



2017 SEASON



sydney symphony orchestra

David Robertson

The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

Tchaikovsky's Pathétique

APT MASTER SERIES

Wednesday 10 May, 8pm

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sydney symphony orchestra

David Robertson Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

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BERLIOZ Le Corsaire – Overture

CHOPIN Piano Concerto No.2

DVOŘÁK Symphony No.8

Bramwell Tovey conductor

Nobuyuki Tsujii piano

Emirates Metro Series

Fri 19 May 8pm

Special Event

Sat 20 May 8pm

■ A BMW Season Highlight

Sydney Opera House

Nobuyuki Tsujii in Recital

JS BACH Italian Concerto, BWV 971

MOZART Sonata in B flat, K570

BEETHOVEN Moonlight Sonata, Op.27 No.2

BEETHOVEN Appassionata Sonata, Op.57

Nobuyuki Tsujii piano

Special Event

Mon 22 May 7pm

City Recital Hall



Morning Inspiration

Mozart & Haydn in the City

HAYDN Symphony No.6, Morning

MOZART arr. Haveron

Duo concertante (after String Quintet, K516)

Andrew Haveron violin-director

Roger Benedict viola (pictured)

Mozart in the City

Thu 25 May 7pm

City Recital Hall



Nick's Playlist

Music by MOZART, BRUCKNER and BERLIOZ, and including HANDEL The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba

Benjamin Northey conductor

Playlist

Tue 30 May 6.30pm

City Recital Hall



Don Quixote

Fantastic Variations

HAYDN Symphony No.60 (Il distratto)*

CARTER Variations for Orchestra

R STRAUSS Don Quixote*

David Robertson conductor

Umberto Clerici cello (pictured)

Tobias Breider viola

Thursday Afternoon Symphony

Thu 15 Jun 1.30pm

Tea & Symphony

Fri 16 Jun 11am*

complimentary morning tea from 10am

Great Classics

Sat 17 Jun 2pm

Sydney Opera House



Pelléas et Mélisande

Opera in the Concert Hall

DEBUSSY Pelléas et Mélisande

Sung in French with English surtitles

Charles Dutoit conductor

Sandrine Piau soprano (Mélisande)

Elliot Madore baritone (Pelléas)

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

APT Master Series

Fri 23 Jun 7pm

Sat 24 Jun 7pm

Wed 28 Jun 7pm

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Jacqueline Dark mezzo-soprano

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs (Fri, Sat only)

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Fri 9 Jun 8pm

Sat 10 Jun 2pm

Sat 10 Jun 8pm

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WELCOME



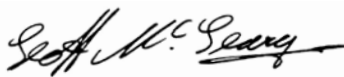
Welcome to tonight's concert in the APT Master Series. We are delighted to be the presenting partner of the SSO's flagship series and to be supporting a program with some great Russian music just as we launch our new Russia tours.

This week Latvian violinist Baiba Skride makes a welcome return to the Concert Hall stage after her 2010 Sydney debut and we'll be able to enjoy her gorgeous sound in Prokofiev's first violin concerto. Her fellow-countryman Andris Poga is conducting the SSO for the first time, and has chosen Tchaikovsky's powerful sixth and final symphony, the *Pathétique*, for the second half of the program, with Wagner's *Rienzi* overture to begin.

Tonight promises to be a thrilling musical experience, from the drama-in-miniature of Wagner's overture to the storytelling character of Prokofiev's beautiful concerto and the heart-on-sleeve emotions of Tchaikovsky's symphony.

A concert like this can sweep you away on a journey of the imagination and leave you moved and inspired. Real-world journeys are the same, and at APT we aim to provide unforgettable experiences that will take you to extraordinary destinations in nearly every part of the world. These include Russia, birthplace of two of tonight's composers, and Latvia, the homeland of our guest artists, in cruises and tours that take in Russia and the Baltics – allowing you to discover iconic and majestic places and rich cultures while enjoying the elegant comfort for which we are known.

We hope you enjoy tonight's performance and that it leaves you inspired to explore the world, and we look forward to seeing you at future APT Master Series concerts during the year.



