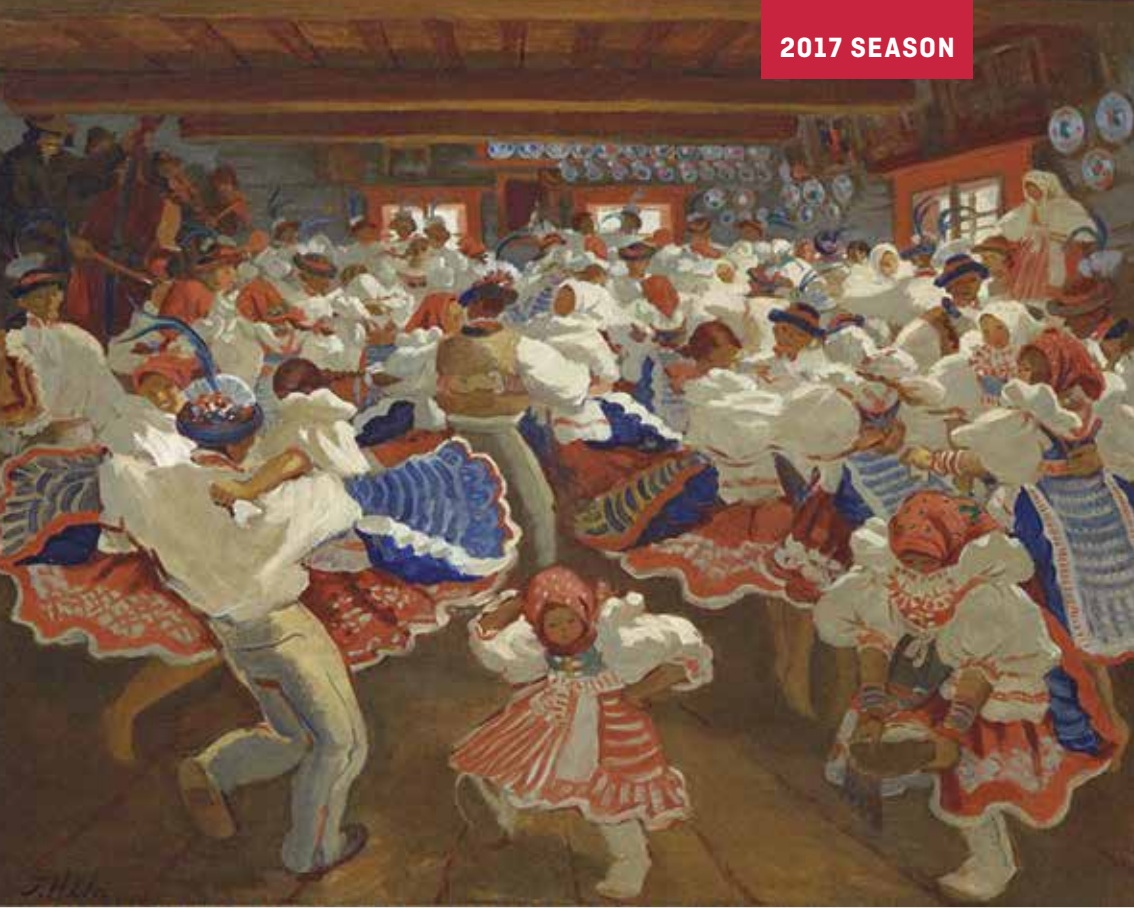


2017 SEASON



**sydney symphony orchestra**

**David Robertson**

The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

# Dancing with the Orchestra

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THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY

Thursday 13 July, 1.30pm

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Saturday 15 July, 2pm

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**BRAHMS** Four Piano Pieces, Op.119  
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Keith Saunders



**High Noon**

*Mozart & Haydn in the City*

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**MOZART** Piano Concerto No.24 in C minor, K491  
**Andrew Haveron** violin-director  
**Orli Shaham** piano

Mozart in the City  
**Thu 6 Jul 7pm**  
 City Recital Hall  
 Tea & Symphony  
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Eva Vermandel



**Dancing with the Orchestra**

*Alina in the Spotlight*

**KODÁLY** Dances of Galanta  
**BARTÓK** Violin Concerto No.2  
**RACHMANINOFF** Symphonic Dances  
**James Gaffigan** conductor  
**Alina Ibragimova** violin

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**Mahler 3**

*Heartwarming Voices*

**MAHLER** Symphony No.3  
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**RAVEL** Shéhérazade\*  
**RAVEL** Daphnis et Chloé - Ballet\*  
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**Susan Graham** mezzo-soprano  
**Sydney Philharmonia Choirs**

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Earlier this year, we announced our vision for One Circular Quay – a development that will incorporate a five-star Wanda Vista hotel, private residences and boutique retail at 1 Alfred Street on Circular Quay. Upon its planned completion in 2021, Sydney will be able to enjoy a new icon, subtle yet striking. So it seems very appropriate that, in our wider commitment to the arts, we are now supporting the artistic endeavours of the great symphony orchestra that makes its home in the iconic Sydney Opera House.

