



**sydney symphony orchestra**

David Robertson The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

# The Happiness Box

*A Sydney Symphony Orchestra  
Family Concert*

2018



**SUN 4 NOV, 2PM**



Principal Partner



**sydney symphony  
orchestra**

**David Robertson**  
The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor  
and Artistic Director

**FAMILY CONCERTS**

SUNDAY 4 NOVEMBER, 2PM

.....  
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL

**The Happiness Box**

**Gordon Hamilton** *conductor*

**Amanda Bishop** *narrator*

**Bryony Marks**

**The Happiness Box**

**For narrator and orchestra**

An adaptation of *The Happiness Box*,  
a book intended as a Christmas present for the children held at  
Changi Gaol, written by David Griffin and illustrated by Leslie  
Greener while incarcerated as POWs at Selarang Barracks,  
Changi, in 1942.

*The Happiness Box* was commissioned by Symphony Services Australia, the Robert  
Salzer Foundation and Father Arthur E. Bridge AM for Ars Musica Australis.

**Join us in the Northern Foyer after the concert for our  
musical Activity Zone for kids!**

.....  
The concert will be performed without  
interval and will conclude at  
approximately 3pm.

.....  
COVER IMAGE: Leslie Greener – 'Towards  
the King' from *The Happiness Box*



Principal Partner

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## Synopsis

*The Happiness Box* is the story of three best friends, a lizard (portrayed by the oboe), a monkey (portrayed by the double bass) and a frog (portrayed by the tuba). Together they tend their garden and find a magical box. Unsure of whether to open the box, the friends set out on a journey through the jungle meeting different animals along the way. Their quest is to discover the secret of happiness hidden in the box.



Giving wind to Martin



House, detail



Reading

## The remarkable story of making of *The Happiness Box*

On 15 February 1942, British General Percival surrendered the British Singapore garrison to Japan's General Tomoyuki Yamashita. After 70 days the Japanese 25th army had defeated Britain.

The day after the surrender, the beaten and demoralised British and Australian soldiers were ordered to march 25km from downtown Singapore to prison quarters at Changi. They became Prisoners of War (POW). Imprisoned in the Selarang, Birdwood and Roberts barracks, the POWs were dismayed to discover that British and Australian women and children were also imprisoned in Changi. The soldiers knew it was important to maintain their own morale. They also wanted to help the women and children not to lose hope as war raged in the Pacific.

As Christmas was approaching, one of the Australian POWs held captive in Selarang suggested they make gifts for the imprisoned children. Unexpectedly, the Japanese captors agreed and instructed the POWs to make toys. These were to be delivered to Selarang's AIF Education Centre, a camp unit established to bolster morale through education.

The POWs made model cars, trains and ships, dolls and animals, even a miniature theatre complete with tiny cardboard actors. These were submitted to the Education Centre in readiness for required inspection by Japanese commander, General Saito, and his staff.

Twenty-seven year old Sgt. David Griffin, NX69235, couldn't make toys, but he could write stories, and set about writing a book for Changi's imprisoned children. Griffin's friend and fellow inmate Leslie Greener, an accomplished artist, agreed to do the illustrations. Bruce Blaikey was another POW in the camp and he operated the only typewriter onsite.

David Griffin composed the story, Bruce Blaikey typed it out allowing space for illustrations, added last by Leslie Greener. In just 36 hours the pages were bound into a little book which went on display along with the toys.

General Saito and his staff reviewed the gifts exhibited in the Education Centre. One Japanese inspector with some English flicked through *The Happiness Box*. He raised concern that the book was propaganda as a key character in the bore the same name as the British leader of the day, Winston Churchill book - Winston the 'chi-chak' lizard.

General Saito immediately became suspicious, believing the book was an ingenious collection of secret coded messages between the military prisoners, housed outside the Changi camp walls, and the women and children housed within.

The Japanese ordered the book to be confiscated and destroyed. Fortunately, in the confusion that followed, the Australians managed to hide the book with some divisional documents in an ammunition container which they buried in the grounds of the prison camp.

Singapore was liberated in September 1945. After the war, the ammunition container was dug up and *The Happiness Box* returned to its author, David Griffin. It was first published in 1947 featuring Leslie Greener's illustrations with Griffin's story. The book was published a second time in the 1990s, but it is very hard to come by these days. The original manuscript survived and its author donated it to the State Library of New South Wales, where it is still kept, in 1990.

