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# Romantic Rapture

THU 5 AUGUST 1.30PM

FRI 6 AUGUST 8PM

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## ROMANTIC RAPTURE

**Simone Young** conductor

**Baiba Skride** violin

**RICHARD WAGNER (1813–1883)**

*Lohengrin*: Prelude to Act III

**KAROL SZYMANOWSKI (1882–1937)**

**Violin Concerto No.1, Op.35**

*Vivace assai* –

*Tempo comodo. Andantino* –

*Vivace scherzando* –

*Poco meno. Allegretto* –

*Vivace*

**INTERVAL**

**ANTON BRUCKNER (1824–1896)**

**Symphony No.7 in E**

*Allegro moderato*

*Adagio. Sehr feierlich und sehr langsam*

*[Very solemn and very slow]*

*Scherzo. Sehr schnell [Very fast]*

*Finale. Bewegt, doch nicht schnell*

*[Turbulent, but not fast]*

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Approximate durations: 3 minutes, 26 minutes, 20-minute interval, 65 minutes  
The concert will conclude at approximately 3.40pm (Thu), 10.10pm (Fri), 4.10pm (Sat)



Wagner offers snuff to Bruckner (a silhouette by Otto Böhler)

# INTRODUCTION

## Romantic Rapture

This concert begins with a large orchestra on stage to play one of the shortest overtures in the repertoire: the Prelude to Act III of Wagner's *Lohengrin*. It's also one of the most successful – in three exhilarating minutes Wagner sets a scene of festive excitement.

The orchestral forces will increase as the stage is set for the First Violin Concerto by the modern romantic Karol Szymanowski. Where the great 19th-century concertos – Brahms, Bruch, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky – are all quite modestly scored, Szymanowski opts for an orchestra equal to his desire for sumptuous colour and ecstatic effect.

After interval it becomes clear that Wagner is pivotal to this program, and that his presence in the concert extends beyond those initial three minutes. Bruckner planned and began his Seventh Symphony in 1881, but while he was working on it, it occurred to him that Wagner – whom he idolised – would soon die. At this point, the theme of the slow movement of the symphony came to him; the news of Wagner's death followed not long after and the movement as a whole became an elegy and its final Wagnerian horn calls a solemn farewell.

Bruckner's large-scale musical architecture and grand vision gives us a Romantic symphony that lasts for more than an hour and shows the composer at his finest, with noble sounds and profound expression.

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# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## Richard Wagner

### *Lohengrin*: Prelude to Act III

This short prelude depicts the swirling activity of the festivities preceding a wedding – the wedding in which the world first heard the Bridal Chorus. These celebrations are for the union of Lohengrin, a Knight of the Holy Grail, and Elsa of Brabant.

Like much of Wagner's work, *Lohengrin* is based on mediæval accounts of mythology, in this instance, one of the Grail legends. Elsa of Brabant has been falsely accused of murdering her brother, heir to the dukedom. She prays fervently for a champion to defend her honour, a knight she has seen in a vision, and Lohengrin appears – in a boat drawn by a swan. Lohengrin defeats Elsa's accuser in combat and proposes marriage, providing she never asks him his name and origin. The final act begins with every reason for joy, as the prelude suggests, but the seed of doubt and curiosity has already been placed in Elsa's mind in Act II, tragedy unfolds and the opera ends with the couple parted forever.

Wagner was not at the premiere: he'd become involved in the May uprising of 1849 and had had to flee to Switzerland. From there, he wrote to Liszt in Weimar, begging him to 'bring out my *Lohengrin*!...to no-one but you would I entrust the production of this opera.' Liszt took him at his word: 'Your *Lohengrin* will be given under conditions that are most unusual and most favourable

## Keynotes

### WAGNER

*Born Leipzig, 1813*  
*Died Venice, 1883*

As a composer of opera, writer and conductor, Wagner was one of the most influential creative personalities of his generation. He was also one of the most controversial: a composer who polarised listeners even as he changed the nature of opera forever. He cultivated an almost symphonic conception of opera, and his monumental creations were sustained by long-range harmonic thinking. One of his most important contributions to music was the ingenious linking of musical motifs (Leitmotiven or 'leading motifs') to specific characters and situations; the influence of this technique continues to be profoundly felt in most film soundtracks.

