

Novosti

Balalaika
NEWS

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MESSAGE FROM RICHARD SHE, PRESIDENT OF THE SYDNEY BALALAIKA ORCHESTRA

While the weather is cooling with the changing seasons, the SBO's passion for music continues to run hot. We have been busy in concert halls and the recording studio, and launching our music into the digital age!



At the start of April, we performed on the magnificent Central Coast. For those who weren't able to come, don't fret as we will be in Sydney for our annual Russian Club concert on 16 June. I hope you'll be able to attend as not only is this our most anticipated concert of the year but it will be our last performance with our musical director, Victor Serghie. Victor has made the difficult decision to retire from the SBO after close to 60 years of service. You will be hearing more about Victor and the power of his lasting legacy. In the meantime, we hope you can celebrate Victor with us on 16 June. At the concert we will

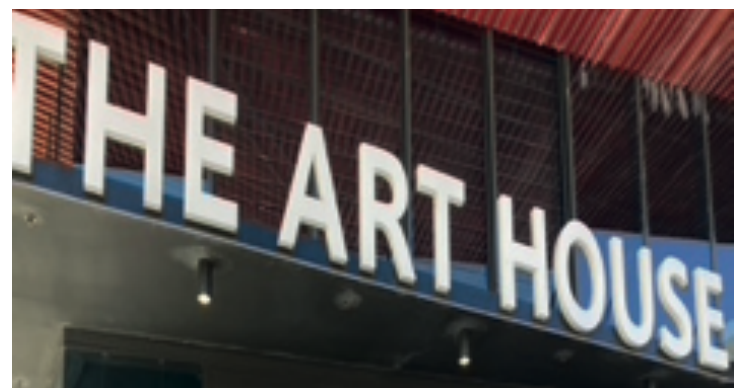
also be releasing our new CD, an album 10 years in the making – The Sounds of Sydney Balalaika Orchestra.

SBO has also taken a huge step into the digital age. Our latest CD, Russian Tapestries, is now available on all major streaming services. We encourage everyone to listen and give us a follow! The rest of

our discography will be available soon and you can read more about it below.

I hope to see you all at the Russian Club in June, not only to enjoy a great concert but to send Victor off with a bang! On behalf of everyone, thank you, Victor, for making the SBO what we are today.

WYONG ART HOUSE
– SBO IN CONCERT – 7 APRIL 2024



On another mild Sunday afternoon in April, SBO travelled up to The Art House in Wyong. The orchestra had performed at this venue before, and the success of 2018 was brought to bear once again.

For more details please refer to our website
www.balalaika.com.au



Special congratulations are in order to SBO vocalist Natasha Tatarinoff for winning the 2024 ACE Award in the category Rising Star. ACE Awards are prestigious Australian Club Entertainment awards. We are not surprised that her amazing talent has been recognised. Congratulations, Natasha!

SAVE THE DATE

JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL RUSSIAN CLUB CONCERT!

When:
Sunday 16 June, 2pm.
The Russian Club – Strathfield,

Where: 7 Albert Road, Strathfield NSW 2135

Enquiries: TBA

Tickets at the door and pre-sales at
www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1212015?

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 President, **Richard She on 0402 179 098.**



Being one of the more contemporary and swanky destination venues of the SBO, it was fully equipped and accommodating, with modern amenities, a full-size stage, and light effects to rival that of the Vivid Festival. While initially a little reserved, the audience quickly warmed up to the Orchestra's varied repertoire under Victor's keen direction. Fast, exotic pieces like the 'Sabre Dance' and 'Valenki' (Russian Ugg Boots!) energised spectators and musicians alike. The excitement spread with SBO Quartet's performance of 'Night Express'.... placing a real emphasis on the word 'express'!

Not to be outdone, delicate songs such the 'Old Linden Tree,' treated listeners to an image of a lone and dignified Tilia being brushed by the first rays of the morning sun in a frosty windswept meadow. In keeping with the theme of natural beauty, the epic overture 'Tale of Lake Baikal' was performed with a sound as broad as the lake is deep. On the prima domra virtuoso Tanya Jephtha's performance evoked a splash of pristine water in a silent, arctic valley in 'Gazing Into Blue Lakes.'

Always a hit, vocalists Natasha Tatarinoff and Dmitry Kuevda, sang their hearts out to recognisable pieces such as 'Dark Eyes,' 'Once Upon a December,' and 'Speak Softly Love,' the theme from film 'The Godfather'. But when they performed as a duo, the audience demanded an encore that the orchestra hadn't even accounted for! Nevertheless, after another spirited duet, 'Those Were the Days,' Victor and the SBO offered the sweet and tender song 'Tbilisi.' Paying homage to the Georgian capital, Natasha and Dmitry astounded us all with their whispers in Georgian and Russian – simply beautiful.

