



sydney symphony orchestra

David Robertson The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

Tchaikovsky Cello Favourites

Vladimir Ashkenazy conducts Strauss

2018



THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY

THU 27 SEP, 1.30PM

EMIRATES METRO SERIES

FRI 28 SEP, 8PM

GREAT CLASSICS

SAT 29 SEP, 2PM



Principal Partner

OCTOBER



The Last Days of Socrates

Haydn's Philosopher

MENDELSSOHN The Fair Melusina – Overture
HAYDN Symphony No.22 (The Philosopher)
DEAN (Text by Graeme William Ellis)
 The Last Days of Socrates

Brett Dean conductor
Peter Coleman-Wright baritone
Andrew Goodwin tenor
 Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Thursday Afternoon Symphony
Thu 11 Oct, 1.30pm
 Emirates Metro Series
Fri 12 Oct, 8pm
 Sydney Opera House



Principal Partner



Thibaudet plays the Egyptian Concerto

With Sibelius 2

DEBUSSY Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun
SAINT-SAËNS Piano Concerto No.5 (Egyptian)
SIBELIUS Symphony No.2

Jukka-Pekka Saraste conductor
Jean-Yves Thibaudet piano

APT Master Series
Wed 17 Oct, 8pm
Fri 19 Oct, 8pm
Sat 20 Oct, 8pm
 Sydney Opera House



Beethoven Nine

Ode to Joy

HAYDN Symphony No.104 (London)
BEETHOVEN Symphony No.9

Edo de Waart conductor
Amanda Majeski soprano
Caitlin Hulcup mezzo-soprano
Kim Begley tenor
Shenyang bass
 Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Thursday Afternoon Symphony
Thu 25 Oct, 1.30pm
 Emirates Metro Series
Fri 26 Oct, 8pm
 Great Classics
Sat 27 Oct, 2pm
 Sydney Opera House



Principal Partner



French Fellowship

Stravinsky's Pulcinella

POULENC Suite française
RAVEL Three Poems by Stéphane Mallarmé
STRAVINSKY Pulcinella: Suite

Roger Benedict conductor
Caitlin Hulcup mezzo-soprano
 Sydney Symphony Orchestra Fellows

Fri 26 Oct, 11am
 Sydney Opera House



Playlist with Kees Boersma

PIAZZOLLA Kicho
BEETHOVEN Symphony No.1: 1st movement
KATS-CHERNIN Witching Hour: 2nd movement
R STRAUSS Metamorphosen (septet version)
BARTÓK Divertimento: 3rd movement

Kees Boersma double bass
Andrew Haveron violin-director

Tue 30 Oct, 6.30pm
 City Recital Hall

NOVEMBER



The Happiness Box

A Sydney Symphony Family Concert

MARKS The Happiness Box
 Based on the book by David Griffin and
 illustrated by Leslie Greener

Iain Grandage conductor
Amanda Bishop narrator

Sun 4 Nov, 2pm
 Sydney Opera House

WELCOME



Principal Partner

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.

For us, partnerships are all about people, who are more important than ever. This is why we place people at the core of everything we do.

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We strive to offer a superior experience every time our passengers step aboard one of our world-class aircraft. With up to 3,000 channels on our award-winning inflight entertainment system "ice", our passengers are able to watch key Sydney Symphony Orchestra performances from thousands of metres above. This is all while enjoying gourmet meals across each of our classes which are composed by leading chefs.

We are a truly international airline which includes many Australian Pilots, Cabin Crew and support teams. It is these people who work together, much like an orchestra, to ensure that our operations run harmoniously each and every day.

