

WHAT'S ON JUNE/JULY

ORGAN SPLENDOUR



TEA & SYMPHONY
PRESENTED BY KAMBLY
FRI 12 JUN 11AM

JS BACH
Toccata and Fugue in F,
BWV 540
JONGEN
Four Pieces for Organ:
Cantabile
DUPRÉ
Passion Symphony:
Crucifixion
WIDOR
Organ Symphony No.6

David Drury organ
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

POWER & PANACHE TCHAIKOVSKY PIANO CONCERTO NO.2



ENERGYAUSTRALIA MASTER SERIES
WED 17 JUN 8PM
FRI 19 JUN 8PM
SAT 20 JUN 8PM
THE VEUVE CLICQUOT SERIES
MON 22 JUN 7PM

TCHAIKOVSKY
Piano Concerto No.2
(orig. version)
WALTON Symphony No.1
Hugh Wolff conductor
Stephen Hough piano
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

DISCOVER HANDEL



DISCOVERY PROGRAM
PRESENTED BY TENIX
TUE 30 JUN 6.30PM

HANDEL
Arrival of the Queen of Sheba*
Concerto grosso, Op.6 No.3
Messiah: Sinfonia

Richard Gill conductor
***Nicholas Carter** conductor
Sydney Sinfonia

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Meet the Concerto (Sept)

CARMINA BURANA



THU 2 JUL 8PM
SAT 4 JUL 8PM

SHOSTAKOVICH
Festive Overture
RESPIGHI Pines of Rome
ORFF Carmina Burana

Arvo Volmer conductor
Amelia Farrugia soprano
Paul McMahon tenor
William Dazeley baritone
Sydney Philharmonia Choirs
Sydney Children's Choir
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

DOMESTIC HARMONY? BRAHMS' VIOLIN CONCERTO



ENERGYAUSTRALIA MASTER SERIES
WED 8 JUL 8PM
FRI 10 JUL 8PM
SAT 11 JUL 8PM

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY
PRESENTED BY TRUST
THU 9 JUL 1.30PM

BRAHMS Violin Concerto
R STRAUSS
Symphonia domestica
Donald Runnicles conductor
Viktoria Mullova violin
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

TWO SYMPHONIES & A FUNERAL



MOZART IN THE CITY:
YOUR PERFECT MID-WEEK ESCAPE.
THU 16 JUL 7PM
TEA & SYMPHONY
PRESENTED BY KAMBLY
FRI 24 JUL 11AM

JC BACH Symphony in
G minor, Op.6 No.6
MOZART Piano Concerto
No.11 in F, K413
HAYDN Symphony No.44
(Mourning)

Michael Dauth violin-director
Clemens Leske piano
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LESLIE HOWARD IN RECITAL



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MON 20 JUL 8PM

BEETHOVEN
Six Variations, Op.34
LISZT Years of Pilgrimage –
Book III
BORODIN Petite Suite
GLAZUNOV Sonata No.1
in B flat minor

Leslie Howard piano
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CLASSICAL MYSTERY TOUR



THU 23 JULY 8PM
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2009 SEASON

ENERGYAUSTRALIA MASTER SERIES

DOMESTIC HARMONY?

Wednesday 8 July | 8pm

Friday 10 July | 8pm

Saturday 11 July | 8pm

Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Donald Runnicles conductor

Viktoria Mullova violin

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

Violin Concerto in D, Op.77

Allegro non troppo

Adagio

Allegro giocoso

INTERVAL

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949)

Symphonia domestica, Op.53

Introduction –

Scherzo –

Adagio –

Finale



Saturday night's performance will be broadcast live across Australia on ABC Classic FM 92.9.

Pre-concert talk by Genevieve Lang at 7.15pm in the Northern Foyer.
Visit sydneySymphony.com/talk-bios for speaker biographies.

Approximate durations:
38 minutes, 20-minute interval,
44 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 9.50pm.

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Each year, the Sydney Symphony brings *EnergyAustralia* Master Series subscribers one of the great Richard Strauss tone poems. In the years we've been supporting the series we've heard *A Hero's Life, Death and Transfiguration, Thus Spake Zarathustra*, and the *Alpine Symphony*. This year we've been looking forward with excitement to tonight's masterpiece, *Symphonia domestica*.

We're delighted to welcome conductor Donald Runnicles back to Sydney. He was last here in 2000, when he conducted the *Alpine Symphony*, and his affinity with Strauss' monumental and evocative style is well-known. Also making a long-awaited return is violinist Viktoria Mullova, and we're thrilled that her choice for us this evening is Brahms' elegantly majestic Violin Concerto.

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We trust that you will enjoy tonight's performance and hope you also have a chance to experience future concerts in the *EnergyAustralia* Master Series.



George Maltabarow
Managing Director

2009 SEASON

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY

PRESENTED BY TRUST

DOMESTIC HARMONY?

Thursday 8 July | 1.30pm

Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Donald Runnicles conductor

Viktoria Mullova violin

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

Violin Concerto in D, Op.77

Allegro non troppo

Adagio

Allegro giocoso

INTERVAL

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949)

Symphonia domestica, Op.53

Introduction –

Scherzo –

Adagio –

Finale



This concert will be broadcast live across Australia on ABC Classic FM 92.9 on Saturday 11 July at 8pm.

Pre-concert talk by Genevieve Lang at 12.45pm in the Northern Foyer. Visit sydneyorchestra.com/talk-bios for speaker biographies.

Approximate durations: 38 minutes, 20-minute interval, 44 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 3.20pm.

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Trust is proud of its long standing partnership with the Sydney Symphony and is delighted to bring you the Thursday Afternoon Symphony series in 2009.

The series offers perfect afternoons with some of the best-loved composers – Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Richard Strauss, Brahms, Prokofiev and many others. These concerts bring together some of the world's most talented conductors and soloists. You're in for a truly delightful experience.

