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SYDNEY YOUTH ORCHESTRA'S WORLD PREMIERE

FATHER AND SON TO PERFORM NEW CONCERTO

The Sydney Youth Orchestra (SYO) has seen many of its musicians progress to international careers. It has become an unofficial 'right of passage' to those who perform in it and on many occasions performers come full circle and return to perform with the SYO as guest soloists or conductors.

In May the SYO will perform a program of music called *Ride of the Valkyries* featuring Berlioz' *Roman Carnival Overture*, Wagner's *The Ring Without Words* (arr. Leinsdorf) and the world premier of Lee Bracegirdle's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*.

The violin soloist, Michael Dauth, is an alumni of the SYO having held the post as Concertmaster and has since established an international career as soloist, orchestral and chamber player.

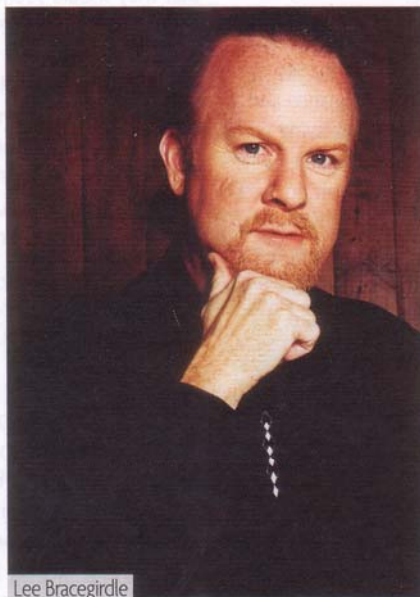
Dauth will perform publicly with his son, SYO Concertmaster, Darcy for the first time, a spectacular performance with 73 members of the Sydney Youth Orchestra.

In fact, Michael Dauth was part of the reason behind the creation of the concerto, says Bracegirdle.

"[He] came to me with the suggestion I write a solo work for him. He had played as Concertmaster with the SSO in some of my previous orchestral works, and I believe it was during a rehearsal of my *Ammerseelieder* that he approached me with this idea. I immediately began thinking up ideas".



Darcy Dauth. Image – Carol Gibbons



Lee Bracegirdle

Bracegirdle outlined some other influences in the work that make it fitting for an Australian premier: "I have always loved the curious, lyric sounds that Australian magpies sing. The opening 12-note violin melody of the slow movement is based on one of these magpie songs."

In regard to the father and son performing this world premiere, Bracegirdle said: "This is a very interesting coincidence, and one to which I look forward very much.

"It should provide some fabulous music-making, especially since there are some passages where there is duet-like collaboration between the two players, and also a string septet section in the slow movement".

Darcy is looking forward to performing this work with his father - it is the first time they have performed together publicly. "The concerto is going to be a highlight and something to remember forever in my musical career. It will be fantastic to work with someone that I look up to and respect greatly," he said.

Valuable experiences

The SYO regularly performs world premieres, which are an important part of a young musician's life, "because this is what they will be presented with when they are professionals" says Bracegirdle. "And what better chance to become accustomed to it than in a good youth orchestra.

"If previous performances by the SYO are any indication... I foresee unbridled, uninhibited, undaunted, and unpredictable playing, and it's something to relish," said Bracegirdle.

As Concertmaster, Darcy faces many challenges in preparing for a new work: "It can be very different performing a classical canon work to a new work. New works explore very new ideas and techniques in their music, different to those composers of classical canon works.

"Being able to watch my father lead a professional symphony orchestra was always a fantastic opportunity. I have learnt much from watching him and learning the Concertmaster role of the orchestra and the leading aspects," said Darcy, who is currently studying violin at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and hopes to study overseas upon the completion of his studies here.

Bracegirdle himself has an established career as a composer, conductor and french horn player. He says that much of the time he spent in the orchestra has been helpful in learning about composing, orchestration and conducting: "I think that the many years I spent sitting right in the middle of the orchestra, in the US, South America, Europe, then Sydney, was a valuable lesson about how to write for the instruments of the orchestra and how the music will sound."

Bracegirdle has some advice for young musicians aspiring to make professional careers in the industry: "For performers: live, sleep, eat, drink and think your instrument and forget all the other stuff.

"For conductors: learn an orchestral instrument, follow my advice to performers and get a job in an orchestra so you can experience what we have to put up with from you. For composers: all of the above and study the scores of the masters."

The Sydney Youth Orchestra, conducted by Alex Briger will perform the world premier of Lee Bracegirdle's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* and other works on Saturday 30 May, 7pm Verbrugghen Hall, Sydney Conservatorium and again on Sunday 31st May 3pm Riverside Theatres, Parramatta.

- Samuel Cottell

For more information visit www.syo.com.au