

Southern Highlands

**Symphony  
Orchestra**



**2019 CONCERT SERIES**



**SATURDAY 30<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 7.30PM**

**SUNDAY 1st DECEMBER 2.30PM**

**BOWRAL MEMORIAL HALL**

**Patrons:**

Ann Carr-Boyd AM and Andrew Ford OAM

**ANDREW FORD**

*Big Bang*

**SERGEI RACHMANINOV**

*Piano Concerto No.2*

Soloist Lisa Kawai

1. *Moderato*
2. *Adagio sostenuto*
3. *Allegro scherzando*

**INTERVAL**

Refreshments will be available from the Supper Room.

**PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY**

*The Nutcracker Suite*

1. *Miniature Overture*
2. *Characteristic Dances*
  - a. *March*
  - b. *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy*
  - c. *Russian Dance - Trepak*
  - d. *Arabian Dance*
  - e. *Chinese Dance*
  - f. *Dance of the Mirlitons*
3. *Waltz of the Flowers*

Dancers from Angus & Lucinda's Academie de Danse

**LEROY ANDERSON**

*A Christmas Festival*

**RECEPTION**

Following the Saturday performance there will be a reception to which all are invited. Enjoy the opportunity to meet the musicians.

# 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** – 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 and The Becroft 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 Penshurst West (where he pioneered primary school bands for the Department) and Frenchs Forest, The King's School, Holy Cross College, and Pymble Ladies' College. He has played in orchestras 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 Colin Brumby, Graham Powning and Alfred Hill, the latter for his PhD thesis, and has published many previously unavailable works by Australian composers.

## ANDREW FORD (b. 1957)



Photograph by Jim Rolan

Andrew Ford is a composer, writer and broadcaster and has won awards in all three capacities. Born in Liverpool, England in 1957, he was educated at the University of Lancaster. He came to Australia in 1983.

He has composed orchestral and chamber music, operas and music-theatre pieces, and a wide range of vocal and solo instrumental works. His music has been featured internationally at festivals in Adelaide, Aspen, Ferrara, Houston, Huddersfield, Istanbul, Kuhmo, Seoul, Sydney and at Salzburg's Aspekte. All the major Australian orchestras have played his works, along with groups such as the London Sinfonietta, the Australia Ensemble, Het Trio, the Hong Kong Sinfonietta, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble and the Black Dyke Band. His piano pieces have been played by Peter Donohoe, Lisa Moore, Gerard Willems and Michael Kieran Harvey, his vocal music sung by Katie Noonan, Teddy Tahu Rhodes, Yvonne Kenny and, above all, Gerald English, for whose voice Andrew composed a dozen pieces.

His music has won national and international awards. He has been composer in residence with the Australian Chamber Orchestra (1992 - 94), the Australian National Academy of Music (2009) and the Australian Festival of Chamber Music (2009). He was the Peggy Glanville-Hicks Composer Fellow (1998-2000) and Australia Council Music fellow (2005-06), during which period he composed, among other works, *Scenes from Bruegel*, jointly commissioned by the West Australian Symphony Orchestra and the New Juilliard Ensemble, and first performed by the latter at Alice Tully Hall, New York in April 2006.

Recent works include a symphony for the Orchestra of the Australian National Academy of Music under Brett Dean (2008); an opera *Rembrandt's*

*Wife* (libretto by Sue Smith) for Victorian Opera (Green Room Award for Best Opera 2010); *Blitz* for the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra (2011); string quartets for the Brodsky Quartet, the Noise, the Australian String Quartet, and the Flinders Quartet; song cycles, *Last Words*, for Jane Sheldon and the Seraphim Trio (2014 Art Music Award), *Comeclose and sleepnow* (2016) for Gian Slater and the Monash Art Ensemble, and *Nature* (2019) for ensembles in Stockholm, Sydney, Oslo and Dublin; a *Missa Brevis* (2015) commissioned by four Australian cathedrals; the electric guitar concerto, *Raga* (2015), for Zane Banks and the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and *Peter Pan* (2015-17), an opera – again with Sue Smith – for Gondwana Choirs.

