

CLASSICS

MUSIC INSPIRED BY THE BARD



SUN 9 MAY 2021 CONCERT HALL, QPAC



2	YOU'RE NEW TO THE ORCHESTRA
4	LISTENING GUIDE
12	ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES
24	SUPPORTING YOUR ORCHESTRA
26	MUSICIANS AND MANAGEMENT

WELCOME

Welcome to our second Music on Sundays for 2021 – Shakespearean Classics. It still amazes me the ripple effects of Shakespeare across the ages and across different art forms. Without him we wouldn't have Zeffirelli's film, Prokofiev's ballet and Bernstein's musical West Side Story. The world would surely have been a drearier place had Shakespeare never existed.

The same can be said of Max McBride. Max is a fine conductor and a universally admired double-bassist, so I am sure the QSO bass section will be getting a lot of love from him in this concert (winks and special cues). We also welcome the rich tones of soprano Rebecca Cassidy in Verdi's Willow Song and Schubert's Who is Sylvia?

It is so nice to be back for another year of Music on Sundays and to be onstage with Queensland Symphony Orchestra again. This series has been a big part of my life (I started presenting the concerts at the age of three) and I hope we can continue to entertain and delight you.

Guy Noble

Host

IN THIS CONCERT

Conductor Max McBride **Host** Guy Noble

Soloist Rebecca Cassidy, soprano (Opera Queensland Young Artist)

PROGRAM

NICOLAI Overture to The Merry Wives of Windsor
WALTON Music from Henry V; A Shakespeare Scenario

SCHUBERT Who is Sylvia?

PROKOFIEV Music from Suite No.3 from Romeo and Juliet, Op.101

BEETHOVEN Overture to Coriolan
VERDI Willow Song from Otello

MENDELSSOHN Wedding March from A Midsummer Night's Dream, Op.61 **TCHAIKOVSKY** Hamlet; Fantasy Overture after Shakespeare, Op.67

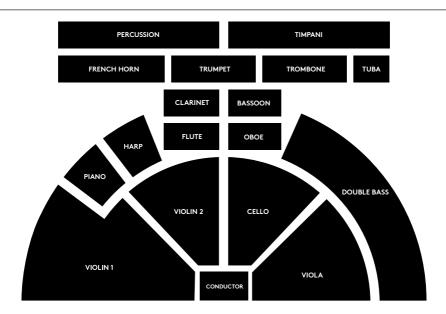
Queensland Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the traditional custodians of Australia.

We acknowledge the cultural diversity of Elders, both past and recent, and the significant contributions that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples have made to Queensland and Australia.

To ensure an enjoyable concert experience for everyone, please remember to turn off your mobile phones and all other electronic devices. Please muffle coughs and refrain from talking during the performance.

Presented in association with Opera Queensland

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/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

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 shaken. Some instruments just make a sound; others play particular pitches.

Timpani, Bass drum, Snare drum, Cymbals, Glockenspiel, Xylophone, Vibraphone,

Tam-tam, Triangle, Sleigh Bells.

WHO'S ON STAGE TODAY

CONCERTMASTER

Rebecca Seymour

VIOLIN 1

Brynley White ^ Lynn Cole Scarlett Gallery Ann Holtzapffel Anne Horton Ceridwen Jones Joan Shih Brenda Sullivan Jason Tong Stephen Tooke Claire Tyrell Sonia Wilson

VIOLIN 2

Wayne Brennan ~ Helen Travers ^ Katie Betts Jane Burrouahs Faina Dobrenko Matthew Hesse Delia Kinmont Natalie Low Tim Marchmont Nicholas Thin Allana Wales Harold Wilson

VIOLA

Imants Larsens ~ Yoko Okayasu >> Charlotte Burbrook de Vere Nara Dennis Nicole Greentree Bernard Hoey Kirsten Hulin-Bobart Jann Keir-Haantera Graham Simpson Nicholas Tomkin

CELLO

Matthew Kinmont = Matthew Jones + Tim Byrne Kathryn Close Andre Duthoit Kaja Skorka MinJin Sung Craig Allister Young

DOUBLE BASS

Phoebe Russell ~ Dušan Walkowicz >> Justin Bullock Daniel Mollov Paul O'Brien Ken Poggioli

