

SYDNEY  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

# Schubert and Liszt

SIMONE YOUNG'S  
VISIONS OF VIENNA

21 – 24 AUGUST

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE



**VIENNA**  
NOW ♦ FOREVER

  
sydney symphony  
orchestra  
David Robertson  
The Loyal Chair of  
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

  
Emirates  
Principal Partner

# CONCERT DIARY

## AUGUST



### Beethoven and Brahms

**BEETHOVEN** String Quartet in E minor,  
Op.59 No.2 (Razumovsky No.2)  
**BRAHMS** String Quintet No.2

**Musicians of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra**

Cocktail Hour

**Fri 23 Aug, 6pm**  
**Sat 24 Aug, 6pm**

Sydney Opera House,  
Utzon Room



### Shostakovich Symphony No.4

**JAMES EHNES PLAYS KHACHATURIAN**

**KHACHATURIAN** Violin Concerto  
**SHOSTAKOVICH** Symphony No.4

**Mark Wigglesworth** conductor  
**James Ehnes** violin

Abercrombie & Kent  
Masters Series

**Wed 28 Aug, 8pm**  
**Fri 30 Aug, 8pm**  
**Sat 31 Aug, 8pm**

Sydney Opera House



## SEPTEMBER



### Geoffrey Lancaster in Recital

**MOZART ON THE FORTEPIANO**

**MOZART** Piano Sonata in B flat, K570  
**MOZART** Piano Sonata in E flat, K282  
**MOZART** Rondo in A minor, K511  
**MOZART** Piano Sonata in B flat, K333

**Geoffrey Lancaster** fortepiano

**Mon 2 Sep, 7pm**

City Recital Hall



### Music from Swan Lake

**BEAUTY AND MAGIC**

**ROSSINI** The Thieving Magpie: Overture  
**RAVEL** Mother Goose: Suite  
**TCHAIKOVSKY** Swan Lake: Suite

**Umberto Clerici** conductor

**Wed 4 Sep, 7pm**

**Thu 5 Sep, 7pm**

Concourse Concert Hall,  
Chatswood



### Star Wars: The Force Awakens in Concert

Set 30 years after the defeat of the Empire,  
this instalment of the Star Wars saga sees original  
cast members Carrie Fisher, Mark Hamill and  
Harrison Ford reunited on the big-screen, with the  
Orchestra playing live to film. *Classified M.*

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Sydney Symphony Presents

**Thu 12 Sep, 8pm**

**Fri 13 Sep, 8pm**

**Sat 14 Sep, 2pm**

**Sat 14 Sep, 8pm**

Sydney Opera House



### Andreas Brantelid performs Elgar's Cello Concerto

**VLADIMIR ASHKENAZY'S MASTERWORKS**

**VAUGHAN WILLIAMS**

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis

\***ELGAR** Cello Concerto

\***ELGAR** Enigma Variations

**Vladimir Ashkenazy** conductor

**Andreas Brantelid** cello

Meet the Music

**Wed 18 Sep, 6.30pm**

Thursday Afternoon Symphony

**Thu 19 Sep, 1.30pm**

Tea & Symphony\*

**Fri 20 Sep, 11am**

Great Classics

**Sat 21 Sep, 2pm**

Sydney Opera House



### Holst's Planets

**VLADIMIR ASHKENAZY'S MASTERWORKS**

**MEDTNER** Piano Concerto No.1

**HOLST** The Planets

**Vladimir Ashkenazy** conductor

**Alexei Volodin** piano

**Sydney Philharmonia Choirs**

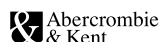
Abercrombie & Kent  
Masters Series

**Wed 25 Sep, 8pm**

**Fri 27 Sep, 8pm**

**Sat 28 Sep, 8pm**

Sydney Opera House



*WELCOME*



## Principal Partner

**Simone Young's *Visions of Vienna* showcases pianist Louis Lortie in a richly expressive program, including a symphonic poem about Hell and Heaven.**

Welcome to tonight's Emirates Metro Series concert, taking you on a journey to Vienna with Schubert and Liszt. Franz Liszt was often inspired by poetry; his *Dante* Symphony looks to the literary masterpiece, *Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri, an imaginative poem about the afterlife. This epic symphony traverses through Dante's vision of Hell to arrive at a heavenly finale. Liszt's orchestral arrangement of Schubert's *Wanderer* Fantasy creates a poetic vehicle for French-Canadian pianist Louis Lortie, who has built a reputation as one of the world's most versatile pianists.

