

RACHMANINOFF'S
VESPERS



SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS

ARTISTIC & MUSIC DIRECTOR BRETT WEYMARK OAM



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SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS

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RACHMANINOFF'S VESPERS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

DEBORAH CHEETHAM FRAILLON and MATTHEW DOYLE
Tarimi Nulay – Long time living here[†]

SERGEI RACHMANINOFF
All-Night Vigil, Op.37

interwoven with music by
BRETT WEYMARK

Brett Weymark director

Tim Cunniffe conductor
Hannah Fraser mezzo-soprano
Louis Hurley tenor

Symphony Chorus

Nicholas Russoniello saxophone
Anthea Cottee principal cello | **James Beck** cello
David Cooper, Jennifer Penno double basses

Mark Hammer lighting designer

Saturday 20 July 2024 at 7pm
Sydney Town Hall

[†] 200 Minutes of New Australian Music 2020 Commission

This concert is performed without interval and will conclude at approximately 8:15pm

JOIN OUR CHRISTMAS CHOIR!

Hallelujah!

This year, our Christmas Choir will sing
Handel's *Messiah* at the Sydney Opera House,
conducted by renowned Handel expert Graham Abbott.

Friday 13 December | 8pm

Saturday 14 December | 1pm

Sunday 15 December | 1pm

No auditions. Singers of any ability welcome.
Join us!



Registration deadline: Monday 21 October
sydneyphilharmonia.com.au/chrischoir24

Welcome

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs has performed Rachmaninoff's All-Night Vigil many times and in some iconic places, including Worcester Cathedral in the UK as part of the 2002 Three Choirs Festival. Given our long history with the work, and the fact that it was first heard in a concert setting, I felt this was a perfect opportunity to look at it in a new way and rethink how this music might be performed and received.

The Sydney Town Hall was chosen for its splendidly warm and vibrant acoustic but also for its flexibility. I have long wanted to explore the acoustic possibilities of the space by placing the choir in the very centre of the building with the audience wrapped around it – not just on chairs but in whatever fashion they felt like perceiving this monumental work. Hence the choice of lying down on yoga mats or sitting in the galleries looking down on the choir.

When it's performed liturgically, the All-Night Vigil is not heard in the same way as it is in concert – with one movement leading directly into the next. This opened my imagination to having the choir move into different formations for each section, and to creating short instrumental interludes, based upon the original chants, played by two cellos and two double basses, sonically contrasted with the sound



PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS

of soprano and baritone saxophones improvising on top and in between.

The subtle use of lighting then creates a special space for this work to exist in, further enhancing the idea that we've entered a place that is not your standard concert hall.

We hope you enjoy the result – a special performance that sits somewhere between ritual, concert and theatre.

Brett Weymark OAM
Artistic and Music Director

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, upon whose Country we rehearse, sing and work, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. Our voices bring to life the songs of many cultures and countries, from across the ages, in a spirit of sharing, learning and understanding. The ancient customs and cultures of this land inspire us to create harmony – in music and in our society.

ALL-NIGHT VIGIL

The ancient and austere chants of the Orthodox church inspired one of the last Romantic composers to compose an extraordinary choral work.

Natalie Shea writes...

'Where on earth are we to find such basses? They are as rare as asparagus at Christmas.'

Nikolai Danilin, conductor of the 88-voice Moscow Synodal Choir, was full of praise for Rachmaninoff's musical setting of the All-Night Vigil, when the composer played the new piece through for him on the piano. He immediately asked Rachmaninoff for permission to perform it as soon as possible (which the composer was of course more than happy to grant) but even with the best choir in Russia at his disposal, Danilin had little hope that he would be able to find singers with deep enough voices to do justice to Rachmaninoff's magnificently resonant sonorities.

Part of the problem was, undoubtedly, timing. This was 1915, and vast numbers of men had been swept up into the bloodbath of the Great War. But even before the war, real *basso profundo* voices (or 'octavists', as they were known in Russia, because they were at times required to double the bass line an octave below the written pitch) were not particularly common. Composers wrote sparingly for them, aware of their scarcity but also understanding that even the most glorious sound can quickly lose its impact if overused.

Rachmaninoff was not daunted by Danilin's complaint: 'I knew the voices of

my countrymen and was well aware of the demands I could put upon Russian basses!' And not just on the basses: it is Rachmaninoff's subtle and sensitive writing for the whole choir that has made his setting of the All-Night Vigil one of the great masterworks of the choral repertoire.

