

SEASON 2008
DISCOVERY PROGRAM
PRESENTED BY TENIX

DISCOVER BRAHMS

17 March | 6.30pm
City Recital Hall Angel Place

Richard Gill conductor
Sydney Sinfonia

BRAHMS

Two scherzo movements:
Symphony No.1 in C minor, Op.68

III *Un poco Allegretto e grazioso*
[A little fast and lively and gracefully]

Symphony No.2 in D major, Op.73

III *Allegretto grazioso (Quasi andantino) – Presto ma non assai*
[Lively and gracefully (as if at a brisk walking pace) –
as fast as possible but not too much]

HOWES

Morgentanz (Morning Dance)



This concert will be recorded for later broadcast in the summer on ABC Radio National.

The ABC Classics DVD of the Discovery Program is now available. Buy online at sydney-symphony.com/shop

PRESENTING PARTNER



ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR

RICHARD GILL conductor

SANDRA & PAUL SALTERI CHAIR OF ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, EDUCATION

Richard Gill is the Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony's Education Program. He was recently appointed Music Director of the newly formed Victorian Opera Company. He has also been Artistic Director of OzOpera, Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra, and Advisor for the Musica Viva in Schools Program.

He regularly conducts for Opera Australia and OzOpera, and in recent seasons he has conducted Meet the Music concerts with the Sydney Symphony, and Discovery concerts with the Sydney Sinfonia; concerts with the Canberra Symphony and the Queensland Orchestra; choral masterclasses and The World's Biggest Singing Lesson at the UWA Perth International Arts Festival; Sing Your Own Opera at the Melbourne International Festival of the Arts; *The Marriage of Figaro* for Opera Queensland; and *Messiah* for Sydney Philharmonia.

His repertoire includes *Orpheus in the Underworld*, *Faust*, *The Gondoliers*, Moya Henderson's *Lindy*, *The Eighth Wonder* by Alan John and Dennis Watkins, *Macbeth*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Il trovatore*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *La Périchole*, *The Merry Widow*, *Fidelio*, *Turandot*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *The Force of Destiny*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, and *The Love for Three Oranges*. Recently he conducted Handel's *Julius Caesar* for Opera Australia's Melbourne season.

For OzOpera he has conducted *Carmen*, *The Magic Flute*, *La bohème*, and *The Barber of Seville*. His music theatre repertoire includes Jonathan Mills' *The Ghost Wife*, of which he conducted the premiere in Melbourne, and performances in Adelaide, Sydney and London.

Richard Gill has received numerous accolades, including an Order of Australia Medal, the Bernard Heinze Award, an Honorary Doctorate from the Edith Cowan University of Western Australia, the Australian Music Centre's award for Most Distinguished Contribution to the Presentation of Australian Composition by an individual, and the Australia Council's prestigious Don Banks Award in 2006.



JEFF BUSBY

ABOUT THE MUSIC

JOHANNES BRAHMS

(born Hamburg, 1833; died Vienna, 1897)

In the musical polemics of the 19th century, Brahms was often cast as the reactionary counterpart to Wagner and Liszt's aesthetic revolution – a chamber composer in an age of music dramas and tone poems. Although this division rather over-simplifies matters, it is true that while Wagner preached 'The Music of the Future', Brahms studied the music of the past. Self-schooled in counterpoint, Brahms performed the keyboard works of Scarlatti and Rameau, directed concerts of Renaissance polyphony, oversaw an edition of François Couperin's work, and maintained a lifelong passion for the music of JS Bach.

Brahms's historical awareness also left him with a keen sense of the importance of the symphonic genre, and the seemingly unapproachable models established by Mozart, Schubert and – most importantly – Beethoven. This almost certainly contributed to Brahms's reluctance to tussle with the symphonic form: he was 43 before he finished his **Symphony No.1 in C minor**, a work which he had started more than 14 years previously. In addition to the burden of historical precedent, the composer was well aware of the problems that his 'serious' music could cause with audiences. 'My symphony is long,' he wrote to a friend, 'and not exactly charming.' Elsewhere he stated that 'the thing...does not commend itself by its genial character'. Brahms was, then, understandably nervous about the reception that his work would face, and accordingly chose a relatively minor location for its premiere in late 1876. Karlsruhe, near Stuttgart, had a decent orchestra, a good conductor, and – best of all – friendly ears in the audience.

Brahms's **Symphony No.2 in D major**, by contrast, had a relatively smooth inception. The measured success of the first symphony, the encouragement of influential friends such as Clara Schumann, and the greater accessibility of the work itself gave Brahms the confidence to schedule its first performance in Vienna. Often described as the sunny counterpart of his First Symphony, Brahms wrote it in the summer of 1877 while staying by the Wörther See in Austria. The composer described it to friend and critic Eduard Hanslick as 'cheerful and lovely' – something, he jovially suggested, that was 'no great feat', since, after all, 'Brahms is a smart fellow and the Wörther See virgin soil, with so many melodies flying about that you must be careful not to tread on any.'



