



sydney symphony orchestra

David Robertson The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

Brahms Revelation: Symphony No. 4

2018



MEET THE MUSIC

WED 22 AUG, 6.30PM

EMIRATES METRO SERIES

FRI 24 AUG, 8PM

GREAT CLASSICS

SAT 25 AUG, 2PM



Principal Partner



CLASSICAL



**Brahms Revelation:
Favourite Concertos**

BRAHMS Academic Festival Overture
BRAHMS Double Concerto
BRAHMS Piano Concerto No.1

David Robertson conductor • Andrew Haveron violin
Umberto Clerici cello • Alexander Gavrylyuk piano

APT Master Series
Wed 29 Aug, 8pm
Fri 31 Aug, 8pm
Sat 1 Sep, 8pm
Mondays @ 7
Mon 3 Sep, 7pm

Sydney Opera House



Sinfonia Flamenca

Juan Carmona Septet plays original Flamenco
CARMONA orch. Reguagui
Sinfonia Flamenca **AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE**

David Robertson conductor
Juan Carmona guitar • Paco Carmona guitar
El Bachi double bass • Domingo Patricio flute
Kike Terrón percussion • Noemi Humanes dancer
Karen Lugo dancer

Meet the Music
Thu 6 Sep, 6.30pm
Kaleidoscope
Fri 7 Sep, 8pm
Sat 8 Sep, 8pm

Sydney Opera House



Bruch and Dvořák

Cocktail Hour

BRUCH String Quintet in E flat
DVOŘÁK String Quintet No.2 in G

Musicians of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Fri 7 Sep, 6pm
Sat 8 Sep, 6pm
Sydney Opera House
Utzon Room



Playlist with Catherine Hewgill

JS BACH Brandenburg Concerto No.3
MENDELSSOHN Symphony No.5, Reformation: Andante
VIVALDI Double Cello Concerto in G minor,
RV 531: 1st movement
BRUCH Kol Nidrei, for cello and orchestra
GRIEG Holberg Suite for strings
Andrew Haveron violin-director
Catherine Hewgill cello and presenter
Umberto Clerici cello

Tue 11 Sep, 6.30pm
City Recital Hall



Thum Prints

An SSO Family Concert

HAMILTON & TOM THUM Thum Prints
Gordon Hamilton conductor
Tom Thum beatboxer

Sun 16 Sep, 2pm
Sydney Opera House

SSO PRESENTS



Disney in Concert: Mary Poppins

A magical event for the whole family – the beloved Disney film accompanied by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra playing *A Spoonful of Sugar*, *Chim Chim Cher-ee*, *Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious* and every note in between!

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Fri 14 Sep, 7pm
Sat 15 Sep, 2pm
Sat 15 Sep, 7pm
Sydney Opera House

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WELCOME



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As in everyday life, partnerships are an important part of what we do as they allow us to connect with different parts of Australian communities. Last year we celebrated 15 years as Principal Partner of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, which continues to be incredibly important for Emirates.

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On that note, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Emirates Metro Series and I hope that you enjoy this world-class experience.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Brown".

Barry Brown

Emirates' Divisional Vice President
for Australasia



**sydney symphony
orchestra**

David Robertson
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

MEET THE MUSIC

WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST, 6.30PM

EMIRATES METRO SERIES

FRIDAY 24 AUGUST, 8PM

GREAT CLASSICS

SATURDAY 25 AUGUST, 2PM

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL

Brahms Revelation **Symphony No.4**

David Robertson *conductor*

Alban Gerhardt *cello*

EDWARD ELGAR (1857–1934)

Serenade in E minor for strings, Op.20

Allegro piacevole

Larghetto

Allegretto

BRETT DEAN (born 1961)

Cello Concerto

PREMIERE

INTERVAL

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833–1897)

Symphony No.4 in E minor, Op.98

Allegro non troppo

Andante moderato

Allegro giocoso – Poco meno presto

Allegro energico e passionato – Più allegro



Saturday's performance will be recorded by ABC Classic FM for broadcast across Australia on Sunday 2 September at noon and again on Tuesday 25 September at 1pm.

Pre-concert talk by Jim Coyle in the Northern Foyer 45 minutes before each performance

Estimated durations: 12 minutes, 25 minutes, 20-minute interval, 40 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 8.20pm (Wed), 9.50pm (Fri), 3.50pm (Sat).

