

WHEN GEORGE MET ARNOLD



SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PATRON Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

The Orchestra's first chief conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdenêk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013. followed by David Robertson as Chief Conductor from 2014 to 2019. Australian-born Simone Young commenced her role as Chief Conductor in 2022, a year in which the Orchestra made its return to a renewed Sydney Opera House Concert Hall. The Sydney Symphony Orchestra's concerts encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, and collaborations with guest artists from all genres, reflecting the Orchestra's versatility and diverse appeal. Its award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music. and the Orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program.

PERFORMING IN THIS CONCERT

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Andrew Haveron

Concertmaster

Alexandra Osborne

Associate Concertmaster Jennifer Booth Sophie Cole

Sercan Danis

Claire Herrick

Georges Lentz

Emily Long

Alexandra Mitchell

Alexander Norton

Léone Ziegler Robert Smith^o

Benjamin Tjoa°

Dominic Azzi[†]

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Principal

Emma Jezek

Acting Associate Principal Alice Bartsch

Victoria Bihun

Emma Hayes

Shuti Huang

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Wendy Kong

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Nicole Masters Marcus Michelsen^o

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Adrian Wallis

Eliza Sdrauliaº

DOUBLE BASSES

Kees Boersma

Principal Dylan Holly

Richard Lynn

Benjamin Ward

Alexandra Elvin[†]

FLUTES Josh Batty

Principal

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Laura Cliff[†]

Lily Bryant*

OROFS

Callum Hogan

Edward Wang*

Miriam Cooney[†]

Guest Principal Cor Anglais

CLARINETS

Francesco Celata

Acting Principal

Olivia Hans-Rosenbaum*

Alexander Morris Principal Bass Clarinet

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Hayden Burget

Melissa Woodroffe*

Guest Principal Contrabassoon

HORNS

Guillaume Tétu*

Guest Principal **Euan Harvey**

Acting Principal

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Brent Grapes

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Cécile Glémot

Joel Walmsley[†]

TROMBONES

Scott Kinmont

Acting Principal

Jordan Mattinson[†]

Christopher Harris

Principal Bass Trombone

TUBA

Steve Rossé Principal

TIMPANI

Antoine Siguré

Principal

PERCUSSION

Timothy Constable Jack Peggie[†] Tim Brigden*

HARP

Natalie Wongo

Acting Principal

Bold Principal

* Guest Musician

^o Contract Musician

[†] Sydney Symphony Fellow

2024 CONCERT SEASON

Wednesday 15 May, 7pm

Concert Hall, Sydney Opera House

WHEN GEORGE MET ARNOLD A FRIENDSHIP FORGED IN MUSIC

ROGER BENEDICT conductor SIMON TEDESCHI piano

LAURENCE COY

director

CHRIS BURKE

Arnold

SAM O'SULLIVAN

George

EMILY WEARE

Hannah

GEORGE GERSHWIN (1898 –1937) ARR. DON ROSE Girl Crazy – Overture

GERSHWIN ARR.

Shall We Dance – Promenade (Walking the Dog)

-

SOL BERKOWITZ

SIMON TEDESCHI

Improvisation

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG

(1874–1951)

Notturno for Strings and Harp

Notturno for Strings and Harp

SCHOENBERG Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op.16 (1949 version)

iii. Farben (Colours)

GERSHWIN ORCH.
TIM BERENS
Rhapsody in Blue – extract

INTERVAL

SCHOENBERG

Accompaniment to a Cinematographic Scene,

Op.34 - extract

GERSHWIN

Catfish Row – Symphonic Suite from Porgy And Bess

ii. 'Porgy Sings'

SCHOENBERG String Quartet No.2, Op.10 (Arranged by the Composer for Strings)

i: Mäßig (Moderato)

GERSHWIN

Piano Concerto in F

iii: Allegro agitato

SCHOENBERG

Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op.16 (1949 version)

i: Vorgefühle (Premonitions)

SCHOENBERG

Piano Concerto, Op.42

iii: Adagio (extract)

SCHOENBERG

Pelleas und Melisande, Op.5

- extract

GERSHWIN ARR. ROMAN BENEDICT Embraceable You Post-concert Q&A

With Simon Tedeschi and Roger Benedict, live on stage, following tonight's performance.