### LOHENGRIN

The three-act opera *Lohengrin* was composed between 1846 and 1848 and premiered in Weimar in 1850. Wagner wrote his own libretto for the opera, drawing on Grail legends. The two preludes – the shimmering and angelic introduction to Act I and the exhilarating introduction to Act III – have become popular concert works in their own right. But perhaps the best known music from the opera is the Bridal Chorus from Act III ('Here comes the bride...').



Scene from *Lohengrin*

for its success. The direction will spend on this occasion almost 2,000 thalers – a sum unprecedented at Weimar within memory of man.’

*Lohengrin* premiered on 28 August 1850; despite his earlier encouraging reports, Liszt was bitterly disappointed with the production, and Wagner was upset to learn that the performance had taken more than an hour longer than he’d intended (which he blamed on the singers’ lingering over what they considered to be recitative passages).

A review in the Hamburg *Kleine Musikzeitung* called the performance ‘a gentle fiasco’ and declared that Wagner had revealed himself yet again to be ‘utterly unmusical’. Other reviewers, however, looked more favourably on the opera, publishing its praise all over Germany and in Paris, and provincial opera companies, having seen that Wagner’s operas could indeed be performed without an enormous theatre, took up his music with enthusiasm. Wagner’s European reputation was established.

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The Prelude to Act III of *Lohengrin* calls for three flutes, three oboes, three clarinets and three bassoons; four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; and strings.

The first Sydney Symphony performance on record of the Prelude to Act III was given in 1938 with W.G. James conducting. Our most recent performance of the prelude was in the 1996 Benevolent Fund Concert, conducted by Edo de Waart.

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**THU 23 SEP 1.30PM**

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## Karol Szymanowski

### Violin Concerto No.1, Op.35

*Vivace assai* –  
*Tempo comodo. Andantino* –  
*Vivace scherzando* –  
*Poco meno. Allegretto* –  
*Vivace*

Baiba Skride *violin*

Szymanowski's output can be divided into four periods: the first, dominated by the influence of Chopin and Scriabin; a second where he responded to Wagner's legacy; the third, where he turned to the so-called impressionistic techniques of Debussy and Ravel; and finally a return to the folk music of his native Poland.

Declared unfit for military service owing to an injury sustained in childhood, Szymanowski spent the years of World War I at Tymoszwówka, his family estate (and birthplace) in the Ukraine. During these years he contemplated many of the diverse cultural elements that had been the subject of his attention on journeys to the Mediterranean and North Africa. He studied classical Greek drama, the works of Plato and Leonardo da Vinci, 13th-century Persian poetry – especially that of the sufi master Jalāl ad-Dīn ar-Rūmī – and Byzantine history. He also wrote a novel called *The Ephebe* (1919) in which Szymanowski celebrated 'a love which is independent of all norms (of public opinion)'. It is at this time, regarded as his third period, that much of Szymanowski's most important music was composed.

Well over half of Szymanowski's compositions have some kind of extra-musical reference: his *Metopes* for solo piano take various incidents from the *Odyssey* as their starting points; the *Myths* for violin and piano are also based on Greek legend; the Third Symphony bursts into song in the words of Rūmī. The first violin concerto, composed in 1916, is believed to have been inspired by *A Night in May*, a poem by Tadeusz Miciński (1873–1918). The common thread here is eroticism, from the 'Isle of the Sirens' (*Metopes*) to the conflict between mediæval Christianity and the cult of Dionysus that forms the crux of Szymanowski's opera *King Roger* (1926). Miciński's poem is a frank expression of joy: beside a crimson lake and surrounded by bird song, the poet describes his rapture as 'today I wed a goddess'. The concerto is similarly imbued with a strong feeling of physical ecstasy, and this is achieved by

