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# THE RITE OF SPRING

*Primal*

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY  
**Thursday 4 August 1.30pm**

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**Friday 5 August 8pm**

GREAT CLASSICS  
**Saturday 6 August 2pm**



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**The Rite of Spring – Primal**

**REICH** The Desert Music  
**STRAVINSKY** The Rite of Spring  
**David Robertson** conductor  
**Synergy Vocals**

Thursday Afternoon Symphony  
**Thu 4 Aug 1.30pm**  
Emirates Metro Series  
**Fri 5 Aug 8pm**  
Great Classics  
**Sat 6 Aug 2pm**



**The Firebird – Ravishing**

**SCULTHORPE** Sun Music I  
**SZYMANOWSKI** Violin Concerto No.1  
**STRAVINSKY** The Firebird – Ballet [1910]  
**David Robertson** conductor  
**Christian Tetzlaff** violin

APT Master Series  
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**Fri 12 Aug 8pm**  
**Sat 13 Aug 8pm**  
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**Petrushka – Immortal**

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**TAN DUN** The Wolf – Double Bass Concerto  
**STRAVINSKY** Petrushka [1911]\*  
**David Robertson** conductor  
**Alex Henery** double bass

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**Wed 17 Aug 6.30pm**  
Thursday Afternoon Symphony  
**Thu 18 Aug 1.30pm**  
Tea and Symphony  
**Fri 19 Aug 11am\***  
*complimentary morning tea from 10am*



**Mahler 2**  
*Resurrection Symphony*

**MAHLER** Symphony No.2, Resurrection  
**David Robertson** conductor  
**Kiandra Howarth** soprano  
**Caitlin Hulcup** mezzo-soprano  
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Brown".

**Barry Brown**  
Emirates' Divisional Vice President  
for Australasia

**THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY**

THURSDAY 4 AUGUST, 1.30PM

**EMIRATES METRO SERIES**

FRIDAY 5 AUGUST, 8PM

**GREAT CLASSICS**

SATURDAY 6 AUGUST, 2PM

.....  
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL



**sydney symphony orchestra**

**David Robertson**

Chief Conductor and Artistic Director



# THE RITE OF SPRING — PRIMAL

**David Robertson** *conductor*

**Synergy Vocals**

**STEVE REICH (born 1936)**

**The Desert Music**

with texts from poems by William Carlos Williams

*First Movement (fast) –*

*Second Movement (moderate) –*

*Third Movement Part One (slow) –*

*Third Movement Part Two (moderate) –*

*Third Movement Part Three (slow) –*

*Fourth Movement (moderate) –*

*Fifth Movement (fast)*

Synergy Vocals

See page 12 for the vocal texts

INTERVAL

**IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882–1971)**

**Le Sacre du Printemps (The Rite of Spring)**

PART 1 L'Adoration de la terre (Adoration of the Earth)

PART 2 Le Sacrifice

See page 15 for details of each part



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Saturday's performance will be recorded by ABC Classic FM for broadcast on Saturday 20 August at 1pm.

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.....  
Estimated durations:

46 minutes, 20-minute interval,

33 minutes

The concert will conclude at

approximately 3.20pm (Thursday),

9.50pm (Friday), 3.50pm (Saturday).

.....  
COVER IMAGE: Kirov Ballet production

of *The Rite of Spring* with original

costumes and choreography

reconstructed by Millicent Hodson.

Julia Makhalina as the Chosen One.

(Laurie Lewis / Lebrecht Music & Arts)



Principal Partner



From top: Wearing his signature baseball cap, Steve Reich looks on in a rehearsal conducted by Roland Peelman for his residency at the Sydney Opera House in May 2012. Five decades earlier, in 1961, Igor Stravinsky in rehearsal with the SSO on his one and only tour to Australia, with Robert Craft on the podium. Set design by Nicholas Roerich for the original production of *The Rite of Spring* (1913).

# The Rite of Spring – Primal

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The three great ballet scores that Igor Stravinsky composed for the Ballets Russes in the early years of the 20th century have become staples of the concert hall – they are programmed more often by orchestras than by ballet companies – but in a first for the SSO, this month we're performing all three in close succession. It's a chance to discover the rapidly emerging voice of a young composer who would change the world of music forever, from *The Firebird* (1910), so heavily influenced by Rimsky-Korsakov, to the genius of *Petrushka* (1911) and ultimately the ground-breaking *Rite of Spring*.

