

# SUNSET SONGS



**3:00PM SUNDAY 12 MAY**

**#BrisbanePhilharmonic**

# CONCERT PROGRAM

## CATHERING LIKHUTA

*Rituals of Heartland*

## RICHARD STRAUSS

*Vier letzte Lieder (Four Last Songs)*

## INTERVAL

## CÉSAR FRANCK

*Symphony in D minor*

*I. Lento; Allegro ma non troppo*

*II. Allegretto*

*III. Finale: Allegro non troppo*



### VIOLIN 1

Cameron Hough  
(Concertmaster)  
Peter Nicholls  
Min Tan  
Rebeca Stephenson  
Hwee Sin Chong  
Ailsa Hankinson  
Carmen Pierce  
Keith Gambling  
Nawres Alfreh

### VIOLIN 2

Yvette McKinnon\*  
Ryan Smith  
Anna Jenkins  
Rebecca Johnson  
Camilla Harvey  
Sam Markovic  
Cara Odenthal  
Lauren Jones  
Nicholas Salmon

### VIOLA

Bronwyn Gibbs^  
Daniel Tipping  
Jenny Waanders  
Katrina Greenwood

### CELLO

Oliver Scott\*  
Mathilde Vlieg  
Edward Brackin  
Oliver Holmes  
Nicole Kancachian  
David Silman  
Sara Waak  
Charmaine Lee  
Elouise Comber  
Amy Naumann

### BASS

Samuel Dickenson\*  
Georgia Lloyd  
Steve Dunn

### FLUTE

Jo Lagerlow\*  
Jessica Sullivan

### PICCOLO

Lucia Gonzáles\*

### OBOE

Gabrielle Knight\*  
Hui-Yu Whitney Chung

### COR ANGLAIS

Anthon Rayner

### CLARINET

Daniel Sullivan\*  
Carmen Anaya-Partida^

### E FLAT CLARINET

Daniel Sullivan\*

### BASS CLARINET

Daniel Byrne\*

### BASSOON

Lisa Squires\*  
Patricia Brennan  
Carl Bryant

### CONTRABASSOON

Carl Bryant\*

### HORN

Melanie Taylor\*  
Anita Austin  
Simon Miller  
Ashley Skyring  
Joumanna Haddad

### TRUMPET

Blake Humphrey\*  
Sophie Kukilies

### CORNET

Jack Duffy  
Akua Van Den Hooven

### TROMBONE

Rohan Osborne  
Nicholas Whatling

### BASS TROMBONE

Clayton Fiander\*

### TUBA

Michael Sterzinger\*

### PERCUSSION

Kerry Vann\*  
Jenny Gribbin  
Davis Dingle  
Thomasina Lawrence

### HARP/CELESTA

Tijana Kozarčić^

### PIANO

Catherine Likhuta



## Conductor Nicholas Cleobury

*Nicholas is an orchestral and operatic interpreter of flair and imagination*

Nicholas Cleobury has an international reputation in the concert hall, opera house and recording studio. He has conducted most of the leading symphony and chamber orchestras of Great Britain. While further afield, he has worked with orchestras in Hong Kong, Melbourne, Singapore and South Africa. He has also appeared at festivals in Austria, Belgium, France, Poland, Spain, USA, many major British festivals, and often at the BBC Proms.

He has worked extensively as a Choir Director, having been Principal Conductor of the Schola Cantorum of Oxford, Assistant Director of the BBC Singers and Chorus Master at Glyndebourne and internationally with numerous choirs as diverse as the Swedish and Danish Radio Choirs and Melbourne Chorale, Netherlands Chamber Choir and Huddersfield Choral Society, Berkshire Choral Festival (USA/UK), and Soweto Township Choirs.

He has given over 100 premieres, is a fervent champion of new music and has worked closely with many notable contemporary composers, such as Bennett, Boulez, Birtwistle, Carter, Dove, Harvey, Henze, Ligeti, Macmillan, Maxwell Davies, McNeff, Patterson, Ruders, Taverner and Turnage. He collaborated extensively with the late Sir Michael Tippett.

