

TASMANIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

# OVERTURES



AUTUMN 2018

# MUSIC IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

## RACT SYMPHONY UNDER THE STARS



IT'S OFTEN SAID that if you don't like the weather in Tasmania, wait five minutes; chances are it will be completely different. There were many anxious faces in the corridors of the TSO in the lead-up to this year's *RACT Symphony under the Stars* as storm clouds rolled ominously across the state and temperatures plummeted to un-summery levels.

There was definitely a chill in the air – and a few droplets of rain – on the evening of 17 February, the date of the first of the two concerts, held at Tolosa Park in Glenorchy. But this did little to dampen the spirits of the thousands of concert-goers who flocked to the outdoor venue with picnic baskets in one hand and waterproof ground mats, rugs and blankets in the other. One or two sleeping bags were seen. Another truism of life in Tasmania is that the locals are a hardy lot who take all kinds of weather conditions in their stride.

Under a canopy of clouds, the concert got off to a dazzling start with Dvorak's joyous *Carnival* overture. The sheer radiance of the piece conjured up cerulean skies, comforting warmth and hearty goodwill. Conductor Elena Schwarz took command of proceedings from the moment she walked on stage, and did a superlative job shaping the various works on the program, including Debussy's *Clair de lune*, Brahms' Hungarian Dance No 1 and Borodin's *Polovtsian Dances*. Andrew Seymour, TSO Principal Clarinet, showed why he's one of the best in the business with his meltingly beautiful performance of

movements from Mozart's Clarinet Concerto. As ever, compere Ryk Goddard was clever, witty and just a touch irreverent.

Nerves were kept on edge the following week when Launceston received its wettest day of the year in the 24 hours immediately prior to *RACT Symphony under the Stars*, on 24 February. As it turned out, the sun finally showed its face and leafy, verdant City Park looked as idyllic as ever on the afternoon of the concert. Happily, the weather held and the crowds turned out in force. In addition to hearing soloist Andrew Seymour, Launceston concert-goers were treated to Emma McGrath, TSO Concertmaster, performing a Vivaldi violin concerto and the ever-popular 'Meditation' from *Thaïs* (Emma had to withdraw from the Glenorchy concert the week before due to ill-health).

Early birds at both events enjoyed warm-up music courtesy of the Tasmanian Youth Orchestra in Glenorchy and St Patrick's College Big Band in Launceston. The RACT provided pre-concert activities for children, including a very popular maraca decorating stall, overseen by Gary Wain, TSO Principal Percussion, and his colleague Stephen Marskell. As ever, TSO Friends did a wonderful job selling raffle tickets and glow-in-the-dark merchandise, raising more than \$11,000.

As for stars, yes, they were there too. Both in the sky and on the stage. And, of course, at RACT, whose generous support makes *RACT Symphony under the Stars* possible.





## THE ART OF CONDUCTING

Aspiring conductors from all over the country descended on Hobart in late January for the inaugural Australian Conducting Academy Summer School, a joint venture between the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and the University of Tasmania.

Working with acclaimed conductor Johannes Fritzsch, Course Director of the Summer School, the 11 up-and-coming conductors made their way through varied repertoire, including Beethoven's energetic Fifth Symphony and Debussy's sinuous *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*. Rather than being thrust in front of the full orchestra in the first instance, the participants initially honed their technique before duo pianists Jennifer Marten-



Smith and Karen Smithies, observed and critiqued by Maestro Fritzsch. Thus prepared, they mounted the conductor's podium and conducted the orchestra in a series of intensive workshops – again, under the watchful eye of Maestro Fritzsch – leading to a performance in Federation Concert Hall on Friday 2 February.

Taking a holistic approach to the art of conducting, Maestro Fritzsch had the course participants attend yoga classes on most days as well as participate in workshops with a mime artist, in order to grasp more fully the finer points of gestural communication.

*Nathaniel Griffiths, a Master's student at the University of Tasmania, commands the attention of the orchestra, as Johannes Fritzsch looks on.*

## MEMORIES OF A LIFETIME

Over the course of its 70 years, the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra has touched the lives of many people, including Valda Haley, who currently lives in a Uniting AgeWell residential care community in Hobart. Blessed with a sharp memory, Valda can recall attending the TSO's very first concert, on 25 May 1948. Aged 16 at the time, she went along to the concert in Hobart City Hall with the young man who would later become her husband, Paul Haley (see photo). Both amateur musicians – Valda played the piano and harp, Paul played the violin – they went on to make a life together and encouraged a love of music in their daughter Robyn, a talented pianist and harpist and a keen choral singer. 'We went to many, many concerts together over the years', said Valda. 'It was our love.'

