

Encore

Asher stays on!



In very exciting news for the Orchestra, the Board and Management of WASO were delighted to recently announce the continuation of their outstanding musical partnership with Principal Conductor Asher Fisch. WASO has embarked on an immense artistic journey over the past four years under Asher's baton and we can all agree that his musical prowess and vision has truly transformed the Orchestra. So it was with great excitement that the entire company assembled on September 7 to witness Asher sign on for a further four years from 2019, extending his contract to 2023! This extension will take Asher's tenure, which began in 2014, to ten years.

WASO Chairman Janet Holmes à Court attended the occasion and expressed her pride in having secured Asher's continued commitment by remarking that 'Asher's leadership has utterly transformed our Orchestra, eliciting remarkable and thrilling performances that have received critical acclaim both nationally and internationally. From the outset, Asher has been focused on the long game, developing specific facets of the Orchestra through his selection of repertoire. His programming of a Beethoven Festival in 2014, Brahms Festival in 2015, and current Wagner Festival are all part of this strategy. I'm thrilled that he can now extend his vision for WASO until 2023 and continue evolving this remarkable relationship.'

Asher himself remarked that he was 'delighted to have extended my contract with WASO. I am enjoying our musical journey immensely, and we have achieved a great deal, but I have my sights on new challenges in 2018 and beyond, and I have great confidence in what we can achieve together in the years to come.' In the most recent example of Asher's artistic vision for the Orchestra, our audiences got to enjoy the **Wagner & Beyond** mini-festival last month, with Asher speaking from the stage about his personal experiences with the music of this great composer.

Over two evenings, he shared with the audience how during his twenties - believing that he 'knew everything about classical music and music history' - he, for the first time, heard Wagner and his world changed. He explained how Wagner invented special instruments like the Wagner Tubas, to add 'colour behind the colour' of the overall brass sound, and how *Siegfried's Funeral March* from his Opera *Götterdämmerung* was the reason he became a conductor.

He intriguingly spoke about wishing to be a 'fly on the wall' in November 1856 when Wagner and Liszt 'plotted the crime of murdering tonality' and Wagner would shortly after dissolve musical form as previously known when beginning to compose *Tristan und Isolde*. He explained autobiographical aspects of operas like *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and took the audiences through very hands-on demonstrations (picture a metronome on a smart phone!) of Wagner's new dimensions of time and slowness in *Parsifal*.

Asher and the Orchestra's journey with the 'serial killer of musical conventions', Richard Wagner, will continue in 2018 with two much anticipated concert performances of *Tristan und Isolde*, forming the centrepiece of WASO's 90th anniversary celebrations, so be sure not to miss out on this extraordinary musical opportunity!

Patrons supporting our WASO & Wagner campaign will be invited to be centre stage during this bold artistic project with exclusive behind-the-scenes experiences and special events bringing them closer to an outstanding cast of international singers. If you are interested in finding out more, please contact Sarah Tompkin on tompkins@waso.com.au or (08) 9326 0017.

Asher Fisch appears courtesy of Wesfarmers Arts.

International Artist Masterclass with violinist Karen Gomyo



11 student from Hale School, Jasmine Middleton, a third year Music student at UWA, and Jasmin Parkinson-Stewart, an honours graduate from UWA.

Shannon played the well-known “hot violin” piece *Zigeunerweisen* by the Spanish composer Pablo de Sarasate. This challenging piece of gypsy music was superbly played by Shannon. Being gypsy music, Karen suggested ‘thinking like a gypsy’, moving around the room and starting boldly as if stepping into the limelight and saying “here I am”, displaying all the various emotions. Karen said it was important to have the stance evenly balanced which allows freer arm movement. Shannon was accompanied on piano by Gladys Chua.