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We hope you enjoy a delightful Thursday afternoon with the Sydney Symphony.



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INTRODUCTION

Brahms and Strauss

Johannes Brahms and Richard Strauss speak to us from different points on the Romantic spectrum. Brahms is older, earlier and more 'Classical' in outlook. Not a reactionary exactly, but an admirer of Mozart, a collector of Bach, and deeply aware of the legacy of Beethoven. Strauss is younger – he was 15 years old when Brahms' Violin Concerto was premiered – and his life and aesthetic crossed into the 20th century. He is the true 'late Romantic', writing music that pushes its expressive and stylistic resources to the extreme.

The two composers provide more contrast than affinity, but there was a point of overlap when the young Strauss experienced an enthusiasm for Brahms so great that he gave it a name: *Brahmsschwärmerei*. It didn't begin well: at 20, Strauss thought Brahms' music obtuse and unlovely. If anything *Strauss* was the reactionary, raised on a diet of music that stopped with Beethoven. But soon he was describing Brahms as 'colossal', 'fresh', 'energetic' and 'demonic' (that was a compliment).

The Brahms influence emerged in Strauss' early chamber music and works such as the rarely heard Burleske for piano and orchestra. These pieces adopted the great Classical conventions: sonata form and abstract genres such as the piano quartet. When Brahms wrote a symphony or a violin concerto he, too, was working within Classical genres. In fact, he rarely departed from them.

Strauss, however, quickly abandoned these genres – and above all the symphony – for a way of writing music that was inspired by Liszt's symphonic poems. 'New ideas must search out new forms,' he said, musical forms that were to be shaped by poetic ideals. Occasionally the poetry can seem mundane (*Symphonia domestica* inspired Edward Sackville-West's quip 'the hero in carpet slippers') but the musical forms that emerge from Strauss' deft handling of his huge orchestras are never short of impressive.

Bartók's Second Piano Concerto

Last year we were obliged to cancel planned performances of Bartók's Second Piano Concerto, to the disappointment of many Master Series subscribers. We're delighted that we were able to reschedule this formidable and exhilarating concerto for this season, and you can hear Cédric Tiberghien perform it on 5–7 August in the Meet the Music and Tea & Symphony series. See page 14 for concert details.

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ABOUT THE MUSIC

Johannes Brahms

Violin Concerto in D, Op.77

Allegro non troppo

Adagio

Allegro giocoso

Viktoria Mullova violin

Cadenza by Joachim

Brahms spent the summers of 1877–79 in the lakeside village of Pörtschach in Carinthia, producing his first motet (Op.74), the Ballades for piano (Op.75), the Symphony No.2 and his Violin Sonata in G (Op.78) – all works which share an atmosphere of pastoral beauty shot through with nostalgia. But as Brahms scholar Karl Geiringer notes, the ‘crowning masterpiece’ of this time is the Violin Concerto.

The Concerto, like the G major Sonata, was composed for the great virtuoso Joseph Joachim, whom an ecstatic 15-year old Brahms had heard play the Beethoven Concerto. In 1853 their friendship began in earnest, with Joachim writing to Brahms’ parents of how ‘Johannes had stimulated my work as an artist to an extent beyond my hopes...my friendship is always at his disposal’. Brahms similarly admired Joachim – significantly as a composer rather than performer, saying that ‘there is more in Joachim than in all the other young composers put together’.

While Joachim was intimately involved with the creation of early works of Brahms’ chamber music, it was not, strangely enough, until those summers by the lake at Pörtschach in the 1870s that Brahms wrote solo music for his friend. Geiringer notes that, in the case of both concerto and sonata, Brahms ‘conscientiously asked his friend’s advice on all technical questions – and then hardly ever followed it’, but in fact at crucial points Joachim’s advice on technical matters was invaluable. This consisted mainly of tinkering with certain figurations to make them more gratifying to play. But Joachim was also a profoundly serious artist – like Brahms – and out of their collaboration came works in which the element of virtuosity never overshadows the musical argument, despite the work’s many technical challenges. Joachim also wrote a cadenza for the concerto which is still frequently heard today.

Keynotes

BRAHMS

Born Hamburg, 1833

Died Vienna, 1897

Brahms is often thought reactionary: he valued classical forms, admired composers of the past, and his choral music is firmly rooted in the traditions of the baroque period. Yet his musical language and manner of using the orchestra clearly represents mid-19th-century romanticism in all its richness and emotive power. It took Brahms 15 years to compose his first symphony; he was keenly aware of the looming shadow of Beethoven. But the second symphony followed swiftly four months later in 1877, and the violin concerto soon after.

VIOLIN CONCERTO

Brahms wrote this concerto for his good friend the violin virtuoso Joseph Joachim. Since Brahms was not a violinist, he consulted Joachim as he worked, sending him drafts and urging him to ‘mark those parts that are difficult, awkward, or impossible to play’. A composer himself, Joachim enthusiastically offered suggestions and composed a cadenza, which he performed at the concerto’s premiere. In the second movement *Adagio*, the solo violin steps back from the spotlight and plays ‘second fiddle’, allowing the oboe to introduce the exquisitely lyrical theme. The last movement, an exuberant rondo, has a distinct gypsy character – a tribute by Brahms to his Hungarian violinist friend and collaborator.

Brahms' Violin Concerto – The Focus Group

In 1878 Brahms sent his friend, the legendary violinist Joseph Joachim, the solo part of his new violin concerto. Joachim told him that, while it was sometimes difficult to tell how a concerto would work from the violin part alone, it appeared at first glance to be a very pleasing and successful work.

'I wish I could go through it with a violinist less good than you,' Brahms wrote back, 'for I am afraid you are not sufficiently blunt and severe.'

The composer then sent the music to another friend, the conductor Hans von Bülow, who responded with the quip that Max Bruch had written a concerto *for* the violin, while Brahms had written one *against* the violin.

