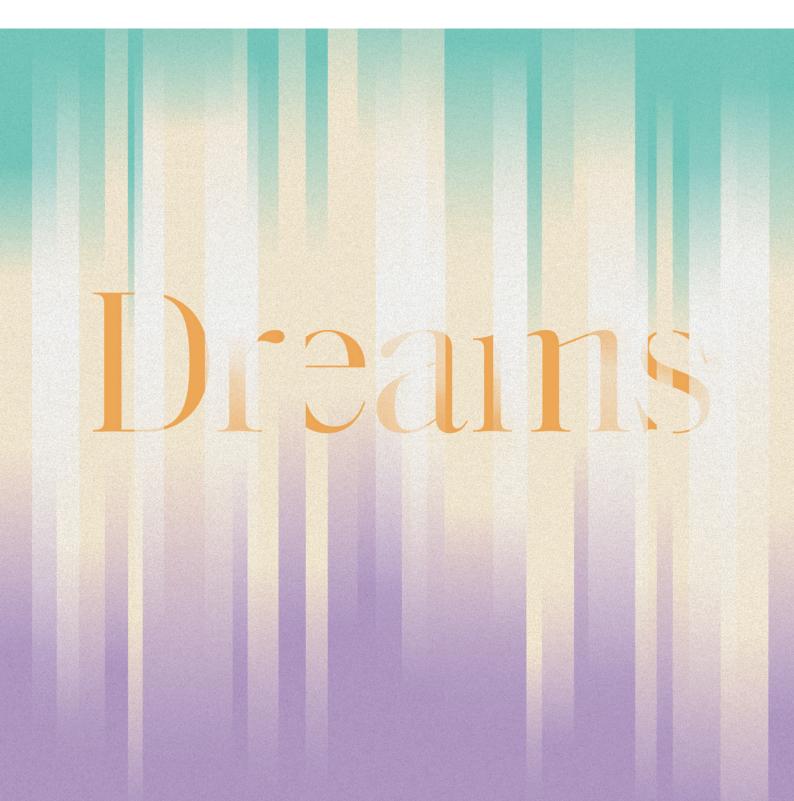
Symphony Series 7



Dreams

Fri 22 & Sat 23 September Adelaide Town Hall

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra Season 2023





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Symphony Series 7

Dreams

Fri 22 & Sat 23 September Adelaide Town Hall

Andante (ma non troppo lento)

Finale (Andante - Allegro molto)

Scherzo (Allegro)

Mark Wigglesworth Conductor

Ilya Gringolts Violin

Duration 2 hrs (incl. interval)

Acknowledgement of Country Jamie Goldsmith arr./orch. Ferguson Pudnanthi Padninthi II - Wadna	[2']
Australian Premiere	
Grace-Evangeline Mason (born 1994) The Imagined Forest	[13']
Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) Violin Concerto No.1 in D, Op.19	[22']
Andantino - Andante assai Scherzo (Vivacissimo) Moderato - Allegro moderato - Moderato - Più tranquillo	
Ilya Gringolts Violin	
Interval	
Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) Symphony No.1 in E minor, Op.39	[38']
Andante, ma non troppo - Allegro energico	

Listen Later ABC Classic is recording this concert for later broadcast. You can hear it again on Sunday 11 February 2024 at 1pm.

Classical Conversation Join us in the Adelaide Town Hall auditorium one hour before each concert for our free *Classical Conversations*, in which Adelaide-based conductor Luke Dollman will be chatting to violinist Belinda Gehlert about the music you'll hear in *Dreams*.









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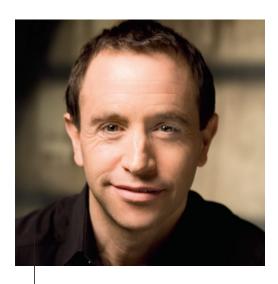
One of the truly magical qualities of music is how it has infinite ways to be heard. Each listener brings their own world of reference, and their own ways of experiencing a performance. That remains true whether the music be old or new, familiar or fresh. It's a pleasure to welcome you to this evening's performance, and invite you to follow wherever this music may take you.

