

THE YEAR 1905

Metro Series #3

Conductor: Stefanie Smith
Sunday 26 September 3pm
Old Museum, Concert Hall



**BRISBANE
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA.**

CONCERT PROGRAM

PYTOR TCHAIKOVSKY

Grand Pas de Deux from *The Nutcracker Op.71*

PYTOR TCHAIKOVSKY

Grand Divertissement from *The Nutcracker Op.71*

Le Chocolat (Spanish Dance)

Le Café (Arabian Dance)

Le Thé (Chinese Dance)

Trépak (Russian Dance)

Danse des mirtilons (Dance of the Reed Flutes)

Danse de la Fée-Dragée (Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy)

Grand ballabile (Waltz of the Flowers)

INTERVAL

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

Symphony No.11 in G minor, Op.103 (The Year 1905)

I. Adagio (Palace Square)

II. Allegro (The 9th of January)

III. Adagio (Memory Eternal)

IV. Allegro non troppo (Tocsin)



FIRST VIOLINS

Clare Cooney (Concertmaster)*
Karen Blair
Tom Reithmuller
Tove Easton
Hwee Sin Chong
Anya Tang
Danny Kwok
Min Tan
Drew Cylinder
Carmen Pierce
Ailsa Hankinson
Emma Eriksson
Jordan Hall#
Rebekah Hall#

SECOND VIOLINS

Cam Hough*
Hayden Burton
Evangeline Jacobs
Ryan Smith
Cara Odenthal
Lauren Jones
Chloe Richardson
Anna Jenkins
Elisna van Niekerk
Rachel Olsen
Vy Dinh
Tylar Leask
Isabel Tunstall
Ai Miura
Nawres Al-Freh

VIOLAS

Sophie Ellis*
Lauren Foster
Michele Adeney
Jacob Seabrook
John McGrath
Bronwyn Gibbs
Katrina Greenwood
Jenny Waanders
Anthony Rossiter

CELLOS

Lynne Backstrom*
Amy Naumann
Angela Batch
Edward Brackin
Anitah Kumar
Elouise Comber
David Curry
Jane Elliott
Joanna Cull
Gabriel Dumitru
Andrew Ruhs
Yoel Garcia Marin
Charmaine Lee

BASSES

Sam Dickenson*
Dean Tierney
Steve Dunn
Angela Jaeschke
Chan Luc
Jemima Shepherd
Bryn Keane

FLUTE

Jo Lagerlow*
Jessica Sullivan

PICCOLO

Lucia Gonzalez*

OBOE

Gabrielle Knight*
Hui-Yu (Whitney) Chung

COR ANGLAIS

John Connolly*

CLARINET

Simon Redshaw^
Amy Kuskopf#

BASS CLARINET

Hugo Anaya Partida*

BASSOON

Lisa Squires*
Patricia Brennan

CONTRABASSOON

Carl Bryant*

HORN

Melanie Taylor*
Oscar Schmidt#
Trestan McMillian#
Cedar Miller
Rhiannon Hurn#

TRUMPET

Blake Humphrey*
Sophie Kukulies
Xavier Bradford#
Bella Geeves#

TROMBONE

Zhao Ming Liu*
John Rotar

BASS TROMBONE

Clayton Fiander*

TUBA

Michael Sterzinger*

PERCUSSION

Kerry Vann-Leeflang*
Davis Dingle
Patrick Hassard
Andrew Palmer
Emily Moolenschot#
Joe Teague#

HARP

Tijana Kozarcic^
Jaclyn Miles#

CELESTA

Andrew Palmer*
Patrick Hassard*



Conductor STEFANIE SMITH

Stefanie Smith is a current DMA candidate researching the emerging careers of Australian conductors, at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU). She has acted as assistant conductor for QCGU's production of Berlioz's opera *Beatrice and Benedict* and has worked with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra on its recent regional tour bringing music education programs and performances to young audiences across various regional centres throughout Queensland.

As a freelance conductor, Stefanie works regularly with the Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra along with a number of other ensembles and various programs in Queensland. As the founder and conductor of the ensemble *Consorte Eclettica*, Stefanie is particularly focused on emerging local artists in Brisbane, and premiering and performing chamber orchestra works in collaboration with other art forms.

Stefanie has participated in Australian Conducting Academy with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and Johannes Fritsch as well as conducting masterclasses with Larry Rachleff (Rice University, USA) and maestro Benjamin Zander at the London Master Classes Conducting Course, with members of the Royal Northern College of Music.

