

# ADELAIDE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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## Adelaide Symphony Orchestra MEDIA RELEASE

SEASON 08

### **NIGEL KENNEDY, THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS VIOLINIST, RETURNS TO THE CLASSICS AFTER CAREER-THREATENING ACCIDENT**

#### **NIGEL KENNEDY & the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra 15 – 16 February 2008, Festival Theatre**

A year after the accident that almost ended his career, Nigel Kennedy returns to Australia to perform works by Beethoven and Mozart with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra for two special concerts on **Friday, 15 February, 8.00pm** and **Saturday, 16 February, 8.00pm** at **Festival Theatre**.

The ASO concerts follow on from a sold out Vivaldi performance in February 2006 and promises to be every bit as special! Kennedy's tour to Australia coincides with his new release through EMI Classics and these concerts are a unique opportunity to hear works from the album performed live with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

Forced by a bicycle accident to abstain from playing for several months at the end of last year, Kennedy reconnected with his family and other passions, bringing about a new perspective on life as the world's most recognizable violinist. Now 50, the celebrity musician shows no signs of slowing down, but rather the time away from the concert platform seems to have reinvigorated him both personally and musically. He recently released his first jazz album on the industry's most prestigious label, Blue Note, which make it clear that Kennedy's passion and talent for jazz rivals his classical side. Following this has been an album entitled "Polish Spirit" including works by Emil Mlynarski and Mieczyslaw Karłowicz which were suggested to him years earlier but only made meaningful after spending time absorbing the landscape and culture of Poland, now his adopted country.

After his recent ventures into new repertoire, Kennedy has felt an urge to re-record the classics particularly the Beethoven Violin Concerto, which he did early in his career. He describes the early version as slow and romantic – his new version is spirited with a mature and confident energy. "Beethoven and Mozart were two of the greatest geniuses who ever lived - but they also knew how to have a good time!" he says. With the Kennedy treatment, concertgoers are sure to agree when the famous violinist lights up the stage with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra.

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On an eternal quest to bring something new to music, Kennedy has divided music lovers. The punk stylings and rock'n'roll accent suggest irreverence, but it's irreverence for what he sees as formal convention, rather than for music itself. With interests that range from east European gypsy music to jazz to Jimi Hendrix, it's little wonder he's still able to infuse his performances with the inimitable Kennedy style.

*"All that designer stubble and estuary English can't disguise the high-class violinist he is."*

*"The truth is, the world needs its Nigel Kennedys, if only to keep the stuffed shirts on their toes."*

The Guardian, 2007

These days Kennedy spends half his time these days in Krakow, Poland with wife Agnieszka, her extended family and his jazz quintet. He works regularly with the Polish Chamber Orchestra after having notoriously burned his bridges with the London orchestras several years ago by refusing to perform without adequate rehearsal time. Despite this, Kennedy's now agreed to return to the London concert hall next spring with the Royal Philharmonic – 'they've given me two rehearsals, man,' – where his father was once principal cellist and his sister works in the office. But overall he has reduced his classical work to just three months of the year, devoting the rest to jazz gigs and composition. Thus his Beethoven/Mozart tour to Australia represents a break from the norm!

*"For all the effing and blinding, the bovver boots, the two-day stubble and the Aston Villa football shirts, Nigel Kennedy is an old-fashioned softie who loves nothing better than to bring a glister to an audience's eyes."*

The Guardian, 2007

Last October in London, Kenney was hit by a cyclist and smashed his left wrist, a career-threatening accident. 'I instantly knew I'd done some damage', he says. He refused immediate reset surgery, and instead found his way to the Hand Clinic at Windsor, where consultants are renowned for treating musical injuries. Four months later, he took up the violin again – a significant period of time for the highly energized musician, but it was worth the wait as he made a full recovery. 'Sometimes you can still feel something clicking in there,' he says, 'and it gets tired easier. But there's no crunching pain.'

For over twenty-five years, Nigel Kennedy has been acknowledged as one of the world's leading violin virtuosos and is one of the most important violinists Britain has ever produced. His virtuosic technique, unique talent and mass appeal have brought fresh perspectives to both the classical and contemporary repertoire. He is the best selling classical violinist worldwide.

Nigel Kennedy will also perform in Australia with the Sydney Symphony (Sydney, Brisbane, Newcastle) and the Melbourne Symphony. For further reading see:

<http://arts.guardian.co.uk/features/story/0,,1882886,00.html>

<http://www.nigelkennedy.com/article-9.htm>

<http://www.myspace.com/nigelkennedy>

## **ADELAIDE CONCERT DETAILS**

Nigel Kennedy with the ADELAIDE SYMPHONY  
8pm Friday 15 and Saturday 16 February  
Adelaide Festival Theatre  
Bookings: BASS 131 246 [www.bass.net.au](http://www.bass.net.au)  
Tickets from \$91.00

**For further media information on the Adelaide performances:  
Jeff Smith, (08) 8233 6205, 0402 677 389**