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A black and white profile photograph of a man with a beard, looking intently at the instrument he is playing. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting his facial features and the texture of his hair and beard. The background is dark, making the subject stand out.

**BEETHOVEN,
DVOŘÁK & SMETANA**

SEASON 2026



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Welcome

Good evening, and a warm welcome to tonight's concert. As a cellist, I am very much looking forward to this concert: a great cellist, conducted by a great cellist!

I'm personally looking forward to hearing our soloist Ivan Karizna's cello, a Tassini made in 1760 which was played by Paul Tortelier, and which I had the privilege of hearing many decades ago here in Brisbane in my formative years.

Dvořák's Cello Concerto is an epic monument and priceless gift to the repertoire. It is certainly my personal favourite as it has everything from symphonic power, youthful vigour and virtuosity, to warm nostalgia and heart-melting intimacy. The elegaic ending of the third movement is possibly the most beautiful thing you will ever hear.

Beethoven's 7th Symphony is quite a regular in our repertoire, and a joy to play. The second movement is particularly well known as it has been used in various movies. The opening of this movement is very poignant, haunting and sombre, akin to a funeral procession. As it builds, you will hear the cellos join with the violas to render the main theme on its way to a layered and progressive climax.

Thank you for joining us and enjoy the concert!



Matthew Kinmont
Cello

BEETHOVEN, DVOŘÁK & SMETANA

Concert Hall, QPAC
Saturday 13 June 2026, 7.30PM

IN THIS CONCERT

Umberto Clerici Conductor
Ivan Karizna Cello
Queensland Symphony Orchestra

PROGRAM

SMETANA	
Overture to <i>The Bartered Bride</i>	9'
DVOŘÁK	
Cello Concerto, Op.104	42'
I. Allegro	
II. Adagio ma non troppo	
III. Finale: Allegro moderato	
Interval	20'
BEETHOVEN	
Symphony No.7	38'
I. Poco sostenuto – Vivace	
II. Allegretto	
III. Presto	
IV. Allegro con brio	

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

There will be a pre-concert talk by ABC Radio's **Ed Le Brocq** in the Concert Hall at 6.30pm. Please enter via Door 1.

All concert doors open at 7pm
This concert will end at approx. 9.40pm



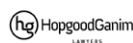
This concert will be recorded by ABC Classic for broadcast on 4 July 2026 at 1pm

Maestro Partners

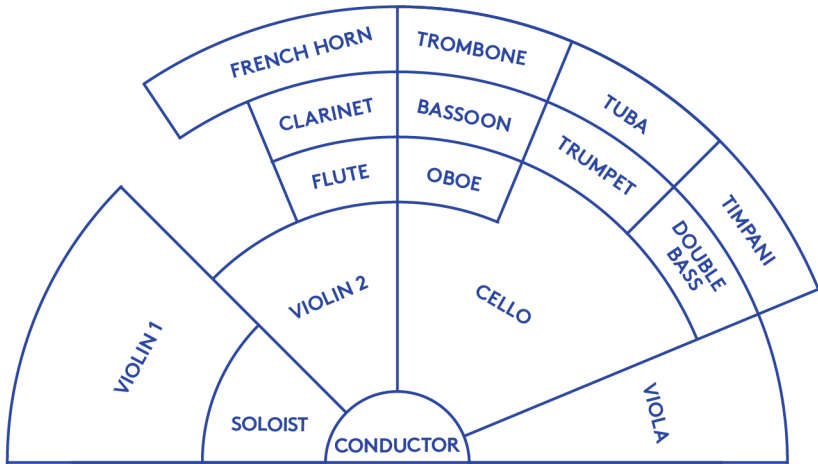
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Today's Orchestra Layout



Who's On Stage

Scan the QR code for the list of musicians playing in tonight's concert.



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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.



Artistic Summary

After this evening's concert, you'll be dancing out of the concert hall. This Czech-flavoured program has its roots in European folk dances, and the rhythmic patterns and intensity form a thread through all three pieces.

