sydney symphony orchestra
David Robertson
The Lowy Chair of
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

MY COUNTRY, MY LIFE

APT MASTER SERIES
Wednesday 3 June 2015
Friday 5 June 2015
Saturday 6 June 2015

APT
Emirates
Principal Partner
SSO Chamber Music
Cocktail Hour
*Riffs: Brahms Fusion*

**MACKEY**
Heavy Light, for electric guitar
Fusion Tune, for electric guitar and cello
*BRAHMS* String Sextet No.2
*Steven Mackey* electric guitar
*Kirsty Hilton* violin • *Emma Jezek* violin
*Tobias Breider* viola • *Amanda Verner* viola
*Umberto Clerici* cello • *Fenella Gill* cello
*Christopher Pidcock* cello

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**Summer Nights**

**HAYDN** Symphony No.31 [Horn Signal]
**BERLIOZ** Les Nuits d’été [Summer Nights]
**SCHUBERT** Symphony No.4 [Tragic]
*David Robertson* conductor
*Katarina Karnéus* mezzo-soprano

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**Tristan und Isolde**
*Opera in the Concert Hall*

**WAGNER** Tristan und Isolde
Sung in German with English surtitles. Performed with two intervals, including a dinner break

*David Robertson* conductor
*Christine Brewer* soprano *(Isolde)*
*Lance Ryan* tenor *(Tristan)*
*Katarina Karnéus* mezzo-soprano *(Brangâne)*
*Stephen Milling* bass *(King Marke)*
*Sydney Philharmonia Choirs*
*S Katy Tucker* video and projection design

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**Tchaikovsky’s Manfred**

**TOVEY** Urban Runway
**BARBER** Violin Concerto
**TCHAIKOVSKY** Manfred Symphony
*Bramwell Tovey* conductor
*Gil Shaham* violin *PICTURED*

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**Bach Concertos**

**JS BACH** Brandenburg Concerto No.6, BWV 1051
**JS BACH** Violin Concerto in A minor, BWV 1041*
**JS BACH** Violin Concerto in E major, BWV 1042*
**JS BACH** Double Violin Concerto in D minor, BWV 1043*
*Gil Shaham* violin-director
*Adele Anthony* violin

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It’s with great delight that we welcome you to tonight’s concert in the APT Master Series, for what promises to be a powerful and evocative performance by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

For this program, the SSO’s chief conductor David Robertson has chosen music by two great Czech composers, Smetana and Dvořák, and he’s matched them to a very moving violin concerto by the American composer Steven Mackey.

All the music tonight is full of inspiration, from personal life events to admiration for a mentor. But most exciting of all is the music of Smetana, inspired by his love for the majestic scenery of his Bohemian homeland. It’s impossible to listen to the music from My Country and not see the great river Vltava or the awe-inspiring rock that towers over Prague, Vyšehrad.

Perhaps you’ll find the music of Smetana (and Dvořák too) sufficiently inspiring to be tempted to see – first-hand – the majestic landscapes and cities of Europe for yourself, taking a luxurious river cruise with APT.

We hope tonight’s performance fires your imagination and we look forward to seeing you at future Master Series concerts during the year.

Geoff McGeary 0AM
APT Company Owner
APT MASTER SERIES
WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE, 8PM
FRIDAY 5 JUNE, 8PM
SATURDAY 6 JUNE, 8PM
...................................................
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL

MY COUNTRY, MY LIFE

David Robertson conductor
Anthony Marwood violin

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841–1904)
Symphony No.7 in D minor, B141 (Op.70)
Allegro maestoso
Poco adagio
Scherzo (Vivace) – Trio (Poco meno mosso)
Finale (Allegro)

INTERVAL

BEDŘICH SMETANA (1824–1884)
Má vlast: Vyšehrad
(My Country: The High Castle)

STEVEN MACKEY (born 1956)
Beautiful Passing – Violin Concerto

SMETANA
Má vlast: Vltava
(My Country: The Moldau)

