SONYA LIFSCHITZ
Pianist

Praised by the New York Times and The Age for her “dynamic” and “powerful” performances, and by the Woodstock Times for her “miraculous keyboard technique and musicianship”, Sonya Lifschitz made her debut with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra at age 18 and is internationally recognised as one of Australia’s most innovative and fiercely creative musical voices. In 2016-2018 seasons, Sonya made a critically-acclaimed solo debut in one of New York’s most prestigious concert venues, the BargeMusic, with other highlights including performances at the Melbourne (MIAF), Adelaide (AF), Canberra (CIMF), Darwin, Metropolis and MONAFOMA Festivals; and venues such as the Melbourne Recital Centre (Melbourne), City Recital Hall (Sydney), QPAC Concert Hall (Brisbane), National Gallery of Australia (Canberra), Elder Hall (Adelaide) and Detroit Institute of Art (Detroit, USA). Sonya’s performances are regularly broadcast by ABC Classic FM, ABC Radio National, 3MBS and 5MBS.

A fierce advocate for new music, Sonya has commissioned and premiered works by such leading Australian composers as Larry Sitsky, Kate Neil, Damian Barbler and Robert Davidson and is the artistic co-director of award-winning contemporary ensemble Press, Play. A passionate collaborator, Sonya has worked with Australia’s top performers, including Lisa Moore, Stephen Emmerson, Joe Chindamo, Caroline Henbest, Vanessa Tomlinson, Topology, the Kransky Sisters, Christine Johnston, and members of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony and Queensland Symphony Orchestras. A Fulbright Scholar, Sonya holds a PhD from the University of Melbourne and is currently Lecturer in Performance at the University of NSW and is a regular presenter on ABC Classic FM. sonyalifschitz.com

BRISBANE FESTIVAL ARTISTIC DIRECTOR’S NOTE

Robert Davidson is one of Brisbane’s musical heroes. A particularly rich part of his work is his interest in the intonation, or the music, of speech. This work reminds us that all speech is performance – that we are always acting – and that music sits in the threads of all we say. Robert has always, too, had an interest in the politics of social upheaval, and Stalin’s Piano gifts us glimpses into great thinkers and actors who have tilted the world. It’s written for Sonya Lifschitz, and it shows in the veracity of the virtuosity. This is politics, art and music as one.

David Berthold

STALIN’S PIANO CREMORNE THEATRE, QPAC | 14 SEPTEMBER

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Robert Davidson (b. 1965) is a prolific composer, bassist, lecturer and founder and artistic director of Topology. He is the Head of Composition and Senior Lecturer at the University of Queensland, in the top 50 universities worldwide. Davidson studied composition with Terry Riley in California before completing a composition PhD at the University of Queensland. He previously studied South Indian vocal music in Kerala, India. Davidson’s compositions are regularly performed, recorded and broadcast around the world. All of Australia’s professional orchestras and many leading soloists and ensembles have commissioned and performed his works. With Topology he has released 12 albums and a DVD, and has directed numerous artistic collaborations with such artists as The Brodsky Quartet, Katie Noonan, TaikOz, The Kransky Sisters and Kate Miller Heidke. The ensemble has won numerous awards for excellence in music performance, composition, music education and recording, including APRA Art Music awards, Sydney Opera House, and ARIA awards.

Arthur Boyd
Bertolt Brecht
Le Corbusier
Edward Estlin Cummings
Dwight Eisenhower
Julia Gillard
Joseph Goebbels
Percy Grainger
Robert Helpmann
Megyn Kelly
John F. Kennedy
David Malouf
Thomas Mann
Jackson Pollock
Dmitri Shostakovich
Joseph Stalin
Donald Trump
Ai Wei Wei
Gough Whitlam
Frank Lloyd Wright
Maria Yudina
Mao Zedong

In keeping with the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Brisbane, the Turrabul and Jagara Yuggera Peoples, and recognise that this has always been a place of creative expression. We wish to pay respect to their Elders – past, present and emerging – and acknowledge the important role Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to play within our creative community.
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