Estimated durations

First half – 40 minutes Interval – 20 minutes Second half – 55 minutes

The concert will run for approximately two hours

Cover image

Millmaine Entertainment Australia

Music preparation

Roman Benedict

Principal Partner



ABOUT THE COMPOSERS

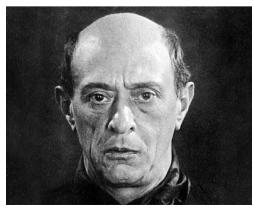
This program celebrates the music of two composers of very different backgrounds, working in very different styles, who nevertheless became firm friends and supporters of each other's work.

George Gershwin, born to Russian Jewish parents in Brooklyn, New York, in 1898, dropped out of school at 15. He made his living as a pianist, making piano rolls or 'song plugging' – demonstrating newly published songs in music shops, and playing in nightclubs. Inspired by the sophisticated work of composers such as Irving Berlin and Jerome Kern he began writing songs and published his first in 1916. When Al Jolson sana Swanee Gershwin's future was assured. Gershwin's hevday was the 1920s and 30s when he, often collaborating with his brother Ira, produced songs for shows that are still widely sung and one of the most important American operas - Porgy and Bess. It was an era of rapid technological and political change in the wake of World War I. Modern architecture by le Corbusier and Gropius began to appear (the Empire State Building rose in 1930): the visual arts saw the rise of Surrealism, and major works by Man Ray, Kandinsky, Brancusi; the Soviet Union was formally established, while socialists rioted in Vienna, and workers went on strike in Britain. The Wall Street Crash on 1929 changed everything, with the succeeding decade seeing Depression, the rise of Fascism, the Spanish Civil War and finally World War II.

Gershwin had from an early age been interested in contemporary art music, both by American composers and Europeans such as Ravel, Stravinsky and Schoenberg. Arnold Schoenberg. born in Vienna to a Hungarian Jewish family, at first cultivated the opulent late-Romantic manner of composers like Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss, and Alexander Zemlinsky as we hear in works like Pelleas und Melisande from 1905. To him it was inevitable that the harmonic richness and chromaticism must be pushed further, such that the old sense of harmony as an opposition of consonant and dissonant chords (with consonance always triumphing) would give way to a music where all notes were created equal. This produced, in works like the last movements of the Second String Quartet of 1908, the pervasively dissonant sound known (not by Schoenberg) as atonality; in systematising this, Schoenberg worked on the principle that all twelve notes of the chromatic scale (all the black and white notes within an octave on the piano) had to be sounded an equal number of times. His solution was the twelve-note series: all notes in a row, with strict rules about when they could be sounded. The method still provokes strong reactions, but in fact is capable of producing music, as we hear in a work like the 1930 Accompaniment to a Cinematic Scene, of a huge range of colour, mood and emotion.







Arnold Schoenberg

ABOUT THE COMPOSERS

George met Arnold in the 1930s, when the older composer joined the influx of refugees from Hitler that settled in California. Schoenberg had been in Paris in 1933 when Hitler took power, and understood that it would be dangerous to return to Germany or Austria. He reaffirmed his Jewish heritage in Paris (dropping the German 'ö' from his surname) and set sail for the United States, living and working at first in Boston. In poor health, however, he moved to the warmer West Coast in 1934. In Gershwin. he found not only a composer whom he admired, but a fellow enthusiast for painting, and, perhaps more importantly, tennis. When Gershwin died, so young, in 1937 Schoenberg would write:

What he has achieved was not only to the benefit of a national American music, but also a contribution to the music of the whole world. In this meaning want to express the deepest grief for the deplorable loss to music, but may I mention that lose also a friend whose amiable personality was very dear to me.