ADAPTED FROM NORMA MIRAFLORES'S 1991 PAMPHLET  
PUBLISHED TO ACCOMPANY MEDIA MASTERS'  
REPUBLICANION OF *THE HAPPINESS BOX*.

### **About the composer**

Bryony Marks has composed three string quartets, a quintet and a sextet and a chamber opera, *Crossing Live*, which was premiered by Chamber Made in 2007, winning a Green Room Award for Best New Australian Work (Opera) in the same year. She has composed extensively for theatre, film and television including Chris Lilley's award-winning series *We Can Be Heroes*, *Summer Heights High* and *Angry Boys*; *The King, Noise*, *Cloudstreet* and *Please Like Me*; as well as *Tangle*, *Hawke*, *Dance Academy*; *Goddess*, *Mrs Biggs*, and *Anzac Girls*.

Marks has captured the sense of wonder, trepidation and delight of the friends' adventure in her adaptation of *The Happiness Box*. The orchestration introduces children to the instruments of the orchestra. It also maintains David Griffin's beautiful story about friendship.

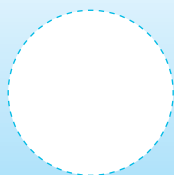
The world premiere of *The Happiness Box* was in 2013 with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra conducted by Brett Kelly and narrated by acclaimed actor Stephen Curry.

### **Illustrations by Leslie Greener**

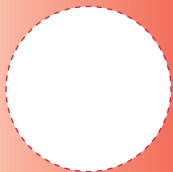
### Composing Wall\*

Compose your own animal motif. Meet composers Josephine Macken and Bryony Marks.

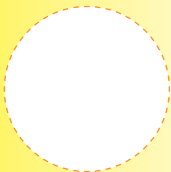
\*post-concert only



**Exotic Instruments**  
Explore how wind makes sound  
with Chris Howes.



**Mobile Orchestra**  
Be the instruments with Wil New.  
Tell a tale with your voice and body!



### Percussion Club

Play some animals moods  
with Emily McKnight.



F A M I L Y C O N C E R T S

### Southern Foyer

Capture your selfies at the selfie wall with guest appearances by Amanda Bishop, Gordon Hamilton and some musicians.

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 (tuxedos and gowns) are visible, suggesting a high-end event or concert. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

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“There’s nothing better than looking up and seeing the joy on a child’s face who has just experienced live orchestral music for the first time!”

Kristy Conrau, Sydney Symphony Cellist since 2006

Over the last 12 months more than 23,000 students have participated in our music education programs and more than 50,000 people have viewed one of our concerts online. By donating today you can help build future audiences and make concerts more accessible for young people across New South Wales.

**Your gift, of any amount, will make an important difference.**



**\$125**

supports professional learning and digital resources for a teacher to bring their students to 'Meet the Music'



**\$250**

supports free and subsidised tickets for ten deserving young people to attend a Family Concert



# Make your gift today!

The Sydney Symphony is a family affair and you're an important member of our family! Your tax-deductible gift before the end of the year will help us share the joy of music as widely as possible in 2019.

To make your donation please visit:

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**\$500**

supports an interactive visit from our musicians to a school in regional NSW



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supports equipment for a live broadcast into libraries and conservatoriums across NSW







# Beethoven Seven

## *Rhythm and Energy*

Of all the Beethoven symphonies the Seventh is the most thrilling. Revel in the obsessive, hypnotic rhythms and inexorable power of this awesome symphony that provided the music to the emotional climax of the Oscar-winning film, *The King's Speech*.

And soloist Claire Edwardes will perform an exciting new percussion concerto that has been compared to New York at rush hour – all colour and energy!



*“Powerhouse playing from Edwardes.”*  
The Australian

### Wednesday

**DEAN** Engelsflügel (Wings of Angels)

**MACMILLAN** Percussion Concerto

No.2 **AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE**

**BEETHOVEN** Symphony No.7

### Thursday

**PADEREWSKI** Overture

**MACMILLAN** Percussion Concerto

No.2 **AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE**

**BEETHOVEN** Symphony No.7

### Friday

**PADEREWSKI** Overture

**BEETHOVEN** Symphony No.7

**David Robertson** conductor

**Claire Edwardes** percussion

Wednesday 7 November, 6.30pm

Thursday 8 November, 1.30pm

Friday 9 November, 11am\*

**Sydney Opera House**

\*Complimentary morning tea from 10am

# THE ARTISTS



© PAT O'NEIL

## Gordon Hamilton *conductor*

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- Gordon loves etymology. The word music comes from Ancient Greek *mousa*, meaning 'the muse'. That Greek word in turn comes from Proto-Indo-European root (way before Greek!)
- \* *men-*, meaning 'think'. That original root has found its way separately into English in the word 'mind'.
- Gordon has a tattoo.
- Gordon cannot beatbox, despite having a famous beatboxer for a teacher.