He has conducted many leading specialist new music ensembles including Aquarius (Founder), Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Fires of London (Principal Conductor), London Sinfonietta, Die Reihe (Vienna) and Opera Nova (Zurich) and contemporary groups at most of the major Music Colleges. In 1997 he founded Sounds New to bring contemporary music to a wider public. Actively involved in creative projects with student musicians of all ages, he is also a vibrant, persuasive speaker and lecturer, in demand as a communicator both on and off the rostrum. A regular broadcaster with the BBC, Classic FM and on European radio, his discography includes highly regarded recordings of Mozart Concertos with the Britten Sinfonia and RPO, an award-winning CD of the music of Richard Strauss for EMI, Bridge, Britten, Headington, Maw and a wide range of English Music with the Britten Sinfonia, Dove and Maw with the Oxford Bach Choir, and many others including the Chopin Piano Concertos, Mozart Concertos and a Spanish Fiesta with the RPO.

Until May 2019, he is Head of Opera at the Queensland Conservatorium. He is also in demand as a conducting teacher and opera coach. He is Founder Laureate of Britten Sinfonia, and until recently was Artistic Director of Mid Wales Opera, Principal Conductor of JAM (New Choral music) and the Oxford Bach Choir.



Soprano  
Rebecca Cassidy

*"I have always wanted to perform Four Last Songs and with BPO my wish has come true!"*

Rebecca Cassidy is a soprano who originally hails from Townsville, North Queensland. Rebecca completed her Bachelor of Music (Advanced Performance) at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music and has performed the roles of Merab from Handel's *Saul*, Noémie from Massenet's *Cendrillon*, as well as the title role of Puccini's *Suor Angelica*, *Ann Trulove* from Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress* and most recently *Rosalinde* in *Die Fledermaus* by Johann Strauss II. In addition to these operatic roles, Rebecca has sung with many notable ensembles in concert, oratorio and symphonic repertoire, including singing the soprano solos in *Mozart's Mass in C Minor* and *Benjamin Britten's War Requiem*.

Rebecca has been the recipient of many prestigious awards and bursaries including winning of the operatic aria and lieder sections in the MTAQ QLD Singing Competition (2018), winning of the Alton Budd Memorial Award (2018), and 3rd place along with the Audience Choice Award at the Australian Concerto and Vocal Competition (2018). This year Rebecca will be part of an exciting new regional tour for Opera Queensland titled "*Songs to Die For*" and will be singing the Soprano Solo of Beethoven's 9th Symphony under the baton of Maestro Johannes Fritsch with the Queensland Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra. This is Rebecca's first performance with Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra.



# 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

Catherine Likhuta (1981 - )

Rituals of Heartland (2017)

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*Rituals of Heartland is a contemporary ten-minute take on a symphonic poem. Born and raised in Ukraine, I have wonderful childhood memories of snowy winters and rich culture and folklore, with many legends and traditions dating back centuries. As a mother of a four-year-old girl, Skylie, I always need to have a few fairy-tales up my sleeve to keep her entertained. I try to incorporate bits and pieces of Ukrainian folklore into those fairy-tales, and they always leave Skylie fascinated and craving for more. In her turn, she takes great interest in my music, both the process and the final result. When this commission came through, I decided it would be an interesting idea to involve Skylie in the creative process—not in the creation of the music, but more as a source of inspiration. Together we came up with a fairy-tale about Mariyka, a brave young girl from medieval Ukraine, who lost her puppy in a snowy enchanted forest, and was on a mission to find and rescue it from an evil witch. I proposed the beginning: the puppy runs away chasing squirrels, and Mariyka has a scary encounter with wolves before heading into the depth of the forest to find her pet. Skylie was given a task to draw/paint a number of pictures which would contribute new characters to the story (because no adult could ever match the wild imagination of a four-yearold). She came up with a baby monster in a cape, a family of enchanted trees, an angry mermaid queen (living underneath a magical frozen lake) and her army of enchanted fishies, a naughty witch and a lake of hot lava. We then took these characters and made a cohesive story, libretto of sorts. Finally, I went to my composing studio and reflected this “libretto” in my music, drawing additional inspiration from the angular rhythms and characteristic harmonies of Ukrainian folk dances. As things become rather intense towards the end of the story, in the final section Mariyka wakes up and realises it was all just a scary dream... because mum didn't know how to explain all these creatures otherwise and bring the story to its conclusion - **Catherine Likhuta***

