

28 October
Sydney Opera House

DANIEL MÜLLER-SCHOTT PERFORMS DVOŘÁK



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SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

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SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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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 commences her role as Chief Conductor in 2022, a year in which the Orchestra makes its return to a renewed Sydney Opera House Concert Hall.

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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DANIEL MÜLLER- SCHOTT PERFORMS DVOŘÁK

HEART TO HEART

EDUARDO STRAUSSER conductor
DANIEL MÜLLER-SCHOTT cello

ESTIMATED DURATIONS

27 minutes, 40 minutes

The concert will conclude
at approximately 12.10pm.

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891–1953)

Romeo and Juliet, excerpts from the Suites,
Opp.64a, 64b

- i. *Montagues and Capulets - The Prince Gives His Order and Dance of the Knights* (Suite 2 No.1)
- ii. *Juliet as a Young Girl* (Suite 2 No.2)
- iii. *Friar Lawrence* (Suite 2 No.3)
- iv. *Dance of the Five Couples* (Suite 2 No.4)
- v. *Dance of the Girls with Lilies* (Suite 2 No.6)
- vi. *Romeo at the Tomb of Juliet* (Suite 2 No.7)

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

Cello Concerto in B minor, B.191 Op.104

- i. *Allegro*
- ii. *Adagio ma non troppo*
- iii. *Allegro moderato*

COVER IMAGE

Daniel Müller-Schott.
Photo credit Uwe Arens

WELCOME

Welcome to this performance of
Daniel Müller-Schott performs Dvořák.

For this exhilarating concert we welcome
Daniel Müller-Schott to Australia to perform
one of the greatest cello concertos ever
written, by the Czech master Antonín Dvořák.
This is followed by a selection of memorable
melodies from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*,
telling stories of the start-crossed lovers and
their feuding families.

The right partnership can be a powerful thing.
Emirates and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
have enjoyed one of the longest standing
partnerships in Australia's performing arts.
Twenty years ago, Emirates and the Sydney
Symphony Orchestra met and created
a wonderful partnership that celebrated
our common goal of creating journeys of
excitement and discovery for people around
the globe.

We are delighted by this continuing
partnership, and it is my great pleasure to
welcome you to this performance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Barry Brown', with a stylized, flowing script.

Barry Brown

Divisional Vice President for Australasia
Emirates

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

EDUARDO STRAUSSER conductor

The charismatic Brazilian conductor, Eduardo Strausser has gained a reputation for his intelligent programming and powerful style on the podium. Highlights of the first part of the 2021/22 season include a new commission, *Odyssee*, for Zurich Opera, as well as performances with violinist Augustin Hadelich at the Musikkollegium Winterthur and a delayed debut with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. He will join Collegium Musicum Basel in the Spring as well as making debuts with Kansas City Symphony and Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra and returning to Venezuela to conduct the El Sistema Orchestra.

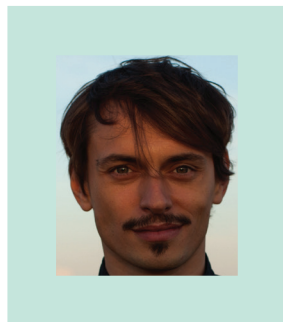
Successes of the season included debuts with Detroit Symphony Orchestra as well as Handel's *Messiah* with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall in London. Other highlights included concerts with Oulu Symphoniker and a mixed programme of Liszt and Schumann for Dubrovnik Summer Festival.

Previous European symphonic highlights include engagements with Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Deutsche Sinfonie Orchester Berlin, Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra, Tampere Philharmonic and Oslo Philharmonic as well as Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne. Elsewhere he has made debuts in previous seasons in Australia with Queensland Symphony Orchestra, and South America with Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional de Mexico.

Formerly Resident Conductor at the Teatro Sao Paolo from 2014–2016, Eduardo has conducted several operas including *Elektra* and Carlos Gome's *Fosca*, as well as performances of *The Nutcracker* with the Balé da Cidade de São Paulo, and a Stefano Poda production of Mahler Symphony No.1. Other highlights include *Tosca* for Theater Magdeburg which he also conducted for Staatstheater Hannover alongside several other productions, including *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *Hansel and Gretel* and *Die Zauberflöte*. Elsewhere he has conducted *La bohème* for Teatro Municipal do Rio de Janeiro and Teatro Verdi di Padova.

