

7-10 May 2025

DANIEL LOZAKOVICH

PERFORMS SIBELIUS' VIOLIN CONCERTO



SYDNEY
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

Principal Partner



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 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. 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.

PERFORMING IN THIS CONCERT

FIRST VIOLINS

Andrew Haveron
Concertmaster
Alexandra Osborne
Associate Concertmaster
Sun Yi
Associate Concertmaster Emeritus
Lerida Delbridge
Assistant Concertmaster
Fiona Ziegler
Assistant Concertmaster
Jennifer Booth
Sophie Cole
Sercan Danis
Claire Herrick
Georges Lentz
Emily Long
Alexandra Mitchell
Léone Ziegler
Marcus Michelsen°
Benjamin Tjoa°

SECOND VIOLINS

Kirsty Hilton
Principal
Marina Marsden
Principal
Emma Jezek
Acting Associate Principal
Victoria Bihun
Acting Assistant Principal
Rebecca Gill
Emma Hayes
Shuti Huang
Wendy Kong
Benjamin Li
Nicole Masters
Robert Smith
Maja Verunica
Caroline Hopson°
Riikka Sintonen°

VIOLAS

Tobias Breider
Principal
Richard Waters°
Principal
Anne-Louise Comerford
Associate Principal Emeritus
Sandro Costantino
Rosemary Curtin
Stuart Johnson
Justine Marsden
Felicity Tsai
Amanda Verner
Leonid Volovelsky
James Wannan°
Stephen Wright°
Ariel Postmus†

CELLOS

Catherine Hewgill
Principal
Simon Cobcroft
Associate Principal
Leah Lynn
Assistant Principal
Kristy Conrau
Fenella Gill
Timothy Nankervis
Elizabeth Neville
Christopher Pidcock
Adrian Wallis

DOUBLE BASSES

Alex Henry
Principal
David Campbell
Dylan Holly
Steven Larson
Richard Lynn
Jaan Pallandi
Benjamin Ward
Harry Young†

FLUTES

Emma Sholl
Acting Principal
Carolyn Harris
Dana Alison†

OBOES

Joshua Oates*
Guest Principal Oboe
Miriam Cooney°
Amy Clough†
Alexandre Oguey
Principal Cor Anglais

CLARINETS

Francesco Celata
Acting Principal
Oliver Crofts†
Alexander Morris
Principal Bass Clarinet

BASSOONS

Matthew Wilkie
Principal Emeritus
Fiona McNamara

HORNS

Jan Breer*
Guest Principal
Euan Harvey
Acting Principal
Marnie Sebire
Rachel Silver
Emily Newham°

TRUMPETS

Brent Grapes
Associate Principal
Anthony Heinrichs

TROMBONES

Scott Kinmont
Acting Principal
Nick Byrne
Christopher Harris
Principal Bass Trombone

TUBA

Steve Rossé
Principal

TIMPANI

Mark Robinson
Acting Principal

PERCUSSION

Rebecca Lagos
Principal
Joshua Hill°
Acting Associate Principal
Timpani/Section Percussion
Timothy Constable

HARP

Louisic Dulbecco
Principal

Bold Principal

* Guest Musician
° Contract Musician
† Sydney Symphony Fellow

2025 CONCERT SEASON

EMIRATES MASTERS SERIES

Wednesday 7 May, 8pm

Friday 9 May, 8pm

Saturday 10 May, 8pm

Concert Hall,
Sydney Opera House

EMIRATES THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY

Thursday 8 May, 1.30pm

DANIEL LOZAKOVICH PERFORMS SIBELIUS' VIOLIN CONCERTO

RADIANT AND LYRICAL

TOMÁŠ NETOPIĽ conductor

DANIEL LOZAKOVICH violin

LEOŠ JANÁČEK (1854–1928)

Symphonic Suite from *Jenůfa* (1904)

concept Manfred Honeck

orchestration Tomáš Ille

JEAN SIBELIUS (1865–1957)

Violin Concerto in D minor, Op.47 (1904)

i. Allegro moderato – Allegro molto

ii. Adagio di molto

iii. Allegro ma non tanto

INTERVAL

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)

Symphony No.6 in D, B112, Op.60 (1880)

i. Allegro non tanto

ii. Adagio

iii. Scherzo: Furiant (Presto)

iv. Finale (Allegro con spirito)

Pre-concert talk

By Douglas Emery in the
Northern Foyer at 7.15pm
(12.45pm Thursday)

Estimated durations

Janáček – 22 minutes

Sibelius – 34 minutes

Interval – 20 minutes

Dvořák – 41 minutes

The concert will run for
approximately two hours

Cover image

Daniel Lozakovich

Photo by Marco Borggreve

Principal Partner



WELCOME

Welcome to **Daniel Lozakovich performs Sibelius' Violin Concerto**, a concert of intense and thrilling artistry.

Impressive young Swedish violinist Daniel Lozakovich makes his Australian début, joining the Orchestra as the soloist for Sibelius' Violin Concerto, conducted by Tomáš Netopil. One of Sibelius' most enduringly popular works, this breathtaking concerto is the perfect introduction to a simply wonderful musician.

