Fields (Adagio)	15'45
4	IV. March to the Scaffold (Allegretto non troppo)	4'36
5	V. Dream of the Witches' Sabbath (Larghetto – Allegro – Dies irae – Witches' Round Dance – Dies irae and Witches' Round Dance together)	9'28

RECORDED AUGUST 1974 IN THE CONCERT HALL OF THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

**Willem van Otterloo conductor**

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART 1756-1791

**Flute Concerto No. 1 in G major, KV313**

		[24'34]
6	I. Allegro maestoso	9'07
7	II. Adagio non troppo	8'34
8	III. Rondo (Tempo di menuetto)	6'48

RECORDED 1976 IN THE ABC MUSIC STUDIOS, SYDNEY

**Neville Amadio flute**

**Patrick Thomas conductor**

Total Playing Time 74'05

**Sydney Symphony Orchestra**

HECTOR BERLIOZ

**Symphonie fantastique, Op. 14**

The premiere of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, on 5 December 1830, was greeted with shouts and the stamping of feet from the enthusiastic audience. But from Berlioz's point of view, the best comment on the piece came from one Madame Moke, who on the strength of it finally granted permission for him to marry her daughter Camille. The irony was that it was Camille who had passed on to Berlioz the gossip about his earlier idol, Irish actress Harriet Smithson, which had provoked the fit of jealous rage that inspired the whole symphony – and it was Harriet whom Berlioz married two years later.

Berlioz's entirely one-sided passion for Smithson had been consuming him for three years. When Berlioz heard the rumours about Smithson and her manager, he was overwhelmed, and composed the *Symphonie fantastique* or 'Episode in the Life of an Artist' to exorcise his feelings of betrayal.

Berlioz's original program tells of a young Musician who falls hopelessly in love with a woman who is everything he has ever dreamed of. He is obsessed by the image of his beloved and by a melody which invariably accompanies any thoughts of her – a double *idée fixe* constantly intruding on his peace of mind. Convinced that his love is unappreciated, he poisons himself with opium, but the dose is not strong enough to kill him and in his drugged sleep

he has nightmarish visions: he has killed his beloved and is led to the scaffold and beheaded; he sees himself at his own funeral, which becomes a grotesque devilish orgy.

How important is this program? Clearly, it is linked to Berlioz's own experience – yet not one of the events it describes had actually occurred in his own life. Berlioz was quite adamant that his art was intended to express 'passions and feelings', not paint pictures. The program is not a documentary to be judged on its accuracy; it is a journey that Berlioz wanted his audience to take with him.

The symphony begins with the sighing of melancholy *Daydreams* alternating with flurries of 'groundless joy', until a sudden Beethoven-like outburst ushers in the *Passions* and the *idée fixe* melody which will recur throughout the work, representing the woman of his dreams.

The second movement takes us to a ball, where the Musician catches sight of his beloved. The *idée fixe* appears twice, once as a central episode in the movement's rondo structure, and again towards the end before the brilliant, swirling coda.

*In the Fields* begins with a duet between cor anglais and off-stage oboe: 'two shepherds in the distance piping a *ranz des vaches* (shepherds' song)'. The *idée fixe* appears in the midst of passionate surges: 'thoughts of happiness disturbed by dark forebodings'. The Musician's

loneliness is symbolised musically when the cor anglais finally takes up the *ranz des vaches* again and the oboe does not answer; 'distant thunder' from two sets of timpani brings the music to an uneasy close.

In the *March to the Scaffold*, sinister mutterings from the timpani finally erupt in a savage theme first beaten out by the cellos and double basses. Bassoons and then low strings weave a mocking counterpoint around it until the grotesque march theme bursts out over deep blaring pedal tones from the trombones. The *idée fixe* appears at the end of the movement, 'like a last thought of love interrupted by the fatal stroke'.