*The Rite of Spring* is notorious for sparking a riot at its Paris premiere in 1913. Although the uproar was as much in response to Nijinsky's startlingly 'primitive' choreography as to the 'blood-curdling' music, Stravinsky was the star of the evening and he was to benefit the most from the resulting *succès de scandale*.

*The Rite of Spring* isn't the only work to be credited with ushering in the age of modern music – Pierre Boulez gave the honour to Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* (1894) – but it was especially influential in the primacy Stravinsky's music gives to rhythm. Boulez again: 'Before worrying about what chord we are hearing, we are sensitive to the *pulse* emitted by this chord.'

And so David Robertson's choice of *The Desert Music* as companion to *The Rite* is an inspired one. As a teenager in the 1950s, Steve Reich found rich inspiration from across the centuries. The records on his turntable ranged from the Fifth Brandenburg Concerto and *The Rite of Spring* to Charlie Parker: 'Bach, Stravinsky and bebop hit me at the same time, and it was like a door opened.' Reich's music doesn't sound like any of these, but it perhaps comes closest to *The Rite* in its hypnotic, almost ritualistic, qualities and, above all, in the inexorability of its musical pulse. And as Stravinsky said: 'There is music wherever there is rhythm, as there is life wherever there beats a pulse.'

**Hear David Robertson conduct *The Firebird* (10, 12, 13 Aug) and *Petrushka* (17, 18, 19 Aug) in our celebration of the music Stravinsky composed for the Ballets Russes.**

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## ABOUT THE MUSIC

### Steve Reich

Raised in New York and California, Steve Reich briefly studied piano as a child. At the age of 14, excited by the sounds of jazz, he began to study the rudiments of Western drumming with the intention of becoming a jazz player. At the same time he became fascinated with Bach's Brandenburg Concertos and Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. 'Bach, Stravinsky and bebop hit me at the same time,' he recalls, 'and it was like a door opened.'

In 1957 Reich graduated from Cornell University with honours in philosophy. He subsequently studied composition with Hall Overton, and with Vincent Persichetti and William Bergsma at the Juilliard School. He then studied with Darius Mihaud and Luciano Berio at Mills College in California, where he received his MA in Music. But, as the American music journalist Allan Kozinn observes, the influence of this diverse group on his mature works is almost impossible to detect. More overt stylistic influences emerged, however, from Reich's studies during the 1970s of African drumming, Balinese Gamelan, 12-century organum, and Jewish traditions of cantillation, the chanting of Hebrew scriptures.

From his early taped speech pieces *Its Gonna Rain* (1965) and *Come Out* (1966) to the digital video opera *Three Tales* (2002, with video artist Beryl Korot), his path has embraced not only aspects of Western classical music, but the structures, harmonies, and rhythms of non-Western and American vernacular music, particularly jazz.

In 1966 he formed the group Steve Reich and Musicians, a busy concert and recording ensemble that varies in size from its original three to as many as 40. Around the same time, together with Philip Glass, he became a leading figure of Minimalism. This approach is rarely 'minimal' in duration or forces, exploring as it does the processes of gradual extension and elaboration within a context of streamlined simplicity. Reich's music is especially identified with canonic techniques, a feeling of harmonic stasis, dense textures, rhythmic sophistication (including subtle shifts of metre), and the extended reiteration of a motif or group of motifs.

1936 – born in New York  
1950 – Bach, Stravinsky and bebop – a door opens  
1957 – graduates from Cornell University  
1958–61 – studies at the Juilliard School  
1963 – graduates from Mills College  
1966 – founds Steve Reich and Musicians  
1970s – studies African drumming, Balinese gamelan and Hebrew chant  
1980s – Reich's 'orchestral decade'  
1983 – composes *The Desert Music*  
1988 – *Different Trains* marks a new compositional method in which speech recordings generate musical material for instruments (in 1990 it receives a Grammy)  
1994 – elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters  
1996, 2006 – major festivals and retrospectives worldwide in celebration of his 60th and 70th birthdays  
1999 – wins his second Grammy with *Music for 18 Musicians*  
2002 – premiere of *Three Tales*, a digital documentary video opera  
2006 – awarded the Praemium Imperiale for Music in Tokyo  
2007 – awarded the Polar Prize from the Royal Swedish Academy of Music; elected a member of the Academy in 2008  
2009 – awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Music for his Double Sextet



