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STRAUSS

BORODIN

ADAMS

STRAVINSKY

THE SYDNEY YOUTH ORCHESTRA

Sun 4 December, 2pm

Verbruggen Hall

Sydney Conservatorium of Music

THE
SYDNEY
YOUTH
ORCHESTRA



Welcome to the
ultimate end of
year dance party.

It is a joy to have the marvelous Stanley Dodds, Principal Conductor of the Berlin Symphony Orchestra and one of Australia's most accomplished and celebrated classical music expats, here to conduct this final program for the SYO in 2022.

For this performance, Stanley has selected a sublime and characterful collection of orchestral bangers united by their links to the dancefloor - from the salubrious ballrooms of Vienna to the iconic ballet stages of the Opéra de Paris.

Beginning with the waltz to end all waltzes, we open with Strauss' opulent An der schönen, blauen Donau - The Blue Danube. We will then journey through the charming, folkish Polovstian Dances by Borodin, packed with gusto and just too many iconic tunes to quote. Then, let's all head nod to Adams' The Chairman Dances: Foxtrot for Orchestra, a propulsive and distinctly modern work, hinting at the schmaltz and glamour of the Americas. Finally, prepare yourselves for Stravinsky's masterful Firebird Suite. Spoiler alert: the Infernal Dances arrives with an infamous BANG.

Thank you for your continued patronage and support of Sydney Youth Orchestras. We look forward to seeing you in 2023 at all the fun things we have planned to mark our 50th Birthday. If you can pencil one date, make it Saturday 25 November 2023, 50 years to the day since the SYO's first ever performance, and a momentous milestone to celebrate!

Have a great end to 2022, and now let's boogie!

Casey Green
Head of Artistic Planning

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Sun 4 December, 2pm

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Stanley Dodds, Conductor

REPERTOIRE

STRAUSS

'The Blue Danube' (An der schönen, blauen Donau), op. 314

BORODIN

Polovtsian Dances

ADAMS

*The Chairman Dances:
Foxtrot for Orchestra*

STRAVINSKY

Firebird Suite (1919)

Sydney Youth Orchestras acknowledges the traditional owners of the land which we work, rehearse, gather and perform; the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. We would like to pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and thank them for their rich musical traditions that continue to echo to this day.

The Musicians

Violin 1

Suraj Nagaraj
Julia Lim
Alex Paterson
Nurhan Solbudak
William Carraro
Stephanie Ryan
Rhianna Frahill
Trish Tran
Edmund Ing
Samina Mahmood

Violin 2

Ethan Powell
Sophia Juarez
Natalie Liu
Jackson Boden
Newton Cheang
Lawrence Yuen
Kimberley Santos
Joshua Kok
Sam Silva
Jamie Krockenberger

Viola

Alison Eom
Liaam Rao
Billie Rose Clow
Aleksei Prakhiy
Alice Moon
Asher Tarbox
Caitlin Duncombe
Jessica Teoh
Lucy Dube

Cello

Alisdair Guiney
Karen Cortez
Rory Marshall-McClelland
Charlotte He
Leo Apollonov
Elden Loomes
John Wu
Lucy Blomfield
Bahar Hakimjavadi

Bass

Gideon Dionysius
Ben Andronos
Rochelle Wang

Flute

Jennifer Ridgeway
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Oboe

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For more information on The Sydney Youth Orchestra musicians and principal biographies, visit www.thesyo.com.au/the-orchestra/



CONDUCTOR

Stanley Dodds

Stanley Dodds is the Principal Conductor of the Berlin Symphony Orchestra with ten sold-out concerts each season in the Berliner Philharmonie, including the annual New Year's Day concert with Beethoven's ninth symphony.

Highlights in the current season include a performance and live recording of Martón Illés Violin Concerto with Patricia Kopatschinskaya and the Karajan-Academy Orchestra, and performances with the Zermatt Festival Orchestra. He founded the ZeMu! Ensemble for contemporary music in 2021 and gave the inaugural performances with the group at the Singapore International Arts Festival in June 2022 premiering the multimedia work "The Once and Future". His recording of works by Wolfgang Rihm with musicians of the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra has been nominated in the category "Conductor of the Year" in Germany's 2022 Opus Classic Awards.

Stanley Dodds gave his debut with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in February 2020. Despite the restrictions caused by the pandemic he was able to accept an offer in October to conduct three concerts with the Staatskapelle Halle with works of Beethoven. Previously in September he performed at the

Musikfest in Berlin, conducting musicians of the Berliner Philharmoniker in a concert featuring works of Wolfgang Rihm with the soloists Tabea Zimmermann, Christian Gerhaher, Jörg Widman and Tamara Stefanovich. The program was repeated in December at the Prinzregententheater in Munich as part of the Musica Viva series, where he conducted musicians of the Bayerischen Rundfunk Symphony Orchestra in a live-stream concert and radio broadcast.

When the Berliner Philharmoniker cancelled live performances during the shutdown from March until July 2020 Stanley Dodds created and produced "The Berlin Phil Series", a series of eleven weekly online concerts for the Digital Concert Hall, where members of the Berliner Philharmoniker played and presented thematically conceived programs, complemented with selections from the Digital Concert Hall archive.