In this concert with conductor James Gaffigan and violinist Alina Ibragimova, the SSO will show just how dynamic and exciting an orchestra can be. You'll be hearing music that's expressive and enlivening. It's a reminder that the presence of the arts in our lives isn't simply a luxury but a powerful and uplifting part of the human experience.

We hope you enjoy the concert and that it leaves you both inspired and proud to call the SSO 'Your Orchestra'.



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**David Robertson**  
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

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THURSDAY 13 JULY, 1.30PM

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FRIDAY 14 JULY, 8PM

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SATURDAY 15 JULY, 2PM

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**DANCING WITH  
THE ORCHESTRA**

**James Gaffigan** *conductor*

**Alina Ibragimova** *violin*

**ZOLTÁN KODÁLY (1882–1967)**

**Dances of Galánta (Galántai táncok)**

*Lento – Andante maestoso –*

*Allegretto moderato – Andante maestoso –*

*Allegro con moto, grazioso – Andante maestoso –*

*Allegro –*

*Poco meno mosso –*

*Allegro vivace – Andante maestoso – Allegro molto vivace*

**BÉLA BARTÓK (1881–1945)**

**Violin Concerto No.2**

*Allegro non troppo*

*Andante tranquillo*

*Allegro molto*

INTERVAL

**SERGEI RACHMANINOFF (1873–1943)**

**Symphonic Dances, Op.45**

*Non allegro*

*Andante con moto (Tempo di valse)*

*Lento assai – Allegro vivace*

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The concert will conclude at approximately 3.25pm (Thu), 9.55pm (Fri), 3.55pm (Sat).

.....  
COVER IMAGE: Slovak wedding dance (1931) by Jan Hála (culture-images/Lebrecht)



Principal Partner



This portrait of Rachmaninoff was made by Boris Grigoriev in 1930, when the composer was in his 50s. With its exaggerated furrows, it brings to mind Stravinsky's quip: that Rachmaninoff was a 'six-and-a-half foot Russian scowl'. This wasn't entirely fair, and the photo of him with conductor Eugene Ormandy on page 16 catches him in a lighter moment.



# Dancing with the Orchestra

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Modern concert halls are designed to do justice to music and its performance – attention is given to the acoustics, the sightlines, the ambience and your comfort. But most concert halls have a flaw: there's very little room, if any, for dancing in the aisles. Which, in this concert, is a great pity, because James Gaffigan has devised a dynamic program that is full of vitality and compelling rhythms.

Hungarian Zoltán Kodály shows the way with his Dances of Galánta, a kind of supercharged csárdás that begins pensively, with the soulful sound of the clarinet in the spotlight, before a sequence of exhilarating dances, all based on original folk sources. You will surely want to tap your toes!

Kodály and his friend and contemporary Béla Bartók were among the pioneers of what you might call ethnomusicology, and together they collected thousands of songs from villages in Hungary and further afield. In Kodály's music you hear that folk material infused in the music; for Bartók, it gave impetus to an original voice. In Bartók's second violin concerto (for a long time his only violin concerto) you can hear the fierceness and the lyricism of his musical style, the clarity and symmetry, but also the colours and atmosphere that he brings out of the orchestra.

Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances from 1940 was originally intended as the score for a ballet with the title 'Fantastic Dances' (Fokine was to have choreographed it). When that project fell through Rachmaninoff changed the name and dropped his literary section headings: no more *Midday*, *Twilight* and *Midnight*, just Italian tempo instructions. One overt reference to dance remains in the title of the second movement, 'Tempo di valse'. The mood is often nostalgic, even gloomy, but even at its darkest (it quotes the 'Dies irae' chant, for example) it is full of energy and its dancing origins are never far away.

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# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## Zoltán Kodály

### Dances of Galánta (Galántai táncok)

*Lento – Andante maestoso –*

*Allegretto moderato – Andante maestoso –*

*Allegro con moto, grazioso – Andante maestoso –*

*Allegro –*

*Poco meno mosso –*

*Allegro vivace – Andante maestoso – Allegro molto vivace*

Zoltán Kodály is revered as Hungary's father of modern composition. His breadth of creativity and commitment to teaching helped to maintain a vigorous musical culture through periods of artistic and political oppression. Together with his contemporary and friend Béla Bartók, he collected thousands of folk tunes from throughout Hungary, Romania and Slovakia. These songs influenced both composers' subsequent works, as well as those of many other middle-European composers. Kodály said of his collaboration with Bartók: 'The vision of an educated Hungary, reborn from the people, rose before us. We decided to devote our lives to its realisation.' The importance of folk tunes to the national identity of countries such as Hungary cannot be overstated.

