

# WHAT'S ON MAY/JUNE

sydney symphony   
Walton Rhymerway Principal Conductors & Artists Advisor

## ASHKENAZY CONDUCTS BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST



MEET THE MUSIC

**WED 20 MAY 6.30PM**  
**THU 21 MAY 6.30PM**

**SCULTHORPE** Kakadu  
**BAX** Tintagel  
**WALTON** Belshazzar's Feast

**Vladimir Ashkenazy**  
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Louis Armstrong hits,  
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World, When the Saints Go  
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Side of the Street, and more

**James Morrison**  
jazz trumpet  
**Emma Pask** vocalist  
**Marc Taddei** conductor

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## IMOGEN COOPER IN RECITAL



INTERNATIONAL PIANISTS IN RECITAL

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**MON 1 JUN 8PM**

**SCHUBERT**  
German Dances, D783  
Sonata in G major, D894  
Six Moments Musicaux,  
D780  
Sonata in C minor D958

**CITY RECITAL HALL**  
**ANGEL PLACE**

## DISCOVER HAYDN



DISCOVERY PROGRAM

PRESENTED BY TENIX

**TUE 2 JUN 6.30PM**

**HAYDN** Symphony No.44  
(Mourning): 1st movement  
**HAYDN** Symphony No.104  
(London): 1st movement  
**PATERSON** Introduction  
and Rondo mizure

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

Join us for more Haydn in:  
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The Creation (Dec)

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## FLOWER OF YOUTH



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**THU 4 JUN 7PM**

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Octet for strings  
**MOZART** Piano Concerto  
No.14 in E flat, K449

**Michael Dauth** violin-director  
**Amir Farid** piano

**CITY RECITAL HALL**  
**ANGEL PLACE**

## ROMANTIC PERFECTION



THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY

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**THU 11 JUN 1.30PM**

EMIRATES METRO SERIES

**FRI 12 JUN 8PM**

GREAT CLASSICS

**SAT 13 JUN 2PM**

**BERLIOZ** Roman Carnival  
- Overture

**MENDELSSOHN**  
Violin Concerto in E minor

**BEETHOVEN**  
Symphony No.6, Pastoral

**Hugh Wolff** conductor  
**Isabelle Faust** violin

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## ORGAN SPLENDOUR



TEA & SYMPHONY

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**FRI 12 JUN 11AM**

**JS BACH**  
Tocatta and Fugue in F,  
BWV 540

**JONGEN**  
Four Pieces for Organ:  
Cantabile

**DUPRÉ**  
Passion Symphony:  
Crucifixion

**WIDOR**  
Organ Symphony No.6

**David Drury** organ

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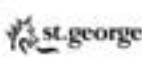
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2009 SEASON

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY  
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## RUSSIAN TRIBUTE

Thursday 14 May | 1.30pm

Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor  
Sasha Rozhdestvensky violin

**DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975)**  
**Violin Concerto No.1 in A minor, Op.99**

*Nocturne (Moderato)*

*Scherzo (Allegro)*

*Passacaglia (Andante) – cadenza –*

*Burlesque (Allegro con brio – Presto)*

### INTERVAL

**MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839–1881)**  
**orchestrated Vladimir Ashkenazy (born 1937)**  
***Pictures at an Exhibition***

*Promenade I –*

*Gnomus (Gnome)*

*Promenade II –*

*Il vecchio castello (The Old Castle)*

*Promenade III –*

*Tuileries (Tuileries. Children Quarrelling at Play)*

*Bydlo (Oxen)*

*Promenade IV –*

*Ballet des poussins dans leurs coques*

(Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks)

*'Samuel' Goldenberg und 'Schmüjle'*

*Promenade V –*

*Limoges (Limoges Market) –*

*Catacombæ. Sepulcrum Romanum*

(Catacombs. A Roman Sepulchre) –

*Con mortuis in lingua mortua*

(With the Dead in a Dead Language)

*Baba Yaga (The Hut on Hen's Legs) –*

*Kiev (The Great Gate of Kiev)*

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This concert will be broadcast  
live across Australia on  
ABC Classic FM 92.9 on  
Friday 15 May at 8pm.

Pre-concert talk by Gordon Kalton  
Williams at 12.45pm in the  
Northern Foyer.  
Visit  
[www.sydney-symphony.com/talk-bios](http://www.sydney-symphony.com/talk-bios)  
for speaker biographies.

Estimated timings:  
39 minutes, 20-minute interval,  
30 minutes  
The performance will conclude  
at approximately 3.10pm.



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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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**John Atkin**  
**Managing Director and**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Trust Company Limited**

2009 SEASON  
EMIRATES METRO SERIES

## RUSSIAN TRIBUTE

Friday 15 May | 8pm  
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor  
Sasha Rozhdestvensky violin

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*Nocturne (Moderato)*  
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*Passacaglia (Andante) – cadenza –*  
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*Limoges (Limoges Market) –*  
*Catacombæ. Sepulcrum Romanum*  
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*Con mortuis in lingua mortua*  
(With the Dead in a Dead Language)  
*Baba Yaga (The Hut on Hen's Legs) –*  
*Kiev (The Great Gate of Kiev)*



This concert will be broadcast  
live across Australia on  
ABC Classic FM 92.9

Pre-concert talk by Gordon Kalton  
Williams at 7.15pm in the  
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HH SHEIKH AHMED BIN SAEED AL-MAKTOUM  
CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE,  
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2009 SEASON  
GREAT CLASSICS

