



West Australian
Symphony Orchestra

GRIEG'S PIANO CONCERTO

MACA CLASSICS SERIES

Friday 28 & Saturday 29 June 2024, 7.30pm

Perth Concert Hall

WASO'S NORTHERN LIGHTS

Sunday 30 June 2024, 5pm

Bunbury Regional

Entertainment Centre



West Australian Symphony Orchestra respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and Elders of Country throughout Western Australia, and the Whadjuck Noongar people on whose lands we work and share music.

MACA CLASSICS SERIES

Grieg's Piano Concerto

Outi TARKIAINEN *The Ring of Fire and Love* (9 mins) (Australian Premiere)

Edvard GRIEG Piano Concerto (30 mins)

Allegro molto moderato

Adagio –

Allegro moderato molto e marcato

Interval (25 mins)

Jean SIBELIUS Symphony No.5 (31 mins)

Tempo molto moderato

Andante mosso, quasi allegretto

Allegro molto

Dalia Stasevska conductor

Alexander Gavrylyuk piano

Wesfarmers Arts Pre-concert Talk

Find out more about the music in the concert with this week's speaker, Prue Ashurst (see page 15 for her biography). The Pre-concert Talk will take place at 6:45pm at the Terrace Level Corner Stage.

Wesfarmers Arts Meet the Artist (Friday only)

Join tonight's soloist, Alexander Gavrylyuk for a post-concert interview immediately following the Friday evening performance in the Terrace Level Foyer. Uncover more about the music and hear insights into the performance experience.

Listen to WASO

This performance is recorded for broadcast Monday 15 July, 1pm (AWST) on ABC Classic. Date subject to change. For further details abc.net.au/classic.

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BONUS Digital Content:

- Meet the musician
- Fun facts about the music

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BUNBURY REGIONAL ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE

WASO's Northern Lights

Sunday 30 June 2024, 5pm

Jean SIBELIUS *Finlandia* (8 mins)

Edvard GRIEG Piano Concerto (30 mins)

Allegro molto moderato

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Interval (25 mins)

Jean SIBELIUS Symphony No.5 (31 mins)

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Andante mosso, quasi allegretto

Allegro molto

Dalia Stasevska conductor

Alexander Gavrylyuk piano

Pre-concert Q&A

Find out more about the music in the concert during this Q&A with pianist Alexander Gavrylyuk (see page 8 for his biography). The Pre-concert Q&A is hosted by WASO's Executive Manager, Artistic Planning Evan Kennea and will take place at 4:15pm in the Harvey Room.

View your Digital Concert Program

Access exclusive digital content, learn more about the artists and music, and get our concert program at your fingertips. Simply open your smartphone's camera app and hover the camera over the QR code to access the WASO's *Northern Lights* digital program.



BONUS Digital Content:

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West Australian Symphony Orchestra

Engage | Excite | Experience | Educate

From the centre of Perth to the furthest corners of the state, we have provided the soundtrack to life in WA since 1928.

As the State Orchestra, Perth's first and finest, WASO is the largest employer of performing artists in Western Australia and reaches two million people with musical experiences each year on stage, in our community, and online.

From concert halls to classrooms, hospitals to aged care, we bring joy, inspire learning, and nurture participation in our community, because everybody deserves the opportunity to experience live music. Every year, through community and leading industry partnerships, we engage a new generation of young and emerging artists to help secure a bright future for music in Australia.

We celebrate our rich classical music heritage with great artists from all over the world and commission and perform new repertoire to renew and expand it.

The Orchestra collaborates widely with major arts companies and independent artists, performing opera to ballet, movies to musicals, jazz to rock. We champion the diversity of music in all its forms, with a team of talented and passionate people who create unforgettable experiences for all West Australians to enjoy.

Asher Fisch is Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser of our Orchestra and we are proud to call Perth Concert Hall home.

