

David Robertson The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

# CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

SUNDAY 13 MARCH 2016

**CARRIAGEWORKS** 



Principal Partner



#### CLASSICAL



#### Pierre-Laurent Aimard in Recital

MESSIAEN Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus (20 Contemplations of the Christ Child) International Pianists In Recital Presented by Theme & Variations

Mon 14 Mar 7pm City Recital Hall



#### Lerida's Playlist

Music by Mendelssohn, Fauré, Copland, Mahler and Bach, and including Vaughan Williams *The Lark Ascending*.

Andrew Haveron violin-director Lerida Delbridge violin Playlist

Tue 15 Mar 6.30pm City Recital Hall



# Symphony in Parramatta Park

Bring your blanket and picnic to this free concert of James Morrison's A-Z of Jazz. Enjoy renditions of *Basin Street Blues* plus Judy Bailey's *Four Reasons*. Fun for the entire family.

FREE EVENT **Sat 19 Mar 8pm** Parramatta Park



#### James Morrison Presents

An SSO Family Concert

James Morrison introduces the world of jazz in a fun-infused, informal concert for all ages! Suitable for children 6+ and their families.

Benjamin Northey conductor

James Morrison jazz soloist & presenter

Family Concerts

Sun 20 Mar 2pm

Sydney Opera House

#### **Heavenly Creatures**

Mozart, Beethoven & Haydn

BEETHOVEN The Creatures of Prometheus: Overture HAYDN Te Deum for the Empress Marie Thérèse MOZART Litany of the Blessed Sacrament, K243 Brett Weymark conductor

Jacqueline Porter soprano
Sally-Anne Russell mezzo-soprano
Andrew Goodwin tenor • David Greco baritone
Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Mozart in the City **Thu 31 Mar 7pm**City Recital Hall



#### Strings Attached

Cocktail Hour

STRAVINSKY Three Pieces for string quartet BEETHOVEN String Quintet in C minor, Op.104 Sophie Cole, Nicole Masters violins Jane Hazelwood, Stuart Johnson violas Kirsty Conrau cello Cocktail Hour - Chamber Music

Sat 9 Apr 6pm

Cocktails from 5.30pm Utzon Room, Sydney Opera House

#### SSO PRESENTS



## Last Night of the Proms

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#### From David Robertson

It is a well-established fact that spaces imply expectations. And perhaps no space carries more expectations than the old-style 'European' concert hall in which orchestras spend so much of their time. The weight of tradition makes its presence felt in even a relatively young space like the Sydney Opera House. When we perform a new musical work in a space like that it can seem shocking. Nowadays, as an alternative, many classical musicians are taking their performances into nightclubs – but that can surprise and ruffle expectations in its own way.

Which is why I'm so thrilled to be able to bring the musicians of the SSO into the adventurous and inspiring space that is Carriageworks. As musicians and as listeners we can come to this space with completely open expectations, and that's what makes programming for Carriageworks so very exciting.

In this first program there is an underlying theme of 'rebirth' – the rebirth of the planet,

despite being metaphorically trampled underfoot, and the fragility of life, not to be taken for granted. And we pay a special homage to that extraordinarily creative individual Pierre Boulez.

Welcome to today's concert – whatever expectations you brought into this space, I hope you will leave completely recharged!



**David Robertson**Chief Conductor and Artistic Director
Sydney Symphony Orchestra

#### From Carriageworks

Carriageworks is delighted to present Crossing the Threshold, the first concert in our new partnership with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. The SSO is one of the world's finest orchestras and Carriageworks is honoured to be entering into this partnership to support new music.

The program of new and recent works has been devised by the SSO Chief Conductor and Artistic Director David Robertson and the SSO's Artist in Residence Brett Dean, especially for Carriageworks. Together they have programmed some of the world's most

intriguing and engaging contemporary music, focused on the presentation of new Australian work, including Lisa Illean *Land's End*, and extending to the visionary work of French composer Gérard Grisey.

