

The Orchestra

Violin 1	Viola	Flute & Piccolo	Contra Bassoon	Bass Tuba
Paul Pokorny **	Martin Lee*	Jacinta Mikus*	Graeme Widmer	Gary Levin
Volf Frishling	Judith Baker	Bruce Lane	Horn	Timpani
Belisario Hernandez	Jennifer Cooke	Catherine Loonam	Annalisa Gatt*	Merillee McNaught*
Paul Hoskinson	Chris Elenor	Prue Page	Bill Cotis	Lyndle Hardstaff
Beatrice Ip	Antony Harvey	Oboe	Matthew Lovelace	Percussion
Laura Jamieson	Andrew Mataxas	Michelle Forbes*	Elana Traurig	Andrew Blake
Julia Park	Danielle Norton	Anita Truninger	Ngoc Long Vuong	Luka Wang
Justin White	Brendon Towney	Nicola Young	Suzanne Wright	Niki Paterson
Noriko Yamanaka	Cello	Cor anglais	Trumpet	Celeste
Violin 2	Laura Hitchcock*	George Jessup	Gary Clarke*	Chad Vindin
Elizabeth Cooney*	Nada Aubrey	Clarinet	Will Van Asperen	Harp
Karina Barnard	Rowena Cseh	Karl Murr*	Vince Donoghue	Liena Lacey
Diana Barraga	David Oldroyd	David Abbott	Janette Vardy	Verna Lee
Michelle Fox	Haydn Skinner	Rachael White	Trombone	Organ
Michelle Hood	Cathie Wiltshire	Bass Clarinet	Lindsay Smartt*	Kaine Haywood
Rohini Mulford	Double Bass	Claire Janiec	Belinda Pickering	
Anthony Rossiter	Manfred Schoen*	Bassoon	Paul Young	
Behram Taleyarkhan	Dan Murphy	Mark Pinner*	Tenor Tuba	
Jill Webb	Nick Powning	Scott James	Lauren Moule	* Denotes Principal
	Mark Szeto	Alex Thorburn		** Denotes Concert Master

Chief Conductor and Artistic Director: Sarah-Grace Williams

Don't miss our next concert!

Danse Sacrée et Danse Profane - DEBUSSY
 Serenade for Strings op 48 - TCHAIKOVSKY
 Serenade for 13 Winds - STRAUSS
 Romeo and Juliet Overture - Fantasy - TCHAIKOVSKY

SATURDAY 1/12/07 8.00pm

www.strathfieldsymphony.org.au

Special thanks to the Friends of the Orchestra

Dr and Mrs N A Andersen	Mr R A Knight	Mr & Mrs M Samrani	Mrs J E Dunlop
Mrs E M Astles	Mr J B Linley	Margaret Shirley*	Miss C Edwards
Mr S Bard *	Mrs S Mahableshwawalla*	Mrs J Widmer*	Mr Vincent Leonard*
Ms R Bernie	Mr M McBurney*	Mr G Widmer*	
Mr T Davis*	Mrs S Myers*	Mr D B Dunlop*	*Denotes life member

Strathfield Symphony Orchestra is proudly sponsored by Strathfield MP Virginia Judge.

For interviews, information and enquiries please contact the Electorate Office.

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The Planets

Strathfield Symphony Orchestra
 Serious Fun!

Chief Conductor & Artistic Director
 Sarah-Grace Williams

Holberg Suite
 Edvard Grieg (21 mins)

Interval

The Planets

Gustav Holst (50 mins)

Featuring the PROCLaim Choir

8.00pm Saturday, 22 September

Petersham Town Hall, 107 Crystal Street, Petersham
www.strathfieldsymphony.org.au

Our Conductor

In February 2006, Sarah-Grace Williams was appointed Chief Conductor of the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra and in February of this year became the Artistic Director. Sarah-Grace also holds the position of Associate Conductor with both The Occasional Performing Sinfonia (TOPS) and the Australian Institute of Music (AIM) Orchestra. She is Director of the AIM showcase vocal ensemble PROCLaim and has been an annual Guest Conductor with the Penrith Symphony Orchestra (PSO) since 2000.

