

**RECEPTION TO CELEBRATE THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
TASMANIAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
BALL ROOM, WEDNESDAY 14 JUNE 2023**

VICE-REGAL SALUTE

Good evening. I warmly welcome you all to this reception to mark the 75th anniversary of our very own cultural icon, the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea and waters.

Let me first thank our Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra Brass ensemble for the rousing performance of the Vice-Regal Salute. As many may know, this Ball Room was specially designed to have a magnificent acoustic. It was built in what is named the German 'barrel barn' style. It is a perfect venue for live music. We have hosted a number of performances over the past months. We are delighted that excellent use is being made of this wonderful space.

Later, we shall hear from the Brass ensemble again in a performance of Gershwin to conclude the formalities this evening. I am sure that we are all very much looking forward to that.

We are very fortunate to have such an accomplished and outstanding Symphony Orchestra in Tasmania. Our TSO is one of only six full-time professional orchestras in Australia. We may have the smallest by some margin, but our TSO is ranked amongst the best. We also host one of only eight Youth Orchestras. That speaks to the depth of talent and commitment to the arts in our State.

The TSO was founded under the Tasmanian Orchestra (Agreement) Act as a partnership between the Tasmanian Government, the Australian Broadcasting

Corporation and our cities of Hobart and Launceston. The first concert, a performance of Greig's Piano Concerto, was held in our Hobart Town Hall on 25 May 1948.

Reflecting the commitment to all Tasmanians, concerts were subsequently held in Burnie, Devonport and Launceston. Our Orchestra garnered a strong following across our State and still flourishes today.

The Hobart Odeon Theatre became the Orchestra's home in 1973, until, in 2000 the Orchestra moved to its current home in the Federation Concert Hall.

Our TSO retains significant community support, evident in the campaign by Tasmanians to retain the Orchestra at its full complement of 47 musicians. In 2005, a Federal Government rationalisation of funding for Orchestras threatened to reduce its size to 36. Fortunately, a letter writing campaign, spearheaded by the newly formed Friends of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, protected and retained our 47 members.

A 75th anniversary Gala Concert was held this year on the exact date of its initial concert, the 25th of May. That concert had a decidedly Russian focus, with pieces by Shostakovich, Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov.

Shortly we will hear from Chair, Harvey Lennon, who will, no doubt, provide an update on current and future directions for the Orchestra. And then, as I mentioned earlier, we will hear again from the TSO Brass Section.

May I conclude and congratulate you all on the achievement of this significant 75 years milestone. It is a testament to all your commitment and hard work. We know that the arts and music are essential parts of our community. I commend everyone involved with our TSO, from musicians and conductors, to sponsors, supporters and administrative staff, for keeping our Tasmanian orchestra through these 75 years. I wish you all every success for the next 75 years.

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