



**sydney symphony orchestra**

David Robertson The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

# A Night at the Speakeasy

*Rhapsody in Blue*

2018



**FRI 29 JUN, 8PM • SAT 30 JUN, 8PM**





CLASSICAL



**Simon Trpčeski in Recital**

GRIEG From Holberg's Time (Holberg Suite)  
 MENDELSSOHN Songs without Words: Selection  
 RIMSKY-KORSAKOV trans. Gilson Scheherazade  
 Simon Trpčeski piano

International Pianists in Recital  
 Presented by  
 Theme & Variations  
 Piano Services  
**Mon 2 Jul, 7pm**  
 City Recital Hall



**Spirit Realms – Sacred and Profane**

*Hough plays Rachmaninoff*

EDWARDS Earth Spirit Songs – Symphony No.2  
 \*RACHMANINOFF Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini  
 \*MENDELSSOHN Symphony No.5, Reformation  
 Julian Kuerti conductor  
 Celeste Lazarenko soprano  
 Stephen Hough piano

Meet the Music  
**Wed 4 Jul, 6.30pm**  
 Thursday Afternoon Symphony  
**Thu 5 Jul, 1.30pm**  
 Tea & Symphony  
**Fri 6 Jul, 11am\***  
 Sydney Opera House



**Mozart's Horn Concerto No.3  
 & Linz Symphony**

SCHUBERT Overture in B flat  
 MOZART Horn Concerto No.3, K447  
 MOZART Symphony No.36 (Linz)  
 Andrew Haveron violin-director  
 Ben Jacks horn

**Thu 12 Jul, 7pm**  
 City Recital Hall



**Pictures at an Exhibition**

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Russian Easter Festival Overture  
 HIGDON Violin Concerto **AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE**  
 MUSSORGSKY orch. Ravel Pictures at an Exhibition  
 Giancarlo Guerrero conductor  
 Benjamin Beilman violin

APT Master Series  
**Wed 18 Jul, 8pm**  
**Fri 20 Jul, 8pm**  
**Sat 21 Jul, 8pm**  
 Sydney Opera House

SSO PRESENTS



**Funny Girl: The Musical in Concert**

The bright lights of Broadway will shine on the Opera House when SSO presents the hit musical *Funny Girl* in concert. Featuring Natalie Bassingthwaigte, Dami Im, Maggie McKenna, Caroline O'Connor, Megan Washington - among others - who will each night share the iconic role of Fanny Brice on stage.

**Thu 12 Jul, 8pm**  
**Fri 13 Jul, 8pm**  
**Fri 20 Jul, 8pm**  
**Sat 14 Jul, 2pm**  
 Sydney Opera House

Produced for the Broadway stage by Ray Stark. New York production supervised by Jerome Robbins. Original production directed by Garson Kann.



**Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back**  
*In concert with the SSO*

Re-live the STAR WARS saga on the giant screen with John William's epic score played live by the SSO

**Fri 27 Jul, 7.45 pm**  
**Sat 28 Jul, 4.45 pm**  
 ICC Sydney Theatre

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DISKLAVIER CFX CONCERT GRAND PIANO, PROUDLY SUPPLIED BY  
YAMAHA MUSIC AUSTRALIA**



**sydney symphony  
orchestra**

**David Robertson**  
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

**SPECIAL EVENT**

FRIDAY 29 JUNE, 8PM

SATURDAY 30 JUNE, 8PM

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL

# A Night at the Speakeasy

**Guy Noble** *conductor and host*

**Ali McGregor** *vocalist*

**Imogen Kelly** *burlesque artist*

*with dancers*

**Dayton Tavares**

**Alexander 'Zan' Kermond**

**Ebony Wright**

**Suzanne Steele**

*and featuring the great*

**George Gershwin**

**Richard Carroll** *director*

**Christopher Horsey** *choreographer*

Concept devised by

**Raff Wilson**

Pre-concert talk by Vincent Plush  
at 7.15pm in the Northern Foyer.

Estimated durations: 45 minutes,  
20-minute interval, 70 minutes  
The concert will conclude at  
approximately 10.15pm.

COVER IMAGE: Shefali Pryor and  
Emma Sholl of the Sydney Symphony  
Orchestra (photo by Keith Saunders)

This event contains adult themes (partial nudity) and is  
recommended for ages 16+

Disklavier piano generously provided by



THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY OR  
THE 1ST E

# A Night at th

IN JØRN UTZON'S ICONIC

## ***Attractions Appearing***

Mr Guy Noble will conduct the Or

### 1ST ACT

#### **1 Overture. GIRL CRAZY**

Direct from Broadway's  
Alvin Theatre  
The Overture to  
George Gershwin's fresh  
and ingenious *Girl Crazy*  
**Guy Noble and the Orchestra**

#### **2 SWEET AND HOT**

With sassy songstress  
**Ali McGregor**  
Music by the song-making  
wizard Harold Arlen\*  
Lyrics by Jack Yellen

#### **3 MOONLIGHT**

Featuring Australia's  
Queen of Burlesque  
**Imogen Kelly**  
Music: *Good Baby* from  
*Baby Serenade*  
By Hollywood favourite  
Erich Wolfgang Korngold

