MAHLER 10
LOVE AND DEATH

THU 12 MAY 1.30PM
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2011 SEASON

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY
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Sydney Opera House Concert Hall

MAHLER 10:
LOVE AND DEATH

Vladimir Askenazy conductor
Pascal Rogé piano
Ami Rogé piano

MATTHEW HINDSON (born 1968)
Concerto for two pianos

The Two of Us
Love Song

PREMIERE
Commissioned for Pascal and Ami Rogé and the Sydney Symphony by The Hon. Justice Jane Mathews AO.

INTERVAL

GUSTAV MAHLER (1860–1911)
Symphony No.10 in F sharp minor
reconstructed and orchestrated after Mahler’s sketches by Rudolf Barshai (1924–2010)

Andante – Adagio
Scherzo (Schnelle Vierteln [Fast crotchets] –
   Gemächliches [leisurely] Ländler-tempo)
Purgatorio (Allegretto moderato)
Finale (Langsam [Slow] – Allegro moderato –
   Andante – Adagio)

The completed symphony is in five movements, the fourth and fifth are played without pause.

Friday night’s performance will be broadcast live across Australia on ABC Classic FM.

Pre-concert talk by Scott Davie in the Northern Foyer, 45 minutes before each concert. Visit sydneysymphony.com/talk-bios for speaker biographies.

Approximate durations: 25 minutes, 20-minute interval, 80 minutes
The concert will conclude at approximately 3.45pm (Thu), 10.15pm (Fri).
A page from Mahler’s sketches for the fourth movement of his Tenth Symphony. ‘You alone know what this means,’ begins the anguished annotation, intended for his wife Alma. ‘Oh God, farewell…’ As Gordon Kerry explains on page 16, ‘this’ is the distinctive sound of the muffled drum which punctuates the two final movements.
INTRODUCTION

Mahler 10: Love and Death

This concert brings together two of the most powerful forces in the world: love and death. It begins with love, with a brand new work composed at the request of a newly wed couple to celebrate their marriage. But piano concertos aren’t commissioned and written overnight and the story begins in 2006 when Pascal and Ami Rogé met Matthew Hindson at the Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Townsville. The two pianists were attracted to the rhythmic and melodic character of Hindson’s music and what they considered a distinctly Australian influence. Ami says his music inspires her with visions of landscapes. And most important of all, says Pascal, ‘It’s music that speaks very directly to the heart.’ Now, nearly five years later, the idea of a new concerto for two pianos has come to fruition, although it’s hardly the end of the story.

Mahler’s Tenth was the symphony he was working on at the time of his death on 18 May 1911, leaving it tantalisingly incomplete. But between the nearly fully worked out Adagio movement (25 minutes of music) and the numerous sketches for the remaining four movements, Mahler had left enough for scholar-composers to try completing it. More than half a dozen have made the attempt and this leaves orchestras and conductors with a choice to make. In a recent article, Ashkenazy wrote that two years ago he thought we would probably perform Deryck Cooke’s completion, the most famous version. Then, for a time, he considered a striking version by Clinton Carpenter. In the end he settled on the version by Rudolf Barshai, which he admires for its fidelity and sincerity and for its deep affinity with Mahler.

So there is love in Mahler’s Tenth too. There is love in the enormous task of completing a great composer’s symphony. And there is love in the very sketches. Even as Mahler’s heart was breaking over the infidelity of his wife, Alma, it seems he was composing the Tenth Symphony as a love letter to her: ‘To live for you! To die for you!’
Matthew Hindson
Concerto for two pianos

_The Two of Us_
_Love Song_

Pascal Rogé piano
Ami Rogé piano

We are accustomed to thinking of music being the food of love in the classical tradition as much as in the pop world. The Western art music tradition has even assigned a whole century the overarching stylistic descriptor ‘Romantic’. From intimate piano pieces written to impress a love interest to full-blown orchestral works depicting infatuations, seductions and wedding marches, classical music has not shied away from the topic of love.

