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**LENINGRAD SYMPHONY**  
*Shostakovich & Tchaikovsky*

MEET THE MUSIC

**Wednesday 4 May 6.30pm**

EMIRATE METRO SERIES

**Friday 6 May 8pm**

GREAT CLASSICS

**Saturday 7 May 2pm**



Principal Partner



sydney symphony orchestra

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## CLASSICAL

**Leningrad Symphony**  
*Shostakovich & Tchaikovsky***P STANHOPE** Dawn and Darkness –Cello Concerto **PREMIERE****TCHAIKOVSKY** Rococo Variations**SHOSTAKOVICH** Symphony No.7, Leningrad**Oleg Caetani** conductor • **Narek Hakhnazaryan** cello

Meet the Music

**Wed 4 May 6.30pm**

Emirates Metro Series

**Fri 6 May 8pm**

Great Classics

**Sat 7 May 2pm**

Sydney Opera House, Concert Hall

**Haydn's Creation****HAYDN** Die Schöpfung (The Creation)*Sung in German***Masaaki Suzuki** conductor**Lydia Teuscher** soprano • **Allan Clayton** tenor**Neal Davies** bass-baritone**Sydney Philharmonia Choirs**

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Mondays @ 7

**Mon 16 May 7pm**

Sydney Opera House, Concert Hall

**Winds of Change***Cocktail Hour***BACH** Trio Sonata in D minor, BWV 1036**STRAVINSKY** after Gesualdo, arr. Kinmont:

Tres Sacrae Cantiones [Three Sacred Songs]

**STRAVINSKY** Wind Octet**Sat 14 May 6pm**

Utzon Room, Sydney Opera House

**The Composer is Dead***An SSO Family Concert***STOOKEY & SNICKET** The Composer is Dead**Toby Thatcher** conductor**Frank Woodley** narrator and The Inspector**Sun 22 May 2pm**

Sydney Opera House, Concert Hall

**Rick's Playlist****BEETHOVEN** Symphony No.9 [Choral]: Scherzo**MOZART** Serenata notturna, K239: March**STRAVINSKY** Dances from The Soldier's Tale**ELGAR** Enigma Variations: Troyte**JS BACH** Matthew Passion:

'Erbarme dich, mein Gott'

**WAGNER** Parsifal: Good Friday Music**Brett Weymark** conductor • **Nicole Youl** mezzo soprano**Musicians of the SSO**

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**Tue 24 May 6.30pm**

City Recital Hall

**Mozart at Night****MOZART** Serenata notturna, K239**SCHOENBERG** Transfigured Night**BRITTEN** Les Illuminations**Roger Benedict** conductor • **Brenton Spiteri** tenor**Thu 2 Jun 7pm**

City Recital Hall

## SSO PRESENTS

**David Bowie –**  
**Nothing has Changed***A Tribute***iOTA** • **Tim Rogers** • **Steve Kilbey****Deborah Conway** • **Adalita** • **Jack Ladder****Benjamin Northey** conductor**Thu 19 May 8pm****Fri 20 May 8pm****Sat 21 May 2pm****Sat 21 May 8pm**

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## sydney symphony orchestra

**David Robertson**  
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

### MEET THE MUSIC

WEDNESDAY 4 MAY, 6.30PM

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.....  
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL



# LENINGRAD SYMPHONY

**Oleg Caetani** *conductor*

**Narek Hakhnazaryan** *cello*

**Paul Stanhope (born 1969)**

***Dawn and Darkness – Cello Concerto***

PREMIERE

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)**

***Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op.33***

'Fitzenhagen' version

Introduction (*Moderato assai quasi andante*)

Theme (*Moderato semplice*)

Variation I (*Tempo della thema*)

Variation II (*Tempo della thema*)

Variation III (*Andante sostenuto*)

Variation IV (*Andante grazioso*)

Variation V (*Allegro moderato*) – with *cadenza*

Variation VI (*Andante*)

Variation VII and Coda (*Allegro vivo*)

Narek Hakhnazaryan, cello

INTERVAL

**Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)**

***Symphony No.7, Op.60, Leningrad***

*Allegretto*

*Moderato (poco allegretto)*

*Adagio – Moderato risoluto – Adagio –*

*Allegro non troppo – Moderato*

The third and fourth movements are played without pause



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.....  
Estimated durations:

12 minutes, 20 minutes, 20-minute interval, 70 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 8.45pm (Wednesday), 10.15pm (Friday), 4.15pm (Saturday).