Beyond composing, Andrew has been an academic (on the Faculty of Creative Arts at the University of Wollongong from 1983-95) and given lectures in the USA, Europe and Asia. In 1998 he won the Geraldine Pascall Prize for critical writing. Ford wrote and presented the ABC radio series *Illegal Harmonies* (first heard in 1997), *Dots on the Landscape* (2001), *Music and Fashion* (2005), *The Sound of Pictures* (2010) and *Earth Dances* (2015). He has also written nine books – most recently *The Song Remains the Same* – and, since 1995, presented *The Music Show* each weekend on ABC Radio National. In 2018, he was H.C. Coombs Creative Arts Fellow at the Australian National University.

## LISA KAWAI



Lisa began learning the piano at the age of four and since then has learned from many wonderful piano teachers including Anthony Baldwin, Elizabeth Jones, Gordon Watson and Trevor Noffke. Owing to her father's work, she spent her early childhood in Tokyo and Toronto and her senior high school and university years in Sydney. She obtained her LMusA shortly after graduating from Sydney University with a Science degree, majoring in Pure Mathematics.

In 2006 Lisa and her family moved to the Highlands where she has been blessed with many and varied musical opportunities. Performing piano concertos, playing in orchestras and being part of intimate chamber music groups were all things she had secretly dreamed of, but never imagined would become a reality.

Lisa's first piano concerto performance was with the Highlands Sinfonia in 2008 where she played Mozart No. 21. She has since played many piano concertos with the Highland Sinfonia including Beethoven No.3 and No.5, Schumann, Grieg, and Mozart No.20 and No.23.

She performed Grieg's *Piano Concerto* with the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra in 2015 and a concerto by Leroy Anderson with the Southern Highlands Concert Band in 2017.

Lisa still finds it extraordinary that she is playing a Rachmaninov piano concerto. She is very grateful to Allan for trusting that she could do this, and for the warm support of the orchestra and audience.

## **ANDREW FORD**

### ***Big Bang* (2019)**

The Big Bang theory places the creation of the universe some 13.8 billion years ago, with our own planet formed 9.3 billion years later. My piece, *Big Bang*, lasts a mere seven minutes, but operates on a similar – and audible – principle.

The music expands to a point at which it can expand no further, then explodes, after which it all starts again. There are two such moments in the piece, one at the beginning and one at the end.

I didn't set out to compose a work about exploding universes, but I did want a very clear structure for the piece – one that an audience would immediately grasp. Wondering what his might be, I turned on the television one evening and there were Julia Zemiro and Brian Cox talking about the Big Bang.

There was one other reason the title seemed apt. Around the time of the piece's commission, Richard Gill died. Richard was a friend and he conducted my music more than once. At Victorian Opera, he commissioned

*Rembrandt's Wife* from me and Sue Smith, and conducted the premiere. He was, of course, also a patron of this orchestra. So I decided to dedicate this piece to his memory. Richard was such a vital force in music and the educational equivalent of a 'Big Bang' in many people's lives. He launched dozens of musical careers, and – perhaps more importantly – led tens of thousands of listeners to a deeper and more knowledgeable love of music.

*Big Bang* was commissioned by the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra with backing from Create NSW's Country Arts Support Program, a devoted funding program administered by Regional Arts NSW and Southern Tablelands Arts on behalf of the NSW Government.

Note by Andrew Ford

**SERGEI RACHMANINOV** (1873-1943)  
*Piano Concerto No.2 in C Minor*, Op. 18

Rachmaninov's beautiful *Second Piano Concerto* is dedicated to his psychiatrist, Dr Nikolai Dahl. In 1897, three years before writing the concerto, the young composer had fallen into terrible depression by the hammering his first symphony had received at the hands of the critics. It seemed he would never have the confidence to compose again. Then in the spring of 1900 his aunt sent him to Dr Dahl. Within a few months, Rachmaninov was composing again and with such speed and self-assuredness that he had completed the second and third movements of a new concerto, his second for the piano. Before the end of the year, the concerto had been premièred in Moscow to tremendous critical acclaim, with several critics expressing keen interest in how Rachmaninov would complete the work. The first movement was composed early in 1901 and the première of the full concerto took place at a Moscow Philharmonic Society Concert on November 9<sup>th</sup> to a rapturous reception surpassing all expectations.