FLUTE

Alison Mitchell ~ Hayley Radke >>

PICCOLO

Kate Lawson *

OBOF

Sarah Meagher >> Alexa Murray

COR ANGLAIS

Vivienne Brooke *

CLARINET

Brian Catchlove = Kate Travers

BASS CLARINET

Nicholas Harmsen *

BASSOON

Nicole Tait ~ Evan Lewis

CONTRABASSOON

Claire Ramuscak *

FRENCH HORN

Nicholas Mooney + Ian O'Brien * Vivienne Collier-Vickers Ryan Humphrey Lauren Manuel

TRUMPET

Richard Madden = Mark Bremner Richard Fomison Michael Whitaker

TROMBONE

Jason Redman ~ Ashley Carter >>

BASS TROMBONE

Matthew McGeachin ^

Thomas Allely *

TIMPANI

Tim Corkeron *

PERCUSSION

David Montgomery ~ Josh DeMarchi >> Jacob Enoka Angus Wilson

HARP

Jill Atkinson *

KEYBOARD

Narelle French ^

- ~ Section Principal
- = Acting Section Principal
- >> Associate Principal
- + Acting Associate Principal
- * Principal
- ^ Acting Principal

LISTENING GUIDE

It wasn't as if Shakespeare's attitude to music was consistent. In *Twelfth Night*, Duke Orsino utters one of the great entrance lines in the history of the theatre: 'If music be the food of love, play on.' On the other hand, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, the siren of the Nile, in response to her attendants' cry of 'The music, ho!' responds languidly: 'Let it alone; let's to billiards'.

Nevertheless, from his time right down to our own, composers have been drawn irresistibly to Shakespeare's world, its passions, tragedies, magic and laughter. Today you'll hear a small sample of the music the world's greatest dramatist has inspired.



Otto Nicolai (1810–1849)

Overture to The Merry Wives of Windsor

Although Verdi's opera Falstaff has now eclipsed Otto Nicolai's opera about the rotund knight, The Merry Wives of Windsor was hugely popular from the get-go, and is still in the repertoire of many German opera houses. That was small comfort to Nicolai who died aged 38 of a stroke only two months after the premiere in 1849.

In the opera, Sir John Falstaff is wooing two wives at once; the women take their revenge by moonlight where after a series of humiliations (including some inflicted by children dressed as fairies), Falstaff begs for forgiveness.

The overture to *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is a delight on its own, and has long been a concert favourite. It opens with shimmering sounds representing moonrise over Windsor Forest, followed by fleet-footed music associated with the phoney fairies and the plot to punish Falstaff. The big man himself enters with a swaggering theme on the strings; the overture ends (not surprisingly) with the sound of laughter.

William Turner Walton (1902–1983)

Henry V - A Shakespeare Scenario

- 4. Touch her soft lips, and part
- 6. Agincourt

England's King Henry V (1387-1422) claimed many towns and fortresses in northern France, and, at the climax of his play about the brilliant military strategist, Shakespeare celebrates Henry's victorious battle at Agincourt. Laurence Olivier's movie adaptation, released in 1944, was revolutionary in its approach to transferring the textural richness of Shakespeare to the big screen, but the actor later said: "The music actually made the film," and that music was by one of the UK's leading composers, William Walton. For Pistol's farewell to Mistress Quickly as he embarks for war, Walton wrote the haunting elegy for strings 'Touch her soft lips, and part' (which must have been unbearably poignant in war-time Britain). His rousing setting of the Agincourt Song marks the moment of victory for Henry and his troops.

LISTENING GUIDE

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

Who Is Sylvia?

Who is Sylvia? What is she, That all our swains commend her? Holy, fair and wise is she, The heav'ns such grace did lend her; That adored she might be

11.

Is she kind as she is fair? For beauty lives with kindness, To her eyes love doth repair To help him in his blindness And, being help'd, inhabits there

Ш.

Then to Sylvia let us sing That Sylvia is excelling She excels each mortal thing Up on the dull earth dwelling To her garlands let us bring

This song started life as a serenade in Shakespeare's comedy The Two Gentleman of Verona, in which it sung to Silvia, daughter of the Duke of Milan, by a chorus hired by one of her suitors. Schubert's setting comes from 1826, a year in which he produced many imperishable works including the B flat piano trio and the String Quartet No. 15.

