

# MSO

SEASON 2021



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Melbourne  
Symphony  
Orchestra



# Ticketing Info



## How to book

Website: [mso.com.au](https://mso.com.au)

Phone: (03) 9929 9600 (Mon–Fri, 10am–6pm)

Mail: **MSO Box Office**  
GPO Box 9994  
Melbourne VIC 3004

*Bookings via phone or online are encouraged.*

Due to current restrictions, our Hamer Hall Box Office will not be open for bookings in person.

Tickets will be available to 2021 MSO Subscribers (3+ concerts) from **10am, 13 May**.

If you've already purchased 3+ concerts in Season 2021 Part 1 – great! You can choose any additional concerts in 2021 at a **10% discount**.

If you are not yet a 2021 MSO Subscriber, simply choose enough concerts in the remainder of Season 2021 to bring your total to three or more concerts in the full year. By doing so you'll have access to seating before the general public, and save 10% over standard ticket prices.

Individual concerts for non-subscribers will be available for purchase from **27 May at 10am**.



## Refunds & Exchanges

For peace of mind and keeping the health and safety of our audiences paramount, we will offer flexible refund and exchange options in the event you or members of your party are unwell on the day of a performance or are required to quarantine.

For information about our refund and exchange policies, please visit [mso.com.au](https://mso.com.au), or contact our Box Office at [boxoffice@mso.com.au](mailto:boxoffice@mso.com.au); or on (03) 9929 9600.



## Subscriptions & Seating

Season 2021 subscriptions are available as part of a Create Your Own Series, in which you can curate your own package of 3+ performances over the course of the year.

Our approach to audience safety remains paramount:

- Seats will be allocated on best-available basis and confirmed upon booking;
- Face masks in our venues remain recommended but not required;
- Intervals will return to longer programs;
- Concert programs will remain available digitally only;
- Venue capacities will operate in line with official government advice;

We encourage you to book early for best seating, as capacities may be limited.



**MSO**  
**.LIVE**

**MSO.LIVE is the online home of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra concerts.** Many of the performances in this guide will be recorded and available on MSO.LIVE in 2021. Sign up today to enjoy 24-hour entertainment on demand, live and pre-recorded HD concert hall performances, family-friendly content and special events from the MSO and the world's finest.

# July



Lawrence Renes

## Carmina Burana

ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE,  
HAMER HALL

Friday 9 July / 7.30pm  
Saturday 10 July / 2pm

**Melbourne Symphony Orchestra**

**Lawrence Renes** conductor

**Helena Dix** soprano

**Kanen Breen** tenor

**Warwick Fyfe** baritone

**National Boys Choir of Australia**

**Australian Girls Choir**

**MSO Chorus**

**Warren Trevelyan-Jones** chorus  
master

**Orff** *Carmina Burana*

*This concert will include an interval.*

Nothing prepares you for the intensity and grandeur of Orff's *Carmina Burana* played live.

Like great crashing gods bursting through the skies to wake the dead, the thundering *Carmina Burana* returns to the Hamer Hall stage showcasing the MSO Chorus in all its glory. With the massive power of the full orchestra and chorus, it comes to glorious fruition only in live performance.

A piece of light, joy, ferocity and booming bombast, Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* is immediately impactful. The piece features a driving rhythmic structure, grand shifts in mood and eventual ecstatic climax. The piece has become one of the most often-performed choral works of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with numerous references throughout popular culture.

# July



Lawrence Renes

## Mahler's Fourth Symphony

Thursday 15 July / 6pm

Saturday 17 July / 6pm

Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall

Friday 16 July / 7.30pm

Costa Hall, Geelong

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Lawrence Renes conductor

Jacqueline Porter soprano

Mahler Symphony No.4

Consumed by his job with the Vienna Court Opera and with little time to compose, Mahler went almost three years without writing a scrap of music. When he finally began work on his Fourth Symphony he did so in the summer months – beginning the work at a lakeside resort in Austria and finishing it in his own second home on the Wörther Lake.

- Unlike his other symphonies, which often centre on explorations of the binaries of human existence – heaven and hell, good and bad, evil and charity – Mahler's Fourth is tuneful and direct, exploring a charming, childlike view of the world.
- The first three movements lead clearly toward the finale, which includes the evocatively-named folk song "Heaven is Hung with Violins," originally written for this third symphony.
- The visions of heaven that Mahler paints suddenly become clear as day when the soprano sings "we enjoy heavenly delights," before imagining life in heaven. Dancing, playing, music, food (asparagus, no less!) and saints are described with playfulness and desire.

