

2017 SEASON



**sydney symphony orchestra**

**David Robertson**

The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

# Daniil Trifonov in Recital

INTERNATIONAL PIANISTS IN RECITAL  
PRESENTED BY THEME & VARIATIONS PIANO SERVICES  
Monday 6 March, 7pm





**sydney symphony orchestra**

David Robertson Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

CLASSICAL



**Daniil Trifonov in Recital**

**SCHUMANN**

Kinderszenen (Scenes from Childhood)  
Toccata  
Kreisleriana

**SHOSTAKOVICH** 24 Preludes

and Fugues: selections

**STRAVINSKY** Three Movements from Petrushka

Daniil Trifonov piano *(pictured)*

International Pianists in Recital  
Presented by Theme & Variations  
Piano Services

**Mon 6 Mar 7pm**

City Recital Hall



**Leah's Playlist**

Music by **Brahms, Tchaikovsky** and  
**Bernstein**, and including **HERRMANN**  
Love Scene from Vertigo

**Andrew Haveron** violin-director

**Anna Goldsworthy** piano

**Leah Lynn** Assistant Principal Cello *(pictured)*

Playlist

**Tue 7 Mar 6.30pm**

City Recital Hall



**Symphony for the Common Man**

**FORD** Headlong

**RACHMANINOFF** Piano Concerto No.4\*

**COPLAND** Symphony No.3\*

**Benjamin Northey** conductor

**Simon Tedeschi** piano *(pictured)*

Meet the Music

**Wed 15 Mar 6.30pm**

Tea & Symphony

**Fri 17 Mar 11am^**

*complimentary morning tea from 10am*

Great Classics

**Sat 18 Mar 2pm**



**Kate-Miller Heidke and the SSO**

Featuring songs by Kate Miller-Heidke,  
including *Last Day on Earth, O Vertigo!, Sarah,*  
and highlights from *The Rabbits*

**Benjamin Northey** conductor

**Kate Miller-Heidke** vocalist, keyboard *(pictured)*

**Keir Nuttall** guitar

Meet the Music

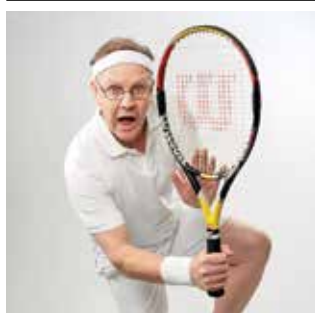
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Kaleidoscope

**Fri 24 Mar 8pm**

**Sat 25 Mar 8pm**

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**RAVEL** Bolero

**DVOŘÁK** New World Symphony: Largo

**HOLST** The Planets: Jupiter

**R STRAUSS** Thus Spake Zarathustra: Introduction

**Toby Thatcher** conductor

**Guy Noble** compere *(pictured)*

Family Concerts

**Sun 26 Mar 2pm**



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*An Alpine Symphony*

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**BRAHMS** Song of Destiny

**BRAHMS** Song of the Fates

**R STRAUSS** An Alpine Symphony

**Asher Fisch** conductor

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Director, Theme & Variations  
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INTERNATIONAL PIANISTS IN RECITAL  
PRESENTED BY THEME & VARIATIONS  
MONDAY 6 MARCH, 7PM  
.....  
CITY RECITAL HALL



**sydney symphony  
orchestra**

**David Robertson**  
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director



# DANIIL TRIFONOV IN RECITAL

**ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810–1856)**  
**Kinderszenen (Childhood Scenes), Op.15**

**Toccata, Op.7**

**Kreisleriana – Fantasias, Op.16**

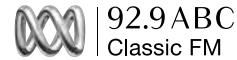
INTERVAL

**DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975)**  
**Selections from 24 Preludes  
and Fugues, Op.87**

- No.4 in E minor*
- No.7 in A major*
- No.2 in A minor*
- No.5 in D major*
- No.24 in D minor*

**IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882–1971)**  
**Three Movements from Petrushka**

- Russian Dance*
- Petrushka's Cell*
- The Shrovetide Fair*



Daniil Trifonov's performance of this recital program at the Melbourne Recital Centre on 14 March will be recorded by ABC Classic FM for broadcast on Sunday 26 March at 5pm.  
.....

Pre-concert talk by David Larkin at 6.15pm in the First Floor Reception Room. For speaker biographies visit [sydney-symphony.com/talk-bios](http://sydney-symphony.com/talk-bios).  
.....

Estimated durations:  
18 minutes, 8 minutes, 28 minutes,  
20-minute interval, 31 minutes,  
15 minutes  
.....

The recital will conclude at approximately 9.15pm.



