

FAIRY TALES

METRO CONCERT SERIES #1
SUNDAY MARCH 6



**BRISBANE
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA.**

Image: James Goss



CONCERT PROGRAM

RICHARD MILLS

Suite from *'Snugglepots and Cuddlepies'*

Michael Kurek

Concertino for Celesta and Orchestra -
'Fairy Dreams' (Australian Premiere)

INTERVAL

Antonin Dvořák

Symphony No.8 in G major Op.88

VIOLIN 1

Cameron Hough*
(Concertmaster)
Yvette McKinnon
Danielle Langston
Kylie Hinde
Tove Easton
Emma Eriksson
Richard Clegg
Peter Nicholls
Chris Gleeson
Keith Gambling

VIOLIN 2

Amy Phillips*
Amanda Lugton
Lauren Jones
Anna Jenkins
Ryan Smith
Camilla Harvey
Ailsa Nicholson
Bec Johnson
Rosie Gibson

VIOLA

Bronwyn Gibbs^
Sarah Parrish
Katrina Greenwood
Daniel Tipping
John McGrath

CELLO

Helen Dolden*
Mathilde Vlieg
Edward Brackin
Gabriel Dumitru
Nicole Kancachian
Charmaine Lee
Fan Li

BASS

Samuel Dickenson*
Amelia Grimmer
Glenn Holliday
Harry Mulhall
Jack Clegg

FLUTE

Jo Lagerlow**
Jessica Sullivan**

PICCOLO

Alex Huyghebaert^

OBOE

Gabrielle Knight*

COR ANGLAIS

Anton Rayner*

CLARINET

Daniel Sullivan*
Kendal Alderman

BASS CLARINET

Melissa Baldwin*

BASSOON

Carl Bryant*
Sarah Johnson

HORN

Melanie Taylor*
Jessica Goodrich#
Ashley Skyring#
Jennifer Sullivan

TRUMPET

Chris Baldwin*
Courtney Oxenford
Courtney Smith

TROMBONE

Nicholas Whatling^
Michael Adams

BASS TROMBONE

Neale Connor^

TUBA

Matthew White#^

PERCUSSION

Kerry Vann*
Michael Stegeman
Bill McIntyre
Lucie Allcock

HARP

John Connolly*

PIANO

Julian Wade#

KOOKABURRA

Cameron Hough^

*denotes principal

**denotes co-principal

^denotes acting principal

#denotes guest performer

**FAIRY
TALES**
METRO CONCERT SERIES #1



Conductor CHEN YANG

BPO is delighted to be working once again with respected conductor Chen Yang.

Chen Yang has held the position as concertmaster of the Queensland Theatre Orchestra (QTO) after graduating from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music with distinction in violin performance. He later joined the Queensland Symphony Orchestra (QSO) for many years.

Chen performs regularly as leader & conductor of both The Sinfonia of St Andrew's Orchestra and The Corda Spiritus Orchestra of Brisbane. Last year he was invited as guest conductor for a successful Gala Concert with The Northern Rivers

Symphony Orchestra celebrating their 20th anniversary.

Chen has worked in music education for many years with his association with the Queensland Youth Orchestra (QYO) leading their Junior String Ensemble (JSE) consisting of up to 70 talented young string players. At present he is also conductor and string teacher at St Hilda's School, Southport.

His other musical interests include playing baroque violin with The Badinerie Players of Brisbane.



Soloist LEVI HANSEN

The BPO is delighted to showcase our remarkable local talent, and we welcome Brisbane-based pianist, Levi Hansen

Levi recently completed a Bachelor of Music at the Queensland Conservatorium where he studied under Natasha Vlassenko. During his degree he was awarded the Margaret Anne Kerrison prize and MK Lassell prize for outstanding performance in his studies.

Levi is currently continuing at the Queensland Conservatorium completing a Master of Music majoring in Performance. He also performs with various orchestras and ensembles in Brisbane, including the Queensland Youth Symphony and most recently, with violin virtuoso Attila Sautov and his Symphonic Rock Ensemble.



ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA

The Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO) is Brisbane's leading community orchestra. The orchestra brings together up to 200 musicians a year to play a variety of classical orchestral music. Over 100 members of the incorporated association form the core of the orchestra. Other players perform as casual musicians, but often join as full-time members after their first concert with BPO. The orchestra was founded on principles of musical excellence and development, communal participation, and organisational professionalism.

Since its creation in 2000, the BPO has become the community orchestra of choice for over 500 musicians. It is eagerly sought as a performance partner for touring choirs, festivals, and internationally acclaimed instrumentalists and vocalists. The BPO performs its own series of symphony concerts and participates in multiple community and festival events throughout the year, attracting an audience of over 2,500 people. The orchestra's main metropolitan concert series includes four to five symphony concerts at Brisbane City Hall and the Old Museum Concert Hall. Programs vary between

concerts featuring the great classical, romantic, and 20th century composers, light concerts including film music, as well as concerts with programs targeted at a younger audience. Additionally, BPO occasionally performs chamber music concerts, featuring smaller groups in a more intimate setting.

The BPO maintains many community partnerships including with the Queensland Music Festival, 4MBS Festival of Classics, Brisbane City Council, and The Brisbane Airport Corporation. These partnerships provide essential connections in artistic, educational, professional, and social programs and cater to the association's increased responsibility to culturally enhance localities and bring a diversity of people together in a fast-paced, ever-impersonal global village. Unusually for a community orchestra, entry to the BPO is by audition and the ensemble is the only community orchestra within the city that rotates guest conductors by invitation rather than establishing a permanent Music Director. Uniquely, this allows a variety of the finest local professional conductors to deliver diverse and innovative programming to artistically stimulate members of the orchestra.



PROGRAM NOTES

Richard Mills (1949-)

Suite from 'Snugglepots and Cuddlepies' (1987)

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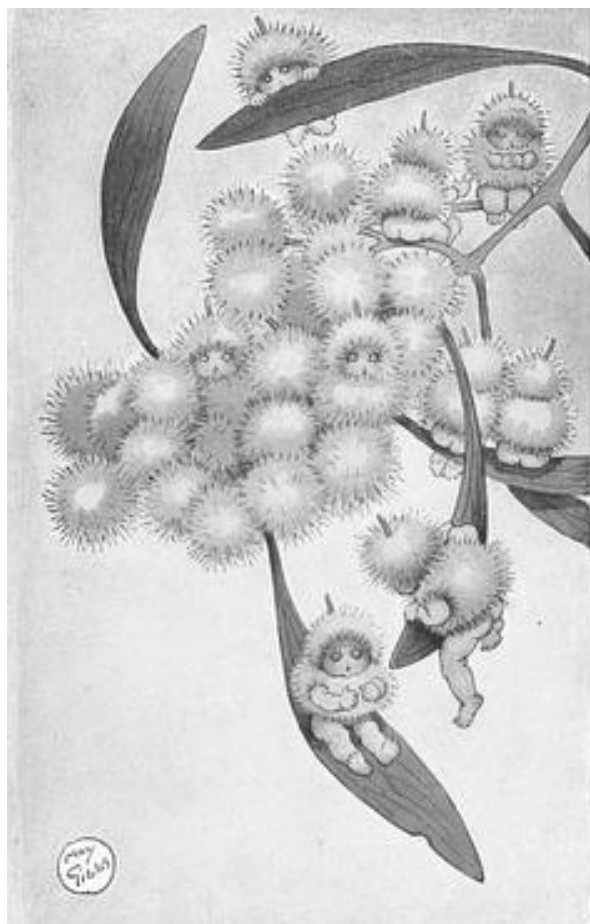
Writing the music for this ballet involved finding creative solutions to two major problems: firstly, to achieve an effective music resonance of the May Gibbs material, and secondly, to create a truly functional score for dance theatre in the classic tradition.