With the TSO turning 70 this year, stories like Valda's have particular resonance. They remind us of continuity, commitment and the sheer pleasure of a lifetime of concert-going. You can help to ensure the on-going vitality of the TSO by making a donation to the Annual

Appeal. Your gift will help the TSO bring music to school children and disadvantaged members of the community, to train up-and-coming musicians, and assist with instrument purchases and repairs. In short, your gift will help us to touch people's lives and make a difference. Visit [tso.com.au/](http://tso.com.au/) support or phone 03 6232 4430.





# WHY CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS MAKE GOOD SENSE

IF YOU'RE running a business, chances are you regularly receive requests for sponsorships and corporate partnerships. Deciding where to lend your support or with whom to align your brand requires careful and strategic thought. It is important to consider a range of elements, including a sense of shared values, a trusting relationship, and a commitment to embarking on the journey together.

UNICA Wealth, a Hobart-based wealth management firm, was established three years ago. From very early on, the decision was taken to forge an ongoing corporate partnership with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. The two organisations share many key attributes: a quality bespoke product, commitment to excellence, and a determination to be the best – if not necessarily the biggest – in their respective fields.

Both organisations are grounded in traditions but have a demonstrated passion for creativity and innovation. UNICA takes a fresh approach to the way it conducts business, seeking out emerging opportunities for clients. The TSO, in its own way, offers fresh perspectives on orchestral music, whether through concerts for families and children, commissioning and premiering new works, or offering traditional repertoire in engaging and unexpected contexts, such as the TSO Live Sessions (where you can pull up a bean bag and hear a chamber orchestra while imbibing a crisp craft beer).

UNICA views its partnership with the TSO as an investment that brings benefits to both

parties. UNICA has entertained valued clients at TSO concerts and been involved in events featuring keynote speakers from the world of business and the arts. Professional networks have been expanded and new relationships and connections have been forged. When you join the TSO corporate community, you come close to other business leaders and potential clients.

Shared values were an important consideration when setting up the partnership. One of these is social responsibility. UNICA supports the broader Tasmanian community by providing financial, educational and in-kind assistance to various not-for-profit organisations. The TSO likewise has a wide-reaching and very active Outreach program, including concerts in schools, hospitals, community centres and aged-care facilities.

For all of these reasons, the partnership between the TSO and UNICA makes good sense. 'I'm delighted with the way our partnership has tracked thus far', said Dominic Mulcahy, UNICA Managing Director, 'and look forward to consolidating it still further. I encourage TSO concert-goers to get in touch should they wish to discuss their financial goals or any aspect of wealth management.'

*Louise Herron, CEO of the Sydney Opera House Trust, speaks at the TSO Chairman's Lunch last October, an event sponsored by UNICA.*