The violinist Henry Wieniawski, himself the composer of some fiendishly difficult violin concertos, also received a copy and declared it to be simply unplayable.

And when, after the premiere, the violinist Pablo de Sarasate was asked if he intended to play the new concerto, he responded (referring to the beginning of the *Adagio*): 'I don't deny that it is very good music, but do you think I could fall so low as to stand, violin in hand, and listen to the oboe play the only proper tune in the work?'



A place where 'so many melodies fly about that one must take care not to tread on them'.

BRAHMS DESCRIBES HIS
SUMMER RETREAT IN
PÖRTSCHACH

The Violin Concerto has some of the expansive dimensions of Brahms' first piano concerto. This is especially true of the spacious first movement which, like that of Beethoven's Violin Concerto, takes up more than half the work's playing time, and which begins with a long, symphonic exposition of its main themes. Like its companion Second Symphony, the Concerto is in D major, a key which composers like Beethoven, Tchaikovsky and Sibelius used for violin concertos as it makes use of the instrument's natural resonance; like the Symphony it has something of a visionary Romantic tone.

Brahms originally thought to write the piece in four movements, making the central pair a scherzo and contrasting slow movement. But he wrote to Joachim that the 'middle movements – naturally the best ones – have fallen through. So I have substituted a feeble adagio'. Feeble is of course hardly the word for this piece: derived from the simplest of musical figures (the falling broken chord with which the oboe introduces the theme and the violin then begins) it evolves into one of Brahms' most

soulful but restrained movements. As such it provides a wonderful contrast to the gypsy style finale, with its pyrotechnic solo line and exciting use of displaced accents.

Joachim premiered the piece in Leipzig in 1879, but the response was tepid, and only through Joachim's persistence did it gradually gain its rightful place in the standard repertoire. Brahms and Joachim fell out over the violinist's divorce in 1884, the rift lasting until Brahms wrote the Double Concerto for violin and cello in 1887. But that's another story.

GORDON KERRY ©2006

The orchestra for Brahms' Violin Concerto calls for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons; four horns, two trumpets, timpani and strings.

The Sydney Symphony first performed the concerto in 1939 with soloist Jeanne Gautier and conductor Malcolm Sargent, and most recently in 2005 with conductor Will Humburg and soloist Arabella Steinbacher.

The First Performance

Joseph Joachim once said that the greatest of the German violin concertos, 'the one that makes fewest concessions', was Beethoven's, and that Brahms' concerto came closest to Beethoven's 'in its seriousness'.

So it's no surprise that he proposed, for the premiere of the Brahms, a program with Beethoven's Violin Concerto at the beginning, and the new concerto at the end. The middle was to be filled with songs, two movements from one of Bach's partitas for solo violin and an overture by Joachim himself.

Brahms had the kinds of doubts that occur to any thoughtful programmer: 'Beethoven shouldn't come before mine – of course, only because both are in D major. Perhaps the other way around – but it's a lot of D major – and not much else on the program.'

Nonetheless, the program went ahead as Joachim had planned. If nothing else, it indicates his great stamina as a violinist – performing two such monumental, and for us similar, works on the one program. But Michael Steinberg offers the reminder that to Joachim and his listeners these were not two established masterpieces but 'one classic and a new and demanding work by a composer with a reputation for being difficult'.



Brahms and Joachim, 1855

Richard Strauss *Symphonia domestica*, Op.53

Introduction –
Scherzo –
Adagio –
Finale

In Holy Week 1897, Richard Strauss was in Stuttgart, staying at the Hotel Marquart in which, many years earlier, Chopin had composed his *Revolutionary* étude, and where King Ludwig II had first discovered the elusive Wagner. There Strauss received a telegram from home in Munich advising him that his wife, the singer Pauline de Ahna, had given birth on 12 April, not to the expected twins, but to a ‘giant boy’.

Young Franz, as he was to be named upon his father’s immediate return to Munich, had been overdue, and weighed more than eight pounds. The massive size of his head, measuring 15 inches in circumference, had placed the lives of both mother and child in jeopardy during the difficult birth. In fact Franz had been temporarily baptised as ‘Richard’ during delivery, when there were fears that he wouldn’t make it.

Franz was born into a happy home. He was adored by his parents and – uncharacteristically for the time – his father took an active role in his day-to-day care. Strauss treated his son as an equal and as he grew older, Franz and his father engaged in passionate debate about all manner of subjects. Observers noted how their discussions of both trivial and serious issues would often become violent, with both father and son refusing to give an inch, before all would be resolved as quickly as it emerged, and without rancour.

It was a satisfying household for all concerned, which is why it was probably inevitable that Strauss, as the most programmatic of composers, would sooner or later turn to it as the subject for another of his illustrative orchestral works. In 1902 he told London’s *Musical Times* that ‘my next tone poem will illustrate a day in my family. It will be partly lyrical, partly humorous – a triple fugue, the three subjects representing papa, mama and baby.’ When the work for large orchestra, now called *Symphonia domestica* (or Domestic Symphony), was completed in the following year, it was dedicated ‘to my dear wife and our boy’.

And as one would expect, such a nakedly autobiographical work laid itself open to all manner of critical derision. One orchestral player described it as ‘the piece where the little kid throws cannon balls at his parents’, while a newspaper

Keynotes

R STRAUSS

Born Munich, 1864

Died Garmisch-Partenkirchen, 1949

Richard Strauss wrote two symphonies as a teenager, but this was not the musical genre that captured his imagination. Instead he made his name in the theatre and with the evocative and storytelling possibilities of the symphonic poem (or ‘tone poem’, as he preferred to call it) as invented by Liszt. *A Hero’s Life*, which the Sydney Symphony will be performing in August, *Don Juan* and *Thus spake Zarathustra* are also examples of large-scale, single-movement tone poems.