## Keynotes

### SZYMANOWSKI

*Born Tymoszwówka,  
near Kiev, 1882  
Died Lausanne, 1937*

Szymanowski grew up in the Ukraine, where many Polish families owned land, and studied music at home and then in Warsaw, before moving to Berlin while he was in his twenties. There, the influence of Richard Strauss's music was added to his deep enthusiasm for Chopin and his Polish nationalist instincts. Later he discovered the colour and sensual appeal of French impressionism through the music of Debussy, and it was around this time that he composed the First Violin Concerto. Szymanowski can be regarded as a modern romantic, experimenting with the techniques of the avant garde in music characterised by exquisite effects, an ear for colour and an almost physical sense of ecstasy.

### VIOLIN CONCERTO NO.1

This concerto is one of Szymanowski's best-known works and most characteristic. It's organised in a single movement, but with five defined sections that alternate between fast music (outer and central sections) and a 'less feverish' mood.

The orchestra is extraordinarily large for a concerto accompaniment – the full woodwind and brass complements and the use of two harps, piano and celesta allow for a vividly coloured orchestral palette and an intensity of effect. The harmonies have the richness of the late-Romantic style.

Karol Szymanowski  
(woodcut by E. Ricardo, c.1921)



The concerto is imbued with a strong feeling of physical ecstasy.

the cumulative power of its single movement structure, its extraordinarily varied orchestral palette and its assimilation and integration of the emotive power of late-Romantic chromatic harmony.

The concerto is scored for a very large orchestra, including triple woodwinds, two harps, piano and celeste as well as a full complement of brass and strings. Though in one continuous movement, it falls into five clearly defined sections that create a kind of 'arch form'. Fast music (*vivace*) dominates the first, third and fifth sections, while the second and fourth, by contrast, use less feverish markings like *andantino* and *allegretto*.

The **first section** makes the composer's debt to Debussy immediately clear, characterised as it is by a shimmering texture punctuated by short woodwind motifs (perhaps an evocation of Miciniński's bird calls) and its lack of any clear tonal focus, which creates a sense of heightened expectation. The soloist's first entry is a high, cantilena passage reminiscent of some of the music Szymanowski

had written in response to Persian texts, chromatic, sinuous and seductive. This is followed by a scherzo-like passage, a tour-de-force both of virtuosity for the soloist and of scintillating scoring. Both of these passages are, however, quite short, and together form the work's first section; there follows a more extended, slower section where the main melodic material of the work is developed.


In general, it is melody that carries the main structural burden in Szymanowski's music, his harmony, like Debussy's, being frequently colouristic rather than traditionally 'goal-directed' as in classical music. In the concerto, much of the music is generated out of a simple little six-note motif stated at this point by the violin – a pattern of five descending notes followed by one ascending. By manipulating the intervals of this motif, Szymanowski spins from it a progressively more extended melody. Despite the rhapsodic impression that the concerto gives, Szymanowski creates considerable tension by offsetting this extension of melody against shorter episodic interruptions, and, with a masterstroke of timing, places the cadenza (written largely by the work's dedicatee, Pawel Kochański) just where the gathering momentum of the work leads us to expect a climax. When the deferred climax is finally reached, preceded by a passage redolent of the sound-world of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, it is with a statement of the original six-note motif scored with an opulence worthy of Richard Strauss. The concerto ends with a whimsical return to the shimmering soundscape of the opening pages, as the solo violin line takes flight and slowly vanishes as the birds continue to sing.

...a whimsical return to the shimmering soundscape of the opening...

GORDON KERRY ©1988/2010

Szymanowski's Violin Concerto No.1 calls for a large orchestra, with parts for three flutes (one doubling piccolo), three oboes (one doubling cor anglais), three clarinets (one doubling E flat clarinet), bass clarinet and three bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon); four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; two harps; celesta, piano and strings.

