

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs celebrate 80 years of collaboration

Mahler 2: Resurrection Symphony

Sydney Town Hall

27–28 August



For Immediate Release: The Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs will celebrate 80 years of making music together when they return to the magnificent acoustic of the Sydney Town Hall on August 27–28 to perform Mahler’s *Resurrection* Symphony (No.2), conducted by David Robertson.

Robertson, the Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the SSO, says Mahler’s Second Symphony is the perfect vehicle in which to showcase the combined power of the orchestra and choir: “In his *Resurrection* Symphony, Mahler sets up the chorus so that it grows organically out of the orchestral material,” he says. “It’s a perfect blend of everything and the Town Hall is a perfect place in which to perform it.”

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs General Manager Hannah Mason says the organisation is delighted to be celebrating this longstanding and artistically fruitful partnership: “The opportunity to work with some of the world’s best conductors and musicians is one that continues to thrill our singers as it has for the past 80 years. Performing with the SSO offers our choristers the chance to sing works such as Haydn’s *Creation*, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, Mahler’s great choral symphonies and many more symphonic choral works.”

The relationship between the SSO and SPC dates back to September 1936 when the SSO and the SPC’s earlier incarnation, the Hurlstone Park Choral Society, performed Verdi’s Requiem at the Sydney Town Hall under the baton of visiting celebrity conductor Malcolm Sargent.

In 1941 SPC (by then the Hurlstone Choral Society) was contracted with the ABC as the choir of the SSO (it adopted the Sydney Philharmonia name in 1969). Since then the organisations have enjoyed a close relationship, bringing to life choral masterworks for the people of Sydney. More than 230 performers – 111 instrumentalists, two vocal soloists and 122 choristers – will be on stage to perform Mahler’s Second Symphony on August 27–28 at the Sydney Town Hall.

In 1950 the SSO and the Hurlstone Choral Society gave the first Australian performance of Mahler’s Second Symphony at the Sydney Town Hall, with renowned 20th-century conductor Otto Klemperer.

Mahler put everything into his *Resurrection* Symphony – his deepest convictions, his most ambitious ideas and thunderbolts of inspiration. It’s an all-embracing symphony, even the resurrection of the title goes beyond that of Christ to the rebirth of the spirit after death, the resurrection of us all. Through this symphony, Mahler questions why we live and why we suffer. The music ponders things that are dark and grotesque; it celebrates innocence and light. Drawing from the folk songs of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (Youth’s Magic Horn), Mahler suggests the simplicity and faith of youth: “Dear God will give me light, will light me to eternal, blessed life!” And in the sublime finale – wild and solemn – death is overturned: “Thou shalt rise again... Immortal life!”

ENDS

WATCH a video of our Principal Cello Catherine Hewgill practising Mahler’s *Resurrection* Symphony [HERE](#)

CONCERT DETAILS:

MAHLER 2: Resurrection Symphony

Sydney Town Hall

Sat 27 Aug, 8pm

Sun 28 Aug, 2pm

MAHLER Symphony No.2, Resurrection

David Robertson conductor

Kiandra Howarth soprano

Caitlin Hulcup mezzo-soprano

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Tickets: \$39-\$129

Bookings through Sydney Symphony Orchestra 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday on 8215 4600 or select your own seat at: www.sydneysymphony.com

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