One hour, no interval

## John Adams: *Harmonielehre*

Thursday 15 July / 8.30pm

Saturday 17 July / 8.30pm

Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Lawrence Renes conductor

John Adams *Harmonielehre*

John Adams' masterpiece *Harmonielehre* may not be a symphony by name, but it certainly is a symphony by nature. Comprised of three impressive movements, the work, led from the podium by acclaimed Dutch-Maltese conductor Lawrence Renes, is a thrilling combination of romanticism, post-minimalism and symphonic orchestration.

- Influential composer Arnold Schoenberg's text *Harmonielehre*, or "Theory of Harmony", provided the inspiration behind the name of Adams' symphonic work. Written in 1910, Schoenberg's text is still one of the most important tomes on music theory.
- Composed in 1985, *Harmonielehre* begins in a startling manner – with 39 E-minor chords. It feels relentless, and perhaps that was intended: the piece was written after a period of relentless creative block. Adams' had a strange dream after 18 months of no writing and "after [the dream], I sat down in my studio to find, almost as if they were waiting for me, the powerful pounding E-minor chords that launch the piece."
- The second movement makes reference to a king who appears in *Parsifal* – Wagner's 1882 three-act opera – and also makes musical reference to Sibelius and Mahler.
- Conductor Lawrence Renes has been a champion of John Adams' music throughout his career, conducting the first commercial recording of the opera *Doctor Atomic* with De Nederlandse Opera, and also conducting the UK premiere of the work with the English National Opera.

One hour, no interval

# July



MSO Principal Conductor in Residence, Benjamin Northey

## Copland and Dvořák: Simple Gifts

Thursday 22 July / 7.30pm  
Melbourne Town Hall

Friday 23 July / 7.30pm  
Robert Blackwood Hall, Monash University

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Benjamin Northey conductor

Copland *Appalachian Spring*  
Hyde *Village Fair*  
Dvořák *Slavonic Dances* (selection)

Folk songs have long served as inspiration to composers from across the globe, whether weaved into symphonies, sprinkled into art song or folded into opera. This program explores how folk music has influenced and infiltrated classical music over the past 150 years.

- With the extraordinary Martha Graham Dance Company in mind, Aaron Copland wrote his *Appalachian Spring* very much to be danced to. It fulfills the commission to be about “the pioneer American spirit, with youth and spring, with optimism and hope.”
- Composed in 1943, *Village Fair* by Australian composer Miriam Hyde was written while she was also producing her significant Sonata in G minor for piano. In stark contrast to the sonata’s reflection of war time, *Village Fair* is a ballet for orchestra that beautifully reflects just what its title suggests: a colourful and lively festival.
- Dvořák’s *Slavonic Dances*, originally written for four hand piano and taking inspiration from Brahms’ *Hungarian Dances*, rocketed the composer to unexpected fame. His forward-thinking publisher suggested Dvořák write something incorporating folk songs from the composer’s childhood in early 1878. The tip paid off, and his *Dances* were orchestrated soon after their wildly popular premiere.

One hour, no interval

# July

## Ears Wide Open: Discover Beethoven

Tuesday 27 July / 6pm  
Melbourne Recital Centre

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Nicholas Bochner conductor and presenter

Beethoven Symphony No.4 (excerpts)

Want to learn more about some of the greatest music ever written? Host and MSO cellist Nicholas Bochner, with the MSO on stage, will take a musical journey through well-known classical pieces and share the context, history and story behind these works. Through performance, conversation and interaction, the MSO will give you the best music lesson of your life.

For our second 'Discover' event of the year, we will explore one of the most popular classical music composers, Ludwig van Beethoven. We'll interrogate the musical, historical, and personal significance of Beethoven's contribution to the Western canon, including excerpts of some of his most famous works, finishing with a deep dive into Beethoven's Fourth Symphony.

Ears Wide Open is MSO's talks and ideas program celebrating our music and artists through informative presentations, conversations, behind the scenes demonstrations and participatory workshops.

*One hour, no interval*



*MSO Cybec Assistant Conductor,  
Nicholas Bochner*

**Please note: Ears Wide Open Events will be filmed with cameras in the auditorium.**

Ears Wide Open is proudly presented by TarraWarra Estate.

The Ears Wide Open program is supported by City of Melbourne.

\*Selected events supported by Crown Resorts Foundation and Packer Family Foundation.