Jasmine played the 1st movement of Mozart’s Violin Concerto No.4 accompanied by Martina Liegart-Wilson on piano. Karen pointed out how Mozart is very difficult for a soloist. There is nowhere to hide! It requires extreme precision so that every note is absolutely clear. In particular, it is important to maintain the pulse and not to slow down during a very soft passage - which can be a common mistake. Jasmine was very receptive to Karen’s suggestions of maintaining a level of vibration in the notes, and also to making more of a circle

with the bow so that it lands softly on the string rather than hitting it.

Finally, Jasmin played the 1st movement of Sibelius’ Violin Concerto. Karen said that this was perhaps her favourite violin concerto and believed that in all Sibelius’ works there is a sense of struggle in his music. She praised Jasmin’s respect for what Sibelius had written and suggested that to memorise such a work if possible was an advantage in order to ‘free up’ a person’s senses to allow deeper concentration on the mood of the music. Jasmin was accompanied on piano by Joel Bass.

Speaking with one of the students afterwards it was clear that they benefited from hearing different viewpoints from an internationally acclaimed performer. These Masterclasses continue to be an important part of WASO’s activities and it is much appreciated that visiting artists like Karen Gomyo are willing to provide their expertise.

Report by WASO Patron, Barry Neubecker.

The International Artist Masterclass Program is supported by Woodside and presented in partnership with the University of Western Australia School of Music. Young and Emerging Artist Programs are supported by The James Galvin Foundation.

It was pleasing that the Canadian violinist Karen Gomyo, in Perth to feature with WASO, again conducted a Masterclass at the Callaway Auditorium, UWA School of Music, on Wednesday August 23.

This year we had three very talented violinists perform in front of a large audience of students, relatives, friends, teachers and WASO Patrons all welcomed by Cassandra Lake, WASO’s Executive Manager, Community Engagement. The participants were Shannon Rhodes, a year

WASO’s Crescendo Music Program Open Class at Medina Primary School, Kwinana



On 14 August members of the Crescendo Giving Circle and other interested Patrons were invited to Medina Primary School to watch a Crescendo class in action with Pre-Primary and Year 1 students. They were joined by parents to see the students come alive with music and song and see first hand the impact of this unique and free music education program.

WASO’s Executive Manager, Community Engagement, Cassandra Lake, gave an introduction to the afternoon explaining the premise behind the program and how the classes are structured. She explained that each Crescendo lesson utilises musical exercises and games to expressly target specific skill-sets and encourage children’s development in a fun learning atmosphere.

For this open class, a set of songs were performed, each focussing on a different skill. Students were encouraged to copy teachers’ movements and sing along to ‘Five Little Monkeys’ and ‘The Cupcake Song’ with the focus on numeracy development; and a specific set of learned movements was performed to *Aquarium* from Saint-Saëns’ *Carnival of the Animals* with the aim of increasing body awareness and fine motor skills.

This class was a shining example of Crescendo’s progression from its beginnings as a pilot program in 2014. Now in its third full year, Crescendo is providing weekly music lessons to all students from Pre-Primary to Year 3 at Medina Primary School and North Parmelia Primary School, and is the only El Sistema inspired music education program of its kind in Western Australia.

WASO aims to provide music lessons to all students at these two schools by the year 2020, and to continue working with this at risk community to provide students with opportunities to develop confidence, resilience and emotional and social well-being. The next exciting step in this unique program will be the introduction of string instruments later this year.

We are committed to offering long-term positive learning experiences to build resilience within these children and this would not be possible without the generous support of our WASO community, in particular the members of the Crescendo Giving Circle. **For more information about how to support WASO’s Crescendo Music Program, please visit waso.com.au/supportus.**

Crescendo Music Program is supported by Lotterywest, Tianqi Lithium Australia, Crown Resorts Foundation, Packer Family Foundation and the Crescendo Giving Circle.

Events for Patrons & Friends

WASO Philanthropy enjoys coordinating a calendar of events for our Patrons, Friends and supporters. We are delighted to invite you to experience WASO from different perspectives, to draw you closer to the Orchestra and to introduce newcomers to our community of music lovers. Stay tuned for our 2018 events program, coming soon. Until then, we have a variety of events remaining for 2017 and we encourage you to join us!