PRESENTED BY

APT
View of Vyšehrad around 1830. Coloured engraving by Vincenc Morstadt (1802–1875) held in the Museum of the City of Prague.
INTRODUCTION

My Country, My Life

Today, writes Anthony Cane later in this program, Smetana’s My Country is no longer the exclusive property of the Czechs. ‘Exploring universal wellsprings of national sentiment, it transcends the narrow limits of a particular patriotism and becomes an archetypal hymn for love of country.’ A cycle of symphonic poems that began, literally, as representing one composer’s homeland, and which inspired feelings of exhilaration among his countrymen, can speak powerfully to music-lovers everywhere. Without question this is one of the reasons for the general popularity of My Country and especially of the symphonic poem known as Vltava (or The Moldau). Although we’d initially planned to do it differently, it’s the sounds of Vltava that will be in your ears as you leave the concert this evening.

Vltava is music that evokes a simple scenario – the journey of a great river from its sources – and does it to tremendous effect. The newest music on the program, Steven Mackey’s Beautiful Passing, also evokes a simple scenario, inviting us to hear this violin concerto as a metaphor for human experience. In traditional concertos the metaphor tends to be one of competition and collaboration: setting the individual virtuoso against the full orchestra, often in spectacular fashion. But in Beautiful Passing we witness the violin ‘gaining control of its own destiny.’ Yes, there is competition, but also the ability to let go – the result of Mackey bringing ‘his life’ to the musical conception.

Tonight’s concert begins with Dvořák’s Seventh Symphony. Although this is abstract music without a literary title or scenario, the symphony reveals in all sorts of ways the national spirit of his Czech homeland. This is something it shares with Smetana’s music. But, unlike Smetana (who wrote only one symphony and was drawn instead to the symphonic poem), Dvořák was striving to emulate the strength and beauty of the traditional classical structures, and Brahms was the inspiration. ‘Dvořák’s country’ is present – listen for the Czech dance rhythms in the third movement or the broad second theme of the finale – but this symphony is also the creation of a composer who was seeking international recognition.

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The foyer fanfare for this concert is Rebellion’s Rise, composed by Paris Francis (13) of St Catherine’s School, Waverley. This is a youth creativity project by the Sydney Opera House and Artology.
From out of the darkness of a deep tonic pedal, violas and cellos wind their way ominously towards the light, rising to a peremptory three-note tattoo, repeated, each time more insistently, till it ends without hope on a stabbing chord (identifiable for the technically-minded as a diminished seventh).

Thus, in a mere six bars, Dvořák sets the mood at the outset for the most powerful and serious of his nine symphonies. Already, in the darkly groping melody, we have the main subject of his first movement. From this he will go on to derive variants obliquely related to his own Hussite Overture of a few years earlier – one reminiscent of the defiant main theme of the overture, others recalling a melody derived from the 13th-century St Wenceslas plainchant. Although Dvořák draws Dvořák's recognition as a composer was helped along by Brahms, who became a staunch advocate. In 1883 Dvořák heard the premiere of Brahms’s Third Symphony, which stimulated him to create the same strength and beauty in his own Seventh Symphony.

In this symphony Dvořák sets a mood of gloomy power and grandeur, often brooding and cathartic, sometimes tender. This is combined with a classical tautness of construction in a symphony that is surprisingly compact for the 19th century.

Dvořák is speaking to the world but, even so, national colouring slips into the finale as it makes its way to an exultant conclusion.
moral and emotional sustenance from these allusions to Czech history, he speaks not to his countrymen: in this symphony, rather, he makes a determined effort to express himself resoundingly to the world.

It cost the composer greater effort than any of his other symphonies. In December 1884 he wrote to a friend: ‘… wherever I go I have nothing else in mind but [my new symphony], which must be capable of stirring the world, and God grant that it may!’

