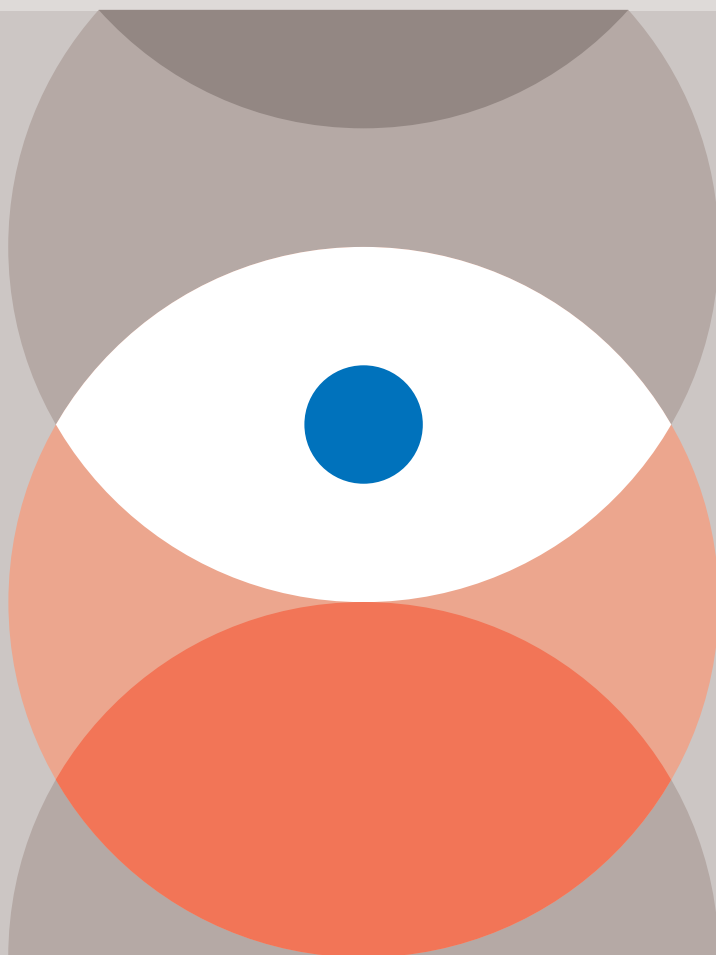


ADELAIDE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA SEASON 2019



MASTER SERIES 7

# Idyllic Visions

**September**

Fri 6, 8pm

Sat 7, 6.30pm

Adelaide Town Hall





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MASTER SERIES 7

# Idyllic Visions

## September

Fri 6, 8pm

Sat 7, 6.30pm

Adelaide Town Hall

**Mark Wigglesworth** Conductor

**Stephen Hough** Piano

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### Vaughan Williams

### Symphony No.5 in D

*Preludio (Moderato)*

*Scherzo (Presto)*

*Romanza (Lento)*

*Passacaglia (Moderato)*

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### Interval

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### Brahms

### Piano Concerto No.2 in B flat, Op.83

*Allegro non troppo*

*Allegro appassionato*

*Andante*

*Allegretto grazioso – Un poco più presto*

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### Duration

This concert runs for approximately 1 hour and 50 minutes, including a 20 minute interval.

### Live Broadcast

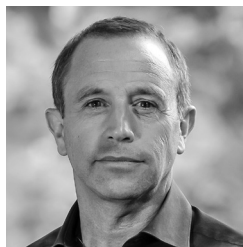
This concert will be broadcast on ABC Classic on Saturday 14 September, 2pm.

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### Classical Conversation

One hour prior to Master Series concerts in the Meeting Hall. The concert pianist and polymath Stephen Hough will be in conversation with Graham Abbott.

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**Mark Wigglesworth**  
Conductor

Internationally renowned and Olivier Award-winning conductor Mark Wigglesworth is one of the outstanding musicians of his generation, as much at home in the opera house as the concert hall. Recognised for his masterly interpretations, his highly detailed performances combine a finely considered architectural structure with great sophistication and rare beauty. Through a broad repertoire ranging from Mozart to Boulez, he has forged enduring relationships with many orchestras and opera houses throughout the world.