SYMPHONIA DOMESTICA

‘Symphonia’ domestica is not a symphony in the traditional sense. In a single movement, this tone poem provides a musical representation of a day in the life of the composer and his family: Papa, Mama and their son Franz (or ‘Bubi’). The dramatic contrasts in the music suggest the Strauss household was not always blissful; domestic life could get rowdy as well. As conductor Hans Richter commented: ‘All the cataclysms of the downfall of the gods in burning Valhalla do not make a quarter of the noise of one Bavarian baby in his bath.’

Richard Strauss with his son
Franz



critic said he attended a performance of it ‘for the first and last time’ because the music suggested to him that Strauss’ ‘marriage is out of joint’. Strauss himself gave ammunition to his critics, announcing at one point, ‘I can’t see why I should not write a symphony about myself – I find myself quite as interesting as Napoleon or Alexander,’ to which Romain Rolland replied, ‘That is no reason why others should share his interest!’

Ironically, however, while Strauss had always argued that ‘in my compositions I am unable to write without a program to guide me,’ he remained ambivalent about the specific program for the *Symphonia domestica*.

On 6 March 1904, two weeks before the work’s world premiere in New York, the *New York Times* reported:

[The composer] wishes it to be taken as music, for what it is, and not as the elaboration of the specific details of a scheme of things. The Symphony, he declares, is sufficiently explained by its title and is to be listened to as the symphonic development of its themes... He believes, and has expressed his belief, that the anxious search on the part of the public for the exactly corresponding passages in the music and the program, the guessing as to the significance of this or that, the distraction following a train of thought exterior to the music, are destructive to the musical enjoyment. Hence he has forbidden the publication of any description of what he sought to express till after the concert. ‘This time,’ says Dr Strauss, ‘I wish my music to be listened to purely as music.’

But his programmatic instincts soon got the better of him and when the piece was performed in Berlin later that year, Strauss himself provided a 'biographical' sketch of the work, and in early 1906 he allowed his colleague Wilhelm Klatte to publish nine pages of in-depth programmatic analysis of it.

The program for the Berlin performance subdivided the *Symphonia domestica's* single movement into the following passages:

I – Introduction and development of the three chief groups of themes

The husband's themes:

- a) Easy-going
- b) Dreamy
- c) Fiery

The wife's themes:

- a) Lively and gay
- b) Grazioso

The child's theme:

Tranquil

II – Scherzo

Parents' happiness. Childish play.

Cradle song (the clock strikes seven in the evening)

III – Adagio

Doing and thinking. Love scene.

Dreams and cares (the clock strikes seven in the morning)

IV – Finale

Awakening and merry dispute (double fugue)

Joyous conclusion.

Within the score itself, Strauss annotated many sections. In the 'Dreams' passage, for instance, he wrote, "The mother dreams about the child: will he be like his father (F major) or like his mother (B major)? Answers come from the Aunts (trumpets quoting the husband's theme), "Just like Papa!" and from the Uncles (trombones, quoting the wife's theme), "Just like Mama!"

The three main themes which are stated at the outset are described thus:

F major: Papa returns from travel, weary.

B major: Mama

D major: Baby, a mixture, but more like his Papa.

It sounds trivial and far too 'cute' for modern tastes, but as the music alone indicates, right from its gruff opening in the lower strings and winds, there remains plenty of



Richard Strauss, portrait by Leonhard Fanto

genuine drama within the Strauss household. The orchestra is massive, featuring quadruple, quintuple, sometimes even octuple winds and brass, four saxophones, two harps – a barrage of musical artillery that would indeed do justice to Napoleon’s or Alexander’s households. As the rapid contrasts within the *Symphonia domestica* between blaring brass, lyrical wind, humorous incidental material and broad main themes indicate, there must have been rather more to the Strauss family life than polite discussions about who changed the nappies and took out the garbage.

Perhaps the *Symphonia domestica* is as narcissistic as its program makes it appear and Romain Rolland might have been correct to call it the most audacious challenge that Strauss had ‘hurled at taste and commonsense’. And it’s true that there is something vaguely ridiculous about Strauss’ humble family man appearing in such a monumental orchestral guise. But surely these are problems with the program itself, not with the music, which is as moving and passionate as anything that the composer offered in his many symphonic tone poems.

Modern audiences tend to agree with Strauss’ colleague and friend Gustav Mahler, who enjoyed and conducted the work, while condemning its program. But only a couple of years earlier, Strauss’ English friend Edward Elgar had composed his *Enigma Variations* filled with musical portraits of often trivial domestic incidents – and gotten off virtually scot-free with the critics. The difference was that Elgar suppressed the sources of his musical portraits until 30 years after his work’s first performance – by which stage it had emphatically established its ‘abstract’ credentials – whereas Strauss, from the moment he completed the score of the *Symphonia domestica*, gave his many critics the programmatic rope to hang him with.

All composers put aspects of themselves into their work. Strauss’ only offence in this otherwise magnificent, large-scale orchestral work was that he dared to talk too soon about its humble origins in a happy domestic life.

MARTIN BUZACOTT ©1998

Symphonia domestica calls for a very large orchestra comprising three flutes, piccolo, two oboes, cor anglais, oboe d’amore, three clarinets, E flat clarinet, bass clarinet, four bassoons and contrabassoon; soprano, alto, baritone and bass saxophone; eight horns, four trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; two harps and strings.

The Sydney Symphony first performed the *Symphonia domestica* in 1949 with Eugene Goossens and most recently in 2003 under Edo de Waart.

Footnote: Franz Strauss eventually took a Doctorate in Law and became his father’s trusted business adviser. In 1924, when he was on his honeymoon in Egypt, Franz contracted typhus and became seriously ill. Traumatized by his son’s ill-health, Richard Strauss returned to the *Symphonia domestica*, composing a *Parergon* (a supplementary work) to it, scored for piano left hand and orchestra, which was performed by Paul Wittgenstein, who’d lost his right arm in World War I.