# THE POWER OF PROTEST

## CONSCIOUSNESS- RAISING WITH THE TSO CHORUS

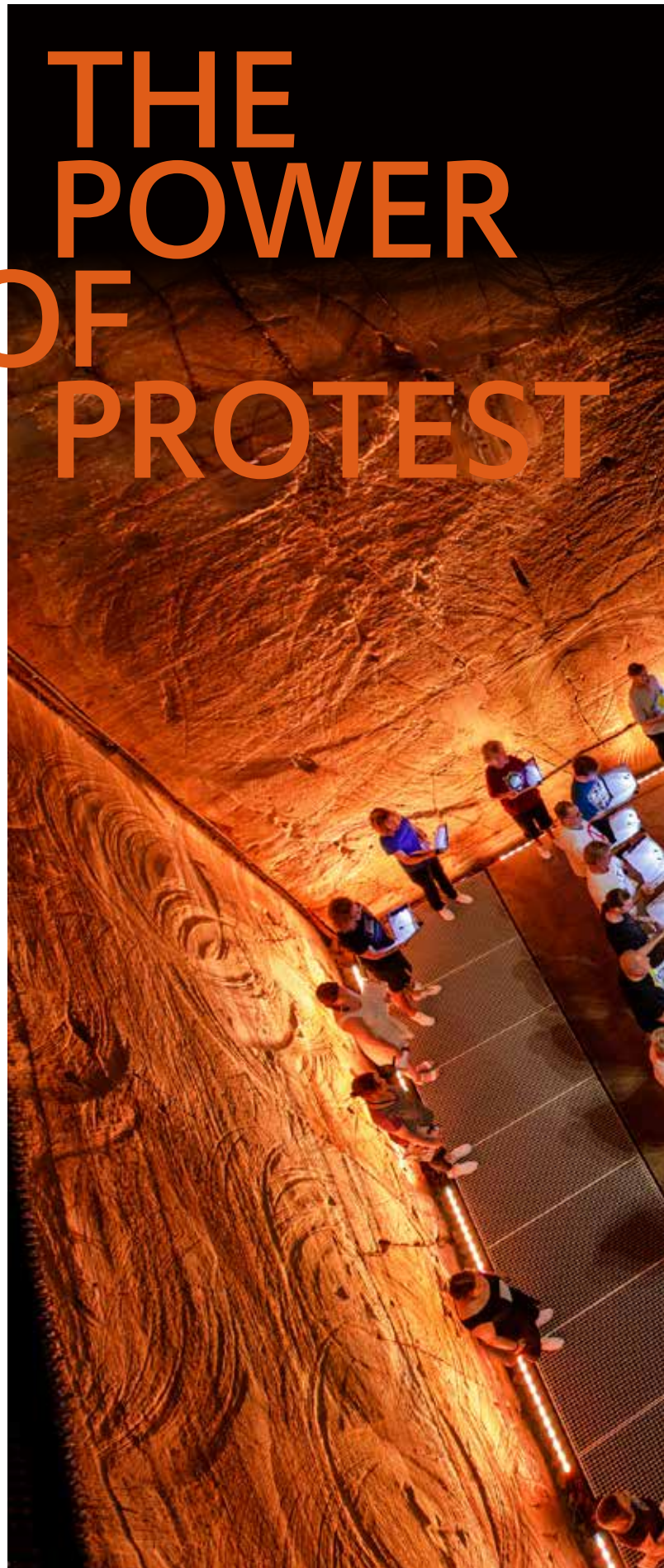
THEY SANG. They wore political slogans. They sported tattoos. Building on the success of previous years, the TSO Chorus delivered yet another edgy performance at Mona as part of Mofo 2018.

This year's Mofo was centred around the theme of 'Protest'. Festival-goers were greeted by staff wearing t-shirts emblazoned with the message 'All are welcome' in Arabic. The program focused on music of the marginalised, the forgotten and the dispossessed.

Taking up this theme, June Tyzack, TSO Chorusmaster, devised and directed *TRUCE*, a mix of song, gesture and spoken word that embraced a wide range of music, from Handel to folk and popular music to works by contemporary composers Anders Edenroth, Eriks Esenvalds and others.

Making the most of Mona's unique layout, the 34 members of the TSO Chorus (in this iteration known as TSO Chorus Extreme) commenced their performance on the museum's B1 level before snaking their way along the suspended metal staircase and re-forming in front of the towering sandstone walls of the Void, which provided a spectacular backdrop as well as an ideal acoustic space.

Sporting sparrow tattoos (a symbol of freedom), choristers created a human birdcage when performing 'Vesper Sparrow' by contemporary American composer Missy Mazzoli and, in a powerful piece of interactive theatre, presented origami sparrows to











## THE POWER OF PROTEST

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members of the audience as part of the performance of 'Would You Harbour Me?' by African-American composer Ysaye Barnwell, a gesture that highlighted difference and prejudice and the role of the individual in enacting change.

One of the most powerful moments in *TRUCE* came when 15-year-old Ella Jensen took up a megaphone and delivered a shocking account of injustices suffered by women her age and younger in less privileged parts of the world, including forced marriage, denial of rights and death in childbirth.

Likewise potent was the performance of the Billie Holiday classic 'Strange Fruit', sung by picnickers under a tree laden with hanging bodies. The 'fruit' in this politically charged song are the victims of lynching. This was one of many moments in *TRUCE* when audience members were not simply drawn in by the music, but invited to ponder larger issues and reflect upon injustices in the world, past and present.