A highlight of the 2016 season was the invitation to conduct a concert with the Australian World Orchestra in the Sydney Opera House. Inaugurated in 2011 the orchestra annually brings together Australia's successful classical musicians from around the world, including members of the Berlin Philharmonic and Vienna Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and London Symphony Orchestra, amongst many others. Previous conductors have been Simone Young, Alexander Briger, Zubin Mehta and Sir Simon Rattle.

Past guest conductor appearances include the Hamburger Symphoniker, Sendai Philharmonic, Neubrandenburger Philharmonie, Istanbul State Symphony Orchestra, Beijing Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Canberra Symphony Orchestra, the Orchestre Philharmonique Luxembourg, Jena Philharmonic, Orchestra I Pomeriggi Musicale Milano, ensembles of the Berliner Philharmoniker, the Karajan-Academy Orchestra and the Scharoun Ensemble Berlin. He appears at major Festivals in Salzburg and Baden-Baden, at the Musikfest and MaerzMusik in Berlin, Musica Viva in Munich and the Summer Festival in Mecklenburg Western Pomerania.

Stanley Chia-Ming Dodds was born in Canada, grew up in Australia and as a dual German-Australian citizen is now based in Berlin. He began playing violin and piano in Adelaide at age four, attended the Bruckner Conservatorium and Musik High School in Linz before studying at Lucerne Conservatorium. He continued violin studies at the Karajan Academy of the Berlin Philharmonic before receiving tenure as a violinist in the orchestra in 1994.

He studied conducting in Australia, Switzerland and Germany, his most important mentor being the acclaimed Finnish professor Jorma Panula. Other important influences on his conducting career have been the chief conductors of the Berlin Philharmonic, Claudio Abbado and Sir Simon Rattle.

His repertoire embraces the core symphonic works of the 19th and 20th century and he is a keen proponent of

contemporary music with numerous works premiered under his direction.

He is dedicated to working with youth and amateur orchestras, directing for many years the Berliner Sibelius Orchestra and Schöneberg Symphony Orchestra. He is artistic director of the State Youth Orchestra of Mecklenburg Western Pomerania, the Youth Orchestra Festival in Neubrandenburg and is in charge of the Schools Orchestra Concert and Youth Composition Workshop of the Berlin Philharmonic. On the occasion of the Berliner Philharmoniker's annual 2017 European concert in Pafos he initiated a bi-communal orchestra project, conducting young musicians from the entire island of Cyprus together with members of the Berliner Philharmoniker, in a gesture of the universal language of music.



Polovtsian Dances

ALEXANDER BORODIN (1833-1887)



"It seems to me that in opera, as in sets, there is no place for small forms, trivial detail: everything should be written in bold strokes, clearly, vividly..."

Born in St Petersburg, Alexander Borodin was a member of the famed Russian Five, a group of composers dedicated to creating music which was distinctly Russian in style; including Mily Balakirev, Cesar Cui, Modest Mussorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and Borodin himself. With his main profession as a research chemist and professor taking up the majority of his time (including the founding of a School of Medicine for Women), Borodin dedicated his spare time to composing, performing and conducting music.

With Borodin having worked on his Opera Prince Igor for ten years prior, the work was left incomplete upon the composer's death in 1887. Borodin's colleagues Alexander Glazunov and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov prepared a performance version of the Opera, finishing the work on his behalf; it was finally premiered in 1890. The Polovtsian dances are performed with

chorus during the Opera, and are often performed as a smaller orchestral version without chorus.

The Opera Prince Igor follows the story of Igor Svyatoslavich, who was a 12th century prince of Novgorod-Severskiy (the modern day Novhorod-Siverskiy in Ukraine). Ultimately having ended in Prince Igor's defeat, the Opera follows the Prince's military campaign against the nomadic Polovtsian people. The Polovtsian Dances appear at the end of Act Two; Prince Igor has been taken prisoner by the Polovtsians, and as a prisoner, is entertained by his captors with a series of dances.

The Blue Danube

(An der schönen, blauen Donau), op. 314

JOHANN STRAUSS (1825-1899)



"The devil take the waltz, my only regret is for the coda..."

The son of Johann Strauss I (who composed the famed Radetzky March), Johann Strauss II was no stranger to the Waltz, composing more than 400 dance pieces throughout his life. The Blue Danube was composed in 1866, the same year during which Prussia defeated Austria in the Seven Weeks War. Commissioned by the Vienna Men's Choral Association, Strauss was asked to compose a piece which would lift the spirits of the nation during a difficult time. The original verses were written by Joseph Weyl, poet of the Choral Association. Whilst the choral version of The Blue Danube didn't receive the acclaim Strauss had expected, the composer was soon commissioned to write for the Paris Exhibition. Transforming The Blue Danube into an orchestral version, the piece received immediate success, and over time has earned its place Austria's unofficial national anthem.

