

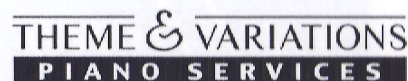


Strathfield *Symphony*
2009

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Tonight's Program

Preludé à l'après-midi d'un faune

Debussy

Cello concerto in E minor

Elgar

Soloist – Patrick Murphy

Adagio – Moderato

Lento – Allegro molto

Adagio

Allegro – Moderato – Allegro, ma non troppo

INTERVAL

Romeo & Juliet Suite no 2

Prokofiev

The Montagues and Capulets

The Young Juliet

Friar Laurence

Dance

Romeo and Juliet Before Parting

Dance of the Girls with Lillies

Romeo at Juliet's Grave

8pm Saturday 4 July

Petersham Town Hall, Petersham



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Chief Conductor & Artistic Director Sarah-Grace Williams

Sarah-Grace Williams has gained a reputation as one of Australia's foremost conductors of her generation. She is currently the Assistant Conductor of The Queensland Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Western Australian Symphony Orchestra and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and holds the posts of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra and Metropolitan Chamber Orchestra, Musical Director and Conductor of the Sydney Opera House Proms Orchestra and Associate Conductor of The Occasional Performing Sinfonia (TOPS). Additionally, Sarah-Grace is regularly engaged as a Guest Conductor and Presenter with many other ensembles including the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra, Penrith Symphony Orchestra, Australian Institute of Music ChAIMber Orchestra and Ku-ring-gai Philharmonic Orchestra.



An accomplished clarinetist and pianist, Sarah-Grace received her Bachelor of Music Degree with Distinction, majoring in performance and composition. She went on to achieve First Class Honours in Conducting before continuing conducting studies in Russia and Holland with Alexander Polishchuk and Jorma Panula respectively. A principal graduate from Symphony Australia's prestigious Conductor Program and the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra's Conductors Program, Sarah-Grace has conducted most of Australia's and New Zealand's premier orchestras under the tutorage of esteemed conductors Johannes Fritzsich, Janos Furst, Sebastian Lang-Lessing, Christopher Seaman, David Porcelijn and Marco Zuccarini. As a result, Sarah-Grace has received invitations to conduct a number of concert seasons and was delighted to secure an ongoing mentorship with Maestro Fritzsich with whom she has been working with since the beginning of 2008.

Sarah-Grace lectures in Conducting, Aural, Music Theatre and Choral Studies at both the Australian International Conservatorium of Music and the Australian Institute of Music and is a highly sought after vocal coach and adjudicator. She has composed, arranged and recorded music for films, theatre productions, symphonic ensembles, chamber groups and continues to work as a freelance Clarinetist and Pianist. Sarah-Grace has been awarded numerous prizes including the Symphony Australia Podium Scholarship, University of Western Sydney Prize for Academic Excellence, the Sound Devices Prize for excellence in Performance and the Guitar Factory Scholarship.

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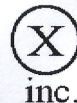
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Soloist

Patrick Murphy

Cellist Patrick Murphy studied with Rosemary Iversen, Gregory Baron, Michael Goldschlager and Alexander Ivashkin.

Patrick currently performs with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the Whiteley Trio and Nexus - 2MBS Virtuosi.

Patrick teaches in the Rising Stars program at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He is the cello tutor for the Sydney Youth Orchestra and in 2009 Patrick tutored at the Australian Youth Orchestra's National Music Camp. Patrick was the cellist of both the Tankstream and Grainger Quartets.



Orchestra

Paul Pokorny - Concertmaster



Violin 1

Paul Pokorny*
Dorothy Sercombe**
Alexandre Chalvet
Amanda Hoh
Julia Park
Michael Santhaseelan
Margaret Blomfield

Violin 2

Volf Frishling*
Laura Frolisch
Sandra Garrido
Phillip Hazell
Alana Pretty
Agnieszka Rypel-Polkas
Rhea Sullivan
Behram Taleyarkhan

Viola

Danielle Norton*
Chris Elenor
Andy Kim
David Pincus

Cello

Serena Devonshire*
Jennifer Ainsworth
Rowena Cseh
Alicea Gedz
Clare Kahn
David Oldroyd
Haydn Skinner
Danni Yi Ding

