



QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA



QSO PORTRAITS: ALISON MITCHELL

SEASON 2026



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WELCOME

Welcome to the first 'QSO at the Queensland Conservatorium' concert of 2026. I am honoured to be performing for you tonight in this concert celebrating highlights from my career and showcasing the beauty and virtuosity of the flute, in particular the romantic Flute Concerto by Carl Reinecke. Playing this music truly inspires me to explore my tonal range, project the story of the characters and release the beauty and phrasing of the wonderful melodies.

"Have flute, will travel" has been my personal motto and after study in Switzerland I performed in concert halls throughout the UK, Europe, USA and Australia. It's indeed a dream come true! Alongside performing I've also been able to pass on my knowledge and enthusiasm for the flute and to inspire the next generation of like-minded students.

Umberto and I have curated a personal "symphony" from symphonic highlights of my career and hope you enjoy them as much as we do.

Alison Mitchell

Section Principal Flute



QSO Portraits: Alison Mitchell

Queensland Conservatorium Theatre,
Griffith University
Friday 13 February 2026 6pm

IN THIS CONCERT

Umberto Clerici Conductor

Alison Mitchell Flute

Queensland Symphony Orchestra

PROGRAM

REINECKE	Flute Concerto	22'
	I. Allegro molto moderato	
	II. Lento e mesto	
	III. Moderato	
DVOŘÁK	Symphony No.5	10'
	I. Allegro ma non troppo	
SCHUMANN	Symphony No.2	8'
	II. Scherzo: Allegro vivace	
MENDELSSOHN	Symphony No.3	11'
	III. Adagio	
SIBELIUS	Symphony No.7	6'
	IV. Vivace; Presto; Adagio;	
	Largamente molto; Affetuoso	

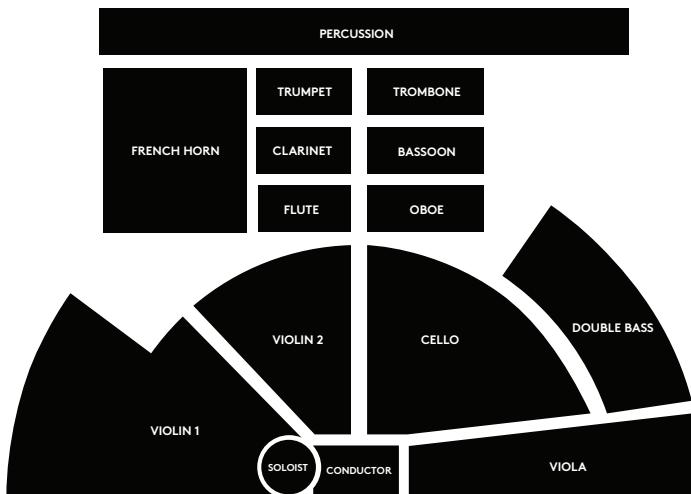
IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Doors open at 5.30pm

This concert will end at approx. 7.30pm

Please note there will be no interval in this concert.

TODAY'S ORCHESTRA LAYOUT



WHO'S ON STAGE



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



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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.

ARTISTIC SUMMARY

Our great orchestral concerts are the result of decades of combined experience and hard work on stage and behind the scenes. QSO wouldn't be QSO without our musicians – and in 2026, we're proud to introduce a new concert series that places them front and centre with their very own Portraits concerts, so that you can get to know them better.

The first in the series introduces our Section Principal Flute, Alison Mitchell. Hailing from Melbourne, Alison studied in Basel with renowned Swiss flautist Peter-Lukas Graf before moving to the UK, which was her base of operations for a vibrant career as an orchestral musician, chamber player, soloist and teacher. Since returning to Australia in 2017, Alison has been particularly involved in Queensland Symphony Orchestra's education programme and is sought-after to give masterclasses and specialist woodwind coaching.



For tonight's concert, Alison will play one of her favourite concertos, and has curated a hybrid symphony with single movements from her favourite repertoire by different composers, starting with Dvorák and passing through Schumann, Mendelssohn and Sibelius – a sort of travel-book of Alison's musical life.