## **Steve Reich (born 1936)**

### ***The Desert Music* for chorus and orchestra**

Texts from poems by William Carlos Williams

*First Movement (fast) –*

*Second Movement (moderate) –*

*Third Movement Part One (slow) –*

*Third Movement Part Two (moderate) –*

*Third Movement Part Three (slow) –*

*Fourth Movement (moderate) –*

*Fifth Movement (fast)*

#### **Synergy Vocals**

*The Desert Music* begins and ends with a pulse. Recurring throughout the music, this pulse is significant both musically and in its response to and commentary on the text itself.

Musically, it presents the harmonic cycles of the movements as a kind of pulsing chorale, and it sets up the feeling, structure and harmony of the entire piece. In the text, the vocalise syllables are a wordless response to 'Well, shall we think or listen?' in the second and fourth movements.

According to Reich, that constant flickering of attention between what words mean and how they sound when set to music is one main focus of *The Desert Music*.

WONGBERG/STEVEREICH.COM



If the most basic element of music, and of our lives, is pulse, then words and a desire for order and symmetry must rank close behind. Reich discovered the poetry of Dr Williams when he was 16 years old. He picked up a copy of Williams' long poem *Paterson*, simply because he was fascinated by the symmetry of his name – William Carlos Williams. The poetry itself soon captured his imagination.

The title and some of the texts were taken from Dr Williams' collection *The Desert Music and Other Poems*. The book contains some of his finest poetry, written between 1954 and his death in 1963 at the age of 80. Reich does not, however, use complete poems. In fact the selection and arrangement of the texts was his first compositional activity, and from this first step emerged a large arch structure in five sections: A – B – C – B – A.

This symmetry is echoed throughout the music. For example, the tempos of the five movements are arranged symmetrically, and the central movement is itself an arch (slow – moderate – slow).

In the orchestration of *The Desert Music*, Reich uses all the orchestral instruments for repeating, interlocking melodic patterns like those found in his earlier music. To give the strings the extra 'snap' needed for this kind of polyrhythmic interplay, they are doubled by synthesizers. The chorus is in turn supported by either woodwinds or muted brass, amplified and mixed together. This, says Reich, might be an old technique, but it 'helps create that mixture of vocal and instrumental sound that I have been working with since my composition *Drumming* in 1971.' The percussion is omnipresent – with mallet instruments supplying the on-going pulse and energy – and coloured by maracas, clicking sticks, bass drums, timpani and tam-tam.

Reich recalls that, while he was composing the last part of the slow movement in a small town in Vermont during the summer of 1983, the local fire siren went off:

*I thought to myself, 'That's it,' and resolved to put a siren in the last part of the slow movement. After some reflection I decided that instead of a mechanical or electrical siren, the violas, who were not playing at the time, would play glissandos which, with contact microphones attached, would rise and fall over the entire orchestra and chorus.*

The music is constructed from three cycles of harmonies, which serve as the basis for the individual movements. Reich presents these cycles as a series of pulsing chords, chromatic and 'dark' in effect. The darkness of the mood is enhanced

by the feeling of increasing ambiguity that drives the music towards its central point and beyond. *The Desert Music* begins with the possibility of a Dorian mode tonal centre but becomes more and more unstable until the third movement where, as the text would suggest, there is no clear harmonic centre at all. This ambiguity remains well into the final movement when, just before the chorus enters, there is a large orchestral cadence – of a kind – to Dorian mode. The piece then ends with a certain harmonic ambiguity partially, but not fully, resolved.

The poems selected for *The Desert Music* all date from after World War II and the dropping of the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Williams was acutely aware of the bomb and his words about it, in a poem about music entitled 'The Orchestra', are central to the impact it had on him:

*Say to them:*

*Man has survived hitherto because he was too ignorant to know how to realize his wishes. Now that he can realize them, he must either change them or perish.*

The gravity of this text – and its impact on Reich – is amplified by the darkness and harmonic ambiguity of the third movement.

