

**AYO** Auckland  
Youth  
Orchestra

# *New World Symphony*

**Concert Series  
May 2015**

[ayo.org.nz](http://ayo.org.nz)

**Auckland Youth Orchestra**  
*presents*

# **NEW WORLD SYMPHONY**

## **PERFORMANCES**

Howick, All Saints Church, 9 May 7pm  
Whangarei, Forum North, 16 May 7.30pm  
Whangaparaoa College, 17 May 4.00pm  
Auckland Town Hall, 23 May 7.30pm

## **PROGRAMME**

Alexander Borodin  
*Polovtsian Dances*

Dmitri Shostakovich  
*Cello Concerto No. 1 in E flat major, Op. 107*

INTERVAL (20 minutes)

Antonín Dvořák  
*Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95 'From the New World'*

Antun Poljanich | Conductor  
Jacky Siu | Cello Soloist

**This concert is free to the Auckland public thanks to the  
generous support of the Wallace Foundation**



**THE WALLACE  
FOUNDATION**

## **ANTUN POLJANICH**

### **MUSIC DIRECTOR**

Born in Croatia, Antun studied piano and theory at Dubrovnik School for Musical Education then studied conducting at the University of Ljubljana. Following post-graduate studies in Austria, he won a scholarship which took him to Leningrad for a three-year Master Course in Conducting at the Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory. He then worked with the Leningrad State Symphony Orchestra, the Veneto Philharmonia, the Slovene and Croatian National Orchestras and other prominent orchestras in Russia and Europe. Antun is the orchestra's fourth Musical Director.



## **JACKY SIU**

### **SOLOIST**

Since the age of five Jacky has explored a variety of instruments and genres. By age 13, he received his DipABRSM for cello and later his LTCL performance diploma with distinction. During his time at Westlake Boys High School, Jacky was an active pianist and oboe player, learning from Dr Anita Geertsema and Alison Jepson. He received ATCL performance diplomas in both instruments with distinction.

Jacky received the Sir Edmund Hillary Scholarship at the University of Waikato where he began tertiary studies at age 16 with James Tennant. Jacky is a founding member of his cello quartet QUATTRO, which won the Royal Overseas League Chamber Music Scholarship in 2014. This prize includes a fully funded trip to the UK, concert tours, lessons, an international summer school and a cash award.



# PROGRAMME NOTES

**Alexander Borodin (1833-1887)**

## ***Polovtsian Dances***

Borodin was the illegitimate son of an elderly prince and his beautiful young twenty-four year old mistress. As was usual in such cases the baby was given the name of one of the prince's serfs, Porfiry Borodin. He was raised and educated by his mother and her female friends and relatives, and this may have been the basis for his passionate advocacy of women's rights, leading him in later life to found a school of medicine for women. His early talent for music was matched by an equal love of science, and in 1850 he enrolled at the Medico-Surgical Academy, continuing his musical studies in what time he could spare from his scientific work.

He went on to have a very distinguished career as a research chemist, becoming a professor of the Academy in 1862, when he was 29. In the same year he fell in love with a brilliant young concert pianist, whom he later married, and wrote for her a piano quintet, the success of which brought him to the attention of Balakirev.

Balakirev was the founder of a group of likeminded composers, intent on founding a national school of Russian music. The members of this group, known as the 'Mighty Handful' or the 'Five' were Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Mussorgsky, Borodin and Cui. All of these composers were of course amateurs, as there was no system of support, or even training, for professional composers in Russia at that time. However, learning from each other and providing mutual encouragement and support, they succeeded, against all the odds, in achieving their goal and in creating works still recognised internationally.

Because of the demands of his medical scientific career Borodin had very little time to devote to composition, and each of his major works took him years to complete. He worked on his opera *Prince Igor* for almost 18 years, leaving it unfinished at his death. The subject of the opera is the invasion of Russia by barbaric nomadic tribes, the Polovtsians, and the Polovtsian Dances were the first part of the opera to be composed. They were orchestrated in one evening by Borodin, helped by Rimsky-Korsakov and Lyadov and introduced to the western world by Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes. They have remained enormously popular ever since.