Our thanks go to the NSW Government through Arts NSW for their ongoing support of Carriageworks and the company's individual donors for supporting this exciting new partnership between Carriageworks and the SSO.

#### Lisa Havilah

Director, Carriageworks



Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

SSO AT CARRIAGEWORKS
SUNDAY 13 MARCH, 5PM
......CARRIAGEWORKS



# **CROSSING THE THRESHOLD**

PRESENTED BY THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CARRIAGEWORKS

David Robertson conductor

Jessica Aszodi soprano
Pierre-Laurent Aimard piano
Musicians of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra

PIERRE BOULEZ (1925–2016) Dérive 1 (1984)

Pierre-Laurent Aimard, piano

BRETT DEAN (born 1961)
Pastoral Symphony (2000)

LISA ILLEAN (born 1983) Land's End (2016)

PREMIERE

GÉRARD GRISEY (1946–1998)

Quatre Chants pour franchir le seuil (1998)

(Four Songs for Crossing the Threshold)

Prélude

1. La Mort de l'ange (The Death of the Angel) Interlude

2. La Mort de la civilisation (The Death of Civilisation)
Interlude

3. La Mort de la voix (The Death of the Voice)

Faux Interlude

4. La Mort de l'humanité (The Death of Humanity)

Berceuse (Lullaby)

Jessica Aszodi, soprano

Estimated durations: 8 minutes, 17 minutes, 10 minutes, 40 minutes The concert will conclude at approximately 6.30pm

COVER PHOTO: Keith Saunders

Land's End was commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra with the generous support of Dr Raji Ambikairajah

# **CARRIAGEWORKS**



# **Crossing the Threshold**

Notes by Timothy Munro

Three works, quite different, yet united in two important ways. All three evoke natural landscapes, hinting at the tension between nature and civilization: Lisa Illean's vast seascape shimmers, dawn breaks over Brett Dean's scene of devastation, and Gérard Grisey's ravaging flood turns the earth's peoples to clay. And all three cross important thresholds: from night into day, nature into civilisation, land into ocean, life into death. This last threshold is pertinent, as we present a brief memorial for Pierre Boulez, who died in January, aged 90.

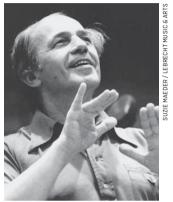
#### **BOULEZ Dérive 1**

Pierre Boulez was a towering figure of classical music.

Conductor, composer, writer, teacher and public intellectual, he had a profound influence on music and musicians throughout his 70-year career. The young Boulez was a controversial figure, calling for the destruction of the world's opera houses and declaring that new music must be 'ugly'. But soon he was a respected institutional figure, conducting major orchestras and ensembles (sometimes in music he had previously decried), working with the world's finest players across several continents, and founding the musical research institution IRCAM.

Dérive 1 is based on harmonies derived from a musical spelling of the surname of Swiss conductor and patron Paul Sacher. But at its most basic level, Dérive 1 is a study in trills. Layer upon layer of fluttering instruments create a buzzing haze that rises then falls, thickens then clarifies, overwhelms then recedes. This alluring sound world brings to mind Boulez's description of his music as 'seductive, even spiritual'.





Pierre Boulez (1925-2016)

#### CHAMPION OF COMPOSERS

The wealthy impresario Paul Sacher, memorialised in Boulez's Dérive 1, was a major patron of 20th-century composers. He commissioned significant works from Igor Stravinsky, Béla Bartók, Richard Strauss, Bohuslav Martinů, Arthur Honegger, Frank Martin, Paul Hindemith, Hans Werner Henze, Elliott Carter, Witold Lutosławski, Henri Dutilleux and Harrison Birtwistle.

We are privileged to be joined today by pianist Pierre-Laurent Aimard, who enjoyed a long musical association with Boulez. Here they are together in 1984, the year in which Dérive 1 was composed.