Private Life, Public Face

There's a phrase for what Richard Strauss does in *Symphonia domestica* – he is 'airing his dirty linen in public', revealing in music the details of his private life. He was criticised for it at the time; if he were to write the music today, in the era of celebrities and facebook, we'd think nothing of its intimacies. What's most striking about the *Symphonia domestica* is that all this intimacy requires one of the biggest orchestras we'll present all year. The next time the orchestra will approach this size will be in August, when we perform another Strauss tone poem.

That concert, A Hero's Life, will present the public face of Richard Strauss. This is the Strauss who said, 'I don't see why I shouldn't compose a symphony about myself...I'm quite as interesting as Napoleon or Alexander.' The result, *Ein Heldenleben*, shows the composer-as-hero, a bold and idealistic 'Artist' who contends with yapping critics and finds solace in loving arms. The arms, he said, belonged to his wife: 'She is very complex, very much a woman, a little depraved, something of a flirt, never twice alike, every minute different from what she was the minute before.' Somehow, Strauss just couldn't keep his private life out of the spotlight, and music is the richer for it!

A HERO'S LIFE

MEET THE MUSIC

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BRAHMS Variations on a Theme of Haydn

BARTÓK Piano Concerto No.2

R STRAUSS Ein Heldenleben (A Hero's Life)

Simone Young conductor

Cédric Tiberghien piano

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PRESENTING
PARTNER:



Photo Credit: Reto Klar



GLOSSARY

BALLADE – a single-movement instrumental piece, suggesting a narrative, often inspired by poetry or literature

CADENZA – a virtuoso passage, traditionally inserted towards the end of a sonata-form concerto movement and marking the final ‘cadence’. In the Baroque and Classical periods cadenzas were improvised, but with Beethoven’s Emperor Concerto composers began writing them out. Brahms was one of the last composers to write a violin concerto with an opportunity for the soloist to improvise a cadenza in the traditional spot.

ETUDE – a study; an instrumental piece written to train or demonstrate certain points of technique

MOTET – in the 19th century, church music for voices using words that are not part of the liturgy (similar to the anthem in the Anglican tradition)

PROGRAM – ‘program music’ is inspired by and claims to express a non-musical idea, usually with a descriptive title and sometimes with a literary narrative, or ‘program’ as well. Program music belongs to a tradition of pictorial or representative music which has been known in various forms since at least the 16th century. Program music itself flourished in the 19th century, with works such as Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique*, and represents an aesthetic in which literature and reading about music is nearly as important as music itself.

SCHERZO – literally, a joke; the term generally refers to a movement in a fast, light triple time, which may involve whimsical, startling or playful elements.

SYMPHONIC EXPOSITION – in nearly all Classical concertos the traditional sonata form is modified: instead of the exposition (statement of main themes) being repeated as is, the musical material is played first by the orchestra (symphonic exposition) and then by the soloist (solo exposition). After this follows the familiar development of ideas and exploration of harmonies and a recapitulation of the original ideas.

TONE POEM – a genre of orchestral music, also known as the **SYMPHONIC POEM**. At its simplest, the tone poem is a symphonic work that departs from conventional forms and adopts a freer structure in service of an extra-musical *program* that provides the narrative or scene. Liszt was the pioneer in this genre and Richard Strauss became a champion.

In much of the classical repertoire, movement titles are taken from the Italian words that indicate the tempo and mood. A selection of terms from this program is included here.

Adagio – slow

Allegro giocoso – fast, playful and humorous

Allegro non troppo – fast, not too much

Grazioso – gracefully

This glossary is intended only as a quick and easy guide, not as a set of comprehensive and absolute definitions. Most of these terms have many subtle shades of meaning which cannot be included for reasons of space.

INTERLUDE

Strauss and the Juggernaut

Richard Strauss was a proponent of musical gigantism, as Malcolm Gillies explains:

The 1890s was a decade of culmination and of change. By its end, wireless, X-rays, aspirin and the modern Olympic Games were realities, although Queen Victoria still held sway over the British Empire. The heroic idealism of the 19th century was reaching some of its more absurd conclusions, and starting to raise a reaction among younger, more pragmatic thinkers. In the arts, Romanticism, already in full bloom, was turning to a state of over-ripeness as artists sought to extract the final mileage from many techniques and tendencies first tried as much as a century before.

With the lover of classical music, this 'over-ripe' decade has proven of unrivalled popularity. Within its ten years, Tchaikovsky wrote his *Pathétique* Symphony and Dvořák his *New World*; Puccini created his first three operatic masterworks, while Mahler produced three monumental symphonies; Bruckner and Brahms made their final musical confessions during these years. Among those more dedicated to radical change, Debussy, Ravel and Schoenberg were starting to flex their muscles. But central to the decade's music, both as an innovator and preserver of traditions, stands the German composer Richard Strauss.

Strauss was a conductor by profession and a composer as time allowed. Not surprisingly, Strauss, the composer, was a master orchestrator. As with his fellow conductor-composer, Gustav Mahler, he knew all those technical tricks of the many instruments of the orchestra, understood just how their sounds would blend or jar to the ear, and could predict the acoustic effects of his scorings within the various new concert halls of the late 19th century.

Strauss's main orchestral medium was the symphonic poem (or, as he preferred to call it, the tone poem). These compositions were built around stories, the main characters of which were often reflected in the titles: *Don Juan* (1888), *Macbeth* (1890), *Don Quixote* (1897). The nature of the story is equally clearly reflected in other titles: *Death and Transfiguration* (1889), *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks* (1895) and *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1896), which ambitiously took as its subject the 'superman' philosophy



of Friedrich Nietzsche. But it was in his final tone poem of the decade, *A Hero's Life* (Ein Heldenleben, 1898) that Strauss' plot symphony turned upon himself. He cast himself as the Hero, who, with his 'Helpmate' (Strauss' wife), took on the Critics, defeating them but never totally silencing them all. This form of self-advertising autobiography seemed more than a little egotistical, but then this is the same man who said: 'I do not see why I should not compose a symphony about myself; I find myself quite as interesting as Napoleon or Alexander.'