Geoff McGeary OAM
APT Company Owner



**sydney symphony
orchestra**

David Robertson

Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

APT MASTER SERIES

WEDNESDAY 10 MAY, 8PM

FRIDAY 12 MAY, 8PM

SATURDAY 13 MAY, 8PM

MONDAYS @ 7PM

MONDAY 15 MAY, 7PM

.....
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL

TCHAIKOVSKY'S PATHÉTIQUE

Andris Poga *conductor*

Baiba Skride *violin*

RICHARD WAGNER (1813–1883)

Overture to the opera *Rienzi*

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891–1953)

Violin Concerto No.1 in D, Op.19

Andantino – Andante assai

Scherzo (Vivacissimo)

Moderato – Allegro moderato – Moderato – Più tranquillo

INTERVAL

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893)

Symphony No.6 in B minor, Op.74, Pathétique

Adagio – Allegro non troppo

Allegro con grazia

Allegro molto vivace

Finale (Adagio lamentoso – Andante)



**92.9 ABC
Classic FM**

Saturday's performance will be recorded by ABC Classic FM for broadcast on Saturday 20 May at noon.

.....
Pre-concert talk by Yvonne Frindle in the Northern Foyer 45 minutes before each performance.

.....
Estimated durations:

12 minutes, 23 minutes,
20-minute interval, 47 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 9.55pm (8.55pm on Monday).

.....
COVER IMAGE: Violin (1918) by Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin (1817–1939)

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Portrait of Tchaikovsky by Nikolai Dmitriyevich Kuznetsov – painted in 1893, the year Tchaikovsky wrote his Sixth Symphony and the last year of his life. It was praised by many, including Tchaikovsky himself: ‘I made the acquaintance of the painter N.D. Kuznetsov, who wished to paint my portrait, and this he carried out with exceptional success, as others have said and as I, too, think. Those citizens of Odessa who came to look at this portrait during the sittings expressed their extraordinary delight, amazement, and joy over the fact that such a splendid work of art was being painted in their city. The portrait was painted rather hurriedly, and that is why it may possibly not have the desired finish in the details, but in terms of its expression, lifelikeness, and authenticity it really is remarkable.’

Tchaikovsky's Pathétique

There's a meme in circulation that originated with the character Inigo Montoya in the 1987 film *The Princess Bride*: 'You keep using that word, I do not think it means what you think it means.' In English-speaking countries at least, this has been the fate of the nickname for Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony – *Pathétique* – possibly the most enduring mistranslation in classical music. The symphony is not pathetic, in any sense, nor is it solely an expression of pathos. It helps a great deal to keep in mind the meaning of the nickname in its original Russian form: 'impassioned'.

Tchaikovsky's Sixth wears its heart on its sleeve and is full of intense emotions – not just pain and tragedy, but joy and a kind of fragile triumph. And there are powerful shifts, most strikingly from the energy of the cathartic third movement to the introspective opening of the finale. Tchaikovsky said that he'd put his 'whole soul into this symphony'. And he did agree – although it seems clear he would have withdrawn it if he had lived – to the nickname that highlights its turbulent expression and dramatic impulses.

The *Pathétique* symphony is the anchor in a program that, without telling any specific stories, is united by a sense of narrative and drama. Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto makes the soloist a storyteller, weaving magic with shimmering, colourful music. The young Prokofiev had a reputation as a spiky composer, an enfant terrible; this concerto shows his lyrical side, which he insisted was not out of character.

The concert begins with music from the theatre: the overture to *Rienzi*, a grand opera by the young Wagner. This is perhaps out of character – Wagner was soon to head in a very different direction as he pursued his vision of music drama, and *Rienzi* is seldom performed today – but the composer's dramatic instincts and musical invention are already there to be heard.

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Richard Wagner

Overture to the opera *Rienzi*

Richard Wagner, in all probability the most controversial musical figure of the 19th century, began composing operas in the German Romantic manner with works such as *Rienzi*, expanded the dimensions of the genre with *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, and finally, with such giant music dramas as *The Ring of the Nibelung* and *Parsifal*, changed the face of opera and music forever. His operas were so challenging and innovative that Wagner, realising one of his life's dreams, constructed a theatre at Bayreuth, the Festspielhaus, designed specifically for the staging of these immense works.

A prolific writer on music and art, Wagner claimed that his intention was to produce a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, or 'total art form', in which drama, music and staging would merge in a new synthesis. His musical innovations included a greatly expanded orchestra, the raising of the use of musical motifs and themes to the level of critical structural and narrative importance, the fostering of a more powerful, dramatic singing style, and the extension of tonal harmony – through intense chromaticism – literally to its very limits.



Keynotes

WAGNER

Born Leipzig, 1813

Died Venice, 1883

Wagner was the composer who completely transformed opera in the 19th century. He regarded opera as a unity of art forms: music and words inextricably linked and organically developed as 'music drama'. His vision influenced singers, orchestras, theatre, and even the science of acoustics. Wagner's personality, philosophies and music were controversial during his lifetime and after his death, attracting equally passionate fans and detractors within the musical world and beyond. His *Ring* cycle of four operas based on *The Ring of the Nibelung* was his most ambitious creation, composed over 26 years.

