

mso



A Symphonic Christmas



MSO Relaxed, Sensory-Friendly Performance

Saturday 13 December / 12.30–1.20pm
Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall



I am going to listen to the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra!



The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is a group of people who like to make music together. The musicians play lots of instruments. Different instruments make different sounds in different ways. When lots of musicians make music together, we call them an orchestra.



I am going to hear the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra perform at a concert. A concert is when musicians play music for people to listen to.





Before the concert



I will wear comfortable clothes. Some people like to wear formal clothes to a concert. That's OK. Some people wear their usual clothes. That's OK too. Sometimes it is cold at a concert. I can wear a jumper, a scarf, or a hat to keep me warm. I can wear something special to celebrate Christmas, but I don't have to if I don't want to. That's OK.

I will bring my ticket or booking confirmation. My ticket tells me what time the concert starts. This concert will start at 12:30pm.

I can bring things that help me listen to the music. I can bring an iPad, a soft toy, headphones, fidgets, or something else that helps me listen.





Where to go

The concert will happen at a place called Hamer Hall, a big round building near the Yarra River. Hamer Hall is a place just for making and listening to music. Lots of concerts happen there.



I can get there in a car, by train, or on a tram.

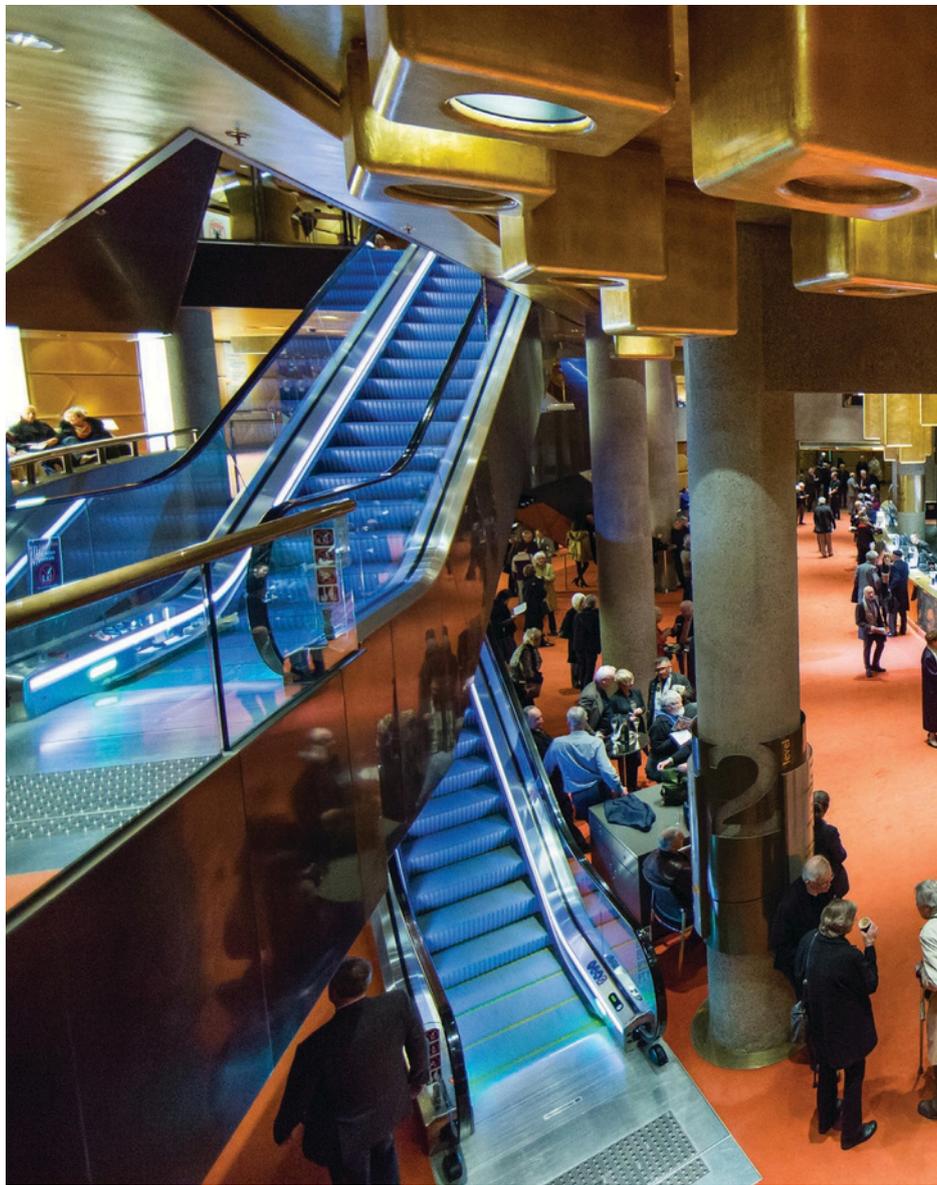
It is good to try to arrive 30 minutes before the concert starts (that's 12:00pm). There will be lots of people at the concert. It will be busy when I arrive. I can go to the toilet. I can buy food or a drink before the concert. If I have a big bag, I can give it to the staff at the cloak room. They will keep it safe for me.