# **DEAN Pastoral Symphony**

Brett Dean studied in Brisbane before moving in 1984 to Germany, where he was a permanent member of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra for 14 years. He began composing in 1988, initially concentrating on experimental film and radio projects and appearing as an improvising performer. Dean is now one of the most widely performed composers of his generation, and much of his work draws from literary, political, environmental or visual stimuli. *Fire Music*, for large orchestra, follows the destruction and rebirth of Melbourne's 'Black Sunday' bushfires; *Eclipse*, for string quartet, traces the flight of refugees; *Equality*, for speaking pianist, sets a text by Michael Leunig that opens with 'All men are bastards!'.

#### The composer writes:

Beethoven's famous Pastoral Symphony is one of countless works in which composers have celebrated the beauty and drama of nature. In 2000, having moved to Australia after 15 years in Germany, I was acutely aware of the joy and beauty to be found just by opening the windows and listening. In wishing to celebrate this abundance of treasures, I felt an immense sense of loss. Consider our relentless rampaging through the world's wilderness, all in the name of more shopping, freeways, car parks and convenience. We all 'love' nature, but what we love more are the trappings of modern living...certainly more than the desire to bask in the glory of a single butcherbird, perhaps the most magical sound found on the whole Australian continent. This piece is about glorious birdsong, the threat that it faces, and the soulless noise that we're left with when it's gone.

Dean's Pastoral Symphony plays out as a dystopian dawn scene. Hushed strings and mumbling brass conjure a threatening darkness, from which a (pre-recorded) dawn chorus of birds emerges. Something is amiss. Daylight breaks, woodwinds keen, brass blurt and strings agitate the increasingly hectic birdsong. From nowhere, a human sound: the strikes of a woodchopper. This metronomic knell forces an uneasy calm, broken by the dramatic tree-fell, which releases a wild 'chase scene' of fleeing birds, replete with fluttering strings, snarling brass and hysterical woodwinds. The encroachment of the modern world forces the unhinged orchestra into confrontations with pile drivers, passing cars, a fleeting techno beat, an auto yard, crashing metal, a grinding lift. Inevitably, a crashing halt, leaving us breathless. What is left? Dean marks his final section 'extremely bare, barren', as fragmentary laments drift through the dusty air.



**Brett Dean** 

#### **PUSHING TO THE EDGE**

Dean, Illean and Grisey do battle with instrumental conventions. Dean leaves no player unscathed, filling his piece with fiddly, frenetic licks for every instrument, from squawking piccolo to buzzing contrabassoon. Soft playing is a great challenge, and all three composers write music that stretches to the very edge of audibility. Grisey and Illean extensively use microtones (the cracks between piano keys), forcing instrumentalists to listen in a different way, and Grisey writes music that is very precisely, very challengingly NOT together...

#### **ILLEAN Land's End**

Small artworks on paper draw the viewer in. Wind-swept ocean surfaces, frozen in time, with no horizon, no perspective. Works of detail and obsession, each created over a full year with a simple graphite pencil.

Composer Lisa Illean found inspiration in these small yet epic seascapes of Latvian-American artist Vija Celmins. 'In such work, surfaces act as forms through which subtle change can be perceived and felt.' In response, Illean's piece, Land's End, 'evolves gradually, like a change in temperature or hue, creating in sound the sensation of fading afternoon light'. Gentle transience is everywhere: harmonies shift glacially, notes barely emerge, notes slide slowly, speeds imperceptibly change.

'For some time,' says Illean, 'I have been interested in sounds comprised of hushed repetitive fragments. These recall the murmurings – of human voices or natural elements – that form a continuous, ever-varying undertint to more foreground sounds.' The music of *Land's End* is hushed, still. High, fragile strings glisten; brass mumble, muted; percussion barely touch their instruments. This tranquillity opens a space for audiences so



Lisa Illean



Drypoint Ocean Surface (1983) by Vija Celmins (born 1938)

that 'the experience of the piece is to be found as much within the listener as within the sounds that I have organised'. Illean challenges her players with 'a discreet virtuosity of finely attuned listening, tuning and balance'. This is a virtuosity that we, leaning quietly forward in the audience, can share.

