

2015 Concert Series 1

Southern
Highlands
Symphony
Orchestra

March, 2015
7.30pm Saturday 21st
2.30pm Sunday 22nd

Memorial Hall
Bendooley Street
Bowral

BRUMBY

Overture in Folk Style

GRIEG

Piano Concerto in A

Soloist • Lisa Kawai

SCHUBERT

*Symphony No 8 in B minor
completed by Brian Newbould*

Conductor: Dr Allan Stiles

THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The orchestra was formed in 2014 due to interest in establishing a symphony orchestra in the region. Musicians from the Southern Highlands and surrounding districts rehearse on Sunday evenings. It is envisaged that the orchestra will become a significant feature of the cultural life of the Southern Highlands.

Overture in Folk Style Premiere performance **Colin Brumby**

When Allan Stiles and his wife, Jenette, met Colin Brumby and his wife, Jenny Dawson, in their Brisbane home towards the end of 2014, discussion of the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra came up, and Allan asked Colin if he felt inclined to write a work for the orchestra to play as part of its 2015 Concert Season. Almost without thinking Brumby suggested an *Overture in Folk Style* and, a short time later, the work was completed.

Brumby has derived considerable inspiration over the years from folk music of all kinds; an inspiration which is reflected in the title that refers to the folk-like melodic material with which he has filled out the first-movement form of the concert overture.

Note by Dr Colin Brumby

Piano Concerto in A Minor

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Allegro molto moderato

Adagio

Allegro moderato molto e marcato

Edvard Grieg, the best known of nineteenth-century Scandinavian composers, was a great exponent of Romantic nationalism. In 1864, he befriended another young Norwegian composer, Rikard Nordraak, who believed that the future of their country's art music lay not in a continued reliance on Germanic models, but in the rich heritage of Scandinavian folk song. Grieg quickly came to share this view and made it his role in life to bring Scandinavian musical and literary culture to the attention of the rest of Europe by expressing himself mainly in miniature forms such as songs, small piano pieces, orchestral dances and re-workings of folk melodies. His most significant large-scale composition is his *Piano Concerto in A minor*. It was written in 1868 at a happy and rewarding time in his life following his marriage to his cousin, Nina Hagerup. While holidaying in the Danish village of Søllerød, the pair shared a house with pianist Edmund Neupert, who gave Grieg regular advice on the Concerto's solo part, and to whom, in gratitude, he dedicated it. The première proved hugely successful. This led to numerous further performances, and the foundation of Grieg's international fame.

The Concerto begins with one of the most striking openings in a musical work: timpani roll crescendo, a sharp chord for orchestra before a strong piano declamation

and a wave of arpeggios, spanning almost the entire range of the keyboard. The first theme appears in the orchestra, a march-like figure later taken up by the piano and elaborated. A lyrical second theme, introduced by the cellos changes the mood to one of serene contemplation. The expansive cadenza deals mainly with the march theme, interspersing it with mighty runs in the lower keyboard. When the orchestra rejoins the soloist, the movement looks to a subdued close but almost as if the sun had emerged from behind a cloud, the mood changes to one of light-hearted joy, the piano providing a brilliant flourish as in the beginning. The second movement, 'Adagio', introduces a tender song-like theme on muted strings, sealed with a beautiful cello solo. When the piano finally enters, it gently embellishes the theme, turning it into a noble statement. It is in the last movement that Grieg's folk impulses break out in a Norwegian dance, the 'halling'. A contrasting middle section with a new melody announced by the flute evokes misty fjords and birds soaring among the Norwegian mountains. In the distance the beat of the 'halling' is heard and again the robust dance invades the music climaxing with a brief but vivid cadenza. The soloist then launches into a coda recasting the dance theme into the rapid triple time of the popular Norwegian 'springdans'. The Concerto comes to an exhilarating conclusion with a full-blooded restatement of the gentle flute theme now thundered out by orchestra and soloist.

Note by Elizabeth Dalton

INTERVAL

20 minutes

Refreshments will be available in the supper room.

Symphony No. 8 in B minor, D.759 ('Unfinished')* **Franz Schubert*

Australian premiere of the completion by **Brian Newbould**

Allegro moderato

Andante con moto

Scherzo and Trio: Allegro

Allegro molto moderato

Of the many works left incomplete by Schubert (including no fewer than six symphonies), it appears that only the 'Unfinished' has acquired the niche status of a 'romantic fragment'. This is because it alone is a playable half-symphony: playable, but strictly failing to qualify for the designation 'symphony'. Lacking a scherzo and a finale, it does the absurd thing (by the criterion of current practice in Schubert's time) of beginning in one key and ending in another - the first movement being in B minor and the second in E major. This was hardly the rounded symphonic structure true to the ideals of Schubert himself and Beethoven and other symphonists for fifty years and more up to 1822.