During the overture to Smetana's *The Bartered Bride*, the composer doesn't directly quote from Czech folk songs, but the rhythmic inflections echo an undeniable national flavour. Smetana had begun experimenting with a new Czech style during the 1848 Prague uprising, in an attempt to throw off the creeping conservatism of the ruling Austrian Empire. Seventeen years Smetana's junior, Dvořák was among the first generation of composers who had grown up speaking Czech, and quickly expanded on the fledgling Czech nationalist style.

In Dvořák's Cello Concerto, now one of the most often-performed in the repertoire, we hear a composer homesick for his native Bohemia. The last large-scale work from Dvořák's time in America before he returned home, it's more like a symphony with a solo cello than a traditional concerto. The melancholy second movement quotes a melody from one of Dvořák's own songs, a favourite of his sister-in-law who had recently died, while the last movement teems with statements and references to rustic European tunes. The composer had been recruited to the United States in the hope that he would inspire a new national tradition of American national music, as he had back home in Bohemia, but he was dissatisfied with the level of government support for the arts in the New World, and never fully felt at home there.

Beethoven's Seventh Symphony is also deeply rooted in folk traditions. Written at a time when the composer was working on arrangements on Scottish, Irish and Welsh folksongs for Edinburgh-based publisher George Thomson as a way to pay the bills, the piece's prominent rhythmic motifs inspired Wagner to describe it as "the apotheosis of the dance". Listen out for the jig-like rhythm in the flutes in the first movement, while the third movement may have been based on an Austrian pilgrim's hymn. The main theme of the finale, meanwhile, is pretty much drawn straight from Beethoven's arrangement of the Irish folksong *Save me from the grave and wise*, which he may well have been working on concurrently with the symphony.

Listening Guide

BEDŘICH SMETANA

(1824-1884)

OVERTURE TO *THE BARTERED BRIDE*

In a breathless overture to the work that gave his fellow-countrymen their operatic identity, Smetana encapsulates the vitality, bustle, and rustic charm of a Czech village in festive mood. Not so much a potpourri of themes from the opera as a tone poem of great concision and economy, the overture was apparently written well before the opera itself, as early as November 1863.

This was the first time Czech village life had been portrayed believably in opera. *The Bartered Bride* survived the fiasco of its opening season in the oppressive midsummer heat of 1866, truncated in the shadow of a looming war with Bismarck's Prussia, to win the undying affection of Czech people (and, subsequently, audiences throughout the world).

Smetana remarked at the celebration of the *Bride's* 100th performance that he had believed from the first that 'not even Offenbach could compete with it.' He had had to build the frothy one-act libretto originally presented to him, through dogged insistence and perseverance, from a lightweight *buffo* confection into a comedy peopled with characters his audiences would empathise with, individuals experiencing the deep human emotions of hope and fear, confusion and despair and, above all, unquenchable young love.

While the overture essentially sets the scene of festivity on the village green (ringing up the curtain as villagers celebrate), the three main motifs (bustling, suspenseful string figures in the opening, a polka-like subject which foreshadows the brilliant national dances to come, and a winsome, contrasting oboe melody) will all be heard again at the climax of the second act as the bridal-sale contract is signed before the outraged village-folk as indignant witnesses.

Smetana lived to resent the fact that the runaway success of this, the second of his eight completed operas, overshadowed later works he valued more highly. But he was wrong, in his disappointment, to dismiss the *Bride* as a mere bagatelle. *The Bartered Bride* was the means by which Smetana resoundingly fulfilled his determination to give his people a national music. Not only did it bring Czech opera to the promised land but it mirrored then, as it mirrors today, the authentic spirit of the rural Czech community.