Besides his studies at the Zurich University of Arts, Eduardo has worked with the visionary composer Karlheinz Stockhausen as part of a two-month course in Kürten, Germany. He has also participated in masterclasses with Bernard Haitink and David Zinman in Switzerland and with Kurt Masur in New York. In 2008 Eduardo was selected to take part in the prestigious International Forum for Conductors at the Ferienkurse für Neue Musik in Darmstadt, where he had the chance to work closely with composers György Kurtág and Brian Ferneyhough. He is now based in Berlin.

Eduardo has worked with a number of top soloists, including Isabelle Faust, Richard Galliano, Steven Osborne, Barnabas Kelemen and Sergei Krylov among others. A multi-linguist, Eduardo can speak eight languages fluently including German, Italian, French, Spanish and Hebrew.



Eduardo Strausser,
photo by Rodrigo Levy

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

DANIEL MÜLLER-SCHOTT cello

Daniel Müller-Schott is one of the most sought-after cellists in the world and can be heard on all the great international concert stages. For many years he has been enchanting audiences as an ambassador for classical music in the 21st century and as a bridge builder between music, literature and the visual arts. *The New York Times* refers to his "intensive expressiveness" and describes him as a "fearless player with technique to burn".

Daniel Müller-Schott guests with international leading orchestras in the United States, Europe and Asia, has appeared in concert with such renowned conductors as Marc Albrecht, Karina Canellakis, Thomas Dausgaard, Christoph Eschenbach, Iván Fischer, Alan Gilbert, Gustavo Gimeno, Manfred Honeck, Neeme Järvi, Cristian Măcelaru, Susanna Mälkki, Andris Nelsons, Gianandrea Noseda, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Kirill Petrenko, Michael Sanderling, Dalia Stasevska and Krzysztof Urbanski.

Daniel Müller-Schott celebrates his 20th stage anniversary this fall together with Julia Fischer in Bamberg, where the career of these two exceptional artists began: with the Bamberger Symphoniker and the Brahms Double Concerto. Both musicians will also perform the same program at the "Long Beethoven Night" at the Bonn Opera House. Another highlight will be the two concerts at the turn of the year with the Konzerthausorchester in Berlin under Alexander Shelley. Further concerts are planned with the Copenhagen Philharmonic and Thomas Dausgaard, with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Vasily Petrenko, Asturias Symphony Orchestra and Ari Rasilainen and with Taiwan Philharmonic (NSO) and Jun Märkl. Lalo's Cello Concerto will be performed by Daniel Müller-Schott with the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchestra / Jukka-Pekka Saraste in its anniversary year.

In January 2023, Daniel Müller-Schott will premiere another Cello Concerto dedicated to him by George Alexander Albrecht, together with the Staatskapelle Weimar under Marc Albrecht.

International music festivals regularly invite Daniel Müller-Schott.

Recording for Orfeo, Müller-Schott's extensive and award-winning discography includes his latest CD release this autumn with one of his long-time piano partners Herbert Schuch: Edvard Grieg Music for Cello.

Daniel Müller-Schott studied under Walter Nothas, Heinrich Schiff and Steven Isserlis. He was supported personally by Anne-Sophie Mutter and received, among other things, the Aida Stucki Prize as well as a year of private tuition under Mstislav Rostropovich. At the age of fifteen, Daniel Müller-Schott won the first prize at the International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians in 1992 in Moscow.

Daniel Müller-Schott plays the "Ex Shapiro" Matteo Goffriller cello, made in Venice in 1727.



Daniel Müller-Schott,
photo by Uwe Arens

ABOUT THE MUSIC

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891–1953)

***Romeo and Juliet*, excerpts from the Suites, Opp.64a, 64b**

Between 1932 and 1936 Prokofiev spent increasingly long periods back in the USSR, which he had left to further his career abroad in 1918. By 1936 he and his family had settled again in Moscow, though on the ‘understanding’ that Prokofiev would still be at liberty to pursue his international career. He had also been offered a large number of very attractive commissions, one of which was to make a ballet of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Aware that the Soviet system had created a vast new, but largely inexperienced, audience for classical music, he said in an interview with *Izvestia* in 1934 that what the USSR needed was ‘light serious’ – or ‘serious light’ – music; it is by no means easy to find the term which suits it. Above all, it must be tuneful, simply and comprehensively tuneful, and must not be repetitious or stamped with triviality.