Daniil Trifonov's performances are generously supported by the Berg Family Foundation.

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## Daniil Trifonov

*piano*

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Born in Nizhny Novgorod in 1991, Daniil Trifonov studied at the Moscow Gnesin School of Music (class of Tatiana Zelikman), and from 2006 to 2009 he also studied composition. He has continued to compose, premiering his own piano concerto in 2014 in Cleveland. Since 2009, he has studied piano with Sergei Babayan at the Cleveland Institute of Music.

He attracted wide attention during the 2010–11 season, when he won medals at the Chopin Competition in Warsaw (Third Prize), the Rubinstein Competition in Tel Aviv (First Prize) and the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow (First Prize and Grand Prix).

Since then he has appeared with the world's most illustrious orchestras and conductors, including the Vienna Philharmonic, Mariinsky and London Symphony orchestras (Valery Gergiev), Israel Philharmonic (Zubin Mehta), Philharmonia Orchestra (Lorin Maazel), Los Angeles Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony and Minnesota Orchestra (Osmo Vänskä), Russian National Orchestra (Mikhail Pletnev), New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and the Chicago Symphony and Royal Philharmonic orchestras (Charles Dutoit).

He has given recitals at leading venues worldwide and appeared for the major festivals in Europe and the USA. As a chamber musician he has collaborated with Nicholas Angelich,

Renaud Capuçon, Gautier Capuçon, Yuri Bashmet, Vilde Frang, Sergei Babayan and the Pavel Haas Quartet.

In the 2015–16 season he performed the complete Rachmaninoff concertos with the New York Philharmonic and with the Philharmonia Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall. This season he performs the concertos with the Mariinsky and Munich Philharmonic orchestras and Valery Gergiev. In the 2016–17 season he is also Capell-Virtuos with the Staatskapelle Dresden – a residency including concerts at the BBC Proms, Salzburg Easter Festival and Vienna Musikverein – and he was resident at the 2016 Edinburgh Festival.

His solo recordings include the Grammy-nominated *Trifonov: The Carnegie Recital, Transcendental* (Liszt études), a Chopin recital album and *Rachmaninov Variations*, which includes the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. He has also recorded Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto with Gergiev and the Mariinsky Orchestra.

On this visit to Australia he makes debut appearances with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra as well as the SSO and will also appear at the Melbourne Recital Centre.

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





Portrait of Robert Schumann from 1839, the year following *Kinderszenen* and *Kreisleriana* (Josef Kriehuber).

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

### Robert Schumann (1810–1856)

#### Kinderszenen

#### Toccatà

#### Kreisleriana

*Introduction and program notes by David Garrett*

Schumann was obsessed with the piano, first as a player, then as a composer.

To the piano he entrusted many of his most personal, original, and marvellous ideas. He fell in love with piano students – first with Ernestine von Fricken, then with one of his fellow students in the studio of Friedrich Wieck, his teacher’s daughter Clara. She was soon acknowledged as the finest young female pianist of her time. Wieck opposed the couple’s marriage. Largely forbidden from communicating with Clara face to face, Schumann used music instead: ‘It’s very curious, but if I write much to you, I can’t compose. The music goes all to you.’

*Kreisleriana* and *Kinderszenen* were composed in early 1838, on a roller coaster ride of hope and despair. Impatience was typical of Robert Schumann – it had already led him to cripple his right hand using a mechanical device aimed at strengthening the fourth finger. Presumably he could no longer play his most demanding music, including the Toccata. He became more interested in counterpoint than in virtuosity per se. Robert claimed fancifully to Clara that he learnt counterpoint from his literary hero, Romantic writer Jean Paul, and mused:

*It is most extraordinary how I write everything in canon,  
and then only detect the imitation afterwards, and often find  
inversions, rhythms in contrary motion, etc.*

A truer teacher was Johann Sebastian Bach. Schumann was ever deepening his study of Bach’s music, of which he is the Romantic heir – Schumann found in Bach a latent Romanticism. Bach is a sub-text in two of Schumann’s most characteristically Romantic creations, *Kreisleriana* and *Kinderszenen*.

We may be grateful that his own romantic crisis drove Schumann to the piano. Once he and Clara were married, in 1840, he temporarily gave up composing for solo piano in favour of song.