## RUSSIAN TRIBUTE

Saturday 16 May | 2pm  
Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor  
Sasha Rozhdestvensky violin

**DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975)**  
**Violin Concerto No.1 in A minor, Op.99**

*Nocturne (Moderato)*  
*Scherzo (Allegro)*  
*Passacaglia (Andante) – cadenza –*  
*Burlesque (Allegro con brio – Presto)*

### INTERVAL

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***Pictures at an Exhibition***

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*Gnomus (Gnome)*  
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*Promenade III –*  
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*'Samuel' Goldenberg und 'Schmuyle'*  
*Promenade V –*  
*Limoges (Limoges Market) –*  
*Catacombæ. Sepulcrum Romanum*  
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*(With the Dead in a Dead Language)*  
*Baba Yaga (The Hut on Hen's Legs) –*  
*Kiev (The Great Gate of Kiev)*

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Visit  
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for speaker biographies.

Estimated timings:  
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30 minutes  
The performance will conclude  
at approximately 3.40pm.

## SYDNEY SYMPHONY RECORDINGS



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Four Last Songs  
**SCHUBERT**  
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**STRAUSS**  
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**Ricarda Merbeth** soprano



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**SHOSTAKOVICH**  
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# INTRODUCTION

## Russian Tribute

There's a word Vladimir Ashkenazy uses in connection with Shostakovich's First Violin Concerto: eloquent. It is a 'a most eloquent piece', he says. This is something the first listeners recognised (and Ashkenazy was among them), but it's also evident today. This is music that speaks, and speaks powerfully. Like a great oration, the concerto blends seriousness with humour, abstract formality with impassioned meaning. Its first soloist, David Oistrakh, compared it to a 'major Shakespearean role, full of meaning which demand a great deal of thought and emotional input from the interpreter'. Behind this is Shostakovich's own eloquence, expressing in his music what Ashkenazy calls 'the tragedy of an individual in impossible circumstances'.

It would be fair to say that it's Russian-born musicians who are best-placed to understand and interpret this music, to get under its skin. These are musicians such as Ashkenazy, who were there when this music was premiered and who directly experienced the world of 'impossible circumstances' it mirrors, and musicians of a younger generation, such as Sasha Rozhdestvensky, who have the richness of Russian music in their blood.

You could also argue that it takes a Russian heritage to fully realise the sound-world of Modest Mussorgsky, the most idiosyncratic of the 19th-century Russian composers. Mussorgsky's style was nurtured outside the traditions of the conservatorium and he was deeply influenced by the rhythms and tones of Russian language. As a result his music is heartfelt, colourful and distinctly Russian in its idiom.

*Pictures at an Exhibition* is perhaps his best-known work, although as an orchestral piece it's fairer to say that it's Mussorgsky-*and-Ravel's* best-known work. Ravel's orchestration of Mussorgsky's piano original abounds with French colour and brilliance. It's great music, but it's not Russian. This is where Ashkenazy's own orchestration brings us closer to the kind of sound that Mussorgsky himself might have imagined, colouring in the pictures anew with darker, richer hues.

# *trust*



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# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## **Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)** **Violin Concerto No.1 in A minor, Op.99**

*Nocturne (Moderato)*

*Scherzo (Allegro)*

*Passacaglia (Andante) – cadenza –*

*Burlesque (Allegro con brio – Presto)*

Sasha Rozhdestvensky violin

Paradoxically, the Second World War lulled some Soviet artists into a false sense of security. They, like the rest of the populace, endured the privations and dangers of battle and invasion, but the war provided some relief from the Great Terror of the 1930s during which Stalin had ‘purged’ – murdered or imprisoned – countless numbers of his own citizens, especially the leading intellectuals in various fields. That Shostakovich, for one, had let his guard down is evident in the events surrounding his Ninth Symphony, for which Stalin had ‘suggested’ the composer use Beethoven’s Ninth as a model. Shostakovich, unable to write the victory symphony expected, nonetheless felt safe enough to produce an ostensibly ‘light’ Ninth Symphony in 1945.

With the defeat of the Nazis, Stalin’s administration returned to the business of enforcing its values on the Soviet people, and his cultural commissar Andrei Zhdanov initiated a series of crackdowns on artistic life. By February 1948 a Party Decree had been promulgated which attacked the proponents of ‘formalism’ in music. Shostakovich, despite publicly acknowledging his ‘errors’, was relieved of his teaching duties. Richard Taruskin has pointed out that a first draft of the Party Decree included the resolution ‘to liquidate the one-sided, abnormal deviation in Soviet music towards textless instrumental works.’ In the event, ‘liquidate’ was replaced with ‘censure’, but the intention is plain: textless works are susceptible to many interpretations, and therefore less easy to censor. Perhaps for that reason, Shostakovich kept the violin concerto that he began in 1947 under wraps for some years – it only saw the light of day in 1955 when Stalin was safely embalmed.

