

25 August  
The Art House, Wyong

# THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY PERFORMS BRITTEN'S SERENADE



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SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA



# SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PATRON **Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley** AC KC

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 Fremaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdenek Macal, 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. Australian-born Simone Young commenced her role as Chief Conductor in 2022, a year in which the Orchestra made 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.

## **Simone Young**

Chief Conductor

## **Donald Runnicles**

Principal Guest  
Conductor

## **Vladimir Ashkenazy**

Conductor Laureate

## **Andrew Haveron**

Concertmaster  
*Chair supported by Vicki  
Olsson*

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*Concertmaster*

### **Harry Bennetts**

*Associate Concertmaster*

Claire Herrick

Alexander Norton

Anna Skálová

Benjamin Tjoa<sup>°</sup>

## **SECOND VIOLINS**

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*Principal*

### **Emma Jezek**

*Assistant Principal*

Alice Bartsch

Victoria Bihun

Benjamin Li

Riikka Sintonen<sup>°</sup>

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Adrian Wallis

Minah Choe\*

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### **Alex Henery**

*Principal*

Richard Lynn

\* = Guest Musician

<sup>°</sup> = Contract Musician

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Fellow

THE ART HOUSE, WYONG

Friday 25 August, 7.30pm

# THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY PERFORMS BRITTEN'S SERENADE

INTIMATE DREAMSCAPES

**ANDREW HAVERON** director

**STEFAN DOHR** horn

**ANDREW GOODWIN** tenor

**BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913-1976)**

**Prelude and Fugue for 18 Strings, Op.29 (1943)**

i. Prelude

ii. Fugue

**BRITTEN**

**Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Op.31 (1943)**

i. *Prologue*

ii. *Pastoral*

iii. *Nocturne*

iv. *Elegy*

v. *Dirge*

vi. *Hymn*

vii. *Sonnet*

viii. *Epilogue*

**DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)**

**Chamber Symphony, Op.118a**

**orch. Rudolf Barshai after String Quartet No.10**

i. Andante

ii. Allegro furioso

iii. Adagio –

iv. Allegretto – Andante

**ESTIMATED DURATION**

Prelude & Fugue – 9 minutes

Serenade – 25 minutes

Shostakovich – 24 minutes

The concert will run for  
approximately 65 minutes.

**COVER IMAGE**

By Craig Abercrombie

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# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**ANDREW HAVERON** director and violin  
*Sydney Symphony Concertmaster,*  
*Vicki Olsson Chair*

Andrew Haveron is one of the most sought after violinists of his generation.

A laureate of some of the most prestigious international violin competitions, Andrew studied in London at the Purcell School and the Royal College of Music. Andrew is a highly respected soloist, chamber musician and concertmaster. As a soloist, Andrew has collaborated with conductors such as Jiří Bělohlávek, Sir Colin Davis, Sir Roger Norrington, David Robertson, Stanislaw Skrowachewski and John Wilson, performing a broad range of well-known and less familiar concertos with many of the UK's finest orchestras.

His performance of William Walton's Violin Concerto with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in 2015 was nominated for a Helpmann Award. Andrew's playing has also been featured on many film and video-game soundtracks, including Disney's *Fantasia* game, which includes his performance of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* with the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Andrew has also appeared recently in recitals around Australia with pianists Anna Goldsworthy, Piers Lane and Simon Tedeschi.

In 1999 Andrew was appointed first violinist of the internationally acclaimed Brodsky Quartet. A busy schedule saw the quartet perform and broadcast in their unique style all over the world. Amassing a repertoire of almost 300 works, they enjoyed collaborations with outstanding artists and commissioned many new works from today's composers, and were famed for their barrier-breaking cross-genre projects with Elvis Costello, Björk, Paul McCartney and Sting. Andrew recorded more than fifteen albums with the quartet, receiving numerous industry awards. Andrew has also appeared with other chamber groups such as the Nash and Hebrides ensembles, the Logos Chamber Group, Kathy Selby and Ensemble Q.