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

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY

THURSDAY 27 SEPTEMBER, 1.30PM

EMIRATES METRO SERIES

FRIDAY 28 SEPTEMBER, 8PM

GREAT CLASSICS

SATURDAY 29 SEPTEMBER, 2PM

.....
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL

Tchaikovsky Cello Favourites

Ashkenazy conducts Strauss

Vladimir Ashkenazy *conductor*

Gautier Capuçon *cello*

PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893)

Andante cantabile

from String Quartet No.1 in D major, Op.11
arranged by the composer for cello and strings

TCHAIKOVSKY

Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op.33

'Fitzenhagen' version (1876–77)

Introduction (*Moderato assai quasi andante*)

Theme (*Moderato semplice*)

Variation I (*Tempo della thema*)

Variation II (*Tempo della thema*)

Variation III (*Andante sostenuto*)

Variation IV (*Andante grazioso*)

Variation V (*Allegro moderato*) – with cadenza

Variation VI (*Andante*)

Variation VII and Coda (*Allegro vivo*)

INTERVAL

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864–1949)

Symphonia domestica, Op.53

Introduction –

Scherzo –

Adagio –

Finale

.....
Saturday's performance will be recorded for broadcast by ABC Classic FM across Australia on 20 October at 12 noon, with a repeat broadcast on 20 December at 1pm.

.....
Pre-concert talk by Zoltán Szabó in the Northern Foyer 45 minutes before the performance.

.....
Estimated durations: 8 minutes, 18 minutes, 20-minute interval, 44 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 4pm (Thurs), 10.30pm (Fri), 4.30pm (Sat).

.....
COVER PHOTO: Gregory Batardon

.....
The Sydney Symphony Orchestra thanks Tom Breen and Rachael Kohn for their leadership support of Mr Ashkenazy's performances, with additional thanks to Constable Estate Vineyards, Andrew Kaldor AM, Renata Kaldor AO and Penelope Seidler AM.



Principal Partner

INTRODUCTION

As the Allied forces gained control of Germany in 1945, a group of American GIs entered the Bavarian town of Garmisch and began requisitioning villas to accommodate the troops. A US officer, Milton Weiss, knocked on one door and was greeted by an old man, who famously said: 'I am the composer of *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Salome*. Leave me alone.'

The Strauss we hear in the *Symphonia domestica* is the noisy, messy Strauss of whom Australian composer Percy Grainger remarked, 'Richard Strauss is a greater, grander genius than Maurice Ravel because he [Strauss] has so amply the vulgarity that Ravel lacks.' Strauss may have built his villa on the proceeds of the self-consciously decadent *Salome*, but coexisting with this generous opulence in Strauss is his great reverence for the music of Mozart, and for Mozart as a symbol of a golden age. It is hardly surprising that he introduced himself to the American soldier as the composer of *Der Rosenkavalier*, as it is in that work that he lovingly set out to create a mythical, Mozartean Vienna, an image of a world that had since been swept away by the Nazis and the Second World War. Nearing the end of his long life, Strauss talked of Mozart in almost mystical terms:

Mozartean melody is detached from every earthly form – the 'thing in itself', like Plato's Eros, poised between heaven and earth, between the mortal and the immortal – liberated from the 'will'; it embodies the deepest penetration of artistic imagination, of the unconscious, into the final mysteries, into the realm of the 'archetypes'.

And the 'Mozartean melody', for Strauss, was most present in the glorious vocal lines of Mozart's operas, which Strauss, in his way, came close to matching.

For Tchaikovsky, like Strauss, playing Mozart induced 'raptures'. In 1887 he produced his Fourth Orchestral Suite, *Mozartiana* based on four keyboard works (of which one is a Mozartean set of variations on a theme of Gluck, and one a Liszt transcription of Mozart). Stravinsky idolised Tchaikovsky not merely as the doyen of Russian music in the nineteenth century, but because the older composer had himself established a kind of unselfconscious neo-classicism in works like *Mozartiana*. But as Stravinsky noted, in *Sleeping Beauty*, 'this cultured man...had no need to engage in archaeological research; he recreated the character of the period by his musical language, preferring involuntary but living anachronisms to conscious and laboured *pasticcio*.'