The impetus for the work was almost certainly the series of concerts given by David Oistrakh in 1947 entitled ‘The Development of the Violin’, and Shostakovich’s response to Oistrakh’s amazing artistry was to compose this big, four-movement, essentially symphonic work and dedicate it to him. It was initially given the opus number 77 but when

## **Keynotes**

### **SHOSTAKOVICH**

*Born St Petersburg, 1906*

*Died Moscow, 1975*

**One of the greatest composers of symphonies of the 20th century, Shostakovich was a controversial and enigmatic personality who lived through the Bolshevik Revolution, the Stalinist purges and World War II.**

**His music is often searched for cryptic messages: criticism of the Stalinist regime disguised in music that, it was hoped, would be found acceptable by authorities. The ambiguous political significance of his work has led to intense debate and he seems fated to be heard only in the context of his biography. The challenge with Shostakovich – more than any other composer – is to listen to his music as music.**

### **VIOLIN CONCERTO NO.1**

**This concerto was composed for the great virtuoso David Oistrakh in 1947 (when it was designated Op.77) but not performed until 1955, after Stalin’s death.**

**It is in four movements: an unexpectedly lyrical *Nocturne*; a *Scherzo* that takes the idea of musical playfulness and gives it a ‘prickly’ character, quoting Shostakovich’s four-note ‘signature’ motif; and a long and noble *Passacaglia*, which builds variations on a theme introduced by strings and timpani before dissolving into a cadenza for the soloist alone, and then ‘crashes down’ into the *Burlesque*.**



Shostakovich (left) looks over a score with violinist David Oistrakh

published appeared as Op.99. Oistrakh himself made many illuminating remarks about the work, saying:

*This composition sets before the violinist a fascinating and noble task...enabling him not only to display his virtuosity, but, in the first place, to give utterance to the most profound feelings, ideas and emotions.*

*The concerto is not readily grasped by the violinist. I recall that a clear perception of it came to me slowly and not without difficulty. I became more and more interested in the work as the days went by, until finally I found myself wholly under the spell of the music.*

The music weaves that spell gradually on its audience. The opening **Nocturne** – and how seemingly perverse to begin a bravura work with a nocturne! – is neither symphonic sonata-allegro nor virtuosic display. Rather the soloist is presented as a lyrical, meditative character, tentatively exploring a sombre landscape and rising by degrees to more impassioned, double-stopped gestures before retreating slowly. Oistrakh described the movement's 'suppression of feelings' and air of 'tragedy in the best sense of purification'. The comparison with the following **Scherzo** – one of Shostakovich's more mordant jokes – could hardly be greater. Here the music is, in Oistrakh's words, 'malignant, demonic, prickly'. The solo part, often playing in counterpoint with solo woodwinds, requires all the virtuosity apparently lacking in the first movement. The movement reaches a grim climax with the bone-rattling timbre of the xylophone.

While there is some gallows-humour in the *Scherzo* (and references to the DSCH motive [D-E flat-C-B natural])

which Shostakovich uses as his musical signature), the **Passacaglia** is unapologetically baleful. Its theme, hinted at in the *Scherzo* but fully stated here by low strings and timpani, has an ominous tread to which the violin replies with long, heart-rending melodies – again called upon to play double-stopped sections at moments of high drama. Like the *Nocturne*, the *Passacaglia* emphasises the melodic, rather than the bravura, aspects of the solo instrument, but as the movement dissolves into the concerto’s cadenza, there can be no doubt that this is music conceived for a prodigiously talented performer. The cadenza requires the full gamut of the soloist’s technical armoury, and leads without a break into the finale **Burlesque**.

It is only here, where the orchestra (again rendered brittle by the xylophone) plays the introductory bars without the soloist, that we realise how constant a presence the violin has been until now, and what stamina is required to play a work of such dimensions. But there’s more, and it’s not long before the violin is drawn back into the maelstrom, responding with astounding agility to a movement of classic Shostakovich. There is black humour, and acid energy, and ever more impossible-seeming gestures for the soloist before a brief reminiscence of the *Passacaglia* is peremptorily dismissed by a sudden cadence.

Oistrakh gave the first performance in Leningrad in 1955 and a few months later introduced it to the West in a concert at Carnegie Hall. The US press went wild; Stalin would have turned in his mausoleum.

GORDON KERRY ©2002


The orchestra for Shostakovich’s Violin Concerto comprises three flutes (one doubling piccolo), three oboes (one doubling cor anglais), three clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet), and three bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon); four horns and tuba; timpani and percussion (xylophone, tambourine, tam tam); two harps, celeste and strings.

The Violin Concerto Op.99 was completed at the beginning of March 1948, but was not performed publicly until 29 October 1955, with its dedicatee David Oistrakh as soloist and Evgeny Mravinsky conducting. During the period between its completion and premiere, Shostakovich made numerous alterations to the score, requiring a change in opus number from 77 to 99. The original version still exists, but is rarely performed.

The Sydney Symphony gave the first Australian performance of this concerto in 1962 with violinist Leonid Kogan and conductor Jascha Horenstein. The most recent performance was in 2006 with Jaap van Zweden and soloist Julian Rachlin.

Shostakovich was part-way through the final movement of his First Violin Concerto when the Zhdanov Decree was published. His friend and fellow-composer, Mikhail Meyerovich recalled:

‘[I asked] “At which point were you exactly in the score when the decree was published?” He showed me the exact spot. The violin played semiquavers before and after it. There was no change evident in the music.’

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\*Seating fee may apply.

**Modest Mussorgsky (1839–1881)**  
**orchestrated Vladimir Ashkenazy (born 1937)**  
***Pictures at an Exhibition***

There is something about Mussorgsky's piano work, *Pictures at an Exhibition*, that is irresistible to other composers. In fact, it was another composer's orchestral arrangement (Maurice Ravel's version, commissioned by Sergei Koussevitzky in 1920) that first brought this remarkable music to widespread public attention.