Lisa Illean has created work for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, The Arts Centre Melbourne, Octandre Ensemble and the Museum of Anthropology (Vancouver), and is currently writing a new piece for clarinettist Thomas Watmough and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. In April the BBC Symphony Orchestra will also perform *Land's End*. Illean is currently a PhD scholar at the Edinburgh College of Art, where she is working across the Composition and Musical Instrument Research (organology) departments. This is her first SSO commission.

# **GRISEY Four Songs for Crossing the Threshold**

Gérard Grisey's song cycle *Quatre Chants pour franchir le seuil* is haunted by death. The soprano soloist sings texts of four 'deaths' (of the angel, civilization, the voice, and mankind) from the perspective of four cultures: Christian, Egyptian, Greek, and Mesopotamian. The composer was inspired by a death close to him: the title refers to a piece by composer Claude Vivier depicting a brutal murder, a depiction that foretold Vivier's own murder by stabbing, just weeks later. And there is one final death, that of Grisey himself, only months after completing *Quatre Chants....* 

Early in his career, Gérard Grisey was obsessed with theoretical concerns. Principally time (for Grisey: 'whale-time, human-time, and insect-time'), harmony (an approach known as 'spectralism') and sound (experiments at the threshold of sound and noise). The French composer insisted his music was free of narrative and extra-musical programs. By his final decade, something had shifted. Grisey's music welcomed new inspirations, began to tell compelling stories. *Quatre Chants...* is the fullest fruit of this shift, retaining theoretical rigour, but speaking with radiant beauty, emotional power and physical force.

The layout of the musicians on the stage is key to *Quatre Chants...*. Surrounding the conductor is a small band: soprano soloist and a group of 'like' instruments (high, melodic). These 'backing singers' provide support for the soprano: bolstering, sharing tunes, 'singing' together. Behind, lurking in the shadows, are three groups of low, large instruments: tubas, saxophones, clarinets, bass drums, deep gongs and harp. Each shadow group is a sort of malformed early music 'underworld', comprising two wind/brass instruments, one stringed instrument (mostly plucked) and one percussion.



Gérard Grisey in 1997, the year before the composition of *Quatre* Chants... and his own death

#### SPECTRALISM

Grisey is the granddaddy of an approach known as 'spectralism' or musique spectrale. Imagine a low note on trombone. Above this note we can barely perceive higher, ghostlike notes: 'upper partials'. Exploiting these upper partials opened up a kaleidoscope of new colours and sounds for composers after the 1970s. Upper partials fall into the cracks between conventional notes, so spectral composers employ 'microtones' (mid-crack notes). Microtones conjure an otherworldliness ideally suited for Grisey's Quatre Chants..., which breathes life into long-lost civilisations.

The music of *Quatre Chants*... is rich in metaphor. Often the work feels like a funeral rite, with bass drums thudding softly, deep gongs ringing, incantations sung. Extremely soft bass drum interludes partition the songs (swishes, whispering, tapping), an aural stucco full of text-derived meaning: beating angels wings, an archaeologist's brush, the gentle patter of rain before the storm. Quatre Chants... also revels in organic sounds (thudding heartbeats, guttural screams), as well as the constant flux of all organic bodies. Grisey writes: 'With a birth, a life, and a death, sound resembles a living being.'

#### A LISTENING GUIDE

A four-part musical meditation on death.... The four movements are separated by short interludes, insubstantial musical particles intended to maintain a level of polite but slackened silence that takes over in concert halls between the end of one movement and the beginning of the next. (From Grisey's own program note.)