#### **4 SHAVE AND A HAIRCUT TAP BOYS**

Introducing  
**Dayton Tavares** and  
**Alexander 'Zan' Kermond**  
Music: *Fiddle-Faddle* by  
Leroy Anderson of  
"The Typewriter" fame

#### **5 LE BŒUF SUR LE TOIT**

aka The Nothing Doing Bar  
Direct from the  
Théâtre des Champs-Élysées  
in Paris, highlights from  
Darius Milhaud's  
*Ox on the Roof* Ballet  
**Guy Noble and the Orchestra**

INTERMISSION

\* Orchestral arrangements by Joseph Twist

***And More in an Evening of***



CHESTRA PROUDLY PRESENTS  
EDITION OF

# e Speakeasy

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

**for Two Nights Only**

**chestra and introduce the Artists**

## 2ND ACT

### 1 **BABY GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD**

Overture to Korngold's  
*Baby Serenade*

**Guy Noble and the Orchestra**

### 2 **THE LAST TANGO** **Dayton Tavares** with **Ebony Wright** and **Suzanne Steele**

Music: *Jalousie* by Jacob Gade

### 3 **NEED A LITTLE SUGAR IN MY BOWL**

With **Ali McGregor**

Song by Clarence Williams,  
J Tim Brymn and Dally Small\*  
As popularised by Bessie Smith

### 4 **THE SAND DANCE** Soft Shoe Shuffle by **Dayton Tavares** and **Alexander 'Zan' Kermond**

Music: Leroy Anderson's  
*Sandpaper Ballet*

### 5 **L'OISEAU – BIRD OF PARADISE**

Featuring **Imogen Kelly**  
and the sultry sounds of  
*Caravan* by Duke Ellington  
(arranged by Morton Gould)  
and *Striptease* from *Wartime  
Sketchbook* (arranged by  
Christopher Palmer from the film  
music of Sir William Walton)

### 6 **Grand Finale. GERSHWIN'S RHAPSODY IN BLUE**

Featuring the Composer  
at the Piano via the  
Latest Piano Roll Technology  
and Yamaha Disklavier  
With the orchestral arrangement  
by Ferde Grofé  
**Guy Noble and the Orchestra**

#### **WARNING**

**Patrons are cautioned against  
exposing bottles or flasks con-  
taining spirituous liquors while  
in the concert hall.**

**Continuous Entertainment!**

# The New Speakeasy

## STORIES FROM THE PROHIBITION

### Death by Bathtub Gin!

WHEN THE GOVERNMENT POISONS  
YOUR BOOZE

**S**UMMER 1927. Businessman Wilson B Hickox, having had a night on the town in New York City, returned to his room in the Roosevelt Hotel and poured himself a nightcap; the booze had come from a bootlegger. It was the last drink of his life. Not long after drinking his libation, he felt pain spreading slowly through his body. The strychnine in the drink was paralysing him, and he died slowly and agonisingly on the floor of his hotel room.

So what was he drinking?

When Prohibition became law across the United States in January 1920, any beverage which contained more than 0.5 per cent alcohol was banned from sale. But other products containing alcohol – paint thinners, antiseptics, embalming fluid and more – were still available legally. It's no surprise that some of this alcohol found its way into the bootleg trade. To render it absolutely unfit to drink, the government decided to “denature” it – adding mercury, strychnine or other poison – the effect of which was often fatal. According to *Eating in America*, by Waverley Root and Richard de Rochemont, 11,700 people died in 1927 (*just in 1927!*) from drinking alcohol their government had poisoned.

Bill Bryson, who recounts the Hickox story in his book *One Summer*, observes: “That was why people like Al Capone did so well out of Prohibition: they didn't kill their customers.”

### THE 18TH AMENDMENT

With the 18th Amendment of its Constitution, the United States effectively prohibited alcoholic beverages by making production, transport and sale of “intoxicating liquors” – but not the consumption or private possession of alcohol – illegal. Exceptions included alcohol for medical and religious purposes. Nationwide Prohibition began in January 1920 and continued for 13 years, until it was repealed in 1933.



PHOTO: GRANGER / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES (1930)



PHOTO: GRANGER / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES (1925)

*Dumping kegs of bootleg liquor into the sewer*



PHOTO: PRIVATE COLLECTION / PRISMATIC PICTURES / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES (1933)

*Labor union members protesting Prohibition in Newark, New Jersey*



# Legislating Morals

## AND THE ASTONISHING PREVALENCE OF COCKTAIL SHAKERS DURING PROHIBITION

**T**HE ADVOCATES for Prohibition were quite sanguine when someone died from drinking poisoned alcohol. Wayne Wheeler, head of the Anti-Saloon League, said that people who drank poisoned alcohol were committing “deliberate suicide”. When the even more fervently “dry” Reverend John Roach Stratton learned that the governor and attorney general of Indiana had allowed ill family members to drink a little whisky on medical advice, he responded: “They should have permitted the members of their family to die, and have died themselves, rather than violate their oaths of office.”