The original piano version was not performed in Mussorgsky's lifetime, and even after its publication in 1886 it 'crept' into the repertoire – its unconventional form and character making it a mere pianistic curiosity until it found mid-20th-century champions in Vladimir Horowitz and Sviatoslav Richter.

Mussorgsky revealed no plan to orchestrate *Pictures at an Exhibition* (or 'Pictures from an Exhibition' as it's more properly translated), and yet many musicians have felt that this vivid music called out for orchestral colours. Among them have been conductors Sir Henry Wood, Leopold Stokowski and Sergei Gorchakov, as well as Koussevitzky, whose instructions to Ravel were that the orchestration be in the manner of Rimsky-Korsakov, the one composer who, surprisingly, didn't attempt the task.

In the early 1980s Vladimir Ashkenazy felt the same call. As a pianist he always thinks in terms of orchestral colour when he plays, and Mussorgsky's masterpiece, in particular, evokes strong orchestral associations. And so, he writes, 'I developed my own personal vision of how the piece should sound when transposed from the piano to the larger canvas of the symphony orchestra.' It is a vision that developed over time and from a long intimacy with the piano work, a 'slow and inexorable process'.

Ashkenazy says: 'I have not been concerned with effect for its own sake, however inventive or brilliant a certain passage might sound, but instead I have been guided by the deeper undercurrents of this predominantly dark-coloured piece. In other words, I have tried to work from within the music rather than from without and I hope the result has a certain validity.' His approach, which we hear in this concert, has been based on 'complete loyalty to Mussorgsky's idiom and to what I believe was in the composer's mind when he conceived this cycle'.

**Keynotes**

**MUSSORGSKY**  
*Born Karevo, Pskov district,*  
*1839*  
*Died St Petersburg, 1881*

With a background in the army and the civil service rather than a conservatorium education, **Mussorgsky developed an idiosyncratic and 'unschooled' musical style. He belonged to the group of five nationalist composers known as 'The Mighty Handful' (see box on page 12), and was strongly influenced by Russian speech inflexions. He is at his finest in songs and opera, such as his masterpiece *Boris Godunov*.**

**Mussorgsky is one of the most 'rearranged' composers in the orchestral repertoire. Shostakovich, Rimsky-Korsakov, Ravel, the conductor Stokowski and others reworked pieces such as *Night on Bald Mountain* (heard in the movie *Fantasia*), and the opera *Khovantchina* was completed by Rimsky-Korsakov. But the music that has attracted the most attention has been *Pictures at an Exhibition*, with more than a dozen different versions for orchestra.**

**PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION**  
**Pictures at an Exhibition was conceived as a piano piece in 1874. Mussorgsky took his inspiration from an exhibition in memory of the artist and designer Viktor Hartmann, which included images ranging from portraits and pictorial scenes to costume designs and architectural sketches. The music literally recreates the experience of wandering through an art gallery, with 'promenades' linking the vividly characterised pictures. The music is played without pause.**



Ilya Repin's famous portrait of Mussorgsky was painted just days before the composer's death. As Richard Taruskin and others have pointed out, this image of a man in decline has long reinforced the misleading view of Mussorgsky as some kind of 'idiot savant', undermining what is known of his technique and the extreme care he took with his manuscripts as well as his refined and aristocratic personal appearance.

The scholar Michael Russ goes so far as to say that the Ashkenazy version 'goes beyond what Mussorgsky could have achieved himself' while remaining entirely in the spirit of the original.

Most music-lovers know the Ravel version best; this is the version that is performed and recorded more frequently than any other. So a performance of a fresh orchestration offers a chance to hear the *Mussorgsky's* music anew and with its original vigour. There are many differences in the details (some of which are highlighted in the 'Catalogue' section of this note). But the overarching difference is the contrast between Ravel's brilliant orchestral showpiece, spectacular and brightly coloured, and the sophisticated but distinctively Russian character – 'heavier and darker' – of Ashkenazy's version.

Since the theme is 'pictures', think of two artists, each copying the painting of another great artist, but each in his own style. The scene is the same, the lines and the composition are the same; the colours and textures are different.

### The Mighty Handful

Mussorgsky, together with Balakirev, Borodin, Cui and Rimsky-Korsakov, belonged to a group of 19th-century Russian composers with a consciously nationalist philosophy of music. They took inspiration from Russian history, literature and folk traditions. In 1867 the critic Vladimir Stasov dubbed them *Moguchaya Kuchka* (usually translated in English as 'The Mighty Handful'), praising the 'poetry, feeling, talent and skill there is in the small but already mighty little heap (moguchaya kuchka) of Russian musicians'.

## An Exhibition

The exhibition in question was a memorial in honour of Mussorgsky's friend, the architect and artist Viktor Hartmann. Hartmann had died the year before, in 1873, at the age of 39. As an architect he had been notoriously bad at constructing 'ordinary, everyday things' but, given palaces or 'fantastic' structures, his artist's imagination was capable of astonishing creativity.

The St Petersburg exhibition included hundreds of Hartmann's delicate drawings, watercolours and designs. Of these Mussorgsky, in his own tribute, selected ten. Four of the artworks are now lost, but they survive, as does Hartmann's memory and reputation, in music.