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# August

## Variations on a Theme: Mozart and Tchaikovsky

Friday 6 August / 6pm  
Saturday 7 August / 6pm  
Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Benjamin Northey conductor  
Li-Wei Qin cello

Mozart Symphony No.31 *Paris*  
Coleridge-Taylor *Symphonic Variations on an African Air*  
Tchaikovsky *Rococo Variations*

Composers have long used the idea of variations to extend and play with their own (and others') musical ideas – there are recorded instances of this technique from as early as 1538! This program explores two different examples, plus one of Mozart's most famous symphonies.

- After a performance of his Sinfonia Concertante in Paris was “sabotaged” by a conductor in the spring of 1778, Mozart received a consolatory commission from the same organisation to write an orchestral work. This became the aptly named *Paris* Symphony, which begins with one of the most thrilling movements in the composer's symphonic catalogue.
- Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was something of a celebrity in the British music scene while he was alive and working, overshadowing Elgar on occasion. His symphonic work *Variations on an African Air* is based on the African-American folk song “I'm Troubled In Mind”. The piece, according to musicologist Herbert Antcliffe, is the perfect opportunity to get to know the criminally underperformed *Variations*: “No single work of his will reveal him more fully.”
- Tchaikovsky was going through a period of depression when he wrote this work, but used his compositional practice to improve his mood. He told the cellist (and the dedicatee of the *Rococo Variations*) Wilhelm Fitzenhagen that *Rococo* meant “a carefree feeling of well-being.”

One hour, no interval



Li-Wei Qin

## Tchaikovsky and Elgar Variations

Friday 6 August / 8.30pm  
Saturday 7 August / 8.30pm  
Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Benjamin Northey conductor  
Li-Wei Qin cello

Tchaikovsky *Rococo Variations*  
Elgar *Enigma Variations*

Composers have long used the idea of variations to extend and play with their own (and others') musical ideas – there are recorded instances of this technique from as early as 1538! This program explores two of the best-loved ‘variations’ examples – Tchaikovsky's *Rococo* and Elgar's *Enigma*.

- Tchaikovsky was going through a period of depression when he wrote this work, but used his compositional practice to improve his mood. He told the cellist (and the dedicatee of the *Rococo Variations*) Wilhelm Fitzenhagen that *Rococo* meant “a carefree feeling of well-being.”
- Elgar's beloved *Enigma Variations* represent his friends, an idea that came to him as he was noodling at the piano when his wife interrupted to tell him she quite liked the tune! He did not know what he had been improvising, and thus the *Enigma* theme was born. The other fourteen variations are named for friends and colleagues.

One hour, no interval



# August



## Beethoven 5:

Music's most famous  
four notes

ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE,  
HAMER HALL

Saturday 14 August / 10am  
Saturday 14 August / 12.30pm\*  
\*relaxed performance

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Ingrid Martin conductor  
Karen Kyriakou presenter

Beethoven Symphony No.5  
(excerpts)

Join Karen Kyriakou and the musicians of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra as they investigate music's most famous four notes and beyond! Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is one of his most recognised and well-loved works, characterised by its unforgettable opening. Throughout this highly interactive concert, children and their grownups will explore Beethoven's incredible work through active participation and listening whilst discovering the sights and sounds of the orchestra.

### ABOUT OUR RELAXED PERFORMANCE

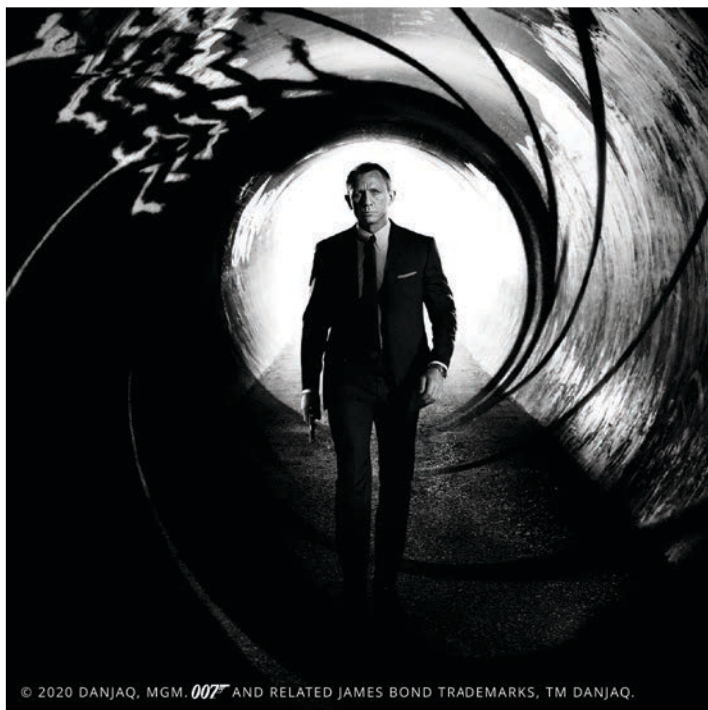
This is a family-friendly event exploring Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. MSO's relaxed, sensory-friendly performance is specifically designed for audience members with autism, a disability or sensory sensitivity.

