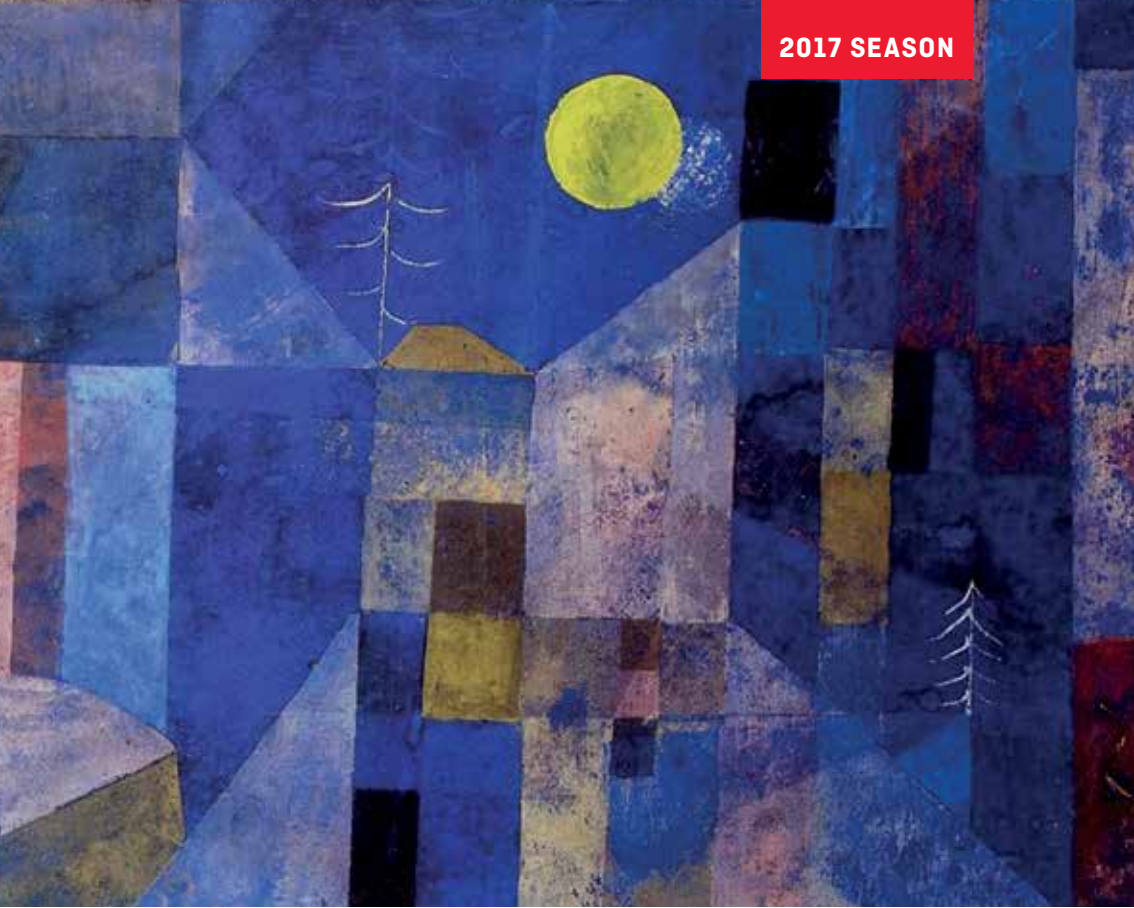


2017 SEASON



sydney symphony orchestra

David Robertson

The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

Bluebeard's Castle

With Bach & Brahms

APT MASTER SERIES

Wednesday 29 November, 8pm

Friday 1 December, 8pm

Saturday 2 December, 8pm



Principal Partner



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Belshazzar's Feast

EÖTVÖS Halleluja – Oratorium balbulum

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WALTON Belshazzar's Feast

David Robertson conductor

Michelle DeYoung mezzo-soprano

Topi Lehtipuu tenor

Andrew Foster-Williams bass-baritone

Martin Crewes narrator

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs & TSO Chorus

Emirates Metro Series

Fri 24 Nov, 8pm

Great Classics

Sat 25 Nov, 2pm

Sydney Opera House



Keith Saunders

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LIGETI arr. **Howarth** Mysteries of the Macabre

PÄRT Fratres for chamber ensemble (2007)

RAUTAVAARA Octet for Winds

GLAZUNOV In modo religioso for brass quintet

TCHAIKOVSKY Souvenir de Florence

Roger Benedict conductor

David Elton trumpet

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Sun 26 Nov, 3pm

Verbruggen Hall



Bluebeard's Castle

With Bach & Brahms

BRAHMS Alto Rhapsody

JS BACH Cantata No.82 – Ich habe genug

BARTÓK Bluebeard's Castle

David Robertson conductor

Michelle DeYoung mezzo-soprano

Andrew Foster-Williams bass-baritone

John Relyea bass

Don Hany prologue

Opera Australia Chorus

APT Master Series

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Sydney Opera House

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COMING UP IN 2018



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WELCOME



Welcome to tonight's performance in the APT Master Series. For this final concert in the SSO's 2017 season, Chief Conductor David Robertson has devised a thrilling and awe-inspiring program that is sure to be a highlight of your musical year.