This evening's performance is a testament to conductor Simone Young's incredible skill and affinity for the richly expressive music of Viennese composers. Born in Sydney, Simone was named the first female conductor in 2005 to lead the prestigious Wiener Philharmoniker in its then 156-year history. She has collaborated with leading international orchestras in prestigious venues around the globe, and has continued to pave the way for emerging female conductors.

At Emirates, we take pride in being first, too. We were the first airline to introduce fully-enclosed First Class private suites, taking luxury and privacy to the next level. We pioneered inflight entertainment systems by offering in-seat TV screens in all classes in 1992. Emirates is also the first airline to introduce web virtual VR technology with the launch of 3D seat models on our website.

From world-class aircrafts to award-winning inflight entertainment, and gourmet meals prepared by leading chefs, we do whatever is in our hands to help you fly better.

This year marks the 17<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our fruitful collaboration with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra as its Principal Partner. On that note, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this Emirates Metro Series concert, Schubert and Liszt.



**Barry Brown**

Emirates' Divisional Vice President  
for Australasia



# sydney symphony orchestra

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

## MEET THE MUSIC

WEDNESDAY 21 AUGUST, 6.30PM

## THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY

THURSDAY 22 AUGUST, 1.30PM

## EMIRATES METRO SERIES

FRIDAY 23 AUGUST, 8PM

## GREAT CLASSICS

SATURDAY 24 AUGUST, 2PM

.....  
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL



# Schubert and Liszt

**Simone Young** *conductor*

**Louis Lortie** *piano*

**Cantillation**

## JAMES LEDGER (born 1966)

*Two Memorials*

(Wednesday only)

## FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828)

*The Devil's Pleasure Palace: Overture*

(Thursday, Friday and Saturday only)

## SCHUBERT arr Franz Liszt

*'Wanderer' Fantasy*

*Allegro con fuoco ma non troppo –*

*Adagio –*

*Presto –*

*Allegro*

INTERVAL

## FRANZ LISZT (1811–1886)

*A Symphony to Dante's Divine Comedy*

*Inferno: Lento – Allegro frenetico*

*Purgatorio: Andante con moto quasi allegretto –*

*Magnificat: l'istesso tempo*



Friday's concert will be broadcast by ABC Classic on 30 August at 1pm and on 29 October at 1pm.

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Pre-concert talk by David Larkin in the Northern Foyer, 45 minutes before the concert.

.....  
Estimated durations: 20 minutes [Ledger], 9 minutes [Schubert, Devil's Pleasure Palace], 21 minutes, 20 minute interval, 52 minutes.

.....  
The concerts will conclude at approximately 8.30pm (Wednesday); 3.10pm (Thursday); 9.50pm (Friday) and 3.50pm (Saturday).

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Simone Young's Visions of Vienna is supported by the Robert and Ruth Magid Artistic Leadership Fund.



Cover image: Simone Young  
(Photo by Berthold Fabricius)



Principal Partner



## **Simone Young AM** *conductor*

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Simone Young, General Manager and Music Director of the Hamburg State Opera and Music Director of the Philharmonic State Orchestra Hamburg (2005-2015), is currently Principal Guest Conductor of the Lausanne Chamber Orchestra. She has conducted complete cycles of *The Ring of the Nibelung* at the Vienna State Opera, Berlin State Opera and Hamburg State Opera. Her Hamburg recordings include the *Ring cycle*, *Mathis der Maler* (Hindemith), and symphonies of Bruckner, Brahms and Mahler. Her 2012 Hamburg Opera and Ballet tour to Brisbane (*Das Rheingold* in concert, and Mahler's Symphony No. 2 *Resurrection*) won her the 2013 Helpmann Award for the Best Individual Classical Music Performance.

The current season sees Simone Young return to the Bavarian, Berlin and Vienna State Opera companies and Zurich Opera. She will also conduct the New York, Los Angeles, Stockholm, and New Japan Philharmonic Orchestras; San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago, West Australian, and Queensland Symphony Orchestras; the Bavarian Radio Symphony, Deutsches Sinfonie, Berlin, and a Strauss Gala for State Opera of South Australia. Simone Young will also return to the Australian National Academy of Music in a special 'Side by Side' collaboration with the West Australian Symphony in Perth.

The BBC Symphony, Berlin, Vienna, Munich, Dresden, and London Philharmonic Orchestras, the Staatskapelle Dresden, Bruckner Orchestra, Linz, City of Birmingham Symphony, Monte Carlo, Cincinnati, and Dallas Symphony Orchestras, and the Wiener Symphoniker, are among the leading orchestras Simone Young also conducts.