Mussorgsky's musical structure is driven by the narrative of a program that combines baroque pictorialism with romantic expression of feeling. *Pictures...* places the listener at the exhibition itself, 'promenading' from picture to picture in 'modo russo' (Russian style) and an alternating five- and six-beat metre. (In these interludes Mussorgsky said his own 'physiognomy' was evident.) Then, pausing before each selected artwork, the composer uses music to take us into its world.

*Pictures at an Exhibition*  
places the listener at the  
exhibition itself...

## A Catalogue

*Pictures at an Exhibition* was dedicated to Vladimir Stasov, who also provided descriptions and explanations for the 1886 edition of the piano version. These are included in italics.

### Promenade I –

The differences between Ravel's and Ashkenazy's version emerge from the very beginning. Ravel begins the first Promenade with a single trumpet and then brings in the other brass instruments. Ashkenazy uses three trumpets – already suggesting the overall 'brassier' quality of his orchestration – and then brings in the full orchestra. Michael Russ points out that the woodwinds and strings are assigned either to the melody or the bass line, and it's the brass section that takes responsibility for filling in the harmonies for an 'appropriate congregational effect'.

The Promenade leads without pause into the first image, *Gnomus*.

## **Gnomus (Gnome)**

*A drawing representing a small gnome walking awkwardly on deformed legs – a design for a nutcracker.*

The Gnome is a caricature – at once grotesque and tragic, menacing and pitiful – and Mussorgsky's music for it invites intriguing orchestral effects. In Ashkenazy's version the eerie sound of Ravel's glissandos to harmonics in the strings are replaced by muted double basses, whizzing up and down tiny fragments of scales.

## **Promenade II –**

### **Il vecchio castello (The Old Castle)**

*A mediæval castle before which stands a singing troubadour.*

The minstrel sings in an Italian siciliano rhythm, but his melody has a mournful Russian character and Ravel memorably gave it to the saxophone. Ashkenazy assigns it to the oboe d'amore, giving the minstrel's voice a darker character, less sweet but even more melancholy.

## **Promenade III –**

### **Tuileries. Dispute d'enfants après jeux**

#### **(Tuileries. Children quarrelling at play)**

*A walk in the gardens of the Tuileries with a group of children and their nurse.*

Michael Russ speculates that the children in Hartmann's Tuileries watercolour were most likely a detail, from which Mussorgsky's inspiration grew. The composer liked children and he captures perfectly their childish shrieking and the shapes of their speech. Here, says Russ, Ashkenazy reflects a pianist's view of the music, with an interpretation that is rapid and lightly textured – there is very little in the way of multiple instruments sharing the same melodic lines.

## **Bydlo (Oxen)**

*A Polish wagon on enormous wheels drawn by oxen.*

Bydlo simply means cattle or oxen in Polish, but Stasov's description gives Mussorgsky's 'secret' away. This is the point where, in Ravel's orchestration, the tuba enters with a gentle, lumbering solo over the lower strings and woodwinds – all very subdued, as if to suggest the wagon is being observed from a distance.

Be prepared for a surprise then: Ashkenazy has four horns blare forth with Mussorgsky's original dynamic of *fortissimo*. The first orchestration, in fact, to 'get this right'.

#### Promenade IV –

##### **Ballet des poussins dans leurs coques** **(Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks)**

*A little picture by Hartmann for the setting of a picturesque scene in the ballet Trilby.*

Mussorgsky's imaginary ballet, a fleeting scherzino, takes the music from the ponderous bass register of *Bydlo* to the treble. Ornamental, fluttering woodwind lines and plucked strings suggest the tapping of the chicks at their shells.



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**Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks**

##### **'Samuel' Goldenberg and 'Schmuyle'**

*Two Polish Jews, rich and poor.*

In 1868 Hartmann had given Mussorgsky two life sketches, those of the rich and the poor Jew from Sandomir. Probably Mussorgsky named them himself, with the Germanicised 'Samuel' for the wealthy Goldenberg and its Yiddish equivalent 'Schmuyle'. The two sketches are united in music in a timeless narrative – the poor man begging from a rich one – and again Mussorgsky's fascination with the representation of speech emerges. Goldenberg appears first – assertive, powerful and measured – with the full strings punctuated by the noble-sounding horns. And instead of the familiar muted trumpet with which Ravel voices Schmuyle, Ashkenazy gives the stuttering, teeth-chattering part to a solo violin. The coda makes no attempt to reconcile the two and the poor man is sent away with nothing.



**The rich Jew**

#### Promenade V –

Ashkenazy restores to the music one of the Promenades that Ravel omitted. Again, the trumpets lead the way for the full orchestra in one of the heavier statements of this theme.

##### **Limoges. Le marché (Limoges Market) –**

*French women furiously disputing in the market place.*

Stasov says the women are arguing, but Mussorgsky's sketched scenario suggests they are *gossiping* – about a lost



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**The poor Jew**

cow, one neighbour's dentures and another's obtrusive red nose. This miniature is racing and excited, and calls for brilliant colouration – as everyone knows, the big news cannot wait!

