swimming pool and five well-heeled daughters, most being roughly my age. And so it somehow came to pass that I was summoned to the farm for the purpose of obliging this gentleman's fancy. I dutifully set out on my push-bike, a freshly procured copy of the 'Emperor' in my bag, feeling very much like a latter-day 'Pip' on his first visit to 'Miss Haversham'. Several such visits were to follow that summer.

Well, predictably I had no clue as how to best capitalise on my good fortune. It wasn't long before daughter No.1, my very own 'Estella' character, had given me up as a hopeless case. The best I could manage was to form a relationship with daughter No.2 that lasted all of three days. But what I mostly remember is the pleasure of using the swimming pool (alone) and playing the piano in a fine farmhouse (mostly alone). Ah, the folly of Youth!

ORCHESTRA

Conductor	Ashley Hopkins
Violins I	Michael Hunter, Emily Bouwhuis, Mary O'Brien, Sonya Bennett, Helen Lewis, Katie Lin, Kai-Ting Yang, David Kayrouz
Violins II	Alison Sorley, Tsui-Wen Chen, Susie Kasza, Ben King, Alison Talmage, Sharanya Sankaran, Roger Booth
Violas	Sharyn Palmer, Judith Gust, Robyn Strange, Pat Roderick, Neil Shepherd, Lawrence Yang
Celli	Dora Green, Maxine Cunliffe, Graham Falla, Hannah Jemmett, Luke Choi, Ella Cornfield
Bass	Andrew Kincaid, Huko Kobé
Flutes	Pene Brawn-Douglas, Rachael Knox
Oboes	Eugénie Middleton, Matthew O'Ryan
Clarinets	Julia Cornfield, Claire Turner
Bassoons	Jacqui Hopkins, Albee Ai
Horns	Janette Horrocks, Miriam Robinson
Trumpets	Dominic Cornfield, Mollie Cornfield
Timpani	Jenny Raven

Acknowledgements and thanks to:

Auckland Council

creative NZ COMMUNITIES

- Westlake Girls' High School for the loan of timpani
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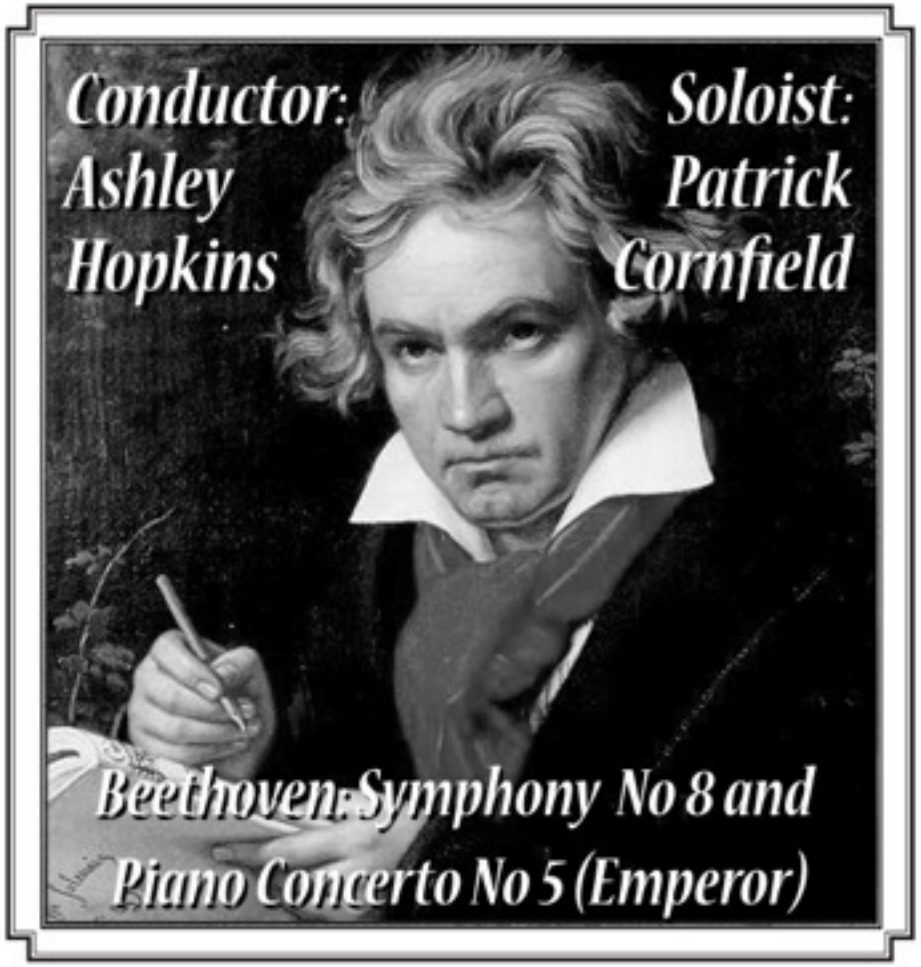
- The Vicar and parish of the Holy Trinity who have made us welcome
- National Library of New Zealand for music