Simone Young has been Music Director of Opera Australia, Conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, and Principal Guest Conductor of the Gulbenkian Orchestra. Her many accolades include a Professorship at the Musikhochschule in Hamburg, Honorary Doctorates from Griffith University, University of Western Australia, Monash University and UNSW; France's Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, the Goethe Institute Medal and the Sir Bernard Heinze Award.



© ANTHONY LICETT

## Louis Lortie

*piano*

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Louis Lortie enjoys long-term partnerships with orchestras such as the BBC Symphony, BBC Philharmonic, Orchestre National de France, Dresden Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Dallas Symphony, San Diego Symphony and St Louis Symphony. In his native Canada he regularly performs with the major orchestras in Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal, Ottawa and Calgary. Further afield, collaborations include the Shanghai Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic and National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan. Regular partnerships with conductors include Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Sir Andrew Davis, Jaap Van Zweden, Simone Young, Antoni Wit and Thierry Fischer.

In recital and chamber music, Louis Lortie appears in the world's most prestigious concert halls and festivals. He is co-founder and Artistic Director of the LacMus International Festival (Lake Como) and a Master in Residence at The Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel of Brussels. Together with Héléne Mercier as the Lortie-Mercier duo, he has shed new light on repertoire for four hands and two pianos.

Special projects for 2019-20 include performances of Liszt's complete *Years of Pilgrimage* at the Beethoven Festspiele and CAL Performances. Celebrating 2020's Beethoven anniversary, he performs a complete sonata cycle in Montreal and Waterloo (Belgium) as well as the five concertos with the New Jersey Symphony and Xian Zhang.

Lortie's recordings cover repertoire from Mozart to Stravinsky, to Lutosławski's Piano Concerto with Edward Gardner and the BBC Symphony to Chopin discs. With Héléne Mercier, he recorded *Carnival of the Animals* with Neeme Järvi and the Bergen Philharmonic and Vaughan-Williams' Concerto for Two Pianos as well as Rachmaninov's complete works for two pianos. Current projects include Saint-Saëns' piano concertos.

Louis Lortie studied in Montreal with Yvonne Hubert (a pupil of Alfred Cortot), in Vienna with Beethoven specialist Dieter Weber, and subsequently with Schnabel disciple Leon Fleisher. In 1984 he won First Prize in the Busoni Competition and was a prizewinner at the Leeds Competition.

## Cantillation

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**Antony Walker** *Music Director*

**Alison Johnston** *Manager*

**Elizabeth Scott** *Schubert & Liszt Chorusmaster*

**Catherine Davis** *Schubert & Liszt Rehearsal Pianist*

Cantillation is a chorus of professional singers – an ensemble of fine voices with the speed, agility and flexibility of a chamber orchestra. Formed in 2001 by Antony Walker and Alison Johnston, it has since been busy in the concert hall, opera theatre and the recording studio.

Highlights have included Nigel Westlake's *Missa Solis*, John Adams' *Harmonium*, Brahms' Requiem, Ross Edwards' *Star Chant*, Haydn's *Creation*, Vaughan Williams' *Flos Campi* (also recorded for CD) and Jonathan Mills' *Sandakan Threnody* (all with the Sydney Symphony), *The Crowd* with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, a sound installation recording for MONA Tasmania, tours of regional NSW and performances with Emma Kirkby in Sydney and Melbourne, for Musica Viva; singing for the Dalai Lama, the Rugby World Cup, and recording soundtracks for several movies, including *Peter Rabbit*, *The Lego Movies*, *Happy Feet 2*, *Live Bait 3D*, *I, Frankenstein*, and *Cane Toads*, *The Conquest*, and recording and filming Jonathan Mills' opera *The Eternity Man*.

For ABC Classics Cantillation has recorded more than 30 CDs and DVDs, including great choral masterpieces of the Renaissance; a collection of contemplative 20th-century sacred works entitled *Prayer for Peace*; Fauré's Requiem; Orff's *Carmina burana*; Handel's *Messiah* (CD and DVD); the Christmas disc *Silent Night*; an album of folk songs entitled *Ye Banks and Braes*; *Magnificat* with Emma Kirkby; a disc of Baroque choruses, *Hallelujah!* and Mozart's Requiem.

For Pinchgut Live Cantillation appears on Haydn's *L'Anima del filosofo*, Rameau's *Castor & Pollux*, Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* and Handel's *Theodora*.

Cantillation is the official chorus for Pinchgut Opera, having performed every opera with chorus since their beginning.