Tomáš Netopil is the Principal Guest Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic, and few bring out the drama and beauty of the music of Dvořák and Janáček as he does.

As the Presenter of this Masters Series, Emirates proudly champions exceptional local and international talent, with a special focus on the Sydney Symphony's celebrated Chief Conductor, Simone Young AM.

This year Emirates is celebrating 25 years flying into Sydney. Together with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra we have created one of the most significant and enduring relationships in Australia's performing arts, one we all continue to be immensely proud of.

Our partnership with the Orchestra has been underpinned by a shared vision: to create unforgettable journeys and remarkable experiences, and this exceptional concert illustrates our mutual commitment to excellence at the very highest level.

We are delighted by the continuing success of our long-term partnership, and I trust you will enjoy this spell-binding performance.



Barry Brown
Divisional Vice President for Australasia
Emirates



YOUR CONCERT AT A GLANCE

LEOŠ JANÁČEK (1854–1928)
Symphonic Suite from *Jenůfa* (1904)
concept Manfred Honeck
orchestration Tomáš Ille

This is a 2013 reworking of themes from Janáček's great opera of love, betrayal and forgiveness in a small rural community in Moravia, which gives a sense of the opera's alternation of tenderness and sometimes unruly energy.

The opera premiered in 1904, the year that saw James Joyce take a walk around Dublin on 16 June, the establishment of FIFA, and the ALP's national electoral victory – the first for a labour party anywhere in the world.

Contemporary music included Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*, Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* and Bartók's *Rhapsody, Op.1*.



Leoš Janáček in 1904
Source: Wikimedia Commons

JEAN SIBELIUS (1865–1957)
VIOLIN CONCERTO IN D MINOR, OP.47 (1904)

Sibelius' only concerto – for an instrument he knew well – is a successor to the large-scale 19th century works of Beethoven, Brahms and Tchaikovsky, in three substantive movements. The first is a virtuoso rhapsody, the second a long-breathed song, and the final a wild dance.

It premiered in 1904 though was revised in 1905, a year that saw the founding of Las Vegas, the First Russian Revolution, and Albert Einstein's four *annus mirabilis* papers which revolutionized understanding of the fundamental concepts of space, time, mass and energy.

Contemporary music included Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance Marches*, Arnold Schoenberg's String Quartet No.1, Op.7, Debussy's *Estampes* and the premieres of piano concertos by Ferruccio Busoni and Frederick Delius.



Sibelius c.1905, by Paul Hecksher
Source: Finnish Heritage Agency/
Wikimedia Commons

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)
SYMPHONY NO.6 IN D, B112, OP.60 (1880)

The Sixth Symphony came at a time when Dvořák had begun to receive his due recognition. Building on the model of Brahms' symphonies, Dvořák produced a solid four-movement work in classical design, but using a musical language much -inflected with the sounds of his native Bohemia, notably in the dance-like Scherzo.

It was premiered in 1881, the year that saw the end of the First Boer War, the opening of the Savoy Theatre (with electric lights!) and the end of novelist Marcus Clarke's natural life.

Contemporary music included Bruckner's Fourth Symphony (premiered that year), Brahms' Second Piano Concerto and Offenbach's *The Tales of Hoffmann*.



Dvořák in 1889
Source: Wikimedia Commons

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

TOMÁŠ NETOPIL conductor

An inspirational force, particularly in Czech music, Tomáš Netopil was Principal Guest Conductor with Czech Philharmonic from 2018 to 2024, performing regularly on tour and at concerts in the Rudolfinum Hall in Prague. He will continue to collaborate with the Czech Phil on a regular basis, including conducting the orchestra's New Year's concerts, which are live televised. In 2023/24 Tomáš Netopil conducted opera productions including Janáček's *Jenůfa* at the Hamburg Staatsoper and Dvořák's *Rusalka* at the Prague National Theatre, as well as symphonic engagements with Frankfurt Opera Orchestra, Janáček Philharmonic Ostrava, Naples Philharmonic and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra.

Opera productions in the 2024/25 season include Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito* at the Grand Théâtre de Genève, *Die Zauberflöte* with the New National Theatre Foundation, Tokyo, and *Don Giovanni* with Oper Köln. As Principal Guest Conductor, Netopil conducts Czech Philharmonic Orchestra's live televised New Year concerts at the Rudolfinum, Prague. He explores a wide range of symphonic repertoire in engagements with Oslo Philharmonic, Antwerp, Kuopio and Sydney Symphony Orchestras, Hong Kong Sinfonietta and Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia.

This season sees a welcome return to L'Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo as well as a debut with Orchestre National des Pays de la Loire. Another return is to Concentus Musicus Wien where he builds on his work with period ensembles. This time, as part of the Prague Spring Festival, Netopil delights the audience with an authentic production of Mozart's Requiem.

Eight years ago, Tomáš Netopil created the International Summer Music Academy in Kroměříž offering students both exceptional artistic tuition and the opportunity to meet and work with major international musicians. In Summer 2021, in association with the Dvořák Prague Festival, the Academy established the Dvořákova Praha Youth Philharmonic with musicians from conservatories and music

academies, coached by principal players of Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. Netopil has held a close relationship with the Dvořák Prague Festival for some time and was Artist in Residence in 2017, opening the Festival with Essen Philharmoniker and closing the Festival with Dvořák's *Te Deum* and Wiener Symphoniker.