Voices are at the heart of tonight's music, with Brahms's profoundly beautiful Rhapsody for alto, male choir and orchestra – featuring Michelle DeYoung – and Bach's much-loved cantata *Ich habe genug*, with Australian baritone David Greco. Then Michelle DeYoung will be joined by John Relyea for the centrepiece of tonight's program: Bartók's one-act opera, *Bluebeard's Castle*. This dark, psychological take on the familiar fairy tale will transport you not through time and place but to the depths of the human psyche.

Music as emotional and stirring as this can take you on a journey of the soul – a rich experience that you can enjoy in the comfort of the concert hall, with the musicians and guests of the SSO as your guides. But if you've been bitten by the Wanderlust, APT are your experts. Perhaps one festive season will see you enjoying a European or Canadian winter wonderland for an unforgettable Christmas.

We hope you find tonight's performance inspiring and we look forward to seeing you at the APT Master Series in 2018.



Geoff McGeary OAM
APT Company Owner



**sydney symphony
orchestra**

David Robertson
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

APT MASTER SERIES

WEDNESDAY 29 NOVEMBER, 8PM

FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER, 8PM

SATURDAY 2 DECEMBER, 8PM

.....
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL

BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE

David Robertson *conductor*
Michelle DeYoung *mezzo-soprano*
David Greco *baritone*
John Relyea *bass*
Don Hany *actor*
Men of the Opera Australia Chorus

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)
Alto Rhapsody, Op.53

Michelle DeYoung, mezzo-soprano
Men of the Opera Australia Chorus

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH (1685–1750)
***Ich habe genug* – Cantata, BWV 82**

David Greco, baritone

INTERVAL

BÉLA BARTÓK (1881–1945)
***Bluebeard's Castle* – Opera in one act**
Libretto by Béla Balázs

Michelle DeYoung – Judith
John Relyea – Duke Bluebeard
Don Hany – Prologue

Saturday's concert will be recorded by
ABC Classic FM for broadcast on
Sunday 10 December at noon.
.....

Pre-concert talk by David Garrett
at 7.15pm in the Northern Foyer.
For more information visit
sydneysymphony.com/speaker-bios
.....

Estimated durations: 13 minutes,
25 minutes, 20-minute interval,
55 minutes

The concert will conclude at
approximately 10.05pm.
.....

COVER IMAGE: *Mondschein* (1919)
by Paul Klee.
.....

CHANGE OF ARTIST: The advertised
soloist for the Bach cantata, Andrew
Foster-Williams, has had to withdraw
from these concerts because of illness.
We are grateful to David Greco for
joining us at short notice, and to
Pinchgut Opera with whom he is
currently rehearsing.

PRESENTED BY



ABOUT THE MUSIC

Johannes Brahms

Alto Rhapsody, Op.53

Michelle DeYoung *mezzo-soprano*

Men of the Opera Australia Chorus

Tonight's concert begins and ends with unlikely 'wedding' presents. Brahms's Alto Rhapsody was offered by Brahms as a wedding gift for Julie Schumann, the second daughter of his friends Robert and Clara, and, perhaps more significantly, a woman for whom Brahms himself had felt an undeclared love. Bartók's opera *Bluebeard's Castle* was dedicated to his first wife Márta Ziegler early in their marriage, and the Judith motif alludes to a piano piece he had written for her. There is an element of autobiography, or at least something deeply personal, about these pieces.

Brahms, searching for a text through which to express his most intimate emotions, seized upon the three central stanzas of an ode by Goethe, *Harzreise im Winter* (A Journey Through the Harz Mountains in Winter), written nearly a century earlier.

In 1777, the Weimar-based statesman and poet had been called away to the Harz Mountains on official business in order to inspect the mines that were dotted about the area. There he met a sensitive young man named Plessing who had been conducting a despairing and ongoing correspondence with Goethe (his depression had been brought on, apparently, by reading Goethe's *Werther*). The result of this visit was the *Harzreise ode Harzreise im Winter*, one of the most important and well-known of Goethe's so-called 'Wanderer Odes'.

In the ode, an unhappy and misanthropic young man who 'drank hatred of men from the fullness of love' disappears into the woods. Lost in the winter landscape, he prays for a melody which can 'restore his heart' and bring comfort to his mental and spiritual torment. The poem itself muses upon the different kinds of life that God ordains for individuals of different temperaments and in its central section it concentrates on the battle of individuals with their private miseries.

The extensive and intense imagery of the poem, together with its argument that nature is revealed to the poet through motion and turbulence, proved irresistible, and the Alto Rhapsody, with its dark scoring and sombre mood, is one of Brahms's most moving works. Writing in her diary after the first performance in 1869, Clara Schumann noted:

I was shattered by the deeply felt pain in both words and music. I cannot believe that this piece is anything other than the expression of [Brahms's] own spiritual suffering. If only he would speak even once so profoundly in words!

Keynotes

BRAHMS

Born Hamburg, 1833

Died Vienna, 1897

Brahms is often thought reactionary: he valued classical forms, admired composers of the past, and his choral music is rooted in the traditions of the baroque period. Yet his musical language and way of using the orchestra clearly represents 19th-century romanticism in all its richness and emotive power.

ALTO RHAPSODY

While Brahms is often regarded as a composer who came at the end rather than the beginning of a tradition, he did develop one musical genre which was highly distinctive. No other composer made such a specialty out of short works featuring choral voices and orchestra. Pieces such as the Alto Rhapsody, *Nänie*, the *Gesang der Parzen* and the *Schicksalslied* gave this highly literate composer the opportunity to respond with extreme intensity to German poetry by Goethe, Schiller and Hölderlin – resulting in some of his greatest, most moving music.

