

## MEDIA RELEASE

### The Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Taikoz present the world-premiere of a new Australian work

Taikoz and the SSO  
22-24 February  
Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House



**1 February, 2018** – The Sydney Symphony Orchestra (SSO) and Taikoz will give a new work by young Australian composer Lachlan Skipworth its first ever airing this month when they join forces for three concerts at the Sydney Opera House.

Skipworth is the 2017 winner of the Albert H Maggs Composition Award and was commissioned by the SSO, with the support of patron Geoff Stearn, to compose *Breath of Thunder* especially for the SSO and the Japanese percussion ensemble.

The 35-year-old composer says he “believes music making to be an expression of humanity transcending culture, place and time.”

“Composing for Taikoz and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, I forgot such notions as ‘East and West’ and concentrated on finding a singular human expression encompassing the exciting and diverse set of forces at my disposal,” Skipworth says. “The orchestra acts as a mediator between the two, allowing the shakuhachi player’s exhalations to move as waves through the orchestra and intensify into the ominous roar of the Taiko in full flight.”

Taikoz Artistic Director and former SSO Principal Percussionist Ian Cleworth says he is looking

forward to showcasing the taiko alongside the orchestra.

“For the past 20 years I have dedicated myself to growing awareness in Australia of the beautiful art-form known as taiko,” Cleworth says. “A big part of that has been the composition of new works that reflect who we are as contemporary Australian musicians. Having this amazing opportunity to premiere a major work in Lachlan Skipworth’s *Breath of Thunder* with the incredible musicians of the SSO is truly a dream come true!”

Performing with instruments ranging from the odaiko drum to the shakuhachi flute, Taikoz has held concerts across Australia and internationally including in Japan, Paris, Bangkok, Taiwan, Abu Dhabi, India and the United States.

Skipworth initially trained as a clarinettist and spent three years in Japan studying the shakuhachi and its ancient honkyoku solo repertoire. His time abroad has informed much of his compositions since. Skipworth was one of 10 Australian composers who re-worked singer-songwriter Josh Pyke’s music for orchestra in a project with the SSO in 2015.

The performance will be conducted by Gerard Salonga who appeared with the SSO alongside his sister, singer Lea Salonga, in February 2017.

High-res images available [here](#).

**#ENDS#**

Concert details:

**Taikoz and the SSO**

Thu 22 Feb, 6.30pm

Fri 23 Feb, 8pm

Sat 24 Feb, 8pm

Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House

BRITTEN The Prince of the Pagodas: Highlights  
WATANABE Dreams  
LEE & CLEWORTH Cascading Waterfall  
CLEWORTH Waves  
SKIPWORTH Breath of Thunder [Premiere]

**Gerard Salonga** conductor

**Taikoz** taiko ensemble

**Ian Cleworth** Artistic Director

**Riley Lee** shakuhachi

**Kaoru Watanabe** shinobue, taiko

Tickets: \$39-\$112

**Tickets available from the SSO Box Office on (02)**

**8215 4600 or choose your own seat at**

[sydneyphilharmonic.com](http://sydneyphilharmonic.com)

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