Tomáš Netopil's recordings for labels such as Supraphon, OehmsClassics, Radioservis, Dynamics and Pentatone are highly rated. His discography for Supraphon includes Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* (the first ever recording of the original 1927 version), Dvořák's complete cello works, Martinů's *Ariane* and Double Concerto, and Smetana's *Má vlast* with Prague Symphony Orchestra. During his tenure in Essen, his releases have included recordings of Suk's *Asrael* and Mahler's symphonies nos. 2, 3, 6 and 9.

From 2008/12 Tomáš Netopil held the position of Music Director of the Prague National Theatre. He studied violin and conducting in his native Czech Republic, as well as at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm under the guidance of Professor Jorma Panula. In 2002 he won the inaugural Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition at the Alte Oper Frankfurt.



Photo by Marco Borggreve

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

DANIEL LOZAKOVICH violin

Daniel Lozakovich, whose music-making leaves both critics and audiences spellbound, has become one of today's most sought-after violinists.

The 2024/25 season leads him to perform with some of the most prestigious orchestras and conductors including an intensive collaboration with Tarmo Peltokoski throughout the season: Hong Kong Philharmonic, Philharmonia Zurich, Israel Philharmonic on tour, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Bayerische Staatsorchester and NHK Symphony Orchestra. The season also includes debuts with Orchestra Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and Thomas Gugges, as well as return visits as soloist with the Swedish Radio Symphony/Kazuki Yamada, Lucerne Festival Orchestra/Ricardo Chailly on tour to Philharmonies in Paris and Hamburg, Orchestre National de France/Suzanna Mälkki, London Philharmonic/Dima Slobodeniuk, and Philharmonia Orchestra/Tugan Sokhiev. He also reunites with the WDR Sinfonieorchester/Cristian Măcelaru for a tour in Germany. He also has his Australian debut with Queensland Symphony/Gábor Káli, as well as Sydney Symphony Orchestra/Tomáš Netopil.

In recital, he joins legendary pianist Mikhail Pletnev for a debut album on Warner Classics, leading him to concerts in Taipei, Kaohsiung, Vienna Musikverein, Berlin Philharmonie, Amsterdam Concertgebouw and Munich Herkulesaal. He also returns to Wigmore Hall with long-time musical partner Alexander Kantorow.

In March 2024, he signed an exclusive contract with Warner Classics with a first album featuring pianist Mikhail Pletnev playing Franck's Sonata for Violin and Piano, Grieg's Violin Sonata No.3 and *Solveig's Song* from *Peer Gynt*, Shostakovich's *Romance* from *The Gadfly* and a Violin Sonata jointly composed by Alexi Shor and Pletnev himself. Lozakovich has already achieved considerable acclaim on record, having been signed by Deutsche Grammophon at just 15 years old. His recording of Bach's two violin concertos (Kammerorchester des Symphonieorchesters des Bayerischen Rundfunks, 2018) reached number one in the

all-music category of the French Amazon charts and the classical album charts in Germany. His live recording of *None But The Lonely Heart* (National Philharmonic of Russia, Vladimir Spivakov, 2019) was named by *Gramophone* as Top Choice spanning 70 years of best recordings of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto. In 2020 he released his highly acclaimed live recording of Beethoven's Violin Concerto (Münchener Philharmoniker, Valery Gergiev, 2020). His latest album, *Spirits* (2023) pays tribute to seven of the most iconic violinists of the 20th century.

Lozakovich has been awarded many prizes, including first prize at the 2016 Vladimir Spivakov International Violin Competition and the Young Artist of the Year 2017 award at the Festival of Nations, the Premio Batuta Award in Mexico, and the Excelentia Prize under the honorary presidency of Queen Sofia of Spain. Lozakovich studied at the Hochschule für Musik Karlsruhe with Professor Josef Rissin from 2012 and graduated with Master's Degree in 2021.

Born in Stockholm in 2001, he began playing the violin at the age of seven. He made his solo debut two years later with Moscow Virtuosi and Vladimir Spivakov. From 2015 has been mentored by Eduard Wulfson in Geneva. Daniel Lozakovich plays the "ex-Sancy" 1713 Stradivari generously loaned by LVMH (Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton).



Photo by Sasha Gusov

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT LEOŠ JANÁČEK

Janáček is proof that life – or at least a richly creative life – starts at 50. His father was an impoverished schoolmaster in a tiny village in Moravia, but Leoš received excellent training in music from his father and then, having shown great promise, in the regional capital of Brno.