While it is true that the overall level of problem drinking declined during Prohibition, the counterweight was the spectacular rise in violence, corruption and hypocrisy. People were still permitted to make their own wine at home (and thus became popular neighbours), and sacramental wine was permitted, which led to an unexpected and significant rise in the

number of clergymen and rabbis (including an alleged rabbi with the fascinating name of Patrick Houlihan...definitely from one of the lost tribes of Israel).

In Chicago, the most famous bootlegger of them all, Al Capone, is estimated to have been responsible for the murder of at least 300 people, and hundreds more died in territorial gang wars across the country. Thousands

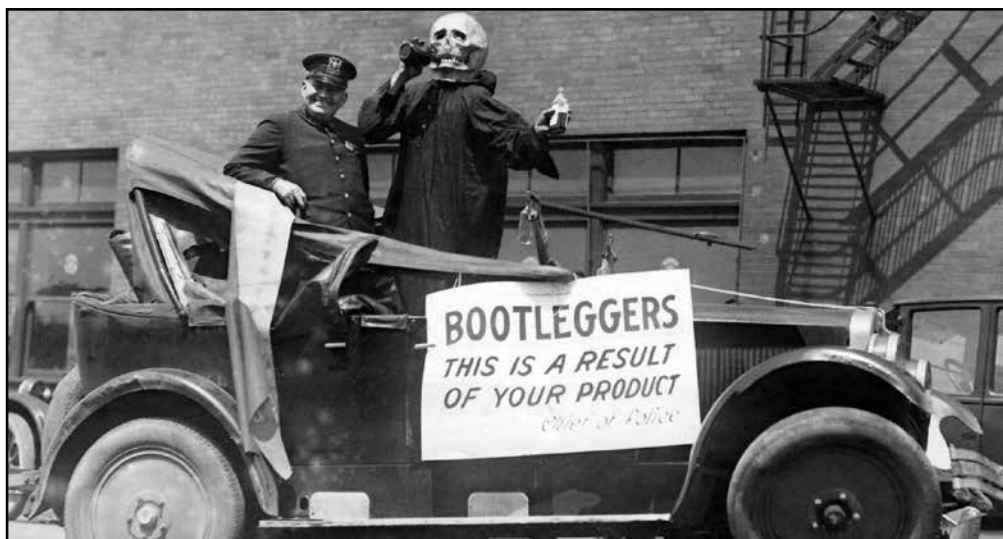
were poisoned by cheap home-made grog. Many police, mayors and legal officials were on the take and turned a blind eye to the illegal liquor business.

### **DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME**

In Chicago, a municipal chemist tipped some bootlegged whisky down a sink and watched in astonishment as it sizzled its way through the porcelain!

“It cannot be truthfully said that prohibition enforcement has failed in New York,” one former Justice Department official remarked in 1926. “It has not yet been attempted.”

Thus it was that, by the mid-1920s, the country in which alcohol had been banned from sale had become the world’s largest importer of cocktail shakers.



*Two women crashed this car after drinking moonshine (police scare campaign)*

# The Password Is “Swordfish”

## FINDING THE SPEAKEASIES IN PROHIBITION AMERICA

**I**F YOU’VE SEEN the Marx Brothers movie *Horse Feathers* (filmed during Prohibition – and yes that’s where the password comes from), Billy Wilder’s *Some Like It Hot*, or Francis Ford Coppola’s *Cotton Club*, you have the movies’ diverse visions of what a speakeasy was like. They were not hard to find; at one point Detroit, for example, had 20,000 speakeasies, or one for every 30 adults. Daniel Okrent, author of *Last Call: The Rise of Fall of Prohibition*, said that a speakeasy could be “a table, a bottle and two chairs, or it could be ‘21’.”

“21” was deluxe, and is still open – as one of New York’s swankiest restaurants. It moved several times during Prohibition, but once at its current location, on 21 West 52nd Street, the owners installed a system of levers to be used in case of a raid. These tipped the shelves of the bar, sweeping the liquor bottles through a chute and into the sewer. There was also a secret wine cellar, which was accessed through a hidden door in a brick wall that opened into the basement of the building next door, number 19. Thus the owners could honestly

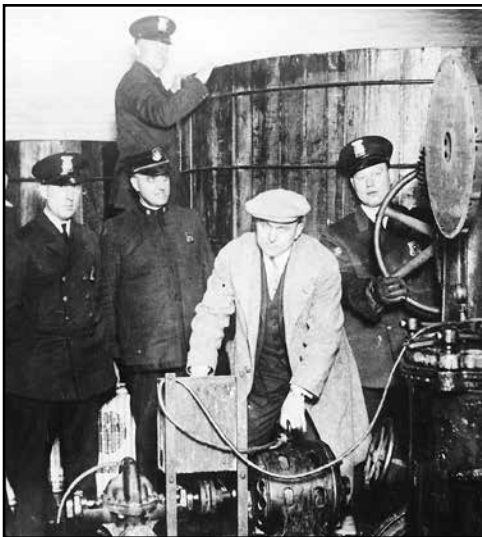


PHOTO: GRANGER / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES (1925)

*Arriving at a speakeasy*

say that no liquor was stored on the premises. “21” may have been raided, but the owners were never arrested, and the hidden basement remained undiscovered by the police.

