

MEDIA RELEASE

Raff Wilson appointed Sydney Symphony Orchestra Director of Artistic Planning

18 November 2016

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra is proud to announce the appointment of Raff Wilson to the position of Director of Artistic Planning.

Wilson is currently Director of Artistic Planning at the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and will officially take up his new role in February 2017. He has previously worked for the orchestra, in the role of Artistic Administration Manager, from 2005-10.

SSO Managing Director Rory Jeffes said he was delighted to welcome Wilson back: "With a background rooted in Australia's orchestral and music sectors and now six years as Director of Artistic Planning with the Hong Kong Philharmonic, Raff brings with him international relationships tied to a broad knowledge of our organisation and environment. Together with our Chief Conductor and Artistic Director, David Robertson, he will curate stimulating programs that will continue to excite and inspire our audiences."

According to Wilson: "I have known the SSO for all of my musical life, and am delighted to take up this position. I'm thrilled at the opportunity to work with David Robertson, one of the world's most original and thoughtful conductors, and with the orchestra's superb musicians, as it cements its position as Australia's leading orchestra, both at home and internationally."

Wilson has been Director of Artistic Planning at the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra since December 2010 and has been involved in a number of innovative projects, including the orchestra's concert performances of the *Ring Cycle*. Throughout his career he has worked with the world's leading international artists, conductors and composers. He brings strong connections with performing arts organisations, artists and artist managers around the world.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts, with Honours in French, from the University of Sydney, and is a former singer at a professional level, specialising in historically informed performance, contemporary music, and lieder. A founding chorus member of Pinchgut Opera Company and Cantillation, he has close ties to many Australian music organisations.

Wilson takes over from current SSO Director of Artistic Planning Benjamin Schwartz who recently accepted a similar position at the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks (Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra) in Munich.

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RAFF WILSON - BIOGRAPHY

Born and raised in Sydney, Raff Wilson began his professional life with music publishers such as Boosey & Hawkes and Alfred Publishing. He also worked for ABC Classic FM and Symphony Australia, before joining the Sydney Symphony Orchestra as Artistic Administration Manager. He trained as a singer and has a background in languages.

As Director of Artistic Planning for the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, he has worked on major steps in its artistic evolution; these include the city's first *Ring* Cycle, conducted by Music Director Jaap van Zweden, an active international touring schedule, the commissioning of new works, and renewed education and outreach activity for the Hong Kong community. He has helped establish regional links between the orchestras of East Asia.

A believer in innovative concert performances, Raff produced several unique projects for the SSO, among them *Antarctic Symphony*, which used music by Vaughan Williams and source material from the Scott polar expedition of 1912; David Robertson's *The Colour of Time* project; and also, semi-staged orchestral productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Isaac Nathan's *Don John of Austria* - the first Australian opera.

For further information, please contact:

Bridget Cormack

Head of Communications

Tel: (02) 8215 4648 | Mob: 0404 816 764

Bridget.Cormack@sydneysymphony.com



Principal Partner

