

Michelle Wong: Conductor

Born in Malaysia, Michelle holds a Bachelor of Music with Honours from the University of Auckland, majoring in musicology. She studied conducting under the tutelage of Professor Uwe Grodd and Dr Karen Grylls. Other artistic mentors include Peter Watts (UK/NZ), Markand Thakar (USA) and Rupert D'Cruze (UK). Since being accepted for the prestigious Summer Conducting Seminar at the Peabody Conservatory in 2016, Michelle has worked with the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, Trust Waikato Symphony Orchestra, Devonport Chamber Orchestra and the Bach Musica NZ, where she currently serves as Music Assistant to Music and Artistic Director - Rita Paczian.

Michelle has worked in music administration for six years before moving on to the position of Project Coordinator at the University of Auckland's Strategic Programmes Office. As the Director of the University Staff Choir, she promotes collegiality and organisational development through music-making in an encouraging environment.

ORCHESTRA

Violins I	Joseph Chen, Brecon Carter, Mary O'Brien, Helen Lewis, Joe Pinto, Sonya Aboltins, Tenwei Liu, Gillian Baynes
Violins II	Heidi Bowmast, David Kayrouz, Averil Griffin, Arthur Ranford, Nicola Couch, Susie Kasza, Roger Booth
Violas	Judith Gust, Sharyn Palmer, Neil Shepherd, Iona McDonald, Daniel Poloha, Pat Roderick
Cellos	Claire Postlethwaite, John Early, Kate Parker, Graham Falla, Mary Greig-Clayton, Michelle Caldicott, Kripa Ravi
Basses	Ted Malan, Samantha Cooke
Flutes	Pene Brawn-Douglas, Rebecca Grimwood
Oboes	Eugénie Middleton, Beverley Brockelbank
Clarinets	Julia Cornfield, Gautam Pathumanithy
Bassoons	David Nation, Charlotte Naden
Horns	Miriam Robinson, Henry Close, Rebekah Gray, Michael Grimwood
Trumpets	Michael Plunkett, Geoff Bold
Timpani	Patrick Cornfield

Acknowledgements and thanks to:

The Vicar and parish of Holy Trinity Church who always make us welcome.



Next Concert: 2pm Sunday, 6th October, Holy Trinity Church. For further information or to be on our mailing list, visit our website: <http://dco.net.nz/>

Devonport Chamber Orchestra



Maia-Dean Martin
Violin
Michelle Wong
Conductor

Beethoven: Leonora Overture No. 1
Mendelssohn: Violin Concerto

Sunday 1st September, 2pm
Holy Trinity, 20 Church St, Devonport
Adults \$15, Seniors/Students \$10,
Children under 12 free

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770 - 1827): Leonore Overture No. 1

Fidelio, Beethoven's only opera, was surely the most troubled musical project of his entire career. Nothing else caused as much effort and heartbreak as this composition which took ten years. It inspired four different overtures, and underwent two major revisions and a name change before convincing Beethoven that he was not a man of the theatre.

Beethoven was inspired by Ferdinando Paer's 1804 Italian opera *Leonora* to write his own version of the story of a heroic woman who disguises herself as a young man in order to infiltrate the prison where her husband is being kept as a political prisoner. Unfortunately, it was premiered in Vienna in November 1805 when the city was occupied by Napoleon's troops, and so only three performances were given. It wasn't well received either, and Beethoven was encouraged to shorten it, which he did for a new production that opened six months later. This second production lasted only two performances before Beethoven quarrelled with the theatre management and withdrew the opera. It was not until 1814 that a further revision, called *Fidelio* (the name the disguised Leonore gives herself), opened in Vienna to great success. For this production, Beethoven wrote an entirely new overture, shorter and more consistently upbeat in mood, to lead more effectively into the lighter opening scene, in which the jailer's daughter has fallen in love with "*Fidelio*".