Where the owners of “21” were well connected and could procure high-quality booze, many speakeasies were not so lucky. They took what they could get. In an article written for *Esquire* magazine in 1934 in which he farewelled Prohibition and its illicit beverages, author Frank Shay recalled: “The basic raw materials then available, and I use the term advisedly, made it imperative that they be doctored or decorated. It was essential that their rougher edges be smoothed down in order that in order that they might pass to their true goal without too much distress to the drinker.” Indeed there is a theory that the gin-based Alexander (gin, crème de cacao, cream) and its relative, the Brandy Alexander, were invented in the early 1920s to disguise poor base ingredients.



*Detroit police uncovering yet another clandestine brewery*

# A Reigning Monarch

TEXAS GUINAN –  
QUEEN OF THE NIGHTCLUBS

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**T**HE UNDISPUTED QUEEN of the nightclubs was Mary Louise Cecilia (that's "Texas" to you) Guinan, who morphed from a career on stage and screen to that of a speakeasy entertainer and *entrepreneuse* just as Prohibition sent nightclubs underground. From Broadway musical comedy she went to Hollywood and appeared in so many westerns she became known as The Two-Gun Woman.

Then in 1923, back in New York, she struck up a partnership with bootlegger and rum (and whisky) runner Larry Fay, and appeared as emcee for the floor show at his El Fey Club where she became famous for such catchphrases as: "Hello, Sucker! Come on in and leave your wallet on the bar." She is also said to have coined the phrase: "Give him/her a big hand," although she was not always flattering about the available talent. She once introduced a vocalist as follows: "Now this little girl isn't much of a singer. She learned singing by correspondence course and missed a couple of lessons."

As one club was raided and shut down she would move to another; there is a wonderful photo of her from 1928, looking radiant and be-minked as, surrounded by police, she steps smilingly into the paddy wagon.

The clientele at her clubs were wealthy, and the dancers – including the young Ruby Keeler and Barbara Stanwyck – were gorgeous and scantily dressed. In 1926 her 300 Club was raided for "violation of the section of the penal code forbidding suggestive dances."

Her fame was so great that she went back to Hollywood in 1929, not to appear in a western, but to star as herself in the Warner Bros. talkie called – you guessed it – *Queen of the Nightclubs*, "a marvellous picture," the posters tell us, "of wine, women and wrong."



*Texas Guinan stars in her own talkie! The famed "Two-Gun Woman" and Speakeasy entrepreneuse (pictured at her most recent arrest for violating the 18th amendment), will tell her own life story in Queen of the Nightclubs. And we hear she's going to be the inspiration for the Gladys George character in Raoul Walsh's film The Roaring Twenties.*

The movie is, alas, lost but contemporary reviews were not kind. She died from complications arising from amoebic dysentery in November 1933, just a month before Prohibition was repealed.

# On the Rocks

## News and gossip from "Raffles"

### SPEAKEASY CRAZE GRIPS TOWN!

It's the word on everyone's lips, but no one's talkin' about it. Speakeasy. The 18th amendment, newborn daughter of the Temperance Movement and the Anti-Saloon League, spreads her veil over our cities. The decree goes forth – from 1920, only the gutters will taste booze. But in our city, the gin joints and back room bars have gone underground. Behind closed doors, the punch still flows and the jazz rumbles. Speakeasy? It's just what you have to do – keep your voice down, or the coppers will come knocking. And careful who you tell – those buttons have elephant's ears. Speak easy indeed, friend.

### CANTOR'S SON SINGS TOO

Harold Arlen, son of a Buffalo NY cantor, has turned to popular song and composed his first full score for a Broadway show, college musical *You Said It*. Teaming up with wordsmith Jack Yellen, this wizard of a songwriter has delivered a sure-fire hit with "Sweet and Hot" and Bessie Smith, Empress of the Blues, has made it her own!

### SYNCOPATED BABY

Now the Viennese boy-wonder composer is all grownup he's taking the film world by storm. Yes, Erich Wolfgang Korngold (and that middle name's no accident!) has arrived in Hollywood and he already has his name on *Captain Blood*, starring Antipodean newcomer Erol Flynn! Not a baby anymore, he has two babies of his own. And the second one – Georg Wolfgang – inspired its own Serenade. It's clearly a jazz-age baby: this music includes three saxophones. And just to remind us that he was a true musical Wunderkind, "Good Baby" is based on a tune Erich wrote when he was just seven years old!



PHOTO: LESLIE LIU

### WHAT'S THE SCOOP...

...on *Burlesque*? We caught up with dazzling dance sensation Imogen Kelly to ask. Ms Kelly replies: "It's all rouged knees and rolled stockings in burlesque right now, thanks to boundary-breaking, visionary women. I'm performing a twin tribute to iconic dancer Loie Fuller (illuminated by the coloured lighting gels she invented!) and the statuesque Isadora Duncan herself. My second dance celebrates the essence of showgirls like the incredible Mistinguett and is full of joie de vivre and creativity! I channel the exotic birds of paradise that these amazing superstars are – an act that is an exultation of spirit. These performers all have transformed the landscape for women in this vibrant and joyous era!"

