



ANNUAL REPORT



SEASON 2024

MSO

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The MSO respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of all the lands upon which the Orchestra works and creates music. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and honour the continuation of the oldest music practice in the world.

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE



Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC,
Governor of Victoria and MSO Patron

As Patron of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, I want to congratulate each and every member of the MSO for yet another successful year of contributing to Victoria's artistic expression and culture.

While the MSO is integral to the rich musical scene in our State's capital city, it's important to acknowledge that 2025 also marks 75 years of its performances in Geelong.

This longstanding outreach to regional Victoria deserves particular praise for bringing a vital and much-needed cultural experience directly to communities. The ability to enjoy world-class music should not be constrained by postcode.

The performing arts are at the heart of making our State special.

Through greater access, we can forge deeper connections and build shared appreciation, regardless of where we come from.

I commend the musicians, staff, and Board for their dedicated efforts in expanding opportunities for all Victorians to experience the joys of orchestral music.

I also sincerely thank all the audience members, subscribers, donors, and partners for their strong support of the MSO.

Finally, I would like to thank outgoing Board Chair Dr David Li AM for his steadfast stewardship of the MSO and extend a warm welcome to incoming Board Chair Edgar Myer.

Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC
Governor of Victoria

CHAIR REPORT



It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's 2024 Annual Report. This has been a year of fantastic performances, and artistic milestones. We have shared music with audiences across Australia and abroad, celebrating the power of orchestral performance to inspire, move, and connect us all.

Our financial position for 2024 is an underlying operating deficit of (\$1,941,631), largely due to the impact of inflation on expected costs, as well as structural revenue pressures that continue to be felt across the arts sector.

This year marked Chief Conductor Jaime Martín's third season with us, and we were thrilled to announce the extension of his tenure until 2028, as well as his expanded role as Artistic Advisor. Under Jaime's leadership, our Orchestra has continued to flourish artistically.

In 2024, we reached 2.26M people, live and online, sharing the magic of orchestral music. A particular highlight was our international touring, where we performed in China, Singapore, and Indonesia, strengthening our global presence and artistic collaborations.

We acknowledge the media concerning the dispute with a performer has been harmful but we remain committed to our values and to transparency, integrity, and proper process, with a review to ensure we uphold the highest standards of excellence.

The year saw changes in our leadership team. We welcomed Richard Wigley as Interim CEO, then confirming his appointment as our permanent CEO in December. Richard brings exceptional expertise and a clear vision for the Orchestra's future, and we look forward to the next chapter under his leadership.

We would like to acknowledge the contribution of Managing Director, Dr Sophie Galaise, who departed at the end of August. We thank her for her dedication to the Orchestra. Sophie served our Orchestra with passion for almost nine years, during which she dealt with many challenges. We wish Sophie all the best in her future endeavours and thank her for her significant contributions to the MSO.

I also wish to acknowledge the retirement of Dr David Li AM, whose legacy will be felt for years to come. David has been a member of the Board since 2013 and Chairman since 2021, and we thank him for his significant contribution and leadership of the MSO. David has accepted the position of Emeritus Chair and we look forward to him and his family remaining part of the MSO.

In 2024 we bid farewell to valued Board members, Andrew Dudgeon AM, Di Jameson OAM, Glenn Sedgwick, and Helen Silver AO, who concluded their tenure. All of their contributions have been immense, and we thank them sincerely for their dedication to sharing our music with the world. It is a privilege to step into the role of Chair, following in the footsteps of such esteemed leaders.

This year also brought the passing of two great figures in the MSO's history—Sir Andrew Davis CBE, our cherished former Chief Conductor, and Harold Mitchell AC, former Chair whose passion for the arts left an enduring impact. We honour their memories and the extraordinary contributions they made to our Orchestra and the wider cultural landscape.

None of our achievements would be possible without the unwavering support of our community—our audiences, donors, sponsors, and funding partners, including Creative Australia and Creative Victoria. Your belief in our mission allows us to bring the very best of orchestral music to audiences far and wide.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to our exceptional musicians and dedicated staff. Your artistry, hard work, and resilience continue to make the MSO the extraordinary institution that it is. It is an honour to serve as Chair, and I look forward to another year of musical excellence so that we can keep inspiring audiences—in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia and abroad—with the best that music has to offer.

Edgar Myer
Chair

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



It is an absolute privilege to be the new-ish CEO of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. I was delighted to join this extraordinary organisation and to be part of a company so deeply committed to artistic excellence, increased reach, and community connections.

In 2024 we saw an orchestra which continued to push artistic boundaries and connect with our audiences in the most extraordinary ways. Highlights of the season included two outstanding festivals—Baroque and Beethoven—the latter seeing Chief Conductor Jaime Martín bring all nine Beethoven symphonies to life over the course of a fortnight for an audience of more than 15,000 people. Other highlights include the Australian premiere of Tan Dun's *Nine*, Jaime conducting Mahler's Third Symphony, Dan Sultan's breathtaking performance with the MSO, and *Kaddish: A Holocaust Memorial Concert* in partnership with the Australian War Memorial. Collaborations with remarkable guest artists and ensembles cemented our reputation among the most vibrant orchestras in the world.

Our commitment to Australian artists remains at the heart of our work. We were proud to showcase 21 commissions by Australian composers and to highlight the incredible talent within our Artistic Family. Through our pipeline of support for emerging artists—including our very own MSO Academy and positions of Cybec Young Composer in Residence (Naomi Dodd) and Cybec Assistant Conductor (Leonard Weiss CF)—we continue to nurture the next generation of Australian musicians and composers.

A key focus in 2024 was our continuing commitment to First Nations artists and narratives. Through dedicated programming, commissions, and artistic positions, we are ensuring that First Nations voices are heard and celebrated on our stages. Community engagement also expanded, with the successful launch of *Jams in Schools*, continued delivery of our regional touring program, and the commencement of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, which will shape our organisation in the years to come. Our MSO Presents program reaches many, many people with its heady mix of major films with live orchestra and crossing genres with big name popular musicians.

I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our Artistic Family, headed by our irrepressible Chief Conductor Jaime Martín, and celebrate the expansion of Benjamin Northey's role to Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor – Learning and Engagement.

I thank our brilliantly talented MSO musicians and administrative team who, day in day out, bring spectacular music to our communities. In 2024, we farewell esteemed colleagues Kirsty Bremner (First Violin), Sarah Morse (Cello; also celebrating her 35-year anniversary), Isy Wasserman (Second Violin), and William Evans (Trumpet), and we welcomed Jonathon Coco (Principal Double Bass), Anna Skálová (First Violin), Aidan Filshie (Viola), and Matthew Thomas (Principal Timpani). Special congratulations to those marking significant milestones in their careers with us—the 40-year anniversary of Robert Macindoe (Associate Principal Second Violin) and 35-year anniversary of Robert Cossom (Percussion)—we celebrate and thank you for your contributions.

I extend my personal gratitude to our Board, particularly recognising the retirement of Dr David Li AM, whose leadership has been instrumental in guiding the Orchestra to new audiences. We also thank departing Board members for their invaluable service and dedication.

Looking ahead, our focus remains clear: it's all about the music. We will continue striving to bring extraordinary performances to our audiences, to champion Australian talent, and to ensure that music remains a vital force in our community.

To our donors, government partners, corporate supporters, and—most importantly—our audience, thank you. Your passion and generosity make everything we do possible, and I am excited for what we will achieve together in the years ahead.

Richard Wigley
CEO



CHIEF CONDUCTOR'S REPORT

As I reflect on my third season with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, I feel incredibly fortunate to be part of this remarkable musical family. It is with great joy that I extend my tenure as Chief Conductor until 2028, now also taking on the role of Artistic Advisor. This Orchestra, with its extraordinary musicians and dedicated team, continues to inspire me every day.

The 2024 Season has been a thrilling journey through wide-ranging repertoire, from the power and intensity of orchestral greats such as Mahler's Third Symphony, and Elgar's *Enigma* Variations (dedicated to the memory of the MSO's former Chief Conductor, Sir Andrew Davis CBE), to our Season Opening Gala featuring Holst's *The Planets* which also saw the world premiere of *Earth* by our First Nations Creative Chair, Deborah Cheetham Frailon AO.

Collaborating with our wonderful guest artists and soloists from Australia and around the world has been a privilege, and I took much joy performing alongside artists such as William Barton, Raehann Bryce-Davis, Alban Gerhardt, and Denis Kozhukhin, among many others. I am particularly proud of the MSO's commitment to nurturing emerging talent, ensuring a vibrant future for orchestral music and it was a highlight to work with our very own MSO Academy, and members of the Australian National Academy of Music, Australian Youth Orchestra, and Melbourne Youth Orchestras.

Beyond the concert hall, we embraced opportunities to connect with our community in new and meaningful ways. Our international tours to Singapore and Indonesia were a highlight, sharing the MSO's artistry with audiences across the region. And, of course, on a more personal note, I had the great pleasure of creating the *Jaime Martín Martini* with our partner Patient Wolf—combining two of my passions: music and a perfectly balanced drink!

To the wonderful musicians of the MSO, bravo! I feel great joy performing alongside you. To our audience, patrons, donors, sponsors, and supporters—thank you. It is a privilege to share our music with you, and I look forward to many more unforgettable moments together in the years ahead.

Jaime Martín
Chief Conductor & Artistic Advisor



IN MEMORY OF SIR ANDREW DAVIS CBE

2024 was marked by the incredibly sad news of the passing of the MSO's Conductor Laureate (2019-2024) and former Chief Conductor (2013-2019), Sir Andrew Davis CBE. Making his MSO debut in 2009, Sir Andrew was a mighty force, both on stage and off, and he is very much missed by the Orchestra's community of musicians, staff, and audiences.

It was a privilege to dedicate performances of Jaime conducts *Enigma Variations*—featuring some of the most popular English works ever written—to the memory of Sir Andrew and in honour of his immense contribution to the MSO and global symphonic music.

Sir Andrew was a giant of orchestral music, and it was a privilege that the MSO was able to work with him and share his passion with the people of Melbourne and Victoria. He also led the Orchestra on the international stage—from the BBC Proms (2014) to China (2018) and the United States (2019)—helping the MSO share the very best of Australian artistic talent with the world. Sir Andrew also led the Orchestra on several recordings, including works by Ives and Goossens, as well as Australian composers Carl Vine and Percy Grainger.

In honour of Sir Andrew's legacy, the MSO officially renamed its library, the Sir Andrew Davis CBE Music Library.



2024 HIGHLIGHTS



300,057
LIVE AUDIENCE



1.95M
DIGITAL AUDIENCE



174
PERFORMANCES



MSO CONCERTS
VIEWED IN
75
COUNTRIES



96% SURVEY RESPONDENTS
BELIEVE THE MSO
IS AN ESSENTIAL
PART OF THE CITY'S
CULTURAL LIFE



94% SURVEY RESPONDENTS
BELIEVE THAT THE
MSO IS A TRULY
GREAT ORCHESTRA



100
EDUCATION
WORKSHOPS
ATTRACTING
16,365
students and
teachers/views



11
SCHOOLS
PERFORMANCES
ATTRACTING
12,396
school-aged students
and teachers/views



57
AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT
TALKS, CONVERSATIONS
& LEARNING EVENTS
ATTRACTING
7,097
people

A YEAR OF HIGHS!

HIGHEST NUMBER OF NEW SUBSCRIBERS PURCHASING PACKAGES (SINCE 2019).

HIGHEST NUMBER OF FRIENDS OF THE MSO MEMBERS SINCE LAUNCHING THE PROGRAM (IN 2022).

HIGHEST MERCHANDISE SALES SINCE RELAUNCHING THE MSO SHOP (IN 2022).



**STAR WARS:
RETURN OF
THE JEDI**
Highest grossing and
fastest selling in 2024

WINNER

2024 Art Music Awards -
Stabat Mater by Mary Finsterer
for Performance of the Year:
Notated Composition

2024 Art Music Awards -
Stabat Mater by Mary Finsterer
for Work of the Year: Choral



58
WORLD PREMIERES*



90
MSO COMMISSIONS
PERFORMED*



87,605
FACEBOOK followers



47,882
INSTAGRAM followers



23,011
YOUTUBE subscribers



12,308
X (TWITTER) followers



1,721
TIKTOK followers



7,863
LINKEDIN followers



3,769
NEWS MENTIONS
with audience reach of
93,268,391

* Including arrangements

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION

Enriching lives through music.

MISSION

Through the shared language of music, we create meaningful cultural experiences for our audiences, delivered to the highest possible standard.

VALUES

RESPECTFUL COLLABORATIVE INNOVATIVE DIVERSE

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



WE LISTEN

to each other, and we listen to our audiences. We continuously tune in to build connections that bring joy and validation.



WE CREATE

welcoming experiences that showcase the beauty and wonder of artistic craft. Innovative performances that elevate the moment and endure in the spirit.



WE UNITE

our individual strengths and celebrate our unifying love of music, fostering understanding and belonging.

2024 ARTISTIC FAMILY



JAIME MARTÍN

Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor

Jaime Martín's Chief Conductor Chair is supported by the Besen Family Foundation in memory of Eva Besen AO and Marc Besen AC.

Chief Conductor of the MSO since 2022, and Music Director of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra since 2019, with those roles currently extended until 2028 and 2027 respectively, Spanish conductor Jaime Martín is also the Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales for the 24/25 season, and has held past positions as Chief Conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Ireland (2019-2024), Principal Guest Conductor of the Spanish National Orchestra (2022-2024) and Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of Gävle Symphony Orchestra (2013-2022). Jaime also served as Artistic Director of the Santandar International Festival, and was a founding member of the Orquesta de Cadaqués.



BENJAMIN NORTHEY

Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor – Learning and Engagement

In addition to his role at the MSO, Benjamin is also the Chief Conductor of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra, and Conductor in Residence of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. His international appearances include concerts with London Philharmonic Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg, Hong Kong Philharmonic, National Symphony Orchestra of Colombia, and New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. Benjamin celebrated his 20th anniversary with the MSO in 2023.



LEONARD WEISS CF

Cybec Assistant Conductor

Supported by Cybec Foundation

Leonard Weiss CF is an Australian conductor and educator. He is honoured to join the MSO as their 2024–25 Cybec Assistant Conductor. Leonard previously held the position of 2022 New Zealand Assistant Conductor in Residence, and before that, the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra's 2020–21 BSO-Peabody Fellow.



WARREN TREVELYAN-JONES

Chorus Director

Regarded as one of the leading choral conductors and choir trainers in Australia, Warren was appointed Chorus Director of the MSO in 2017. He has an extensive singing career as a soloist and ensemble singer in Europe, and has appeared on more than 60 CD recordings, numerous television, and radio broadcasts, and in many of the worlds' leading music festivals and concert halls.



KATY ABBOTT

Composer in Residence

Forensically curious about concepts of connection, place and humour which are threaded throughout her work, Katy Abbott is a highly-awarded Australian composer whose works are performed and recorded around the world. She is an Honorary Senior Fellow at Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and founded The Artists' Mentor, which supports established artists across disciplines to build long-term, vibrant careers with impact.



ERIN HELYARD

Artist in Residence

Erin Helyard is an inspiring conductor, a virtuosic and expressive performer of the harpsichord and fortepiano, and a lucid scholar who is passionate about promoting discourse between musicology and performance. His work as Artistic Director and co-founder of Pinchgut Opera and the Orchestra of the Antipodes has forged new standards of excellence in historically informed performance. Erin led the MSO in two Baroque Festival concerts and the annual Messiah performances in December 2024. Erin appears courtesy of Pinchgut Opera.

2024 ARTISTIC FAMILY



CHRISTIAN LI

Young Artist in Association

Christian has captivated audiences around the world since he became the youngest-ever Junior 1st Prize-winner of the 2018 Yehudi Menuhin International Violin Competition aged 10. In 2020 he became the youngest artist ever to sign with Decca Classics, and the youngest violinist to professionally record Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* (with the MSO). July 2023 saw the release of Christian's second album *Discovering Mendelssohn*, also with the MSO. Christian's most recent international debuts include the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, the Aalborg Symphony, the Oslo Philharmonic and the RTV Slovenian Radio Symphony.



NAOMI DODD

Cybec Young Composer in Residence

Supported by Cybec Foundation

Naomi Dodd is an emerging contemporary classical composer whose music transports listeners and evokes emotional response. Her music draws from impressionist, programmatic and romantic influences while her inspiration is deeply connected to her emotional sensitivities, with compositions often finding their genesis in Naomi's experiences and impressions of subjects such as Australian landscapes and coastlines, home and family.



KAREN KYRIAKOU

Artist in Residence, Learning and Engagement

Karen Kyriakou's work as an educator, presenter, author and composer/arranger is underpinned by her passion for music's unique capacity to unite and inspire. She works broadly in the area of music education, with students from kindergarten to tertiary level. With more than 25 years' experience in the field, Karen is renowned for her innovative approach to music education. Karen has led the MSO's ever-popular Jams for Juniors since its inception.



XIAN ZHANG

Artistic Ambassador

Sought after across the globe, GRAMMY® Award winner Xian Zhang has been Music Director of New Jersey Symphony since 2016. Previous positions include Music Director of Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano (2009–2016, continuing as Conductor Emeritus) and Principal Guest Conductor of BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Zhang was the first female conductor to hold a titled role with a BBC orchestra.



TAN DUN

Artistic Ambassador

The world-renowned artist and UNESCO Global Goodwill Ambassador, Tan Dun has made an indelible mark on the world's music scene with a creative repertoire that spans the boundaries of classical music, multimedia performance, and Eastern and Western traditions.



LU SIQING

Artistic Ambassador

Born in Qingdao, China, Lu Siqing is one of China's superstars of the violin. Invited by Yehudi Menuhin to study at his school in London aged 11, in 1984 he returned to China, and five years later went to Juilliard to study with Dorothy DeLay. In 1987 he was the first Asian violinist to win First Prize at Italy's Paganini International Violin Competition.



