

# Armidale Symphony Orchestra

## President's Report - 2018

Once again the Orchestra has presented a successful and well received series of concerts in 2018. Starting with the annual Choral Weekend where we accompanied the assembled choristers for a performance of Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, as well as our own performance of his *Ballade for Orchestra*. Once again it was a pleasure to work with conductor Paul Holley for this performance.

As a departure from previous years we undertook to give a sample of our performances at the annual Autumn Festival. The council generously provided a covered performance area with a solid floor for this performance. A small, but appreciative audience enjoyed the performance and we also had the opportunity to promote our concert series for the remainder of the year. Thanks goes to Robert Jackson for pursuing this initiative. (Regrettably, the Council decided against providing an adequate performance space in 2019 and the orchestra was unable to repeat this initiative).

Our second concert saw a departure from our usual performance venue with conductor Stephen Wu choosing the Cathedral of St Mary and St Joseph for his concert featuring local violinist, Eliza Scott, performing Mendelssohn's *Violin Concerto in E minor*. It was a great pleasure for the orchestra to accompany this talented young performer for this work. The concert also featured Handel's *Queen of Sheba Overture*; J S Bach's *Suite No.2 in B minor*, and Haydn's *Symphony in D major*. We also welcomed our own members Sharon Davidge, David Rowe and Li-Ling Chen as soloists on this occasion.

In September, NECOM Director, Russell Bauer presented a concert featuring Holst's *Planets Suite*; Williams *Star Wars Suite*, *Rey's Theme and Selections from ET*, the latter challenging the orchestra to keep in time with extracts from the movie projected during performance. We also were privileged to premiere Russell's own composition, *New Frontiers: Australian Space Program*. This exciting and diverse program was enjoyed by audiences at two performances.

Our final concert for the year was conducted by first time ASO conductor, Bruce Meyers. Bruce is well-known to the orchestra for his excellent trumpet playing skills and musicianship, and it was a pleasure to work under his baton. The concert consisted of Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker Suite*, Khachaturian's *Adagio from Spartacus*, and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. This concert was also well received by the audience.

I would like to thank all our conductors for 2018 for the skilful preparation of the orchestra and their thoughtful choice of repertoire, demanding at times, but always pleasurable to perform.

Thanks also goes to the various orchestra and section leaders, and to all orchestra members for their commitment and for the professionalism displayed in presenting our concert series. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Management Committee for their dedication and work throughout the year.

Two members of the orchestra deserve special mention for their contribution to the ASO over many years. Firstly, Colin Sholl for his dedication as Orchestra Librarian; and secondly, Graham Maddox, who regrettably has decided to retire as an oboist. Colin will continue as violinist and I'm sure that Graham will also continue his association with the orchestra in other ways.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the support of the orchestra given by the NECOM staff. Their expertise and leadership provide a great benefit to the orchestra and I am grateful for their involvement, especially as they have to juggle the demands of their NECOM roles with that of the orchestra. I hope that they will be able to continue giving their support and enabling the orchestra to keep growing and developing. It is wonderful to see a number of new faces in the orchestra this year, and a number of younger members continuing their enjoyment of orchestral playing. I hope that the NECOM staff's involvement might continue to enable these, and other people to be involved with the orchestra and provide them with mentoring and musical guidance.

Stuart Pavel  
ASO President  
24 March 2019