

Southern Highlands

**Symphony
Orchestra**



2021 CONCERT SERIES

1

SATURDAY 20th MARCH 7.30PM

SUNDAY 21st MARCH 2.30PM

PETER CRAIG CENTRE, OXLEY COLLEGE

BURRADOO



Patrons:

Ann Carr-Boyd AM and Dr. Andrew Ford OAM

Ludwig van Beethoven *Overture to Egmont Op.84*

Sostenuto ma non troppo
Allegro
Allegro con brio

Georges Bizet *L'Arlésienne Suite No.1*

1. *Prélude*
2. *Menuetto*
3. *Adagietto*
4. *Carillon*

SHORT INTERVAL

Alfred Hill *Carnival Symphony*

1. *Allegro bravura*
2. *Scherzo*
3. *Adagio con gravita*
4. *Finale*

Antonin Dvořák *Slavonic Dance Op. 46 No. 8*

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 is conducted by Dr Allan Stiles, who has directed orchestras, bands, choirs, and theatre productions over many years. 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 directed 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.

Conducting studies were with Robert Miller and later as part of his MMus at UNSW.

He has played in orchestras in Sydney and London.

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.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Overture to Egmont, Op. 84

Johann von Goethe's play, *Egmont*, is a stirring dramatization of a quintessentially romantic subject: a hero's fatal struggle against injustice. Beethoven composed incidental music to the play in 1809 with the overture following the plot of the drama. Egmont, a 16th century Flemish nobleman and devout Catholic, protested the cruel persecution of the Protestants of his country by their Spanish rulers. The Spanish Duke of Alba accused him of treason, denied him a fair trial and had him publicly beheaded. The Flemish people's response to this outrage led to an open rebellion and their eventual freedom from the Spanish yoke.

After an opening unison note, the Overture introduces a menacing 'sarabande' rhythm (a slow dance originating in 16th century Spain) that represents the Spanish oppressors. The answering theme in the winds is associated with the spirit of the Flemish people, as well as with Egmont's true love. These two themes battle throughout the piece, until Egmont's life comes to an abrupt end when he is beheaded (by the violins). The end of Egmont's life is not the end of the story though, and the overture concludes with a rousing hymn of the eventual triumph of liberty.

Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

L'Arlésienne Suite no.1

1. *Prélude*
2. *Minuetto*
3. *Adagietto*
4. *Carillon*

Georges Bizet was a Parisian composer at a time when Paris was the world centre of opera, boasting some of the best-equipped opera houses and theatres, including the Paris Opéra. Nearly every 19th century composer of opera, from Verdi to Wagner, wanted to have his works staged there. For French composers, writing opera was the one sure way to musical fame and fortune, and like all composers of his time, Bizet desperately wanted to write successful operas. His masterpiece, *Carmen*, sadly did not attain popularity until after his death.

From working with the genre called ‘opera comique’, which was essentially a French creation that introduced spoken dialogue in place of recitative, Bizet extended his compositional talent to equally popular theatrical dramas with musical accompaniments. In 1872, he was commissioned to write the incidental music for *L’Arlésienne*, a play by Alphonse Daudet. The original score was not well received as it was largely misunderstood by its audience, who criticised the music for overshadowing the dialogue. Only a month after the staging of the drama, Bizet fashioned some of his original musical episodes, or ‘melodrames’ as they were known, into the *L’Arlésienne Suite no.1*.

The suite is in four movements. In the *Prelude*, Bizet borrows the French Christmas carol, ‘The March of the Kings’, and offers it several ways. The strings, woodwinds and horns open with a vigorous rendition. Then the woodwinds alone play it as a quiet chorale. The full orchestra with percussion and brass follows, presenting the melody as a storm at sea, with rising and falling dynamics underpinned by a rolling chromaticism. In contrast, the cellos, horns and bassoons then offer the theme with gently swaying rhythms. The final variant is a return to the full orchestra with a military flourish. Bizet ends the movement with a second melody featuring the saxophone, its first appearance in the standard orchestral repertoire following its invention in 1844 by the fiery Belgian instrument maker, Adolphe Sax.

The second movement, *Minuetto*, begins with a sharp, rhythmic melody passed from section to section within the orchestra before yielding to the soaring second subject. The piece ends in the style of a classical minuet with a return to the first theme.

Adagietto is scored for strings alone. The instruments are muted, dampening their sound to give a hushed, veiled quality to this heartfelt music.

The final movement, *Carillon*, as the name implies, imitates the ringing of church bells from the horns with the repetition of three notes in the opening, quietening as the first theme, a sprightly little dance theme, is introduced by the violins. The second theme is a gentle ‘sicilienne’, then the carillon effect recurs and the suite comes to a resounding close.

Notes by Elizabeth Dalton

Alfred Hill (1869-1960)
Symphony in A Minor “The Carnival”

In 1912 Hill composed *String Quartet No.3 in A Minor*. The quartet score is subtitled *The Carnival - A Student in Italy*. Sometime in the 1950s, probably motivated by the encouragement from the conductor of the Adelaide

Orchestra, Henry Krips (1912–1987), Hill orchestrated the music to create his *Carnival Symphony*. Many adaptations can be observed in the reworking and the order of the middle movements was reversed.

