

Sunday 30th June 1996, 2.30 pm

Strathfield Town Hall

STRATHFIELD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

founded by Emily Finn in 1969

SOLOMON BARD

Conductor

DONALD WOOLFORD

Concertmaster

KIAN LIM

Deputy Concertmaster

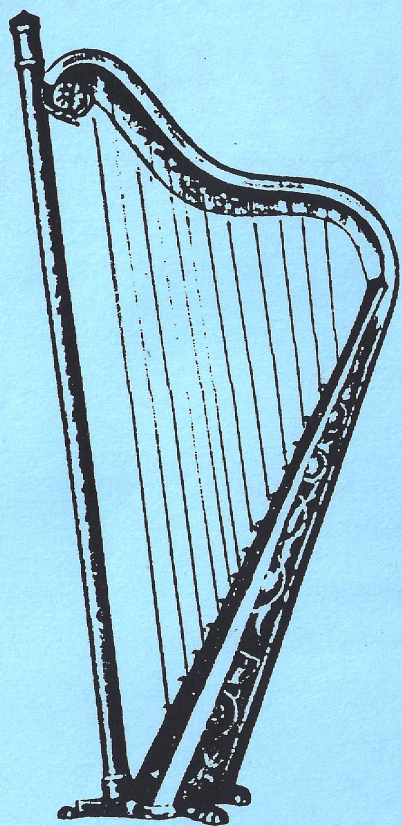
Soloist

VERNA LEE

Harp

ORCHESTRA PATRON

Councillor Eve Dutton, Mayor of Strathfield



PROGRAM

Franz von SUPPÉ
(1819–1895)

Poet and Peasant: Overture

Edvard Hagerup GRIEG
(1843–1907)

Peer Gynt: Suite No. 1
Morning. Death of Åse. Anitra's Dance.
In the Hall of the Mountain King

George Frideric HANDEL
(1685–1759)

Harp Concerto in B flat, Op. 4 No. 6
Andante—Allegro. Larghetto. Allegro

Claude DEBUSSY
(1862–1918)

Dances Sacred and Profane
(soloist: Verna Lee)

Interval

William ALWYN
(1905–1985)

Suite of Scottish Dances

Peter WEBB
(born 1948)

The Christmas Kangaroo
(narrator: Patricia Cash)

Richard RODGERS
(1902–1979)

The Sound of Music: selection

This project has been made possible with assistance from the
New South Wales Government through the Ministry for the Arts.



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NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

Orchestral programming in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries was frequently a matter of assembling a collection of varied pieces, designed to appeal to all tastes. At its best the effect was lively and engaging, but with the decline of the amateur musician (in the truest sense) and the rise of professionalism, concert programming became formalised, assuming the 'overture—concerto—symphony' pattern that it is so familiar to audiences today. It is appropriate, then, that an amateur orchestra revive the old style of programming in a Sunday afternoon concert that can bring pleasure to all.

Franz von Suppé's overture to the comedy *Poet and Peasant* is said to be one of the most popular overtures ever written. Certainly it has been arranged for 59 different combinations of instruments since its composition in 1846. Suppé was the father of Austrian operetta, putting frothy melodies and buoyant waltzes on the stage with a wit that rivals the composers such as Johann Strauss Jnr who followed him. Wildly popular in his own day, Suppé's music experienced a revival in the 1920s when the *Poet and Peasant* overture became the mainstay of cinema pianists.

Edvard Grieg's *Peer Gynt* suites also originated as incidental music for a play. Both Ibsen's play and Grieg's music for it were hugely successful when *Peer Gynt* was first performed in 1875, and Grieg's publishers were soon demanding concert arrangements of the music. 'Morning' is perhaps the best-known of the *Peer Gynt* melodies and, along with 'In the Hall of the Mountain King', has had the dubious honour of being appropriated for television advertising many times. 'Death of Åse' is Peer's lament for his dying mother, while in 'Anitra's Dance' a beautiful Arabian girl seduces Peer before robbing him of his riches.

From the music of pictures and stories we turn to 'absolute' music—the stuff of sonatas and symphonies. Handel's Organ Concerto was originally written for a young virtuoso, William Powell, who played on a harp strung with three rows of strings (now obsolete). It was later published in 1738 as an organ concerto, and has often been performed on this instrument, although its range is too high for most organs of Handel's day. Handel was sympathetic to the delicacy of the harp sound and the orchestral accompaniment is correspondingly muted and gentle with the harp playing on its own most of the time.

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Debussy's *Dances Sacred and Profane* were also composed for an instrument now obsolete: the 'chromatic harp' made by the French firm Pleyel. Pleyel commissioned the *Dances...* in a kind of marketing battle with the rival company Erard, builders of the double-action harp used today. Erard, in turn, commissioned Maurice Ravel to write the equally exquisite *Introduction and Allegro*. Ironically, these were the only works for solo harp that we have from these composers, even though the harp with its delicate rippling quality, featured strongly in their 'impressionistic' orchestral sound. Debussy's two dances, one 'sacred', the other 'secular', are linked together without pause, setting the archaic, ritual sounds of the former against the animated waltz-like rhythms of the latter. Like Handel, Debussy provides a lightly-scored accompaniment of strings, supporting rather than swamping the soloist.

William Alwyn was born in 1905, the year after Debussy composed his *Dances...* for harp. Of his work that he acknowledges—for he disowned everything he wrote before 1939—much is in a neo-classical or Romantic style. His Suite of Scottish dances evokes the rhythms and scales of Scotland but retains his personal stamp in the harmonies and orchestral colour.