## Kinderszenen (Scenes from Childhood), Op.15

*Von fremden Ländern und Menschen*

*(Of Foreign Lands and People)*

*Curiose Geschichte (A Curious Story)*

*Hasche-Mann (Catch Me If You Can)*

*Bittendes Kind (Pleading Child)*

*Glückes genug (Perfect Happiness)*

*Wichtige Begebenheit (An Important Event)*

*Träumerei (Dreaming)*

*Am Camin (At the Fireside)*

*Ritter vom Steckenpferd (Knight of the Hobbyhorse)*

*Fast zu ernst (Almost Too Serious)*

*Fürchtenmachen (Frightening)*

*Kind im Einschlummern (Child Falling Asleep)*

*Der Dichter spricht (The Poet Speaks)*

Schumann was the first composer to celebrate childhood (Bizet, Mussorgsky, Debussy and Mahler were to follow). Whereas Schumann's *Album for the Young*, assembled ten years later, was for children to play, *Kinderszenen* consists of 13 pieces 'by a big child', as its composer describes himself - 'reminders for people who have grown up'. Though 'easy for children', this music is intended, Schumann insists, for adults. The idea may have been suggested by Clara's comment, in a letter to Robert, that sometimes he seemed to her like a child. He told her that when she played these pieces she would have to forget she was a virtuosa.

Although the composer claimed the titles came to him after the music, there is no question the world of childhood was his inspiration. It could have been anticipation of having children of his own that pushed Schumann towards reminiscence of childhood, achieving a simplicity and touching expression all the more remarkable in that it was jostling in his imagination with the wild, crazed world of *Kreislariana*. Equally remarkable in this very self-aware music is its avoidance of maudlin sentimentality. Distilling a single poetic idea, each piece seems, as we hear it, a world rather than a miniature.

Schumann begins as he means to go on, with a rising interval, then four notes descending by degrees (if a fifth note were added we would have Schumann's 'Clara' motif). This musical material is more or less obviously referred to in each of the pieces that follow. It is a story-teller's opening ('Once upon a time...'), a mode captured in the title 'about foreign lands and people'. Hidden in an inner part, when the theme reappears, are the notes B-A-C-H. Schumann's resourcefulness owes much to his intensive study, around this time, of Bach's keyboard works.



◀ Clara Wieck was to become one of the leading concert pianists of her day. Schumann told her that when she played *Kinderszenen* she would have to forget she was a virtuosa.

In some of the pieces the title is the clue to the music: 'Catch me if you can' (sometimes given in English as Blind Man's Buff), 'Pleading child', 'Hobbyhorse', 'Child falling asleep'. Other pieces evoke curiosity as to what memories of childhood the music reflects. The young Schumann wrote in his diary that 'notes in themselves cannot really paint what the emotions have not already painted'. This applies to all the *Kinderszenen*, but perhaps most to the piece that has become just about Schumann's most popular composition, *Träumerei* (Dreaming). Ineffable beauty conceals the ingenuity with which Schumann makes the effect. By shifting where the main accent falls from bar to bar, the music gives the impression of a sequence of changing time signatures: 5/4, 3/4, 2/4, 2/4 and 4/4 time. Perspiration as well as inspiration! Dreams are rarely simple...

Finally the poet, whose expression up to then has been in music, 'speaks' in a recitative like a singer's – indeed, the ending of *Kinderszenen* recalls that of Schumann song-cycles such as *Dichterliebe* (Poet's Love), winding down into silence.

## Toccatà, Op.7

In this recital program the title 'Toccatà' might be thought to nod to Schumann's hero J.S. Bach, as Schumann does at times in both *Kinderszenen* and *Kreisleriana*.

But the toccata is much earlier than those works (dating in its first version from 1830 in Heidelberg) and it is about keyboard virtuosity, a toccata in the sense of a technically demanding concert study. Schumann remained satisfied with this toccata, as with few among his early piano pieces.

At first he believed he had succeeded in writing the hardest thing to play ever written for the piano. He became annoyed that the dedicatee of the toccata (in its definitive form of 1833), his friend and exact contemporary, Ludwig Schuncke, had never played it. 'I therefore played it, one day, in my room, hoping that having heard it, he would study it. Then, a long time after...I was amazed to hear Schuncke play my toccata perfectly. He admitted that he had sometimes listened to me, in secret, and that he had then studied the toccata in his head, silently, without a piano.'

The difficulties Schuncke had overcome, with such seeming ease, include double notes, octaves, repeated notes requiring rapid finger changes, wide skips, contrasts of legato and staccato and of very loud and very soft (this summary is Joan Chissell's). The quiet conclusion suggests all effort spent; the forward momentum has been relentless up to then. Yet although the toccata character is kept up throughout, there is plentiful contrast. For this is Schumann's first piece in sonata form. The second subject, more sustained and singing than the torrent of semiquavers, appears first in the left hand, in G major.