The Alto Rhapsody sets stanzas from one of Goethe's 'Wanderer Odes', a dark text full of intense imagery. The music is in three sections, adopting a structure similar to that of a baroque cantata. There is an introductory recitative (speech-like music), an aria ('Alas, who cures the pain...') and a final chorus in which the soloist is joined by male choir.



For his own part, Brahms did not want ‘this rather intimate music to be printed or performed’, and on more than one occasion he refused requests for subsequent performances.

The Alto Rhapsody adopts a three-part structure – introductory recitative, aria and a final chorus – that echoes the baroque cantata tradition, represented in this concert by Bach’s *Ich habe genug*. (It also shares with the cantata a protagonist who is at an existential ‘end’.)

The intense opening of the Alto Rhapsody circulates around Brahms’s most distinctive key of C minor (the ‘breakthrough’ key of the first symphony and first string quartet). The surging orchestral theme creates a sense of drama, and this impassioned mood is sustained into the following aria – a section of great lyrical power and expressive range. The melody of the central arioso emerges and the tempo increases imperceptibly, as the two ideas begin to dominate – ‘Menschenhass’ (misanthropy) and ‘Fülle der Liebe’ (fullness of love).

The final section of the Alto Rhapsody then appears as a kind of chorale, now in C major, shared between the soloist and the male chorus. The ending embodies a kind of religious fervour, with the plea for a restored heart repeated three times and the music closing like an impassioned Amen.

ADAPTED FROM A NOTE BY MARTIN BUZACOTT © 1997

In addition to the alto soloist and male chorus, Brahms’s Alto Rhapsody calls for pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns (with no other brass) and strings.

The SSO first performed the Alto Rhapsody in 1968, in concerts conducted by Fritz Rieger with soloist Janet Baker, and most recently in 1977, conducted by Willem van Otterloo with Lauris Elms and the Men of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs.

Brahms did not want ‘this rather intimate music to be printed or performed’...

Turn to page 9 for the text and translation.



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Alto Rhapsody

Aber abseits wer ist's?
In's Gebüsch verliert sich sein Pfad,
hinter ihm schlagen
die Sträucher zusammen,
das Gras steht wieder auf,
die Öde verschlingt ihn:

Ach, wer heilet die Schmerzen
des, dem Balsam zu Gift ward?
Der sich Menschenhass
aus der Fülle der Liebe trank?
Erst verachtet, nun ein Verächter,
zehrt er heimlich auf
seinen eig'nen Wert
in ung'nügender Selbstucht.

Ach, wer heilet die Schmerzen...

SOLO AND CHORUS

Ist auf deinem Psalter,
Vater der Liebe, ein Ton
seinem Ohre vernehmlich,
so erquicke sein Herz!
Öffne dem umwölkten Blick
über die tausend Quellen
neben dem Durstenden
in der Wüste.

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE
FROM *HARZREISE IM WINTER*

But who is it,
walking there apart?
His path is lost in the trees
which close behind him.
The grass rises again,
the wasteland swallows him.

Alas, who cures the pain of the sufferer
for whom balm has turned to poison?
Who drank hatred of men
from the abundance of love?
First scorned, now scorning,
he feeds secretly
his own worth
in barren selfishness.

Alas, who cures the pain...

O all-loving father,
if there is one tone on your lyre
which can reach him,
comfort his heart!
Lift the clouds from his eyes,
and show him the thousand fountains
that are so close to the
one in the desert.

TRANSLATION BY HEDWIG ROEDIGER
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Johann Sebastian Bach

Ich habe genug – Cantata, BWV 82

David Greco *baritone*

In his capacity as director of music at St Thomas's Church in Leipzig, Bach was called upon to supply cantatas for the Sundays and Festivals of the ecclesiastical year. He composed most of them for chorus, with solos interspersed and with liberal use of chorales or hymns, an important feature of Lutheran worship. Some cantatas were 'dialogues'; others were for solo voice.

There is evidence to suggest that Bach's three cantatas for solo bass were written for the same singer. They were all composed within a few months of each other; they all appear to have texts by Picander, Bach's usual librettist; and they possess the common theme of longing for death. *Ich habe genug* was composed in February 1727 for the Feast of the Purification. The name of a bass, a student named Lipsius, appeared in the church accounts for the three years 1725–27.

The Gospel story of the Purification of Mary (Luke 2: 22–32) tells of the presentation of Jesus in the temple and of Simeon, of whom it had been prophesied that he should not die before seeing the Saviour. The text of Cantata No.82 is connected with the words of Simeon which are interpreted as: 'after the Saviour has appeared, man can die peacefully, putting his trust in the act of Christ's redemption.'

In the first aria the oboe spreads a widely-spaced melody over accompanying string figures. Of particular note in this work is the central aria 'Schlummert ein, ihr matten Augen', described by one writer as 'the glorious death lullaby'. That this aria was copied into Anna Magdalena Bach's notebook suggests a fondness for it by the Bach family, and it is recognised as one of Bach's most inspired creations. The baroque yearning for death (the reverse of the baroque joy in life) is apparent also in the final aria. Unusually, the work does not end with a chorale.

GORDON KALTON WILLIAMS © 2007

Bach's Cantata No.82 calls for an orchestra of one oboe, strings and organ continuo.