#### 1. La Mort de l'ange (The Death of the Angel)

After Les Heures de la nuit by Christian Guez-Ricord

Christian Guez-Ricord died after a short life beset by mental illness and frequent hospitalizations. His poetry is esoteric and intense, filled with ecstatic and delirious mystic visions that unite the erotic and the spiritual, nowhere more so than in *La Mort de l'ange*. In few words, Guez-Ricord opens a world of ambiguity and sadness. 'The death of the angel', for Grisey, 'is the most horrific, since it resigns us to bid farewell to our dreams.' Grisey's music weeps, each gesture drifting downwards, quietly mourning. The soprano's response to this death is shock and clarity. She blurts, stutters, obsesses over key words ('duty', 'death'). Pain and outrage mounts then peaks, leaving a numbed, hushed quiet.

#### 2. La Mort de la civilisation (The Death of Civilisation)

After Egyptian sarcophagus inscriptions of the Middle Kingdom

Plucked strings evoke the 3500-year old arched harp of ancient Egypt, here underpinning a restrained, solemn funeral procession. The soprano is an archaeologist reading her litany of research discoveries 'with a neutral voice ... as if deciphering a manuscript'. Only when she encounters a text that tackles mortality with a gesture to the infinite ('make me a pass of light, let me pass on...'), does her voice fill with emotion, a tiny glance into our shared humanity with a lost, alien civilisation.

#### 3. La Mort de la voix (The Death of the Voice)

After Erinna

The soprano sings words by the 2600-year-old poet Erinna, a contemporary and friend of Sappho, from whose work only fragments remain. Dazzling, piercing light gleams, each time encroached upon by the dark shadows of tubas and contrabass clarinet. Grisey writes: 'The emptiness, the echo, the voice, the shadow of sounds and silence are so familiar to the musician that I am.' Erinna's voice is extinguished. How quickly we are forgotten by the world.

#### 4. La Mort de l'humanité (The Death of Humanity)

After The Epic of Gilgamesh

The 3000-year-old *Epic of Gilgamesh* is one of the earliest surviving works of literature. Late in this swashbuckling adventure tale, the Sumerian king Gilgamesh, seeking immortality, meets with Utnapishtim, who speaks of a great flood. (Utnapishtim is a sort of pre-Noah). Rain patters on percussion, wind rushes through brass and woodwinds, thunder booms from bass drums. The cataclysmic tempest arrives with a shock, Grisey evoking 'squalls, driving rain, hurricane, flood, tempest, slaughter: a grand polyphony'. Struggling to be heard above the fray is the soprano, who cries out her tale at the top of her lungs.

After the apocalypse, stillness reigns. A dystopian vision: 'all mankind had been returned to clay ... I fell to my knees and wept'. But the music is simple, beautiful. Grisey writes, 'this tender lullaby brings not slumber but rather an awakening. Music of the dawn of a humanity finally unencumbered by nightmare. I dare to hope that this lullaby will not be of the sort that we will sing tomorrow'.

TIMOTHY MUNRO © 2016

Tim Munro is a Brisbane-born, Grammy-winning flautist based in Chicago.

#### PERCUSSION CHOREOGRAPHY

Sydney Dance Company, eat your heart out. The true modern dancers in this city are its percussionists, the powerhouse of this evening's ensemble. Watch them dart silently across the stage, flit between arrays of gongs and deep drums, and swap mallets with dazzling sleight of hand. In Grisey's work, the expansive percussion collection provides a sort of theatrical 'set', framing the music both aurally and visually.

Turn to page 12 for the text and translations of Grisey's Ouatre Chants...