### **SOPRANOS**

Elli Bortolotti  
Claire Burrell-McDonald  
Anna Fraser  
Josie Gibson  
Alice Girle  
Lana Kains  
Chloe Lankshear  
Amy Moore  
Alison Morgan  
Josie Ryan  
Michelle Ryan  
Hester Wright

### **MEZZO-SOPRANOS**

AJ America  
Jo Burton  
Steph Dillon  
Jenny Duck-Chong  
Anne Farrell  
Lanneke Jones  
Atalya Masi  
Rebecca O'Hanlon  
Natalie Shea  
Brooke Shelley  
Alexandra Siegers  
Nicole Smeulders

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## James Ledger (born 1966)

### Two Memorials

Australian composer James Ledger began writing music in his late 20s. His first orchestral work, *Indian Pacific*, was written during the mid-1990s. From 2003 to 2004 he was the composer attached to the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. From 2007 to 2009, he was composer-in-residence with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, which gave the premiere of his Trumpet Concerto in 2007 under Sachio Fujioka. Other highlights of his residency with the WASO included the premieres of *The Madness and Death of King Ludwig* under Asher Fisch, and *Arcs and Planes* and *Chronicles* under Paul Daniel.

In 2008 Ledger was awarded a Churchill Fellowship, which allowed him to travel to Europe to research contemporary compositional practice with a particular focus on new music in Estonia. He has also been composer-in-residence with the Christchurch Symphony Orchestras, the Australian National Academy of Music and the Australian Festival of Chamber Music. He has won APRA Art Music Awards for his violin concerto *Golden Years* and the orchestral work *Chronicles*.

Ledger enjoys an ongoing collaboration with songwriter Paul Kelly. Their song-cycle *Conversations with Ghosts* won an ARIA award in 2013. In 2015 the Sydney and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras simultaneously premiered *War Music* for choir and orchestra, with text by Kelly.

A focus on chamber music in 2018 saw a large-scale piano work for Alex Raineri and two new string quartets. One of the quartets incorporated live electronic sound manipulation and was toured nationally by the Australian String Quartet.

This year sees the premiere of *Thirteen Ways to Look at Birds* – a new song-cycle by Ledger and Kelly for the Adelaide Festival. Later in the year is a new concerto for orchestra and viola featuring Brett Dean as soloist.



James Ledger



CREDIT: BRIDGEMAN IMAGES

John Lennon, one of the people memorialised in this piece, with Yoko Ono



*The composer writes:*

At first glance it might seem odd to write memorial pieces for two such disparate composers as Anton Webern and John Lennon: Webern (1883-1945), was part of the Second Viennese School and composer of such highly-powered expressive miniatures. Lennon (1940-1980) – songwriter, activist for peace and of course, a Beatle, who achieved a level of fame the world hadn't seen before.

What unites these composers, at least superficially, is that they were both shot to death. Webern was shot at the end of the Second World War, during the Allied occupation. He stepped out onto the balcony at his home in Mittersill, Salzburg after curfew to enjoy a cigar and was shot by an American soldier. John Lennon was murdered on the steps of his home in New York after returning from a recording session.

It was though the disparity between the composers compelled me to write two memorials as one piece. It intrigued me to put a twelve-tone row side by side with a pop chord progression complete with tambourine. To unite Webern's volatile, even brutal music with Lennon's psychedelic, trippy-circus music seemed too good an opportunity to pass up.

If there is anything in common between these two memorials it is the unrelenting steady pulse that acts as a terrifying funeral march in Webern's memorial and serves as a driving pop beat in Lennon's. The latter memorial also contains recorded samples of Webern's memorial played in reverse – an effect that typifies the type of studio trickery The Beatles were experimenting with by the mid-1960s.

*Two Memorials* is dedicated to the West Australian Symphony Orchestra and its then-principal conductor Paul Daniel, who have premiered many new works of mine over the years and to whom I am extremely grateful for their generous spirit and thrilling performances.

By complete coincidence, I finished this piece on 9 October 2011 – what would have been John Lennon's 71st birthday.

JAMES LEDGER © 2011

Two Memorials calls for an orchestra of 2 flutes (one doubling piccolo and alto flute), 2 oboes (1 doubling cor anglais), 2 clarinets (1 doubling bass clarinet and harmonica), 2 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, 3 percussion, harp, celesta, electric harpsichord, synthesiser and strings.

This is the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's first performance of the work.