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*Dawn and Darkness* was commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra with the generous support of Vicki Olsson.

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COVER IMAGE:

Illuminations in St Petersburg (1869) by Fedor Vasiliev (Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow / Bridgeman Images)



Principal Partner



During the Siege of Leningrad, Shostakovich was a volunteer firefighter. This photo from July 1941 – while he was composing his Seventh Symphony – shows him taking part in exercises with his colleagues on the roof of the Leningrad Conservatoire.

# Leningrad Symphony

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This concert begins with a new creation by Paul Stanhope. It's an example of a commission for which the programming context is known, and so *Dawn and Darkness* is a short cello concerto – just over ten minutes – that forms a pair with Tchaikovsky's *Rococo Variations*, also for cello and orchestra. Just as Tchaikovsky took inspiration from his love for the music of Mozart, Stanhope has turned to the past, drawing on fragments from a lute song by John Dowland: 'In Darkness Let Me Dwell.' Look for it on YouTube and you too can revel in its profound melancholy as Dowland's 17th-century listeners would have done. Stanhope, however, does not dwell in darkness for long – as you will hear!

Tchaikovsky's *Rococo Variations* provides a contrast of spirit with a tribute to his one of his favourite composers, Mozart. The real Mozart could be dark and turbulent at times (and as deeply felt as Dowland); Tchaikovsky's picture of his 18th-century hero is elegant, refined and always cheerful.

For Shostakovich's *Seventh Symphony*, the inspiration was all around in the darkness and violence of war. He had begun work in July 1941, weeks after Hitler had invaded the Soviet Union. In a besieged Leningrad, the symphony became a musical declaration that 'life in our city goes on as usual'. But it didn't go on *quite* as usual. The photo opposite shows Shostakovich in action as a volunteer firefighter. At one point when he was on duty on the roof of the Conservatoire, he took the score of the symphony-in-progress with him because he 'could not be parted from it'.

The *Leningrad Symphony* received its first performances in March 1942 – in Kuibyshev, where Shostakovich had been evacuated, and then in Moscow. The Soviet Union's allies in the West showed intense interest in the new symphony: a microfilm of the score was smuggled out by road via Teheran to Cairo, then flown across the Sahara. Henry Wood conducted a broadcast in London in June; Toscanini gave the North American premiere in July. (The Leningrad premiere followed in August.) With World War II raging, the symphony was more than topical, it was political – an act of defiance. The *Leningrad Symphony* was, as the composer said, 'how I hear the war'. Today we can hear this war through Shostakovich's ears.

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## ABOUT THE MUSIC

**Paul Stanhope (born 1969)**

### ***Dawn and Darkness* – Cello Concerto**

PREMIERE

**Narek Hakhnazaryan** *cello*

*Dawn and Darkness* was commissioned as a companion to Tchaikovsky's elegant Rococo Variations, with the two works sitting together in the first half of the program. Both pieces feature a solo cello and use similar orchestral forces (although Stanhope adds timpani, percussion, harp and celesta to Tchaikovsky's modest ensemble), and both refer in some way to music of the past.

*The composer writes...*

Much of my recent music involves weaving found objects – for example fragments of early music – into my own musical voice. My aim is to connect to the Western musical tradition and find new and inventive combinations of sound that come about through a process of stylistic juxtaposition and integration.

*Dawn and Darkness* is composed in the style of a fantasy, and takes the shape of a compact yet free-flowing series of embellishments on two short thematic fragments from a lute song, 'In Darkness Let Me Dwell' by the English Renaissance composer John Dowland.

The title *Dawn and Darkness* relates to the 'darkness' of what would have been the fashionable melancholy of Dowland's song. But in addition to the quiet and contemplative moments (inspired by Dowland), my piece spins fragments of the original song into a lather of exuberant dance episodes that eventually climax and collapse into a cadenza for the soloist.

I hope that my piece suggests the possibility of light at the end of a dark night, rather than the prospect of wrapping oneself permanently in melancholia.

Composing for cello and orchestra is a great joy, but balancing the solo instrument with the larger forces can be a challenge. This work is written for Armenian-born cellist Narek Hakhnazaryan, who has both terrific sound projection and an outstanding virtuosity. During the process of composition I also appreciated the valuable advice of SSO cellist Christopher Pidcock, who kindly workshoped the solo part.

