# Beethoven Brahms



**13 & 14 JUN 2025** CONCERT HALL, <u>QPAC</u>

# WELCOME

# IF YOU'RE NEW TO THE ORCHESTRA

WHO'S ON STAGE

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MUSICIANS & MANAGEMENT

Queensland Symphony Orchestra provides a spoken Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of each concert to encourage awareness and to demonstrate our respect for First Nations cultures and traditions, as well as signalling our commitment to a more inclusive and equitable society. We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of Meanjin where we work, rehearse and perform; the Turrbal and Yuggera peoples, whose deep connection to this land reminds us to always protect and care for it.

Queensland Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the traditional custodians of Australia. We acknowledge the cultural diversity of Elders, both past and present, and the significant contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make to Queensland and Australia.

Photos by Sam Muller

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# **QSO FIRST NATIONS ARTWORK WHO WE ARE**

The First Nations artwork that appears on QSO attire is reprinted with permission and drawn from Who We Are by Jeremy Donovan. Jeremy speaks about the work here:

"This artwork was commissioned to capture and reflect the Queensland Symphony Orchestra (QSO). Painted in the office of the QSO, I had the unique opportunity to engage with musicians, QSO staff, and supporters. The painting was influenced by these conversations and interactions. This painting depicts the whole of the QSO. In each individual panel, the Orchestra is depicted using different colours to reflect the roles and the variety of instruments played. The central panel features the hands around the orchestra, which is symbolic of the people who come to experience the QSO and the music. Blue features across all three panels and represents the land on which the QSO is based, and pays respect to both the Turrbal and Yuggera peoples, and the custodianship of this beautiful region.

Greens are the mountains and the rainforests of Queensland. Fine detail within the greens is symbolic of our Far North Queensland Shield designs. There are three of these on the middle panel; they are our Elders and are symbolic of three individuals who were just acknowledged for their 40-year service to the orchestra. Across the top of the painting, the fine white dot work is symbolic of the Dark Sparkles (Milky Way) in the sky—a Dreaming story belonging to my family. Beyond the stars are the musical notes silhouetted in the sky, acknowledging that sound is infinite. The seven purple circles on each panel are symbolic of the dedicated teams behind the music. QSO is so much more than what people get to see, hear, and enjoy. There are tireless teams behind the magic of the music. These seven circles are also the Seven Sisters, connecting my Grandmother's Dreaming.

Having spent my career as a musician and artist, and being privileged to play alongside classical and symphony orchestra musicians, the creation of this piece was a special experience."

#### – Jeremy Donovan



# WELCOME

Trying to find the right words to express this concert is challenging. Firstly, it is my first as the Director of Artistic Planning for the brilliant Queensland Symphony Orchestra and second, what hasn't been said about these incredibly famous and groundbreaking masterpieces of western classical music?

So, let me start at the beginning... It is an immense privilege and pleasure to be here with you in this new and exciting role. To steer the future artistic vision of our programmes and to bring the very best of orchestral music to all the people of Queensland is both daunting and thrilling in equal measure.

Daunting and thrilling are also perhaps two words that can well describe the works of this programme. To perform what is arguably the most famous of all orchestral introductions – those fateful 4 notes – always takes a steely nerve. This was also a daunting period for the composer, a tumultuous time where he started to lose his hearing. The symphony, however, takes us on a defiant journey to a triumphant conclusion in the key of C major.

Brahms, living in the shadow of Beethoven, must have been slightly daunted in the writing of his first piano concerto and what happens also to be his first orchestral work. It went through several guises over a period of five years before emerging as a gigantic and celebrated addition to the piano concerto repertoire. Who better then perform this then than the highly celebrated and acclaimed pianist Sir Stephen Hough.

Enjoy!