At the outset of *The Desert Music*, however, the chorus plays a purely musical role. It is as if, says Reich, there are moments when there is no more to be said – there are things that can only be said musically. The text then emerges from a completely non-verbal, abstract sound.

Reich concludes his preface to *The Desert Music* with a further reference to the third movement, about which the work pivots harmonically, temporally and emotionally. The text of the movement's own central section, is also taken from 'The Orchestra':

*...it is a principle of music to repeat the theme. Repeat and repeat again, as the pace mounts. The theme is difficult but no more difficult than the facts to be resolved.*

'Those at all familiar with my music,' says Reich, 'will know how apt those words are for me, and particularly for this piece, which, among other things, addresses the basic ambiguity between what the text says, and its pure sensuous sound.'

PREPARED IN PART FROM STEVE REICH'S PREFACE TO *THE DESERT MUSIC* SYMPHONY AUSTRALIA © 1997

**'...the basic ambiguity between what the text says, and its pure sensuous sound.'**

**STEVE REICH**

In addition to a chorus of 10 (or 27) amplified voices, *The Desert Music* calls for four flutes (three doubling piccolo), four oboes (three doubling cor anglais), four clarinets (three doubling on bass clarinet) and four bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon); four horns, four trumpets (one doubling on piccolo trumpet), three trombones and tuba; two timpani (doubling on rototoms); a large percussion section (seven players) dominated by mallet instruments such as marimbas, positioned in front of the conductor; two pianos and three synthesizers; and strings divided into three visually distinct groups of 16, each comprising eight violins, three violas, three cellos and two double basses.

The SSO gave the first Australian performance of *The Desert Music* in 1997, conducted by David Porcelijn and featuring The Contemporary Singers.

## The Desert Music

I – *fast*

‘Begin, my friend  
for you cannot,  
you may be sure,  
take your song,  
which drives all things out of mind,  
with you to the other world.’

from *Theocritus: Idyll I*  
– *A Version from the Greek*

II – *moderate*

‘Well, shall we  
think or listen? Is there a sound addressed  
not wholly to the ear?  
We half close  
our eyes. We do not  
hear it through our eyes.  
It is not  
a flute note either, it is the relation  
of a flute note  
to a drum. I am wide  
awake. The mind  
is listening.’

from *The Orchestra*

III A – *slow*

‘Say to them:  
Man has survived hitherto because he was too ignorant  
to know how to realize his wishes. Now that he can realize  
them, he must either change them or perish.’

from *The Orchestra*

III B – *moderate*

‘it is a principle of music  
to repeat the theme. Repeat  
and repeat again,  
as the pace mounts. The  
theme is difficult  
but no more difficult  
than the facts to be  
resolved.’

from *The Orchestra*

III C – *slow*

‘Say to them:  
Man has survived hitherto because he was too ignorant  
to know how to realize his wishes. Now that he can realize  
them, he must either change them or perish.’

from *The Orchestra*

IV – *moderate*

‘Well, shall we  
think or listen? Is there a sound addressed  
not wholly to the ear?  
We half close  
our eyes. We do not  
hear it through our eyes.  
It is not  
a flute note either, it is the relation  
of a flute note  
to a drum. I am wide  
awake. The mind  
is listening.’

from *The Orchestra*

V – *fast*

‘Inseparable from the fire  
its light  
takes precedence over it.  
who most shall advance the light –  
call it what you may!’

from *Asphodel, That Greeny Flower*

Excerpts from: *Theocritus: Idyl I* and *The Orchestra* (first published in *The Desert Music and Other Poems*, 1954) and *Asphodel, That Greeny Flower* (first published in *Journey to Love*, 1955), collected in *Pictures from Breughel and Other Poems* (1962) by William Carlos Williams © 1954, 1955, 1962. Used by permission of New Directions Publishing Corp.