Stefanie is a sessional academic at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University where she assists with the Symphony Orchestra and Wind Orchestra and teaches the undergraduate conducting courses. Stefanie is also the Young Conservatorium Ensemble Coordinator where she conducts the Symphony Orchestra, Wind Orchestra, and Woodwind Ensemble and teaches Chamber Music.

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

Pyotr Tchaikovsky (1840 - 1893)

The Nutcracker Op.71

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The magical and wondrous fantasy of a child's Christmas portrayed in the Nutcracker ballet makes an unlikely companion to Tchaikovsky's doom-laden Sixth Symphony, the *Pathétique*. Yet these were the last two big works Tchaikovsky was to compose, with the Nutcracker completed in April 1892 and the symphony written during the following year, shortly before his death.

Tchaikovsky was not enthusiastic about The Nutcracker. Choreographer Marius Petipa had provided a libretto based on an adaptation of E.T.A Hoffmann's short story '*The Nutcracker and the Mouse King*'. The result not only lost some of the dark detail of the original but was dramatically lopsided; nearly all the action occurs in Act I. Tchaikovsky considered abandoning the project but persevered, pouring into this last great ballet some of his most enchanting music.

The ballet begins with a Christmas Eve party at the home of Mayor Silberhaus, whose children, Clara and Fritz, are busy at the Christmas tree, eagerly awaiting their venerable and mysterious godfather. He arrives with a strange gift for Clara: a wooden figure of a man who cracks nuts between his bushy moustache and lower jaw. As bedtime approaches, the tired but still excited children quarrel, and Fritz breaks the nutcracker. It lies forlorn as the children go upstairs.

In the stillness, the magic of Christmas begins. Clara returns in her nightgown, looking for the nutcracker. As the clock strikes midnight, the Christmas tree looms larger and Clara seems to feel herself shrinking. On all sides, mice appear, as large as she is. The toy soldiers and dolls come to life; Clara's broken nutcracker becomes their military general, leading the toys in a pitched battle against the fearsome seven-headed Mouse King and his followers. In desperation Clara flings her slipper at the Mouse King, rescuing the hard-pressed Nutcracker from his enemies. Immediately, he is transformed into a handsome prince. The drawing-room magically melts away, and Clara and her Prince Charming are transported to a land where all good dreams come true.



PROGRAM NOTES

Act II: *Divertissement*

In the second act, Clara and her Prince arrive in the Kingdom of Sweets, where they are greeted by the good and generous Sugar Plum Fairy, Queen of the Kingdom, who extends a festive welcome. The Prince tells the Fairy of the battle with the Mouse King, and Clara's bravery. Since Clara has saved the Prince's life by her bravery, the Fairy presents an elaborate banquet by way of celebration: a series of vivid character dances presenting various confections, each associated with a different country.

Inspired by Hoffmann's tale, the Kingdom of the Sweets was formed as a lusty representation of the toys and treats that every affluent St Petersburg family knew and loved. Food was the theme that the divertissements brought to life.

Chocolate is represented by a **Spanish Dance**; which recalls the introduction of chocolate beans to Europe following the Spanish Conquest in South America.

The sultry strains of the **Arabian Dance** follow, evoking the warmth of the Middle East, where coffee was cultivated for centuries.

Tea – represented by the sprightly **Chinese Dance** – was traditionally the most recognisable victual in the ballet, and several choreographers incorporate tea-drinking gestures or even gigantic teapots into the variation.

The **Russian Dance** is a wildly energetic **Trepak**; the iconic folk dance in the Russian tradition, and the only truly Russian aspect of the work.

Mirlitons are a kind of crunchy pastry tube filled with whipped cream, but the name also refers to a kind of children's flute (a little like a kazoo). Tchaikovsky features three flutes in this dainty dance.

The spectacle culminates in an elaborate dance to one of Tchaikovsky's most famous and beloved melodies, the **Waltz of the Flowers**.

A majestic series of descending scales in the cellos accompanied by arpeggiated harp figures introduces the second act **Pas de deux**, danced by the Sugar Plum Fairy and her cavalier, Prince Coqueluche. A short tarantella for Prince Coqueluche is followed by the **Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy**, accompanied by the enchanting bell-like tinkling of the celesta, at the time a relatively new instrument that Tchaikovsky had discovered on a recent trip to Paris.

All of the sweets return to the stage for the finale's grand waltz, and, to the strains of the same music that ushered Clara and the Nutcracker Prince into the Kingdom of Sweets, Clara is transported back home to her real-life slumber beneath the Christmas tree.