DEBORAH CHEETHAM FRAILLON AO

First Nations Creative Chair

Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO is a Yorta Yorta/Yuin soprano and composer specialising in chamber, orchestral, choral, and operatic settings of First Nations traditional languages and narratives across Australia. Deborah has been widely written about and is a thought leader regarding the importance of cultural authority in the Art Music space. Deborah has championed the voice and visibility of classically trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island musicians through her achievements as a composer, performer and artistic director of Short Black Opera and Ensemble Dutala. Deborah's career and achievements have been celebrated with many significant awards and in 2020 was appointed as the MSO's First Nations Creative Chair.



HIROYUKI IWAKI AO†

Conductor Laureate

In memoriam: 1974–2006

The MSO's longest serving conductor, Hiroyuki Iwaki commenced as Chief Conductor in 1974, and in 1990 was appointed as the MSO's first Conductor Laureate, honouring his contribution to the Orchestra's development. His dedication earned him many accolades including the renaming of the ABC Southbank studio to the Iwaki Auditorium in 1995.



SIR ANDREW DAVIS CBE†

Conductor Laureate

In memoriam: 2013–2024

Acclaimed conductor Sir Andrew Davis conducted virtually all the world's major orchestras and opera companies during his distinguished career of more than fifty years. Sir Andrew became the MSO's second Conductor Laureate in 2020 following his highly successful tenure as Chief Conductor from 2013–2019.

† Deceased

MEET THE ORCHESTRA

FIRST VIOLINS



Tair Khisambeev
Acting Associate
Concertmaster
*Di Jameson OAM and Frank Mercurio**



Anne-Marie Johnson
Acting Assistant
Concertmaster
*David Horowitz**



Peter Edwards
Assistant Principal



Kirsty Bremner
Retired Mar 2024



Sarah Curro
*Dr Harry Imber**



Peter Fellin



Deborah Goodall



Karla Hanna



Lorraine Hook



Kirstin Kenny



Eleanor Mancini
*Anne Neil**



Mark Mogilevski



Michelle Ruffolo



Anna Skálová
Completed trial Jun 2024



Kathryn Taylor

SECOND VIOLINS



Matthew Tomkins
Principal
*The Gross Foundation**



Monica Curro
Assistant Principal
*Dr Mary-Jane Gething AO**



Mary Allison



Isin Cakmakcioglu



Tiffany Cheng
*Glenn Sedgwick**



Freya Franzen



Cong Gu
*Newton Family in memory
of Rae Rothfield**



Andrew Hall



Robert Macindoe
Stepped down from
Associate Principal,
Mar 2024



Isy Wasserman
Retired Dec 2024



Philippa West
*Andrew Dudgeon AM**



Patrick Wong
*Cecilie Hall**



Roger Young
*Shane Buggle and Rosie
Callanan**

VIOLAS



Christopher Moore
Principal
*Di Jameson OAM and Frank
Mercurio**



Lauren Brigden



Katharine Brockman



Anthony Chataway
Peter T Kempen AM



William Clark
*Morris and Helen Margolis**



Aidan Filshie
Completed trial Aug 2024



Gabrielle Halloran



Jenny Khafagi
*Margaret Billson and the late
Ted Billson**



Fiona Sargeant

CELLOS



David Berlin
Principal



Rachael Tobin
Associate Principal
*Anonymous**



Elina Faskhi
Assistant Principal
*Di Jameson OAM
and Frank Mercurio**



Rohan de Korte
*Andrew Dudgeon AM**



Sarah Morse
Retired Mar 2024



Rebecca Proietto
*Peter T Kempen AM**



Angela Sargeant



Caleb Wong



Michelle Wood
*Andrew and Judy Rogers**

DOUBLE BASSES



Jonathon Coco
Section Principal
Completed trial Jun 2024



Rohan Dasika



Benjamin Hanlon
*Di Jameson OAM and Frank
Mercurio**



Suzanne Lee



Stephen Newton
*Sophie Galaise and Clarence
Fraser**

FLUTES & PICCOLO



Prudence Davis
Principal
*Jean Hedges**



Wendy Clarke
Associate Principal



Sarah Beggs



Andrew Macleod
Principal Piccolo

OBOES & COR ANGLAIS



Michael Pisani
Acting Section Principal



Ann Blackburn
*Margaret Billson and the late
Ted Billson**

CLARINETS & BASS CLARINET



David Thomas
Principal



Philip Arkinstall
Associate Principal



Craig Hill
*Rosemary and the late
Douglas Meagher**



Jon Craven
Principal Bass Clarinet

BASSOONS & CONTRA-BASSOON



Jack Schiller
Principal
*Dr Harry Imber**



Elise Millman
Associate Principal



Natasha Thomas
*Patricia Nilsson**



Brock Imison
Principal Contrabasson

HORNS



Nicolas Fleury
Principal
*Margaret Jackson AC**



Saul Lewis
Principal Third
*Cecilie Hall and the late
Han Michael Watt KC**



Abbey Edlin
*The Hanlon Foundation**



Josiah Kop



Rachel Shaw
*Gary McPherson**

TRUMPETS



Owen Morris
Principal



Shane Hooton
Associate Principal
*Glenn Sedgwick**



William Evans
Retired Mar 2024



Rosie Turner
*Dr John and Diana Frew**

TROMBONES & BASS TROMBONE



Richard Shirley



Mike Szabo
Principal Bass Trombone

TUBA



Timothy Buzbee
Principal

PERCUSSION & TIMPANI



Matthew Thomas
Principal
Completed trial Mar 2024



Shaun Trubiano
Principal Percussion



John Arcaro
*Tim and Lyn Edward**



Robert Cossom
*Drs Rhyll Wade and
Clem Gruen**

HARP



Yinuo Mu
Principal
*Pauline and David Lawton**

– Position supported by

MEET THE CHORUS

Warren Trevelyan-Jones
MSO Chorus Director

SOPRANO

Shirin Albert
Philippa Allen
Emma Anvari
Julie Arblaster
Sheila Baker
Helena Balazs
Aviva Barazani
Tina Battaglia
Giselle Baulch
Anne-Marie Brownhill
Eva Butcher
Ariel Chou
Aliz Cole
Jillian Colrain
Gabrielle Connell
Veryan Croggon
Ella Dann-Limon
Samantha Davies
Michele de Courcy
Isabelle Dennis
Clarissa Dodawec
Keren Evans
Laura Fahey
Rita Fitzgerald
Catherine Folley
Susan Fone
Carolyn Francis
Nicole Free
Camilla Gorman
Karina Gough
Emma Hamley
Juliana Hassett
Kim Sue Hendry
Gay Hoise
Penny Huggett
Gina Humphries
Tania Jacobs
Gwen Kennelly
Ingrid Kirchner
Theresa Lam
Natasha Lambie
Katie Lewis
Charlene Li
Judy Longbottom
Chloe Newmann
Tian Nie
Caitlin Noble
Susie Novella
Julie O'Reilly
Karin Otto
Rashika Perera Gomez
Jodie Pilkington
Amanda Powell

Tanja Redl
Beth Richardson
Jo Robin
Anna-Maria Rojas Leal
Danielle Rosenfeld-Lovell
Elizabeth Rusli
Jodi Samartgis
Jillian Samuels
Julienne Seal
Fiona Seers
Lydia Sherren
Jemima Sim
Eleanor Smith
Chiara Stebbing
Fiona Steffensen
Rachel Sztanski
Tracey Thorpe
Elizabeth Tindall
Christa Tom
Katy Turbitt
Asami Weaver
Emma Wise
Jillian Wood
Janelle Wytkamp
Boya Yan
Tara Zamin
Channery Zhang

ALTO

Judy Anderson
Ruth Anderson
Margaret Arnold
Tes Benton
Catherine Bickell
Cecilia Björkegren
Kate Bramley
Jane Brodie
Jacqueline Cheng
Alexandra Chubaty
Juliarna Clark
Andrea Clifford-Jones
Lesley Collins
Marie Connett
Niki Ebacioni
Mari Eleanor-Rapp
Nicola Eveleigh
Dionysia Evitaputri
Venice Fan
Lisa Faulks
Claudia Funder
Jill Giese
Jillian Graham
Debbie Griffiths
Sophia Gyger
Ros Harbison
Jennifer Henry

Kristine Hensel
Helen Hill
Yvonne Ho
Julie Lotherington
Helen MacLean
Christina McCowan
Rosemary McKelvie
Charlotte Midson
Stephanie Mitchell
Penelope Monger
Nicole Paterson
Natasha Pracejus
Alison Ralph
Tormey Reimer
Kate Rice
Helen Rommelaar
Kerry Roulston
Annie Runnalls
Lisa Savige
Victoria Sdralis
Helen Staindl
Melvin Tan
Libby Timcke
Jenny Vallins

TENOR

James Allen
Adam Birch
Kent Borchard
Steve Burnett
Peter Campbell
Allan Chiang
Keaton Cloherty
James Dal-Ben
Carlos Del Cueto
Jose Diaz
James Dipnall
Simon Gaites
Simon Goldman
Daniel Griffiths
Andreas Hartmann
Lyndon Horsburgh
Fergus Inder
Nader Masrouf
Lilijana Maticevska
Michael Mobach
Jean-Francois Ravat
Linton Roe
Colin Schultz
Robert Simpson
Cameron Tait
Brad Warburton
Stuart Webb
Elliott Westbury
Stephen Wood

BASS

Maurice Amor
José Miguel Armijo Fidalgo
Ryder Babcock
Kevin Barrell
Tharanga Basnayake
David Bennett
Richard Bolitho
Stephen Bordignon
David Brown
Roger Dargaville
Ted Davies
Peter Deane
Simon Evans
Michael Gough
Elliott Gyger
Andrew Ham
Andrew Hibbard
John Howard
John Hunt
Jordan Hyndman
Jordan Janssen
Gary Levy
Tim March
Douglas McQueen-Thomson
Vern O'Hara
Douglas Proctor
Stephen Pyk
Nick Sharman
Liam Straughan
Bruce Thompson
Matthew Toulmin
Caleb Triscari
Jiunn Yap
Maciek Zielinski



"Every thread of sound was audible and distinct, every cadence (of the Chorales particularly) was carved, as with a scalpel."

— Australian Book Review, 9 April 2024



PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

JAIME CONDUCTS MAHLER 3

In his first performance of the 2024 Season, Chief Conductor Jaime Martín undertook Mahler's epic Third Symphony, considered the longest symphony in the standard repertoire. Featuring American mezzo-soprano Raehann Bryce-Davis, the Young Voices of Melbourne, and the upper voices of the MSO Chorus (directed by Warren Trevelyan-Jones and guest director, Steven Hodgson), the more than 100 performers were met with a standing ovation. While in Melbourne, Raehann Bryce-Davis held a Masterclass with vocalists from Melba Opera Trust, offering insights and behind-the-scenes knowledge.

★★★★★

"MSO chief conductor Jaime Martín and his massive forces—more than 100 musicians plus upper voices choir, children's choir and American mezzo Raehann Bryce-Davis—met every challenge with panache, while the section principals covered themselves with distinction in their solo requirements."

– *The Age*, 18 March 2024

RYMAN HEALTHCARE SEASON OPENING GALA: JAIME CONDUCTS *THE PLANETS*

The 2024 Season—dedicated to symphonic storytelling—officially opened with a world premiere from Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO. German cellist Alban Gerhardt joined Chief Conductor Jaime Martín and the MSO for Elgar's Cello Concerto, composed in the aftermath of the First World War. Written at the same time, Holst's *The Planets* featured the upper voices of the MSO Chorus directed by Warren Trevelyan-Jones, and guest chorus director, Steven Hodgson.

Commissioned by the MSO, the world premiere of Cheetham Fraillon's *Earth* was written to complement Holst's *The Planets*, adding a vital First Nations perspective to an evening which celebrated humanity. The MSO's Ryman Healthcare Gala Series was presented by MSO Premier Partner, Ryman Healthcare.

★★★★★

"It was sumptuous: by turns thrilling, powerful, snarling and tender, with striking attention to detail by all involved—the work of a virtuoso orchestra and a conductor perfectly attuned."

– *The Age*, 25 March 2024

BAROQUE FESTIVAL

The MSO's 2024 Artist in Residence, Erin Helyard conceived the three-part Baroque Festival to resounding success. Commencing with Bach and Vivaldi Concertos, Helyard directed from the harpsichord, accompanied by violinist Zoë Black, with the MSO performing the Telemann Overture (Suite) in D Major, along with selections from Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, and Vivaldi concertos.

Handel and Vivaldi Arias again featured Helyard and Black, this time with Australian soprano, Samantha Clarke, and MSO soloists Matthew Tomkins (violin), Rachael Tobin (cello), and Michelle Wood (cello), performing a range of concerti and arias, the star genres of the Baroque era.

Wrapping up the Festival was a special 300th Anniversary performance of Bach's oratorio of biblical proportions, *St John Passion*. Conducted by Stephen Layton and featuring Ruairi Bowen (Evangelist, tenor), Christopher Richardson (Christus, bass), David Greco (Pilatus, bass), Sara Macliver (soprano), and Ashlyn Tymms (alto), the MSO was also accompanied by the MSO Chorus under Warren Trevelyan-Jones.

"Of the many outstanding features of these three concerts comprising the MSO's Baroque Festival, the variety of instrumentation was unexpectedly diverse—due largely to director Erin Helyard's choice of repertoire."

– *Classic Melbourne*, 7 April 2024

AMERICAN STORIES: BERNSTEIN, GERSHWIN AND MORE

In a program featuring favourites from American composers Barber, Bernstein and Gershwin, the MSO was led by Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor – Learning and Engagement, Benjamin Northey. A highlight of the performance was Australian composer, Joe Chindamo's *Ligeia* Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra, featuring guest artist, Australian-born Jonathon Ramsay, Principal Trombone at the Berlin Philharmonic. Based on the short story of the same name by Edgar Allan Poe, Chindamo notes that his work "reflects the nature of duality, or the double, a recurring theme in Poe's Gothic tales of mystery and the macabre".

★★★★★

"The interplay between the strings and woodwind, brass and percussion throughout the performance was masterfully handled by the MSO musicians under conductor Benjamin Northey."

– *Limelight*, 16 April 2024

★★★★★

"Placed before the beginning of *The Planets*, *Earth* instead operated in a kind of elliptical orbit around Holst's work, and was especially effective towards its conclusion where both the orchestral lines and an in-form Cheetham Fraillon soar."

– *Limelight*, 22 March 2024



Jess Hitchcock performs at **Classic 100 in Concert**, conducted by Benjamin Northey (photo Laura Manariti)

METROPOLIS: HIDDEN THOUGHTS I AND II

Cybec Assistant Conductor, Leonard Weiss CF, led the MSO in chamber performances of all-Australian programming. Hidden Thoughts I was curated by MSO percussionist, Robert Cossom, and featured Richard Meale's *Incredible Floridas* inspired by the surrealist poetry of Arthur Rimbaud, and MSO Composer in Residence, Katy Abbott's *Hidden Thoughts I: Do I Matter?*, used anonymous answers from a survey created by Abbott asking women for their 'hidden thoughts'.

The second instalment featured Abbott's *Hidden Thoughts II: Return to Sender*, using words taken from unopened letters from the Australian public to Asylum Seekers in detention on Nauru Island. With a libretto by Abbott and Maureen Johnson, the performance was narrated by Richard Piper, and featured Australian mezzo-soprano, Lotte Betts-Dean.

"Members of the audience... had no hesitation in jumping to their feet for a prolonged standing ovation at the end of the performance."

– *Classic Melbourne*, 4 August 2024

ABC CLASSIC 100 IN CONCERT

Presenting 'feel good' classics, the MSO and ABC Classic partnered once again to present a concert of uplifting and mood-boosting tunes that soothe the soul such as Elena Kats-Chernin AO's *Wild Swans: Eliza Aria*, Puccini's *Nessun Dorma* from *Turandot*, and Bernstein's *Symphonic Dances* from *West Side Story*.

Under the baton of Principal Conductor in Residence and the concert's Creative Director, Benjamin Northey, the concert featured ABC presenters and special guests who joined the MSO to celebrate the Top 100, as voted by Australian music lovers.

"...Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 [was] a crowd-pleasing introduction, and especially well-performed by the choir and strings. In fact, the string orchestra was a consistent delight throughout the show, as expected from the MSO."

– *Farrago Magazine*, 24 June 2024

DAN SULTAN X MSO

NAIDOC Week 2024 saw one of Australia's most loved singer-songwriters, Dan Sultan, join the MSO to celebrate the tenth anniversary of his third studio album, *Blackbird*. Dan reunited with the MSO to perform songs from the album and hits from his impressive catalogue. With orchestral arrangements from Alex Turley and featuring original, MSO-commissioned artwork from Dan's longtime friend and artist, Jarra Karalinar Steel, this performance—conducted by Aaron Wyatt—was ten years in the making and proudly presented in association with Arts Centre Melbourne and by MSO Major NAIDOC Week Partner, Equity Trustees.

"From the soaring and plaintive solo violin to the driving rhythm of the pizzicato string section, the power of the brass, horns, drums, and harp. Dan's music came to life in a very different, new, and moving way. Hearing rearrangement of Dan's songs took the audience on a magical music carpet ride. It was majestic!"

– *AustralianMusician.com.au*, 13 July 2024

METROPOLIS: MAX RICHTER: THE FOUR SEASONS RECOMPOSED

Under Principal Conductor Benjamin Northey, the Orchestra presented the world premiere of MSO commission, *Hidden Thoughts III: Stories of Awe*, by Composer in Residence, Katy Abbott. Narrated by Pamela Rabe, guest artists included Sophie Rowell (violin), Sunny Kim (vocalist), and Andrew O'Connor (bass-baritone). The third piece in Abbott's award-winning *Hidden Thoughts* series, the work is based on the stories of anonymous participants, telling of unexpected encounters, of finding the extraordinary in the ordinary, of being moved by music, art, nature, kindness, and courage.

The second half saw the MSO present ground-breaking composer Max Richter's take on Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*, which topped the classical charts in 22 countries in 2012 and is featured on countless soundtracks.