Anthony Cane © 2005

Despite being lesser-known internationally than younger composers such as Dvořák, **Smetana** is considered by many the father of the Czech national movement. Educated in German, Smetana struggled to gain fluency in his mother tongue, but created a canon of Czech opera where none had previously existed. Similarly to Beethoven, he continued composing despite complete deafness in his later years.

CELLO CONCERTO IN B MINOR, OP.104

- I. Allegro
- II. Adagio ma non troppo
- III. Finale: Allegro moderato

Brahms was impressed. 'If only I'd known,' said the composer, Dvořák's longtime champion, 'that one could write a cello concerto like that, I'd have written one long ago!' Brahms' admiration aside, the composition of what Dvořák scholar John Clapham has called simply 'the greatest of all cello concertos' was no easy matter. In fact, it was his second attempt at the medium – the first was composed in 1865, but appears only to have been written out in a cello and piano score. That Dvořák left the work unorchestrated suggests that he was dissatisfied with this first effort. Despite the urgings of his friend, the cellist Hanuš Wihan, Dvořák thought no more about writing such a piece until many years later.

In New York in March 1894, whilst serving as director of the National Conservatory of Music, Dvořák attended a performance by Victor Herbert of his Second Cello Concerto. This made a huge impact on Dvořák, who re-examined the idea of such a work for Wihan. The concerto was sketched between 8 November 1894 and New Year's Day, and Dvořák completed the full score early in February.

Much to Dvořák's annoyance, the first performance of the concerto was not given by its dedicatee, Wihan. The London Philharmonic Society, who premiered it at the Queen's Hall in March 1896, mistakenly believed Wihan to be unavailable, and engaged Leo Stern.

Despite Dvořák's embarrassment, Stern must have delivered the goods, as Dvořák engaged him for the subsequent New York, Prague and Vienna premieres of the work. Wihan did, however, perform the work often, and insisted on making some 'improvements' to Dvořák's score so that the cello part would be more virtuosic. Wihan also insisted on interpolating a cadenza in the third movement, which the composer vehemently opposed. (Only a stiff letter from Dvořák persuaded his publisher, Simrock, to leave out the cadenza.)

Despite being an 'American' work, the concerto is much more a reflection of Dvořák's nostalgia for his native Bohemia, and perhaps for the composer's father who died in 1894. It is full of some of Dvořák's most inspired moments, such as the heroic first theme in the first movement, and the complementary melody for horn which adds immeasurably to its Romantic ambience.

The Bohemian connection became more personal when Dvořák, working on the piece in December 1894, heard that his sister-in-law Josefina (with whom he had been in love during their youth) was seriously ill. Dvořák was sketching the slow movement at the time. The outer sections of this movement are calm and serene, but Dvořák expresses his distress in an impassioned gesture that ushers in an emotionally unstable central section, based on his song *Kěž duch můj sám* (Leave me alone) which was one of Josefina's favourites.

Listening Guide

Josefina died in the spring of 1895, and Dvořák, by this time back in Bohemia, made significant alterations to the concluding coda of the third movement, adding some 60 bars of music.

These additions, and his determination not to diffuse its emotional power with a cadenza, allowed Dvořák, as scholar Robert Battey notes, to revisit 'not only the first movement's main theme, but also a hidden reference to Josefina's song in the slow movement. Thus, the concerto becomes something of a shrine, or memorial.'

© Queensland Symphony Orchestra

Dvořák was the first Bohemian (now part of Czechia) composer to achieve worldwide recognition, noted for turning folk material into the language of 19th-century Romantic music. Dvořák's popularity lies in his great talent for melody and in the delightfully fresh Czech character of his music, which offered a welcome contrast to the heavier fare of some of his contemporaries. Dvořák's legacy includes nine symphonies, an opera (*Rusalka*), a cello concerto and a wealth of choral and chamber music.

Following this piece there will be an interval of 20 minutes

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

(1770-1827)

SYMPHONY NO. 7 IN A, OP. 92

- I. Poco sostenuto – Vivace
- II. Allegretto
- III. Presto
- IV. Allegro con brio

Beethoven's early listeners couldn't get enough of the *Allegretto* from Symphony No. 7.