In his book on Schumann, Martin Geck fantasises about Robert practising octaves like a man possessed, seeing in his mind's eye Clara practising at exactly the same time in another part of Friedrich Wieck's house. For virtuoso pieces like the toccata, Robert passed the baton to her. By 1834 he had injured his hand, and Schuncke had died of that Romantic disease 'galloping consumption'.

## Kreisleriana – Fantasias, Op.16

- I *Äußerst bewegt* [extremely turbulent]
- II *Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch* [fervent and not too quick] –  
*Intermezzo I – Intermezzo II*
- III *Sehr aufgereg*t [very agitated]
- IV *Sehr langsam* [very slow]
- V *Sehr lebhaft* [very lively]
- VI *Sehr langsam* [very slow]
- VII *Sehr rasch* [very quick]
- VIII *Schnell und spielend* [fast and with ease]

Schumann's tempo indications for *Kreisleriana* all stress fastness, or slowness, to some extreme degree. The near-panic of the beginning of the music plunges to the limits of expression, 'agitated to the utmost'. Clara Wieck reacted by telling Robert Schumann 'sometimes your music actually frightens me'. The slow pieces, particularly the fourth and sixth, are some of the strangest music Schumann ever wrote – deeply introspective, and resorting to near-speech in music, issuing in more lyrical outpourings. Schumann asked Clara, 'Do you ever play my *Kreisleriana*? Some of the pages betray a really desperate love.' He wanted to dedicate it to her, since 'in it, you and a theme or 'idea' of yours play the principal role'. But Clara's father Friedrich Wieck, who was opposing his daughter's marriage to Schumann, was enraged at this plan. Instead, Schumann dedicated *Kreisleriana* to Frédéric Chopin. Like the Etudes of Chopin, *Kreisleriana* owes much to recent developments in piano building – particularly in the resonance from the middle and lower reaches of the keyboard.

Schumann declared that, among all the piano pieces he completed in the productive year from 1838 to 1839 (including the *Kinderszenen*, the *Fantasie in C* and the *Humoresque*), '*Kreisleriana* is the dearest to me'. *Kreisleriana* is a key to Romanticism – so new, so original, with so many unconventional, unclassical features. Schumann wrote to Clara in April 1838, the month before he began *Kreisleriana*: 'I am affected by everything that goes on in the world and think it over in my own way, politics, literature and people, and then I long to express my feelings and find an outlet for them in music. That is why my compositions are sometimes difficult to understand, because they are connected with distant interests; and sometimes striking, because everything extraordinary that happens impresses me and impels me to express it in music.'

This title may have been, for Schumann, a kind of disguise, for outrageous self-revelation. Much of the music seems passionate, frenzied, neurotic. These were traits of Schumann at the time of composing, but more famously of the character who gave Schumann his title. Johannes Kreisler, a fictional creation of E.T.A. Hoffmann,

**'Do you ever play my  
*Kreisleriana*? Some  
of the pages betray a  
really desperate love.'**

**SCHUMANN TO CLARA WIECK**

is an eccentric musician, half mad, alternating between depression and wild, ingenious flights of fancy. *Kreiseriana* was Hoffmann's title for short stories, anecdotes and musical criticism linked by the fictitious Kreiser. They had become famous, among the 'Tales of Hoffmann'. Hoffmann wrote about music with authority – this lawyer by profession, was also writer, conductor, concert promoter and composer. Kreiser was not a self-portrait, but Schumann believed Hoffmann had based the character on Ludwig Böhner (1787–1869), an eccentric Thuringian musician whose rambling musical discourses Schumann had witnessed.

Kreiser appears most memorably in a novel Hoffmann left unfinished at his death in 1812, *Kater Murr*, whose full title is *Growler the Cat's Philosophy of Life Together with Fragments of the Biography of Kapellmeister Johannes Kreiser from Random Sheets of Printer's Waste*. Growler the Cat – a caricature of bourgeois complacency – utters platitudes about how to grow into a big cat. But he is continually interrupted by the fragments of Kreiser's biography, which he had torn up to use for notepaper. Hence the fragmented, episodic form of the story, which appealed so much to Schumann. The music, he claimed, preceded the title, but Hoffmann's Kreiser writings matched Schumann's musical creations: so like literary texts, albeit of the new, Romantic type. The music resembles narrative, but no coherent story is told. 'Fantasy pictures' was Schumann's original title, and the music is indeed fantastic, in the Hoffmann manner of dizzying shifts between fantasy and reality. These fantasies are nightmares, hallucinations, phantoms.