"Witnessing this performance [Hidden Thoughts III] was a profoundly moving experience... [it was] awe-inspiring in its own right: an exceptional work beautifully rendered by hugely talented performers. Benjamin Northey's direction [The Four Seasons Recomposed] was incisive without being intrusive; the ensemble produced a rich, warm, full sound..."

– *Classic Melbourne*, 13 August 2024

FAURÉ'S REQUIEM

Culminating in Fauré's *Requiem*, featuring the MSO Chorus (led by Warren Trevelyan-Jones), soprano Siobhan Stagg, and baritone Roderick Williams, the MSO, conducted by Lawrence Renes, delivered a program of much-loved repertoire and artists. Elena Kats-Chernin AO's *Mythic*, was inspired by the mental image of entering a mythical cave, while Sibelius' *Seventh Symphony* resulted in audiences lured into another dimension with its immersive and disorientating structure.

"As hoped, the musicians of the MSO showed how astutely an orchestra must attend to the varied challenges in programming where nuance, refinement and ensemble connection as a cohesive unit is the goal for music that doesn't need to be overt to express the ineffable."

– *Classic Melbourne*, 1 September 2024

TAN DUN: NINE | 谭盾《九》

MSO Ambassadors Tan Dun (conductor) and Lu Siqing (violin) joined the MSO and MSO Chorus for a celebratory performance featuring the Australian premiere of an MSO commission in Dun's Choral Concerto *Nine*. Opening with the overture to Beethoven's only ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus*, Lu Siqing then performed Dun's *Hero Concerto* for violin, based on the composer's score for the critically-acclaimed martial arts film *Hero*.

Paired with the famous *Ode to Joy* from the final movement of Beethoven's Ninth, Dun then conducted the Australian premiere of his choral concerto, *Nine*, a response to Beethoven, co-commissioned by the MSO and the Philharmonic Society of London—the very group who commissioned Beethoven's Ninth Symphony two hundred years ago. This concert was proudly supported by the MSO's East meets West consortium of partners and supporters.

★★★★

"Soloist Lu Siqing, like Dun himself, is a seasoned performer and gave a commanding and committed performance of this music."

– *The Age*, 14 September 2024



Siobhan Stagg performs *Fauré's Requiem*, conducted by Lawrence Renes (photo Laura Manariti)

KADDISH: A HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL CONCERT

Marking 80 years since the murder of composers, musicians, and artists from Terezin in Auschwitz, and in partnership with the Australian War Memorial, the MSO presented an evening of mourning and remembrance in two parts. Part I saw the performance of Leonard Bernstein's Symphony No.3 *Kaddish*, featuring Dr Leah Pizar, daughter of Samuel Pizar, narrating her father's libretto.

Part II commenced with the world premiere of *The Night of Broken Glass/William Cooper March* co-composed by Elena Kats-Chernin AO with William Barton. The concert then illustrated what happened to Jews, members of the Roma community and others during the Holocaust via projected texts and images and through works from murdered Jewish composers (such as Erwin Schulhoff, Hans Krása, and Pavel Haas), alongside works from survivors including George Dreyfus AM. To create Part II a year-long project, Music of Memory, was undertaken, led by a partnership between Flowers of Peace and the Australian War Memorial's musical director Christopher Latham OAM.

Conducted by Benjamin Northey, and directed by Latham, the performance featured Simon Tedeschi (narrator), William Barton (yidaki), Emily Sun (violin), Jessica Aszodi (mezzo-soprano), Edward Neeman (piano), Alice Giles AM (harp), the Young Voices of Melbourne under direction of Mark O'Leary OAM, and the MSO Chorus under Warren Trevelyan-Jones. The concert also featured video messages by US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken (stepson of Samuel Pizar), and Chair of the Australian War Memorial, Kim Beazley AC. This concert was presented in partnership with the Australian War Memorial, and supported by the Gandel Foundation and The Australian Jewish News.

"...The memorial was most powerful in its humanisation of such mass tragedy. In the orchestra's brilliant performance of compositions... we mourn not only the needless loss of life though humanity's cruelty but also the devastating loss of potential stolen from the world."

– *The Australian Jewish News*, 6 November 2024

BEETHOVEN FESTIVAL

For a fortnight in November, more than 15,000 ticket-holders were treated to the breathtaking range of Beethoven's symphonic output, in the much-anticipated Beethoven Festival, conducted by Chief Conductor, Jaime Martín. Across seven performances the Orchestra undertook the monumental task of presenting all of Beethoven's nine symphonies, with two symphonies performed each night, and culminating in three performances of Beethoven's Ninth for the annual Spring Gala.

The Ryman Healthcare Spring Gala also featured Sir James MacMillan's Concerto for Orchestra, an MSO co-commission. Sharing the stage with Jaime and the Orchestra for Beethoven's Ninth, the MSO was joined by Lauren Fagan (soprano), Margaret Plummer (mezzo-soprano), Stuart Skelton (tenor), Shenyang (bass-baritone), and the MSO Chorus led by director, Warren Trevelyan-Jones. Also performing Beethoven's Ninth was the MSO's Auslan Choir, powerfully representing the spectrum of emotions of the Ninth, visually. The Auslan Choir was led by the MSO's Artist in Residence, Learning and Engagement, Karen Kyriakou, and Rachelle Stevens and was supported by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

The Beethoven Festival was presented by Law Squared, the MSO's Premier International Law Firm Partner, and Quick Fix at Half Six was presented by TarraWarra Estate. The Ryman Healthcare Spring Gala was presented by Premier Partner Ryman Healthcare.

★★★★★

"The MSO players... passionate commitment to the music has shone through at every turn and near-capacity crowds have enthusiastically shown their appreciation for this Herculean effort. ... A well-considered additional feature of this performance was the participation of the 2024 Auslan Choir whose signing of the text not only acknowledged Beethoven's deafness but pointed to the composer's aspirations that all should "hear" his message."

– *The Age*, 29 November 2024

★★★★★

"Martín has a remarkable rapport with the orchestra and manages to extract from their performance all the joy, hope and resilience of the music. His conducting is joyous and wide-ranging, from small Bernstein-like gestures of the eyebrows to wide sweeps of the arms that gather in the whole orchestra."

– *Limelight*, 21 November 2024



CHAMPIONING CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIA



The MSO remains steadfast in its commitment to championing and elevating Australian music. Through the performance and commissioning of Australian works and collaborations with Australian artists, the MSO proudly showcases the nation's rich and diverse musical heritage.

In 2024, the MSO championed contemporary Australian women, sharing the stage with acclaimed artists such as Meg Washington, Kate Ceberano AM (in an encore performance from her 2023 concerts), and Katie Noonan, while also presenting a dedication to the late Dame Olivia Newton-John AC DBE. These performances highlighted the MSO's role in fostering a vibrant and thriving contemporary music ecosystem, often engaging new audiences and expanding its reach beyond traditional concert repertoire.

The commissioning of new orchestral works remained a cornerstone of the MSO's vision in 2024. This year saw the world premieres of compositions by Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO, Katy Abbott, Robert Cossom, Elena Kats-Chernin AO, Alex Turley, and the MSO's Cybec Young Composer in Residence, Naomi Dodd, underscoring the Orchestra's dedication to supporting creative innovation and nurturing the next generation of Australian composers.

KATY ABBOTT'S HIDDEN THOUGHTS

Throughout 2024, the MSO presented Katy Abbott's Hidden Thoughts, a series of three works, each which includes text sourced from the public.

The first of the series, *Do I Matter?*, utilised anonymous answers from a survey created by Abbott asking women for their 'hidden thoughts'. For Part II, *Return to Sender*, Abbott opened hundreds of letters from 2013 from Australians who had written letters of support and encouragement to Asylum Seekers in detention on Nauru Island which were never delivered. In her third and final instalment, *Stories of Awe*, Abbott presented individual stories of unexpected encounters, of finding the extraordinary in the ordinary, of being moved by music, art, nature, kindness and courage.

MEG WASHINGTON WITH THE MSO

The MSO's collaboration with ARIA winner, Meg Washington, kicked off a five city Australian tour, under conductor Vanessa Scammell. The performance featured reimaged orchestral arrangements of works from Washington's extensive catalogue, including *Lazarus Drug*, *How to Tame Lions*, *Skeleton Key* and *Catherine Wheel*.

HOPELESSLY DEVOTED: A CELEBRATION OF OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN

In March 2024, the MSO presented an uplifting tribute to Australian luminary, Dame Olivia Newton-John AC DBE, who passed away in August 2022 aged 73.

Hosted by Tottie Goldsmith, this celebration concert under the baton of Jessica Gethin, featured performances from David Campbell, Jess Hitchcock, Georgina Hopson and Christie Whelan Browne, with works including *Hopelessly Devoted to You*, *You're the One That I Want*, *Physical*, *Make a Move on Me*, *Xanadu*, *Magic*, *I Honestly Love You* and more. This concert was part of the MSO's Icon Series, which was proudly presented by Premier Partner Ryman Healthcare.

KATE CEBERANO: MY LIFE IS A SYMPHONY ENCORE

Due to overwhelming popular demand, Australian music royalty Kate Ceberano AM returned to Hamer Hall with the MSO in April. The third and final Melbourne performance of her critically acclaimed 30th album *My Life Is a Symphony* (featuring the MSO) was conducted by Principal Conductor Benjamin Northey.

Released to resounding success in May 2023, the album hit 1st on iTunes, 2nd on the ARIA Australian chart, and 6th on the ARIA Album chart and was nominated for Best Adult Contemporary Album at the 2023 ARIA Awards.

KATIE NOONAN X MSO: LOVE – AN ACT OF BRAVERY

In May, ARIA award-winner Katie Noonan shared her extraordinary vocal talents with the MSO and the next generation of orchestral musicians from Melbourne Youth Orchestras, who played 'side-by-side' as part of an ongoing partnership between the two Melbourne institutions.

Conducted by former MSO Cybec Assistant Conductor, Carlo Antonioli, Noonan performed a selection of works from Benjamin Britten's poetic song cycle, *Les Illuminations*, Leonard Bernstein, Joni Mitchell and original music from Noonan that reflects the theme of love as an act of bravery, including *Bluebird* and *Love's my song for you*.

“I’m a passionate advocate for new talent so to provide an opportunity for talented young musicians from the MYO to perform alongside the MSO on the Hamer Hall stage is a much-welcomed bonus.”

– Katie Noonan



107
AUSTRALIAN
WORKS
PERFORMED*



120
GUEST AUSTRALIAN
ARTISTS, SOLOISTS
& ENSEMBLES

CELEBRATING FIRST NATIONS



Through our shared language of music, the MSO honours the continuation of the oldest music practice in the world, and celebrates the people of the Eastern Kulin Nations, on whose unceded lands the Orchestra works and performs.

In 2024, the MSO's Musical Acknowledgement of Country *Long Time Living Here* continued to open concerts across the State. The Orchestra remains grateful to MSO First Nations Creative Chair, Deborah Cheetham Frailon AO and the language custodians throughout Victoria who guided and contributed to this important, and beautiful acknowledgement of First Nations peoples and culture.

The Orchestra also thanks Equity Trustees for their support as the MSO's Major NAIDOC Week partner, and the Ullmer Family Foundation, the Sage Foundation, and Members of the MSO First Nations Giving Circle for their support.

MUSIC & IDEAS: FIRST VOICES SHOWCASE

At the end of May, the MSO presented its second annual First Voices Showcase featuring the world premiere of works by Adam Manning and Leon Rodgers.

Adam's work, *New Normal*, featured clapsticks, the earliest handheld instrument still in use today, redefining their function within a modern orchestral context. Leon's work, *Seven Sisters*, paid homage to the well-known story around seven celestial sisters who are pursued by a man represented by the morning star. The event, conducted by Aaron Wyatt, also featured *Awakening* by Vonda Last, and Adam Manning's Rhythmic Acknowledgement of Country.

The First Voices Showcase was proudly presented by MSO Major NAIDOC Week Partner, Equity Trustees, with special thanks to the Ullmer Family Foundation: First Nations Emerging Artist Program, and Members of the MSO First Nations Giving Circle. Music & Ideas is supported by the City of Melbourne, and Aaron Wyatt's work with the Orchestra is generously supported by the Sage Foundation.

★★★★★

"Well performed by a chamber ensemble of some 16 players, with empathetic direction and commentary by Aaron Wyatt, this year's First Voices Showcase represents another small but important step along the road of reconciliation."

– *The Age*, 20 May 2024

"What better way to defeat apathy or inertia on these important issues than to seek out and celebrate Indigenous Australian composers and musicians."

– *ClassikON*, 24 May 2024

FIRST VOICES COMPOSERS PROGRAM

Culminating in the First Voices Showcase, the First Voices Composers Program is an initiative for emerging Australian First Nations composers. It aims to strengthen capacity and enhance cultural vibrancy through collaborations and the nurturing of talent. First Voices offers participants an orchestral music commission, along with the opportunity to workshop intensively with MSO musicians and guest composer mentors, and in mid-2024, Nathaniel Andrew and James Howard commenced the program, with their works being premiered in 2025.

CYBEC FIRST NATIONS COMPOSER IN RESIDENCE

In 2024, the MSO introduced a new position of Cybec First Nations Composer in Residence to the MSO's 2025 Artistic Family. Created to enhance First Nations representation in orchestral music, this inaugural role was awarded to composer and sound designer James Henry, offering opportunities for mentorship and commissioned work, the first of which will premiere in 2025. The MSO is very grateful to the Cybec Foundation for supporting the expansion of its artist development programs, and First Nations artistic achievement, through this role.

DAN SULTAN X MSO

During NAIDOC Week 2024, one of Australia's most loved singer-songwriters, Dan Sultan, joined the MSO to celebrate the tenth anniversary of his third studio album, *Blackbird*. With orchestral arrangements from Alex Turley and featuring original, MSO-commissioned artwork from Sultan's longtime friend, Boonwurrung, Wemba Wemba and Trawlwoolway artist, Jarra Karalinar Steel, the performance was conducted by Noongar man Aaron Wyatt and presented in association with Arts Centre Melbourne, and proudly presented by MSO Major NAIDOC Week Partner, Equity Trustees.

★★★★★

"The performance came together with bold and purposeful work from conductor Aaron Wyatt. The orchestra confidently moved through both sets, with an undeniable connection to the music and Sultan [was] brimming with passion. ... With at least three standing ovations, this collaboration between Sultan and the MSO was a musical feat and demonstrated the immense power of elevating First Nations voices on the orchestral stage."

– *Arts Hub*, 15 July 2024

 **25**
WORKS BY FIRST NATIONS
COMPOSERS PRESENTED*

“The layers [Sultan’s] music is generally known for were enriched and reflected in many tones, textures, layers and colours by the MSO tonight which deeply resonated with the audience judging by the look on the audiences faces.”

– Australian Musician, 13 July 2024



NURTURING THE NEXT GENERATION



The MSO believes in developing the future of the artform by supporting the next generation of musicians, composers, and conductors. In 2024, the Orchestra continued its partnership with the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM), delivering performance and learning opportunities for emerging instrumentalists who in 2024, participated in a variety of activity including panel discussions, masterclasses, and performances, such as Jaime Conducts Debussy and Strauss: A Hero's Life, and Jaime conducts Debussy & Strauss.

The MSO welcomed students from Melbourne Youth Orchestras to the stage in a curtain raiser performance at the Sidney Myer Free Concerts, and performed side-by-side with the MSO's musicians in Katie Noonan x MSO: Love – An Act of Bravery.

During the year, the MSO also hosted workshops for the Australian Conducting Academy, with emerging conductors Leonard Weiss CF, Aaron Wyatt, Sara Duhig, Ingrid Martin, and Nathaniel Griffiths, working under the mentorship of MSO Conductor in Residence and Artistic Advisor – Learning and Engagement, Benjamin Northey, and guest conductor, Alice Farnham.

CYBEC ARTIST DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS & SHOWCASE

In 2024, the Cybec Foundation continued its support of the Cybec 21st Century Australian Composers Program, the Cybec Young Composer in Residence, and the Cybec Assistant Conductor program.

The MSO was particularly grateful to the Cybec Foundation for assisting with the expansion of its artist development pathways with the addition of the Cybec First Nations Composer in Residence position to the MSO's 2025 Artistic Family. Aiming to increase First Nations representation in the orchestral artform, composer and sound designer, James Henry, was selected for this inaugural role, which incorporates mentorship and commissioning.

The annual Cybec Showcase took place on 30 January, presenting the world premiere of the previous year's Cybec program finalists; *Penchant* by Martin Cheney, *and they leave me in the dark* by Katia Geha, *Ikon of Nipsis* by Klearhos Murphy and *Sunburst Lichen* by Christine Pan. Klearhos Murphy was announced as the 2025 Cybec Young Composer in Residence.

“The vibrant diversity of this year's [Cybec] showcase bodes well for the future of Australian composition.”

– *The Age*, 29 January 2024

“This Cybec showcase was excellently produced, with a close-to sold out audience. Featuring a committed and talented young conductor at the helm, the orchestra was not only on top of its game technically, but also generally proved more adventurous in its commitment to these new works than many other orchestras would be.”

– *Limelight*, 2 February 2024





MSO Academy (left to right): Alexandra Allan, Tasman Compton, Donica Tran and Adam Davis (photo Samantha Meuleman)

MSO ACADEMY

Providing young instrumentalists a vital final bridge to a successful career, the MSO Academy is a paid opportunity for post-graduate musicians embarking on their career as professional musicians. Entry to the Academy is by audition, and the program runs for 12 months. Participants are guaranteed more than 60 mainstage calls and chamber music projects, mentorship with permanent MSO Musicians, and professional development and other industry training.

The 2024 participants were Donica Tran (violin), Alexandra Allan (oboe), Tasman Compton (bassoon), and Adam Davis (trumpet). Throughout the year, Academy members took part in a diverse range of concerts including all the Sidney Myer Free Concerts, Ryman Healthcare Season Opening Gala: The Planets, Jaime conducts Enigma Variations, the Baroque Festival, Dan Sultan x MSO, Classic Kids: Peter and the Wolf, the Regional Tour, the Beethoven Festival, and Home Alone, among many others.

