

# Slavonic Swoon

6pm Sunday, October 19, 2008  
Riverway Arts Centre

## *Barrier Reef Orchestra*

**Smetana: Vltava/Moldau**  
**Dvorak: Symphony No.7**  
**Martinu: Oboe Concerto**

*Conductor*

**Richard McIntyre OAM**



*Featuring oboist*

**Megan Billing**

*(Canberra School of Music,  
TSO guest principal oboe)*

## Program

### 1. Smetana: *Vltava/Moldau*



**Bedřich Smetana** was a Czech composer (2/3/1824 – 12/5/1884) best known for his symphonic poem *Vltava*, (*Moldau* in German) the second in a cycle of six symphonic poems entitled *Má Vlast* (*My Country*), and for his opera *The Bartered Bride*.

Smetana showed prodigious talent in piano and composition from an early age. At 19 he went to Prague and studied composition and began his career in music. In 1848 he was caught up in the revolutionary times and left Prague to live in Sweden. Returning in 1863, he opened a new school of music dedicated to promoting specifically Czech music but struggled for years through great personal tragedy, ill-health and under-appreciation in his homeland. By 1874 he had become almost totally deaf, with the added burden of severe tinnitus (continual ringing in the ears) but continued to compose; *Má Vlast* was written during this

time.

Smetana's work influenced many Czech composers including Antonín Dvořák, and he is seen as the founder of Czech music and a National Hero. He continues to inspire musicians today.

*Vltava* (1874) is the second symphonic poem in *Má Vlast*, and is a musical depiction of the Vltava River as it flows through Bohemia. After rising in the forest where hunting sounds are heard, the stream flows through countryside past a lively farm wedding. Nymphs dance in the moonlight by the mature river which then tumbles over rapids before reaching its full breadth and maturity flowing majestically through Prague before joining the river Elbe. It contains one of the most recognised themes in popular classical music.

### 2. Martinu Oboe Concerto

**Bohuslav Martinů** (8/12/1890 – 28/8/1959) was a prolific Bohemian Czech composer, who wrote six symphonies, 15



operas, 14 ballet scores and a large body of orchestral, chamber, vocal and instrumental works. He became a violinist in the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, and taught music in his home town. In 1923 he left Czechoslovakia for Paris, and deliberately withdrew from the Romantic style in which he had been trained. In the following years he experimented widely with different styles including jazz idioms although he continued to use Czech folk melodies throughout compositions no matter their "style".

He emigrated to the United States in 1941, fleeing the German invasion of France. Despite the initial problems of most émigré artists he established himself as a successful composer receiving many commissions. Although homesick for Czechoslovakia, he spent his later years in Switzerland where he died

aged 69. Among his notable students were Alan Hovhaness and Burt Bacharach.

**Concerto for Oboe and Small Orchestra H353** was composed in Nice in April and May of 1955 for Jiri Tancibudek, a young Czech oboist just beginning his international career, who had settled in Australia. Tancibudek had greatly admired Martinů's work describing it as "sparkling, rhythmical vitality with lots of syncopations" and had asked Martinů to compose a work specifically for oboe. Tancibudek gave the world premiere performance at an ABC organised public subscription concert in Sydney with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, in August 1956. The Oboe Concerto is a delightful work with the piano prominent in the orchestration. **It is composed of three movements; Moderato, Poco Andante** (with a virtuoso passage allowing the soloist to demonstrate her skills) **and a final Poco Allegro** movement with polka-like overtones.

Since its premiere this piece has become a standard in the repertoire of oboists worldwide.

## Interval

### 3. Dvorak: Symphony No.7

**Antonín Dvořák** (8/9/1841-1/5/1904) learned violin, viola, piano and organ at school and was clearly destined for a career in music. He later studied in Prague and played viola in the Provisional Theatre Orchestra which gave him practical experience in performance and orchestral dynamics. The chief conductor of this orchestra was Bedřich



Smetana and Dvořák followed Smetana's example of national pride for the rest of his life. He travelled widely and launched new works in several countries before being appointed the Director of the National Conservatory of Music in New York City. He lived in USA for several years before family ties and finances influenced him to return home. Although he received many honours and awards throughout his life he remained a modest man of simple tastes who, like Smetana, was loyal to his Czech nationality.