Composer and conductor Gordon Hamilton most recently appeared with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in *Thum Prints*, his collaboration with beatboxer Tom Thum. In recent seasons he has conducted the Melbourne, Queensland and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras and the St. Christofer Chamber Orchestra (Lithuania). In 2018-19, he will conduct the WDR Funkhausorchester (Cologne), the Southwest German Philharmonic (Konstanz) and the Nürnberger Symphoniker. Gordon Hamilton has a special focus and aptitude for choral music and has conducted Handel's *Messiah* and Fauré's Requiem with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. Gordon has arranged and conducted several crossover projects, including with Australian Hiphop duo Horrorshow and Cuban pianist Marialy Pacheco.

After freelancing for five years in Germany, Gordon took over in 2009 as Artistic Director of The Australian Voices (TAV). Gordon has led TAV in its mission of commissioning innovative new music by Australian composers. Gordon's choral opera *Moon* (2011) toured with TAV to Australia, Germany and to the Edinburgh Fringe and was described as 'one of the outstanding musical surprises of Fringe 2012.' In 2014 TAV made international headlines with their video of Rob Davidson's *Not Now, Not Ever!* – a musicalisation of former PM Julia Gillard's famous 'misogyny' speech.



© CAITLIN MITCHELL

## Amanda Bishop *narrator*

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- Amanda loves animals, funny noises and funny people. She also seems to love everyone's children, they're adorable. Babysitting anyone?
- Amanda has selective hearing when her Mum's asking for help in the garden that involves heavy lifting, or asking her to get up early in the morning - but she can hear spider noises...! For real.
- Amanda cannot dance as well as she thinks she can. Will somebody tell her please???

Amanda Bishop is an actor, singer and writer living in Sydney and New York. She has just finished filming the TV series *Drop Dead Weird* (season 2) for Channel 7, Ireland's RTE and iTV. She has appeared in children's TV shows like *The Upside Down Show* (with the Umbilical Brothers for Nick Jr/Sesame Street/Noggin), *Penelope K*, *By The Way* (BBC Worldwide) and *My Place* (ABC TV). She has recently appeared on stage in *The Pill* (workshop La Mama NYC), *Silent Night* (Darlinghurst Theatre Co.), *All The World's A Pickle* (Theatre 54). Recent film and television work includes *Law and Order: SVU* (NBC), *Next Is The One* (Nice International Film Festival, nomination Best Actress), *Chaperones* (Pilot), *At Home With Julia* - (as Julia/co-writer/Associate Producer and winning an Equity Cast Award). Amanda has also appeared regularly in the Sydney Theatre Company Wharf Revue. She was a recipient of the Australian Community Award 2018, New York.

# ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA

## Sydney Symphony Orchestra

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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 ABC, the SSO has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the Sydney Opera House, the SSO also performs regularly at City Recital Hall, tours NSW and internationally, and it is well on its way to becoming the premier orchestra of the Asia Pacific region. The SSO's concerts encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, and collaborations with guest artists from all genres, reflecting the orchestra's versatility and diverse appeal.

The SSO's award-winning Learning and Engagement program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music – nurturing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. In addition to Family Concerts in Sydney, activities such as Playerlink and regional schools concerts expand the orchestra's reach beyond Sydney to inspire students throughout NSW and Australia. The SSO also promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program, and the SSO Live label captures the orchestra's performances in recordings.

[www.sydneyssymphony.com](http://www.sydneyssymphony.com)

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# THE ORCHESTRA



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Tobias Aan<sup>†</sup>

Benjamin Tjoa\*

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Victoria Bihun

Emma Hayes

Wendy Kong

Maja Verunica

Rollin Zhao<sup>†</sup>

## VIOLAS

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### Steve Rossé

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Sami Butler<sup>†</sup>

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Chiron Meller\*

## HARP

Emily Granger\*

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<sup>o</sup> = CONTRACT MUSICIAN

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NOT APPEARING IN THIS CONCERT

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## Learning & Engagement

PHOTO: Keith Saunders



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