RIENZI

Completed in 1840, *Rienzi* is a grand tragic opera in the French tradition – one of Wagner's earliest operas and perhaps his most traditional. It is based on the story of a historical figure from 14th-century Rome: Rienzi, the last of the Tribunes, who leads the people to victory over the patrician nobles only to die when the fickle crowd sets fire to the Capitol. The opera is rarely staged today and is frequently omitted from general discussions of Wagner's stage works, but it was a great success in his lifetime. The dramatic and highly effective overture – with its haunting trumpet call and use of Rienzi's prayer – has a more established presence in the concert hall.

Though he produced a handful of purely instrumental works, Wagner was to all intents and purposes solely an opera composer. He was nevertheless also a famed conductor, of his own and other composers' works, and his concert tours – most often intended to raise money to cover his debts for such projects as the Bayreuth theatre – regularly included purely instrumental excerpts from his operas.

Wagner sketched the plan of *Rienzi* in 1838 and, in a mood of desperate ambition, resolved to build the work on such a colossal scale that he would not be tempted to offer it to anything less than a royal theatre. This was during his residence in Riga – a period of vast hopes and bitter disappointments, resulting in a phase of disgust with the condition of modern life, which he believed to be at the root of all evils, personal and universal. This mood, he wrote, was fostered by reading Bulwer-Lytton's novel *Rienzi, the Last of the Tribunes*. The opera was first performed at Dresden in 1842 and its success was immediate, notwithstanding the fact that Wagner carried out his original intentions so thoroughly that the first performance lasted six hours.

The overture is a highly effective introduction to the five acts of an opera that was crowded, as the composer put it, 'with hymns, processions, and the musical clash of arms'. After an impressive prelude it opens with the theme of *Rienzi*'s prayer for the people, the best-known aria in the opera. The theme of the ensuing fast section is associated with the cry of the Roman citizens for freedom. This is succeeded by a strident call to arms, heard in the trombones. After a repetition of the 'prayer' theme, a fourth subject is introduced from the people's greeting to *Rienzi* in Act II. The overture eventually swings into a vigorous march, liberally underpinned by percussion.

GORDON WILLIAMS
SYMPHONY AUSTRALIA © 2001

The overture to *Rienzi* calls for three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons and a serpent in place of a contrabassoon; four horns, four trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and a large percussion section; and strings. (The serpent is a distinctively curved low-voiced instrument with a mouthpiece like a trumpet or trombone and finger holes in the body like a woodwind instrument.)

The SSO was the first ABC orchestra to perform the *Rienzi* overture, in 1938 under conductor Percy Code. Our most recent performance of the overture was in 1989, conducted by Jerzy Semkow

'The opera's success was immediate, notwithstanding the fact that the first performance lasted six hours.'



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Sergei Prokofiev

Violin Concerto No.1 in D, Op.19

Andantino – Andante assai

Scherzo (Vivacissimo)

Moderato – Allegro moderato – Moderato – Più tranquillo

Baiba Skride *violin*

Above the first solo entry in the score of Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No.1 stands the word *sognando* – dreamily. The theme to which it refers is the most enduringly attractive feature of the concerto. As expansive as it is reflective, this exquisite melody reveals an easily neglected lyrical aspect of Prokofiev's style.

But when the concerto was premiered in Paris on 18 October 1923, the musical avant-garde found the work *too* lyrical – shot through, in the words of White Russian emigré critic Boris de Schloezer, with 'Mendelssohnism'. The accusation – despite the intended malice – was not unfounded. The concerto's melancholy lyricism and pensive romanticism, as well as its modest lack of ostentatious display, is indeed reminiscent of Mendelssohn's music.

There's another striking parallel: Mendelssohn had been plagued by the opening theme of his own violin concerto, writing to the violinist Ferdinand David six years before its composition, 'I want to do you a violin concerto. I have one in E minor in my head, and the opening won't leave me in peace.' Similarly, Prokofiev's first theme had been in his head since he'd developed it for a concertino in 1915. 'I had often regretted,' he wrote, 'that other work had prevented me from returning to its "meditative opening".'

Two years later, during a summer retreat to the country outside St Petersburg (by then Petrograd) the concertino 'grew' into a concerto. Meanwhile – Prokofiev recalled – 'exciting' but 'contradictory' news of the October Revolution filtered out from the city, along with trainloads of 'panic-stricken bourgeois crowds'. Yet the serenity and spirit of the First Violin Concerto holds no trace of the violence of the revolution that delayed its premiere by six years.