Kreiser was a tormented, even schizoid soul. Schumann had looked into that abyss, when the turmoil of his emotional life around Clara drove him to neurosis and heavy drinking. But early in 1838 came recovery, and the rich creativity of these years continued. Having finished *Kinderszenen*, Schumann completed a draft of *Kreiseriana* in early May, claiming with some exaggeration that he had composed the music in four days, and telling Clara 'whole new worlds are opening up to me'.

The wildness of *Kreiseriana*, which frightened Clara, shows that Schumann's idea of her contained a considerable element of fantasy. Yet she must have relished musical devices showing Schumann far from mad, and in complete control of the 'new worlds'. The wild impulsiveness of Florestan is tamed by the other personification of Schumann's dual personality, the reflective, soulful Eusebius. This happens not so much in alternating pieces, since the even-numbered slow pieces contain their own extremes and strangeness, but within each piece.

Schumann's new language, visionary and suggestive, comes allied with ingenious compositional craft. Schumann's own deep

**'Fantasy pictures' was Schumann's original title, and the music is indeed fantastic...**



◀ Frontispiece from the 1855 edition of ETA Hoffmann's *Kater Murr*.

immersion, at this time, in Bach (especially his *Well-Tempered Clavier*) is evident in passages of the *Kreisleriana* such as the dance-like episode in the second piece, the fugato of the seventh, and the rhythmic accentuation of the triplets in the middle section of the first piece making a cantilena stand out. *Kreisleriana* is a cycle, through thematic connections sensed rather than explicit, and key relationships, alternating pieces in minor keys with related major keys – all the even-numbered pieces are in B flat major.

The eighth piece, breaking the pattern, may have been an afterthought. Two days after his diary recorded that he had completed the cycle, Schumann wrote: 'Kreisler piece in G minor, 6/8, with D minor trio, composed in fire.' Indeed, and so was the whole cycle. No wonder it needed its literary *Doppelgänger*, Kapellmeister Kreisler. This last piece comes to a fading, vanishing ending. *Kreisleriana* is a fanciful, eccentric world, and to surrender to it is to plunge to the heart of Romantic music. We may find this easier than did Schumann's contemporaries. Liszt was reluctant to program the *Kreisleriana*, because 'they are too difficult for the public to digest'. Clara felt that way too. But had not Johannes Kreisler deplored the failure of the world to recognise true art?

DAVID GARRETT © 2017



## Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975)

### Four Preludes and Fugues from Op.87

We first encounter the term 'fuga' in music as early as the 14th century. Palestrina, Dufay and Josquin used it in their vocal compositions for works that we would call canons; to this day we refer to the 'voices' of a fugue (the Russians call them *golosa*) as a way of describing the independently moving parts. Eventually keyboard fugues made their appearance in the output of many composers, including the illustrious Frescobaldi, whose music was known to JS Bach. It is generally agreed that Bach's fugues represent the summation of this kind of composition.

After the Baroque era, the writing of polyphonic keyboard music receded into the background. Classical masters occasionally turned to fugues at the keyboard: many of Mozart's fugues lie relatively early in his output, whereas Beethoven came to serious polyphony late in his career and wrestled with the old forms in some of his greatest keyboard works, most notably the wonderful fugue in the Sonata Op.110 and the lengthy fugue in the *Hammerklavier* Sonata. I use the word 'wrestled' advisedly: polyphony was no longer the common currency of composition and Beethoven had great trouble conquering it.

It needs to be said here that fitting complex polyphonic lines to the capacities and limitations of ten fingers is a second obstacle to be overcome by the composer after the pure working out of the fugue is accomplished. It is a minor miracle that the fugues of Bach and Shostakovich (among many others) are possible on a keyboard at all, as distinct from an ensemble of voices or instruments.

Nineteenth-century piano music was concerned with discoveries in the realms of harmony and form and so excursions into fugue were fairly infrequent. We have repertoire such as Mendelssohn's Bach-like Six Preludes and Fugues Op.35, Schumann's lyrical Four Fugues Op.72, and the big fugue that concludes Brahms's Variations on a Theme of Handel. In addition to these there is a fine example of fugue in Franck's Prelude, Chorale and Fugue and the remarkable model in Liszt's Sonata. But these are exceptions to the rule.

The 20th century proved to be a more contrapuntally oriented time. On the piano, apart from the Shostakovich collection, there is the Shchedrin cycle of Preludes and Fugues in every key, as well as Hindemith's extraordinary *Ludus Tonalis*, which draws on contrapuntal techniques not even used by Bach. This is all by way of saying that the Shostakovich Preludes and Fugues do have a context within the history of piano music. Yet in their day, at the very end of the Stalin era, they were received with some caution, as the bogey of 'formalism' in music was still very much alive in



◀ Shostakovich's recitals and chamber concerts would often include a selection from his Preludes and Fugues.

the Soviet Union. One had to watch out for one's health in those dreadful times!