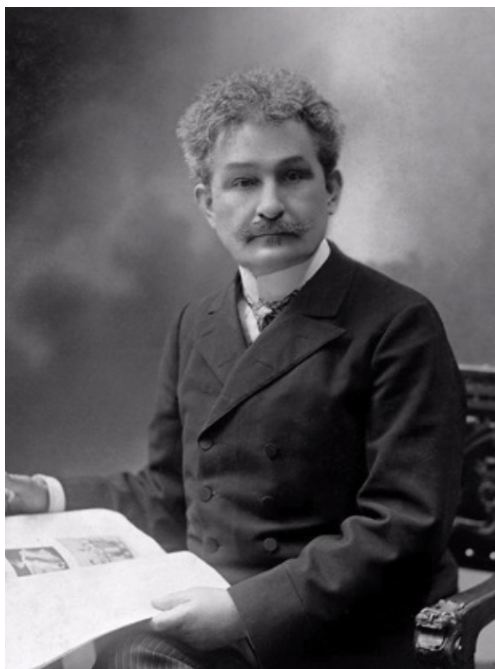
He studied further at conservatories in Prague, Leipzig and Vienna before returning to settle in Brno. There he taught, founding the Brno Organ School (which later became the Brno Conservatorium) and composed; he also edited a journal of music criticism and collected folk music. In around 1896 he became ardently pro-Russian, seeing Russia's as a model for authentically Slavic culture.

Janáček didn't merely arrange folk music, but listened carefully to its distinctive irregularities of metre and rhythm, and married this with a melodic manner derived in part from the sound of Czech speech, most obviously in his operas. Even Theodor W Adorno, philosopher of modern[ist] music, wrote admiringly of 'the magnificent art of Janáček [that] has a power of alienation which places it in the company of the avant-garde.'

Janáček's first opera was shelved, but his second, *Počátek románu* (The Beginning of a Romance) was a folkloric affair, based on a work by playwright Gabriela Preissová, that was performed in 1891. Preissová had also written the play *Její pastorkyňa* (Her Stepdaughter), which would become the opera *Jenůfa* which premiered in Brno in 1904.

In the quarter-century that followed, Janáček composed six more operas, including *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Kat'a Kabanova* and *The Makropoulos Affair*. This 'late' period also saw orchestral masterpieces like *Taras Bulba* and the *Sinfonietta*, enduring piano works like *On an Overgrown Path* and the Piano Sonata, a great deal of choral music including *The Diary of One who Disappeared* and the monumental *Glagolitic Mass*.

In 1917 Janáček met Kamila Stösslová, the 20-something wife of a dealer in antiques. Opinions differ as to the extent, if any, to which she reciprocated the 60-something composer's feelings (Janáček's estranged wife Zdenka wrote that Kamila 'was completely unimpressed by my husband's fame, and also by his person'), but much of Janáček's late work, such as the two great string quartets, reflect powerful erotic motivations.



Leoš Janáček in 1904. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

ABOUT JENŮFA

Like Mozart's Da Ponte operas, many of Janáček's examine the destabilising effect of eroticism on the status quo - and where better to examine that than in a claustrophobic rural community? Jenůfa is a young, pure-hearted girl in love with her cousin, the local lothario Števa Buryja. Števa's stepbrother Laca is in love with Jenůfa and bitter that, under the law, only Števa will inherit the family mill.

As Act I opens, Števa is absent, and Jenůfa worries that he will be drafted into the army and not be able to marry her – she, unknown to anyone else, is pregnant with his child. Števa returns, drunkenly carousing with some soldiers, and taunting Jenůfa. Jenůfa's stepmother, who as sacristan of the local church goes by the title of Kostelníčka, is appalled and forbids the marriage unless Števa stays sober for a year. That isn't going to happen. Laca in turn taunts Jenůfa and, when she stays loyal to Števa, becomes so angry that he slashes her cheek with a knife.

Act II takes place some months later: Jenůfa has secretly given birth to a baby boy and is ill. The Kostelníčka demands that Števa marry Jenůfa but he, put off by the scar on her cheek,

ABOUT THE MUSIC

has become engaged to someone else. He leaves and Laca arrives, and the Kostelnička tells him of the baby, but then, seeing his disgust, says that the baby died. When Laca leaves she takes the week-old baby and drowns him in the icy stream. Laca returns, determined to marry Jenůfa. The Kostelnička is relieved for the family honour, but still fears the 'face of death' that she seems to see at the window.

In Act III it is spring and the wedding of Jenůfa and Laca is imminent. As the Kostelnička and Jenůfa's and Števa's grandmother make preparations, a chorus of girls sing a happy song; the mayor calls in to offer congratulations and a shepherd bursts in to say a baby's body has been found in the thawing ice of the stream.

When Jenůfa says the baby is hers the townsfolk prepare to do her violence, but the Kostelnička steps forward and admits the crime. As she is taken away Jenůfa forgives her; Jenůfa then breaks the engagement to save Laca's honour, but he swears that he will stay with her and love her.

ABOUT THE SUITE

There is little purely orchestral music in the opera. (An overture - based on folksong called *Žalivec* (The Jealous Man) that expresses the charming sentiment 'I would rather cut off your head than let another love you when I am gone' - was repurposed as a concert opener, *Jealousy*.)

Conductor Manfred Honeck conceived the idea of a symphonic suite in collaboration with Czech composer Tomáš Ille, writing that it was 'particularly important to present the most significant moments of the opera story in this suite. This includes the emotions of Jenůfa, the sadness of losing a child, drama and storminess (weather), and also the conciliatory ending.'

