



Orchestra 21
Presents

mystical text

4pm Sunday
5 May 2024

Church of
All Nations



Artists

Orchestra 21

Patrick Burns Conductor

Hannah Dahlenburg Soprano

Program

GRENFELL

Knitting Unicorns

FINZI

Dies Natalis Opus 8,
Cantata for Soprano & Strings

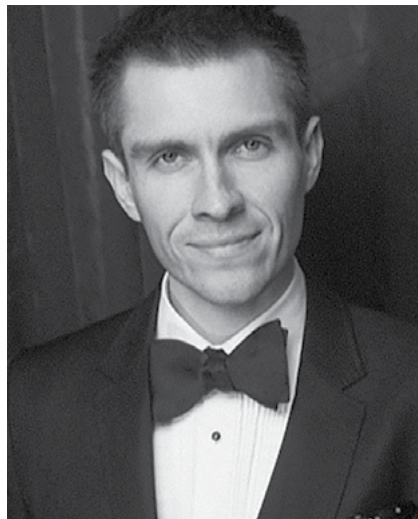
SCHUBERT

Symphony No. 5
in B-flat major D.458

Duration (*approximate*)

5', 28', 30'

Patrick Burns Conductor



Patrick Burns is the Artistic Director of the Lyric Opera of Melbourne and Director of Music Programs Victoria for the Play It Forward Choral Program.

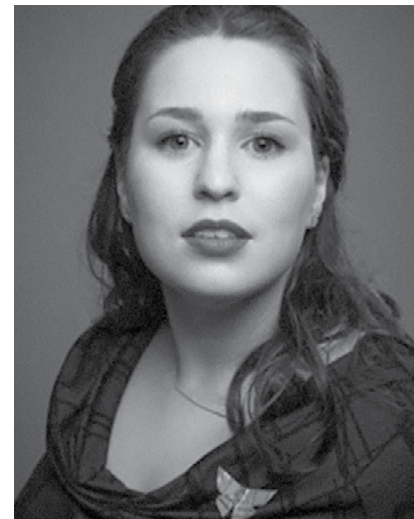
In 2018 and 2019 Patrick was the Robert and Elizabeth Albert Conducting Fellow for The Australian Ballet, alongside the Hephzibah Tintner Conducting Fellow. As part of his Fellowships, Patrick has conducted performances for The Australian Ballet with Orchestra Victoria, The Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and The Opera Australia Orchestra.

He has conducted Orchestra Victoria in a regional performance, acted as Assistant Conductor to Simone Young with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and served as Assistant Conductor in William Kentridge's production of Wozzeck presented by Opera Australia.

Internationally Patrick has made guest appearances with the National Theater of Serbia (Otello), State Opera of Bulgaria Ruse (Rigoletto, Nabucco, Turandot) and the Pazardzhik Symphony Orchestra in Bulgaria. In 2017, he was the assistant conductor with British Youth Opera and conducted the covers performance with the Southbank Sinfonia. Patrick won the Jury's Prize at the 2015 Blue Danube International Opera Conducting Competition in Bulgaria and the Orchestra's Prize in 2016 Black Sea Opera Conducting Competition in Romania. He won the Green Room Award for Musical Achievement for Lyric Opera's 2022 production of Iphis by Elena Khats-Chernin and Richard Toop.

For more information visit www.patrickburnsconductor.com

Hannah Dahlenburg Soprano



Australian-Canadian Soprano Hannah Dahlenburg is renowned for her performances as Queen of the Night, performing with a 'sumptuous, beautiful tone, great strength and brilliance' (Plays to See, 2017). She has performed the role to acclaim across Australia, the UK, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, amongst numerous other roles.

A frequent recitalist and soloist in Australia and Europe, Hannah has a passion for the influence of recital programming and utilizing multimedia in her recitals.

She has received numerous awards and scholarships in Australia and the UK and holds an MMus in Performance (Royal Northern College of Music) and BMus with Honours in Performance (University of Melbourne).

Program Notes

MARIA GRENFELL (1969–)

Knitting Unicorns (2017)

Maria Grenfell was born in Malaysia, and completed composition studies in Christchurch, New Zealand. She obtained a Masters degree from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and a Doctorate from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, where she was also a lecturer. Maria Grenfell's work takes much of its influence from poetic, literary and visual sources, and from non-Western music and literature.