With the premiere finally in sight, potential soloists could only see that the concerto lacked a cadenza, and the celebrated Bronislaw Hubermann and other violinists 'flatly refused to learn "that music"'. It was not until 1924 – when Joseph Szigeti performed it at the Prague International Festival of Contemporary Music – that the concerto began to attract the recognition it deserved. Even then acceptance was not complete. The composer Glazunov ostentatiously walked out of one performance even as the audience was encoring the *Scherzo* movement.

Keynotes

PROKOFIEV

Born Sontsovka (Ukraine), 1891
Died Moscow, 1953

By the time he was finishing up at the St Petersburg Conservatoire, Prokofiev had developed a compositional style that balanced four distinct characteristics, which he identified as: classical, modern or 'grotesque', motoric, and lyrical or 'meditative'. He claimed that the lyrical aspect of his style was 'not noticed until much later' but it emerged quite early on and dominates both his violin concertos.

VIOLIN CONCERTO NO.1

The first thing the soloist plays in this concerto came into being in 1915, the year after Prokofiev graduated. It's a dreamy, haunting melody that floats over a shimmering accompaniment and sets the tone for the whole work. The shape of the concerto is unexpected: instead of the typical fast–slow–fast organisation of the three movements, it begins and ends with shimmering serenity and the fast, more obviously virtuosic music is in the middle. This middle movement shows Prokofiev at his most whimsical, laughing with us in a true-to-form 'joking' scherzo.

The concerto was completed in 1917 and premiered in 1923 in Paris.



In Szigeti's view, the *sognando* opening was 'a clue to the day-dreaming expression of the "the little boy listening to a story" feeling' of the exposition. So it's no surprise to find, soon after, a second word above the solo part: *narrante* – 'in the manner of a narration'. Here the music takes on a rhythmic character, all sparkle and bite. No longer is Prokofiev setting the scene for daydreams – we're thrown headlong into a tale. And it's a tale told in symphonic dialogue between the violin and orchestra, with little sense of the traditional opposition between soloist and full ensemble.

But in many ways Prokofiev was as much a traditionalist as an innovator. The First Violin Concerto has the clear-cut, neoclassical construction of the *Classical Symphony* (also composed in 1917) even as it inverts the usual sequence of tempos so that two slow lyrical movements surround a fast, rhythmic scherzo.

The *Scherzo* is a catalogue of violin trickery: extreme leaps, double-stopping, slides, harmonics, and rapid figuration alternating with accented rhythms. Yet Prokofiev avoids giving the impression of empty display. Instead, the capricious exposition of technical effects draws attention to their expressive possibilities. The five sections of the movement transport the

listener from the buoyant ascent of the opening theme above a clockwork accompaniment to the sinuous passage work of the solo violin in its low register.

This mercurial *Scherzo* with its abrupt ending has been cited as an example of the 'grotesque' or 'sarcastic' aspect of Prokofiev's style, but he objected to this use of the word 'grotesque', describing it as hackneyed and distorted. 'I would prefer my music,' he wrote, 'to be described as "scherzo-ish" in quality, or else by three words describing various degrees of the scherzo – whimsicality, laughter, mockery.'

The third movement begins with a brief theme on the bassoon (no hint of mockery here) that is developed with increasing lyricism by each of the woodwind instruments in turn. This sets the scene for the solo part's combination of staccato and sustained ideas suspended above scoring of the utmost economy. Nowhere is the translucency of the orchestration more apparent than in the coda where the opening theme from the first movement returns in the orchestral violins above a shimmer of tremolos and harp arpeggios. The solo violin traces the melody with 'altitudinous trills' before coming to rest – exactly as it had at the end of the first movement – on a top D in unison with the piccolo.

ABRIDGED FROM A NOTE BY YVONNE FRINDLE.
SYMPHONY AUSTRALIA © 1997



The orchestra for Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto comprises two flutes, piccolo, and pairs of oboes, clarinets and bassoons; four horns, two trumpets and tuba; timpani and percussion; harp and strings.

The SSO gave the first Australian performance of the concerto in 1938 with violinist Ernest Llewellyn and conductor George Szell. The most recent performance was in 2009 with soloist Boris Belkin in Vladimir Ashkenazy's 'Prodigal Russian' Prokofiev festival.



Don Quixote

Fantastic Variations

Join us in June when SSO Principal Cello Umberto Clerici takes on the role of the eccentric Don Quixote in Richard Strauss's famous tone poem, inspired by Cervantes. Accompanied by his stalwart squire Sancho Panza (Principal Viola Tobias Breider), Clerici's 'knight of the woeful countenance' will embark on a series of variations depicting his fantastic quests: the windmills, the sheep, Dulcinea... Another eccentric – Haydn's 'distracted gentleman' – begins the concert and the whole orchestra enters the spotlight in Elliott Carter's exhilarating Variations.