Matthew Wood Director of Artistic Planning

## IN THIS CONCERT

ConductorUmberto ClericiSoloistSir Stephen Hough, piano

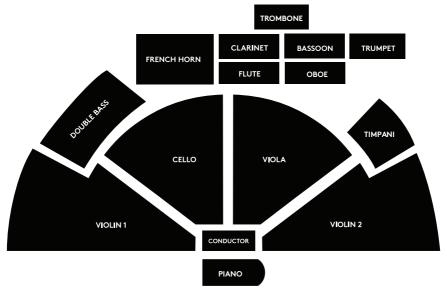
## **PROGRAM - FRIDAY REPERTOIRE**

BEETHOVEN	Coriolan Overture, Op.62	8'
BRAHMS	Concerto No.1 in D Minor for Piano, Op.15	44'
BEETHOVENZIMMER	Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op.67 ((First movement only)	7'

## **PROGRAM - SATURDAY REPERTOIRE**

BEETHOVEN	Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op.67	31'
INTERVAL		20'
BRAHMS	Concerto No.1 in D Minor for Piano, Op.15	44'

# IF YOU'RE NEW TO THE ORCHESTRA



## WHO SITS WHERE

Orchestras sit in sections based on types of instruments. There are four main sections in the symphony orchestra (strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion) and sometimes a keyboard section.

#### STRINGS

These instruments produce sound by bowing or plucking stretched strings.

First and Second Violin Viola Cello Double Bass Harp

#### WOODWIND

Wind instruments produce sound by being blown into.

Flute/Piccolo Clarinet/E-flat Clarinet/Bass Clarinet Oboe/Cor Anglais Bassoon/Contrabassoon

#### **KEYBOARD**

Keyboard instruments are played by pressing keys.

Piano Celeste Organ

#### BRASS

Brass players create sound by vibrating their lips. When this vibration is pushed through large brass tubes, it can create significant noise.

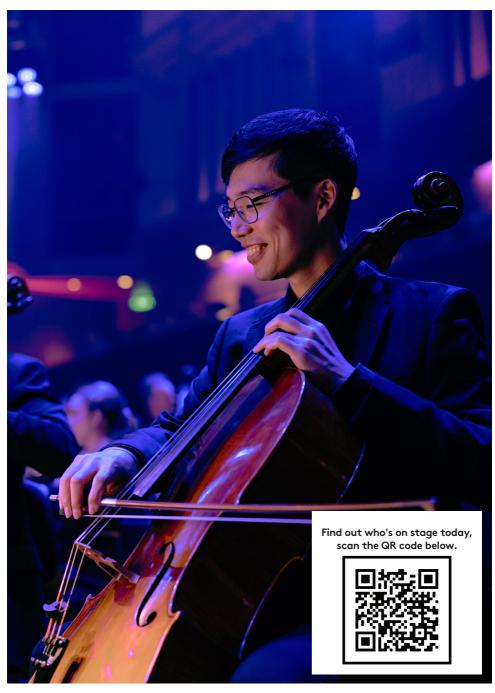
French Horn Trumpet Trombone/Bass Trombone Tuba

#### PERCUSSION

These instruments create sound by being struck or, for the harp, plucked or strummed. Some instruments just make a sound; others play particular notes.

Timpani, Bass drum, Snare drum, Cymbals, Glockenspiel, Xylophone, Vibraphone, Tam-tam, Triangle, Sleigh Bells.

## WHO'S ON STAGE TODAY



# **BEFORE WE BEGIN**

Before the performance begins, get to know a few musical terms in the Listening Guide.

FortissimoA passage of music marked to be performed very, very loudly.TrillsA rapid alternation between two notes.



## LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827) Coriolan Overture, Op.62

When Beethoven composed his *Coriolan* Overture, he knew how to make it sound as dramatic as the literary tale it shares. The orchestra is obscenely loud (**fortissimo**), and the following silence is deafening. You're on the edge of your seat – and you only just sat down!

This colossal work premiered not in a concert hall, but in someone's house. Granted, that house was a palace. It belonged to Prince Lobkowitz, an arts patron to whom Beethoven had dedicated his Fifth Symphony. The *Coriolan* Overture is set in ancient Rome, and it brings to life Heinrich Joseph von Collin's 1804 play *Coriolan*, a work steeped in legend.