The performance takes place in the safe environment of MSO's concert home, Hamer Hall. Elements of the performance are adapted to reduce anxiety and discomfort and special resources are available to enhance your concert experience:

- Online pre-concert resources including a downloadable Visual Story
- A relaxed attitude to noise and movement during the concert
- Lights to stay on during the concert
- Open doors and chill-out break areas
- General admission seating with space for freedom of movement
- Friendly, trained staff

*One hour, no interval*

# September



## Skyfall™ in Concert

**ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE,  
HAMER HALL**

Thursday 2 September / 7.30pm  
Friday 3 September / 7.30pm  
Saturday 4 September / 7.30pm

**Melbourne Symphony Orchestra**  
Nicholas Buc conductor

**Thomas Newman** *Skyfall*

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra performs *Skyfall™* in Concert at this special event!

Daniel Craig plays the legendary secret agent in the franchise's most successful film to date, with the MSO performing Thomas Newman's award-winning score live to picture.

The 2012 film, directed by Sam Mendes, pits 007 against one of his most formidable foes, the ruthless cyberterrorist and former MI6 agent Silva (Javier Bardem). Judi Dench returns once again as the steadfast M, and *Skyfall* re-introduces two familiar and beloved Bond characters: the ingenious quartermaster Q (Ben Whishaw), and the charming and resourceful Eve Moneypenny (Naomie Harris).

*This concert will contain an interval*

# September

## Mozart and Tchaikovsky

Thursday 16 September / 6pm  
Friday 17 September / 6pm  
Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Xian Zhang conductor  
Christian Li violin

Still *Mother and Child*

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto: first movement  
Mozart Symphony No.39

Conductor Xian Zhang makes her debut as MSO Principal Guest Conductor with William Grant Still's moving *Mother and Child* alongside the first movement of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto and Mozart's majestic Symphony No.39.

- The composer William Grant Still was incredibly prolific and diverse – writing works for choir, opera, ballet, chamber ensembles, orchestras and soloists, and in 1943, wrote his *Suite for Violin and Piano*, based upon the works of “three contemporary Negro artists who I admire.” The second movement of the *Suite*, based on the lithograph “Mother and Child” by Sargent Johnson was orchestrated, and became the moving work we hear now.
- Prodigious violinist Christian Li returns to the MSO to perform the first movement of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto – a work written by the composer during a period of great difficulty. His marriage was a disaster, and his other compositional work was not really going anywhere, but his Violin Concerto brought him back to his creativity in the most stylish and virtuosic way.
- In the summer of 1788, Mozart composed a set of three final symphonies – the 39<sup>th</sup>, the 40<sup>th</sup> and the 41<sup>st</sup>. They were reportedly written extremely quickly, and with little break, perhaps pointing to the trio of works as a unified work.

One hour, no interval



MSO Principal Guest  
Conductor, Xian Zhang

## Tchaikovsky's Sleeping Beauty

Thursday 16 September / 8.30pm  
Friday 17 September / 8.30pm  
Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Xian Zhang conductor  
Jack Schiller bassoon

Still *Mother and Child*

Matthew Laing *Of Paradise Lost*: Bassoon Concerto, first movement^

Tchaikovsky *Sleeping Beauty Suite*

^ World premiere of an MSO Commission

Conductor Xian Zhang makes her debut as MSO Principal Guest Conductor with William Grant Still's moving *Mother and Child* alongside the first movement of Tchaikovsky's exquisite *Sleeping Beauty Suite* and a brand-new commission from Cybec Young Composer In Residence, Matthew Laing.