She explains: "It eventuated by Umberto asking me what concerto I'd like to play. The Carl Reinecke Flute Concerto is one of the most famous Romantic flute concertos in the repertoire, and it was one that I hadn't done. And so from that point on – we chose the concerto, and then Umberto asked me about my playing history and where I've been, and we came up with four symphonies that came at major parts of my career. We chose a movement from each of those to make another symphony.

It probably won't hit me until I'm on the stage – I just love playing! Because I'm playing in the symphonies as well as the solo, from a concentration point of view, it will be very full-on. It might make me sad, because some of this repertoire I might not play again, but on the other hand I'll be very happy because I've had the chance to play it again."

QSO is grateful for our Music Chair Program supporters, whose donations sustain the Orchestra as a whole. Alison Mitchell is currently supported by Alan Symons.



LISTENING GUIDE

CARL REINECKE (1824-1910)

Flute Concerto in D, Op.283

I. Allegro molto moderato

II. Lento e mesto

III. Moderato

By the time he composed his Flute Concerto in 1908, Carl Reinecke had reached the ripe old age of 84, and yet the work is fresh and youthful, with the sophistication of an elderly composer. Reinecke is known for several cadenzas for the Mozart piano concertos, and for Mozart's Flute and Harp Concerto. The structure of the first movement of his Flute Concerto, *Allegro molto moderato*, reveals Reinecke's fascination with and reverence for the Mozart piano concertos, and the flute's first entry is specifically reminiscent of the E flat Piano Concerto, K.271.

Difficulties in balancing a solo flute against the huge forces of the Romantic orchestra meant that little other than virtuoso salon pieces was written for the flute in this period. In this concerto, Reinecke employed a Classical orchestration more suited to this subtle instrument.

While the atmosphere of the first movement is serene, there are moments of orchestral agitation and several animated flute episodes. The harmonic relationship of its three themes underpins

the structure. The first, a gentle lilting 6/8, is rather open-ended. The flute introduces the second, more modal theme, its symmetrical shape climaxing in animated arabesques and flourishes. A third, more playful, antiphonal theme for flute and staccato brass concludes the exposition, ushering in the short and contrapuntal development. A lengthy orchestral tutti signals the midpoint of the movement, and the highly compressed recapitulation, touching upon all themes, concludes the movement quietly and inconclusively with a flute trill on a high D, its resolution cyclically reiterating in reverse order the first three notes of the flute's entrance.

The concerto effectively explores the technical and expressive possibilities of the flute, achieving dazzling effects – not with fast tempos, but with elaborate ornamentation and, because all the materials are derived from the three-note cell, the work radiates a satisfying unity.

Kylie Burtland
Symphony Australia © 1995

ABOUT CARL REINECKE



At 19 years of age, Reinecke was already the favourite of the King of Denmark, in whose court he spent two years as court pianist, followed by 35 years as conductor of the celebrated Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig. Here he met Mendelssohn and Schumann, who saw in him a kindred spirit. Reinecke continued to compose prolifically until his death, his output including six operas, three symphonies, numerous overtures and a plethora of chamber works.

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK (1841-1904)

Symphony No.5 in F, Op.76

I. Allegro ma non troppo

In 1875, Dvořák was 33, blissfully married and the proud father of a son. The financial insecurity that had dogged him since his arrival as a student in Prague in 1857 was relieved by an Austrian State Grant for deserving young artists of talent. He began to feel confident about expressing himself according to the birthright he was later to proclaim, that of a 'simple Czech musician'. He no longer needed to ape the German culture that he found so alien and threw off the hero-worship of Wagner that overlaid his Third and Fourth symphonies. His Fifth Symphony is alive with a vitality which

swept him forward to complete a full score in under six weeks.

The first three movements prompt one to define the work as Dvořák's 'pastoral' symphony, the clarinets tripping in with what Donald Tovey considered the lightest symphonic opening since Beethoven's *Pastoral*. However, Dvořák has two subsidiary themes introduce the necessary vigour and minor-key tension for a development, after which the movement subsides to a tranquil conclusion.

Abridged from Anthony Cane © 1989

ABOUT ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK



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.