In July 1950, Shostakovich headed the Soviet delegation to the Bach bicentenary celebrations held in Leipzig and took part in a concert that included the Bach Concerto for three keyboards and orchestra. The pianists were Tatiana Nikolayeva, Pavel Serebriakov and Shostakovich himself, who stepped in at the last moment for Maria Yudina, who had injured a finger. It was after this that Shostakovich first considered writing preludes and fugues for the piano. Inspired, he worked at terrific speed, and in 1951 presented his 24 Preludes and Fugues at meetings of the Union of Composers of the USSR.

At first the composer thought that he would write a set of technical exercises with the aim of demonstrating mastery of polyphonic techniques, as had Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky. But the work took on a life of its own and finished up as a large cycle of pieces in every key, clearly with Bach's twin volumes of *The Well-Tempered Clavier* in mind.

Should they be performed as a cycle? Tatiana Nikolayeva – the work's secret dedicatee as well as its first performer in 1952 – couldn't resist the challenge: two-and-a-half hours of music! Furthermore, she claimed that Shostakovich intended for the set to be played in its entirety. 'When played separately, the pieces acquire a "divertimento" character,' she said. Shostakovich himself seems to have disagreed: 'I do not regard this composition as a cycle. It does not need to be played from the first to the last prelude and fugue. In my opinion this is not essential, in fact it might even harm the work.... It would be more correct,

### **Nikolayeva and Op.87**

**Russian pianist Tatiana Nikolayeva visited Australia way back during the Soviet era. I had the pleasure of meeting her and of course asked her about the Shostakovich Preludes and Fugues and what she remembered about their genesis. She told me that what jolted her most was the phenomenal speed and assurance with which Shostakovich tackled and completed this formidable task, exhibiting incredible powers of creative concentration. She was in constant communication with the composer during this time and went to him to play the pieces as they rolled off his mental printing press. She told me that she did not then consider performing the complete cycle, but in due course she became known for doing precisely that, and eventually recorded the set for the Melodiya label. She worked from the manuscript, which, she said, had its own particular expressive quality.**

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## Nobuyuki Tsujii

Nobuyuki Tsujii makes his Sydney recital debut.

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**MOZART** Sonata in B flat, K570

**BEETHOVEN** Moonlight Sonata, Op.27 No.2

**BEETHOVEN** Appassionata Sonata, Op.57



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INTERNATIONAL PIANISTS IN RECITAL

**MON 3 JUL 7PM**



## Imogen Cooper

Music by Beethoven and Haydn, with a moody modern take on a Renaissance hit.

**BEETHOVEN** Bagatelles and Variations

**HAYDN** Sonata in C minor, Hob.XVI:20

**ADÈS** Darknesse Visible

**BEETHOVEN** Sonata in A flat, Op.110



## Alexander Gavrylyuk

Alexander Gavrylyuk performs a classic virtuoso recital, to include:

**BACH trans. Busoni**

Toccata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565

**HAYDN** Sonata in B minor, Hob.XVI: 32

**CHOPIN** Etudes, Op.10: selections

**SCRIABIN** Piano Sonata No.5

**RACHMANINOFF** Sonata No.2 (1931)

INTERNATIONAL PIANISTS IN RECITAL

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therefore to play a group of six, or maybe even three of four of the pieces.'

That is the approach Daniil Trifonov has adopted for this recital, choosing four of the preludes and fugues and reordering them to make two pairs in major–minor modes.

ADAPTED FROM A NOTE BY LARRY SITSKY © 2007

### **No.7 in A major**

*Allegro poco moderato – Allegretto*

The prelude begins gently, evoking the world of Bach in delicate and luminous music. An iridescent fugue in three voices manages to sound easy going without ever stopping for breath. It is built from the simplest of themes: just an A major chord ascending and descending.

### **No.2 in A minor**

*Allegro – Allegretto*

In his comprehensive study of Opus 87, Mark Mazullo vividly describes the A minor prelude's rapidly streaming semiquavers as 'hurled down as lightning bolts...an unbroken churning-out of material in a single contrapuntal line'. As the line is passed between the two hands, there's a suggestion of the famous C major prelude that begins Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*. The dizzying fugue is angular, its three voices sharply defined.