Pawel Kochański played through the concerto in 1917, but its public premiere had to wait until 1922, when Józef Ozimiński performed it in Warsaw. The Sydney Symphony first performed the concerto in 1968 at a Proms concert conducted by John Hopkins. Our records suggest that violinist Ladislav Jasek was scheduled to play the solo part but there was a late substitution. (If you attended this concert and recall the soloist, please contact [program.editor@sydneyssymphony.com](mailto:program.editor@sydneyssymphony.com)) Since then we have performed the concerto on two occasions, both with violinist Wanda Wilkomirska: in 1973 with Dean Dixon conducting and in 1982 with Niklaus Wyss.



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## Anton Bruckner

### Symphony No.7 in E

*Allegro moderato*

*Adagio. Sehr feierlich und sehr langsam*

[Very solemn and very slow]

*Scherzo. Sehr schnell* [Very fast]

*Finale. Bewegt, doch nicht schnell* [Turbulent, but not fast]

(Nowak edition)

At the age of 60, the diffident, pious Anton Bruckner suddenly achieved international fame as a composer, and the work which catalysed Europe's attention was the Seventh Symphony. The composer had moved from the provinces to the imperial capital in 1868 to take up a position at the Vienna Conservatory, where he succeeded his teacher Simon Sechter as Professor of Harmony and Counterpoint, as well as taking up an honorary appointment as organist to the Hofkapelle, or court chapel. In addition, he taught at the teacher training College of St Anna (until he unwittingly offended a female student; this eventually led to his withdrawal from the institution), and travelled as far afield as Paris and London in his capacity as one of the greatest organists of the age. But until the mid-1880s, his own music had failed to find a foothold in Vienna's musical life.

This is partly the result of Bruckner's idolisation of the music of Richard Wagner, which was anathema in a city where Brahms presided as the resident Great Composer. Heading a powerful clique of critics, Eduard Hanslick regarded Brahms, not Wagner or Liszt, as embodying the 'true' tradition of German music. He routinely attacked Bruckner's music in print, and Brahms himself dismissed Bruckner until late in his own life, saying: 'In the case of Bruckner one needn't use the word "Symphony"; it's enough to talk of a kind of "fake" which will be forgotten in a few years.'

Wagner, on the other hand, seems genuinely to have admired Bruckner's work. The two composers had met in 1873 when Bruckner approached Wagner for permission to dedicate his Third Symphony to the 'Master of all masters'. Their meeting, over several beers, was a highlight of Bruckner's life; Wagner's acceptance of the dedication gave Bruckner immense confidence. Sadly, the premiere of the Third was a fiasco; Bruckner responded by retreating – revising extant scores rather than writing anything new.

## Keynotes

### BRUCKNER

*Born near Linz, 1824*

*Died Vienna, 1896*

In 1868 Anton Bruckner moved to Vienna from the Austrian city of Linz in order to advance his career as organist, teacher and, above all, composer. He was famously provincial in his manners and dress, diffident and eccentric, but enjoyed success as an organist (and improviser), held academic posts, and was internationally feted. Would he be the next major symphonist? The heir of Beethoven?

Bruckner's symphonies have an 'alpine splendour' – long in duration, noble in character, splendid in effect and full of profoundly felt melodies. They ask 'Big Questions' and take time in contemplating the answers.

### SYMPHONY NO.7

Bruckner admired Wagner: he dedicated his Third Symphony to him and the news of Wagner's death in February 1883 influenced his composition of the Seventh, completed seven months later.

Listen in particular to the long and beautiful melody that begins the symphony. Bruckner suspends it over a trademark texture of shimmering strings, signalling the dimensions and trajectory of music to come. The slow and solemn second movement is Bruckner's elegy for Wagner, and at this point he introduces the Wagner tubas. The mood shifts in the spirited third movement, and the finale restores the grandeur that characterises the symphony as a whole.



In 1881, however, Hans Richter gave a triumphant first performance of the Fourth Symphony. Bruckner was already back at work, but the success must have encouraged him: he completed his Sixth Symphony and began work on the Seventh later that year.