Her orchestral music has been commissioned, performed or recorded by all the major symphony orchestras in Australia and New Zealand. In 2013 Maria won 'Instrumental Work of the Year' for Tasmania at the Australian Art Music Awards for her septet *Ten Suns Ablaze*, commissioned by the Australia Ensemble, and in 2017 her double concerto *Spirals* won the Tasmanian award for 'Orchestral Work of the Year.' Her music was commissioned for the documentary films *Quoll Farm*, aired in 2021 and *Living with Devils* in 2023. Maria is an Associate Professor at the University of Tasmania Conservatorium of Music and co-ordinates the composition stream. She was Head of the Conservatorium from 2018-2019.

Knitting Unicorns was commissioned by the Hush Foundation in 2017. The aim of HUSH is to "transform the culture of health care through the arts". One of their activities is to develop music that can contribute to reducing stress and anxiety in children undergoing painful medical procedures. The composer writes:

When I had the opportunity to visit the Royal Hobart Hospital, there was bright colour on the walls, sunshine outside, and young people playing on their electronic devices or watching bad TV. One young lady, however, spent much of her time studying her high school textbooks, and knitting voraciously. In the bed next to hers was a toddler who was captivated by some unicorns from the hospital's toy box. Coincidentally, the knitter was also knitting a unicorn. Maybe the magic of this mythical yet beautiful creature transports children of all ages to their happy place.

GERALD FINZI (1901–1956)

Dies Natalis (1938–1939)

- I. Intrada
- II. Rhapsody (Recitativo stromentato)
- III. The Rapture (Danza)
- IV. Wonder (Arioso)
- V. The Salutation (Aria)

British composer Gerald Raphael Finzi's cantata *Dies Natalis* (translated as "Natal Day" or "Day of Birth") Op. 8 is based on texts by the 17th-century metaphysical poet Thomas Traherne. This five-movement solo cantata for either soprano or tenor voice accompanied by string orchestra features richly textured instrumental writing and lyrical melodies. The work reflects Traherne's themes of innocence and wonder, presenting a child's perspective on the world. Finzi's fascination with Traherne's texts is underscored by his own challenging life experiences, including the loss of family members during his childhood and World War I. Traherne's poetry offered Finzi a sense of escapism and solace amidst personal tragedy.

The cantata's movements collectively present a cohesive narrative, embodying themes of beauty, divinity, and the miracle of existence. The text setting reflects Finzi's meticulous attention to detail, with musical themes intertwined seamlessly with Traherne's words. The purely instrumental *Intrada* creates an image of the unborn child in the womb and provides the basic thematic material used in the other three movements. Its musical ideas are shared with the second movement *Rhapsody*: swaying rhythms progressing to a stately flowing melody swelling to a heady climax. *The Rapture* was inspired by paintings of Botticelli's circle of angels dancing in praise, viewed by the composer. *Wonder* is a tender arioso supported by rich nine-part string writing. *The Salutation* is sung in the form of a Bachian chorale prelude accompanied by flowing melodies over measured bass, which are shared amongst instruments until a gradual winding down to stillness.

Despite facing challenges in getting the work published and premiered, *Dies Natalis* eventually received its first performance in 1940 at Wigmore Hall in London. The piece garnered positive reviews and cemented Finzi's reputation as a composer of importance and originality.

Program Notes

Over the years, the cantata has been increasingly performed and recorded, though initially associated with tenor voices, it has also been performed by sopranos. The composition's significance lies not only in its musical beauty but also in its ability to evoke timeless themes of innocence and wonder, offering listeners a poignant reflection on the human condition. Finzi's *Dies Natalis* remains a testament to his artistry and enduring legacy in British music.

The Rapture

*Sweet Infancy!
O heavenly fire! O sacred Light!
How fair and bright!
How great am I
Whom the whole world doth magnify!*

*O heavenly Joy!
O great and sacred blessedness
Which I possess!
So great a joy
Who did into my arms convey?*

*From God above
Being sent, the gift doth me enflame,
To praise His Name.
The stars do move,
The sun doth shine, to show His Love.*

*O how divine
Am I! To all this sacred wealth
This life and health,
Who rais'd? Who mine
Did make the same!
What hand divine!*

Wonder

*How like an angel came I down!
How bright are all things here!
When first among His works I did
appear
O how their glory did me crown!
The world resembled His Eternity
In which my soul did walk;
And every thing that I did see
Did with me talk.*