Strauss' gifts lay in musical pictorialism. When his plots became very explicit so did his musical images. Early in *Don Quixote* he captures the very essence of the bleating of a flock of sheep (which the befuddled Knight has mistaken for an army). In *A Hero's Life* the themes of the main characters are magically adapted in mood to suit the circumstances of attack, defeat or repose dictated by Strauss' story. In *Death and Transfiguration* the faltering pulse precisely indicates the stages of ebbing and flowing of life in the dying artist.

To achieve such graphic results Strauss used many techniques. He frequently adopted easily recognisable themes or motifs to represent important characters, situations or subjects. The alternation of louder and softer passages, the smoothness or sharpness of the notes and the thickness or thinness of the sound profile became totally subservient to the precise demands of the story. But it was above all, in the use of the instruments of the orchestra that Strauss excelled as a 'musical painter'. The instruments, individually or in combinations, become the protagonists. In *A Hero's Life* Strauss himself is the horn, his 'Helpmate' the violin and the critics are a ragged, cackling consortium of wind and brass instruments. In *Don Quixote* those sheep 'bleat' through a finely calculated texture of muted brass instruments and oboes. 'Religion', in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, emerges in a complex web of over a dozen different string parts backed up by the organ.

As Strauss struggled for a more explicit depiction of his plots his orchestra grew. Occasionally he wanted more instruments just to gain a more massive sound – as in his cacophonous battle with the critics in *A Hero's Life*. But normally he wanted the extra instruments so as to gain more exquisite or unusual combinations of sounds, to achieve the eeriness of sound when the piccolo meets up

When his plots became very explicit so did his musical images.

with three trombones, or when three oboes decide to take on the shrill E flat clarinet.

And grow Strauss' orchestra did. His early *Don Juan* of 1888 was already composed 'for large orchestra': 11 woodwind and 11 brass players, as well as a full complement of strings and a relatively small percussion section. A decade later with *A Hero's Life* his 'large orchestra' exceeds 100 players: 16 wind, 18 brass, 66 string players, plus percussion. Somehow he could not control this orchestral growth. Strauss' juggernaut of an orchestra would continue to career along until World War I forced him to temper his megalomania.

His second autobiographical symphonic poem, *Symphonia domestica* (1902–03), an exposé of the Strauss' private life, added extra instruments, including a quartet of saxophones and even more bassoons and clarinets, thereby inspiring a chorus of complaint from the critics. Even such a Strauss enthusiast as Ernest Newman would write that 'the instrumental colour is grossly overdone... the realistic effects on the score are so pitifully foolish that one listens to them with regret that a composer of genius should ever have fallen so low.' But Strauss continued on his path of orchestral gigantism. His last tone poem, *An Alpine Symphony*, which through 22 sections describes a day in the mountains, came to involve more than 150 players, whose awesome combined power is truly demonstrated in Strauss' representation of 'Thunder and Tempest'.

Strauss was not the only rider on this juggernaut. Mahler too, was fascinated by the gigantic, writing his *Symphony of a Thousand* in 1906–07, and Arnold Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* (1901–11) was written for musical forces nothing short of grotesque: 25 wind instruments (four piccolos), 25 brass (seven trombones), four harps amid masses of strings and percussion, not to mention five soloists, a speaker and four choirs! Such orchestral inflation and such massive works clearly could not be sustained. It fell to the lot of this same Schoenberg to launch a new, ultra-modern currency: the atonal miniature.

© MALCOLM GILLIES

Strauss' juggernaut of an orchestra would continue to career along until World War I forced him to temper his megalomania.

MORE MUSIC

Selected Discography

BRAHMS VIOLIN CONCERTO

Viktoria Mullova's superb live recording with Claudio Abbado and the Berlin Philharmonic is out of print but is available as an ArkivCD from ArkivMusic.com. Mullova plays the cadenza Joachim wrote with Brahms' endorsement.

PHILIPS 438998

Jascha Heifetz performs the Brahms concerto at a cracking pace in a 1955 recording with Fritz Reiner and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. The cadenza in this recording is Heifetz's own.

RCA VICTOR LIVING STEREO 67896

SYMPHONIA DOMESTICA

Strauss's recordings of his own music are priceless for the insights they give. His *Symphonia domestica* with the RPO is notable for its energetic Allegros and relaxed slower tempos.

TESTAMENT (LABEL) 1441

Edo de Waart regularly conducted Strauss' great tone poems during his years with the Sydney Symphony. Recorded with the Minnesota Orchestra, this disc also includes *Don Juan*, *Alpensinfonie*, and *Till Eulenspiegel*.

VIRGIN CLASSICS VERITAS 61460

For the complete Strauss tone poems at an excellent price, try Decca's star-studded 6-CD boxed set in which Zubin Mehta conducts *Symphonia domestica* with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra.

DECCA 470 954-2

VIKTORIA MULLOVA

You can enjoy more intimate Brahms in the complete violin sonatas, with Mullova accompanied by Piotr Anderszewski. This recording garnered a 1998 Critic's Choice award from *Gramophone* magazine.

PHILIPS 446709

As a foil for all this romantic fare, you might try Mullova's more recent 2007 recording of Bach's sonatas, accompanied by harpsichordist Ottavio Dantone.

ONYX 4020

Or satisfy your neoclassical cravings with Stravinsky's violin concerto, paired with Bartók's second violin concerto. Esa-Pekka Salonen conducts the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra.

