

# Mosman Symphony Orchestra

## 40th Anniversary Concert Copland Appalachian Spring Rimsky-Korsakov Scheherazade

**Friday March 20th at 8pm  
Sunday March 22nd at 2.30pm  
Mosman Art Gallery**



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## Message from the Musical Director

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'On behalf of everyone in Mosman Symphony Orchestra, I would like to welcome you to our 40th anniversary concerts. It is rare that we can celebrate such a milestone as 40 years of music making, yet it only seems yesterday that the orchestra was celebrating 30 years. Time certainly flies! I hope our music today serves to transport you away from the humdrum to new places that are simple and rustic or legendary and fantastical.

Forty years ago a small group of people formed what was known as the Lane Cove Orchestra. After a period of homelessness, restructuring and expansion, the small-group feeling has remained and Mosman Symphony Orchestra, as we are now known, is still a friendly, welcoming ensemble that prides itself on its music making and loves doing so.

Regular audience members will notice that this program is a little different. Instead of featuring a soloist we are featuring the entire orchestra in two pivotal works, the *Appalachian Spring* suite and the symphonic suite *Scheherazade*. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's suite *Scheherazade* is a shining example of how to use the instruments of the orchestra to tell a tale, to contrast colour of sound and, incidentally, it features solos from almost every instrument in the orchestra.

In the next century Aaron Copland also sought to bring to life different orchestral colours and textures. We start our concert with the suite from his ballet, restored by Copland for large orchestra, his music rural and optimistic, yet connected with the land in ways his sounds make so obvious.

The rest of 2015 will bring some wonderful soloists and exciting works. Our next concert is a knockout program featuring the 'two fives' of Beethoven, his fifth Symphony and Fifth Piano Concerto (the Emperor) and are delighted to welcome back Greg Kinda as soloist. Carlos Alvarado is guest conductor later in the year. And our final concert features two titanic works: Brahms' first Symphony and Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto.

Each concert program promises to be a special event and we hope to see you there!'

## Notes on the Program

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### Appalachian Spring, Aaron Copland (1900-1990)

This orchestral suite has remained widely and enduringly popular. It was originally a ballet score for a thirteen-member chamber orchestra, written as a commission from choreographer and dancer Martha Graham and it premiered at the Library of Congress in Washington DC in October 1944, with Martha Graham dancing the lead role. The original ballet concerned a spring celebration by the Pennsylvanian pioneers of the nineteenth century after building a new farmhouse. Among the ballet's central characters are a bride, a groom, a pioneer woman, a preacher and his congregation.

Copland did not have a title for the work, which he called simply *Ballet for Martha*. However, shortly before the premiere Graham suggested *Appalachian Spring*, a quotation from the poem 'The Dance' by Hart Crane:

*O Appalachian Spring! I gained the ledge;*

*Steep, inaccessible smile that eastward bends*

*And northward reaches in that violet wedge*

*Of Adirondacks!*

In 1945, Copland was commissioned by conductor Artur Rodzinski to rearrange the ballet work as an orchestral suite, keeping most of the music. The resulting suite was the work that made Copland's name as a popular, accessible composer who used themes that came to be known as American. In the 1930s and 1940s he wrote other works in what he called his 'vernacular' style: besides *Appalachian Spring* there were the ballet scores for *Rodeo* and *Billy the Kid*, as well as his *Fanfare for the Common Man* and *Third Symphony*. All are characterised by open, slow-changing harmonies that seek to evoke the spirit of the pioneers in a vast landscape.

Copland was an adventurous composer. Born in Brooklyn, New York, into a conservative Jewish family of Lithuanian origin that anglicised the family name from 'Kaplan' to 'Copland', he produced music in many genres, including chamber music, vocal works, opera and film scores. He came to his particular style in part as a reaction to the prevailing modernism and the academic study of composition. Though he had impeccable classical credentials as a composer – in the 1920s he studied in Paris with Isidor Philipp and the famous teacher Nadia Boulanger -- he knew he had to be versatile if he wanted to fulfil his ambition to be a fulltime composer. Accordingly he gave lecture recitals, wrote works on commission and did a great deal of teaching and writing. He followed the German idea of *Gebrauchmusik* – music for use – that is, music that was playable for a wide range of

instruments as well as having artistic merit. However, later in his career he incorporated serial or twelve-tone row techniques in some of his works.