*About the composer...*

Paul Stanhope is a Sydney-based composer who has had prominent performances of his music in the UK, Europe, Taiwan and Japan, as well as North and South America. He studied composition with Peter Sculthorpe, after which a Charles

...the possibility  
of light at the end  
of a dark night...

Mackerras Scholarship enabled him to study at the Guildhall School of Music in London in 2000.

His international standing was confirmed in 2004 when he won the Toru Takemitsu Composition Prize for his *Fantasia* on a Theme of Vaughan Williams. He subsequently won two APRA/Australian Music Centre Awards in 2011, and in 2012 he was awarded a Sidney Meyer Creative Fellowship, the first Australian composer to be granted this honour.

In 2010 he was Musica Viva's featured composer, with performances nationwide of his String Quartet No.2 and *Agnus Dei – After the Fire* for violin and piano as well as other chamber and choral works. And in Musica Viva's 2015 season his String Quartet No.3 was toured nationally by the Goldner String Quartet. His music has also been performed by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales at the Vale of Glamorgan Festival, and by the National Colombian Symphony Orchestra in Bogota.

Recent works include *Qinoth* (2011), composed for the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the cantata *Exile Lamentations* (2007–11), and a piccolo concerto (2013), which was commissioned by the Melbourne, Adelaide and Tasmanian symphony orchestras and subsequently recorded by the MSO with soloist Andrew Macleod.

The SSO gave the Australian premiere of the *Fantasia* on a Theme of Vaughan Williams in 2005 and performed it again in 2010. More recently, in 2014, the SSO commissioned and premiered *Jandamarra – Sing for the Country*, a dramatic cantata based on the life of the Western Australian Indigenous resistance hero and featuring the Yilimbirri Ensemble, Gondwana Choirs and soloists. It has been hailed as a work of major cultural significance.

Paul Stanhope is a Senior Lecturer at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and Artistic Chair of the Australia Ensemble.

The orchestra for *Dawn and Darkness* comprises two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes (one doubling cor anglais), two clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet), two bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon) and two horns; timpani and percussion; harp, celesta and strings.

*Dawn and Darkness* was commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra with the generous support of Vicki Olsson. These are its first performances.



JASON CATLETT



## Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

### Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op.33

'Fitzenhagen' version (1876–77)

Introduction (*Moderato assai quasi andante*)

Theme (*Moderato semplice*)

Variation I (*Tempo della thema*)

Variation II (*Tempo della thema*)

Variation III (*Andante sostenuto*)

Variation IV (*Andante grazioso*)

Variation V (*Allegro moderato*) – with *cadenza*

Variation VI (*Andante*)

Variation VII and Coda (*Allegro vivo*)

**Narek Hakhnazaryan** *cello*

A nostalgia for the world of the 18th century, thought of as refined, elegant and gently civilised, is never far from the surface in the highly Romantic art of Tchaikovsky. It shows in his choice of works by Pushkin (who shared and fed this nostalgia) for the books of his two best operas, *Eugene Onegin* and *The Queen of Spades*, where Tchaikovsky's music sometimes resorts to out-and-out 18th-century pastiche. Mozart was the composer who symbolised the best of the former century for Tchaikovsky, who revered him above all other musicians. 'No one,' he said, 'has so made me weep and tremble with rapture at nearness to what we call the ideal.' Whatever the term 'rococo' may mean, to Tchaikovsky it meant Mozart. This set of variations is his finest tribute to his idol's art, far preferable to his orchestration and overlaying of Mozart pieces with a rather sticky sweetness in the orchestral suite *Mozartiana*.

In no way does it detract from the success of Tchaikovsky's Variations that the Mozart he emulates contains no turbulent emotions. In short, the Variations are far from the real Mozart. But they are charming, elegant, deftly written – equally gratifying to virtuoso cellists and to audiences. The light and airy accompaniment, which enables the cello to stand out beautifully, is for 18th-century forces: double winds, two horns and strings.

Tchaikovsky composed the work in 1876 (shortly before beginning his Fourth Symphony) for a cellist and fellow-professor at the Moscow Conservatorium, Wilhelm Fitzenhagen. Fitzenhagen had requested a concerto-like piece for his recital tours, so it was natural that Tchaikovsky first completed the Variations in a scoring for cello and piano. Before orchestrating it he gave the music to Fitzenhagen, who made changes in the solo part, in places pasting his own versions over Tchaikovsky's. The first performance was of the orchestral version, in November

## Keynotes

TCHAIKOVSKY

*Born Kamsko-Votkinsk, 1840*

*Died St Petersburg, 1893*

Tchaikovsky represented a new direction for Russian music in the late 19th century: fully professional and cosmopolitan in outlook. He embraced the genres and forms of Western European tradition – symphonies, concertos and overtures – bringing to them an unrivalled gift for melody. His ballets are among his masterpieces, and his extraordinary dramatic instinct comes to the fore in all his music, whether for the stage or the concert hall.