OCTOBER

Photo: Sara Hannigan

Symphony Circle Celebration

Friday 6 October, 11:15am for an 11:30am start
Perth Concert Hall

We invite the members of our Symphony Circle to join us in watching parts of a rehearsal of our Classics 6 concert, to be conducted by former WASO Assistant Conductor Christopher Dragon. Following the rehearsal join Chairman Janet Holmes à Court, maestro Christopher Dragon and the Philanthropy Team in the PCH Café for a light lunch.

This is an invite-only event for members of our Symphony Circle-supporters who have notified us of their decision to leave a bequest to WASO in their Will.



OCTOBER

Photo: Nik Babic

PATRONS & FRIENDS EVENT

Meet the Percussion Section

Sunday 15 October, 2 – 4pm
Perth Concert Hall

On stage at Perth Concert Hall, meet the members and instruments of the self-proclaimed ‘noisy section’ of the Orchestra! Tickets are \$45 for Patrons & Friends (\$55 for guests) and include wine, light refreshment and a raffle.

Please book via the WASO Box Office on 9326 0000. Ticket sales support the Friends of WASO Scholarship. Brian Maloney’s (pictured) chair of Principal Percussion is partnered by Stott Hoare.



NOVEMBER

Photo: Rebekah Ryan

WASO Principals Dinner

Wednesday 15 November, 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start
Fraser’s Kings Park

Join us for this sumptuous evening of performances and Q&As with WASO’s Principal players. Joined by Principal Conductor & Artistic Adviser, Asher Fisch, this is an opportunity to get to know our Orchestra’s leading musicians over a three course meal.

This is an exclusive event for WASO Patrons and tickets are \$80 per person.

To book, please call the WASO Box Office on 9326 0000. Be quick, this is nearly at capacity!

Asher Fisch appears courtesy of Wesfarmers Arts.



DECEMBER

PATRONS & FRIENDS EVENT

Patrons & Friends Christmas Party

Thursday 14 December, 4.30pm

A much-loved event! Gather to celebrate the musical year that was and mingle with WASO musicians over a relaxed dinner and drinks after watching the final WASO rehearsal of 2017.

Tickets are \$45 for Patrons & Friends (\$55 for guests). Ticket sales support the Friends of WASO Scholarship.

Please book via the WASO Box Office on 9326 0000.



DECEMBER

Photo: Emma van Dordrecht

Symphony in the City 2017

Saturday 16 December, 7.30pm
Langley Park, Perth

Save the date for our spectacular, free outdoor concert!

Symphony in the City is supported by City of Perth.

Wolfgang 'Wolfie' Lehmkuhl – 24 Years of Supporting WASO



This year marks the 24th year of volunteering for one of our most loved members of the WASO community, 'Wolfie', and we thought this milestone was a good opportunity to share his story with the wider WASO family.

Originally hailing from Hamburg, Wolfgang Lehmkuhl spent his early years in war-torn Germany. It was during this time that his love of the art form originated and he received a thorough education in music. Many hours were spent listening, learning to read music and even attending professional rehearsals at opera companies. One particular piece has stayed with Wolfie to this day - 'The one I can remember is Smetana's *The Moldau* - it was explained to us as 'a river that comes out of a

tiny little creek in the mountains and flows into a creek and grows bigger and bigger... And as it grows, the music goes faster.' In 2007 I did an opera and concert tour to Prague and they took us to where the river starts. It was amazing.' Lehmkuhl's family eventually arrived in Australia in 1951, reuniting with Lehmkuhl's father, who had been missing during the Second World War. After training and working as a ladies' hairdresser for many years in Sydney, Lehmkuhl made his way to Perth with his partner in 1991. The couple began attending WASO concerts that year and by 1993 Wolfie, then retired, decided to volunteer for the Orchestra. 'I retired but I was always interested in music. And when we came over here, I felt I wanted to do something.'