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Kylie Liang

Assoc Principal 2nd Violin

• The Baker Family

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Assistant Principal

2nd Violin

Sarah Blackman

Stephanie Dean

Amy Furfaro

Rebecca Glorie

• Rosalind &

Lyndsay Potts

Beth Hebert

Emma Hunt

• Ulrich &

Gloria Kunzmann

William Huxtable

Sunmi Jung

Kathryn Lee

Andrea Mendham

• Dale & Michael Kitney

Akiko Miyazawa

• MIMI

Lucas O'Brien

Karen Matoba

Yasmin Omran

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Louise Sandercock

• Unnamed

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• Philip &

Frances Chadwick

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Samantha

Wickramasinghe

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VIOLA

Daniel Schmitt

Kierstan Arkleysmith

George Batey^

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• Future Logic

Alison Hall

Rachael Kirk

James Munro

Elliot O'Brien

Helen Tuckey

CELLO

Rod McGrath

Isaac Davis

Shigeru Komatsu

• Unnamed (2)

Oliver McAslan

• M & D Forrest and

Michelle Todd

Nicholas Metcalfe

• The Gregg Family

Fotis Skordas

• Unnamed

Tim South

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Andrew Sinclair*

John Keene

• Janet Holmes à Court AC

& Gilbert George

Robin Brawley

Oakley Paul^

Christine Reitzenstein

Mark Tooby

Giovanni Vinci

FLUTE

Andrew Nicholson

PICCOLO

Sonia Croucher

OBOE

Sarah Young

Liz Chee

• Ruth E. Thorn and

Michael & Helen Tuite

COR ANGLAIS

Jonathan Ryan

• Joshua & Pamela Pitt

CLARINET

Allan Meyer

• Leanne & Sam Walsh AO

Som Howie

BASSOON

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• Meg O'Neill, Chase Hayes

& Vicky Hayes

Adam Mikulicz

• Meg O'Neill, Chase Hayes

& Vicky Hayes

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★ Rod & Margaret Marston

David Evans

Eve McEwen

Robert Gladstones

Principal 3rd Horn

Julia Brooke

Francesco Lo Surdo

TRUMPET

Jenna Smith

Acting Principal

Koominka°

• John & Nita Walshe

TROMBONE

Joshua Davis

• Dr Glenda Campbell-

Evans & Dr Ken Evans AM

Liam O'Malley

• Dale & Greg Higham

TUBA

Chloe Higgins

TIMPANI

Alex Timcke

• Jean & Peter Stokes

PERCUSSION

Brian Maloney

François Combémoré!

Assoc Principal

Percussion & Timpani

• Jim & Freda Irenic

Paul Tanner^

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Assistant Principal

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* Instruments used by these musicians are on loan from Janet Holmes à Court AC.

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Clap with enthusiasm

Whether you are welcoming your favourite artist to the stage, or showing appreciation at the end of a piece, we love thunderous applause. Not sure when to clap? Here's a tip; if the conductor's arm is raised, hold it. If it's relaxed, go for it!



Share with your friends

Snap a selfie from your seat, capture the artist bows and share the experience with friends. Don't forget to tag us! #WASymphonyOrchestra



Respect those around you

Ensure your mobile phone is on silent and does not disrupt the experience of those around you. If you need to cough or sneeze, please do this into your elbow.



Accessible services available

For information about our services such as assisted listening and accessible toilets please ask one of our friendly ushers.



Latecomers admitted at a suitable time

If you arrive late or leave your seat during a performance, your auditorium entry will need to wait until a suitable break.

a Little Luxury



About the Artists

Dalia Stasevska Conductor

Dalia Stasevska's charismatic and dynamic musicianship has established her as a conductor of exceptional versatility. Chief Conductor of Lahti Symphony Orchestra and Artistic Director to the International Sibelius Festival, Dalia also holds the post of Principal Guest Conductor of BBC Symphony Orchestra. She has made several appearances at the BBC Proms including the First Night of the Proms in 2023.

In 2023/24, Dalia will guest conduct The Cleveland Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, hr-Sinfonieorchester, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, Berner Symphonieorchester, Sydney Symphony Orchestra and West Australian Symphony Orchestra.

Recent engagements have included orchestras such as New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, The Philadelphia Orchestra, Minnesota Orchestra, the National Symphony Orchestra and Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra at the Concertgebouw Hall, Amsterdam.