Mark has enjoyed a long relationship with English National Opera (*Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, *Così fan Tutti*, *Falstaff*, *Katya Kabanova*, *Parsifal*, *Force of Destiny*, *Magic Flute*, *Jenufa*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Lulu*), and operatic engagements elsewhere include the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Rise and Fall of Mahagonny*), the Metropolitan Opera, New York (*The Marriage of Figaro*) as well as at the Bavarian State Opera, Semperoper Dresden, Teatro Real, the Netherlands Opera, La Monnaie, Welsh National Opera, Glyndebourne, and Opera Australia. In 2017 he received the Olivier 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, Cleveland Orchestra, Tokyo Symphony, and the Sydney Symphony. His recordings include a critically acclaimed complete cycle of the Shostakovich Symphonies with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Mahler's Sixth and Tenth symphonies, with the Melbourne Symphony, a disc of English music with the Sydney Symphony, Britten's *Peter Grimes* with Glyndebourne, and the Brahms Piano Concertos with Stephen Hough.

He has written articles for The Guardian and The Independent, made a six-part TV series for the BBC entitled *Everything to Play For*, and held positions as Associate Conductor of the BBC Symphony, Principal Guest Conductor of the Swedish Radio Symphony, Music Director of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and most recently Music Director of English National Opera. He is currently Principal Guest Conductor of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. His book, *The Silent Musician*, was published by Faber & Faber at the end of 2018.





**Stephen Hough**  
Pianist

One of the most distinctive artists of his generation, Stephen Hough combines a distinguished career as a pianist with those of composer and writer. Named by *The Economist* as one of Twenty Living Polymaths, Hough was the first classical performer to be awarded a MacArthur Fellowship and was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the New Year's Honours 2014.

Since taking first prize at the 1983 Naumburg Competition in New York, Hough has performed with the world's major orchestras and has given recitals at the most prestigious concert halls. He is a regular guest at festivals such as Salzburg, Mostly Mozart, Edinburgh, La Roque-d'Anthéron, and BBC Proms, where he has made more than twenty-five appearances.

Highlights in 2018/19 include performances with the Cleveland and Minnesota orchestras, the Wiener Symphoniker, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-Carlo, Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della Rai, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra and China National Symphony Orchestra. In the UK he performs with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, and the Hallé, with which he will also tour China. Recent highlights include appearances with the New York Philharmonic, Detroit, Dallas and Baltimore symphony orchestras, Singapore Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Symphony Orchestra. In 2018 he was Artist-in-Residence at the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, performing a cycle of Beethoven concertos. Recent recitals

include New York's Carnegie Hall and London's Royal Festival Hall (International Piano Series), amongst others.

Hough's extensive discography of over 60 CDs has garnered international awards including the Diapason d'Or de l'Année, several Grammy nominations, and eight Gramophone Awards including Record of the Year and the Gold Disc. Recent releases include solo piano works by Debussy, Hough's 'Dream Album', and a live recording of Schumann and Dvořák's piano concertos with Andris Nelsons and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, all for Hyperion Records. His award-winning iPad app *The Liszt Sonata* was released by Touch Press in 2013.

As a composer Hough has been commissioned by Wigmore Hall, Musée du Louvre, London's National Gallery, Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral, the Genesis Foundation, Gilmore International Keyboard Festival, the Walter W. Naumburg Foundation, Orquesta Sinfónica de Euskadi and the Berlin Philharmonic Wind Quintet. His music is published by Josef Weinberger Ltd.

Stephen Hough's first novel, *The Final Retreat*, was published by Sylph Editions in March 2018, and he has written for *The New York Times*, *The Telegraph*, *The Times*, *The Guardian* and the *Evening Standard*. He is an Honorary Bencher of the Middle Temple, an Honorary Member of the Royal Philharmonic Society, a Visiting Professor at the Royal Academy of Music, the International Chair of Piano Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music, and is on the faculty of The Juilliard School in New York.



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Cameron Hill\*\*  
(Associate Concertmaster)  
Shirin Lim\* (Principal 1st Violin)  
Michael Milton\*\*  
(Principal 2nd Violin)  
Lachlan Bramble ~  
(Associate Principal 2nd Violin)  
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Martin Butler  
Lesley Cockram  
Anna Hansen  
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\*\* denotes Section Principal

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In tonight's program, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra Concertmaster Natsuko Yoshimoto will be playing 'The Adelaide' violin. Crafted in Milan in 1753-7 by Giovanni Batista Guadagnini, Natsuko is the current custodian of 'The Adelaide' which is held in trust by UKARIA.

