

Mosman Symphony Orchestra MD report 2011

This is my 13th annual report as musical director of Mosman Orchestra, and I intend it to be my most concise to date!

2010 saw the orchestra perform a relatively tight and ultimately highly successful series of concerts. Apart from our usual 4 concert programs, we presented a very successful Kiddies' Concert with Danika Allars ably directing the orchestra, and a special program of Handel's Messiah, with the Willoughby Symphony Choir at the end of the year. Highlights included Mark Brown as guest conductor with Tchaikovsky's 1st Symphony, and a soloist with food poisoning and only a couple of hours notice to find a way to fill the hole.

In all of these concerts, I saw a growth within the orchestra: in the personal playing of members, in the ensemble of the whole group and in numbers. Without a doubt, 2010 was one of our more successful years.

With the positives also come the less desirable events. We saw a couple of members retire, with Chris Bladwell hanging up her bow, and Ruth Day stepping back due to illness. Despite this, Ruth spent a lot of time assisting Bob Clampett re-cataloguing the library, a thankless task for which she deserves a round of applause. The start of this year has also seen Cameron Hough leave the state (and us) for a couple of years, but not before a rousing send off concert with Harold in Italy! Also, the fantastic news that one of our previous concert masters, Manu Berklejon won a position with an orchestra in Sweden is tempered by the fact that Mark Szeto will be joining her in the middle of this year, and is unable to commute to weekly rehearsals from Scandinavia! I'm sure the orchestra joins me in wishing all those who do leave our Tim tam enriched activities all the best for the future!

That makes this AGM a time to also welcome new members, and in particular, Anny Bing, who has agreed to continue on as our concert master. She will be back with us in a few weeks, after a concert tour of China.

There are still positions open in the orchestra, and maybe 2011 is the year to fill them properly. Leaders in second violins is open, we need an oboe, more horns, can do with another regular percussionist, and of course, we can never have too many strings! The stronger our membership, the easier is it to rehearse and perform our concerts, and the more interesting the pieces. Also, it takes the pressure of individual players, especially strings. On that note, I want to offer a sincere thanks to Julian Dresser and Dennis Brown for always being here to provide front desk coverage for the firsts and seconds. It makes ALL the difference.

The rest of this year is pretty well set, apart from a few pieces in our Best of British concert, and Messiah details. I have a rehearsal schedule (version 1) for this concert coming up tonight for people.

For the future, well, I have ideas, and the committee will be discussing these over the coming months.

This is also a group that I MUST thank for their support, ideas, assistance and organisation of the orchestra. Without them, the orchestra would not exist. Please seriously consider what help you too can give the orchestra as we go on into the future, which, from my perspective, looks quite rosy.