Composed in the style of the Viennese Waltz, the piece is in ¾ time, and features the classic accompaniment of a strong downbeat followed by two lighter beats. The Viennese

Waltz finds its roots in a German folk dance, the Ländler, and originated in Austria. Of all the European Waltzes, the Viennese Waltz is quickest in tempo, and features a rotary style layout, with couples rotating clockwise and counter clockwise, in a large circle. The Blue Danube is comprised of five different Waltz melodies. The introduction features the first Waltz melody played by the horn, and accompanied by serene chords in the winds. The five Waltz melodies are then introduced consecutively, before the piece finishes with a three minute coda.

The Chairman Dances

Foxtrot for Orchestra

JOHN ADAMS (B. 1947)



"My roots are profoundly affected by American popular music, jazz, ragtime, swing, rock. I'm not a quoter, nor a musical chameleon... but my personal style does not deny its roots."

The Chairman Dances, premiered in 1987 at the Houston Grand Opera, was composed at the same time as John Adams' Opera Nixon in China. The piece was designed as a separate outtake and commentary to the Opera. Also premiered in 1987, Nixon in China went on to receive both an Emmy Award and a Grammy Award.

As a composer, the music of John Adams is rooted in minimalism, a style of art music which includes the likes of composers Julius Eastman, Ryūichi Sakamoto, Meredith Monk and Steve Reich, amongst many others. The most striking feature of minimalism is the gradual development of music over time, through only minute alterations to compositional devices such as notes, rhythm and instrumentation.

Adams' Opera Nixon in China was inspired by events which occurred fifteen years before the Opera's premiere, a commentary on President Nixon's visit in 1972 to China to bring increased stability to relationships

between the USA, China, and Russia. His wife, Jiang Qing, was known as an ex movie star and key political figure in China's Cultural Revolution.

The plot line of The Chairman Dances begins with Jiang Qing, who has arrived at the presidential banquet in Beijing's Great Hall of the People. After signalling to the orchestra to play, and beginning to dance, she is joined by Chairman Mao and together they dance a Foxtrot, recalling more simple days from the couple's youth.

The Foxtrot, a dance form pioneered by Harry Fox and danced to Ragtime music, is a defining feature of Adams' Chairman Dances. After a driving introduction punctuated by a two-note motif in the winds, a melodic statement in the horn and a sudden release in tempo announces the arrival of the Foxtrot. The music gradually builds in intensity before relaxing into a peaceful soundscape, with shimmering chords and whimsical melodies shared across the orchestra. Following the return of a lively dance section, the final statements of melodic material feature the "winding down" of a gramophone as, one by one, the instruments bow out of the texture. With only percussion left, the music whirls to a quiet stop.

Firebird Suite

(1919 version)

IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882-1971)



"I love ballet and am more interested in it than in anything else. . . . For the only form of scenic art that sets itself, as its cornerstone, the tasks of beauty, and nothing else, is ballet."

The Ballets Russes, founded by Sergei Diaghilev and active during the early 1900s, played a key role in the introduction of Russian culture to Europe. Composed for the 1910 Paris season of the Ballets Russes, composer Igor Stravinsky was commissioned by Diaghilev to write the music for Firebird. With three composers (possibly even a fourth) having consecutively declined or withdrawn from the role, Stravinsky had already sketched part of the score in anticipation of the commission. The ballet was premiered on the 25th June 1910 by the Opéra de Paris, conducted by Gabriel Pierné, and with immediate success in France, Stravinsky would soon go on to compose Petrushka and The Rite of Spring for the Ballet Russes.

The plot of Firebird was conceived by choreographer and dancer Michel Fokine, and artist Alexandre Benois, who drew from two principal sources of Russian fairytales- the story "Koschei the Deathless" and a poem about the Firebird from Yakov Polonsky's "A Winter's Journey". The ballet begins with the

protagonist, Prince Ivan Tsarevich, walking through the garden of the antagonist, Koschei the Immortal. He catches a Firebird, who pleads for her freedom- and upon being freed, she gifts Prince Ivan one of her magic tail feathers. He continues his journey, happening across thirteen princesses who are kept under Koschei's spell, and falls in love with the thirteenth princess, The Beautiful Tsarevna. Using the feather, Prince Ivan summons the Firebird, who aids him in freeing the thirteen princesses, and defeating Koschei.

Stravinsky went on to compose three versions of the ballet as orchestral suites, in 1911, 1919 and 1945. The 1919 version is made up of several movements, the titles and music correlating with the ballet's storyline. The music of the suite opens with the strings playing sul ponticello (close to the bridge), with six movements following the introduction:

Introduction

The Firebird and its dance

The Firebird's variation

The Princesses' Khorovod

Infernal dance of King Kashchei

Berceuse

Finale

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Coming up at SYO

SYO is celebrating its 50th Birthday in 2023.

To mark this tremendous occasion, SYO is marking the impact it has made for our young musicians over 50 years in a bumper year of concerts, a re-envisioned touring program, new ways to reach more musicians than ever before, and in connecting with alumni and our family of supporters.

We are beyond excited, and we invite you to celebrate this special milestone with us.

Stay tuned for further announcements. Our performances, events, and celebrations in 2023 will be once in a lifetime experiences that cannot be missed.

SYO 

THE
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YOUTH
ORCHESTRA



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SYO

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