Ain't she the bee's knees!



Mistinguett of the *Moulin Rouge*

### MEOW MILHAUD

Which French composer was in the jazz haunts of Harlem last week, soaking up the tumult? None other than Mr Darius Milhaud. Already noted for his exotic taste – in his home town he's a fan of Miss Josephine Baker, that crazy cat Picasso and French Hot Jazz – he seemed to be making musical pals in our New York scene, and contemplating a new piece. Readers will remember the Brazilian flavour of his *Ox on the Roof* – "10 bars and you're south of the border!" What's next? Ritzy jazz for orchestra is the music of tomorrow!

### BEWARE THE SHOWGIRL!

In the Great War, notorious dancer and courtesan Mata Hari was sensationally caught and executed for espionage. The *femme fatale* who uses her wiles to extract military secrets and pass them onto the enemy is a theme that may recur in future years. It would make a dynamite film! And England's fabulous young William Walton can write music to match – it's a wartime striptease, for symphony orchestra.

### GHOST AT THE KEYBOARD

In June 1978, pianist Percy Grainger (by then dead for 17 years) made an appearance with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra playing his signature piece, the Grieg Piano Concerto. Exactly 40 years ago those performances were made possible by a Duo-Art cabinet player built by Denis Condon and Peter Phillips to play the piano rolls that Grainger had recorded in his lifetime. Fiona Stevens, who was there in the concert hall, recalls the fascinating experience: "It was like hearing a ghost at the keyboard!"





*“Beilman is definitely one to watch out for: technically adept young players are legion, but artistic maturity of this calibre at such an early age is much rarer.”*

David Larkin, [BachTrack.com](http://BachTrack.com)

## Pictures at an Exhibition

*Higdon Violin Concerto with Benjamin Beilman*

The brilliant Benjamin Beilman makes his SSO debut with a new showpiece violin concerto in the classic Romantic style, tapping into the lyricism of Samuel Barber, the pastoral mood of Vaughan Williams and the energy of Prokofiev.

Then enjoy the vivid and exhilarating *Pictures at an Exhibition*, a true audience favourite!

### RIMSKY-KORSAKOV

Russian Easter Festival Overture

### HIGDON

Violin Concerto [AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE]

### MUSSORGSKY orch. Ravel

Pictures at an Exhibition

**Giancarlo Guerrero** conductor

**Benjamin Beilman** violin

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Principal Partner

\*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.



Create NSW  
Arts, Screen & Culture

# A Composer For The Ages

THE IMPERISHABLE GEORGE GERSHWIN

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THE OPENING CREDITS of Warner Bros.' bio-pic of George Gershwin's life, *Rhapsody in Blue* (1945), are a telling compression of the Gershwin musical legend. The studio crest is accompanied by the *Rhapsody*'s famous opening clarinet glissando. The main theme then segues straight into "The Man I Love", played by disembodied dinner-suited hands, at a piano (reminding us of Gershwin the pianist). This segues, in turn, into "Embraceable You".

The point is not that this kind of Hollywood musical patchwork does a disservice to Gershwin's music but that it is entirely plausible. Gershwin was way ahead of the pace in his ability to work for the concert hall one minute, the musical stage the next. He is still the only composer heard as frequently in concert as in cabaret, and his songs were immeasurably enriched by his leaping musical ambition.

"Chutzpah" is one term for this, "daring" another. The main melody of "The Man I Love" was daring for its day (1924) because it depended so heavily on its harmony to make

an impact and, harmonically speaking, the song is a close relation to the big *Andante moderato* tune that dominates the last third of *Rhapsody in Blue* (composed the same year). "Fascinating Rhythm" (also 1924) was daring because it put its rhythmic complexity on show with blazing lights, at a time when popular songs were not supposed to be too complicated for the public who bought sheet music. "How Long Has This Been Going On?" (1928) was daring because it called for a more personal, tender delivery than most of the dance bands and singers could summon up at the time. The song lay dormant for nearly 15 years, since when it has been an imperishable Gershwin standard.

These examples, and there are countless more, illustrate Gershwin's genius for absorbing the musical world around him – the raw material of his craft – and turning its component parts into something individual, memorable and, most remarkable of all, durable. The Gershwin songbook has transcended its era, which is one reason the man himself is celebrated so lavishly in tonight's concert.



# An Experiment in Modern Music

GERSHWIN'S RHAPSODY IN BLUE

THE PREMIERE of *Rhapsody in Blue* was the climax of An Experiment in Modern Music, a concert presented by bandleader Paul Whiteman at New York's Aeolian Hall in February 1924. Gershwin was the soloist. He had composed the work – his first extended piece for the concert hall – especially for this event. In the audience were Jascha Heifetz, Fritz Kreisler, Leopold Stokowski, Ernest Bloch, Sergei Rachmaninoff and many other musical luminaries, including *New York Times* critic Olin Downes, whose review said, in part: “The composition shows extraordinary talent... [Gershwin] has expressed himself in a significant and, on the whole, highly original manner.”