On one hand, he wished to impress the Philharmonic Society of London (which had commissioned it on his first visit to England in March 1884 and since elected him to honorary membership). On the other, he frankly sought to create a work which emulated the strength and beauty he had admired in the Third Symphony of his great friend and mentor Brahms on its premiere at the end of 1883.

Dvořák keenly sought unqualified commendation from Brahms, for the latter was not only a staunch advocate, but also a stern critic of any carelessness he found in the younger composer’s work. Brahms had told Dvořák he looked forward to the new symphony being ‘quite different’ from its predecessor, No.6 in D.

Dvořák wrestled besides with a spiritual struggle stemming from his failure to win recognition at home as a composer of Czech operas and from his acute artistic need, love of country notwithstanding, to win recognition and success internationally. In the defiant tone of the Seventh Symphony we sense the composer choosing determinedly to strike out on his own. In its gloomy power and grandeur, Karel Hoffmeister [a student, later professor, in the Prague Conservatorium of which Dvořák himself was successively Professor and Director] finds the composer ‘at his loftiest, and yet most remote from his truest and most characteristic self.’ Today’s listener, however, with the benefit of greater distance than Hoffmeister enjoyed, readily recognises in the Seventh a characteristic profile of the composer’s largest self.

The grimness of Dvořák’s main first movement subject and its related ideas is moderated by a gentle, conciliatory second subject introduced by flute and clarinet. In but a few bars, however, seething undercurrents of passion upset its calm.

As the exposition ends with tragic vehemence, the gentle second theme tentatively initiates the development. Again, however, it is overtaken, and dominated, by the main idea. This is one of Dvořák’s shortest development sections, but also one of his tautest – indeed one of his finest. In the
To the **slow movement** Dvořák brings a prayer for serenity and consolation, in the course of which the pent-up anguish of all his doubts and uncertainties bursts forth. It becomes, in Otakar Šourek’s words, ‘the intimate and passionate confession of a soul consumed with longing to be delivered’ – unrestrained in the central section which the horn introduces ‘as through a mist of tears’, to be answered by the clarinet in pathetic tones. Yet from the catharsis of anguish comes an elevated calm which lifts the heart and brings the movement to a tender conclusion.

The **Scherzo** has much of the character of a furiant, with conflicting 3/2 and 3/4 rhythms. Yet, far from being a simple and sunny Czech dance, this **Scherzo** soon becomes dour, its rhythms pounding aggressively. The dreamlike central **Trio** evokes a pastoral scene, with trilling birdsong and distant hunting horns. But the return of the **Scherzo** jolts us back to reality. The movement progresses to an extended coda which raises all sorts of questions and leaves us with a forthright reminder of the real business we are about.

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The finale expresses a poignant cry for help. Searching for direction, we gradually find ourselves swept up in the irresistible propulsion of a surging march. As a sense of real confidence develops, cellos and decorative violins introduce a broad, warm-hearted second subject – the first sign of happiness in the symphony and also, as Šourek suggests, Dvořák’s first use of a melody with national colouring. All now sweeps forward to a solemnly exultant conclusion in the major mode.

The composer personally conducted the first performance of his Seventh Symphony in St James’ Hall, London, on 22 April 1885. (It is actually numbered ‘6’ on the autograph score, presumably because Dvořák didn’t count his first essay in the form, The Bells of Zlonice.) Public and critics gave it a more mixed reaction than its immediately attractive predecessor (No.6 in D), which Dvořák had conducted there the previous year. But this did not dampen his habitual self-confidence as he wrote home: ‘The Symphony was immensely successful, and at the next performance will be a still greater success.’ In fact, the turning point with the Seventh Symphony seems to have been a pair of performances which Hans von Bülow conducted in Berlin in 1889, at which the composer was present. So ecstatic was Dvořák that he pasted a portrait of von Bülow on the title page of the score above an inscription: ‘Slava! – Glory be to you! You brought this work to life!’ That admiration was reciprocated. Bülow is known to have expressed the view that ‘the most important composer for me, apart from Brahms, is Dvořák.’

