

Volume 17
Issue 3
August 2016



Freonotes

The Newsletter of the Fremantle
Symphony Orchestra

Spring

**Concert Details:
Fremantle Town Hall
3pm, Sunday 11th
September**

Vivaldi – *Spring (from The Four Seasons)*

Copland - *Appalachian Spring*
Pye - *The Seasons*

The spring is sprung, the grass is riz.
I wonder where the boidie is.
They say the boidie's on the wing.
But that's absoid. The wing is on the bird.

Well, the quality of our poetry in our next concert is going to be better than this little ditty - and I am still looking for someone who knows the complete poem as I heard it performed for a camp sketch quite a few years back.

Of course the concerto for our next performance will be Vivaldi's Spring and the plan had been to once again give you the instructions Vivaldi wrote into the music to describe the scenes. However, this is supposed to be the first of the four concerti and so Vivaldi apparently did not include those instructions. Instead, here is one person's analysis of the music, thanks for the wonders of the web. it looks reasonably accurate.

After a long winter in which the snow covers in white the great landscape, the spring arises like a colourful explosion, the flowers, the butterflies and the song of the birds initiates with a joy hymn whereupon this beautiful station is received.

The birds add themselves to the general joy with their trills and warblings (three solo violins). A far the smooth murmur of water little stream singsong is listened to, also in spring there are terrible heavy downpours announced with the lightning and the thunderclap.

The second movement draws a scene where a little shepherd has remained asleep, the smooth wind produces a beautiful murmur and the violin solo describes the sweet and calm dream of the little shepherd. In the third movement a popular celebration is described with jubilant songs and dances because of the Spring's arrival.



Copland wrote Appalachian Spring as a commission for Martha Graham's ballet company. However, the work that we now know has been altered in two key ways. Firstly, it was originally written for a chamber orchestra with only thirteen instruments. The second change is that what is commonly played is actually a suite that tells the story in a much more condensed form. The suite essentially represents the key parts of the plot of the story behind Appalachian Spring (without those little pesky additions that are purely to make it into a pretty ballet).

Originally, Copland did not have a title for the work and simply called it "Ballet for Martha." The Appalachian setting came later and it was a pure fluke that the music represented this setting.

The cast consists of American pioneers who have just built a new farmhouse upon their land. A few of the characters include a bride, groom, congregation, and various townspeople. The original ballet is comprised of 8 movements, or scenes. Some scenes are very fast, simulating the excitement of country fiddling, square dancing, and celebration of spring. Other movements are slower, reminiscent of the tenderness of family or the fears and curiosities faced by the early American pioneers in their new Appalachian home.

December Concert:
11th December 2016
3pm Fremantle Town Hall

Like to make your own contribution? We aren't picky, maybe you could ask a question to help makes sense of music.

Email us
FreoNotes@iinet.net.au



Tickets are now available at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/fremantle-symphony-orchestra-presents-spring-tickets-26753997928?ref=ebtnebtckt>. You can also purchase them by contacting FSO musicians or at the door.

Ticket prices:

Adults: \$25

Concession: \$20

Under 12s: Free

Our final work on the programme was written by our very own David Pye with poetry by Kevin Gillam, so we give you the outline of this work (over the next few pages) in their own words.

Composer's Note

This work found its initial inspiration in an amateur reading of Walton's *Façade* (which I was conducting and Kevin playing cello), a chance reading of Kevin's poetry collection, *Other Gravities*, a conversation with Kevin about the poetry underlying Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* and a conversation with violinist, Jessica Ipkendanz, about a performance of the Vivaldi she was preparing.

The concept of a violin concerto with narrated poetry caught all our imaginations. However we were very concerned that the piece should reflect the reality of our Australian experience of the seasons. In fact we quickly realised that there are many perceptions of the shifting seasons, often culturally linked to various factors including natural phenomena, religious and social festivals as well as the direct experience of the weather.