Andrew is also in great demand as a concertmaster and orchestra director, and has worked with all the major symphony orchestras in the UK and many further afield. In 2007 he became concertmaster of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, broadcasting frequently on BBC Radio and enjoying many appearances at the BBC Proms including the famous Last Night. Joining the Philharmonia Orchestra in 2012 Andrew also led the World Orchestra for Peace at the request of its conductor Valery Gergiev, and again in 2018 at the request of Donald Runnicles. In 2004 Andrew received an honorary Doctorate from the University of Kent for his services to music.

In 2013, Andrew started in his current position of concertmaster of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. He plays on a violin made in 1757 by GB Guadagnini; a generous loan to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra by Vicki Olsson for Andrew's use.



Andrew Haveron  
Photo by Jez Smith

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## STEFAN DOHR horn

Proclaimed by the *New York Chronicle* as the 'king of his instrument', Stefan Dohr is widely regarded as one of the world's greatest horn players.

In addition to being Principal Horn of the Berliner Philharmoniker, Stefan has collaborated as a soloist with the world's leading conductors, including Sir Simon Rattle, Claudio Abbado, Daniel Barenboim, Bernard Haitink, Christian Thielemann, Daniel Harding, Neeme and Paavo Järvi, Dima Slobodeniuk, Gustavo Gimeno, John Storgårds, and Marc Albrecht.

Dohr is continually expanding his instrument's repertoire – commissioning and premiering new pieces by today's foremost composers including Herbert Willi, Jorge E. López, Johannes Wallmann, Dai Bo, Toshio Hosokawa, Wolfgang Rihm and Hans Abrahamsen.

In the 2022/23 season, Dohr will perform with the Royal Bangkok Symphony Orchestra, Utah Symphony, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra and Vancouver Symphony Orchestra under the baton of conductors such as Jonathan Nott, Jun Märkl, Fabio Luisi and Thierry Fischer. A prolific chamber musician, Stefan is a permanent member of the Ensemble Wien-Berlin, Berliner Philharmoniker, Chamber Music Society and the Philharmonisches Oktett Berlin.

Stefan's extensive discography includes *The Yellow Shark* with Ensemble Modern and Frank Zappa (Barking Pumpkin Records); Schumann's *Konzertstück* for Four Horns and Orchestra with Paavo Järvi and the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen (RCA Red Label); Toshio Hosokawa's horn concerto *Moment of Blossoming* with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (Naxos); Music for horn and piano by Franz and Richard Strauss with Markus Becker (Campanella Musica); the Complete Mozart Horn Concertos with Camerata Schulz; and Weber's *Concertino* for Horn and Orchestra with the Münchner Rundfunkorchester (both on the Camerata label).

Stefan Dohr studied in Essen and Cologne, starting his professional career at the age of 19 as Principal Horn of the Frankfurt Opera, during which time he also frequently appeared as a guest artist with Ensemble Modern. He held the position of Principal Horn in Orchestre Philharmonique de Nice, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin and the Festival Orchestras of Bayreuth and Lucerne before taking up his current post in 1993. A passionate teacher, Stefan is a Visiting Professor at the Royal College of Music, the Sibelius Academy, and a permanent faculty member at the Herbert von Karajan Academy and the Hochschule für Musik 'Hanns Eisler' in Berlin.



Stefan Dohr  
Photo by Simon Pauly

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## ANDREW GOODWIN tenor

Andrew Goodwin has appeared with opera companies in Europe, the UK, Asia and Australia, including the Bolshoi Opera, Gran Theatre Liceu Barcelona, Teatro Real Madrid, La Scala Milan, Opera Australia, Pinchgut Opera and Sydney Chamber Opera.

He has performed with the St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Moscow Chamber Orchestra, the Melbourne, West Australian, Queensland, Tasmanian, Adelaide and Sydney Symphony Orchestras, and has given recitals with pianist Daniel de Bora at the Wigmore Hall, and Oxford Lieder, Port Fairy, Huntington, Coriole, Bendigo, Huntington and Canberra International Music Festivals.

This year Andrew returns to the QSO (Beethoven Symphony No.9), Melbourne Bach Choir and Canberra Symphony (Evangelist, *St. John Passion*), the Australia Ensemble, the Australian Haydn Ensemble, Canberra International Music Festival for Mozart concert arias and songs by Silvestrov, Sydney Symphony (Britten's Serenade for tenor and horn and as Mime in *Das Rheingold*), Brisbane Festival (Britten *War Requiem*), Sanguine Estate Music Festival, MSO (*Messiah*) and Sydney Philharmonia (Bach's *Christmas Oratorio*). He will also give recitals in Adelaide, Brisbane and at UKARIA.