COVER ARTWORK: *Cello* (1982), ink etching by Heather Betts

Brett Dean's Cello Concerto was commissioned with the generous support of Geoff Ainsworth AM and Johanna Featherstone.



Principal Partner

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Edward Elgar

Serenade in E minor for strings, Op. 20

Allegro piacevole

Larghetto

Allegretto

Elgar's first instrument was the violin, which he began learning at the age of nine and rapidly mastered. The son of a music seller and piano tuner father and a mother who was a fine poet and artist, Elgar's early musical precocity was encouraged, though family finances prevented him studying music abroad. He became very active as a performer and conductor in his native Worcestershire, playing violin in the orchestra for the Three Choirs Festival in Worcester under Dvořák in 1884, and composing for a number of local ensembles.

Elgar believed passionately in the indivisible nature of a musical idea and its sound, once writing that:

A musical idea may be interesting to read without hearing, or it may hold the attention when played on a key instrument: or by a combination of instruments, but its inventor must have had some definite medium in his mind...I find it impossible to imagine a composer creating a musical idea without defining inwardly, and simultaneously, the exact means of its presentation.

Throughout his career he maintained a particular love for the string family, culminating in the autumnal Cello Concerto of his final years, and among his best-loved works are the Introduction and Allegro for string quartet and string orchestra, Op.47, and the Serenade for strings, Op.20. Both works show Elgar's supreme mastery of the textural possibilities of the string ensemble; when the young composer Herbert Howells asked Elgar his secret, the latter replied: 'Study old Handel. I went to him for help ages ago.' Handel may have been a help, but the lyricism of the Serenade and its simple but idiomatic writing for strings, are entirely characteristic and prophesy the mature Elgar.

Keynotes

EDWARDS

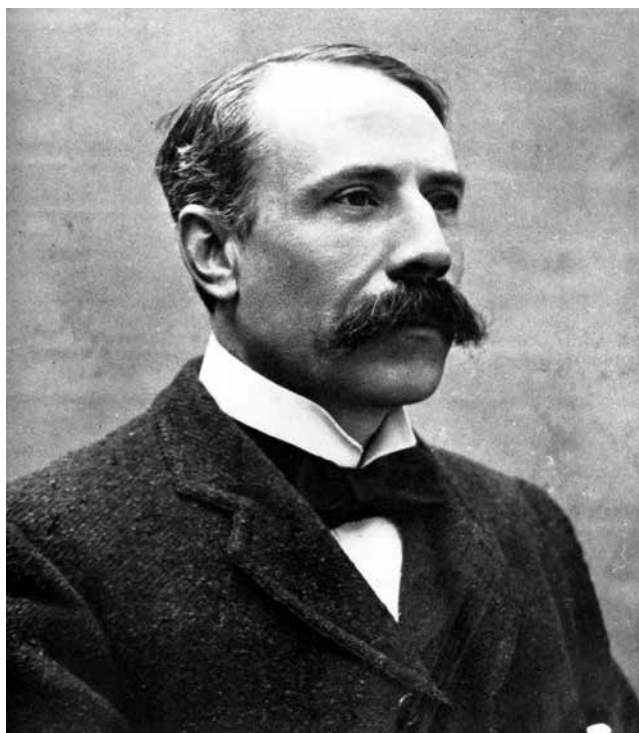
Born Broadheath, 1857

Died Worcester, 1934

Early in their marriage, Elgar and his wife Alice moved to London in the hope that this would boost his career and help him reach his goals as a symphonic composer. But his feelings of being an outsider – as a Roman Catholic with a lower class background and as a musician who hadn't pursued formal academic study of music – meant that he found London society inhospitable. In 1891 they retreated to Malvern; Elgar was 34. It was nearly another decade before he found deserved fame with the *Enigma Variations*.

SERENADE

The Serenade for strings was written in 1892, and the composer offered it to his wife, Alice, as a gift on their third anniversary. At the time he was eking out his income by teaching music in girls schools, and it seems likely that the Serenade was first performed by the Ladies' Orchestral Class in Worcester. This would account for the relative simplicity and directness of the music. Elgar's own experience as a violinist resulted in idiomatic and effective string writing as well as an astute understanding of string ensemble textures. The music itself may have had its origins in an earlier piece from 1888, in which the first two movements were given evocative titles: 'Spring Song' and 'Elegy'.