From the 1960s Copland turned increasingly to conducting, becoming a frequent guest for orchestras in the US and UK. He also made a series of recordings of his music, mostly for Columbia Records.

*Appalachian Spring* is divided into eight sections, each described by Copland himself:

1. Very slowly. Introduction of the characters, one by one, in a suffused light.
2. Fast/Allegro. Sudden burst of unison strings in A major arpeggios starts the action. A sentiment both elated and religious gives the keynote to this scene.
3. Moderate/Moderato. Duo for the Bride and her Intended – a scene of tenderness and passion.
4. Quite fast. The Revivalist and his flock. Folksy feeling – suggestions of square dances and country fiddlers.
5. Still faster/Subito allegro. Solo dance of the Bride – presentiment of motherhood. Extremes of joy and fear and wonder.
6. Very slowly (as at first). Transition scene to music reminiscent of the introduction.
7. Calm and flowing/Doppio Movimento. Scenes of daily activity for the Bride and her Farmer husband. There are five variations on a Shaker theme. The theme, sung by a solo clarinet, was taken from a collection of Shaker melodies compiled by Edward D. Andrews, and published under the title 'The Gift to be Simple'. The melody borrowed and used almost literally is called 'Simple Gifts'.
8. Moderate. Coda/Moderato – Coda. The Bride takes her place among her neighbours. At the end the couple are left 'quiet and strong in their new house'. Muted strings intone a hushed prayer-like chorale passage. The close is reminiscent of the opening music.

The best known section of *Appalachian Spring* is 'Simple Gifts' in section 7. It is a version of a tune written by Maine resident Joseph Brackett (1797-1882) who joined the religious sect known as the Shakers. Founded in England in the eighteenth century as a branch of the Quakers, the Shakers (originally called 'Shaking Quakers' because of their ecstatic behaviour during worship) settled in colonial America where they became known for the equality of the sexes, their celibate, simple and communal lifestyle and pacifist beliefs. Brackett's father's farm became the base for a new Shaker settlement.

The song was largely unknown outside Shaker communities until Copland used its melody. He liked it so much that he used it again in 1950 in a set of *Old American Songs* for voice and piano, later orchestrated.

### Simple Gifts

*Joseph Brackett, Jr., 1848*



Many people think that the tune is a traditional Celtic one, largely because it has been adapted and arranged many times by folksingers and composers. Probably the best known version is by English songwriter Sydney Carter, who adapted the tune for his song 'Lord of the Dance', first published in 1963. The Carter lyrics were adapted in ignorance of their origins and without authorisation or acknowledgment for Michael Flatley's dance musical *Lord of the Dance*, which opened in 1996. There have been other adaptations, all in the belief that the tune was always in the public domain.

Aaron Copland was amused when people told him that *Appalachian Spring* captured the beauty of the Appalachians in his music, because he had composed the suite without knowing what the title would be. And incidentally the word 'spring' in the original Hart Crane poem describes a source of water, not a season of the year.

### INTERVAL

## Op. 35 Scheherazade, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908)



Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, widely recognised and celebrated as a master of nineteenth-century orchestration and probably best known for this dazzling orchestral suite, was an amateur composer with comparatively little formal training in the craft.

His father was a government official, his mother a pianist, and his elder brother and cousin both served in the Russian navy. Young Nicolai's birthright thus included a love for the sea and an interest in music. When he was twelve the family moved from the small village of Tikhvin to St Petersburg, where he became a cadet in the naval academy. At the age of fifteen he began taking

piano lessons and learned the rudiments of composition. When he was seventeen he met the composer Balakirev, a very cultured man, and under Balakirev's guidance he started to write music.

The following year he graduated, and in 1862 went on a long sea voyage to the USA. It was the height of the American Civil War and because Russia was sympathetic to the northern states, the sailors were welcomed there. On the same voyage he travelled to Brazil, Spain, Italy, France, England and Norway, returning in 1865. For the twenty-one-year-old Rimsky-Korsakov, the whole voyage confirmed a fascination with the sea that found its way into many of his operas and symphonic works. Apart from *Scheherazade*, these include *Sadko*, *The Tale of Tsar Sultan* and *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia*.

