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Vladimir Ashkenazy
Principal Conductor & Artistic Advisor

2010 SEASON

Divine
DANCES

WED 11 AUGUST 6.30PM

THU 12 AUGUST 6.30PM

MEET THE MUSIC
PRESENTED BY



EnergyAustralia



WELCOME TO MEET THE MUSIC



Welcome to this concert in the 2010 Meet the Music series. Tonight we're excited to welcome Vladimir Ashkenazy back to the podium, bringing his supreme musicianship to Sydney music lovers, young and old.

The musical program is an exhilarating one, with dances, celebration and the astonishing mystical vision of Russian composer Alexander Scriabin in the *Divine Poem*. Australia's Ross Edwards contributes to the ecstatic sounds with his 'dancing-chanting' violin concerto, *Maninyas*. This concerto was written in 1988 for Dene Olding to play, so it's a great privilege to hear him perform it with the Sydney Symphony this evening.

EnergyAustralia is one of Australia's leading energy companies, with more than 1.4 million customers in NSW, the ACT, Victoria and Queensland.

As one of the most recognised names in the energy industry, we are proud to be associated with the Sydney Symphony. In addition to supporting the Master Series, we're very excited to now be linked to one of the Orchestra's most exciting and vigorous concert series, Meet the Music.

Meet the Music has been nurturing musically curious audiences over many decades. We trust that you will find tonight's performance energising and illuminating, and we welcome you to the ranks of music lovers whose enjoyment of music is continually enhanced by this series.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Maltabarow". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.

George Maltabarow
Managing Director

2010 SEASON

MEET THE MUSIC

PRESENTED BY ENERGYAUSTRALIA

Wednesday 11 August | 6.30pm

Thursday 12 August | 6.30pm

Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

DIVINE DANCES

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor

Dene Olding violin

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

Carnival Overture, Op.92

ROSS EDWARDS (born 1943)

Maninyas – Violin Concerto

*I Introduction and first Maninya –
Intermezzo quasi cadenza –*

II Chorale –

III Second Maninya

INTERVAL

ALEXANDER SCRIABIN (1872–1915)

Symphony No.3 in C minor, Op.43, The Divine Poem

Prologue (Lento) –

Struggles (Allegro) –

Delights (Lento) –

Divine Play (Allegro)

This concert will be introduced by Andrew Ford, award-winning composer, writer and broadcaster, and presenter of *The Music Show* on ABC Radio National.

PRESENTING PARTNER



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



Thursday night's performance will be webcast by BigPond. Visit bigpondmusic.com/sydneysymphony

Pre-concert talk by Raff Wilson in conversation with Ross Edwards at 5.45pm in the Northern Foyer. Visit sydneysymphony.com/talk-bios for speaker biographies.

Approximate durations: 12 minutes, 25 minutes, 20-minute interval, 50 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 8.30pm.



ABOUT THE MUSIC



ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

Czech composer
(1841–1904)

Carnival Overture

This overture begins with a frenzied main theme, which then appears a number of times during the piece. Various rhythmic and melodic fragments of this theme are also strewn throughout the whole work. It looks like a single movement work on paper, but it falls into three quite distinct sections. The boisterous outer sections are both based on the same melodic material and frame a contrasting inner section, which provides a quiet, reflective moment away from the rowdy melodies that characterise the overture as a whole.

The overture calls for piccolo, pairs of flutes and oboes, cor anglais, pairs of clarinets and bassoons; four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani, percussion (including cymbals, tambourine and triangle), harp and strings.

Nature was the inspiration for many musicians and artists of the Romantic generation, and Dvořák was no exception. His *Carnival Overture* evokes both nature and its human inhabitants and is full of the characteristic Bohemian colour for which Dvořák's music became famous. It was originally conceived as the second in a trio of overtures titled *Nature, Life and Love*. Although the overtures are usually performed as independent compositions, they are linked together by a Nature leitmotif (or 'leading theme'), which appears in all three works. In the *Carnival* overture it is introduced by the clarinet, after the first statement of the main themes.

We can tell from his sketches that Dvořák wasn't sure what to call each overture. He gave the first one the title *In Nature's Realm* or *A Summer Night*, and the subtitle *Solitude*. The second he called *Life*, adding the subtitle *Carnival*, and the third had two names: *Love* and *Othello*.

Along with his compatriots Smetana and Janáček, Dvořák is regarded as one of the greatest Czech composers of all time. His compositions span all of the major genres including symphonies, opera, chamber music, and concertos, and his music achieved great popularity both in Europe and the United States, where he later worked at the National Conservatory of Music in New York.

Navigating the overture

The Nature theme

What's in a name?