The same might be said of the Rococo Variations. The material is all completely original, but is imbued with the spirit of Mozart's age and elegance, an act of homage not unlike Strauss' opera.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Andante cantabile

from String Quartet No.1 in D major, Op.11

arranged by the composer for cello and strings

In 1876 the Moscow Conservatoire presented a concert to honour the great Russian writer Tolstoy. The program included the *Andante cantabile* from Tchaikovsky's First Quartet, composed in 1871. Even by then the movement, like Barber's *Adagio*, had taken on a life of its own independent of the work of which it forms a part, and Tchaikovsky himself made this arrangement for cello and strings in 1888. The music moved Tolstoy to tears; Tchaikovsky was overwhelmed by Tolstoy's generous response, and wrote to him, saying 'I cannot express how honoured and proud I felt that my music could make such an impression on you'. [Tchaikovsky's former tutor, Anton Rubinstein disagreed, telling a publisher not to take the work on as it was 'not worth it!']

The *Andante cantabile's* appeal to Tolstoy may have lain in its explicitly Russian character. The main theme is based on a folk-tune that Tchaikovsky had heard at his sister's country estate in Ukraine in the late 1860s; it was sung by a carpenter on that occasion, to words that describe 'Vanya sitting on the divan, smoking his pipe...' That, however, didn't stop a Soviet psychiatrist opining in 1929 that the movement represent the 'primeval cry' of a soul oppressed by the wicked Tsarist regime.

Tchaikovsky had shown an early interest in folk music. But unlike the Five, or Mighty Handful – composers who sought to create a distinctly Russian music without recourse to the sound and techniques of the West – Tchaikovsky remained much more internationalist. In the First Quartet, we can hear his evident engagement with the quartets of Schubert and Beethoven as much as with Russian folk-song. The shift to B flat (from the work's central D major) for the slow movement is typically Schubertian.

ABRIDGED FROM A NOTE BY GORDON KERRY © 2008

The SSO first performed a version of Tchaikovsky's *Andante cantabile* in 1944 with Percy Code conducting; and most recently in 2012 with Dene Olding directing.

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.

His ballets are among his masterpieces, and his extraordinary dramatic instinct comes to the fore in all his music, whether for the stage or the concert hall.



Tchaikovsky, 1875

Tchaikovsky

Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op.33

'Fitzenhagen' version (1876–77)

Introduction (*Moderato assai quasi andante*)

Theme (*Moderato semplice*)

Variation I (*Tempo della thema*)

Variation II (*Tempo della thema*)

Variation III (*Andante sostenuto*)

Variation IV (*Andante grazioso*)

Variation V (*Allegro moderato*) – with cadenza

Variation VI (*Andante*)

Variation VII and Coda (*Allegro vivo*)

Gautier Capuçon *cello*

A nostalgia for the world of the 18th century, thought of as refined, elegant and gently civilised, is never far from the surface in the highly Romantic art of Tchaikovsky. It shows in his choice of works by Pushkin (who shared and fed this nostalgia) for the books of his two best operas, *Eugene Onegin* and *The Queen of Spades*, where Tchaikovsky's music sometimes resorts to out-and-out 18th-century pastiche. Mozart was the composer who symbolised the best of the former century for Tchaikovsky, who revered him above all other musicians. 'No one,' he said, 'has so made me weep and tremble with rapture at nearness to what we call the ideal.' Whatever the term 'rococo' may mean, to Tchaikovsky it meant Mozart. This set of variations is his finest tribute to his idol's art, far preferable to his orchestration and overlaying of Mozart pieces with a rather sticky sweetness in the orchestral suite *Mozartiana*.

In no way does it detract from the success of Tchaikovsky's Variations that the Mozart he emulates contains no turbulent emotions. In short, the Variations are far from the real Mozart. But they are charming, elegant, deftly written – equally gratifying to virtuoso cellists and to audiences. The light and airy accompaniment, which enables the cello to stand out beautifully, is for 18th-century forces: double winds, two horns and strings.