### ROCOCO VARIATIONS

Tchaikovsky's *Rococo Variations* for solo cello and orchestra were composed in tribute to Mozart, and the 'rococo' theme is Tchaikovsky's idea of the style of Mozart. The variations themselves are virtuosic, though nimble rather than strenuous. They were written for one of Tchaikovsky's fellow professors at the Moscow Conservatorium, Wilhelm Fitzenhagen, who took it upon himself to alter the order of the variations, establishing the version almost always played nowadays. The theme (Tchaikovsky's own) determines the character of the Variations. After a brief introduction, in which the orchestra anticipates fragments of the theme, the soloist plays it – then the orchestra provides a postlude, and the cello a final question. The postlude will round off most of the variations – this rococo garden is formal and well-kept.



Whatever the term ‘rococo’ may mean, to Tchaikovsky it meant Mozart.

1877. Tchaikovsky couldn’t attend since he had left Russia to recover from his disastrous marriage. Fitzenhagen retained the score, and it was he who passed it on to the publisher, Jurgenson. The cello and piano version was the first to appear in print, in autumn 1878, with substantial alterations, which Fitzenhagen claimed were authorised but about which Tchaikovsky complained somewhat bitterly.

But by the time Jurgenson came to publish the *Rococo* Variations in orchestral form, ten years had elapsed, during which Fitzenhagen had performed the work successfully both inside and outside Russia, and it had entered the repertoire. When Fitzenhagen’s pupil, Anatoly Brandukov, asked Tchaikovsky what he was going to do about Jurgenson’s publication of the Fitzenhagen version, the composer replied, ‘The devil take it! Let it stand as it is!’

The theme, which determines the character of the Variations, is Tchaikovsky’s own: it’s the composer’s *idea* of Mozart’s style. The soloist plays it after a brief introduction in which the orchestra anticipates the later breaking of the theme into fragments by attempting little phrases from it. The theme itself has an orchestral postlude, with a final question from



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◀ Cellist Wilhelm Fitzenhagen (1848–1890) was born in Germany but at the age of 22 he joined the staff of the Moscow Conservatoire. In Russia he established himself as a leading teacher and performer, and became friends with Tchaikovsky.

the cello. This postlude, increasingly varied, rounds off most of the Variations. The first two of these are fairly closely based on the theme, which the cello decorates with a dance in triplets, then discusses with the orchestra. The soloist emerges in full limelight in the virtuosic second variation. This is followed by a leisurely slow waltz, largely in the hands of the soloist. This variation, number three, is the expressive heart of the piece. (Tchaikovsky had originally placed it at No.6.)

In Variation IV, Tchaikovsky gives the theme a different rhythm, and incorporates some bravura flourishes. In the fifth variation the flute has the theme, and the cello accompanies with a long chain of trills. The cello solo has its most substantial cadenza at the end of this variation which leads into the soulful slow variation, number six. This minor key version of the theme is heard over plucked strings. It was this variation that, without fail, drew stormy applause on Fitzenhagen's recital tours.

The final variation begins with the solo part establishing its own particular rhythmic interpretation of the theme, a delightful way of upping the activity, which continues into the coda.

DAVID GARRETT © 2002

The orchestra for Tchaikovsky's Rococo Variations comprises pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns; and strings.

The SSO first performed the Rococo Variations in 1955 with soloist Ernst Friedlander and Eugene Goossens conducting; and most recently in 2010 with Catherine Hewgill, and Dene Olding directing.

## Dmitri Shostakovich

### Symphony No.7, Op.60, *Leningrad*

*Allegretto*

*Moderato (poco allegretto)*

*Adagio – Moderato risoluto – Adagio –*

*Allegro non troppo – Moderato*

The third and fourth movements are played without pause.

It is a sad irony that the most hellish time imaginable for Shostakovich, Leningrad, the Soviet Union and Europe virtually ensured the spectacular public success of the *Leningrad* Symphony.