From the opening strumming accompaniment (suggesting the sound of lutes or guitars that might have been used in the song's original setting), it's clear that Schubert loves the text. The mood is blissful and radiant; as pianist and scholar Graham Johnson puts it: "Merry geniality holds sway."

Schubert wrote Who Is Sylvia? in a small pocket book; this manuscript was not discovered until 1969.

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

From Romeo and Juliet

Act 1, Scene 1: Morning Dance Act 3, Epilogue: Death of Juliet

Romeo and Juliet – the ultimate drama of young love – has probably attracted more composers than any other Shakespeare play (although Hamlet and The Tempest would be in the running too). Prokofiev wrote his score – one of the most widely loved of the classical ballet repertoire –in the mid-1930s, at a crucial time in his life and in the political fortunes of the Soviet Union. This was the era of sudden political purges, and in one such Stalin-directed clearing-out of the cultural elite, Prokofiev's principal collaborator on Romeo and Juliet, Kirov theatre director Sergei Radlov, was thrown out of his job, and the project closed down because it was claimed choreographed Shakespeare was a sacrilege. It took another five years for the ballet to reach the stage.

The 'Morning Dance' was a late addition to the score; Prokofiev adapted it from a section of his Piano Sonata No. 2. Juliet's Death is the last music heard in the ballet. Juliet wakes in the tomb and finds Romeo's body beside her. In despair she takes Romeo's dagger; the moment she stabs herself is clearly depicted in the music.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Overture to Coriolan

After the exceptionally difficult birth of his only opera, Fidelio, Beethoven channelled his passion for the theatre into creating music for other people's plays. So, although Beethoven's overtures are among his most popular orchestral works, most of them were not overtures to works by him!

Coriolan was a drama by Beethoven's contemporary Heinrich Collin, one which seems to have been modelled on Shakespeare's Coriolanus. The hero of the title – a general of ancient Rome who has been banished from the city and swears to reconquer it – comes to life in the powerful opening bars. But tempering this iron resolve, Beethoven also captures, with equal brilliance, Coriolan's doubts about the wisdom of his actions. The final moments, depicting his decision to sacrifice himself, are incredibly moving, as the music moves swiftly from bold defiance to quiet despair.

LISTENING GUIDE

Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901)

Otello: Act IV - Willow Song

"She wept singing in the lonely land, the sad girl wept. O Willow, Willow, Willow! She sat with her head inclining upon her breast, Let's sing! Let's sing! The willow will be my funeral garland."

Hurry; Otello will be coming in a little while.

"The brook flowed between the flowering banks, She moaned in grief, And her eyes flowed with bitter tears in which her heart sought solace. Willow! Willow! Willow! Let's sing! Let's sing! The willow will be my funeral garland."

"The birds flew down from branches towards this sweet singing And her eyes wept so much that the rocks pitied her."

Here take this ring. Poor Barabara! she used to end her song with this simple saying: "He was born for glory, I for love."

Listen! I heard a moan. Who knocks at the door?"

"I to love him and to die. Let's sing! Let's sing! Willow! Willow! Willow!

Emilia, farewell, How my eyes do itch this evening! Is it the presence of weeping? Good night. Ah! Emilia, Emilia, farewell! Emilia, farewell!

Translation by Lori Decter Purcell

Verdi – like Wagner or Queen Victoria – is someone it's impossible to imagine the 19th century without. His impact on the world of opera – and on the worlds of music in general – was enormous. You can hear echoes of his style and method in music by Stravinsky, Richard Strauss, Britten and many other 20th century composers and he wrote dozens of operas that virtually define the genre.

Verdi authority Charles Osborne described the composer's feeling for Shakespeare as "real and intense"; in addition to the operas based on Shakespeare that he completed – Macbeth, Otello and Falstaff – he made several attempts to write a King Lear opera, attempts which stretched on for decades. It is one of music's great might-have-beens.

In Otello, his second-last opera, Verdi's vision of Desdemona was idealised; he saw in her 'a type of goodness, of resignation, self-sacrifice,' and as Act IV opens, in a scene of supreme, melancholy beauty, she sings the Willow Song she once learned from her mother's maid. In a short while, Otello will enter, and the opera's tragic final moments will be set in train.