- The composer William Grant Still was incredibly prolific and diverse – writing works for choir, opera, ballet, chamber ensembles, orchestras and soloists, and in 1943, wrote his *Suite for Violin and Piano*, based upon the works of “three contemporary Negro artists who I admire.” The second movement of the *Suite*, based on the lithograph “Mother and Child” by Sargent Johnson was orchestrated, and became the moving work we hear now.
- After the premiere of *Sleeping Beauty* in 1890, Tchaikovsky approached his publisher about the possibility of making “one or even two suites” from the music of the ballet. The suite was indeed written, and while the first performance sadly did not occur until after the composer's death, it has now become a staple in the orchestral repertoire.

One hour, no interval



# September



MSO Principal Guest  
Conductor, Xian Zhang

## Tchaikovsky and Beethoven

Thursday 23 September / 7:30pm  
Arts Centre Melbourne,  
Hamer Hall

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Xian Zhang conductor  
Christian Li violin

Nokuthula Ngwenyama *Primal  
Message*

Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto  
Beethoven Symphony No.4

Beethoven's Fourth may not be the most regularly programmed symphony in any orchestra's repertoire, but as a critic wrote, "there are no words to describe the deep, powerful spirit of this work from his earlier and most beautiful period."

- Composer and violist Nokuthula Ngwenyama rose to prominence at 16 when she won the Primrose International Viola Competition and is now gaining acclaim for her compositions. Her work *Primal Message* – originally written for viola quintet – was orchestrated for Detroit Symphony Orchestra and conducted in its premiere by Principal Guest Conductor of MSO, Xian Zhang.
- Prodigious violinist Christian Li returns to the MSO to perform Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto – a work written by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky during a period of great difficulty. His marriage was a disaster, and his other compositional work was not really going anywhere, but his Violin Concerto brought him back to his creativity in the most stylish and virtuosic way.
- Sitting between the *Eroica* and the famous Fifth Symphony, Beethoven's Symphony No.4 doesn't get nearly the recognition it deserves, despite it being a favourite of colleagues and critics. It was premiered privately in 1807, and there was almost no published criticism, which may have something to do with its lack of popularity!

*This concert will include an interval*

# October

## Erin Helyard: **Darkness and Light**

Thursday 7 October / 7:30pm  
Melbourne Recital Centre

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Erin Helyard director / harpsichord

Hasse Sinfonia No.3: *Overture to Cleofide*

Graupner Overture in G

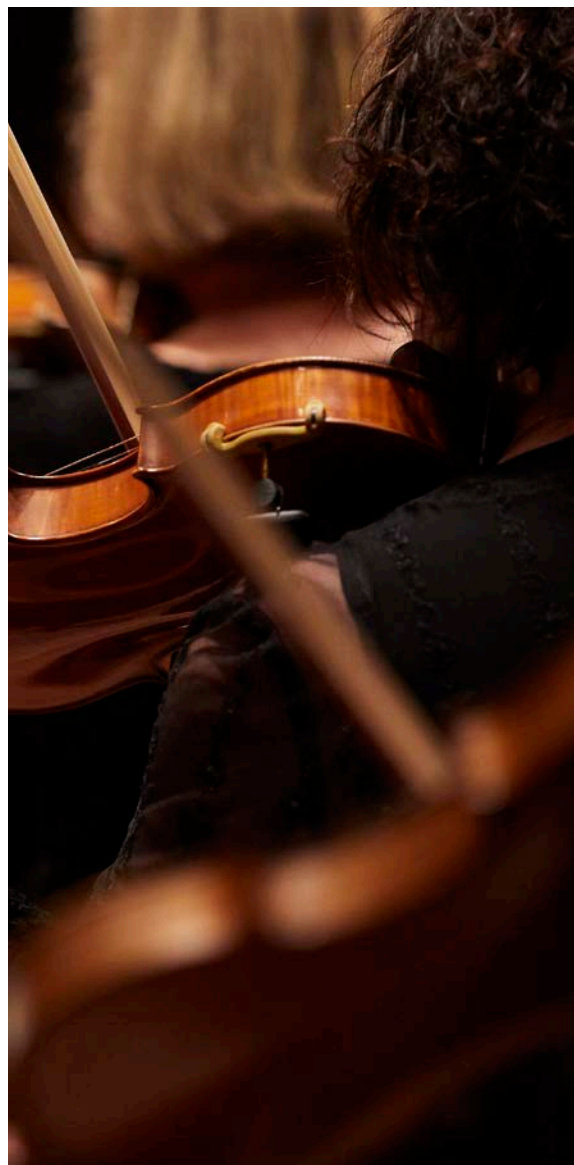
Telemann Concerto for 2 Flutes and Bassoon