The title character is based on a Roman army leader who betrays his people and joins the enemy. He prepares to attack his own city-but Coriolan's mother Volumnia convinces him to walk away from the violence, and he listens. Still, he chooses to die by his own hand.

You'll hear both of these characters in Beethoven's overture. When the music sounds explosive, like an argument with someone you just can't sway, you'll know you're hearing the angry and vengeful Coriolan. Listen for relentlessly loud dynamics and chaotic strings. Volumnia's melody exudes the pain and tension of a mother trying to convince her son to choose good over evil. Notice the contrast: Volumnia's theme flows with a sense of logical direction, which we can follow as listeners. Her son's music is abrupt, filled with rage-fuelled outbursts.

You might think we're ending on a sour note (C, to be precise). But remember the bigger picture: the people of Rome survived.



# LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Symphony No.5 in C minor, Op.67

- I. Allegro con brio
- II. Andante con moto
- III. Allegro
- IV. Allegro

As Hans Christian Andersen once said: "Where words fail, music speaks." But how many themes actually transcend music to become as commonplace as words in our daily lives? Very few. One is unmistakeable, though - and that's the four-note motif from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. So deep is this theme in our collective culture that it often replaces words when we're expressing a theatrical element of surprise. Who's knocking at the door? Dun-dun-dun-daa!

Actually, we know exactly who's knocking at the door: fate. This concept underpins the symphony, according to Beethoven's early biographer Anton Schindler – but he was known to be an unreliable narrator. An alternative interpretation comes from Beethoven's student Carl Czerny who believed the four-note motif was inspired by nature. It's not too much of a stretch when considering the presence of nightingale and cuckoo birdsongs in Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony No.6, which he composed alongside the Fifth. "No one can love the country as much as I do," the composer wrote, these two symphonies premiered in the same concert in Vienna, 1808 – and the adorable yellowhammer bird might have flittered around the outskirts of this city in which Beethoven worked. Look up a yellowhammer video after the concert, and you may hear a strikingly familiar four-note call: chirp-chirp-chiep-chiep! (It's also the least-imposing sound on Earth, so take Czerny's theory with a grain of salt. Or seed.)

But back to the fate of the work. It begins in C minor (a key representing tension), and finds resolution in C major (the sound of triumph). The first movement opens with that four-note motif, and because it's so iconic, you'll have the perfect opportunity to practice your active listening. Sometimes, an opening theme can become harder to recognise as the movement goes on – but here, it's so distinct that you'll follow its development through different instruments, rhythm and expression. You'll hear strings steal the theme and scurry away, and brass come in to emphasise it. Even when the orchestra plays a second, flowing melody, you'll still spot the motif providing a subtle beat underneath – a knock at the door that cannot be ignored. We hear the same idea through agony and joy; desperation and strength. Even without the theme's explicit statement, this movement is dominated by consecutive quavers (the same note duration as those first three knocks). The power of fate is always present.

# LISTENING GUIDE

The second movement offers a gracious respite from that action-packed introduction. A floating melody makes its way from lower strings to winds. But wait – who's knocking at the door now? It's brass and timpani! They blaze with the feeling of victory for which this symphony is so well known. Then the third movement marks a turning point where Beethoven brings back that opening motif – but this time, it doesn't spiral out of control. It's slow and decisive, competing with the more optimistic forces of the orchestra. We're not in the clear yet, and Beethoven presents a tug-of-war between hope and distress. It's only with the arrival of the fourth movement that we know we've backed a winner!

You won't hear a break between movements, but you'll know when the line is crossed. Timpani will thrum ever-so-quietly, strings will play discretely to build suspense and excitement – then with a huge and fast crescendo, we arrive at the Allegro – Presto! It's brave, ecstatic, and a touch cinematic. You'll hear references to the four-note motif, but they're not as prominent as before. There's no mistaking it: fate has been conquered!

## JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897) Piano Concerto No.1 in D minor, Op.15

I. Maestoso II. Adagio

III. Rondo: Allegro non troppo

Beethoven was a groundbreaking composer. But so was Brahms. The trouble with the latter was how long it took him to accept and appreciate his own musical voice.

Brahms spent most of his career under the shadow of that behemoth who came before - the master who wrote the theme of "fate knocking at the door" (Beethoven and his Fifth Symphony, of course). He just couldn't separate his own fate from the artists in his orbit, and his value for Beethoven shaped his confidence and ability to work. (It would take Brahms more than 20 self-doubting years to complete his First Symphony!)

Brahms' friendships with composers Robert and Clara Schumann also influenced the stunning melodies he dared to put onto his pages. We can hear Brahms' profound respect for Clara in the Adagio of his Piano Concerto No.1 in D minor. "I am painting a gentle portrait of you," he revealed to her. This movement, more than 20 minutes into the concerto, is so gentle that we scarcely hear the orchestra before the pianist begins to play with a very sweet expression (*molto dolce espressivo*).

But a lot happens before we reach that calming musical reward: first, we must brave the tumultuous opening movement! Here, you'll hear ferocious **trills** in the violins and woodwinds above thunderous timpani, and the dark drone of lower instruments. It's so enthralling that you might forget why you're here – to listen to the pianist! The orchestra

spends about four minutes staking its claim. Then finally, the virtuoso enters softly, perhaps with trepidation after such an assertive orchestral introduction.

A romantic-minded listener may interpret the pianist of this movement to be Brahms himself – a young musician daring to share his voice after the enormous force of the orchestra that came before (representing Beethoven, if you like). Right before the piano enters, you'll hear booming references to Beethoven's four-note motif travelling across the instruments. *Dun-dun-dan-daa!* But this is just one interpretation, informed by Brahms' background and personal insecurities. Another accepted theory is that Brahms used this movement to express the struggles of Robert Schumann. Robert's mental ill-health, which tragically led to his own death, would bring heartbreak to Clara and Brahms.

After the Adagio – that loving ode to Clara – we hear the third movement. It opens with a brusque energy, then navigates through many hurdles on its way to a hard-earned triumph. Such is life!

Brahms was just 25 years old when he played piano at its premiere in Hanover, 1859. He thought the concerto was a massive failure. Doesn't it make you want to travel back to reassure him? *Brahms, we're all still here for you!* 



## **ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES**



## Umberto Clerici Conductor

After a career spanning more than 20 years as a gifted cello soloist and orchestral musician, Umberto Clerici has consolidated his diverse artist achievements to rapid acclaim as a conductor. Umberto is now the Chief Conductor of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra.

Umberto began his career as a virtuoso cellist making his solo debut at the age of 17 performing Haydn's D Major cello concerto in Japan. After years of performing on the stages of the world's most prestigious concert halls, Umberto took up the position as Principal cello of the Teatro Regio di Torino following which he was Principal Cello of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra from 2014 to 2021.

It was in Sydney in 2018 that Umberto made his conducting debut with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra at the Sydney Opera House. Following a swift trajectory of prestigious conducting engagements, Umberto is now in high demand across Australia, New Zealand and Europe.

In addition to his role as Chief Conductor of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Umberto's recent conducting engagements include Elgar's cello concerto with Steven Isserlis for the Volksoper Vienna, and debuts with Orchestra del Teatro Massimo in Palermo and Orchestra Regionale Toscana. Umberto has also curated a three-week series with the Sydney Symphony for 'Symphony Hour' and returned to the podiums of the Dunedin, Melbourne and West Australian Symphony Orchestras.

In November 2024, Queensland Symphony Orchestra announced the extension of Umberto's Chief Conductorship until the end of their Season 2027.

Highlights in 2025 will include conducting Daniil Trifonov playing Rachmaninov's piano concerto No.3 with New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, a return to Teatro Massimo in Palermo and his second collaboration with Opera Queensland for which Umberto will conduct Puccini's La Boheme.