The Dances of Galánta were written for the 80th anniversary of the Budapest Philharmonic in 1933. This is a mature work (Kodály was in his early 50s), both highly accessible and relatively conservative, possibly owing in part to the influence of the commissioning orchestra. Kodály took as his source a compendium of dances from the early 1800s, 'the gypsy dances from Galánta', and orchestrated a selection while composing new linking material. Kodály had grown up in the town of Galánta on the border between Hungary and Austria, where the passing traffic, including Romani and wandering musicians, may well have left an aural impression.

Based on the style of the verbunkos recruiting dance (structured, like the csárdás, as a slow *lassú* followed by the fast *friss*), these dances have two moods: pensively slow and fiercely fast. Chiefly linking these two emotional opposites with broad and impassioned string writing, Kodály also allows solo passages to play a significant role.

As in the suite from his opera *Háry János* (1927), there are lyrical sections of poignant beauty and virtuosity for the clarinet. Throughout the first major section – functioning as the *lassú* – and indeed through the rest of the suite, the clarinet receives special attention. It seems to act as a melodic fulcrum, linking and leading harmonic and rhythmic

## Keynotes

### KODÁLY

*Born Kecskemét, Hungary, 1882  
Died Budapest, 1967*

Born just one year after Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály holds a similarly prominent place in Hungarian music. In particular, Kodály's commitment to the collection of traditional music from his homeland and surrounding regions and to the fostering of a national style led Bartók to describe his works as 'the most perfect embodiment of the Hungarian spirit'. In the concert hall he is perhaps best known for his *Háry János* suite as well as the Dances of Galánta (1933), and he wrote an attractive and folk-infused Concerto for Orchestra. He also developed a music education system for children, based around singing and rhythmic movement, that remains influential worldwide.

### DANCES OF GALÁNTA

This continuous string of dances – full of folk-inspired fervour – is one of the most exhilarating works in the orchestral repertoire. Kodály's sources are tunes from the town of Galánta, where his father was the stationmaster. (They don't come from his own transcriptions, however, but from a 19th-century collection.) The underlying format is borrowed from the verbunkos, a recruiting dance, which begins with a slow section, *lassú*, followed by the faster *friss* (literally 'fresh'). The clarinet has an especially important part to play.

changes. The *Andante maestoso* from this slow introduction is then briefly referred to between the dances that follow.

Kodály maintains tension through clever use of rubato and rhythmic variation, as with the syncopated rhythms of the fiery *csárdás* heard in the late-night revels of a tavern. The 'gypsy scale', found in so much of the folk music diligently collected by Kodály, is a prominent melodic feature. And the clarinet in particular conjures the melancholy sound of Jewish klezmer music.

A solo flute and piccolo accompanied by pizzicato (plucked) strings introduce the *friss* with the first of the fast dance sections (*Allegretto moderato*). There is a decidedly Eastern flavour here, and the whirring strings, when released from pizzicato, are particularly striking as they return to the first, clarinet-inspired, introspective dance themes.

An oboe introduces the next of the fast dances (*Allegro con moto, grazioso*). This melody is so simple and insubstantial that it seems to need reinforcement from the other woodwinds, brass and strings. It is eventually overwhelmed by the return of the melancholic first theme, which in turn is interrupted just as suddenly by a fierce syncopated dance (*Allegro*) with the whole orchestra in full cry. Two dances quickly follow, with melodies reminiscent of *Háry János* – the bassoons play chirpy ornaments, horns swing across the bar line and a dotted rhythm returns in the clarinet (*Poco meno mosso*).

This mildly comic excursion by Kodály sets up a frantic finale, beginning with the muted insistence of the timpani. The theme is then launched by the winds, and captured in virtuoso brilliance by the strings, with powerful rhythmic syncopation throughout the orchestra (*Allegro vivace*). Instead of a predictably triumphant close, the first brooding melody returns in an arresting G sharp minor. Kodály is perhaps suggesting that behind all this exuberance lies darkness. But such introspection is thrust aside in the final bars (*Allegro molto vivace*) where the dance is at an end: exhilarating, exhausting!

ADAPTED FROM A NOTE BY DAVID VIVIAN RUSSELL  
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The Dances of Galánta call for two flutes (one doubling piccolo) and pairs of oboes, clarinets and bassoons; four horns and two trumpets (but no trombones or tuba), timpani and a large percussion section; and strings.