*The skies in their magnificence
The lovely, lively air,
O how divine, how soft, how sweet,
how fair!
The stars did entertain my sense;
And all the works of God, so bright
and pure,
So rich and great, did seem,
As if they ever must endure
In my esteem.*

*A native health and innocence
Within my bones did grow,
And while my God did all His Glories
show,
I felt a vigour in my sense
That was all Spirit. I within did flow
With seas of life, like wine;
I nothing in the world did know
But 'twas Divine.*

The Salutation

*These little limbs, these eyes and
hands which here I find,
This panting heart wherewith my life
begins;
Where have ye been? Behind what
curtain were ye from me hid so long?
Where was, in what abyss,
my new-made tongue?*

*When silent I, so many thousand,
thousand years
Beneath the dust did in a chaos lie,
how could I smiles, or tears,
Or lips, or hands, or eyes, or ears
perceive?
Welcome, ye treasures
which I now receive.*

*From dust I rise and out of nothing
now awake,
These brighter regions which salute
my eyes,
A gift from God I take, the earth, the
seas, the light, the lofty skies,
The sun and stars are
mine: if these I prize.*

*A stranger here, strange things doth
meet, strange glory see,
Strange treasures lodged in this fair
world appear,
Strange, all, and new to me: But that
they mine should be who nothing was,
That strangest is of all;
yet brought to pass.*

FRANZ SCHUBERT (1797–1828)

Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major D.485 (1816)

- I. Allegro
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Menuetto, Allegro molto
- IV. Allegro vivace

Symphony No. 5 was completed in October 1816 when Schubert was 19 years old. He had abandoned teaching at his father's school not long before and begun lodging with a friend devoting himself full-time to composition.

The symphony is scored for the smallest orchestra of any of Schubert's symphonies. It does not include any clarinets, trumpets, or timpani; the instrumentation matches the first version of Mozart's 40th Symphony. The chamber manner of the instrumentation and writing shows the influence of the previous generation of Viennese composers, particularly Mozart, rather than Schubert's contemporary Beethoven. Diary entries from the time Schubert was composing the symphony show that he was infatuated with Mozart.

Program Notes

Schubert heard the symphony performed at the home of Otto Hattwig, a musician who hosted gatherings of players for informal concerts. Afterwards it met a similar fate to many of his other compositions. The first public performance did not take place till many years after the composer's death. The symphony has four movements:

I. *Allegro (B-flat major)*

This does not have a slow introduction; it quickly introduces two melodies. The movement is in sonata form and has unusual key areas heard later: D-flat major and E-flat minor.

II. *Andante con moto (E-flat major)*

The slow movement shows similar melodic inventiveness and unusual modulations as the first, it modulates to the rare key of C-flat major.

III. *Menuetto, Allegro molto (G minor)*

This sounds reminiscent of a classic minuet, however Schubert's gift for elegant melody shines in the contrasting middle section.

IV. *Allegro vivace (B-flat major)*

'Is a cheerful romp that sounds like it could have been composed some forty years earlier.' (William E. Runyan)

The symphony has the sound of a classical symphony from the time of Mozart and Haydn with Schubert's touches of romantic melody and harmony.

David Choate, Diana Greenslade & Phillippa Clements © 2024.

Musicians

VIOLIN I

Michaela Mee
Concertmaster
 Ray Chan
 Bronwyn Francis
 Jean McMullin
 Carmen Yeung
 Michael Semeniuk
 Mary Muirhead
 Janine Manwaring

VIOLIN II

Bronwyn Henderson*
 Owen Halliday
 Diana Greenslade
 Caroline Matthews
 Karen Love
 Lisette Bush
 Owen Bradfield

VIOLA

Kate Walker*
 Yota Yoshimitsu
 Heng Lin Yeap
 David Chaote
 Jane Standish

CELLO

Phillippa Clements*
 Julia Cianci
 Cath Brennan
 Jamie Wallis
 Anita Vinton
 Barbara Manovel

CONTRABASS

Melody Chia*
 Darren Steel

OBOE

Lucy Belfrage*
 Bridie Mee

FLUTE

Matthew Barker*

HORN

Lyndelle Newey*
 Tracy Tulloch

BASSOON

Linda Pearson*
 Megan Waugh

Orchestra 21 would like to thank Michael Semeniuk, 3MBS
and our concert day volunteers.

Orchestra 21 thanks its generous Patrons (donations \$500 & over)

Owen Halliday
Helen & Roger Mee
John Smyth

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