

Queensland Symphony Orchestra in partnership
with Brisbane City Council presents



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Organ Spectacular

Midweek Masterworks Series

11AM, WEDNESDAY APRIL 14

QPAC Concert Hall

Conductor	Eivind Aadland
Soloist	Christopher Wrench, Organ
Poulenc	Organ Concerto
Sibelius	Symphony No. 2

Concert Hall Etiquette

To ensure an enjoyable concert experience for all, please remember to turn off your mobile phone (and other electronic devices) before entering the concert hall. If you need to cough or sneeze, please muffle the sound with a handkerchief or scarf, or excuse yourself from the auditorium to recover. Thank you, and enjoy the performance.

About the Artists



Eivind Aadland – Conductor

Eivind Aadland is Chief Conductor and Artistic Leader of the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra and one of Norway's most respected conductors. A student of Jorma Panula, he was encouraged by Mariss Jansons to pursue his conducting career.

He maintains regular relationships with the Oslo Philharmonic, WDR Cologne and the Orchestre National de Belgique alongside successful appearances with Orchestre du Capitole de Toulouse, the Swedish Radio, Gothenburg and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras and the Bergen Philharmonic.

Future projects include his debuts with Rotterdam Philharmonic, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin and K.B.S. Seoul and return engagements with Oslo Philharmonic,

Stavanger Symphony, Orchestre National de Belgique and WDR Cologne. This summer he will take the Trondheim Symphony to the Bergen Festival and on tour to China including concerts at the Shanghai Expo.

Mr Aadland has appeared at Den Norske Opera in Oslo where has conducted successful productions of *Don Giovanni*, *Le nozze di Figaro*, *Die Zauberflöte* and *Die Fledermaus*.

Mr. Aadland's prolific recording output encompasses a diverse range of repertoire and he is a champion of Norwegian and Swedish composers. He has recorded for BIS, Simax, CPO Records, Hyperion and Koch amongst others.



Christopher Wrench – Organ

Australian organist Christopher Wrench is a distinguished graduate of the Queensland and Vienna Conservatoria, and the Vienna University of Music. International acclaim followed prizewinning performances at international competitions in Melbourne (1st Prize, 1995), Odense, Denmark (1st Prize, 1992), St Albans, England (Audience Prize, 1989) and Dublin.

Annual concert tours have taken Christopher Wrench to Austria (incl. St Stephen's Cathedral), Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, England (incl. Westminster Abbey and King's College Cambridge), Germany, Hong Kong, Italy and Sweden. He performs regularly in major Australian venues and festivals, and has appeared as soloist with the *Australian Chamber Orchestra*, the *Adelaide Chamber Orchestra*, *The Queensland Orchestra*, the *Queensland*

Youth Symphony Orchestra and the *Camerata of St John's*. His performances are broadcast regularly throughout Australia on ABC Classic FM and MBS networks.

Christopher Wrench commands a broad solo repertoire including the complete organ works of Bach (performed 2000), Buxtehude, Duruflé (performed 2002), Franck, Hindemith and Mendelssohn (performed 2009); whilst also working as a liturgical musician, pedagogue, and chamber player. He directs the music programme at St Mary's Anglican Church, Kangaroo Point (Brisbane) and teaches organ at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University. In 2008 he was awarded the Lord Mayor's Australia Day Cultural Award for his outstanding contribution to the musical life of Brisbane. Wrench's recording of J.S.Bach's *Six Organ Sonatas* at the Garrison Church in Copenhagen was released by Melba Recordings in August 2009.

About the Repertoire

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Concerto in G minor for organ, strings and timpani

Christopher Wrench organ

Jean Sibelius (1865-1957)

Symphony No.2 in D, Op.43

Allegretto

Tempo andante

Vivacissimo –

Allegro moderato

Concertos for organ and orchestra have usually been written for performance in the concert hall rather than the church. The most famous are those of Handel, which originated as part of his oratorio performances. **Poulenc's** concerto, one of a number of organ concertos composed in the 20th century, and certainly the most often played, is unusual in being written by a composer who was not known as an organist.