The SSO first performed the Dances of Galánta in 1948, conducted by Eugene Goossens, and most recently in 1996, conducted by Takuo Yuasa.



Zoltán Kodály



Citizens of Galánta in traditional costume (1938)





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## Béla Bartók Violin Concerto No.2

*Allegro non troppo*

*Andante tranquillo*

*Allegro molto*

**Alina Ibragimova** *violin*

Bartók's Second Violin Concerto was composed as the result of a commission from the violinist Zoltán Székely in 1937. Bartók wanted to write a large work in variation form – much of his music had already been motivated by the spirit of variation – but the suggestion did not go down well with Székely who wanted a traditional concerto instead.

In the end Bartók did it both ways. On the surface this a big three-movement concerto with sonata-form first and last movements. But, as a private joke, he'd combined concerto form with variations anyway: not only is the second movement in an obvious theme and variation form, the finale is a transformation of the first movement's structure and materials. Nevertheless, Székely was delighted.

The premiere of the concerto took place on 23 March 1939 with Székely as soloist and the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Willem Mengelberg. Bartók himself never heard Székely play the work (although the pair of them did work on the piece in Paris before the first performance) and it was not until 1943 that Bartók heard the piece performed at all. After that performance, in New York, Bartók reported:

*I was most happy that there is nothing wrong with the scoring; nothing needs to be changed, even though orchestral 'accompaniment' of the violin is a very delicate business.*

*[Bartók is here referring to the sheer difference in quantity between soloist and orchestra.] The critics, of course – they ran true to form, although they wrote a bit more favourably than usual. I wouldn't even mention them but for the brutishness of one of them; he doesn't believe this work will ever displace the Beeth. Mendel. Brahms concertos. How is it possible to write such an idiotic thing: what fool fit for the madhouse would want to displace one of these works with one of his own?*

It's interesting that Bartók was satisfied with his scoring. Bartók's music is perhaps most immediately enjoyable in that very realm of scoring and flavour: the wonderfully telling use of harp; the shimmering winds and high strings clashing against the blaring brass just after the second subject of the first movement; that wonderful passage in the development section of the first movement where harp, celesta, muted violins and high tremolos accompany a mirror inversion of the main theme played as a broad cantilena on the solo violin.

## Keynotes

### BARTÓK

*Born Nagyszentmiklós (Hungary) now Sînnicolau Mare (Romania), 1881*

*Died New York, 1945*

Bartók is one of Hungary's most famous composers and an important figure in 20th-century music. He was also an avid collector and student of folk music (an early ethnomusicologist) and this influenced many of his works, especially in his use of melody, ornamentation and compelling, non-standard rhythms. He was also influenced by Debussy, Stravinsky and even Schoenberg. He is best known in the concert hall for his brilliant and evocative Concerto for Orchestra, while piano students will probably recall his *Mikrokosmos*.

### VIOLIN CONCERTO NO.2

For a long time this was Bartók's only known violin concerto (he concealed the existence of an earlier concerto). It was composed in 1937–38 for the violinist Zoltán Székely, who had already premiered Bartók's Second Rhapsody and wanted something new in the form of a traditional concerto. The result is inventive and brilliant, with a highly virtuosic solo part astutely balanced against a large and colourful orchestra. As was common for Bartók, the concerto follows a symmetrical shape: the bravura outer movements are share thematic material and each has a cadenza. In the centre is a more reflective and atmospheric movement, organised as a set of variations on a simple, folk-like melody.

It can, however, be difficult at first to divine his forms, or his organisational techniques: sonata forms which are no longer articulated by the tonal system of the Classical or Romantic styles are very hard to pick up; and though the themes of the first and last movements are related to each other (are indeed identical from the point of view of melodic intervals), their rhythmic differences disguise the relationships. It's possible Bartók didn't want his audience to be too aware of thematic correspondences throughout the work.

### Listening Guide

For the **first movement** (*Allegro non troppo*), Bartók suggests a duration of 12'16". This indication appears under the double bar lines in the score. The movement begins with six measures of strumming on the harp. The soloist enters with a rhapsodic theme which, considerably altered, will also form the basis of the finale. The prominence of the intervals of the fourth and fifth give this theme a Hungarian touch, but it is no folk tune, just one more example of the way Bartók's long years of study of Hungarian folk music had enabled him to absorb something of the character of that music into his own sophisticated style.

There is brief development of this theme, with the soloist interjecting. Then the appearance of the principal contrasting theme, which outlines a complete twelve-tone row in Bartók's own fashion, not subscribing to the 'rules' of Schoenberg's Second Viennese School.