The patriotic work was premiered in 1813 at a Vienna charity concert honouring soldiers wounded in the Battle of Hanau. Maestro Beethoven waved his baton, and exhilarated audiences called for an encore of the second movement. Play it again, Ludwig!

There was sustained demand for this movement throughout the century – so much so that it was programmed into performances of his other symphonies, too. Fanatic listeners applauded between movements.

It's easy to get technical about why the *Allegretto* is so brilliant—the dactyl (the insistent long-short-short rhythm) and spondee (long-long) build in intensity as they're shared between instrumental sections; a grave and majestic theme that at last succumbs to the inevitable human instinct of hope. But should we really worry about dactyls and spondees? The point is to enjoy the masterpiece with the same explosive joy as Beethoven, who'd considered this symphony his best.

Rousing *Allegretto* aside, the Seventh is an exceedingly jubilant example of a symphony composed in a major key. The *Poco sostenuto* is spacious enough to allow active listening of its ascending scales: each iteration develops with a different mood. The *Presto* gallops along before arriving at a trio, which recalls an Austrian pilgrim's gentle hymn (later, composer Hector Berlioz would compare this very musical moment to “the spirit of landscape painting and the idyll”).

The ecstatic and vigorous final movement is especially remarkable when we remember Beethoven wasn't in the best of health. He'd worked on the composition while visiting Teplice—a Bohemian spa town to which his doctor sent him for various ailments. His hearing was also failing, yet he was so elated by the Seventh that he was observed jumping up and down on the podium.

Our collective love for the Seventh hasn't diminished. Its standalone treasure, the *Allegretto*, has been handpicked for film soundtracks including *The King's Speech* and *Mr Holland's Opus*. And in the concert hall, the music feels just as alive as it did in the 19th Century.

Stephanie Eslake © 2021

Beethoven's music is often hailed as a musical period entirely of its own, pointing the way from the high Classical towards Romanticism. His music responds to changing philosophies of the early nineteenth century: a new humanism and incipient nationalism, as well as a concern for individual and personal freedom. Famously continuing to compose throughout his life despite increasing hearing loss, Beethoven was a considerable innovator, widening the scope of sonata, symphony, concerto and quartet forms, and blending choral and orchestral elements in his ninth symphony in a way never before attempted. Alongside Bach and Mozart, Beethoven is widely regarded as one of the greatest composers who ever lived.

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 artistic achievements to rapid acclaim as a conductor. Since 2023 he has been the Chief Conductor of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra.

It was in Sydney in 2018 that Clerici made his conducting debut with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra at the Sydney Opera House. Following a swift trajectory of prestigious conducting engagements, he is now in high demand in the southern hemisphere and Europe.

In addition to his busy schedule with the Queensland Symphony, other recent and future engagements include the Volksoper Wien with Steven Isserlis, New Zealand Symphony with Daniil Trifonov, debuts with Orchestra del Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Orchestre de l'Opéra de Rouen and Orchestra Regionale Toscana. Clerici continues a special relationship with the Sydney Symphony, and will return in 2026 to the Opera House with a programme featuring Bryce Dessner and Dvořák. Each season also sees Clerici conducting on the podiums of Melbourne and West Australian Symphony Orchestras.

In the operatic sphere, Clerici recently enjoyed his second collaboration with Opera Queensland (Puccini's *La bohème*) and he will make his opera debut with the Volksoper Vienna with Bizet's *Carmen*.



IVAN KARIZNA

CELLO

Ivan Karizna is a storyteller with an exceptional gift of musical expression, known equally for his poetic interpretations and powerful stage presence. Described by András Schiff as 'one of the best cellists of his generation', he has won numerous awards, including at the Tchaikovsky and Queen Elisabeth Competitions.