Dates

Thu 15 Jun / 1:30pm

Fri 16 Jun / 11am

Complimentary morning tea from 10am

Sat 17 Jun / 2pm

Program

HAYDN Symphony No.60 (Il distratto)^

CARTER Variations for Orchestra

R STRAUSS Don Quixote^

^These works will be performed on Fri 16 Jun.

Artists

DAVID ROBERTSON conductor

UMBERTO CLERICI cello

TOBIAS BREIDER viola

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*Selected performances. Prices correct at time of publication and subject to change.
Booking fees of \$5-\$8.95 may apply depending on method of booking.



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Symphony No.6 in B minor, Op.74, *Pathétique*

Adagio – Allegro non troppo

Allegro con grazia

Allegro molto vivace

Finale (Adagio lamentoso – Andante)

The original audience for the Sixth Symphony was uncomprehending and ambivalent. Tchaikovsky had expected this, writing to his nephew and the dedicatee, 'Bob' Davidov, that he wouldn't be surprised if the symphony were 'torn to pieces', even though he considered it his best and most sincere work. The critic Hermann Laroche suggested that audiences who 'did not get to the core' of the symphony would 'in the end, come to love it'. As it turned out, it took them only 12 days. In the intervening period its composer had died, and for the second performance, in a memorial concert, it was promoted with the subtitle that had been suggested by Tchaikovsky's brother: *Pathétique* (or *Pateticheskaja Simfoniia* – 'impassioned symphony' – in Russian). The symphony was declared a masterpiece.

The myth of the-*Pathétique*-as-suicide-note (not to mention Tchaikovsky's 'suicide' itself) has been more or less debunked in the past three decades, in particular by the work of Alexander Poznansky. There are no grounds for doubting that Tchaikovsky died from post-choleric complications; the theory that his old classmates decided in a 'court of honour' that he should commit suicide to avoid disgrace has been undermined; and his social, financial and artistic circumstances all speak against any other motivation for suicide, even if he continued to be troubled by his homosexuality.

The Sixth Symphony, specifically, seems to have been a source of immense pride, satisfaction and joy to him. And shortly after its premiere he is reported to have said 'I feel I shall live a long time'.

He was wrong. And following his death, his audience – now in mourning and seeking 'portents' – immediately heard the Sixth Symphony (the *Pathétique*) in a fresh way. New significance was given to the appearance in the first movement of an Orthodox burial chant, 'Repose the Soul' – a hymn sung *only* when someone has died – and to the otherworldly, dying character of the slow finale.

Even if the symphony is not a suicide note, there is a programmatic and semi-autobiographical underpinning to the symphony that is the source of its unusual form and turbulent emotions. Tchaikovsky admitted the existence of a program but was cagey about the details, perhaps because it reflected his

Keynotes

TCHAIKOVSKY

Born Kamsko-Votkinsk, 1840

Died St Petersburg, 1893

Tchaikovsky represented a new direction for Russian music in the late 19th century: fully professional and cosmopolitan in outlook. He embraced the genres and forms of Western European tradition – symphonies, concertos and overtures – bringing to them an unrivalled gift for melody. But many music lovers would argue that it's his ballets that count among his masterpieces, and certainly it's Tchaikovsky's extraordinary dramatic instinct that comes to the fore in all his music, whether for the theatre or the concert hall. He died on 6 November 1893, just days after having conducted the premiere of the *Pathétique* Symphony.