**Catherine Likhuta (b. 1981)** is an Australian-based composer, pianist and recording artist. Her music exhibits high emotional charge, programmatic nature and rhythmic complexity. Catherine's works have been played throughout the United States, Europe and Australia, as well as in Canada, Mexico and Brazil. Her music has enjoyed performances by many prominent soloists (such as Peter Luff, Andrew Pelletier, Denise Tryon, Adam Unsworth, Paul Dean, Griffin Campbell, Ronald Caravan and Trish O'Brien), chamber ensembles (such as PLEXUS, Atlantic Brass Quintet, Western Brass Quintet, Queensland Symphony Orchestra Horns, U.S. Army Field Band Horns, HD Duo and Collusion) and large ensembles (such as Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, The Australian Voices, University of Georgia Hodgson Singers, University of Georgia Hodgson Wind Ensemble, Queensland Conservatorium Wind Orchestra and Orchestra of the National Radio of Ukraine). Catherine's pieces have been played at several international events, including four International Horn Symposiums and two World Saxophone Congresses. Her recent residencies include the University of Connecticut, the University of Georgia and North Carolina NewMusic Initiative. She was the winner of the International Horn Society Composition Contest (virtuoso division) and the recipient of several awards, including two grants from the Australia Council for the Arts. Her music can be heard on Cala, Albany and Equilibrium Records. Catherine holds a Bachelor's degree in jazz piano from Kyiv Glière Music College and a five-year post-graduate degree in composition from the Tchaikovsky National Music Academy of Ukraine (Kyiv Conservatory). She is currently pursuing a PhD in composition at the University of Queensland. She has delivered presentations on her work at a number of institutions, including Arizona State University, Bowling Green State University, Butler University, Cornell University, Ithaca College, Queensland Conservatorium, Syracuse University and the Union of Composers of Ukraine.

## Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

### Vier Letzte Lieder (Four Last Songs), Op posth (1948)

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Strauss was a masterful composer for opera, and had a particular love for the female voice (his wife, Pauline was an opera singer) and composed many songs from the age of 6 onwards. None are finer than the four pieces that he wrote for performance by the soprano Kirsten Flagstad, which have been collected together and published as the Four Last Songs. With the exception of one other song, Malven (Mallows), they are Strauss's final compositions.

The songs were sparked from the poetry of Hermann Hesse (the first three) and Joseph von Eichendorff (the fourth song), which inspired Strauss to create four songs of serene beauty that act as a kind of valedictory summation of his life and career - and especially his love for his muse Pauline. Although the subject matter is generally melancholic, Strauss's songs are filled with an autumnal bittersweet calm and sense of acceptance.

The orchestral writing is lush throughout, but features prominently three very important elements for Strauss : prominent horn parts (his father Franz was the pre-eminent horn player of his generation); violin solos in two of the songs, which join in a duet with the soloist (the violin was Strauss's own childhood instrument); and, overwhelmingly, the female voice itself (soprano, the same range as his wife Pauline).

The first song, Frühling (Spring), speaks of the joy of unfurling spring, yet begins darkly and unsettled with turbulent semiquavers for winds and lower strings. Once the soloist enters a rhapsodic mood is created, although not without some chromatic tinges, while the accompaniment of flowing wind passages and soaring strings matches the expansive vocal writing.

The second song, September, depicts the fading of summer into autumn as the leaves fall and the garden shivers in the rain.

The long vocal lines of the soprano seem to act as a narrator to the musical picture provided by the orchestra, with burbling woodwinds and the almost-constant descending arpeggios that are passed between solo violins and flutes depicting the falling of leaves and raindrops in the gardens. As the text speaks of the weariness of fading summer, the mood calms and stills until in the waning moments of the song a rhapsodic horn solo plays the main theme and the song ends in a mood of resigned stillness.

The third song, Beim Schlafengehen (Falling Asleep), is perhaps the loveliest music Strauss ever wrote, as the soloist sings of the bliss of sinking into the embrace of sleep after the day's weariness. Ascending arpeggios for woodwinds and strings create a magical feel as the soloist sings an expansive phrase above. Midway through, a ravishing violin solo introduces a new rising triplet melody which is then taken over by the soloist, who soars into the heavens supported on a lush tide of orchestral warmth with the lines "my unguarded soul will in free flight soar into the magical circles of the night".