So it seems the most natural thing for Pascal and Ami Rogé to want to celebrate their marriage by commissioning a double piano concerto especially for them to perform together.

Matthew Hindson was their composer of choice. When they heard Hindson’s Violin Concerto (which had been recorded by their friend Lara St John), Pascal and Ami discovered a composer they describe as combining jazz style

**The Lydian Mode**

At the piano, the Lydian mode is the scale from F to F played entirely using the white keys. Here it is transposed to begin on the note C:

There is only one difference between Lydian mode and a major scale: the 4th note, which is raised a semitone in the Lydian mode. This raised 4th creates the sense of energy and optimism that characterises this major-sounding mode. (‘The Simpsons’ theme, for example, is based on the Lydian mode.)

There are several apps that allow iPhone users to explore and play with modes. _Scales and Modes_ (SmappSoft) gives an introduction that demonstrates how modes are played on keyboard and guitar; _Modus_ offers a delightful way to explore the aural effects of different modes (while including some theoretical background too).

Keynotes

**HINDSON**
**Born Wollongong, 1968**

Matthew Hindson is one of the most-performed and commissioned composers of his generation. His works have been performed by ensembles and orchestras throughout Australia and internationally, and he has been featured at national and international festivals, with orchestras and Musica Viva. His music has been used for dance by such companies as the Birmingham Royal Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Ballett Schinowski and the Sydney Dance Company.

His music often displays influences of popular music styles within a classical music context, and is characterised by directness and immediacy. Its outright virtuosity lends itself to the concerto genre, with works such as his violin concerto and House Music, commissioned by flautist Marina Piccinini. In addition, his innate sense of drama, wit and spontaneous joie de vivre has enabled him to break down barriers and reach new audiences.

Matthew Hindson is an associate professor and chair of the Composition Unit at the Sydney Conservatorium, and Chair of the Music Board of the Australia Council. He was the artistic director of the award-winning Aurora Festival, based in western Sydney (2004–2010), and he is Guest Music Curator for the Campbelltown Arts Centre. In 2006 he was made a member of the Order of Australia for his contributions to music composition and education.
and Australian sensibility. The accessibility of this musical language was exactly what they were looking for in their ‘wedding’ commission.

The concerto that has ensued is a celebration of the mystery of marriage: two becoming one. Explored in a myriad of ways, this motif is even reflected in the structure of the work: one concerto made of two movements.

The first of these movements, *The Two of Us*, starts with the optimism and energy of a new relationship. After a brief orchestral fanfare, the pianos enter together mirroring each other’s gestures, finishing each other’s sentences. The use of tonality is key to the creation of mood: the Lydian mode, with its raised 4th, propels this happy pianistic banter, and the added 2nd in the tonic chord underscores the joy of the two entering the marriage.

The traditional perception of a concerto, essentially the soloist versus the orchestra, is subverted by the high happiness quotient: the ensemble is not opposed to the pianists, but rather acts as a colourist, creating appropriate locations in which the two lovers meet, supporting the
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Sydney Symphony couple and excited to be invited. And if the joyous interplay between the two pianists is the first subject of the work then the second subject is one of sonority: bells. Celebratory peals punctuate both movements, and spotting each new bell motif will be part of the joy of listening to this work.

In the midst of the first chime-like section, a syncopated pattern appears in one piano and is then taken up by the flute, then the oboe, then joined by piccolo, clarinets and trumpets. Finally the pianos get together to play this rhythmic hook. It is vintage Hindson.

These three elements (interplay, bell timbres and the rhythmic hook) are the drivers of the whole first movement, including the delicate duo for the two pianists alone, which stands in for a cadenza. Here in this cadenza the musical materials achieve quiet intimacy before the work spins into an accelerating recapitulation.

Love Song, the second movement, begins with morning-after wooziness. The use of the orchestra is markedly different in this movement: the strings cascade from one harmony to the next while the rhythmic hook from the first movement has been replaced by languid triplets and free-falling sequences of scale-like passages that evoke a distant carillon.