The magic of May Gibbs' world of the imagination has been the guiding force behind the composition of this music. The colour, whimsy, humour and, sometimes

violence of the stories; the sense of gentleness and the decorative quality of the drawings (in which one often finds compositional formality tempered with unpredictable capriciousness and sheer delight in fanciful detail); in essence, the lively spirit of Gibbs the artist provided constant inspiration and direction during the process of composition.

However, the composer is also present in the ballet as a character – never seen on stage but residing (sometimes quietly) in the pit: sometimes commenting on the action, defining the characters, adding colour, atmosphere and providing the framework for the choreographic drama to unfold. The music is unequivocally theatrical and written to be enjoyed.

Program notes by Richard Mills



Wake-ups and Blossom Shower

The bush dance begins with the Gumnut Blossoms waking in the morning light. Spritely figures in the winds interject the murmuring tremolos of strings, piano, and harp as the blossoms shake off the dew in a colourful flurry.

Blossom Dance

A fast-paced and rhythmic dance interwoven with lush string melodies is our welcome into the frantic yet beautiful world of the Blossoms.

Pas de Deux

The main heroes, brothers Snugglepote and Cuddlepie, are depicted in this frenetic and character-driven number.



Ragged Blossom's Solo

The wistful and pastel-coloured Ragged Blossom enters, represented by bending glissandi in the strings and a romantic and almost mournful motif in the clarinet.



Capture Dance

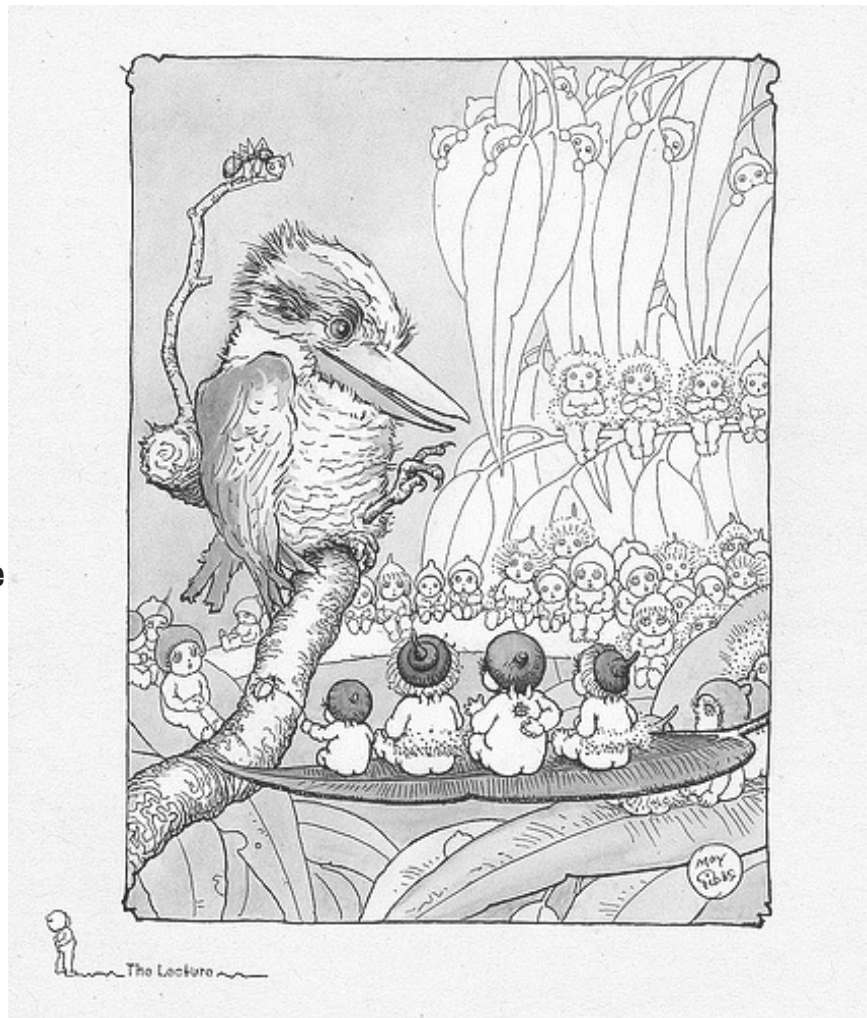
Ragged Blossom is left alone in the bush. The peace and tranquility surrounding her is abruptly interrupted by the entrance of the villains: the Banksia Men, who kidnap her and flee the scene!