**Symphony No. 7 in D minor Op. 70**, was first performed in London on April 22, 1885 shortly after the piece was completed. An emotionally turbulent work, it is considered the most typically romantic symphony Dvořák wrote. Although reminiscent of Brahms' Fourth Symphony, Dvořák was inspired by the political struggles of the Czech nation and resolved that his new symphony would reflect this struggle. Perhaps it also

reveals his personal struggle reconciling his simple and peaceful countryman's feelings with his intense patriotism and his wish to see the Czech nation flourish.

The piece contains intense calm and peace, but also includes turmoil and unsettled sequences. Dvořák said that the 4th movement suggested the capacity of the Czech people to display stubborn resistance to political oppressors. The first performance was at St James's Hall London, with Dvořák himself conducting and was a huge success. **The symphony is in four movements: Allegro maestoso, Poco Adagio, Scherzo and Finale.**

## Richard McIntyre; Conductor



Richard McIntyre sustains a long and distinguished career as bassoonist, music educator, conductor and arranger working at the ANU School of Music for over a quarter of a century. One of Australia's most respected and successful bassoon teachers he places great emphasis on establishing a one-to-one relationship, a thorough understanding of the instrument and its techniques, the specifics of musical fabric and effect, and various musical functions of the bassoon in various styles and repertoires. He has many successful students with full-time careers as professional musicians both within Australia and overseas, as members of prominent orchestras, free-lancers, specialists in historically-informed performance on period instruments, instrumental teachers, and members of the armed services.

A composition graduate from the University of Sydney Richard was for 10 years Associate Principal Bassoonist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra before moving to Canberra in 1978. He is a foundation member of the renowned wind quintet, the Canberra Wind Soloists (Australia's most long-lived professional chamber ensemble), with whom he has recorded CD's and toured extensively abroad. He has been Guest Principal and concerto soloist with the SSO and other Symphony Australia orchestras, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and has performed with the Australia Ensemble and numerous other prominent chamber groups. Richard has taught throughout Australia and Asia, and has included much work with Youth Music Australia over some 30 years. He has contributed significantly to the bassoon's pedagogic repertoire with numerous transcriptions and arrangements. His work as a youth orchestra conductor has yielded Canberran of the Year, Sounds Australian and Advance Australia awards; he was granted an Order of Australia Medal in 1992.

## Megan Billing: Soloist Oboe

Born in Korumburra, Victoria, Megan studied music from an early age, first with the flute, later taking up the oboe at age 14. In 1998, with the help of the Australian National Academy of Music, she began lessons with oboist Eve Newsome. Megan completed a bachelor of music at the Victorian College of the Arts in Melbourne, after which she undertook 2 years of study in Zurich, Switzerland, in the class of Professor Thomas Indermuhle.

Megan has played for many Australian ensembles including the Melbourne Symphony orchestra and Orchestra Victoria. She has appeared as guest principal oboist with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. Megan has also been a principal player of the Australian Youth Orchestra and a recipient of the Willem Van Otterloo travelling scholarship, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's Young Artists Award and an Australian Youth Orchestra opportunity grant.

Megan has a passion for education, and enjoys seeing the development of young up and coming oboe players. In 2006, She joined the teaching staff of the ANU. Megan is also the Acting Principal Oboe with the Canberra Symphony Orchestra and in July 2008 was a faculty member of the Sunwater and Stanhope Winter Music School in association with the Southern Cross Soloists.



## Brief history of the Czech Republic.

*The compositions you will hear tonight were composed by passionate musicians and the struggles of their countrymen and their love of country is displayed in their music.*

The Czechs are descended from ancient Slavic tribes and are related to both the Celts and Goths. These tribes have inhabited the regions of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia since the 6th century and this territory has changed hands many times.

From the 13th Century the Habsburg Monarchy was the major power in central Europe but many of the varied groups living under the Habsburg rule wanted autonomy. Both Czechs and Slovaks struggled against their powerful neighbours; the creation of Czechoslovakia in 1918 was the result of the long struggle of the Czechs against their Austrian rulers and the Slovaks against their Hungarian rulers, both groups had similar languages and despite cultural differences the Czechs and Slovaks shared similar aspirations for independence from the Habsburg state and voluntarily united.