Next Concert: 2pm Sunday, 8th July, Depot Artspace, with "Duo Tapas". For further information or to be on our mailing list, visit our website: http://dco.net.nz/

Devonport Chamber Orchestra



Sunday 24th June, 2pm

Holy Trinity, 20 Church St, Devonport

Admission $20, Children under 12 free

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827): Symphony No. 8 in F major

Beethoven composed his 7th and 8th symphonies in the summer of 1812 during a period of deep unhappiness. Increasingly withdrawn and antisocial because of his worsening deafness and ill-health, he left Vienna to avoid the danger of primitive sanitary conditions and traveled to Bohemia where, as well as completing the 8th symphony, he penned his famous letter to the "Immortal Beloved". Beethoven probably never sent the letter and nowhere did he reveal the identity of the woman with whom he'd had a brief and passionate affair.

The 8th symphony was premiered in 1814 at a concert that also included the 7th Symphony and Beethoven's popular "Wellington's Victory". As a shorter, lighter, and far more good-humoured work, the 8th suffered by comparison with the other two works. Later, when Beethoven's student Carl Czerny noted that the 8th wasn't as popular with audiences as the 7th symphony, Beethoven is said to have replied, "That's because the 8th is so much better."

The first movement is dominated by a buoyant opening theme, from which a related second theme emerges. One of Beethoven's witty touches is that the first and last bars of the movement are the same. The symphony has no slow movement, in fact, no heaviness anywhere. The *Allegretto scherzando* second movement is a reworking of music Beethoven had written in tribute to Johan Maelzel, an inventor who designed some of the ear trumpets Beethoven used, as well as refining and patenting the metronome. Incessant metronome ticking is evident in the woodwind ostinato of semiquavers that continues throughout most of the movement. For the third movement, Beethoven probably felt it would be unwise to follow the already humorous *allegretto* with another *scherzo* (joke) and so reverted to a more classical minuet and trio form. Yet the amusing touches do not entirely disappear. For example, the deceptive off-beat rhythms of this minuet would make it almost impossible for dancing.

Despite Beethoven's personal circumstances in 1812, the last movement is one of the most jovial he ever wrote. It takes off at a brilliant speed but quite softly at first until the end of the first theme when Beethoven tosses in a loud unison C-sharp - an odd exclamation point for an F major melody. Many moments of wit follow: tiny whispers that answer bold declarations, and gaping pauses when you can't help but wonder what will happen next. But Beethoven saves his best punch line until near the end when that inappropriate C-sharp returns one last time, however not as a stumbling block in an F major world, but as a gateway to the unlikely key of F-sharp minor. Then, in order to drag us back to the home key, the trumpets and timpani begin defiantly hammering away on F-natural. Finally they are joined by the rest of the orchestra and Beethoven has a last bit of fun by banging the tonic F major chord over and over, 45 times in fact, as if enthusiastically waving a finishing flag in the faces of audience.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827): piano Concerto No. 5 in Eb major

In May 1809, Napoleon invaded Vienna and Beethoven sought refuge in the cellar of a friend's house where he covered his sensitive ears with pillows to protect them from the concussion of the blasts. Later, he wrote to his publisher, "*We have passed through a great deal of misery. I tell you that since May 4th, I have brought into the world little that is connected; only here and there a fragment. The whole course of events has affected me body and soul... What a disturbing, wild life around me; nothing but drums, cannons, men, misery of all sorts.*"