A Catholic and of lower middle-class social status, Elgar had married Alice Roberts against the wishes of her aristocratic family in 1889, and the couple had moved to London in the hope of securing Elgar's career as a composer. Sadly, this proved unsuccessful, so in 1891 Elgar and his wife returned to Worcestershire where Elgar eked out a living from teaching, performing and sporadic publications until his reputation took off with the appearance of the *Enigma* Variations at the end of the decade.

The Serenade dates from 1892, and seems to have received its premiere with the Ladies' Orchestral Class in Worcester which Elgar trained. It may, however, be a reworking of his Three Pieces for String Orchestra, first performed in 1888 by the Worcestershire Musical Union. Elgar said of the Three Pieces: 'I like 'em [the first thing I ever did]'. Unfortunately, the score of the earlier work has not survived, but its movement titles (*Spring Song*, *Elegy* and *Finale*) correspond roughly to those of the present work, which Elgar often said was a favourite.

The Serenade was offered by Elgar as a gift to his wife on the third anniversary of their marriage. On the manuscript Elgar wrote, 'Braut helped a great deal to make these little tunes' ('Braut' means bride in German).

ADAPTED FROM A NOTE BY GORDON KERRY © SYMPHONY AUSTRALIA

In this Serenade there's an almost cryptic dialogue going on between the strings: they are both saying something and yet, with typical British reticence, leaving a good deal unsaid. I find it to be quite amazing in that way – it feels like the kind of dialogue that Julian Fellowes would write for *Downton Abbey*. It makes the right combination with Brahms's Fourth Symphony, which is both very well known but in a sense quite cryptic.

David Robertson

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Brett Dean

Cello Concerto

Alban Gerhardt *cello*

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Dramatis Personæ, *Ariel's Music*, *The Lost Art of Letter Writing* – these are just some of the Brett Dean concertos (for trumpet, clarinet and violin respectively) that the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has performed in recent seasons. With titles like these, it's perhaps no surprise that those working in the SSO waited with some anticipation to learn what Dean would call his new cello concerto.

Choosing the title is important, he says, and this is linked to the nature of the work itself. 'With *Dramatis Personæ* the soloist's theatrical role was central to the work, so it was never going to be just a "Trumpet Concerto". The premise of this new work is concerned with music for music's sake, so "Cello Concerto", pure and simple, seems exactly the right title.'

Dean knew from the outset that this would be the 'purest' of his concertos, 'focusing on the personality at the front of the orchestra, without any programmatic or spatial theatrics'. While many of his concertos have an overt drama (*Ariel's Music* was inspired by a woman's fight to raise awareness about AIDS), the Cello Concerto is more concerned with collaboration than conflict, with ideas from the soloist being amplified by the orchestra.

The 'personality at the front of the orchestra' in this case is German cellist Alban Gerhardt, someone who has long been part of Brett Dean's 'musical family'. Dean knew his father as a fellow member of the Berlin Philharmonic, as well as his sister Manon (like Dean a violist), and has played chamber music with him for many years, including recent string quintet tours.

As well as his admiration for Gerhardt as a musician, Dean has been impressed by his whole approach to the championing of contemporary works. Rare among soloists, Gerhardt memorises the scores of the new works he performs (a feat in itself), but beyond this, explains Dean, he has an amazing ability to internalise the music. 'I've seen him perform concertos by Matthias Pintscher and Unsuk Chin and he treats them with the same respect and enthusiasm as the standard repertoire of Dvořák and Elgar'. And when Dean composed *Eleven Oblique Strategies* for the Feuermann cello competition in 2014, Gerhardt agreed to test it and discuss technical issues. As it turned out, that solo cello piece became an important source for this new concerto, serving almost as a study for the larger work.

In some ways it was natural, having composed his Viola Concerto and *The Lost Art of Letter Writing*, that Dean would write a cello concerto. 'As a violist,' he says, writing for strings has always seemed like a "home" rather than an "away" game for me.

Keynotes

DEAN

Born Brisbane, 1961

Brett Dean studied in Brisbane before moving to Germany in 1984, where he was a viola player in the Berlin Philharmonic (1985–2000). His first compositions were semi-improvised film scores and he is almost entirely self-taught as a composer. One of his earliest works to attract international attention was a piece for solo cello and electronics, composed for Jiří Kylián's dance work *One of a Kind*. He returned to Australia in 2000 to concentrate on his composing career and his music has been championed by such leading conductors around the world.