ANTHONY CANE © 1996

Dvořák’s Seventh Symphony calls for two flutes (one doubling piccolo) and pairs of oboes, clarinets and bassoons; four horns, two trumpets and three trombones; timpani and strings.

The SSO first performed the symphony in a concert in Tamworth in 1950 with conductor Eugene Goossens and in a Sydney subscription concert with Joseph Post the following year. Our most recent performance of the symphony was in Sir Charles Mackerras’s final concerts with the orchestra, in 2007.
Bedřich Smetana

Symphonic poems from *Má vlast* (My Country)

*Vyšehrad* (The High Tower)
*Vltava* (The Moldau)

(The two symphonic poems will frame Steven Mackey’s concerto *Beautiful Passing.*)

Bedřich Smetana began his career as a virtuoso pianist. It was only when a growing popular movement for the establishment of a national theatre in Prague promised real opportunities to foster a sense of national purpose and identity through music that he was able to turn to composing and conducting operas as, he believed, the greatest mission he could undertake for his people. However, given his deep admiration for Liszt, and his gratitude for the older composer’s support in difficult times, it is no cause for wonderment that he also found inspiration in the Lisztian symphonic poem.

It had been while he was trying to establish a name for himself in Sweden between 1856 and 1861 that Smetana gradually turned from writing charming piano pieces in the style of Chopin and Schumann to the neo-Romanticism of Liszt. His three orchestral poems from this period, *Richard III* (1858), *Wallenstein’s Camp* (1859) and *Hakon Jarl* (1861), are on the whole vivid exemplars of Liszt’s approach to the literal representation in music of literary ideas or action.

Even so, Smetana harboured no serious thoughts of the symphonic poem for at least the first decade after his return to Prague. The concept of a monumental symphonic cycle in honour of his homeland grew only slowly in his mind.

The first seed of the idea seems to have come to him one day in 1867. Visiting the forests in southern Bohemia, he came upon the spot where two small rivulets merge to become the fledgling River Otava, and he mentally followed the course of the Otava until it flowed into the Vltava, and onwards to become the greatest river of Bohemia. ‘Within himself,’ as the violinist Moric Anger later recounted, ‘Smetana heard the beginnings of two melodies which intertwine, and expand, and later swell into a mighty musical stream.’

Three years later Smetana wrote of an outing on the Vltava upstream from Prague, to the rapids of St John, a beauty spot now drowned by a dam: ‘At high water I sailed in a boat through the huge waves. On both sides the landscape was grand and beautiful.’

Serious work on a pair of symphonic poems, *Vyšehrad* and *Vltava*, began in September 1874, but by this time Smetana was within a few weeks of facing a musician’s greatest tragedy,
the sudden onset of total deafness. The disaster seemed to spur on his work. When Vyšehrad was first performed, in March 1875, it had to be repeated, and at the premiere of Vltava a month later, a youthful Leoš Janáček was standing near the orchestra: ‘At the end a tumultuous roar fused into the name Smetana!’

When the six poems of My Country were performed as a complete cycle for the first time in 1882 the occasion was one ‘which the Czech musical world counts among its greatest celebrations...never has there been such an exalted mood in any Czech assembly...’ Today, My Country is no longer the exclusive property of the Czechs. Exploring universal wellsprings of national sentiment, it transcends the narrow limits of a particular patriotism and becomes an archetypal hymn of love for country.
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Smetana provided his own brief descriptions of the individual poems making up My Country.

Vyšehrad. The harps of the minstrels evoke the past; a poet sings of the events on Vyšehrad, of glory and splendour, of tournaments and battles, and of eventual decline and ruin. The poem ends on an elegiac note.

