

MEDIA RELEASE

David Robertson conducts the Asia-Pacific premiere of new John Adams violin concerto – *Scheherazade.2*

Wed 2 Mar, 6.30pm

Thur 3 Mar, 1.30pm

Fri 4 Mar, 8pm

Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House



22 FEBRUARY 2016: A new violin concerto by celebrated American composer John Adams will have its Asia-Pacific premiere with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director David Robertson next month.

Scheherazade.2 is a dramatic symphony for violin and orchestra and was commissioned by the SSO, with support from Geoff Ainsworth AM and Johanna Featherstone, in conjunction with the New York Philharmonic and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Adams wrote the piece for American-Canadian violinist Leila Josefowicz who will join the SSO as soloist for these concerts at the Sydney Opera House.

Robertson and Josefowicz performed the work last week with the St Louis Symphony: “I’m enormously looking forward to giving the Australian premiere of this new violin concerto by John Adams who is one of our greatest living composers and a long-time collaborator of mine,” Robertson says. “*Scheherazade.2* takes the famous character from *One Thousand and One Nights* and brings her into our present day environment where many women still face tremendous challenges and inequalities in status.

“Violinist Leila Josefowicz will step in to the role of a contemporary Scheherazade in these concerts, which open with Rimsky-Korsakov’s familiar symphonic poem,” he added.

When *Scheherazade.2* had its world premiere with the New York Philharmonic last year, Anthony Tommasini for *The New York Times* said: “Ms. Josefowicz, playing this formidable violin part from

memory, gave a stunning performance, by turns commanding and vulnerable, slashing and sensual. The ovation was tremendous.”

Josefowicz has carved out a career championing works by living composers and performs almost 100 per cent contemporary repertoire. The virtuoso has a longstanding relationship with Adams, whose violin concerto she performed aged 23.

She is a frequent collaborator of several leading composers and works with orchestras and conductors at the highest level around the world. She has been awarded a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship, joining prominent scientists, writers and musicians who have made unique contributions to contemporary life.

Russian composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov took inspiration from *One Thousand and One Nights* for his *Scheherazade*; a kaleidoscopic symphony of fantastic happenings and exotic imagery that will open these concerts. The concertmaster plays the role of Scheherazade herself with wonderful spinning violin solos and the brilliant result has become a much-loved classic of the concert hall.

Scheherazade.2 will feature in the second half of the concerts and is one of several Australian premieres Robertson will perform with the SSO in what will be his third season at the helm of the orchestra.

This week Robertson will give the Australian premiere of *Swing Symphony* with Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Centre Orchestra, before presenting a new realisation of Messiaen's *From the Canyons to the Stars* with stunning projections of the Utah desert by photographer Deborah O'Grady next month.

[WATCH](#) a preview of Leila Josefowicz performing *Scheherazade.2* on the SSO's No.1 destination for news and multimedia, Backstage News+.

ENDS

CONCERT DETAILS

SCHEHERAZADE: Her Story Continues

Wed 2 Mar, 6.30pm

Thur 3 Mar, 1.30pm

Fri 4 Mar, 8pm

Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House

David Robertson conductor

Leila Josefowicz violin

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV Scheherazade

ADAMS Scheherazade.2 - Dramatic Symphony for violin and orchestra

[AP] Australian premiere & SSO co-commission

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

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