



STRATHFIELD  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

*founded by Emily Finn In 1969*

Saturday, 29 November 2003 , 8.00pm  
Strathfield Town Hall

SOLOMON BARD  
Conductor

PAUL POKORNY  
Concertmaster

## PROGRAMME

### OBERON, OVERTURE

**CARL MARIA VON WEBER**  
(1786-1826)

### SWAN LAKE SUITE

Scene  
Valse  
Danses des cygnes  
Scene  
Danse hongroise (Czardas)

**PETR ILLYICH TCHAIKOVSKY**  
(1840-1893)

Soloists : Paul Pokorny (violin) ; Haydn Skinner (cello) ; Helen Boyd (harp)

### ENERGY II

**CAROLINE SZETO**

## INTERVAL

### VALSE TRISTE

**JEAN SIBELIUS**  
(1865-1957)

### SYMPHONY NO 4 IN D MINOR

Ziemlich langsam, Lebhaft  
Romanze  
Scherzo  
Langsam. Lebhaft

**ROBERT SCHUMANN**  
(1810-1856)

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



## PROGRAMME NOTES

### *Oberon, Overture*

#### *Carl Maria von Weber*

Some of the characters in the opera are the same as in Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but the story is different.

The overture opens softly with Oberon's magical three-note horn call answering phrases on muted strings, fairy-like cascades of notes on the woodwind and an equally hushed pre-echo of the opera's resounding triumphal march. A sudden loud chord by the full orchestra breaks the spell of this enchanting slow introduction and launches the rest of the overture. The pace temporarily slackens with a return of the horn call followed by the theme of an important aria from the opera heard first on solo clarinet, then taken up and beautifully developed by the violins.

In a stormy central development section, fragments of melody are restlessly tossed about. Finally, the recapitulation ends with the extended main theme singing out on the violins, with brass and woodwind in glorious support.

### *Swan Lake Suite*

#### *Petr Illyich Tchaikovsky*

Set in medieval Germany, the ballet opens with Prince Siegfried's coming-of-age party where his mother insists he must choose a bride at the ball the next evening. Later that night, Siegfried sees a flight of swans against the setting sun. Odette appears and tells him she and her friends have been bewitched by the evil sorcerer, Von Rothbart, and must live as swans by day. She explains that only one prepared to die for his love can break the curse.

The opening scene to this selection from *Swan Lake* illustrates Tchaikovsky's evocative scene-painting. The shimmering violins and harp glissandos suggest rippling lake-water. A plaintive oboe introduces the main melody and the sense of tragedy is heightened by the dramatic entry of the horns representing the evil Von Rothbart.

The Waltz that follows is lively and melodic but is soon interrupted by orchestral bursts. In contrast, the secondary theme enters with a lighter, humorous touch with a solo trumpet playing in an expressive 'cabaret' style.

The Dance of the Swans is an elegant and sprightly sequence that dispels any sense of tragedy and foreboding, providing a necessary break from the more emotive passages that have gone before.

### *Energy II*

#### *Caroline Szeto*

The title of the orchestral work *Energy II* (1994) is a reference to *Energy* (1990), which has had numerous performances by both professional and amateur orchestras. The two works are not related, although *Energy II* is intended to continue the energetic and festive character of *Energy*.

The work begins with tutti brass chords accompanied by string and woodwind figurations. The opening bars provide the basis for the harmony, melody and rhythm of the entire work. The harmony of *Energy II* is based on four notes: two pairs of tones alluding to the five notes of the pentatonic scale so prevalent in Chinese music, and thus producing an Eastern-Western effect.

## PROGRAMME NOTES

### *Valse Triste* Jean Sibelius

*Valse Triste* (1903) was Sibelius' most popular successful work during his lifetime. It is taken from incidental music to a play called *Kuolema* ("Death"), written by Sibelius' brother-in-law Arvid Järnefelt. The two main musical ideas (a slow, sombre waltz and a wilder, happier one) alternate in direct correlation with the stage action. In the opening scene, the central character, Paavali, is seen by his dying mother's bedside. She tells him of a dream in which she has gone to a ball. Later, while Paavali is sleeping, the mother awakes and beckons to a crowd of invisible guests – the waltz melody arrives as if from a distance. In a dream, she mingles with the dancers for a while. Later, she is exhausted and sinks to the couch (bed). Seeing whom she believes to be her dead husband, she rouses herself one final time as the ball is brought to a feverish climax. At the climax, everything suddenly dissolves from the dream except her dead husband who is revealed to be Death. He has come to claim her and recognising her time she goes off willingly accompanied by soft chords from a quartet of solo violins.