As the River Vltava (Moldau in German) approaches Prague, the huge and venerable rock Vyšehrad rises sheer from the water’s edge, dominating the entrance to the city. This was once the proud home of Bohemia’s legendary first dynasty, the Přemyslid kings and princes. The opening harp motif, which evokes the remote and glorious past of Vyšehrad, is also the central theme uniting the cycle. Recurring towards the end of Vltava, it stands not only for the physical manifestation of the ancient rock, or high castle, but also as a symbol of the pride and glory of the nation. Smetana stamps his seal into the opening notes, B flat, E flat (in German B, Es) which represent his own initials.

Vltava. The poem depicts the course of the river, beginning from its first small sources, where two springs, one cold and one warm join into a stream, and flow through forests and meadows, through countryside where festivals are being celebrated; by moonlight a dance of water nymphs; proud castles – mansions and ruins – rise up from nearby cliffs. The Vltava swirls through the Rapids of St John, then flows in a broad stream towards Prague, where Vyšehrad comes into sight. It finally disappears in the distance as it sweeps majestically on to join the Elbe.

The sources of the Vltava are represented by flutes and clarinets respectively; strings introduce the Vltava theme, which recurs throughout the piece, separated by contrasting episodes in the manner of a rondo. Horns and trumpets suggest a forest hunt; from a village festival come the strains of a polka; against delicately shimmering orchestration, water nymphs dance in the moonlight. The Vltava theme returns, growing in confidence, before plunging into the rapids of St John. The stream emerges a powerful river, striking out proudly and powerfully to meet its destiny – Vyšehrad and Prague, and thence dying away into the distance.

ABRIDGED FROM A NOTE © ANTHONY CANE

These tone poems from My Country call for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets and two bassoons; four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; two harps and strings.

The SSO first performed Vltava in 1939 under George Szell, and Vyšehrad in 1971 under Fritz Rieger. Both works were performed (together with Šárka from the same cycle) in 2008 under Tomas Netopil.
Steven Mackey

*Beautiful Passing* – Violin Concerto

Anthony Marwood *violin*

The composer writes...

*Beautiful Passing* is in two halves separated by a violin cadenza. The first half deals with the interaction between the sharply contrasting materials of the violin and the orchestra. The orchestra develops something of a group mentality, a mass hysteria that is both scary and funny. It isn’t so much malevolent as it is mechanical and oblivious to the nuance of the violin. That insensitivity is threatening but like a bull in a china shop, also somewhat funny to observe with enough distance. Gradually, a few members of the orchestra hear the voice of reason and become supportive of the violin. After a cadenza that impresses the orchestra with fluttering delicacy the violin introduces its own version of brutality – crushing triple stops – which command, for the first time a consensus between the orchestra and soloist. In this second part they retain the individuality but conspire toward common goals, unlike the first part.

Keynotes

MACKEY

American composer

Born Frankfurt, 1956

Steven Mackey was born to American parents stationed in Frankfurt, Germany. His first musical passion was playing the electric guitar in rock bands based in northern California. He later discovered concert music and started composing for orchestra, blazing a trail in the 1980s and 90s by including the electric guitar and vernacular influences in his concert music. He regularly performs his own work, including two concertos for electric guitar and numerous solo and chamber works. He is also active as an improviser and performs with his band Big Farm. Mackey is a professor of music at Princeton University – helping to shape the next generation of musicians, he teaches composition, theory, contemporary music and improvisation. In 2012 the SSO and David Robertson gave the Australian premiere of his piano concerto *Stumble to Grace* with soloist Orli Shaham.
The governing metaphor of the work has to do with the violin gaining control of its own destiny, competing with, commanding and ultimately letting go of the orchestra. This metaphor arises from my experience, during the composition of the piece, watching my mother gain control of her destiny to the point of predicting the day she would let go, predicting the day of her death. Her last words to me were: ‘Please tell everyone I had a beautiful passing.’

STEVEN MACKEY
www.stevenmackey.com

The orchestra for Beautiful Passing calls for two flutes (one doubling piccolo), piccolo, two oboes (one doubling cor anglais), two clarinets (one doubling E flat clarinet), bass clarinet and two bassoons (one doubling contrabassoon); four horns, two trumpets, two trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; harp, piano and strings.

