



STRATHFIELD  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

*founded by Emily Finn In 1969*

*THE MUSIC OF TRAGEDY*

Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> September 2003, 2.30pm  
Strathfield Town Hall

SOLOMON BARD  
Conductor

PAUL POKORNY  
Concertmaster and Soloist

## PROGRAMME

**ROMEO AND JULIET, OVERTURE-FANTASY**      **PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY**  
(1840-1893)

**CARMEN, SUITE No. 2**      **GEORGES BIZET**  
(1838-1875)  
*Habanera (Carmen's aria)*  
*Nocturne (Michela's aria)*  
*Chanson du Toreador (Escamillo's introduction and aria)*  
*La Garde Montante (The Mounted Guard)*  
*Danse Boheme (Gypsy Dance)*

## INTERVAL

**DANSE MACABRE**      **CAMILLE SAINT-SAENS**  
(1835-1922)  
  
Violin Solo by Paul Pokorny

**SYMPHONY No. 6 "LITTLE C MAJOR"**      **FRANZ P SCHUBERT**  
(1797-1828)  
*Adagio. Allegro*  
*Andante*  
*Scherzo. Presto-Piu Lento*  
*Allegro moderato*

The Strathfield Symphony Orchestra acknowledges with thanks  
the assistance of the Strathfield Municipal Council.



## PROGRAMME NOTES

### **Romeo and Juliet, Overture-Fantasy** **Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky**

Following the usual structure of his symphonic first movements, Tchaikovsky begins this *Fantasy Overture* with an atmospheric introduction marked *Andante non tanto quasi moderato* (not too slow). A gloomy, chorale-like theme played on low clarinets and bassoons represents the character of the priest, Friar Lawrence. This is followed by a more serene, rising motif for woodwind and harp, perhaps suggesting the spiritual fate of the lovers. Soon an urgent, accelerating passage leads to a forceful *Allegro giusto*. A powerful, staccato figure depicting the feud between the Capulets and the Montagues is then developed in a series of dramatic episodes. The tension is resolved by the introduction of the famous themes representing the two lovers; the first, a tender, lyrical melody on the cor anglais and viola, is answered by the second, a gently whispering figure on muted strings.

An insistent, falling motif on the horn swells into an episode for the full orchestra, then dies away softly. Suddenly, a return of the violent feud theme heralds the final section of the work. Here all the previous ideas are cleverly combined, the Friar Lawrence theme and the love music contrasting with the helplessness of individuals overwhelmed by fateful events. The feud music rises to a fierce climax signalling the death of the lovers in the face of this adversity. Their theme soars one final time on high strings over the gloomy chorale figure – and the stirring coda ends with seven dramatic chords.

### **Carmen, Suite No. 2** **Georges Bizet**

This suite, which comprises further orchestral arrangements from the opera, tells the story of Carmen as she is torn between her love for Don José and her attraction to the swaggering hero of the bullfights. The *Smugglers' March* is full of eeriness, as flutes accompanied by pizzicato lower strings softly introduce the theme. Soon the bassoons enter playing away beneath the melody and preserving the atmosphere of stealth. By turns, the music grows darker then brighter but soon the insistent march returns. The *Habanera*, the most famous melody from the suite is based on a Cuban dance song. Under Bizet's hand, however, it is transformed into a lilting and highly seductive tune which masterfully sums up the whole of Carmen's character. By contrast, *Nocturne* is in an altogether different mood. It has a lovely romantic air from its opening on the horns, through its expressive rendition on half-muted strings, to the echoes of the horn at the end.

The *Song of the Toreador* opens in a belligerent mood, the bullfighter himself being represented by the horn. Eventually, the music takes up the theme from *The Toreadors* and, after the full orchestra has joined in, concludes with a rousing climax. The *Changing of the Guard* is announced by a bugle call after which two flutes take up a jaunty little march. They are joined by an occasional flourish on the cornet and accompanied here and there by pizzicato strings before brass and triangle join in. As the march fills out there is much delightful interplay between the two flutes and the orchestra before the march quietly fades away into the distance. In the *Bohemian Dance*, Bizet uses the idioms of Spanish gypsy music to create this exotic and spirited dance. Here the flute and piccolo pitched in intervals of thirds race and whirl above a background of pizzicato strings and harp, which gives the illusion of accompanying guitar chords. After this the brass takes up the melody and the dance progresses in a wild, fast and frenzied pace, before coming to its abrupt conclusion.

