

Artistic Director's Report

The fatal heart attack suffered by the great genius Sviatoslav Richter on 1st August 1997 is a tragic loss to all who love music. The loss is irreplaceable and, respectfully, the Artists and Committee of the Eighth Sydney Spring dedicate the twelve concerts to his memory with love and respect. We will never forget him.

The Eighth Sydney Spring proudly presents seventy five works of which fifteen are world premieres and thirty four are first performances. Two thirds of the repertoire is *new* in the sense of *recent*, in addition to which the Renaissance Players will present *new* music from two centuries. The world premieres include works by Anne Boyd, the late Bill Coates, Tim Davies, James Dillon, Rolf Gehlhaar, Raymond Hanson, Moya Henderson, Matthew Hoare, Elena Kats-Chernin, Thomas Meadowcroft, Damien Ricketson, Ian Shanahan and Matthew Shlomowitz. Compositions by Australian composers, Benjamin Marks, Katia Tiutiunnik and Adam Yee will also be performed. In addition music by Abrahamsen, Berio, Debussy, Feldman, Ferneyhough, Ligeti, Masson, Schoenberg, Stefansson, Stravinsky, Sveinnsson and Webern will be presented and of course works by our three composers-in-residence Gilbert Amy from France, James Dillon from the UK and Rolf Gehlhaar from Germany.

The Spring welcomes them and six instrumental ensembles including **Libra** from Melbourne; **Sprung** a new percussion group from Sydney; the **Spring Quartet**; the **Spring Ensemble** and the **Renaissance Players** on the occasion of their 30th anniversary; the Brisbane musicians Nicholas Bochner, Kevin Power and Robert Curry from Perth. Sydney Spring has always embraced multiple art forms including dance, poetry, literature and film; this year it presents exhibitions devoted to Australia's musicians by the photographer Bridget Elliot and contemporary visual art by Australian artist Richard Dunn.

The Spring is proud to announce the inaugural **Sydney Spring Awards**, for an outstanding work and performance that merit special recognition. The Awards will be made at the conclusion of each Festival and this year will be presented after of the final concert on Sunday 21 September.

The Spring thanks ABC Classic FM for its generous coverage of this year's concerts (four of them will be broadcast *live*) and for its valuable contribution to the presentation of Australian Fine Music to its million-plus band of loyal enthusiasts Australia-wide. ABC Classic FM's continuing dedication to the Australian composer, performer and to music lovers throughout the land is impressive and deeply appreciated. The Spring thanks also ABC Classics who will release compact discs of music by Kats-Chernin and Debussy in August.

The Spring thanks our new sponsors Westfield Holdings, Boral and APRA for their support as well as old friends who have stuck by us over many years - Marienberg Wines, Pechiney Pacific, Alliance Française de Sydney, AFAA (Association Française d'Action Artistique), ACRA (Australia Council Reform Association), and the Novotel Sydney on Darling Harbour. The Sydney Spring thanks Richard Pratt, the Australia Foundation, Dame Leonie Kramer, Glen-Marie Frost and Mary Ellen Barton for their strong personal support during a difficult year. The Sydney Spring is particularly grateful to the admirable generosity shown by the Premier Bob Carr: it was the Premier's personal intervention and the exemplary support of the NSW Ministry of the Arts with emergency funding that enabled the Eighth Spring to proceed as planned.

The Eighth Spring continues its odyssey with Debussy as founding father of this century's modernism and opens with Karen Cummings (soprano), Nathan Waks (cello) and Roger Woodward (piano) performing the *Bilitis*, *Mallarmé* and *Baudelaire* Songs, *Cello Sonata* and piano *Etudes*. Concert two is Feldman/Kats-Chernin Five Pianos: a tenth anniversary tribute to the passing of the great American genius Morton Feldman by five pianists. Elena Kats-Chernin's new work for five pianos will open that concert. Supper will then be served after which Feldman's epic *Triadic Memories* will be performed for those who wish to stay for a late night concert.

Sunday 31 August marks the opening of The Spring Academy for New Music at the Old Darlington School, University of Sydney, when Lyle Chan will provide an overview of the Eighth Spring. This will be followed by a light lunch. Thanks to Prof. A.E. Boyd (Chair of Music at the University of Sydney) the Sydney Spring proudly announces the inaugural lecture and workshop series of **The Spring Academy for New Music** in association with the University's Department of Music at the Old Darlington School, 31 August - 5 September. The Sydney Spring thanks Nick Wales for his administrative efforts. There will be a special day of lectures and workshops with Amy, Dillon and Gehlhaar at the **Australian Institute for Music** (Director - Peter Calvo) on Monday 15 September on *European Concepts of Composition*.

Concert three provides a rare opportunity to hear superlative Scandinavian wind players who have currently been stunning audiences worldwide with their performances. The **Reykjavik Wind Quintet's** exclusive programme of premieres revolves around Scandinavian composers with additional works by Berio and Ligeti. The Quintet will also appear for the Spring Academy on 4 September.

Concert four introduces Melbourne's premier new music Ensemble - **Libra** - to Sydney. Libra under the direction of Mark Knoop and Carl Rosman, will perform new works by Dillon, Marks, Yee and Schoenberg's *Herzgewäche* from 1911! It will be the first performance of this work in Australia.