Southern Highlands
Symphony
Orchestra

2018 CONCERT SERIES

SATURDAY 15th SEPTEMBER 7.30PM

SUNDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2.30PM

BOWRAL MEMORIAL HALL

BENDOOLEY STREET

Patrons:

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

RICHARD WAGNER (1813 – 1883)

Overture to the opera *Rienzi*

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732 – 1809)

Concerto No.1 in C for Violoncello and Orchestra Hob. VIIb:1
Soloist Catherine Barnett

Moderato
Adagio
Allegro molto

INTERVAL

Refreshments will be available from the Supper Room.

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810 – 1856)

Symphony No. 4 in D Minor, Op. 120
"Clara Symphony"

Ziemlich langsam (Rather slowly) – *Lebhaft* (Lively)
Romanze: *Ziemlich langsam*
Scherzo: *Lebhaft*
Finale: *Langsam – Lebhaft*

RECEPTION

You are invited to enjoy a reception after the Saturday performance.

THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The orchestra was formed in 2014 as a result of overwhelming 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

The orchestra will be conducted by Dr Allan Stiles, who has conducted orchestras, bands, choirs, and theatre productions over many years. In Sydney he formed the Western Youth Orchestra and 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 at 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.

CATHERINE BARNETT

Born in Ballarat, Victoria, Catherine Barnett commenced her musical studies age six with the piano, and then ‘cello at age eleven. She studied violoncello externally at the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne with Miriam Morris. She graduated from La Trobe University, Melbourne in 1995 with a Bachelor of Applied Science (Speech Pathology).

Catherine was a member of the Melbourne Youth Orchestra from 1991-1992 and the Chamber Strings of Melbourne from 1992-1994 which included an exciting tour to Europe and Russia. Moving to NSW in 1995, she performed with the SBS Radio and Television Youth Orchestra in Sydney from 1996-1998. During this time in Sydney she had ‘cello lessons with Susan Blake.

Based in Oxford and Wells in England (1999-2001) Catherine gained the Associate Diploma in Violoncello Performance from Trinity College, London in 2000 and the Licentiate Diploma in Violoncello

Performance from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London in 2001.

Since returning to Australia in 2002, Catherine has done freelance performing with a variety of orchestral and chamber ensembles including Steel City Strings and WIN Wollongong Symphony Orchestra. She has been performing with the Macarthur String Quartet since 2002. Currently she is principal cello with the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra and in Concert Series 1 in 2017 she was the soloist in the Saint-Saens *Cello Concerto in A Minor*.

Catherine now teaches cello privately in Bowral, at Bowral Public School, Oxley College and Frensham School.

RICHARD WAGNER (1813–83)

Overture to *Rienzi*

Rienzi was Wagner's third completed opera. It is based on the novel, *Rienzi, the Last of the Roman Tribunes*, by Edward Bulwer-Lytton. Set in Rome in the mid-14th century, it is the story of the patriotic Cola Rienzi, a Roman Tribune, who endeavours to restore the city to its former greatness by freeing it from the tyranny of corrupt nobles. Despite his popular support, he is eventually overthrown by the nobles of the court and assassinated.

With *Rienzi*, Wagner decided to try his hand at an opera in the grand French style, and created a spectacle in five acts over more than six hours. He originally aspired to have it staged at the Grand Opéra in Paris but due to his youth and lack of influence it took two years and considerable efforts from his friend, Giacomo Meyerbeer, before a première performance was staged at the Dresden Opera House in 1842. Once *Rienzi* was finally presented to the public, it was an instant success and remained popular across Europe well into the late nineteenth century.

Although the full opera is rarely performed today, the Overture gives a good idea of the musical character of the whole and has remained a favourite on the concert platform. It opens atmospherically with a solo trumpet note, swelling from pianissimo to forte and then receding again, which in the opera represents the herald's summons to

the people. The slow main theme drawn from 'Rienzi's Prayer' in the fifth act is one of Wagner's most majestic and eloquent melodies. Bursting forth after a very sustained and stately introduction, the main *Allegro energico* section is full-blooded and effectively scored. It incorporates two major themes: the battle hymn, 'Santo spirito Cavaliere' and 'Rienzi's prayer'. A rousing military march brings the overture to a close in a massive Wagnerian soundscape.