The TSO Chorus is keen to augment the ranks of tenors and basses for *Roméo et Juliette* in October. Should you be interested in joining the chorus for this concert performance of Gounod's opera, please contact the Chorus Administrator: chorusadmin@tso.com.au, 03 6232 4421.

## A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

The TSO Foundation aims to guarantee the financial viability of the TSO well into the future. The degree to which the Foundation can support the orchestra depends upon gifts to the fund by individuals. When you make a bequest to the Foundation, you therefore help to ensure the sustainability of the orchestra in the long term.

Two people who have done so are Joe Giedl and Anne Lynch. Long-time TSO subscribers, Joe and Anne have enjoyed concerts for many years and decided to increase their engagement with the orchestra. They felt that giving to the TSO Foundation was the perfect way to do so. 'Tasmania is a small island,' said Joe, 'and our relatively small population base requires more per capita effort to ensure that top-level activities like our orchestra thrive.'

Joe's involvement with the TSO Foundation has been intensified still further through his recent appointment to the TSO Foundation Board, which has brought him into closer contact with the entire organisation, the musicians as well as the administrative staff. 'The more you go behind the scenes, the more you are astonished by the level of commitment you see – it exceeds any amount of effort I would have imagined.' Joe further adds, 'the TSO's excellence has not been achieved by accident. The high standards and coherent group dedication need, indeed *deserve*, support.'

Should you wish to follow in Joe and Anne's footsteps and make a bequest to the TSO Foundation, please phone Ed Benyon on 03 6232 4430 or email benyone@tso.com.au.

*Anne Lynch and Joe Giedl*





# Q&A

## WITH RICHARD TOGNETTI



THE AUSTRALIAN Chamber Orchestra, under celebrated Artistic Director Richard Tognetti, makes its long awaited return to Tasmania on Sunday 13 May performing in Federation Concert Hall, Hobart. Special guest artist with the ACO is oud player extraordinaire, Joseph Tawadros. (An antecedent of the Western lute, an oud is an Arabian stringed instrument.) At the centre of the program is Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*. *Overtures* was delighted to be able to put some questions to Richard Tognetti in advance of the concert.

**Overtures:** What can we expect in the ACO concert on 13 May?

**RT:** Our *Four Seasons* program celebrates the resonance of different cultures. In addition to Vivaldi's justly famous work, and other works by Vivaldi and fellow Italian Baroque composers Benedetto Marcello and Biagio Marini, the concert includes a number of original works by Australian musician Joseph Tawadros.

**Overtures:** What can you tell us about Joseph Tawadros?

**RT:** Joe is an Egyptian-Australian oud player, one of Australia's best composers, and one of my favourite collaborators. He holds a unique place in Australian composition, as his modal writings are inspired by the 'classical' music of Egypt, and therefore the Middle East or Arabian Peninsula and North Africa. Joe is a Coptic Egyptian but is very much Australian, blending both Western

and Eastern cultures seamlessly. It's nearly impossible to pigeonhole his music into one musical genre.

**Overtures:** How did you and Joe go about putting this concert together?

**RT:** When we started working on this program, Joe came with his exquisitely crystalline oud line and strongly realised structures. Together we arranged his pieces, then I orchestrated them. The idea was to keep true to the colour of the music – the zing of the riq' [a type of tambourine] and the twang of the oud, while challenging the string layers of the ACO to keep up and play these brilliant, catchy lines. The process of preparing this concert was highly illuminating. As evinced by numerous books on the subject, there is a profound symbiosis between the cultures of Venice and Islam. To me, these links extend into the musical, with key ingredients that bond the two musical practises, including Baroque sequences, motor rhythms, and the use of ornamentation and phrasing. I am convinced that the occurrence of these links between Baroque and Islamic music is in no way insubstantial, hence this program.

An exotic musical banquet perfectly timed for Mother's Day – 13 May – the ACO concert commences at 6pm in Federation Concert Hall. Book online at [tso.com.au](http://tso.com.au) or phone 1800 001 190.

