



Soaring Heights



QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

75 YEARS

19 FEB 2022

CONCERT HALL, QPAC



CONTENTS

WELCOME	1
IF YOU'RE NEW TO THE ORCHESTRA	2
BEFORE WE BEGIN	6
LISTENING GUIDE	8
ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES	12
SUPPORTING YOUR ORCHESTRA	20
MUSICIANS AND MANAGEMENT	22

WELCOME

It is my great pleasure to welcome you back to Queensland Symphony Orchestra's Maestro magic, and what a program have we prepared for the 75th Birthday of your orchestra! With the first Maestro concert of 2022 we start big. Strauss' Alpine Symphony is a celebration of orchestral brilliance – an indulgence in colours and sounds, it is the pinnacle of Strauss' tone poems. Over 100 musicians share the concert stage, the mighty QPAC organ will roar during the thunder storm, and a back-stage brass ensemble will represent a group of hunters. The emotional journey from sunrise to sunset, the adventurous hike up the mountains and back is not just the description of a single day, it is more like the description of rich life experience, from the first hour to the last. We musicians love this grand piece and we present it with collective experience, passion and instrumental brilliance.

Before we start the hike up the Alps we climb another mountain: Brahms' second piano concerto is one of the absolute highlights in the repertoire for solo piano and orchestra. We are very happy to welcome Brisbane-based pianist Daniel de Borah to join us in this striking "symphony" for piano and orchestra.

Johannes Fritzs

Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser

IN THIS CONCERT

Conductor	Johannes Fritzs
Soloist	Daniel de Borah, piano
Conductor Offstage Brass	Nathaniel Griffiths

PROGRAM

BRAHMS	Concerto No.2 in B flat for Piano and Orchestra, Op.83	46'
INTERVAL		20'
R. STRAUSS	<i>Alpine Symphony</i> , TrV 233, Op.64	47'

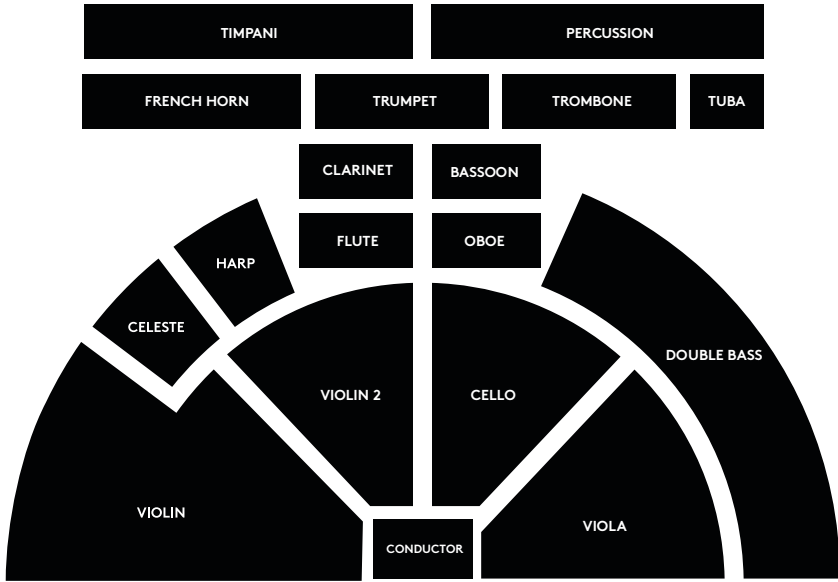
Queensland Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the traditional custodians of Australia. We acknowledge the cultural diversity of Elders, both past and recent, and the significant contributions that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to make to Queensland and Australia.

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.

QSO Favourites is presented in association with QPAC.

Photos by Peter Wallis.

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
- 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
- Wagner 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



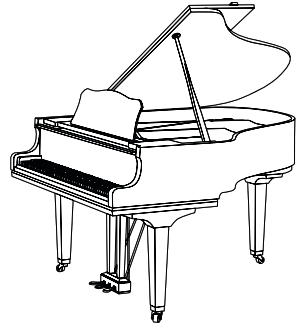
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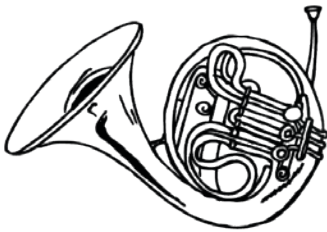
FOR YOUNGER EARS

Johannes Brahms Piano Concerto No.2 in B flat

The first piece of music you will hear on stage today is a piano concerto – this is a piece of music that is composed to feature the soloist's musicality and skills – Daniel de Borah, a renowned Brisbane based musician of incredible talent and musical skill. Today the piano is played by Daniel de Borah, an renowned Brisbane based musician of incredible talent and musical skill. Watch as his fingers fly back and forth over the keys.