**Anton von Webern**

**To unite Webern's volatile, even brutal music with Lennon's psychedelic, trippy-circus music seemed too good an opportunity to pass up.**

## Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

### *The Devil's Pleasure Palace: Overture D.84*

Best read this after, not before, hearing the music. You'd hardly guess it was a prentice piece by a 17-year-old, the overture to his first completed opera, proudly inscribed as by 'Schubert, pupil of Mr. Salieri, principal Court Kapellmeister in Vienna'. You probably wouldn't guess it was by Schubert at all, though you'd certainly place it near the beginning of Romanticism, with echoes of Weber, and surprisingly, of early Berlioz in the second subject. [But Weber's *Freischütz*, with its spooky wolf's glen scene, was still seven years in the future, and Berlioz' *Les francs-juges* Overture, on a gruesome subject, 12 years.]

The Romantic atmosphere conjured up in this overture is to do with the subject matter of what is to follow. *Des Teufels Lustschloss* is a 'magic opera', a genre that can be traced to the influence of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, still popular in Vienna when Schubert composed his opera. The title means 'The Devil's Pleasure Palace', and if Schubert's music recalls more the Mozart of the *Don Giovanni* Overture than that of *The Magic Flute*, it's because he is introducing a 'Gothic' spine-chiller.

The libretto is based on a 1793 French play, *Le château du diable*, by Joseph-Marie Loaisel de Tréogate. Its author, August von Kotzebue, called it 'Eine natürliche Zauberoper', a natural magic opera, because all the – apparently – magical effects are not supernatural phenomena, but deliberately devised illusions, with perfectly rational causes. The hero, Oswald [corresponding to Mozart's Tamino] spends the night with his faithful squire Robert [= Papageno] in a castle reputed to be enchanted. The castle's Lord, disapproving of Oswald's abduction from him and marriage to his niece Luitgarde, terrifies his guests with apparitions and conjuring tricks, effects of the castle's stage machinery. There are ghosts, statues come to life, an Amazon tries to seduce Oswald, and he is condemned to be hurled over a precipice. At the end his uncle explains that the whole thing was staged by himself and his servants, to test Oswald's courage and fidelity.

Schubert composed a three-act opera, in German with spoken dialogue, much more ambitious than the average Singspiel. After Salieri had suggested radical changes, a second version, completed in October 1814, astonished Schubert's teacher by its scope and quality. These were not enough, however, to persuade a theatrical management to take the risk of staging an opera by an untried composer. Schubert's friends kept trying on his behalf – as late as 1822 Joseph Hüttenbrenner submitted the second version of *Des Teufels Lustschloss* to several theatrical managers, including the Director of the Kärntnerthor Theatre [ancestor of the Vienna State Opera]. Schubert had given him the music as security for a loan, but he wasn't able to cash in on it. Then in 1848,



Franz Schubert

If Schubert's music recalls more the Mozart of the *Don Giovanni* Overture than that of *The Magic Flute*, it's because he is introducing a 'Gothic' spine-chiller.

long after Schubert's death, this same Hüttenbrenner's fellow-lodgers used parts of Schubert's manuscript to light a fire!

Drum rolls punctuate the overture's stormy opening, which leads to more serene contrasting material, until the opening returns and builds up still more drama. The most Berliozian passage occurs when the second subject returns, then the tempo drops to Largo, and a most strikingly scored middle section begins, in A minor. First trombones alone bring their supernatural atmosphere, then gradually flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons are added, in groups. This suggests, in prayer-like music, the faithful love that has to be tested amidst the Gothic horrors. Then the opening material returns, modified to heighten the drama. As with almost all Schubert's dramatic music, which amounts to eight completed operas, and a total of 20 works, the overture is the only part you are likely to hear. In this case, it is so striking as to arouse lively curiosity about the rest.

DAVID GARRETT © 2005

*The Devil's Pleasure Palace*: Overture requires an orchestra of paired woodwinds, horns and trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra was the first Symphony Australia network orchestra to perform this work, in June 1978 with Michi Inoue; most recently it performed the piece in June 2008 under Robin Ticciati.

## Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

arr. Franz Liszt

### 'Wanderer' Fantasy, D.760

*Allegro con fuoco ma non troppo* –

*Adagio* –

*Presto* –

*Allegro*

In 1848, Liszt had more or less retired from recital performances and settled in Weimar as music director to the court of the Grand Duke, where he helped to enlarge and improve the local orchestra, and wrote most of his music for piano and orchestra. In addition to the two great concertos and two other original pieces, the early 1850s saw three works based on music by Beethoven (*The Ruins of Athens*), Weber (*Polonaise brillante*) and Schubert's 'Wanderer' Fantasy. The latter had its premiere in Weimar in 1851 (like almost all of its companion periods it was not performed or conducted by Liszt).