When he returned, he completed the symphony begun before his voyage, which was performed with great success in December 1865. His next work, *Fantasy on Serbian Themes for Orchestra* was performed, with Balakirev conducting, two years later. It was at this concert that a reviewer proudly said that henceforth Russia, too, had its own 'mighty little heap' of native composers. The name, usually translated as 'mighty handful', caught on quickly and found its way into music history books, with reference to Rimsky-Korsakov, Balakirev, Borodin, Cui and Mussorgsky. They became known as The Five, and they sought to assert the musical independence of Russia from the West. Of the five Rimsky-Korsakov was the most learned and productive.

Though he lacked formal qualifications as a composer, he was engaged in 1871 to teach composition at the St Petersburg Conservatory. In his autobiography *Chronicle of My Musical Life* (published in English in 1972) he frankly admitted that at the time he was unable to 'harmonise a chorale, had never done any exercises in counterpoint, had no idea of strict fugue, never having taken a course in music theory', though he had learned from Balakirev and had some professional advice from Tchaikovsky. And so in 1873 he started studying, concentrating mainly on counterpoint and the fugue. He studied the work of many composers and was particularly interested in that of Berlioz, whose *Treatise on Orchestration* he said taught him the art of composition. After several years of work he sent his fugues to Tchaikovsky who declared them impeccable.

While he was at the Conservatory he continued his naval service, assuming charge of military bands as an inspector and conductor. He left the navy in 1873 and consolidated his career as bandmaster, conductor and composer. In 1889 he led concerts of Russian music at the Paris World Exposition, and in the spring of 1907 conducted in Paris two historic concerts in connection with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes.

In his later years he became the de facto editor and head of an enterprise financed by a Russian industrialist and dedicated to publishing the music of Russian composers. After Mussorgsky's death Rimsky-Korsakov edited his scores for publication, making radical changes in what he considered Mussorgsky's awkwardly voiced melodies. His edited and altered version of Mussorgsky's opera *Boris Godunov* was sharply criticised by modernists, but his intervention made sure the opera survived, and it is the more dramatic Rimsky-Korsakov version that is more often performed. With Glazunov, Rimsky-Korsakov also edited some of the works of Borodin after that composer's death.

While he was working to complete Borodin's unfinished opera *Prince Igor* in the winter of 1887, Rimsky-Korsakov decided to compose an orchestral piece mainly based on pictures from *One Thousand and One Nights* (also known as *the Arabian Nights*). During the summer of 1888, he completed the work, which he called *Scheherazade*. This symphonic poem combines dazzling, colourful orchestration and an interest in orientalism, both of which were characteristic of Russian music of the time and of Rimsky-Korsakov in particular. He explained that he had envisaged an orchestral suite in four movements, 'closely knit by the community of its themes and motives yet presenting, as it were, a kaleidoscope of fairytale images and designs of Oriental character'.

He wrote a brief introduction that he intended for use with the score, as well as the program for the premiere, and which outlines the story of Scheherazade: 'The Sultan Schariar, convinced that all women are false and faithless, vowed to put to death each of his wives after the first nuptial night. But the Sultana Scheherazade saved her life by entertaining her lord with fascinating tales, told *seriatim*, for a thousand and one nights.



### *Scheherazade continued telling her story.*

The Sultan, consumed with curiosity, postponed from day to day the execution of his wife, and finally repudiated his bloody vow entirely.'

The movements are unified by the short introductions in the first, second and fourth movements and an intermezzo in the third. The last was a violin solo representing Scheherazade herself, and a similar artistic theme is heard at the end of the fourth movement. The peaceful coda at the end of the final movement represents Scheherazade finally winning over the heart of the Sultan, allowing her to have a peaceful night's sleep.

The work is scored for two flutes and a piccolo, with the second flute doubling on the second piccolo for a few bars, two oboes with the second doubling cor anglais, two clarinets in A and B flat, two bassoons, four horns in F, two trumpets in A and B flat, three trombones, tuba, timpani, bass drum, snare drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, tam-tam, harp and strings. A feature of the work is the number of short solos performed not only by the violin, but by the flute, clarinet, oboe, cello, brass and percussion. *Scheherazade* premiered in St Petersburg on 28 October 1888, conducted by the composer.