In 2025–26 Karizna returns to the Netherlands Philharmonic to give the Dutch premiere of Thomas Larcher's Cello Concerto under Dmitri Slobodeniouk at the Concertgebouw and makes his debut with Netherlands Radio Philharmonic to perform the Brahms Double Concerto. He tours Australia, performing with Sydney, Adelaide, Queensland and West Australian Symphony Orchestras whilst other appearances include with Residentie Orkest, Kuopio Symphony, and BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

Karizna is an avid chamber musician and has collaborated with numerous distinguished artists, including Joseph Swensen and Alan Gilbert as part of La Jolla Chamber Music Festival. This season he joins colleagues in Amsterdam's Muziekgebouw and Utrecht's TivoliVredenburg, as well as at UKARIA in the Adelaide Hills and returns to Elena Bashkirova's Jerusalem Chamber Music Festival. Past chamber collaborations include with Gidon Kremer, András Schiff, Renaud Capuçon and Christian Tetzlaff.

Karizna plays the 1760 Tassini cello previously owned by Paul Tortelier, on generous loan from a member of the Stretton Society. He is a French citizen, dividing his time between Paris and Amsterdam.

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As one of the largest performing arts companies in Queensland and the state's only professional symphony orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra (QSO) is renowned for its high quality, breathtaking performances of both classical and modern compositions that engage audiences of diverse musical tastes, interests, and ages.

We play a vital role in Queensland's cultural community: educating; mentoring aspiring performers; touring regional centres; broadcasting; and performing with state, national, and international ballet and opera companies.

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In Memory of Elizabeth Barnes
Prof. Margaret Barrett
M.J. Bellotti
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Professor Andrew and
Jan Cheetham
Robert Cleland
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Dr Michael Daubney
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QUEENSLAND PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Queensland Performing Arts Trust is a statutory body of the State of Queensland and is partially funded by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.

The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP
Minister for Education and the Arts

Sharon Schimming
Director-General, Department of Education

Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) rests on the lands of the Yuggera and Turrbal peoples. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this country and recognise their rich cultural heritage and enduring connection to the land, waters and skies. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are this country's original storytellers, and it is our privilege to continue to share stories and be a place of gathering on this land that has been a meeting place for millennia.

Thank you to all our donors for their generous support of the QPAC Foundation, which enables us to reach beyond the stage and bring a sense of belonging, community engagement, and joy to all Queenslanders.

We give heartfelt thanks to QPAC's Principal Partners Hyundai and MinterEllison and we acknowledge the valued support of all our corporate partners who help make our work possible.

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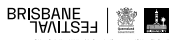


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Coming Up



Rising Stars

FRI 26 JUN 7.30PM

Queensland Conservatorium Theatre, Griffith University

Luke Dollman	Conductor
Rebecca Goobanko	Soprano
Jake Lyle	Baritone
Reuben Tsang	Piano

A stage for tomorrow's most exciting performers: featuring 2024 Lev Vlassenko Winner Reuben Tsang in Mozart's Piano Concerto No.23, and a selection of operatic favourites from Mozart, Rossini and Lehár. This concert is a showcase of Queensland's emerging talent.



Ravel & MacMillan

FRI 17 JUL & SAT 18 JUL 7.30PM

Concert Hall, QPAC

Jaime Martín	Conductor
Claire Edwardes	Percussion
Voices of Birralee	

JAMES MACMILLAN	<i>Veni, Veni Emmanuel</i>
RAVEL	<i>Daphnis and Chloé</i>



Fanfare & Flight

SUN 2 AUG 11.30AM

Concert Hall, QPAC

Tianyi Lu	Conductor
Glenn Christensen	Violin
Ed Le Brocq	Host

COPLAND	<i>Fanfare for the Common Man</i>
JOAN TOWER	<i>Fanfare for Uncommon Woman</i>
CHAUSSON	<i>Poème, Op.25</i>
TCHAIKOVSKY	<i>Selections from Swan Lake</i>



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