The Suite, played without a break, begins and ends as does the opera, but occasionally reorders the sequence of events for a more satisfying musical structure. Ille makes some judicious changes to the scoring, in part to compensate for the absence of vocal lines (which are not, generally, 'doubled' by instruments in Janáček's score), and includes a certain amount of musical connective tissue developed from Janáček.

The opening is a typical Janáčekian explosion of energy, with the nervously repeated note of the xylophone acting as a recurrent motif of suppressed violence. (It appears in the opera as Laca fingers the blade of the knife with which he will attack Jenůfa.)

There follows much dance-music, associated with Števa and the chorus of drunken soldiers, that includes 'Jenůfa's favourite song' with which he taunts her.

By way of contrast, Ille now includes some of the most haunting, quiet music in the opera. Taken from Act II, it is based on deceptively simple short phrases that are harmonised in thirds, as Jenůfa registers that her baby is dead, and hopes that he is in heaven, while the Kostelnička quietly tells her that God has restored Jenůfa's freedom.

The music then returns to some of the Act I choral/dance music that morphs into the 12/16 rhythms of the angry mob in Act III.

An introspective section where Jenůfa says that the baby never cries, and the Kostelnička replies that it would be better if he died, is interrupted by some of the happier choral music from Act III's wedding preparations, whose energy builds before another quieter passage that begins with music associated with the kindly Grandmother Buryja. Before long, tension builds again, leading into the frightening music that ends Act II, as the Kostelnička stares into the moral abyss. From there we have the final scene, where Jenůfa offers Laca his freedom and he vows to stay with her. Also like Mozart, notably in *Figaro*, Janáček ends his opera with music of radiant forgiveness that nevertheless remembers the hurt for which forgiveness is offered.

Gordon Kerry © 2025

This suite from Janáček's opera is scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, cor anglais, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet and 2 bassoons; 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba; timpani, percussion, harp and strings.

The opera received its premiere on 21 January 1904, at the National Theatre in Brno, in what is now the Czech Republic.

This is the first time the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has performed this suite.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

WHO WAS JEAN SIBELIUS?

Coming from the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland, Sibelius had been largely unaware of the richness of ‘ethnic’ Finnish culture until he became engaged to Aino Järnefelt, whose family was very pro-Finnish, in 1890. The Järnefelt family introduced Sibelius to the mythological and literary culture of the Finns, notably *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic. He was able to create a Finnish musical language out of the drama of its legends, the typical modal patterns of Finnish folk-song (though he never quoted actual folk-tunes) and the rhythmic imprint of its verse, and to blend these elements with the contemporary musical idioms of Bruckner, Liszt and Tchaikovsky.

Sibelius produced his first major works in the 1890s, and in July 1900 wrote to his wife, Aino, from Germany: ‘I can win a place, I believe, with my music. No, I don’t believe; I know I can’. Having launched his symphonic career, at the turn of the 20th century Sibelius went to create seven of the most important symphonies of the century (and one of its greatest violin concertos) alternating them with other more programmatically ‘Finnish’ works.

There should have been an Eighth Symphony, and correspondence between the composer and conductor Serge Koussevitzky suggests that it was very nearly complete in 1927 when Sibelius burned the score in what his wife called an *auto-da-fé*.

From then on he produced practically no music for the remaining thirty years of his life. Sibelius had always been profoundly ambiguous about his talent – for every effusion about assembling ‘God’s mosaic’, as he described writing the Fifth Symphony, there is a corresponding note of distrust towards his own work and capability. Moreover, he developed alcoholism fairly early in his career, giving it up (temporarily) only when he was discovered to have tumours growing in his throat as a result of drinking and smoking cigars. He outlived all his doctors, dying in 1957 at the age of 91.



Sibelius c.1905, by Paul Hecksher. Source: Finnish Heritage Agency/Wikimedia Commons.

ABOUT SIBELIUS’ VIOLIN CONCERTO

Martin Buzacott writes:

A ‘show-off’ work for soloist was anathema to Sibelius, who increasingly throughout his career sought the purest, most unselfconscious forms of musical expression. And yet for all that aversion to merely ‘gestural’ instrumental effects, Sibelius harboured ambitions of becoming a violin virtuoso (and occasionally appeared as second violin in a string quartet at Helsinki Conservatory). His frustrated ambitions must have been compensated in part by composition in 1903 of his only concerto, the Violin Concerto now acknowledged as one of the greatest ever written in the form.

In this work, written between his second and third symphonies, Sibelius managed to adapt the virtuoso vehicle to his own expressive needs. The concerto is not so much a demonstration of fiendish virtuosity, rather an organic musical whole in which every single hemidemisemiquaver contributes to the overall expressive intent.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

The concerto had been inspired by Willy Burmester, former leader of the Helsinki Orchestra. Burmester had been enquiring as to the concerto's progress and made various offers of technical assistance and advice. In September 1903 Sibelius sent him a short score, to which Burmester replied, 'I can only say one thing: wonderful! Masterly! Only once before have I spoken in such terms to a composer, and that was when Tchaikovsky showed me his concerto.'

Sibelius actually offered the first performance to Viktor Nováček, who on 8 February 1904, premiered the work with Sibelius conducting. It was not a success, despite some favourable reviews. Sibelius set about revising it. The new version was completed in June 1905 and premiered in Berlin by Karel Halíř, with Richard Strauss conducting.