In June, Academy members were invited to a workshop with members of the Australian Sports Commission's Elevate Lead Program, a professional development opportunity for the National Sports Organisations performance pathways. Along with MSO Principal Conductor Benjamin Northey, participants discussed high performing environments across disciplines.

The MSO Academy was supported by the generosity of Platinum Patrons Di Jameson OAM and Frank Mercurio.

AYO PRODUCTION TRAINEESHIP

With a mutual objective to develop the next generation of artists and arts workers, the MSO was pleased to commence a collaboration with Australian Youth Orchestra to deliver a comprehensive training experience to enhance technical production skills within the performing arts sector. Supported through a Creative Australia Workforce Development grant, the MSO and AYO have designed a program which will see participants gain on the job training and exposure to technical production professionals over the next two years.

In 2024, the MSO welcomed the first trainee as part of the program, Paris Bendistinto, who gained experience in the world of orchestral production management through a range of peer and expert-led learning and training modules.

SNARE DRUM AWARD

In August 2024, the MSO celebrated the Snare Drum Award's 20th Anniversary in a special concert event. Hosted by MSO Percussionist Rob Cossom, each finalist performed two works, with the MSO pleased to announce Felix Gilmour as the 2024 Snare Drum Award winner.

Established by Robert Cossom in 2004, the MSO Snare Drum Award is designed to encourage the pursuit of excellence in snare drum performance. Open to undergraduate tertiary students from Australia and New Zealand, the award provides an exclusive opportunity for applicants to further develop audition skills and performance techniques in a professional environment.

The MSO's Snare Drum Award is very generously supported by Tim and Lyn Edward, Cecilie Hall, an anonymous donor, and the late Hon. Michael Watt KC. The MSO is also grateful to Mastro Snare Drums, Zildjian, Evans, and Just Percussion for donating the Award prizes.

INDONESIAN INTERNS

Each year, the MSO welcomes two interns from Indonesia, supported through the partnership with the Government of the Special Region of Yogyakarta. During October, cellist Raden Dwitya Tama Darmasakti (Tama), and orchestra manager Sheila Sanjaya, immersed themselves in the day-to-day life of the MSO, working with musicians and staff to develop their skills and knowledge.

Toward the end of their stay, the MSO were joined by representatives of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Victoria State Office and the Indonesian Consulate General to celebrate Tama and Sheila and the shared creativity between Australia and Indonesia.

The MSO's 2024 engagement with Indonesian was gratefully supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Creative Victoria.



Snare Drum Award winner Felix Gilmour



Indonesian intern Sheila Sanjaya with MSO Head of Touring and Chorus, Callum Moncrieff (photo Laura Pemberton)

DISCOVERING THE JOY OF MUSIC



The MSO is dedicated to cultivating a lifelong connection with music, offering experiences that inspire audiences of all ages. In 2024, the Orchestra invited audiences to engage with the artistry of orchestral music through three Ears Wide Open 'musically illustrated' lectures, drawing 1,500 attendees, as well as 54 pre- and post-concert talks that engaged 6,800 music enthusiasts.

For younger audiences, Jams for Juniors reached more than 9,000 children through 55 workshops, while Classic Kids concerts introduced 8,800 primary school students to the wonders of orchestral music. The MSO offered its Work Experience program for secondary school students, engaging 58 participants in 2024.

JAMS IN SCHOOLS

In 2024, the MSO launched Jams in Schools, bringing the Orchestra's very popular series, Jams for Juniors, into primary schools around Victoria. The program is curriculum-linked and is designed to enhance students' understanding of orchestral music and instruments through the investigation of musical themes and compositional techniques—all in a participatory and interactive format.

Led by the MSO's Artist in Residence, Learning and Engagement, Karen Kyriakou together with six MSO musicians, Jams in Schools delivered 25 workshops to more than 4,400 school children around Victoria in its first year.

Jams in Schools was generously supported by Major Partner Melbourne Airport, the Department of Education, Victoria, through the Strategic Partnerships Program, AWM Electrical, Jean Hedges, Hume City Council, Marian and EH Flack Trust, and Flora and Frank Leith Trust.

"The enthusiasm was contagious as our students experienced the magic of orchestral performance firsthand [...] Moments like these remind us of the transformative power of music in education and inspire a lifelong love for the arts."

— Participating Teacher

MSO FOR SCHOOLS

Designed to inspire students and support the work of teachers in the classroom, the 2024 MSO for Schools program included concerts for students of all ages and abilities, learning resources for generalist and specialist music teachers, and pathways for schools that have never engaged with the MSO.

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, tickets to MSO for Schools concerts remained at \$9 each, with the 2024 program including *The Peasant Prince* (by MSO Composer in Residence, Katy Abbott), and *Peter and the Wolf*, as well as two open rehearsals with conductors Anja Bihlmaier, and Jen Winley.

In the regions, the MSO reached more than 1,300 students through performances in Shepparton, Wangaratta, and Albury, and once again offered two digital broadcasts and downloadable teacher resources packs, reaching students virtually in schools across the State.

Ensuring disadvantaged and diverse schools had equal access to MSO learning programs, the Schools Concert Experience Excursion Subsidy engaged 2,323 students from government primary and secondary schools with an Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage (ICSEA) below 1000, included subsidies for 57 buses, and covered expenses for 10 teachers.

MSO for Schools, and the MSO Schools Concert Experience Excursion Subsidy are supported by Crown Resorts Foundation and the Packer Family Foundation.

MUSIC & IDEAS

In 2024 the MSO's Music & Ideas program offered a rich array of public activities designed to enrich the audience's connection to MSO performances, with accessibly priced tickets and free events available both online and in-person.

Over the year, the MSO presented thirteen Music & Ideas events, including open rehearsals led by MSO Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor – Learning and Engagement Benjamin Northey and international guest conductor Lawrence Renes; masterclasses with guest soloists Raehann Bryce-Davies, Tine Thing Helseth, and Lu Siqing; and thought-provoking conversations with composer Tan Dun and the creative team behind *Kaddish: A Holocaust Memorial Concert*.

The MSO's Music & Ideas program was supported by the City of Melbourne, with the digital livestream made possible by the Crown Resorts Foundation and the Packer Family Foundation.



REFLECTING OUR DIVERSITY



The MSO champions programs that reflect the community's diversity, ensuring audiences see themselves in the Orchestra's performances. The MSO was delighted to welcome a range of incredible artists representing culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and performed works by contemporary artists such as Egyptian-Australian multi-instrumentalist, Joseph Tawadros, Indonesian-Spanish classical pianist and composer, Ananda Sukarlan, Chinese composer, Zheng QiuFeng, and Singaporean composer, Kelly Tang.

CHINESE NEW YEAR

A highlight of the MSO's East meets West program (a year-long celebration blending traditional and contemporary Eastern music on the Australian stage), the 11th Anniversary Chinese New Year Concert celebrated the Year of the Dragon at Hamer Hall in February 2024. Led by acclaimed conductor, Li Biao, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Beijing Symphony, and Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Tianjin Symphony Orchestra, the performance featured soprano Cathy-Di Zhang, and pianist Caroline Almonte.

This event was supported by the Consulate General of China in Melbourne, Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China, the Li Family Trust, and the East meets West consortium of partners and supporters.

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INTERNATIONAL GUEST
ARTISTS & ENSEMBLES



AUSTRALIAN
PREMIERE
OF AN MSO
CO-COMMISSION
NINE BY TAN DAN



ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY



The MSO believes in music's power to unite, inspire, and transform communities. Committed to audience-focused outcomes, the Orchestra strives to align with community goals and remove barriers to participation.

In 2024, the Sidney Myer Free Concerts attracted more than 24,000 attendees and reached 237,000 people through broadcast, showcasing a diverse program from Beethoven and Puccini, to world premieres by emerging Australian composers Naomi Dodd and Alex Turley.

The Friends of the MSO program welcomed more than 1,000 members, while student memberships saw 540 young people engage with the Orchestra. The Secret Symphony series, made easy by Up, welcomed audiences to unexpected venues including Melbourne Museum, St Ali, and Max Watts (in collaboration with RISING Festival).

The MSO also deepened collaborations with leading non-orchestral artists through the MSO Presents series, featuring performances such as Olivia Newton-John: Hopelessly Devoted, Kate Ceberano: My Life is a Symphony, and The Man from Snowy River in Concert. These innovative partnerships expanded the MSO's reach, redefining what a symphony orchestra can be in today's world.

GEELONG SERIES AND GEELONG FRIENDS OF THE MSO

In 2024, the MSO celebrated 75 years of performing in Geelong and maintained its reputation as the only Australian orchestra to offer a full series of concerts in a second city. Throughout the year the MSO presented a program which included American Stories: Bernstein, Gershwin and more, Mozart and Tchaikovsky, and Jaime conducts Rachmaninov and Dvořák with Chief Conductor Jaime Martín, all at Geelong's Costa Hall.

Supporting the Geelong series are the dedicated Geelong Friends of the MSO, who play a vital role in supporting the Orchestra and promoting its presence in the community. Members enjoy advantages such as post-concert events and access to open rehearsals, deepening their connection to the music.

SIDE-BY-SIDE

The MSO is committed to sharing its expertise, offering community members meaningful opportunities to learn directly from its musicians.

In April, a group of MSO musicians, were warmly welcomed to Shepparton for a side-by-side rehearsal with the Goulburn Valley Concert Orchestra. The rehearsal, which included 40 members from the GVCO, was conducted by MSO Cybec Assistant Conductor Leonard Weiss CF. Extending engagement with regional ensembles, 40 members of the West Gippsland Chorale performed with the Orchestra in Handel's *Messiah* at the West Gippsland Arts Centre in Warragul.

In May, 41 members of Melbourne Youth Orchestras sat side-by-side with the MSO for rehearsals and a performance of Katie Noonan x MSO: Love – An Act of Bravery. Conducted by former MSO Cybec Assistant Conductor, Carlo Antonioli, MYO and their MSO counterparts performed works from Britten, Bernstein, Joni Mitchell, and Noonan herself.

ACCESSIBILITY

The MSO is dedicated to ensuring all of its performances and spaces are accessible, safe and welcoming to every music-lover. In 2024, the Orchestra continued its focus on ensuring access through accessible venues, companion and carers' cards, hearing loops and assisted listening devices, among other initiatives. The MSO also added Auslan-interpretation to each of its Jams for Juniors series, enabling d/Deaf and hard of hearing audiences to join in on the music-making fun.

The season's Relaxed Performances—Peter and the Wolf, The Peasant Prince, and A Symphonic Christmas—attracted more than 3,100 audience members, and are for anyone who would benefit from a more relaxed concert environment. This includes but is not limited to people with autism, sensory sensitivities, learning disabilities, dementia as well as those living with anxiety or who have experienced trauma. Throughout the performance there is a relaxed attitude to noise, doors remain open and although the lights are dimmed, they remain on throughout the concert. Seating is usually General Admission, visual stories are available to prepare concert-goers, and patrons are welcome to leave the auditorium to take a break, with a designated quiet area available.

The MSO's Relaxed Performances and Auslan-interpreted Jams for Juniors presentations were supported by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

“We can't wait to see Peter and the Wolf on 10th August and thanks for the inclusive sensory friendly session. It makes attending these cultural and music events possible.”

– Audience member

AUSLAN CHOIR

In 2024, the MSO presented its first Auslan Choir in a performance of Beethoven's Symphony No.9 at the Spring Gala and as part of the Beethoven Festival. Led by MSO's Artist in Residence, Learning and Engagement, Karen Kyriakou, and consultant Rachelle Stevens, the Auslan Choir featured 20 people from around Melbourne who auditioned to be part of the event.

To prepare for the Auslan Choir rehearsals, participants received video learning materials created by Karen and Rochelle which provided information about Beethoven (who was profoundly deaf for more than half his life) and his Ninth Symphony. To develop the videos, Karen and Rachelle spent hours deciphering the old German poem 'Ode to Joy' by Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, into English and then into Auslan, navigating some very complex metaphors along the way.

The MSO's Auslan Choir initiative was supported by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

"A particular meaningful moment in the choir was the hand waving applause given to the Auslan choir at the end of the performance by the conductor and the MSO. This was truly a moving and unforgettable moment."

– Auslan Choir participant

"[What I enjoyed most was] the inclusivity, being part of something that is more often denied this minority; the camaraderie, making connections with passionate, like-minded people; and the endorphin rush I felt every time I finished the rehearsal video and the words 'see you at rehearsal' would flash on the screen. After the first Auslan rehearsal, I floated back to the train station. It took hours to come back from the high."

– Auslan Choir participant



"...sitting on the stage at Hamer Hall, watching the conductor and orchestra was awe inspiring. Never would I have imagined that I would have such an opportunity. I am so grateful for the experience and proud of what we did."

– Auslan Choir participant

MSO CHORUS



The MSO Chorus, under Chorus Director Warren Trevelyan-Jones, is one of Australia’s leading symphonic choruses and has been the voice of the MSO’s choral repertoire for almost 60 years.

Each year, members are invited to participate in an annual MSO Chorus Weekend and in 2024, choristers worked closely with Warren, and guests Steve Hodgson (conductor), Michael Fulcher (vocal technique), and Victoria Lambourn (German language coach) as they prepared for performances throughout March and April.

In 2024, the MSO Chorus appeared in 26 performances across 11 programs including Jaime Conducts Mahler 3, Season Opening Gala: The Planets (performing the world premiere of Deborah Cheetham Fraillon AO’s *Earth*), Fauré’s *Requiem*, performing the Australian premiere of Tan Dun’s *Nine*, Kaddish: A Holocaust Memorial Concert, and Home Alone in Concert, among others. The Chorus’ Tenor and Basses also travelled to Sydney to take part in two epic performances of Schoenberg’s *Gurrelieder* at the Sydney Opera House with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra under Simone Young AM.

Alone, the MSO Chorus appeared in their annual Anzac Day performance, honoured Remembrance Day and the Shrine of Remembrance’s 90th Anniversary alongside the Royal Australian Navy Band, and presented Song Cycles: Dove and Twist, featuring Joseph Twist’s *Timeless Land: An Australian Song Cycle*.

In August, the MSO Chorus undertook its first international tour in more than 10 years, joining the Orchestra in Singapore to perform Carl Orff’s *Carmina Burana*. With more than 200 people onstage, the MSO and MSO Chorus were joined by the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Chorus and Youth Choir. The MSO Chorus is proudly supported by Creative Victoria and the Orchestra’s generous patrons.

“...hearing the MSO Chorus a capella and with just piano accompaniment, you could appreciate the full breadth and depth of their talent and capacity for fine singing.”

– *ClassikON*, 26 May 2024 (Song Cycles)

“Something about the upper harmonies in the MSO Chorus and the interplay with the Orchestra had struck me in such a profound way...”

– *Arts Hub*, 3 December 2024 (Beethoven Festival)

“The MSO Chorus, clearly well prepared by chorus director Warren Trevelyan-Jones, was just as thrilling—comfortably filling the hall with clear and strong pitch and diction, and performing from memory.”

– *Limelight*, 29 November 2024 (Ryman Healthcare Spring Gala: Beethoven’s Ninth)



“Singing from memory, the MSO Chorus radiated conviction, even while dealing with the composer’s challenging vocal demands.”

– *The Age*, 29 November 2024 (Beethoven Festival)



MSO ON THE ROAD



REGIONAL TOURING

In 2024, the MSO's regional touring program visited eight communities—Mildura, Ballarat, Geelong, Warragul, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Albury and Bendigo—reaching a total of 11,800 people in-person and an additional 1,425 people online. Over the course of the year-long program, a range of activity was delivered ensuring access to world-class orchestral music and learning opportunities for regional communities including 14 mainstage concerts, eight pre-concert talks, three MSO for Schools concerts, three workshops/rehearsals with community ensembles, five interactive workshops for children/students—including work with the Heinze Music Program in Shepparton—and two digital broadcasts to schools.

Highlights included MSO musicians travelling to Shepparton in April to undertake two interactive schools' performances with 124 music students from Greater Shepparton Secondary College attending the first performance, and 180 students from five primary schools attending the second. These musicians also undertook a side-by-side rehearsal with the Goulburn Valley Concert Orchestra. In July, MSO Cybec Assistant Conductor Leonard Weiss CF visited Clarendon College in Ballarat where he conducted a workshop with the school orchestra of 42 student musicians, culminating in an open rehearsal/concert for parents and families. In December, the MSO Chorus partnered with the West Gippsland Chorale for *Messiah* in Warragul, and the Orchestra's performance of *Messiah* in Geelong became the highest grossing Geelong concert for the MSO.

The MSO's 2024 regional touring program was generously supported by Creative Victoria – Touring Victoria, AWM Electrical, Freemasons Foundation Victoria, the Robert Salzer Foundation, the Sir Andrew and Lady Fairley Foundation, and the Angior Family Foundation.

“Thank you so much for coming out to Clarendon College on Monday and please pass on my thanks again to Leonard and Nick. It was a wonderful experience for the kids.”

– Teacher

“This enriching experience has sparked new interests in music among some students, with some expressing a keen desire to learn an instrument themselves. We thank the MSO... for providing such a memorable day for our young learners.”

– Teacher

CHINA

In May, the MSO visited China to perform at the opening of the May Music Festival with MSO partner, the National Centre for Performing Arts (Beijing).

Over two nights, six MSO musicians performed side-by-side with members of the NCPA Orchestra, under the artistic leadership of world-renowned violinist and MSO Artistic Ambassador Lu Siqing, the Artistic Director of the May Festival. The MSO also worked with His Excellency Ambassador Scott Dewar and the Australian Embassy team to support cross-cultural connections and public diplomacy events around this activity, including a performance from MSO musicians with composer and world-leading contemporary guzheng artist, Mindy Meng Wang.

The MSO is grateful to the National Foundation for Australia-China Relations, the Australian Embassy, China, and the NCPA for their support of this activity.