As a cellist, Umberto remains beloved by audiences worldwide, having performed internationally as a soloist at New York's Carnegie Hall, Vienna's Musicverein, the great Shostakovich Hall of St Petersburg, Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome, the Salzburg Festival and is one of only two Italians to have ever won a prize for cello in the prestigious International Tchaikovsky Competition.

Umberto plays cellos by Matteo Goffriller (made in 1722, Venezia) and Carlo Antonio Testore (made in 1758, Milano).



## Sir Stephen Hough Piano

Named by *The Economist* as one of Twenty Living Polymaths, Sir Stephen Hough combines a distinguished career of a concert pianist with those of a composer and writer. In recognition of his contribution to cultural life, he became the first classical performer to be given a MacArthur Fellowship, and was awarded a Knighthood for Services to Music in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2022.

In a career spanning over 40 years, Stephen Hough has played regularly with most of the world's leading orchestras, including televised and filmed appearances with the Berlin, London, China, Seoul and New York Philharmonic Orchestras, and the Concertgebouw, Budapest Festival and the NHK Symphony Orchestras. He has been a regular guest of recital series and festivals including Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium, London's Royal Festival Hall, Salzburg, Verbier, La Roque-d'Anthéron, Aspen, Tanglewood, Aldeburgh and Edinburgh.

He begins his 2024/25 concert season with his 30th appearance at the BBC Proms, performing at Last Night of the Proms to a live audience of 6,000 and televised audience of 3.5 million. Over the course of the following 12 months Hough performs over 80 concerts on four continents, opening Philharmonia Orchestra's season at the Royal Festival Hall, performances with the Cleveland Orchestra, performing a solo recital at Barbican Centre and giving the world premiere of his Willa Catherinspired Piano Quintet at Lincoln Center's David Geffen Hall.

Hough's discography of 70 recordings has garnered awards including the Diapason d'Or de l'Année, several Grammy nominations, and eight Gramophone Awards including Record of the Year and the Gold Disc. Upcoming releases include a Liszt Album, a recital of encores, including arrangements made for Lang Lang's Disney project, and Hough's own Piano Concerto.

As a composer, Hough's Fanfare Toccata was commissioned for the 2022 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition and performed by all 30 competitors. His 2021 String Quartet No.1 Les Six Rencontres, was written for and recorded by the Takács Quartet for Hyperion Records. His music is published by Josef Weinberger Ltd.

As an author, Hough's memoir Enough: Scenes from Childhood, was published by Faber & Faber in Spring 2023. It follows his 2019 collection of essays *Rough Ideas: Reflections on Music and More* which received a Royal Philharmonic Society Award and was named one of the *Financial Times'* Books of the Year. His novel *The Final Retreat* was published in 2018 (Sylph Editions).

## THANK YOU WAYNE



This weekend, we bid farewell to Wayne Brennan, QSO's long-standing leader of the second violins. When I became Concertmaster of the QSO in 1995, Wayne was already well established in his role, having auditioned successfully for a tutti position in 1990, before being awarded the Principal role in 1992. It didn't take us long to form not only a genuinely instinctive musical connection, but a friendship that has grown ever stronger over the years. Wayne has been my closest and most trusted confidant within the QSO. We have led hundreds of concerts together over the years and, most recently, have sat adjacent to each other. We have often left the stage together after a performance, commenting on how much we've enjoyed our musical partnership.

Wayne possesses a wide range of musical and leadership skills. As musicians, we constantly strive to improve every facet of our playing, and Wayne embraced this through extensive research into music performance, which enabled his stylistic approach to remain current and adaptable. His knowledge and advice have been invaluable. The function of each string section is somewhat different. Whilst the first violins often have the melodic interest, the second violins and violas are nimble and adaptable, frequently negotiating complicated string-crossing passages and providing rhythmic stability. Wayne never hesitated to let us in the first violins know when we were being too indulgent or wayward! An important skill that section principals need to possess is the ability to be constantly aware of the overall orchestral ensemble. Even in the most complex works, Wayne has always been able to identify the manner in which the various voices combine.