Gershwin seems to have made a habit of dazzling established composers and then asking for lessons; possibly, the inevitable polite refusal became a badge of honour. If the stories are true, Stravinsky asked how much he earned, then suggested Gershwin should give him lessons; Ravel supposedly told him he should be 'a first-rate Gershwin rather than a second-rate Ravel'. Schoenberg is said to have made a similar response. Schoenberg was, of course, one of the greatest teachers, with students ranging from film composer like Alfred Newman to avantgarde figures like

Lou Harrison and, famously, John Cage, whom Schoenberg described as 'an inventor of genius'. Gershwin, while he never studied with Schoenberg, was 'classically' schooled - while working as a successful song-writer, between 1915 and 1921 he had taken lessons in 'classical' harmony and counterpoint. And he was fully aware of Schoenbera's music from at least the early 1920s when he attended the American premiere of *Pierrot* lunaire. In addition to playing tennis with Schoenberg, painting his portrait and making home movies with him, Gershwin (with Leopold Stokowski) endowed a scholarship at Boston's Malkin Conservatory for a student of Schoenberg in 1933, and underwrote the recording of Schoenberg's Fourth String Ouartet with the Kolisch Quartet.



Gershwin painting Schoenberg's portrait, courtesy Arnold Schönberg Centre, Vienna.

Gershwin's *Girl Crazy* (about a New York playboy that falls in love with an Arizona postmistress) appeared on Broadway in 1930 as a vehicle for Ethel Merman and Ginger Rogers with a band that included luminaries like Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller and Gene Krupa. It ran for 272 performances and left a residue of immortal hit songs such as 'I got rhythm', 'But not for me', 'Embraceable you' and 'Bidin' my time', as well as this buzzy overture.

As Phillip Sametz writes, George and his brother Ira:

returned to Hollywood...to write the songs for the musical film **Shall We Dance**, starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rodgers. It included some of their most enduring numbers, such as 'They All Laughed', 'Let's Call the Whole Thing Off' and 'They Can't Take That Away from Me'. This last was nominated for the best song Oscar but, in fine Academy Award tradition, lost out to that masterpiece of wit and style, the Harry Owens composition *Sweet Leilani*.

Although George Gershwin was not hired to compose any of the background music for *Shall We Dance*, he expressed his desire to do so, and wrote this charming vignette for a shipboard scene in which various characters (including the two leads) parade their dogs up and down the promenade deck.

Shall We Dance's title song sees Fred Astaire surrounded by a flock of Ginger Rogers lookalikes who disappear as he begins dancing with the real Miss Rogers.



George and Ira Gershwin

In his early twenties, Schoenberg's aspirations to be a musician were briefly derailed: on the death of his father he was obliged to get a real job and joined a Viennese bank in 1895. (The bank obligingly went bust soon after, leaving Schoenberg free to return to music, making a living from orchestrations and piano reductions of popular music.) During his time at the banks, he continued to play cello in the amateur string ensemble of the Polyhymnia Music Club, which was led by the composer (and later Schoenberg's brother-in-law) Alexander Zemlinsky; a review from early 1896 mentions a **Notturno** for strings and harp. The score was presumed lost until only recently, when the musicologist Antony Beaumont found the manuscript of an 'Adagio for harp and strings' in the Library of Congress, and identified it as the missing piece. There is some disagreement between editors as to whether Schoenberg was involved in the premiere.

It has been described by Charles Rosen as 'Brahmsian, even Dvořákian', opening out from warm, tonal lyricism in the alto and tenor regions of the band, adding the bright line of a solo violin and the delicate tracery of the harp as the music climbs ever higher.

As Gordon Williams explains:

Schoenberg's *Five Pieces* Op.16 is among those works, written around 1910, which marked the break between the classical-romantic tradition and the more extreme, modernist ethos of the 20th century. It was composed between May and August of 1909.

At this stage, Schoenberg was trying to find alternative ways of creating coherence in music which lacked the organising properties of key centres - music which, in other words, was 'atonal'. In early works Schoenberg had simply extended the logical potential of the extremely chromatic language of Mahler and Wagner. Soon, however, Schoenberg began to see that there was something ultimately redundant and hypocritical in maintaining a sense of key in music which is so tortuously chromatic; which spends so much of its time, and gains so much expressiveness, away from a key centre.