The greatest example of this aesthetic is *Romeo and Juliet*, yet it had a difficult and protracted birth. Leningrad’s Kirov Theatre rejected the initial proposal because of the story’s tragic ending, but Prokofiev’s friend, theatre director Sergei Radlov, suggested a happy conclusion in which the lovers avoid death. This, he argued, would make it ‘a play about the struggle for the right to love by young, strong progressive people battling against feudal traditions and feudal outlooks on marriage’ and thus a perfect piece of optimistic Socialist Realism. As recent research by scholar Simon Morrison in his book *The People’s Artist* has shown, the happy ending was also attractive to Prokofiev for religious reasons. With his wife, he had begun practicing Christian Science in the 1920s, and accepted that Good ‘will necessarily triumph over the finite and temporary phenomenon of evil’; the new version of *Romeo and Juliet* would demonstrate that as a kind of parable. There remained people to convince, however.



Prokofiev in the 1930s

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre had planned to premiere it though play-throughs of the score in Moscow had failed to enthuse bureaucrats, dancers or audiences. According to Prokofiev, it was one comment, 'your music doesn't express any real joy at the end', that led him to reconsider the tragic ending and find a way to express it in music that could be choreographed. In the meantime, however, both the artistic director of the Bolshoi and the proposed conductor for *Romeo and Juliet* were arrested and shot in Stalin's purges. The ballet was quietly shelved.

The premiere of *Romeo and Juliet*, eventually but successfully, was given in Brno, in the then Czechoslovakia in 1938, at which time the Kirov Theatre in Leningrad offered, after a memo from Stalin, to give the Russian premiere in January 1940. There was what Morrison calls a considerable amount of 'vandalism' by the Kirov people – unbeknown to the composer until the actual Leningrad performance. Choreographer Leonid Lavrovsky made some unauthorised wholesale changes to the scenario and score, and then bullied Prokofiev into making further cuts and additions. The dancers were, as Galina Ulanova who danced Juliet later observed, 'a little afraid' of the music; its strangeness meant that they could 'couldn't hear that love [of Romeo and Juliet] in his music then.' The composer was actually very accommodating, subtly changing orchestrations to be heard more clearly by the dancers on stage, for instance, and he reported to a friend that 'after 15 curtain calls' at the Leningrad premiere, some of the dancers felt the work 'might be acceptable after all'. Fortunately, the regime felt that the work was acceptable after all, too.

The dancers' initial bafflement seems odd now. Musicologist Stephen Walsh calls the ballet a 'brilliant fusion of post-Imperial romanticism and scuttling, unpredictable Prokofievism'. The score is notable for its clarity of orchestration – not that this precludes moments of great opulence,

ABOUT THE MUSIC

such as the pile up of sonority which presages the tragic events about to unfold, or the multi *divisi* strings which give the young lovers a halo of rich sound. But quite simply, the score offers clear contrasts between the implacable march of tragic fate in those passages built on repeated ostinato figures and the more rhapsodic soaring passages associated with love, and the worlds of public life and private intimacy.

Prokofiev's characterisation is masterful, where he depicts the arrogance of the Capulets, the tenderness of Juliet herself or the otherworldly music which accompanies Friar Lawrence as he awaits the lovers in his cell, and each theme for each character is immediately recognisable when it appears in a new context. There are numerous set-pieces which provide a sometimes bustling backdrop, as in the *Dance of the Five Couples* from Act II, and sometimes menacing one to the unfolding love story. The *Dance of the Girls with the Lilies*, for instance, delicately sets the scene in Juliet's bedroom of her supposed death on her wedding morning. The music where Romeo imagines Juliet dead is of heartbreaking intensity.