Snugglepot's Solo

Snugglepot is frantic and panicked at the capture of Ragged Blossom and this soon turns to sorrow as he tells Cuddlepie and the other Blossoms of her kidnapping.

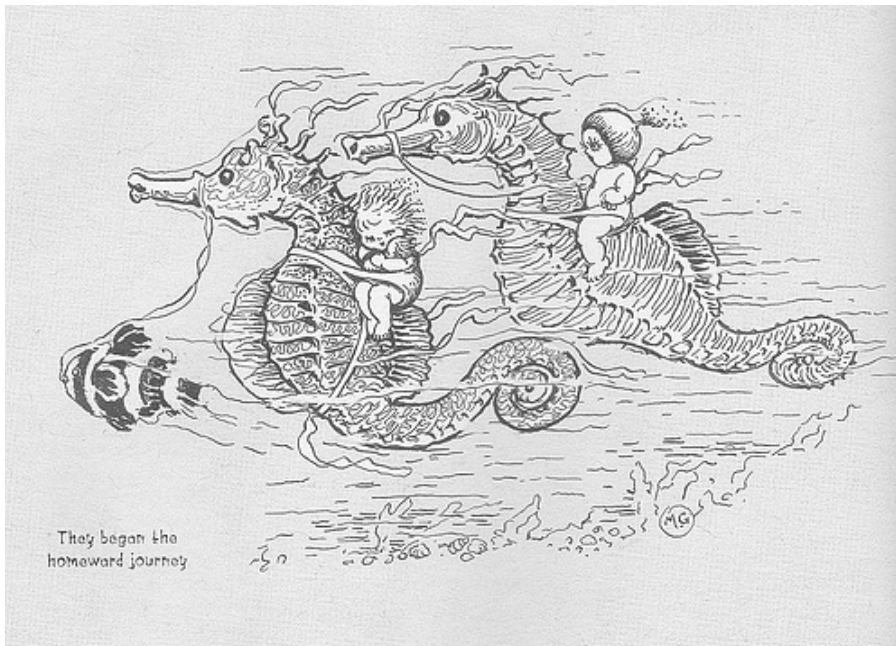
Mrs Kookaburra – Prelude and Dance

The brothers run to Mrs Kookaburra to tell her of Ragged Blossom's capture and ask her to help spread the awful news. No voice is louder than hers to get a message out for all to help.



Obelia's Blessing

A lone Banksia Man has taken Ragged Blossom to his underwater prison. On his tail are Snugglepot and Cuddlepie who descend into the world of the fish folk lead by the powerful John Dory and beautiful Ann Chovy. The sea is ruled supreme by little Obelia who banishes the Banksia to her cave and blesses the marriage of John Dory and Ann Chovy.