The history of the four overtures to *Fidelio* is nearly as complicated as that of the opera itself. Their sequence is further confused by the numbers mistakenly given to them after the fact, so that Beethoven's first effort is now known as no. 2 and his second as no. 3. An overture written for a production in Prague that never took place was discovered after Beethoven's death and mistakenly called Leonore no. 1, thereby setting up this entire series of wrong numbers. The Leonore Overture No. 1 opens sombrely with a slowly-rising motif in the strings, finally finding a bright but still unsettled mood, as woodwinds join in. The tempo then turns animated and the music brightens, a sense of joy and hope emerging in the new, lively theme. Another slow section follows, but the sense of doubt is quickly cast aside by the emergence of a soaring, heroic theme, bringing the overture to a triumphant and joyful close.

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847): Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64

(Allegro molto appassionato, Andante, Allegretto non troppo)

In July 1838, Felix Mendelssohn wrote to his friend, the distinguished German violinist Ferdinand David, "*I'd like to write a violin concerto for you next winter; one in E minor sticks in my head, the beginning of which will not leave me in peace.*" The concerto took Mendelssohn six years to complete and he regularly consulted David for technical and compositional advice – a testament to how much Mendelssohn respected David, given that Mendelssohn himself was a very capable violinist. The concerto was first performed in Leipzig on 13 March 1845 with David as soloist. Mendelssohn was unable to conduct due to illness and the premiere was conducted by the Danish composer Niels Gade.

Mendelssohn's concerto is groundbreaking and goes against established concerto conventions in several ways. It breaks with the Romantic violin concerto tradition of

showpieces for the soloist with uninteresting orchestral parts and little need for artistry or passion from anyone. Mendelssohn referred to such concerti as merely "*juggler's tricks and rope dancer's feats.*" His was the first significant concerto for violin since Beethoven's, and was the last until the concertos of Bruch, Dvorak, Tchaikovsky and Brahms later in the 19th century.

Although he wasn't the first composer to introduce his soloist at the start of a concerto, Mendelssohn chose to do it in this work, letting soloist and orchestra explore the exposition of the main themes together instead of the more traditional double exposition, first with orchestra alone and then from the soloist. The idea was subsequently followed by nearly every 19th century composer except Brahms and Dvorák. It also stands out from previous concerti with its connected movements. There is no break between the first and second movements, with a held bassoon note connecting the two. The bridging passage between the last two movements begins almost immediately after the slow movement, with a melody that is similar to that of the opening, hinting at the cyclic form of the piece. The linking was designed to eliminate applause between movements so that the work could be heard as a coherent whole. This would have come as a surprise to audiences of the day, who were used to applauding between movements.

This violin concerto was to be Mendelssohn's last orchestral work and a masterpiece that remains one of the most popular in the solo concerto repertoire. It is also one of the most plagiarised concerti of all time, the most recent example being the theme of the second movement uplifted almost in its entirety for the song: "*I don't know how to love him*" in Andrew Lloyd-Webber's "*Jesus Christ Superstar*".

- Programme notes by Roger Booth from several sources including Steven Schwartz, Phillip Huscher, Richard Dyer, Elizabeth Schwartz, Michael Steinberg, Kevin Bazzana, Paul Schiavo, Lori Newman, Steven Lowe, Robert Cummings

Maia-Dean Martin: Violin Soloist

18 year-old Maia-Dean is from Whangarei. She was home-schooled for most of her life until last year when she attended Whangarei Girls High for one year. She has been playing violin since she was 3 years old and, for the first 10 years, her violin teacher was Victoria Harkness from Whangarei. For the last 6 years, Mary O'Brien from Auckland has been her tutor. Maia-Dean has participated in numerous competitions over the years and won several awards for 1st or 2nd place at the Whangarei, West Auckland and South Auckland Competitions, competed at the National Young Performer Awards in 2015 and 2017, and was awarded most promising young performer in the National Concerto Competition in 2013. She has also been to the semi-finals of the National Chamber Music Competitions in 2014-2018 in groups from Northland and Auckland. In 2018, Maia-Dean, together with her sister, her brother and a friend in the "*Te Ahi Kaa*" quartet from Northland, won the National Chamber Competition with a spell-binding performance of Schubert's Death and the Maiden quartet. She played the Lalo violin concerto with the Devonport Orchestra in 2018 and Sarasate and Lalo with the Auckland Symphony Orchestra in 2017 and 2018. Maia-Dean is currently studying music, majoring in violin performance at the University of Waikato, under the tutorship of Amalia Hall.

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