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## Igor Stravinsky

### ***Le Sacre du Printemps* (The Rite of Spring)**

PART 1 L'Adoration de la terre (Adoration of the Earth)

*Introduction*

*Danse des adolescentes* (Dance of the Young Girls)

*Jeu du rapt* (Ritual of Abduction)

*Rondes printanières* (Spring Rounds)

*Jeux des cités rivales* (Games of the Rival Tribes)

*Cortège du sage* (Procession of the Sage)

*L'Adoration de la terre* (Adoration of the Earth)

*Danse de la terre* (Dance of the Earth)

PART 2 Le Sacrifice

*Introduction*

*Cercles mystérieux des adolescentes* (Mystic Circles of  
Young Girls)

*Glorification de l'élue* (Glorification of the Chosen Virgin)

*Evocation des ancêtres* (Evocation of the Ancestors)

*Action rituelle des ancêtres* (Ritual of the Ancestors)

*Danse sacrale – L'élue* (Sacrificial dance – The Chosen Virgin)

The first performance of Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps* (The Rite of Spring) was one of the greatest scandals in the history of any of the arts, not just music. An evening in 1913 remains the defining date of 'modern' music. More than a century later, there still hasn't been anything to top it. The ballet, whose completely novel choreography was part of the offence it gave to traditionalists, is only occasionally re-staged. It is Stravinsky's music which has endured as an icon of modernism, and its power and originality can still be felt, even now that its lessons have been absorbed by so much music that followed. Stravinsky's assistant Robert Craft called *The Rite of Spring* the prize bull that inseminated the whole modern movement. Although Stravinsky later composed two orchestral works called symphonies, it is his music for this ballet which has achieved 'symphonic' status in the world's concert halls.

*The Rite of Spring* is composed for a very large orchestra, including five of each of the wind instruments, eight horns and five trumpets. The Russian impresario Sergei Diaghilev had very generous financial backing for the 1913 season of his Ballets Russes in Paris, and Stravinsky had an orchestral palette even richer than for his two previous full-scale ballets for Diaghilev, *The Firebird* and *Petrushka*. Even so, and in spite of the clear acoustic of the then-new Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, the playing of the music was almost drowned out by the noise

## Keynotes

STRAVINSKY

*Born near St Petersburg, 1882*

*Died New York, 1971*

One of the 20th century's greatest and most influential composers, Igor Stravinsky was born in Russia, later adopting French and then American nationality. His style is similarly multi-faceted, from the exotic instrumental and harmonic colours of *The Firebird* – his first big hit – to the transparency of his later neoclassical style. His most popular orchestral works include the three ballets created for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, with *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring* following the success of *Firebird*. All three, despite their obvious differences, demonstrate Stravinsky's power as a musical storyteller and creator of viscerally compelling music for dance.

THE RITE OF SPRING

At its premiere in Paris in 1913, *The Rite of Spring* sparked a riot – and a mythology to go with it – bringing its young composer notoriety as well as success. The music begins with a hauntingly contorted bassoon solo (the seeds of spring pushing their way through the frosty earth?) but its real trademark is its elemental rhythms, often savage in effect. This spring awakening as conceived by Stravinsky, choreographer Nijinsky and the original designer Nicholas Roerich, is ancient, primitive and fierce. The ballet is in two main parts, each divided into brief, continuously played scenes of a few minutes each.



The power and originality of Stravinsky's music can still be felt, even now that its lessons have been absorbed...

which broke out in the auditorium, as people shouted insults, howled and whistled. There were even punches thrown, as the supporters of artistic novelty confronted well-dressed patrons who were shocked by what they heard and saw. The dancers could hardly hear the music, and the choreographer of *The Rite*, Nijinsky, had to shout numbers to them from the wings. Conductor Pierre Monteux, with admirable sang-froid, piloted his musicians through to the end.