The development section is based chiefly on the opening material, varied melodically, rhythmically and contrapuntally before the soloist returns with the main theme played softly, an octave higher than at the beginning. The recapitulation is full of striking harmonies and new colour effects, including the whole string section at one stage plucking their strings so violently that they report back.

There is a spectacular cadenza, a couple of minutes in length, before the rousing conclusion. Székely was disappointed when he saw that Bartók originally planned to end the movement with orchestra alone for the last 22 bars. Again, he insisted to Bartók that he wanted a *real* concerto with flights of virtuosity. Bartók came to see Székely's point of view, but, when he had the score published, included both endings. [Alina Ibragimova performs Bartók's original ending.]

For the **second movement** (*Andante tranquillo*) Bartók suggests 9'37". There is a distinct folk quality to the theme, introduced by the soloist. In the first variation (*Un poco più andante*) the soloist embellishes the theme accompanied by kettle drum and basses. In the second variation (*Un poco più tranquillo*), the harp floridly bridges the soloist's pauses. This section contains the 'night'



Béla Bartók



◀ Béla Bartók with violinist Zoltán Székely (standing)

atmosphere so typical of Bartók slow movements, and is among the most beautiful pages of orchestration.

Crushed-sounding double stops, and almost honking brass begin the third variation (*Più mosso*), a recitative-like section, like a passage of oration. In the *Lento* (variation 4) the soloist spins a weave around the principal theme in cellos and double basses. Some really interesting orchestration marks variation 5 (*Allegro scherzando*) – high winds and harp add colour, while the side drum and triangle dot and spangle the canvas.

The music returns to a slower pace for variation 6 (*Comodo*), where there is also an interesting array of effects – snaps from the soloist, drum taps, trills. This variation presages the return of the opening theme at the original tempo, but this time an octave higher, and accompanied by celesta and the high sheen of strings, which provide a sweetening effect.

If you listen carefully to the **finale** (*Allegro molto*) – estimated by Bartók at 9'40" in duration – you may hear the resemblance between the opening theme and the first movement, despite obvious differences in tempo and rhythmic values. There is even a second cadenza. It is left to you, however, to decide if your enjoyment is enhanced by knowing how closely it is meant to relate to the first movement.

GORDON KALTON WILLIAMS  
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The orchestra for Bartók's Violin Concerto No.2 comprises two flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes (one doubling cor anglais), two clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet) and two bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon); four horns, two trumpets and three trombones (but no tuba); timpani and percussion; harp, celesta and strings.

The SSO first presented the concerto in March 1955 with violinist Max Rostal; Eugene Goossens conducted the first performance and Joseph Post the remaining two. Our most recent performance was in 1999 with Viktoria Mullova as soloist and Edo de Waart conducting.

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## Sergei Rachmaninoff

### Symphonic Dances, Op.45

*Non Allegro*

*Andante con moto [Tempo di valse]*

*Lento assai – Allegro vivace*

Conductor, pianist and composer, Rachmaninoff often complained that he could never maintain all three activities simultaneously. His adult career as a concert pianist left him little time for composition, and for years he wrote next to nothing. Then, much to his surprise, the urge to compose began to reassert itself. A procession of ‘Indian summer’ pieces emerged between 1926 and 1940, many of which are now regarded as among his finest compositions.

‘I don’t know how it happened. It must have been my last spark,’ is how Rachmaninoff described the origins of the Symphonic Dances. Yet the idea of a score for a programmatic ballet had been at the back of his mind since 1915, and when Michel Fokine successfully choreographed the Rhapsody for a ballet called *Paganini* in 1939, the opportunity to compose an original ballet appealed to Rachmaninoff’s imagination again. He wrote the Dances the following year, 1940, giving the three movements the titles *Midday*, *Twilight*, and *Midnight*. At this point the work was called ‘Fantastic Dances’.



## Keynotes

### RACHMANINOFF

*Born Semyonovo, Russia, 1873*

*Died Beverly Hills, USA, 1943*

Rachmaninoff’s Second Symphony became his trademark success and, together with his Second Piano Concerto, served as his artistic passport during his early years of exile from his politically troubled homeland. But the popularity of these pieces also threatened to stifle his creative urge, until, out of what had become by the early 1930s an ominous silence, appeared the hugely popular Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini for piano and orchestra. The Third Symphony, from 1935–36, was in a more sombre vein, despite being conceived as a virtuoso showpiece for Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

### SYMPHONIC DANCES

Composed in 1940 for the same orchestra, but another conductor – Eugene Ormandy – the Symphonic Dances was Rachmaninoff’s last new orchestral work, leaner and more modern yet still full of his trademark melody and passionate expressiveness. At first he hoped the dances – *Midday*, *Twilight*, and *Midnight* – would be staged as a ballet. But he dropped the titles, and the music became a concert work. Even so, vestiges of the vigour and variety of the original scenario remain, whether in macabre dance steps to the ‘Dies irae’ from the Catholic mass for the dead, a hectic waltz swirling out of control, or a festive Orthodox procession to a refrain of Easter alleluias.