Last season, with BBC Symphony Orchestra, she embarked on a six-concert tour to Japan with soloists Sol Gabetta, Nicola Benedetti and Roderick Williams. In spring 2024, Dalia and BBC Symphony Orchestra collaborate on a Total Immersion project focussing on Missy Mazzoli. Performing works of living composers is a core part of Dalia's programming, and with Lahti Symphony Orchestra, they present works by Andrew Norman, Thomas Adès, Helen Grime, Kaija Saariaho and Outi Tarkianen, to name a few.

A passionate opera conductor, 2023 saw Dalia's highly successful debut at the Glyndebourne Opera Festival with a revival of the iconic Peter Hall production of Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In previous seasons, she returned to Finnish National Opera and Ballet to



conduct a double bill of Poulenc's *La voix humaine* and Weill's *Songs* with Karita Mattila, and to Norske Opera to conduct *Madama Butterfly* and *Lucia di Lammermoor*. Other productions include *Don Giovanni* with Kungliga Opera Stockholm, directed by Ole Anders Tandberg, *Cunning Little Vixen* with Finnish National Opera and Sebastian Fagerlund's *Höstsönaten* at the 2018 Baltic Sea Festival in Stockholm, featuring Anne-Sofie von Otter.

Her debut solo album *Dalia's Mixtape* with BBC Symphony Orchestra released in Spring 2024 on Platoon features ten tracks of some of the freshest sounds in contemporary music. Released one month at a time with music by genre-bending composers such as Anna Meredith, Caroline Shaw, Andrea Tarrodi, Noriko Koide, Judith Weir and others. In June 2023 together with Lahti Symphony Orchestra and pianist Olli Mustonen, she released piano concerti by Rautavaara and Martinu on BIS.

Dalia originally studied as a violinist and composer at the Tampere Conservatoire and subsequently violin, viola and conducting at the Sibelius Academy. As a conductor her teachers include Jorma Panula and Leif Segerstam. In December 2018, she had the honour of conducting Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra at the Nobel Prize Ceremony in Stockholm. She was awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society's Conductor Award in 2020, Alfred Kordelin Prize in 2022 and BBC Music Magazine's Personality of the Year award in 2023.

Dalia was bestowed the Order of Princess Olga of the III degree by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in October 2020 for her significant personal contribution to the development of international cooperation, strengthening the prestige of Ukraine internationally and popularisation of its historical and cultural heritage. Since February 2022, she has actively been supporting Ukraine by raising donations to buy supplies and on a number of occasions delivering them herself.

About the Artists

Alexander Gavrylyuk

Piano

A stunningly virtuosic pianist, Alexander is internationally recognised for his electrifying and poetic performances. His performance of Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No.3 at the BBC Proms was described as “revelatory” by the Times and “electrifying” by Limelight. For the 23/24 season, Alexander will be Artist in Residence at Wigmore Hall, performing three recitals across the season.

Highlights of the 2023-24 season include debuts with NDR Hannover, Bochum Symphoniker and Amsterdam Sinfonietta, as well as return visits to Sydney Symphony, Adelaide Symphony, Bournemouth Symphony, Aarhus Symphony & Rheinische Philharmonie. Recent highlights also include Detroit Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Polish Baltic Philharmonic, Sao Paolo Symphony & Rhode Island Philharmonic.

Born in Ukraine in 1984 and holding Australian citizenship, Alexander began his piano studies at the age of seven and gave his first concerto performance when he was nine years old. At the age of 13, Alexander moved to Sydney where he lived until 2006. He won First Prize and Gold Medal at the Horowitz International Piano Competition (1999), First Prize at the Hamamatsu International Piano Competition (2000), and Gold Medal at the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Masters Competition (2005).

He has since gone on to perform with many of the world's leading orchestras, including: New York, Los Angeles, Czech, Warsaw, Moscow, Seoul, Israel and Rotterdam Philharmonics; NHK, Chicago, Cincinnati and City of Birmingham Symphony orchestras; Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Philharmonia, Wiener Symphoniker, Orchestre National de Lille and the Stuttgarter Philharmoniker; collaborating with conductors such as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Alexandre Bloch,



Herbert Blomstedt, Andrey Boreyko, Thomas Dausgaard, Valery Gergiev, Neeme Järvi, Vladimir Jurowski, Sebastian Lang-Lessing, Kirill Karabits, Louis Langrée, Cornelius Meister, Vassily Petrenko, Rafael Payare, Alexander Shelley, Yuri Simonov, Vladimir Spivakov, Markus Stenz, Sir Mark Elder, Thomas Søndergård, Gergely Madaras, Mario Venzago, Enrique Mazzola and Osmo Vänska.