Initially he had intended to name the movements of the work 'Prelude, Ballade, Adagio and Finale', keeping the name 'Scheherazade' because it brought Oriental fairytales to mind, but eventually he settled on thematic headings. However, in a later edition he did away with titles altogether. He wrote that, 'All I desired was that the hearer, if he liked my piece as symphonic music, should carry away the impression that it is beyond a doubt an Oriental narrative of some numerous and varied fairytale wonders, and not merely four pieces played one after the other and composed on the basis of themes common to all the four movements.'

The work's four movements are not intended to be strictly narrative, but to evoke an atmosphere of exotic orientalism and fairytale.

#### *I The Sea and Sinbad's Ship (Largo e maestoso – Lento – Allegro non troppo – Tranquillo)*

Two memorable themes evoke the main characters in the story. The first, featuring bass strings and heavy brass, represents the grim and commanding Sultan, while the sinuous solo violin over the harp arpeggios relates to Scheherazade herself. The movement alternates three climactic passages mostly scored for strings and brass, with three episodes featuring both themes. The orchestration is noteworthy here for its ingenuity: in the second episode the solo cello changes places with the horn and the clarinet with the flute, while the oboe and solo violin stay where they are.

#### *II The Tale of the Kalendar Prince (Lento – Andantino – Allegro molto – Vivace scherzando – Moderato assai – Allegro molto ed animato)*

The Kalandars were wandering beggars or Muslim ascetics who were feted as royalty for superstitious reasons. This movement is basically ternary in form (theme A theme B theme A) but really presents a kaleidoscope of increasingly colourful variations. Scheherazade weaves her spell to introduce the A theme, which is partly a dance, partly declaratory on the bassoon, the only woodwind instrument not yet heard solo. The B theme is based on the Sultan's motto, first heard deep in the basses, then in growls and

brassy fanfares. A bold march gradually emerges, bracketed by two cadenzas: the first for clarinet and the second on bassoon introduces the final section, widely considered the most beautiful scoring of the entire work.

*III The Young Prince and the Young Princess (Andantino quasi allegretto – Pochissimo piu mosso – Come prima – Pochissimo piu animato)*

This movement, also ternary, is considered the simplest movement in form and melodic content. Rimsky-Korsakov identified the main theme on flowing strings with the Prince, a brief counter-subject in rippling clarinet with the Princess. The allegretto is an upbeat variation of the material in the first section. The trumpet-led rubato leads into a closing section where solo instruments are predominant; the ending, which features woodwind over string pizzicato and percussion, is particularly evocative.

*IV Festival at Baghdad, The Sea, The Ship Breaks Against a Cliff Surmounted by a Bronze Horseman (Allegro molto – Lento – Vivo – Allegro non troppo e maestoso – Tempo come prima)*

This movement ties in aspects of all the preceding movements and adds some new musical ideas. For example, the introduction and the *vivo* section are based on the Sultan's theme, there is a repeat of the main Scheherazade violin theme, and a repeat of the fanfare motif, to suggest a shipwreck. In the calm ending, the two main themes – that of the Sultan and Scheherazade – reach a harmonious conclusion.

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## Mosman Symphony Orchestra

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### Andrew Del Riccio – Musical Director

Andrew Del Riccio holds degrees in performance from the NSW State Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney, in conducting from the University of British Columbia and education from the University of Western Sydney. He has studied at the *Schola Canorum Basiliensis* in Switzerland and the Boston Conservatory, conducting master courses in the Czech Republic and in London. While completing a Masters in Opera Conducting in Canada, Andrew conducted many performances, including two seasons of *Hansel und Gretel*, and seasons of *La Finta Giardinera*, *Turandot* 127 (world premiere at Summerstock Festival), *L'histoire du Soldat*, *The Medium*, numerous premieres of student works, new music reading workshops, and student ensembles for recitals and juries.