The great Joseph Joachim, on hearing the Berlin premiere, damned it. 'Joachim seems no longer in tune with the spirit of our time,' wrote Sibelius. The press was rather more enthusiastic. Even so, the work didn't really establish itself in the repertoire until the 1930s, when Jascha Heifetz began to perform it. Since that time it has been a yardstick by which violinists are measured.

The opening of the concerto is one of the most unmistakable in all music. Over the murmur of muted violins, the soloist enters immediately with an intense and brooding first subject, soon echoed and developed in the woodwind. This *Allegro moderato* theme is set against a series of fragmentary figures which form a kind of second subject emerging out of the depths of cellos and bassoons. The movement itself doesn't sit well with standard sonata principles, however. The development and recapitulation are actually combined, and the cadenza precedes them both. Yet there is a clear organic structure within the movement.

The mood of the *Adagio* is more restrained, but the characteristic intensity remains, as does the poignancy and sense of regret. After a more agitated middle section, the movement ends with a return of the main thematic material. The finale is a polonaise (a Polish national dance) in all but name, and a bravura showpiece for the soloist. Sibelius noted, 'It must be played with absolute mastery. Fast... but no faster than it can be played perfectly.'

Sibelius' Violin Concerto is scored for 2 each of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons; 4 horns, 2 trumpets and 3 trombones; timpani, strings and violin soloist.

It was premiered on 8 February 1904 by the Helsinki Philharmonic Society, conducted by Sibelius with Victor Nováček as soloist. A revised version was premiered the following year by the Berlin Court Orchestra conducted by Richard Strauss, with the orchestra's concertmaster Karel Halíř as soloist.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra first performed the work in September 1938, with Guila Bustabo as soloist conducted by Joseph Post.

Notable performances led by guest conductors include Alan Loveday/Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt (1953); Ida Haendel/Bernard Heinze (1958); Alfredo Campoli/Malcolm Sargent (1960); Ruggiero Ricci/Jascha Horenstein (1962); Henryk Szeryng/Fritz Rieger (1968); Charmian Gadd/Albert Rosen (1985); Boris Belkin/John Hopkins (1986); Igor Oistrakh/Jean Fournet (1990) and two by Sir Donald Runnicles, with Julian Rachlin (1990) and Frank Peter Zimmermann (2014).

Performances led by our Chief Conductors include Ginette Neveu/Eugene Goossens (1948); Ricardo Odnoposoff/Nicolai Malko (1957); Wilfred Lehmann/Dean Dixon (1964); Zvi Zeitlin/Moshe Atzmon (1970); Donald Hazelwood/Atzmon (1972); Lisa Batiashvilli/David Robertson (2003) and Boris Belkin/Vladimir Ashkenazy (2004).

Our most recent performances were in 2017, with Thomas Søndergård conducting Janine Jansen.



Photo by Lyodoh Kaneko

‘TRUE MUSIC IS A REVELATION, IT’S A MEDICINE’:

DANIEL LOZAKOVICH SPREADS THE GOOD WORD

Swedish violinist Daniel Lozakovich is a young man full of passion for life and music. Ahead of his Australian debut he talks about the transcendent power of art and the ‘otherworldly’ Sibelius Violin Concerto.

Daniel Lozakovich is reaching for eternity.

Despite just turning 24 the Swedish violinist already has built a career most can only dream of: signed to legendary record label Deutsche Grammophon at just 15, performing on Stradivarius violins loaned to him by admirers and travelling the world playing music night after night. These concerts mark his Australian debut performing Sibelius’ mighty Violin Concerto at the Sydney Opera House, where so many dream of playing. But he’s not satisfied with just a stellar career. To quote the great yearner, Henry David Thoreau, this is a young man who wants to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life.

‘For me, my goal is to find the blood of truth in your soul,’ he says, earnestly and sincerely. ‘If it can heal, that’s my main goal. Because music – true music, not some easy music or entertainment – true music is a revelation, it’s a medicine that can really penetrate and refresh the heart and find in some ways an inner truth.

There is something so forthright, so assured in the way that Lozakovich speaks that you feel as though you are speaking with a wise old seer; yet there is a passion and intensity that can only come from a young person eagerly carving out their place in the world. Taken together, it has a mesmerising effect.

Some of Lozakovich’s worldly perspective no doubt comes from his background. He was born in Sweden, though his mother is from Kyrgyzstan and his father is from Belarus; further back there are Russian, Tatar, Uzbek, Ukrainian and Belarusian genes. He says that he feels most closely connected to Kyrgyzstan, a former Soviet republic situated on the old Silk Road, at various stages in history conquered by Turkic nomads and the Mongol Empire before being absorbed into the Russian Empire.

He has visited several times over the last few years – his grandfather, a sculptor, still lives there, as do many cousins – and a faraway

BACKSTAGE NEWS

gaze falls over his face as he tells me about a country most Australians couldn't find on a map.

'It is a place where you can dream,' says Lozakovich. 'It is a sacred place, it is untouched nature. It was really something that changed my life, the way they appreciate music but also the most important things: family, nature, culture.'