Beautiful Passing was written for violinist Leila Josefowicz and is dedicated to the memory of Elaine E Mackey. It was commissioned by the BBC and the St Louis Symphony. The BBC Philharmonic gave the premiere in October 2008 with Leila Josefowicz and conductor Juraj Valcuha; David Robertson conducted the US premiere the following month, with Josefowicz and the St Louis Symphony. Anthony Marwood gave the Australian premiere in 2011, accompanied by musicians of the Australian National Academy of Music with the composer conducting.

Hear Steven Mackey play electric guitar at the second of the SSO Cocktail Hour concerts, Riffs: Brahms Fusion
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The SSO’s former chief conductor Charles Mackerras had a special affinity for Czech music and spent much of his career advancing this repertoire. You can hear him conducting the London Philharmonic in Dvořák’s Seventh Symphony, together with the Eighth and the Ninth, From the New World.
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SMETANA’S MY COUNTRY
Mackerras also conducts the complete set of tone poems that make up Má vlast (My Country) with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, in a live recording from the 1999 Prague Spring Festival.
SUPRAPHON 3465

MORE MACKEY
For more music by Steven Mackey, we recommend American Grace: Piano Music from Steven Mackey and John Adams, released last year. Orli Shaham plays the solo Sneaky March and Mackey’s piano concerto Stumble to Grace with David Robertson conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic. From John Adams: China Gates and Hallelujah Junction, for which Shaham is joined by pianist Jon Kimura Parker.
CANARY CLASSICS 11

Or look for the monodrama Lonely Motel: Music from Slide with tenor Rinde Eckert, Steven Mackey playing electric guitar and the thrilling contemporary ensemble Eighth Blackbird. It has been described as a work that: ‘spotlights the inner life of a loner going into meltdown. In this case it’s a psychologist holed up in a seedy motel, dealing apparently with the collateral damage of a failed love affair, trying to apply his own professional techniques to himself... and obviously not succeeding.’
CEDILLE RECORDS 128

Or if the energy of virtuoso percussion music is more to your taste, look for It is Time, performed by the group So Percussion. Like the piano concerto Stumble to Grace, the music was inspired by Mackey’s young son Jasper.
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Saturday 6 June, 8pm
MY COUNTRY, MY LIFE
See this program for details.

Tuesday 9 June, 9.30pm
FATHERS AND SONS
Andrew Haveron violin-director
Yelian He cello
JS Bach, CPE Bach, L Mozart, WA Mozart

Saturday 20 June, 1pm
SUMMER NIGHTS
David Robertson conductor
Katarina Karnéus mezzo-soprano
Haydn, Berlioz, Schubert

Sunday 21 June, 7pm
TRISTAN UND ISOLDE
David Robertson conductor
Cast including soprano Christine Brewer and tenor Lance Ryan
Wagner

Monday 29 June, 7pm
TCHAIKOVSKY’S MANFRED
Bramwell Tovey conductor
Gil Shaham violin
Tovey, Barber, Tchaikovsky

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SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA HOUR
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Garrick Ohlsson is the soloist in one of the few recordings of the *original* version of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto No.2. Ashkenazy conducts. SSO 201301

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**Mahler 10 (Barshai completion)** SSO 201202

**Song of the Earth** SSO 201004

From the archives: *Rückert-Lieder, Kindertotenlieder, Das Lied von der Erde* SSO 201204

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David Robertson is a compelling and passionate communicator whose stimulating ideas and music-making have captivated audiences and musicians alike. A consummate musician and masterful programmer, he has forged strong relationships with major orchestras throughout Europe and North America.

He made his Australian debut with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in 2003 and soon became a regular visitor to Sydney, with projects such as The Colour of Time, a conceptual multimedia concert; the Australian premiere of John Adams’ Doctor Atomic Symphony; and concert performances of The Flying Dutchman with video projections. In 2014, his inaugural season as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director, he led the SSO on a seven-city tour of China.

