

A HOT CONCERT FOR THE SBO IN SUTHERLAND

On the evening of 11 February, the SBO gave its first concert for 2020 in the Sutherland Memorial School of Arts, presented by the Sutherland Music Club. 'The first concert of the year is always a worry,' said musical director, Victor Serghie. 'The players have just come back from Christmas and New Year holidays and some may be a bit rusty.'

Also, it hadn't been a great start to the year. The bush fires had gotten a bit too close to the properties of some orchestra

'I shouldn't have been so worried about the performance,' said Victor. 'It was one of the better concerts we've given recently. The orchestra played together, tightly and the dynamics were good. The soloists gave good performances and our mezzo soprano, Sophia Markovtzev, sang like a nightingale,' he said.

The orchestra presented a new addition to its repertoire, Valse Triste by Sibelius. The piece is lovely but it is tricky to play, in part because players need to balance sweetness with discord.



members and there was still smoke in the air. And it was hot, very hot, on the night.

The orchestra had spent only a small number of rehearsals trying to perfect the piece. But on the night the Gods smiled, and the performance was fittingly delicate and other-worldly.

The Gods may have smiled on us, but the spotlights did not! The stage is small, with poor air circulation and the SBO's costumes are not exactly light, tropical attire. 'Somehow the heat and sweat that was fogging up my glasses didn't quite match the images of Russia's icy steppes, that this music was trying to convey,' said bass domra player Patrick O'Neill.

The Sutherland Memorial School of Arts is a charming little theatre that is nearly 100 years old. It was opened in August 1922 to promote community education and recreation. This was one of the last concerts scheduled before the theatre closes for renovations.

For the past 12 years SBO has had a happy association with Sutherland Music Club, this being our sixth concert. We are looking forward to perform again in the renovated hall when it reopens.



Sutherland Memorial School of Arts



Ambassador Pavlovsky 4th from left, Consul General Arzhaev 6th from left

A special event took place at the Russian Consulate on 10 January. The Russian Ambassador, HE Dr Alexey Pavlovsky, and the Consul-General, Mr Igor Arzhaev, invited many Russian compatriots to an "Old New Year's Eve celebration." * The SBO quartet was invited to entertain the guests.

It was also an occasion for handing out awards to long-standing members of the Russian community, one of whom was SBO musical director Victor Serghie.

Ambassador Pavlovsky presented Victor with an honorary diploma from the Russian Federation Government Commission for his contribution in preserving the Russian culture abroad.

In accepting the diploma, Victor said 'I'm proud that this orchestra, the majority of whom are non-Russian speakers, continues to introduce our Russian music to so many Australians.'

* Old New Year is so called because of the 14-day difference between our western Gregorian calendar and the 'old style' Russian Orthodox calendar.



Honorary diploma from the Russian Federation Government Commission



Photos courtesy of "UNIFICATION" Russian Newspaper

sydney balalaika orchestra

NOVOSTI





SBO END-OF YEAR PARTY

A Christmas Party is held each year by the SBO for musicians, family supporters and all those who have helped us during the year. This time our very versatile lead domra player, Tanya Jephtha, revealed her cooking talents with a particularly tasty Russian smetana cake. Smetana is commonly translated as sour cream but truly, Russian smetana is in a class of its own. The cake was delicious. The ingredients – secret! Thank you Tanya.

NEW WEBSITE!

The orchestra's website is a great place to find out about our next performances, sample our music, browse our CDs and more. Our exciting new look website is coming soon, still at www.balalaika.com.au Check it out!



SAVE THE DATE FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, 2nd August 2020 | STRATHFIELD, NSW | 2:30pm Start
Russian Club, Strathfield

Saturday, October (tba) | CABARRAMATTA, NSW | 1.00pm Start
St Sergius of Radonezh Nursing Home

Sunday, 8th November 2020 | GERRINGONG, NSW | 2.00pm Start
Gerringong Town Hall

Sunday, 21st March 2021 | GALSTON, NSW | 2.00pm Start
Galston Uniting Church

CAN YOU HELP?

The SBO is always seeking to perform at new venues. Maybe you know a venue where we can introduce our beautiful Russian folk music to a new audience. We also need additional musicians, so if you come up with any ideas please contact our Musical Director, **Victor Serghie on 0409 058 895** or our Secretary, **Richard She on 0402 179 098.**

SINFONIETTA CORONALIS



SBO REHEARSALS UNDER QUARANTINE!

Because we're a prudent lot, rehearsals have been suspended.
But we're diligent too - so the shows will go on!