PATHÉTIQUE SYMPHONY

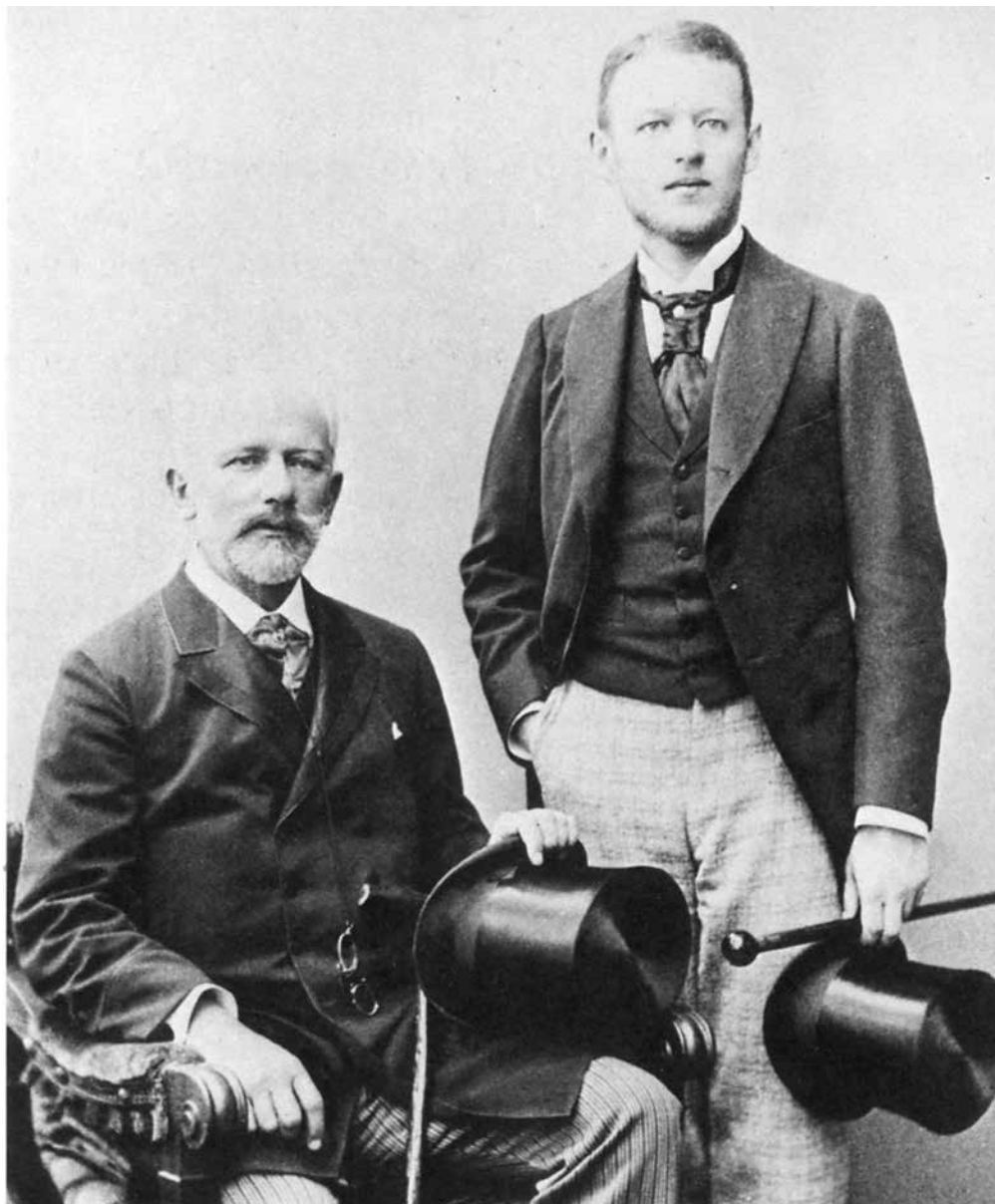
In the original Russian, the nickname for the Sixth Symphony means something like 'impassioned'. It was suggested by his brother, adopted and then almost immediately retracted – but too late, Tchaikovsky died and it passed into publication. But it's appropriate, since, as Tchaikovsky admitted: 'without exaggeration, I have put my whole soul into this symphony.'

Two features are especially striking. The second movement is a waltz with five beats to the bar (rather than the usual 'oom pah pah' three); and the finale (after a riotous third movement that sounds like it *could* be the end) brings the symphony to a sombre, tragic close.

romantic feelings for Davidov. The closest we have is a sketched scenario, devised originally for an abandoned symphony in E flat but appearing to correspond with much of the Sixth Symphony:

Following is essence of plan for a symphony Life! First movement – all impulse, confidence, thirst for activity. Must be short (Finale death – result of collapse). Second movement love; third disappointment; fourth ends with a dying away (also short).

**Tchaikovsky with his nephew,
and the Sixth Symphony's
dedicatee, 'Bob' Davidov**



There are aspects of this program and the Sixth Symphony that suggest suffering, but for Tchaikovsky the composition of the symphony was a cathartic experience rather than an expression of current sufferings. He himself wrote: 'Anyone who believes that the creative person is capable of expressing what he feels out of a momentary effect aided by the means of art is mistaken. Melancholy as well as joyous feelings can always be expressive only out of the Retrospective.'