Last year he launched his tenth season as Music Director of the St Louis Symphony. Other titled posts have included Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Music Director of the Orchestre National de Lyon and resident conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. An expert in 20th- and 21st-century music, he has also been Music Director of the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris (where composer and conductor Pierre Boulez was an early supporter). He is also a champion of young musicians, devoting time to working with students and young artists.

David Robertson is a frequent guest with major orchestras and opera houses throughout the word and in recent seasons he has conducted the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and the Philadelphia and Cleveland orchestras, as well as the Berlin Philharmonic, Staatskapelle Dresden, BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra. Last year he conducted the controversial but highly acclaimed Metropolitan Opera premiere of John Adams’ Death of Klinghoffer.

His awards and accolades include Musical America Conductor of the Year (2000), Columbia University’s 2006 Ditson Conductor’s Award, and, with the SLSO, the 2005–06 ASCAP Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming. In 2010 he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and in 2011 a Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

David Robertson was born in Santa Monica, California, and educated at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he studied French horn and composition before turning to conducting. He is married to pianist Orli Shaham.

The position of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director is also supported by Principal Partner Emirates.
London-born Anthony Marwood is renowned both as a soloist and a director, and has collaborated with many of the world’s leading ensembles, conductors and instrumentalists.

In recent seasons he has appeared as a soloist with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra and toured with the Amsterdam Sinfonietta and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra as soloist-director, as well as performing in Australia with his regular recital partner Aleksandar Madžar. He also premiered Samuel Carl Adams’s Violin Concerto in California, performed with clarinettist Martin Fröst and pianist Marc-André Hamelin in Europe and the United States, and made debuts as soloist-director with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Swedish Chamber Orchestra and Tapiola Sinfonietta.

Highlights of the 2014–15 season include a Wigmore Hall residency (incorporating a tango project with accordionist James Crabb), his third tour with the Australian Chamber Orchestra and play-direct debuts with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra and Bern Camerata, as well as a return to Canada for concerts with Les Violons du Roy, of which he was recently appointed Principal Artistic Partner.

His many recordings include violin sonatas by Schumann and Brahms with Aleksandar Madžar, Britten’s Violin Concerto and Double Concerto (violin and viola) with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Ilan Volkov, and Stravinsky’s complete works for violin and piano with Thomas Adès.

Anthony Marwood was named Instrumentalist of the Year by the Royal Philharmonic Society in 2006 and for sixteen years was the violinist of the Florestan Trio. He is co-Artistic Director of the Peasmarsh Chamber Music Festival. He made his debut appearance with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in 2012, performing the Adès violin concerto Concentric Paths.

www.anthonymarwood.com
SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Established in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra 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 SSO also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales. International tours to Europe, Asia and the USA – including three visits to China – have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

The orchestra’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, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013. The orchestra’s history also boasts collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

The SSO’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 orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Lee Bracegirdle, Gordon Kerry, Mary Finsterer, Nigel Westlake and Georges Lentz, and the orchestra’s recordings of music by Brett Dean have been released on both the BIS and SSO Live labels.

Other releases on the SSO Live label, established in 2006, include performances with Alexander Lazarev, Gianluigi Gelmetti, Sir Charles Mackerras, Vladimir Ashkenazy and David Robertson. In 2010–11 the orchestra made concert recordings of the complete Mahler symphonies with Ashkenazy, and has also released recordings of Rachmaninoff and Elgar orchestral works on the Exton/Triton labels, as well as numerous recordings on ABC Classics.

This is the second year of David Robertson’s tenure as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director.
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Umberto Clerici has been *Principal Cello* of the SSO since 2014. He has performed as a soloist with orchestras around the world and served as principal cello at the *Teatro Regio* in Turin in his native Italy before joining the SSO. Umberto’s chair is generously supported by Garry and Shiva Rich. Their son Samuel recently started learning the cello and aspires to join the SSO one day.

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