The composition took place over two years during which time Bruckner wrote little else. He did, however, travel to Bayreuth to hear the first performance of Wagner's last opera, *Parsifal*, conducted by Hermann Levi. Bruckner and Wagner saw each other several times during the visit. Gabriel Engel writes: 'Wagner would deplore the disappointing state of contemporary music, exclaiming: "I know of only one who may be compared to Beethoven – and he is Bruckner!"'

While working on the Seventh Symphony, Bruckner later remarked, 'One day I came home and felt very sad. It occurred to me that the Master would soon die, and at that moment the C sharp minor theme of the Adagio came to me.' Indeed, during the composition of the slow movement, Bruckner heard the news of Wagner's

death, incorporating his grief into the final pages of the movement. But the piece as a whole was conceived before Bruckner's premonition, and our response shouldn't be over-determined by the Wagner connection.

The dimensions and trajectory of the work are signalled by the melody with which the **first movement (Allegro moderato)** begins. Built over a typical texture of shimmering strings, it is a long and very beautiful tune, consisting of clearly delineated and contrasting phrases: the first, for instance, outlines the key of E major over two octaves, before moving through seemingly distant keys; a 'false' close gives way to yet more varied phrases and hints of further tonal exploration before returning to E for a fuller restatement of the melody itself. The movement displays Bruckner's habitual use of three contrasting groups of themes, the second of which is what he liked to call a 'song-period', and out of these he spins a lengthy series of contrasting musical worlds, using key-relationships for maximum dramatic effect.

This principle governs the whole work. The key of C sharp minor, though closely related to the work's 'home key' of E major, is avoided through the first movement so that its appearance in the **second (Adagio)** is more emphatic. This is, of course, the premonitory elegy for Wagner, and Bruckner introduces four Wagner tubas into the score at this point. But the model for the movement is to be found in the slow movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The 'very slow and very solemn' material with which Bruckner's commences is in due course contrasted with a theme in a different mood, speed and key. Bruckner was working on the climax of the movement – a majestic passage in C major – when he heard of Wagner's death. He quotes a motive from his *Te Deum* (associated with the words 'Non confundar in aeternum' – let me never be put to shame) but it is in the coda which follows with its almost Wagnerian horn calls that Bruckner farewells the Master.

After the catharsis of the *Adagio*, Bruckner produces in the **third movement** one of his most delightfully energetic, and deceptively simple, scherzos. Again, the movement's key – A minor – has been avoided so far. The octave and perfect fifth which constitute the theme of this section are the most stable intervals in tonal music (and relate the theme to that of the opening of the first movement), but Bruckner effortlessly plays this stability off against a series of unexpected excursions into different keys, and it proves a

Bruckner was working on the climax of the movement when he heard of Wagner's death.

genuinely witty foil to the central, more lyrical, Trio section (marked 'somewhat slower').

The **Finale**, less massive than some, is nonetheless constructed out of four large sections of material. The pattern of keys a third apart is reflected in this structure: the first section is in E major, and deliberately recalls the first movement in its use of the stable intervals of the common chord; the second and third sections are, respectively, in keys a third above and below E; finally the fourth section, using material based on the first, charts the journey from the key of A back to the home key.

It may be that with the death of Wagner, Bruckner was the heir-apparent for his now large group of supporters in Vienna. Nonetheless, Bruckner at first tried to stop performances of this work there, fearing that Hanslick's opposition would undermine his growing reputation in other parts of the German-speaking world. The Seventh's premiere was in the Leipzig Gewandhaus under Arthur Nikisch in 1884 and the applause lasted for 15 minutes. Hermann Levi, who had facilitated Bruckner's dedication of the work to the Wagner-mad Ludwig II of Bavaria, gave the work in Munich, declaring it 'the most significant symphonic work since 1827' and within a few years it had been heard throughout Germany as well as in New York, Chicago, Amsterdam, Budapest and London. When it finally was heard in Vienna in 1886, Hanslick's colleague Kalbeck memorably wrote 'It comes from the Nibelungen and goes to the devil!'