Double Bass

Oliver Simpson*
Robert Budniak
Moya Molloy
Ryu Yoshimoto

Flute

Jacinta Mikus
Lyndon Swasbrook

Flute/ Piccolo

Prue Page

Oboe

Adele Haythonthwaite
Justine Simkins

Cor Anglais

George Jessup

Clarinet

David Abbott
Nigel Clarke

Bass Clarinet

Jason Kok

Tenor Sax

Matthew Pearce

Bassoon

John Fletcher
Alex Thorburn

Contrabassoon

Graeme Widmer

Horn

Sharon Hatton
Suzanne Jones
John Trezise

Trumpet

Gary Clarke
Janette Vardy
David Young

Trombone

Lindsay Smartt
Andrew Fazzone

Bass Trombone

Phil Dunkley

Tuba

Gary Levin

Timpani

Merrilee McNaught

Percussion

Morgan Merrell
Jon Mayne
Grant Knapman
Tony Keep

Harp

Helen Boyd

Celeste/ Pianoforte

Chad Vindin

* Principal

** Associate

Concertmaster



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Program Notes

Preludé à l'après-midi d'un faune

Claude Debussy (1862 - 1918)



Stéphane Mallarmé's poem *L'Après-midi d'un faune* (*The Afternoon of a Faun* - 1876) inspired Debussy to conceive an orchestral work. In fact *The Afternoon of a Faun* was Debussy's first significant work for orchestra. Although it is tempting to call this piece a tone poem, there is very little musical literalism in the piece; instead, the languorous melody and shimmering orchestration as a whole evoke the eroticism of Mallarmé's poem.

'[This prelude] was [Debussy's] musical response to the poem of Stéphane Mallarmé' (1842-1898), in which a faun playing his pan-pipes alone in the woods becomes aroused by passing nymphs and naiads, pursues them unsuccessfully, then wearily abandons himself to a sleep filled with visions. Though called a 'prelude', the work is nevertheless complete.

The work is called a prelude because Debussy intended to write a suite of three movements – Prelude, Interlude, and Final Paraphrase – but the later two were never composed.

Debussy beautifully explores voicings and shading in his orchestration, allowing the main melody to move from solo flute to oboe, back to solo flute, then two unison flutes then clarinet, and so forth. And, in the first minute of the piece, Debussy mischievously throws in a bar of complete silence, giving the listener the opportunity to explore the musical quality of silence within a gentle flowing river of sound.

The flute, indeed begins this work with an evocation of the opening lines of Mallarmé's poem:

I would perpetuate those nymphs.

Their rosy

Bloom's so light, it floats upon air drowsy

With heavy sleep.

Was it a dream?

Cello Concerto in E Minor

Edward Elgar (1857 - 1934)

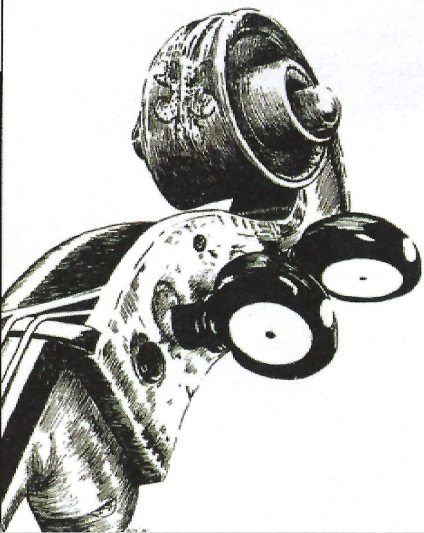
- 1 Adagio — Moderato
- 2 Lento — Allegro Molto
- 3 Adagio
- 4 Allegro, ma non troppo

Elgar wrote his Cello Concerto in the summer of 1919, and although he was to live for a further fifteen years it proved to be his last major orchestral work. He had been deeply saddened by the First World war, was suffering from a painful chronic ear condition, and the recent deaths of several old friends had made him acutely aware of his own advancing years.

In addition to being an exquisitely beautiful piece, and one of the greatest of all English concertos, the work signifies Elgar's farewell to the way of life as he had known it. '... Everything good and nice and clean and fresh and sweet is far away - never to return' as he wrote to a friend in a letter at the time.

The concerto is in four movements. Following an opening nobile flourish on the cello, the violas introduce the haunting 9/8 lament, the theme that most readily identifies the concerto's pervasive feeling of autumnal regret.

It is this melody that Elgar hummed on his death-bed to his friend and said: 'If ever after I'm dead you hear someone whistling this tune on the Malvern Hills, don't be alarmed. It's only me'.



Cello Concerto in E Minor

Edward Elgar (1857 - 1934)

The movement has the character of a melancholy soliloquy, fading gently away into the shadowy second movement scherzo by way of the soloist's guitar-like pizzicato version of the introductory flourish.

Following the Scherzo, the short and serene Adagio third movement is an elegiac song without words, perfectly suited to the cello at its most nobly eloquent. Without a real break, the orchestra then suggests the final rondo theme, but the soloist instigates another recitative-like cadenza before launching into the last movement. Near the end Elgar recalls the second phrase of the Adagio melody from the second movement, and rarely has music conveyed such anguish and despair.