Whilst we in the QSO are sad to lose Wayne, we know that he will be busy and happy pursuing his many interests. We wish him, and his wonderful wife Raquel, all the very best for the future.

# Chinchilla, Miles, Roma and Tara

## Initiative 2025



Australia Pacific LNG and its operator Origin Energy are proud to support Queensland Symphony Orchestra's Chinchilla, Miles, Roma and Tara Initiative. The annual tour delivers musician workshops with students, professional development sessions for teachers and free community concerts.

## 2025 COMMUNITY IN CONCERT DATES AND LOCATIONS

Chinchilla: 29 JUL, 6:30pm | Chinchilla Cultural Centre, Chinchilla Tara: 30 JUL, 11:30am | Tara Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Tara Roma: 1 AUG, 6:30pm | Jubilee Hall, Roma State College Senior Campus, Roma

🖌 🖌 Queensland Symphony Orchestra's regional engagement enriches the lives of students, teachers and communities, providing unparalleled opportunities to enjoy, learn from, and perform alongside the state's best musicians.

We believe that everyone, no matter where they're from, deserves to experience the transformative power of music. Queensland Symphony Orchestra truly is an Orchestra for all Queenslanders, and we are delighted to play our part in helping them fulfil that vision.  $\P$ 



Dan Clark ALSTRALIA Chief Executive Officer, Australia Pacific LNG

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An end of financial year gift to QSO will enable us to continue our work to make music a way of life for Queenslanders across the length and breadth of this state, through performances and critical programs such as Regional Touring, Community and Education, and Health and Wellbeing.

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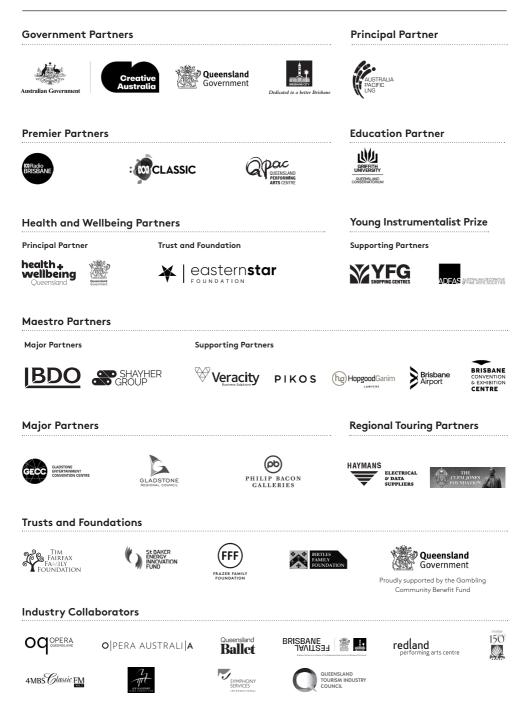
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# COMING UP



# **Mozart's Piano**

THU 19 JUN 7.30PM FRI 20 JUN 11.30AM

Queensland Conservatorium Theatre, Griffith University

Conductor	Umberto Clerici
Soloist	Daniel de Borah, piano
Rossini	Overture to La Cenerentola (Cinderella)
Mozart	Piano Concerto No.27 in B flat, K.595
Haydn	Symphony No.49 in F minor (La passione)



# **Brief Encounter**

SAT 19 JUL 1.30PM

Concert Hall, QPAC

Conductor	Benjamin Northey
Soloist	Konstantin Shamray, piano

See one of the greatest romantic classics on screen, live with Queensland Symphony Orchestra featuring Rachmaninov's lush Piano Concerto No.2.



# **Shostakovich Ten**

FRI 19 SEP 7.30PM SAT 20 SEP 7.30PM Concert Hall, QPAC

Conductor Soloist	Umberto Clerici Alexander Gavrylyuk, piano
Prokofiev	Piano Concerto No.3 in C,
Shostakovich	Symphony No.10 in E minor, Op.93

Shostakovich's Tenth becomes the soundtrack to the William Kentridge film "Oh To Believe In Another World" in this unique pairing of artforms.

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