# Quatre Chants pour franchir le seuil

#### 1. La Mort de l'Ange

D'après Les Heures de la nuit de Christian Guez Ricord\*

De qui se doit de mourir comme ange

comme il se doit de mourir comme un ange je me dois de mourir moi même

il se doit son mourir, son ange est de mourir comme il s'est mort comme un ange

#### 2. La Mort de la Civilisation

D'après les sarcophages égyptiens du moyen empire

811 et 812: (presque entièrement disparus) 814: "Alors que tu reposes pour l'éternité …" 809: (détruit)

868 et 869: (presque entièrement détruits) 870: "J'ai parcouru … j'ai été florissant … je fais une déploration … le Lumineux tombe à l'intérieur de …"

961. 963: (détruits)

972: (presque entièrement effacé)

973: "... Qui fait le tour du ciel ... jusqu'au confins du ciel ... jusqu'à l'étendue des bras ... Fais-moi un chemin de lumière, laisse-moi passer"

903: (détruit)

1050: "formule pour être un dieu ..."

# Four Songs for Crossing the Threshold

#### 1. The Death of the Angel

After The Hours of Night by Christian Guez Ricord

Of him who has a duty to himself to die as angel

just as he has a duty to himself to die like an angel my duty is to die myself

he owes this death to himself his angelic destiny is to die just as he has departed like an angel

#### 2. The Death of Civilisation

After the Egyptian Sarcophagi of the Middle Empire

811 and 812: (almost entirely disappeared)

814: "Now that you rest for eternity ..."

809: (destroyed)

868 and 869: (almost entirely destroyed)

870: "I have travelled through ... I have been prosperous ... I make my lamentation ...
The Luminous falls inside the ..."

961 and 963: (destroyed)

972: (almost entirely obliterated)

973: "which makes the circuit of the sky ... right to the borders of the sky ... right to the furthest reach of the arms ... Make me a path of light, let me pass on ..."

903: (destroyed)

1050: "Formula for being a god ..."

<sup>\*</sup> Publié par La Sétérée 1992, Jacques Clerc Éditeur

#### 3. La Mort de la Voix

D'après Erinna

Dans le vide d'en bas, l'écho en vain dérive, Et se tait chez les morts. La voix s'épand dans l'ombre.

#### 4. La Mort de l'Humanite

D'après L'Épopée de Gilgamesh

... Six jours et sept nuits,
Bourrasques, Pluies battantes,
Ouragans et Déluge
Continuèrent de saccager la terre.
Le septième jour arrivé,
Tempête, Déluge et Hécatombe cessèrent,
Après avoir distribué leurs coups au hasard,
Comme une femme dans les douleurs,
La Mer se calma et s'immobilisa

Je regardai alentour: Le silence régnait! Tous les hommes étaient' Retransformés en argile; Et la plaine liquide Semblait une terrasse.

J'ouvris une fenêtre Et le jour tomba sur ma joue. Je tombai à genoux, immobile, Et pleurai ... Je regardai l'horizon de la mer, le monde ...

#### 3. The Death of the Voice

After Erinna

In the void below, the echo drifts in vain, And falls silent among the dead. The voice spreads in shadow.

#### 4. The Death of Humanity

After The Epic of Gilgamesh

... For six days and seven nights
Squalls, Pelting rains,
Hurricanes and Flood
Continued to ravage the earth.
When the seventh day arrived,
Tempest, Flood and Carnage ceased.
Having distributed their random blows
Like a woman in labour
The Sea calmed himself into stillness.

I looked about: Silence reigned! All mankind had been Returned to clay; And the flat liquid Resembled a terrace.

I opened a window

And daylight fell on my cheek.
I fell to my knees, immobile,
And wept ...
I looked to the sea's horizon, the world ...

Translated by Christopher Wintle and Joe Bain Reprinted by kind permission

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#### ABOUT THE ARTISTS



David Robertson
THE LOWY CHAIR OF
CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

David Robertson is a compelling and passionate communicator whose stimulating ideas and music-making have captivated audiences and musicians alike. A consummate musician and masterful programmer, he has forged strong relationships with major orchestras throughout Europe and North America.