LISTENING GUIDE

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

Wedding March from A Midsummer Night's Dream

It has always seemed strange that two of the world's favourite wedding marches originally appeared in such seemingly unpropitious circumstances. The one from Wagner's Lohengrin ('Here Comes the Bride,' if you prefer) presages a doomed marriage, and the jubilant one you hear today comes near the end of this, the ultimate comedy of romantic mishap. Mendelssohn composed his incidental music for fairly deluxe circumstances: a performance of Shakespeare's play at the King of Prussia's palace in Potsdam.

We might think of A Midsummer Night's Dream as unique and sublime now but, famously diarist Samuel Pepys thought not. After seeing it on 29 September 1662 he described it as "the most insipid ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life. I saw, I confess, some good dancing and some handsome women, which was all my pleasure."

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

Hamlet; Fantasy Overture after Shakespeare

By the time he created this powerful work, Tchaikovsky had already written orchestral pieces inspired by Romeo and Juliet and The Tempest. But the tragedy of 'a man who could not make up his mind' haunted him for years, and he finally put pen to paper in 1888, around the time of some his richest musical accomplishments, including the ballet The Sleeping Beauty, the Fifth Symphony and the opera The Queen of Spades. Tchaikovsky's Hamlet is not so much an attempt at a musical narrative as an evocation of the play's atmosphere of anguish, violence and the supernatural. The ominous opening theme suggests the ghost of Hamlet's father, portentous brass figures the brooding atmosphere of Elsinore, a fast-moving dialogue between brass and percussion the duel between Hamlet and Laertes, and a lyrical oboe theme Hamlet's doomed love for Ophelia. The ending, bassoons and lower strings dominating, is immensely, almost luxuriously dark.

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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



Max McBride Conductor

Max McBride is one of the most widely respected musicians active in Australia today, having found success on the concert stage, in the theatre and as an educator. He was Lecturer and Senior Lecturer in Double Bass and Conducting at the Canberra School of Music from 1992 - 2008.

Max embarked on his conducting career immediately upon his return to Australia in 1979. He was engaged as a conductor by the ABC, and has since worked with the ABC orchestras in Sydney, Hobart, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth. He was also a regular conductor with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and has conducted opera at Victoria State Opera and Australian Opera as well as large scale choral works with Sydney Philarmonia and Canberra Choral Society.

Max has always loved working with young musicians. Recently, he has been at the centre of re-developing orchestral music at the ANU School of Music, conducting the Side-by-Side Orchestra in a collaboration with the Canberra Symphony Orchestra. In October 2020 he conducted the highly successful premiere of the ANU Orchestra to a capacity audience at Llewellyn Hall and critical acclaim. The program featured Shostakovich's 2nd Piano Concerto and Dvorak's 8th Symphony.

From 2009 - 2014 Max was Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Sydney Youth Orchestra. Highlights included performances of Saint-Saëns's Organ Symphony, Mahler's 3rd and 6th Symphony, as well as working with soloists Teddy Tahu-Rhodes, Satu Vänskä and David Pereira. Under Max's direction the SYO has premièred works of such Australian composers as George Palmer, Gerard Brophy, Graeme Koehne, Elena Kats-Chernin and Daniel Rojas.

From 1992 - 2010 Max was Chief Conductor of the Canberra Youth Orchestra. Highlights included touring Europe and performing Mahler's Resurrection Symphony in Canberra and at Sydney Opera House.



Guy Noble Host

Guy Noble has conducted the Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Western Australian, Tasmanian, Queensland and Canberra symphony orchestras, the Auckland Philharmonia, and the Hong Kong Symphony and Malaysian Philharmonic orchestras. He was the host and accompanist each year for Great Opera Hits (Opera Australia) at the Sydney Opera House, conducted Opera Queensland's 2014 production of La Boheme, and is conductor and host for the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra's Classics Unwrapped series at the Adelaide Town Hall. In 1991 he was a network announcer on BBC Radio 3, host of Breakfast on ABC Classic from 1999 to 2001 and a presenter on ABC TV's Dimensions in Time series. He appeared four times on ABC TV's Spicks and Specks which still air at odd hours of the day or night.