Actually, it is music about going to heaven, or, as Robert Simpson puts it, 'a patient search for pacification'. Appropriately, the *Adagio* was performed at the composer's funeral. Engel writes that 'Brahms, a very sick old man, stood outside the gate, but refused to enter. Someone heard him mutter sadly, 'It will be my turn soon', and then he sighed and went wearily home.'

GORDON KERRY ©2002

Bruckner's Seventh Symphony calls for an orchestra with modest woodwind forces but an enlarged brass section, with parts for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons; four horns, four Wagner tubas, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion (cymbal and triangle); and strings.

The Sydney Symphony first performed Bruckner's Seventh Symphony in 1945, conducted by Bernard Heinze, and most recently in 2002, conducted by Lorin Maazel.

...it is music about  
going to heaven...

# GLOSSARY

**CADENZA** – a virtuoso passage for a solo instrument, traditionally inserted towards the end of a concerto movement and marking the final ‘cadence’.

**CANTILENA** – a song-like melody.

**CHROMATIC HARMONY** – in tonal music, the use of foreign notes and harmonies that do not belong to the key, together with frequent modulation to other keys. The impression is one of harmonic richness and while chromaticism has been used as an expressive effect since the 16th century, it is most strongly associated with the Romantic style of the 19th century.

**IMPRESSIONISM** – the term is borrowed from painting and is most commonly associated with composers such as Debussy, on the grounds that the music seemed intended to convey impressions and sensations rather than to follow a harmonic or dramatic narrative.

**KEY** – in Western music there are two main categories of scale or key: major and minor. Aurally, a major scale will sound ‘brighter’ or more cheerful (‘Happy Birthday’), while a minor scale will sound sombre or mournful (funeral marches). The tonic or home note of a scale gives it its name (e.g. E major, a major scale beginning on the note E, or C sharp minor, a minor scale beginning on C sharp). The next most prominent note of the scale is the fifth note (or dominant).

**OCTAVE** – the interval between two notes that are eight scale steps apart (and which effectively share the same pitch name). The first two notes of ‘Somewhere over the rainbow’ are an octave apart. The term *octave* is also used when referring to the compass of a melody or a singer’s range.

**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.

**SCORING** – the way in which an orchestral work employs the different instruments and sections of the ensemble; also known as ‘orchestration’.

**TE DEUM** – a Latin hymn of thanksgiving.

**WAGNER TUBA** – a type of brass instrument designed to Wagner’s specifications and used in his *Ring* cycle, as well as by Bruckner and Richard Strauss. Despite its name, it is closer to the French horn than the standard orchestral tuba. There are two sizes, tenor and bass; two of each are used in Bruckner’s Seventh Symphony.

*In classical music, movement titles are usually taken from standard musical terminology (drawn from Italian) indicating basic tempo, and mood. Terms used in this concert include:*

Adagio – slow

Allegretto – lively, not as fast as *Allegro*

Allegro moderato – moderately fast

Andantino – a diminutive of *Andante*

(walking pace), this term can be interpreted as either a little slower than *Andante* or, as is more common nowadays, a little faster

Poco meno – a little less

Tempo comodo – in a flowing, leisurely tempo

Vivace – lively

Vivace assai – very lively

Vivace scherzando – lively and playfully

*In the 19th century many German composers began providing tempo and expression instructions in their native tongue. These have been translated where they occur in this program, since they’re not standard musical terms.*

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.



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# MORE MUSIC

## Selected Discography

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### LOHENGRIN

For a collection of Wagner overtures and preludes, try Otto Klemperer's recording with the Philharmonia Orchestra, which includes the preludes to Acts I and III of *Lohengrin* as well as other concert favourites.

EMI CLASSICS 567893

### SZYMANOWSKI

For a comprehensive introduction to Szymanowski's orchestral music, you can't go past the Simon Rattle 4-CD set, recorded with the City of Birmingham Orchestra and Chorus, and soloists including Thomas Zehetmair, who plays both the violin concertos. Also included in the set are two of the symphonies, vocal music and a sumptuous version of *King Roger*.