Telemann Ouverture jointe d'une suite tragi-comique

In a program of early music gems curated by Australian conductor and keyboardist Erin Helyard, the MSO dives headfirst into a selection of great works from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

- A prolific composer of opera and sacred works, Johann Aldoph Hasse played an important role in the development of 18<sup>th</sup> century music. Born to three generations of church organists, Hasse was incredibly popular while he lived, and was favoured by many influential people.
- Christoph Graupner may not be well known to audiences; his manuscripts were not published in his lifetime as his employer refused to give them up to any publisher!
- German composer Georg Philipp Telemann was well known for his concerto writing. While he composed nearly 50 for solo instrument and orchestra, this Concerto features the unusual pairing of Flute and Bassoon.
- Telemann's "tragicomic" Overture joins 134 other overtures or suites the composer wrote for orchestra, each produced for a specific occasion.

*One hour, no interval*



# October



## Boléro!

ARTS CENTRE MELBOURNE,  
HAMER HALL

Friday 22 October / 7:30pm  
Saturday 23 October / 7:30pm

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Benjamin Northey conductor  
Slava Grigoryan guitar

Borodin *Polovtsian Dances*  
Bernstein *On the Town: Three*  
Dance Episodes  
Ravel *La Valse*  
Rodrigo *Concierto de Aranjuez*  
Piazzolla *Oblivion*  
Ravel *Boléro*

From Ravel to Rodrigo, orchestral music is full of toe-tappers; music that makes us sway and tap and whisk our partner into a waltz.

- Now instantly recognisable thanks to its distinct rhythm, Ravel's *Boléro* was originally commissioned as a ballet, by the great Russian actress, dancer and patron of the arts, Ida Rubinstein.
- This program begins with three lively dance numbers: the *Polovtsian Dances* from Borodin's *Prince Igor*; a suite of dances from Leonard Bernstein's popular musical about three sailors on leave in New York City; and a tribute to the "art of the waltz" by Maurice Ravel.
- There are many interpretations of Astor Piazzolla's *Oblivion*, but the soul of the work is the tango. As cellist Yo Yo Ma put it, "tango is not just about dancing. It is a music of deep undercurrents."
- *Concierto de Aranjuez* is one of the most famous pieces for guitar and orchestra, and it came to its composer Joaquín Rodrigo famously quickly: "I heard a voice inside me singing the entire theme of the Adagio at one go, without hesitation," he said.

*This concert will include an interval*

# November



## Dale Barltrop: A Journey through England

Thursday 4 November / 7:30pm

Saturday 6 November / 7:30pm

Melbourne Recital Centre

Friday 5 November / 7:30pm

Robert Blackwood Hall, Monash University

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Dale Barltrop director / violin

Stephen Newton tenor

Purcell *Fantasia* No.8

Holst *St Paul's* Suite No.2

Thomas Adès *Arcadiana*: VI. *O Albion*

Britten *Les Illuminations*

Purcell *The Fairy Queen* (selections)

Curated by MSO Concertmaster Dale Barltrop, this program takes the audience on an English-inspired musical journey, from Purcell to Britten with some unexpected stops along the way.

- The giant of 20<sup>th</sup> century English composition, Benjamin Britten, is represented by *Les Illuminations*, his 1940 song cycle with text taken from a collection by French poet Arthur Rimbaud. Multi-musically-skilled MSO Double Bassist Stephen Newton performs this cycle as Tenor soloist.
- The MSO also performs the second *St Paul's* Suite by Holst, which pays homage to English folk songs, and was, appropriately, written at St Paul's Girls' School in Hammersmith, where the composer was the Musical Director.
- Selections from Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*, a semi-opera based on Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* conclude this charming program.

One hour, no interval



## Russian Ballet: The Nutcracker and Petrushka

Thursday 18 November / 7:30pm

Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

Finnegan Downie Dear conductor

Tchaikovsky *The Nutcracker* Suite (selections)

Thomas Adès *Polaris*

Stravinsky *Petrushka* (1947)

Acclaimed young conductor Finnegan Downie Dear makes his debut with the MSO performing Stravinsky's *Petrushka* and works by Tchaikovsky and Adès.