The horn introduces melodic motifs that the pianos will go on to explore and share, yearning 7ths and contented 6ths, all outlined in fluid rhythmic shapes. The Lydian mode is again the tonal reference point for the movement, the slow pace tempering the energy this optimistic mode conveys.

The Piano Plays Bells

From the 19th century, composers have revelled in the capacity of the piano to create a bell-like sonority. From Liszt’s iconic La Campanella (from the Six Paganini Etudes) through Debussy’s Cloches à travers les feuilles (from Images, Book 2) and Ravel’s La Vallée des Cloches (from Miroirs) and into the middle of the 20th century with John Cage’s reimagining of pianistic possibilities through ‘preparation’, the piano has mimicked bells more than any other single instrument. Australian examples are many: Anne Boyd’s Book of the Bells (1981), Julian Yu’s cheeky Jangled Bells (1980) and Peter Sculthorpe’s Between Five Bells (composed for the 2000 Sydney International Piano Competition), to name a few.

...spotting each new bell motif will be part of the joy of listening to this work.
But many ideas from the first movement are reinvented here: the rhythm of the bell motif and its echo, the descending scales and, of course, the complementary and conversational interactions between the two pianists. Even the melodic motifs are anticipated in the earlier movement, albeit in the context of a faster tempo.

Peals of descending chords punctuate the increasingly lushly harmonised melodic statements. Excitement quietly builds prior to the cadenza, this time a true virtuosic display. The pianists show some of their earlier banter before performing an arpeggiated pas de deux, finally melding into a single expression – so much so that at the conclusion of the cadenza the two pianists now play at the same piano.

The work concludes with bells, fanfare rhythms and an unmistakable wedding march.

ELISSA MILNE ©2011

Matthew Hindson’s Concerto for two pianos calls for flute, piccolo, oboe, cor anglais, clarinet, bass clarinet, bassoon and contrabassoon; four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and two percussionists; harp and strings.

The Concerto for two pianos was commissioned for Pascal and Ami Rogé and the Sydney Symphony by The Hon. Justice Jane Mathews AO.

The most recent performance of music by Matthew Hindson in a Sydney Symphony subscription series was in 2008, when the orchestra premiered *Kalkadungu* by Hindson and William Barton. More recently Hindson has been a featured composer in the Education program, and the orchestra played his music at the Edinburgh Festival during the 2010 European Tour.
Gustav Mahler
Symphony No.10 in F sharp minor
reconstructed and orchestrated after Mahler’s sketches by Rudolf Barshai (1924–2010)

Andante – Adagio
Scherzo (Schnelle Vierteln [Fast crotchets] – Gemächliches [leisurely] Ländler-tempo)
Purgatorio (Allegretto moderato)
Finale (Langsam [Slow] – Allegro moderato – Andante – Adagio)

To a sequence of apocalyptic minor chords in the orchestra, a small wooden building, framed by a breathtaking vista of lake and mountains, bursts suddenly into flames. This image is from Ken Russell’s occasionally lurid biopic, Mahler; the music is the first climactic moment of the opening Adagio of Mahler’s epic Tenth Symphony.

Keynotes

MAHLER
Born Kalischt, 1860
Died Vienna, 1911
Mahler is now regarded as one of the greatest symphonists of the late 19th century. But during his life his major career was as a conductor – he was effectively a ‘summer composer’. Mahler believed that a symphony must ‘embrace the world’. His own symphonies are large-scale, requiring huge orchestras and often lasting more than an hour; they cover a tremendous emotional range; and they have sometimes been described as ‘Janus-like’ in the way they blend romantic and modern values, self-obsession and universal expression, idealism and irony. Mahler completed nine numbered symphonies, together with The Song of the Earth and other works for voice and orchestra; he was working on his Tenth Symphony when he died on 18 May 1911.