## *in brief...*

### **RED-LETTER DAY IN LAUNCESTON**

The TSO has a full day of activities in Launceston on Saturday 14 April. In the morning, members of the TSO will sit side-by-side with musicians of the City of Launceston Philharmonic Orchestra, a community orchestra, to lend their professional expertise. Conducted by Norwegian maestro Eivind Aadland, the TSO/LPO musicians will rehearse repertoire for an LPO concert to be held the following month. Hands-on experience of this kind brings lasting benefits. In the afternoon, musicians from the TSO will lead up to 16 masterclasses for young musicians from northern Tasmania. Held at Scotch Oakburn College and open to young instrumentalists from all schools in the Launceston area and beyond, the masterclasses will be an excellent opportunity for student musicians to play for and receive feedback from the career musicians of the TSO. Excited by both of these ventures, the TSO looks forward to bringing its professional expertise to musicians in the north of the state.

### **ORCHESTRA TO ZOOM ZOOM IN A BRAND NEW MAZDA**

The TSO enjoys an enduring and favourable partnership with Mazda. Earlier this year, James Johns and the team from Hobart Mazda generously placed a brand new Mazda CX-5 at the disposal of Marko Letonja, orchestra members and staff. Not surprisingly, the TSO is deliriously happy. The Mazda CX-5, which has been Australia's No 1 SUV for the past four years, combines speed and grace, plenty of legroom, impeccable finishes and a whole range of safety features. It's the perfect vehicle for the TSO's needs and has already proved to be a winner with recent tours to Launceston, Latrobe and Scottsdale. It puts an end to hire car costs which, of course, helps with the orchestra's bottom line. Keep an eye out for the sleek, silver CX-5 next time you're on the road. It's emblazoned with the TSO logo! Sincere thanks to Hobart Mazda for this kind and very practical gesture.

### **TSO FRIENDS QUIZ NIGHT**

Save the date: Saturday 5 May. TSO Friends will be holding a Quiz Night in the TSO Studio, adjacent to Federation Concert Hall, on Saturday 5 May, 6.30pm for 7pm. Open to everyone, the Quiz Night will raise funds for a variety of TSO Friends' projects. The cost is \$25 per person, which includes supper. Come by yourself or put together a table of 8 or 10.

To book, contact the TSO Box Office on 1800 001 190. If you're not already a member of TSO Friends, you might want to think about signing up. TSO Friends offers a range of members-only events, including admission to TSO rehearsals, talks and demonstrations by TSO musicians, and chamber music performances. You get to mix with other like-minded music lovers and enjoy the community of TSO supporters. Full single annual membership is \$42, full couple annual membership is \$58. For more information, visit [tsofriends.com.au](http://tsofriends.com.au).





## RED SQUARE RESOUNDS TO TSO LIVE SESSIONS

THE NIGHT was calm and mild, the atmosphere was easy-going and the music was sensational when 13 casually dressed members of the TSO Strings, led by Miranda Carson, performed before a capacity audience at TSO Live Sessions on Saturday 3 February. Held outdoors in Red Square at Hobart's Macquarie Point, TSO Live Sessions offered an eclectic and captivating mix with Bach, Vivaldi and Mozart sitting cheek by jowl with bluegrass, tango and polka.

In addition to leading the ensemble, Miranda Carson did a superb job as soloist in a number of works, giving a bravura performance of Vivaldi's Op 4 No 3 and a soulful reading of Piazzolla's *Oblivion*. The evening's other soloist was Hayato Simpson, who held the audience spellbound with his rendition of *Autumn* from *The Four Seasons*

of *Buenos Aires*. Gary Wain, TSO Principal Percussion, added bells, whistles and the smooth sounds of the maracas to some of the numbers.

Food trucks, offering a range of cuisines, were on hand to feed the masses, and thirsts were quenched by the craft beers of the adjacent Hobart Brewing Company. In addition to Macquarie Point Development Corporation and the Hobart Brewing Company, the TSO would like to acknowledge the support of a range of organisations and businesses that helped to make this open-air Live Sessions possible: Graeme Wood Foundation, Blundstone, Foot & Playsted, The20, Veolia and Mitre 10.

The next TSO Live Sessions will be indoors at the Hobart Brewing Company on Friday 25 May.

# PARTNERS

## GOVERNMENT SUPPORT



The Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and through Arts Tasmania by the Minister for the Arts, and the Tasmanian Icon Program.

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