About the composer



ROSS EDWARDS
Australian composer
(born 1943)

Maninyas – Violin Concerto

Maninyas began as a set of dances for violin and orchestra. In its final shape it is a concerto in three continuous movements, with an intense cadenza for the soloist placed between the first and second of these. The outer movements feature Ross Edwards' characteristic 'maninya' style; the contrasting middle movement is lyrical and solemn, adopting his 'sacred' style.

The concerto calls for an orchestra of two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon; three horns, two trumpets and three trombones (but no tuba); percussion, including several tuned percussion instruments (vibraphone, marimba, xylophone and glockenspiel); harp, piano and strings.

The stylistic origins of *Maninyas* date from the period 1977–1984, when Edwards was living in a coastal village north of Sydney. In this tranquil environment, two distinct musical styles emerged, each strongly influenced by the sounds and rhythmic patterns of the natural environment.

The first of Edwards' principal styles – his 'sacred' style – is characterised by refined, subtle and austere textures. Isolated sound events are conceived for their spatial and timbral intensity. Instead of hearing a logically ordered sequence of events, the listener becomes aware of the uniqueness of each acoustic experience. The beginnings of the 'sacred' style appear in the orchestral work *Mountain Village in a Clearing Mist* (1973) and can be heard in works such as *Yarrageh* (1989) for solo percussion and orchestra.

Edwards' other principal style emerged in the *Maninya* cycle of five pieces for different combinations of instruments and voice. The title was drawn from the text of the first piece *Maninya I* for voice and cello (1981), which used randomly chosen syllables. Meaningless at first, the word 'maninya' has since come to mean Edwards' music of this type: dance-chant. It is characterised by an abstraction of insect and bird sounds, lively tempos and rhythms, angular pentatonic melodies and simple drone-like harmonies with subtly varied repetitions.

Navigating the concerto

'Sacred' style

Maninya: 'dance-chant'

The outer movements of the concerto are based on *Maninya I* and *Maninya V* for voice and piano. The solo part is an elaboration of the original vocal line that had been composed for countertenor Hartley Newnham, while the intricate textures of the originals were reworked in lush orchestrations with an almost Romantic character. There is a flamboyance in the virtuosic solo part and an insistent rhythmic energy reminiscent of the hypnotic style of minimalist composers.

Ross Edwards has created a unique sound world by which he seeks to reconnect music with elemental forces and restore such qualities as ritual, spontaneity and the impulse to dance.

After studying in Australia and Europe, he at first cultivated a modernist style remarkable for its complexity and the challenges it posed to performers and listeners. But following a compositional crisis and a period of creative silence, he set out to perfect a musical language unmistakably his own. Returning to the east coast of New South Wales, he immersed himself in the sounds of the natural environment. The resulting music was static, contemplative and starkly powerful, as in *The Tower of Remoteness* for clarinet and piano (1978). Edwards' fascination for the apparently arbitrary rhythms and textures of the sounds of insects and birds emerged in the 1980s, and his technique for weaving the rhythmic patterns of nature into energetic dance forms has become a distinctive aspect of his style.

His compositions have been performed all over the world and include five symphonies, several concertos, orchestral, chamber and vocal music, children's music, film scores, opera and music for dance. The *Maninyas* concerto has also been adopted as a ballet score by Australian choreographer Stanton Welch, with performances in Houston and San Francisco as well as in Australia. Some of his concert hall works call for special lighting, movement, costume and visual accompaniment – for example his oboe concerto *Bird Spirit Dreaming*, composed for Sydney Symphony principal, Diana Doherty.

Edwards' recent works include a clarinet concerto for David Thomas and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra; *Tucson Mantras* (2008), commissioned by the Tucson Winter Chamber Music Festival, Arizona; the score for choreographer Nicolo Fonte's ballet, *The Possibility Space* (Australian Ballet); and his String Quartet No.2, premiered in May 2010 by the Goldner Quartet (Musica Viva Australia). He is currently working on a commission for the West Australian Symphony Orchestra.

About the composer

Maninyas was commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, with financial assistance from the Australian Bicentennial Authority, to celebrate the nation's Bicentenary in 1988. It was premiered by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in 1988 with conductor David Porcelijn and soloist Dene Olding, to whom it was dedicated. The original orchestration was revised for performance by the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and Barbara Jane Gilby in 1994, and the work was further revised this year.



ALEXANDER SCRIBIN

Russian composer
(1872–1915)

The Divine Poem (Symphony No.3)

The Divine Poem begins with a slow prologue, grand in character, which introduces the main thematic ideas. The three movements that follow are given titles, which tell us everything we need to know, except perhaps that Scriabin experienced sound as colour.