Complete 'emancipation of the dissonance' was achieved in works such as *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* (1908-09), and the Piano Pieces Op. 11 (1909). Finally Schoenberg's early atonal works dispensed with the requirement that even the most intensely dissonant relations should resolve. How did Schoenberg make up for the lack of a

traditional key signature? Five Pieces showed some of the possible solutions, establishing the notion that something other than the identity of the key can underpin a piece. For a start, these pieces maintain some link with traditional hearing patterns. The chromatic melodies appear as motifs, audibly recognisable.

As well, orchestral colour takes over some of the structural, delineating role of melody and harmony. *Five Pieces* was originally composed for a huge orchestra comprising 17 woodwind, 12 brass, celeste, harp, percussion and strings. Schoenberg's 1949 version reduces these forces a little, deleting a couple of winds, but the observation still holds.

No.3 is undoubtedly the most visionary of the five pieces. 'Farben' (Colours) consists of a minimum of harmonic or melodic activities. The interest resides almost completely in the changes in orchestral colouring. Listen closely to the first chord (c, g sharp, b, e', a') played first by two flutes, clarinet, bassoon and solo viola, and then replaced by cor anglais, second bassoon, horn, trumpet, with viola remaining the common factor. 'As gently as possible' was Schoenberg's instruction, so that the listener barely notices the transition. Schoenberg was here radically exploring the notion of a language of instrumental colours, which he would later name Klangfarbenmelodie (tone-colour melody).



Gershwin at the piano with (L-R) impresario Samuel Rothafel, Ferde Grofé and Paul Whiteman.

Gershwin was a little nervous when band leader Paul Whiteman commissioned him to write a piano concerto for a projected concert An Experiment in Modern Music in 1924, but Whiteman convinced Gershwin that he truly had the talent to write the piece in less than a month and assured him that he could delegate the orchestration to Ferde Grofé, the band's arranger, later composer of the Grand Canyon Suite. The concert took place at New York's Aeolian Hall on 12 February 1924, with people like Jascha Heifetz, Rachmaninov, numerous critics and Tin Pan Alley composers in the audience. Rhapsody in Blue was so successful that Gershwin was soon fulfilling commissions for Walter Damrosch of the New York Symphony-Philharmonic (Concerto in Fand An American in Paris). From now on, though, he was determined to do his own orchestration.

Rhapsody in Blue falls clearly into the standard 'classical' fast-slow-fast pattern; today we hear the brilliant finale.

Although he ended up in Hollywood – his neighbours included Shirley Temple and Tyrone Power – Schoenberg never worked in the movies. This isn't so much a question of style, so much as temperament: when he was asked to compose the score for the 1937 film *The Good Earth* he insisted that he'd need control over every other aspect of the movie, and the actors would be expected to deliver their lines to his specific rhythmic instruction. But he had always been fascinated by film music, and in 1930 was living in Berlin, a city with a film industry comparable with that of Hollywood.

The film to which he wrote his Accompaniment to a Cinematic Scene that year was imaginary, and is, as Mark Berry puts it, a 'miniature tonepoem' but, as he also says, 'many of the "effects" Schoenberg employs here would become stick vocabulary for later film composers', among them the use of twelve-note 'serial' method to create an effect of disorientation. Schoenberg did, it seem have a program or story in mind beginning with a quiet 'calm before the storm', a growing presentiment of danger, catastrophe and final salvation or deliverance, Conductor Otto Klemperer suggested that the Bauhaus artist Lázslo Móholy-Nagy make a film to go with it, but sadly that didn't not eventuate. Today we hear the opening moments of the piece.



Set for Porgy and Bess, Alvin Theatre New York

It's possible that Gershwin shot himself in the foot by calling *Porgy and Bess* a 'folk opera', and he didn't do himself or the work any favours by making huge cuts to it before the New York premiere in 1935. Since then though it has rightly come to be recognised as a great work; Gershwin's loving understanding of the musical idioms of African-Americans – not just in the jazz that brought forth the Rhapsody in Blue in 1924 but the music of the coastal communities in the deep south which are immortalised in the opera a decade later.