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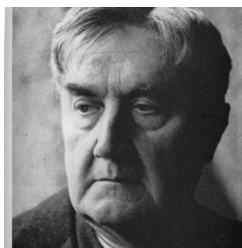
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**Ralph Vaughan Williams**  
(1872-1958)

### ***Symphony No.5 in D***

*Preludio (Moderato)*

*Scherzo (Presto)*

*Romanza (Lento)*

*Passacaglia (Moderato)*

Vaughan Williams' Fifth Symphony is a work of extraordinary, exultant beauty, born in the depths of the Second World War. It was premiered at the Albert Hall on 24 June 1943, six months after Winston Churchill's famous declaration of the 'end of the beginning' of the war. Conflict and violence had characterised Vaughan Williams' Fourth Symphony, written eight years earlier (1935), and in his succeeding symphony he chose to create its opposite, a work of sublime tranquillity and moral reassurance.

Much of the material of the Fifth Symphony derives from music Vaughan Williams had been working on for a projected opera of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Bunyan's story, first published in 1678, has lost its appeal to modern readers, and we are liable to think of it (most likely without ever having read it) as an empty piece of aged religious propaganda. But it was a story that worked powerfully on Vaughan Williams' imagination from childhood to old age, bringing together many of the philosophical themes that were important to him.

Above all, the book provides a vision of the heavenly Ideal. According to his

wife, Ursula, Vaughan Williams did not consider himself a confirmed Christian, but adopted a state of 'cheerful agnosticism'. Nevertheless, he understood the promise of heaven and its importance for individuals and for society. Perhaps this heaven can be read more rightly as 'utopia', but certainly its defining character is peacefulness. The musicologist Frank Howes, the composer's colleague and champion, observed that in this symphony Vaughan Williams is not only reflecting upon a world after the war, in which there is an 'absence of armed conflict', but aspires to essay a higher, spiritual condition of 'peace, ultimate and fundamental'.

This profound peaceful state is attained only after a considerable quest – the pilgrim's journey. While thankfully the symphony doesn't put us through a litany of trials like the pilgrim goes through, we nevertheless gain through its four movements a potent sense of a life's journey through different emotional experiences. The symphony adopts a relatively formal classical symphonic structure, so we should avoid ascribing to it an excessively programmatic or narrative reading: the music can happily be left alone to communicate for itself. However, some of the symphony's music also appears in Vaughan Williams' other tellings of the *Pilgrim's Progress* story, in particular a radio play from 1942 and an

opera (more like a dramatic oratorio) performed in 1951.

The symphony opens with an evocation of blissful, unsullied nature. Mellers concludes that this is the pilgrim's journey in overview: an onward march with moments of threat and triumph, but without resolution or finality. The sinister presence comes forward more in the second movement, the scherzo, where the scurrying, ethereal music is like that with which Vaughan Williams describes Pilgrim's fight with the devilish 'hobgoblins' in the opera.

The third movement is entitled *Romanza*, but even here the idyllic mood (its material similar to the opera's Act I, Scene ii, 'The House Beautiful') is contrasted with music of agitation (from Act I, Scene i, where Pilgrim sings, 'Save me, Lord! My burden is greater than I can bear'). Initially, Vaughan Williams appended a quotation from Bunyan to this movement: 'He hath given us rest by his sorrow and life by his death' – an apt inscription in wartime, but perhaps at odds with the abstract nature of the symphony.

The final movement is dominated by a glorious passacaglia on a hymn-like theme, rising to a great D major climax. But this is not the symphony's end: an epilogue follows, which shares melodic material with the scene in the opera where Pilgrim passes over the River of Death, entering humbly but triumphantly into Paradise.

These instances illustrate not so much a narrative underpinning, but a philosophical one for the symphony, namely that the pursuit of goodness and justice faces continual challenge from darker forces. The music's structure reflects this philosophical purpose. While the structure of a classical symphony is present underneath the music, it is

subjected to such richly imaginative and intuitive remodelling that we can barely recognise it. For the most part, the symphony proceeds by means of contrasts rather than by the traditional 'argument' or development based on key changes and thematic 'conflict'. This gives the experience of listening to the symphony its powerful serenity. The harmonic language of the symphony also contributes to this sensibility, artfully combining ancient modality and pentatonic scales with contemporary tonality to create an extended, harmonically luscious sound-world. While the symphony is designated as D major, this tonality is quite hazy for most of the time. It's only in the final movement that D major unequivocally asserts itself, but its triumph here is so emphatic that Mellers describes the key as representing 'human fulfilment'.

Abridged from a note by James Koehne © 2004

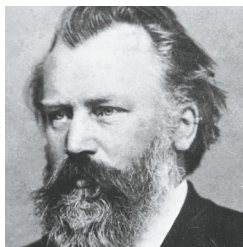


The Adelaide Symphony Orchestra first performed this symphony in May 1956 under the direction of Henry Krips, and most recently in July 2003 with James Judd.