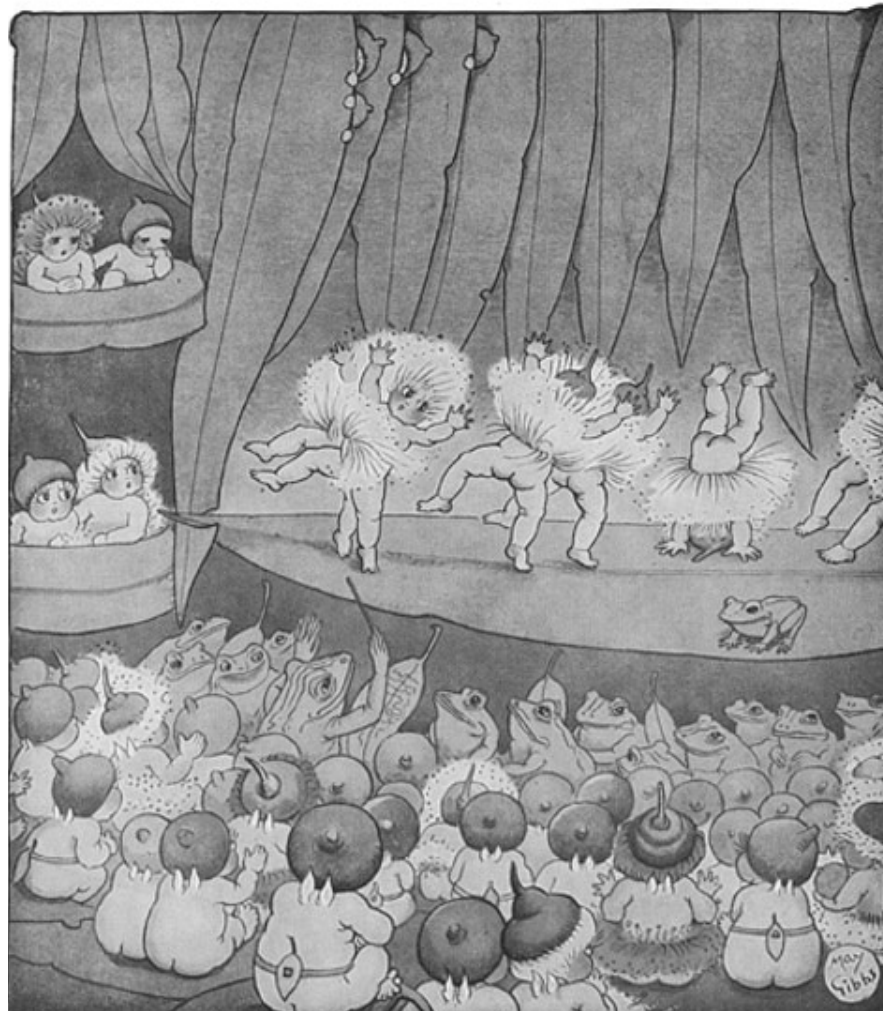


Pas de Deux: John Dory & Ann Chovy

John Dory and Ann Chovy's wedding dance is joyous and romantic, culminating in a triumphant celebration after which the Gumnut brothers and Ragged Blossom say goodbye to the fish folk and ascend to the surface.

Finale

Beneath a huge moon and shimmering stars, all the bush creatures, Nuts and Blossoms, join together in a colourful dance to celebrate the safe return of their friends, Snugglepup, Cuddlepie, and Ragged Blossom.



And remember, Humans: 'Be kinds to all creature and don't pull out flowers by their roots.' – May Gibbs



PROGRAM NOTES (CONT.)

Michael Kurek (1955-)

Concertino for Celesta and Orchestra 'Fairy Dreams' (2002)

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Concertino for Celesta and Orchestra: "Fairy Dreams" (in one movement) was commissioned by the Nashville Symphony Orchestra in 2002 for its new 5.5-octave celesta, whose range extends a full octave below, and a half-octave above, the celesta's usual outer pitches. According to the Schiedmayer company in Stuttgart, Germany, makers of celestas since 1890 (the instrument was invented in 1886), this is the first concerto in the history of the celesta

(with the celesta placed in front of the orchestra as soloist).

In the tradition of the celesta's best-known solo, from Tchaikovsky's "Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy" (The Nutcracker), I decided to envision some fairy music of my own. My title does not allude to a dream about fairies, but rather to the kind of music I imagine might accompany the dreams of tiny fairies themselves, as they delicately, tenderly snooze on some soft goose feather. The celesta introduces this short work's "A" theme (the form is ABA), an ephemeral, wistful minuet. The middle (B) section features a more lyrical theme, played by other instruments against a playful obligato in the celesta.