The curtain had risen on Nicholas Roerich's setting for the tableaux of pagan Russia which were his scenario (argument, sets and costumes) for the ballet. He and Stravinsky were later to dispute who first had the idea of a primitive, pagan sacrifice as a subject for a ballet, with Stravinsky's vision (in a dream) of a maiden sacrificed and dancing herself to death given priority. But *The Rite* was a collaborative project, and Nijinsky's choreography was, in its way, as radical as Stravinsky's music. The stylised gestures, the spare, restricted dancing, with heads in profile contrasted with bodies full-on, elbows hugged into the waist, the convulsions of the Chosen Virgin, the renouncing of conventional dance ensembles and storytelling in favour of primitive immediacy – these were Nijinsky's inventions, and many of the public thought he was pulling their leg – or that



Stravinsky has often been compared with his near-contemporary Picasso – both men left their native country to become universal symbols of modernism in the arts, yet both were deeply marked by their native culture – Picasso by Spain's, Stravinsky by Russia's. 'Not art!', 'Not music!' was a common early reaction to both. In the work of both men style became a leading consideration in itself, and both startled their own admirers and dismayed their critics by repeatedly re-inventing themselves. Yet Stravinsky, like Picasso, is immediately recognisable through all his stylistic disguises. He began by crowning the achievements of Russian composers in vivid, colourful music for dance (*The Firebird*, *Petrushka*). *The Rite of Spring*, a musical earthquake, foretold his break with Russia, enforced by exile after the Revolution. In France in the 1920s and 30s Stravinsky 'invented' neoclassicism for music, with *Pulcinella*, and continued to be one step ahead of the avant-garde. His last startling surprise, after he moved to the USA in World War II, was to embrace twelve-tone serial music, in works such as *Threni*. Stravinsky was the most famous 'serious' composer of the 20th century, a position into which he leapt at one bound in 1913.

'There is music wherever there is rhythm, as there is life wherever there beats a pulse.'

STRAVINSKY

the dancers were imitating epileptic fits. Admirers accepted Nijinsky's choreography as Spring seen from inside: biological ballet, with surges, spasms and fissions.

Stravinsky's music had required Nijinsky to develop a new way of rehearsing the dancers by numbers, and his preparations seemed to one observer like arithmetic classes. Stravinsky claimed later that the music, which broke every mould of convention, had to be written that way, that it transcended him: 'I was the vessel through which *The Rite* passed.' Rhythm was one basis of *The Rite*'s innovation, not surprisingly since it developed within the bosom of an adventurous ballet company. Stravinsky was to say, 'There is music wherever there is rhythm, as there is life wherever there beats a pulse.' The rhythmic novelties in *The Rite of Spring* include its static ostinatos: compulsively repeated figures, which are nevertheless not regular, but additive in rhythm, so that the strong beats are irregularly spaced, and the time-signature for the musicians is constantly changing, often from bar to bar. Even the composer was baffled as to how to write out the final *Danse sacrale*. These patterns, thrillingly projected with almost unprecedented orchestral impact, reach a state of hypnotic motion, which can only be broken by the start of the next dance.



Vaslav Nijinsky – his choreography was, in its way, as radical as Stravinsky's music.



This was music which made a quantum leap into a new sound-world. The discordant effect heard through the growing fracas in the theatre resulted from Stravinsky's harmonic innovations. These are linked to his rhythmic inventions, since they also function by accumulation: of notes and chords, creating polyharmonies which textbook writers have been busy trying to codify ever since. The paradox is that this complexity was really simplicity – the reduction of harmonic language to essentials allowed rhythmic subtlety to claim a dominant place. As a modernist composer much influenced by Stravinsky, Pierre Boulez, explains, 'Before worrying about what chord we are hearing, we are sensitive to the *pulse* emitted by this chord.'

It was clever of Diaghilev to capitalise on fashionable Paris' fascination with the Russian and the primitive. Stravinsky later emphasised the newness and musical necessity of *The Rite of Spring*, and played down its Russianness. But this work, the fountainhead of international modernism, with which Stravinsky left Russia for good, was Russian in every way, and the leading revisionist among students of Stravinsky's works, Richard Taruskin, has proved this against Stravinsky's own mythologising.

The bad reception *The Rite* received in Russia, where he expected it to be received with joy, was, according to Stravinsky himself, the greatest rebuff of his career. It was this which encouraged him to deny its Russianness. The opening bassoon solo, said Stravinsky, 'is the only folk melody in *The Rite*', concealing the indebtedness of most of its musical material to Russian folksongs, to which Taruskin traces the limited

**Dancers from the original production of *The Rite of Spring* adopt a characteristic pose in Nicholas Roerich's 'primitive' costumes. Marie Rambert, second from left, helped Nijinsky teach the choreography. (Originally published in *The Sketch*, 1913)**

range of the melodies, the ostinato structure, and the modal formulas. Even the instrumentation is based on Stravinsky and Roerich's ethnological research, particularly the 'reed pipes' of the Introduction scored for wind instruments.

