



SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONCERT SERIES FOUR

SATURDAY 19TH NOVEMBER, 2016 7.30PM

SUNDAY 20TH NOVEMBER, 2016 2.30PM

BOWRAL MEMORIAL HALL

BENDOOLEY STREET

Patrons:

Ann Carr-Boyd, Dr. Andrew Ford OAM, Richard Gill AO

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. The SHSO has become a significant feature of the cultural life of the Southern Highlands.

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 operas and musicals for the Hurstville Light Opera Company, the Hills Musical Society, the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, the Parramatta Musical Comedy Company and the Highlands Theatre Group. He enjoyed decades of conducting orchestras, bands, and theatrical productions while a teacher for the NSW Department of Education at French's Forest, The King's School, Holy Cross College, and Pymble Ladies College. He has also played in orchestras both in Sydney and London. 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.

ALFRED HILL (1869 – 1960)

Celebrations Overture in C

Alfred Hill, following his studies in Leipzig, became one of the most highly respected composers, string players, conductors, and educators in Australia and New Zealand. He was the professor of composition and a conductor at the Sydney Conservatorium from its foundation until his retirement. The catalogue of his works includes over 2000 titles, some of which have been widely performed, recorded and broadcast. A CD of his *Piano Concerto* and *Piano Sonata* played by Piers Lane with the Adelaide SO has just been released by Hyperion. The SHSO performed his *Horn Concerto* last year with Robert Johnson, the SSO principal.

This overture was first performed in 1938 at a concert by the SSO to celebrate the sesquicentenary of the founding of the British colony in Sydney.

Note by Allan Stiles

BEDRICH SMETANA (1824-1884):

Symphonic Poem – Vltava (The Moldau)

Bedrich Smetana was born in 1824 in Bohemia, which was then a province of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. From a very early age Smetana exhibited a prodigious musical talent, both as pianist and composer. At the age of 19 he went to Prague to

study composition. The inevitable round of teaching followed and what may be called the post of "resident pianist" to the deposed Emperor Ferdinand I. He was caught up in the revolutionary times of 1848, and subsequently accepted a conductorship in Gothenburg, Sweden. Encumbered with personal bereavements, he returned to Prague in 1861. His most productive and mature years were to follow, during which he wrote five operas, the second of these being the ever-popular *The Bartered Bride*. In his homeland, Smetana came to be regarded as the first major Czech composer of the 19th century, and he was influential in establishing a National Opera.

At the time of composing his fifth opera, *Libuse*, during the period 1874-1879, Smetana was beginning to be troubled by deafness, together with the development of the disease that would cause him to see out his years in a lunatic asylum. It was during this time that he commenced work on *Ma Vlast* ("My Country"). It consists of six tone poems celebrating Bohemia's history, mythology and landscape. The second of the cycle, *Vltava*, describes the river upon which Prague stands. The piece is sometimes referred to as "The Moldau" - the river's German name.

The Vltava rises in forest land about sixty miles south of Prague from one warm spring and one cold spring. Smetana is thought to have visited the spot where the two streams meet, and to have taken the inspiration for the tone poem from this experience. The music follows the river's course as it flows through the Bohemian plain and the city of Prague. It is in the form of a Rondo, united by a recurring theme which represents the river. Smetana's own preface to the score describes the music's content.

Undulating flutes begin, representing the first tributary. They are soon joined by clarinets, representing the second. The river gathers strength until violins, oboes and bassoons unite in the first expression of the warm, rich rondo theme, which is taken from a Bohemian folk tune. Horns and trumpets portray the river flowing through the forest, with hunting calls heard over the river motif. The river next flows past a rustic wedding celebration. At this point we hear dance music - part polka, part march in 2/4 time. A climax is reached and subsides as the moon - represented by pianissimo woodwind figures - rises and sparkles in the rippling water. Fluctuating flutes lead to the "dance of the Water Nymphs", subdued, nocturnal music suggesting the river flowing through a smooth course. Then the pace quickens as the water tumbles and foams over the St John rapids and the music becomes vigorous and stormy. It recovers from its turmoil to flow majestically into Prague, where it passes under the great fortress of Vysehrad then flows on, leaving Prague behind. The music has a "dying fall" and is lost to sight. Smetana ends the piece with two emphatic chords to round off the tableau.