The SSO first performed this cantata in 1967 in a concert conducted by Nino Sanzogno with soloist John Shirley-Quirk. Our most recent performance took place the following year with conductor Fritz Rieger and soloist Gérard Souzay.

Keynotes

JS BACH

Born Eisenach, 1685

Died Leipzig, 1750

In his lifetime Johann Sebastian Bach was renowned as an organist; in the century after his death his name was kept alive by enthusiasts, and then – spurred in part by Mendelssohn's revival of the Matthew Passion – he gained new and enduring fame as a great master of the baroque era. His career has been defined by three major periods of employment. In 1708, he became court organist in Weimar, but when he was passed over for a promotion, it was time to move on, and in 1717 Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen offered him a Kapellmeister post. It wasn't an easy departure: the Duke of Weimar briefly placed him under arrest! In 1722 he applied for the post of cantor at the school attached to the Thomas Church in Leipzig. He wasn't the town council's first choice, but he won the job and spent the remaining 27 years of his life in Leipzig: teaching, performing, organising the musical life of the church and composing his great series of church cantatas.



ARIA

Ich habe genug,
Ich habe den Heiland,
das Hoffen der Frommen
Auf meine begierigen Arme genommen;
Ich habe genug!
Ich hab' ihn erblickt,
Mein Glaube hat Jesum an's Herze gedrückt,
Nun wünsch' ich noch,
heute mit Freuden
Von hinnen zu scheiden:
Ich habe genug!

RECITATIVE

Ich habe genug!
Mein Trost ist nur allein
Dass Jesus mein
Und ich sein eigen möchte sein.
Im Glauben halt' ich ihn
Da seh' ich auch mit Simeon
Die Freude jenes Lebens schon.
Lasst uns mit diesem Manne zieh'n!
Ach, möchte mich von meines Leibes Ketten
Der Herr erretten.
Ach, wäre doch mein Abschied hier,
Mit Freuden sagt' ich, Welt, zu dir:
Ich habe genug.

ARIA

Schlummert ein, ihr matten Augen,
Fallet sanft und selig zu.
Welt, ich bleibe nicht mehr hier,
Hab' ich doch kein Teil an dir,
Das der Seele könnte taugen;
Hier muss ich das Elend bauen;
Aber dort, dort werd' ich schauen
süssen Frieden, stille Ruh.

RECITATIVE

Mein Gott!
Wenn kömmt das Schöne?
Nun! Da ich in Frieden fahren werde
Und in dem Sande kühler Erde,
Und dort bei Dir,
im Schosse ruh'n
Der Abschied ist gemacht.
Welt! Gute Nacht.

ARIA

Ich freue mich auf meinen Tod
Ach, hätt' er sich schon eingefunden:
Da entkomm' ich aller Not
Die mich noch auf der Welt gebunden.

[It is enough!
I have borne in my longing arms
The Saviour,
the hope of all devout.
It is enough!
I have seen him
My faith has held Jesus to its heart.
Now my only wish
is to leave this
world in happiness today.
It is enough!

It is enough!
My only comfort is
that Jesus will be mine
and I shall be His.
I believe in Him,
and like Simeon
I already see the joy of the life to come.
Let us follow Him.
I pray to the Lord that He
will free me from the bonds of my body.
I wish that now were the time of my death,
Gladly I would bid the world farewell and say:
it is enough!

Sleep, weary eyes.
Close gently and with joy.
O world, I shall no longer stay here.
I have no part of you now,
Where my soul has no peace.
Here my lot is misery alone;
In heaven I shall find
peace and sweet rest.

My God!
When will my dearest wish come true?
Now, as when I go in peace
to rest in the cool earth
and beyond there
in heaven with Thee.
My farewell has been spoken.
O world, good night.

I long for my death.
I wish it would come soon
Then will I be freed
From earthly bonds of misery.

Béla Bartók

Bluebeard's Castle – Opera in one act

Libretto by Béla Balázs

Michelle DeYoung *mezzo-soprano* (Judith)

John Relyea *bass* (Duke Bluebeard)

Don Hany *actor* (Prologue)

Bluebeard's Castle – Bartók's quest for a beloved

I prophesy, I have a foreknowledge, that this spiritual loneliness is to be my destiny. I look about me in search of the ideal companion, and yet I am fully aware that it is a vain quest.

Bartók in a letter to his mother (1903)

The legend of Bluebeard, a man who murdered his wives and kept their severed heads in a locked room, has horrified and fascinated readers since Charles Perrault wrote *Barbe bleue* in 1697. Béla Bartók's *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* of 1911 (with a libretto by Béla Balázs) is a psychological study of male-female relationships, and the elusive quest for a beloved. Bluebeard, in Bartók's treatment, is not a wife-slayer, but a man who longs for but is terrified of finding a soul-mate who can plumb his depths, discover all he is, without destroying him or being destroyed in the process.

Structurally the opera is like a huge, stone archway. It begins in darkness and near silence, moves upward to the light, then recedes again to silent darkness. The 'virginal' state of Bluebeard's soul is represented by a pentatonic theme, based on a five-note scale that uses the black keys on the piano. A recurring menacing blood motif, based on semitones (the smallest interval in Western harmony), adulterates the pentatonic purity. The tonal scheme uses mirror symmetry. As psychological tension intensifies, the tempo accelerates, the pitch heightens, the dissonance and diatony increase. White-key notes represent light/female; black-key notes represent dark/male.