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904) **Cello Concerto in B minor, B.191 Op.104**

Brahms was impressed. 'If only I'd known,' he said, 'that one could write a cello concerto like that, I'd have written one long ago!' And he wasn't just being polite. Brahms had recognised Dvořák's talents early on, ensuring that the young composer received from the Imperial Government in Vienna the Austrian State Stipendium, an annual grant, for five years, and persuading his own publisher, Simrock of Berlin, to publish Dvořák's music.

But Brahms' admiration aside, the composition of what Dvořák scholar John Clapham has called simply 'the greatest of all cello concertos' was no easy matter. In fact, it was his second attempt at the medium – the first, in A major, was composed in 1865,



Antonín Dvořák

ABOUT THE MUSIC

but appears only to have been written out in a cello and piano score. Despite the urgings of his friend, the cellist Hanuš Wihan, Dvořák thought no more about writing such a piece until many years later.

In 1894 Dvořák was living in New York, having accepted the invitation of Jeannette Meyer Thurber to head the National Conservatory of Music that she had founded there in 1885. In March 1894, Dvořák attended a performance of Victor Herbert's Second Cello Concerto. The Irish-born American composer and cellist is now best remembered for shows like *Naughty Marietta* and *Babes in Toyland*, but his concerto, modelled on Saint-Saëns' first, made a huge impact on Dvořák, who re-examined the idea of such a work for Wihan. The work was sketched between 8 November 1894 and New Year's Day, and Dvořák completed the full score early in February.

Much to Dvořák's annoyance, the first performance of the concerto was not given by its dedicatee, Wihan. The London Philharmonic Society, who premiered it at the Queen's Hall in March 1896, mistakenly believed Wihan to be unavailable, and engaged Leo Stern.

Despite Dvořák's embarrassment, Stern must have delivered the goods, as Dvořák engaged him for the subsequent New York, Prague and Vienna premieres of the work. Despite being an 'American' work, the concerto is much more a reflection of Dvořák's nostalgia for his native Bohemia, and perhaps for the composer's father who died in 1894. As scholar Robert Battey has noted, 'two characteristic Bohemian traits can be found throughout the work, namely pentatonic ['black note'] scales and an aaB phrase pattern, where a melody begins with a repeated phrase followed by a two bar "answer"'. The work is full of some of Dvořák's most inspired moments, such as the heroic first theme in the first movement, and the complementary melody for horn which adds immeasurably to its Romantic ambience.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

The Bohemian connection became even stronger and more personal when Dvořák, working on the piece in December 1894, heard that his sister-in-law Josefina (with whom he had been in love during their youth) was seriously, perhaps mortally, ill. Dvořák was sketching the slow movement at the time. The outer sections of this movement are calm and serene, but Dvořák expresses his distress in an impassioned gesture that ushers in an emotionally unstable central section in G minor, based on his song *Kéž duch můj sám* (Leave me alone) which was one of Josefina's favourites.

Josefina died in the spring of 1895, and Dvořák, by this time back in Bohemia, made significant alterations to the concluding coda of the third movement, adding some 60 bars of music. The movement begins almost ominously with contrasting lyrical writing for the soloist. Dvořák's additions to the movement, and his determination not to diffuse its emotional power with a cadenza, allowed him, as Battey notes, to re-visit 'not only the first movement's main theme, but also a hidden reference to Josefina's song in the slow movement. Thus, the concerto becomes something of a shrine, or memorial.'

Gordon Kerry © 2022

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

1932 – 2022



Celebrations following an Australian Proms performance at Sydney Town Hall under conductor John Hopkins, 1960s.

A performance during the Orchestra's first overseas tour to Manila, Tokyo and Hong Kong in 1965.



The Orchestra performing at the United Nations General Assembly under Chief Conductor Stuart Challender, 1988.

The Orchestra's brass section celebrates the Sydney Harbour Bridge's 80th anniversary, 2012.



Chief Conductor David Robertson steps out onto the Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg during the Orchestra's 2018 European tour. Photo by Peter Hundert.



After the Orchestra's final performance in the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall before the venue's renewal in 2019 – Mahler's *Das klagende Lied* conducted by Simone Young, with Eleanor Lyons, Michaela Schuster, Steve Davislim, Andrew Collis, and the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs conducted by Brett Weymark.



2023 SEASON

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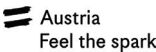
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