



Celebrate Australia 2002
4th China Shanghai International Arts Festival
10 – 17 November

MEDIA RELEASE

MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA to perform in Shanghai during
Celebrate Australia 2002

2 performances, Saturday 16 November and Sunday 17 November 2002
Shanghai Grand Theatre

Recognised as a world-class orchestra with an international reputation, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra will perform in Shanghai as part of the *Celebrate Australia 2002* program at the 4th China Shanghai International Arts Festival. This is part of a tour of China, which also includes performances in Beijing, Nanjing and Tianjin. Over 100 musicians, ten production and management personnel and 4 tonnes of equipment will be toured to four cities over twelve days.

For the China Shanghai International Arts Festival, Chief Conductor and Artistic Director, Markus Stenz, has selected a sensational program of music including works by Beethoven, Mozart, Mahler and Dvorák as well as the world premiere performance of a contemporary Australian composition by Melbourne based composer **Julian Yu** titled *Willow and Wattle*. Born in Beijing in 1957, Yu studied composition at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, and later joined the teaching staff there. He migrated to Australia in 1985. Julian Yu's music has won many awards in the USA, Japan, Italy, France, the People's Republic of China, and his adopted Australia.

Willow and Wattle reflects a meeting of Chinese and Australian musical styles and elements. The willow tree frequently appears as a symbol of beauty in ancient Chinese poetry and also represents sadness at parting. Wattle, with its green leaves and golden flowers, is the floral emblem of Australia. The piece consists of two sections. The first light, airy and delicate in the beginning, develops into long lyrical melodies played on the mellow Chinese erhu {(two stringed fiddle)}. The second section, lively and rhythmic, uses the strident jing-hu {(Peking Opera fiddle)}. At the end, the unique timbre of the jing-hu takes up snatches of the melody of Australia's national anthem, [Advance Australia Fair], a little hesitantly at first, but culminating in a jubilant ending.

Markus Stenz was appointed Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra in 1998 following periods as Principal Conductor of the London Sinfonietta (1994 to 1998) and Music Director of the Montepulciano Festival (1989 to 1995).

"Australia's best Orchestra, the Melbourne Symphony, is set to take on the world..."
 The Age, 23 January 1997

Celebrate Australia 2002 is supported by the Australian Government through the Australia International Cultural Council an initiative of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in partnership with the Australia Council for the Arts. Other partners include the Australia-China Council, the Australian Film Commission, Austrade, the Australian Tourist Commission and State Governments of New South Wales, South Australia and Western Australia.

For further information about Melbourne Symphony Orchestra visit: www.mso.com.au
 For images go to the website: www.reckless.on.net/publicity User name: Press Password: Shanghai

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