TENTH SYMPHONY
Mahler left sufficient sketches and musical material for his Tenth Symphony to be completed by others, and in its completed form it has a symmetrical structure of five movements. The first and fifth – each around 25 minutes long – balance each other. The two scherzos – one classical in character, the other more sinister, both around 11 minutes – flank the shorter, central Purgatorio movement. The fourth and fifth movements are played without a pause.
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14 JUNE 8PM
Lang Lang plays Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No.1

www.sydeynsymphony.com/2011/langlang

EVGENY KISSIN

Vladimir Ashkenazy describes Evgeny Kissin as “a born musician and a born great pianist.” Find out why when Kissin plays Chopin, Grieg and Liszt.

PREMIER PARTNER CREDIT SUISSE

15 SEPTEMBER 8PM
Evgeny Kissin in Recital

22 SEPTEMBER 8PM
Evgeny Kissin plays Grieg Piano Concerto in A minor

24 SEPTEMBER 8PM
Evgeny Kissin plays Chopin Piano Concerto No.1

www.sydeynsymphony.com/2011/kissin
The wooden building represents Mahler’s studio by the Wörthersee, where he and his wife Alma spent their summer vacations from 1900 to 1907. There he left aside the pressures of his day job at the Vienna Court Opera and devoted himself to composition. The real studio never burst into flames, but the image of its sudden and catastrophic destruction might symbolise those events crucial to the genesis of the Tenth.

Leonard Bernstein once said that ‘Ours is the century of death, and Mahler is its prophet.’ ‘Death’ was an indispensible part of Romanticism’s furniture, an image of final reintegration with the universe, celebrated by Novalis, Schopenhauer and Wagner. Thus, Mahler’s early funeral marches and Totentänze (dances of death), and the theme of death in such works as the Kindertotenlieder (Songs on the Death of Children); but from 1907 death became a more personal concern. Mahler had been diagnosed at the beginning of that year with heart disease. Then, the Mahlers’ four-year-old daughter Maria Anna died in June; the trauma of this caused Alma Mahler’s mother to suffer heart attack. The Mahlers’ marriage was destabilised, and, in 1910, Mahler’s discovery of his wife’s affair with architect Walter Gropius had a cataclysmic effect.

Mahler left the Tenth Symphony incomplete on his death in 1911. The first two movements exist in draft full score, as does 30 bars of the central Purgatorio. The fourth and fifth movements exist in more or less completed short score – a four-line system with some written indication of the instruments to be used.

The symphony has a symmetrical structure, where the outer movements – each around 25 minutes long – balance each other, as do the scherzos – one Haydnesque, the other more sinister, but both lasting around 11 minutes – that flank the much shorter, central Purgatorio movement. Offsetting the symmetry, the first two movements form the symphony’s Part I, while the latter three form Part II.

Alma Mahler at first refused to publish or circulate the sketch material but eventually asked her son-in-law, Ernst Krenek, to complete the work; Krenek made performing editions of the Adagio and Purgatorio, which were premiered in 1924. Schoenberg and Shostakovich also considered, but decided against, making their own versions. More minor figures braved the hostility of Alma Mahler to do so, but the real turning point came in 1959 when musicologist Deryck Cooke was asked by the BBC...
to write a booklet for the centenary of Mahler’s birth. Cooke made a fair-copy of Mahler’s notoriously untidy sketches, and in doing so discovered that the essence of the symphony was fully realised; he then made a reconstruction that he and colleagues subsequently revised.

Rudolf Barshai conducted a Cooke version in the 1980s but, as Bernd Feuchtner puts it: ‘soon discovered that the dissatisfaction he felt could not be dispelled by a few corrections here and there... The Cooke version remains the ground plan and preparatory work, but the Barshai version (2001) has given the Tenth a new shape which comes a step closer to Mahler’s intentions.’ Barshai’s scoring is often fuller and more emphatic than Cooke’s but, more importantly, allows what Cooke took for mistakes in the harmony to stand as Mahler’s intention; the dissonances he discovers make Mahler’s prophetic relationship to the music of Schoenberg and his followers even clearer.