It was the Russian spring which Stravinsky celebrated – that spring which bursts out so quickly with a terrifying noise. The ballet's libretto really boiled down to the succession of episodes described by the titles in the score, and listed above. The music took over, and created the dance. As Boulez says, the composition doesn't depend on the argument of the ballet, which is why it transfers so well to the concert hall: 'This ritual of "Pagan Russia" attains by itself a dimension quite beyond its formal point of departure: It has become the ritual – and the myth – of modern music.'

DAVID GARRETT © 1999/2013

*The Rite of Spring* calls for a large orchestra of five flutes (including piccolos and alto flute), five oboes (including cor anglais), five clarinets (including E flat clarinet and bass clarinets) and five bassoons (including contrabassoons); eight horns (one doubling Wagner tuba); five trumpets (one doubling bass trumpet); three trombones and two tubas; a large percussion section and strings.

The SSO was the first ABC orchestra to perform *The Rite of Spring*, in 1946 with Eugene Goossens conducting. Our most recent performance of this music was in 2013, conducted by Charles Dutoit.

**'The most essential characteristic of *Le Sacre du Printemps* is that it is the most dissonant and the most discordant composition yet written. Never was the system and the cult of the wrong note practised with so much industry, zeal and fury.'**

LE TEMPS, PARIS, 1913  
FROM NICOLAS SLONIMSKY'S  
LEXICON OF MUSICAL INVECTIVE  
(1952)



## sydney symphony orchestra

**David Robertson** Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

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## THE ARTISTS



MICHAEL TAMMARD

### 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 seven-city tour of China.

Last year he launched his 11th 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.*

## Synergy Vocals

Micaela Haslam *Director*

---

Synergy Vocals specialises in close-microphone singing and is often associated with the music of Steve Reich, Louis Andriessen, Steven Mackey and Luciano Berio. The London-based ensemble performs regularly with Ensemble Modern, Ictus, Ensemble InterContemporain, London Sinfonietta and the Colin Currie Group.

Synergy gave its first concert in 1996, performing Steve Reich's *Tehillim* with the London Symphony Orchestra and David Robertson. Since then, the group has given concerts all over the world with orchestras and ensembles including the Boston and Chicago symphony orchestras, St Louis Symphony, New World Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, and the Los Angeles and New York philharmonic orchestras, as well as Nexus, Steve Reich and Musicians, Shanghai Symphony Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra and all the BBC orchestras. The group has also

collaborated with dance companies including the Royal Ballet, Rosas and Opéra de Paris.

The group has premiered works such as Steve Reich's *Three Tales* and *Daniel Variations*, Mackey's *Dreamhouse*, Andriessen's *Commedia*, David Lang's *Writing on Water* and James MacMillan's *Since it was the Day of Preparation...*, as well as giving the UK premiere of Nono's monumental *Prometeo* on London's South Bank.

Synergy has undertaken educational projects in the UK, The Netherlands, the USA and South America. Micaela Haslam also coaches ensembles for Steve Reich in the preparation of his *Music for 18 Musicians*.

Synergy Vocals also features on a variety of TV and film soundtracks and appears both live and in studio with pop artists such as Steven Wilson, Kompendium, Rob Reed and Anna Calvi.

[www.synergyvocals.com](http://www.synergyvocals.com)



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# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



## DAVID ROBERTSON

THE LOWY CHAIR OF  
CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

.....  
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.

# THE ORCHESTRA



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SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA NOT

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This year we are bidding farewell to two longstanding members of the SSO. Dene Olding will give his final performances as Concertmaster on 26, 28 and 29 October; Principal Flute Janet Webb will give her final performances on 10, 11 and 12 November.

[www.sydneysymphony.com/SSO\\_musicians](http://www.sydneysymphony.com/SSO_musicians)

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David Robertson

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KEITH SAUNDERS

Principal Double Bass Kees Boersma holds the SSO Council Chair. The Sydney Symphony Orchestra Council is a group of dedicated donors and subscribers, who, when the opportunity arose, were delighted to support one of the SSO's long-standing musicians. Kees Boersma with members of the SSO Council (from left): Eileen Ong, Danny May, Simon Johnson, John van Ogtrop and Gary Linnane (full Council listing opposite).