His most recent engagements include touring/recording with the Australian Vocal Ensemble, and returns to Sydney Philharmonia Choirs and the QSO for *Mozart Requiem*; Melbourne Bach Choir as Evangelist in the *St. Matthew Passion*; Canberra International Music Festival (and the Australian Haydn Ensemble) for Haydn's *Creation*; Canberra, Melbourne, New Zealand and Queensland Symphony Orchestras for *Messiah*; Mozart's *Requiem* with MSO and TSO, and Richard Mill's new oratorio, *Nativity*, with the ASO. His opera roles include Janik in *Diary of one who disappeared* (Janacek) with Sydney Chamber Opera, Lysander in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for Adelaide Festival and Jacquino (*Fidelio*) with West Australian Symphony.

Andrew studied voice at the St Petersburg Conservatory with Professor Lev Morozov, graduating with a Bachelor of Music and with Robert Dean in the UK and is the winner of many awards and scholarships including the Tait Memorial Trust Scholarship, the Martin Bequest Travelling Scholarship, the Sir Robert Askin Operatic Travelling Scholarship, and the Australian Opera Auditions Committee Joan Sutherland Richard Bonyngé Scholarship.



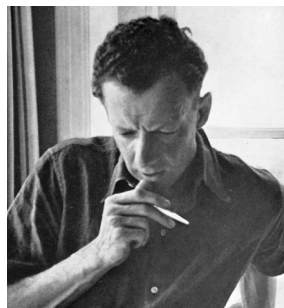
Andrew Goodwin

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## **BENJAMIN BRITTEN (1913-1976)** **Prelude and Fugue for 18 Strings, Op.29 (1943)**

In June 1937 the Salzburg Festival invited violinist Boyd Neel and his string orchestra to appear, and requested that the band would premiere a new work by a British composer. With only two months before the August festival, Neel contacted the young Benjamin Britten, who obliged with an early masterpiece, the *Variations on a theme of Frank Bridge*. The Boyd Neel Orchestra would go on to give the 1940 premiere of Britten's song cycle, *Les Illuminations*, with soprano Sophie Wyss, and in 1943, Britten composed his *Prelude and Fugue, Op.29*, to celebrate the orchestra's tenth anniversary. With many players serving in the war, the band consisted of only 18 members, but Britten finds something unique for each to do.

Where the 'Bridge' Variations consisted of a series of short, pitch-perfect parodies of recognisable genres, the *Prelude and Fugue* is much more abstract and somewhat less immediately ingratiating. In the *Prelude*, (marked *Grave*) passionate, dissonant chords in the upper strings are answered by baleful low notes in the bass, before the music drifts into quiet, wan counterpoint that avoids any urgent sense of direction, returning to a distant version of the opening chords. The ensuing *Fugue* (*Allegro energico*) is in complete contrast, displaying Britten's utter master of complex counterpoint (all 18 players get a go), and the skilful deployment of string texture to create lean active passages and overwhelming moments of sonority. A final coda is introduced by rich unison writing and a quiet reminiscence of the *Prelude* before a last eruption of the fugal material.



Benjamin Britten

# ABOUT THE MUSIC



Britten and Peter Pears in the 1940s

## **BRITTEN**

### **Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings, Op.31 (1943)**

The previous year, the acutely homesick Britten had returned to England from the United States where he and his partner, the tenor Peter Pears, had lived since the outbreak of World War II. But it was not just for friends and family that Britten was homesick. He had just discovered the poetry of George Crabbe, whose *The Borough* evoked the coastal landscapes and villages of Britten's native Suffolk, and it was that work which he would soon turn into his first, major operatic triumph: *Peter Grimes*.