Notable works include his opera *Bliss* (Sydney, 2010); *Ariel's Music* for clarinet and orchestra; his violin concerto *The Lost Art of Letter Writing*, which the SSO performed and recorded with its dedicatee Frank Peter Zimmermann in 2011; and the orchestral version of *Engelsflügel* (Wings of Angels), composed for the SSO and David Robertson in 2014. In 2009 *Lost Art...* won Dean the Grawemeyer Award, the equivalent of a Nobel prize for music; more recently he received the Don Banks Music Award for his contribution to Australia's musical scene. His second opera, *Hamlet*, was premiered to acclaim at Glyndebourne in 2017 and received its first Australian performances in the 2018 Adelaide Festival. Other recent premieres include *Notturmo inquieto* for the Berlin Philharmonic, *Approach* (a companion piece for Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No.6) and *The Scene of the Crime* for trumpet and percussion.

From a viola perspective, the cello is a much bigger instrument in all senses, not only its dimensions but also the magnificent rich sound it can produce in most registers, and it's true that I both love and am slightly jealous of the expansive sound of the cello.'

That said, one of the challenges for any composer of a cello concerto is that the cello is a 'middle-register instrument' within the orchestral space, so the solo part needs to be treated 'with judicious care in what you can throw against it in terms of orchestral accompaniment and partnering'. The orchestration for the Cello Concerto is a fairly standard one with Dean's usual expanded percussion section, including some unconventional elements – look for the bubble wrap! – but there is one standout addition, which is his first use of Hammond organ. This is heard in those sections of the concerto with a jazz funk flavour, sometimes used chordally but more often its part is busy with a dark, edgy groove. Although the Cello Concerto is a 'darkly serious piece', it does have a more playful side, a quality embodied in the early etching by Dean's wife, Heather Betts, reproduced on the program cover.

Listening Guide

The concerto is in one uninterrupted movement but can be heard in five major sections:

I. Extremely intimate yet flowing and playful

The solo cello – in its high register – starts a tentative dialogue with the orchestra through bird-call like material. While introducing various motivic ideas that will feature throughout the piece, it picks up in density, rhythmic edge and tempo. Unexpectedly however it dissipates into...

II. Slow, dreamy, unhurried

An extended slow movement in which the soloist floats above gently undulating wave-like harmonies in harp and divided strings. At its peak, the orchestral colours are dominated by swirls coming from the two contrasting keyboard instruments, piano and Hammond organ. The solo cello takes us gradually down, down, down from its elevated, bird's-eye-view into the new energy of...

III. Allegro agitato sempre

In which the various rhythmic components that we've heard earlier return with a more demonic and threatening edge, forcing the soloist to 'duck and weave' around the orchestra. This wakes the orchestra itself into more volatile actions of its own, in turn pushing the soloist into new territories of repeated down-bow chords and different colourings of the same note. The race comes to a sudden stop and everyone catches their breath for a moment but just when we think a calm may have returned we're thrown into...

'...it's true that I both love and am slightly jealous of the expansive sound of the cello.'

BRETT DEAN

IV. *Fast, rhythmic, relentless*

The soloist, now in lowest register, reluctantly takes off again; this cat-and-mouse chase with the orchestra isn't done yet! At times the orchestra, having taken up the solo-cello's motivic ideas as their own, then leaves the soloist behind, so keen are they to ride the wave, culminating in an extended orchestral tutti. After it subsides, the soloist returns, hushed, chastened perhaps by the orchestral storm he/she has set in motion. Shadows of former motives lead us to...

V. *Slow, spacious and still*

In the stillness, the soloist tentatively reconnects with the orchestra through a series of extended quarter-tone trills shared with other string soloists in cellos and basses. Calm, distant memories of the cello's opening bird calls combine with delicate orchestral trills. The work ends with a hushed, upwards-spiralling question mark.

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA © 2018

WITH QUOTATIONS FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH THE COMPOSER BY

DAVID ALLENBY (BOOSEY & HAWKES)

LISTENING GUIDE BY BRETT DEAN © 2018

The orchestra for Brett Dean's Cello Concerto comprises three flutes (doubling piccolos and alto flute), three oboes (one doubling cor anglais), four clarinets (doubling bass clarinet and contrabass clarinet), two bassoons and contrabassoon; four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and four percussionists; harp, piano and Hammond organ; and strings.

