



sydney symphony orchestra

David Robertson The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

Who Needs a Conductor Anyway?

2018



FAMILY CONCERTS

SUN 11 MAR, 2PM



Principal Partner



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SUNDAY 11 MARCH, 2PM

SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL

Who Needs a Conductor Anyway?

Roger Benedict *conductor*
Simon Tedeschi *piano*
with Andy Dexterity as the Stage Manager
Eva di Cesare *director*

Written by
Simon Tedeschi, Eva di Cesare and Tim McGarry
With special thanks to Monkey Baa Theatre Company

In today's concert you'll hear highlights from...

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Piano Concerto No.1 in B flat minor, Op.23
1st movement (Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso)

Edvard Grieg
Piano Concerto in A minor, Op.16
1st movement (Allegro molto moderato)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Piano Concerto No.19 in F major, K459
1st movement (Allegro)

Ludwig van Beethoven
Piano Concerto No.5 in E flat major, Op.73 (Emperor)
2nd movement (Adagio un poco mosso)

Frédéric Chopin
Piano Concerto No.1 in E minor, Op.11
1st movement (Allegro maestoso)

Mozart
Piano Concerto No.21 in C major, K467
2nd movement (Andante)

Sergei Rachmaninoff
Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op.43
Variation 18 (Andante cantabile)

George Gershwin
Rhapsody in Blue
Finale

The concert will be performed without interval and will conclude at approximately 3pm.

COVER IMAGE: Photo by Loribelle Spirovski

Join us in the Northern Foyer after the concert for our musical Activity Zone for kids!



ABOUT THE MUSIC

So... what is a conductor anyway?

The conductor is a type of musician found in orchestral music, where there are typically anything from 20 to 100 or more musicians performing together. The conductor doesn't play an instrument but instead uses hand gestures and a baton to direct the performance.

The conductor's role has a practical side – directing rehearsals and ensuring that everyone plays together and at the right time – as well as an interpretative side – among other things, taking care of the tempos, phrasing and energy levels in performance.

Orchestral conducting as it is known today took shape in the 19th century with composer-conductors such as Mendelssohn (one of the first to use a baton), Berlioz, Wagner, Richard Strauss and Mahler. In the 18th century, ensemble performances were usually directed or 'conducted' by a lead musician who was also playing an instrument, typically the first violinist or the keyboardist.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

(Russian composer, 1840–1893)

Piano Concerto No.1 in B flat minor, Op.23



Tchaikovsky is famous for his melodic gifts and his dramatic instinct. These qualities came to the fore in his great ballets – *Swan Lake*, *Nutcracker* and *Sleeping Beauty* – but are also present

in his music for the concert hall.

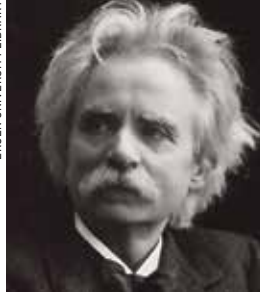
His first piano concerto is one of the most popular of concertos (ABC Classic FM listeners voted it into their top ten a few years ago). One of the reasons is the impressive way it begins, with piano and orchestra at full strength for maximum sonority and excitement. It was first performed, by Hans von Bülow, in Boston in 1875. Nikolai Rubinstein, who had savaged the concerto when Tchaikovsky asked him for advice, must have changed his mind: he conducted the Moscow premiere later that year.

Today we're performing the beginning of the first movement.

Edvard Grieg

(Norwegian composer, 1843–1907)

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op.16



Grieg is best known for his music for the play *Peer Gynt* (including *Morning Mood* and *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, popular with advertisers) and for his Piano Concerto in A minor, which was

championed by the Australian pianist and composer Percy Grainger. The concerto contains no actual folksong material, yet unerringly evokes the spirit of Norway.

On one legendary occasion, Percy Grainger (who was a fitness fanatic) bounded onto the stage during the famous opening drum roll, arriving at the piano just in time to play the flourish with which the solo part begins!