Berlioz did not invent the idea of a Satanic orgy but he added another layer of meaning by giving the place of honour to the ghost of the young Musician's beloved, whose *idée fixe* theme here appears encrusted with grace notes and trills of mocking laughter: 'a common dance tune, trivial and grotesque'. Church bells sound and the solemn plainsong *Dies irae* theme from the requiem mass is caught up in the demonic revelry. The dance theme becomes the subject of a fugue: when combined with the *Dies irae* theme the impression of sacrilegious carousing is complete.

'One must draw the line somewhere,' wrote Edward Dannreuther in the first edition of Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1879). 'Bloodthirsty delirious passion such as is here

depicted may have been excited by gladiator and wild beast shows in Roman arenas; but its rites...are surely more honoured in the breach than in the observance.' Popular taste seems to have ignored this advice, and we are now quite used to seeing this and more on our television screens, but Berlioz's music still has the power to send a chill down our spines.

**Natalie Shea**  
**Symphony Services Australia**

#### WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART **Flute Concerto No. 1 in G major, KV313**

In October 1777, on his way to Paris, Mozart arrived at Mannheim, where he broke his journey and stayed some months; he also made the acquaintance of a wealthy Dutch patron of music who played the flute. This musical amateur (whose name was De Jean or Deschamps) commissioned several flute works from Mozart, including some quartets and two concertos. Mozart fulfilled only part of his contract; he composed one concerto for the impatient De Jean (KV313 in G major); for the second he adapted for flute a work he had written for the Salzburg oboist Giuseppe Ferlendis.

It is common to read that Mozart disliked the flute, although there is no evidence of that dislike in the music he wrote for the instrument. The suggestion arises from a letter he wrote home from Mannheim

*Neville Amadio*



several months after the commission had been offered. Justifying the delay in its completion – and possibly not wanting to reveal the distractions of his love affair with Aloysia Weber – Mozart told his father that he didn't always feel like working: 'And then, as you know, I get fed up when I have to write for the same instrument all the time, and for one I can't stand at that!' The commission that had delighted Mozart in December was frustrating him in February. But, as flautist Frans Vester suggests, the sudden hostility was probably directed more to the player (Mozart had no high opinion of De Jean's playing) than to the instrument.

The Mozart authority Alfred Einstein has suggested that De Jean must have objected to the slow movement of this flute concerto as being too difficult, because Mozart had to compose a substitute. From the technical point of view, the first and the third movements of the concerto are more difficult than the second, yet they were not changed. Einstein was referring to a different kind of difficulty:

*The slow movement is so personal, one might say so fantastic, so completely individual in character, that the man who commissioned the work evidently did not know what to do with it. Mozart then presumably had to replace it with a simpler, more pastoral or idyllic Andante in C.*

Mozart indeed had taken little notice of De Jean's request that the concertos should be 'short and

easy'. In spite of the relative delicacy of the solo instrument, the first movement is built on quite a massive scale, the point being to contrast the firmness of the opening subject with the more lyrical and tender melodies which follow.

The slow movement has been generally reckoned the richest and most beautiful in Mozart's flute concertos. The strings play muted throughout.

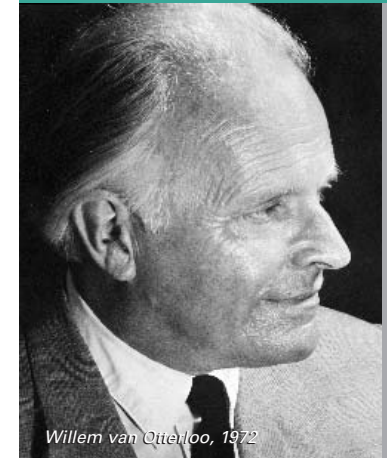
The *Rondo* 'in the tempo of a minuet', described by Einstein as 'a veritable fountain of good spirits and fresh invention', is graceful and elegant. On the last few pages the flute is allowed to indulge in a greater virtuosity than anywhere earlier in the concerto, but the movement, like some others of Mozart's in this tempo, ends quietly.