Composed for Alban Gerhardt, the concerto was commissioned by the Berlin Philharmonic, Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra and Sydney Symphony Orchestra, with the generous support of Geoff Ainsworth AM and Johanna Featherstone, who also support Brett Dean's role at the SSO as Artist in Residence. These world premiere performances will be followed in October by the European premiere in Berlin and the Dutch premiere at the Cello Biennale Amsterdam.

PAWEŁ KOPCZYŃSKI



The interesting thing about Brett is that he looks at a piece of music as a philosophical – I won't say argument, that's not what it is – but a philosophical *exploration* through the use of tone. As we know from his use of the cello in something like *Twelve Angry Men*, for Brett the music is never without deeper connotations, without the possibility of having the tones explore something that is very deeply felt and perhaps not easy to put into words, which is why I find his way of writing so allied to what I would call philosophy.

David Robertson

Johannes Brahms

Symphony No.4 in E minor, Op.98

Allegro non troppo

Andante moderato

Allegro giocoso – Poco meno presto

Allegro energico e passionato – Più allegro

Brahms spent years skirting around the symphonic genre, and when he did begin to write symphonies he agonised over them, apologetically circulating drafts to his musical friends. To his publisher, Simrock, Brahms wrote: 'Some honourable colleagues (Bach, Mozart, Schubert) have mischievously overindulged the world. But if we are not able to write as beautifully as they could, then we must surely in addition protect ourselves from trying to write as quickly as they did...'

But the real culprit in Brahms's struggle with the symphony had been Beethoven. 'I shall never compose a symphony!' wrote Brahms. 'You don't have any idea how it feels if one always hears such a giant marching behind one.' Brahms needed to preserve his own identity against the expectations and precedents set by Beethoven. At the same time, more than any of his contemporaries, he had a deep reverence for the past, and his highly personal solutions to musical problems are often founded on the formal strength of Classical structures.

After the long and difficult gestation of his first symphony, Brahms gathered momentum, and the Fourth Symphony appeared only two years after the Third (in 1885) following two summers' work at his mountain retreat in Müzzuschlag in Austria. It can be heard as a 'summing-up' of Brahms's aims: the marriage of past techniques with contemporary idioms and the close-knit integration of material. Especially in its weighty final movement, the symphony unleashes a certain 'cumulative power', even at the first rehearsal conductor Hans von Bülow recognised it as 'gigantic, altogether a law unto itself, quite new, steely individuality. Exudes unparalleled energy from first note to last.'

The **first movement** opens not with a slow introduction (which Brahms discarded from his early draft), nor with a theme, but with a mighty gesture of falling thirds and rising sixths. It is a motto that Schoenberg later admired for its economy and almost abstract value as a pattern, and its fundamental significance lies in the way it hints at tonal relationships and provides the germ of melodic material for the whole symphony. Later, in the development, the alternation of the two intervals takes on a conversational tone. When the critic Eduard Hanslick heard Brahms and Ignaz Brüll play through a two-piano version of the

Keynotes

BRAHMS

Born 1833, Hamburg

Died 1897, Vienna

Brahms completed his final symphony in 1885. He had spent the summers of 1884 and 1885 working on it in an Austrian mountain retreat, Müzzuschlag, but the inspiration seems to have come less from nature and more from his musical and intellectual enthusiasms, in particular the 'old masters' such as Johann Sebastian Bach.

FOURTH SYMPHONY

The Fourth Symphony has been described as the 'brainiest' of Brahms's symphonies. This is a response to the opening movement ('two tremendously witty people') and to the finale – a monumental movement based on the Baroque technique of a repeating bass, above which Brahms spins an elaborate set of 30 variations. The inner movements bring beauty, serenity and good humour. The glowing *Andante* begins with a gently moving theme featuring Brahms's favourite instrument, the horn. The playful scherzo – his first – brings extremes: the high-pitched piccolo and the lowest woodwind, the contrabassoon. And watch out for the triangle, heard only in the third movement!