### *Symphony No 4 in D Minor* Robert Schumann

In the first movement of this symphony, *Einleitung*, a single chord is held for four bars at a time while slow, stately notes are played in contrast. The music progresses in majestic fashion until the strings introduce groups of four notes that rise in tone and pace. Two emphatic chords sound above them played by wind instruments. Following without a break, the second movement, *Allegro*, begins with the strings launching into a fast, strongly accented series of passages. After a pause on two chords – one expectant, the other dramatic – agitated music ensues, with rapid playing on the strings. Next comes a march-like tempo, decorated by fast string passages. A creamy, lyrical theme intervenes briefly before the pace picks up again. The strongly stated march theme, the lyrical melody and the agitated passages come back in turn. Finally, the music rises to its last climax and, gaining pace in the last few bars, ends on three strong chords.

A soft, soulful chord starts the next movement, *Romance*, as a halting melody is played by the woodwind instruments. The plaintive mood is then taken up by the strings. After a major chord, a brighter theme begins. Played by a violin, it runs freely up and down the scale in groups of three notes, decorated by trills. A soulful melody follows and the music slows to reach its last three gentle chords. In the *Scherzo*, the orchestra begins on a strong minor melody, emphasised by chords in the bass and drum rolls. The theme repeats, before giving way to a calmer, slightly hesitant melody played in groups of three notes. The first theme returns, as does the lyrical melody. The music slows and becomes contemplative, then builds towards a climax, while a tremolo accompaniment shivers in the bass.

Without pausing, the music builds up to the *Finale*, which is announced by expectant chords. It then launches into a bar of three strong chords, followed by a syncopated bar. This pattern is then repeated until an expansive theme appears. This has a simple, four-beats-to-the-bar "striding" accompaniment. The music now builds to a full climax, followed by two dramatic chords underlined by drum rolls. This, in turn, is followed by a counterpoint in which sections of the orchestra weave a thick musical texture. Finally, after repeats of its themes, the movement ends on a full orchestral climax, finished off by four full-bodied chords.

Programme notes supplied by:  
The Classical Collection, 1993 (Orbis Publishing Ltd)  
<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~fhoog/notes/valse.html>  
Caroline Szeto

## PROFILES

### CAROLINE SZETO, COMPOSER



Caroline Szeto is a Sydney-based composer. She began her musical training on the piano. She completed both her undergraduate and postgraduate studies in composition at the University of Sydney under Eric Gross and Peter Sculthorpe at the Department of Music at the University of Sydney, where she has lectured in harmony. Szeto has received several prizes and awards including a Composer Fellowship from the Performing Arts Board of the Australia Council for the Arts. She has fulfilled commissions for many prominent soloists, ensembles and orchestras, and her music for piano, guitar, tuba and violin published. Many of her works have been performed in Australia by leading ensembles and orchestras, including the Tasmania, Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne and Queensland Symphony Orchestras. Her works have also been performed abroad. Two of her orchestral works, *Energy* and *ABC Fanfare* (commissioned by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation for their 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) were performed in the Czech Republic in 1997 at The Second Festival of New Music for Orchestra. These two orchestral works and *Energy II* have had numerous performances. Many of Szeto's later works consist of Chinese harmony and structures which are used in her chamber work *Images of Li Po* and rhythmic patterns adopted in her ensemble work *The Third Station of the Cross*.

### PAUL POKORNY, CONCERTMASTER



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.

## PROFILES

### 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 1*

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

### *Violin II*

Laura Jamieson\*  
Judith Baker  
Clare Ryan  
Joseph Singles  
Rohini Thavaravy  
Behram Taleyarkhan

### *Viola*

Fflur Harvey\*  
Ted Davis  
Chris Elenor  
Kirrillie Moore°  
Julia Pokorny°  
Kirrillie Moore°

### *Cello*

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

### *Double bass*

Manfred Schoen\*  
Nick Lebedev

### *Flute*

Prue Page\*  
Bruce Lane

### *Piccolo*

Bruce Lane

### *Oboe*

Merryn Horrocks\*  
Margaret Shirley

### *Clarinet*

Mami Iwashita\*  
Joe Davies

### *Bassoon*

Liz Cruse\*  
Alex Thorburn

### *French horn*

Cameron Grant\*  
Ron Clarke  
Graham Robards

### *Trumpet*

David Young\*  
Anthony Fleming

### *Trombone*

Lindsay Smartt\*  
Ross Bliim

### *Bass trombone*

Brian Sedgwick\*

### *Tuba*

Paul Young\*

### *Timpani and Percussion*

Merrilee McNaught\*  
Andrew Blake  
Liam Childs  
Matthew Darvas

### *Harp*

Helen Boyd†

\* Denotes Principal  
+ Denotes Freelance  
° Denotes Guest

## ORCHESTRA MEMBERS

### FRIENDS OF STRATHFIELD SYMPHONY

Patron:

Councillor John Abi-Saab  
Mayor of Strathfield

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

\* Life Member

We wish to thank Teresa Rogers for preparing this programme.



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