I'm delighted that the first piece this evening is an example of ASO's continuing commitment both to programming new music, and to recognising composing women. Grace-Evangeline Mason was commissioned to write *The Imagined Forest* to mark the 150th anniversary of the Royal Albert Hall, London. The Royal Albert Hall - home of the BBC Proms, an annual eight week festival of classical music, where this piece was premiered in 2021 - is an enormous building. The acoustic is cavernous, and the atmosphere electrifying. I hope we can evoke some of that festival magic together, and onwards in the beautiful sound worlds of Prokofiev and Sibelius.

All three works tonight are evocative soundscapes, full of detail under the broad sonic brushstrokes. Let the music wash over you, be absorbed by fragments of sound colour, rhythm, harmony. Listen again, and marvel at something new.



Kate Suthers
Concertmaster



Mark Wigglesworth Conductor



Ilya Gringolts Violin

Mark Wigglesworth is an outstanding conductor who has forged many enduring relationships with orchestra and opera companies across the world, conducting repertoire ranging from Mozart through to Boulez.

He has enjoyed a long relationship with English National Opera. Operatic engagements elsewhere include The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; The Metropolitan Opera, New York; Bavarian State Opera, Opéra national de Paris and Opera Australia. In 2017 he received the Oliver Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera.

On the concert platform, highlights include performances with the Berlin Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw, London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic and Cleveland Orchestra. His recordings include a complete cycle of the Shostakovich Symphonies with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic and Mahler's Sixth and Tenth symphonies, with the Melbourne Symphony.

He has written articles for *The Guardian* and *The Independent*, and held positions as Associate Conductor of the BBC Symphony, Principal Guest Conductor of the Swedish Radio Symphony and the Adelaide Symphony, Music Director of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and Music Director of English National Opera. His book *The Silent Musician: Why Conducting Matters* was published in October 2018 by Faber and Faber.

Ilya Gringolts wins over audiences with his highly virtuosic playing and sophisticated interpretations and is always seeking out new musical challenges. As a sought-after soloist, he devotes himself to the great orchestral repertoire as well as to contemporary and rare works; he is also interested in historical performance practices. Recent invitations included the Bavarian Radio Symphony, the Oslo Philharmonic, the Tonhalle-Orchestra Zurich, the Orchestra dell' Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia and the National Symphony Orchestra Taiwan. In 2020, Ilya Gringolts and conductor Ilan Volkov founded the I&I Foundation for the promotion of contemporary music, which awards commissions to young composers.

Ilya Gringolts starts his 23/24 season in Australia and New Zealand, where, in addition to his ASO performances, he appears with the Tasmanian Symphony and Auckland Philharmonia, and in recital at Ukaria and the Melbourne Recital Centre. Forthcoming collaborations include the Hungarian National Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala, Brussels Philharmonic, as well as new projects with La Scintilla and Finnish Baroque Orchestra; and he will premiere new works by Lotta Wennäkoski, Chaya Czernowin, Boris Filanovsky and Mirela Ivicevic.

Ilya Gringolts holds a professor position at the Zurich University of the Arts and teaches at the renowned Accademia Chigiana. He plays a Stradivari (1718 'ex-Prové') violin.



Grace-Evangeline Mason (born 1994) The Imagined Forest

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

The Imagined Forest (2021) for orchestra is a fantastical journey through a space that appears to be a familiar impression of nature, but simultaneously somewhere entirely unknown. The forest, a place rooted in fairy tales, fantasy and folklore, often represents areas of refuge, danger, transformation, and adventure. Recognising the forest as an ethereal and intangible entity, the piece seeks to momentarily transport the listener somewhere intimate and yet, surreal.