This symphony was named but not numbered by the composer and the score is undated. After the composer's death a musicologist gave it the number five. Further research has revealed that the numberings were inaccurate and it is recommended that Hill's titles only be used.

A preface to the manuscript score explains the programme thus:

1. The gaily-lit streets are thronged with people, watching the preparations for the carnival. After a long night of sightseeing, the weary ones wend their way homewards as the illuminations are turned off, one by one.
2. Dancing and games on the green.
3. A lone student, in his garret, ponders on the more serious things of life.
4. The carnival - revelry in the streets - The Battle of the Flowers - a street musician entertains the crowd with a popular air on his fiddle - a procession of priests chant on their way to the cathedral to the toll of bells. General rejoicing and merrymaking goes on almost without end.

In 1999 a recording was made by the Queensland Orchestra conducted by Wilfred Lehmann and it was released on the CD, Marco Polo 8.223538.

Recent performances have been in Australia, New Zealand and the UK, where the BBC Ulster Orchestra concert was broadcast.

Note by Allan Stiles

Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904) ***Slavonic Dance Op. 46 No 8***

The *Slavonic Dance Suite*, Op. 46, was the first flowering of the Czech nationalism that was to become so closely associated with Dvořák's music. On the advice of his mentor, Johannes Brahms, he sent it to the noted Berlin publisher, Simrock, in May 1878 and was paid 300 marks, the first substantial sum Dvořák had made from any of his works. Though these pieces were originally intended for piano duet (a shrewd marketing strategy by Simrock as there were a lot more piano players than orchestras), Dvořák began the orchestrations even before the keyboard score for all eight dances was completed, and Simrock issued both versions simultaneously in August 1878. Louis Ehlert, the influential critic of the *Berliner Nationalzeitung*, saw an early copy of the *Slavonic Dances*, and wrote admiringly of their "heavenly

naturalness” and Dvořák’s “real, naturally real talent.” The public’s interest was aroused, there was a run on the music shops, and Dvořák was suddenly famous. Though he did not quote actual folk melodies in this music, as had Brahms in his *Hungarian Dances*, Dvořák was so imbued with the spirit and style of native Slavic music that he was able to create superb, idealised examples of their genres.

No. 8 in the set is a ‘furiant’, a Bohemian dance that typically contrasts duple and triple time. In the outer sections the emphasis of the offbeats disguises the piece’s 3/4 time signature, with the brightly orchestrated chords of the rapid tune alternating between the minor and the major. This serves as a framework for the entire piece. The same phrase is re-formed, first with a waltz-like accompaniment, then briefly in swirling quavers in the flutes, then the lower orchestra voices. The opening grandiose tune returns, leading into a slower middle section, in G major. This has a quiet legato melody, with an almost pastoral quality to it that is soon disturbed by the original melody. The entire opening section is repeated, with a coda that further transforms the main phrase, modulating it up and down the scale, changing its rhythmic sound from the duple to the triple meter and back, then heading finally into a reference to the pastoral middle section before the opening phrase finishes the dance as brilliantly as it began it.

The enormous success of the Opus 46 dances led Simrock to request another set of Slavonic Dances in 1886. Dvořák’s subsequent Opus 72 dances met with a similar reception.

Note by Elizabeth Dalton

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

Dr. Penny Knowlden

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Michelle and Michael Phillips

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Jenny Simons OAM

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We also thank those music lovers who have donated anonymously.

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Martin Stiles

DOUBLE BASS

Ethan Ireland – principal

Louis Ameneiro

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

New players are welcome.

Please contact:

Allan Stiles on 0415 309 760

or Roma Dix on 0432 466 882



Zoe Andrews



Alexandra Dening



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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 you may sponsor a “chair” to provide ongoing support for the SHSO.

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David McFarlane at Mittagong Print and Design, and the many
businesses that displayed our flyers and banners, and
the volunteers who assisted with setting up
the hall and front of house.

Photographs by Christopher Donaldson.

Find us on Facebook.

Email: shsonsw@gmail.com Website: www.shso.org.au

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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.

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SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

2021

CONCERT SERIES TWO

Peter Craig Centre, Oxley College, Burradoo

Saturday 5th at 7.30 PM and Sunday 6th June at 2.30 PM

Jean Sibelius *Karelia Suite*

Pierre Rode *Violin Concerto No.7*
soloist Emily Sinden

John Corley *High Flight*
Winner of the 2020 composition competition

Carl Nielsen *Symphony No.1*

CONCERT SERIES THREE

McGrath Hall, Chevalier College, Burradoo

Saturday 18th at 7.30 PM and Sunday 19th September at 2.30 PM

Repertoire TBA

CONCERT SERIES FOUR

McGrath Hall, Chevalier College, Burradoo

Saturday 27th at 7.30 PM and Sunday 28th November at 2.30 PM

Repertoire TBA