Brahms conducted the premiere of his Fourth Symphony with the tiny Meiningen Orchestra (49 players) on 25 October 1885.

draft symphony he commented: 'During the whole first movement I felt as if I were being beaten soundly by two tremendously witty people.' The duo piano arrangement may have contributed to this impression, and in performances such as this one where the first and second violins sit either side of the conductor's podium there is a vivid sense of the dialectic that Brahms wrote into the music.

The **Andante** opens with a horn melody apparently in C major to prelude a movement in E major. The 21-year-old Richard Strauss heard this movement as 'a funeral procession moving in silence across moonlit heights'. The cellos introduce the second subject, a sympathetically glowing and tender theme.

The **third movement** represents the first appearance of a 'scherzo' in a Brahms symphony. Rather than adopting the usual three-part scherzo and trio structure, Brahms's *Allegro giocoso* is a boisterous sonata movement. Its exultant playfulness emerges in orchestral extremes – both piccolo and contrabassoon appear in the texture for the first time, and a triangle solo provides the only percussion moment in the symphony.

The previous year Brahms had received his copy of the 30th issue of the *Bach Complete Edition*, including Cantata No.150

‘During the whole first movement I felt as if I were being beaten soundly by two tremendously witty people.’

EDUARD HANSLICK, AFTER HEARING A DRAFT OF THE SYMPHONY



The first page of the autograph manuscript for the Fourth Symphony

'Nach dir Gott verlanget mich' (Unto thee, O Lord, will I lift up my soul). Brahms was drawn to its concluding choral passacaglia, and contemplated the symphonic use of its ground bass, asking von Bülow: 'What would you think if someone were to write a symphony movement on the same theme? But it is too bulky, too straightforward; one must change it somehow.'

And change it he did: chromatically altering just one note (the fifth in the sequence) and elevating it from ground bass to melody line, with newly implied chords. This theme is stated at the beginning of the **finale** by brass and wind, establishing from the outset a sombre and dramatic atmosphere. Its austerity is further strengthened by the introduction of the trombones, which Brahms has held in reserve for this magnificent finale. Thirty variations follow, demonstrating a huge range of colour and emotion, concluded by a long, elaborate coda.

At first the passacaglia finale was thought an inappropriate conclusion for a symphony. The grand closing passacaglia or chaconne was a Baroque theatrical convention; and while Brahms – editor of Couperin and collector of Bach – would have appreciated this, few of his listeners did. But one critic at the Leipzig premiere in 1886 understood the gesture:

The [finale] is not only constructed on the form displayed in Bach's Chaconne for violin, but it is filled with Bach's spirit. It is built up with such astounding mastery...and in such a manner that its contrapuntal learning remains subordinate to its poetic contents...It can be compared with no former work of Brahms and stands alone in the symphonic literature of the present and the past.

As this anonymous critic recognised, Brahms had created the perfect marriage of learning and poetry, of past and present, and the Classical and Romantic spirit.

YVONNE FRINDLE © 2006

The orchestra for Brahms's Fourth Symphony comprises two flutes, one doubling piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon; four horns, two trumpets, and three trombones (in the fourth movement only); timpani and triangle (third movement only); and strings.

The SSO first performed the Fourth Symphony in 1938 under Malcolm Sargent. (This was the first complete performance of a Brahms symphony by the orchestra.) The most recent performance was in 2014 conducted by Jakub Hrůša.



Brahms Four is a very public work – a symphony – and yet, ironically, it conveys a more private side of the composer's musical personality. Much of it is deeply rooted in the historical past: the passacaglia in the final movement, the nod to ancient church modes in the second. But then the third movement has a popular energy – you can hear it as a kind of two-step that Brahms might have heard in a ballroom. And then the first movement is this remarkable projection of where musical form can go. So the Fourth Symphony is a work that is in certain ways both very historical and yet at the same time is really pushing the concepts of music forward into new areas that would be developed in the 20th century. And this is one of the things that makes it an ideal companion to the new cello concerto on this program.

David Robertson

A young woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a black off-the-shoulder dress, is the central focus. She is holding a violin and looking slightly to her right with a thoughtful expression. In the background, several other people in formal attire are visible, including a man in a tuxedo and a woman in a black dress. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the woman's face and the texture of her dress.