### **Catacombæ. Sepulcrum romanum**

**(Catacombs. A Roman Sepulchre) –**

**Con mortuis in lingua mortua**

**(With the Dead in a Dead Language)**

*Hartmann's picture represented the artist himself looking at the catacombs in Paris by the light of a lantern*

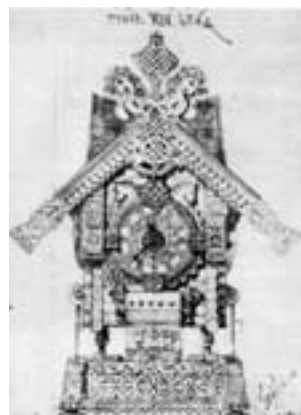
This pair of linked movements was inspired by a single image. The catacombs are first represented in literal terms, with a stark scoring of slow, sustained notes for the brass section. Then, says Mussorgsky alongside his dodgy Latin, 'The creative spirit of the departed Hartmann leads me to the skulls and invokes them: the skulls begin to glow faintly.' The mood of sombre introspection is sustained with a vaporous evocation of the *Promenade* theme in a minor key, which Ashkenazy assigns to horns and trumpet (rather than oboes and cor anglais) against high string tremolos and the nervous ringing of the celesta's bell-like sounds.

### **The Hut on Hen's Legs (Baba Yaga) –**

*Hartmann's drawing represented a clock in the form of Baba Yaga's Hut on Hen's Legs. Mussorgsky has added the ride of Baba Yaga in her mortar.*

Russian children grow up with the tale of Baba Yaga, the witch who lives in a hut mounted on hen's legs and devours children. Unlike Western witches, Baba Yaga travels in a mortar propelled by a pestle – her broomstick is strictly for sweeping over her tracks.

As Stasov says, Mussorgsky portrays Baba Yaga's ride as much as her dwelling place with this terrifying and inexorable music (and, with one bar of music per second, clocklike as well!).



**Design for the Baba Yaga clock**

### **The Great Gate of Kiev**

*Hartmann's drawing represented his project for a gate in the city of Kiev in the massive old Russian style, with a cupola in the form of a Slavonic helmet.*

Hartmann's gate – a competition entry from 1869 – was never built but he considered it his masterpiece. Mussorgsky's music conveys the grandeur of Hartmann's



concept and its suggestion of 'old heroic Russia'. Ashkenazy begins with sonorous restraint, using the rich colours of woodwinds, horns and a pair of rippling harps. The quotation from a Russian Orthodox chant, 'As you are baptised in Christ', is introduced with sombre string tones, and the second chorale is given to the high horns (contrasting with the reed organ sound of Ravel's clarinets and bassoons). Then there are the characteristically Russian peals of bells. Through this the *Promenade* theme rings out. Here, if nowhere else, *Pictures...* demands an orchestral sound in the spirit of Mussorgsky's the mighty and sonorous climax.

ADAPTED FROM A NOTE BY YVONNE FRINDLE ©2008

Ashkenazy's orchestration of *Pictures at an Exhibition* calls for three flutes (two doubling piccolo), three oboes (one doubling oboe d'amore), two clarinets, clarinet in E flat, bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon; four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion (xylophone, glockenspiel, tubular bells, tam-tams, bass drum, snare drum, cymbals, triangle, whip); two harps, celesta and strings.

This is the Australian premiere of this version of *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

# GLOSSARY

**BURLESQUE** – music with a humorous or playful character.

**CADENZA** – a virtuoso passage, traditionally inserted towards the end of a sonata-form concerto movement and marking the final ‘cadence’. But in Shostakovich’s Violin Concerto No.1 the cadenza forms a bridge between two movements.

**COUNTERPOINT** – two or more different musical lines or melodies played at the same time.

**DOUBLE-STOPPING** – in string playing double-stopping involves bowing across two strings simultaneously to create chord effects; the left hand ‘stops’ notes on both strings.

**D-S-C-H** – in English-speaking countries musical notes are named using the first seven letters of the alphabet, A to G, with sharps and flats added accordingly. In Germany, the letter “B” indicates B flat, while the letter “H” is used for a regular B (B natural). Flats for other notes are shown with the addition of an “s”, e.g. Es for E flat. Composers of all nationalities have taken advantage of this to allow musical note spelling. In this way Shostakovich spelled his name in music with D, E flat (Es), C, B natural (H).

**GLISSANDOS** – an extremely rapid scale passage. On stringed instruments the effect is created by sliding the left hand along the fingerboard.

**HARMONICS** – in string playing, a harmonic is achieved by touching the string lightly while bowing, thereby affecting its frequency of vibration. The resulting sound is ethereal and flute-like.

**NOCTURNE** – literally a ‘night piece’, at first used for Classical serenades (played outdoors in the evening) and later adopted for lyrical piano works (e.g. those by Chopin) and other evocative instrumental works.

**OBOE D’AMORE** – an instrument slightly lower in pitch and gentler in sound than the oboe.

**ORCHESTRATION** – the practice of arranging or recomposing music for an orchestral ensemble (often working from music written for piano), also the name for such a work.

**PASSACAGLIA** – a musical form with Baroque origins, characterised by its recurring ground bass, providing the support for an extended set of variations, and by its serious tone. Many composers have taken inspiration from the impressive passacaglias of Bach and Handel, including Brahms in the finale of his Fourth Symphony and Britten in the finale of his Violin Concerto.

**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. A **SCHERZINO** is a little scherzo.

**SONATA-ALLEGRO FORM** – the term sonata form – or sonata-allegro form, as it’s also known – was conceived in the 19th century to describe the harmonically based structure most Classical composers had adopted for the first movements of their sonatas and symphonies. It involves the exposition, or presentation of themes and subjects: the first in the tonic or home key, the second in a contrasting key. The tension between the two keys is intensified in the development, where the themes are manipulated and varied as the music moves further and further away from the ultimate goal of the home key. Tension is resolved in the recapitulation, where both subjects are restated in the tonic. Sometimes a coda (‘tail’) is added to enhance the sense of finality.