Rachmaninoff played it over on the piano for Fokine, who was enthusiastic about the music but non-committal about its balletic possibilities. In any case, Fokine's death a short time later cooled Rachmaninoff's interest in the ballet idea altogether. He deleted his descriptive movement names and substituted 'Symphonic' for 'Fantastic' in the title. In its new guise he dedicated the triptych to his favourite orchestra, the Philadelphia, and its chief conductor Eugene Ormandy.

It is a work full of enigmas, which Rachmaninoff does nothing to clarify. In the first movement, there is a transformation from minor to major of a prominent theme from his first symphony, which at that time Rachmaninoff thought was irretrievably lost. (The score was lost, but the symphony was re-constructed from the orchestral parts after his death.) The premiere of that work in 1897 had been such a fiasco that Rachmaninoff could not compose at all for another three years. But the reference to the symphony in this new piece has a meaning that remains entirely private.

There is also the curious paradox that the word 'dance' – with its suggestion of life-enhancing, joyous activity – is here put at the service of a work that – for all its vigour and sinew – is essentially concerned with endings. Chromaticism darkens the colour of every musical step. The sense of foreboding and finality is particularly strong in the second movement, with its evocations of a spectral ballroom, and in the bell-tolling and chant-intoning that pervade what was to be not only the last dance of the set, but the last new movement he would ever compose.

The **first movement**, with its unusual tempo marking *Non Allegro* ('Not fast' – what could he have meant?) begins hesitantly, before a bold, staccato statement of a theme that sounds very much like the plainchant for the dead, 'Dies irae', in disguise. [Studies of Rachmaninoff's sketches reveal that this whole section had already been written in 1915.] It will reappear in different guises throughout the work. This leads to the main part of the movement. From this point on, most of the major musical ideas are introduced by the woodwinds, including the leaping main theme, given to flutes, oboes and clarinets. The major lyrical theme is then given to that infrequent orchestral visitor, the alto saxophone, making its solo appearance with delicately scored accompaniment for winds only. (The saxophone has no other music to play in the work.) Rachmaninoff also employs orchestral piano, and when the lyrical theme is given its second statement by the strings, in an impassioned unison, the piano traces a filigree accompaniment, creating an overall effect of shining



**Rachmaninoff (right) dedicated the Symphonic Dances to his favourite orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, and its chief conductor Eugene Ormandy (left)**

## **Dance of Death**

**Rachmaninoff's choice of the 'Dies irae' chant in the third piece suggests a 'dance of death'. The 12 chimes of midnight in the introduction enhance the macabre effect. But Rachmaninoff moves well beyond a *danse macabre*, transforming the sinister tune into music serenely reminiscent of his beloved Russian Orthodox chant. This is the spiritual and musical heritage he celebrated in his great choral masterpiece, the *All-Night Vigil* and Rachmaninoff directly quotes music from the *Vigil* at the point in the score marked 'Alliluya'. Choosing his own final dance partner, Rachmaninoff abandons Death, for Life.**

brightness. In the coda of this movement, harp and piano together create a glistening, shimmering counterpoint to the plush, chorale-like statement of the motif plucked from the first symphony.

The waltz movement begins with muted trumpet fanfares that have a sinister fairy-tale quality to them. Woodwind arabesques swirl around them, until a solo violin passage gives way to the main waltz theme, introduced by the oboe and cor anglais before being taken up by the strings. The ghostly woodwind arabesques continue to decorate this theme until the winds themselves announce the livelier second melody. Although the atmosphere becomes warmer and more passionate at times, it does not lighten, and sometimes becomes quite macabre. It is as if we are experiencing a memory of a ballroom rather than a ball itself.

The **finale** is the work's most complex movement. The extensive use of the 'Dies irae' (a regular source of material for Rachmaninoff) and the inscription 'Alliluya', written in the score above the last motif in the work to be derived from Orthodox chant, suggest the most final of endings mingled with a sense of thanksgiving. [The 'Alliluya' is a direct reference to Rachmaninoff's choral work, *All-Night Vigil*.] The tolling of the midnight bell that prefaces the movement's vigorous main section reinforces the view that the work might, after all, be a parable on the three ages of man.