Liszt's repertoire had included numerous transcriptions for solo piano but with the 'Wanderer' Fantasy he does something quite different, using an extant piano work to produce something like a concerto. Schubert's original is far from being a slight Romantic rhapsody: in scale and form it resembles a 19th century sonata, and Liszt's own B minor Sonata of 1853 is deeply indebted to it.



**A Schubert evening, painted by  
Leopold Kupelwieser**

Both works use the articulated single-span layout, where the same material supplies the content in the first and last 'movements', making the finale seem like the recapitulation of a conventional sonata-allegro movement; both works are driven, especially in those outer movements, by the use of repeated and developed short motifs and both use material that recurs in different guises in different movements.

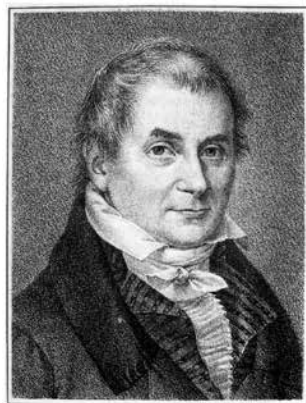
The 'Wanderer' Fantasy opens with short phrases that are themselves largely made up of dactylic (long-short-short) rhythms, given first to the orchestra, making it sound like the introduction to a conventional concerto. The effect is not dispelled by the piano's entrance, though the fully-voiced chords and rippling arpeggios are at first given out softly. The lower winds then take over the simple harmony, while lower strings and upper winds sounds the theme; this liberates the piano to start exploring intricate figurations that do not obscure Schubert's material. Throughout, Liszt responds deftly to the implied contrasts of 'tutti' and 'solo' writing in Schubert, and allows for some cadenza-like display.

The work's nickname derives from Schubert's quotation of an extant song, *Der Wanderer* D.489, as the theme of the *Adagio*. The song, composed in 1816, sets a lyric (by Georg Philipp Schmidt von Lübeck) that charts the familiar story of alienation from home and happiness. The quotation with which the piano begins the section is characterised, too, by dactylic rhythm. Schubert allows the piano a long rumination before bringing in the orchestra in a gradual tidal surge and setting off on the lengthy elaboration of the theme. Liszt's response never gets in the way of the piano, but creates exquisite moments notably with an aching, high cello solo soon answered by solo horn. The presto third section, hinted at in the last moments of the *Adagio*, is a forthright scherzo, even more Beethovenian in Liszt's scoring, and with a pastoral Trio section. The opening dactyls, hammered out as a fugue subject, signal the finale, though Baroque decorum is soon dropped in favour of breathtaking display.

GORDON KERRY © 2019

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra first performed Liszt's version of the 'Wanderer' Fantasy in July 1960 with Nikolai Malko conducting and Grant Johannesen, piano. Its most recent performance was in March 1963 with Charles Mackerras conducting and Lili Kraus, piano, at a Jewish National Fund concert.

Liszt's arrangement of the 'Wanderer' Fantasy calls for solo piano and an orchestra of paired woodwinds, horns and trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani and strings.



**Georg Philipp Schmidt  
von Lübeck, poet of  
'Der Wanderer'**

## Franz Liszt (1811–1886)

### A Symphony to Dante's *Divine Comedy*, S.109

*Inferno: Lento – Allegro frenetico*

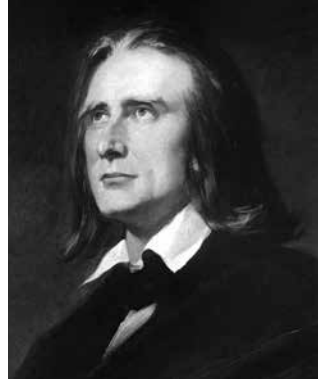
*Purgatorio: Andante con moto quasi allegretto –*

*Magnificat: l'istesso tempo*

In 1302, the faction to which the politically-engaged poet Dante Alighieri (c1265–1321) lost its bid for power and its members were banished from their native city of Florence. Dante spent his years of exile working on what he called his *Comedia* (the double 'm' and the 'Divine' adjective would come later) which he completed in 1320, a year before his death. With its richly symbolic cosmology (the sacred number three dictates everything from the shape of the eternal realms to the number of lines in each stanza) it is a foundational text both of Italian (and Western) literature and of the Christian imagination: Dante's visions have supplied the imagery for much art, especially from 19th century Romantic painters and composers, and many a fire-and-brimstone homily or sermon.

