

28 April, Dubbo
29 April, Bathurst
7 July, Orange

SYDNEY SYMPHONY PERFORM TCHAIKOVSKY



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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 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.

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, followed by David Robertson as Chief Conductor from 2014 to 2019. Australia-born Simone Young has been the Orchestra’s Chief Conductor Designate since 2020. She commences her role as Chief Conductor in 2022 as the Orchestra returns to the renewed Concert Hall of the Sydney Opera House.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra’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. Its award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, and the Orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program.

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2022 CONCERT SEASON
REGIONAL TOUR

SYDNEY SYMPHONY PERFORM TCHAIKOVSKY

JOHANNES FRITZSCH conductor
MATTHEW WILKIE bassoon
TODD GIBSON-CORNISH bassoon

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART (1756–1791)

Lucia Silla, K.135: Overture

JOHANN BAPTIST VAÑHAL (1749–1813)

Concerto for two bassoons and orchestra in F major

Allegro moderato

Andante grazioso

Finale: Allegro

LOUISA TREWARTHA (BORN 1989)

*Inspire**

PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893)

Symphony No.5 in E minor, Op.64

Andante – Allegro con anima

Andante cantabile, con alcuna licenza

Valse (Allegro moderato)

*Finale (Andante maestoso – allegro vivace – moderato
assai e molto maestoso)*

* This work was made possible through the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's 50 Fanfares Project and was commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, supported by Rosemary Swift, in memory of Leon Garry OAM.

Thursday 28 April 7.30PM,
Dubbo Regional Theatre

Friday 29 April 7.30PM,
Bathurst Memorial
Entertainment Centre

Thursday 7 July 7.30PM,
Orange Civic Theatre

ESTIMATED DURATIONS

9 minutes, 23 minutes,
interval 20 minutes,
4 minutes, 50 minutes

The concert will conclude at
approximately 9.30pm

COVER IMAGE

Nick Bowers

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ABOUT THE ARTISTS

JOHANNES FRITZSCH conductor

Johannes Fritzsch was appointed Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in February, 2021 having previously served as their Chief Conductor (2008-2014). Since 2018, Johannes has held the position of Principal Guest Conductor of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

From 2006 – 2013 he was Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Oper Graz, Grazer Philharmonisches Orchester (Austria). Prior to his appointment in Graz, Johannes held the position of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Staatsoper Nürnberg. From 1993 until 1999, he was Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Städtische Bühnen and the Philharmonic Orchestra in Freiburg.

Johannes was born in 1960 in Meissen, near Dresden, Germany, where he completed his musical education. He has conducted many leading orchestras, both within Germany and internationally. He regularly conducts the major Australasian orchestras as well as leading productions for Opera Australia, Opera Queensland, West Australian Opera and State Opera of South Australia.

In January 2015, Johannes was appointed Adjunct Professor, The Conservatorium of Music, School of Creative Arts and Media at the University of Tasmania; in June 2019, he joined the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University as Professor of Opera and Orchestral Studies.

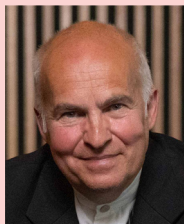
Over the past twenty years, Johannes has given many Masterclasses for the German conductor training and development organisation *Dirigentenforum des Deutschen Musikrates*. Similarly, he was active and enthusiastic in the training of conducting participants selected to take part in Symphony Services' International Conductor Development Program.

In 2017, the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra invited him to design and lead the newly founded Australian Conducting Academy.

In 2021, he conducts the Auckland Philharmonia and the Sydney, Melbourne, Queensland, Tasmanian and West Australian Symphony Orchestras.

TODD GIBSON-CORNISH bassoon *Sydney Symphony Principal Bassoon* *Nelson Meers Foundation Chair*

New Zealander Todd Gibson-Cornish was appointed principal bassoon of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in 2016 at the age of 21. He was an NZSO Fellowship student and freelanced with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra before moving to London for further study. In 2016, Todd graduated from the Royal College of Music, London with a first class honours degree, as a Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Scholar supported by a Douglas and Hilda Simmonds Award. His teachers were Joost Bosdijk, Andrea de Flammineis and Julie Price. He was awarded the Tagore Gold Medal for outstanding musical contribution to the



Johannes Fritzsch
Photo: Peter Wallis



Todd Gibson-Cornish
Photo: Keith Saunders

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

RCM, which was presented to him by HRH The Prince of Wales. Since graduating, he has returned to the RCM to give masterclasses and mentoring sessions.