We remain in the twentieth century for the last two works while returning to the theatre and drama of the opening numbers. Melbourne-born Peter Webb has devoted the past two years to his composing and the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra's Educational Program after a long career as an orchestral oboist and cor anglais player. Commissioned in 1986, *The Christmas Kangaroo* is based on a children's book of the same name by South Australian author Ian Mudie. It is a simple tale of Mirram, a kangaroo, and her son Joey, in an Australian twist on the Father Christmas theme...

Today's concert concludes with the music of one of the best-loved composers in musical theatre, Richard Rodgers. Collaborating first with Lorenz Hart and later Oscar Hammerstein II, Rodgers created hits such as *Oklahoma!* *The King and I* and *South Pacific*. *The Sound of Music* tells the true story of the effervescent and musical Maria von Trapp with songs like 'Climb Every Mountain', 'My Favourite Things', 'Edelweiss', and 'Do-Re-Mi'.

Program notes by Yvonne Frindle © 1996

ORCHESTRA MANAGER - Margaret Shirley

LIBRARIAN - Jill Hobbs

STAGE MANAGER - Russel Watson

LIBRARY ASSISTANT - Beatrice Ip

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THE ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Donald Woolford *Concertmaster*
Kian Lim *Deputy Concertmaster*
Sheila Myers
Carol Henson
Beatrice Ip
Vanja Lalic
Rosslyn Irvine
Margaret Walsh

VIOLIN II

Dorita Orzaes *
Rohini Thavaravy
Helen Bailey-Cooke
Reyna Sharwood
Peter McCracken
Antonia Canaris
Teresa Rogers
Samuel Tov-Lev
Behram Taleyarkhan

VIOLA

Ted Davis*
Fflur Harvey
Mark Berriman
Antony Harvey
Merv Brophy

CELLO

Haydn Skinner*
Geoff Widmer
Joy Lukunic
Sarah Moberley
Emanuel Webber
Kate Girdwood

DOUBLE BASS

Svetlana Niconishin*
Michael Atkins
Mian Lin

* Principal

FLUTE

Prue Page*
Philip Braithwaite
Anthony Winter (*Picc.*)

OBOE

Margaret Shirley* (and cor anglais)
Eva Griffith

CLARINET

Tony Wheeler*
Joe Davies

BASSOON

Pat Taylor*
Alex Thorburn

FRENCH HORN

Terry Dewhurst*
Elizabeth Dalton
Jill Hobbs
Peter Hogg

TRUMPET

David Young*
Pauline Walshaw

TROMBONE

Lindsay Smartt*
Ross Bliim

BASS TROMBONE

Barrey Pickersgill*

TUBA

Russel Watson

HARP

Verna Lee

TIMPANI & PERCUSSION

Merrilee McNaught*
Joel Pringle

PROFILES

VERNA LEE

Verna Lee is one of Australia's foremost young harpists. She has performed and toured with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Australian Youth Orchestra and Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, as well as touring internationally as a soloist. In her most recent performance she appeared as a soloist with the Australian Youth Orchestra at the Adelaide Festival.

PATRICIA CASH

Patricia Cash was the original presenter of the children's television program 'Emper Room' on Channel 9 in Brisbane. She has appeared in numerous television commercials, radio plays and stage plays. While working with the Bathurst Players, she also won the title of Miss Central West in the Miss Australia Quest. The mother of three children, Patricia is the liason manager for Dr Robert Schuller's television and radio program 'Hour of Power'.

SOLOMON BARD

Solomon Bard's musical education began in north China where, at the age of ten, he commenced violin studies. From the age of fifteen Solomon played regularly with the Harbin Symphony Orchestra, and conducted at the Music Academy where he was studying.

Setting aside music as a career, Solomon pursued medicine, graduating as a medical doctor in 1939. But after World War II he became the conductor of the newly-formed Sino-British Orchestra (later the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra). He relinquished his post in 1953 to become the orchestra's concertmaster and deputy conductor, a post he held until 1976. In 1969 he was guest conductor with the National Philharmonic Orchestra of the Philippines.

Solomon's long-standing interest in Chinese music and Chinese instruments was rewarded by appointment in 1983 as conductor of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, with which he toured Australia, Japan, Korea, and China. He emigrated to Australia in 1993 and was appointed conductor of the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra in December 1994.

STRATHFIELD ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY

PATRON: Councillor Eve Dutton
Mayor of Strathfield

HONORARY AUDITOR:
Mr Bill McBurney

SOCIETY MEMBERS:

Dr N. A. Andersen
Mr R. Bernie
Mr & Mrs D. B. Dunlop
Miss C. Edwards
Mrs M. Edwards
Mr & Mrs G. Hawkshaw
Mr J. B. Linley
Brother McGlade
Miss P. A. McPhillamy

Miss P. J. McPhillamy
Mrs S. Mahableshwarwalla
Mrs J. C. Moroney
Mrs M. Robinson
Mr P. Smith
Mr R. Watson
Mrs J. Widmer

We would like to thank Mrs Widmer for preparing the supper,
as well as Mrs Hawkshaw and other members who have assisted.
We also thank Rohini Thavaravy for organising the raffle and
Yvonne Frindle for preparing the program.

CONCERT DATES FOR 1996

Saturday 14th September, 8 pm

Saturday 30th November, 8 pm

Rehearsals take place every Monday evening at 7.45 pm in the
Strathfield Town Hall. For further information please call
Solomon Bard on 327 3439.



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