Unlike western Europe with its oratorios and especially England, with its Anglican cathedral tradition, Russia's church music heritage was not particularly inspiring. There was a vast body of chant dating back to the 10th century, but the conservatism of the Orthodox liturgy had effectively fossilised this as unaccompanied, unison singing. Attempts in the 17th century to reform the musical practices of the church had met with a backlash so violent that in the end the ancient chants were banned altogether. The music that took their place was heavily influenced by the Italian school, à la Mozart or Haydn. When composers in the 19th century began to reassert their national identity by reclaiming authentic Russian chants, having no living performance practice to draw on, they generally ended up squeezing the melodies into the regular rhythms and simple four-part harmonies of the West. Rachmaninoff, with his All-Night Vigil, was the first to successfully blend old

SPEED READ

Much like Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* and Bach's *B Minor Mass*, Rachmaninoff's *All-Night Vigil* is liturgical music that transcends the requirements of the church, resulting in a monumental work that has found a home in the concert hall.

The Orthodox Vigil service combines Vespers (evening praise) and Matins (morning praise) every Saturday night.

Vespers (Nos 1–6) is a call to repentance and reflection, concluding with the symbolism of light as the setting sun is associated with the everlasting light of Christ. Matins (Nos 7–14) is then a celebration of the Resurrection. (The Russian word for Sunday is *Voskreseniye*, or 'resurrection'.) No. 15 is a final hymn of praise to the Mother of God.

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and new, remaining faithful to the old melodies while creating a newly expressive musical soil in which they could thrive.

The All-Night Vigil, despite the name, does not last all through the night in the Russian Orthodox tradition, at least not in ordinary parish worship; it is the standard Saturday evening service, combining the offices of Vespers, Matins and the First Hour – a prayerful farewell to the day that is done, and a preparation for the day to come. Rachmaninoff's setting consists of 15 musical items. Ten of these use traditional chants; the other five are pure Rachmaninoff but so skilfully constructed – 'conscious counterfeits' to use his words – that it is really not possible to pick them as 'false' just by listening to them. (For the record, they are Nos 1, 3, 6, 10 and 11.)

Russian chant differs from the Gregorian chant of the Western church most obviously in its rhythmic patterning: whereas in Gregorian chant the notes are generally all the same length and flow evenly, with no sense of any regular metre or pulse, in Russian chant the rhythm is notated, and the notes have different lengths. The rhythms are still 'free', though, in the sense that they don't fit neatly into bars of regular length, and in fact the music generally has no bar-lines at all, except at the ends of phrases. The melodies tend to move in steps rather than leaps, and are confined to quite a limited range of pitches, usually no more than a sixth; in No. 4, *Svete tikhii*, the tune covers just four notes.

What Rachmaninoff does with these melodies is extraordinary. Using the natural timbres of each voice type, he creates a breathtaking range of vocal and choral colours, contrasting high and low voices (sopranos and altos against tenors and basses), upper and lower voices (sopranos and tenors against altos and basses), solo



voices and full chorus. Overlaid on this rich colour palette are the shifting harmonic textures: from homophony, with the voices all moving together in rhythmic unison (for example, No. 1, *Priidite, poklonimsya*), to the freer polyphony of, say, No. 7, *Slava v vyshnikh Bogu*, where different vocal lines move at different speeds, and bell-like chords ring out over the melody. And although the melodies themselves are at times quite repetitive, Rachmaninoff never repeats his harmonies; they are different every time.

Then there is a third layer of colour in the constantly changing dynamics. Of course, the power of the full choir is always impressive, but even more striking is Rachmaninoff's use of the softer dynamics: piano, pianissimo and beyond, into near silence. The octavists' moment of glory, the closing phrase of No. 5, *Nyne otpushchayeshi*, where the bass line descends right down to a bottom B flat – the phrase that had conductor Danilin shaking his head – is all the more breathtaking for being sung in a whisper.

Rachmaninoff never heard the Vigil performed liturgically: it was premiered on 10 March 1915 at a war benefit concert, albeit by a church choir, the all-male Moscow Synodal Choir, with a boy treble as the alto soloist. (Rachmaninoff later conducted a performance by the Mariinsky Opera Chorus, so he clearly did not object to the involvement of female singers.) Even in the concert hall, however, the effect of Rachmaninoff's kaleidoscope of colours and textures is the same as that of the original, unadorned chant: a heightening of the meaning of the sacred texts, and a spirit of awe and wonder.

Natalie Shea © 2014

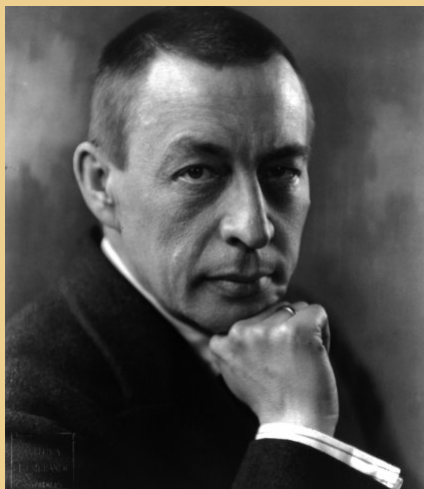


PHOTO: KUBEY REMBRANDT (1921) / LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

When SERGEI RACHMANINOFF (1873–1943) graduated from the Moscow Conservatory with the Great Gold Medal in 1892, his future as a performer and a composer promised to be equally golden. And he did indeed find success as a composer, a pianist and a conductor – although rarely in more than one field at a time.