At the age of 53, worn out by hard work and ill health (he had suffered from heart problems for some years, and had also survived cholera) he died suddenly of a massive heart attack, while dressed in national costume at a fancy dress ball.

## **Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)**

### ***Cello Concerto No 1 in E flat major, Op. 107***

I Allegretto II Moderato III Cadenza-Attacca IV Allegro con moto

It is hard to imagine how Shostakovich must have felt on the death of Stalin in 1953. Against all the odds, having seen so many of his friends and colleagues liquidated over the years, he had somehow survived. He was gradually able to bring out of his drawer, and into the light of day, many of his most personal compositions, which he had hidden for fear of the criticism that could have drawn Stalin's attention to him, with possibly fatal consequences.

Many of his works, like Alban Berg's, contain secret messages or codes, and this certainly applies to the first cello concerto which he wrote, and dedicated to his friend Rostropovich in 1959. Shostakovich often used the motif D-Eb-C-B, which in German terminology reads as D SCH, as a symbol representing himself. An inverted form of this motif runs throughout the concerto. The first movement, which is obsessively built around this motif, has a desperate driving feel to it throughout. The beautiful and tragic second movement comes as a relief from this almost manic energy, with some delicate passages where the cello, playing harmonics, is accompanied by the celeste. This is followed without a break by a cadenza of formidable difficulty which becomes a movement in itself, before launching into the finale, where the first theme is a distorted form of one of Stalin's favourite songs. However the Shostakovich theme again returns to end the work in triumph.

It is generally recognized that this concerto is one of the most difficult works for cello and orchestra ever written, demanding a huge level of concentration and great physical energy, the last three movements being played without a break.

## **Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904)**

### ***Symphony No. 9 in E minor, Op. 95, 'From the New World'***

I Adagio-Allegro molto II Largo III Scherzo molto vivace IV Allegro con fuoco

At the end of the nineteenth century, the music created by European composers was appreciated and revered to an extent unimaginable today. Throughout the latter part of that century composers had incorporated the folk music of their countries into the classical forms inherited from their predecessors to create national schools of composition which found an enthusiastic following from music lovers everywhere their music was performed.

At that time the great schism between popular ‘commercial’ music and serious ‘art’ music did not exist in the way it does today. When Dvorak’s Slavonic dances were first published, there were queues at music shops as people rushed to obtain them, to play at home. It was natural that European Americans, who had established orchestras and opera companies in their new homeland, would envisage a national American school of composition arising, which would use the folk music of the native people of America in the same way to create great works to rival those of the ‘old world’ they had left behind.

The formation of the National Conservatory of Music of America in 1892 was an example of this aspiration. Its policy of accepting applicants on the basis of talent alone, including women and black people, was radical at that time. Dvorak, who had risen from a very humble background himself, was invited to be its first director. He embraced the concept wholeheartedly, and made a careful study of the music of Native American people, and that of Black Americans, particularly ‘negro spirituals’, which he found to be both beautiful and moving - the famous and hauntingly beautiful theme of the slow movement of his symphony ‘From The New World’ (played by the cor anglais, the alto oboe of the orchestra) bears a passing resemblance to the well-known spiritual ‘Swing Low, Sweet Chariot’.

The works which Dvorak wrote during his time in America proved to be among the most successful of his career. They include the famous ‘American’ string quartet, the cello concerto, and of course the Symphony ‘From the New World’, which was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and given its premiere performance in 1893 at Carnegie Hall. The reception by the audience was rapturous, each movement being met by prolonged applause. It was immediately taken up by orchestras everywhere and became, and remains, one of the most popular and accessible symphonies of all time.

Programme notes by Alexander Cowdell, © 2015

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Thank you to all the teachers who have taught and guided our players as they have developed into the wonderful musicians that you see on the stage today. A special mention must be made of **James Tennant** from the University of Waikato who is the teacher of our soloist Jacky Siu.