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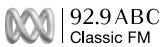
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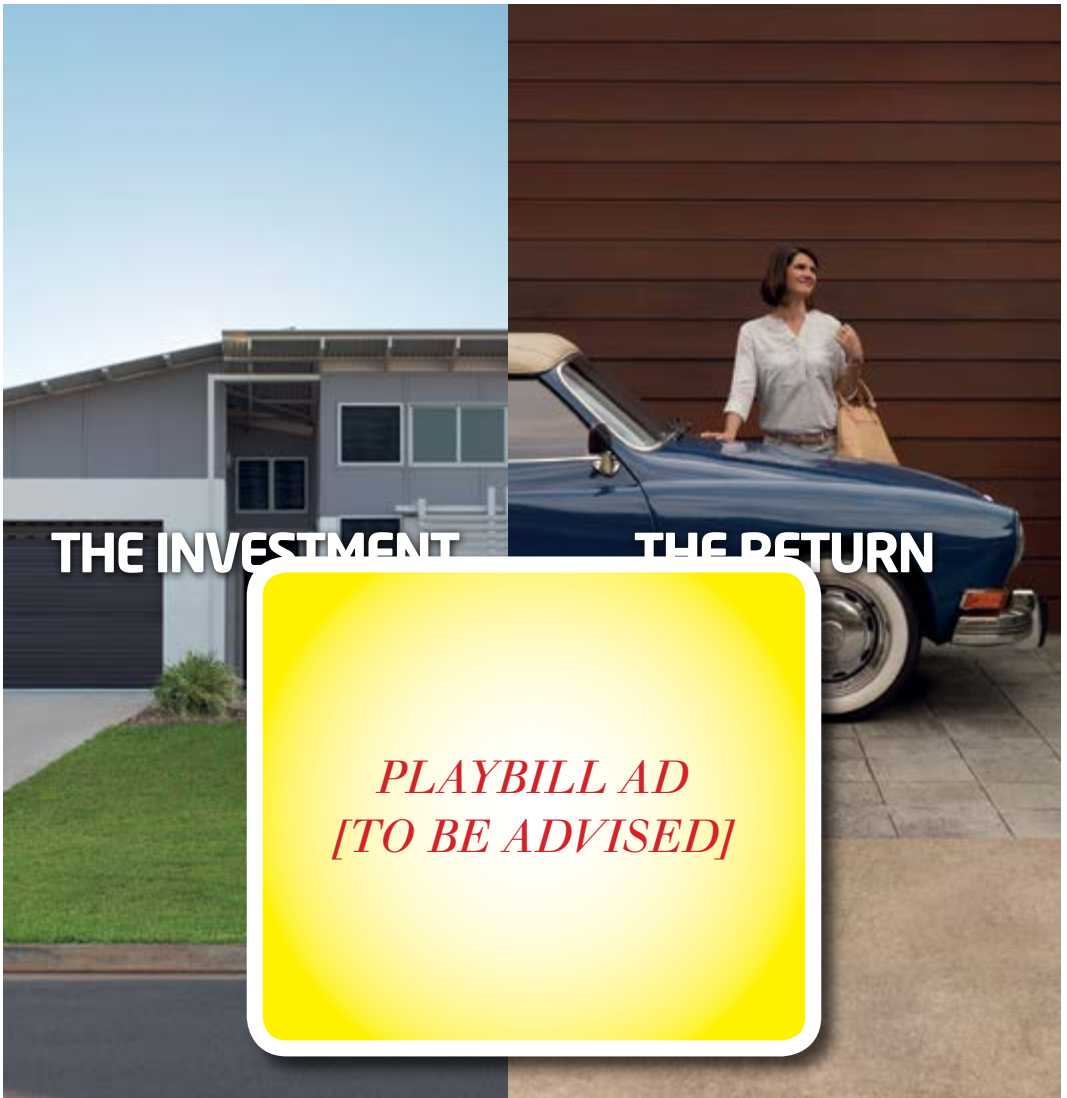


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