Todd has played as guest principal with the London Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and CBSO, working under conductors such as Sir Simon Rattle, Lorin Maazel, Bernard Haitink, Esa-Pekka Salonen and Andris Nelsons. He has performed at the BBC Proms, Musikfest Berlin, Schleswig-Holstein, Edinburgh, Enescu and Lucerne Festivals.

Concerto appearances with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra have included the 2019 Australasian premiere of Christopher Rouse's Bassoon Concerto, conducted by David Robertson, and in 2018, the Mozart Bassoon Concerto. Todd was the NZSO National Youth Orchestra's 2018 soloist where he performed Jolivet's Bassoon Concerto. Upcoming projects include performing at Les Concerts du Zeppelin in France.

MATTHEW WILKIE bassoon

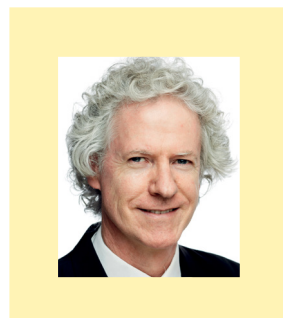
*Sydney Symphony Principal Emeritus Bassoon
Nelson Meers Foundation Chair*

Matthew Wilkie grew up in Canberra and, after studying at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, in 1979 went to Europe, where he ended up staying for 23 years. While studying bassoon in Hanover, Germany with Klaus Thunemann, he was a prize winner at the International Music Competition in Geneva. He has since appeared as soloist with many orchestras, including the Orchestra de la Suisse Romande, Württemberg Chamber Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra of Europe, as well as the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, which he joined as principal bassoon in 2000.

He has been a member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe since 1986, and has worked under such conductors as Claudio Abbado, Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Lorin Maazel, Zubin Meta, Roger Norrington, Yannick Nézet-Séguin and Bernard Haitink. He appears on countless recordings with the COE, many of which have received international awards. His solo and chamber music recordings include concertos by Mozart, Vivaldi and Richard Strauss; the complete wind chamber music of Mozart and Richard Strauss; and six trio sonatas by Zelenka. His 2009 recording of Bach and Telemann sonatas, *The Galant Bassoon*, was shortlisted for an ARIA award and has been praised internationally. He has also appeared at many international festivals and is a regular guest at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Townsville.

Matthew Wilkie's most recent solo appearances with the SSO were in 2008, playing Mozart's Bassoon Concerto, and 2011, when he gave the premiere of James Ledger's *Outposts* bassoon concerto, which was written for him.

Besides his commitments with the SSO, Matthew continues to work as principal bassoon with the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, travelling to Europe five times a year. He is also much in demand as a teacher and gives masterclasses in Europe and Japan.



Matthew Wilkie

Photo: Keith Saunders

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Irish tenor Michael Kelly attended a quartet party in Vienna in 1784, and while the performers weren't, in his view, technically brilliant, their 'science' and musicianship was amazing. This is hardly surprising, as the players included some of the most prominent composers of their time: Joseph Haydn, Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf and Johann Baptist Vaňhal. They were joined by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, then a rapidly rising pianist-composer in his adopted city and on the brink of producing his greatest opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Mozart had been writing operas since his early teens, and in January 1773 he and his father Leopold were in Milan, where the teenaged Wolfgang had been commissioned to write the opera *Lucio Silla*. The premiere performance started three hours late, as the Archduke had been detained writing his New Year's greetings, a late substitute cast member acted so badly that the audience tittered at moments of high drama (putting the prima donna off her stroke), and the Archduchess clapped at an inopportune moment. Once such things were dealt with, though, the piece enjoyed a lengthy and successful run.

Like many a 'serious opera' of the time, it is set in ancient Rome, and tells a story which allows a princely figure to demonstrate magnanimity. The title character is a dictator, in love with Giunia, as is Cecilio who has been banished by Silla but returns secretly to Rome. There are multiple plots by various characters to assassinate Silla, but when Silla recognises the love between Giunia and Cecilio he forgives them, blesses their union and retires to restore the Roman citizens' freedom.

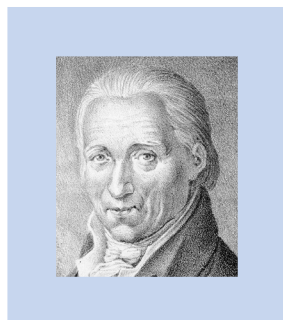
The overture is, unsurprisingly, of the 'Italian' type, falling to three sections: a very fast opening that alternates formal fanfares and a cheekier second theme. There follows a slower, elegant *Andante* central 'movement', before another fast section in a whirling 6/8 time.