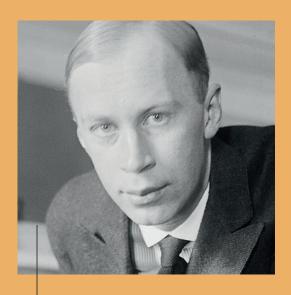
The piece is inspired by the work of Clare Celeste Börsch, a Berlin-based artist who uses collage techniques to build imagined worlds filled with foliage and fauna. Bringing together thousands of delicate hand cut paper images, she creates intricate and immersive spaces to transform ordinary rooms into magical forests. The Imagined Forest travels through the musical space by interweaving atmospheric textures and fragmentary melodic lines as a collage of fleeting images, just like the artwork upon which it is inspired. The music follows a voyage through the forest with moments of florid energy marked by tumbling, intervallic passages enacting the liveliness of nature itself, contrasted with large interludes of static stillness embodying expansive clearings.

The central musical theme wanders through the piece towards enclosed glades where it pauses, as if it is interspersed with shimmering light from the canopies above and the dreamlike dances from the elements of nature; the orchestra glistens with sparkly interjections. Both music and art are fascinating in that countless people can all be experiencing the same work at once and yet, through the lens of their own influence, encounter a completely different artwork. This piece is therefore not a prescriptive experience but is instead a fictional journey; whether it is blooming with flora, captivated by colour, or an airy garden darkened by storm, it is the forest of your own imagination.

© Grace-Evangeline Mason, 2021

Performance History

The world premiere of *The Imagined Forest* took place in May 2021 in London's Royal Albert Hall; the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra was conducted by Domingo Hindoyan. The Baltimore Symphony gave the first performance in North American in May 2023, conducted by Jonathon Heyward. Tonight's performance is the first of *The Imagined Forest* in the Southern hemisphere.



Andantino – Andante assai Scherzo (Vivacissimo) Moderato – Allegro moderato – Moderato – Più tranquillo

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953) Violin Concerto No.1 in D, Op.19

Above the first solo entry in the score of Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No.1 stands the word sognando – dreamily. The theme to which it refers is the most enduringly attractive feature of the concerto. As expansive as it is reflective, this exquisite melody reveals an easily neglected lyrical aspect of Prokofiev's style.

But when the concerto was premiered in Paris in October 1923, the musical avant-garde found the work too lyrical – shot through, in the words of White Russian emigré critic Boris de Schloezer, with 'Mendelssohnism'. The accusation – despite the intended malice – was not unfounded. The concerto's melancholy lyricism and pensive romanticism, as well as its modest lack of ostentatious display, is indeed reminiscent of Mendelssohn's music.

There's another striking parallel: Mendelssohn had been plagued by the opening theme of his own violin concerto, writing to Ferdinand David six years before its composition, 'I want to do you a violin concerto. I have one in E minor in my head, and the opening won't leave me in peace.'

Similarly, Prokofiev's first theme had been in his head since he'd developed it for a concertino in 1915. 'I had often regretted,' he wrote, 'that other work had prevented me from returning to its "meditative opening".'

Two years later, during a summer retreat to the country outside St Petersburg (by then Petrograd) the concertino 'grew' into a concerto. Meanwhile, Prokofiev recalled, 'exciting' but 'contradictory' news of the October Revolution filtered out from the city, along with trainloads of 'panic-stricken bourgeois crowds'. Yet the serenity and spirit of the First Violin Concerto holds no trace of the violence of the revolution that delayed its premiere by six years.

With the premiere finally in sight, potential soloists could only see that the concerto lacked a cadenza, and the celebrated Bronislaw Hubermann and other violinists 'flatly refused to learn "that music". It was not until 1924 – when Joseph Szigeti performed it at the Prague International Festival of Contemporary Music – that the concerto began to attract the

recognition it deserved. Even then acceptance was not complete. The composer Glazunov ostentatiously walked out of one performance even as the audience was encoring the *Scherzo*.