He made his Australian debut with the SSO in 2003 and soon became a regular visitor to Sydney, with projects such as The Colour of Time, a conceptual multimedia concert; the Australian premiere of John Adams' Doctor Atomic Symphony; and concert performances of The Flying Dutchman with video projections. In 2014, his inaugural season as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director, he led the SSO on a sevencity tour of China.

Last year he launched his tenth season as Music Director of the St Louis Symphony. Other titled posts have included Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Music Director of the Orchestre National de Lyon and resident conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. An expert in 20th- and 21st-century music, he has also been Music Director of the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris (where composer and conductor Pierre Boulez was an early supporter). He is also a champion of young musicians, devoting time to working with students and young artists.

David Robertson is a frequent guest with major orchestras and opera houses throughout the world and in recent seasons he has conducted the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the Philadelphia and Cleveland orchestras, as well as the Berlin Philharmonic, Staatskapelle Dresden, BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2014 he conducted the controversial but highly acclaimed Metropolitan Opera premiere of John Adams' Death of Klinghoffer.

His awards and accolades include Musical America Conductor of the Year (2000), Columbia University's 2006 Ditson Conductor's Award, and, with the SLSO, the 2005–06 ASCAP Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming. In 2010 he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and in 2011 a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

David Robertson was born in Santa Monica, California, and educated at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he studied French horn and composition before turning to conducting. He is married to pianist Orli Shaham.

The position of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director is also supported by Principal Partner Emirates.



Jessica Aszodi soprano

Chicago-based Australian vocalist Jessica Aszodi is thirsty for adventure. She is a performer of notated and improvised music, and a researcher, curator and producer of music that challenges the status quo. In her genre-bounding career she has premiered more than 60 new pieces of notated music, performed works that have lain dormant for centuries, sung a dozen roles from the standard operatic repertoire and collaborated with a constellation of artists from the far reaches of the musical palette.

When not working on a solo project or research voyage she has performed with ensembles as diverse as ICE, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Pinchgut Opera, Bang on a Can, San Diego Symphony, wild Up and Sydney Chamber Opera, as well as appearing in the Los Angeles Philharmonic Green Umbrella series. She has sung in festivals around Australia and the world, including Aldeburgh, Tanglewood, the Macau International Music Festival, Music X (Switzerland), the Melbourne International Arts Festival and Vivid Sydney.

Jessica Aszodi is an alumna of Victorian Opera's Young Artist Program and her roles there ranged from Donna Elvira (*Don Giovanni*) and Sesto (*Giulio Cesare*) to Popova (*The Bear* by Walton) and Rose (Elliott Carter's What Next?).

She holds degrees from the University of California and the Victorian College of the Arts, where she was taught by Anna Connolly. She has twice been nominated for Green Room awards as Best Female Operatic Performer in both leading and supporting categories.

Earlier this month she performed with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in the Adelaide Festival's Tectonics Adelaide, curated and conducted by Ilan Volkov. This season she also appears in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's chamber series. Her recordings as a soloist include an appearance on the MSO's album of Percy Grainger works for large chorus and orchestra, conducted by Andrew Davis, and she has just recently released her debut solo album on Sydney label Hospital Hill.



# Pierre-Laurent Aimard piano

Pierre-Laurent Aimard is widely acclaimed as a key figure in the music of our time and as a uniquely significant interpreter of piano repertoire from every age. He regularly performs throughout the world with major orchestras and conductors including Esa-Pekka Salonen, Vladimir Jurowski, Peter Eötvös, Simon Rattle and Riccardo Chailly, and his residency invitations include projects at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York, Wiener Konzerthaus, Berlin Philharmonie, Lucerne Festival, Mozarteum Salzburg, Cité de la Musique in Paris, Tanglewood Festival and London's Southbank Centre. He is also the Artistic Director of the Aldeburgh Festival.

