

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Simone Young conducts Korngold and Brahms

R. Daniel Foster · Tuesday, November 30th, 2021

The U.S. premiere of [Connor D'Netto's "Uncertain Planning"](#) was held at Walt Disney Concert Hall on November 26—an apt choice, in both title and composition, given how hard the pandemic has hit concert halls.

[The Los Angeles Philharmonic](#) is back for a full [2021/22 season](#) at the downtown venue, flush with enthusiastic and grateful audiences. The experience of hearing music live would seem to never again be taken for granted, especially in the LA Phil's acoustic-rich home—minus overhead choppers at the Hollywood Bowl.

Born in 1994, D'Netto has been pegged “the model contemporary Australian composer.” He was matched in this performance by another Aussie—conductor [Simone Young](#). The Sydney native will become chief conductor at the Sydney Symphony in 2022.



Conductor Simone Young / via Wikimedia Commons

A classically trained singer, D’Netto incorporates electronic elements, a hardware synthesizer, and some DIY instruments in some compositions. His goal is to synthesize his extensive creative drives—he’s also a videographer, photographer, and overall visual artist. D’Netto is Associate Director of [Dots+Loops](#), Australia’s post-genre music and arts series. The events explore the intersections between disparate forms: the underground club scene, orchestral concerts, and avant-garde art shows.

“Uncertain Planning,” then, is D’Netto’s expression of other disparate elements—basically, the upside-down vibe of 2020. “... a broken world continued to turn outside my window and the uncertainty outside inevitably spread in,” writes D’Netto. “—anxious stillness, distant, constant uneasiness, and unknowing; overwhelming frustration, searing anger; gentle hope and burning determination.” All of which were abundant in “Uncertain Planning.”

Korngold’s violin concerto



Violinist Nicola Benedetti at Royal Albert Hall, 2013 / Photo: Allan Beavis via Wikimedia Commons

[Nicola Benedetti](#), wielding her 1717 [Gariel Stradivarius](#), was an optimal match for Erich Wolfgang Korngold’s violin concerto (1937-1939 and revised in 1945). Born in Scotland to an Italian father

and an Italian-Scottish mother, the violinist at age 8 became the concertmaster of Great Britain's National Children's Orchestral. By age 16, she had won the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition. In 2013, she was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire for her "services to music and to charity."

She approached Korngold's violin concerto with a kind of exquisite finesse, if not at times unmitigated aplomb.

Brahms' "slashing intensity"

Concluding the evening was another crowd-pleaser: Brahms Symphony No. 4 in E minor, Op. 98. It's Brahms' final symphonic work, a monumental piece that ever-accelerates, even through moments where the foot seems to have eased somewhat off the gas pedal. Conductor Young, who extracted a superb performance from the LA Phil, easily mastered the unremitting interwoven themes and interactions.

The work's concluded passages are "charged with defiance and bristling with slashing intensity," writes Dennis Bade, Associate Director of Publications for the Los Angeles Philharmonic Association. "For once, there is no coda. No triumph, no joy, no radiant string chords. The rest ... is silence."

But not the kind as experienced in 2020. It's good to be back.

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