WHO WAS BRAHMS?



Johannes Brahms was a German composer and conductor, as well as being a very accomplished pianist himself. He was born in 1833 and was trained in music almost as soon as he could crawl. Brahms' Dad played the French horn and double bass and wanted to pass on his musical knowledge to his son. Johannes was a natural, but instead of wanting to pursue a life as a performer (like his parents wanted) he paved his own way as a composer and became one of the greats!

DID YOU KNOW?

Though the piano is considered a keyboard instrument, it creates sound using strings (like a violin or cello) that are struck by small mallets inside the instrument (like a drum or xylophone).

Richard Strauss

Alpine Symphony (Eine Alpensinfonie)

This magnificent music you're about to hear will take you on an epic journey; slowly climbing up a huge mountain until you triumphantly reach its peak and finally make your way back down again. You might notice that there are A LOT of musicians on stage – 100 to be exact. That's because this challenging piece is loud and needs lots of instruments working together to create the mountain of music the composer (Richard Strauss) wanted to create.



WHO WAS STRAUSS?

Like Brahms, Richard Strauss was a German composer, but he came onto the scene a little later. Strauss began composing in 1870 at just six years old – the *Alpine Symphony* you will hear today was composed between 1911 and 1915 when Strauss was in the middle of his career. He also composed operas, symphonies, concertos, and conducted orchestras as well. He was influenced by Brahms and another German composer named Richard Wagner, but he also inspired others. If you've ever watched *Star Wars* you might hear a few similarities between the iconic theme and this symphony. *Star Wars* composer John Williams was a huge fan of Strauss and was influenced by Strauss' use of French horns in his music.

LISTEN OUT FOR...

As the music builds, representing climbing up the mountain, we can hear a theme develop (a theme is tune that is repeated). The theme is reversed when we begin our climb back down the mountain. But wait, we're hit by a storm! The orchestra plays very quickly and we can imagine trying to shelter on the side of a mountain from violent wind and rain.



DID YOU KNOW?

Alpine Symphony is a Tone Poem – a Tone Poem is a name for a piece of music that tells a story or musically illustrates a painting or landscape. In this case, *Alpine Symphony* uses music to paint us a musical picture of climbing a huge mountain.

BEFORE WE BEGIN

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

Tone poem

a piece of orchestral music that tells a story, either evoking the content of a poem, story, painting, or landscape.

Sustained

in music, sustain is a period of time where the sound remains the same.

Major key

a key whose essential harmony is based on the major scale. Music in a major key usually sounds happy, whereas music in a minor key tends to sound sad.

Triplets

a three-note pattern that fills the duration of a typical two-note pattern.

Scherzo

a short composition or sometimes a movement in a larger work such as a symphony (most commonly the third movement) which contains a contrasting section. A scherzo is usually fast-paced and playful and sometimes contains elements of surprise.

Romantic

Romantic music is a style of music from the 19th century. Usually we refer to it as the Romantic period, where artists (painters, writers and composers) were concerned with communicating emotional depths. This is not to be confused with romance.





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LISTENING GUIDE

Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Concerto No. 2 in B flat for Piano and Orchestra, Op.83

Johannes Brahms suffered a terrible condition. There may not have been a name for it during the 19th Century, but today it would be diagnosed as impostor syndrome.

The German composer had the misfortune of being born in 1833 – six years after Beethoven died. How could a newcomer compete with such a legend? And what would it take for that newcomer to prove themselves worthy? In 1870, Brahms would readily admit: “You have no idea what it’s like to hear the footsteps of a giant like that behind you!”

Poor Brahms. His insecurity was such an affliction that he was 43 by the time he turned out his first symphony (having germinated the idea about two decades earlier). He spent the first half of his life trying to avoid styles commonly linked to the former master – particularly anything orchestral. Add to that the failure of his first piano concerto at its 1859 premiere, and Brahms would put himself through a cringe-worthy long wait before his second attempt at the form. (That also took two decades.)