In Szigeti's view, the sognando opening was 'a clue to the day-dreaming expression of the 'little boy listening to a story' feeling' of the exposition. So it's no surprise to find, soon after, a second word above the solo part: narrante – 'in the manner of a narration'. Here the music takes on a rhythmic character, all sparkle and bite. No longer is Prokofiev setting the scene for daydreams – we're thrown headlong into a tale, one told in symphonic dialogue between the violin and orchestra.

But in many ways Prokofiev was as much a traditionalist as an innovator. The First Violin Concerto has the clear-cut, neoclassical construction of the *Classical Symphony* (also composed in 1917) even as it inverts the usual sequence of tempos so that two slow lyrical movements surround a fast, rhythmic scherzo.

The Scherzo is a catalogue of violin trickery: extreme leaps, double-stopping, slides, harmonics, and rapid figuration alternating with accented rhythms. Yet Prokofiev avoids giving the impression of empty display. Instead, the capricious exposition of technical effects draws attention to their expressive possibilities. The five sections of the movement transport the listener from the buoyant ascent of the opening theme above a clockwork accompaniment to the sinuous passage work of the solo violin in its low register.

This mercurial *Scherzo* with its abrupt ending has been cited as an example of the 'grotesque' or 'sarcastic' aspect of Prokofiev's style, but he

objected to this use of the word 'grotesque', describing it as hackneyed and distorted. 'I would prefer my music,' he wrote, 'to be described as "scherzo-ish" in quality, or else by three words describing various degrees of the scherzo – whimsicality, laughter, mockery.'

The third movement begins with a brief theme on the bassoon (no hint of mockery here) that is developed with increasing lyricism by each of the woodwind instruments in turn. This sets the scene for the solo part's combination of staccato and sustained ideas suspended above scoring of the utmost economy. Nowhere is the translucency of the orchestration more apparent than in the coda, where the opening theme from the first movement returns in the orchestral violins above a shimmer of tremolos and harp arpeggios. The solo violin traces the melody with 'altitudinous trills' before coming to rest – exactly as it had at the end of the first movement – on a top D in unison with the piccolo.

Abridged from a note by Yvonne Frindle Symphony Australia ©1997

Performance History

Sam Bor was soloist in the Orchestra's first performance of Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No.1, given in January 1950 under Henry Krips' direction. The ASO's most recent performance, in July 2017, featured soloist Alina Ibragimova and conductor Nicholas Carter.



Andante, ma non troppo - Allegro energico Andante (ma non troppo lento) Scherzo (Allegro) Finale (Andante - Allegro molto)

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) Symphony No.1 in E minor, Op.39

Who is the real Sibelius? The passionate Romantic of the First and Second Symphonies; the lofty, clear-thinking classicist of the Third and Sixth Symphonies; the dark nay-sayer of the Fourth or the creator of those epics of intensity, the Fifth and Seventh Symphonies? Can the frequenter of southern breezes in *The Oceanides* be the same man who conjures up the almost horrific stillness of *Tapiola*?

It's this very unknowability that makes him a fascinating figure. Yet beneath these apparent contradictions you can discern a trajectory which takes his music on a journey that begins in a world of florid rhetoric and a strong feeling of nationalist pride, for he played a part in Finland's struggle against Russian domination. But at the end of his composing life his music is bounded by interior concerns, for as the years progressed Sibelius' imagination revolved increasingly around the idea of music itself as drama, of the unfolding of musical events as a kind of parallel narrative universe.

Naturally enough his First Symphony finds him near the beginning of this journey; it's the work of a man in his early 30s, immensely gifted and skilful, but still coming to terms with many of the musical influences around him.

The feature of the work that immediately marks it out as 'Sibelian' to anyone interested in musical detail is the modal quality of the long, winding tune which opens the first movement. The modes in which music was created, before the system of major and minor keys came into play about four centuries ago, held a particular fascination for many composers around the turn of the 20th century, particularly those interested in folk traditions. The modal inflection in the tune which opens this symphony is Dorian, or the 'scale' you hear when you play all the white notes between one D and the next on the piano. Although Sibelius' modal writing was to change character over the years, it was never to leave him.

