

December 2024 Newsletter of the



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[www.orpheusstrings.org](http://www.orpheusstrings.org)

The Orpheus Strings Orchestra performs at the *Pat Heffernan* Hall of Katoomba Public School, Merriwa Street, Katoomba. Admission at the door is \$20 full, \$15 pensioners (does not apply to Seniors Card holders), children free with supervising adult. All concerts commence at 3:00pm. Admission price includes afternoon tea.



**SUNDAY 8th December at 3:00pm**

Audience members are invited to remain after the concert for our end-of-year festivities. There will be a short interval but without refreshments during the concert.

### **Program**

**Ralph VAUGHAN WILLIAMS** (1872-1958): The **Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus** was commissioned by the British Council for the 1939 Worlds Fair in New York City. It was premiered at Carnegie Hall in that year with Sir Adrian Boult conducting. The title comes from the English folk song based on the parable told in chapter 16 of Luke's gospel. Vaughan Williams had already used the tune for his hymn, *Kingsford*, his version of the text, *I heard the voice of Jesus say*. The composition for harp and string orchestra has six movements with the first movement setting the theme. At the Orpheus performance, the harp will be replaced by piano, played by Noortje Tromp.

**Edvard GRIEG** (1843-1907): The **Holberg Suite (In Holberg's Time) Opus 40** was Grieg's contribution to the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1884, of the birth of the Norwegian author and playwright, Ludwig Holberg (1684-1754.) Grieg and Holberg were born in Bergen, Norway. Originally a piano piece, the work is made up of five 18<sup>th</sup> century dance movements; Praeludium, Saraband, Gavotte, Air and Rigaudon. The beautiful air is sometimes performed and broadcast separately. The Rigaudon, featuring solo violin, viola and orchestra, brings the work to a lively conclusion. Grieg arranged the suite for string orchestra in 1885, adapting formal principles of composition from an earlier period to create this charming, popular composition.

**Giacomo PUCCINI** (1858-1924): In a letter to his brother, Puccini stated that he had quickly composed his elegy, **Crisantemi for string orchestra** (The Chrysanthemums) in one night, in memory of his friend, Amadeo di Savoia, Duke of Aosta, King of Spain, who died suddenly in 1890 at the age of 44. The chrysanthemum in Europe represents heroism, loyalty and mourning. The work is the epitome of romanticism with expressive rubato, dynamic subtleties and luscious melodies. Puccini later used parts of the composition as themes in his opera, *Manon Lescaut*.

**Jeremy SOULE** (1975): USA composer, Jeremy Soule writes mainly for film and television (including Harry Potter films) and has music for over 60 video games in his catalogue. **Dragonborn Skyrim** is the theme for the soundtrack of the 2011 video game, *The Elder Scrolls V Skyrim*. This short composition has Nordic influences and is in classical style. *Dragonborn* has been lauded by critics and audiences alike and appears regularly in world-wide concert repertoire.

**W.A. MOZART** (1756-1791) and **Peter SCHICKELE** (1936-2024): USA composer and musician, Peter Schickele, had a successful career satirising music under the name of fictional composer, P.D.Q BACH (the 21<sup>st</sup> of Bach's 20 children.) Among his many decomposed works are *Fanfare for the Common Cold* and *Missa Hilarious*. His **Eine Kleine Nichtmusik** (aka *A Little Nightmare Music*) was premiered at Carnegie Hall on 27 December 1982. In the words of P.D.Q. Bach, it is “based on a dream I had on December 4, 1791... the night that Mozart died and Antonio Salieri didn't.” Schickele's original work was for full orchestra. Orpheus will play his shorter arrangement for strings. Expect to hear weavings of songs like *Scotland the Brave* throughout.

*Colin Semmler and Julie Cooney*



## 2025 Concert Dates

March 23, June 22, September 19, December 7