Alma believed the work to be a love-letter to her: Mahler’s annotations in the final movement’s sketches include such passionate outbursts as ‘To live for you! To die for you!’ and, finally, her nickname, ‘Almschi!!’ Those that appear in earlier movements are rather more cryptic. The earliest title page of the *Purgatorio* reads ‘Purgatorio oder Inferno’ (Purgatory or Hell) with the *oder Inferno* crossed out. Other remarks on the *Purgatorio*’s sketch material include ‘Todesverkündigen’ – a reference to the music in Wagner’s *Die Walküre* where Brünnhilde announces to Siegmund that he will die in battle and be transported to Valhalla; ‘Erbarmen’ (have mercy) – which some scholars link to the anguished cries of the wounded knight Amfortas in *Parsifäi*; Jesus’ words from the cross, ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me’ and finally, ‘Thy will be done’. With these quotations, and its title’s
reference to the specifically Catholic notion of Purgatory, this slender movement bears an emotional and spiritual weight seemingly disproportionate to its size and tone.

The fourth movement’s sketch contains several remarks, including the famous ‘only you know what this means’. ‘This’ is the distinctive sound of the muffled drum that punctuates the two final movements recalling the time that, during the Mahlers’ first visit to New York, they observed from their hotel window the funeral procession of a fireman who had died in action. The remainder of this movement is festooned with various cries: ‘the devil dances with me’, ‘madness, take hold of me, the accursed’, ‘destroy me that I may forget I exist…’, ‘farewell, my lyre.’

The symphony’s formal structure is fascinating, and the thematic relationships between movements give the work an immense unity. The seemingly inconsequential *Purgatorio* provides important thematic material for the following scherzo (a slow waltz-like section) and the finale. In the latter, this includes the sublime flute solo that, like the Bird of Death flute solo in the ‘Resurrection’ Symphony (No.2), presages a vision of peace; by contrast it also informs the more disturbing tuba solo. The opening *Adagio* reaches its climax on a shattering nine-note chord through which comes the piercing cry of a solo trumpet. This gesture is recalled in the finale, though after passing through that realm of pain the music achieves a radiant calm. Mahler, far from wallowing in self-pity, was ready to strike out on new compositional paths having passed safely through a fiery purgatory.

GORDON KERRY ©2011

Rudolf Barshai’s completion of Mahler’s Tenth Symphony calls for four flutes (two doubling piccolo), four oboes (two doubling cor anglais), four clarinets (two doubling E flat clarinet and two doubling bass clarinet) and four bassoons (two doubling contrabassoon); six horns, four trumpets, cornet, euphonium, four trombones and two tubas; timpani and percussion; celesta, guitar and two harps; and a large string section.

This is the Australian premiere of the Barshai completion. The Sydney Symphony first performed the Adagio movement from Mahler’s Tenth Symphony in 1964, conducted by Bernard Heinze, and again in the 1980 Mahler Festival conducted by José Serebrier. (The Boston Symphony Orchestra and Richard Burgin gave what was probably the first Australian performance of the Adagio in Melbourne in 1960.) The Sydney Symphony was the first orchestra in Australia to perform a completion of the symphony, when John Hopkins included it in the 1970 Town Hall Proms. Since then the orchestra has performed the Deryck Cooke completion in concerts conducted by Markus Stenz in 2004.
A Classical

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Musician photography by Brendan Read
GLOSSARY

ADDED 2ND – it’s possible to take a basic three-note chord and enhance or colour its effect on the ear by adding extra notes that don’t belong to the original chord, in just the same way that you might add spices to food. An ‘added 2nd’ is one example of this technique.

ARPEGGIATED – an arpeggio is a musical gesture in which the notes of a chord are ‘spread’, or played one after the other instead of simultaneously. Many arpeggios in succession create an ‘arpeggiated’ texture.

CADENZA – a virtuoso passage, traditionally inserted towards the end of a concerto movement and marking the final ‘cadence’.