The final and longest song, Im Abendrot (At Sunset) is about an old couple reflecting back at the end of their lives on their long journey in love together: although the day is ending and the night falls, they have reached a peaceful land and are content in their love together. The song begins in an extended orchestral introduction with upper winds and strings playing the slowly-unfurling melody over a rich foundation of sustained horn and brass chords. When the soloist enters the melody is sustained and broad, underpinned by a warm horn

accompaniment in which the sunset's rays can be vividly imagined. After the first stanza of the text, the orchestra plays a brief return of the opening theme, and then the soloist returns, with Strauss indulging in some word-painting via flutes playing ascending trills as the soloist sings of the larks rising in the evening.

## Strauss Continued..

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A short violin solo joins in duet with the soloist, and then the song stills to a mood of profound serenity, out of which the orchestra reprises the opening melody, now with the soloist intoning the phrase "Oh! What broad still peace is this" above before descending to a dark sonority.

The soloist ends with the line "is this perhaps death?" at which point in the song Strauss quotes the "transfiguration" theme from his tone poem Death and Transfiguration, written some 60 years earlier. The mood is briefly dark, but then resolves back to major and the songs end in a mood of deep stillness with the woodwinds playing "bird trills" above the warm final chords.

Strauss died in 1949 before he could hear the songs performed; the first performance was given in London with Flagstad as soloist as per the composer's wishes, and the songs have been hailed as a masterpiece ever since. One review of the first performance commented "In these the old artist, supreme master of his craft, is lovingly turning over for the last time those... which mean the most to him; and in the final song achieving a wonderful, calm apotheosis".

### Verse Translation:

#### Spring

In dim dusky crypts  
Dreamed I deep and long  
Of blue skies and tall trees  
Of scented bird song.

Now you are unfolding  
Ornate and a gleam  
Your wonder revealing  
With each bright sunbeam.

You know me once more  
So blessed and bewitching  
Your presence entices me  
And leaves my limbs trembling!

#### September

The garden mourns for times of old  
Cool drips the rain on flowers pale.  
Old Summer shivers in the cold  
As softly speeds his time away.

The tall acacia tree lets fall  
Leaf after leaf in golden garb;  
Summer smiles, amazed and dull,  
At dying garden's bygone dreams.

He stands long by the faded rose  
He longs to sleep and reach his bed.  
Slowly, gently, he starts to close  
And rest his large and weary eyes.

#### Falling Asleep

Now weary from the toils of day  
I long now to embrace  
And greet as friend the starry night,  
As does a sleepy child.

Rest now, my hands, from all your work  
Forget, my head, all thoughts.  
My senses wish to gently sink  
In slumber deep and calm.

And my unguarded soul, now free,  
In blessed flight will soar  
And in night's magic circles shall  
Live deep and thousandfold.

#### At Sunset

We have through joy and sorrow  
Travelled hand in hand  
From wanderings we now rest  
Here in this peaceful land

The deep valleys are shadowed,  
The sky grows still and dark.  
Up in the fragrant evening  
Rise a pair of larks

Come, leave them to their flying  
Soon comes our time to rest  
Lest we ourselves be spellbound  
By this stillness so blessed.

Oh! What broad, still peace is this  
So deep at day's last breath?  
Our road-wearied feet falter...  
Is this then, perhaps, death?

Verse translation by Cameron Hough.

# Cesar Franck (1822-1890)

## Symphony in D Minor (1888)

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Although Belgian born, Franck considered himself a thoroughly French composer and indeed naturalised as a French citizen when he took the post of professor of organ at the Paris Conservatoire after a distinguished career as a performer and church organist at several Parisian churches, during which time he was introduced to the works of composers of the German school including Bruckner and Liszt. His time at the Conservatoire provided Franck with the opportunity to spend more time on composition, and his style developed in response to modern trends in music, spurred on by his unusually close musical relationship with his students at the Conservatoire including Chausson and D'Indy, who influenced Franck as much as he them.

The Symphony in D minor was a very late work, and was composed at a time when the symphony was out of vogue in France, viewed as a purely German musical form and alien to French composers, for whom opera and ballet were the main creative outlets. Although Saint-Saens' Organ Symphony of 1883 had been very popular, its use of piano and organ as 'solo' instruments made it sufficiently different to a 'standard' symphony in the eyes of the French musical establishment, and there was some resistance to Franck's adoption of a 'foreign' musical form from both the Conservatoire orchestra and the critics. Despite this chilly initial reception, the symphony was regularly played across Europe and America within years of its composition and has entered the repertoire.