From 1918 to 1938 saw democracy but the coming of WW2 resulted in the country being split in 4 with the Sudetenland (most of the German population was here) being annexed by Germany and other parts to Hungary, Poland and Slovakia. The Allied victory created a country governed by a coalition government with some Communist ministers playing leading roles. This lasted until 1948 when the Communists seized power to become a Communist country with a centrally planned economy (from 1960 onwards officially a Socialist Republic, part of the Eastern Bloc). In 1968, in response to a brief period of liberalization (the 'Prague Spring'), Czechoslovakia was invaded by Eastern bloc forces under the influence of the Soviet Union. Soviet leader Brezhnev stating ; *"When forces that are hostile to socialism try to turn the development of some socialist country towards capitalism, it becomes not only a problem of the country concerned, but a common problem and concern of all socialist countries."* The "Federal" republic consisting of the Czech Socialist Republic and the Slovak Socialist Republic lasted until 1989 when the country became democratic again through the peaceful 'Velvet Revolution'. This occurred at around the same time as the fall of communism in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland and within three years communist rule was eradicated from Europe.

On 1 January 1993, the Czech Republic and the Republic of Slovakia were simultaneously and peacefully founded.



# *Barrier Reef Orchestra*

**Patron** — Her Excellency, the Governor of Queensland, **Penny Wensley**

**Founding Patron** – Professor John Hopkins OBE

**Honorary Artistic Advisors** -Richard McIntyre OAM and Sean O'Boyle

**Orchestra Manager** — **Una Flavelle**

**Rehearsal Conductors** — **Donna McMahon**

<b>Flute</b> Megan Franklin* Caradoc Jones# Phoebe Li	Ben Fixter*# Peter Christensen	Debbie Bowden Hanya Kaminska Jasmine Martin Daria Romanik Amanda Tapiolas	Ashleigh Rowbottom Wade Tattersall Kristie Theodore Carla Trott Rike Wolf
<b>Clarinet</b> Jacinta Grace* Justin Thamboo Josephine Pearson	<b>Trombone</b> Michael Henderson# Julie Bingley Daniel Blackmore~	<b>Violin 2</b> Susan Fraser* Karin Croft Louise de Jersey Donna Gandini Alex Gorton Amber Jones Mary Paola Suva Leitch Anna Skillington	<b>Bass</b> Jessica Balanzategui* Phil Honey Stephen Kluver Katryn Strong
<b>Oboe</b> Danny Cocks* Bernard Girard~	<b>Tuba</b> Rob Jones		
<b>Bassoon</b> Stephen Draper* George Kutash	<b>Tympani</b> James McNicol* Luke Gallagher		
<b>Horns</b> Suzanne Darrigan* Brendan Orchard Kieri Darrigan Ashley Skyring+	<b>Percussion</b> Elle Graham	<b>Viola</b> Caroline Lloyd-Doolan* Ben Moh Jan Stuart-Street	* denotes section leader # denotes 1RAR + from Bowen ~ from Brisbane
<b>Trumpet</b>	<b>Piano/Keyboard</b> Justin Thamboo* Julie Bowden	<b>Cello</b> Una Flavelle* Lachlan Johnson	
	<b>Violin 1</b> Stephen Frewen Lord*		

The Barrier Reef Orchestra would like to thank the **Soroptimists International Inc Townsville-Focus After Five Club** for their excellent support helping to sponsor **Megan Billing**, (see their website below for information on their important projects).

Thanks are also due to **Pimlico State High School** for the rehearsal venue, to our stalwart rehearsal conductor, **Donna McMahon** and as always the **staff at Riverway Arts Centre** for their encouragement and assistance and **Townsville City Council** for continued support. Thanks are also due to **Graham Wheeler** for his assistance and **Councillor Jenny Lane** for her encouragement.

Of course concerts don't just 'happen' so thank-you to the hard-working **committee** for their continued commitment.

**The Barrier Reef Orchestra welcomes new players and general members.**  
**If you would like to sponsor the orchestra please contact us on:**

**NQ Ensembles Inc.**



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