For the first time ever, the SBO featured three prima balalaikas in concert for the classic folk piece 'Shining Moon.' Patrick O'Neill, Matthew Morgan and new member Olga Keenan showed with humour and the flick of the wrist how a trio of balalaikas would have sounded in your local village.

By Lazar Stojkov





After the Sydney Balalaika Orchestra's concert at the Russian Club on 16th June, the SBO's long standing musical director Victor Serghie will hang up his baton for the last time and retire. It will be a sad day indeed for this remarkable Orchestra, as Victor has been its driving force for nearly 60 years. In that time, he has seen us grow from a small group of 6 musicians, to an ensemble of up to 28.

On Australia Day at The Russian Club in Strathfield, Victor was honoured with an Achievement Medallion for an 'exceptional contribution to cultural diversity and the promotion of Russian folk music in Australia.' Nominated by the Russian Ethnic Community Society, it is an award for a lifetime's contribution, and is so very well deserved.

Victor's dynamism as a conductor and his arranging and orchestration skills have been his greatest gifts to the Orchestra. Through his leadership, he has transformed musicians of 'all sorts' into players of Russian folk music, despite the fact that very few of us even speak a word of Russian.

Victor has also moved with the times of ever-changing technology. Leading an Orchestra in public is challenge enough. Leading one in a recording studio, is quite another. Victor knows well how to conduct musicians in what is acoustically, a sterile environment. In March we recorded our forthcoming album, 'The Sounds of Sydney Balalaika Orchestra'. We could wear nothing that clunks, no jewels, or buckles. No rattles or scratches! All our clothing had to be 'rustle-proof'! Singers were disconnected in sound-proof kiosks to ensure purity. But Victor rose to the challenge and today we have six CDs to his credit. With most of the Orchestra's music now recorded and increasingly available online, this is a crucial part of his lasting legacy. It is all arranged by him. It was all achieved with no Government funding or sponsorship. All money received at the box office or from CD sales is rolled back into the Orchestra. Any air travel is subsidised by the Orchestra or paid for out of musicians' pockets. The players have never been paid a cent – and neither was Victor.



So how will we survive without him? Before our concert in Wyong, the SBO warmed up with orchestral fantasy 'Tale of Lake Baikal'. As we played on stage, Victor went to the back of the theatre to check our sound from an audience perspective. We kept playing – no one had told us to stop. And we played with all the dynamics he would have expected, but with no conductor! Our Maestro seemed happy when he returned to the stand. Maybe he felt his legacy would be safe with us.



We invite you to celebrate Victor's legacy with us for our final concert with Victor at the helm, at the Russian Club on 16 June.

By Patrick O'Neill



VICTOR SERGHIE TO HANG UP HIS BATON

HARMONISING TRADITION AND TECHNOLOGY – SBO's Streaming Journey

The Orchestra's decision to embrace streaming platforms echoes a global symphony. Streaming services, like a digital Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon Music and many more connect artists with billions of listeners worldwide.

More than two decades ago we released our first CD, 'Old Linden Tree' (2000), followed up with 'Mail Troika' (2004), Dawn of Russia (2007) and 'Rassipuha (Scattered Notes)' (2010) and 'Russian Tapestries' in 2014. The SBO re-released the 2014 album 'Russian Tapestries' earlier in April this year on most of the major streaming platforms around the world, and the forthcoming album, 'The Sounds of Sydney Balalaika Orchestra' will join it soon. The convenience of streaming—accessible anytime, anywhere—has struck a chord with both artists and audiences. Our music harmonises across continents, transcending borders and streaming is a cost-effective, space-saving solution that amplifies and democratises music distribution.

While CDs offer pristine sound quality, streaming's allure lies in its vast audience and ease of access. We can now dance on both stages: streaming for global reach and legacy CDs for those who seek tangible artistry. We might serenade audiences in iconic venues — from Sydney, to China and into the heart of Russia — yet our music resonates across time and technology. So, let the balalaikas (and domras) strum, and the streams flow—a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation.

By Andrew Tatarinoff



STREAM OUR MUSIC

SPOTIFY LINK



AMAZON LINK



APPLE MUSIC LINK



CONTROL ROOM STUDIO 301



For more details please refer to our website
www.balalaika.com.au