The work follows Vivaldi's structure of four concertos each of three movements. However, unlike the Vivaldi, our piece runs continuously with each movement evolving into the next just as the weather gradually evolves from one month to the next. Each movement is named after a month of the year with aspects of the construction of the piece based upon the weather statistics of an actual year in Perth (July 2003 – June 2004).

Conductor: David Pye

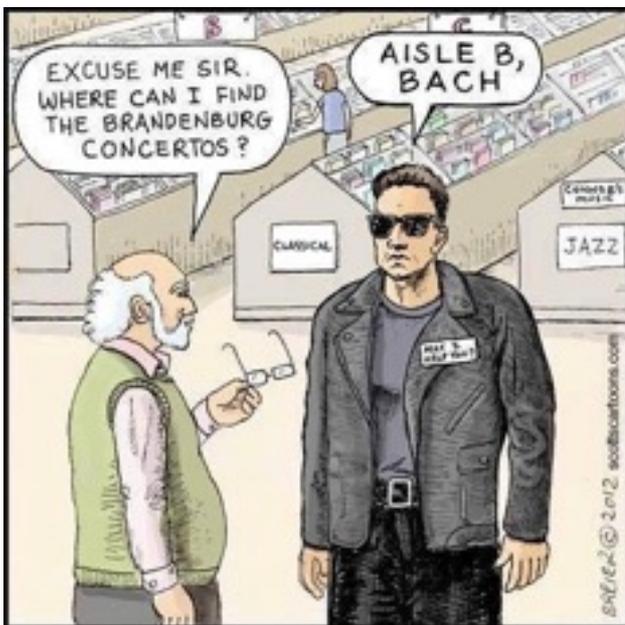
Most of our audience will know our long-time conductor and musical director, David Pye. Because he is such a regular, we do not always put his biography in the *FreoNotes*, but it has been a while, so for the benefit of some of our more recent readers, here is his background.

David Pye is one of WA's most experienced musicians, working as a composer, percussionist and conductor for the past twenty-five years. As musical director of various organisations, his programming reflects a policy of encouraging local composers combined with a practical acknowledgement of the importance of audience and musicians' enjoyment of their music-making.

In 1983 David founded Nova Ensemble to perform the classical music of the twentieth century and has overseen the development of the group into Western Australia's leading contemporary music ensemble, commissioning, writing, performing and recording music primarily by local composers. In 2002 he formed pi to specifically focus on the use of strings, reeds and percussion in an improvisational context.

In 1985 David was first invited to conduct for the West Australian Ballet Company, and in the following year joined the company as Resident Conductor. From 1988 to 1996, David was Musical Director of the West Australian Mandolin Orchestra.

David conducted his first program with the Fremantle Symphony Orchestra in 1997, presenting the world premieres of his own *Symphony no. 1* and also *Fremantle Fanfare*, a work commissioned by the orchestra from local composer, Robert Schulz. As a result of the success of this concert, David was appointed Musical Director of the FSO for 1998. Since then he has conducted many programs for the



The Terminator's day job

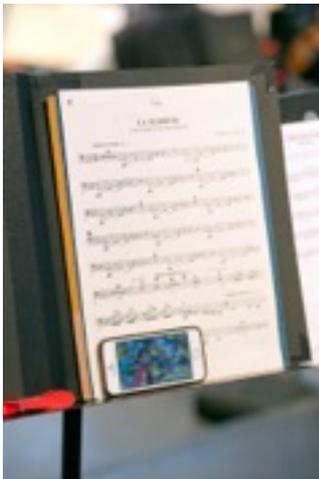
Poet's Note

The poems are written in six different forms, and are paired across a six month span. 'January'/'July' use a fibonacci number sequence for syllable count within their stanzas (3/5/8), the former being written with a repetitive aural scape in mind. 'February'/'August' are written in linked haibuns, haikus with two added lines. 'March'/'September' employ the sonnet, the most traditional poetic form in the work, although the stanza structure 8/6 lines is reversed in the latter. 'April'/'October' are villanelles, the 'tightest' form to be embraced. 'May'/'November' are written in an invented structure, with strict line/syllable counts of 13/8/5 (fibonacci), while 'June' and 'December' use the slowly evolving pantoum.