In 1941, Leningrad (now St Petersburg) was under siege from the advancing German army; Shostakovich was at work on his Seventh Symphony. On 17 September 1941 he said in a radio broadcast:

*I speak to you from Leningrad at a time when brutal battle rages at its very gates...Two hours ago I finished the first two movements of a symphonic work. If I succeed in writing this composition well, if I manage to finish the third and fourth movements, then I may call it my Seventh Symphony. Why do I announce this? I announce this so that those listening to me now may know that life in our city goes on as usual...*

Shostakovich was evacuated from Leningrad to Moscow, where he composed the third and fourth movements, and where the premiere took place on 5 March 1942 in Kuibishev. Its Leningrad premiere, conducted by Karl Eliasberg, took place on 9 August 1942 while the city was still under siege. The performance was given by an orchestra depleted by war and illness, in a hall with a bomb-damaged roof, with a special order given to the Leningrad artillery to knock out as many of their German counterparts as possible immediately before the performance.

The story of the symphony's first performance in the United States is well known: the NBC had been persuaded by Leopold Stokowski to purchase rights to the score, and a microfilmed copy was conveyed by road, via Teheran and Cairo, and air to the USA. Arturo Toscanini, however, had enough clout to secure this famous premiere for himself. His letters to Stokowski on the subject – from a conductor trading heavily on his anti-fascist credentials, in a country which had only just decided to join the war – make interesting reading:

*Don't you think, my dear Stokowski, that it would be very interesting for everybody, and yourself, too, to hear...one of the first artists who strenuously fought against fascism...play this work of a young Russian anti-Nazi composer?*

## Keynotes

SHOSTAKOVICH

*Born St Petersburg, 1906*

*Died Moscow, 1975*

One of the great symphonic composers of the 20th century, Shostakovich was also a controversial and enigmatic personality who lived through the Bolshevik Revolution, the Stalinist purges and World War II. His music is often searched for cryptic messages: criticism of the Stalinist regime disguised in music that, it was hoped, would be found acceptable by authorities. But Shostakovich's compromises only went so far and his music was nonetheless subject to censure, usually on stylistic or 'moral' grounds, and it was officially denounced on two occasions (in 1936 and 1948).

### LENINGRAD SYMPHONY

The *Leningrad* Symphony was described as the composer's reaction to the heroism of the people of his native city under siege, and Shostakovich himself provided a descriptive commentary. The first of the four movements, for example, ends with a 'a deeply tragic episode, a mass requiem', while he described the last movement as an 'ode to freedom, joy and victory won'. When the symphony was first performed in Russia in 1942, victory was far from assured, but the music contained the messages that wartime audiences wanted to find: 'heroism, defiance, and love of life of ordinary people.'



**Shostakovich at work in wartime Leningrad.**

Shostakovich initially gave titles to the movements (*War, Reminiscences, Russia's Vastness, and Victory*), which were later withdrawn. The **first movement** opens sturdily, with a theme given out by the strings in octaves, punctuated by the timpani and trumpets. This yields to a more lyrical section, eventually fading down in a piccolo and violin solo.

The patter of a snare drum begins probably the most notorious single passage in all of Shostakovich's music: a march built upon a single melody and a pervasive accompanying rhythm, undergoing a crescendo from the *pianissimo* softness of a single instrument to the *fortissimo* of the full orchestra. There is an obvious similarity here to Ravel's *Bolero* – as Shostakovich reportedly said to Isaak Glikman at the time: 'Idle critics will surely rebuke me for imitating *Bolero*. Well, let them; that is how I hear the war.'

It is not long before 'wrong notes' in the cellos and basses begin to colour the innocently diatonic opening. Dissonance and slithering chromaticism continue to accumulate; eventually a whole extra brass section (held in reserve until this point) is brought in, with a startling change of key. Finally the march rhythm comes to a halt; the symphony's opening music returns, this time in the minor key, in what Richard Taruskin has described as a 'horripilating climax'.

Perhaps the real climax of the movement, however, is not a sound but a silence: after several pages of *fortissimo* struggle between the march theme and the opening music of the symphony, there are two one-beat rests for the whole orchestra. After these,

## Shostakovich 7 in Leningrad

Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony was completed after he'd been evacuated to Kuibishev, where it was premiered on 5 March 1942. Samuil Samosud conducted the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, and again in Moscow later in the month. Other Soviet performances followed and the score was smuggled abroad – as valuable as any piece of intelligence. Henry Wood gave the broadcast premiere with the London Philharmonic Orchestra on 22 June. Toscanini conducted the NBC Symphony Orchestra for the North American premiere on 19 July. But the premiere of greatest significance was the first

performance in Leningrad itself on 9 August. The city was still under siege and the Leningrad Philharmonic had been evacuated, leaving the depleted Radio Orchestra of just 14 musicians. The conductor Karl Eliasberg called on retired musicians, and soldiers with musical training were released to perform – all were issued with extra rations. The playwright Alexander Kron, writing in 1967, recalled the emotional reaction: 'People who no longer knew how to shed tears of sorrow and misery now cried from sheer joy.'