### **No.5 in D major**

*Allegretto – Allegretto*

This pair evokes the elegant atmosphere of the 18th century, as heard through 20th-century ears. As with No.7, this is graceful and sunny music, tender and yet nonchalant. Mazullo compares the prelude with Ravel: his *Pavane pour une infante défunte* and the slow movement of the G major piano concerto. At the centre of the texture is a strummed accompaniment in the Baroque 'style brisé'. The almost frivolous fugue motif is characterised by detached repeated notes

### **No.24 in D minor**

*Andante – Moderato*

Trifonov concludes with the cycle's monumental finale, three times as long as the other pairs. Its grand scale carries over into the structure and the textures as well as the emotional range. Nikolayeva compared No.24 with the finale of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony, not just in its expression but also in its journey from D minor to D major. The solemn melodic ideas of the prelude have been linked to motifs in Shostakovich's song cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry*. The four-voice fugue is one of just two double fugues in the cycle. But as it becomes progressively more frenzied it seems to act less and less like a fugue: there is nothing 'academic' or 'formalist' here.



After this program went to print we were advised that Daniil Trifonov would be performing five of the Op.87 preludes and fugues, adding the following to the beginning of his selection:

### **No.4 in E minor**

*Andante – Adagio*

## Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)

### Three Movements from *Petrushka* (1921)

*Danse russe (Russian Dance)*

*Chez Pétrouchka (Petrushka's Cell)*

*La Semaine Grasse (The Shrovetide Fair)*

Stravinsky's *Petrushka* music began life in 1910 as a *Konzertstück* (Concert Piece) for piano and orchestra, a small project before he embarked on *The Rite of Spring*. At Diaghilev's prompting it became a ballet, although the piano retained its prominence, effectively taking the 'title role' as the puppet. *Three Movements from Petrushka*, composed a decade later, corresponds to the original material of the *Konzertstück*: the *Russkaya*, or Russian Dance, heard in the first tableau of the ballet; the second tableau (Petrushka's despairing solo); and the dances of the fourth tableau with what became the concert ending of the ballet. Stravinsky's transcription – even if he would rather we not call it that – brings the music full circle.

Stravinsky insisted that the *Three Movements from Petrushka* was not a 'mere' act of transcription: that it should not be played with the original orchestra in mind because the piano could not imitate the orchestra, and that it should not be heard with reference to the original dramatic context, but as *piano music*.

The original ideas were in essence pianistic. In addition to the image of a puppet-come-to-life, one scenario for the *Konzertstück* was founded on a 'combat' between piano and orchestra. Stravinsky envisaged a long-haired musician of the Romantic tradition (Liszt perhaps?) seated at the piano rolling 'incongruous objects' on the keyboard, while his exasperated colleagues make vehement protests. We hear this best towards the beginning of *Petrushka's Cell*, in which the piano cadenza – black keys in the left hand, white keys in the right – receives a furious 'caterwaul' of tremolandos in reply.

The suggestive bitonality of the black and white keys manifests itself throughout the music – including the famous 'Petrushka chord' with which the piece ends – and for Stravinsky this was Petrushka's voice, his way of insulting the crowd. Although the Petrushka of the *ballet* emerges with a good measure of Pierrot – 'the immortal and unhappy hero of every fair in all countries' – the Petrushka of the *Konzertstück* was closer to his origins in the Russian Shrovetide Fairs, and to his cousins, the Italian Pulcinello and the English Punch. These characters are devil-may-care oddballs, impudent disturbers of the peace, always obnoxious and often obscene.

Since the Petrushka puppet plays always begin with a silly, frenetic dance, the *Russian Dance* is in the *moto perpetuo* style.



The distinctive 'Petrushka chord' has the right hand playing on the white keys while the left plays on the black keys – bitonality that literally falls under the hands.

The artist Benois described it as 'a devilishly infectious excitement alternated with strange digressions into tenderness', the whole thing breaking off abruptly after reaching a paroxysm. The *Shrovetide Fair* is a parade of cunning borrowings from traditional Russian music.

Ironically, given Stravinsky's *Konzertstück* image of musical combat, the composition of the *Three Movements* came about from a dispute involving a virtuoso in the Romantic tradition. Arthur Rubinstein reports that he annoyed Stravinsky by describing his *Piano-Rag-Music* (1919) as more for percussion than his kind of piano. Stravinsky responded: 'The piano is nothing but a utility instrument and sounds right only as percussion.' Somehow the argument ended with Rubinstein playing parts of the second tableau from the *Petrushka* ballet, delighting the composer with his intricate pedalling techniques, and with Stravinsky promising the pianist 'a sonata made of the material of *Petrushka*'.

Stravinsky began work in 1921, enthralled by his task: 'to provide piano virtuosos with a piece having sufficient scope to enable them to add to their modern repertory and display their technique.' In this he succeeded – the music is breathtakingly demanding. Stravinsky himself would not play it (the only one of his piano works to elude his technique), and even Rubinstein admitted the *Three Movements* 'very difficult to perform'.