## PROGRAMME NOTES

### *Danse Macabre* **Camille Saint-Saens**

*Danse Macabre* (Dance of Death) is one of Saint-Saens' most celebrated symphonic poems in which he takes a traditional story and imposes upon it great depth of feeling by masterly use of solo instruments and the full orchestra. Saint-Saens' composition was originally meant to be a musical interpretation of a contemporary French poem of the same name (see below), which told of Death playing his fiddle in a wintry churchyard while skeletons of long-dead mortals rose up and danced to his ghostly tune. The work begins with slow, deliberate single notes announcing the stroke of midnight, and the macabre effect is created almost immediately by a slithering waltz on solo violin. The swirling melody gathers pace as all the instruments combine to produce the effect of Death triumphant over mortals he has claimed. Then suddenly, an oboe imitating the cock's crow at dawn, heralds the onset of daylight. The skeletons fade away back to their graves as Death recognises that his moment is past. When French audiences first heard *Danse Macabre* in 1875, they did not appreciate Saint-Saens' innovations and greeted the piece with such a barrage of noisy disapproval that his elderly mother fainted with shock. Happily, it is now regarded as one of his most popular works!

### **Danse Macabre by Henri Cazalis (1840 – 1909)**

Zig et zig et zag, la mort cri cadence  
Frappant une tombe avec son talon,  
La mort à minuit joue un air de danse,  
Zig et zig et zag, sur son violon.

Le vent d'hiver souffle, et la nuit est sombre,  
Des gémissements sortent des tilleuls;  
Les squelettes blancs vont à travers l'ombre  
Courant et sautant sous leurs grands linceuls,

Zig et zig et zag, chacun se trémousse,  
On entend claquer les os des danseurs,  
Un couple lasseif s'assoit sur la mousse  
Comme pour goûter d'anciennes douceurs.

Zig et zig et zag, la mort continue  
De racler sans fin son aigre instrument.  
Un voile est tombé! La danseuse est nue!  
Son danseur la serre amoureuxment.

La dame est, dit-on, marquise ou baronne.  
Et le vert galant un pauvre charron -  
Horreur! Et voilà qu'elle s'abandonne  
Comme si le rustre était un baron!

Zig et zig et zag, quelle sarabande!  
Quels cercles de morts se donnant la main!  
Zig et zig et zag, on voit dans la bande  
Le roi gambader auprès du vilain!

Mais psit! tout à coup on quitte la ronce,  
On se pousse, on fuit, le coq a chanté  
Oh! La belle nuit pour le pauvre monde!  
Et vive la mort et l'égalité!

[www.recmusic.org/lieder/1/lahor/danse.macabre.html](http://www.recmusic.org/lieder/1/lahor/danse.macabre.html)

## PROGRAMME NOTES

### *Symphony No. 6 "Little C Major"* **Franz P Schubert**

Franz Schubert composed, at different periods in his career, two symphonies in the key of C major, works that are distinguished from each other by the somewhat unsatisfactory designations "Little" and "Great." (The latter piece is far better known, being not only Schubert's most impressive orchestral composition but one of the outstanding works of the symphonic literature.) Schubert began writing the "Little" C Major Symphony in October 1817 and completed it in February of the following year, not long after his twenty-first birthday. This work offers the sort of winsome melodies and rich harmonic palette for which Schubert's music is treasured, but something else as well: a surprisingly Italian sense of melodic buoyancy and instrumental colour, particularly in its use of the woodwinds. Schubert's preoccupation with Rossini in the winter of 1817 evidently spilled over into the symphony, which bears the Italian composer's influence as much as that of Schubert's more usual model, Beethoven. The slow introduction to the first movement recalls the latter composer—specifically, the corresponding portion of Beethoven's First Symphony—in its surprising turns of harmony. In the Allegro that follows, however, the insouciant character of the two principal themes bears the impress of Italian opera music. Interestingly, it is neither of these subjects but a slender third idea composed of falling scale figures that Schubert elects to develop during the central portion of the movement. After a reprise of the main themes, the movement concludes with a coda in accelerated tempo, another Rossinian touch.

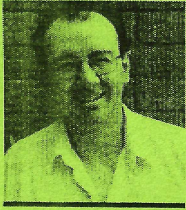
The symphony's inner movements are, as one might expect, a lyrical Andante followed by a scherzo, the latter enlivened by off-beat accents and sudden forte outbursts very much in the manner of Beethoven's symphonic scherzos. With the opening theme of the finale, an effervescent and utterly sunny melody, Schubert once more seems to bow in the direction of Rossini, but the dotted rhythms heard so insistently later are again reminiscent of Beethoven.