While engaged in the preparatory drafting of *Peter Grimes*, Britten made the acquaintance of the twenty-one year-old Dennis Brain, the principal horn player in the RAF Orchestra. The orchestra played Britten's incidental music for a radio series, and after hearing Brain for the first time, Britten 'took every opportunity to write elaborate horn solos into every subsequent score!' The composer also intended to write a concerto for the young virtuoso, but at the suggestion of musicologist Erwin Stein, set to work on an orchestral song cycle with horn obbligato. In March 1943 he wrote to a friend in the USA, 'I've practically completed a new work (6 Nocturnes) for Peter (and a lovely young horn player Dennis Brain, & strings...It is not important stuff, but quite pleasant, I think.' The premiere of the Serenade, as it became, at London's Wigmore Hall later that year was a huge success for Britten, Pears, and Brain.



## ABOUT THE MUSIC

Despite Britten's protestations, the Serenade is 'important' for a number of reasons. Britten's most recent song cycles *Les Illuminations* and the Michelangelo Sonnets had set foreign languages, but the Serenade – partly, perhaps as a sketch for *Peter Grimes* sets the notoriously unwieldy English language. Moreover, here Britten displays, as in a number of important subsequent pieces, a love of compiling highly contrasting texts which deal with a central theme – in this case, the approach of night.



Dennis Brain  
Photo courtesy Warner Classics

The solo horn frames the work with a Prologue which is repeated, off stage, as an Epilogue. Like Vaughan Williams, in a famous section of his *Pastoral Symphony*, Britten stipulates that the horn use only natural harmonics – that is, the player should avoid using the valves which make it possible for the horn to play every note in tune with the modern 'tempered' scale. The result is hauntingly beautiful (though to his great regret, Brain was accused of playing out of tune by insensitive critics), and as Britten scholar Peter Evans suggests, 'evokes the natural order of things, a world in which the natural laws are being unquestionably obeyed'.

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

The sense of tranquillity in nature is carried over into the first song, *Pastoral* a setting of seventeenth-century poet Charles Cotton, which describes a rural scene at sunset. Britten's gift for musical onomatopoeia is much in evidence here: the horn initially follows the voice's downward line in imitative canon, as if to illustrate the word 'shadows'; a 'very little, little flock' is represented by very little motifs drawn from the original string texture; at the word 'lug' a string pizzicato presents a slight obstacle to the music's gentle course. A more dramatic view is presented in the *Nocturne*, where Tennyson describes the sunset 'on castle walls and snowy summits old in story'. As Christopher Palmer notes, this is a Scottish landscape. The distinctive rhythm of the 'Scotch snap' – short note followed by a long which was hinted at in the first notes of both the *Prologue* and *Pastoral*, now dominates the texture. The horn remains silent during the verses, but plays a free fanfare at the words 'Blow, bugle, blow' to imitate the 'wild echoes' of the text.

The following *Elegy* represents a radical change of mood. Over an almost inert, dragging rhythm from the strings, the horn plays a weird melody consisting of half-steps or semitones which explores all twelve notes of the scale, finally bursting like an abscess at the very top of its range. Only then does the voice enter, with a recitative setting of William Blake's *O Rose, thou art sick*. Here, perhaps, is the 'sense of sin in the heart of man', a theme taken up in the Lyke Wake Dirge. The tenor intones the ancient dirge which stresses the dead person's accountability for his actions during life. The text makes it clear that the charitable soul, who gave clothes and shoes, or meat and drink to the poor, shall not suffer, but the music is unrelentingly terrifying. The vocal line – high in the tenor's register, and with no expression or dynamic markings so as to de-nature it – is repeated, unchanged, as the strings add a progressively more complex fugato accompaniment. At the mention of the fires of purgatory the horn enters the texture, blazing out the fugato theme.

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

There is another sudden change of mood with the setting of Ben Jonson's *Hymn*, a brilliant piece of coloratura for both voice and horn over pizzicato strings which celebrates the goddess of the moon – here referred to as Cynthia but perhaps better known as Diana. The horn is silent for the final song, setting John Keats' sonnet *To Sleep*. Here the texture is built out of a radiant series of mainly major triads, which also contain the twelve notes of the chromatic scale between them. The vocal line is graceful and apparently serene, but occasionally clashes harmonically with the accompaniment – as for instance at the words 'O soothest sleep'. This subtly expresses in music the poet's fear of 'curious Conscience... burrowing like a mole'. Finally, from the distance we hear the horn's *Epilogue*, its 'natural' simplicity just beyond our reach.