EMI CLASSICS 14576

### BRUCKNER

Bruckner's Seventh is one of his most frequently recorded symphonies. Herbert Blomstedt's acclaimed 1980 recording with the Dresden Staatskapelle has recently been re-released on the Da Capo label and is worth seeking out.

DAL SEGNO 46

And Sydney audiences who've admired Yannick Nézet-Séguin's Bruckner performances here may be interested in his recording with the Grand Montreal Metropolitan Orchestra.

ATMA CLASSIQUE 22512

Or turn to the Vienna Philharmonic for an authentic Bruckner sound in the hands of Nikolaus Harnoncourt.

TELDEC 24488

### SIMONE YOUNG

Simone Young is recording the Bruckner symphonies with the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra, most recently releasing Symphonies No.4 and No.8.

OEHMS 614 (No.2), 624 (No.3), 629 (No.4), 638 (No.8)

Her other recent releases include Wagner's *Walküre* with the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir and a cast including Stuart Skelton and Deborah Polaski.

OEHMS 926

Simone Young also conducts on the Sydney Symphony Live recording of music by Brett Dean.

SSO 200702

### BAIBA SKRIDE

In 2008 Baiba Skride released a Tchaikovsky disc, *Souvenir Russe*, recorded with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Andris Nelsons. Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto is joined by Glazunov's arrangement of his *Souvenir d'un lieu cher* and two numbers from *Swan Lake*.

SONY 6972142

She has also recorded Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No.1 with the Munich Philharmonic and Mikko Franck, which is available in a release with her recording of Janáček's violin concerto, *Pilgrimage of the Soul*, made with the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra and Marek Janowski.

SONY 73146

## Broadcast Diary

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### AUGUST

Thursday 12 August, 6.30pm

#### DIVINE DANCES

**Vladimir Ashkenazy** conductor

**Dene Olding** violin

Dvořák, Edwards, Scriabin

Wednesday 18 August, 8pm

#### EUROPEAN TOUR FAREWELL CONCERT

**Vladimir Ashkenazy** conductor

**John Chen** piano

Sculthorpe, Beethoven, Tchaikovsky

Friday 27 August, 7pm

#### YOUNG PERFORMERS AWARDS GRAND FINAL

**Marko Letonja** conductor

**Oliver She** piano, **Richard Pollett** violin, and

**Ashley William Smith** clarinet

**Queensland Symphony Orchestra**

---

2MBS-FM 102.5

#### SYDNEY SYMPHONY 2010

Tuesday 10 August, 6pm

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

## Webcast Diary

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Selected Sydney Symphony concerts are recorded for webcast by BigPond.

Visit: [bigpondmusic.com/sydneysymphony](http://bigpondmusic.com/sydneysymphony)

Thursday afternoon's webcast will be streamed live and then available for repeat viewing.

## Sydney Symphony Online

Visit the Sydney Symphony at [sydneysymphony.com](http://sydneysymphony.com) for concert information, podcasts, and to read the program book in the week of the concert.

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We invite you to tweet with us at concerts, but not during the performance itself – as one of our followers said recently, "If it's tweetworthy, it's worthy of undivided attention."

## Have Your Say

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Tell us what you thought of the concert at [sydneysymphony.com/yoursay](http://sydneysymphony.com/yoursay) or email: [yoursay@sydneysymphony.com](mailto:yoursay@sydneysymphony.com)

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## Simone Young conductor

Australian-born Simone Young is one of the leading conductors of her generation. She is General Manager and Music Director of the Hamburg State Opera and Music Director of the Philharmonic State Orchestra Hamburg, and has already celebrated many successes, including the commencement of the Hamburg *Ring Cycle*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Mathis der Maler*, *Salome* and *Daphne*. Her contract has been extended to 2015.