Gavrylyuk has appeared at many of the world's foremost festivals, including the Hollywood Bowl, Bravo! Vail Colorado, Mostly Mozart, the Ruhr Festival, the Kissinger Sommer International Music Festival, the Gergiev Festival in Rotterdam.

As a recitalist Alexander has performed at the Musikverein in Vienna, Tonhalle Zurich, Victoria Hall Geneva, Southbank Centre's International Piano Series, Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Master Pianists Series, Suntory Hall, Tokyo Opera City Hall, Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, Cologne Philharmonie, Tokyo City Concert Hall, San Francisco, Sydney Recital Hall and Melbourne Recital Centre. Alexander also performs regularly with his recital partner Janine Jansens throughout Europe.

Alexander is Artist in Residence at Chautauqua Institution. He supports a number of charities including Theme and Variations Foundation which provides support and encouragement to young, aspiring Australian pianists as well as Opportunity Cambodia, which has built a residential educational facility for Cambodian children.

Alexander Gavrylyuk is a Steinway Artist.

About the Music

Perth Concert Hall performances only

Outi Tarkiainen

(b. 1985)

The Ring of Fire and Love (2020)

Outi Tarkiainen was born in Rovaniemi in Finnish Lapland, a place that has proved a constant source of inspiration for her and to which she has recently returned to live. She has long been drawn to the expressive power of the human voice, but in addition to song cycles and operas, has written chamber and solo instrumental works as well as symphonic poems and concertos. 'I see music as a force of nature that can flood over a person and even change entire destinies', she once said.

Outi has been commissioned by ensembles including the BBC Symphony, Scottish Symphony and Philharmonic orchestras, the San Francisco, Gothenburg, Finnish Radio and Netherlands Symphony Orchestras, the Royal Stockholm and Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestras and the National Arts Center Orchestra while her works have been taken up by flagship orchestras from Boston to Vienna. Her early work with jazz orchestras culminated in *Into the Woodland Silence* (2013), a score that combined the composer's sense of natural mysticism with the distinctive textures of the jazz orchestra tradition. Major works since include an orchestral song cycle to texts by Sami poets *The Earth, Spring's Daughter* (2015), concertos for saxophone (2016) and cor anglais (2022), the symphonic poems *Midnight Sun Variations* (2019), *Songs of the Ice* (2019), and *The Ring of Fire and Love* (2020), all recorded for Ondine. Her first full-length opera, *A Room of One's Own* (2021), was commissioned and premiered by Theater Hagen in Germany.

Outi studied composition at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, the Guildhall School in London and at the University of Miami. She was for four years co-artistic director



of the Silence Festival in Lapland, has twice been nominated for the Fondation Prince Pierre de Monaco's Musical Composition Prize. In 2023, she won Finland's Music Publishers' Award.

Andrew Mellor, 2024

Composer's Note

The Ring of Fire is a volcanic belt that surrounds the Pacific Ocean and in which most of the world's earthquakes occur. It is also the term referring to the bright ring of sunlight around the moon at the height of a solar eclipse, when the moon covers only the central part of the sun. Yet, the same expression is also used to describe what a woman feels when, as she gives birth, the baby's head passes through her pelvis. That moment is the most dangerous in the baby's life, its little skull being subjected to enormous pressure, preparing it for life in a way unlike any other. *The Ring of Fire and Love* is a work for orchestra about this earth-shattering, creative, cataclysmic moment they travel through together.

FIRST PERFORMANCE:

18 March 2021, Stockholm.
Sakari Oramo conducting.

FIRST WASO PERFORMANCE:

These are the Australian Premiere performances of *The Ring of Fire and Love*.

INSTRUMENTATION:

two flutes (both doubling piccolo), two oboes, clarinet, bass clarinet and two bassoons; four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and three percussion; harp, celeste and strings.

About the Music

BREC performance only

Jean Sibelius

(1865-1957)

Finlandia, Op.26

Sibelius composed *Finlandia* in 1899 – a time of great political upheaval in Finland, as the ruling Imperial Russia tightened its hold on the country, withdrawing the administrative power of the Finnish Diet, closing newspapers, and suppressing freedom of speech.