The concerto opens in a strikingly original way with eight bars of sonorous, bell-like chords on the piano, gathering harmonic tension and dynamic force as they unfold. The sound of bells meant a great deal to Rachmaninov. As a child he had been deeply impressed by the chimes of St Sophia's Cathedral, Novgorod, and in later life he frequently expressed the view that bells could suggest a variety of human emotions – here dark and tragic. Soon the strings glide in over the piano to develop the mood with a sombre and passionate theme in a minor key. Typically Russian, Rachmaninov makes the most of this rich melody and allows it to unfold gradually. At first the soloist acts as an accompanist, embellishing the harmonies with sonorous broken chords but soon the piano steps forward as a vocal soloist in a grand Romantic manner with one of Rachmaninov's most

familiar and beloved themes. A dramatic development is introduced by a series of powerful brass chords. It begins with the first melody on violas and an ominous rhythmic figure on cellos and basses increasing the tension with an echo of the bell motif. Then the soloist takes command with a series of dazzling runs. Finally, the second melody reappears in the violas with music that is now fervent and imploring before arriving at an impassioned climax with massive triplets from the piano. A feverishly excited bridge passage leads into the stormy recapitulation and the music continues with a rousing march on the piano. The tension subsides and a solo horn presents the second theme above shimmering strings and for a moment all is peace. The sense of relief is short-lived as a terse coda finishes the movement with an angry outburst from the strings and piano.

The second movement, *Adagio sostenuto*, begins like the opening with a short chordal introduction. The warm soothing strings and low woodwind and horns subtly lift the music from the gloomy key of C minor to a radiant E major, creating an atmosphere of otherworldliness. The piano enters with a series of rippling triplets above which the flute and clarinet sing a haunting theme. As the soloist develops the melody with accompanying woodwinds and strings, the tension mounts. The tempo increases and a brilliant cadenza climaxes with three powerful chords. Just as it seems the earlier serenity has been lost, two low flutes enter very softly and the music resumes its original calm. Muted violins and then the solo piano bring the movement to a beautiful, restful close.

The finale, *Allegro scherzando*, begins martially with a jerky rhythmic figure on the lower instruments, which is quickly overtaken by an opening showy cadenza from the piano. After a few bars of nervous dialogue between woodwind and piano, the first theme based on a repeated pulsing rhythm is introduced. For a while it seems the martial elements are in command of the music but this fades as the violas and solo oboe introduce the lyrical second theme in marked contrast. The two themes vie for prominence as the mood of the movement shifts abruptly from jittery agitation to ecstatic rhapsody. Rachmaninov concludes the work with a victorious return of the second subject, richly scored for piano and full orchestra. No sooner has this great theme finished than the piano breaks into frenzied figurations accompanied by loud acclamations from the orchestra. With these triumphant sounds, it seems the troubled young composer has conquered his demons and is now celebrating the long-awaited return of his muse.

**PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)**  
*The Nutcracker Suite*

*The Nutcracker*, Tchaikovsky's third and final ballet, was based on Alexander Dumas' adaptation of a story by E.T.A. Hoffman, and tells the story of a young girl named Clara who receives her most cherished Christmas present – a nutcracker – during a Christmas party. Several fantasies occur throughout the ballet, including toys coming to life, a battle with an army of mice, and the nutcracker's transformation into a prince who takes Clara to his Kingdom of Sweets and introduces her to a variety of subjects in a colourful stream of character dances.