Brahms had an unpredictable sense of humour. He once suggested embellishing the cover of his *51 Etudes for Pianoforte* with 'all possible instruments of torture... from the thumbscrews to the Iron Maiden'. He enjoyed practical jokes: the rocking chair in his apartment was positioned to precipitate careless visitors onto the floor.

ANDREW HOWES (born Sydney, 1992)

About the composer

Andrew Christopher Roy Howes is currently in Year 11 at the Conservatorium High School. He is studying violin with Jeremy Williams, composition with Trevor Pearce, and conducting with Christopher Seaman through the Symphony Australia Conductor development program. He has been composing for as long as he can remember and has written works for the NSW Department of Education, Sydney Children's Choir and the 2007 Australian Society for Music Education conference in Perth. His compositions have been selected for the Sydney Symphony's Sinfonietta Project three years in a row and he enjoys working with a wide range of performing media including orchestras, chamber ensembles, choirs and stage bands. Andrew Howes is a member of Sydney's new 'composer + performer' group, along with his mother Rosamund Plummer, where he gets an opportunity to present and share his works with other performer/composers.



JASON CATLETT

About the music

Morgentanz (Morning Dance) was written for the Sydney Symphony's 2007 Sinfonietta Project, a composition workshop for high school students from throughout Australia. In 2007 students were asked to compose a work modelled on Schoenberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra. The composer writes:

This piece was written while I was taking part in a study on 'subconscious melodies'. This involved writing a melody every morning for a week, before I had eaten, showered or even left my room! At the end of a week, I looked over the melodies and found one that I really liked. I developed this melody and based the piece on it. The title of the work came from the 'morning' theme, and the nature of the piece (a dance). At the beginning of the work, the 'morning' theme is heard in the first violin, and then developed throughout the rest of the ensemble. After a slow and pensive start, the tempo picks up, transforming the piece into a whirling, frenetic dance, coming to a violent end.

Morgentanz is scored for oboe, B flat and E flat clarinets, bassoon, horn and strings.

THE SYDNEY SINFONIA

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The Sydney Sinfonia is a specialist ensemble combining the experience of Sydney Symphony musicians and Australia's most accomplished tertiary music students. The Sydney Sinfonia performs through New South Wales and provides music students with the chance to be mentored by Sydney Symphony musicians. The Sydney Sinfonia is part of the Sydney Symphony's Education Program and is supported by Leighton Holdings and the NSW Ministry for the Arts.

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The Sydney Symphony is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council and by the NSW Ministry for the Arts.

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The Sydney Sinfonia's unique structure and format drives a dynamic culture of professional development and innovative performance, benefiting not only the young musicians involved but also contributing to a greater understanding of classical music within the community regardless of age.

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Richard Gill, the Sydney Symphony's acclaimed educator and musician, has worked with Australia's leading musicians and music teachers to create our innovative and world-renowned Education Program. We bridge the gap between classroom and concert hall by producing high quality resources and offering development programs to assist teachers, giving inspiring concerts to school children and awarding fellowships to postgraduate musicians.

To support our activities and help enrich our community with the wonder of music, please contribute by making a donation.

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The Sydney Symphony Education Program

Our range of programs encourages people to respond to music in a number of ways. They include: **School Concerts** for all ages, with supporting educational materials and teacher seminars; **Playerlink** and **Regional Tours**, bringing the orchestra to children in regional areas; **Sydney Sinfonia**, tonight's ensemble, providing a career pathway and mentoring for emerging professional musicians; **Sydney Symphony Sinfonietta**, an elite ensemble drawn from the Sinfonia to perform contemporary repertoire and nurture young composers; **Sydney Symphony Fellowship Program**, providing opportunities for young professional musicians to work closely with the Orchestra; **James Fairfax Young Artist Program**, enhancing the experience of Fellowship holders through work on chamber music repertoire; and **Discovery**, a concert series for adults that examines how orchestral music works.

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Tenix warmly welcomes you to the 2008 Discovery Program of concerts. We are confident you will find them musically exciting, and that they will open up for you a new understanding of the featured composers and works.

Tenix's sponsorship of the Sydney Symphony's Education Program is now in its fourth year. As a company with a commitment to technology and innovation, we support education and training across a range of fields, and we are proud to support not only the Discovery Program but also the Sydney Symphony's extensive Schools program, which brings the world of classical music to primary schools across the State.

Sydney Symphony's Discovery Program is a wonderfully innovative and exciting experience. We hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoy our Education partnership with the orchestra.

Paul Salteri
Chairman, Tenix Pty Ltd



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