**TREMOLO** – repeating the same note many times very quickly, to produce a ‘shaking’ or ‘trembling’ effect.

*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.*

Allegro – fast

Allegro con brio – fast, with life

Andante – at a walking pace

Moderato – moderately

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.

# MORE MUSIC

## Selected Discography

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### SHOSTAKOVICH VIOLIN CONCERTO NO.1

There are several releases in which this concerto is performed by its dedicatee, David Oistrakh. One to seek out is the coupling with Paul Tortelier's interpretation of Shostakovich's First Cello Concerto (to be performed by the Sydney Symphony in August).

EMI CLASSICS 72493

Or you can hear Oistrakh (in a different performance conducted by the composer's son, Maxim) in the excellent value 3-CD set that collects all of Shostakovich's concertos.

EMI CLASSICS 09428

### PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

Ashkenazy conducted his orchestration of *Pictures at an Exhibition* with the Philharmonia Orchestra for a Decca release in 1983. It has since been re-released in a compilation with Ashkenazy's performance of the original piano version.

DECCA 414386 (OR 000797302)

If wanting to refresh your memory of Ravel's orchestration or seek out more music by Mussorgsky, try the collection recorded by Valery Gergiev and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, which also includes Rimsky-Korsakov's arrangement of *Night on Bald Mountain*, Shostakovich's arrangement of 'Dawn on the Moscow River' from *Khovanschina* and Liadov's arrangement of the Hopak from *Sorochintsy Fair* and other pieces.

PHILIPS 468526

### SASHA ROZHDESTVENSKY

Rozhdestvensky performs Schnittke's Concerto grosso No.6, which was composed for him and pianist Viktoria Postnikova. Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducts the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, and the disc is completed with Schnittke's Symphony No.8.

CHANDOS 9359

*Rozhdestvensky's recording of the Shostakovich Violin Concerto No.1 has yet to be released.*

### VLADIMIR ASHKENAZY

#### RECENT RELEASES

#### Rachmaninov: Complete Symphonies and Orchestral Works

Ashkenazy conducts the Sydney Symphony in live recordings from the 2007 Rachmaninov Festival.

EXTON EXCL-00018

#### Rare Rachmaninoff: Chamber Music

Soprano Joan Rodgers, violinist Dene Olding and the Goldner String Quartet are joined by Ashkenazy at the piano for a recording of Rachmaninoff rarities

SYDNEY SYMPHONY LIVE 200901

## Broadcast Diary

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### MAY-JUNE

#### RELIVE THE 2008 ELGAR FESTIVAL

**Vladimir Ashkenazy** conductor

**Lilli Paasikivi** mezzo-soprano,

**Mark Tucker** tenor,

**David Wilson-Johnson** baritone,

**James Ehnes** violin,

**Sydney Philharmonia Choirs**

Two broadcasts remaining:

16 May, 12.05pm

Violin Concerto, Pomp & Circumstance Marches, Enigma Variations

23 May, 12.05pm

The Dream of Gerontius

1 June, 8pm

#### IMOGEN COOPER IN RECITAL

Schubert

3 June, 1.05pm

#### BEETHOVEN & BEYOND

**Douglas Boyd** conductor

**Paul Lewis** piano

Haydn, Beethoven, Bartók

6 June, 8pm

#### KURT ELLING: JAZZ & ORCHESTRA (2008)

**Kurt Elling** vocals

with **Robert Amster**, **Laurence Hobgood**, **Kobie**

**Watkins**, **Julien Wilson** and the **Sydney Symphony**

conducted by **Benjamin Northey**

2MBS-FM 102.5

#### SYDNEY SYMPHONY 2009

12 May, 6pm

What's on in concerts, with interviews and music.

## Webcast Diary

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May webcast:

#### SENSE AND SENSUALITY

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or email: [yoursay@sydneysymphony.com](mailto:yoursay@sydneysymphony.com)

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Vladimir Ashkenazy** conductor  
PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC ADVISOR

In the years since Vladimir Ashkenazy first came to prominence on the world stage in the 1955 Chopin Competition in Warsaw, he has built an extraordinary career not only as one of the most renowned and revered pianists of our times, but as an inspiring artist whose creative life encompasses a vast range of activities.

Conducting has formed the largest part of his music-making for the past 20 years. He was Chief Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic from 1998 to 2003, and he was Music Director of the NHK Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo from 2004 to 2007. In 2009 he takes up the position of Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the Sydney Symphony.

Alongside these roles, Vladimir Ashkenazy is also Conductor Laureate of the Philharmonia Orchestra, with whom he has developed landmark projects such as *Prokofiev and Shostakovich Under Stalin* (a project which he toured and later developed into a TV documentary) and *Rachmaninoff Revisited* at the Lincoln Center, New York.

He also holds the positions of Music Director of the European Union Youth Orchestra and Conductor Laureate of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra. He maintains strong links with a number of other major orchestras, including the Cleveland Orchestra (where he was formerly Principal Guest Conductor), San Francisco Symphony, and Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin (Chief Conductor and Music Director 1988–96), and last year returned to conduct the Berlin Philharmonic.

Vladimir Ashkenazy continues to devote himself to the piano, building his comprehensive recording catalogue with releases such as the 1999 Grammy award-winning Shostakovich Preludes and Fugues, Rautavaara's Piano Concerto No.3 (which he commissioned), and Rachmaninoff transcriptions. His latest releases are recordings of Bach's *Wohltemperierte Klavier* and Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations*.