For a benefit concert raising funds for the nationalist cause, Sibelius composed an orchestral suite entitled *Finland Awakes*, and its finale would provide the basis for *Finlandia*. It was the second occasion on which Sibelius had used his music to weigh into a political debate. In 1893 his blatantly patriotic *Karelia* Suite had established him as a spokesman in the Finnish struggle for national independence.

Although *Finlandia's* genesis was closely aligned with its country's struggle, it immediately gained international popularity. Sibelius revised it in 1900 as *Suomi* ('Finland'), and it found success in France as *La Patrie* and in Germany as *Vaterland*. Eventually it became *Finlandia* and its impact in stirring national ardour for the Finnish cause was so great that the Russian authorities prevented its performance in the land of its origin (Finland gained independence in 1917).

Although Sibelius referred to *Finlandia* as a tone poem, there is little in it which could be compared with the more obviously programmatic tone poems of Liszt and Richard Strauss. For one thing, it is much more tightly structured than those works and its features more closely resemble those of a concert overture.



It is built on three related ideas – an introductory chorale, the main *Allegro* subject, and an unforgettable hymn tune – all of which derive from essentially the same musical material.

Adapted from a note by Martin Buzacott

Symphony Australia © 1997

FIRST PERFORMANCE:

2 July 1900, Helsinki.
Robert Kajanus conducting.

FIRST WASO PERFORMANCE:

October 1939. Malcolm Sargent,
conductor.

MOST RECENT WASO PERFORMANCE:

25 July 2021. Thaddeus Huang, conductor.

INSTRUMENTATION:

two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets and two bassoons; four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani, percussion and strings, three trombones and tuba; timpani and three percussion; harp, celeste and strings.

About the Music

Edvard Grieg

(1843-1907)

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op.16

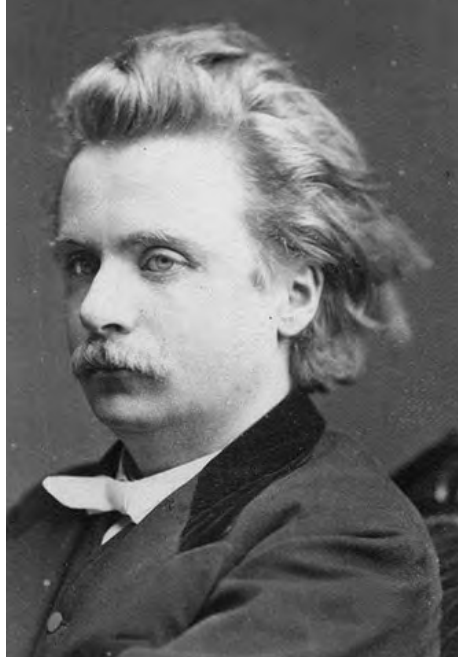
Allegro molto moderato

Adagio –

Allegro moderato molto e marcato

After hearing a performance of Grieg's piano concerto, Arnold Schoenberg is supposed to have remarked: 'That's the kind of music I'd really like to write'. It wouldn't have been the first time that Schoenberg's facetious humour was apparent, but one can't help but feel that there was a wistful sincerity buried in the remark. Schoenberg, after all, believed that his experiments, first in **atonality** and later the **twelve-note** serial method, were forced upon him by historical destiny rather than being the result of his own wishes. He also remarked that there was 'still plenty of good music to be written in C major' and his last word was according to legend, 'Harmony!' Grieg's concerto, while not in C major, is in its close relative, A minor, and is certainly full of good music. And it is, with good reason, popular – a fate not enjoyed by Schoenberg's music.

Grieg himself was not so sure, however. He composed the concerto at the age of 25 whilst still relatively inexperienced in orchestral writing. He tinkered endlessly with the **orchestration** of his concerto between the time of the work's (triumphant) premiere and his death. Grieg had studied at the Leipzig Conservatory from the age of 15 with the initial intent of becoming a concert pianist. Dissatisfied with his first teacher, Grieg began lessons with E.F. Wenzel, a friend and supporter of Schumann's; under his tutelage Grieg began writing piano music for his own performances and wrote passionate articles in defence of Schumann's music.