It is interesting to note that Adolf Hitler claimed to have been profoundly influenced by his viewing of the opera. He attended a performance in 1906 and was transformed by the title character's charismatic leadership, stirring oratory, and sense that he alone could redeem mankind. He eventually acquired the only autographed manuscript of the work, which was destroyed around the time of his death in 1945.

JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809)

Concerto No.1 in C for Violoncello and Orchestra, Hob. VIIb:1

Moderato
Adagio
Allegro

In 1761, Joseph Haydn was appointed Vice-Kapellmeister to the court of Prince Paul Anton Esterházy, which was the beginning of a thirty year relationship with the Esterházy dynasty. Haydn was directly engaged in hiring musicians to expand and improve the small resident orchestra, which it is thought he led from the second violin desk. His compositions from this early stage, such as concertos and symphonies with extended solos, demonstrate great confidence in the abilities of some of his musicians. The orchestra's principal cellist, Joseph Franz Weigl, was one of the individual virtuosi Haydn had in mind when he wrote his *Cello Concerto in C Major*. Thought to be composed during Haydn's early years at Esterházy between 1761 and 1765, the score was lost for many years, its existence only known from a catalogue prepared by Haydn's copyist, Joseph Essler. It was not until 1961 that a manuscript of the concerto was discovered in a collection of papers from another noble estate deposited in the Prague National Museum. It

was identified by the few bars that were given in Essler's catalogue and also authenticated by the signature of Joseph Weigl on the score.

Composed during the years of transition from the Baroque to the Classical period, the concerto shows traits of both the old and the new styles. All three movements are laid out in the traditional Baroque 'ritornello' style: a main theme is played by the orchestra and repeated as an occurring refrain while in between the cello repeats, elaborates and develops the theme as a soloist with a supportive but subdued accompaniment. Each movement reaches a dramatic climax with a cadenza or elaborate flourish for the cello alone that resolves into the final 'ritornello'. The harmonic and melodic components are largely Classical in style as are the cello sections which take on the Classical properties of exposition, development and recapitulation. A novel feature in the concerto is the frequent use of the then recently invented thumb-position technique, which revolutionized both cello playing and the music that was written for the instrument; the last movement in particular could not be played without using the new technique, which extends the range and enables the cellist to play in the very highest register of the instrument.

The first movement, marked *Moderato*, begins with a confident, courtly theme with dotted rhythms; in contrast, the second subject is softer and more graceful, establishing a lyrical mood. When the cello enters and takes command of the themes, it launches the first theme with a resonant C major chord, eventually presenting each melody in an increasingly ornate manner. The development engages the cellist in intense passagework derived from the primary theme, while reappearances of the second subject allow the soloist to sing more expansively. Haydn works through the theme groups in sequence twice before reaching the cadenza and a brief coda derived from the movement's opening bars.

The second movement *Adagio* provides a platform for the warm and expressive tone of the cello. Haydn dispenses with the oboes and horns and has the cello emerge from the sound of the string orchestra with a long powerfully expressive note. The theme is an eloquent aria that both soloist and orchestra extend through varied re-statements.

A rousing *Allegro* finale displays the most spirited virtuosity of the concerto with vivacious verve and wit typical of Haydn's familiar

style. As in the slow movement, almost every time the cello enters, it emerges from the orchestra with a single, long note; this time, however, the long note is transformed into a rapidly ascending C major scale. Intricate high-register passagework is combined with melodic phrases of exceptional lyricism in a wonderful showcase of the cello's qualities.

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Symphony No 4 in D Minor, Op 120 "Clara Symphony"