In many ways Lozakovich has the ideal job for someone who wants to inspire and connect: he gets to travel around the world, a new city every few days, performing for thousands of people every night. That privilege isn't lost on him.

'I am honestly extremely fortunate to be able to play music,' he says. 'It gives us the strongest impulse of any language to find truth. It is something that connects with us all. Music pulls the strings of the heart like no other art form.'

And rarely is that statement more true than when considering the only violin concerto written by Jean Sibelius. It is a staggering work musically – it is one of the most difficult concertos ever written – but also emotionally, a torrid inner struggle writ large on a vast canvas.

Sibelius was one of the great composers at the turn of the 20th century, an innovator who managed to capture the spirit of his native Finland in his music by composing music inspired by ancient myths and legends. But he suffered from alcoholism for most of his life, a terrible burden whose deleterious physical and especially financial effects he was only too aware of.

His Violin Concerto was completed under much self-inflicted duress. He had spent much of 1903 in Helsinki, celebrating his rising fame by running up enormous bills at restaurants and taverns. Strapped for cash he rushed to finish his concerto so that it could be performed and he could be paid for it; instead of the planned premiere in Berlin by the virtuoso German violinist Willy Burmester, it was first heard in Helsinki, performed by a violin teacher who wasn't equal to its considerable challenges.

Despite this – and after some considerable revisions – the work has found its way to the centre of the repertoire, acknowledged as one of the greatest of all concertos.

'It is one of the greatest achievements of the human spirit by far,' says Lozakovich, almost in awe. 'It was an otherworldly touch he found.'

He continues, 'You can feel there is a lot of pain in Sibelius. I think it's really his strongest confession he ever wrote. His dream was to be a violinist. And I think that's why also he wrote such an otherworldly violin concerto – because his dream didn't happen. So he put all his rage and sadness into that violin concerto.'

Lozakovich imagines the concerto as autobiographical in parts, Sibelius represented by the solo violin fighting against all the forces that keep trying to take him down.

'It's a fight between evil and good,' he argues. 'Through the violin he is trying to fight the evil darkness that is drowning him and drowning his emotions. He tries to save himself with the violin, his ideal instrument.'

But lest you think it is all bleak despair and defeat, in this concerto – as in life – there is always hope.

'There was this great Russian poet, Yesenin, and he was really a tortured soul. He died very young and he was also an alcoholic, but his poems really touch you deeply. And he said one thing that I think relates to Sibelius, especially in this piece: "If the devil scalds you inside, that means angels live inside." It's in some ways very difficult to translate it properly in English, but if it scalds your soul, that's when there's light in it. And you can really feel these things in this concerto.'

With that, Lozakovich brings things full circle to the start of our conversation, and the sanctity of music and the connection between performer and audience.

'This music is a revelation. And that's why it's a responsibility, I think, for any artist who is doing such divine music – it has to be performed at the highest spiritual level. Otherwise I think you will fail not only yourself, you will fail the music and the people who come to hear you. There could be one person that truly wants to be healed. It is the responsibility for each artist to give their all.'

Something tells me we can expect Lozakovich to put every ounce of his formidable energy into what are sure to be memorable concerts.

By Hugh Robertson





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ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT DVOŘÁK

In 1877 Johannes Brahms wrote to his Berlin publisher, Simrock, saying:

I have been receiving a lot of pleasure for several years past from the work of Anton Dvořák of Prague...Dvořák has written all kinds of things, operas (Czech), symphonies, quartets, piano pieces. He is certainly a very talented fellow. And incidentally, poor! I beg you to consider that!

Simrock was duly impressed with the young composer's work and commissioned a set of Slavonic Dances for piano duo. These, as Simrock had expected, were an instant hit, and again in their orchestral version. Simrock made a huge profit, and Dvořák's reputation spread rapidly in Europe, such that by 1879 his 'Slavonic' String Quartet had been premiered by the ensemble led by the great Joseph Joachim, and Hans Richter had commissioned the work we now know as his Sixth Symphony for Berlin.

As Brahms' letter shows, Dvořák was already a prolific composer, and by the time he was 50 Dvořák was at the height of his creativity and fame. In the late 1880s he had travelled to Russia and England, where in 1884 he conducted his works at the Albert Hall, St James's Hall and the Crystal Palace in London (on the back of this his Requiem was composed for the Birmingham Festival); he had been showered with Imperial honours and honorary doctorates, and was about to become the founding head of the new National Conservatory in New York. The works of this period show his life-long love of a 'national' music, while making significant experiments in form and structure, particularly in chamber music.



Dvořák in 1889. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

ABOUT THE SIXTH SYMPHONY

Anthony Cane writes:

Dvořák composed his sixth symphony at the age of 39. Long designated 'Number 1' as the first to be published, this does indeed come first among the four unqualified masterpieces that crowned the Czech composer's symphonic career, culminating in the universally-acclaimed *New World* Symphony.

Five busy years of creative development had followed the composition of Dvořák's Symphony No.5 in 1875, whilst the symphony lay unpublished and unperformed until as late as 1879. But also in 1879, Dvořák made his mark in Vienna. The Philharmonic performed his Third *Slavonic Rhapsody* with such success that Dvořák promised the conductor, Hans Richter, a new symphony for the following season. Thus, with a view to performance in Vienna at Christmastide 1880, the Sixth Symphony was composed between August and October of that year.