“These performances bring exceptional music to the stage here in China and demonstrate the power of music to enhance people to people links between Australia and China”,

– His Excellency, Mr Scott Dewar, Australian Ambassador to the People's Republic of China





Indonesian musicians joined the MSO for a performance at Prambanan Temple

INDONESIA

In July, the MSO travelled to Indonesia with Chief Conductor, Jaime Martín, to celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations between Australia and Indonesia with performances, workshops and training for young people.

In Jakarta, the MSO team led an Arts Management Workshop for key cultural institutions invited by the Australian Embassy. Members of the MSO also joined forces with Indonesian musicians for a performance of Australian and Indonesian repertoire. In his first MSO Tour to Indonesia, Jaime Martín joined the Orchestra in Yogyakarta to conduct a side-by-side performance at UNESCO World Heritage site, Prambanan Temple, with musicians of the MSO, the Yogyakarta Royal Orchestra, and Youth Music Camp students. In addition to the annual Youth Music Camp, where MSO musicians provide string tuition to emerging instrumentalists, the MSO also delivered a three-day Arts Management Workshop which was attended by a diverse range of representatives from the local performing arts and arts management sector from government, universities, cultural institutions, and communities. A goal of this year's workshop was for participants to devise a creative initiative for the Yogyakarta Special Region, working within an indicative budget, with one project to be selected and delivered by the Government of Yogyakarta Special Region in 2025.

A four-year extension of the current agreement with the Government of Yogyakarta Special Region (2025 to 2028) and a new agreement with the Yogyakarta Royal Orchestra (2025 to 2028) was signed before the concert at Prambanan Temple.

The MSO's tour to Indonesia was supported by the Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

SINGAPORE

In August, the Singapore and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras and choruses joined forces to present Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana*. Led by Chief Conductor Jaime Martín, the performance featured the MSO's 2023 Artist in Residence Siobhan Stagg (soprano), Andrew Goodwin (tenor), and Christopher Tonkin (baritone). The program also included *Fanfare for a City* by Australian composer Maria Grenfell, Stravinsky's *The Firebird Suite* (1919) and, in homage to Martín's Spanish roots, De Falla's *Three Dances from The Three-Cornered Hat*.

Announced in a joint statement by the Prime Ministers of Australia and Singapore, the MSO agreement with the Singapore Symphony Group, first signed in 2018, was extended to 2025. The SSO and the MSO will continue to promote people to people exchange, develop co-commissions, digital collaborations and touring opportunities.

The MSO's tour to Singapore was supported by the Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts - International Cultural Diplomacy Arts Fund and the Orchestra's generous Patrons.

The MSO's international engagement is supported by the Gandel Foundation through the MSO's Now and Forever Future Fund.

“Following the cross-border digital productions with MSO in 2020 and 2021, we are thrilled to finally showcase the best of both orchestras live on stage together in this musical collaboration.”

– Kenneth Kwok, Chief Executive Officer of the Singapore Symphony Group



SHARING OUR MUSIC WITH THE WORLD



Believing in the power of music to connect, inspire, and uplift communities beyond the walls of the concert hall, in 2024, the MSO was pleased to share its performances through range of broadcasting channels, bringing symphonic performances to listeners across the globe.

The MSO once again partnered with ABC Classic to share performances on radio and online throughout Australia and around the world, in a combination of live and pre-recorded broadcasts to an estimated audience of 1.2M listeners in 2024. Continuing the tradition of broadcasting all the MSO's Sidney Myer Free Concerts live, ABC Classic also broadcast performances including Jaime Conducts Romeo and Juliet, Dan Sultan x MSO, Rachmaninov and Weinberg, American Stories: Bernstein, Gershwin and more, Dvořák and Bruckner, and Metropolis: Max Richter: The Four Seasons Recomposed, among many others.

MSO.LIVE

The MSO's digital content viewing platform, MSO.LIVE, continued across 2024 delivering performances and learning and engagement events to viewers in 79 countries. Thirty releases and livestreams of MSO concerts and events were showcased on the platform including Jaime Conducts Romeo and Juliet, Ryman Healthcare Winter Gala: Carmina Burana, Schumann and Tchaikovsky, Music & Ideas: First Voices Showcase, Jaime Conducts Mahler 3, the MSO's Sidney Myer Free Concerts, and the Ears Wide Open series.

For the last three years, MSO.LIVE allowed the MSO to stay connected with its community during the pandemic and post-pandemic period, becoming a lifeline for audiences seeking the inspiration and comfort of music during uncertain times. Looking to the future, the MSO is prioritising a more sustainable business model that aligns with its evolving audience needs, and with the significant investment required to maintain and grow MSO.LIVE, made the thoughtful decision to switch off the platform in early 2025. The MSO will continue to share its music and programs online and looks forward to focussing efforts on the vibrant opportunities that lie ahead in its live performances and beyond.

DEBUSSY & STRAUSS

Exploring life and love, *Debussy & Strauss* was the first release of recordings from a partnership, signed in December 2022, between the MSO and the London Symphony Orchestra.

Bringing together Chief Conductor Jaime Martín, soprano and MSO 2023 Artist in Residence Siobhan Stagg, with the MSO, the recording features a rarely heard 2015 arrangement by Australian composer Brett Dean of Debussy's *Ariettes oubliées (Forgotten Songs)*, which the MSO premiered in March 2023, and Strauss' *Vier letzte Lieder (Four Last Songs)* from the MSO's 2023 Season Opening Gala.

"It would be hard to imagine a more auspicious start to the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra's new in-house label than the release of this marvellous 5.0 multi-channel SACD of two Debussy and Strauss song cycles featuring the young and supremely gifted Australian soprano Siobhan Stagg."

– *HRAudio.net*, 25 May 2024

"The MSO's first release on its new label is a triumph."

– *Limelight*, 24 June 2024

★★★★★

"... the recording team has created audio alchemy that shows off the MSO at its best. Every brass chord is evenly spaced like organ registration, woodwinds flutter like birds, and every string chord sounds in perfect unison."

– *Weekend Australian*, 22 June 2024

63,000
NUMBER OF STREAMS
WITHIN 6 WEEKS OF DEBUSSY
& STRAUSS RELEASE

DVOŘÁK: SYMPHONIES 5 & 6

The first in a new cycle of Dvořák symphony recordings, *Dvořák: Symphonies 5 & 6* was the second release on the MSO's record label and was recorded at Hamer Hall in 2023.

The musical exploration of Czech composer Antonín Dvořák's many works has been an ongoing passion of Chief Conductor Jaime Martín, with these performances being artistic highlights of the MSO's second season under Martín's baton.

The cover artwork for the MSO's Dvořák cycle releases will profile iconic scenes from across Melbourne and the state of Victoria, beginning on this album with the Twelve Apostles of the Great Ocean Road.

"Chief conductor Jaime Martín approached Dvořák's Fifth Symphony as if engaging in a conversation with an old friend. He shaped the sumptuous melodic lines and warm, rich harmonies with ease allowing space for his wonderful orchestral colleagues to weave elegant solos or rumbustious interruptions."

– *ClassikON*, 20 November 2024



"...this MSO recording can already be considered a worthy addition to the Dvořák discography, with Martín and the MSO offering a balanced, lyrical reading that will appeal to those seeking a gracious yet robust entry point into Dvořák's symphonic world."

– *Limelight*, 22 November 2024

80,000

NUMBER OF STREAMS WITHIN 6 WEEKS OF DVOŘÁK: SYMPHONIES 5 & 6 RELEASE

APPLE MUSIC & SPOTIFY

HIGHEST STREAMING BY PROVIDER FOR BOTH RELEASES

ELECTRIC FIELDS X MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA 'LIVE IN CONCERT'

Recorded live in 2023 with the MSO, Electric Fields released their debut album in 2024, featuring 10 of their iconic tracks reimagined with the might of a full symphony orchestra.

The album features Electric Fields' Zaachariaha Fielding, lead vocals, and Michael Ross, producer, and was conducted by Vanessa Scammell. Arrangements were made by Alex Turley, the MSO's 2022 Cybec Young Composer in Residence, and the album was released on ABC Music. The 2023 concert was proudly presented by MSO Major NAIDOC Week Partner, Equity Trustees.

"This isn't just an album—it's a masterful blend of sonic innovation and orchestral grandeur, a once-in-a-lifetime musical experience."

– *Australianmusician.com.au*, 5 December 2024

"In almost 10 years of Electric Fields, this is one of our proudest moments. Our favourite EF songs performed live with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra."

– Electric Fields

USA & JAPAN

HIGHEST STREAMING TERRITORIES FOR BOTH RELEASES



"There was much rejoicing last year when the MSO launched its international collaboration with the London Symphony. Its first joint release boasted ear-stunning performances of orchestral songs by Debussy and Richard Strauss. How could that possibly be topped? The answer lies herein: its second release presents the fifth and sixth symphonies by Antonin Dvorak."

– *Weekend Australian*, 22 February 2025



CREATIVE ALLIANCES



Jessica Aszodi (mezzo-soprano), Alice Giles AM (harp) and William Barton (yidaki) perform with the MSO as part of *Kaddish: A Holocaust Memorial Concert*, presented in partnership with the Australian War Memorial and Flowers of Peace, conducted by Benjamin Northey (photo Laura Manariti).

The MSO's creative collaborations play a vital role in the Orchestra's ability to innovate, inspire, and connect with diverse audiences. By partnering with other organisations and individuals in the presentation of its work, the MSO can expand its creative reach and present fresh, multidisciplinary performances that resonate with diverse, modern audiences. As well as the incredible solo artists the MSO shared its stage with in 2024, the MSO was delighted to partner with all the organisations listed here in the presentation of its 2024 Season.

ABC TV and ABC Classic

Australian Army Band – Melbourne

Australian National Academy of Music

Australian War Memorial

Australian Youth Orchestra

ConcertLab

Flowers of Peace

Melba Opera Trust

Melbourne Fringe

Melbourne Youth Orchestras

National Centre for the Performing Arts Orchestra, Beijing

Qingxin Chamber Orchestra, Beijing

RISING Festival

Royal Australian Navy Band

Shrine of Remembrance

Singapore Symphony Children's Choir

Singapore Symphony Orchestra

Sydney Symphony Orchestra

The Consort of Melbourne

West Gippsland Chorale

Yogyakarta Royal Orchestra

Young Voices of Melbourne



Megan Burslem and Jeremy Fernandez host the *Classic 100 in Concert*, presented in association with ABC Classic (photo Laura Manariti)



OUR SUPPORTERS

As we reflect on 2024, we acknowledge a year marked by change, new beginnings, and above all else, extraordinary music. Amidst this change, we have been reminded time and again of the enduring power of music to bring people together. Whether in our concert halls, on tour across the regions, or in the foyer pre- and post-performance, our supporters warmth and presence have created an environment rich in connection, joy, and shared inspiration.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our incredible family of donors, patrons, funding partners, and corporate supporters. Your generosity throughout 2024—across government grants, private giving, and meaningful corporate partnerships—has been instrumental in ensuring that we continue to enrich lives through music, foster artistic excellence, and reach new audiences.

We began the year mourning the passing of Sir Andrew Davis CBE, whose remarkable legacy touched countless lives in our community. We also farewelled former MSO Chair Harold Mitchell AC, whose generosity, leadership, and unwavering advocacy for the arts helped shape the MSO into the thriving, world-class organisation it is today.

We are especially grateful to the Robert Salzer Foundation, marking Robert's centenary in 2024, and the Freemasons Foundation Victoria, whose support since 2019 has enabled

our ongoing regional touring. Your enduring commitment is felt deeply by our musicians and wider MSO family.

In the corporate space, we celebrated ongoing and new collaborations with partners who represent the very best in their industries. These partnerships have not only provided vital support but also created unique experiences for our audiences and helped us extend our reach—locally and internationally. Long-standing relationships, such as with Emirates and Ryman Healthcare, continue to enrich our work in countless ways, and we are truly grateful.

This year also brought exciting new beginnings. We welcomed our new CEO, Richard Wigley, whose warmth, ambition, and leadership have already made a significant impact. We also welcomed new musicians and bid farewell to cherished colleagues whose artistry over decades has shaped the MSO's sound and spirit.

As we look ahead, we do so with deep appreciation for all who support and believe in us. From all of us at your MSO, thank you for being part of our story. We wish you happiness, health, and musical joy in 2025, and look forward to sharing another year of unforgettable music together.

Suzanne Dembo
Chief Operating Officer

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Her Excellency Professor, the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria

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 Alexandra Champion de Crespigny
 Josh Chye
 Akira Kikkawa
 Jayde Walker
 Demetrio Zema

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 Patricia A Breslin
 B J Brown
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 Sarah Bullen
 Peter A Caldwell
 Luci and Ron Chambers
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The MSO gratefully acknowledges the support of the following Estates:

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Cecilie Hall and the late Hon Michael Watt KC
 Tim and Lyn Edward

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MSO Ambassador

Geoffrey Rush AC

The MSO honours the memory of Life Members

The late Marc Besen AC and the late Eva Besen AO
 John Brockman OAM
 The Honourable Alan Goldberg AO QC
 Harold Mitchell AC
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OUR MANAGEMENT



RICHARD WIGLEY
CEO

Born in New Zealand, Richard studied at the New England Conservatory of Music in the United States before embarking on a professional career playing the bassoon for the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester in the United Kingdom. At Hallé he was appointed the Orchestra's Education Director and then Head of Artistic Planning, leading to management roles at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, the Netherlands Symphony Orchestra and overall leadership as General Manager of the BBC Philharmonic. Most recently he was Managing Director for the Ulster Orchestra in Northern Ireland and Interim CEO of the Dunard Centre, a premier concert hall being built in Edinburgh, Scotland.

EXECUTIVE

- Richard Wigley*
Chief Executive Officer
(from August 2024)
- Sophie Galaise*
Managing Director
(until August 2024)
- Justine Battistella
Executive Assistant

PROGRAMMING

- Andrew Moore*
Director of Programming
(from April 2024)
- Warren Trevelyan-Jones
Chorus Director
- Katharine Bartholomeusz-Plows
Head of Artistic Planning
- Andrew Groch
Artistic Planning Manager
- Grace Ip
Programming Coordinator
(until December 2024)
- Stephen McAllan
Artist Liaison
- Mindy Meng Wang
East meets West Programming Lead
(until June 2024)
- Luke Speedy-Hutton
Orchestra Library Manager
(until December 2024)
- Veronika Reeves
Orchestra Librarian
- Jennifer Powell
Orchestra Librarian

LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

- Nicholas Bochner
Head of Learning & Engagement
- Keturah Haisman
Schools Program Lead
- Erica Dawkins
Emerging Artist Lead

ARTISTIC OPERATIONS

- Guy Ross*
Chief Operating Officer
- Simonette Turner
Head of Orchestra Management
- Callum Moncrieff
Head of Touring & Chorus
- Nina Dubecki
Orchestra Manager
- Eljo Agenbach
Assistant Orchestra Manager
(until November 2024)
- Meg Bowler
Orchestra & Chorus Coordinator
- Mark Sutcliffe
Executive Producer, MSO Presents
(until January 2024)
- Erika Noguchi
Producer MSO Presents
- Steele Foster
Head of Media & Production
(until December 2024)
- Brenton Burley
Production Manager
- Daniel Boaden
Production Coordinator
(until July 2024)
- Renn Picard
Production Coordinator
- Andrew Robinson
Production Coordinator
(from July 2024)
- Samantha Meuleman
Digital Content Producer
- Alexandra Fitzgerald
People & Culture Business Partner

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- Suzanne Dembo*
Director Philanthropy & External Affairs
- Caroline Buckley
Head of External Affairs
- Christina Chiam
Head of Philanthropy
(from January 2024)
- Charlotte Crocker
Philanthropy: Administration & Programs Lead
- Catherine Hempenstall
External Affairs: Grants & Reporting Lead
- Keith Clancy
Donor Liaison

PARTNERSHIPS

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Director of Business Development
- Nellie McLean
Head of Partnerships
(from May 2024)
- Christopher Cassidy
Senior Manager Corporate Partnerships
(until December 2024)

- Aidan Furst
Corporate Partnerships Manager
(until May 2024)
- Olivia Ouyang
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(until December 2024)

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- Dylan Stewart*
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- Shannon Toyne
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- Clare Douglas
Head of Marketing & Communications
(until April 2024)
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Digital Content & Campaign Coordinator
(until December 2024)
- Prue Bassett
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(until December 2024)
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(from May 2024)
- Sarah Camm
Box Office Manager
(until January 2024)
- Nicole Rees
Ticketing Operations & Insights Lead
- Marta Arquero
Ticketing & Customer Experience Coordinator
- Rowan Donaldson
Box Office Supervisor
(until December 2024)
- Sam Harvey
Database Administrator

FINANCE

- Sharon Li*
Chief Financial Officer
- Kate Nuttal
Financial Controller
(from July to December 2024)
- Lynn Tejano
Financial Accountant
- Lilian Karidza
Assistant Accountant
(from November 2024)
- Shayal Kumar
Payroll & Finance Officer
(until December 2024)
- Matthew Bagi
Accounts Officer
(from February 2024)

The MSO is incredibly grateful to all our casual team members and volunteers for their tremendous work in 2024.

* MSO Executive Leadership Team



CORPORATE GOVERNANCE



OUR BOARD



EDGAR MYER
CHAIR

Member of:

MSO Foundation Committee
MSO Investment Sub-Committee

Born and raised in Melbourne, Edgar Myer brings a broad range of skills and experiences to the role of MSO Chair. As Investment Director at Yulgilbar Group of Companies, a family office that invests across various asset classes and operating businesses, Edgar manages a range of investment and legal related matters.

Before moving into the world of private investment management, Edgar qualified as a solicitor and practiced at Gilbert + Tobin in Sydney, which included a secondment to Cravath, Swaine & Moore in New York City, where he worked on a variety of transactions, investigations, and disputes over several years. Prior to becoming a lawyer, Edgar trained as an anthropologist, conducting fieldwork in Eastern Indonesia.