INTERVAL – the distance in pitch between two notes, e.g. a 6th or a 7th. Intervals are named according to the number of steps of the musical scale that they cover: a third is an interval of three steps, a sixth six steps, and so on. The first two notes of the Australian national anthem, for example, cover the interval of a fourth.

LÄNDLER – a popular Austrian country dance in triple time. A forerunner of the waltz, it is slower and ‘heavier’ than the Viennese waltz.

MODE – modes are a system of scales founded on mediæval plainchant and predating the major and minor key system, which emerged in the late Renaissance. Unlike major and minor scales, each mode has its own pattern of whole and half scale steps and therefore a distinctive sound and character. Classical composers have often used modes to evoke an ancient or religious mood, but since modes are also common in many traditional and non-Western cultures, their use can also give a folk character to music.

ORCHESTRATION – the way in which an orchestral work employs the different instruments and sections of the ensemble; also known as ‘scoring’.

SCHERZO – literally, a joke; the scherzo as a genre was a creation of Beethoven. For composers such as Mozart and Haydn the third movement of a symphony had typically been a minuet. In Beethoven’s hands it acquired a joking and playful mood (sometimes whimsical and startling) as well as a much faster tempo; later composers such as Mahler and Shostakovich often gave the scherzo a cynical, driven, or even diabolical character – less playful and more disturbing.

SCORE, FULL AND SHORT – when a composer notates ensemble music in a form that shows all the instrumental and vocal parts, vertically aligned, this is called a score. Scores are used by conductors, recording producers, scholars, and anyone interested in following the musical work in its entirety. A short score is a compressed representation of the music useful for sketching ideas – it usually comprises just four staves, and therefore combines parts or omits details.

TRIPLET – a rhythmic gesture, in which three notes are played in the time of two of the same kind. Continuous use of triplets, especially at a fast tempo, can create a ‘skipping’ effect, because each beat is effectively divided into three.

In much of the classical repertoire, movement titles are taken from the Italian words that indicate the tempo and mood. A selection of terms from this program is included here.

Adagio – slow
Allegretto moderato – moderately lively, not so fast as Allegro
Allegro moderato – moderately fast
Allegro pesante – fast, heavily
Andante – at a walking pace

The system of a universal ‘musicians’ Italian’ developed during the baroque period, at a time when Italian music was dominant. It is not always linguistically correct or even capable of direct ‘translation’, but as a lingua franca it is profoundly meaningful to musicians throughout the world. There are also traditions of French and German-speaking composers choosing tempo words and movement titles from their own language.

This glossary is intended only as a quick and easy guide, not as a set of comprehensive and absolute definitions. Most of these terms have many subtle shades of meaning which cannot be included for reasons of space.
Selected Discography

MATTHEW HINDSON

Hindson’s Violin Concerto, which partly inspired the Rogés to commission a concerto from him, has been recorded by Lara St John with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Sarah Ioannides. Also on the disc: Liszt’s Totentanz arranged for violin by Nigel Kennedy and St John, and Corigliano’s Red Violin Suite. ANCALAGON 133

Hindson’s music provides the title track for another recent release, The Metallic Violins, a duo disc recorded by James Cuddeford and Natsuko Yoshimoto and also featuring music by Smalley, Kats-Chernin and Ford among others. TALL POPPIES TP207

Due for release this year by the Sydney Conservatorium of Music is a disc of selected solo and chamber works, including Video Game Dreaming for saxophone quartet, Plastic Jubilation for piano and pre-recorded audio, and Monkey Music for toy piano and cymbal monkey!