Today we're performing the beginning of the first movement.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(Austrian composer, 1756–1791)

Piano Concerto No.19 in F major, K459

Piano Concerto No.21 in C major, K467



In 1781 Mozart moved from his home town of Salzburg to Vienna, the centre of the musical universe. There he found an audience eager to hear him as a composer *and* as a performer, and in

his many piano concertos the two opportunities were combined. If you'd been there for the first performances you would have seen Mozart conducting his own concertos from the piano.

In a Mozart concerto the orchestra begins by presenting the main themes and then the soloist joins in. The Concerto in C major (K467) has always been popular, but it acquired a boost – and a nickname – in the 1960s when Bo Widerberg adopted it for the soundtrack of *Elvira Madigan*.

(Although, frustratingly, in the film the music often stops just as the piano is about to enter!)

Today we're performing the soloist's first entry from the Concerto in F major (K459) and the slow second movement from the Concerto in C major (K467).

Ludwig van Beethoven

(German composer, 1770–1827)

Piano Concerto No.5 in E flat major, Op.73 (Emperor)



Although Beethoven had played the solos in his first four piano concertos, by the time he composed his fifth concerto (1809) he was too deaf to perform in public and the premiere was eventually given by another pianist. As a result, Beethoven had to write the solo part out in full (previously he would have performed from shorthand sketches), and started a trend for composers writing out solo cadenzas instead of leaving them for the soloist to improvise. Beethoven didn't choose the 'Emperor' nickname – it probably came from a publisher who was impressed by the majestic character of the music. But the slow second movement that we perform today is dreamlike and mysterious.

Frédéric Chopin

(Polish composer, 1810–1849)

Piano Concerto No.1 in E minor, Op.11



Like most of the composers in today's concert, Frédéric Chopin was also a virtuoso concert pianist. But, unlike the others, he focused almost exclusively on composing for solo piano and his two piano concertos are among the few works he wrote for piano and orchestra. His orchestral writing is not as dazzling or richly coloured as that of his contemporaries in the 19th

century, but the singing character and virtuoso brilliance of his piano parts more than compensates.

Today we're performing an excerpt from the first movement.

Sergei Rachmaninoff

(Russian composer, 1873–1943)

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op.43



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After Rachmaninoff left Russia in 1917, he made his living as a touring concert pianist and composed much less. The popular Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini from 1934 is one of the few pieces he composed in

the West and is effectively his last 'concerto'.

The 'Rach Pag' – as musicians call it – is a set of 24 variations on a theme by the 19th-century violin virtuoso, Niccolò Paganini. The gorgeous 18th variation contains one of Rachmaninoff's most famous melodies and he said of it: 'This one is for my agent.'

George Gershwin

(American composer, 1898–1937)

Rhapsody in Blue



In 1924, the American band leader Paul Whiteman asked George Gershwin to write a 'jazz concerto' for a concert called 'An Experiment in New Music'. It was a chance for Gershwin – who was known for his

popular songs and music for Broadway and Hollywood – to present himself as a 'serious' composer of concert music. *Rhapsody in Blue* was the result. The premiere was a great success: the audience was captivated by the work's distinctly American tone, Gershwin's brilliant performance of the solo part, and – of course – Paul Whiteman's masterly conducting of the band!

Today we're performing the final section of the Rhapsody in Blue.

Northern Foyer

Symphony or concerto?
Trivia challenge with the
SSO Young Ambassadors.

Composing Wall

Guest Composer, Peggy Polias

See small pianos and other keyboard
inspired instruments.
Exotic Instruments

Mobile Orchestra
Download the free Perfect Piano app
to play today's concerto samples.

Percussion Club

Play some motifs from today's concert
with Melanie Young.

F A M I L Y C O N C E R T S

Southern Foyer

Capture your conductor selfies at the SSO selfie wall with guest
appearances by Simon Tedeschi and Roger Benedict.



What will we see at the SSO concert?