Despite the chaos and turbulence of 1809, Beethoven was able to finish his last and largest piano concerto during that year. The name "Emperor" was certainly not given to the concerto by Beethoven who once wrote of Napoleon, "*This man will trample the rights of men underfoot and become a greater tyrant than any other.*" The name may have been tacked on by an early publisher because of the grand character of the work, although another story suggests that it originated from the premiere performance when one of Napoleon's soldiers, overcome by the majesty of the concerto, cried out: "*C'est l'Empereur!*"

The concerto begins in a highly unconventional manner, opening in resplendent majesty with three imperious orchestral chords, each in turn elaborated by the soloist in cascades of arpeggios, trills, scales and broken octaves. The piano writing is more brilliant than in any of Beethoven's earlier concertos and includes virtuosic passages in both hands simultaneously, dashing octave runs, and expressive melodic motifs, often in very close succession. After a furious development section there is a recapitulation of the main themes and then an orchestral chord on which a piano cadenza would normally be launched. However here, Beethoven wrote into the piano part, "*Do not play a cadenza, but begin immediately what follows*" and supplied a tiny, written-out solo passage. This was the first of his concertos that, because of his deafness and ill-health, Beethoven himself would not play, and so he wanted to have more control over the finished product by prescribing exactly what the soloist was to do.

The serene slow movement, in the remote key of B major, is one of Beethoven's most profound. A hushed mood of sublime simplicity offers a refreshing, soothing contrast to the militant grandeur and exuberance of the first movement. It makes use of two main elements only - a solemn tune first heard on muted violins, and a pensive theme with which the piano follows. Later, the soloist takes over the violin tune, elaborating and developing it. The woodwinds then repeat it while the piano accompanies, and finally nothing is left but a cold grey octave B in the bassoons which, in a magical moment, falls a semitone to become a long held B-flat for horns. Above this, the piano hesitantly plays two bars of ascending E-flat major harmonies amidst an atmosphere of suspense, followed immediately by an exuberant restatement of the same material as the main theme of the *Rondo* finale. The central episode of the *Rondo* takes on the characteristics of a sonata development and the main theme is taken to various distant keys before returning triumphantly to the home key. In the coda, the piano part grows progressively slower and quieter, with only the timpani as accompaniment. Having reached *adagio*, the tempo suddenly accelerates again and the work ends abruptly and triumphantly. Overall, a spirit of heroism infuses this music, and it stands as a stirring testament to Beethoven's heroic will to survive in trying times.

- Programme notes compiled by Roger Booth from several sources including Phillip Huscher, Barbara Heninger, Michael Steinberg, Günther Herbig, Michael Allsen and Robert Markow

Patrick ‘Paddy’ Cornfield writes...

I had a particularly bold program in mind for this, my 9th annual DCO concert, as 2012 is my 50th birthday year. Alas, resource constraints conspired against me yet again! So it was suggested that I might like to indulge someone else's fancy for a change - Beethoven's 'Emperor' piano concerto. And what a magnificent suggestion it has been for me to oblige. Only by learning this work have I come to realise the way it has influenced subsequent piano concertos. Compare the second movement with the same movement of the Grieg and Shostakovich's No.2 concerti, and you will hear one composer paying homage to another. My family's involvement in the Takapuna Grammar School's production of *West Side Story* was another impediment to my DCO ambitions, and, given the demands of that particular musical, perhaps it was for the best that I am only attempting to play a single concerto this year.

As usual, there is a back-story as to why this concerto has been gathering dust on my bookshelf, unlearnt and unloved, for over three decades. I never studied music at high school, but I always enjoyed the opportunity to perform, undaunted by my lack of rigorous tuition and technique. I quickly realised that the possession of some musical skill could afford one a certain degree of social mobility. (This must have been greatly more so in Beethoven’s time).

There was, in the village where I grew up, an influential local person whom my parents referred to as a 'Gentlemen Farmer'. This man had an interest in music – and in particular the last movement of the 'Emperor' concerto. He also happened to be in possession of a large