I. Ziemlich langsam - Lebhaft
II. Romanze: Ziemlich langsam
III. Scherzo: Lebhaft
IV. Langsam – Lebhaft

Robert Schumann is considered one of the great figures of Romanticism in music, much loved for his deeply lyrical and vividly imaginative creations. With the exception of piano music, which he composed throughout his life, Schumann tended to concentrate on one category of music at a time in his creative efforts. In 1841 he composed three symphonic works. At the end of January that year he wrote his *'Spring' Symphony* (*No. 1 in B-flat*); a few months later he composed the *Overture, Scherzo and Finale*, which he initially labelled 'Symphonette'; in September he produced his *Symphony in D minor* which he presented to his young wife, Clara, on her birthday. As this was the second completed symphony, it was billed as *Symphony No. 2* when it was given its première. However, this first performance in Leipzig, with the composer himself conducting, was a disaster. Disappointed by its failure, Schumann withdrew the work and only returned to it ten years later, after the completion of his less radical *C Major Symphony* and highly successful *'Rhenish' Symphony*. It is this 1851 revised version you will hear in our performances; renumbered as No.4, it was eventually published in 1853. Schumann's revisions were extensive, in both form and orchestration. He considered for a time calling the work a 'Symphonic Fantasy', his intention being to create a grand cyclic structure in which the musical material of the different movements or sections was completely unified. To achieve this, he

indicated in his revision that the four movements should be played without a break.

The Symphony opens slowly with a most evocative orchestral tone-painting, in which a strongly phrased motif that is to be the unifying feature of the entire work is played by the second violins and bassoons. The lively allegro that follows is built from a semiquaver figure derived by inverting the motif and breaking it with an octave leap. This movement's course is a journey from darkness into light, culminating in a hugely impressive climax. There is a pause on a held note and then the music slips into the slow movement.

The *Romanze* is brief and exquisitely fashioned. Its main elegiac melody features solo oboe playing with the cellos. In triple time and a tempo similar to the beginning of the symphony, Schumann recalls the motif of the first movement to remind us that this tender song has an integral part in the general symphonic design. A contrasting middle section extends this opening motif into a soft expressive tune with an elegant paraphrase on solo violin. Then the plaintive oboe/cello theme returns and after a momentary pause the *Scherzo* is launched.

The theme of the *Scherzo* is an elaboration of the motif, inverted and given a completely different character by the rhythm, dynamics and orchestration. In marked contrast, this very energetic music is provided with a gentle trio in B flat major, which includes the graceful figuration that the solo violin added to the recurring motif in the middle section of the *Romanze.* The *Scherzo* returns and then the trio is heard again but this time slowed down to provide a seamless link to the opening section of the Finale.

The final movement, like the first, has a slow introduction; this serves as a bridge from the quiet conclusion of the S*cherzo* to the dramatically charged finale proper, which commences with a powerful proclamation of the motif theme and then cites other material from the preceding movements. A bustling orchestral build-up leads to a full-bodied fanfare from the horns and a robust dance-like motif is introduced by the cellos during a brief respite before the final rush to the exuberant conclusion.

The Fourth Symphony is now widely regarded as one of Schumann's most original and inventive works. In departing radically

from the classical forms of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, it paved the way for the great late Romantic symphonies of Brahms and Dvořák.

Notes by Elizabeth Dalton.

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ENCORE SOCIETY

The Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra wishes to acknowledge the following members of its Encore Society. Each one of the following has made a tax-deductible donation to ensure that the SHSO is able to maintain its artistic and community vision. We thank you.

Jan and Frank Conroy
Mrs M McCutcheon
Mrs Pamela Tallents
Ms Cheryl Tucker

We also thank those music lovers who have donated anonymously.

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 Fundraising Chair on 0416 192 229.

If you have a favourite musician/instrument in the orchestra and you wish to sponsor their “chair”, please pick up a “Musical Chairs” flyer at the front desk and see how you can provide ongoing support for the SHSO.

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Wingecarribee Shire Council, Stiles Music Publications,
the many businesses that displayed our flyers, and the
volunteers who assisted with setting up the hall,
front of house, and refreshments at the
interval and the reception.

Photographs by Christopher Donaldson

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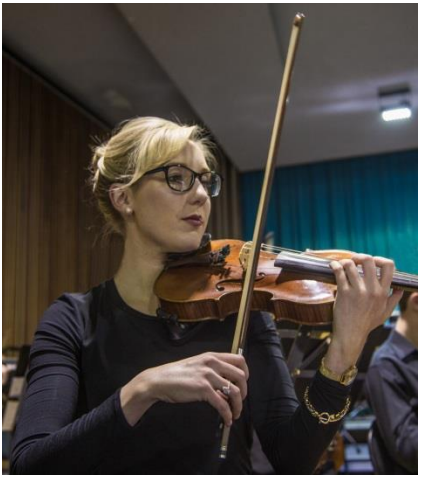
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Southern Highlands

Symphony Orchestra

2018 concert series

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