In its art this is Tchaikovsky's most innovative symphony. He dares to conclude with a brooding slow movement and uses boldly dramatic gestures to give the music its emotional impulse. The 'limping' elegance of the second movement waltz with its unusual five beats to the bar would have been less surprising, to Russians at least – the five-beat metre was a part of a tradition that was embraced by Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky (in his *Pictures at an Exhibition*), and later Rachmaninoff (in *The Isle of the Dead*).

In the Sixth Symphony Tchaikovsky comes to terms with his professed inadequacies in structural matters. His solution in the first movement was to extend the exposition section, so well suited to his melodic gifts, and to compress the central development section in which he felt his skills inadequate. The music begins already in the depths with the dark colour of the bassoon and yet somehow Tchaikovsky sustains a downward trajectory, or the impression of one, for the whole work.

In the third movement the idea of 'disappointment' is replaced by something more malevolent. In purely musical terms the movement conflates two musical ideas – feverish tarantella triplets and a spiky march – but the juxtapositions and incursions into each other's thematic territory create a disturbing sense of antagonism. The movement's applause-provoking conclusion *could* be triumphant, or it could be the crash of self-delusion.

The finale may not fit the formula established by Tchaikovsky's classical predecessors, but within the emotional journey of the symphony its stark sense of tragedy provides an inevitable conclusion – all the more powerful for the grace and jauntiness of the preceding movements.

YVONNE FRINDLE © 2008/2017

Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony calls for three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two oboes, two clarinets and two bassoons; four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion (cymbals, bass drum, tam-tam); and strings.

The first Australian performance of the symphony was by the South Australian Orchestra (precursor of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra) in 1923. The SSO first performed it in 1939, conducted by Malcolm Sargent, and most recently in 2012, conducted by David Robertson.



'Just as I was starting on my journey, the idea came to me for a new symphony. This time with a program, but of the kind which remains an enigma to all – let them guess who can. The work will be entitled 'A Program Symphony' (No.6). This program is penetrated by subjective sentiment. During my journey, while composing it in my mind, I frequently shed tears...There will be much more that is novel as regards form in this work. For instance, the Finale will not be a great Allegro, but an Adagio of considerable dimensions. You cannot imagine what joy I feel at the conviction that my day is not yet over.'

TCHAIKOVSKY DESCRIBES THE SYMPHONY'S GENESIS IN A LETTER TO HIS BROTHER ANATOLY.

ORCHESTRAL WAGNER

For fans of orchestral Wagner, Brilliant Classics has issued excellent value 3CD album, *Wagner: Complete Overtures and Orchestral Music from the Operas*. Most of the performances, including the overture to *Rienzi*, are by the Philharmonia Orchestra and Yuri Simonov.

BRILLIANT CLASSICS 94937

PROKOFIEV VIOLIN CONCERTOS

The great Russian violinist David Oistrakh recorded both the Prokofiev violin concertos and these are available in various releases and boxed collections. Most recent is the Musical Concepts release, which also includes an arrangement for violin and piano of pieces from Prokofiev's *Cinderella* ballet. The first concerto is accompanied by the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra and Kiril Kondrashin.

MUSICAL CONCEPTS 1318

Joseph Szigeti was the first violinist to record Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No.1, in 1935 with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Thomas Beecham; the music especially suited his style. In the release on the Naxos Historical label, it's paired with the Bloch Violin Concerto (written for Szigeti). Or look for the older EMI release that matches it with Mendelssohn and Mozart's Violin Concerto No.4 in D, K218. (Available as a reissue from arkivmusic.com)

NAXOS 8.110973

TCHAIKOVSKY SYMPHONIES

The *Pathétique* is Tchaikovsky's most-recorded symphony, closely followed by the Fourth and Fifth symphonies, which leaves an embarrassment of choice. But you can't go wrong with the legendary set of all three works, recorded in 1960 by Evgeny Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra.

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 4775911

Mikhail Pletnev's 1996 recording of the complete Tchaikovsky symphonies with the Russian National Orchestra was reissued in 2010. The newer release added some of the smaller orchestral works to make a 7CD set, but it lacks Richard Taruskin's superb liner notes from the original issue.

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 477 8699 (2010); 449 9672 (1996)

Among the more recent issues of the complete symphonies is the 6CD set from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Claudio Abbado. It's a treat for Tchaikovsky fans, with all the symphonies, the suite from *Nutcracker*, several tone poems, the *Romeo and Juliet* fantasy overture and the *1812* overture.

SONY 836722

BAIBA SKRIDE

Baiba Skride's most recent release is a Nordic-themed recital album with her sister Lauma Skride playing piano. Violin sonatas by Grieg, Nielsen and Stenhammar are complemented by four pieces by Sibelius.