Tchaikovsky composed the work in 1876 (shortly before beginning his Fourth Symphony) for a cellist and fellow-professor at the Moscow Conservatorium, Wilhelm Fitzenhagen. Fitzenhagen had requested a concerto-like piece for his recital tours, so it was natural that Tchaikovsky first completed the Variations in a scoring for cello and piano. Before orchestrating it he gave the music to Fitzenhagen, who made changes in the solo part, in places pasting his own versions over Tchaikovsky's. The first performance was of the orchestral version, in November 1877. Tchaikovsky couldn't attend since he had left Russia to recover from his disastrous marriage. Fitzenhagen retained the score,

ROCOCO VARIATIONS

Tchaikovsky's Rococo Variations for solo cello and orchestra were composed in tribute to Mozart, and the 'rococo' theme is Tchaikovsky's idea of the style of Mozart. The variations themselves are virtuosic, though nimble rather than strenuous. They were written for one of Tchaikovsky's fellow professors at the Moscow Conservatorium, Wilhelm Fitzenhagen, who took it upon himself to alter the order of the variations, establishing the version almost always played nowadays. The theme (Tchaikovsky's own) determines the character of the Variations. After a brief introduction, in which the orchestra anticipates fragments of the theme, the soloist plays it – then the orchestra provides a postlude, and the cello a final question. The postlude will round off most of the variations – this rococo garden is formal and well-kept.

and it was he who passed it on to the publisher, Jurgenson. The cello and piano version was the first to appear in print, in autumn 1878, with substantial alterations, which Fitzenhagen claimed were authorised but about which Tchaikovsky complained somewhat bitterly.

But by the time Jurgenson came to publish the *Rococo* Variations in orchestral form, ten years had elapsed, during which Fitzenhagen had performed the work successfully both inside and outside Russia, and it had entered the repertoire. When Fitzenhagen's pupil, Anatoly Brandukov, asked Tchaikovsky what he was going to do about Jurgenson's publication of the Fitzenhagen version, the composer replied, 'The devil take it! Let it stand as it is!'

The theme, which determines the character of the Variations, is Tchaikovsky's own: it's the composer's *idea* of Mozart's style. The soloist plays it after a brief introduction in which the orchestra anticipates the later breaking of the theme into fragments by attempting little phrases from it. The theme itself has an orchestral postlude, with a final question from the cello. This postlude, increasingly varied, rounds off most of the Variations. The first two of these are fairly closely based on the theme, which the cello decorates with a dance in triplets, then discusses with the orchestra. The soloist emerges in full limelight in the virtuosic second variation. This is followed by a leisurely slow waltz, largely in the hands of the soloist. This variation, number three, is the expressive heart of the piece. [Tchaikovsky had originally placed it at No.6.]

In Variation IV, Tchaikovsky gives the theme a different rhythm, and incorporates some bravura flourishes. In the fifth variation the flute has the theme, and the cello accompanies with a long chain of trills. The cello solo has its most substantial cadenza at the end of this variation which leads into the soulful slow variation, number six. This minor key version of the theme is heard over plucked strings. It was this variation that, without fail, drew stormy applause on Fitzenhagen's recital tours.

The final variation begins with the solo part establishing its own particular rhythmic interpretation of the theme, a delightful way of upping the activity, which continues into the coda.

DAVID GARRETT © 2002

The orchestra for Tchaikovsky's *Rococo* Variations comprises pairs of flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons and horns; and strings.

The SSO first performed the *Rococo* Variations in 1955 with soloist Ernst Friedlander and Eugene Goossens conducting; and most recently in 2010 with Catherine Hewgill and Dene Olding directing.