As he tells it, the poet, then in the 'middle of life' loses his way in a dark wood on Good Friday, 1300, confronts several allegorical wild beasts and realises his alienation from God. Virgil, the great Roman poet of the *Aeneid*, appears and leads him through the nine circles of hell, peopled by villains from scripture, myth and history (and one or two of Dante's enemies) at the frozen pit of which he sees Satan; they climb the mountain of Purgatory, where the souls of penitent sinners are cleansed. There Dante must leave the unbaptised Virgil, and travel through the nine circles of heaven. He is guided by Beatrice, his ideal beloved, and, on Easter Sunday in the highest Empyrean, experiences a vision of the unmediated presence of God.

Liszt, whose works often had a long gestation, had thought of a 'Dante Symphony' as early as the 1830s, and completed the piano piece known as the Dante Sonata soon afterwards. By 1847 was imagining an orchestral piece with wind machine and accompanying light show. But the symphony was ultimately composed in the mid-1850s, and premiered – disastrously – in Dresden in 1857.



Franz Liszt, 1856



'Paolo and Francesca in Hell'  
by Gustav Doré

Liszt was the apostle of the symphonic poem, so unsurprisingly the music here is frankly and specifically descriptive. The gargantuan *Inferno* has a baleful introduction for low brass and strings in unison, representing the inscription on the gates of Hell:

Through me the way to the city of desolation;  
through me the way to eternal sorrows;  
through me the way among lost souls...

followed by horns and trumpets announcing 'Lay down all hope, you who enter here'. Dante and Virgil hear endless lamentations, shrieks and groans, which Liszt depicts in roiling music of extreme violence, punctuated by a terrifying statement of the 'abandon hope' motif. The obsessive music is permeated by a rhythmic idea of three short (or unstressed) beats followed by a longer of stressed one and by plangent semitone motifs. A weird calm of delicate wind and harp writing descends, and a 'recitative' for bass clarinet, which is answered by chords that prefigure some of the harmony in Wagner's *Tristan*. This section, like Wagner's opera, is about doomed love: in a famous episode (which also features in the 'Dante Sonata' and in Tchaikovsky's symphonic poem *Francesca da Rimini*, Dante meets the noble Francesca and her lover Paolo, younger brother of her husband, who has murdered both when discovering their adultery. Their punishment is to be forever blown about together in the infernal wind, Paolo constantly weeping and Francesca, now disgusted, unable even to speak his name. Liszt gives her voice to the cor anglais, noting in the score the line 'there is no greater sorrow than to remember times of happiness in misery.' A simple section featuring a cello melody rounds this off, marked *amoroso*, and unfolds into a passage in, effectively, 7/4 time. The horns interrupt with the 'abandon hope' motif, and after a harp cadenza the allegro music is recapitulated sounding, in Liszt's words, like 'blasphemous, mocking laughter' and eventually leading to a majestic coda and reminiscence of the opening motto.

*Purgatorio*, less descriptive, begins in the quiet depths, rising to a dialogue for oboe and cor anglais. Solo lines are answered by hymnal wind chords, and the occasional distant trombone-call: Hell's terrors are real, but far away. A fugato passage begins in the violas on a theme full of gaps and rests as if someone were gasping from breath. The 'choral' winds return, over gently turbulent strings or pizzicato footsteps before the opening material is restated. After a beautiful melody from cellos and double bass the texture takes wing with high winds and harp.



Dante by Doré

Dante's visions have supplied the imagery for much art, especially from 19th century Romantic painters and composers, and many a fire-and-brimstone homily or sermon.

Wagner persuaded Liszt not to attempt to portray Paradise (even Dante admits that his 'high fantasy failed' there). The work comes to a serene conclusion, prefiguring that of *Parsifal* in radiant but slow-moving harmony enlivened by rippling repetitions from winds and harp. A women's (or children's) chorus with harmonium, ideally hidden from view, sings the opening lines of the Magnificat ('My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my sprit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour') 'Hosanna' and 'Hallelujah'. Dante's poem mentions specific psalms and hymns being sung in Purgatory and Paradise; Liszt's melody seem to have been derived from a medieval plainchant known as the Magnificat Tone III, set in sumptuous orchestration to depict 'the love the moves the sun and other stars.'

GORDON KERRY © 2019

The Dante Symphony requires an orchestra of 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo) 3 oboes (1 doubling cor anglais) 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba. 2 timpani, 3 percussion, 2 harps, harmonium, strings and chorus SSAA.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra performed Liszt's Dante Symphony in May 1986 under Albert Rosen with the Crafters Boys' Choir.