ROBERT SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Symphony No.2 in C, Op.61

II. Scherzo (Allegro vivace)

Schumann belonged to the first generation of composers who wrote in full awareness and sometimes in awe of what their great predecessors had done. Any symphony composed in Germany in 1845 was written for audiences for whom Haydn, Mozart, and especially Beethoven provided the models of what a symphony should be. Felix Mendelssohn, who conducted the first performances of Schumann's First and Second Symphonies, had done much to create this public awareness of past music, in his representative programs at the Leipzig Gewandhaus. The Second

Symphony pays tribute to Mendelssohn, with whom Schumann had an exceptionally close artistic collaboration. But by the already backward-looking standards set by its first critics, Schumann's symphonies did not seem Classical enough, nor were their novelties convincing. Even a sympathetic musical colleague of Schumann's in Leipzig, Moritz Hauptmann, found the First Symphony 'somewhat curious, but always musical'. This curioseness is just what makes Schumann's symphony original. The form may be classical, but the language is new.

Schumann owed much to Mendelssohn's advice, not least on the orchestral scoring at which he was a novice. It seems Mendelssohn suggested the transfer of the theme in triplets in the first of the Scherzo's two trios from strings to winds. This movement, which comes second, is the most explicit tribute by imitation to Mendelssohn of many in Schumann's first two symphonies. Much in the brilliant non-stop dashing of the strings sounds Mendelssohnian, as do some of the wind interventions. But this is no 'fairy scherzo'.

The music is restless, and as Michael Steinberg notices, 'a layer of melancholy underlies the jocularity.' The two trios give complete contrast from the *perpetuum mobile*. In the second, a fugato section points to the B-A-C-H fugues for pedal piano Schumann had been writing in 1845 as part of an intensive study of Bach's music. At one point the notes B-A-C-H (B flat, A, C, B natural) can be heard played in longer values by the first violins.

David Garrett © 2005

ABOUT ROBERT SCHUMANN



Severely affected by what was most likely bipolar disorder, Schumann wrote some of the greatest music of the Romantic era, and also some of the weakest. His best works were his piano pieces and songs produced early in life. He never became the virtuoso pianist he hoped to be, however his wife Clara was a formidable prodigy, and it is largely thanks to her championing of her husband's music that he remains a canonic figure.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1809-1847) Symphony No.3 in A minor, Op.56 Scottish

III. Adagio

Despite its occasional references to Scottish folksong, Mendelssohn's Scottish Symphony's claims to Scotland lie less in direct musical example than in a pervading mood of melancholy and resignation.

In 1829, Mendelssohn left for a four-year Grand Tour of Europe and the British Isles, a fashionable Romantic gesture to 'broaden his mind.' His tour of Scotland inspired at least two pieces indispensable to the symphonic repertoire.

After a visit to the Isle of Mull he wrote to his parents that 'in order to make you understand how extraordinarily the Hebrides have affected me, I have written the following which came into my mind.' Enclosed was the first 20 bars

of *The Hebrides* overture. Later that same trip he wrote, 'I believe I have found the beginning of my Scottish Symphony.' A trip to Italy appears to have dispelled the mood; Mendelssohn did not complete the Symphony for another 12 years, making it the last of the five symphonies.

The Scottish Symphony is perhaps more interesting for its innovation of structure than for its local details. The principal sections run straight through, and contain enough motivic relation to qualify, almost, as thematic transformation. The piece was premiered in Leipzig, in 1842, and permission was granted later that year for its dedication to Queen Victoria, a fervent admirer of the composer.

Anna Goldsworthy © 1999

ABOUT FELIX MENDELSSOHN



An extremely precocious musician, Mendelssohn wrote a number of operas, symphonies, and concertos during his childhood, and made his first appearance as a soloist at age nine. Queen Victoria described Mendelssohn as 'the greatest musical genius since Mozart'. In his mature music, Mendelssohn largely observed Classical models and practices while initiating key aspects of Romanticism. When he died aged just 38, he left behind a legacy of symphonies, concertos, piano music, organ music and chamber music.

JEAN SIBELIUS (1865-1957) Symphony No.7 in C, Op.105

IV. Vivace; Presto; Adagio; Largamento molto; Affetuoso

One of the hallmarks of Sibelius' music is its powerful evocation of elemental spirits. There is an intensity of expression, a disdain for adornment and a casting-aside of all that is unnecessary, coupled with an obvious identification with the natural world. With his Seventh Symphony (1924), Sibelius made his last statement in the form.