Many thanks to Franco Viganoni, the owner and director of **Viganoni & Viganoni** as the official sound recorder of the Auckland Youth Orchestra.

# THE ORCHESTRA

## First Violin

‡Harris Leung  
#Jim Wu  
+Gwyneth Nelmes  
Nanae Saga  
Woojin Wang  
Pearl Hindley  
Gloria Tian  
Simon Tie  
Kenny Li  
Ji Reh Yoo  
Weihong Yi  
Kauri May  
Amy Maslen-Miller  
Sung Min Jun  
Ye Li  
Sofie Wigram  
Grace Nie  
Adrian Robb

## Second Violin

#Joseph Chen  
+Anne Yu  
Danny Kwok  
Patrick Hayes  
Adrian D'Souza  
Chloë Litchfield  
Jason Yeung  
Michelle Allbury  
Ka Hee Cook  
Catherine Allbury  
Jerry Liu  
Richard Paull

Genevieve Tang  
Eins Lee

## Viola

#Alex McFarlane  
+Anya Leenman  
Jamie Oemcke  
Grace Lam  
Brendon Fisher  
Dora Tsao

## Cello

#Cameron Stuart  
#Bleau Bustenera  
+Ilya Chataline  
Lucy McSweeney  
Gemma Henderson  
Ben Lin  
Sharon Hung  
Jacky Siu

## Double Bass

#Eric Scholes  
+Alex Verster  
Robbie Brown  
Phoebe Johnson

## Flute

#Mikee Bisquera  
#Eva Ding

## Piccolo

Eva Ding

## Oboe

#Noah Rudd  
#Josh Webster  
Elizabeth Lewis

## Cor Anglais

Noah Rudd  
Josh Webster

## Clarinet

#James Daniell  
Joshua White  
Jay Shen

## Bassoon

#Sasha Rasmussen  
+Charlotte Naden

## Contrabassoon

Charlotte Naden

## Celeste

Lachlan Grant

## Horn

#Anita Austin  
+Rebekah Gray  
Ellen Bingham  
Henry Close  
Rachel Childs

## Trumpet

#Nicholas Allan  
Benjamin Webster  
Michael Nihotte  
Caleb Probine

## Trombone

#Mark Bingham  
+Rachel Smith  
Daniel Nihotte  
Josh Zhong

## Tuba

#Lachlan Grant

## Timpani

#Laurence McFarlane  
Paul Robertson

## Percussion

# Paul Robertson  
+Tim Doyle

‡ Concertmaster

# Principal

# Co-Principal

+ Assistant Principal  
Guest Player

## GOVERNANCE

Dame Catherine Tizard, Patron

Michael McLellan, President • Margaret Leman, Vice-President

## Executive Committee

Alexander Cowdell, Chairman • Anne-Marie Forsyth, Secretary • Helen Lewis, Treasurer  
Antun Poljanich, Music Director • Anne Draffin, Artistic Facilitator • Cameron Stuart,  
Orchestra Manager • Player Representatives: Anya Leenman, Gemma Henderson, Lucy  
McSweeney • Co-Opted Members: Bleau Bustenera, Ben Lin



## ABOUT AYO

Founded in 1948, Auckland Youth Orchestra is the premier regional youth orchestra in New Zealand and was the first youth orchestra established in the Southern Hemisphere, designed to bridge the gap between school orchestras and adult professional groups.

We inspire young people to excel through their love of musical performance and provide them with a wide range of cultural experiences, thus shaping our leaders of tomorrow.

AYO is a healthy social experience for young people and makes an important contribution to the cultural life of Auckland and New Zealand. No other orchestral organisation or institution in New Zealand provides such a comprehensive programme to young musicians.

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**Join us:** We are always keen to hear from talented young musicians who want to join AYO. Contact us now at [auditions@ayo.org.nz](mailto:auditions@ayo.org.nz)

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