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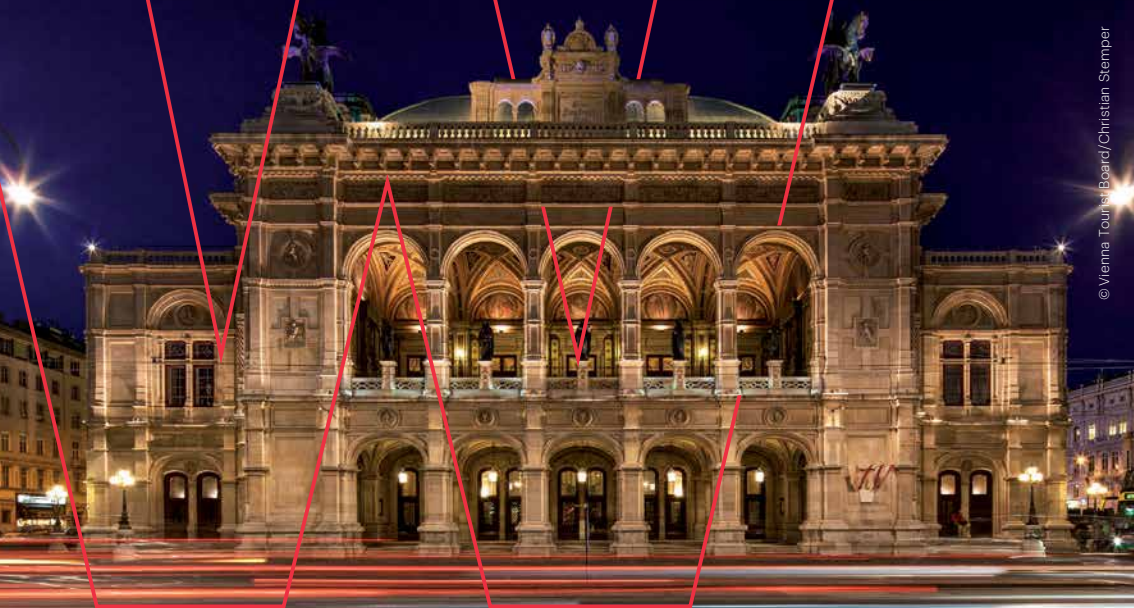
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# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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## DAVID ROBERTSON

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PATRON Professor The Hon. Dame Marie Bashir AD CVO

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra 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 Sydney Symphony Orchestra 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 Sydney Symphony'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.

2019 is David Robertson's sixth season as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director.

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PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS

*The Hon. Jane Mathews AO pictured with percussionist Timothy Constable, who says “the Orchestra is very lucky to have a dear friend like Jane! For many years she has been our champion, commissioning new music and personally supporting my chair. What a legend!”*

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHAIR PATRONS PROGRAM CALL (02) 8215 4674

# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PATRONS

## Sydney Symphony Fellowship

The Fellowship program receives generous support from Paul Salteri AM & Sandra Salteri and the Estate of the late Helen MacDonnell Morgan.

Fellowship Artistic Director, Roger Benedict is supported by Warren & Marianne Lesnie.

### FELLOWSHIP PATRONS

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In memory of Mrs W Stening *Cello Fellow*

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PHOTO: ANTHONY GEERNAERT

*Sydney Symphony Orchestra 2019 Fellows*

## Sydney Symphony Orchestra Commissions 2019

Each year – both alone and in collaboration with other orchestras worldwide – the Sydney Symphony Orchestra 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.

STEVE REICH Music for Ensemble and Orchestra

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Commissioned with the support of

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# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA PATRONS

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We recognise the generosity and vision of donors who help to secure a bright future for the Sydney Symphony by making a bequest. The Sydney Symphony Bequest Society honours the legacy of Stuart Challenger, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's renowned Chief Conductor from 1987 until his untimely death in 1991. In addition to those listed below, we also acknowledge those who wish to remain anonymous.

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*Stuart Challenger, Sydney Symphony Orchestra Chief Conductor and Artistic Director 1987–1991*

We gratefully acknowledge those who have left a bequest to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra

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IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON MAKING A BEQUEST TO THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, PLEASE CONTACT OUR PHILANTHROPY TEAM ON 8215 4674.

## Sydney Symphony Orchestra Vanguard

Sydney Symphony Vanguard is an adventurous way to demonstrate your commitment to supporting a secure future for orchestral music and live performance. A membership program for the musically curious, Vanguard is your ticket to join the Sydney Symphony community.

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