In addition to her four concert series with the Strathfield Symphony and concert commitments with both Penrith Symphony and TOPS, highlights of Sarah-Grace's 2007 schedule include conducting six concerts with Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra and presenting an education concert entitled 'Construction' with The Queensland Orchestra.

An accomplished clarinetist and pianist, Sarah-Grace completed her Music degree at the University of Western Sydney in 1996, graduating with distinction in performance and composition. After receiving a scholarship for academic excellence, Sarah-Grace went on to achieve First Class Honours in Conducting before continuing her conducting studies in Russia with Maestro Alexander Polishchuk (St Petersburg Conservatoire) and in Holland with Maestro Jorma Panula (Amsterdam). Sarah-Grace has also studied with the esteemed conductors Johannes Fritzsich, Daniel Porcelijn, Marco Zucarrini, Janos Furst and Christopher Seaman.

As one of the principal graduates from the Symphony Australia Conductors Programme, Sarah-Grace conducted Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, The Queensland Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra in both rehearsals and concert. She has also toured as a conductor throughout Europe, Asia, Great Britain and New Zealand.

Sarah-Grace lectures in Conducting, Musical Theatre, Performance Studies, History and Aural at the Australian Institute of Music (tertiary) and works as a Musical Director and Vocal Specialist for the Catholic Schools Performing Arts (CaSPA). She is also a highly sought after Vocal Coach and teacher of Piano, Performance Studies and Clarinet.

Sarah-Grace would like to dedicate her performance this evening to the memory of Roger Rigato.

PROCLaim Choir

PROCLaim, the vocal ensemble from the Australian Institute of Music, was formed in March 2006 under the direction of Sarah-Grace Williams and comprises elite vocal students from the music theatre, contemporary and classical departments of the Australian Institute of Music. The melding of their different talents and vocal colours, combined with their youthful vibrancy has created a unique ability to perform in a number of genres, from classical and jazz to spiritual and pop.

Recent highlights include regular appearances at internationally televised sporting events and are performing at major functions leading up to World Youth Day in 2009.

PROCLaim first performed with Strathfield Symphony in 2006 singing Borodin's Polovtsian Dances and recently two members, Daniel Belle and Joshua Kyle appeared as soloists with the orchestra.

Performing as a full choir, a cappella or in smaller ensembles as the occasion requires, PROCLaim is gaining the reputation as an esteemed and dynamic vocal group.

CHOIR MEMBERS

Jenna Baxter, Daniel Belle, Katie Carr, Martinique Cavallaro, Taryn Erickson, Emma Etherington, Rebecca Gordon, Cassy Greaves, Emily Hanks, Tamsin Howard, Vianney Hunter, Kimberley Janceski, Alana Jenkins, Eleni Kokkinos, Joshua Kyle, Claire Leeds, Chelsea Sobel, Aaron Taylor, Aerliah Thurgood, Annie Zoghbi



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




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Program Notes

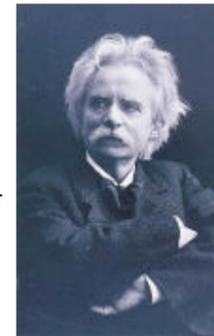
Holberg Suite - Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

We know Grieg today as one of the great nationalistic composers, but initially his musical sensibilities were much in the manner of the German Romantics. Two years after he left the Leipzig Conservatory, however, he met Rikard Nordraak, the composer of the Norwegian national anthem, who introduced the young Grieg to the folk songs and dances of Norway. For the rest of his life Grieg was a respected scholar in Norwegian musical lore and moulded his style and technique on his country's folk music.

When he composed the incidental music to Peer Gynt in 1876, his lasting reputation was assured. So beloved was he at the time of his death in 1907 that representatives from 57 foreign countries and musical organizations were present as he lay in state in his hometown of Bergen while over 400,000 of his countrymen lined the streets to pay their respects.

Grieg seemed reluctant to compose for orchestra, however, he was very fond of the string orchestra and works originally written for the piano were often later arranged for strings. This is the case with his Holberg Suite. When the noted playwright Ludvig Holberg was honoured on the bicentenary of his birth, Grieg paid tribute by composing a charming suite for solo piano which utilized musical forms contemporary with Holberg. The following year he provided an arrangement for strings. He wrote in a lush Romantic style which was thoroughly infused with Nordic ambiance. In The Holberg Suite Grieg manages to harness the forms of the past to the colour, expressiveness, and harmony of his own time.