*The Nutcracker Suite* is an arrangement of some of the music of the ballet and was created and performed in 1891 before Tchaikovsky completed the ballet itself. (The score for *The Nutcracker*, Op. 71, was finished about a month after the première of the suite, and the ballet was first staged at the Maryinsky Theater in St. Petersburg on December 18, 1892.) The reason for this had little to do with the ballet, and was more because of Tchaikovsky's eagerness to be ahead of his colleagues in introducing a new sound to Russia. In 1891, when passing through Paris on his way to America, he heard Victor Mustel's newly developed instrument, the celeste, a keyboard instrument in the form of a small upright piano in which metal plates over resonating boxes are struck by hammers and sustained in the manner of the piano. Tchaikovsky was greatly intrigued by its "divinely beautiful tone", particularly in regard to the ballet commission he had just accepted. As he revealed some time later, he was having trouble depicting the Sugar Plum Fairy, because choreographer Marius Petipa wanted the Sugar Plum Fairy's music to sound like "drops of water shooting from a fountain". The celeste provided him with the perfect solution. As soon as Tchaikovsky returned home from America, he had his publisher, Pyotr Jurgenson, order a celeste for use in *The Nutcracker*, swearing him to secrecy in case his contemporaries, Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov, "get wind of it and ... use it for unusual effects before me."

While the *Suite* does not include much of the music that carries the drama of the plot, it does present a sampling of the wonderful melodies and distinctive tone colours that characterize all the music of the ballet. It begins as does the ballet, with an *Overture*, orchestrated with light strings and winds, which invites us to enter the magical world of the fairy tale. Immediately following is the *March* which introduces the Christmas party scene. Simple and straightforward, the first theme is repeated with almost childlike enjoyment. The full power of the orchestra with resounding brass and percussion, underpinned by the pizzicato strings in typical Tchaikovsky style,

is expressive of the joy and spirit of the festive season. It is in the *Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy* that Tchaikovsky displays his masterly use of orchestral colour in using the celeste to depict the lightness and grace of the fairy. This was the first use of the celeste as an orchestral instrument and, as Tchaikovsky had confidently expected, it made such an impression on its first hearing that the audience demanded an encore. Even today this piece is still the most celebrated use of the instrument.

The dance that follows is the *Trepak*, a national dance of Russia. Based on a rhythmic figure heard in the first bar, it is extremely lively and spirited in character and one can readily imagine spectacular leaping of leather-booted Cossacks. In the short coda the tempo increases building momentum to the end. By contrast, the *Arabian Dance* is slow, sinuous and exotic. It is scored mainly for the woodwinds and muted strings, though the tambourine is occasionally heard. The plaintive cry of the oboe recalls the sound of the Middle-Eastern shawm and reveals Tchaikovsky's Romantic obsession with the exotic. This exoticism is echoed in the *Chinese Dance*, with the use of the glockenspiel and the triangle. The *Dance of the Mirlitons* is a depiction of some toys that come to life in the 'divertissement' of the ballet's second act. A mirliton is a musical instrument rather like a reed-pipe. Appropriately Tchaikovsky gives the first theme to three flutes, lightly accompanied by pizzicato in the lower strings, and then a second section in the minor key features the brass, drums and cymbals, before a return to the first theme at the close.

*Waltz of the Flowers* brings the suite to a grand conclusion. The spotlight falls first on the harp, with a generous cadenza, then on the four horns that introduce the main tune, and then on the strings, whose sweeping melody is one of the most endearing elements of the score. Brimming with grace and elegance, this waltz shows Tchaikovsky at his most inspired. Taking the form which the Viennese had proudly called their own, he raises it to a higher level of sophistication with the imaginative use of countermelodies and decorative figures.

We are delighted to be joined by dancers from Angus & Lucinda's Academie de Danse.

## **LEROY ANDERSON** (1908-1975) *A Christmas Festival*

Leroy Anderson was described by John Williams as "one of the great American masters of light orchestral music". His musical education began as a young child with lessons from his pianist mother and he went on to study composition at Harvard with George Enescu and Walter Piston. A linguist of

several languages, including Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Icelandic, German, French, Italian, and Portuguese, he served with U.S. Intelligence in Iceland as an interpreter during the Second World War. He almost accepted a position as language teacher at a private school in Pennsylvania, but fortunately backed out of that option in favour of composing and was soon "discovered" by Arthur Fiedler, who commissioned him to write many works for the Boston Pops Orchestra. He quickly became one of the most popular composers of light music in America and was best known for his miniatures and arrangements.