Rachmaninoff is known today as one of great piano virtuosos of his time and the last of the late-Romantic composers. Before leaving Russia for America in 1917, he had already composed two symphonies, three piano concertos, *The Isle of the Dead* and the much-loved Vocalise.

It's less well-known that he had a deep love of Orthodox church music – even in winter he would rise early in the morning to attend service and listen to the chants – and from this emerged two great choral works: the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom (1910) and the tremendous All-Night Vigil (1915).

The All-Night Vigil was both an outstanding achievement and a personal favourite of Rachmaninoff's. He wanted the *Nunc dimittis* or Song of Simeon (No. 5) sung at his funeral, and at the end of his life he quoted from *Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi* (No. 9) in the final movement of his Symphonic Dances, writing 'Alleluia' into the score.

The Words

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Tarimi Nulay – Long time living here

Tarimi nulay ngalawa yura
garrabarra baraya yagu barrabugu
ngyiningi ngara
ngyiningi berong

*Long time here live the people
dancing and singing today and tomorrow,
your way of knowing
your way of belonging*

Words by Deborah Cheetham Fraillon, translated into Gadigal by Matthew Doyle

All-Night Vigil (Vsenoshchnoye bdeniye)

VESPERS

1. Call to Worship

Priidite, poklonimsya Tsarevi
nashemu Bogu.
Priidite, poklonimsya i pripadem
Khristu Tsarevi nashemu Bogu.
Priidite, poklonimsya i pripadem
Samomu Khristu Tsarevi i Bogu nashemu.
Priidite, poklonimsya
i pripadem Yemu.

*Come, let us worship before the
Lord our God.
Come, let us worship and fall down before
Christ, our King and our God.
Come, let us worship and fall down before
the very Christ, our King and our God.
Come, let us worship
and fall down before Him.*

2. Praise the Lord, O my Soul

Blagoslovi, dushe moya, Gospoda,
blagosloven yesi, Gospodi.
Gospodi Bozhe moy, vozvelichilsya yesi zelo.
Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi.
Vo ispovedaniye i v velelepotu
obleklsya yesi.
Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi.
Na gorakh stanut vody.
Divna dela Tvoya, Gospodi.
Posrede gor proydut vody.
Vsya premudristiyu sotvoril yesi.
Slava Ti, Gospodi, sotvorivshemu vsya.

*Praise the Lord, O my soul.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord.
Lord my God, Thou art exceedingly great.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord.
Thou art clothed with majesty
and honour.
Blessed art Thou, O Lord.
The waters stand in the hills.
Wondrous art Thy works, O Lord.
The springs run among the hills.
In wisdom hast Thou made all things,
Glory to Thee, O Lord, who created everything.*

3. Blessed is the man

Blazhen muzh, izhe ne ide na sovet
nechestivyykh. Alliluyia.

Yako vest Gospod put pravednykh,
i put nechestivyykh pogibnet.

Alliluyia.

Rabotaite Gospodevi so strakhom i raduitiesya
Yemu s trepetom. Alliluyia.

Blazheni vsi nadeyushchisya Nan.

Alliluyia.

Voskresni, Gospodi, spasi mya,

Bozhe moy. Alliluyia.

Gospodene est spaseniye, i na lyudekh
Tvoikh blagosloveniye Tvoye. Alliluyia.

Slava Otsu, i Synu, i Svyatomu Dukhu,
i nyne i prisno i vo veki vekov.

Amin.

Alliluyia. Slava Tebe, Bozhe.

*Blessed is the man that hath not walked in
the counsel of the ungodly. Alleluia.*

*For the Lord knows the way of the
righteous, and the way of the ungodly
shall perish. Alleluia.*

*Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice unto
Him with reverence. Alleluia.*

*Blessed are all they whose hope is in Him.
Alleluia.*

Arise, O Lord: save me,

O my God. Alleluia

*Salvation comes from the Lord, and Thy
blessing is upon Thy people. Alleluia.*

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O Lord.

4. Evening Hymn of the Light (Kyiv chant)

Svete tikhiy svyatyya slavy, Bezsmernago,
Otsa Nebesnago, Svyatago Blazhennago,
lisuse Khriste!

Prishedshe na zapad solntsa,
videvshe svet vecherniy.

Poyem Otsa, Syna

i Svyatago Dukha, Boga!

Dostoin yesi vo vsya vremena

pet byti glasy prepodobnymi,

Syne Bozhii, zhivot dayai,

temzhe mir Tya slavit.