PHILIPS 456542

RUNNICLES CONDUCTS STRAUSS

Donald Runnicles conducts the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra in Strauss's *Death and Transfiguration*. The disc also includes the *Four Last Songs* and Wagner's *Prelude and Liebestod* with Christine Brewer.

TELARC 80661

Runnicles has also recorded *A Hero's Life*, together with the last scene from *Salome* with soprano Alessandra Marc and the North German Radio Symphony Orchestra Hamburg.

APEX 741379

Broadcast Diary



JULY

11 July, 12.05pm

ANGELS & BROKEN HEARTS

Michael Dauth violin-director

Sara Macliver soprano

Handel, Mozart

11 July, 8pm

DOMESTIC HARMONY?

See this program book for details.

14 July, 8pm

CARMINA BURANA

Arvo Volmer conductor

Amelia Farrugia, Paul McMahon, William Dazeley vocal soloists

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs,

Sydney Children's Choir

Shostakovich, Respighi, Orff

20 July, 8pm

LESLIE HOWARD IN RECITAL

Beethoven, Liszt, Borodin, Glazunov

2MBS-FM 102.5

SYDNEY SYMPHONY 2009

14 July, 6pm

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Webcast Diary



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June webcast:

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Donald Runnicles conductor

Donald Runnicles was born in Scotland and educated there and at Cambridge University; soon afterwards he went to Germany to work in opera. He learned his art from the ground up: coaching singers and attending rehearsals in Mannheim. He made his North American debut in 1988 conducting *Lulu* for the Metropolitan Opera, was named General Music Director of the City of Freiburg, Germany in 1989 and made his Glyndebourne debut in 1991 conducting *Don Giovanni*.

He was Music Director and Principal Conductor of the San Francisco Opera from 1992 to 2009, concluding his 17-year tenure in May with performances of Verdi's Requiem. In September he will take up appointments as General Music Director of the Deutsche Oper Berlin and Chief Conductor of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. He is also Music Director of the Grand Teton Music Festival in Wyoming and Principal Guest Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Highlights in his operatic work have included new productions of *Tannhäuser* and *The Magic Flute* and the launching of a *Ring* cycle for San Francisco Opera and a new production of *Peter Grimes* for the Metropolitan Opera. In 2005 he led the world premiere of *Doctor Atomic* by John Adams, and he's since conducted the concert suite in Atlanta. He also makes annual appearances for the Vienna State Opera and has led productions in the opera houses of Amsterdam, Berlin, Cologne, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Milan, Munich, Paris and Zurich. He conducts frequently at the Salzburg and Bayreuth festivals and appears regularly at the BBC Proms and Edinburgh Festival.

Symphonic work is close to his heart, and in addition to the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra he works with some of the leading orchestras in the United States and Europe, including the Cleveland Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New World Symphony, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Orchestra of St Luke's, Berlin Philharmonic, Concertgebouw Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra and the German radio orchestras in Hamburg (BDR) and Munich.

Among Donald Runnicles's awards are the OBE and an honorary degree from Edinburgh University.



KEN FREDMAN

Viktoria Mullova violin

Viktoria Mullova is known the world over as a virtuosic violinist with exceptional versatility and musical integrity. Her repertoire interests span the gamut of musical development from baroque and classical right up to the most contemporary influences and improvisation.

Her interest in the authentic approach to earlier music has led to collaborations with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Il Giardino Armonico, Venice Baroque and Orchestre Révolutionnaire et Romannique. She also tours and records with harpsichordist Ottavio Dantone. As a recitalist, she regularly performs with Katia Labèque. She also performs as a duo and trio with fortepianist Kristian Bezuidenout and cellist Pieter Wispelwey.

Her ventures into contemporary music began in 2000 with her album *Through the Looking Glass*, a collaboration with British jazz pianist Julian Joseph. She also commissions new work from composers such as Fraser Trainer, and is working on a project of gypsy music and improvisation with Matthew Barley's band.

She also appears regularly with the world's major orchestras and conductors. This season she has performed with the Berlin Philharmonic and Gustavo Dudamel, Rotterdam Philharmonic and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Philharmonia Orchestra with Paavo Järvi, and the Orchestre National de France.

Her extensive discography has attracted many prestigious awards, and her Vivaldi concertos disc with Il Giardino Armonico won the Diapason D'Or in 2005. She has also recorded the Schubert Octet with the Mullova Ensemble, *Recital* with Katia Labèque and Bach Sonatas with Ottavio Dantone. Most recently she has completed a recording of all Bach's sonatas and partitas for solo violin.

Viktoria Mullova studied at the Central Music School of Moscow and the Moscow Conservatoire. Her extraordinary talent captured international attention when she won first prize at the 1980 Sibelius Competition in Helsinki and the Gold Medal at the Tchaikovsky Competition in 1982. Since then, she has appeared with most of the world's greatest orchestras and conductors and at the major international festivals. On this Australian tour she also appears with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Viktoria Mullova plays either her 'Jules Falk' 1723 Stradivarius or a Guadagnini violin.



HENRY FAIR

THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY

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PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS

Founded in 1932, the Sydney Symphony has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities.

Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, where it gives more than 100 performances each year, the Sydney Symphony also performs concerts in a variety of venues around Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra world-wide recognition for artistic excellence. Last year the Sydney Symphony toured Italy, and in October 2009 will tour to Asia.

The Sydney Symphony's first Chief Conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by conductors such as Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and, most recently, Gianluigi Gelmetti. The Orchestra's history also boasts collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

The Sydney Symphony's award-winning Education Program is central to the Orchestra's commitment to the future of live symphonic music, developing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. The Sydney Symphony also maintains an active commissioning program and promotes the work of Australian composers through performances and recordings. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Liza Lim, Lee Bracegirdle and Georges Lentz, and the Orchestra's recording of works by Brett Dean was released last year on the BIS and Sydney Symphony Live labels.