In the 2015–16 season he is Artist-in-Residence with Wiener Symphoniker, performing all the Beethoven piano concertos under the baton of Philippe Jordan. He also performed in a major Stockhausen projects for Musica Viva in Munic, followed by concerts in Paris and Amsterdam, and a performance of Lachenmann's *Ausklang* in Luxembourg. Other highlights include solo recitals in Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Tokyo and London.

Born in Lyon in 1957, Pierre-Laurent Aimard studied at the Paris Conservatoire with Yvonne Loriod and in London with Maria Curcio. He won the 1973 Messiaen Competition at the age of 16, and three years later Pierre Boulez appointed him as Ensemble Intercontemporain's first solo pianist.

He has had close collaborations with many leading composers including Kurtág, Stockhausen, Carter, Boulez and George Benjamin, and had a long association with Ligeti, recording his complete works for piano and recently launching a major online resource (www.explorethescore.org). He gave the premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's Responses: Sweet Disorder and the Carefully Careless (2014), as well as Elliott Carter's last piece, Epigrams (2013), which was written for Pierre-Laurent Aimard and premiered at the Aldeburgh Festival.

His accolades include the Royal Philharmonic Society's Instrumentalist Award (2005) and Germany's Schallplattenkritik Honorary Prize (2009), and in 2007 he was named Musical America's Instrumentalist of the Year in 2007. He has made many highly successful recordings, including a prize-winning recording of Bach's Art of Fugue, Hommage à Messiaen (2009 ECHO Klassik Award) and Ives' Concord Sonata and Songs (2005 Grammy). More recent released include The Liszt Project, Debussy Préludes, and Book 1 of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier.

PIERRE-LAURENT AIMARD IN RECITAL
MESSIAEN Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant-Jésus
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City Recital Hall Angel Place

#### SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



#### DAVID ROBERTSON

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Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra 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 SSO also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA – including three visits to China – have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

The orchestra'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.
Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor
from 2009 to 2013. The orchestra's history also
boasts collaborations with legendary figures

such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

The SSO'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 orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Lee Bracegirdle, Gordon Kerry, Mary Finsterer, Nigel Westlake and Georges Lentz, and the orchestra's recordings of music by Brett Dean have been released on both the BIS and SSO Live labels.

Other releases on the SSO Live label, established in 2006, include performances with Alexander Lazarev, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Sir Charles Mackerras, Vladimir Ashkenazy and David Robertson. In 2010–11 the orchestra made concert recordings of the complete Mahler symphonies with Ashkenazy, and has also released recordings of Rachmaninoff and Elgar orchestral works on the Exton/Triton labels, as well as numerous recordings on ABC Classics.

This is the third year of David Robertson's tenure as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director.

#### THE ORCHESTRA



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Rosamund Plummer flute, piccolo Diana Doherty oboe Guy Spielman\* clarinets Sandra Ismail\* clarinets Matthew Wilkie bassoon Noriko Shimada contrabassoon, flexatone Ben Jacks horn Geoffrey O'Reilly horn David Elton trumpet, piccolo trumpet Greg Flynn\* trumpet Scott Kinmont trombone, flexatone Steve Rossé tuba, flexatone Mark Robinson percussion Kevin Man\* percussion Alison Pratt\* percussion Louise Johnson harp Jacob Abela\* piano Dene Olding violin Sophie Cole violin Emma Jezek violin Tobias Breider viola

Elizabeth Neville *cello* Christopher Pidcock *cello* Kees Boersma *double bass* 

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bass clarinet, contrabass clarinet
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Steve Rossé tuba
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Dene Olding violin
Christopher Pidcock cello
Kees Boersma double bass
with
Jessica Aszodi soprano

#### \* = GUEST MUSICIAN

Javanese gongs for Grisey's Quatre Chants... supplied courtesy of the School of Arts and Media, University of NSW

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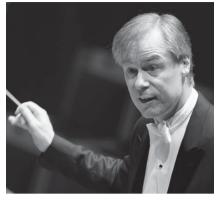
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