The visual symbolism of the castle, with its seven rooms, finds resonance in the musical architecture – each of the doors is represented by a musical section – a 'room' – with its own musical language and symbolic lighting. The opera's setting is a huge, circular, window-less, Gothic hall. On the left a stairway leads to a small iron door to the outside world, on the right there are seven enormous doors. The iron door opens, silhouetting Duke Bluebeard and his new wife as they hover on the threshold. Bluebeard asks, 'Judith, are you coming?' She knows the rumours – he has been married before, and no one knows what became of his wives. But Judith cries, 'Yes, I am coming.' She

Keynotes

BARTÓK

*Born Nagyszentmiklós (Hungary)
now part of Romania, 1881
Died New York City, 1945*

Bartók is one of Hungary's most famous composers and an important figure in 20th-century music. He was also a collector and student of folk music and this influenced his use of melody, ornamentation and compelling, non-standard rhythms. He was also influenced by Debussy, Stravinsky and Schoenberg. While piano students will probably recall his *Mikrokosmos*, he is best-known in the concert hall for his *Concerto for Orchestra*. He wrote just three stage works: the ballets *The Wooden Prince* and *The Miraculous Mandarin*, and *Bluebeard's Castle*.

BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE

This is an opera with just two characters: Duke Bluebeard and his new wife Judith. It takes the form of an extended dialogue and, as in so much of Bartók's music, it follows a symmetrical arch shape, with each of its five sections based on a different harmonic tonal centre.

Listen for the archaic, folk-like sound of the theme that introduces the Castle (and Bluebeard); this is based on a five-note scale and it is characterised by simplicity. Judith's music is more elaborate and insinuating. Also key to the musical drama is the blood motif, for which Bartók uses the jarring and dissonant sound of two adjacent notes played together. At the climax – the fifth door – the increasing complexity of the music suddenly dissolves into a blazing C major from the whole orchestra.

wants to assume the burden of her beloved's fearful obscurity, his mysterious greatness, to enter and redeem the suffering reflected in his piercing eyes, open his dark recesses to the light of day.

Judith, the stronger of the two, initially occupies the musical foreground, Bluebeard answering her in short motifs. The roles reverse as the drama unfolds. The musical portrait of Judith proceeds in a diminuendo, Bluebeard in a crescendo. Bluebeard keeps asking 'Are you afraid?' Judith reassures him nothing will turn her away. Fumbling in the darkness, Judith asks why the walls are sweating but Bluebeard is evasive, asking instead whether her father's house might not be gayer. But Judith is the fearless woman in love who with her own lips would dry the weeping walls, with her own body warm the icy marble. All must be revealed and opened up.

She hammers on the first door. A cavernous sighing, like the night wind moving through a labyrinth makes her shudder. The first door opens to reveal a streak of red light, marked by a semitone trill, the blood motif. It is Bluebeard's torture chamber. The gruesome tools of torture are conveyed by the brittle sound of xylophones, by flute and piccolo shrieking up and down the span of a tritone, the traditional *diabolus in musica*. Yet Judith overlooks the weapons of torture and persuades herself that the red light is the crimson radiance of dawn.

At her insistence, the second door opens on an armoury bathed in a yellow-red light. A fanfare of brass coming from all directions syntonically heralds the clamour of battle. Ignoring such signs of war, she looks to the stream of light, demanding he give her all the keys at once. Reluctantly he gives her three more keys, admonishing her to look her fill but ask no questions. These three keys open the doors to the pleasures of power – a treasure chamber bathed in golden light representing his spiritual richness, a flower garden washed in blue-green light, and the dazzling brightness of the expanse of Bluebeard's realms. She digs her hands into the jewels of the treasure chamber behind the third door. She lays jewels, a crown and a cape upon the threshold but jumps in alarm when she sees they are stained with blood.

The fourth door opens upon a pristine spring day in the castle's secret garden. Harp arpeggios and a pentatonic horn melody rise like mist above the haze of tremolo strings. Flutes play a bird song and a descending flutter of flute evokes the sense of blossom softly falling. Her gasps of delight at its pristine beauty turn to horror when she plucks a rose and finds it is bleeding, 'Who bleeds to water this garden?' she asks. Not answering, Bluebeard instead urges her to open the fifth door.



**Judith is the
fearless woman
in love...**

'Now behold my spacious kingdom...Is it not a noble country?' Judith shrieks on high C as a monumental organ peal, timpani and brass proclaim the might of Bluebeard's domain. Rendered almost speechless, she stammers unaccompanied, blinded by the light. All is placed at Judith's feet.

'All is thine forever, Judith. Here both dawn and twilight flourish, here sun, moon and star have dwelling, they shall be thy deathless playmates,' he says. Yet Judith notices that beyond the pastures, streams and mountains the clouds cast a blood-red shadow. The violins tremolo once more the ominous blood motif. Bluebeard implores her to embrace him, ask no more questions, and refrain from opening the remaining two doors.

This is the turning point: Judith has the chance to content herself with what she has seen behind the five doors so far opened. The battle of wills between husband and wife intensifies. Judith's relentless demand to know more reaches a climax of dissonance based on an underscoring of semitones. The scene

Not Your Classic Fairytale

The Bluebeard story comes to us from Charles Perrault's 1697 collection of fairytales. You probably know it: a man murders each of his wives in turn and hangs them in a locked room. The last wife is a little cleverer and luckier than the previous ones and escapes with her life. This is not the story of *Bluebeard's Castle*.