The influence of Schumann's Piano Concerto, also in A minor, on Grieg's work has been remarked on frequently, but apart from their similar three-movement design and opening gesture (in both works a full **tutti** chord of A minor releases a florid response from the keyboard soloist) the style of each is markedly different. Both composers were, however, primarily lyricists, and Grieg's concerto is certainly replete with exquisite tunes. Many of these echo some of the shapes of Norwegian folk music with which Grieg had become deeply familiar in 1864 when he had also become active in a society for the support of Scandinavian music. The piano's opening gesture, for instance, recalls folk music in its use of a '**gapped**' scale, and the origins of the finale in folk dance are clear.

Grieg was unable to attend the premiere of his concerto in Copenhagen in 1869, but it was an outstanding success, no doubt in part because Grieg's cultivation of folk music struck a chord with the increasingly nationalist Scandinavian audiences. But in large part it was because the concerto was recognised as

a youthful masterpiece. No less an artist than Anton Rubinstein, who attended the performance, described it as a 'work of genius'. A year later Grieg and his wife travelled to Italy where Grieg met Liszt for the second time. Liszt had been encouraging of Grieg's work some time before; now he allegedly sight-read Grieg's concerto and said 'you have the real stuff in you. And don't ever let them frighten you!'

Grieg didn't let them frighten him, and the Piano Concerto went on to establish his reputation throughout the musical world. Audiences responded, as they still do, to the charm of Grieg's melodies, the balance of, it must be said, Lisztian virtuosity and Grieg's own distinctive lyricism, and what Tchaikovsky, who adored the work, described as the work's 'fascinating melancholy which seems to reflect in itself all the beauty of Norwegian scenery'. One of Grieg's greatest admirers described the 'concentrated greatness and all-lovingness of the little great man. Out of the toughest Norwegianness, out of the most narrow localness, he spreads out a welcoming and greedy mind for all the world's wares.' This was, of course, the Australian-born pianist/composer Percy Grainger who became one of the Grieg

concerto's most celebrated exponents and one of the dearest friends of Grieg's last years. Not only that – Grainger spent time with Grieg working on the concerto before the composer's death at which time Grieg was making the final adjustments to the **orchestration**; with such 'inside knowledge' Grainger was able to publish his own edition of the work in later years. Sadly, a proposed tour with Grieg conducting and Grainger playing the Concerto never transpired.

Gordon Kerry © 2006

FIRST PERFORMANCE:

3 April 1869, Copenhagen. Edmund Neupert, soloist; Holger Simon Paulli conducting Orchestra of the Royal Theatre.

FIRST WASO PERFORMANCE:

18 April 1942. E.J. Roberts, conductor; Allen McCristal, soloist.

MOST RECENT WASO PERFORMANCE:

16-17 November 2018. Asher Fisch, conductor; Andrey Gugin, soloist.

INSTRUMENTATION:

two each of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons; four horns, two trumpets and three trombones; timpani, and strings.

Glossary

Atonality – refers to music not written in any particular key.

Gapped scale – unlike the major scale, in which adjacent notes are separated by a distance (or interval) of either a tone or a semitone, a gapped scale contains intervals of greater than a tone. An example is the five-note pentatonic scale, widely found in folk music.

Orchestration – the allocation of various notes and melodies to the different instruments and combinations of instruments in the orchestra.

Twelve-note (or 12-tone) – tonal music adheres to a particular key, and primarily uses notes contained within that key or scale (in the key of C major this would be all of the white notes on a piano between C and the C an octave above). In 12-tone (or 12-note) composition, all 12 notes in the chromatic scale (i.e. all of the black and white notes on a piano between C and the C an octave above) are regarded as equal and are used impartially; the resulting music is said to be atonal, and not confined to any key or tonal centre.

Tutti – all of the instruments of the orchestra playing at the same time.

