

# media release

## Monday 5 June 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



TASMANIAN  
SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

### FATHER AND SON TEAM PERFORM ALL FOUR PIANO CONCERTOS BY SERGEI RACHMANINOV



In what can only be described as a mammoth undertaking, pianist Howard Shelley will perform the complete piano concertos of Sergei Rachmaninov under the baton of his son, conductor Alexander Shelley, with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra in two landmark concerts in Hobart on 13 and 15 July.

Rachmaninov's piano concertos are among the most challenging pieces of music in the entire repertoire, with most pianists performing no more than a single concerto in any one concert, such are their physical and intellectual demands.

But in his forthcoming concerts with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Howard Shelley will perform Piano Concertos 1 and 2 in the first concert and Piano Concertos 3 and 4 in the second. He'll take a well-earned rest day in between.

Audiences, in other words, will have the unique opportunity to hear all four piano concertos by Rachmaninov in the space of only a few days.

Audiences will also have the rare opportunity to hear Rachmaninov's best known concertos – Nos 2 and 3 – alongside Nos 1 and 4, which are rarely heard and little known. The Concerto No 1 was written as a graduating piece from the Moscow Conservatory and the Concerto No 4 went through a number of revisions before it reached its final form in 1941. Given the tremendous popularity of Concertos 2 and 3 (both of which feature in the Classic FM Concerto Top 10, and the Concerto No 3 reached a wide audience through the movie *Shine*),

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it is surprising how little known Concertos 1 and 4 are. These concerts will provide a fresh context for these undiscovered gems.

Howard Shelley has a special affinity with the music of Rachmaninov and the unusual distinction of having recorded every note of his piano music – all four piano concertos and the complete music for solo piano.

Howard also has a special affinity with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, having appeared with the TSO on a regular basis, almost every year, since 1985. Additionally, he has made many recordings with the TSO, including 15 in the acclaimed *Romantic Piano Concerto Series* on the British record label Hyperion.

Howard's son, conductor Alexander Shelley, is also no stranger to Tasmania and the TSO, having visited the island state throughout his childhood and first appeared as conductor with the TSO in 2009.

Alexander first gained attention when he won the prestigious Leeds Conductors Competition in 2005. He subsequently became Chief Conductor of the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra and is currently Music Director of the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa, Canada. He is also Principal Associate Conductor of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London.

Of the forthcoming concerts, Howard Shelley has said: "I love Rachmaninov, I love Tasmania and the TSO, and of course I love my son, so I cannot imagine a more thrilling and satisfying project than performing these sensational works in Federation Concert Hall, a home away from home."

Audiences are in for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to hear these beautiful, stirring and brilliant works with this unique father and son team and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

## **RACHMANINOV PIANO CONCERTOS**

### **Concertos 1 & 2**

THURSDAY 13 July 7.30pm

Federation Concert Hall, Hobart

**Alexander Shelley** conductor

**Howard Shelley** piano

**Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra**

### **Concertos 3 & 4**

SATURDAY 15 July 7.30pm

Federation Concert Hall, Hobart

**Alexander Shelley** conductor

**Howard Shelley** piano

**Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra**

Tickets from \$32 at 1800 001 190 and [www.tso.com.au](http://www.tso.com.au)

## IN CONVERSATION WITH HOWARD AND ALEXANDER SHELLEY

Hosted by ABC Classic FM's Christopher Lawrence.

FRIDAY 14 July 6.00pm

TSO Studio

**Tickets \$50.00**

**TSO Subscribers receive 10% Discount**

Join father and son team, Howard and Alexander Shelley, as they discuss Rachmaninov's Piano Concertos and much else besides with Christopher Lawrence.

With a lifetime's experience of performing and recording the concertos of Rachmaninov, **Howard Shelley** is attuned to the fervour, muscularity and brilliance of this most pianistic of composers. No stranger to playing the Rachmaninov concertos as a cycle, Howard nonetheless has never performed them complete with his son, Alexander, as conductor.

Since winning the Leeds Conductors Competition in 2005, **Alexander Shelley** has been a maestro in demand and currently holds leading positions in Europe and North America, including Music Director of Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra.

*"I love Rachmaninov, I love Tasmania and the TSO, and of course I love my son, so I cannot imagine a more thrilling and satisfying project than performing these sensational works in Federation Concert Hall, a home away from home."*

Howard Shelley

TSO tickets available [www.tso.com.au](http://www.tso.com.au) or 1800 001 190.

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