The *Rhapsody* came near the end of what was a lengthy concert, one in which Whiteman attempted to show, from his point of view, the history of jazz up to that point. Yet as Whiteman saxophonist Donald Clark recalled that first performance of the *Rhapsody* many years later: “When we swung into the E major [*Andantino*] theme, I could see some tears mingled with the sweat on almost every musician's face – the emotional impact was that great.”



# Rolling Through Time

RECORDING GERSHWIN THE PIANIST

WHEN GERSHWIN was in his teens, he began recording piano rolls. Initially, these were the kind of rolls that you would load into a player piano or, to use the name of one brand after which the whole species has been named, Pianola. These rolls could reproduce phrasing and pedalling – you added the dynamics yourself when you played the roll back, via hand and foot controls.

But Gershwin also made rolls for the more sophisticated reproducing piano, a mechanism which could reproduce finely shaded dynamics from *ppp* to *fff*. Composers saw at once how nuanced a facsimile of their playing the resulting rolls could be, and among the luminaries who recorded rolls for Welte-Mignon, Duo-Art or Ampico – the most notable of the reproducing piano companies – were Saint-Saëns, Mahler, Debussy and Rachmaninoff.

Gershwin made 140 rolls between 1915 and 1926, initially of songs by established songwriters, but increasingly of his own music. The piano roll of *Rhapsody in Blue* you hear tonight is in many ways the climax of Gershwin's years as a pianist for piano rolls. He was the soloist in two 78 rpm recordings of the *Rhapsody*, made in 1924 and 1927. Both are heavily cut; the roll represents Gershwin's

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

### *Speedy Gershwin*

If you're familiar with pretty much any modern recording of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* you'll be expecting tonight's performance to come in at around 18 minutes. But performances of this piece have slowed down since Gershwin gave the premiere in 1924. Dr Peter Phillips has determined "beyond doubt" that the tempo of the Gershwin piano roll is correct, as it matches the tempos on both the 1924 and 1927 disc recordings. So hold on tight for a playing time of around 14 minutes!



PHOTO: MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK / BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

*The Aeolian Company introduced the Duo-Art mechanism in 1913*

only complete recording of the work. It was also made for the Duo-Art mechanism, which means you hear as fully expressive a rendering of his playing as could be captured by the technology of the day.

The complications in making “Gershwin’s ghost” (if you will) a soloist with a symphony orchestra are manifold. To begin with, Gershwin recorded both parts of the two-piano version of the *Rhapsody* on the one roll, to create as complete a rendering of the piano and orchestral parts as possible. The technical wizards behind our performances – Dr Peter Phillips, David Gosden and Glenn Amer – had

to find a way to remove the “orchestral” part from the roll; this also meant putting back some notes that were missing from the solo part. And in turning the paper roll into a MIDI file playable on Yamaha’s Disklavier mechanism, they also had to find a way to “stop the music” for those sections where the orchestra takes over and the piano is silent. What you’re hearing from the piano tonight is a labour of love, and a demonstration of how amazing an achievement the reproducing piano was in its day.

Could Gershwin ever have imagined that “he” would be soloist with an Australian symphony orchestra 120 years after he was born?

PROGRAM NOTES BY PHILLIP SAMETZ © 2018

WITH ADDITIONAL MATERIAL BY RAFF WILSON AND YVONNE FRINDLE

**Our special thanks to...**

**Dr Peter Phillips** for the MIDI Realisation in *Rhapsody in Blue*, together with his colleagues **Glenn Amer** (musical advisor and musical preparation) and **David Gosden** (MIDI player software development).

Dr Phillips was responsible for digitising the late Denis Condon’s fabled collection of piano rolls (once stored in his home in Newtown and now held by Stanford University), from which tonight’s Gershwin performances have been taken.

**Yamaha** for generously providing the Disklavier piano that you hear tonight.



# Play your part

## IN 2018

“All of us in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra deeply appreciate your generous philanthropic support that enables our music-making around the globe.”

David Robertson, Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

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## THE ARTISTS



### **Guy Noble** *conductor*

---

Guy Noble has conducted the Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Western Australian, Tasmanian, Queensland and Canberra symphony orchestras, the Auckland Philharmonia, and the Hong Kong Symphony and Malaysian Philharmonic orchestras. He is the host and accompanist each year for Great Opera Hits (Opera Australia) at the Sydney Opera House. He conducted Opera Queensland's 2014 production of *La Bohème*, is conductor and host for the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra's Classics Unwrapped series at the Adelaide Town Hall, and for the Queensland Symphony Orchestra's Music on Sundays series at QPAC. His *Opera! The Opera* was premiered at WAAPA in 2016, and has since been workshopped by Opera Australia. He is also the host of Concert Hall on Qantas Radio.

Guy Noble has worked with a wide variety of international performers appearing with orchestras across Australia, including Harry Connick Jr, Ben Folds, The Beach Boys, The Pointer Sisters, Dianne Reeves, Glenn Frey, Randy Newman, Clive James, Conchita, The Two Cellos, Alfie Boe and Olivia Newton John. He has worked with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra over many years, first appearing with them as a boy soprano soloist in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in 1977 at the Sydney Opera House.