The symphony deftly blends the French and German musical traditions in its combination of cyclic form (a characteristic French feature) with the more abstract form of the symphony. The symphony is united by a recurring melody with a characteristic long-short-long dotted rhythm, played by the lower strings in the opening bars, which is transformed throughout the symphony. Scored for large orchestra with the addition of the harp (its first appearance in a symphony), it is in three movements rather than the usual four.

The first movement begins with a solemn slow introduction that introduces the cyclic theme and grows in intensity until there is an allegro version of the main theme and forceful descending dotted rhythms answered by ascending wind phrases, which come to an abrupt conclusion. The slow introduction is repeated in a different key, and when the allegro section returns it introduces the main body of the movement, which is in modified sonata form. The second subject is lyrical with an ascending melody, while the dotted rhythms continue, building to an expansive "heroic-sounding" major theme that will recur later in the symphony.

The exposition ends with a tender, slow version of the heroic theme for the winds. The turbulent development section with fiery descending scales and repeated rhythmic motifs based on the cyclic theme leads to a return of the slow introduction, now offset by brass fanfares. The fast section comes back and the recapitulation presents the musical material again, now in the 'home key' of D, until after a coda full of simmering energy the movement ends with a sudden change to major key and a resounding chord.

The slow movement begins with a chaconne-like repeated rhythm played by pizzicato strings and harp, which becomes the accompaniment to a haunting cor anglais solo, at moments reminiscent of the Christmas carol O Come O Come Emmanuel. Cello and horn provide some melodic contrast before the violins take over with an extended sinuous major key passage which builds and builds until subsiding and the cor anglais and horn play reprises of the main theme. In the following section, scurrying muted violin passages form the accompaniment for a return of the melody which is now played staccato and passed between the winds and brass. A lilting melody on clarinet acts as a kind of trio section, taken over by the strings and then becoming more ominous on brass and wind, and then the scurrying string accompaniment returns, now with the cor anglais again playing the melody.

Continued Overleaf..

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## Symphony continued..

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The cheerful finale is reminiscent of the finale of Franck's famous violin sonata, sharing some of the same clear, open writing and musical transparency. After some brusque opening chords the lower strings play the first half of the melody with the upper strings taking over for the second half before building to a climax for full Orchestra. The second subject is a slower march-like subject introduced by the brass. The ebullient celebration is interspersed with reminiscences from the first and second movement, including the cyclic theme and the "heroic" theme which act to unify the whole symphony. After a return of the opening music, a magnificent reprise of the second movement's theme leads into a dreamy section where gentle reprises of the cyclic theme, now in major, are offset by harp arpeggios, until the third movement theme returns to launch the energetic coda which brings the symphony to a conclusion with the same major chord that finished the first movement.

Program Notes By Cameron Hough.



Thank you for attending today's concert.

We invite you to take five minutes to complete our questionnaire. As a thank you, all responses will go into the draw to win a prize! (Use this case sensitive link <http://tiny.cc/Sunsetsongs>) or use a QR reader app to read the below.



## THE TEAM

### Executive Committee

President: Ryan Smith

Secretary: Mathilde Vlieg

Treasurer: Daniel Sullivan

Committee member: Melanie Taylor

Committee member: Michael Sterzinger

Committee member: Josephine Lagelow

Committee member: Nicholas Whatling

### Officers

Catering: Thomasina Lawrence

Librarian: Dean Tierney

## DONATIONS

The Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra accepts donations from individuals, groups and businesses. Every donation, whether it be a one off donation or an ongoing arrangement, greatly assists us to realise our goal of delivering an annual program of high-quality music-making to benefit the Brisbane community and our members.

BPO holds deductible gift recipient status (DGR) for tax purposes. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible and receipts are provided.

For further information email  
[info@bpo.org.au](mailto:info@bpo.org.au)

## AUDITIONS

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](http://www.bpo.org.au)

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# VERDI REQUIEM

SUNDAY 28 JULY, 4PM  
CONCERT HALL, QPAC

CONDUCTOR | JOHN CURRO AM MBE  
SOPRANO | NATALIE AROYAN  
MEZZO-SOPRANO | MILIJANA NIKOLIC  
TENOR | DIEGO TORRE  
BASS | WARWICK FYFE

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