The **first movement** opens in the manner of an early Italian opera before a beautiful sequential theme gives it a serenade-like quality. His **Sarabande** is initially gentle and reflective in tone but almost imperceptibly builds to a beautiful emotional climax before ending quietly. The **Gavotte** possesses the stately bearing characteristic of that dance while also capturing a bit of the peasant feeling so important to Grieg. In accordance with the practice of its time, the Gavotte is followed by a rustic **Musette**. The **Air** that comes next is affecting and emotional. It ebbs and flows and changes dynamics to great effect. The concluding **Rigaudon** is in the gay and light-hearted early style of this Provençal dance. While it clearly evokes the world of French courtly dancing, Grieg draws on the harmonic subtleties of his own day and instills a breath of Romantic melancholy.



The Planets - Gustav Holst (1874-1934)



Holst's personality was a curious mixture, combining the sociable and outgoing with the introverted and withdrawn. He was a great teacher, not only of music students but also of children and amateurs. He taught at St. Paul's Girls' School in London, and at Morley College, and even trained the church choir for a while. "If a thing is worth doing, it is [even] worth doing badly" he is reported saying - yet he was fastidious in his own scores, reworking and rejecting ideas many times until he was satisfied. He was interested in the avant-garde of his time, admiring the works of Stravinsky and Schoenberg such. However, the frequent use of unusual time signatures (both 'Mars' and 'Neptune' are in 5 beats to the bar) and the dissonances which appear in Holst's scores never sound as harsh as one might expect. He was interested in all sorts of "New Age" mysticism, dabbling in Astrology, which gave him the inspiration for The Planets, and various Eastern philosophies.

He began work on The Planets in 1913, and only completed orchestration in 1916. The first public performance had to wait until after the war in 1919 - though there had been a professional play-through to an audience of friends and guests the previous year. At one time he thought of calling the work Seven Orchestral Pieces, but the work is more integrated than that title would suggest. Each of the seven movements is like a short tone poem based on one aspect of the supposed character of the planet's influence on man. It is not symphonic but pictorial. And how vivid the pictures are!

Mars is a picture of the utter brutality of modern warfare, and it comes as a shock to realise that the tanks and machine guns, pictured so graphically here, were still in the future. The relentless battering builds up from a quiet but menacing start to a series of terrifying climaxes. Holst uses his very large orchestra to its full power, with dynamic markings of *fff* and *ffff*. The close is a series of brutal hammer blows. Holst's predictions were to prove all too true in the following few years.

Venus, by contrast, is pure and peaceful. The four rising French Horn notes which start the movement keep the music feeling lifted and floating throughout. Holst dispenses with the heavy brass and percussion here, using just strings, wind and horns, with occasional comments from the celeste.

Mercury, the Messenger of the Gods, is a swift scherzo, sometimes in two different keys at the same time, and alternating between 3/4 and 6/8 frequently. But the generally thin and quiet textures, and the fast speed impart a feeling almost of a Mendelssohn scherzo. At one point the violins have a very high note repeated in a curious accato rhythm - the Messenger of the Gods clearly communicates in morse code sometimes!

Jupiter brings jollity; a heavily syncopated tune against scurrying quavers, a folk-like tune in triple time, and in the middle section a big, genial, relaxed tune. The setting of this tune as a hymn to patriotic words ("I vow to thee my country") was done later, and brings false associations - try and forget them!

Saturn is the bringer of Old Age, and his heavy tread is frighteningly apparent here. Weariness has never been depicted so well in music, before or since. This was Holst's favourite movement and, he thought, the best one. It builds up steadily as a desolate funeral march to a great climax of tolling bells and displaced rhythms.

Uranus, the Magician, clearly went to the same school of magic as the magician in Dukas' Sorcerer's Apprentice. He is powerful, loud and vulgar, and seems to be given to practical jokes.

Neptune may be one the most radical of all the movements. In an early work Schoenberg set the words "I feel an air from another planet", and that is what one feels here. It is pianissimo throughout, and towards the end Holst introduces a wordless, disembodied chorus. And at the very end, the chorus float away, oscillating between two chords which gradually fade away into the silence of deep space.