DAMIAN W. VINCENZI

## Ali McGregor *vocalist*

---

Ali McGregor began her career as a principal soprano with Opera Australia in 2000. After performing more than 25 roles, she crept into The Famous Spiegeltent one night, beginning her love affair with cabaret, and then ran away with the circus, joining hit show *La Clique (La Soirée)* in 2005.

Her shows *The Opera Burlesque*, *Jazz Cigarette*, *Alchemy*, *Ali McGregor's Late-Nite Variety-Nite Night* and *Jazzamatazz!* have toured international festivals that include Melbourne International Comedy Festival, Melbourne Jazz Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Perth Fringe Festival, Adelaide Cabaret Festival, Adelaide Fringe Festival and London's Wonderground.

She has been nominated for a Green Room Award three times, winning Best Supporting Actress in an Opera for *La Cenerentola*, and in 2015 received a Green Room Award for Contribution to Cabaret. Ali McGregor has released three CDs – *Jazz Cigarette*, *ALCHEMY* and *JAZZAMATAZZ!*, which received an ARIA nomination in 2014.

Alongside Eddie Perfect, she was Artistic Director of the Adelaide Cabaret Festival for 2016–17. Taking the reins as sole Artistic Director this year, she has just completed a triumphant season, which also featured her own critically acclaimed show *YMA SUMAC – The Peruvian Songbird*.



LESLIE LUO

## Imogen Kelly *burlesque artist*

---

Imogen Kelly is Australia's first lady of striptease, not only renowned as Australia's Queen of Burlesque, but also crowned World Queen of Burlesque in 2012 at the Burlesque Hall of Fame, Las Vegas. Her work reflects her influences, from being a high-flying trapeze artist to Moulin Rouge kick lines and shows for sheiks, from high-end Japanese geisha weddings to burlesque festivals around the world.

With a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Performance under her belt, a diploma in Circus Arts, a diploma in film-making and a NIDA degree in directing, Imogen Kelly embarked on a career as an international show pony, touring in the UK, Europe, USA and Japan. In Australia she co-founded cult night club Gurlesque and is a member of Brisbane's La La Parlour. She has performed in the Sydney Opera House in the opera *Rinaldo*, as well as directing or performing shows in the Opera House Studio (*The Studio* launch, *Sleepless Beauty*, *Close Your Little Eyes*, *Music for the Eyes*, *La Soirée* and *Club Swizzle*), and has just returned from the 2018 Adelaide Cabaret Festival.

In 2007 Imogen Kelly performed in Hyde Park for the Sydney Festival and the following year was married by Sydney Festival First Night in a public wedding that literally stopped the city – Macquarie Street was her altar and aisle. Imogen is a breast cancer survivor and campaigner.



## **Richard Carroll** *director*

---

Richard Carroll is a director, writer and producer based in Sydney. Last year he directed an acclaimed production of *Calamity Jane* at Hayes Theatre Co starring Virginia Gay, winning a Sydney Theatre Award for Best Production of an Independent Musical and a nomination for Best Director of a Musical.

His cabaret work includes: *Everybody Loves Lucy* (co-writer); *Dahlesque* (co-writer); *¡Hispanic Attack!* (writer/director, national tour); *Don't Bother to Knock* (co-writer/director, Hayes/Adelaide Cabaret Festival); *Julie Madly Deeply* (co-creator; Australian, Canadian, UK national tours and West End season); and opening night variety gala concerts (director/writer) for the Adelaide Cabaret Festival and The Art House.

In 2018 his directing work includes: *Gypsy* for Hayes Theatre Co; an Australian tour of *Calamity Jane*; the Melbourne season of *The Show Goes On*; and *An Act of God* (co-director) for Darlinghurst Theatre Company starring Mitchell Butel. His associate and assistant directing work includes: *Violet* (winner of three Sydney Theatre Awards including Best Independent Musical) and *High Society*, both at the Hayes Theatre Co. His producing work includes: *Darlinghurst Nights* and *High Society* (Hayes); *Miracle City* and *Sweet Charity* (Luckiest Productions). Richard Carroll co-wrote and was associate producer of the documentary *David Campbell on Broadway*.



## **Christopher Horsey** *choreographer*

---

Christopher Horsey is an Australian Dance Award nominee for his work on *Swing on This*. Most recently, he choreographed for Channel 7's *Dance Boss* and the new children's mockumentary comedy series *The InBESTigators* (written and produced by Gristmill). For the SSO he has choreographed *Witches* (2016) and *Praying for Time*, a George Michael tribute (2017). He choreographed Adam Garcia's judges' performances on *Got to Dance* (UK), and is resident choreographer for Channel 7's *Carols in the Domain*.