**Wilhelm Fitzenhagen (1848–90),
cellist**

**Whatever the term
'rococo' may mean,
to Tchaikovsky it
meant Mozart.**



Alexander Garvrylyuk



Elio Villafranca



Joyce Yang

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Richard Strauss

Symphonia domestica, Op.53

Introduction –

Scherzo –

Adagio –

Finale

In Holy Week 1897, Richard Strauss was in Stuttgart, staying at the Hotel Marquart in which, many years earlier, Chopin had composed his *Revolutionary* étude, and where King Ludwig II had first discovered the elusive Wagner. There Strauss received a telegram from home in Munich advising him that his wife, the singer Pauline de Ahna, had given birth on 12 April, not to the expected twins, but to a ‘giant boy’.

Young Franz, as he was to be named upon his father’s immediate return to Munich, had been overdue, and weighed more than eight pounds. The massive size of his head, measuring 38 centimetres in circumference, had placed the lives of both mother and child in jeopardy during the difficult birth. In fact Franz had been temporarily baptised as ‘Richard’ during delivery, when there were fears that he wouldn’t make it.

Franz was born into a happy home. He was adored by his parents and – uncharacteristically for the time – his father took an active role in his day-to-day care. Strauss treated his son as an equal and as he grew older, Franz and his father engaged in passionate debate about all manner of subjects. Observers noted how their discussions of both trivial and serious issues would often become violent, with both father and son refusing to give an inch, before all would be resolved as quickly as it emerged, and without rancour.

It was a satisfying household for all concerned, which is why it was probably inevitable that Strauss, as the most programmatic of composers, would sooner or later turn to it as the subject for another of his illustrative orchestral works. In 1902 he told London’s *Musical Times* that ‘my next tone poem will illustrate a day in my family. It will be partly lyrical, partly humorous – a triple fugue, the three subjects representing papa, mama and baby.’ When the work for large orchestra, now called *Symphonia domestica* (or Domestic Symphony), was completed in the following year, it was dedicated ‘to my dear wife and our boy’.

And as one would expect, such a nakedly autobiographical work laid itself open to all manner of critical derision. One orchestral player described it as ‘the piece where the little kid throws cannon balls at his parents’, while a newspaper critic said he attended a performance of it ‘for the first and last time’ because the music suggested to him that Strauss’ ‘marriage is out of joint’. Strauss himself gave ammunition to his critics,

Keynotes

STRAUSS

Born Munich, 1864

Died Garmisch-Partenkirchen, 1949



Richard Strauss wrote two symphonies as a teenager, but this was not the musical genre that captured his imagination. Instead he made his name in the theatre and with the evocative and storytelling possibilities of the symphonic poem (or ‘tone poem’, as he preferred to call it) as invented by Liszt.

***A Hero’s Life, Don Juan and Thus spake Zarathustra* are also examples of large-scale, single-movement tone poems.**

SYMPHONIA DOMESTICA

***Symphonia domestica* is not a symphony in the traditional sense. In a single movement, this tone poem provides a musical representation of a day in the life of the composer and his family: Papa, Mama and their son Franz (or ‘Bubi’).**

The dramatic contrasts in the music suggest the Strauss household was not always blissful; domestic life could get rowdy as well. As conductor Hans Richter commented: ‘All the cataclysms of the downfall of the gods in burning Valhalla do not make a quarter of the noise of one Bavarian baby in his bath.’

announcing at one point, 'I can't see why I should not write a symphony about myself – I find myself quite as interesting as Napoleon or Alexander,' to which Romain Rolland replied, 'That is no reason why others should share his interest!'