Diction and choice of imagery is designed to capture all the regions of the State, from Broome to the granite boulders of the Great Southern. The seasons and their naturalistic and cultural associations obviously differs in all locations. Unifying the entire text is the theme of water - its presence, 'lack of', and overriding importance to all. Rivers, dams, rain, creeks, seas, salt pans - water defines and shapes us both geographically and biologically. It also, however, laps and licks at our cultural and social milieus. Words in this piece act like water, flowing and creating inter-connections between syllable and sound.



Trombone vs. car.
Hint: the car won.



Spring – Concerto in E Major

Allegro

Springtime is upon us.

The birds celebrate her return with festive song,
and murmuring streams are softly caressed by the breezes.
Thunderstorms, those heralds of Spring, roar, casting their dark
mantle over heaven,
Then they die away to silence, and the birds take up their
charming songs once more.

Largo

On the flower-strewn meadow, with leafy branches rustling
overhead, the goat-herd sleeps, his faithful dog beside him.

Allegro

Led by the festive sound of rustic bagpipes, nymphs and
shepherds lightly dance beneath the brilliant canopy of spring.



So when does the music stop?

Most of these came from David Pye, who is conducting this concert:

The violas won by a semi quaver ... or half a semi quaver by the time you got to the end as they dragged that bit.

Trumpet - I'm playing in the $\frac{5}{8}$ bar ... trying to, anyway.

You were certainly out with the trombones & they were out with everyone.

Clearly he thinks the Seconds can play like birds (they could be crows).

That chord sounds better. Last time it sounded like slamming the door.

There's a wonderful cannon between the horns & trombones, but it's supposed to be in unison.

Make each crochet a little longer ... and vibrato on the second semi quaver, please.

I know it's in a nasty key, but it sounds really tentative at the moment. I can't understand why.

Seconds, while yes, you do need to creep in on that entry, that time you crept in by not playing the notes.

Firsts, I think think the key is not to be late at the start of every bar.

Trumpet, the aim here is to support the cellos, not kill them.

Quotable Quotes

And other funnies

Viola: I have "increasingly normal" written in two bars before B, is that right?

Conductor: Think of it as a behavioural guideline.

Viola: Sure, but that's more like a life goal.

Vivaldi's Four Seasons concerto for solo viola and string orchestra accompaniment.

(Violas have been a little thin on the ground for a couple of rehearsals.)



I'll need the winds at 7.30 next week for ukulele practice.