Much of the main *Allegro vivace* material here is derived from the chant, as is the motif that eventually drives away the 'Dies irae' and dominates the work's forthright conclusion. But this is also the movement in which Rachmaninoff takes time out from the dance, in an extensive central section in which morbidity, regret, passion and tears commingle in a complex and beautifully scored musical design.

ADAPTED FROM A NOTE BY PHILLIP SAMETZ © 1999

Though completed as concert work, Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances retains a smaller theatrically scaled scoring of piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, two bassoons and contrabassoon; four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion (triangle, tambourine, side drum, cymbals, bass drum, tam tam, xylophone, glockenspiel, tubular bells); harp, piano and strings.

The SSO first performed the Symphonic Dances in 1977 with Denis Vaughan, and most recently in 2012, conducted by Jakub Hrůša.

**'I don't know how it happened. It must have been my last spark.'**

**RACHMANINOFF DESCRIBES THE ORIGIN OF THE SYMPHONIC DANCES**

## MORE MUSIC

### DANCES OF GALÁNTA

For a comprehensive introduction to the music of Zoltán Kodály, look for the Collector's Edition set *Kodály Orchestral Works*. The 4-CD collection includes the *Háry János* opera as well as the more familiar concert suite, Dances of Galánta and the Concerto for Orchestra. Most of the performances feature the Philharmonia Hungarica with Antal Doráti conducting. DECCA 478 2303

Or for one-stop shopping, look for the 6-CD boxed set *Solti Conducts Bartók*. Despite the name – and a great deal of Bartók – this collection also includes the best-known of Kodály's orchestral music, including Dances of Galánta and the *Háry János* suite, both recorded with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. From the Bartók side, the generous selection includes both his violin concertos, with Kyung-Wha Chung as soloist and Georg Solti conducting the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. DECCA 478 3706

### BARTÓK VIOLIN CONCERTOS

Violinist Gil Shaham includes Bartók's Violin Concerto No.2 on the second volume of his *1930s Violin Concertos* project, in a recording with Stéphane Denève and the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra. It's paired with Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No.2. CANARY CLASSICS 16

If you'd like to hear Bartók's earlier violin concerto, look for Thomas Zehetmair's recording with Iván Fischer and the Budapest Festival Orchestra – excellent value on the budget label Brilliant Classics. BRILLIANT CLASSICS 9436

### SYMPHONIC DANCES

The SSO's recording of Rachmaninoff's Symphonic Dances with Vladimir Ashkenazy is included in the 5-CD set of his complete symphonies and orchestral works, recorded during and around our Rachmaninoff festival in 2007. EXTON 18

An excellent Penn Library online exhibition *Eugene Ormandy: A Centennial Celebration* includes a fascinating audio interview with the conductor, recorded in 1973, in which he recounts working with Rachmaninoff on the world premiere of the *Symphonic Dances*: [www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/rbm/ormandy/sergei.html](http://www.library.upenn.edu/exhibits/rbm/ormandy/sergei.html)

### JAMES GAFFIGAN

James Gaffigan has been recording the Prokofiev symphonies with the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, and the most recent release in the series

presents the two most popular symphonies: the *Classical Symphony* and Symphony No.5.

CHALLENGE 72732

Visit [jamesgaffigan.com](http://jamesgaffigan.com) for his full discography.

### ALINA IBRAGIMOVA

Alina Ibragimova has been recording the Mozart violin sonatas with pianist Cédric Tiberghien for Hyperion, and volume three was released earlier this year. (The fourth is due out in September.)

HYPERION CDA 68143

Or look for her recording of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor with Vladimir Jurowski and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. It's paired with Mendelssohn's youthful (and rarely heard) Violin Concerto in D minor, and *Fingal's Cave* completes the album.

HYPERION CDA 67795

Visit [www.alinaibragimova.com](http://www.alinaibragimova.com) for more recordings.

## Broadcast Diary

### July–August



92.9 ABC  
Classic FM

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

Friday 21 July, noon

### DANCING WITH THE ORCHESTRA

See this program for details.

Saturday 29 July, noon

### MAHLER 3: HEARTWARMING VOICES

David Robertson conductor  
Susan Graham mezzo-soprano  
Sydney Philharmonia Choirs  
Sydney Children's Choir

### SSO Radio

Selected SSO performances, as recorded by the ABC, are available on demand:

[sydneyssomusic.com/SSO\\_radio](http://sydneyssomusic.com/SSO_radio)



### SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA HOUR

Tuesday 8 August, 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)



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DANIELA WENZLER

## James Gaffigan *conductor*

---

Hailed for the natural ease of his conducting and the compelling insight of his musicianship, James Gaffigan is one of the most outstanding American conductors working today. He is Chief Conductor of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra; previous roles include Principal Guest Conductor of the Gürzenich Orchestra, Cologne.