Program notes by Michael Kurek

ABOUT THE CELESTA

Charles Victor Mustel, a Parisian reed organ and pipe organ manufacturer invented the celesta in 1886. The original patent No. 176.530 is preserved in the Institut National de la Propriété (inpi), Paris.

The uniqueness of this new instrument, called "Celesta" by Victor Mustel, was in the method of sound generation. Through the activation of a piano-like keyboard, metal plates resting on top of felt wedges over wooden resonators, are struck from above with felt hammers.

This new orchestral instrument was quickly introduced into compositions of the 19th century.

On his way to the inauguration of Carnegie Hall in 1891, **Tchaikovsky** stopped over in Paris to visit Mustel and personally experience the sound of the instrument. Tchaikovsky was fascinated by the unique sound of the celesta and ordered an instrument on the spot.

He wrote **The Nutcracker** featuring the '**Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy**' with its famous celesta solo. The world premiere of The Nutcracker at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg in December 1892 led to the international breakthrough of the instrument. The celesta has gone on to be a regular member of symphonic repertoire and is played by pianists. The instrument was more recently brought into the spotlight again by John Williams' renowned score to **Harry Potter** where it plays Hedwig's Theme - a recurrent motif throughout all eight films.

Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904)

Symphony No. 8 in G major, Op 88 (1889)

.....

Dvořák was one of the great symphonists of the late 19th century, writing nine symphonies as well as several symphonic poems and concert overtures. Although the Ninth - the famous *New World* symphony - is by far the most famous and most-frequently-played, his other mature symphonies (particularly the last five) are rewarding for both musicians and listeners even if they are somewhat overshadowed by the success of the Ninth.

The Eighth Symphony is one of Dvořák's most popular works - and deservedly so, for it is brimming with lush melodies and is overall one of his most sunny and beautiful compositions. In a sense, the Eighth is Dvořák's "Pastoral" symphony, in that it was written at his summer retreat at Vysocka in the countryside south of Prague. The impetus for the symphony was Dvořák's election to the Bohemian Academy of Science, Literature and the Arts, and the symphony is dedicated in thanks to the Academy. As Dvořák's biographer later described the symphony, "*it is a simple lyric singing of the beauty of our country*".

It comes from a particularly productive period of Dvořák's life in the late 1880s, which also produced some of his greatest works - the second Piano Quintet, the Requiem Mass and the *Dumky* piano trio - but while some of these works are brooding and meditative, the symphony is rhapsodic and carefree.

This is reflected somewhat in its compositional structure - it is not as strict in following established form as its predecessor, the turbulent Seventh Symphony - but is a more free-flowing work. Freed from the requirements of strict form, Dvořák's melodic invention takes full flight. Dvořák himself wrote that it "*will be different from other symphonies, with individual*

thoughts worked out in a new way". Even the key - G major - was, at the time, unusual - not since Haydn had a major composer written a symphony in G major, and the key was viewed as being 'simple' and more suited for folk music than a 'proper' symphony; in the Eighth Dvořák masterfully takes folk music and incorporates it into the symphony.

Dvořák wrote of the composition of this symphony that "*melodies simply pour out of me*", and this is very true in the first movement, which is less a traditional symphony movement and more a cavalcade of melodic invention. Janáček later wrote of this symphony that "*you've scarcely got to know one figure before a second one beckons with a friendly nod, so you're in a state of constant but pleasurable excitement*".

The symphony opens with a lush, slightly melancholy chorale-like melody played by the cellos, horns and trombones, with contrapuntal writing as if for unaccompanied choir; this melody was a late inspiration added to the symphony shortly before its completion, but it transforms the structure by acting as somewhat of a 'signpost' to separate the exposition, development and recapitulation sections.