This volunteering role has dramatically shifted over the years and Lehmkuhl remembers the years when WASO was situated in the ABC buildings on Adelaide Terrace. In recent years, he has religiously visited the WASO office every Wednesday morning to assist in all manner of administration tasks and brighten our days with pieces of wisdom and musical memories of the Orchestra.

Volunteering aside, there are numerous other ways in which Lehmkuhl supports the Orchestra, including as a Patrons & Friends Committee member and as a Bequestor.

About the latter he explains that 'I have nobody as family to leave it to and I feel for what I have got out of the Orchestra, out of listening, I feel I'd like to contribute and let them remember me in this way.'

So with this level of commitment to classical music, does Lehmkuhl play an instrument? 'No. I cannot play an instrument and I can't get a note out, can't sing. But I've got all the tunes in my head!'

The WASO community would simply not be the same without 'Wolfie' and we cannot thank him enough for his ongoing support and service to WASO. Dankeschön Wolfie!

Our Musicians' Hidden Fortes

It is easy to assume that our talented WASO musicians spend their lives simply perfecting their musical prowess. Our Orchestra members however, have wide-ranging interests and some of them miraculously manage to find the time to perfect another area of expertise. From road cycling and hiking to instrument building and costume design, there is an entire gamut of additional skills hidden behind the musical talent of our Orchestra. We spoke to Tutti Horn, Francesco Lo Surdo, and Tutti Viola, Nik Babic, about their other non-musical enterprises.



FRANCESCO LO SURDO - ESPRESSO LO SURDO

Frankie Lo Surdo has been roasting coffee for a number of years and launched his roasting company, Espresso Lo Surdo, in 2014. Since then, Frankie's hand-crafted blends have featured at many local Perth cafes and have become the much-loved stalwart of the WASO administration office (you may have even been lucky enough to have received a little Espresso Lo Surdo parcel at an event in the past few years). Although Espresso Lo Surdo has recently merged with Backyard Roasters, you can still order your own blend by visiting www.backyardcoffee.com.au/coffees/

We spoke to Frankie to understand what it takes for a professional musician to branch out into the world of coffee.

So, why coffee?

I've always had an interest (and need!) for coffee, which started during university in Sydney. I took that interest further by doing some barista training, then coffee roasting. After experimenting roasting coffee by pointing a heat gun into a bread maker, I won a silver and bronze medal at a national roasting competition for hobby roasters. It was after this I decided to do some formal training at Pound Coffee roasters here in Perth.

What are some of the interesting discoveries you've made along the way?

I quickly discovered that there is more in common between being a professional musician and roasting coffee than one might think. You have to be a perfectionist! There's always more to learn, skills to improve. Similarly to music, the coffee industry is also a very competitive world. Trying to sell coffee as a wholesale product to cafes made me realise that I am definitely not a competitive person, in spite of having a very competitive drive within myself.

Have you found that your focus on sourcing ethical and traceable coffee has shaped the blends you produce in any way?

The company I now work for only sources organic coffee, as well as coffees through companies that are striving to make

differences on the ground in coffee growing countries which happen to be some of the poorest. When you believe in your product and take pride in it, I think you always want to work harder for it.

You have said that community is one of the things about the coffee industry that you value the most. Where does this value arise from?

Just like the music world, the coffee industry here in Perth is a very small world and at a very high level. Similarly, there is nothing better than sharing knowledge and experience with others to better everyone.

Are you currently dreaming up any interesting blends?

Every week I'm tasting and tweaking up to five or six different blends that cafes have requested. We have a new cafe in Nedlands that has recently opened, so I will be monitoring that space closely. I'm also currently working closely with a Kenyan man in Perth whose grandma has been farming coffee in Kenya for 40 years. Our plan is to set up a direct trade into Perth so we can support her and the great work she is doing.

an art form. I did not, however, have the means or the time to pursue it then so I only admired it from the sidelines.