Brahms eventually recovered from his impostor syndrome, but remnants of his modest nature can be found in the way he described his 1881 Piano Concerto No. 2 to his contemporaries. To composer Clara Schumann, he wrote that it was “very small and pretty”, and to composer Elisabeth von Herzogenberg, he wrote that it contained “a tiny, tiny whisp of a **scherzo**”.

Whether these comments were ironically or genuinely self-conscious, they’re nevertheless amusing, because the concerto was anything but tiny. It was one of the biggest **Romantic** concertos of all! Into it, Brahms added a fourth movement when the form traditionally contained three. (That addition was his “tiny” scherzo.)

It took the composer-pianist three years to start and finish this composition, after which it propelled him along a string of performances across Europe. It proved to others – as to Brahms – that light could emerge from under Beethoven’s shadow.

There are some moments within this concerto that so gracefully unite piano and orchestra, we may forget we’re listening to a solo exhibit. Unlike the overtly virtuosic passages in many other works of this type (Rachmaninov 3 and Prokofiev 2 spring to mind), Brahms’ concerto does not sound like an ego-tickling affair. It is smartly integrated into the orchestra and helps carry his overarching themes. Similarly, other instruments – such as the horn opening the first movement, and the cello opening the third movement – take on a soloistic flare.

This is not to suggest the pianist should lack virtuosity (or that Rachmaninov 3 and Prokofiev 2 are not also among the best). But at the end of the day, Brahms’ second piano concerto is an impressive display from a composer who finally found his confidence, and could navigate each section of the orchestra with respect to its unique voice. The result is likely to have pleased Beethoven. (And if not, who cares? It pleases you today, and that’s all that matters.)

Notes by Stephanie Eslake

Richard Strauss (1864–1949)

Alpine Symphony, TrV233, Op.64

Would it surprise you to learn this piece was originally going to be called *The Antichrist*? While composing the draft – its working title *Der Antichrist: Eine Alpensinfonie* – Richard Strauss had philosophised about a Nietzschean work that would represent “worship of eternal, magnificent nature”, as he explained in his 1911 journal. In the end though, the German composer pulled these spiritual connotations from the title, dedicating his work more simply to the alps.

Strauss had always felt at home in the mountains. As a teen, he hiked through a thunderstorm in the Bavarian Alps; as an adult, he built a home overlooking them. The composer drew from personal experience when he created this **tone poem**. His action-packed adventure sends the listener from the base of the mountain to its peak, and all the way back down again. (Including the thunderstorm.)

What’s clever about the *Alpine* is how its narrative unfolds. In one continuous movement, it models a full day’s climb in 22 short sections (a storytelling structure perfect for the modern attention span). The scene begins with *Night*. Through **sustained** instrumentation we can picture snowy summits cloaked in darkness, waiting to challenge the climbers when day breaks. By *Sunrise*, the full scale of these glorious alps is revealed – and the adventure begins.

Low strings may signify the mountain’s base as climbers begin their steady *Ascent*, filled with the optimism of a new day. Their camaraderie is embedded in a **major key**; they are the heroes of their journey. As they gallop along to brass **triplets**, every step brings them closer to the vista.

Strauss’ quest continues through a mysterious forest. A stream (rapidly running woodwinds) leads straight to a waterfall. Instruments crash together, descending in a flurry like droplets of water. After one breath-taking moment, these explorers continue on their way through flowering meadows; cowbells chiming over alpine pastures.

A few trials await them: to a messy concoction of sounds, they thrash their way through a thicket; later, a stray bassoon heralds the suspense of a *Dangerous Moment*. Finally, they make it to the summit. (Little do they know a thunderstorm will strike upon descent!)

The *Alpine* is an epic and satisfying example of orchestral storytelling. It’s difficult to lose your way as you follow Strauss’ gripping journey: through colourful instrumentation, the composer makes it easy to stay on track. Using your imagination, you can visualise his wild storms, icy glaciers, and alpine views that’ll leave you awe-struck from your seat in the concert hall.





ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



Johannes Fritzsch Conductor

Johannes Fritzsch was appointed Principal Conductor and Artistic Adviser of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in February, 2021 having previously served as their Chief Conductor (2008-2014). Since 2018, Johannes has held the position of Principal Guest Conductor of the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

From 2006–2013 he was Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Oper Graz, Grazer Philharmonisches Orchester (Austria). Prior to his appointment in Graz, Johannes held the position of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Staatsoper Nürnberg. From 1993 until 1999, he was Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Städtische Bühnen and the Philharmonic Orchestra in Freiburg.