Judith doesn't die. Neither do the other three wives. Nor is Bluebeard killed by her brothers. Everything in the opera is stained with blood but there are no actual deaths. There are no murders or narrow escapes in Bartók's opera; this is psychological drama. It's astonishing that it's as dramatic as it is given there are just two characters and – beyond the opening and closing of doors – there's no action as such. (This, of course, makes it an excellent candidate for concert performance.)

In the libretto by symbolist poet Béla Balázs the tale becomes a story about the psyche of Bluebeard himself, an allegory of a man's search for his beloved. Perrault is less influential than Maurice Maeterlinck, who had written the libretto for *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* by Paul Dukas. In Dukas' opera, composed

not long before Bartók's, the myth of murder had already become a myth about curiosity and the thirst for information. With Bartók and Balázs it becomes a myth about the desire for intimacy.

Bartók's choice of the name Judith brings to mind Judith and Holofernes; Bluebeard is at his most vulnerable when he reveals his secrets to her and allows her into his world. This is what is happening as Judith unlocks each of the seven doors. And that's where we find another important difference to the classic Bluebeard story. Traditionally, Bluebeard leaves the castle having warned his wife not to enter the forbidden chamber. But Judith unlocks the doors in Bluebeard's presence and more or less with his permission. The drama focuses on Judith's need to know the depths of her new husband's heart and her fear of what might happen when she does. Bluebeard tries to restrain her, to keep some of the symbolic doors in the relationship closed. He needs intimacy – and badly – but cannot reveal his soul.

YVONNE FRINDLE © 2000

ends tonally dissolved, light years from where it began. She hammers on the last two doors in agitated, percussive crotchets. The castle answers with a sigh, a glissando in lower strings and bassoons. As she turns the key to the sixth door, a deep sobbing sigh of harp, flute, and clarinet reveals a sheet of water. 'What is this mysterious water?'

'Tears,' he explains sadly, 'tears, tears.'

Thinking she has guessed his secret, that he has slain all his previous loves, Judith demands shrilly that he open the last door. The shrieking blood motif combining all manner of dissonant tonal relationships proclaims her doom. A C minor seventh with major 7 – Bartók's leitmotif for pain, suffering, and sadness – accompanies the opening of the last door. Bluebeard has not been transformed by Judith's love: her C major becomes C minor, and she, his last bride, becomes another cryogenised image of beauty.

The seventh door opens on the realm where the brides of Bluebeard live a deified but ghostly half-life, crowned and decked in jewels. Bluebeard falls in homage and sings a lush song of praise. Bluebeard's vocal lines dominate: Judith shrinks in horror, her vocal lines characterised by utmost brevity and chromaticism. 'Living, breathing. They live here!'

Each of the three wives has her own tonality representing 'crimson, fragrant early morning', 'silent, flaming, golden-haired noon' and 'quiet, languid, sombre twilight.' Judith protests vainly as he proclaims his fourth bride: 'starry, ebony mantled midnight' and places upon her the heavy mantle, diadem and jewels. They gaze into each other's eyes before she walks, bowed by her robes and crown, to take her place in the hall of memories.

Bluebeard's respite from the prison of his soul, his brief attempt to find light and love, has failed once more, and he recedes back into his dark soundscape. 'Henceforth all shall be darkness, darkness, darkness.'

In response to the steadfast devotion and fearless love of his last wife Judith, the doors of Bluebeard's heart opened one by one, penetrating ever deeper into his inner recesses. That the seven doors are opened in the presence of Bluebeard adds to the psychological dimension. The unlocking becomes an integral part of the male-female relationship, of the struggle for full, uncompromising, unconditional love. The two are locked in dialogues of pleading, restraint, submission, disclosure, reaction, reinterpretation. Yet Judith herself clings to illusions and ignores the true, stark nature of all she sees – her love gilds the reality of the torture chamber and she sees instead the red light of sunrise. The lake of tears, on the other hand, she interprets as those of the wives, not Bluebeard. Under Judith's insistence he reveals

The Seven Doors of Bluebeard's Castle

First door. Bluebeard's torture chamber – shackles, daggers, racks and pincers, all bathed in a blood red light.

Second door. Bluebeard's armoury – weapons of war stained with blood and gleaming in a yellowish-red light.

Third door. Bluebeard's treasury – crowns, luxurious capes and gowns of ermines, gleaming pearls and bright jewels sparkling in a golden glow.

Fourth door. Bluebeard's secret garden – sweet, fragrant, branches heavy with blossom; abluish-green light.

Fifth door. Bluebeard's kingdom – a brilliant, blinding light floods in through the open door; beyond are silken meadows, velvet forests, streams of winding silver, and lofty mountains, blue and hazy.

Sixth door. Bluebeard's tears – through dim shadows a glimpse of a white and tranquil lake of tears.

Seventh door. Bluebeard's wives – silver moonlight illuminates the three wives, pale but proud. They are Crimson Dawning, Golden Noon, Sombre Eventide; Judith will be Starry Midnight 'ever queen of all his beauties'.