When Erwin Stein, who suggested the idea for the piece to Britten, died, his daughter Marion Thorpe discovered Britten's manuscript for a seventh song among her father's papers. It was a setting of Tennyson's *Now sleeps the crimson petal* a poem which, as Britten biographer Humphrey Carpenter points, 'is an invitation to make love'. Perhaps it was, as some have suggested, the 'sense of sin', which made Britten omit the song; in any case, the *Serenade* is, like so much of Britten's music, a moving document of the conflict between innocence and experience.

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## **Pastoral**

The day's grown old; the fainting sun  
Has but a little way to run,  
And yet his steeds with all their skill,  
Scarce lug the chariot down the hill.

The shadows now so long so grow,  
That brambles like tall cedars show;  
Mole hills seem mountains and the ant  
Appears a monstrous elephant.

A very little, little flock  
Shades twice the ground that it would stock;  
Whilst the small stripling following them  
Appears a mighty Polypheme.

And now on benches all are sat,  
In the cool air to sit and chat,  
Till Phoebus dipping in the West,  
Shall lead the world the way to rest.

*Charles Cotton*

## **Nocturne**

The splendour falls on castle walls  
And snowy summits old in story:  
The long light shakes across the lakes,  
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Bugle, blow; answer echoes, dying.

O hark, o hear, how thin and clear,  
And thinner, clearer, father going!  
O sweet and far from cliff and scar  
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!  
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:  
Bugle, blow; answer echoes, dying.

O love, they die in yon rich sky,  
They faint on hill or field or river:  
Our echoes roll from soul to soul  
And grow for ever and for ever.  
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,  
Bugle, blow; answer echoes, dying.

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

## **Elegy**

O Rose, thou art sick;  
The invisible worm  
That flies in the night,  
In the howling storm  
Has found out thy bed

Of crimson joy;  
And his dark secret love  
Does thy life destroy.

*William Blake*

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## **Dirge**

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,  
Every nighte and alle,  
Fire and fleet and candle-lighte  
And Christ receive thy saule.

When thou away from hence art past,  
Every nighte and alle,  
To Whinnymuir thou com'st at last  
And Christ receive thy saule.

If ever thou gav'st hos'n and shoon  
Every nighte and alle,  
Sit thee down and put them on  
And Christ receive thy saule.

If hos'n and shoon thou ne'er gav'st nane,  
Every nighte and alle,  
The whinnies sall prick thee to the bare bane;  
And Christ receive thy saule.

From Whinnymuir when thou may'st pass,  
Every nighte and alle,  
To Brig o'Dread thou com'st at last:  
And Christ receive thy saule.

## **Hymn**

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,  
Now the sun is laid to sleep,  
Seated in thy sliver chair,  
State in wonted manner keep:  
Hesperus entreats thy light,  
Goddess, excellently bright.

Earth, let not thy envious shade  
Dare itself to interpose;  
Cynthia's shining orb was made,  
Heav'n to clear when day did close:  
Bless us then with wished sight,  
Goddess, excellently bright.

## **Sonnet**

O soft embalmer of the still midnight!  
Shutting with careful fingers and benign  
Our gloom-pleas'd eyes, embower'd from  
the light,  
Enshaded in forgetfulness divine:  
O soothest sleep! If so it please thee, close  
In midst of this thine hymn my willing eyes,  
Or wait the 'Amen' ere thy poppy throws  
Around my bed its lulling charities;  
Then save, or the passèd day will shine

From Brig o'Dread when thou may'st pass,  
Every nighte and alle,  
To Purgatory fire thou com'st at last;  
And Christ receive thy saule.

If ever thou gav'st meat or drink,  
Every nighte and alle,  
The fire sall never make thee shrink:  
And Christ receive thy saule.

If meat or drink thou ne'er gav'st nane,  
Every nighte and alle,  
The fire sall burn thee to the bare bane  
And Christ receive thy saule.

This ae nighte, this ae nighte,  
Every nighte and alle,  
Fire and fleet and candle-lighte  
And Christ receive thy saule.

*Anon, 15th century*

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,  
And thy crystal shining quiver;  
Give unto the flying hart  
Space to breathe, how short so-ever:  
Thou that mak'st a day of night,  
Goddess, excellently bright.