*Gladsome light, holy glory immortal,
Father in heaven, Holy, blessed,
Jesus Christ!*

*Now that we have come to the setting of the
sun, and behold the evening light.*

*We sing to the Father, Son
and Holy Spirit, our God.*

*Worthy are you at all times,
to be praised in hymns by reverent voices,
Son of God, who gives life;
the whole world praises you.*

5. Nunc dimittis – Song of Simeon (Kyiv chant)

Nyne otpushchayeshi raba Tvoego, Vladyko,
po glagolu Tvoyemu s mirom:

yako videsta ochi moi spaseniye Tvoye,

yezhe yesi ugotoval pred litsem vsekh lyudei,

svet vo otkrovenie yazykov, i slavu lyudei

Tvoikh Izrailya.

*Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in
peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes
have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast
prepared before the face of all people: to be
a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the
glory of Thy people Israel.*

6. Hymn for the Virgin Mary

Bogoroditse devo, raduisya,
Blagodatnaya Mariye, Gospod s Toboyu.
Blagoslovenna Ty v zhenakh,
i blagosloven plod chreva Tvoyego,
yako Spasa rodila yesi dush nashikh.

*O Virgin, Mother of God, rejoice!
O Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women, and
blessed is the fruit of thy womb, for thou
didst give to the Saviour of our souls.*

MATINS

7. The Short Gloria – intonation to the Six Psalms

Slava v vyshnikh Bogu,
i na zemli mir,
v chelovetsekh blagovoleniye. Slava!
Gospodi, ustne moyi otverzeshi,
i usta moya vozvestyat khvalu Tvoyu.

*Glory to God in the highest heavens,
and on earth peace,
good will among men. Glory!
O Lord, open Thou my lips,
and my mouth shall proclaim Thy praise.*

8. Praise ye the name of the Lord (Polyeleos)

Khvalite imya, Gospodne. Alliluyia.
Khvalite, rabi, Gospoda. Alliluyia.
Blagosloven Gospod ot Siona,
zhivyi vo Iyerusaleme. Alliluyia.
Ispovedaitesya Gospodevi,
yako blag. Alliluyia.
Yako v vek milost Yego. Alliluyia.
Ispovedaitesya Bogu nebesnomu.
Alliluyia.
Yako v vek milost Yego. Alliluyia.

*Praise ye the name of the Lord. Alleluia.
Praise the Lord, all ye his servants. Alleluia.
Blessed is the Lord from Zion,
he who dwells in Jerusalem. Alleluia.
O give thanks unto the Lord,
for he is good. Alleluia.
For His mercy endures forever. Alleluia.
O give thanks unto the God of heaven.
Alleluia.
For his mercy endures forever. Alleluia.*

9. The Story of the Resurrection (Evlogitaria)

REFRAIN: Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,
nauchi mya opravdaniem Tvoim.

Angelskiy sobor udivisya,
zrya Tebe v mertvykh vmenivshasya,
smertnyuyu zhe, Spase, krepost razorivsha,
i s Soboyu Adama vozdvigsha
i ot ada vsya svobozhdsha.

Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi...

Pochto mira s milostivnymi slezami,
o uchenitsy, rastvoryayete;
blistayaisya vo grobe Angel,
mironositsam veshchashe:
‘Vidite vy grob, i urazumeite:
Spas bo vozkrese ot groba.’

REFRAIN: *Blessed art Thou, O Lord:
teach me Thy statutes.*

*The company of the angels was amazed,
when they beheld Thee numbered among
the dead, yet Thyself, O Saviour, destroying
the power of death, and with Thee raising
up Adam and releasing all men from Hell*

Blessed art Thou...

*‘Wherefore, O women disciples, do ye
mingle sweet-smelling spices with your
tears of pity?’ the radiant angel within the
sepulchre cried unto the bearers of myrrh:
‘Behold the grave, and understand;
for the Saviour is risen from the tomb.’*

Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi...

Zelo rano mironositsy techakhu
ko grobu Tvoyemu rydayushchiya.
No predsta k nim Angel, i reche:
'Rydaniya vremya presta ne plachite,
voskreseniye zhe apostolom rtsyte.'

Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi...

Mironositsy zheny, s miry prishedshyya
ko grobu Tvoyemu, Spase, rydakhu.
Angel zhe k nim reche, glagolya:
'Chto s mertvymi zhivago pomyshlyayete?
Yako Bog bo voskrese ot groba.'

Slava Otsu, i Synu,
i Svyatomu Dukhu.
Poklonimsya Otsu, i Yego Synovi,
i Svyatomu Dukhu,
Svyatei Troitse vo yedinom sushchestve,
s Serafimy zovushche:
'Svyat, svyat, svyat yesi Gospodi.'
I nyne, i prisno, i vo veki vekov. Amin.