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Karl Eliasberg rehearses the Leningrad Radio Orchestra for the Leningrad premiere of Shostakovich's Seventh Symphony (9 August 1942).

◀ Soviet soldier buying a ticket to the Leningrad premiere.



the struggle abruptly ceases, dying down into the more lyrical music heard before. A distant reminder of the march concludes the movement.

At the time, the march episode was held to represent specifically the siege of Leningrad. Some years after the event, the conductor Yevgeny Mravinsky saw the march as 'a universalised image of stupidity and crass tastelessness', while another Soviet critic saw it as a 'generalised image of evil', albeit with 'German colouring'.

The remaining movements do not feature such concrete imagery, and so have been unfortunately neglected, despite containing some of Shostakovich's most deeply felt music. Shostakovich described the **second movement** as an 'intermezzo', and the opening certainly fits this description, with a gentle melody in the strings alone, yielding to a lyrical oboe solo. The contrasting middle section is initiated by the E flat piccolo clarinet in its highest register; it eventually subsides into the return of the opening music, with the oboe solo on bass clarinet, before the strings conclude. The **third movement** is dominated by a chorale from the winds, and a recitative-like section from the violins; again the middle section supplies a dramatic contrast.

The **finale** follows without a break, and returns to the grander scale of the first movement. A Beethovenian climb out of its suspenseful beginning passes through a variety of textures, culminating in the reappearance of the music which opened the symphony. As in Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony, the final climax is spectacular; it is also far from unequivocal, with some searing chromaticism on the high trumpets clouding the harmony to unsettling and ambivalent effect.

Within a few years of its premiere, the furore surrounding the *Leningrad* Symphony had begun to die down, and a backlash commenced. Performances were comparatively infrequent until the appearance in 1979 of *Testimony*, Shostakovich's purported memoirs. We read there:

*The 'invasion theme' has nothing to do with the attack. I was thinking of other enemies of humanity...I feel eternal pain for those who were killed by Hitler, but I feel no less pain for those who were killed on Stalin's orders.*

Thus the symphony began to be rehabilitated. The same notes which had been dismissed as tired platitudes when seen as a tool of heroic anti-Hitler propaganda found a new (if no less musically dubious) lease of life as a tool of heroic anti-Stalin propaganda.

Right from its appearance, controversy has raged over the literal authenticity of *Testimony*, although even those who doubt the literal authenticity of these 'memoirs' acknowledge that there seems to be much truth behind them.

Mravinsky saw the march as 'a universalised image of stupidity and crass tastelessness'



The issue does, however, bring to the foreground one disturbing feature of the reception of Shostakovich's music: we seem to prefer to be told 'what the music means'. As with most music of any enduring interest, there is no simple answer. And as the history of the *Leningrad* Symphony demonstrates, once an 'answer' has been found the work loses much of its interest: it is the continuing reassessment of the layers of meaning that has given this work a comparatively secure place on the concert platform. We can never know what Shostakovich specifically had in mind when he composed the symphony, and this is emphatically not something to be regretted. Indeed it is a large part of why we still listen to it today.

CARL ROSMAN © 2000

The *Leningrad* Symphony calls four flutes (two doubling piccolo), two oboes, cor anglais, three clarinets (one doubling E flat clarinet), bass clarinet, two bassoons and contrabassoon; an especially large brass section of eight horns, six trumpets, six trombones and tuba; timpani and a large percussion section (xylophone, up to three side-drums, triangle, tambourine, tam tam, cymbals, bass drum); two harps, piano and strings.

The SSO gave the Australian premiere of this symphony as part of a War Funds concert conducted by Bernard Heinze on 24 August 1943. The orchestra's most recent performance of the work was in 2011, conducted by Vasily Petrenko.



## sydney symphony orchestra

**David Robertson**  
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

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## MORE MUSIC

### PAUL STANHOPE

Paul Stanhope's *Piccolo Concerto* was premiered and recorded by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra with Andrew Macleod as soloist and Benjamin Northey conducting. It keeps excellent company with *Polaris – Voyage for Orchestra* by English composer Thomas Adès, the MSO conducted by Markus Stenz.