*By Ben Jonson*

Upon my pillow, breeding many woes;  
Save me from curious Conscience,  
that still lords  
Its strength for darkness, burrowing like  
a mole;  
Turn the key deftly in the oilèd wards,  
And seal the hushèd Casket of my Soul.

*By John Keats*

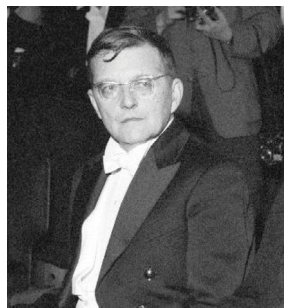
# ABOUT THE MUSIC

## **DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906–1975)** **Chamber Symphony, Op.118a** **orch. Rudolf Barshai after String Quartet No.10**

With the outbreak of World War II in 1939 a young Polish Jew named Moisei Weinberg (or Vainberg) fled east to Minsk, where he studied at the Conservatorium, and then to Tashkent, where he met Shostakovich. Weinberg would be protégé, colleague and close friend for the rest of Shostakovich's life. They supported each other through inevitable political travails (Weinberg was arrested as a traitor and only released thanks to Stalin's providential death). Weinberg, as pianist, helped in the revival of Shostakovich's suppressed Fourth Symphony, and premiered new works. There was also friendly rivalry, and Shostakovich is said to have composed his **Tenth Quartet** because both he and Weinberg had already written nine. Weinberg was the dedicatee of the new work.

It was composed at an artists' retreat at Dilizhan, in Armenia, where Shostakovich and his wife Irina spent the summer of 1964. It was a complicated time: Shostakovich's health was declining, and he had succumbed to pressure to join the Communist Party a few years before, a decision that took its toll on him; but after a disastrous second marriage, he was now extremely happy with Irina, whom he had married two years before.

The ambivalence may account for the extremes of expression that he cultivated in the Tenth Quartet – Wendy Lesser describes it as 'at once Shostakovich's harshest and his friendliest quartet.' In a conventional four-movement design, the opening Andante begins with a long solo violin melody in that genial but slightly uneasy 'Baroque' manner favoured by Shostakovich (and Weinberg) at times. The movement features quietly insistent rhythms, and a contrasting theme for cello. After the delicate reserve of the Andante, the Allegro furioso is shocking in its volume, violence and unremitting rhythm. Curiously, though, while this music suggests a characteristically bleak vision there is none of the pathos with which Shostakovich sometimes

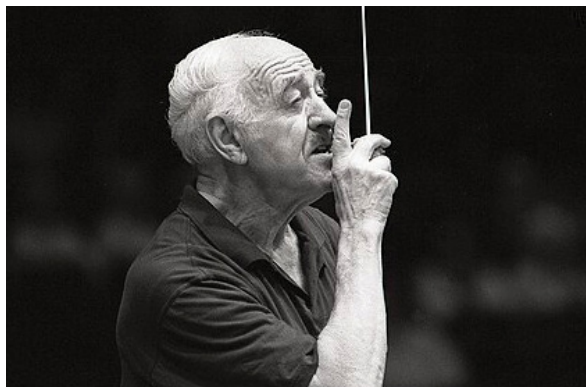


Dmitri Shostakovich in 1958

# ABOUT THE MUSIC

leavens such music - more curious in that he often does so using music of Jewish provenance. This is not conventionally tragic music.

The slow movement is a passacaglia – another reference to the Baroque tradition, and a form which both Shostakovich and his friend, Benjamin Britten, cultivated extensively. The theme here is presented by the cello-line, and after several elaborations the music passes straight into the finale. Here Shostakovich gathers together themes from the passacaglia and returns to the first movement (at first in a completely different mood) before a quiet and resigned close.



Rudolf Barshai in 1996

When Shostakovich's student and colleague Rudolf Barshai was commissioned by a concert promoter in Leipzig to make an arrangement of the Eighth Quartet for string orchestra, the composer said, 'It is as it should be', inspiring Barshai to create string-orchestra versions of three more, as well as a full orchestral treatment of the Third Quartet. A wonderful violist as well as conductor, Barshai treated the works with loving respect; the arrangement of Tenth Quartet naturally foregoes some of the agility achieved by four solo instruments playing together, but by contrast gains in sonority and, through occasional octave doubling and bass reinforcement, rhetorical emphasis.

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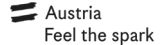
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