*A Christmas Festival* was composed in 1950 at the request of Arthur Fiedler, who asked him to write a piece of music for the holiday season. The result was a tapestry of well-known Christmas songs and carols woven into what Anderson described as a concert overture. He uses *Joy to the World*, *Jingle Bells* and *O, Come All Ye Faithful* as the main thematic material. Other tunes such as *Deck the Halls*, *Good King Wenceslas*, *God Rest You Merry Gentlemen*, *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*, *The First Noel* and *Silent Night* are subtly interwoven, with instrumental variety giving colour to the orchestration.

Programme notes for Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky and Anderson  
by Elizabeth Dalton.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Support from the following is gratefully acknowledged: Angus & Lucinda's Academie de Danse, Southern Highlands Concert Band, The Highlands Sinfonia, Wingecarribee Shire Council, photographs by Christopher Donaldson, Robert Crowe, Flowers by Van Til, Artemis Wines, Sweetwater Creek Christmas Puddings, Destination Southern Highlands, Brian Haydon at Highlands FM, ABC Illawarra, Graeme Day at 2ST, LOCALlure, Audible Hearing, Judith O'Brien OAM, Janet Ninio for the loan of her harp, Anne Donaldson, David McFarlane at Mittagong Print and Design, Stiles Music Publications, Southern Highlands News, the businesses that displayed our flyers, and those who worked on the set-up, front of house, refreshments, and stage management.

Special thanks to John Uliana  
who has lent his splendid grand piano for us all to enjoy.

## **FRIENDS OF THE ORCHESTRA**

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### **SPONSORSHIP**

The experience of enjoying live symphonic music is unique to every member of our audience and every member has the opportunity to ensure 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.

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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	Jenny Simons OAM
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We also thank those music lovers who have donated anonymously.

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Wind and brass players are listed alphabetically, as are strings after principals.

New players are welcome. Contact: Allan Stiles on 0415 309 760 or Roma Dix on 0432 466 882

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# **SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONCERTS 2020**

## **CONCERT SERIES ONE**

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> at 7.30 and Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> March at 2.30

<b>Sibelius</b>	<i>Karelia Suite</i> Op. 11
<b>Pierre Rode</b>	<i>Violin Concerto No.7</i> soloist Emily Sinden
<b>Nielsen</b>	<i>Symphony No.1</i>

## **CONCERT SERIES TWO - STAGE AND SCREEN GALA**

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 and Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June at 2.30

<b>John Williams</b>	<i>The Force Awakens</i> – Suite from <i>Star Wars 7</i>
<b>Morricone</b>	<i>Gabriel's Oboe</i> – theme from <i>The Mission</i>
<b>Schönberg</b>	Suite from <i>Les Misérables</i> conductor Jillian Bridge
<b>Beethoven</b>	<i>Leonore Overture No.3</i>
<b>Bizet</b>	<i>Carmen Suite</i> with A & L Academie de Danse
<b>John Williams</b>	March from <i>Raiders of the Lost Ark</i>

## **CONCERT SERIES THREE**

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 and Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September at 2.30

<b>Tchaikovsky</b>	<i>Capriccio Italien</i>
<b>Debussy</b>	<i>Première Rhapsodie</i> soloist Alexandra Donaldson
<b>Haydn</b>	<i>Violin Concerto No.2</i> soloist Lisa Gemell /conductor Eliza Corley
<b>Composition Competition</b> – winning piece	
<b>Bizet</b>	<i>L'Arlésienne Suite No.1</i>
<b>Alfred Hill</b>	<i>Carnival Symphony</i>

## **CONCERT SERIES FOUR**

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30 and Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November at 2.30

<b>Paul Paviot</b>	<i>Overture A Bit of This, That and the Other</i>
<b>Franz Liszt</b>	<i>Piano Concerto No.1 in Eb</i> soloist Luke Bowen
<b>Graham Powning</b>	<i>Symphony No.1</i>
<b>Dvořák</b>	<i>Slavonic Dance No. 8</i>

**Subscriptions are available until 26<sup>th</sup> January.**

The SHSO reserves the right to change the repertoire.