- The North Star, or *Polaris*, is a star that other stars appear pulled to by magnetic force. It is almost motionless and has been used for navigation for as long as we can remember. Thomas Adès' *Polaris* uses a "magnetic series", in which all twelve notes are presented slowly, but keep returning back to an "anchoring" pitch, as if the note itself is magnetic.
- The suite from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* came about when the composer's ballad *The Voyevoda* was programmed for performance in St Petersburg. Tchaikovsky had destroyed the full score following its first performance, and so needed to quickly find a replacement for the upcoming performance. He compiled and orchestrated the suite in early 1892, which was immediately an audience favourite.
- After his success with Ballet Russes founder Sergei Diaghilev on *Les Sylphides* and *Firebird*, the idea of a puppet "suddenly endowed with life" came to Stravinsky. After hearing just a little, Diaghilev was thrilled to start workshopping choreography for *Petrushka* and the ballet premiered in Paris in 1911. It tells the love story of three puppets; in short, *Petrushka* is in love with the Ballerina, but the Ballerina loves the Moor. A classic, complicated tale!

This concert will include an interval

# November



Finnegan Downie Dear

## MSO Mornings: The Nutcracker and Petrushka

Saturday 20 November / 11am  
Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra  
Finnegan Downie Dear conductor

Tchaikovsky *The Nutcracker* Suite (selections)  
Stravinsky *Petrushka* (1947)



MSO Mornings is supported  
by Ryman Healthcare

Acclaimed young conductor Finnegan Downie Dear makes his anticipated debut with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra performing Stravinsky's *Petrushka* and selections from Tchaikovsky's charming *Nutcracker* Suite.

- The suite from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* came about when the composer's ballad *The Voyevoda* was programmed for performance in St Petersburg. Tchaikovsky had destroyed the full score following its first performance, and so needed to quickly find a replacement for the upcoming performance. He compiled and orchestrated the suite in early 1892, which was immediately an audience favourite.
- Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* Suite is famously used in Disney's *Fantasia*, with the different musical segments corresponding to the changing seasons.
- After his success with Ballet Russes founder Sergei Diaghilev on *Les Sylphides* and *Firebird*, the idea of a puppet "suddenly endowed with life" came to Igor Stravinsky. After hearing just a little, Diaghilev was thrilled to start workshopping choreography for *Petrushka* and the ballet premiered in Paris in 1911.
- *Petrushka* tells the love story of three puppets; in short, *Petrushka* is in love with the Ballerina, but the Ballerina loves the Moor. A classic, complicated tale!

*One hour, no interval*

# November



MSO Chorus

## MacMillan's Christmas Oratorio

**Saturday 27 November / 7:30pm**  
**Arts Centre Melbourne,**  
**Hamer Hall**

**Melbourne Symphony Orchestra**  
**Sir James MacMillan** conductor  
**MSO Chorus**  
**Warren Trevelyan-Jones** chorus  
 master

**MacMillan Christmas Oratorio**<sup>^</sup>

<sup>^</sup> *Australian premiere of an MSO  
 Co-commission*

Scottish composer Sir James MacMillan's Christmas Oratorio was written throughout 2019 and completed in early January 2020. With initial performances cancelled due to global lockdowns, this Oratorio bursts happily back onto stages this Christmastime.

- Called a "rich and prodigious invention" by the Financial Times, MacMillan's Oratorio is a full-scale nativity work that collates texts from a number of different sources: The King James Bible, Latin hymns, and poems from 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century poets Robert Southwell, John Donne, and John Milton.
- MacMillan's score is impressively cast – soprano and baritone soloists will feature in front of the full MSO Chorus, with the Orchestra boasting double woodwind, brass and percussion, as well as the joyful strains of harp and celeste.
- The composer has sources of inspiration in many places for this large-scaled work: from the rhythms of secular Christmas carols to the stately solo arias of traditional oratorio. "There are... intermittent moments of joyfulness and the childhood excitement and abandon of Christmas at various points," says MacMillan.

*90 minutes, no interval*

# December



Siobhan Stagg

## Handel's Messiah

Saturday 11 December / 7:00pm  
 Sunday 12 December / 5:00pm  
 Arts Centre Melbourne,  
 Hamer Hall

**Melbourne Symphony Orchestra**

**Graham Abbott** conductor

**Siobhan Stagg** soprano

**Sally-Anne Russell** alto

**Samuel Sakker** tenor

**Pelham Andrews** bass

**MSO Chorus**

**Warren Trevelyan-Jones** chorus  
 master

**Handel** *Messiah*

It's the most wonderful time of the year, which means it is time again for Handel's greatest oratorio celebration, *Messiah*. Composed in 1741, the work is still as potent as it was 280 years ago, inspiring joy and wonder from both first-time listeners and the audience members who have sung along for many years.