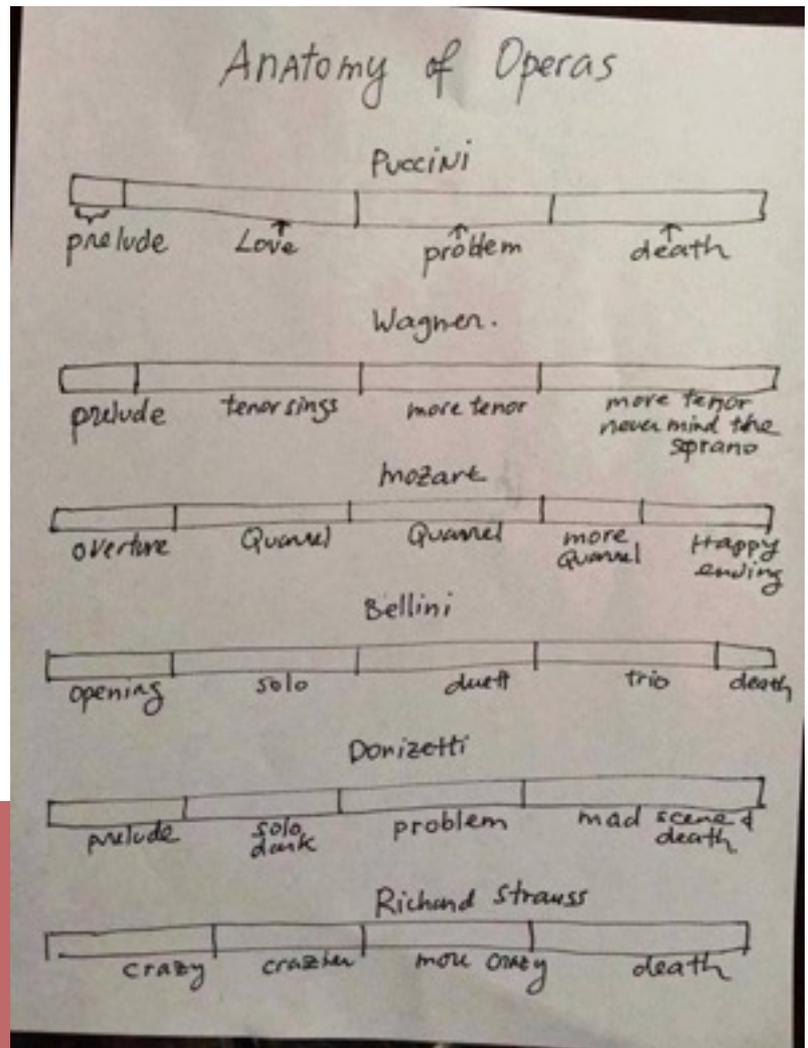
Q&A of the music world

Is the ukulele a serious musical instrument?

One could potentially argue that it is like a viola - the joke of the orchestra (sorry violas, actually, no I'm not). However, it can be viewed more like a recorder. Yes, you have probably shuddered at the mention of that instrument. The recorder gets bad rap, mainly because of children who are taught it at school and never get beyond screeching on it.

Have you heard Genevieve Lacy, Australia's home grown recorder virtuoso? (You can listen to her playing here <http://genevivelacey.com/sounds/>). The sound of someone who actually knows how to play, is very different.

But I digress. The ukulele is often seen as a toy guitar and for string players, it is a very quick instrument to learn. However, there is always the difference between being able to play a tune and being able to play well. Its popularity is increasing and maybe with time it will be elevated from being the recorder of the string world to being seen as a more serious instrument with virtuoso potential.



Me: The moonlight is just so beautiful tonight.

Girl: Yes, it is.

Me: Do you know what else is beautiful?

Girl: *blushes*

Me: The adagio finale of Mahler's third symphony.



Funnies from the Web...

For the lovers of cute cat videos - this cat meets a metronome. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdmd5fenroU>

It only takes 2 cellists to play Beethoven's fifth... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x8yymm3DtVA>

Of course we can't miss out on the Brass section stirring up the conductor during Romeo & Juliet <https://www.facebook.com/hellostage/videos/779491408854744/>

In case you missed it from ABC Classic FM, here are the best known operas summed up in one sentence. <http://www.abc.net.au/classic/content/2016/06/07/4477199.htm>

They don't make violinists like this any more. <https://www.facebook.com/IgudesmanJooOfficial/videos/1150703738307634/>

And a few more serious bits of information:
Music is an international language and this tourist (who happens to travel with his double bass - why?) proves the point.
<http://www.viralvo.com/tourist-asks-street-band-if-he-could-join-seconds-later-its-simply-divine/>

Redefining Classical Music
<https://www.facebook.com/breakfastnews/videos/10153852158903983/>
OK, sorry that was another cello video.

Purchase your tickets here:
<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/fremantle-symphony-orchestra-presents-spring-tickets-26753997928?ref=ebtnebtckt>
Or ask your friendly orchestra member

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*On our theme of orchestral sight reading,
here is another challenge for our
musicians...*

1 = 416

2

7

10

12

13

We think it might be twinkles...