She was Music Director of Opera Australia (2001–2003), Chief Conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra (1999–2002) and has conducted the Berlin, Vienna, Munich, London and New York Philharmonic orchestras, the Staatskapelle Dresden and the Bruckner Orchestra, Linz.

Simone Young is an acknowledged interpreter of Wagner and Strauss operas, and has conducted *Der Ring des Nibelungen* to acclaim at the Berlin and Vienna state opera companies. She has also worked with the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Bastille in Paris, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, Los Angeles Opera and Houston Grand Opera. At Opera Australia the productions she conducted included *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Otello*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Lulu*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Tristan und Isolde*, *Tannhäuser*, *Falstaff*, *Don Carlos*, *Andrea Chenier*, *La bohème*, *Don Giovanni*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Un ballo in maschera*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Cavalleria rusticana*, *Pagliacci* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, which she directed from the fortepiano. During this time, her opera and concert work with the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, and her development of musical standards in the company received praise from the profession and the public.

She has received numerous prestigious awards and accolades, and in 2004 was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia. In 2007 she was elected to the Akademie der Kuenste (Academy of Artists) in Hamburg and nominated as Conductor of the Year by *Opernwelt* magazine. A regular visitor to the Sydney Symphony, her most recent engagement was in 2009 when she conducted a program of Brahms, Bartók and Richard Strauss.



© RETOKLAR

## Baiba Skride violin

Baiba Skride was born into a musical family in Riga, Latvia, where she began her studies, transferring in 1995 to the Conservatory of Music and Theatre in Rostock. In 2001, just 20 years old, she won first prize in the Queen Elisabeth Competition.

Since then she has appeared with many of the leading orchestras of Europe, including the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Munich Philharmonic, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Residentie Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Philharmonia Orchestra. In North America she has performed with the orchestras of Philadelphia, Houston, Cincinnati and Detroit, and in Australia with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. She regularly collaborates with conductors such as Charles Dutoit, Thierry Fischer, Mark Janowski, Paavo Järvi, Neeme Järvi, Mikhail Pletnev, John Storgårds, Mikko Franck, and Kirill Petrenko.

Recent engagement highlights have included an extensive tour of Germany with the City of Birmingham Orchestra and Andris Nelsons, her Edinburgh Festival debut with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Donald Runnicles, and in the United States she performed the Beethoven Triple Concerto with her sister and longstanding duo partner, Lauma Skride, and cellist Jan Vogler. As part of the Mendelssohn anniversary celebrations in 2009 she and Lauma played the early Concerto for violin and piano with the Zurich Chamber Orchestra and the Warsaw Philharmonic. As a duo, they have given recitals in Basel, Frankfurt, Tokyo, Osaka and San Francisco, and perform trio repertoire with cellist Tanja Tetzlaff.

Baiba Skride's highly praised discography includes a recent Tchaikovsky recording, *Souvenir Russe*, with the CBSO and Nelsons, and a recording of Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No.1 and Janáček's *Pilgrimage of the Soul* concerto.

Baiba Skride plays the Stradivarius 'Wilhelmj' violin (1725), generously on loan to her from the Nippon Music Foundation.

This is her Sydney Symphony debut.



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# MUSICIANS

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Associate Concertmaster

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Jennifer Booth

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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](http://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

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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 iconic Sydney Opera House, where it gives more than 100 performances each year, the Sydney Symphony also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the orchestra worldwide 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, Zdenek Mácal, 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 its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, developing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. The Sydney Symphony promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program. 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 on both the BIS and Sydney Symphony Live labels.

Other releases on the Sydney Symphony Live label, established in 2006, include performances with Alexander Lazarev, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Sir Charles Mackerras and Vladimir Ashkenazy. The Sydney Symphony has also released recordings with Ashkenazy of Rachmaninoff, Elgar and Prokofiev orchestral works on the Exton/Triton labels, and numerous recordings on the ABC Classics label.

This is the second year of Ashkenazy's tenure as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor.

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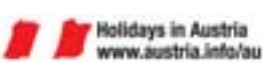
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