In Australia, Andrew's conducting interests have led to the formation of ensembles including the St Peters Chamber Orchestra and The Unexpected Orchestra. He has been Musical Director of the Mosman Symphony Orchestra since 1999, conducting world premieres of works by Michiel Irik and Mathew Chilmaid with them. He has also worked with the Lane Cove Youth Symphony, North Sydney, Strathfield and Sydney University Symphony Orchestras and conducted concerts as an assistant conductor with the Willoughby Symphony Orchestra.

Andrew currently teaches music at Trinity Grammar School and also has a busy private teaching practice.

### Anny Bing Xia – Concertmaster



Anny Bing Xia is a highly experienced professional violinist with an impressive record of achievements in China and Australia. After graduate studies in Shanghai Conservatorium of Music, Anny pursued the Master of Performance in Music and moved to Sydney from 1998. She was first taught by Peter Zhang, continued her studies with Alice Waten and completed her post graduate studies under Charmian Gadd at Australian Institute of Music.

Anny is actively involved as a performer with the Australia Opera and Ballet Orchestra, Australia Violin Ensemble and WIN Wollongong Symphony Orchestra (WWSO). She has recorded for ABC radio, TV shows and done solo performance recordings for the Australian Fox Studio.

As a student, Anny won numerous awards and has performed as a soloist internationally, as well as recent tour of China with Russian pianist Konstantin Shamray (a winner of the Sydney International Piano Competition) that was highly successful. She has received critical acclaim for her performance of works by Mozart, Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Beethoven, Schubert and Debussy as well as special praise for her playing of the famous Chinese traditional piece "*Butterfly Lovers*", described as '[the] sweet, soft tones of her violin sound which brings out our inner-most poetic yearnings'.

## Orchestra Musicians

**First Violin:** Anny Bing Xia (concertmaster)\*, Lucia Caparelli, Julian Dresser, Armine Gargrytsyan, Nicole Gillespie, Annika Herbert, Johnny Lim, Beres Lindsay, Sarah Sellars

**Second Violin:** Emily Jones (leader), Shari Amery, Lucy Braude, Kiri Johnston, Daniel McNamara, Nicole McVicar, Meryl Rahme, Esther Rand, Kate Robertson, Bridget Wilcken

**Viola:** Neil Thompson (leader), Mark Berriman, Bob Clampett, Daniel Morris, Brett Richards, Hannah Shephard

**Cello:** Michal Wieczorek (leader), Scarlett Gu, Mariko Kodera, Yvette Leonard, Ian Macourt, Karly Melas

**Double Bass:** Clare Cory, Jonathan Gamra, Moya Molloy, Vitaly Rayitsyn, James Zhang

**Flute:** Linda Entwistle, Jacqueline Kent, Carolyn Thornely

**Piccolo:** Linda Entwistle

**Oboe:** Kim d'Espiney, Cate Trebeck

**Clarinet:** Judy Hart, Allan Kirk

**Bassoon:** Bob Chen, Graham Cormack

**French Horn:** Stefan Grant, Chika Migitaka, Hiroaki Migitaka, Chie Yamaguchi

**Trumpet:** Benjamin Blunt, James Blunt

**Trombone:** Greg Hanna, Jayson McBride, Lauren Smith

**Tuba:** Greg Moloney

**Percussion:** Lisa Beins, Dorothy-Jane Daniels, Stuart Hill, Rufina Ismail, Robert Oetomo, Laura MacDonald

**Harp:** Georgia Lowe

*\*Chair of Concertmaster in memory of Carolyn Clampett*

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# Mosman Symphony Orchestra 2015 Concert Dates

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***Thank you for your company today. We hope to see you again at some of our concerts scheduled over the rest of the year\*.***

## **Concert 2**

**June 19 and 21** – All Beethoven Concert, featuring the wonderful Gregory Kinda at the piano.

## **Concert 3**

**August 28 and 30** – Mozart, Mayuzumi and Dvorak. Nicola Lee – xylophone

## **Concert 4**

**November 13 and 15** – Brahms & Tchaikovsky. Chris Kinda – violin

***If you would like to receive information about our concerts by email please contact us at [publicity@mosmanorchestra.org.au](mailto:publicity@mosmanorchestra.org.au) and we will be happy to add you to our mailing list.***

\* Program details are subject to change.



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