Program notes by Symphony Australia and the Australian Ballet

PROGRAM NOTES

Dmitri Shostakovich (1906 - 1975) **Symphony No.11 in G minor, Op.103 (The Year 1905)**

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- I. Adagio (Palace Square)*
- II. Allegro (The 9th of January)*
- III. Adagio (Memory Eternal)*
- IV. Allegro non troppo (Tocsin)*

BACKGROUND

On the morning of Sunday 9th January 1905, thousands of Russians gathered in front of the Winter Palace in St Petersburg. The country's economy was in dire straits; and yet despite extreme poverty and hardship, the assembled crowd had no intention of anything other than presenting their government with a peaceful petition. They were simply asking to have their grievances heard and not only did they expect to be received with respect and maybe even kindness, but genuinely believed that the Tsar would be able to help. Many of them had huge regard for him; they even sang 'God Save the Tsar'.

No one will know what would have happened had an unnecessarily apprehensive Tsar Nicholas II not made the tragic mistake of deciding at the last minute to leave the city in advance of the demonstration. In his absence the people grew restless and, when the police ordered them to disperse, confusion arose, and a group of young and nervous Cossack troops suddenly opened fire. In the ensuing chaos, over a thousand men, women, and children were mown down by gunfire. The snow turned red with the blood that was spilled.

One who survived was Dmitri Boleslavich Shostakovich, and his son Dmitri Dmitriyevich was born the following year. The massacre was frequently discussed in the young composer's home, and its unprovoked brutality left an indelible impression on the young and sensitive child. In Testimony, the book published in 1979 by Solomon Volkov, Shostakovich is quoted as follows:

'Our family discussed the Revolution of 1905 constantly... the stories deeply affected my imagination. When I was older I read much about how it all happened... They were carting a mound of murdered children on a sleigh. The boys had been sitting in the trees, looking at the soldiers, and the soldiers shot them – just like that, for fun. They then loaded them on the sleigh and drove off. A sleigh loaded with children's bodies. And the dead children were smiling. They had been killed so suddenly that they hadn't time to be frightened.'

It would therefore have been with understandably mixed feelings that fifty years later the celebrated composer accepted a commission from the Soviet authorities to write a symphony commemorating the event, and it is not surprising that it took him a while to start its composition. It was perhaps events outside Russia that in the end stimulated him to begin work.

PROGRAM NOTES

On 25th October 1956, a build-up of local protests resulted in thousands of Hungarians amassing in Budapest's Parliament Square to demonstrate against their government. The puppet régime that the Soviet Union had installed there was particularly oppressive. Random abductions, false imprisonment, and forced confessions equalled those of Stalin's Russia, and rough estimates say that over ten percent of the population had passed through the country's torture chambers and prison camps at some point since the Second World War.

When the secret police turned their machine guns on the crowd, leaving an estimated six hundred dead, Soviet tanks had to be sent in to put down the uprising that followed. No one was more horrified than Shostakovich at the depressing repetition of events that this seemed to exemplify and it was not hard to draw parallels between Budapest in 1956 and St Petersburg in 1905. A similarly courageous struggle for a just cause won the protesting Hungarians many tacit supporters back in Russia.

But tacit, of course, is what such support had to be. Despite Stalin's death in 1953 and the undoubted 'thaw' that had followed, there was no lessening of the risk incurred by suggesting that the Soviet reaction in Hungary was heavy-handed and over the top. In appearing to describe a similar uprising of fifty years before, Shostakovich was able to express his current sympathies without upsetting anyone in the government.

Yet it was not that difficult for anyone who wanted to draw comparisons between both atrocities to be stimulated to do so on listening to the symphony. After the première an elderly lady was overheard saying: 'Those aren't guns firing, they are tanks roaring, and people being squashed.' And when this was related to Shostakovich, he is reported to have replied: 'That means she understood it.' Even the composer's own son apparently asked his father: '*Papa, what if they hang you for this?*' But he was not hanged. In fact the work was a huge success and resulted in a Lenin Prize for the composer the following year. It is ironic that the symphony should have been so praised by a régime that it was probably secretly denigrating.

It makes sense for a work that is essentially about the spirit of revolution, albeit a failed one, to have as its musical basis several revolutionary songs – all of which would have been extremely well-known to contemporary Russians. This was music that Shostakovich grew up singing as a child, and the texts would have been so familiar to his audience that he did not feel any need to have them articulated by voices. It raises the question as to whether a non-Russian can relate to the symphony in the same way. The answer is probably not, but the simplicity and power of the melodies themselves certainly evoke the right emotion, even if it is experienced away from the specific context of twentieth-century Russian history.