- One of the most enduring works of all time, it only took Handel about 24 days to write *Messiah*. He began at the end of August in 1741, and his pen was down by mid-September, including the 48 hours he took to quickly work out the orchestration from his sketched-out draft.
- While we've come to know and love hearing *Messiah* around Christmas time, it was originally intended for Easter. The conductor of the London Handel Orchestra, Laurence Cummings, thinks maybe it was because there was not much Christmas music: "There is so much fine Easter music... and so little great sacral music written for Christmas," he told Smithsonian Magazine.
- *Messiah's* debut was at the Musick Hall in Dublin on April 13, 1742. It may seem like a strange location, but Dublin was quickly becoming one of Europe's most flourishing cities, with many wealthy patrons keen to hear new, exciting work.

# Jams for Juniors

## IWAKI AUDITORIUM, ABC SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Children aged 0-5 and their adults can explore, play and join in these popular 30-minute musical workshops. They're the best way to introduce babies and toddlers to the magic of music.

Book early, they're sure to sell out!

All tickets \$16. 4-pack \$52



## Unfinished Symphony

Saturday 17 July  
10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm

## Symphonic Dances

Saturday 16 October  
10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm

## Pictures at an Exhibition

Saturday 4 September  
10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm

## Sleeping Beauty

Saturday 20 November  
10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm

# Create Your Own Series

## Step 1: Select concerts from the list below.

MSO Geelong concerts, Skyfall in Concert and Jams for Juniors are not available as part of Create Your Own Series.  
All concerts at Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall unless indicated.

### Group 1

Carmina Burana  
Tchaikovsky and Beethoven  
Boléro!  
Messiah

### Group 2

Mahler's Fourth Symphony  
Variations on a Theme  
Tchaikovsky and Elgar Variations  
Mozart and Tchaikovsky  
Russian Ballet: Nutcracker and  
Petrushka

### Group 3

*Melbourne Recital Centre:*

Erin Helyard: Darkness and Light  
Dale Barltrop: A Journey through  
England

### Group 4

*Melbourne Town Hall:*

Copland and Dvořák: Simple  
Gifts

### Group 5

John Adams: Harmonielehre  
Tchaikovsky's Sleeping Beauty  
MSO Mornings: Nutcracker and  
Petrushka  
MacMillan's Christmas Oratorio

### Group 6

*Robert Blackwood Hall:*

Copland and Dvořák: Simple  
Gifts

### Classic Kids

Beethoven 5

## Step 2: Add up the cost of your tickets using the prices\* below.

\*Prices subject to change from 27 May 2021. Prices listed are inclusive of 10% MSO subscriber discount. Excludes some special events.

| GROUP 1   | ADULT | CONC. |
|-----------|-------|-------|
| Premium   | \$117 | \$113 |
| A Reserve | \$103 | \$99  |
| B Reserve | \$85  | \$81  |
| C Reserve | \$76  | \$72  |
| D Reserve | \$64  | \$60  |
| GROUP 2   |       |       |
| Premium   | \$107 | \$102 |
| A Reserve | \$94  | \$90  |
| B Reserve | \$80  | \$75  |
| C Reserve | \$71  | \$66  |
| D Reserve | \$62  | \$57  |
| E Reserve | \$53  | \$48  |
| GROUP 3   |       |       |
| Premium   | \$90  | \$86  |
| A Reserve | \$76  | \$72  |
| B Reserve | \$56  | \$52  |
| C Reserve | \$46  | \$42  |

| GROUP 4      | ADULT | CONC. |
|--------------|-------|-------|
| A Reserve    | \$90  | \$86  |
| B Reserve    | \$75  | \$71  |
| C Reserve    | \$63  | \$58  |
| D Reserve    | \$38  | \$34  |
| GROUP 5      |       |       |
| Premium      | \$85  | \$81  |
| A Reserve    | \$76  | \$72  |
| B Reserve    | \$67  | \$63  |
| C Reserve    | \$58  | \$54  |
| D Reserve    | \$49  | \$45  |
| E Reserve    | \$36  | \$31  |
| GROUP 6      |       |       |
| A Reserve    | \$54  | \$49  |
| B Reserve    | \$46  | \$42  |
| C Reserve    | \$30  | \$26  |
| Classic Kids |       |       |
| All tickets  | \$18  |       |