In addition to his role on the MSO Board, Edgar serves as a director of The Aranday Foundation, as a member of the Asialink Advisory Council, and as a member of The Myer Foundation's Kenneth Myer Innovation Fellowships Committee. Previously, he was chair of CAUSINDY, the Conference of Australian and Indonesian Youth, and has undertaken several observer programs within The Myer Foundation. Mr Myer is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Appointed 17 March 2023
Appointed Chair 10 February 2025



MARTIN FOLEY
CO-DEPUTY CHAIR

As a former Minister in the Victorian Parliament across a range of portfolios—including the Creative Industries—Martin Foley brings a background of working with government, community and stakeholders in the Arts and Cultural communities. He worked closely with key Major Performing Arts organisations over the time he was in Government—including responding to the challenges of Covid 19 pandemic.

Martin sits on several other arts organisation's Boards, and chairs Alfred Health. He has a Master of Commerce from the University of Melbourne. He is also working with Monash University Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences approach to Mental Health reform. Martin longs to see a St Kilda Premiership before he dies.

Appointed 22 March 2023
Appointed Co-Deputy Chair
26 August 2024



FARREL MELTZER
CO-DEPUTY CHAIR

Member of:

MSO Foundation Committee

Farrel Meltzer founded Wingate and Wingate Capital, the predecessor of Fancourt Capital Group in 2004 after a successful career as an investment banker, including positions as head of ANZ Private Bank and Group Managing Director of Investec Bank (Australia) Ltd.

Recognised as one of Australia's outstanding specialised financial service innovators and business builders, Farrel's experience spans property investment and financing, corporate and consumer finance, private credit, private equity, and listed equities.

Farrel serves on several boards, investment and risk management committees and is an advisor to and confidant of many of Australia's substantial private investment groups and families. He is a Chartered Accountant and holds a B.Com, B.Acc (cum laude) and Adv Dip Banking (cum laude). Farrel is active in community affairs and a former board member of Jewish Care Victoria and the Jewish Museum of Australia Foundation.

Appointed 22 November 2022
Appointed Co-Deputy Chair
31 October 2024



SHANE BUGGLE
DIRECTOR

Chair MSO Finance Committee

Member of:
MSO Music Hub Committee

Shane Buggle has more than 35 years' experience in the finance sector, spending 25 years at ANZ in a variety of roles including Chief Financial Officer, and has also held senior roles at Zurich Financial Services and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

He is currently a director and chair of the Audit Committees at BUPA ANZ companies and Heartland Bank Australia Limited.

He holds a Bachelor of Commerce from University College Dublin, and an honorary doctorate, LL.D, from Monash University. He is a fellow of the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, and is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Shane was a member of Council of Monash University from 2007 to 2018 and was a Deputy Chancellor of Monash University from 2015 to 2018.

Appointed 18 August 2021



LORRAINE HOOK
DIRECTOR (EMPLOYEE-ELECTED)

Violinist Lorraine Hook joined the MSO in 1986 after studying in Melbourne, Germany, and London, and plays in the First Violin Section. Lorraine is actively involved in Chamber Music including performing in Tokyo in 2019.

She enjoys teaching privately, has tutored for the Melbourne and Australian Youth Orchestras, and was an MSO mentor for the Master of Music Orchestral Performance at Melbourne University Conservatorium of Music.

Lorraine's orchestral experience includes the Royal Philharmonic, City of London Sinfonia, London Festival Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Academy of Melbourne, and Australia Pro Arte.

Lorraine is Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (GAICD).

Appointed 27 February 2019



MARGARET JACKSON AC
DIRECTOR

Chair MSO Music Hub Steering Committee

Member of:
MSO Foundation Committee
MSO Governance Committee

Margaret Jackson has an extensive list of previous roles including Chairman of the Defence Employer Partnering Network, Chairman of Spotless Group Holdings, Chairman of Qantas, FlexiGroup Ltd, Chairman of Ansett Aviation Training Ltd, the Victorian Transport Accident Commission, the Prince's Trust Australia, the Malthouse and the Playbox, and President of Australian Volunteers International. She has also served as a Director of The Australian and New Zealand Banking Corporation, Pacific Dunlop Limited, John Fairfax Holdings Limited, BHP, and Telecom.

Margaret was awarded a Companion of the Order of Australia in the General Division (AC) in June 2003 for service to business in diverse and leading Australian corporations and to the community in the area of support for medical research, the arts and education. She also received the Centenary Medal in 2001 for service to Australian society in business.

Appointed 8 May 2015

Appointed Co-Deputy Chair
15 January 2024 to 26 August 2024



GARY MCPHERSON
DIRECTOR

Chair MSO Learning & Engagement Committee

Gary McPherson is the Ormond Professor of Music at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, the University of Melbourne.

Trained at the universities of Sydney and Indiana he has held professorial positions in the United States, Hong Kong, and Australia.

A former President of the Australian and International Societies for Music Education he has published more than 250 academic publications and produced 14 books through Oxford University Press.

Gary served as Director of the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music from 2009 to 2019 and currently teaches and undertakes research on a range of issues related to music performance science and music psychology.

In 2021 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Lund University (Sweden) for his contribution to music and music research internationally.

Appointed 18 August 2021



MARY WALDRON
DIRECTOR

Chair MSO Governance Committee

Member of:
MSO Learning & Engagement Committee
MSO Music Hub Committee

Mary Waldron previously served in Chair and Directorship roles at the Melbourne Recital Centre, Opera Australia, Macfarlane Burnet Institute for Medical Research and Public Health, Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, The Australian-Ireland Fund, and the Centre for Ethical Leadership advisory board.

She is a current non-Executive Director and Chair of Audit, Risk and Compliance of Zurich Australia and NZ, Chair of Audit and Finance at Crown Melbourne Limited, and Chair of the Risk committee of The Bank of Queensland.

Mary has more than 35 years' experience providing audit, risk, and professional services to Australian and Global Companies, in addition to Global executive leadership roles with deep operational, risk management and technology experience. She is a former Partner of PwC, EY and Andersen and held senior leadership roles, her last executive role was as Global Chief Risk Officer at PwC.

She is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and Chief Executive Women and is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, and Chartered Accountants Ireland. She holds a Bachelor of Economics and Social Studies from Trinity College Dublin and is a Fellow of the Vincent Fairfax Centre for Ethical Leadership.

Appointed 5 April 2023

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

This statement outlines the MSO's corporate governance practices and compliance in line with Australia Council for the Arts' Five Essential Governance Principles for Arts Organisations, authored by Dr Judith S. MacCormick and Bruce Rolph, published by the Australia Council for the Arts, January 2021.

To ensure sound governance of the organisation, the MSO Board works to:

- Ensure alignment of actions and decisions towards delivering on the organisation's mission, while demonstrating its values.
- Contribute to the development of a sound strategic plan to deliver on the vision and identified outcomes.
- Monitor and review activities and the organisation's financial position and remunerate fairly and responsibly.
- Manage risk and compliance, along with ensuring reporting requirements are met.
- Engage with stakeholders and instil the right organisational culture.

In 2024, the primary role of the Board of Directors was to guide the implementation of the MSO's strategic objectives to ensure reserves are suitably replenished and a long term, financially sustainable future for the Orchestra can be secured.

Key activities undertaken by the Board in 2024 included:

- The appointment of the MSO's new CEO, Richard Wigley.
- The ongoing development of governance practices including organisational and risk management practices.
- Initiating a program to drive cultural change and design improvements necessary to support a modern creative cultural organisation.
- Oversight of the Board renewal and replenishment process to ensure a board best positioned to meet the challenges of the organisation whilst ensuring a diverse range of skills are represented.
- Oversight of the wellbeing of the MSO's people and the Orchestra's financial position.
- Oversight of the MSO's Music Hub aiming to provide a long-term home for the MSO and a contemporary Hub for the music sector in the 21st Century.

The MSO also works to reflect the communities with whom it engages. In establishing measurable objectives for achieving diversity in the areas of, but not limited to, gender, age, ethnicity, disability and cultural background, the MSO will be able to assess and report on its progress and achievements.

The MSO sets out an expectation that directors are deeply connected to the mission of the organisation, and as a result will participate in and support the Company's operations, for example as a subscriber and by regular attendance at concerts and special events. Furthermore, directors have represented the MSO at numerous events during the year.

MSO directors' positions are on an honorary basis, and non-executive directors and the Company Secretary do not receive remuneration for their roles as directors of the Company. Board members also make philanthropic gifts.

Throughout the year, the Board delegates the management of the organisation to the CEO and Senior Management team, and governs each of the MSO's significant business streams, supported by Board subcommittees.

BOARD SUB-COMMITTEES

Membership of the sub-committees includes Board members, Senior Management and external representatives as required. The Chair of each subcommittee acts as a Board interface by representing the Board and reporting back at full Board meetings.

The current sub-committee structure includes five subcommittees, each chaired by a different Board member, with the following areas of responsibility:

1. Governance Committee – Chair, Mary Waldron

- Overall Governance
- Board recruitment, division of roles and performance
- Succession planning
- CEO assessment and compensation

2. Finance Committee – Chair, Di Jameson OAM (to June 2024) and Shane Buggle (from June 2024)

- Integrity of financial statements and reporting
- Engagement with the external auditors
- Reviewing internal controls and risk management
- Reviewing compliance with regulatory and legal requirements
- Reviewing ticket sales, marketing spend, cost and annual budget

3. Foundation Committee – Chair, Glenn Sedgwick (to June 2024) and Farrel Meltzer (from June 2024)

- Contributed revenue streams
- The structure of MSO Foundation Committee
- Development portfolios: Philanthropy, Corporate Sponsorship, Trusts, and Foundations
- Fundraising campaigns
- MSO investments and investment strategy

The purpose of the Foundation Committee is to raise and accumulate capital to ensure the long-term viability and financial security of the MSO, and to fund special initiatives.

4. Learning and Engagement Committee – Chair, Gary McPherson

- Strategy and assessment of effective programs and policy
- Champion for Music Education – advocacy

5. Music Hub Committee – Chair, Margaret Jackson AC

The medium-term purposes of the Committee are to oversee the fundraising strategy and the development of the Music Hub at 63-69 City Road, Southbank, Victoria.

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES

The MSO Board of Directors wish to acknowledge the following external representatives for the MSO Board subcommittees for their significant contribution in 2024:

Demetrio Zema (Company Secretary)

Daniel Johnson (Board Observer)

Governance Committee:

Carolyn Baker

Learning and Engagement Committee:

Robert Breen

Simon Warrender

Alice Rudd

The Hon Chris Pearce MP

Dr Hieu Pham

Finance Committee:

Kristen Hilton (to November 2024)

Liza Maimone (to October 2024)

Caroline Stuart

Foundation Committee:

Tabitha Lovett

BOARD SKILLS

A summary of Board skills, which includes the mix of professional competencies, including those trained as classical musicians, and diversity of its membership, is updated with each Board appointment. Currently, the MSO Board includes directors with a range of skills including:

- Not-For-Profit
- Arts Management
- Finance, Accounting and Investment
- Business and Commercial Experience (Public Companies and Small Business)
- Law
- Government Relations
- Marketing
- Governance
- Music and Cultural Industries
- Sustainability
- Fundraising
- IT and Digital
- Risk Management and Compliance

An MSO employee-elected director is also included on the Board, elected for a three-year term.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

The following MSO Management sub-committees are charged with the responsibility of meeting throughout the year to oversee the MSO's internal review and self-assessment processes:

1. MSO Artistic Committee

The MSO Artistic Committee is comprised of the Director of Programming, Chief Operating Officer and management representatives, the Chief Conductor, Concertmaster(s), and elected musicians. Its main purpose is to review:

- All performances including soloists, conductors, and programming choices.
- Orchestral performance standards.
- Annual repertoire and season plans.

2. Two MSO Consultative Committees

Two MSO Consultative Committees for musicians and administrative staff. The committees' roles include the discussion of day-to-day MSO operations as they relate to the Musicians and Staff Enterprise Agreements.

- The Musicians Consultative Committee consists of members of the Players' Committee and Players' Executive, plus management representatives including the Chief Operating Officer.
- The Staff Consultative Committee includes representatives from across administrative Staff, including the Chief Operating Officer.

3. MSO Chorus Committee

The MSO Chorus Committee, made up of eight singers, management representatives, and the Chief Operating Officer, meets to discuss engagement opportunities for the Chorus, programming and issues of artistic quality and performance standards.

4. Occupational Health and Safety Committee

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee consists of two elected Health and Safety representatives from the Orchestra, plus the Chief Operating Officer and representatives from across the Orchestra, Staff and Chorus. The committee monitors standards of occupational health, safety and rehabilitation and initiates plans and procedures with a view to minimising the effects of workplace hazards. The MSO continues to work diligently to maintain a formal and transparent procedure for managing the artistic proficiency of its orchestral musicians. This process continues to be refined.

2024 BOARD AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS*

DESCRIPTION	NO. OF MEETINGS
Board Meeting	6
Special Board Meeting	2
Finance Committee	5
Foundation Committee	4
Governance Committee	3
Learning and Engagement Committee	3
Music Hub Committee	4

* Regular Board meetings and two Special Board meetings were held. The Board and certain sub-committees also held working groups outside of the normal board calendar schedule as needed to respond to strategic issues as they arose.



FINANCIAL REPORT

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Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

ABN 47 078 925 658

Directors' Report for the year ended 31 December 2024

The Directors present their report together with the financial report of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited (the Company) for the year ended 31 December 2024 and the auditor's report thereon.

The Directors of the Company during the financial year and until the date of this report are as follows:

Name	Date of Appointment
David Li ^{AM} (Chairman)	1 July 2013 to 8 February 2025 (Chairman from 30 April 2021 to 8 February 2025)
Diane Jameson ^{OAM} (Co-Deputy Chair)	10 April 2018 to 31 October 2024 (Co-Deputy Chair from 30 April 2021 to 31 October 2024)
Helen Silver ^{AO} (Co-Deputy Chair)	14 January 2015 to 14 January 2024 (Co-Deputy Chair from 30 April 2021 to 14 January 2024)
Margaret Jackson ^{AC}	8 May 2015 (Co-Deputy Chair from 15 January 2024)
Shane Buggle	7 September 2021
Andrew Dugdeon ^{AM}	27 February 2019 to 7 October 2024
Martin Foley	22 March 2023
Sophie Galaise (Managing Director)	21 April 2016 to 26 August 2024
Lorraine Hook	30 April 2021
Gary McPherson	7 September 2021
Farrel Meltzer	22 November 2022
Edgar Myer	17 March 2023 (Chairman from 10 February 2025)
Glenn Sedgwick	10 April 2018 to 10 April 2024
Mary Waldron	5 April 2023

The number of meetings of the Company's Board of Directors held during the year ended 31 December 2024¹, and the number of meetings attended by each director were:

Name	Position Held	Held	Eligible	Attended
David Li ^{AM} (Chairman)	Chairman, Non-Executive Director	8	8	7
Diane Jameson ^{OAM}	Co-Deputy Chair, Non-Executive Director	8	7	6
Helen Silver ^{AO}	Co-Deputy Chair, Non-Executive Director	8	0	0
Shane Buggle	Non-Executive Director	8	8	8
Andrew Dugdeon ^{AM}	Non-Executive Director	8	6	4
Martin Foley	Non-Executive Director	8	8	5
Sophie Galaise	Managing Director	8	5	5
Lorraine Hook	Non-Executive Director	8	8	8
Margaret Jackson ^{AC}	Non-Executive Director	8	8	8
Gary McPherson	Non-Executive Director	8	8	6
Farrel Meltzer	Non-Executive Director	8	8	5
Edgar Myer	Non-Executive Director	8	8	7
Glenn Sedgwick	Non-Executive Director	8	1	1
Mary Waldron	Non-Executive Director	8	8	7

¹ 6 Regular Board meetings and 2 Special Board meetings were held. The Board and certain sub-committees also held working groups outside of the normal board calendar schedule as needed to respond to strategic issues as they arose.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Directors' Report for the year ended 31 December 2024

COMPANY SECRETARY

Mr Demetrio Zema Appointed 21 March 2024, resigned 31 December 2024

Mr Randal Williams Appointed 1 January 2025

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

During the financial year, the principal activities of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra were:

- the performance of symphonic music on stage
- delivery of learning and community outreach activities on-stage and online

There was no significant change in the nature of the activities of the Company during the year.

REVIEW AND RESULTS OF OPERATIONS

The 2024 year marked the second and final year of MSO's updated strategic plan (2023–2024), focused on business transformation. The 2024 Season box office revenue grossed more than \$15.7m, the second highest in MSO's history.

The total comprehensive deficit for the year was a deficit of (\$3,346,399), reflecting the underlying operating deficit as well as one-time restructuring costs, non-recurring program adjustments, staff separations, and case management expenses.

The underlying operating deficit for the full year of 2024 was (\$1,941,631), largely due to the impact of inflation on expected costs, as well as structural revenue pressures that continue to be felt across the arts sector.

Operating deficit is derived by removing the impact of one-off non-recurring transactions from the Comprehensive Income for the year, to show the result (Surplus/Deficit) had these costs not been incurred, as they are not part of the day-to-day operations of the Company. This information provides a more accurate view of the Company's performance for the year, for the Company's Directors and the management team.

In late 2024, the MSO developed a three-year Horizon document 'It's all about the music' which frames a medium-term vision and next steps. As part of this initiative, MSO restructured operations to mitigate financial risks and developed a sustainable future operating model to address these ongoing challenges.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

ABN 47 078 925 658

Directors' Report for the year ended 31 December 2024

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

ABN 47 078 925 658

Directors' Report for the year ended 31 December 2024

The table below presents the operating results for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra for the year ended 31 December 2024.