Like Mozart, Vaňhal (or Wanhal, as he called himself) had come to Vienna from the provinces – his family were 'bonded servants' to a German-speaking noble family in what is now the Czech Republic (which is why he is sometimes referred to now by his Czech name, Jan Křtitel Vaňhal). His musical talent was recognised early and he gained work playing various instruments and as a choral conductor. Around 1760 he, like Mozart, moved to Vienna to seek his musical fortune and enjoyed some years as a sought after composer of symphonies. He spent some time in Italy from 1769 before returning to Vienna where he, again like Mozart, seems to have worked freelance, composing concertos, sacred music and keyboard works. Mozart is known to have performed one of Vaňhal's violin concertos on one his Italian tours in the 1770s, and he clearly esteemed the older composer highly.

Other details of the prolific Vaňhal's life are rather thin, coloured by a questionable and not-quite contemporary account of his going mad and retreating into silence.



Mozart in 1770



Johann Baptist Vaňhal, portrait by Heinrich Eduard Winter

ABOUT THE MUSIC

This Double Concerto probably dates from his later life and falls into the standard three-movement layout. The first, which takes up nearly half the piece's duration, is a broad, fast-paced movement in which the bassoonists' virtuosity is evenly matched. In the second, they sing a gentle duet before a short, faster finale.

The quartet that Michael Kelly heard in 1784 was – as was the norm – a brand new work. This evening's premiere is by Victoria-based Louisa Trewartha who divides her professional life between composition, conducting, teaching and playing trumpet. Her fanfare, *Inspire*, features a variety of effects from the brass choir – attention-grabbing gestures, glowing wide-spread chords, a lively use of rhythmic impulse and a stately peroration. She writes that:

To 'inspire' means to breathe in. This piece is about the glint of hope for the natural world that we witnessed in 2020. The resilient response of nature to a brief moment of human pause should inspire us. This fanfare uses breath through brass instruments to attest to and archive this moment, and so continue to inspire.

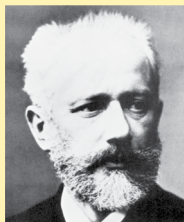
This work was made possible through the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's 50 Fanfares Project and was commissioned by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, supported by Rosemary Swift, in memory of Leon Garry OAM.

Tchaikovsky was at the height of his creative powers in 1888, and had come to a personal and artistic rapprochement with Brahms (whom he once described as a 'giftless bastard', but who was arguably the leading symphonist of the day). Tchaikovsky's Fifth (like his Fourth) is what's known as a 'motto' symphony, unified by a 'motto' or theme stated in the introduction to the first movement and reused throughout. Tchaikovsky self-effacingly said that the symphony 'has a mountain of padding; an experienced eye can detect the thread in my seams and I can do nothing about it'. In fact the experienced eye and ear of Brahms was highly impressed by the work's cohesion. The work too displays some of Tchaikovsky's most inspired orchestration. In fact, in addition to the use of the motto theme, Tchaikovsky gives his work its special sense of coherence through the use of a web of key relations, and 'subliminal' motifs which occur from movement to movement.

The first movement's introduction sets the tone with lugubrious scoring which features the low register of the clarinet, and instrument which also heralds the faster material of the main body of the movement. The energy gradually increases, with marvellous call and response writing for the winds against the passionate surges of the strings and the urgent punctuation from the brass. The 'second subject' group of themes forms a sharp contrast in its more lyrical, noble mood. The material forms the basis for dramatically contending music, but the movement ends quietly and in a sense inconclusively.



Louisa Trewartha



Tchaikovsky in 1888

ABOUT THE MUSIC

The slow movement is justly famous for its long breathed horn theme, and its powerful climaxes (Tchaikovsky's directions for the second climax are 'with desire and passion'). The balletic *Valse* provides a relaxation in the intensity of the music (despite a late reminiscence of the motto) before the finale, in which the tension between tragedy and joy is decisively concluded in favour of joy.

The work does have moments of unarguably tragic tone, which, if biographical explanation is required, may relate to these specific events: the composer fell ill in 1886 and experienced poor health for the following year – to the point where he became convinced that this was his final illness. More importantly, a number of his closest friends died at this time, including Nikolai Kondratiev whose demise provided the inspiration for the symphony. Scholar Roland John Wiley argues that the rhythm of the motto theme corresponds to a Russian Easter chant which sets the words 'Christ is risen'. Wiley says that:

if that connection was intentional, various aspects of meaning in the Fifth Symphony would be clarified. The triumphal variant of the motto in the last movement would be more than a defeat-to-victory cliché, while the clash between the motto and the worldly intonations of the inner movements would make sense.

This is not to say that the work is a 'program symphony', but that it contains a meaning more complex and important than is admitted in more common, glib accounts based on imaginary aspects of Tchaikovsky's state of mind.

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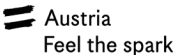
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