

MEDIA RELEASE

Love, Lust and Longing: Sydney Symphony's exhilarating weekend of Russian romance

***Sydney Symphony joined by Russian double bill, conductor Tugan Sokhiev
and pianist Boris Berezovsky
22, 24 and 25 August
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall***

***Tugan Sokhiev brings to life all the drama of the greatest love story ever told,
Romeo and Juliet
23 and 26 August
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall***

Sydney, 1 August- This August, Sydney audiences will be taken on a sensual romantic escape when, over one weekend, the Sydney Symphony and acclaimed conductor Tugan Sokhiev perform some of the greatest Russian and French music ever penned in two exhilarating programs.

For three performances Sokhiev and the Orchestra perform Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. The piece whirls audiences through a fever-dream of obsessive unrequited love, elegant ballrooms, desolate countryside, the execution of the artist and an orgiastic gathering of witches, in a delirious, Gothic trip. Also on the program is the Prokofiev Piano Concerto No.3 with acclaimed Russian pianist Boris Berezovsky.

In a second concert program, Sokhiev conducts the Orchestra in music inspired by the greatest love story of all time, *Romeo and Juliet*. Tchaikovsky, famously unlucky in love, conveys both the bliss and tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* in his fantasy overture, and Prokofiev transforms the play into a ballet using music of the utmost expressive power to capture the drama, nobility and heartbreak of Shakespeare's poetry.

Russian-born young-gun conductor Sokhiev returns to town for the first time since his acclaimed Sydney Symphony debut in August 2005, when he and Yannick Nézet-Séguin replaced Lorin Maazel at the eleventh hour. Of Sokhiev's performances, the Sydney Morning Herald said, "It was refreshing to hear a young conductor more engaged with musical problems and with projecting a well-shaped artistic statement than with his own persona."

At the youthful age of 28, Sokhiev already boasts an array of memorable performances with orchestras throughout the world including the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Nuremberg Opera, Austrian Radio Orchestra, Frankfurt Radio Symphony and Orchestre National de Toulouse.

Russian pianist Boris Berezovsky made his debut in London at the Wigmore Hall in 1988 where The Times described him as "an artist of exceptional promise, a player of dazzling virtuosity and formidable power". Later he proved his considerable talent by claiming the Gold Medal at the 1990 International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. Today he is revered as one of the great Russian pianists, performing with all the world's major orchestras and conductors.

To book tickets to 'Symphonie Fantastique' or 'Romeo and Juliet' at the Sydney Opera House, call Sydney Symphony Customer Service on 8215 4600 or visit www.sydneyphilharmonicsymphony.com

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For further information regarding the concert, interviews with performers and photo opportunities, please contact:

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Note to editors

Sydney Symphony concert programs are now distributed free of charge to audiences. They are also available online for download before the concert.

Concert details

SYMPHONIE FANTASTIQUE

Wed 22 August, 8pm
Fri 24 August, 8pm
Sat 25 August, 8pm

Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Tugan Sokhiev conductor
Boris Berezovsky piano

PROKOFIEV Piano Concerto No. 3
BERLIOZ Symphonie Fantastique

Tickets from \$58

Pre-concert talk by Sydney Symphony Concert Program Editor, Yvonne Frindle, in the Opera House Northern Foyer at 7.15pm.

ROMEO AND JULIET

Thu 23 August, 1.30pm
Sun 26 August, 2pm

Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Tugan Sokhiev conductor

TCHAIKOVSKY Romeo and Juliet – Fantasy Overture
RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Capriccio espagnol
PROKOFIEV Romeo and Juliet: Suite

Tickets from \$58

Pre-concert talk by Sydney Symphony Artistic Administration Manager Raff Wilson in the Opera House Northern Foyer 45 minutes before each performance.