ABC CLASSICS 481 0862

You can hear Stanhope's work for chamber choir in *Songs for the Shadowlands*, an album that brings together compositions from 1995–2005, including *Sea Chronicles*, *Lux Aeterna* and *Three Geography Songs*. Some of Australia's finest choral talent is on display with performances from Cantillation, Sydney Chamber Choir and Gondwana Voices.

ABC CLASSICS 476 3870

### ROCOCO VARIATIONS

Mstislav Rostropovich's recording of the *Rococo Variations* with Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic is paired with Sviatoslav Richter's performance of Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto [Karajan and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra].

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 477 7158

Alternatively, if you'd like to hear Tchaikovsky's original structure, look for Julian Lloyd Webber's recording with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maxim Shostakovich. The original Philips release (with music by Shostakovich and Myaskovsky) is out of print, but the recording is included in the 5-CD *Ultimate Cello Classics*, which lives up to its name by including all the great cello concertos, the Bach suites and a generous selection of popular bonbons.

DECCA 475 8566

### SHOSTAKOVICH SYMPHONIES

Below, of course, we recommend Oleg Caetani's Shostakovich symphony cycle. But there's something to be said also for going back to the 'source' and to Yevgeny Mravinsky, who conducted several premieres of Shostakovich symphonies with the Leningrad Philharmonic. Although he didn't premiere the Seventh, his historic 1953 recording is revelatory.

NAXOS CLASSICAL ARCHIVES 9.80687

### OLEG CAETANI

Caetani's own website [www.olegcaetani.com](http://www.olegcaetani.com) is a good place to begin exploring his recorded repertoire. On the Multimedia page, he even offers some basic tips on conducting!

His complete set of Shostakovich symphonies, recorded with the Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano G. Verdi (and its chorus) for the Arts Music label.

ARTS MUSIC 47667

Another recent project is his pioneering recording of the Alexandre Tansman symphonies with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and (in volume 4) the Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana.

CHANDOS 5041, 5054, 5065, 10574

Also with the MSO, a well-regarded recording of the Tchaikovsky symphonies: 1 to 6, together with the original version of the *Manfred* Symphony.

MSO LIVE/ABC CLASSICS 476 6442

## Broadcast Diary

### May



92.9 ABC  
Classic FM

[abc.net.au/classic](http://abc.net.au/classic)

Friday 6 May, 10pm

#### GARRICK OHLSSON IN RECITAL

Garrick Ohlsson piano

Granados, Mussorgsky, Chopin

Saturday 7 May, 2pm

#### LENINGRAD SYMPHONY

See this program for details.

Friday 13 May, 8pm

#### HAYDN'S CREATION

Masaaki Suzuki conductor

Lydia Teuscher, Allan Clayton, Neal Davies  
vocal soloists

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Monday 30 May, 10pm

#### YUJA WANG IN RECITAL (2015)

Yuja Wang piano

Scriabin, Chopin, Balakirev, Schumann, Prokofiev  
and encores



#### SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA HOUR

Tuesday 10 May, 6pm

Musicians and staff of the SSO talk about the life of the orchestra and forthcoming concerts. Hosted by Andrew Bukenya.

[finemusicfm.com](http://finemusicfm.com)



### Oleg Caetani *conductor*

---

Oleg Caetani attaches equal importance to his work in opera and orchestral repertoire. He works with orchestras such as the Staatskapelle Dresden, Munich Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio Orchestra, Vienna Symphony, Mariinsky Orchestra, Mozarteum Orchester, Konzerthaus Orchester Berlin, Bamberg Symphony, Weimar Staatskapelle, Monte-Carlo Philharmonic Orchestra, Spanish National Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Metropolitan Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, Yomiuri Orchestra, Montreal Symphony Orchestra (with which he has recently conducted a Tchaikovsky festival), RAI National Orchestra, Maggio Musicale Fiorentino Orchestra and the Verdi Orchestra in Milan (recently conducting a Schumann festival in Salzburg).

His talent was discovered and nurtured by the great teacher Nadia Boulanger. He then studied at Rome's Conservatory of Santa Cecilia, and later in Moscow and St Petersburg, during which time Shostakovich's music became central to his repertoire. Since then he has conducted Shostakovich all over the world as well as recording an award-winning cycle of the complete symphonies with the Verdi Orchestra.