What, for all of us, enables the work to overcome this generic disqualification is the

creative daring that distances the two finished movements from Schubert's foregoing symphonies. The sinuous opening theme in cellos and basses clearly announces a new kind of symphony. When a gently pulsating string figuration is set up, to cradle a drooping upper melody delivered in a poignant mix of oboe and clarinet timbre, we can sense a new kind of emotional intimacy, adumbrating that of the despondent opening of the A minor String Quartet of two years later, but hardly traceable to Schubert's earlier symphonic history.

The music climaxes and breaks off, leaving a long held wind note, which bends into the famous 'second subject', first heard in the cellos. This completes the lyrical ingredients of a movement which goes on to extract its measure of drama from them before finally coming to uneasy rest in a coda which finds residual threats in the sinuous opening cello theme.

At first, the slow movement seems to offer a glimpse of serenity. It begins gently, with a soft string theme prefaced by a tiny 'opening bud' of an idea (horns and bassoons above plucked double basses). The second theme, unfurled at leisure by the clarinet, floats above soft syncopations in the strings whose magical harmonic shifts tend to pull the clarinet melody in wonderfully surprising directions. This is Schubertian magic at its bewitching best. And when moments of tense drama build up in due course, their force is intensified by the supremely poetic context.

Schubert began a scherzo, and probably finished a draft of the finale, which later became what we know as the Entr'acte in B minor from *Rosamunde*. Abandoning the work at this point, he sent off his half-symphony to Anselm Hüttenbrenner in Graz as a token of gratitude for the bestowal on Schubert of an honorary diploma by the Styrian Music Society. Had he given up on the work? Or had he merely delivered to Graz an 'instalment on account'? Was he dissatisfied with his progress on the last two movements, or somehow discouraged by compositional problems? Did his total neglect of it in the six years remaining to him reflect a demoralisation arising from his discovery, at or soon after he had commenced its composition (late in 1822), that he had contracted syphilis, a disease almost inevitably terminal at this tide in the affairs of man? We may never know.

There are several arguments for accepting the Entr'acte from *Rosamunde* as finale of the symphony. It's in the same key as the symphony (a rare one for symphonies), uses the same orchestral line-up, is in a typical finale form, and is too big a piece as part of the incidental music for a play. Schubert had to assemble music for that play hurriedly in 1823 and it would make sense to commandeer a piece already sketched, and perhaps already scored.

More hands-on intervention is needed to 'rescue' the Scherzo, which survives as a sketch set out on two staves as though for piano but in fact simply for convenience. Two pages of orchestral score have also been found. The scherzo is extremely sketchy in places. For the trio, Schubert got no further than setting down a melody,

for the first section only. Of the (usually longer) second section there is nothing at all. The only completion known to me adapted a Schubert song for this second section, a solution having the merit that more of the finished trio would be unadulterated (or only slightly adulterated) Schubert. But he would always, without exception, base the second section of a trio on the material of the first section. To do this on his behalf requires a certain arrogance, to be sure; but the result has at least a chance of sounding truer to Schubert's symphonic practice.

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Professor Newbould's completion was commissioned by Philips/Phonogram in 1981 for recording as part of a complete album of the Schubert symphonies to be conducted by Neville Marriner and the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, in which his completions of Nos.7 and 10 were also to be included.

RECEPTION

Following the concert on Saturday there will be a reception to which all are invited.

ALLAN STILES - CONDUCTOR

The orchestra will be conducted by Dr Allan Stiles, who has conducted orchestras, bands, choirs, and theatre productions over many years. He formed the Western Youth Orchestra (now the Northern Sydney Youth Orchestra) and the Beecroft Chamber Orchestra, which became The Beecroft Orchestra. He has also conducted various operas and musicals for the Hurstville Light Opera Company, the Hills Musical Society, the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, and the Parramatta Musical Comedy Company. He enjoyed decades of conducting orchestras, bands, and theatrical productions while a teacher for the NSW Department of Education at Frenchs Forest, The King's School, Holy Cross College, and Pymble Ladies College. Conducting studies were with Robert Miller and later as part of his MMus at UNSW. As a musicologist he has catalogued the works of Alfred Hill for his PhD thesis and has published many previously unavailable works by Australian composers.