ORFEO 913161

Since her first visit to Sydney she has recorded two concerto albums for the Orfeo label: Nielsen and Sibelius with the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra and Santtu-Matias Rouvali; and the Szymanowski concertos with the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra and Vasily Petrenko. The latter comes highly recommended.

ORFEO 87314 (SZYMANOWSKI)

Broadcast Diary May-June



92.9 ABC
Classic FM

abc.net.au/classic

Saturday 20 May, noon

TCHAIKOVSKY'S PATHÉTIQUE

See this program for details

Sunday 21 May, 2pm

DEDICATIONS (2016)

Brett Dean conductor

Alisa Weilerstein cello

Lutosławski, Dvořák, JS Bach

Saturday 27 May, noon

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Roger Benedict viola

Haydn, Mozart

Sunday 28 May, noon

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SSO Radio

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

sydneyssymphony.com/SSO_radio



SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA HOUR

Tuesday 13 June, 6pm

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

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MARCO BORGREVE

Andris Poga *conductor*

Andris Poga is the Music Director of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, a post he has held since 2013.

Born in Riga, he studied conducting at the Jazeps Vitols Latvian Academy of Music, graduating in 2007, and with Uros Lajovic at the Vienna University of Music and Performing Arts (2004–05). He also studied philosophy at the University of Latvia. As a student, he took part in masterclasses with conductors such as Mariss Jansons, Seiji Ozawa and Leif Segerstam.

In 2007 he received the Latvia Great Music Award for 'Debut of the Year' with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, and 2010 he was awarded First Prize in the Evgeny Svetlanov International Conducting Competition in Montpellier. Following this success, in 2011 he was named assistant conductor to Paavo Järvi at the Orchestre de Paris for three years, and in 2012 assistant conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (appearing in Boston and at the Tanglewood Festival). He came to wider attention and achieved tremendous success during 2013 and 2014 when he replaced at short notice Georges Prêtre and Mikko Franck in concerts with the Orchestra de Paris, and Lorin Maazel in the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra's tour of Asia.

Andris Poga is now considered as one of the best conductors of his generation and has conducted many leading orchestras including the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Munich Philharmonic, St Petersburg Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Orchestre National de Lyon, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, HR Sinfoniorchester Frankfurt and Svetlanov Symphony Orchestra of Russia, as well as the China Philharmonic Orchestra, New Japan Philharmonic and NHK Symphony Orchestra, and the Orchestre Symphonique du Québec.



JANIS DEINATIS

Baiba Skride

violin

Baiba Skride returns to Sydney having made her SSO debut in 2010, performing Szymanowski's first violin concerto. Her natural approach to music-making has endeared her to some of today's leading conductors and orchestras worldwide, and audiences enjoy her refreshing interpretations and her sensitivity and delight in the music. She has worked with the Berlin Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and NHK Symphony, among others. And she has collaborated with such notable conductors as Thierry Fischer, Paavo Järvi, Neeme Järvi, Andris Nelsons, Santtu Matias Rouvali, Vasily Petrenko, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, John Storgårds and Kazuki Yamada. In February 2016 she made her New York Philharmonic debut with Christoph Eschenbach.

Highlights of the 2016–17 season include debuts with London's Philharmonia Orchestra, the Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai and Orquestra Simfònica de Barcelona, and return visits to the Vienna Symphony Orchestra (Gustavo Gimeno), the Stockholm, Bergen and Copenhagen philharmonic orchestras, and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (Vasily Petrenko). She also appears with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Cleveland Orchestra,

as well as the Boston Symphony Orchestra for the American premiere of Sofia Gubaidulina's Triple Concerto for violin, cello and bayan. On this visit to Australia she will also appear with the Tasmanian and West Australian symphony orchestras.

Baiba Skride is a sought-after chamber musician, regularly performing at leading festivals and venues such as the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Wigmore Hall, Palais des Beaux Arts Brussels, Bad Kissingen and Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. In the 2016–17 season she appears in a new piano quartet with Lauma Skride, Harriet Krijgh and Lise Berthaud; she also collaborates with Bertrand Chamayou, Brett Dean, Sol Gabetta, Alban Gerhardt, Xavier de Maistre and Daniel Müller-Schott.

Baiba Skride was born into a musical family in Riga, where she began her studies before transferring in 1995 to the Conservatory of Music and Theatre in Rostock, Germany. In 2001 she won first prize in the Queen Elisabeth Competition. She plays the Yfrah Neaman Stradivarius kindly loaned to her by the Neaman family through the Beares International Violin Society.

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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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SSO Patrons pages correct as of 1 January 2016

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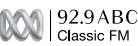
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