Johannes was born in 1960 in Meissen, near Dresden, Germany, where he completed his musical education. He has conducted many leading orchestras, both within Germany and internationally. He regularly conducts the major Australasian orchestras as well as leading productions for Opera Australia, Opera Queensland, West Australian Opera and State Opera of South Australia.

In January 2015, Johannes was appointed Adjunct Professor, The Conservatorium of Music, School of Creative Arts and Media at the University of Tasmania; in June 2019, he joined the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University as Professor of Opera and Orchestral Studies.

Over the past twenty years, Johannes has given many Masterclasses for the German conductor training and development organisation *Dirigentenforum des Deutschen Musikrates*. Similarly, he was active and enthusiastic in the training of conducting participants selected to take part in Symphony Services' International Conductor Development Program.

In 2017, the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra invited him to design and lead the newly founded Australian Conducting Academy.



Daniel de Borah

Piano

Daniel de Borah is recognised as one of Australia's foremost musicians, consistently praised for the grace, finesse and imaginative intelligence of his performances. His busy performance schedule finds him equally at home as concerto soloist, recitalist and chamber musician.

Since his prize-winning appearances at the 2004 Sydney International Piano Competition, Daniel has given recitals on four continents and toured extensively throughout the United Kingdom and Australia. As a concerto soloist he has appeared with the English Chamber Orchestra, London Mozart Players, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Australian Chamber Orchestra and the Sydney, Melbourne, Queensland, Adelaide and Auckland Symphony Orchestras.

An avid chamber musician, Daniel has enjoyed fruitful collaborations with many leading soloists including Vadim Gluzman, Andrew Haveron, Dale Barltrop, Kristian Winther, Baiba Skride, Umberto Clerici, Nicolas Altstaedt, Li-Wei Qin, Roderick Williams, Steve Davislim and Andrew Goodwin. His festival appearances have included the Musica Viva Festival, Adelaide

Festival, Huntington Estate Music Festival and the Australian Festival of Chamber Music. Daniel is a founding member of Ensemble Q, ensemble-in-residence at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University since 2017.

During his studies Daniel won numerous awards including 3rd Prizes at the 2004 Sydney International Piano Competition, the 2001 Tbilisi International Piano Competition and the 2000 Arthur Rubinstein in Memoriam Competition in Poland. In 2005 he was selected for representation by the Young Classical Artists Trust, London. Daniel is also a past winner of the Australian National Piano Award and the Royal Overseas League Piano Award in London.

Born in Melbourne in 1981, Daniel studied at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, the St. Petersburg State Conservatory and the Royal Academy of Music, London. His teachers have included Zsuzsa Esztó, Mira Jevtic, Nina Seryogina, Tatyana Sarkissova and Alexander Satz. Daniel now lives in Brisbane where he serves as Head of Chamber Music at the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University.

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

The Honourable Leeanne Enoch MP: Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts
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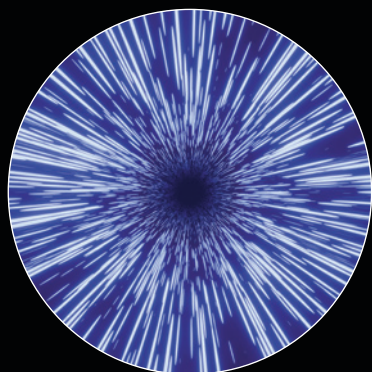


Studio Sessions 1

SUN 13 MAR 3PM

QSO Studio, ABC Building

Get up close and personal to the music-making in our first Studio Session for the year. Delight in an afternoon of brass and woodwind virtuosity, featuring music by Bartók, Tilsen Thomas, Brisbane composer Callum Kennedy, and more.



Cinematic

FRI 29 APR 7.30PM

SAT 30 APR 1.30PM & 7.30PM

Concert Hall, QPAC

Conductor & Host Nicholas Buc

Our flagship concert for lovers of movie soundtracks is back and this year we're celebrating the 90th birthday of the master of movie music: John Williams. Enjoy favourites from *Indiana Jones*, *Star Wars*, *Harry Potter*, *Schindler's List* and much more.



Heroes and Revolutionaries

SUN 15 MAY 11.30AM

Concert Hall, QPAC

Conductor Jonathan Stockhammer

Host Guy Noble

Enjoy a relaxed morning concert featuring music of fire and passion. Enjoy works by Beethoven, Berlioz, Rossini and more.

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We love to hear from our audience. What did you think of the concert? What was your favourite piece? Who do you want to hear more of? Let us know!

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