About the Music

Jean Sibelius

(1865-1957)

Symphony No.5 in E flat, Op.82

Tempo molto moderato

Andante mosso, quasi allegretto

Allegro molto

The pitiless despair of Sibelius' Fourth Symphony (1911) puzzled many of its first listeners. The work seemed an unlikely sequel to the gentle radiance of the Third (1907), yet its gaze into the abyss gave way, in the Fifth, to one of Sibelius' most shining, life-affirming creations. While the Fifth is light to the Fourth's darkness, a progression from doubt to belief (Sibelius' admiration for Bruckner should not be forgotten here), it represents no shift in Sibelius' compositional principles. An economy of orchestral resource, the building-up of musical paragraphs by the development of tiny melodic fragments, the determination to create his own solutions to the problems of harmonic language and symphonic form – these were abiding features of his music from the beginning of his composing life. In fact of all the major composers of the last century he was the most solitary, methodical and purposeful in his stylistic development, taking only fitful interest in the work of his contemporaries.

He wrote the Fifth, one of the most popular of all his works, at a time of great personal difficulty. The Great War had broken out and, as a result, Sibelius had lost access to the revenue from his German publishers. To earn some regular income he wrote a great number of salon pieces for domestic performance, and had little time for other composing; the Fifth Symphony is his only major work of the war years.



Sibelius himself conducted the symphony's first performance, at a concert given on 8 December 1915 to mark his 50th birthday. It was a jubilant event, treated almost as a national holiday, but Sibelius was unhappy with the work and revised it twice. In 1916 he joined the first two of the original four movements together, and he made further revisions before it was published in 1919.

The symphony begins quietly on horns and timpani. The theme we hear at this point is soon elaborated into a woodwind cadenza. At its conclusion the strings enter, and we seem to be moving inexorably into the landscape of the music until we come to the vista presented by a great tolling of the brass and the announcement of a jagged syncopated theme on the strings. Now we have reached the threshold beyond which the heart of the symphony lies. A mysterious, cloudy passage for the strings – over which the bassoon utters a sorrowful version of one of the main themes – leads to a burnished assertion by the trumpets of the very first theme of the symphony, shortly after which the mood changes to one of dancing lightness. Soon the music gathers pace and the strings take up the dance strain with increasing excitement until the brass join in for the final, sudden, invigorating climax.

The second movement is a set of variations not on a theme, but on a rhythmic pattern that Sibelius contrives to behave like a theme. The whole movement is a centre of calm, and even the passionate descending string tune that marks one of the most decisive transformations of the original idea is marked ***Poco tranquillo***. Towards the end of the movement the brass toll out a reminiscence of their earlier, more excitable selves; this leads to a series of cloudy gestures which recall music from the earlier movement. But towards the end the mood changes to one of almost childlike serenity, which is carried through to the short, abbreviated, **coda**.

The finale throws us into its hurly-burly almost immediately, with a whirlwind passage for the strings leading to one of the best-known of all themes in Sibelius' music, that in which, as Donald Tovey famously described it, Thor swings his hammer. After some woodwind carolling and a return to the gusty sounds of the movement's opening, Sibelius prepares us for a return of the swinging horn theme. When this finally reappears, it does so as a chorale that has to struggle through long **pedal-points** and changes of key before bursting into its sunset glory. These final minutes of the movement contain the richest orchestration of the whole work, but almost before we can register the fact, the symphony ends with six jubilant, adamant chords.

Abridged from an annotation by Phillip Sametz
© 1995/2004

FIRST PERFORMANCE:

8 December 1915, Helsinki.
Composer conducting.

FIRST WASO PERFORMANCE:

26 June 1953. Rudolf Pekarek, conductor.

MOST RECENT WASO PERFORMANCE:

5-6 November 2021. Dane Lam
conductor.

INSTRUMENTATION:

two each of flutes, oboes, clarinets and bassoons; four horns, three trumpets, three trombones; timpani and strings.

The final version of Sibelius' Fifth Symphony was premiered in Helsinki under the baton of the composer on 24 November 1919.

Glossary

Poco tranquillo – a little calm, tranquil.

Coda – a concluding section added to the basic structure of a piece or movement to emphasise the sense of finality.

Pedal-points – a low-pitched note played for a long time while the harmonies change above it.