Duration: 40 minutes

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**Johannes Brahms**  
(1833-1897)

## **Piano Concerto No.2 in B flat, Op.83**

*Allegro non troppo*

*Allegro appassionato*

*Andante*

*Allegretto grazioso – Un poco più presto*

*"I beg you to forgive my delay in thanking you for so kindly sending me your concerto. Frankly speaking, at the first reading this work seemed to me a little grey in tone; I have, however, gradually come to understand it. It possesses the pregnant character of a distinguished work of art, in which thought and feeling move in noble harmony."*

So Liszt wrote to Brahms after hearing, and then studying the score of, the latter's Second Piano Concerto. The wording suggests that he was not entirely convinced – and he certainly never played a note of Brahms' music in public – but his choice of 'pregnant' as a description is interesting, carrying connotations both of something unfinished and of over-abundance. There is, of course, nothing unfinished about this piece, but its magnitude, its vast scale, often solid scoring and fearsomely difficult though never bravura piano writing is evidence of great generosity.

In 1881 Brahms had written to his friend and musical confidante Elisabeth von Herzogenberg that he was writing a 'tiny, tiny piano concerto with a tiny, tiny wisp of a scherzo'. What he produced,

however, is one of the most expansive works in the genre; not only are the movements all of considerable weight and duration, there are four of them – the 'tiny scherzo' probably based on the one that Brahms had discarded while writing his Violin Concerto. The piece helped forge a relationship with conductor Hans von Bülow, who defected from the Wagner camp when the latter began an affair with Bülow's wife, Liszt's daughter Cosima, who left him for the composer. Bülow offered to play through the work with his excellently trained orchestra at Meiningen, and soon became one of Brahms' principal interpreters.

Opening a massive work with a solo horn call might have reminded some of Brahms' listeners of the romantic forest world of Weber's *Oberon* or *Freischütz*. Elaborating that with an improvisatory piano flourish certainly recalls the Beethoven of his Fourth Piano Concerto – very unclassical, but a very dramatic gambit. As the movement gets under way, though, it becomes clear that this is a work of great rigour, and while the piano part is as demanding as they come, it forms part of a symphonic musical argument. Despite its commanding rhetoric, the work never hectors, and the transformation of the opening theme, especially its first, rising three-note motif at the climax of the first movement, is magical, and rather Lisztian.

The 'tiny' minor-key scherzo demonstrates the mature Brahms' mastery of metrical displacement, creating the infectious,

initial dance rhythm that can be light and careless or, when fully scored as later in the movement, carry hints of passion and tragedy, all of which is offset by the optimistic major-key trio.

The endless, beautiful cello solo in the third movement almost makes us forget that we are listening to a piano concerto; the cello gathers a warm orchestral tutti to itself, that dies away with Brahms' trademark sound of soft, high woodwinds as the piano self-effacingly enters. The tone remains lyrical throughout the movement, even when indulging in almost Tchaikovskian excesses, and the plangent cello returns later in the movement to support gently ornamental figures from the piano.

Brahms' music frequently transforms thematic material from the outside world. The rhythms of the scherzo and the opening of the fourth movement are cases in point. The opening theme of the finale could almost be a relative of the second movement of Beethoven's Eighth Symphony but is followed in abrupt succession by Brahms at his most gypsy-like. Brahms first came across 'Hungarian' music in Hamburg when he was a teenage tavern pianist, as many Hungarians took ship there for the New World; and in teaming up with Hungarian violinists like Eduard Reményi and Joseph Joachim, Brahms played 'ethnic' music in concerts. This of course was never the actual peasant folk music collected by Bartók some decades later, but nevertheless popular 'gypsy' music suffuses Brahms' work, even if it found no great favour with the Hungarian Liszt. Fittingly, the Second Concerto received its official premiere in Budapest in 1881, and then enjoyed a triumphant series of performances in German, Swiss and Dutch cities. Brahms was at the height of his success.

© Gordon Kerry 2015



The Adelaide Symphony Orchestra first performed this concerto on 10 February 1953 with Henry Krips and soloist Raymond O'Connell, and most recently in September 2016 with Nicholas Carter and Alexei Volodin.



Duration: 45 minutes

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**Vincent Ciccarello**  
Managing Director

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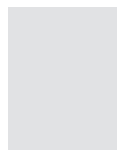
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