Zhiznodavtsa rozhdshi, grekha, Devo,
Adama izbavila yesi.
Radost zhe Eve v pechali mesto podala yesi:
padshiya zhe ot zhizni, k sei napravi,
iz Tebe voplotiviyisa Bog i chelovek.

Alliluyia. Slava Tebe, Bozhe.

10. Hymn of the Resurrection

Voskreseniye Khristovo videvshe,
poklonimsya Svyatomu Gospodu Iisusu,
Yedinomu bezgreshnomu.
Krestu Tvoyemu poklanyayemsiya, Khriste,
i svyatoye voskreseniye
Tvoye poyem i slavim:
Ty bo yesi Bog nash,
razve Tebe inogo ne znayem,
imya Tvoye imenuyem.

Blessed art Thou...

*Very early in the morning did the women
bearing myrrh run lamenting unto Thy tomb;
but an angel came toward them, saying:
'The time for lamentation is passed; weep
not; but announce unto the apostles the
resurrection.'*

Blessed art Thou...

*The women bearing myrrh mourned as
they drew near Thy tomb, O Saviour.
But the angel spoke unto them, saying:
'Why seek ye the living among the dead?
In that he is God, He is risen from the grave.'*

*Glory to the Father and the Son
and the Holy Spirit.
We worship the Father, as also His Son,
and the Holy Spirit,
the Holy Trinity in one essence,
crying with the seraphim:
'Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O Lord.'
Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

*In that thou didst bear the Giver of Life,
O Virgin, thou didst redeem Adam from sin
and didst give to Eve joy in place of
sadness; and He who was incarnate of thee,
both God and man, has restored to life
those who had fallen therefrom.
Alleluia. Glory to Thee, O Lord.*

*Having beheld the resurrection of Christ,
let us worship the Holy Lord Jesus,
the only sinless one.
Thy cross we worship, O Christ,
and Thy holy Resurrection
we sing and glorify,
for Thou art our God,
we know none other beside Thee;
we call upon Thy name.*

Priidite vsi vernii,
poklonimsya svyatomu
Khristovu voskreseniyu:
Se bo priide krestom radost vsemu miru,
vsegda blagoslovyashche Gospoda,
poyem voskreseniye Yego;
raspyatiye bo preterpev,
smertiyu smert razrushi.

11. Magnificat

Velichit dusha moya Gospoda,
i vozradovasya dukh moy o Boze
Spase moyem.
REFRAIN: Chestneyshuyu Kheruvim
i slavneyshuyu bez sravneniya Serafim,
bez istleniya Boga Slova rozhdshuyu,
sushchuyu Bogoroditsu Tya velichayem.

Yako prizre na smireniye raby Svoyeya.
Se bo ot nyne ublazhat Mya vsi rodi.

Chestneyshuyu Kheruvim...

Yako sotvori mne velichie silny,
i svyato imya Yego,
i milost Yego v rody rodov
boyashchimsya Yego.
Chestneyshuyu Kheruvim...

Nizlozhi silnyya so prestol,
i voznese smirennyya.
Alchushchiya ispolni blag,
i bogatyashchiyasya otpusti tshchi.
Chestneyshuyu Kheruvim...

Vospriyat Izrailya otroka svoyego,
pomyanuti milosti, yakozhe
glagola ko otsem nashym,
Avraamu i semeni yego, dazhe do veka.
Chestneyshuyu Kheruvim...

12. The Great Doxology

Slava v vyshnikh Bogu, i na zemli mir,
v chelovetsekh blagovoleniye.
Khvalim Tya, blagoslovim Tya,

*Come, all ye faithful,
let us worship Christ's holy Resurrection:
for behold, through the cross is
joy come into all the world.
Ever blessing the Lord,
let us sing His Resurrection:
for in that He endured the cross,
He has destroyed death by death.*

*My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in my
Saviour God.*

*REFRAIN: More honourable than the
cherubim, and beyond compare more
glorious than the seraphim, who without
decay gave birth to God the Word, true
Mother of God, we magnify thee.*

*For He has regarded the lowliness of His
handmaiden, for from henceforth all
generations shall call me blessed.
More honourable than the cherubim...*

*For He who is mighty has magnified me,
and holy is His name,
and His mercy is on them that fear Him,
throughout all generations.
More honourable than the cherubim...*

*He has put down the mighty from their seat,
and exalted the humble and meek.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich He has sent empty away.
More honourable than the cherubim...*

*He remembering His mercy
has helped His servant Israel,
as He promised to our forefathers,
Abraham and his seed forever.
More honourable than the cherubim...*

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth
peace, goodwill toward men.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee,*

klanyayem Ti sya, slavoslovim Tya,
blagodarim Tya velikiya radi slavy Tvoyeya.
Gospodi, Tsaryu Nebesny,
Bozhe Otche, vsederzhitelnyu.
Gospodi, Syne yedinorodny,
Iisuse Khriste i Svyatye Dushe.
Gospodi Bozhe, Agnche Bozhiy, syne Otech,
vzemlyai grekh mira,
pomiluy nas:
vzemlyai grekhi mira,
priimi molitvu nashu.
Sedyai odesnuyu Otsa,
pomiluy nas.
Yako Ty yesi yedin svyat,
Ty yesi yedin Gospod, Iisus Khristos,
v slavu Boga Otsa. Amin.