LISA KAWAI - SOLOIST

Lisa began learning the piano at the age of 4. Due to her father's work, she spent her childhood in Toronto, Tokyo and Sydney and has learnt from many teachers in that time. Through her senior years in high school and university, she learnt from Anthony Baldwin, Elizabeth Jones and Gordon Watson. She obtained her LMusA shortly after graduating from Sydney University with a Science degree, majoring in Pure Mathematics. She then got married and her husband's job took her back to Tokyo where she had three children and not much time to play the piano. In 2006 she and her family moved to the Highlands where she has rediscovered the joy of playing the piano. She enjoys the opportunities to play in chamber music groups, perform piano concertos with local orchestras, to accompany other instrumentalists and her piano

lessons with mentor Trevor Noffke. She has also started learning the cello and is grateful for the local orchestras (Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra and Highlands Sinfonia) to let her join. She feels privileged to play and perform with a wide variety of musicians to warm and appreciative audiences and loves all the music in the Highlands.

FUTURE CONCERTS

June: Saturday 27th at 7.30pm and Sunday 28th at 2.30pm
Tchaikovsky *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture*
Beethoven *Symphony No.5 in C Minor*

August: Saturday 29th at 7.30pm and Sunday 30th at 2.30pm
Mozart *Overture to The Magic Flute*
Elgar *From the Bavarian Highlands* with the Macarthur Singers
Brahms *Symphony No.2 in D Major*

November: Saturday 14th at 7.30pm and Sunday 15th at 2.30pm
Sibelius *Finlandia*
Dvorak *Symphony No.8 in G Major*

Details will be advertised at www.southernhighlandssymphonyorchestra.com.

ORCHESTRA MANAGEMENT

President	Mrs Jenette Stiles
Vice-President	Mr Gerald Power
Secretary	Dr Allan Beavis OAM
Treasurer	Mrs Elizabeth Dalton
Musical Director	Dr Allan Stiles
Orchestra Manager	Ms Roma Dix OAM
Librarian	Mrs April Butcher
Member	Mr Peter Glass JP

FRIENDS OF THE ORCHESTRA

Become a supporter of the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra. The aim of the Friends is to promote the appreciation of fine music in the community and surrounding districts by supporting the organization of concerts and fundraising.

Enquiries: 0416 380 567

Email: southernhighlandssymphonyorchestra@hotmail.com

FLUTES

Roma Dix
Tanya Goodman

OBOE

Michellé Biasutti

CLARINETS

Adrienne Bradney-Smith
Mark Biasutti
Alex Crowe

BASS CLARINET

Richard Gawned

BASSOONS

Melissa Reyder
Rory Ali

HORNS

Elizabeth Dalton
Gay Scanlon
Steven Smith
Paul Stiles
Patrick Webb

TRUMPETS

Julian Paviour
Jeremy Donaldson
Robert George

TROMBONES

John Thompson
Angus Blake
William Short

TUBA

David Ricketts

PERCUSSION

Eliza-Jane Corley
Paul Blackstone

FIRST VIOLINS

Jillian Bridge – Leader on Sunday
Kate Malone – Leader on Saturday
Sarah Caddy
Veronica Goldrick
Sophia Hans
David Hart
Lily Liu
David Mee
Michelle Mulvihill
Allan Rooke

SECOND VIOLINS

Maggie Loo
Robert Arthurson
Anne Graham
Howard Lesslie
Rebecca Michael
Jack Michlethwaite
Lesley Staats

VIOLAS

Mellisa Lamrock
Roger Lavers
Timothy Senior
Quentin Woods

CELLOS

Catherine Barnett
Elise Ali
David Archer
April Butcher
Lisa Kawai

DOUBLE BASSES

Diana Ford
Louis Ameneiro

After the principals, players are listed alphabetically.

SPONSORSHIP

The experience of enjoying live symphonic music is unique to every member of our audience, yet each of you plays an important role in ensuring that this live music experience continues. To support your Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra through sponsorship or donations you are invited to contact the President on 0416 380 567.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Southern Highlands Concert Band, The Highlands Sinfonia, David Ricketts, The Brown Bookshop, Bowral District Credit Union, Jenny Kena (The Wingecarribee Shire Council Cultural Development Officer), Destination Southern Highlands, The Southern Highlands News, 2ST, Highlands FM, Kennard's Hire, Marist Wines, Southern Removals and Storage, ABCFM, David Shipman, and Van Til Flowers.

Piano supplied and prepared by Ron Craig.

Thanks to the volunteers who assisted with front of house, refreshments at the interval and at the reception.