**David Garrett**

### **Willem van Otterloo** 1907-1978

Dutch conductor Willem van Otterloo was born in 1907. He studied cello and composition at the Amsterdam Conservatory, and made his conducting debut when his Suite No. 3 was awarded a prize by the Concertgebouw Orchestra. His first conducting position was with the Utrecht Municipal Orchestra, in which he had played cello. From 1949 until 1973 he was chief conductor of the Residentie Orchestra in The Hague, touring internationally and making many recordings in the 1950s. He toured for the ABC in 1962 and 1965, and the success of these visits led to his appointment in 1967 as Chief Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, which he led on two important North American tours. In 1973 he became Chief Conductor of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. With the SSO he toured Britain and Europe (1974), promoting the performance of Australian music in concerts overseas. He was revered for his vast knowledge, musical integrity and strong discipline, and his ability to bring a fine orchestral sound from his players. At the age of 70, and wishing to scale back on his Australian commitments, Willem van Otterloo negotiated with the ABC a reduced workload for the 1979 season and the title Principal Guest Conductor of both the Sydney and Melbourne orchestras. In 1978, a few days after the party farewelling him as the SSO

Chief, he was killed in a car accident in Melbourne. Willem van Otterloo's honours included Knight in the Order of the Dutch Lion and the French Légion d'honneur.



*Willem van Otterloo, 1972*

**Neville Amadio** 1913-2006

In 1928, at the age of 14, flautist Neville Amadio joined the 2FC Broadcasting Orchestra, an eight-piece studio ensemble, and in 1934 he was appointed Principal Flute of what is now the Sydney Symphony. He held this position until his retirement in 1978 – in all, a 50-year association with the ABC's Sydney orchestra. Born into a distinguished musical family (his older brothers included clarinettist Clive Amadio), Neville studied flute with his uncle, John Amadio, who married the singer Florence Austral. As Principal Flute in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra he became one of the orchestra's best-known players, and was considered by many of his peers, including Charles Mackerras, as one of the greatest flautists of the 20th century, a musician of great taste and mastery. As a soloist Neville Amadio appeared with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra on its international tours, and with many leading conductors, including Thomas Beecham, John Barbirolli, Otto Klemperer, George Szell, Eugene Goossens and Willem van Otterloo, and he performed as an associate artist with Elisabeth Schwarzkopf. He was a professor at the Sydney Conservatorium, where he had studied as a teenager, and an active chamber musician. In recognition of his services to music he was honoured with appointments as a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 1969 and as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1981.

**Patrick Thomas** b. 1932

Just one month older than the ABC, Patrick Thomas was born in Brisbane. His long association with the national broadcaster and its orchestras began in his early teens, when he performed as a flautist in 1944, continuing when he joined the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in 1951. He later turned his focus to conducting, and from 1978 to 1986 he was the ABC's Federal Conductor in Residence. Previous posts during the 1960s and early 70s included resident conductor for the national opera and ballet companies; Assistant Conductor of the South Australian (now Adelaide) Symphony Orchestra and Music Director of the ABC's radio chorus, the Adelaide Singers; and Chief Conductor of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. From 1973 until 1977 he was Chief Conductor of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. He performed internationally as a guest conductor, including engagements with the BBC Philharmonic and the Hallé Orchestra, and from 1988 until 1991 he was Artistic Director of the Wellington City Opera in New Zealand. His Australian activities included hundreds of concerts with the ABC orchestras, studio recordings, and a popular and distinctive series of school concerts. He promoted the performance of Australian music, a lifetime commitment recognised by an Australian Government Creative Artists Fellowship in 1990, the same year he received the Sir Bernard Heinze Award. In 1978 he was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE).

*Patrick Thomas*



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*Willem van Otterloo in conversation with  
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, 1973*