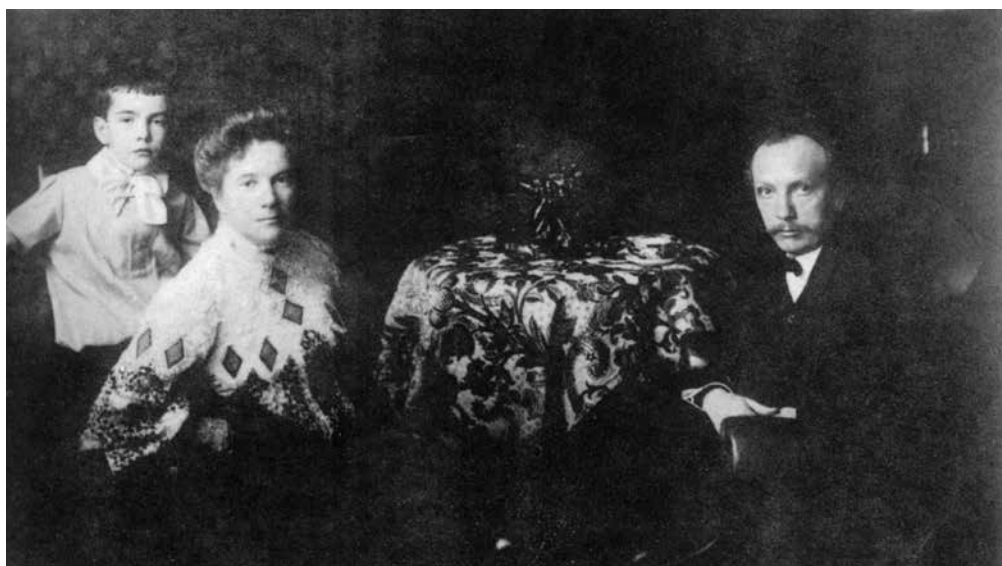
Ironically, however, while Strauss had always argued that 'in my compositions I am unable to write without a program to guide me,' he remained ambivalent about the specific program for the *Symphonia domestica*.

On 6 March 1904, two weeks before the work's world premiere in New York, the *New York Times* reported:

[The composer] wishes it to be taken as music, for what it is, and not as the elaboration of the specific details of a scheme of things. The Symphony, he declares, is sufficiently explained by its title and is to be listened to as the symphonic development of its themes...He believes, and has expressed his belief, that the anxious search on the part of the public for the exactly corresponding passages in the music and the program, the guessing as to the significance of this or that, the distraction following a train of thought exterior to the music, are destructive to the musical enjoyment. Hence he has forbidden the publication of any description of what he sought to express till after the concert. 'This time,' says Dr Strauss, 'I wish my music to be listened to purely as music.'

But his programmatic instincts soon got the better of him and when the piece was performed in Berlin later that year, Strauss himself provided a 'biographical' sketch of the work, and in early 1906 he allowed his colleague Wilhelm Klatte to publish nine pages of in-depth programmatic analysis of it.

**Richard and Pauline Strauss
with their son Franz, about 1907**



The program for the Berlin performance subdivided the *Symphonia domestica*'s single movement into the following passages:

I – Introduction and development of the three chief groups of themes

The husband's themes:

- a) Easy-going
- b) Dreamy
- c) Fiery

The wife's themes:

- a) Lively and gay
- b) Grazioso

The child's theme:

Tranquil

II – Scherzo

Parents' happiness. Childish play.

Cradle song (the clock strikes seven in the evening)

III – Adagio

Doing and thinking. Love scene.

Dreams and cares (the clock strikes seven in the morning)

IV – Finale

Awakening and merry dispute (double fugue)

Joyous conclusion.

Within the score itself, Strauss annotated many sections. In the 'Dreams' passage, for instance, he wrote, 'The mother dreams about the child: will he be like his father (F major) or like his mother (B major)? Answers come from the Aunts (trumpets quoting the husband's theme), "Just like Papa!" and from the Uncles (trombones, quoting the wife's theme), "Just like Mama!"'

The three main themes which are stated at the outset are described thus:

F major: Papa returns from travel, weary.

B major: Mama

D major: Baby, a mixture, but more like his Papa.

It sounds trivial and far too 'cute' for modern tastes, but as the music alone indicates, right from its gruff opening in the lower strings and winds, there remains plenty of genuine drama within the Strauss household. The orchestra is massive, featuring quadruple, quintuple, sometimes even octuple winds and brass, four saxophones, three harps – a barrage of musical artillery that would indeed do justice to Napoleon's or Alexander's households. As the rapid contrasts within the *Symphonia domestica* between blaring brass, lyrical wind, humorous incidental material and broad main themes indicate, there must have been rather more



The Strauss family

to the Strauss family life than polite discussions about who changed the nappies and took out the garbage.