There will be people to help me at Hamer Hall. They are called ushers. They all wear black clothes so people know who they are. The ushers are here to help people have a good time at the concert. I can ask them questions.





When I am ready to go into the concert, my grown-up and I will go down the escalators, the stairs or the lift. The auditorium is a big room where the music happens. We will show the ushers our tickets.





There are lots of seats, and a stage for the orchestra to sit on. The stage will have Christmas decorations on it.

The ushers can help me find a seat to sit on. Some people like to sit at the front where it is louder. Some people like to sit at the back where it is quieter. I can choose where I sit. If I sit upstairs, I will be careful on the steep stairs.

If I have a phone or an iPad, I will turn off the sound so it does not interrupt the music.

Before the concert, I can move around and talk to people. Musicians from the orchestra might be on stage already. They will be getting ready. It might be noisy.

Sometimes people are late for a concert. This is OK. The ushers will let me in as soon as they can so I can listen to the concert.

During the concert

When the orchestra is ready to start the concert, the conductor will walk on stage. The conductor is the person who leads the musicians. His name is Benjamin Northey. The conductor will move his arms and body along with the music, to keep the musicians playing at the same time.



Photo credit: Laura Manariti

Sometimes people clap for the orchestra before they start. This is a way to show the musicians we are excited to hear what they will play. When everybody claps, it can get very loud. If it's too loud I can cover my ears.



What will I hear?

The orchestra will play lots of pieces of Christmas music and carols at the concert. There will be a singer on stage to sing Christmas carols while the orchestra plays. Her name is Jess Hitchcock. Jess and Ben will tell us about the Christmas music and carols and help everybody enjoy the concert.



The music is:

The Nutcracker - Miniature Overture

O Holy Night

The Nutcracker - March



Do You Hear What I Hear?

The Nutcracker - Dance of the Sugar-Plum Fairy

The Nutcracker - Trepak

Let it Snow

The Nutcracker - Dance of the Reed Pipes

Jingle Bells - an Australian version

The Nutcracker - Waltz of the Flowers

Silent Night

Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer



Jess will invite the audience to join in some parts of the concert and sing along to some of the carols. I don't have to join in if I don't want to.

The carols the audience can sing are:

Jingle Bells - an Australian version

Silent Night



Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer

The words to the carols will be projected onto the back wall of the stage when it is the audience's turn to sing.



Jess will tell us what to do. She won't ask me to come on stage or do anything that would make people laugh at me. I don't have to join in if I don't want to.



Everybody will listen while the musicians play. People listen in lots of different ways. Some people dance. Some people move their hands or feet. Some people sit still. Some people will make noises. I will try to be quiet, but it is OK if I need to talk to friends, my family, or my grown-up or if I make noises. I can use a fidget tool or my iPad while the orchestra plays the music.

The music might be loud. Some people like to wear headphones or earplugs.





I can take a break whenever I need to and leave the auditorium with my grown-up. There is a quiet area in the foyer where I can relax. I can go back into the auditorium whenever I am ready or watch the concert on the screens in the foyer.

When the music stops, I can clap my hands to say thank you to the musicians.



After the music stops, I can take a photo of the musicians.

After the concert

The music is finished when the conductor and the musicians leave the stage. It is time to go home.



I can do it again

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra perform lots of concerts. My grown-ups can help me find out when we can go again.

I can also watch the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra on YouTube.



<https://youtube.com/@melbournesyphonyorchestra>

Arts Centre Melbourne helped the MSO write this social story.



Tell us what you think

We want to hear from you.

You can call us on the phone.

The phone number is (03) 9929 9600

You can send an email to education@mso.com.au

We will listen.

We want everyone to enjoy music.