The first opportunity to try it on my own came in 2006 when I bought a second-hand digital SLR from Dave Evans, our Principal Horn, who was upgrading his gear. We were about to go on our China tour which seemed like a perfect place for it, so I snapped away there and quickly realised how fulfilling the process of crafting an image can be.

When did you start seriously pursuing it?

After a few years of trying almost every photographic genre known to me at the time I realised I gravitated towards working with people. I especially enjoyed collaborating with other performers and eventually decided to have that as my little photographic niche. I slowly built my portfolio by asking my WASO colleagues and some WA Ballet dancers to be my models until the word spread and commissions from other performers started to come in. They all needed images for their promo materials and websites and my work had to quickly become much more professional.

You expressly place an importance on creativity in your practice. Where do you draw your inspiration from?

Being surrounded by and collaborating with creative people definitely helps to keep those imagination-cogs spinning. I try to see the work of others regularly and often get ideas of my own while immersed in someone else's.

Also, after earning my accreditation with the AIPP, the national governing body for the industry, I also got to know some of the most accomplished Australian photographers who all proved to be immensely helpful with their own ideas and knowledge and providing feedback to my own work. In the last couple of years I have won several silver and one gold award in the annual professional awards which is also a great inspiration to do better each year.

You've held several solo exhibitions, are you working on one currently?

The three solo exhibitions I had so far were all with the performers as subject matter but primarily as the means to presenting a particular photographic concept. The next one will probably be a more traditional approach to portraiture but something more personal. It will be an attempt to dig deeper into what the life of a performer might be like with all its highs and lows.

To keep things challenging and make sure it is still primarily a photographic experience there will be a visual twist to all of the images. That's the aspect that I am refining at the moment.



NIK BABIC – NIK BABIC PHOTOGRAPHY

WASO has been lucky to have Nik in the ranks as resident photographer for a while now, and many of the official Orchestra photos you would have seen over the past few years are his creations. He is a professional photographer in his own right and specialises in performing arts photography, with several solo exhibitions under his belt. It is definitely worth having a look at Nik's wider portfolio as showcased on his website! (www.nikbabicphotography.com.au)

Nik talked us through his particular blend of professional musicianship and photography.

How did you become involved with photography?

I first became interested in it during my student years, when I lived in Boston only walking distance from several good museums and art galleries. Over those five years I saw many exhibitions and had a chance to see photography used creatively and presented as



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2018 Season Preview – WASO's 90th Anniversary



Patrons & Friends Committee members: Margaret Marston, Ian Watson, Gina Humphries, Val Neubecker, Barry Neubecker, Jen Gardiner and Chris Rtshiladze.

On Thursday 31 August, our community of Patrons assembled on Perth Concert Hall Terrace Level to celebrate the launch of WASO's 90th anniversary season in 2018.

Principal Conductor & Artistic Adviser, Asher Fisch, and Executive Manager of Artistic Planning, Evan Kennea, delivered an exciting briefing of the Season, before opening the floor for a Q&A. This was followed by a mesmerising performance from The Pinnacle Quartet, comprised of WASO musicians, Rachael Kirk, Rebecca Glorie, Cerys Tooby and Fotis Skordas. The evening concluded with drinks and nibbles and boundless ebullient conversation.

A big thankyou to our Patrons & Friends Committee who made the evening possible and thanks to all who attended and shared the excitement about what is promising to be a fantastic season for the Orchestra!

Photos: Rebekah Ryan



Chris and Vimala Whitaker



Lilian and Roger Jennings



Margaret Affleck and Marjan Oxley



Peter Handford, Gavin and Susan Fielding



Julienne Penny and Gavin Bunning



Ulrich and Gloria Kunzmann and Sarah Tompkin



Julie Faulkner and David Taylor



WASO Philanthropy team: Jacinta Sirr, Sarah Tompkin and Emily Kennedy



WASO Musicians: Rebecca Glorie, Cerys Tooby, Rachael Kirk and Fotis Skordas