Other releases on the Orchestra's own label, established in 2006, include performances with Alexander Lazarev, Gianluigi Gelmetti and Sir Charles Mackerras, as well as a recording of rare Rachmaninoff chamber music with Vladimir Ashkenazy.

This year Vladimir Ashkenazy begins his tenure as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor.

MUSICIANS



Vladimir Ashkenazy
Principal Conductor and
Artistic Advisor



Michael Dauth
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Dene Olding
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Second Violins



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Associate Concertmaster
- 02 Kirsten Williams
Associate Concertmaster
- 03 Kirsty Hilton
Assistant Concertmaster
- 04 Fiona Ziegler
Assistant Concertmaster
- 05 Julie Batty
- 06 Sophie Cole
- 07 Amber Gunther
- 08 Rosalind Horton
- 09 Jennifer Hoy
- 10 Jennifer Johnson
- 11 Georges Lentz
- 12 Nicola Lewis
- 13 Alexandra Mitchell
Moon Chair
- 14 Léone Ziegler
- 15 Brielle Clapson
Marianne Broadfoot

Second Violins

- 01 Marina Marsden
Principal
- 02 Emma West
A/Associate Principal
- 03 Shuti Huang
A/Assistant Principal
- 04 Susan Dobbie
Principal Emeritus
- 05 Maria Durek
- 06 Emma Hayes
- 07 Stan W Kornel
- 08 Benjamin Li
- 09 Nicole Masters
- 10 Philippa Paige
- 11 Biyana Rozenblit
- 12 Maja Verunica

Guest Musicians

- Monique Irik
Second Violin†
- Belinda Jezek
Second Violin
- Kylie Liang
Second Violin†
- Emily Long
Second Violin#
- Robin Wilson
Second Violin
- Jacqueline Cronin
Viola#
- Jennifer Curl
Viola#
- Victoria Jacono-
Gilmovich
Viola
- Vera Marcu
Viola
- Rowena Crouch
Cello#
- Rachael Tobin
Cello†
- Stephen Newton
Double Bass
- Lina Andonovska
Flute†
- Matthew Larsen
Clarinet
- Doree Dixon
Horn
- Alexander Love
Horn#
- Wendy Tait
Horn
- Andrew Evans
Trumpet

- Genevieve Lang
Harp
- Nathan Henshaw
Saxophone
- Christina Leonard
Saxophone
- James Nightingale
Saxophone
- Andrew Smith
Saxophone
- # Contract Musician
† Sydney Symphony
Fellow

MUSICIANS

Violas



Cellos



Double Basses



Harp

Flutes

Piccolo



Violas

- 01 Roger Benedict
Andrew Turner and
Vivian Chang Chair of
Principal Viola
- 02 Anne Louise Comerford
Associate Principal
- 03 Yvette Goodchild
Assistant Principal
- 04 Robyn Brookfield
- 05 Sandro Costantino
- 06 Jane Hazelwood
- 07 Graham Hennings
- 08 Mary McVarish
- 09 Justine Marsden
- 10 Leonid Volovelsky
- 11 Felicity Wytthe
Stuart Johnson

Cellos

- 01 Catherine Hewgill
Principal Cello
Tony and Fran Meagher
Chair
- 02 Timothy Walden
Principal
- 03 Leah Lynn
Assistant Principal
- 04 Kristy Conrau
- 05 Fenella Gill
- 06 Timothy Nankervis
- 07 Elizabeth Neville
- 08 Adrian Wallis
- 09 David Wickham

Double Basses

- 01 Kees Boersma
Principal
- 02 Alex Henery
Principal
- 03 Neil Brawley
Principal Emeritus
- 04 David Campbell
- 05 Steven Larson
- 06 Richard Lynn
- 07 David Murray

Harp

- Louise Johnson
Principal Harp
Mulpha Australia Chair

Flutes

- 01 Janet Webb
Principal
- 02 Emma Sholl
Associate Principal
- 03 Carolyn Harris

Piccolo

- Rosamund Plummer
Principal

MUSICIANS

Oboes



Cor Anglais



Clarinets



Bass Clarinet

Bassoons



Contrabassoon



Horns



04



05



06



Trumpets



Trombones



Percussion



Piano



Nicholas Carter
Assistant Conductor
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Symphony Australia

Oboes

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Principal Oboe
Andrew Kaldor and
Renata Kaldor Ao Chair
- 02 Shefali Pryor
Associate Principal
David Papp

Cor Anglais

Alexandre Oguey
Principal

Clarinets

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Principal
- 02 Francesco Celata
Associate Principal
- 03 Christopher Tingay

Bass Clarinet

Craig Wernicke
Principal

Bassoons

- 01 Matthew Wilkie
Principal
- 02 Roger Brooke
Associate Principal
- 03 Fiona McNamara

Contrabassoon

01 Noriko Shimada
Principal

Horns

- 01 Robert Johnson
Principal
- 02 Ben Jacks
Principal
- 03 Geoff O'Reilly
Principal 3rd
- 04 Lee Bracegirdle
- 05 Euan Harvey
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Christopher Harris
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Steve Rossé
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- 02 Colin Piper

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Josephine Allan
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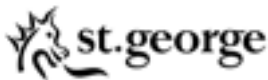
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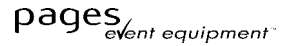
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02



03



04



05



06



07



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08



KEITH SAUNDERS

09



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03
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Trombone
RogenSi Chair
with Gerald Tapper,
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RogenSi

06
Diana Doherty
Principal Oboe
Andrew Kaldor and
Renata Kaldor AO Chair

07
Paul Goodchild
Associate Principal Trumpet
The Hansen Family Chair

08
Catherine Hewgill
Principal Cello
Tony and Fran Meagher
Chair

09
Emma Scholl
Associate Principal Flute
Robert and Janet Constable
Chair

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