MAHLER 10

Naturally, we’d encourage you to build your Mahler symphony collection from our Mahler Odyssey releases as they are released. But if you simply can’t wait for your Mahler symphonies, the Rafael Kubelik set with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra is recommended. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 463 738-2

There is currently one recording of the Barshai completion of Mahler 10 available on CD, recorded by the German Youth Philharmonic Orchestra with Barshai himself conducting. BRILLIANT CLASSICS 94040

The Clinton Carpenter completion, which Ashkenazy considered for a time, has been recorded by Andrew Litton and the Dallas Symphony Orchestra. DELOS 3295

The Carpenter version also finds an advocate in David Zinman and the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra. RCA 76895

Or seek out the Deryck Cooke version in a recording by Daniel Harding with Mahler’s own orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic. DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON 4777347

Broadcast Diary

MAY

Friday 13 May, 8pm
MAHLER 10
See this program for details.
Wednesday 18 May, 8pm
MAHLER 3 (2010)
Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor
Lilli Paasikivi mezzo-soprano
Sydney Philharmonia Choirs
Sydney Children’s Choir
Friday 20 May, 8pm
MAHLER 9
Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor
Steven Osborne piano
Mozart, Mahler
Friday 27 May, 8pm
“RACH 2” (2010)
Mark Wigglesworth conductor
Bernd Glemser piano
Shostakovich, Rachmaninoff, Rossini
Monday 30 May, 8pm
PASCAL & AMI ROGÉ IN RECITAL
Schumann, Brahms, Poulenc, Dukas, Ravel

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This month: Mahler 9 on Friday 20 May
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Vladimir Ashkenazy conductor

In the years since Vladimir Ashkenazy first came to prominence on the world stage in the 1955 Chopin Competition in Warsaw he has built an extraordinary career, not only as one of the most renowned and revered pianists of our times, but as an inspiring artist whose creative life encompasses a vast range of activities.

Conducting has formed the largest part of his music-making for the past 20 years. He has been Chief Conductor of the Czech Philharmonic (1998–2003), and Music Director of the NHK Symphony Orchestra, Tokyo (2004–2007). Since 2009 he has held the position of Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the Sydney Symphony.

Alongside these roles, Vladimir Ashkenazy is also Conductor Laureate of the Philharmonia Orchestra, with whom he has developed landmark projects such as Prokofiev and Shostakovich Under Stalin (a project which he toured and later developed into a TV documentary) and Rachmaninoff Revisited at the Lincoln Center, New York.

He also holds the positions of Music Director of the European Union Youth Orchestra and Conductor Laureate of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra. He maintains strong links with a number of other major orchestras, including the Cleveland Orchestra (where he was formerly Principal Guest Conductor), San Francisco Symphony, and Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin (Chief Conductor and Music Director, 1988–96), as well as making guest appearances with orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic.

Vladimir Ashkenazy continues to devote himself to the piano, building his comprehensive recording catalogue with releases such as the 1999 Grammy award-winning Shostakovich Preludes and Fugues, Rautavaara's Piano Concerto No.3 (which he commissioned), Rachmaninoff transcriptions, Bach’s Wohltemperierte Klavier and Beethoven’s Diabelli Variations. His most recent release is a recording of Bach’s six partitas for keyboard.

A regular visitor to Sydney over many years, he has conducted subscription concerts and composer festivals for the Sydney Symphony, with his five-program Rachmaninoff festival forming a highlight of the 75th Anniversary Season in 2007. Vladimir Ashkenazy’s artistic role with the Sydney Symphony includes collaborations on composer festivals, recording projects and international touring.
For several years Pascal and Ami Rogé have enjoyed playing recitals for four hands/two pianos – partners in music as well as in life. Together, they have travelled the world appearing in prestigious festivals and concert halls, including New York’s Carnegie Hall, the Hong Kong Joy of Music Festival, Australian Festival of Chamber Music in Townsville, Beijing International Piano Festival, Salisbury International Festival, Thaxted Festival, Petworth Festival and Music for Galway, as well as Incontri in Terra di Siena in Tuscany, The Sage Gateshead, London’s Chopin Society and on tour in New Zealand. A tour of Japan saw them perform the premiere of *Ami Suite*, a work for four hands written especially for them by Japanese-American composer Paul Chihara.