Na vsyak den blagoslovlyu Tya
i voskhalyu imya Tvoe vo veky i v vek veky.
Spodoby, Gospodi, v den sei
bez grekha sokhranitisya nam.
Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,
Bozhe Otets nashikh,
i khvalno i proslavleno imya
Tvoe vo veky. Amin.

Budi, Gospodi, milost Tvoya na nas,
yako zhe upovakhom na Tya.

Pomiluy mya

ALTOS: Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,
nauchi mya opravdaniem Tvoyim.

Istseli dushu moyu

ALTOS: Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,
nauchi mya opravdaniem Tvoyim.

K Tebe pribegokh,

ALTOS: Blagosloven yesi, Gospodi,
nauchi mya opravdaniem Tvoyim.

FULL CHOIR: Gospodi pribezhishche byl
yesy nam v rod i rod.

Az rekh: Gospodi, pomiluy mya,
istseli dushu moyu, yako sogreshikh Tebe.
nauchi mya tvoriti volyu Tvoyu,
yako Ty yesy Bog moy,
yako u Tebe istochnik zhivota.

*we worship Thee, we glorify Thee,
We give Thee thanks for Thy great glory.
O Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Father Almighty.
O Lord, the only begotten Son,
Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
take away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us;
take away the sins of the world,
accept our prayer.
Sitting at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For Thou art the only Holy One,
Thou art one Lord, Jesus Christ,
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

*Every day will I give thanks unto Thee
and praise Thy name forever and ever.
Grant, O Lord, to keep us
this day without sin.
Blessed art Thou,
O Lord God our fathers,
and praised and glorified be Thy name
for ever and ever. Amen.*

*Grant, O Lord, Thy mercy be upon us,
as we have trusted in Thee.*

Have mercy upon me.

*ALTOS: Blessed art thou, O Lord,
teach me thy statutes.*

Heal my soul.

*ALTOS: Blessed art thou, O Lord,
teach me thy statutes.*

I flee unto thee.

*ALTOS: Blessed art thou, O Lord,
teach me thy statutes.*

*FULL CHOIR: O Lord, Thou hast been our
refuge from generation to generation.
I said: Lord, have mercy on me,
heal my soul, for I have sinned against
Thee. O Lord, I flee unto Thee.
Teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my
God, for Thou art the fountain of life.*

Vo svete Tvojem uzrim svet.
Probavi milost Tvoju vedushchim Tya.

Svyaty Bozhe, Svyaty Krepkiy,
Svyaty Bezsmertnyi, pomiluy nas.
Slava Otsu, i Synu,
i Svyatomu Dukhu,
i nyne i prisno, i vo veky vekov. Amin.

Svyaty Bozhe, Svyaty Krepkiy,
Svyaty Bezsmertnyi, pomiluy nas.

*In Thy light shall we see light.
Extend Thy mercy to those who know Thee.*

*Holy God, Holy Mighty,
Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost,
now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

*Holy God, Holy Mighty,
Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us.*

13. Resurrection hymn: Today is salvation come

Dnes spaseniye miru byst,
poyem voskresshemu iz groba
i nachalniku zhizni nasheya:
razrushiv bo smertiyu smert,
pobedu dade nam i veliyu milost.

*Today is salvation come into the world,
let us sing unto Him who rose again from
the grave, the Author of our life:
for in that by death, He has destroyed
Death, He has given unto us victory
and great mercy.*

14. Resurrection hymn: Thou hast risen from the tomb

Voskres iz groba i uzy rasterzal yesi ada,
razrushil yesi osuzhdeniye smerti,
Gospodi, vsya ot setei vraga izbavivyi,
yavivyi zhe Sebe apostolom Tvoim,
poslal yesi ya na propoved,
i temi mir Tvoi podal yesi vselennei,
Yedine mnogomilostive.

*Thou hast risen from the tomb and burst the
bonds of Hell, and destroyed the
condemnation of death, O Lord,
releasing all from the snares of the enemy.
Revealing Thyself to Thine Apostles,
Thou sent them forth to proclaim Thee.
And through them Thou hast given Thy
peace to the world, O merciful One.*

PRIME (THE FIRST HOUR)

15. Hymn to the Mother of God (Akathist hymn)

Vzbrannoy voyevode pobeditelnaya,
yako izbavishesya ot zlykh,
blagodarstvennaya vospisuem
Ti rabi Tvoi, Bogoroditse.
No yako imushchaya
derzhavu nepobedimuyu,
ot vsyakikh nas bed svobodi,
da zovym Ti:
Raduisya, nevesto Nenevestnaya.