He is also in demand as a guest conductor with leading orchestras and opera houses worldwide. In North America he has conducted the Cleveland Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic and the orchestras of San Francisco, Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, St Louis, Detroit, Dallas, Baltimore and Toronto, as well as the National Symphony Orchestra, among others.

His international career was launched when he won the 2004 Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition. Since then, his European engagements have included the Munich, London, Dresden, Rotterdam, Oslo and Czech philharmonic orchestras; Dresden Staatskapelle, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Konzerthaus Berlin, Zurich Tonhalle, Gothenburg Symphony, Wiener Symphoniker, Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony, Orchestra

of the Age of Enlightenment, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de France, and the Berlin, Leipzig and Stuttgart radio orchestras. In Asia he has conducted the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra and the Seoul Philharmonic.

Since making his opera conducting debut in Zurich in 2005, he has conducted productions for Houston Grand Opera, Chicago Lyric Opera and Washington National Opera as well as the Glyndebourne Festival (*Così fan tutte*, *La Cenerentola* and *Falstaff*), Hamburg Opera (*Salome*), Norwegian Opera (*La Traviata*) and Bavarian State Opera (*Don Giovanni*). He made his Vienna State Opera debut in 2011 with *La Bohème*, followed by *Don Giovanni* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, and will return later this year to conduct *La Traviata*.

Born in New York City, James Gaffigan graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music and the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, Houston. He also participated in the American Academy of Conducting (Aspen Music Festival), was a conducting fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center, and completed three-year tenures as Associate Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony and Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra.

James Gaffigan's most recent appearance with the SSO was in 2015, when he conducted music by Verdi, Rachmaninoff and Shostakovich.



EVA VERMANDEL

## Alina Ibragimova

*violin*

---

Performing music from baroque to new commissions on both modern and period instruments, Alina Ibragimova has established a reputation as an accomplished and intriguing violinist. This was illustrated at the 2015 BBC Proms, in which she performed a concerto with a symphony orchestra, a concerto with a baroque ensemble, and two Royal Albert Hall late-night recitals featuring the complete Bach partitas and sonatas, commanding capacity audiences.

Alina Ibragimova studied at the Moscow Gnesin School before moving with her family to England, where she studied at the Yehudi Menuhin School and Royal College of Music. She was also a member of the Kronberg Academy Master program. Her teachers have included Natasha Boyarsky, Gordan Nikolitch and Christian Tetzlaff.

Engagement highlights include debuts with the Boston and Montreal symphony orchestras, Konzerthaus Berlin, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Wiener Symphoniker, Camerata Salzburg, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Hungarian National Philharmonic, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and the Tokyo Symphony; as well as return appearances with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe and the London and BBC symphony orchestras, and residencies with the Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg and at the Casa della Musica in Porto.

Collaborations over the years have also included the Cleveland and Philadelphia

orchestras, radio orchestras in Cologne, Stuttgart and France, Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and all the BBC orchestras. And she has worked with leading conductors such as Bernard Haitink, John Eliot Gardiner, Valery Gergiev, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Vladimir Jurowski, Charles Mackerras, Mark Elder, Osmo Vänskä and Philippe Herreweghe.

As a recitalist, she has appeared at major venues and festivals worldwide. Her duo partnership with pianist Cédric Tiberghien has featured the complete Beethoven and Mozart violin sonatas at Wigmore Hall, and in 2010 they toured Australia for Musica Viva.

Her accolades include the Royal Philharmonic Society Young Artist Award (2010), Borletti-Buitoni Trust Award (2008) and Classical BRIT Young Performer of the Year (2009), and she was a BBC New Generation Artist (2005–07). She was named an MBE in the 2016 New Year Honours List.

As a soloist-director she has toured with Kremerata Baltica, Britten Sinfonia, Academy of Ancient Music and the Australian Chamber Orchestra. On this tour of Australia, she also performs with the Melbourne, Adelaide and Tasmanian symphony orchestras.

*Alina Ibragimova performs on an Anselmo Bellosio violin (c.1775) generously provided by Georg von Opel.*



# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



## DAVID ROBERTSON

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Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, 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.

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KEITH SAUNDERS

*Janet and Robert Constable with Associate Principal Flute Emma Sholl. 'When we first met her in the Green Room at the Opera House,' recalls Robert, 'it was a lovely hug from Emma that convinced us that this was not only an opportunity to support her chair but to get involved with the orchestra and its supporters. It has been a great experience.'*



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*Stuart Challender, SSO Chief Conductor and Artistic Director 1987–1991*

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SSO Patrons pages correct as of 1 January 2017

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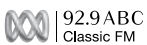
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