But despite its diabolical difficulty, the music is completely idiomatic – a result of Stravinsky's habit of composing at the piano. 'Fingers are not to be despised,' he once said, 'they are great inspirers, and, in contact with a musical instrument, often give birth to subconscious ideas which might otherwise never come to life.' This is pure piano music: not, as Stravinsky once explained in a pre-concert lecture, a piano reduction, 'but better a piece written especially for the piano, or stated differently, piano music. I insist on this point...' Paradoxically, when Rubinstein performed the work in the Salle Gaveau, Stravinsky reported that he made it 'sound as I heard it by the orchestra more than as a piano piece'.

YVONNE FRINDLE © 2004/2017



**Stravinsky with Vaslav Nijinsky in costume as *Petrushka*.**



## MORE MUSIC

### SCHUMANN

David Garrett, who wrote the program notes for tonight's Schumann pieces recommends Horowitz's recordings from the 1960s. Schumann was Horowitz's favourite German composer and his performances of *Kinderszenen*, *Kreisleriana* and the Toccata can be found together with the *Arabeske* and *Blumenstück* on a CBS Masterworks release.

CBS MASTERWORKS 42409

### SHOSTAKOVICH

If you'd like to hear the dedicatee Tatiana Nikolayeva perform Shostakovich's Preludes and Fugues, there are several releases to choose from. She recorded the complete set (nearly three hours of music) a number of times, including in 1990 for Hyperion.

HYPERION 66441/4

Vladimir Ashkenazy performs the Preludes and Fugues in Decca's 5-CD set *Shostakovich: Piano Music, Chamber Works*.

DECCA 475 7425

### STRAVINSKY

Maurizio Pollini's recording of the *Three Pieces from Petrushka* leads an exhilarating album of Stravinsky, Prokofiev (Sonata No.7), Webern (Variations, Op.27) and Boulez (Sonata No.2). Recorded in the 1970s and available on Deutsche Grammophon's The Originals label.

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 447 4312

And Louis Lortie includes the *Three Pieces in 20th Century Original Piano Transcriptions*, alongside selections from Prokofiev's own transcription of music from his *Romeo and Juliet* ballet, Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* for one piano, and (with Hélène Mercier) Ravel's two-piano version of *La Valse*.

CHANDOS 8733

### DANIIL TRIFONOV

Daniil Trifonov's most recent solo album is *Transcendental*, a 2-CD collection of etudes by Franz Liszt, including the Paganini Etudes as well as the Transcendental Etudes.

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON

And in an album released in February, he plays Rachmaninoff piano trios with violinist Gidon Kremer and cellist Giedre Dirvanauskaitė, together with a violin and piano arrangement of the slow movement from Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON

His *Rachmaninov Variations* album from 2015 combines sets of solo piano variations (on themes by Chopin

and Corelli) with the hugely popular Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, accompanied by the Philadelphia Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. As an added treat, you can hear Trifonov-composer in music of his own, *Rachmaniana*.

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON

Finally, if you'd like to see Trifonov in Shostakovich's First Piano Concerto (with its featured trumpet part), search YouTube for his performance conducted by Valery Gergiev.

## Broadcast Diary

### March



92.9 ABC  
Classic FM

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

Thursday 9 March, 10pm

**DOHNÁNYI CONDUCTS BRAHMS** (2016)

**Christoph von Dohnányi** conductor

**Camilla Tilling** soprano

Lutosławski, Berg, Brahms

Sunday 26 March, 5pm

**DANIIL TRIFONOV IN RECITAL**

Schumann, Shostakovich, Stravinsky

Performance recorded at the Melbourne Recital Centre on 14 March

Friday 31 March, noon

**LENINGRAD SYMPHONY** (2016)

**Oleg Caetani** conductor

**Narek Hakhnazaryan** cello

P Stanhope, Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich

### SSO Radio

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

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



### SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA HOUR

Tuesday 14 March, 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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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. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence, and it is well on its way to becoming the premier orchestra of the Asia Pacific region.

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, and this is David Robertson's fourth year as Chief Conductor. The orchestra's history also boasts collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

A legacy of the SSO's ABC origins is a tradition of presenting visiting guest soloists in recital, which saw singers and instrumentalists of all kinds performing solo programs in Sydney concerts, on air from the studio, and in major regional centres. In addition to the longstanding International Pianists in Recital series, the SSO also presents special event recitals including, in 2017, Pieter Wispelwey's performance of the complete Bach cello suites.

The SSO's award-winning Learning and Engagement program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, and the orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and commissions.



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Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

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