PROGRAM NOTES

THE MUSIC

Played without a pause, the symphony's four movements are all given titles by the composer. **Palace Square** serves as a slow introduction: its cold and desolate vastness depict the snow-covered square at daybreak; ominous timpani strokes fatefully suggest an uneasy calm, whilst distant brass fanfares evoke the soldiers' early morning 'reveille'. As the sun rises, the melodies of two revolutionary songs emerge. Listen! and The Prisoner were both well-known to prisoners trying to come to terms with the slow pace of time whilst in captivity, with only the crying of fellow inmates to keep them company during the long dark nights.

Entitled **The Ninth of January**, the following Allegro cinematically depicts the crowd, at first calm, then gradually giving way to more impassioned pleas for help. But these receive no answer, and we sense the people's dejected frustration: a silent stillness that is suddenly interrupted by the sound of rifling drum shots, as seemingly unprovoked and unexpected as, by all accounts, the real gunfire was in 1905. The confusion and panic in the music is unmistakable, as is the hollow and ghostly emptiness of the terrifying quiet of the now lifeless, body-strewn square with which the movement ends.

The third movement, an Adagio headed **In Memoriam**, laments those who lost their lives in the atrocity. Sometimes resigned and sad, in other places angry and defiant, it is based on the revolutionary funeral march You fell as victims, with un-selfish love for the people, a song that was heard at Lenin's funeral in 1924.

The finale, **Tocsin** (an alarm or warning bell), is a gesture of defiance on the part of the survivors and on behalf of those who gave their lives in resistance. In anticipation of future uprisings, it uses the songs Tremble, Tyrants and Whirlwinds of Danger to predict an ultimate victory for the revolutionaries. These texts are translated below.

Whether or not 'the ultimate victory' as manifested in the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 was something to glorify is left unanswered by the composer. Though the ringing bells that close the work suggest a certain triumph, they sound hollow in the context of a resilient G minor tonality, and it could hardly be called an optimistic ending to what is a very dark and brooding symphony as a whole. All revolution is essentially tragic, just as all war is basically civil war, and no bloodshed at any time, or any place, can ever be something to celebrate. Shostakovich elaborated on the depressing nature of recurrence in Testimony:

'I think that many things repeat themselves in Russian history. Of course the same event can't repeat itself exactly, there must be differences, but many things are repeated nevertheless. People think and act similarly in many things... I wanted to show this recurrence in the Eleventh Symphony. I wrote it in 1957 and it deals with contemporary themes even though it's called "1905". It's about the people, who have stopped believing because the cup of evil has run over. That's how the impressions of my childhood and my adult life come together. And naturally, the events of my mature years are more meaningful.'

PROGRAM NOTES

Ultimately, the debate about whether Shostakovich is portraying the heroism of Russians in 1905 or Hungarians in 1956 is irrelevant. It does not matter whether he is attacking the violence of Cossack troops or the aggression of Red Army tanks. What is clear is his obvious empathy with all who try to rise up against tyranny and his passionate antipathy towards all who oppress them. The symphony may on the surface be a costume drama, but it is one that still resonates today. In the end, Shostakovich writes about emotions and states of mind, rather than specific dates, and even if he does use facts as his focus, they are invariably symbols for universal sentiments. That is why his music remains both timeless and topical.

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*Tremble, tyrants, as you mock us!
Threaten us with jail and manacles!
We are free in spirit, even if our bodies are not,
Shame on you, you tyrants! Shame!*

*Whirlwinds of danger are raging around us,
O'erwhelming forces of darkness assail.
Still in the fight see advancing before us,
Red flag of liberty that yet shall prevail.*

*Then forward, ye workers, freedom awaits you,
O'er all the world on the land and the sea.
On with the fight for the cause of humanity,
March, march ye toilers and the world shall be
free!*

*Women and children in hunger are calling,
Shall we be silent to their sorrow and woe,
While in the fight see our brothers are falling.
Up then united and conquer the foe!*



Valentin Serov's painting '*Where is your glory, soldiers?*' inspired by the events of the Bloody Sunday.

LOVE LETTERS

Metro Series #4

Conductor: Chen Yang
Sunday 28 November 3pm
Old Museum, Concert Hall



Coming up:

SUNDAY 28 NOVEMBER, 3pm
OLD MUSEUM CONCERT HALL

Conductor: Chen Yang

Violin: Courtenay Cleary

PROGRAM:

Glinka | Overture to *Ruslan and Ludmila*

Mendelssohn | *Violin Concerto* in E minor, Op.64

Prokofiev | *Romeo and Juliet* (Selections from Suites 1 & 2)

For tickets visit: www.bpo.org.au

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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

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

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