Detailed analyses of Sibelius' later music are always difficult because of the subtlety with which the composer lays his plans, but in the case of the Seventh Symphony the task is almost impossible. In this work the natural world has been dissolved into a symphony that is itself elemental, and as magnificent and perplexing as nature itself. Composer and critic Robert Simpson has described it as being 'like a great planet in orbit', while the writer Bayan Northcott calls it 'a single, gigantic wave'.

It could be called a genuine stream-of-consciousness symphony were it not so tightly organised. The work is anchored in C, and after an introduction that moves from simplicity to dark splendour, the main theme is announced. This burnished statement is the pivot around which the symphony revolves. The Lisztian objective of a convincing musical structure based on the method of 'transformation of themes' is here realised, with each theme anticipating and recalling another, but occupying its own emotional sphere. At one moment the spirit of the dance is summoned; at the next, the atmosphere is more troubled and dissonant, before Sibelius weaves these and other ideas around the final sublime tolling of the trombones.

Phillip Sametz © 1993/2004

ABOUT JEAN SIBELIUS



One of the great symphonists, Sibelius was the foremost musical champion of the Finnish nationalist cause. His music drew heavily on Finnish myths and legends, helping his country discover its identity and national character in the lead-up to its full independence in 1917. Many of his pieces draw inspiration from the Finnish countryside, and from the mythological epic, the *Kalevala*. His seven symphonies and Violin Concerto remain fixtures of orchestral seasons around the world.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



Umberto Clerici Chief 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. Since 2023 he has been the Chief Conductor of 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 Queensland Symphony Orchestra, 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*.



Alison Mitchell Flute

Alison Mitchell is the Queensland Symphony Orchestra's Section Principal Flute and has a vibrant and diverse career, as orchestral musician, chamber musician, soloist and teacher, performing throughout Europe and Australia.

She has held Principal positions with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the Orchestra of Scottish Opera, and Associate Principal with the Sydney Symphony. She also performs as guest Principal with orchestras around Australia and in Europe, including the Australian World Orchestra of which she is a founding member and the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Mitchell is also a member of the Brisbane-based chamber group, 'Ensemble Q'.

Mitchell has performed all the major flute concertos with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Her recording of Mozart's Flute Concerto in G with the SCO (Linn) received glowing reviews and the ACO recording of Bach's Triple Concerto where Mitchell joined Angela Hewitt and Richard Tognetti was a Gramophone Editor's Choice.

Alison is a dedicated educator and, alongside her QSO Connect projects, is Flute Faculty at the Australian National Academy of Music and teaches at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University

QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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.

Each year, QSO attracts the world's best conductors and soloists as part of our acclaimed concert season, in addition

to presenting unique blockbuster events. QSO is passionate about commissioning innovative new programs and Australian works and continues to invest in collaborations, recordings, and digital initiatives.

Powered by music, our passionate and talented team works hard on and off the stage to bring out the best in people, and share in a sense of wonderment and excitement that is truly for everyone to enjoy.

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The Music of John Williams

FRI 27 FEB 7.30PM

SAT 28 FEB 7.30PM

Concert Hall, QPAC

Nicholas Buc Conductor

Music from

Star Wars | *Jaws* | *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*
Indiana Jones | *E.T.* | *Jurassic Park* | *Schindler's List*
Superman (1978) | *Harry Potter*



Fauré Requiem

FRI 13 MAR 7.30PM

SAT 14 MAR 7.30PM

Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University

Umberto Clerici Conductor

Stacey Alleaume Soprano

Christopher Richardson Bass-baritone

Brisbane Chamber Choir

Maria Grenfell *Gaudete Fanfare*

Brahms *Serenade No.2*

Katy Abbott *Fanfare for the Melancholy*

Fauré *Requiem*



Maestro 1: Umberto's Mahler 5

FRI 20 MAR 7.30PM

SAT 21 MAR 7.30PM

Concert Hall, QPAC

Umberto Clerici Conductor

Sergej Krylov Violin

Mendelssohn *Violin Concerto in E minor*

Mahler *Symphony No.5*



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