*O queen victorious who was chosen,
who has delivered us from the wicked,
We thy servants, offer songs of
thanksgiving, O Mother of God.
You who have invincible power,
deliver us from all our troubles,
that we may call unto thee:
Hail, O Bride unwedded.*

*English translation adapted from the Service Book of the
Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic Church*

About the Artists

Brett Weymark director

One of Australia's foremost choral conductors, Brett Weymark OAM was appointed Artistic and Music Director in 2003, and he has conducted the Choirs throughout Australia as well as internationally. He has also conducted the Sydney, Adelaide, Queensland, West Australian and Tasmanian symphony orchestras, Orchestra of the Antipodes, Sydney Youth Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic, as well as productions for WAAPA, Pacific Opera and OzOpera, and he has performed with Opera Australia, Pinchgut Opera, Australian Chamber Orchestra, The Song Company and Musica Viva.

He studied singing and conducting at the University of Sydney and the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, continuing his conducting studies with Simon Halsey, Vance George, Daniel Barenboim and John Eliot Gardiner, amongst others.

His repertoire at SPC has included Bach's Passions and Christmas Oratorio, the Mozart, Verdi, Duruflé and Fauré requiems, and Orff's *Carmina Burana*. He champions Australian composers, and has premiered works by Matthew Hindson, Elena Kats-Chernin, John Peterson, Daniel Walker, Rosalind Page, Peter Sculthorpe, Andrew Schultz and Ross Edwards. In 2011 he premiered his own work *Brighton to Bondi* with the Festival Chorus. He has also conducted musical theatre programs including Bernstein's *Candide*, which won multiple BroadwayWorld Sydney awards.



PHOTO: KEITH SAUNDERS

Under his direction, SPC received a Helpmann Award for *Oedipus Rex* and *Symphony of Psalms*, directed by Peter Sellars, and was nominated for a Limelight Award for Purcell's *King Arthur*.

He was chorus master for the Adelaide Festival productions of *Saul* (2017), *Hamlet* (2018) and *Requiem* (2020), and he has prepared choirs for Charles Mackerras, Zubin Mehta, Edo de Waart, Vladimir Ashkenazy and Simon Rattle. He has recorded for the ABC and conducted film scores for *Happy Feet*, *Mad Max Fury Road* and *Australia*.

Recent conducting highlights include *Sweeney Todd* (West Australian Opera), *Jandamarra* by Paul Stanhope and Steve Hawke (SSO), Michael Tippett's *A Child Of Our Time* (Adelaide Festival) and *Carousel* (State Opera South Australia).

In 2001 he was awarded an Australian Centenary Medal and in 2021 the Medal of the Order of Australia.

Brett Weymark is passionate about singing and the role music plays in both the wellbeing of individuals and the health and vitality of a community's culture. He believes music can transform lives and should be accessible to all.



PHOTO: PILAR MATA DUPONT

Tim Cunniffe conductor

Tim Cunniffe is a conductor, musical director and pianist who has worked with Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, Sydney Children's Choir and Gondwana Voices since 2012. He earned his Music Education degree from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts in Perth and later studied conducting with Dobbs Franks.

He forged his career in WA, where he is known as music director of more than 30 stage shows, lecturer in Music Theatre at WAAPA, conductor of the Churchlands Choral Society for 12 years, and co-creator of more than 80 cabaret shows presented around the world. He has a long association with His Majesty's Theatre: he was the resident musical director of Downstairs @ The Maj from its inception, arranged and directed the music for the theatre's centenary gala (2004), and has conducted many performances within its walls, most memorably *Irene* (2008) with Hollywood legend Debbie Reynolds.

His recent musical theatre work includes serving as assistant conductor on national tours of *The King and I* (Opera Australia/ Gordon Frost Organisation), *Dirty Dancing* (GFO), *We Will Rock You* (GFO), and *Jersey Boys* (New Theatricals). In 2021 and 2022 he returned to WAAPA as a Visiting Artist to conduct its productions of *Crazy For You* and *Mack and Mabel* at His Majesty's.



PHOTO: ANDREW RICHARDS

Hannah Fraser mezzo-soprano

Hannah Fraser has become a well-known name on stages throughout Australia, performing regularly with reputable ensembles and musicians both as a soloist and a consort member. From 2013 until 2017 she was a core member of The Song Company, which led her into a rewarding career spanning repertoire from 12th-century Europe to contemporary music.