THE MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA MANAGEMENT OPERATING STATEMENT		
	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Revenues		
Public Funding ¹	15,518,515	14,929,934
Private Funding ²	7,267,974	5,746,311
Earned Income ³	16,271,109	18,259,455
Other	996,962	1,435,266
Total Income	40,054,560	40,370,965
Expenses		
Employee Expenses	21,940,791	22,328,700
Artistic Programming and production	11,446,748	12,199,925
Marketing Expenses	3,839,698	2,392,121
Other Expenses	4,779,119	3,919,020
Total Expenses	42,006,356	40,839,766
Underlying Operating Results	(1,951,796)	(468,801)
One-off expense items:		
Non-recurring Program Changes	(388,000)	-
Staff Costs associated with Restructure and Separation	(954,000)	-
Case Management and Response Costs	(689,000)	-
Donations of Endowment Nature	284,112	116,607
Special Purposes Donations	-	350,000
Profit on Sale of Investments	195,296	-
Change in Fair Value of Financial Assets	156,989	215,213
Surplus/(Deficit)	(3,346,399)	213,019

1. Public Funding – Revenue received from Government Sources
2. Private Funding – Revenue received from Sponsorships and Donations
3. Earned Income – Revenue received from Tickets Sales and Hires

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE STATE OF AFFAIRS

Events of 2024 resulted in a change in leadership and refresh of Board Directors including a new Chair and the appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer. The principal activities of the organisation remain unchanged.

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION

The Company's operations are not subject to any significant environmental regulations under either Commonwealth or State legislation. However, the Board believes that the Company has adequate systems in place for the management of its environmental requirements and is not aware of any breach of those environmental requirements, as they apply to the Company.

DIVIDENDS

No dividends were paid, declared or recommended during or since the end of the financial year.

INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE OF OFFICERS AND AUDITORS**Indemnification**

Under its Constitution, the Company provides an indemnity to its Directors and Officers, against any liability arising while the person served in these roles, in relation to the Group (subject to certain exceptions). During the year (ending 31 December 2024), the MSO agreed to indemnify certain Directors and Officers against specific liabilities.

Insurance premiums

During the financial year, the Company has paid premiums in respect of Directors' and Officers' liability, legal expenses, and insurance contracts. Since the end of the financial year, the Company has paid or agreed to pay premiums in respect of such insurance contracts for the year ended 31 December 2025. Such insurance contracts insure persons who are or have been Directors or Officers of the Company against certain liabilities (subject to certain exclusions).

Directors have not included details of the nature of the liabilities covered or the amount of the premium paid, as such disclosure is prohibited under the terms of the contract.

Indemnification of auditors

To the extent permitted by law, the Company has agreed to indemnify its auditors, Ernst & Young, Australia, as part of the terms of its audit engagement agreement against claims by third parties arising from the audit (for an unspecified amount). No payment has been made to indemnify Ernst & Young, Australia during the year ended 31 December 2024.

MATTERS SUBSEQUENT TO THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR

During the year a performance was cancelled and the performer then commenced proceedings against the Company in the Federal Court under the Fair Work Act. On 17 March 2025, the Chief Justice of the Federal Court heard the Company's application for Interlocutory Proceedings in regard to this matter. The Chief Justice has reserved her decision in the matter and at the date of signing the accounts the decision was still pending.

Unless otherwise stated in this report, no other matter or circumstance has arisen since 31 December 2024 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect:

- (a) the Company's operations in future financial years, or
- (b) the results of those operations in future financial years, or
- (c) the Company's state of affairs in future financial years.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited
 ABN 47 078 925 658
 Directors' Report for the year ended 31 December 2024



Shape the future
with confidence

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AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under s. 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012 is set out on page 5.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors:

Edgar Myer
Chair

Melbourne
30 April 2025

Shane Buggle
Director and Chair of Finance Committee

Melbourne
30 April 2025

Auditor's independence declaration to the directors of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

In relation to our audit of the financial report of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited for the financial year ended 31 December 2024, and in accordance with the requirements of Subdivision 60-C of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- a. No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of any applicable code of professional conduct; and
- b. No non-audit services provided that contravene any applicable code of professional conduct.

Ernst & Young

Christopher Tiedemann
Partner
30 April 2025

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited
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Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
REVENUES AND INCOME			
Government Funding – direct	3a	721,045	656,045
Government Funding – via parent entity	3b	14,797,470	14,273,889
Ticket sales	4	15,736,215	17,620,402
Sponsorship and donation revenue	5	7,132,949	5,950,091
Other revenue	6	1,727,152	2,074,319
Income from financial assets classified as Available for Sale	7	419,137	262,826
Financial Asset Revaluation Loss		156,989	215,213
Total Revenues and Income		40,690,957	41,052,785
EXPENSES			
Employee expenses		22,894,791	22,328,700
Artists fees and expenses		5,095,766	5,785,069
Marketing expenses		3,839,698	2,392,121
Production expenses		6,738,982	6,414,856
Selling expenses		430,459	492,531
Depreciation and amortisation	8	111,627	196,646
Management fee- Orchestra service fee		100,000	100,000
Other expenses		4,826,033	3,129,843
Financial Asset Revaluation Loss		-	-
Total Expenses		44,037,356	40,839,766
(Deficit)/Surplus		(3,346,399)	213,019
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		(3,346,399)	213,019

The Statement of Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the financial statements.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited
ABN 47 078 925 658
Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	16	5,767,767	4,466,404
Other financial assets	11	5,018,280	6,480,905
Receivables	9	381,106	363,783
Other	10	1,519,031	2,051,537
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		12,686,184	13,362,629
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, Plant, and Equipment	12	13,951,204	13,636,256
Intangible assets	13	42,320	108,132
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		13,993,524	13,744,388
TOTAL ASSETS		26,679,708	27,107,017
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables	14	6,639,733	5,230,552
Unearned revenue		6,762,623	4,966,227
Provisions	17	4,242,699	4,349,831
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		17,645,055	14,546,610
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provisions	17	393,140	572,495
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		393,140	572,495
TOTAL LIABILITIES		18,038,195	15,119,105
NET ASSETS		8,641,513	11,987,912
SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY			
Contributed equity	15	438,002	438,002
MSO Reserves	22	8,203,511	11,549,910
TOTAL SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY		8,641,513	11,987,912

The Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the financial statements.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited
 ABN 47 078 925 658
 Statement of Changes in Equity for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Contributed Equity (Note 15)	Retained Surplus/ (deficit) (Note 22(a))	MSO Foundation Reserve (Note 22(b))	Total Equity
	\$	\$	\$	\$
SHAREHOLDERS' EQUITY				
As at 31 December 2022	438,002	424,423	10,912,468	11,774,893
Total comprehensive income	-	213,019	-	213,019
Advance to/ (from) RIS Reserve	-	-	-	-
Transferred to reserves	-	(166,552)	166,552	-
As at 31 December 2023	438,002	470,890	11,079,020	11,987,912
Total comprehensive income	-	(3,346,399)	-	(3,346,399)
Net Transfers (to)/from MSO Foundation Reserve	-	1,000,000	(1,000,000)	-
Transferred to reserves	-	(1,017,771)	1,017,771	-
As at 31 December 2024	438,002	(2,893,280)	11,096,791	8,641,513

The Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the financial statements.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited
 ABN 47 078 925 658
 Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from government funding (incl GST)		17,125,981	16,351,789
Receipts from ticket sales		18,166,301	16,281,671
Receipts from sponsorships (incl GST) and donations		6,793,101	5,888,647
Receipts from other revenue		2,261,647	2,582,462
Interest received		323,313	54,965
Dividends received		178,313	
Payments to suppliers, employees and artists (incl GST)		(44,187,636)	(42,255,420)
NET CASH FLOWS USED IN OPERATING ACTIVITIES		661,020	(1,095,887)
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Net (Additions)/Disposals of Financial Assets		1,000,000	(1,000,000)
Payment for property, plant, and equipment		(359,657)	(3,031)
NET CASH FLOWS USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES		640,343	(1,003,031)
NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH HELD		1,301,363	(2,098,918)
Cash & Cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		4,466,404	6,565,322
CASH & CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	16	5,767,767	4,466,404

The Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the financial statements.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

1. CORPORATE INFORMATION

The financial report of the Company for the year ended 31 December 2024 was authorised for issue in accordance with a resolution of Directors on 29 April 2025.

The Company is a proprietary limited company incorporated in Australia. The ultimate parent of the Company is Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Holdings Limited (MSOHL).

MSOHL is a public company limited by guarantee and was incorporated in Australia on 19 October 2006 and subsequently purchased all shares in the Company from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) for \$10.

The nature of the operations and principal activities of the Company are described in the Directors' Report.

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**a) Basis of preparation**

The financial report is a general-purpose financial report, which has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012, Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures, and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

These accounting policies have been consistently applied by the Company and, except where there has been a change in accounting policy, are consistent with those of the previous period.

The financial report is presented in Australian dollars.

Going Concern

The financial report has been prepared on a going concern basis which assumes the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become payable for a period of at least 12 months from the date of the financial report.

As disclosed in Note 23, The Company is economically dependent on the ongoing annual funding from the Australian and Victorian Governments through a multipartite agreement. A new four-year multipartite funding agreement under the National Performing Arts Partnership Framework was entered in 2024, and expires 31 December 2028.

The financial statements have been prepared based upon conditions existing at 31 December 2024. Having carefully assessed the current forecasts, taking into consideration the existing and new 4-year funding framework for the Company as an approved Partner organisation, the Directors have determined that the going concern basis remains appropriate for the preparation of these financial statements.

b) Statement of compliance

The Company has adopted AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* for the financial year beginning 1 January 2021.

The Company is a not-for-profit, private sector entity which is not publicly accountable under Australian Accounting Standards. Therefore, the financial statements for the Company are tier 2 general purpose financial statements which have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures (AASB – SD) (Including Australian interpretations) adopted by the Australian

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

ABN 47 078 925 658

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Accounting Standards Board (AASB) and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012.

Other than the change in disclosure requirements, the adoption of AASB 1060 has had no significant impact on the entity's financial statements because the entity's previous financial statements complied with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures.

c) Revenue recognition

Revenues are recognised when an entity satisfies a performance obligation by transferring a promised good or service to a customer. AASB 1058 establishes principles for not-for-profit entities to recognise income on transactions where the consideration to acquire an asset is significantly less than fair value principally to enable a not-for-profit to further its objectives. The excess of the asset recognised over any "related amounts" is recognised as income immediately. The Company has not entered into any transactions where the consideration to acquire an asset is significantly less than the fair value of the asset principally to enable the Company to further its objectives.

Ticket sales

Ticket sales are recognised at the time of concert performance. The value of tickets sold in advance of each concert is recorded as prepaid ticket sales and recognised as a liability.

Sponsorship revenue

Sponsorship revenue is recognised in the period to which the sponsorships relate. Sponsorships which relate to specific performances are recognised at the time of concert performance. Sponsorship revenue is traditionally paid in advance and the value of unearned sponsorship revenue is recognised as a liability.

Government funding revenue

Funding revenue comprises funding from the Federal Government, the State Government of Victoria, and local governments.

The current tripartite funding agreement between MSOHL, the Creative Australia through the National Performing Arts Partnership Framework, and the Victorian Ministry for Creative Industries, through Creative Victoria, is for a period of four years ending 31 December 2024.

Funding revenue is recognised when due under the terms of the funding agreement. Special purpose funding, which requires the Company to fulfill an obligation outside its normal operations, is recognised at the time the obligation is fulfilled.

Government grants

Grants from the government are recognised in the period to which the grants relate. Grants which relate to specific activities/performances are recognised at the time of activities/concert performance.

Interest revenue

Interest revenue is recognised on a time proportionate basis that takes into account the effective yield on the financial assets.

Dividends

Dividends are recognised when the right to payment is established.

Sale of non-current assets

The gross proceeds of non-current asset sales are included as revenue at the date control of the asset passes to the buyer, usually when an unconditional contract of sale is signed.

The surplus or deficit on disposal is calculated as the difference between the carrying amount of the asset at the time of disposal and the net proceeds on disposal.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**Donations, bequests and grants**

Donations collected, including cash and goods for resale, are recognised as revenue upon attaining control over the donation and any performance obligations relating to the donation are completed.

d) Income Tax and Goods and Services Tax (GST)

The Company is exempt from income tax as it is an exempt charitable institution in accordance with Subdivision 50-B of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Revenues, expenses, and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the taxation authority. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included as a current asset or liability in the Statement of Financial Position. Cash flows are included in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are classified as operating cash flows.

e) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents, including short-term deposits with a maturity of three months or less, are carried at the face value of the amounts deposited. The carrying amounts of cash and cash equivalents, including short-term deposits, approximate net fair value.

f) Receivables

Trade receivables, which generally have 30-90 day terms, are recognised at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less an allowance for any impairment.

The collectability of trade receivables is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Debts that are known to be uncollectible are written off when identified. An allowance for doubtful debts is raised when there is objective evidence that the Company will not be able to collect the debt. Management considers such objective evidence to include, but not be limited to, formal correspondence from a trade receivable indicating its inability to repay the amount outstanding.

g) Other financial assets

Other financial assets are externally managed investment portfolios measured at fair value in the manner described in Note 11.

Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss

Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss include financial assets held for trading, financial assets designated upon initial recognition at fair value through profit or loss, or financial assets mandatorily required to be measured at fair value. Financial assets are classified as held for trading if they are acquired for the purpose of selling or repurchasing in the near term.

Financial assets with cash flows that are not solely payments of principal and interest are classified and measured at fair value through profit and loss, irrespective of the business model. Financial assets at fair value through the profit and loss are carried in the statement of financial position at fair value with net changes in fair value recognised in the statement of profit or loss.

h) Financial liabilities**Initial recognition and measurement**

All financial liabilities are recognised initially at fair value and, in the case of loans and borrowings and payables, net of directly attributable transaction costs.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

ABN 47 078 925 658

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**Subsequent measurement**

After initial recognition, interest-bearing loans and borrowings are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate (EIR) method. Gains and losses are recognised in profit or loss when the liabilities are derecognised as well as through the EIR amortisation process. Amortised cost is calculated by taking into account any discount or premium on initial recognition and fees or costs that are an integral part of the EIR. The EIR amortisation is included as finance costs in the statement of profit or loss.

Derecognition

A financial liability is derecognised when the obligation under the liability is discharged or cancelled or expired. When an existing financial liability is replaced by another from the same lender on substantially different terms, or the terms of an existing liability are substantially modified, such an exchange or modification is treated as the derecognition of the original liability and the recognition of a new liability. The difference in the respective carrying amounts is recognised in the statement of profit or loss.

Offsetting of financial instruments

Financial assets and financial liabilities are offset and the net amount is reported in the statement of financial position if there is a currently enforceable legal right to offset the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis, or to realise the assets and settle the liabilities simultaneously.

During the financial year, the Company held a loan facility of \$7,500,000 with its banker National Australia Bank. As at the date of this report, this loan facility of \$7,500,000 is undrawn and the Company can access these funds until October 2025, when this facility will expire and is expected to be renewed.

i) Impairment of non-financial assets other than goodwill

Intangible assets that have an indefinite useful life are not subject to amortisation and are tested annually for impairment or more frequently if events or changes in circumstances indicate that they might be impaired. Other assets are tested for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount. Recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use. For the purpose of assessing impairment, assets are grouped at the lowest levels for which there are separately identifiable cash inflows that are largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets (cash-generating units). Non-financial assets other than goodwill that suffered impairment are tested for possible reversal of the impairment whenever events or changes in circumstance indicate that the impairment may have reversed.

j) Property, plant, and equipment

All items of property, plant and equipment are carried at their historical cost of acquisition, being the fair value of the consideration provided plus the incidental costs directly attributable to the acquisition, less any accumulated impairment losses, less accumulated depreciation. The Company elected to adopt the cost model as an accounting policy to subsequently measure land as a class of PP&E.

Subsequent additional costs

Costs incurred on assets subsequent to initial acquisition are capitalised when it is probable that future economic benefits, in excess of the originally assessed performance of the asset, will flow to the Company in future years.

Costs that do not meet the criteria for capitalisation are expensed as incurred.

The residual values, useful lives and amortisation methods of all items of plant and equipment are reviewed and adjusted if appropriate, at each financial year-end.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**Intangible Assets**

Intangible Assets are the accumulation of costs associated with the development the Company's website. IT development costs include only those costs directly attributable to the development phase and are related to external direct costs of materials and services and payroll related costs relating to the time spent by those employees directly engaged in the project.

Capital Work in Progress

Capital Work in Progress is measured at cost. Assets will be recognised and depreciated using the straight-line method over their estimated useful lives when assets are ready for use.

k) Leases

The Company recognises assets and liabilities for all leases with a term of more than 12 months, unless the underlying asset is of low value. The Company uses the modified retrospective approach and elected to adopt the relief under AASB 2019-8 to utilise the cost option on transition for the Company's peppercorn leases.

The Company has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of venues and car parking that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets, including IT and office equipment. The Company recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

l) Depreciation**Useful lives**

Items of plant and equipment, leasehold improvements, computer equipment, motor vehicles and musical instruments are depreciated using the straight-line method over their estimated useful lives. Assets are depreciated from the date of acquisition. Land that qualifies for recognition as an asset is measured at cost on acquisition. The cost of acquisition includes both the purchase price and other directly attributable costs. Subsequently, land is carried at cost less any accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually for appropriateness. Depreciation is expensed.

The depreciation rates used for each class of asset are as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation rates
Plant & equipment	10% - 30%
Musical instruments	10% - 20%
Computer equipment	20% - 30%
Leasehold improvement	10% - 33.3%
Motor vehicle	30%
Land held by the Company is not depreciated due to the unlimited useful life.	

m) Payables

Trade payables and other payables are carried at amortised cost. They represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Company prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid and arise when the Company becomes obliged to make future payments in respect of the purchase of these goods and services. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

n) Employee benefits

Employee benefits comprise wages and salaries, annual and long service leave, and contributions to superannuation plans.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

ABN 47 078 925 658

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**Wages, salaries and annual leave**

Liabilities for wages and salaries expected to be settled within 12 months of balance date are recognised in other payables in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date. Liabilities for annual leave in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date which are expected to be settled within 12 months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related services are recognised in the provision for annual leave. Both liabilities are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

Long service leave

The provision for employee benefits to long service leave represents the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made by the employer resulting from employees' services provided up to the reporting date.