The main theme of the symphony is a relaxed "bird call" melody played on flute and built around the major triad and featuring some characteristically-Dvořák dotted rhythms. The full orchestra enters with a dotted-rhythm passage, crescendoing to a sudden chord, after which the violas enter with new melodic material, which is picked up by the full orchestra and building in intensity until the main theme is presented *fortissimo* by the full orchestra.

A transition passage played by the violins with accented upbeats and flute ornamentation leads into the second subject, which is a lilting melody on clarinet with a triplet accompaniment by the lower strings, after which a new, chorale like melody is developed and forms the end of the exposition mixed together with a transformed version of the major triad from the main melody.

PROGRAM NOTES (CONT.)

The opening chorale then returns, tricking the listener into thinking that there is a repeat, but instead the development section follows, with the main melody being transformed through various keys and taking on a stormy character in one of the few turbulent sections in the whole symphony. Then suddenly the mood changes again, with a pattering flute countermelody under sustained high violin notes over a transformed version of the viola's theme from the exposition; the instrumentation is then reversed with the violins taking over the countermelody, moving into a brief fugal passage, which then resolves into the climax of the movement with the brass blaring out the chorale theme of the introduction against a rushing torrent of repeated notes.

In the aftermath, the mood turns mysterious and the cor anglais enters with a slowed-down version of the main theme - the only time that the cor anglais plays in the entire symphony! - and then after some transformed versions of the main theme, the second subject returns. From here on the recapitulation is fairly traditional, culminating in a ebullient coda and forceful closing chords.

The beautiful slow movement was inspired by the countryside around Vysocka, and features several connected sections in a kind of musical procession around the forest, akin to its counterpart in Beethoven's *Pastoral* symphony. Despite being marked Adagio, Dvořák's own metronome markings are for a faster tempo, closer to Andante, and this helps contribute to the slightly "clockwork" feeling of some of the movement with

'ticking' running countermelodies, and the contrast between triplet and double rhythms that persists throughout the movement.

The opening section is scored just for strings, with a warm melody beginning with a characteristic triplet upbeat rhythm that will recur throughout the movement, before the winds take over with a pastoral sounding section with bird calls on flute and a lilting clarinet melody that shifts between major and minor, as if evoking shifting patterns of sunlight and shadow in a forest.



The lower strings bring back the triplet rhythm, and the violins start playing a "clockwork" countermelody while the winds play a lyrical, soaring melody, which then passes to solo violin, which has a brief cadenza before the full orchestra takes over with a march-like theme (still with the 'clockwork' running countermelodies and the triplet upbeats) which builds to a triumphant climax.

Afterwards the mood turns searching, with a gentle string passage leading into a transition section on clarinet and cello leading into an impassioned horn solo and then a turbulent section with sudden chords. The dark mood cannot last, however, and the 'clockwork' section returns, now with the winds playing the countermelody and the strings playing the melody. The final section of the movement features a return to the mood of the opening with the 'bird calls' and triplet fanfares.

The dreamy third movement is Dvořák's version of a symphonic waltz, inspired by the lyrical movements of his friends Tchaikovsky and Brahms and a contrast to the rather violent, rhythmic scherzos of his other symphonies. The lyrical, lilting main theme on first violins is offset by burbling countermelodies by the winds with running semiquavers. The second subject of the movement is a staccato fanfare-like rhythm somewhat like a polonaise, which offsets the smoothness of the main theme.

The trio features the contrast between a gentle dotted melody (quoting from Dvořák's opera *The Stubborn Lovers*), played initially by winds over a syncopated string and timpani accompaniment, and a more forceful version of the same melody played by full orchestra. After a repeat of the waltz, a brief coda in double time with bell-like countermelodies and pattering repeated quavers brings the movement to a close.