The opera was not, to put it mildly a success at first, and in 1936 Gershwin made a suite of five numbers from the opera, of which we hear one today. The suite, as Vincent Plush notes, 'disappeared from view until Lawrence D Stewart, Ira Gershwin's secretary, stumbled upon it 1958. By then, Robert Russell Bennett's famous *Symphonic Portrait of "Porgy and Bess"*...was firmly lodged in the orchestral repertory. To avoid confusion, Ira Gershwin retitled his brother's "scissors-and-paste" suite *Catfish Row.*'

Completed in 1908, Schoenberg's **Second String Quartet**, Op.10, is a watershed: it begins in F sharp minor, but by the end Schoenberg has dispensed with any sense of traditional diatonic, or major/minor, harmony. Not only did Schoenberg inaugurate atonal music in this work, he added a soprano solo who sings settings of two poems by Stefan George – most tellingly his 'Ecstasy', with its famous opening line, 'I feel the air from another planet'.

The first movement is composed, as Alex Ross puts it, in 'a fairly conventional late-Romantic language', reminding us of the traditional out of which Schoenberg's mature music grows.



Schoenberg's painting, The Red Gaze (1910)

As David Garrett writes:

Rhapsody in Blue, in which Gershwin first crossed the tracks from jazz and popular music to 'serious' music, caused a sensation and a controversy. When all the dust had settled, the pungent, memorable tunes and rhythms were still there: the Rhapsody is likely to remain Gershwin's most popular non-vocal piece.

In 1925, the year after Rhapsody in Blue, with the jazz craze still in full flood, the venerable but still enterprising conductor of the New York Symphony Society, Walter Damrosch, had an idea to encourage American composers and bring some jazz flavour into the concert hall. His Society commissioned Gershwin to compose a concerto and to appear as soloist in seven concerts with the New York Symphony beginning in December 1925.

It is said that the brashly selfconfident Gershwin, after accepting the commission, had to find out what a 'concerto' was. Be that as it may, Gershwin was determined to orchestrate the work himself, and bought a textbook of orchestration. His original title for the work was New York Concerto, and he began to write it in the Gershwin family home at 103rd Street; or, when that became too crowded with distracting friends and relatives, in the nearby Whitehall Hotel. The Australian-born pianist Ernest Hutcheson, then a staff member and later president of the Juilliard School, made available his studio at out-of-town Chautaugua. Some of the concerto was composed there.

The *Concerto in F* is in fact a string of highly effective melodies, involving a certain amount of repetition (including reminiscences of the first movement in the third), not much development, and some quasi-symphonic linking passages between the big tunes.

The final movement, in Gershwin's own words, 'is an orgy of rhythms, starting violently and keeping to the same pace throughout.'

Returning to Schoenberg's *Five Pieces*, Gordon Williams notes that:

Carl Dahlhaus, writing in Schoenberg and the New Music, claims that Schoenberg's Five Pieces is bound up with the 19th century tradition of program music. This is in contrast to most commentaries on the work which stress that Schoenberg added movement titles after the work's completion, reluctantly, at his publisher's request. Yet, Schoenberg's complete explanation, when fully quoted, complicates any attempt to categorise these pieces as absolute music. 'For,' said Schoenberg: ' ... the wonderful thing about music is that one can tell all, so that the educated listener understands it all, and yet one has not given away one's secrets, the things one doesn't admit even to oneself. Whereas titles are a giveaway... The titles I shall perhaps give do indeed give nothing away, being partly technical, partly very obscure.'

In the first piece, 'Vorgefühle' (Premonitions), several germinal ideas are presented within the space of a few bars; fragmentary shapes strikingly juxtaposed.

The **Piano Concerto**, Schoenberg's last major orchestral piece, likewise seems to have been grounded in non-musical ideas. As Richard Toop explains:

At some stage – we don't know whether it was before or after composing the piece – Schoenberg jotted down a brief program for the individual movements:

- 1. Life was so easy
- 2. Suddenly hatred broke out
- 3. A grave situation was created
- 4. But life goes on.