Perhaps the *Symphonia domestica* is as narcissistic as its program makes it appear and Romain Rolland might have been correct to call it the most audacious challenge that Strauss had 'hurled at taste and commonsense'. And it's true that there is something vaguely ridiculous about Strauss' humble family man appearing in such a monumental orchestral guise. But surely these are problems with the program itself, not with the music, which is as moving and passionate as anything that the composer offered in his many symphonic tone poems.

Modern audiences tend to agree with Strauss' colleague and friend Gustav Mahler, who enjoyed and conducted the work, while condemning its program. But only a couple of years earlier, Strauss' English friend Edward Elgar had composed his *Enigma Variations* filled with musical portraits of often trivial domestic incidents – and gotten off virtually scot-free with the critics. The difference was that Elgar suppressed the sources of his musical portraits until 30 years after his work's first performance – by which stage it had emphatically established its 'abstract' credentials – whereas Strauss, from the moment he completed the score of the *Symphonia domestica*, gave his many critics the programmatic rope to hang him with.

All composers puts aspects of themselves into their work. Strauss' only offence in this otherwise magnificent, large-scale orchestral work was that he dared to talk too soon about its humble origins in a happy domestic life.

MARTIN BUZACOTT ©1998

Symphonia domestica calls for a very large orchestra comprising three flutes, piccolo, two oboes, cor anglais, oboe d'amore, three clarinets, E flat clarinet, bass clarinet, four bassoons and contrabassoon; eight horns, four trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; two harps and strings.

The SSO first performed the *Symphonia domestica* in 1949 with Eugene Goossens and most recently on 11 July 2009 under Donald Runnicles.



Pauline Strauss and Franz, 1905

Franz Strauss eventually took a Doctorate in Law and became his father's trusted business adviser. In 1924, when he was on his honeymoon in Egypt, Franz contracted typhus and became seriously ill. Traumatized by his son's ill-health, Richard Strauss returned to the *Symphonia domestica*, composing a *Parergon* (a supplementary work) to it, scored for piano left hand and orchestra, which was performed by the legendary one-armed pianist Paul Wittgenstein.

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 towards the right. In the background, several other people in formal attire (tuxedos and black dresses) are visible, suggesting a concert or gala event. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

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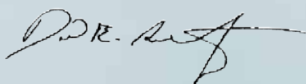
The music we share with you in the Concert Hall tonight is the artistic realisation of pen and ink, ideas on paper – it may be a bit different to how it was in rehearsal, or how it sounds on other nights. That's one of the gifts of live music-making – the shared energy, here and now, makes each performance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

American Harmonies – Adams, Copland and Rouse |





Leah Lynn
Assistant Principal Cello

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KEITH SAUNDERS

Vladimir Ashkenazy *conductor*

Russian-born Vladimir Ashkenazy inherited his musical gift from both sides of his family: his father David Ashkenazy was a professional light music pianist and his mother Evstolia (née Plotnova) was daughter of a chorus master in the Russian Orthodox church. He first came to prominence in the 1955 Chopin Festival in Warsaw and after winning the 1956 Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels. He established himself as one of the premier pianists of the 20th century before expanding his musical interests to include conducting.

A regular visitor to Sydney, Vladimir Ashkenazy first came to Australia, as a pianist, in 1969. Since then he has conducted the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in subscription concerts and composer festivals. He was the orchestra's Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor from 2009 to 2013. Highlights of his tenure were the Mahler *Odyssey*, a concert performance of Tchaikovsky's *Queen of Spades* and several international tours.