This symphony's opening melody is characteristically Sibelian, too, in its economy of means: a solo clarinet over a timpani roll is all Sibelius needs to suggest something ancient, eternal, bard-like. The way he puts his material together in this movement tells you a lot about the consistency of his principles of musical organisation. It's possible to write in terms of formal analysis, but the music comes to you more organically and intuitively than that. Notice, for example, how the second major theme, a dancing idea first heard on the flutes, becomes broader and more lyrical when it passes to the oboe and how it is, in any case, clearly derived from the solo clarinet theme that sets the symphony in motion.

With this second theme Sibelius gradually quickens the tempo and makes the musical undergrowth much thicker, combining all the ideas you've heard so far in an ingeniously devised musical tempest, at the other end of which a ringing transformation of the main theme on the brass announces that a mood of summary and conclusion. This technique of gradual crescendo and pulse-quickening, followed by a short, bracing survey of the vista from the summit, then an abbreviated rounding off, would be vital to Sibelius' thinking in much of his later music.

The Andante reminds you that, however subtly he organises his material, Sibelius, at this moment, is still captivated by the rhetoric of the Romantic symphony. The warm, tender opening tune is the seed from which all else in the movement grows. This song-like theme takes on many guises as the movement progresses, some subtle, some obvious, but the overall

effect is not intricate or fussy but passionate and intense.

The short scherzo that follows is notable for its integration of the timpani into the main melodic material, its pastoral trio and the gradually quickening pace of its foreshortened reprise, which gives the final minutes an air of hectic excitement.

You'll hear Sibelius' admiration for Tchaikovsky most clearly in the finale. The very opening is a good example; here he gives the strings the tune with which the symphony began, but now in a highly impassioned setting, punctuated by brass declamations. The ferocity of the tune's subsequent development also bears some resemblance to the spirit of Tchaikovsky's more rousing symphonic moments. On the other hand, the big, lyrical tune which comes to dominate the movement is essentially operatic: after all, Sibelius had not altogether abandoned the idea of writing a major work for the opera stage. The work's final pages are more mysterious; after a heroic summing-up the symphony ends, like the first movement, with two pizzicato chords.

Phillip Sametz © 2004/2023

Performance History

The ASO's first performance of Sibelius' Symphony No.1 took place in November 1945 conducted by Percy Code; most recently, the Orchestra performed it in April 2015, when Yan Pascal Tortelier was the conductor.



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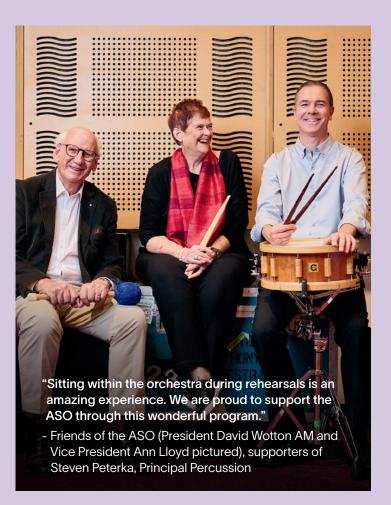


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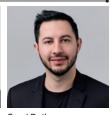
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In memory of Barbara Carter

In memory of Dr Ian Hodgson and Elaine Hodgson

In memory of Bob Maynard

in memory of Margaret Mudge

In memory of Dr Vance Tottman

Anonymous (4)

Donation by the ASO Players Association in memory of Ladislav Jasek, former ASO Concertmaster

The ASO would like to thank the 1,320 donors who have given other amounts. A complete list of donors of \$250 or more can be found at aso.com.au/aso-donors

*Deceased

Correct as at 21 July 2023

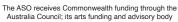
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