INTERVAL

Refreshments will be available from the Supper Room.

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

Symphony No. 6 in B minor, op. 74, “Pathétique”

- I. *Adagio – Allegro non troppo*
- II. *Allegro con grazia*
- III. *Allegro molto vivace*
- IV. *Finale: Adagio lamentoso*

By the late 1880s, Tchaikovsky had composed nearly all of his most revered works – five of the six symphonies, the ballets *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty*, and most of his operas and chamber music. Since the mid-1870s, the wealthy widow Nadezhda von Meck had been his benefactress, providing him with an annual stipend of six thousand roubles on the condition that he would devote his energies to full-time composition. These were the brightest years of his life, but they were not to last. In 1890 von Meck severed their relationship. Even though he no longer relied on her financial assistance, the world-famous composer sorely missed the emotional support he found through their many correspondences. For years he had suffered from depression over his failed month-long marriage in the 1870s, his general insecurity, and his difficulty in coming to terms with his homosexuality. The loss of von Meck’s support sent Tchaikovsky into the deepest depression of his life and by 1893 he had hit rock-bottom. Yet from the depths of his despair somehow he was able to immerse himself in the creative process and within seven months from February to August 1893 he composed his sixth symphony. Tchaikovsky considered calling it the “Tragic,” but when his brother, Modeste, suggested *pateticheskyy*, the composer agreed, so the word was inscribed immediately on the score’s title page and the work was published as *Symphonie pathétique*. It is worth noting that the Russian word *pateticheskyy* derives from the Greek *patheticos*, and refers to something passionate, emotional and, as in the original Greek, having overtones of suffering, not as in most modern English contexts where it usually has the connotation of inadequacy and pity. The *Pathétique* is one of Tchaikovsky’s most soul-searching scores. He claimed that the work was a program symphony – one that tells a story – but refused to divulge the underlying program. During its composition he wrote to his nephew Vladimir ‘Bob’ Davidov “the program will be of a kind that will remain an enigma to all—let them guess... This program is saturated with subjective feeling... while composing it in my mind I shed many tears.”

The work begins with a slow, mournful opening. The introductory bassoon solo becomes the melodic material for the *Allegro* section’s principal theme. The second subject, arguably one of the most famous of all Tchaikovsky’s melodic creations, haunting in its beauty, poignancy and sad lyricism, is first presented by the violins. The scoring intensifies but the ardour is quickly spent and the music reduces to an extreme pianissimo (*pppppp*). Then the mood is shattered abruptly as the entire orchestra explodes into the frenetic development section, one of the most violent and ferocious passages Tchaikovsky ever wrote. Full of emotional intensity, the music is an expression of torment, fear and pain. After a final, despairing appearance of the

soaring second theme, the movement winds down into unsettled, resigned silence. The next movement, a waltz, promises a welcome untroubled contrast from the emotional traumas of the first movement. However, five beats to the bar instead of the usual three throws the mood off kilter, with disturbing, bittersweet results. In the middle section, the quiet but insistent beat of the timpani is like an ominous cloud passing over the fleeting joy and sense of pleasure that is suggested by the graceful nature of the themes.

The third movement begins as a feathery, Mendelssohnian Scherzo. Gathering momentum, it becomes a blazing march of triumph, sweeping all before it and as such has many characteristics of a typical symphonic finale. From the exuberance of this movement and the elegance of the second, one might think that the brooding and violent qualities of the symphony's opening have been forgotten. But the composer's anguish is reiterated in the symphony's slow Finale, an extended song of lamentation. The opening motif, a descending sigh-like figure immediately establishes a return to the dark despair of the opening movement. The intensity builds until the devastating moment near the end when a gong sounds, followed by a brass chorale, and the symphony fades away into silence.

Ironically, this dark music filled its creator with joy. Shortly before completing the symphony, Tchaikovsky wrote: "I swear that I have never felt such satisfaction, such pride, such happiness as I do now in knowing that I am the composer of this beautiful work. ... I love it as I have never loved any of my musical offspring."