Going to the SSO with Young Ambassador Hamish Anderson

SSO Young Ambassadors 2018

- Hamish Anderson
- Sarah Bradley
- Liam Brewin Higgins
- Alexander Maltas
- Lachlan Massey
- Bettina Minogue
- Emma Warburton

SSO Learning and Engagement

- Linda Lorenza *Director of Learning & Engagement*
- Rachel McLarin *Emerging Artists Program Manager*
- Amy Walsh *Education Manager*
- Tim Walsh *Education Manager*
- Laura Andrew *Education Officer*
- Brendon Taylor *Production Coordinator*

Learn more about the program at www.sydneyssosymphony.com/young-ambassadors

THE ARTISTS



Roger Benedict *conductor*

Roger Benedict's career as a conductor has been informed and enriched by more than two decades as a principal player in some of the world's leading orchestras, his work as a soloist and chamber musician, and his involvement in orchestral training and development. He is currently Principal Viola of the SSO and Artistic Director of the SSO Fellowship program. Previously he was Principal Viola in the Philharmonia Orchestra in London (1991–2000).

He has conducted the SSO in subscription concerts at the Sydney Opera House, City Recital Hall and in regional centres, as well as for special events. He regularly conducts the SSO's Fellowship ensembles, including concerts at the Sydney Opera House and on tour. He has also collaborated with the Auckland Philharmonia, and many other orchestras throughout Australasia. Heavily involved in nurturing emerging talent, he has coached the European Union Youth Orchestra since 2000, and conducted many youth and young professional orchestras, including the Southbank Sinfonia (London) and UK National Youth Orchestra (Aldeburgh).

Recent engagements include subscription concerts with the Sydney and Adelaide symphony orchestras, as Associate Conductor of the National Youth Orchestra (UK) and the Young Symphonists programs of the Australian Youth Orchestra. In his work with the SSO Fellows, he is admired for his adventurous and imaginative programming and also for his dedication to outreach and community activity.

Did you know that Roger...

- conducted *Carnival of the Animals* on Playschool
- played piano as a boy, but never got as good as Simon because his teacher had amnesia and Roger got away with playing the same piece in every lesson!
- wanted to be a train driver, then an actor, and finally a musician – he's achieved two of those dreams so far...



COLE BENNETTS

Simon Tedeschi *piano*

Simon Tedeschi performed his first Mozart piano concerto in the Sydney Opera House at the age of nine, and at the age of 17 won the ABC Young Performer of the Year. Since then he has become one of Australia's most sought-after classical pianists. In addition to concertos with the Sydney, Melbourne, Queensland, Adelaide, Tasmanian and Christchurch symphony orchestras, he has appeared as a soloist with the orchestras of Colorado, Fort Worth and Illinois, and has performed in major concert halls throughout Europe, North America and Asia.

Recent highlights include tours to China and the UAE with his program Meeting Mozart, and a recording and national tour of Richard Strauss's *Enoch Arden* with actor John Bell, including appearances in the Sydney Opera House's Utzon Music Series, His Majesty's Theatre in Perth, Adelaide Festival Centre and the Queensland Performing Arts Centre.

Earlier this year he released *A Winter's Tale*, a recording of music by Schubert and Schumann with violist Roger Benedict. Other recordings include *Gershwin and Me*, *Gershwin: Take Two and Tender Earth*, as well as Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* and concertos by Grieg, Tchaikovsky and Mozart.

Simon is Artistic Patron of Fine Music 102.5FM and Ambassador for the Australian Children's Music Foundation, Blue Mountains Concert Society, and the Sydney and Ryde eisteddfods.

Did you know that Simon...

- is a trained barista (coffee maker)
- likes scary movies
- has a wife who is a painter
- can't swim
- practises piano in his head while running 5km races

ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA

Sydney Symphony Orchestra

DAVID ROBERTSON The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director
Patron PROFESSOR THE HON. DAME MARIE BASHIR AD CVO

Founded in 1932 by the ABC, the SSO has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the Sydney Opera House, the SSO also performs regularly at City Recital Hall, tours NSW and internationally, and it is well on its way to becoming the premier orchestra of the Asia Pacific region. The SSO's concerts encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, and collaborations with guest artists from all genres, reflecting the orchestra's versatility and diverse appeal.