The finale is one of Dvořák's most beloved movements, beginning with an unaccompanied trumpet fanfare - famously described by conductor Rafael Kubelik: "*In Bohemia, the trumpets never call to the*

battle - they call to the dance!" which sets the stage for a triumphant set of symphonic variations. In his previous symphonies Dvořák had struggled with the difficult problem of how to write a finale to match the scale of the rest of the symphony; in the Eighth the finale unquestionably does the rest of the movements justice!

After a brief passage with a thrumming timpani rhythm, the cellos enter with the main theme of the variations - as with the first movement's "bird call" theme, based on the major triad - a noble theme that Dvořák will transform and explore throughout the variations to follow.

After the theme has been presented, Dvořák starts playing it in canon between the lower and upper voices, and then suddenly plays the theme louder and faster by the full orchestra, giving it a festive character.

The next variation is a virtuosic flute solo, before a return to the main theme by full orchestra, and then a transition passage 'runs down' into minor key for the next section, with complex folk-like rhythms in the accompaniment and a wind melody. Rather than following strict variation form in this section, Dvořák starts to develop the theme and spin out the possibilities of the material over a more prolonged passage, as if in the development section of a traditional sonata-form movement. For example, a countermelody based on the triad is heard firstly under an accompaniment of running semiquavers in the violins, and then is treated canonically and forms a development passage building up to the climax of the movement where the key suddenly shifts back to major and the trumpet fanfare returns.

Dvořák now returns back to more-traditional variation form for the next few variations, which have a more subdued and lyric character; a variation for lower strings with flute countermelody; a hushed, chorale-like variation for strings; a rustic-sounding variation for clarinet underneath shimmering tremolando strings; and finally an extended transition passage where Dvořák slowly

PROGRAM NOTES (CONT.)

'unfolds' the rhythms of the melody via slowly-changing repetition and the first violins play one final countermelody before coming to a pause. Then suddenly the main theme returns - loud and faster by full orchestra, leading into an ebullient coda that brings the symphony to an exciting close.

The symphony was received ecstatically at its first performance in Prague with Dvořák conducting; within a couple of years Dvořák had conducted it in Frankfurt and Cambridge (where he was awarded an honorary doctorate), as well as in Chicago at the Columbian World Exposition, while Hans Richter had premiered it to great success in Vienna and London, writing to Dvořák *"You would have enjoyed this performance*

very much. We all felt that it is a great work, therefore we all were enthusiastic... the applause was warm and hearty!"

However, despite its success, Dvořák's publisher Simrock only offered him 1,000 guldens for the work - a mere third of what he was paid for the Seventh Symphony and a quarter of what Simrock had paid for Brahms' Fourth - and insisted on printing Dvořák's name only in German rather than in Czech. Insulted, Dvořák took the symphony to London publisher Novello, who treated the work with the respect it deserved!

Program notes by Cameron Hough



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AUDITIONS ARE ON!

Being a member of the BPO is a rewarding community experience and a lot of fun.

Our members are just like you – ordinary people who enjoy coming together to make extraordinary music! Auditions are held to fill vacant positions or to appoint suitable reserve players capable of filling temporary vacancies from time-to-time.

Visit our website to download audition excerpts and fill out the online form to sign up! www.bpo.org.au

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WHAT'S NEXT?

THE BELLS

We join forces with the Brisbane Chorale and some of Australia's finest opera stars to open the 2016 4MBS Festival of Classics at City Hall. The 2016 festival takes its theme from the Russian master composers, with this concert featuring Rachmaninoff's magnificent choral symphony 'The Bells'.

Sun 22 May
3pm

Venue
Brisbane City Hall

Tickets
www.bpo.org.au or phone 3847 1717

IMPRESSIONS OF BRAZIL

With the Rio Olympics around the corner, what better opportunity to explore the composers of Brazil? We explore the works of Antônio Carlos Gomes and Villa-Lobos, rounding off this exotic program with Karin Schaupp and Trio Rosa to perform Rodrigo's Concierto Andaluz for four guitars.

Sun 24 July
3pm

Venue
Old Museum Concert Hall

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