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2019... An incredible season ahead

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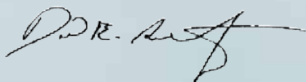
The music we share with you in the Concert Hall tonight is the artistic realisation of pen and ink, ideas on paper – it may be a bit different to how it was in rehearsal, or how it sounds on other nights. That's one of the gifts of live music-making – the shared energy, here and now, makes each performance special.

It's exactly what we strive to achieve each time we present a new season to you – a season that is special, that anticipates the enthusiasm you bring as a music lover, that stimulates your curiosity and inspires you to enjoy more music with us.

The 2019 season is wonderfully diverse. The Season Opening Gala places Diana Doherty – a musical treasure – centre stage with Nigel Westlake's *Spirit of the Wild* oboe concerto, reprising one of the most exciting premieres of my time in Sydney. The operas-in-concert continue with Britten's *Peter Grimes*, headlined by a powerhouse duo – Stuart Skelton and Nicole Car. And, in a first for Australia, an amazing piece of theatre-with-music: Tom Stoppard and André Previn's satirical *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*.

My final program in 2019 – American Harmonies – brings together all-American showstoppers: the lyrical beauty of Copland's *Appalachian Spring*; a new concerto by Christopher Rouse that showcases the incredible talent of one of our own musicians, bassoonist Todd Gibson-Cornish; and *Harmonielehre* by John Adams – one of the greats and a very dear personal friend. That spirit of warm friendship between you, me and the musicians is so important to our musical community.

Please join us in 2019 and let's celebrate together.



David Robertson

The Lowy Chair of
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

Highlights – David Robertson Conducts

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| FEBRUARY | Season Opening Gala – Diana Doherty performs Westlake
The Sydney Symphony Orchestra
and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra |
| JUNE | Lang Lang Gala Performance – Mozart Piano Concerto No.24 |
| JULY | Britten's <i>Peter Grimes</i>
with Stuart Skelton and Nicole Car |
| AUGUST | Keys to the City Festival
Kirill Gerstein – piano concertos by Grieg, Ravel and Gershwin |
| NOVEMBER | André Previn and Tom Stoppard's <i>Every Good Boy Deserves Favour</i> – A play for actors and orchestra
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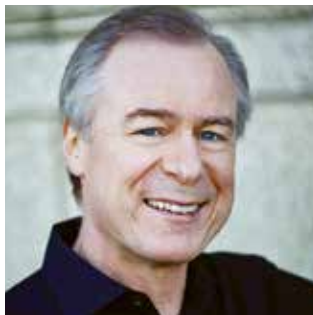
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JUN FRAM

David Robertson *conductor*

THE LOWY CHAIR OF CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

David Robertson – conductor, artist, thinker and American musical visionary – is a highly sought-after figure in the worlds of opera, orchestral music and new music. A consummate and deeply collaborative musician, he is hailed for his intensely committed music-making and celebrated worldwide as a champion of contemporary composers, an ingenious and adventurous programmer, and a masterful communicator and advocate for his art form.

He made his Australian debut with the SSO in 2003 and soon became a regular visitor to Sydney, with highlights including the Australian premiere of John Adams' *Doctor Atomic* Symphony and concert performances of *The Flying Dutchman*. In 2014, his inaugural season as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director, he led the SSO on a tour of China. More recent highlights have included presentations of *Elektra*, *Tristan und Isolde*, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, and *Porgy and Bess*; the Australian premiere of Adams' *Scheherazade.2* violin concerto, Messiaen's *From the Canyons to the Stars* and Stravinsky ballet scores (also recorded for CD release), as well as the SSO at Carriageworks series (2016–17).

Currently in his farewell season as Music Director of the St Louis Symphony, David Robertson has served as artistic leader to many musical institutions, including the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre National de Lyon, and – as a protégé of Pierre Boulez – Ensemble Intercontemporain. With frequent projects at the

world's leading opera houses, including the Metropolitan Opera, La Scala, Bavarian State Opera, Théâtre du Châtelet and San Francisco Opera, he is also a frequent guest with major orchestras worldwide, conducting the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston and Chicago symphony orchestras, Philadelphia and Cleveland orchestras, Berlin Philharmonic, Staatskapelle Dresden, BBC Symphony Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.

David Robertson is devoted to supporting young musicians and has worked with students at the Aspen, Tanglewood and Lucerne festivals; as well as the Paris Conservatoire, Juilliard School, Music Academy of the West, National Orchestral Institute (University of Maryland) and the National Youth Orchestra of Carnegie Hall.