The Vienna Philharmonic did not give the scheduled premiere, however, allegedly due to anti-Czech sentiment. It was eventually performed in Prague, under Adolf Čech, on 25 March 1881. Although Hans Richter admired the work and performed it many times, he was never to do so in Vienna.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

Dvořák clearly intended a gesture of homage to his mentor Brahms in composing his new symphony in the same key and in similarly sunny vein as the latter's Second Symphony. Horns at the beginning of both symphonies evoke a sense of arrival in the countryside, and both final movements begin in understated fashion with their main themes seeming to be in search of properly grand orchestral robes.

But Dvořák is gratefully emulating Brahms, not imitating him. He speaks with his own voice. The freshness of his melodies and the richness of his orchestration, with its expressive use of winds and brass, are his own. In raising a popular Czech dance to symphonic status for the first time as his third movement, he ensures that his accents are unmistakably Czech.

In this symphony, the boy from a tiny village downstream from Prague who had struggled in the Czech capital to make his way in music, against family expectations that he would learn German and make a living in the butcher's trade, was entering the symphonic big league. Indeed, with already more than twice as many symphonies under his belt as the professionally more cautious Brahms, Dvořák was well prepared to take on Vienna. Brahms, who had been instrumental in the award of Austrian government scholarships to the impoverished young Dvořák, would have been proud of his protégé's symphonic prowess.

The principal subject of the first movement grows from a simple two-note figure exchanged nonchalantly between upper and lower woodwinds. It quickly blossoms into a lyrical melody, gains energy and momentum, and builds to a resplendent statement, *grandioso*, on the full orchestra. An easygoing horn melody over gaily dancing violins seems to promise a second subject expressive, like the first, of the simple pleasures of the countryside. But it is short-lived. A calmly rising scale springboards the oboes into the disarmingly innocent melody that proves to be the second subject proper. All innocence is later dispelled, however, when the self same second subject brings the sonata-form recapitulation to an end in a statement of immense power, leading immediately into a coda of mounting urgency and rhythmic elation. The entire brass section combines to celebrate the main theme one last time, in the peaceful aftermath of which the second subject suddenly returns and brings the movement quickly and firmly to a close.

In the opening of the slow movement, Dvořák recalls Beethoven at the equivalent point in his Ninth Symphony as, for a few bars, imitative woodwinds doodle reflectively on a tiny three-note phrase. But the long, lyrical string melody that grows out of the tiny phrase is pure Dvořák. This is an *Adagio* of nocturnal bliss. Dvořák alternates his idyllic main theme and its all-pervasive three-note motto with a yearning, increasingly passionate subject of repeatedly falling phrases. A dramatic outburst developed in a central episode from the opening motto figure briefly disturbs the calm. The main theme soaring mellifluously on flute stands out among many delicate and ingenious pieces of instrumentation as the movement moves towards a tranquil close.

It was in keeping with the optimistic mood of the symphony that Dvořák should choose as his scherzo movement an ebullient Czech dance, the furiant, which, following the classic furiant in Smetana's opera *The Bartered Bride*, he had used with great success in his *Slavonic Dances*. In no sense a 'furious' dance, the furiant expresses boldness or defiance through sharply accented rhythms in alternating duple and triple time. Dvořák's central Trio section offers a complete break from the wild exuberance of the dance.

If the furiant was a muscle-flexing display piece for frisky young men, the urge to dance seems to spread to everyone, young and old, in a finale which overflows with high spirits and good humour.

Dvořák's Sixth Symphony is scored for 2 flutes (the second doubling piccolo) and pairs of oboes, clarinets and bassoons; 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba; timpani and strings.

It was premiered in Prague on 25 March 1881, by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Adolf Čech.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra first performed the symphony in November 1968, conducted by Fritz Rieger.

Other notable performances include those by David Measham (1976), Myer Fredman (1980), Guido Ajmone-Marsan (1983), Elgar Howarth (1984) and Richard Gill (2007).

Our most recent performances were in 2019, under Jaime Martín.

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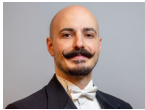
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FROM THE ARCHIVES



1930s – MALCOLM SARGENT

Sir Malcolm Sargent is a hugely significant figure in his native England – co-founder of the London Philharmonic, the first conductor of a full-time Liverpool Philharmonic and chief conductor of the Proms from 1947-1967 – but he also looms large in the history of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Sargent was brought to Australia by the ABC for an extended tour in 1936, and was the Sydney Symphony's guest conductor during the very first year that the Orchestra offered a season of concerts that audiences could subscribe to.

There was even some thought that he might be the Orchestra's first-ever Chief Conductor: his biographer Richard Aldous writes that Sargent was poised to accept a permanent role with the ABC when World War II broke out, and he decided to return home instead.

Nevertheless, and demonstrating the high regard in which he was held in Australia, Sargent would return to Australia for frequent tours throughout his life: his final visit was in 1967, mere months before his death.

While in Sydney in April 1960, Sargent conducted Sibelius' Violin Concerto with Italian-born British violinist Alfredo Campoli as soloist.

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