Notes by Elizabeth Dalton

RECEPTION

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

ORCHESTRA MANAGEMENT

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| President | Mrs Jenette Stiles AAICD |
| Vice-President | Mr Gerald Power |
| Secretary | Mr Douglas Pritchard JP, FCA |
| Treasurer | Mrs Elizabeth Dalton |
| Musical Director | Dr Allan Stiles |
| Orchestra Manager | Ms Roma Dix OAM |
| Librarian | Mrs April Butcher |
| Members: | Mr Peter Glass JP Dr Allan Beavis OAM |

FLUTES

Zoe Andrews
Roma Dix
Claire Jacobson

OBOE

Michellé Biasutti

SOPRANO SAXOPHONE

Richard Gawned

CLARINETS

Mark Biasutti
Alexandra Donaldson

BASSOON

Melissa Reyder
Phoebe Staats
Maria Smith

HORNS

Radu Boros
Elizabeth Dalton
Ian McQuillan
Gay Scanlon

TRUMPETS

Jeremy Donaldson
Robert George

TENOR TROMBONES

William Short
John Thompson

BASS TROMBONE

Simon Mitchell

TUBA

David Ricketts

TIMPANI

David Manuel

PERCUSSION

Adrienne Bradney-Smith
Rhonda Langford

KEYBOARD

Rhonda Langford

FIRST VIOLINS

Myee Clohessy – Leader
Jillian Bridge – Co-leader
Rebecca Coulter
Alexandra Dening
David Mee
Rebecca Michael
Emily Sinden
Sarah Tomlinson

SECOND VIOLINS

Maggie Loo – Principal
Robert Arthurson
Sarah Caddy
Rosemary Eddowes
David Hart
Howard Lesslie
Lesley Staats

VIOLAS

Timothy Senior – Principal
Xanthe Herps
Catherine Kerr
Roger Lavers
Quentin Woods

CELLOS

Catherine Barnett – Principal
David Archer
April Butcher
Sarah Hick
Lisa Kawai
Martin Stiles

DOUBLE BASS

Louis Ameneiro – Principal
Vitaliy Rayitson

Wind and brass players are listed alphabetically. After the string principals, players are also listed alphabetically.

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 organisation of concerts and fundraising. Please join our mailing list by completing the enclosed flyer and leave it in the Friends box at the front of the Hall.

Enquiries: 0416 380 567
Email: shsonsw@gmail.com

NEW PLAYERS ARE WELCOME.

Contact: Allan Stiles on 0415 309 760 or Roma Dix on 0432 466 882.

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, which are tax deductible, please contact the President on 0416 380 567.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Support from the following is gratefully acknowledged:

Artemis Wines (sponsor), Southern Highlands Concert Band, The Highlands Sinfonia, Luke Menteith, Wingecarribee Shire Council, Colin Fox (ABCFM), ABC Illawarra, Southern Highlands Welcome Centre, Van Til Flowers, Southern Highlands News, BDCU Alliance Bank, Robert Crowe, Christopher Donaldson, The Bookshop Bowral, Highlands FM, and 2ST.

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



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SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

2017 Concert Series

CONCERT SERIES ONE

Saturday 18th March 7.30pm and Sunday 19th March 2.30pm

Sibelius Finlandia

Saint Saens Cello Concerto No.1 – soloist Catherine Barnett

Dvorak Symphony No.8

CONCERT SERIES TWO

Saturday 17th June 7.30pm and Sunday 18th June 2.30pm

CONCERT SERIES THREE

Saturday 9th September 7.30pm and Sunday 10th September 2.30pm

CONCERT SERIES FOUR

A Festive Spectacular

Saturday 2nd December 7.30pm and Sunday 3rd December 2.30pm

The SHSO reserves the right to amend the advertised repertoire.

The Southern Highlands Concert Band

SPIRIT OF THE DANCE

Enticing rhythms and seductive melodies to make your soul soar.

Featuring soloists **Nina Krezo** and **Stephen Wheatley**.

Bowral Memorial Hall

Saturday 26th November at 7.30 pm and Sunday 27th November at 2.00 pm

Adults \$20, Students and children \$5. Group discounts available.

Bookings online at www.southernhighlandsconcertband.org.au

Destination Southern Highlands, Mittagong 1300 657 559

or at the door Box Office opens 6.30 pm Saturday and 1.00 pm Sunday.