About the Speaker

Prue Ashurst

Pre-concert Speaker

Prue is a graduate from the University of Western Australia with a Masters in Music Performance (Choral Conducting) and Bachelor degrees of Music Education and Performance. Having taught at Churchlands SHS, Perth Modern and Penrhos College, Prue's school choirs have sung in Geneva, London, Singapore and Wales. She is now in demand as a choral conductor, educator, adjudicator and guest speaker. She has conducted for the Perth Festival, WA Opera, UWA Choral Society, WASO Chorus, PUCS and the Gondwana Choirs. For 14 years Prue has been a regular presenter on ABC 720 with the late Eoin Cameron. In 2013 the Rotary Foundation named her a Paul Harris Fellow for her lifetime

work in music education. In 2016 she co-commissioned RIFT by the acclaimed British composer Anna Clyne for the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music in California and in 2018 was a guest pre-rehearsal speaker for this festival. In 2019 Prue returned to ABC Perth radio as a regular guest with Gillian O'Shaughnessy and was Commissioning Patron of Paul Stanhope's award winning *I Am Martuwarra* for Gondwana Choirs World Choral Festival at the Sydney Opera House. Prue continues her passion for contemporary orchestral and choral music by supporting the position of WASO's Composer in Residence and commissioning new works for WASO by Olivia Davies, the award-winning *Stratus* (2021), *In Waves* (2022), *Murmuration* (2023) and *Oscillations for Orchestra* (2023).



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WASO in the Community

From Zimmer to Rissmann, students of Perth experience WASO at its finest in May

WASO's Education and Community Engagement team have had a very busy month in May, producing several experiences for students to engage with the wonderful world of orchestral music, a fitting celebration of UNESCO's World Arts Education Month.

One of WASO's string quartets visited four Education Support Centres across Perth to present Harmony Music. These performances were filled with uplifting music from films and video games, and were followed by a have-a-go session of a violin and viola. Reaching an audience of 230 across the performances, students were delighted with this opportunity to see and hear live music in an accessible and comfortable setting.

We were thrilled to offer students from Years 4 to 8 a one-hour adaptation of the hugely successful *Music of Hans Zimmer* event, called *A Guide To Film Music*. 1,367 students and educators soaked up exhilarating excerpts from popular film scores, including *Pirates of The Caribbean*, *Batman*, *The Lion King* and *Kung Fu Panda*.

Presented by special guests Andrew Pogson and Dan Golding, and conducted by Nicholas Buc, students were guided on an adventure through some of the finest film scores in Zimmer's catalogue, highlighting his composition style and how themes are formed, plus the building blocks for creating emotion, mood, environment, suspense and character through music. It was truly wonderful to hear the excitement in the auditorium from students, eager to hear their state orchestra bring movies to life through music.



Our younger students were also treated to a spectacular experience, with WASO's Education Artist in Residence, Paul Rissmann bringing childrens book *Izzy Gizmo The Young Inventor* to life with the help of our 11-piece Education Chamber Orchestra at the Perth Town Hall.

Written by Pip Jones, with illustrations by Sara Ogilvie and animations by Victor Craven, almost 500 students from Pre-Primary to Year 3 enjoyed this beautiful story about a fearless young inventor whose determination solves a great mystery and helps a friend in need. Set to Paul Rissmann's stunningly composed music and performed by vocalist Libby Hammer and WASO's Education Chamber Orchestra of 11 ensemble musicians, students were delighted to learn some of the songs with Paul and Libby during the concert. With plenty of singing, dancing and laughter, this intimate concert provided a wonderful opportunity for young students to get up close to our Orchestra and experience the unparalleled joy of music.

Philanthropy News

Join Our Symphony of Giving

The transformative nature of music is yet to be matched. It can heal, it can unite, and it can inspire. It can do this and so much more all without a single word being uttered. It's unsurprising then that it's woven into the fabric of our celebrations and stories, providing the backdrop for countless moments in our lives.

That is why WASO is committed to empowering, enriching, and elevating the lives of all West Australians through the universal language of music. The donations we receive enable your Orchestra to continue to inspire and connect our community through its beauty.

Join us in shaping our performances by contributing to the concerts you love so that together we may continue to change lives through music.

For more information or to pledge your support, please call the Philanthropy team on (08) 9326 0016 or visit our website by scanning the QR code.



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The importance of our giving community is to be valued and congratulated. You are making a difference to what you see on stage - your commitment is a source of constant inspiration for us.

We are proud to acknowledge our donor family, many of whom give to multiple areas and some who wish to remain unnamed.

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