Struggles (in C minor – a ‘red’ key; described as ‘mysterious, tragic’) moves between strenuous, occasionally baleful music and gleaming textures, such as the radiant passage with solo trumpet in its last moments, which offer an image of hope.

Delights (in whitish-blue E major; ‘sublime’) offers more delicate textures, often featuring woodwind and satiny string writing punctuated by passages of birdsong and fuller episodes for the full orchestra with inexorably rising melodies.

Divine Play (‘with a resounding joy’) introduces a balletic character to the symphony, concluding with an overwhelming apotheosis in C major.

The symphony is conventional in design but uses harmony that shows Scriabin moving towards a freedom from tonal gravity which would create music of ecstatic, unresolved eroticism.

The symphony calls for a large orchestra, with parts for three flutes, piccolo, three oboes, cor anglais, three clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons and contrabassoon; eight horns, five trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; two harps and strings.

Scriabin began as a composer of mazurkas, nocturnes and preludes, heavily influenced by Chopin. As he grew older, he became involved in various types of religious and aesthetic mysticism and quasi-philosophical ideas, including Theosophy. His increasingly original mindset was reflected in the growing originality and individuality of his compositions.

His best works are characterised by a unique harmonic language, which showed some of the qualities of French ‘impressionism’ well before Debussy and Ravel became

Navigating the symphony

Style and vision

widely known. Of the composers who followed him, he shares with Messiaen a sense of the spiritual and mystical, as well as the experience of sound as colour.

By the end of his career, Scriabin was aspiring to take Wagner's ideal of the 'complete work of art' to new heights and had taken his harmonic language to the doorstep of Schoenberg and Bartók. At his death he was working on a grandiose supra-musical work, *Mysterium*. This was an experimental work intended to be a complete sensual experience, with music (including chorus, solo voices, orchestra and Scriabin at the piano), dance, coloured lighting and perfume, all augmented by 'bells suspended from the clouds'.

In 1902, when he was working on *The Divine Poem*, Scriabin's aesthetic philosophy was shaped by Greek mythology and the works of Vladimir Solovyov, a philosopher, mystic and self-proclaimed prophet who claimed to have had three visions of Sophia, Divine Wisdom. Scriabin came to think of himself as a prophet and told an associate that *The Divine Poem* (completed in 1905 and premiered in Paris that year) would be 'the first proclamation of my new doctrine'. The 'doctrine' is untranslatably expressed in music in which we can still hear the influence of Wagner and various Russian forebears such as Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov.

In 1908, several years after the premiere, Scriabin's lover Tatiana de Schloezer wrote a scenario or descriptive program for the symphony. In this the symphony is seen to be about 'the evolution of the human spirit which, torn from an entire past of beliefs and mysteries which it surmounts and overturns, passes through Pantheism and attains to a joyous and intoxicated affirmation of its liberties and its unity with the universe (the divine 'Ego').

Schloezer goes on to describe the three movements:

I. *Struggles* – the conflict between the Slave-Man and the Man-God – the latter appearing to triumph.

II. *Delights* – the man allows himself to be captured by the delights of the sensual world, intoxicated and soothed by voluptuous pleasures, his personality lost in Nature.

III. *Divine Play* – the spirit is finally freed from all the bonds which fastened to it its past submission to a superior power, the spirit producing the universe by the sole power of its creative will, conscious of being at one with this Universe, abandons itself to the sublime joy of free activity – the Divine Play.

Philosophy

Is there a program?

About the composer

Alexander Scriabin was a near contemporary of Rachmaninoff (who was born the following year) and like Rachmaninoff he showed precocious talent as a pianist. By the age of 11, writes biographer David Nice, he was 'already playing with what was to become a legendary delicacy and incandescence', and he was groomed early on for a career as a concert pianist.

Scriabin began composing as a child, and when he was 20 gave a concert of his own piano music, which led to publication and the first of a series of international concert tours. By the time he was 30 he was known as a virtuoso, held a professorship at the Moscow Conservatory, and had composed many of solo piano works, a piano concerto and his first symphony.

PROGRAM NOTES BY ALEXANDRA PINKHAM (DVOŘÁK), AND ADAPTED IN PART FROM NOTES BY NINA APOLLONOV (EDWARDS), AND GORDON KERRY AND GORDON WILLIAMS (SCRIABIN).

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Visit www.sydney-symphony.com/fellowship for more information.




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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor

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 has been Chief Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic (1998–2003), and Music Director of the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo (2004–2007). Since 2009 he has held 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), as well as making guest appearances with orchestras such as 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), Rachmaninoff transcriptions, Bach's *Wohltemperierte Klavier* and Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations*. His most recent release is a recording of Bach's six partitas for keyboard.