Composed in 1938, it was dedicated to the great patron of the arts, the Princesse Edmond de Polignac (born Winnaretta Singer). This highly musical lady had an organ in her Paris town house, which she played herself, and that is where Poulenc's concerto was first performed. The soloist was Maurice Duruflé, a notable composer in his own right, who advised Poulenc on registration.

The concerto reflects very clearly the two sides of Poulenc's musical personality: on the one hand, the charm, wit, and desire to amuse and astonish, on the other the deep seriousness of religious feeling, and an admiration for the

music of Bach. The very opening, for example, parodies the opening of Bach's G minor Fantasia for organ. On the whole, the 'street urchin', irreverent side of Poulenc predominates in the organ concerto, with not a little debt to Stravinsky in its neo-Baroque style. The accompaniment is scored for strings and kettledrums only, probably because the organ can supply the sustained tones of wind instruments from its own resources, and what is more, as Stravinsky once observed, it never has to breathe! The concerto falls into seven short sections, played as one continuous movement.

David Garrett © 1993

Sibelius came relatively late to writing symphonies, producing his First at the age of 33 and premiering it in 1899. He had accrued considerable experience in writing for orchestra, however. The 1890s saw the composition of works like *Kullervo*, *En saga*, movements which later became the *Karelia* suite and the original version of the *Lemminkäinen Suite*, which depicts heroic tales from the Finnish mythological cycle, the *Kalevala*.

What all these works have in common is their preoccupation with the myths and legends of Finland, which remained until 1917 a satellite of Imperial Russia. As a member of the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland, Sibelius hadn't given much thought to the traditional mythology of the Finns until his engagement in 1890 to Aino Järnefelt, whose family were very pro-Finnish. At the time he was studying in Vienna, where the music of Anton Bruckner made a deep impact on him. While Sibelius' enthusiasm for Bruckner cooled over the years, the influence of the Austrian composer – particularly his ability to structure large-scale symphonic movements – remained crucial.

Sibelius' nationalist music was related to a growing political consciousness: by 1899 the Russians were actively discriminating against Finns and suppressing their language. Sibelius' enterprise in the 1890s, then, was to create a Finnish musical language out of the drama of its legends, the typical modal patterns of its folksong and the rhythmic imprint of its

verse, and to blend these elements with the contemporary idioms of Bruckner, Liszt and Tchaikovsky.

Sibelius always denied that the Second Symphony, which appeared in 1902, had any extra-musical significance, but commentators – particularly in Finland – have often argued for its having an implicit program of national liberation. The audiences at its premiere performances certainly thought so: the composer was acclaimed as a national hero.

Its first movement seems to evoke the pastoral landscapes of Finland, shot through with a sense of incipient grief. During its course the symphony passes through often fragmentary stages of deep melancholy and conflict before emerging in the final movement with one of Sibelius' most stirring and memorable tunes.

In fact, Sibelius began writing music which ended up in the symphony while holidaying in Italy. From his correspondence we know he was contemplating at least two projects: a set of tone-poems called *Festivals* and a single-movement work – inspired perhaps by Richard Strauss – on the story of *Don Juan*. Out of the sketches for these works, Sibelius fashioned some of his most memorable gestures: the sinister opening of the second movement, with its soft pizzicato opening, horn calls and bassoon solo, was originally to have evoked the figure of Death arriving at Don Juan's castle.

The work may be a document of national liberation, but it is also about the process of unifying and reconciling diverse, often fragmentary, musical gestures, so that the expansive melody of the finale seems the inevitable outcome of all that went before. Five years later, Sibelius would have his meeting with Mahler where he advocated a 'severity of style and the profound logic that creates an inner connection between all the motifs'. Mahler's response, 'No, the symphony must be like the world and embrace everything,' missed the point. In their different ways, they were saying the same thing.

Gordon Kerry © 2003



Poulenc



Sibelius