But the soloist's introductory flourish returns, and the work ends with a few hurried bars in which cellist and full orchestra combine for the only time in the concerto.

Elgar himself conducted the first performance at the Queen's Hall on 26th October 1919 with Felix Salmond as soloist.



Romeo & Juliet Suite no 2

Sergei Prokofiev (1891—1953)

1. The Montagues and Capulets
2. The Young Juliet
3. Friar Laurence
4. Dance
5. Romeo and Juliet Before Parting
6. Dance of the Girls With Lillies
7. Romeo at Juliet's Grave

1936 is the year in which Sergei Prokofiev composed two of his three 'Romeo and Juliet' Suites. Following his return from exile to the Soviet Union in the middle of the 1930's, Prokofiev concentrated mainly on his full-length ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, on which he had worked with great enthusiasm during the summer and autumn of 1935 after receiving a commission from the Moscow Bolshoi Theatre. (His enthusiasm for ballet music had clearly revealed itself during his time in Paris, during which he composed a number of ballets for Sergei Diaghilev's famous Ballets Russes.)

The Ensemble was certainly disappointed after first hearing it played through and also during rehearsals; they considered Prokofiev's complicated rhythmic structures to be 'undanceable' and the unexpected happy ending, in which Julia wakes up in time to prevent Romeo from committing suicide, to be inappropriate.

The Bolshoi Theatre finally dropped the production. But Prokofiev was so convinced of the quality of his work – in which his melodic talent, refined intellect and experience in writing film-music are interwoven in an artistic manner – that he wrote two Concert Suites as a kind of propaganda for his own compositions.

Romeo & Juliet Suite no 2

Sergei Prokofiev (1891—1953)

And thus the seven-part Suite No. 2, Op. 64b was performed in 1937, a year before the première of the ballet took place in Brünn.

The opening movement 'Montagues and Capulets' is probably the best-known part of the ballet and presents the proud and aggressive dance of the knights at the Capulet ball. In a lyrical interlude, Romeo first sees Juliet.

In 'Juliet, the young girl', two flutes play Juliet's theme and reveal her passionate nature. Towards the end of the movement, the harp and saxophone indicate that Juliet's childlike naturalness does not stand a chance in the adult world.

'Friar Laurence' awaits the lovers in the chapel to the accompaniment of a solemn theme played by the tuba and bassoon, which then gives way to a warm melody in the cello.

The following 'Dance' is a kind of interlude for five couples in the market place.

'Romeo at Juliet's before the parting' announces the dramatic finale and depicts the melancholy theme of the farewell in soaring sounds. The 'Dance of the Antilles girls' accompanies the bridesmaids in their dance around the sleeping Juliet. Extended and highly expressive variations on the death theme accompany 'Romeo at Juliet's grave', before the Suite closes in a restrained manner in a simple C-major key. The lovers are united in death.



STRATHFIELD SYMPHONY
Orchestra of the Inner West



Immortal Beloved

Prometheus Overture

Beethoven

Romance no 2

Beethoven

SOLOIST: Paul Pokorny

Symphony no 2

Beethoven

8.00pm Saturday, 5th December 2009

Strathfield Town Hall



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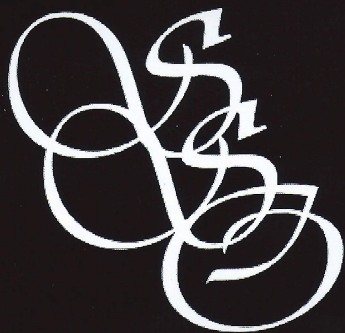
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About the Orchestra

Strathfield Symphony Orchestra is a community orchestra based in the inner-west Sydney suburb of Strathfield. The orchestra is comprised of approximately 60 players. It rehearses most Monday nights and gives four programs a year, plus a special concert for seniors in Senior Citizens' Week. The orchestra aims to promote musicmaking in the community, to provide exciting and enjoyable concert programs, to nurture young talent, and to showcase the works of Australian composers.

The orchestra was founded by Emily Finn, a music teacher in Strathfield. The first performance was held on 28th June 1969 and was conducted by Richard Gill. Over the years many talented young musicians have played with the orchestra, the youngest being nine-year-old violinist Kim Marshall. In recent years the orchestra has played works by many Australian composers including Elena Kats-Chernin, Nigel Westlake, Vincent Leonard, Michael Easton and Solomon Bard. In 2008 the orchestra commissioned Elena Kats-Chernin to write a work for the orchestra's 40th Birthday Concert on 4th July 2009. Australian composer and pianist Miriam Hyde was a keen supporter and good friend of the orchestra. She played with the orchestra as soloist and the orchestra has performed many of her works.



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