

Precis

BRUCH VIOLIN CONCERTO

Friday 11 March, 7.30pm, Federation Concert Hall, Hobart

Eivind Aadland conductor

Emma McGrath violin

Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

HARRISON Hi-Vis (9')

BRUCH Violin Concerto No 1 in G minor, Op 26 (25')

Vorspiel (Allegro moderato) -

Adagio

Finale (Allegro energico)

INTERVAL (20')

DVOŘÁK Symphony No 8 in G, Op 88 (36')

Allegro con brio

Adagio

Allegretto grazioso

Allegro ma non troppo

Holly Harrison (born 1988) is one of the freshest names in Australian music. Currently composer in residence with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, she has had works performed throughout Australia as well as Asia, Europe and the United States. She describes Hi-Vis, which receives its world première in this concert, as follows:

Hi-Vis was inspired by night roadworks. For the majority of 2020 (and beyond!), major roadworks took place outside my western Sydney home from 9pm to 4am each night: flickering lights, continuous drilling, humming, reversing, beeping, and grinding. Yet, amid lockdown times, I found the rhythms of machinery strangely comforting and exciting, and a gentle reminder of the existence of other people! Hi-Vis is a musical reimagining of these sights and sounds, but also a celebration of all things hi-vis, musical and otherwise. Think fluorescent, luminescent and neon colours, LED traffic batons and, of course, workers in hi-vis vests. I began to imagine what road workers might be listening to, and how the contrast between the strobing lights and dark sky conjured up an almost nightclub-like environment. The piece loosely draws on 'hi-vis' elements of electronic dance music, brass fanfares, boot-scooting, and disco, all filtered through the constant on-and-off of earmuffs.

You can be forgiven for imagining that 19th-century composers turned out one violin concerto apiece (Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky...) with Max Bruch (1838-1920) among their number. In fact, Bruch composed three concertos for violin and orchestra, but his Violin Concerto No 1 in G minor, which was premièred in 1868, far overshadowed his subsequent efforts. After the briefest of introductions, the solo instrument enters on its very lowest note, the G below middle C and, from there, rises ever so gently. But the mood quickly becomes tense and dramatic before giving way to a long and lyrical melody in the key of B flat. The opening movement leads without a break into the Adagio, the emotional heart of the concerto. Bruch summons Gypsy (or Romany) idioms in the finale, swapping the tender legato of the middle movement for fast, passionate and fiery playing, which becomes faster still in the brilliant closing moments.

The Symphony No 8 by Antonín Dvořák (1841-1904) exhibits the easy-going simplicity of the rural retreat south of Prague where it was composed, in late 1889. Flute melodies resemble birdsongs, rustic dances come and go and tunefulness prevails. The first movement echoes the bucolic world of Smetana's The Bartered Bride while the second ushers in some beautiful minor-key shadings before leading to a grand paragraph in C major. Lilted dance rhythms come to the fore in the third movement while the finale is built around a dignified theme introduced by the cellos. Dvořák ratchets up the tempo towards the end giving us a boisterous coda in the style of one of his Slavonic Dances.

Robert Gibson, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, © 2022

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HARRISON Hi-Vis

BRUCH Violin Concerto No 1 in G minor, Op 26

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DVOŘÁK Symphony No 8 in G, Op 88

Violin

Jennifer Owen *Concertmaster*
Peter Edwards *Associate Concertmaster*
Lucy Carrig-Jones *Principal Second*
Christopher Nicholas *Principal First*
Madeleine Boud
Miranda Carson
Yue-Hong Cha
Margaret Connolly
Frances Davies
Edwina George
Matthew Hassall
Michael Johnston
Christine Lawson
Elinor Lea
Susanna Low
Ambra Nesa
Rohana O'Malley
Hayato Simpson

Viola

Sally Boud #
Douglas Coghill
Henry Justo
Anna Larsen Roach
Rodney McDonald
William Newbery

Cello

Ivan James #
David Moran
Martin Penicka
Sophie Radke
Eliza Sdraulig

Double Bass

Stuart Thomson *
Aurora Henrich
Matthew McGrath
Oliver Simpson

Flute

Douglas Mackie *
Lloyd Hudson *Piccolo*

Oboe

Eve Newsome #
Dinah Woods *Cor Anglais*

Clarinet

Andrew Seymour *
Eloise Fisher *Bass Clarinet*

Bassoon

Tahnee van Herk *
Simone Walters *Contrabassoon*

French Horn

Greg Stephens *
Philip Paine #
Jules Evans
Roger Jackson
Wendy Page

Trumpet

Yoram Levy *
Mark Bain

Trombone

David Robins *
Jackson Bankovic

Bass Trombone

Mitchell Nissen*

Tuba

Tim Jones *

Timpani

Matthew Goddard *

Percussion

Gary Wain *
Stephen Marskell

Harp

Meriel Owen #

* principal player

guest principal