His awards and accolades include Musical America Conductor of the Year (2000), Columbia University's 2006 Ditson Conductor's Award, and the 2005–06 ASCAP Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming. In 2010, he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and in 2011 a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

David Robertson was born in Santa Monica, California, and educated at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he studied French horn and composition before turning to conducting. He is married to pianist Orli Shaham.

The position of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director is also supported by Principal Partner Emirates.



Alban Gerhardt

cello

Alban Gerhardt has, for 25 years, made a unique impact on audiences worldwide with his intense musicality, compelling stage presence and insatiable artistic curiosity. His gift for shedding fresh light on familiar scores, along with his appetite for investigating new repertoire from centuries past and present, truly set him apart from his peers.

Following the premiere of Brett Dean's Cello Concerto here in Sydney, he will give the European premiere with the Berlin Philharmonic and Sakari Oramo. Other highlights of the 2018–19 season include concerts with the Hong Kong and Oslo philharmonic orchestras, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, MDR Sinfonieorchester Leipzig, and WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln under Jukka-Pekka Saraste, with whom he will record both Shostakovich concertos.

He is a keen recitalist and chamber musician, and his regular performance partners include Steven Osborne, Cecile Licad, Baiba Skride and Brett Dean. He is developing a new project, *Love in Fragments*, with violinist Gergana Gergova, choreographer Sommer Ulrickson and sculptor Alexander Polzin.

He is passionate about sharing his discoveries with audiences beyond the traditional concert hall: outreach projects have involved schools, hospitals and pioneering sessions in public spaces and young offender institutions, as well as a collaboration with Deutsche Bahn involving live performances on Germany's main commuter routes. Last year he founded #Musicians4UnitedEurope.

Following early competition success, his career was launched by his 1991 debut with the Berlin Philharmonic and Semyon Bychkov. Notable collaborations since then include the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, the British and German radio orchestras, Tonhalle Zürich, Leipzig Gewandhaus and Orchestre National de France, as well as the Cleveland Orchestra and the Philadelphia, Boston and Chicago symphony orchestras, under conductors such as Kurt Masur, Christoph von Dohnányi, Christian Thielemann, Christoph Eschenbach, Michael Tilson Thomas, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Vladimir Jurowski, Kirill Petrenko and Andris Nelsons.

He has collaborated with composers including Jörg Widmann, Unsuk Chin, Brett Dean, Julian Anderson and Matthias Pintscher; and in almost every case he commits to memorising their scores before world premiere performances. His recording of Unsuk Chin's Cello Concerto won the BBC Music Magazine Award and was shortlisted for a Gramophone Award in 2015. His most recent recording, *Rostropovich Encores*, was released last year and in 2019 he will release his recording of the Bach cello suites.

His most recent appearance for the SSO was in 2011, when he performed the Brahms Double Concerto with violinist Karen Gomyo and Vasily Petrenko conducting.

Alban Gerhardt plays a Matteo Goffriller cello dating from 1710.

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS



DAVID ROBERTSON

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

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

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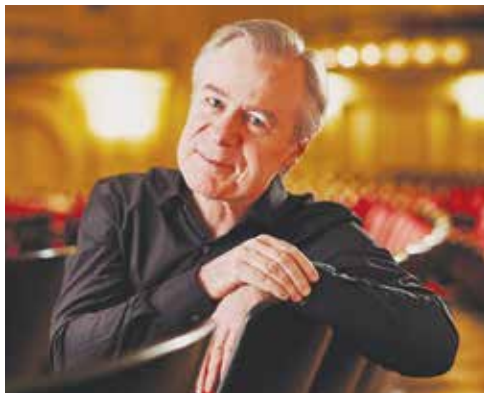


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Each year – both alone and in collaboration with other orchestras worldwide – the SSO commissions new works for the mainstage concert season. These commissions represent Australian and international composers, established and new voices, and reflect our commitment to the nurturing of orchestral music.

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- JULIAN ANDERSON *The Imaginary Museum – Piano Concerto* with soloist Steven Osborne
2, 3, 4 August (Australian premiere)
- BRETT DEAN *Cello Concerto* with soloist Alban Gerhardt
22, 24, 25 August (Premiere)



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*Stuart Challender, SSO Chief Conductor
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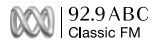
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