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 Sydney Symphony includes collaborations on composer festivals, recording projects and international touring.



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Dene Olding violin

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THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY

Dene Olding is one of Australia's most outstanding instrumentalists and has achieved a distinguished career in many aspects of musical life.

As a soloist, he appears regularly with the Australian symphony orchestras and has given the Australian premieres of Lutoslawski's *Chain 2*, Elliott Carter's *Violin Concerto*, and the Philip Glass *Violin Concerto*, as well as concertos by Ross Edwards and Bozidar Kos, and Richard Mills' *Double Concerto*, written for him and his wife, violist Irina Morozova.

A graduate of the Juilliard School in New York, in 1985 he was awarded a Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship and was a Laureate of the Queen Elisabeth of Belgium International Violin Competition. He rejoined the Sydney Symphony as Co-Concertmaster in 2002, having held the position from 1987 to 1994. Other concertmaster positions have included the Australian Chamber Orchestra and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. He is also first violinist for the Australia Ensemble and a founding member of the Goldner String Quartet. As a conductor he has made appearances with the Sydney Symphony and Auckland Philharmonia, and as conductor-soloist with chamber orchestras in Australia and America. He regularly directs concerts in the Sydney Symphony's Mozart in the City concerts.

His recordings include Brahms, Beethoven and Mozart sonatas, concertos by Martin, Milhaud, Hindemith and Barber, the premiere recording of Ross Edwards' violin concerto, *Maninyas*, the complete Beethoven string quartets, a Rachmaninoff disc with Vladimir Ashkenazy, and many other chamber works.

Dene Olding plays a 1720 Joseph Guarnerius violin.



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MUSICIANS

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Brielle Clapson

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Nicole Masters

Alexandra Mitchell

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SECOND VIOLINS

Kirsty Hilton

Marina Marsden

Emma West

Assistant Principal

Jennifer Hoy

A/Assistant Principal

Susan Dobbie

Principal Emeritus

Maria Durek

Shuti Huang

Stan W Kornel

Benjamin Li

Emily Long

Philippa Paige

Biyana Rozenblit

Maja Verunica

Katherine Lukey#

VIOLAS

Roger Benedict

Anne-Louise

Comerford

Robyn Brookfield

Sandro Costantino

Jane Hazelwood

Stuart Johnson

Justine Marsden

Mary McVarish

Felicity Tsai

Rosemary Curtin#

Arabella Zozic†

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Neil Brawley

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Benjamin Ward

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Janet Webb

Emma Sholl

Kate Lawson#

Rosamund Plummer

Principal Piccolo

OBOES

Diana Doherty

Shefali Pryor

David Papp

Alexandre Oguey

Principal Cor Anglais

CLARINETS

Lawrence Dobell

Francesco Celata

Christopher Tingay

Craig Wernicke

Principal Bass Clarinet

BASSOONS

Matthew Wilkie

Roger Brooke

Fiona McNamara

Noriko Shimada

Principal Contrabassoon

HORNS

Ben Jacks

Robert Johnson

Hector McDonald*

Geoffrey O'Reilly

Principal 3rd

Lee Bracegirdle

Marnie Sebire

Euan Harvey

Francesco Lo Surdo†

TRUMPETS

Daniel Mendelow

Paul Goodchild

John Foster

Anthony Heinrichs

Alexandra Bieri*

TROMBONES

Ronald Prussing

Scott Kinmont

Nick Byrne

Christopher Harris

Principal Bass Trombone

TUBA

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Fellow

In response to audience requests, we've redesigned the orchestra list in our program books to make it clear which musicians are appearing on stage for the particular performance. (Please note that the lists for the string sections are not in seating order and changes of personnel can sometimes occur after we go to print.)

To see photographs of the full roster of permanent musicians and find out more about the orchestra, visit our website: www.sydneysymphony.com/SSO_musicians If you don't have access to the internet, ask one of our customer service representatives for a copy of our Musicians flyer.

THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY

Vladimir Ashkenazy PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC ADVISOR

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



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Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, 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 Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Symphony also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional NSW. International tours have earned the orchestra world-wide recognition for artistic excellence, and in 2009 it made its first tour to mainland Asia.

The Sydney Symphony's first Chief Conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and 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 its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, and the orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program.

The Sydney Symphony Live label has captured performances with Alexander Lazarev, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Sir Charles Mackerras and Vladimir Ashkenazy. The orchestra has also released recordings with Ashkenazy on the Exton/Triton labels, and numerous recordings for ABC Classics.

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