Guy has worked with a wide variety of international performers including Harry Connick Jr, Ben Folds, The Beach Boys, The Pointer Sisters, Dianne Reeves, Glenn Frey, Randy Newman, Clive James, Conchita, The Two Cellos, Alfie Boe and Olivia Newton John, He was the first conductor and host

for the Symphony in the City for the West Australian Symphony Orchestra and returns regularly to entertain upwards of 25000 happy concertgoers at Langley Park.

Some career highlights include doing a raffle with Princess Margaret in London, sharing a chat in a lift with John Gielgud at BBC Broadcasting House, cooking pasta live on stage with Maggie Beer and Simon Bryant and the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and singing backing vocals with Kate Ceberano. Guy is pleased after a covid-inspired hiatus to return in 2021 for music and laughter with the QSO.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



Rebecca Cassidy Soprano

Hailing from Townsville, soprano Rebecca Cassidy completed her Bachelor of Music at Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University (QCGU). Her performances include the title role in Puccini's Suor Angelica, Anne Trulove in Stravinsky's The Rake's Progress and Rosalinde in Die Fledermaus by Johann Strauss Jnr. In addition to these operatic roles, Rebecca's concert, oratorio and symphonic repertoire as soprano soloist include Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Mozart's Mass in C minor, Handel's Saul, Britten's War Requiem and Richard Strauss' Four Last Songs.

Rebecca's awards and scholarships include QCGU's Wagner Prize, Trinity College London Exhibition Award and the Alton Budd Memorial Scholarship.

In 2019, Rebecca featured in Opera Queensland's regional tour of Songs to Die For as well as our partner event Carols in the Common. Most recently for Opera Queensland, she performed with Rosario La Spina and Alex Raineri in QPAC's True North and in the Concert Hall for ENCORE - Opera Queensland Returns to the Stage.

Rebecca us currently a member of the Opera Queensland Young Artist Program. Queensland Symphony Orchestra is pleased to be collaborating with Opera Queensland to present Rebecca in today's concert.



Queensland Symphony Orchestra (QSO) has been captivating audiences for over 70 years – thank you for making QSO the organisation it is today.

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BEYOND THE CONCERT HALL

On stage and off, we're always making, performing and teaching music. Our performances in QPAC's Concert Hall are only part of what we do, so we thought we would share a little bit of what your Queensland Symphony Orchestra has been up to lately across the state.

In March, we took a QSO Connect Woodwind Quintet to the beautiful towns of Chinchilla, Miles and Tara, as well as a String Quartet to Roma. This tour showed our musicians and team the splendour of the Western Downs Region and featured performances alongside local musicians, playing in nursing homes and aged care facilities, and teaching workshops in remote schools. Our 13-player QSO Connect Ensemble went tropical and toured Far North Queensland, performing four concerts for the general public and school students in Innisfail and Cairns. More than 200 instrumental music students from Innisfail, Tully, Mossman and Cairns high schools attended workshops on their individual instruments presented by our musicians.

Even the likes of Mozart, Beethoven and Bach had their musical talents fostered by others who knew a little about music. As part of Queensland Symphony Orchestra's commitment to fostering music education, we facilitate several projects that teach music making to young people. Last month our Education team with cellist Craig Young visited Narangba Valley State High School, St Johns Anglican College, Cannon Hill

Anglican College, and Brisbane State High School as part of our Compose Project to develop the composers of tomorrow. Our Musical Mentor program took violinist Katie Betts to Holland Park State High School for rehearsals and workshops with budding young violinists for oneon-one mentorships. Finally, our Young Instrumentalist Prize Finalists' Recital was held at our Studio on Saturday 13 March. From six outstanding finalists, Andre Oberleuter (bassoon) and Anna Suzuki (violin) were selected as 2021 prize winners.

All this, as well as perfomances in Redlands and Redcliffe, and a livestream that reached communities in Mt Isa. Towoomba, Mackay and the Fraser Coast. It's been a busy start to 2021 and reinforces our mission to be an Orchestra for everyone.

Craia Whitehead Chief Executive

Watch some highlights from our



Chinchilla Miles Roma tour.

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