Now all shall be darkness... darkness...

more and more of his spiritual treasures, the dazzling greatness of his ideas, becomes passionate, enamoured, animated, and at this point wishes to unite with his beloved in a never-ending embrace. Revelation is a dramatic and psychic necessity, and that he believed love could freeze at the juncture where only his greatness has been revealed means Bluebeard is locked in a cycle of searching out new mates, requesting they leave the doors unopened, having them disobey this injunction, and take their place as living portraits on his walls, fictionalised memories rather than flesh and blood women, leaving him alone once more.

Bartók was captivated by the story of Bluebeard, and saw an image of himself mirrored in the glass sheet of the lake of tears. Bartók's music radiates the entangled passions and destructive patterns of human relations, his life-long conflict between fear of intrusion and longing to be fully known. His ability to idealise and fall passionately in love with certain types of woman, and his inability to find happiness in love were inversely proportional. The musical motifs for each of the four wives of Bluebeard contain musical allusions to works dedicated to his own former loves: the first to Felicitas Fábrián, Bartók's first love, the second to his beloved Stefi Geyer, the third to Irmay Jurkovic. Judith is, of course, Márta Ziegler, to whom it was dedicated: what a wedding present!

JUDITH PICKERING © 2000

Dr Judith Pickering is a musicologist and psychoanalytic psychotherapist in private practice.

Bluebeard's Castle calls for a large orchestra of flute flutes (two doubling piccolo), two oboes, cor anglais, three clarinets (doubling E flat clarinets and bass clarinet), three bassoons and contrabassoon; four horns, four trumpets, four trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; two harps; celesta, organ, and strings. At the opening of the Fifth Door an additional four trumpets and four trombones play as a 'Musica di scena'.

The SSO gave the first Australian performance of *Bluebeard's Castle* in 1963, under the direction of John Hopkins with soloists Lauris Elms and Alan Light; James Condon spoke the prologue. Our most recent performance was in 1981, conducted by Georg Tintner with soloists Margreta Elkins and Donald Shanks.

English language surtitles provided by Canadian Opera Company and operated by Takefumi Ogawa.

Revelation is a dramatic and psychic necessity...



PHOTO: JAN FRAM

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 highlights including the Australian premiere of John Adams' *Doctor Atomic* Symphony and concert performances of *The Flying Dutchman*. In 2014, his inaugural season as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director, he led the SSO on a seven-city tour of China. More recent highlights have included presentations of *Elektra*, *Tristan und Isolde*, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, and *Porgy and Bess*; the Australian premiere of Adams' *Scheherazade*. 2 violin concerto, Messiaen's *From the Canyons to the Stars* and Stravinsky ballet scores (also recorded for CD release), as well as the launch of the SSO at Carriageworks series.

Last year he began his 12th 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 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 worldwide, conducting the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia and Cleveland orchestras, Berlin Philharmonic, Staatskapelle Dresden, BBC Symphony Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as conducting at La Scala, Opéra de Lyon, San Francisco Opera and the Bavarian and Hamburg state operas. 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 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.



John Relyea

bass

John Relyea has appeared in the world's most celebrated opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera (where he is an alumnus of the Merola Opera Program and Adler Fellowship), Lyric Opera of Chicago, Seattle Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Royal Opera House, Paris Opera, Teatro alla Scala, Bavarian State Opera, Vienna State Opera and Mariinsky Theatre.

His repertoire includes title roles in *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Quixote*, *Attila* and *Aleko*; *Zaccaria (Nabucco)*, Bertram (*Roberto Diabolo*), Raimondo (*Lucia di Lammermoor*), Colline (*La Bohème*), Don Basilio (*The Barber of Seville*), Méphistophélès (*Faust* and *The Damnation of Faust*), the Four Villains in *The Tales of Hoffmann*, and King Marke (*Tristan und Isolde*) which he sang with the SSO in 2015.

He is also in demand throughout the concert world, appearing with the Chicago and Boston symphony orchestras, Cleveland and Philadelphia orchestras, New York Philharmonic, Philharmonia Orchestra and Berlin Philharmonic, among others. He has also appeared in major festivals and recital venues worldwide.

Engagement highlights for the 2017–18 season include a return to the Paris Opera (*Bluebeard's Castle*) and to Rome Opera as Claggart (*Billy Budd*), his debut at the Teatro di San Carlo, and concerts with the New York Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris and Netherlands Radio Philharmonic.



PHOTO: KRISTIN HOEBERMANN

Michelle DeYoung

mezzo-soprano

Michelle DeYoung is in demand worldwide, appearing regularly with the New York Philharmonic, Boston and Chicago symphony orchestras, Cleveland Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, The Met Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic, and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and performing at prestigious festivals. She appears frequently with the SSO and recently sang Kundry (*Parsifal*) in concert for Opera Australia.

Equally at home in opera, she has appeared with the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Teatro alla Scala, Bayreuth Festival, Berliner Staatsoper, Paris Opera, Theater Basel and Tokyo Opera. Her repertoire includes the title roles in *Samson et Dalila* and *The Rape of Lucretia*; a number of Wagner roles, including Kundry (*Parsifal*) and Brangäne (*Tristan und Isolde*); and Amneris (*Aida*).

Her award-winning discography includes Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*, Third Symphony and *Das klagende Lied* (Michael Tilson Thomas, San Francisco Symphony); *The Trojans* (Colin Davis, London Symphony Orchestra), and two further recordings of Mahler's Third (Bernard Haitink, Chicago and Manfred Honeck, Pittsburgh).