They also perform together with orchestra, playing Poulenc’s Concerto for two pianos and Mendelssohn’s Concerto in E major for two pianos, and appearing with orchestras such as the Shanghai Symphony, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Poznan Philharmonic, Metropolitan Orchestra of Lisbon, Het Gelders Orkest, and the Jyväskylä Symphony Orchestra in Finland. Last year they performed Mozart’s Concerto in E flat for two pianos, K365, with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Vasily Petrenko.

Pascal and Ami Rogé recently released *Wedding Cake*, a CD of French repertoire for four hands and two pianos, together with Chihara’s *Ami Suite*.

Hear Pascal and Ami Rogé in recital on Monday 16 May at 7pm at City Recital Hall Angel Place. Their program will include Brahms’s *Sonata* in F minor for two pianos, and transcriptions by the composers of Ravel’s *La Valse* and Dukas’ *Sorcerer’s Apprentice*. 
**Ami Rogé** was born to a Japanese mother and Indonesian father, and began studying the piano as a small child in her native city of Tokyo. She moved with her family to Houston, then to New York where she continued her studies at the Juilliard School and Mannes College.

Her piano teachers have included Shu Hao Pao, Oxana Yablonskaya, Leon Pommers, and Sophia Rosoff. She also studied harpsichord with Arthur Haas. This is her first appearance with the Sydney Symphony.

Born in Paris, **Pascal Rogé** has become one of the best-known interpreters of the French piano repertoire in the world today, admired for his elegant performances of music by Poulenc, Satie, Fauré, Saint-Saëns and Ravel in particular.

He has performed in nearly every major concert hall in the world, and with leading orchestras such as the Philadelphia Orchestra, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, L’Orchestre de Paris, L’Orchestre National de Radio France, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra Amsterdam, NHK Symphony Orchestra Tokyo, Vienna Symphony Orchestra, L’Orchestre de la Suisse Romande and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, as well as all the major London orchestras.

He also appears regularly in the United States and is a frequent guest artist in Australia, New Zealand, Latin America and Japan. For two years he was the Artistic Director of Incontri in Terra di Siena, a summer festival that takes place in Tuscany.

**Pascal Rogé** has won many prestigious awards including two Gramophone Awards, a Grand Prix du Disque and an Edison Award for his interpretations of the Ravel and Saint-Saëns piano concertos. His extensive discography also includes the complete piano works of Poulenc and Ravel, and four albums of Satie, and in 2005 he embarked on his first complete Debussy cycle as part of the Rogé Edition project. He has also recorded a Bartók cycle with the London Symphony Orchestra; the Poulenc piano concertos, *Aubade* and *Concert champêtre* under Charles Dutoit; the Gershwin concertos, *Rhapsody in Blue* and *An American in Paris* with the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra under Bertrand de Billy, and a disc of Mozart concertos with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra.

His previous appearances with the Sydney Symphony include performances of Mozart’s Piano Concerto No.25 (K503) and Ravel’s Piano Concerto in G during the orchestra’s 1996 tour of Japan.
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Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Sydney Symphony 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, where it gives more than 100 performances each year, the Sydney Symphony also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence, most recently in a tour of European summer festivals, including the BBC Proms and the Edinburgh Festival.

The Sydney Symphony’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, Zdenek Mácał, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and, most recently, Gianluigi Gelmetti. The orchestra’s history also boasts collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

The Sydney Symphony's award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, developing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. The Sydney Symphony promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Liza Lim, Lee Bracegirdle and Georges Lentz, and the orchestra’s recording of works by Brett Dean was released on both the BIS and Sydney Symphony Live labels.

Other releases on the Sydney Symphony Live label, established in 2006, include performances with Alexander Lazarev, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Sir Charles Mackerras and Vladimir Ashkenazy. Currently the orchestra is recording the complete Mahler symphonies. The Sydney Symphony has also released recordings with Ashkenazy of Rachmaninoff and Elgar orchestral works on the Exton/Triton labels, and numerous recordings on the ABC Classics label.

This is the third year of Ashkenazy’s tenure as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor.
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