Notable recent engagements include Pinchgut Opera programs *Spiritual Forest*, *Women of the Pietà*, the Charpentier double bill *Pleasures of Versailles*, and Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu Nostris*; Bach Akademie programs *Missa Brevis in F*, *A Child of Stars* and *Bach in the Castle of Heaven*; The Song Company's 40th anniversary concert; and Handel's *Messiah* with the Canberra Symphony Orchestra.

With The Song Company, she collaborated with the Australian Chamber Orchestra in their Total Immersion program and she has also sung with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Cantillation in Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, conducted by Simone Young.

This year she will make her solo debut with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, performing Bach's Christmas Oratorio.



PHOTO: EVE WILSON

Louis Hurley tenor

Sydney-based tenor Louis Hurley is a passionate operatic and concert performer whose repertoire ranges from the Baroque to the 21st century. After completing a Bachelor of Music degree and a Graduate Diploma of Music at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), he furthered his studies, as a Hazell Scholar, with a Master of Music degree at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama. While in London, he made soloist debuts at Wigmore Hall, and at the Barbican Hall with the London Symphony Orchestra.

Since returning to Australia, he has performed with a number of Australia's leading opera companies and orchestras. On the concert platform he has appeared as a soloist with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Melbourne and Sydney symphony orchestras and Pinchgut Opera. For Sydney Philharmonia Choirs he appeared in Jubilation singing Haydn's *Nelson Mass* (2022) and this year's ChorusOz – The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace.

On the opera stage, he has performed extensively with Pinchgut Opera, where he was the inaugural recipient of The Humanity Foundation Taryn Fiebig Scholarship, as well as with Melbourne Opera and West Australian Opera, and in the Adelaide Festival, with a show-stealing performance of Flute/Thisbe in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

He has sung in some of Australia's premier vocal ensembles, including The Song Company, Cantillation, Castalia Vocal Consort and AVE (Australian Vocal Ensemble).



PHOTO: JACQUIE MANNING

Nicholas Russoniello saxophone

Nick Russoniello is a saxophonist, composer, ensemble leader and educator. A graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and the Conservatorio di Musica 'Giuseppe Verdi' di Milano, he has appeared as a soloist or guest musician with many of Australia's leading arts organisations, including the Sydney and Melbourne symphony orchestras, Australian World Orchestra, Opera Australia Orchestra, Ensemble Offspring, Metropolitan Orchestra and Acacia Quartet. He has received major awards such as the ABC Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year and Fine Music Kruger Scholarship, and was a Freedman Fellowship Award finalist.

Through his own acclaimed projects and ensembles (Duo Histoire, Golden Age Project and his One Man Band live looping show) he has appeared for the Sydney Festival, Musica Viva Australia, Royal College of Music, ABC Classic, Conservatorio di Milano, Strasbourg Cité de la Musique, City Recital Hall, Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra and Australian Digital Concert Hall.

His saxophone compositions are regularly performed by international artists, and in 2023, with the support of an Australia Council award, he composed and premiered three concertos that were presented by the Orange Chamber Music Festival, Queensland Chamber Orchestra, The Metropolitan Orchestra and Steel City Strings.

Nick Russoniello holds a doctorate from the Sydney Conservatorium and is a Yamaha Australia Artist and D'Addario Woodwind Artist.

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Elizabeth Scott Associate Music Director

Tim Cunniffe Assistant Chorus Master and Principal Rehearsal Pianist

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Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs presents the art of choral singing at the highest standard, and develops the talents of those with a passion for singing, in Sydney and beyond. Founded in 1920, it has become Australia's finest choral organisation and is a Resident Company of the Sydney Opera House.

Led by Artistic and Music Director Brett Weymark OAM and Associate Music Director Dr Elizabeth Scott, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs comprises three auditioned and three community choirs that perform repertoire from choral classics to musical theatre and commissions by Australian composers. SPC presents its own annual concert season as well as collaborating with leading conductors, soloists and orchestras in Australia and overseas. In 2002, SPC was the first Australian choir to sing at the BBC Proms (Mahler's Symphony No.8 under Sir Simon Rattle), returning again in 2010 to celebrate its 90th anniversary. The Choirs perform in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's season every year, as they have done for more than 80 years. SPC also presents community singing events – Chorus Oz and singing workshops throughout Sydney and NSW.

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs' centenary in 2020 saw the realisation of an inspiring commissioning project – 100 Minutes of New Australian Music – featuring works by composers including Elena Kats-Chernin, Deborah Cheetham Fraillon and Brett Dean. In 2023 Brett Weymark celebrated his 20th anniversary as Artistic Director.

The 2024 season includes performances of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Ethel Smyth's Mass in D major, Rachmaninoff's All-Night Vigil, and, with ChorusOz, Karl Jenkins' *Armed Man: A Mass for Peace* together with a commission by Katie Noonan and Andrew O'Connor.

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