It's doubtful whether too much importance should be attached to these headings – after all, Schoenberg chose not to make them public. But apart from their usefulness in establishing a general mood (and in emphasising just how un-traumatic the emotional world of the outer movements is, in relation to what listeners often expect of Schoenberg), they are a reminder that beneath the classical surface of Schoenberg's later works there still lurks the former composer of Straussian symphonic poems...

[in the final movement] despite initial markings such as giocoso ...there are soon darker shadows. Life may indeed 'go on', but this is, after all, music written at the height of the Second World War. Though never a 'political composer', Schoenberg had just written a savagely ironic Ode to Napoleon which is a thinly-disguised 'Ode against Hitler', and was soon to compose a brief but searing post-Holocaust work entitled A Survivor from Warsaw. Nevertheless, the closing bars of the Piano Concerto are exuberant and triumphant.

Belgian playwright Maurice Maeterlinck (1862-1949) completed his *Pelléas et Mélisande* in 1890.

The mythical kingdom of Allemonde is ruled by the old and frail king Arkël. While hunting, the king's grandson Golaud becomes lost, and comes across Mélisande, weeping in distress beside a spring. She is petrified of this grizzled, middle-aged man, and cannot answer any questions about who she is or where she is from, but eventually agrees to go with him, and we discover, to marry him. When they return to the castle Mélisande meets Golaud's younger half-brother, Pelléas, who himself is in distress at the imminent death of his father and of a close friend. Pelléas and Mélisande become affectionate friends, causing Golaud to become increasingly jealous, convinced that they are lovers. He spies on them, and terrorises Pelléas by dragging him into the vaults of the castle. When his father recovers, Pelléas is finally free to travel and visit his dying friend, at which point he realises that he is, indeed, in love with Mélisande. Golaud hears Pelléas declare his love for Mélisande, and kills him with his sword. Mélisande escapes, but soon after dies giving birth to Golaud's child as the castle servants enter and surround her.

Schoenberg composed his tone-poem, in which he 'tried to mirror every detail...with only a few omissions and changes to the order of scenes', in 1902, and conducted its premiere, to a less than enthusiastic audience, in Vienna in 1905.

One of the hit songs from *Girl Crazy*, '*Embraceable You*' was in fact written for an earlier show, *East is West*, which seems to have gone south. Judy Garland guaranteed the song's immortality, singing it in the 1943 film of *Girl Crazy*.

Notes by Gordon Kerry, Gordon Williams, David Garrett, Richard Toop.

THANK YOU

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Your donations help bring music to vulnerable communities, inspire the next generation of musicians and music-lovers and share the joy of live performances far and wide across New South Wales.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ROGER BENEDICT conductor

Roger Benedict's career as a conductor has been informed and enriched by more than two decades as a principal player in some of the world's leading orchestras, by his extensive work as a soloist and chamber musician, and through his deep involvement in orchestral training and development. Over the last 15 years Roger has earned a reputation as a musician's musician, a conductor of deep musical convictions and a highly engaging performer and communicator.

From 1991–2000 Roger was Principal Viola in the Philharmonia Orchestra, London, and following that held the same position in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

From 2002–2021 he was Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony Fellowship Program and was responsible for building it into one of the world's leading professional training programs for musicians. He now holds the position of Chief Conductor at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

A regular guest conductor with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Roger has conducted the orchestra in subscription concerts at the Sydney Opera House, at City Recital Hall and on tour. He also enjoys regular collaborations with other Australian (including the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and Australian Youth Orchestra) and UK orchestras (including Southbank Sinfonia and National Youth Orchestra).

Roger has gained admiration for his adventurous and imaginative programming and for his dedication to outreach and community activity, leading concerts and workshops in prisons, aged care facilities and the corporate sector. He conceived and conducted several highly successful fundraising concerts with Orchestra for Life, raising significant sums for suicide prevention and Indigenous mental health charities.

Roger has held teaching appointments at the Royal Northern College of Music (UK) and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (where he is currently an Associate Professor) and he gives masterclasses throughout Europe and Asia.

Roger has enjoyed considerable success as a solo viola player. As a soloist he has appeared with the Philharmonia Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, the New London Orchestra and the Ulster Orchestra in the UK as well as the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Canberra Symphony Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestra Ensemble Kanazawa (Japan).