A regular visitor to Sydney over many years, he has conducted subscription concerts and composer festivals for the Sydney Symphony, with his five-program Rachmaninoff festival forming a highlight of the 75th Anniversary Season in 2007. Vladimir Ashkenazy's artistic role with the Orchestra includes collaborations on composer festivals, major recording projects and international touring activities.



SASHA GUSOV / DECCA

## Sasha Rozhdestvensky violin

Born in Moscow, Sasha Rozhdestvensky made his debut appearance outside Russia in 1989, performing the Glazunov concerto with the Soviet Philharmonic in Germany. In 1992 he made his Carnegie Hall debut, and the following year he made his London debut with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Since then he has appeared as a soloist with many leading orchestras, including the Leningrad Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Ensemble Orchestral de Paris, the Residentie Orchestra, Bavarian State Orchestra and the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich. He has also appeared in numerous international music festivals, including the London Proms and the Tanglewood, Schleswig-Holstein, Ravinia and Montreux festivals.

More recently he has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland, Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, as well as the Orchestra of the Beethoven Hall in Bonn, the Budapest Festival Orchestra and the Malaysian Philharmonic.

In the current season he performs at the Bratislava Festival, and will tour Spain and Great Britain. He also appears with the Vilnius Orchestra, the Tampere Orchestra, the German Symphony Orchestra Berlin, and the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony Orchestra, and will give recitals and chamber music concertos throughout Europe, performing with Michael Rudy, Viktoria Postnikova, Gary Hoffman and Kun Woo Paik. Future engagements will include concerts with the Kirov Orchestra and Valery Gergiev.

Alfred Schnittke's Concerto grosso No.6 was written especially for him and pianist Viktoria Postnikova; they gave the premiere in 1994, subsequently released on CD. More recently he has recorded the Shostakovich Violin Concerto, with Gennady Rozhdestvensky conducting.

A member of one of Russia's leading musical families, Sasha Rozhdestvensky began playing the violin at the age of seven. He studied at the Central Music School in Moscow, the Moscow Conservatory, the Paris Conservatoire and the Royal College of Music in London. His teachers included Zinaida Gilels, Maya Glezarova, Gérard Poulet and Dr Felix Andrievsky.

This is Sasha Rozhdestvensky's Australian debut. His tour will continue with concerto performances in Melbourne and Perth.



Sasha Rozhdestvensky plays the violin of Guarneri del Gesù 1734 'Haddock', loaned to him by the Stradivari Society. He is Ambassador of the Stradivarius Society.

# THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY

PATRON Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales



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 boxed set of Rachmaninov orchestral works, conducted by 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**  
Concertmaster Chair  
supported by the Sydney  
Symphony Board and Council



**Dene Olding**  
Concertmaster Chair  
supported by the Sydney  
Symphony Board and Council

## First Violins



## Second Violins



## First Violins

- 01 Sun Yi  
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 Shutti 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 Musician

- Emily Qin  
First Violin#
- Alexandra D'Elia  
Second Violin#
- Emily Long  
Second Violin#
- Rosemary Curtin  
Viola#
- Nicole Forsyth  
Viola
- Rachael Tobin  
Cello†
- Benjamin Ward  
Double Bass#
- Alexander Love  
Horn#
- Owen Torr  
Harp
- # = Contract Musician
- † = Sydney Symphony  
Fellow

# MUSICIANS

## Violas



## Cellos



## Double Basses



## Harp

## Flutes

## Piccolo



### Violas

- 01 Roger Benedict  
Principal Viola  
Andrew Turner and  
Vivian Chang Chair
- 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

### 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
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Mulpha Australia Chair

### Flutes

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

### Piccolo

- Rosamund Plummer  
Principal

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## Oboes



## Cor Anglais



## Clarinets



## 03



## Bass Clarinet



## Bassoons



## 03



## Contrabassoon



## Horns



## 02



## 03



## 04



## 05



## 06



## Trumpets



## 02



## 03



## 04



## Trombones



## 02



## 03



## Bass Trombone



## Tuba



## Timpani

## Percussion



## 02



## Piano



## Oboes

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Principal Oboe  
Andrew Kaldor and  
Renata Kaldor Ao Chair
- 02 Shefali Pryor  
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## Cor Anglais

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## Clarinets

- 01 Lawrence Dobell  
Principal
- 02 Francesco Celata  
Associate Principal
- 03 Christopher Tingay

## Bass Clarinet

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Principal

## Bassoons

- 01 Matthew Wilkie  
Principal
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- 03 Fiona McNamara

## Contrabassoon

- Noriko Shimada  
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## Horns

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Principal
- 02 Ben Jacks  
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- 03 Geoff O'Reilly  
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- 04 Lee Bracegirdle
- 05 Euan Harvey
- 06 Marnie Sebire

## Trumpets

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Trumpet  
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- 03 John Foster
- 04 Anthony Heinrichs

## Trombone

- 01 Ronald Prussing  
Principal Trombone  
NSW Department of  
State and Regional  
Development Chair
- 02 Scott Kinmont  
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- 03 Nick Byrne  
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## Bass Trombone

- Christopher Harris  
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## Tuba

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## Timpani

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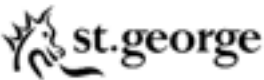
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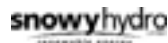
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