The provision is calculated using estimated future increases in wage and salary rates, including related on-costs, and expected settlement rates based on turnover history and is discounted using the rates attached to corporate bonds at balance date which most closely match the terms of maturity of the related liabilities.

o) Critical accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts in the financial statements. Management continually evaluates its judgements and estimates in relation to assets, liabilities, contingent liabilities, revenue and expenses. The following critical accounting policies have been identified for which significant judgements, estimates and assumptions are made.

Provision for employee benefits

Probabilities regarding staff turnover, when staff take leave, and future wage rates are based on historical experience.

Land carrying value

The MSO acquired a parcel of land in late 2022. The carrying value of this asset in the accounts is at historical cost. Management have reviewed this and resolved to maintain the land value at historical cost.

p) Comparatives

Where a change in accounting treatment has resulted in significant differences between financial years, prior year data has been reclassified to assist comparison.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

3. FUNDING REVENUE

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
a) Funding from Government		
<u>Federal Government</u>		
National Foundation for Australia-China Relations	42,857	119,143
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade-International Cultural Diplomacy	60,000	-
Creative Australia - Australian Cultural Fund	-	18,710
Creative Australia - Workforce Development Grants	25,000	-
Department of Social Services	80,000	-
Office for the Arts	50,000	-
<u>Victoria State Government</u>		
Creative Victoria - Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus Grant	125,590	125,590
Creative Victoria - Asia activity support	-	82,829
Creative Victoria - Regional Tour	120,000	159,300
Creative Victoria - International Engagement Grant	25,000	-
Creative Victoria - International Engagement Grant	42,500	35,116
<u>Local Governments</u>		
City of Melbourne - Arts and Creative Investment Partnerships	110,098	105,357
City of Melbourne - Event Partnership Program	30,000	-
Hume City Council - Community Partnerships	10,000	10,000
	721,045	656,045
b) Government Funding – via parent entity		
Australia Council for the Arts - Annual Grant	12,414,470	11,925,524
Arts Victoria - Annual Grant	2,383,000	2,348,365
	14,797,470	14,273,889
Total Funding	15,518,515	14,929,934

Provision of funds by MSOHL to the Company originates from federal and state governments, through the Creative Australia and Creative Victoria and is paid to MSOHL. A funding agreement between MSOHL and the Company provides the basis for the funds to be passed to the Company.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

4. TICKET SALES REVENUE

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Subscription sales	2,792,078	2,574,843
Single night ticket sales	12,944,137	15,045,559
	15,736,215	17,620,402

5. SPONSORSHIP AND DONATION REVENUE

Sponsorship	2,871,657	2,085,917
Donations	2,669,384	2,487,457
Special Donations for future capital project	-	350,000
Bequests	284,112	116,607
Grants and trusts	1,307,796	910,110
	7,132,949	5,950,091

6. OTHER REVENUE

Interest	277,785	269,086
Orchestral hire & performance fees	534,894	639,053
Other	914,473	1,166,180
	1,727,152	2,074,319

7. OTHER INCOME FROM FINANCIAL ASSETS

Interest earned from financial assets	45,528	74,153
Dividends	178,313	134,083
Profit on Sale of Financial Assets	195,296	54,590
	419,137	262,826

8. EXPENSES

Net Surplus for the year has been arrived at after charging the following items:

Depreciation:		
Office equipment, furniture and fittings	3,067	8,005
Computers	32,877	51,670
Leasehold Improvements	-	4,828
Musical instruments	9,871	14,310
Intangible Assets	65,812	117,833
Total Depreciation (Note 12)	111,627	196,646
Lease payments - car	9,528	9,526
Lease payments - office equipment	13,032	13,032
Office outgoings	167,856	157,503

The Company has applied AASB 16 and elected to adopt the relief under AASB 2019-8 to utilise the cost option on transition for the Company's peppercorn leases. The Company has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of venues and car parking that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets, including IT and office equipment. The Company recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

9. RECEIVABLES

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
a) Trade and other receivables		
<i>Current</i>		
Trade receivables	104,586	135,390
Government funding invoiced in advance	-	13,463
Debtors – sponsorship invoices raised	62,427	77,000
GST receivable	214,093	137,930
	381,106	363,783
b) Trade and other debtors ageing:		
0 to 60 days	4,318	86,688
61 to 90 days	22,042	11,000
Over 90 days	100,214	83,641
Total trade and other receivables	126,574	181,329

Trade receivables are non-interest bearing and are normally settled in 30 days. Other receivables amounts generally arise from transactions outside the usual operating activities of the Company.

10. OTHER CURRENT ASSETS

Prepayments	1,022,877	930,398
Accrued interest	-	19,188
Accrued revenue	496,154	1,101,951
Total Other Current Assets	1,519,031	2,051,537

11. OTHER FINANCIAL ASSETS

MSO Foundation externally managed portfolio	5,018,280	5,480,905
Term Deposit maturing in greater than 3 months	-	1,000,000
	5,018,280	6,480,905

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

11. OTHER FINANCIAL ASSETS (continued)

a) Financial assets

Financial assets include:

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Cash	108,012	1,093,784
Fixed Income	569,296	1,065,793
Managed funds - Government Bonds	-	400,051
Managed funds - Real assets	-	179,854
Term Deposit maturing in greater than 3 months	-	1,000,000
Domestic Equities	567,452	2,023,400
International Equities	1,225,726	718,023
Private Markets, Credit Funds and other Managed Assets	2,547,792	-
	5,018,278	6,480,905

Investments are designated as fair value through profit and loss financial assets if they do not have fixed maturities and fixed or determinable payments, and management intends to hold them for the medium to long term.

Specific valuation techniques used to value financial instruments include quoted market prices for similar instruments.

Private Markets, Credit Funds and Other Managed Assets are held at fair value and have varying liquidity profiles.

12. PROPERTY, PLANT, AND EQUIPMENT

	Property, plant, and equipment	Musical instruments	Office equipment	Leasehold Improvements	Computer equipment	Motor Vehicle	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Cost:							
Opening balance	13,757,232	1,452,672	257,947	146,508	677,075	10,000	16,301,434
Additions	-	343,811	-	-	21,786	-	365,597
Disposal	-	-	-	-	(2,908)	-	(2,908)
Closing balance	13,757,232	1,796,483	257,947	146,508	695,953	10,000	16,664,123
Accumulated depreciation:							
Opening balance	187,901	1,425,874	247,151	151,791	645,492	10,000	2,668,209
Depreciation expense (Note 8)	-	9,872	3,067	-	32,877	-	45,815
Disposal	-	-	-	-	(1,106)	-	(1,106)
Closing balance	187,901	1,435,745	250,218	151,791	677,263	10,000	2,712,918
Net book value, 31 December 2024	13,569,331	360,737	7,729	(5,283)	18,690	-	13,951,204
Net book value, 31 December 2023	13,569,331	26,798	10,796	(5,283)	34,614	-	13,636,256

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

13. INTANGIBLE ASSETS

	Websites \$	Tessitura (CRM) \$	Total \$
Cost:			
Opening balance	447,927	329,088	777,015
Additions	-	89,970	89,970
Closing balance	447,927	419,058	866,985
Accumulated amortisation:			
Opening balance	420,139	338,714	758,853
Amortisation expense (Note 8)	27,788	38,024	65,812
Closing balance	447,927	376,738	824,665
Net book value, 31 December 2024	-	42,320	42,320
Net book value, 31 December 2023	27,788	80,344	108,132

14. PAYABLES

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Trade creditors	2,960,200	1,432,260
Other creditors and accruals	3,328,329	3,307,617
Unearned government funding	199,954	157,816
Unearned sponsorship revenue	36,249	162,858
Unearned other revenue	115,001	170,001
Total Payables	6,639,733	5,230,552

Trade payables are non-interest bearing and are normally settled in 30 days.

15. CONTRIBUTED EQUITY

Share capital		
438,002 (2022: 438,002) ordinary shares, fully paid	438,002	438,002

On 31 December 2006 MSOHL purchased all shares of the Company that were previously held by the ABC.

16. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and at bank and short-term deposits with an original maturity of three months or less. Cash assets as at the end of the financial year as shown in the statement of cash flows are as follows:

	2024	2023
Cash	5,767,767	4,466,404
Total	5,767,767	4,466,404

The Company has \$5,767,767 Cash equivalents at 31 December 2024 (31 December 2023: \$4,466,404).

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

17. PROVISIONS

Employee Benefits

	2024	2023
Current		
Annual Leave	1,659,197	1,481,309
Long Service Leave	2,583,502	2,467,060
	4,242,699	3,948,369
Non-current		
Annual Leave	-	401,462
Long Service Leave	393,140	572,495
	393,140	973,957
Total	4,635,839	4,922,326

Assumed rate of increase in wage and salary rates	3.5%	3.0%
Discount rate	5.0%	5.0%
Full-time equivalent employees at year-end	152.34	164.62

18. KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

a) Details of Key Management Personnel

(i) Directors

The number of meetings of the Company's Board of Directors held during the year ended 31 December 2024², and the number of meetings attended by each director were:

Name	Position Held	Held	Eligible	Attended
David Li ^{AM} (Chairman)	Chairman, Non-Executive Director	8	8	7
Diane Jameson ^{oAM}	Co-Deputy Chair, Non-Executive Director	8	7	6
Helen Silver ^{AO}	Co-Deputy Chair, Non-Executive Director	8	0	0
Shane Buggle	Non-Executive Director	8	8	8
Andrew Dugdeon ^{AM}	Non-Executive Director	8	6	4
Martin Foley	Non-Executive Director	8	8	5
Sophie Galaise	Managing Director	8	5	5
Lorraine Hook	Non-Executive Director	8	8	8
Margaret Jackson ^{AC}	Non-Executive Director	8	8	8
Gary McPherson	Non-Executive Director	8	8	6
Farrel Meltzer	Non-Executive Director	8	8	5
Edgar Myer	Non-Executive Director	8	8	7
Glenn Sedgwick	Non-Executive Director	8	1	1
Mary Waldron	Non-Executive Director	8	8	7

² 6 Regular Board meetings and 2 Special Board meetings were held. The Board and certain sub-committees also held working groups outside of the normal board calendar schedule as needed to respond to strategic issues as they arose.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

b) Compensation of Key Management Personnel	2024	2023
Compensation	2,628,801	1,785,052

Key management personnel comprise board-appointed personnel and other persons having the responsibilities for planning, directing and controlling the major activities of the Company. The Directors positions are on an honorary basis, as such, Non-Executive Directors do not receive remuneration for their role as a Director of the Company.

c) Transactions with key management personnel

Refer to note 19 for details of significant transactions between the Company and key management personnel.

19. RELATED PARTIES**a) Directors**

The names of each person holding the position of Director of the Company during the financial year are detailed in the Directors' Report and note 18(a).

b) Parent Entities

The ultimate holding company of the Company is MSOHL which owns 100% of the equity in the Company. The Directors of MSOHL are also Directors of the Company. An agreement between MSOHL and the Company exists whereby MSOHL has agreed to fund the Company via contributions from the Creative Australia through the National Performing Arts Partnership Framework and the Victoria Ministry for Creative Industries through Creative Victoria. A service agreement that is governed by the contents of the Tripartite Agreement exists between the two entities MSOHL and the Company. Corporate costs associated with MSOHL have been met by the Company.

c) Key Management Personnel

Details of compensation for key management personnel are in note 18(b).

d) Transactions with other related parties

The following transactions occurred with related parties:

- i) Donations**
Donations received from Directors and director-related entities in 2024 were \$396,080 (2023: \$919,077).
- ii) Sponsorship**
Sponsorship from Director-related entities in 2024 was \$50,000 (2023: \$50,000).
- iii) Complimentary tickets**
From time to time, complimentary tickets are provided to Board members as part of their role in development activities for the Company.

e) Loans to/from related parties

There are no loans to or from the Company with related parties (2022: nil).

f) Symphony Services Australia Limited

Ms Sophie Galaise, a Director of the Company, was a director and appointed the Chair of Symphony Services Australia Limited ('SSA') on 17 November 2021, stepped down 26 August 2024. SSA provides orchestral services to the Company including the provision of artist services, artist liaison support and music library services. In 2024, the Company paid SSA \$100,000 (2023: \$100,000) for SSA's orchestral services.

g) Terms and conditions

All transactions were made on normal commercial terms and conditions and at market rates.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
20. AUDITOR'S REMUNERATION		
Audit of the financial report	80,000	70,000
Total auditor's remuneration	80,000	70,000

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
21. EXPENDITURE COMMITMENTS		
<i>Artists fees contracted, but not provided for, and payable:</i>		
Within one year	2,284,260	2,436,314
One year or later, but not later than five years	-	-
	2,284,260	2,436,314
<i>Consulting (Professional Services) contracts as per agreements</i>		
Within one year	353,928	153,153
One year or later, but not later than five years	-	-
	353,928	153,153
<i>Office outgoing committed as per agreements ¹</i>		
Within one year	167,855	174,455
One year or later, but not later than five years	-	-
	167,855	174,455
<i>Venue Hire Commitments ²</i>		
Within one year	1,916,264	1,870,971
One year or later, but not later than five years	-	-
	1,916,264	1,870,971
<i>Office Equipment Leases ³</i>		
Within one year	13,032	13,032
One year or later, but not later than five years	-	-
	13,032	13,032
TOTAL	4,735,339	4,647,925

Expenditure commitments are contracted up to the following dates:

- Artist fees – December 2025
- Consulting – December 2025
- Rental leases – December 2025
- Office equipment – December 2025
- Venue Hire – December 2025

1. The Company has applied AASB 16 and adopt the relief under AASB 2019-8 to utilise the cost option on transition for the Company's peppercorn leases.
2. The Company has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of venues and car parking that have a lease term of 12 months or less. The Company recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as expenses.
3. The Company has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for leases of low-value assets, including IT and office equipment. The Company recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

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Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
22. RESERVES		
a) Retained surplus/(accumulated deficit)		
Retained earnings at the beginning of the year	470,890	424,423
Deficit from ordinary activities for the year	(3,346,399)	213,019
Advance from MSO Foundation Reserve	1,000,000	-
Transfer of income earned to the MSO Foundation Reserve	(1,017,771)	(166,552)
Balance at year end	(2,893,280)	470,890
b) MSO Foundation Reserve		
Opening balance	11,079,020	10,912,468
Transfer from Accumulated Surplus	1,017,771	166,552
Transfer to MSO Ops Account	(1,000,000)	-
Balance at year end	11,096,791	11,079,020
TOTAL	8,203,511	11,549,910

23. ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY

Provision of federal and state funding via the parent company, MSOHL, to the Company is in respect of funds payable as a result of the Orchestra Review Implementation Funding Agreement. It originates from Federal and State Governments through Creative Australia and the Victoria Ministry for Creative Industries and is paid to MSOHL. A funding agreement between MSOHL and the Company provides the basis for the funds to be passed to the Company. As a result, the company is economically dependent on MSOHL, and in turn, on the Creative Australia and the Victoria Ministry for Creative Industries.

A tripartite funding agreement between MSOHL, Creative Australia through the National Performing Arts Partnership Framework, and the Victoria Ministry for Creative Industries, through Creative Victoria was entered into for a period of four years ending 31 December 2024.

The Company was successful in its funding application for a further four years and a new multipartite agreement was signed in December 2024, securing funding for the period 2025 to 2028. Under the funding agreement the Company receives the stability of four years of investment.

24. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

During the year a performance was cancelled and the performer then commenced proceedings against the Company in the Federal Court under the Fair Work Act. The matter remains unresolved at the time of signing the accounts. The Company has formed the view that no accounting provision is required in regard to this matter on the basis that an outflow is not considered probable. However, the ultimate resolution of this matter remains uncertain and should the Company be unsuccessful in defending the claim there may be an adverse impact on future operating surpluses/deficits and cash flows.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

ABN 47 078 925 658

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024

25. MATTERS SUBSEQUENT TO THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR

During the year a performance was cancelled and the performer then commenced proceedings against the Company in the Federal Court under the Fair Work Act. On 17 March 2025, the Chief Justice of the Federal Court heard the Company's application for Interlocutory Proceedings in regard to this matter. The Chief Justice has reserved her decision in the matter and at the date of signing the accounts the discussion was still pending.

Unless otherwise stated in this report, no other matter or circumstance has arisen since 31 December 2024 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect:

- (a) the Company's operations in future financial years, or
- (b) the results of those operations in future financial years, or
- (c) the Company's state of affairs in future financial years.

26. ENTITY INFORMATION

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited is a company limited by shares, incorporated in Australia and having its registered office address and principal place of business at:

ABC Southbank Centre
120 - 130 Southbank Boulevard
Southbank VIC 3006

The postal address of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited is:

GPO Box 9994
Melbourne VIC 3001

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

ABN 47 078 925 658

Directors' Declaration for the year ended 31 December 2024

In the opinion of the Directors of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited ("the Company"):

- (a) the financial statements and notes of the Company are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012, including:
 - (i) giving a true and fair view of the financial position of the Company as at 31 December 2024 and of its performance, as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows for the period ended on that date; and
 - (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosure Requirements and the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Regulation 2013; and
- (b) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors:



Edgar Myer
Chair

Melbourne
30 April 2025



Shane Buggle
Director and Chair of Finance Committee

Melbourne
30 April 2025



Shape the future
with confidence

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Independent auditor's report to the members of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Pty Limited (the Company), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2024, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Company is in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- a. Giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 31 December 2024 and of its financial performance for the year ended on that date; and
- b. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report* section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Information other than the financial report and auditor's report thereon

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information is the directors' report accompanying the financial report.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.



Shape the future
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Responsibilities of the directors for the financial report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.


As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- ▶ Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- ▶ Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Company's internal control.
- ▶ Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- ▶ Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Company's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- ▶ Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.



We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.


Ernst & Young


Christopher Tiedemann
Partner
Melbourne
30 April 2025

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