In the 2017–18 season, she makes her debut at English National Opera singing Amneris (*Aida*), and appears in concert with the Philharmonia, London Philharmonic, Hong Kong Philharmonic and Dallas Symphony orchestras.



David Greco

baritone

Australian-born David Greco has worked on the cutting edge of the early music movement in Europe for the past eight years, performing with the Academy of Ancient Music and Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, and as a soloist in productions such as Gluck's *Alceste* (Festival Aix-en Provence) and Purcell's *Fairy Queen* (Glyndebourne). Having sung in Europe's finest concert halls, from the Théâtre des Champs Elysées to the Vienna Konzerthaus, last year he made his Amsterdam Concertgebouw debut singing Bach.

In 2012 he was bass Lay Clark in the Westminster Abbey Choir, and in 2014 was appointed to a position with the Sistine Chapel Choir. 2016 saw his debut as an Opera Australia principal in *The Love for Three Oranges* and *The Eighth Wonder*, and performances of Mozart with the SSO. He also sang the role of Wagner in Gounod's *Faust* (Lyric Opera Chicago and Macau International Music Festival).

This year he appeared as a soloist for the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs and Handel in the Theatre, and at the Melbourne Recital Centre. He sang the title role in Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* in Melbourne, and is currently singing Seneca in Monteverdi's *Incoronazione di Poppea* with Pinchgut Opera. His recordings include *Poems of Love and War* (music by Jack Brody) and, for release next year, Schubert's *Winterreise* with fortepianist Erin Helyard.



Don Hany

actor

Don Hany has been one of Australian television's most popular faces since he first appeared in the late 1990s and he has also worked extensively overseas.

His television credits include the anticipated Foxtel series *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *East West 101*, *Devil's Playground*, *The Broken Shore*, *Serangoon Road*, *Jack Irish: Black Tide* and *Rake*. Internationally, he was most recently seen in the NBC TV drama *Heartbeat*, as well as *Warriors* and the mini-series *Childhood's End*.

His film credits include the Australian comedy *Ali's Wedding*, *Healing* and *Winning the Peace* (for which he won Best Actor at the 2005 Methodfest awards); US feature films *Big Top*, *The TV Set* and *California King*; ABC telemovie *The Last Confession of Alexander Pearce* and Australian feature *Lucky Miles* (Audience Award, 2007 Sydney Film Festival).

His role as Zane Malik in *East West 101* won him the TV Week Silver Logie for Most Outstanding Actor in 2010 and a nomination for the AACTA for Best Lead Actor in a TV Drama in 2012. He received AFI nominations in 2008 and 2009 for Best Lead Actor in a TV Drama, and in 2011 was nominated for the TV Week Silver Logie for Most Popular Actor for his roles in *Tangle* and *Offspring*.

THE CHOIR

Opera Australia Chorus

Anthony Hunt *Chorus Master*

Michael Curtain *Assistant Chorus Master*



At the heart of Opera Australia's musical activities is the Opera Australia Chorus. Involved in almost every production, the Chorus is a professional ensemble of 40 full-time singers, performing in Sydney, Melbourne and on the outdoor stage for Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour.

The Chorus was formally established in 1969, with a permanent ensemble of 32 singers. It was enlarged with the opening of the Sydney Opera House in 1973. Now one of the busiest operatic choruses in the world, this ensemble is involved in an average of 170–200 performances each year.

Notable recent concert performances have included *Thais*, *Parsifal* and Verdi's *Requiem*, and *The Nixon Tapes* by John Adams for Vivid. Stage highlights have included *Turandot* for Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, John Bell's new production of *Carmen*, and Kaspar Holten's production of *King Roger* from the Royal Opera House Covent Garden.

opera.org.au



ANTHONY HUNT *Chorus Master*

Anthony Hunt (ARAM) has been Chorus Master at Opera Australia since 2013, preparing the Chorus for more than 35 operas in Sydney and Melbourne, and for each opera staged for Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour.

He studied piano and organ at the Elder Conservatorium, University of Adelaide, before moving to London, where he received a Masters degree as a repetiteur from the Royal Academy of Music.

He was for many years the Assistant Organist at St Peter's Cathedral in Adelaide, has been a participant in the Symphony Australia Conductor Development Program, and was a Young Artist with the State Opera of South Australia.

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 Gregory Brown
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 Damien Hall
 Scott Hannigan
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 Jin Tea Kim
 Andrei Laptev
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 Kent McIntosh
 Tobias Merz
 Benjamin Rasheed
 Matthew Reardon
 Claudio Sgaramella

BASSES

Jonathan Alley
 Christopher Bath
 Benjamin Caukwell
 Malcolm Ede
 Tom Hamilton
 Alexander Hargreaves
 David Hidden
 David King
 Jared Lillehagen
 Jeffrey Lock
 Jonathan McCauley
 Anthony Mackey
 Clifford Plumptre
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SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS



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 fourth year as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director.

THE ORCHESTRA



David Robertson

THE LOWY CHAIR OF
CHIEF CONDUCTOR
AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



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Nora Goodridge with Tutti Second Violin Nicole Masters. Nicole says she feels incredibly privileged to have this connection with someone who wants to support her chair in the orchestra. 'I feel really grateful that there are people like Nora still in this world.' For her part, Nora sums it up: 'It's my choice, and it's a joy!'



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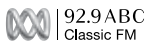
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