

## SINFONIA CONCERTANTE

Friday 7 May, 5.30pm and 8.30pm  
Federation Concert Hall, Hobart

**Eivind Aadland** conductor  
**Emma McGrath** violin  
**Jonathan Békés** cello  
**David Nuttall** oboe  
**Tahnee van Herk** bassoon  
**Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra**

**HAYDN** Sinfonia concertante in B-flat, Hob.I.105 (23')

Allegro  
Andante  
Allegro con spirito

**MOZART** Symphony No 39 in E-flat, K 543 (30')

Adagio – Allegro  
Andante con moto  
Menuetto (Allegretto) – Trio – Menuetto  
Allegro

As a genre, the sinfonia concertante had its heyday in the second half of the 18th century. These were concerto-like works featuring more than one soloist and were generally not as showy as concertos for solo instrument. The sole contribution to the genre by Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) is this work, the Sinfonia concertante for violin, cello, oboe and bassoon. It seems that Haydn composed it at the suggestion of violinist and entrepreneur Johann Peter Salomon, who brought Haydn to London for two hugely successful concert tours in the early-to-mid 1790s. Haydn's Sinfonia concertante was premièred on the first of those tours, in London in March 1792, with Salomon as violin soloist. The work opens with a quick movement where, after a short tutti, the four solo instruments come to the fore in a back-and-forth conversation. The soloists take centre stage in the serene middle movement with the orchestra delivering discreet accompaniment. Trumpets, timpani and the full orchestra come charging forth at the opening of the finale. This gives way to a brief episode in the style of an operatic recitative with the solo violin taking the place of a singer. Given that Haydn wrote the violin part for Salomon, his concert organizer and promoter, he might have felt obliged to give his backer a star turn.

Although composed four years before his untimely death, the Symphony No 39 in E-flat by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) is among the last of his symphonies. All three final symphonies (Nos 39-41) were written in the space of just a few months in the middle of 1788. The orchestra is especially lavish and, in addition to the usual instruments, includes pairs of flutes, clarinets and trumpets. The symphony opens with a grand, slow introduction. The main theme comes with the arrival of the fast section, which sways to a triple beat and soon gives way to some powerful outbursts. The second movement, which is in the key of A-flat, opens with an extended paragraph for strings alone. The sound is warm, and the mood is calm and relaxed. But with the arrival of winds and horns we're ushered into a rather more tempestuous, unsettled place. As the movement progresses, these two elements – the calm and the stormy – play off one another. A robust Menuetto follows which, in turn, leads to a contrasting Trio with prominent parts for the clarinets. The lively finale, Allegro, offers structural coherence, wit and surprise in equal measure. Mozart sounds very much like Haydn here with all kinds of jokes – stops and starts, false leads, unexpected silences – contributing to the jocular mood.

Robert Gibson, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, © 2021

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