#### Programme notes supplied by:

The Classical Collection, 1993 (Orbis Publishing Ltd)  
The Reader's Digest "Favourites from the Classics" (Reader's Digest Australia Pty Ltd)  
Reader's Digest Services Pty Ltd  
<http://www.berkeleysymphony.org/encyclopedia/schubert.html>

## PROFILES

### PAUL POKORNY, CONCERTMASTER AND SOLOIST



Paul Pokorny has joined the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra as concertmaster for 2003, on leave from the Ku-ring-gai Philharmonic Orchestra, where he has been co-concertmaster now for many years. An experienced freelance violinist, with extensive orchestral and chamber experience, Paul also plays occasionally with a number of other orchestras, including the Bourbaki Ensemble and the Garrison Ensemble, having also played in the former Northern Chamber Orchestra and the Hunter Orchestra. He has been concertmaster of the Encore Kammerorchester, the Lane Cove Symphony and the Warringah Symphony Orchestras. Paul has

also led many orchestras in musical theatre, playing for such musical societies as Chatswood, Warringah, Lyric Theatre, Forestville and Rockdale. Paul is also the first violinist with the Opus 4 String Quartet.

### SOLOMON BARD, CONDUCTOR



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 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 to the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, with which he toured Australia, Japan, Korea and China. He moved to Australia in 1993 and was appointed conductor of the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra in December 1994.

### THE ORCHESTRA

In the 1960's, Miss Emily Finn, a well-known teacher in Strathfield, saw the need for an amateur orchestra in the area. She refused to listen to doubters, and with the assistance of Strathfield Council, The Strathfield Symphony Orchestra was formed in 1969, the first performance under the baton of high school teacher, Richard Gill, being performed on 28 June 1969. Over the years many talented young musicians were given the opportunity to play with the Orchestra, some of them for the first time. The youngest was 9-year-old violinist Kim Marshall. Others who are today well-known artists include Jane Rutter (flautist); Simon Tedeschi (piano); Kathryn Lambert (piano); Natalie Chee (violin); William Chen (piano); and Marilyn Meier (piano). The Orchestra is now in its 32nd year of music making in the Strathfield area, an achievement for any amateur orchestra. It keeps going because of the support from Strathfield Council and its many subscribers and players.

## ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

### *Violin I*

Paul Pokorny\*  
Volf Frishling  
Carol Henson  
Belisario Hernandez  
Marie Hodsdon  
Beatrice Ip  
Lisa Lebedev  
Vincent Leonard  
Dorita Orzaes  
Samuel Tov-Lev

### *Violin II*

Laura Jamieson  
Judith Baker  
Clare Ryan  
Danny Shaloub  
Joseph Singles  
Sara Stevens  
Rohini Thavaravy  
Behram Taleyarkhan

### *Viola*

Fflur Harvey\*  
Ted Davis  
Chris Elenor  
Julia Pokorny\*

### *Cello*

Roger Barker\*  
Rowena Cseh  
Gina Kim  
Haydn Skinner  
Geoff Widmer  
Joe Whitcombe

### *Double bass*

Manfred Schoen†  
Nick Lebedev

### *Flute*

Prue Page\*  
Bruce Lane

### *Piccolo*

Prue Page  
Bruce Lane

### *Oboe*

Merryn Horrocks\*  
Margaret Shirley

### *Cor Anglais*

Margaret Shirley

### *Clarinet*

Mami Iwashita\*  
Joe Davies

### *Bassoon*

Liz Cruse\*  
Alex Thorburn

### *French horn*

Cameron Grant\*  
Ron Clarke  
Terry Dewhurst  
Peter Hogg

### *Trumpet*

David Young\*  
Malcolm Boyd  
Daryl Taylor

### *Trombone*

Ross Bliim\*  
Lindsay Smart†

### *Bass trombone*

Brian Sedgwick

### *Timpani*

Tim Brigden†

### *Percussion*

Andrew Brown

### *Harp*

Helen Boyd†

\* Denotes Principal  
† Denotes Freelance  
‡ Denotes Guest

## ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

### FRIENDS OF STRATHFIELD SYMPHONY

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Councillor John Abi-Saab  
Mayor of Strathfield

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Mrs S Myers\*  
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Mr R Watson\*  
Mr R A Knight

\* Life Member

We wish to thank Teresa Rogers for preparing this programme.



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