Other credits include *West Side Story* and *Godspell* (Queensland Conservatorium), *The 39 Steps* (Queensland Theatre) and *Mickey's Big Band Christmas Show* (Disneyland Paris), as well as The Helpmann Awards, *Kiss Me, Kate* (Opera Queensland), *The Detective's Handbook* (Hayes Theatre Co), *Ruthless* (Theatre Division), *Jive Junkys* (Edinburgh Festival), and for the Production Company *High Society* and *Sugar (Some Like It Hot)*.

As a performer Christopher Horsey is best known for his work as a founding member of *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, *Tap Dogs* and the feature film *Bootmen*, and he owes much of his motivation to his world title as a 12 year old in the Fred Astaire International Tap & Jazz Championship in New York City.



## **Dayton Tavares** *dancer*

---

Dayton Tavares is one of Australia's most exciting and in-demand young performers. A prodigy in the business, he performed on stage in his first lead role as a child in the hit musical *Billy Elliot*. From there he continued his training, graduating from the prestigious Brent Street in Sydney with a Certificate IV in Performing Arts.

He is now taking the professional world by storm as an adult. His stage credits include Opera Australia's critically acclaimed *Carmen*, choreographed by Kelley Abbey, as well as Bonny Lithgow's *Aladdin and his Wondrous Lamp*.

On screen Dayton Tavares has been a featured dancer on *The Voice Australia*, *The Voice Kids*, *X Factor Australia* and *So You Think You Can Dance Australia*, and he has had lead roles in television campaigns for brands such as Toyota and Taco Now.



## **Alexander 'Zan' Kermond** *dancer*

---

Alexander 'Zan' Kermond is a fifth-generation performer who has been dancing since he learned to walk. He made his professional debut at age eight when he was cast as young Cosmo Brown in David Atkins' *Singin' in the Rain*, performing across Australia and Asia. One of Zan's childhood dreams was realised when he was offered a spot in Dein Perry's *Tap Dogs* in 2010. His musical theatre credits also include *Hot Shoe Shuffle*, once again performing with the legendary David Atkins, and he appeared in George Miller's *Happy Feet 2*.

Under the direction of Wayne Harrison, Zan headed to the Adelaide Cabaret Festival with his father and grandpa, where three generations performed onstage together in *The Kermonds*. He was thrilled to be awarded a Mo Award for Best Variety Production Show of the Year.

Zan recently turned his hand to producing and directing, with his show *Les Vaudevillians* premiering at the Adelaide Fringe Festival where it received five-star reviews. Zan is a graduate of the prestigious ED5 International.



## **Ebony Wright** *dancer*

---

Originally from Sarina, North Queensland, Ebony Wright trained at the Queensland University of Technology and The Edge in Los Angeles. Now residing in Sydney, she has worked with many of the great creatives in the business as well as artists such as Guy Sebastian, Rove McManus, Robb Mills, Rhonda Burchmore and Peter Cousens.

She has toured with the World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra and worked with Wayne Scott Kermond on the musical *Candy Man*. Other theatre credits include Opera Australia's *Werther* and *Manon Lescaut*, *Las Vegas [Confidential]* *The Musical* and in 2017 *Les Vaudevillians*, in which she was the only female lead.

On screen Ebony Wright was featured as a tap dancer in the Bollywood blockbuster film *Dhoom 3*, choreographed by Dein Perry. She has also appeared on *The X Factor Australia*, *The Voice Australia*, *Rove LA*, *Sunrise* and in numerous television commercials.

She is also the Show and Cast Manager for the iconic Sydney Showboats, as well as the Australian Casting Consultant for Hong Kong Disneyland, Shanghai Disneyland and Tokyo Disney Resort.



## **Suzanne Steele** *dancer*

---

Suzanne Steele's passion for performing emerged at an early age in Brisbane, under the instruction of Lenore Robbins and the Australian Acting Academy. She went on to become a graduate of the Queensland Ballet's Queensland Dance School of Excellence and Dance World Studios.

Her theatre credits include *Dream Lover The Musical*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Hello, Dolly!*, *Funny Girl*, Hugh Jackman's arena tour *Broadway to Oz*, *The Rocky Horror Show* (Janet, Magenta, Columbia cover), the original Australian tour of *Wicked* (Nessarose cover), Barry Humphries' 50th anniversary Australian tour *Back with a Vengeance*, Universal Studios Japan and headline singer for corporate events (Crown, SMA Productions). She was part of the professional cast for the Opening and Closing ceremonies of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games, performing with artists such as Delta Goodrem, Guy Sebastian, Ricki-Lee, Anthony Callea and Samantha Jade, and later this year will appear in *She Loves Me* at the Hayes Theatre Co. Suzanne Steele is a proud member of the MEAA.

# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS



## DAVID ROBERTSON

THE LOWY CHAIR OF  
CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

PATRON Professor The Hon. Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the SSO also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

Well on its way to becoming the premier orchestra of the Asia Pacific region, the SSO has toured China on five 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.

2018 is David Robertson's fifth season as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director.

# THE ORCHESTRA



**David Robertson**  
THE LOWY CHAIR OF  
CHIEF CONDUCTOR  
AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



**Brett Dean**  
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Anonymous [1]



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PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS

*Associate Principal Trombone Scott Kinmont with  
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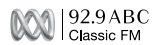
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