The SSO's award-winning Learning and Engagement program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music – nurturing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. In addition to Family Concerts in Sydney, activities such as Playerlink and regional schools concerts expand the orchestra's reach beyond



KEITH SAUNDERS

Sydney to inspire students throughout NSW and Australia. The SSO also promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program, and the SSO Live label captures the orchestra's performances in recordings.

www.sydneyssymphony.com

The Musicians

FIRST VIOLINS

Kirsten Williams
Associate Concertmaster
Jenny Booth
Georges Lentz
Alexandra Mitchell
Léone Ziegler
Rollin Zhao†

SECOND VIOLINS

Marina Marsden
Principal
Victoria Bihun
Emma Hayes
Monique Irik
Stan W Kornel
Toby Aant

VIOLAS

Jane Hazelwood
Justine Marsden
Amanda Verner
Justin Julian†

CELLOS

Umberto Clerici
Principal
Fenella Gill
David Wickham
Daniel Pini†

DOUBLE BASS

Hamish Gullick*

FLUTES

Emma Sholl
A/ Principal
Rachel Howie†

OBOES

Diana Doherty
Principal
Eve Osborn†

CLARINETS

Christopher Tingay
Magdalenna Krstevska†

BASSOONS

Fiona McNamara
Alison Wormell†

HORNS

Geoffrey O'Reilly
Principal 3rd
Milen Boubbov*
Aidan Gabriels†
Lee Wadenpfuhl°

TRUMPETS

David Johnson*
Jenna Smith†

TROMBONES

Ronald Prussing
Principal
Colin Burrows*
Amanda Tillett†

TUBA

Andrew Jefferies*

TIMPANI

Sami Butler†

PERCUSSION

Rebecca Lagos
Principal
Joshua Hill*
Chiron Meller*

° = CONTRACT MUSICIAN

* = GUEST MUSICIAN

† = SSO FELLOW

www.sydneyssymphony.com/SSO_musicians

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Learning & Engagement

PHOTO: Keith Saunders



Sydney Symphony Orchestra 2018 Fellows

The Fellowship program receives generous support from the Estate of the late Helen MacDonnell Morgan

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Paul Salteri AM & Sandra Salteri *Violin, Double Bass and Trombone Chairs*
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Anonymous *Oboe Chair*

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sydney symphony orchestra

David Robertson
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

Clocktower Square,
Argyle Street,
The Rocks NSW 2000
GPO Box 4972,
Sydney NSW 2001
Telephone (02) 8215 4644
Box Office (02) 8215 4600
Facsimile (02) 8215 4646
www.sydneyphilharmonicsymphony.com

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Please address all correspondence to the Publications Editor:
Email program.editor@sydneyphilharmonicsymphony.com



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SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

Bennelong Point
GPO Box 4274
Sydney NSW 2001

Principal Partner

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Administration (02) 9250 7111
Box Office (02) 9250 7777
Facsimile (02) 9250 7666
Website sydneyoperahouse.com



SYMPHONY SERVICES INTERNATIONAL

Clocktower Square, Shops 6-9
35 Harrington Street,
The Rocks 2000
Telephone (02) 8215 4666
Facsimile (02) 8215 4669
www.symphonyservicesinternational.net



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**Head Office: Suite A, Level 1, Building 16,
Fox Studios Australia, Park Road North, Moore Park NSW 2021
PO Box 410, Paddington NSW 2021**

Telephone: +61 2 9921 5353 Fax: +61 2 9449 6053
E-mail: admin@playbill.com.au Website: www.playbill.com.au

Chairman & Advertising Director Brian Nebenzahl OAM RFD
Managing Director Michael Nebenzahl
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