Vladimir Ashkenazy's associations with other orchestras include the Philharmonia Orchestra (London) which made him their Conductor Laureate in 2000. The Philharmonia's *Voices of Revolution: Russia 1917* at London's Southbank was a recent project. He is also Conductor Laureate of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra and of the NHK Orchestra, Tokyo, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana. Previous posts included Music Director of the European Union Youth Orchestra and Chief

Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. He maintains strong links with the Cleveland Orchestra and Deutsches Symphonie-orchester Berlin (where he held titled positions).

Ashkenazy maintains his devotion to the piano, these days mostly in the recording studio. Recent recordings include Bach's French Suites. His discography also records his work as a conductor, including direction of Rachmaninoff's orchestral music. Milestone recordings include *50 Years on Decca* - a box-set celebrating his long-standing relationship with the label.

Beyond performing and conducting Ashkenazy has been involved in many TV projects, inspired by a vision of music maintaining a presence in the mainstream media and reaching as wide an audience as possible.

Vladimir Ashkenazy most-recently appeared with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in November 2017 conducting an all-Shostakovich concert with Ray Chen as soloist.



GREGORY BATAARDON

Gautier Capuçon

cello

Gautier Capuçon has performed with many of the world's foremost conductors and instrumentalists. He has appeared with orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Concertgebouw Orchestra (Amsterdam), New York Philharmonic, London Symphony, and NHK Symphony Orchestra (Tokyo).

In the 2017-18 season he toured Europe with the Vienna Symphony (under Philippe Jordan) and with the Orchestre de Chambre de Paris. In the US he toured with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Thierry Fischer. Other highlights included returns to the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra (with Stéphane Denève), the Vienna Philharmonic (with Semyon Bychkov), the Orchestre de Paris (with Hannu Lintu, performing Qigang Chen's Cello Concerto as part of the orchestra's China Weekend), London's Philharmonia (with Paavo Järvi), Leipzig's Gewandhaus Orchestra (with Herbert Blomstedt), and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Mirga Gražintė-Tyla. From here, Gautier Capuçon travels to Germany to perform with the Munich Philharmonic and David Afkham, tours Europe with Lisa Batiashvili (violin) and Jean-Yves Thibaudet (piano), performs the European premiere of *Eros Athanatos* by Richard Dubugnon with Jean-Yves Thibaudet in Antwerp conducted by Dima Siobodeniouk, and appears with the Czech Philharmonic and Semyon Bychkov, with Thibaudet in recital in San Francisco and Los Angeles, and with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Michael Tilson Thomas.

Gautier Capuçon's recordings include *Intuition*, an anthology of short pieces for cello and piano or orchestra (released February 2018), and Beethoven Cello Sonatas with Frank Braley. He is also the founder of the Classe d'Excellence de Violoncelle at the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris, which, every year, offers advanced training for six talented young cellists from around the world.

Born in Chambéry, France, in 1981, Capuçon began playing the cello at the age of five. He studied at the Conservatoire National Supérieur in Paris with Philippe Muller and Annie Cochet-Zakine, and later with Heinrich Schiff in Vienna. The winner of first prizes in leading competitions including the International André Navarra Prize, Capuçon was named 'New Talent of the Year' by Victoires de la Musique in 2001. Gautier Capuçon plays a 1710 Matteo Goffriller cello. He most-recently appeared with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in October 2013.

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS



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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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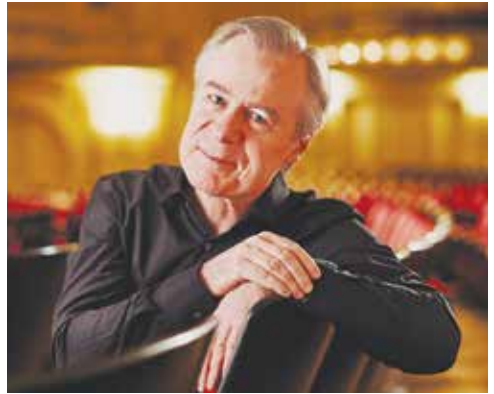


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Catherine Hewgill, Principal Cello

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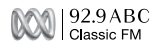
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