After winning the RAI Turin and Karajan competitions, he began his career at the Berlin State Opera. He now conducts in the great opera houses of the world, including La Scala in Milan (where he has conducted *Turandot* and *Otello*), Royal Opera House Covent Garden (*Tosca*),

English National Opera (*Khovanschina*, *La Bohème*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Sir John in Love*), Mariinsky Theatre (*Tosca* and *Turandot*), Théâtre des Champs-Élysées (*L'Enfant et les sortilèges*), Houston Opera (*Cavalleria rusticana* and *Pagliacci*) and San Francisco Opera (*The Magic Flute* and *Norma*). He has also conducted *The Prisoner* by Dallapiccola at the White Night Festival in Saint Petersburg. Forthcoming engagements will include *Tosca* at the ENO and *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in Helsinki, as well as concerts with the State Academy Orchestra Svetlanov in Moscow, Yomiuri Symphony, NSO Taiwan Philharmonic and The Orchestra Now at the Lincoln Center, among others.

In 2005 he was music director designate of English National Opera. Previously he has been music director of the Staatskapelle Weimar and of the Robert Schumann Philharmonic Orchestra, and First Conductor for Frankfurt Opera. His pioneering recordings of Alexandre Tansman's symphonies and his Gounod symphony recordings have all won the Diapason d'Or.

Oleg Caetani's most recent appearances with the SSO were in 2012, when he conducted Shostakovich's Sixth Symphony, and in 2014, when he conducted Schubert.



## Narek Hakhnazaryan

*cello*

---

Narek Hakhnazaryan was born in Yerevan, Armenia, into a family of musicians. He studied at the Sayat-Nova School of Music in Yerevan and the Moscow Conservatory; mentored by the late Mstislav Rostropovich, in 2011 he received an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory of Music. As First Prize winner in the 2008 Young Concert Artists International Auditions, he also made his debut at Carnegie's Zankel Hall and in Washington, DC.

Since winning the Cello First Prize and Gold Medal at the XIV International Tchaikovsky Competition in 2011 at the age of 22, Narek Hakhnazaryan has forged strong relationships across the globe with orchestras such as the Mariinsky Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic, Filarmonica de la Scala and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. In 2014 he was named a BBC New Generation Artist.

Narek Hakhnazaryan has played with many of the world's finest orchestras, including the London Symphony, Chicago Symphony, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Czech Philharmonic, Frankfurt Radio and New Zealand Symphony orchestras, collaborating with conductors such as Valery Gergiev, Jakub Hrůša, Ton Koopman, Neeme Järvi, Leonard Slatkin, David Robertson and Jiří Bělohlávek. A few weeks after stepping in at the eleventh hour to join the WDR Symphony on tour across Spain, he made his debut with the LA Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl.

An enthusiastic chamber musician and recitalist, he has played in halls such as the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Salle Pleyel Paris, Wigmore Hall, Berlin Konzerthaus, Philharmonie Essen, Vienna Konzerthaus, Oji Hall Tokyo, Carnegie Hall and Jordan Hall in Boston, and at the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Ravinia, Aspen, Mikkeli, City of London, Lucerne and Verbier festivals amongst many others.

Highlights of the 2015–16 season include debuts with the Orchestre de Paris, NHK Symphony, Milwaukee and Seattle Symphony, at the Alte Oper Frankfurt with the Frankfurt Museumgesellschaft and at Budapest's Palace of the Arts with the Pannon Philharmonic. He will also give debut recitals at the Beethovenfest Bonn, the Pau Casals Festival, Spain, and in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing, as well as returning to Lucerne and Wigmore Hall.

This is his first appearance with the SSO.

# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



## DAVID ROBERTSON

THE LOWY CHAIR OF  
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.....  
PATRON Professor The Hon. Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO  
.....

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, the SSO also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

Well on its way to becoming the premier orchestra of the Asia Pacific region, the SSO has toured China on four occasions, and in 2014 won the arts category in the Australian Government's inaugural Australia-China Achievement Awards, recognising ground-breaking work in nurturing the cultural and artistic relationship between the two nations.

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 Learning and Engagement 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 commissions. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Lee Bracegirdle, Gordon Kerry, Mary Finsterer, Nigel Westlake, Paul Stanhope and Georges Lentz, and 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 conducted by Alexander Lazarev, Sir Charles Mackerras and David Robertson, as well as the complete Mahler symphonies conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy.

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

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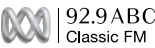
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