Roger has released several highly acclaimed recordings for the Melba and ABC Classic labels, including two with Simon Tedeschi: *A Winter's Tale* and *Debussy – Ravel*.



Roger Benedict

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

SIMON TEDESCHI piano

Simon Tedeschi is one of Australia's most renowned classical pianists and a critically acclaimed author. Recipient of the Young Performer of the Year Award, the Creativity Foundation's Legacy Award (USA), the New York Young Jewish Pianist Award and a Centenary of Federation Medal, he has performed for audiences, royalty and world leaders worldwide, from the Sydney Opera House to Carnegie Hall. Acclaimed by respected critics and peers as 'true greatness' (Sydney Morning Herald), Simon performed his first Mozart piano concerto in the Sydney Opera House aged nine, later studying and performing in the USA. Since returning to Australia in 2009, he regularly performs as soloist with all the major Australian symphony orchestras, and tours nationally for festivals, venues and presenters including Musica Viva Australia. Uncommonly for a classical pianist, Tedeschi also dabbles in jazz, and has cowritten and toured internationally the Sydney Opera House's Meeting Mozart childrens' show, and a number of shows combining words and music, for Monkey Baa Theatre, and with Australian theatre icon, John Bell.

In 2024, Tedeschi's major concert engagements include When George Met Arnold with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra; various performances around the country of With love, Amadeus with John Bell; regional touring for Musica Viva Australia; and a new program for UKARIA's Jazz series (Adelaide) with leading iazz musicians.

2023 engagements included performances with the Sydney and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras; festival appearances with John Bell, and jazz vocalist/violinist George Washingmachine at Blackheath Chamber Music Festival and Woodend Winter Arts Festival; a fundraising performance for Médecins Sans Frontières and concerts at Sydney Town Hall, the

Concourse with Sonus Quartet, and Canberra's Snow Concert Hall with violinist Daniel Röhn. Tedeschi also returned to the Sydney Opera House for a fourth season of *Meeting Mozart*, which has toured to Asia, UAE and USA, produced by CDP and cowritten by Tedeschi.

Simon's latest album, *Debussy – Ravel* with violist and conductor Roger Benedict received a 2023 ARIA Award nomination for Best Classical Album, adding to his numerous recordings for ABC Classics/ Universal Music such as *The Gershwin Collection*, Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, R. Strauss' *Enoch Arden*, and concerti by Mozart, Tchaikovsky and Grieg.

Alongside his performing career, Tedeschi is fast gaining renown as a writer of note, winning the prestigious Calibre Essay Prize for 2022 and Tedeschi's critically acclaimed literary debut, *Fugitive* (for Upswell Publishing) shortlisted in the 2023 Victorian Premier's Literary Awards, and 2023 Judith Wright Calanthe Award for a Poetry Collection.



Simon Tedeschi

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



Simone Young AM Chief Conductor



Donald RunniclesPrincipal Guest Conductor



Vladimir Ashkenazy Conductor Laureate



Andrew Haveron Concertmaster Vicki Olsson Chair

FIRST VIOLINS

Harry Bennetts

Associate Concertmaster Judy & Sam Weiss Chair

Alexandra Osborne

Associate Concertmaster

Lerida Delbridge

Assistant Concertmaster Simon Johnson Chair

Fiona Ziegler

Assistant Concertmaster
Webb Family Chair, in memory
of Dr Bill Webb & Helen Webb

Sun Yi

Associate Concertmaster Emeritus

Jenny Booth Brielle Clapson Sophie Cole Sercan Danis

Claire Herrick Russell & Mary McMurray Chair

Georges Lentz Emily Long

In memory of Dr Margot Harris Chair

Alexandra Mitchell Alexander Norton Anna Skálová Léone Ziegler

SECOND VIOLINS

Kirsty Hilton

Principal

A/Prof Keith Ong & Dr Eileen

Ong Chair

Marina Marsden

Principal

Marianne Edwards

Associate Principal
Dr Rebecca Chin & Family Chair

Emma Jezek

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