

Worlds Collide



QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

18 FEB 2024
CONCERT HALL, QPAC



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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; specifically 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 Sarah Marshall, Sam Muller and Joel Tronoff

WELCOME

Welcome to a new year of music with QSO! Whether you are a long-term patron or a new kid on the classical music block, we have so much planned for you to enjoy in 2024. I personally have been experiencing some withdrawal symptoms in January after the last few months of 2023 which were filled to the brim with QSO concerts, not to mention the opera almost every night!

I hope you have noticed that we have doubled our concert offering this year. We have made this leap in activity for a number of very good reasons: 1) we want to give you as much choice and opportunity to attend as possible, 2) the repertoire is so extensive and enticing that we need more occasions to perform it, and, most importantly, 3) we really want to explore some new and different venues with you. You may not yet have had the chance to hear us perform at the Queensland Conservatorium, St Stephen's Cathedral, Redlands Performing Arts Centre or in Queens Park Toowoomba...so if you love classical music, now is the chance to hear it in lots of different places and spaces.

Today's concert comprises firm favourites and some new adventures. My Czech heritage means that anything composed by Dvořák is in my DNA, and I guarantee you will find the Polovtsian Dances by Borodin very familiar. The choice to perform Mozart's Sinfonia concertante is an easy one; QSO has a raft of exceptional musicians whose soloistic capability we love to showcase through works like this.

Thank you for making QSO part of your 2024. I am delighted that you are joining us on this year's cultural journey into the wonderful world of symphonic music.

Yarmila Alfonzetti

Chief Executive

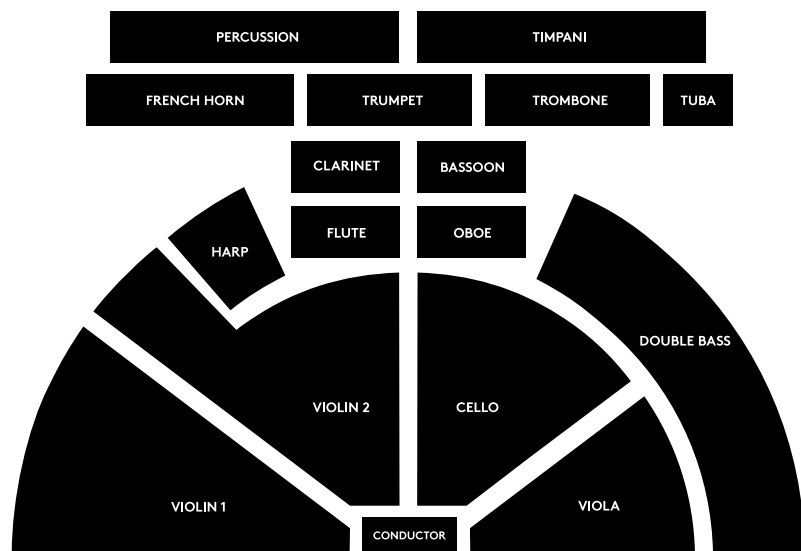
IN THIS CONCERT

Conductor	Douglas Boyd
Host	Ashleigh Denning
Soloists	Huw Jones, oboe Irit Silver, clarinet Tim Allen-Ankins, horn Nicole Tait, bassoon

PROGRAM

SDRAULIG	<i>Torrent</i>	6'
MOZART	Sinfonia concertante in E flat, mvt 2	9'
DVOŘÁK	Symphony No. 9, <i>From the New World</i> in E minor, mvts 3 and 4	20'
WILLIAMS	<i>Penillion</i> for Orchestra	5'
BORODIN	Polovtsian Dances from <i>Prince Igor</i>	12'

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



Find out who's on stage today, scan the QR code below.



BEFORE WE BEGIN

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

Pizzicato	A musical term indicating that a string be plucked.
Intermezzo	A short instrumental piece that connects different sections of an opera.
Scherzo	A short composition in a larger work, containing a contrasting section – usually fast-paced and playful, sometimes containing elements of surprise.
Stanza	A division of a poem consisting of two or more lines arranged together as a unit.



LISTENING GUIDE

Harry Sdraulig (1992–present)

Torrent

Melbourne-born Harry Sdraulig is a rising star in the world of Australian composers, having already received commissions from Musica Viva, PLEXUS, Ensemble Q and many other organisations. He created *Torrent* for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's *50 Fanfares Project* in 2021, in a commission supported by the Sharon and Anthony Lee Foundation. The work has since been played by the Tasmanian and Melbourne Symphony orchestras, making this QSO premiere a completion of *Torrent's* conquest of the east coast capital cities.

Harry Sdraulig writes:

*"Torrent begins with immediate, unrelenting forward motion. Flurries disperse among the winds and strings, supported by bold, fanfare-like interjections from the brass and percussion. But before long a second theme emerges – one of complete rhythmic simplicity and contrast, first heard in the **pizzicato** strings and then passed to the woodwinds. After a brief return of the opening flourish, a languid oboe solo heralds the beginning of a gentle, slow **intermezzo**. Muted brass and vibraphone accompany an extended violin solo, eventually entwined with lyrical responses from the piccolo. However, the relative peace of this passage proves short-lived – trumpets and snare drum drive towards a martial, tumultuous conclusion."*

LISTENING GUIDE

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Sinfonia concertante in E flat, K.297b

2. Adagio

Mozart's adulthood coincided with an increased sophistication in the design of woodwind instruments, and greater opportunities for woodwind soloists; hence this delicious concerto, originally intended for a solo quartet comprising flute, oboe, bassoon and horn. But the story behind it is far more complicated than the beautiful results suggest...

Mozart wrote this Sinfonia concertante in Paris, in 1778, for four talented friends to play with a Parisian concert society. But something went wrong – some intrigue within the French musical establishment, perhaps – and Mozart's autograph score was never prepared for performance. Not only that, the music disappeared for nearly 100 years, and when a copy did show up in the late 1860s it was scored differently – with solo clarinet replacing flute. Mozart scholars now also believe that all the solo parts were changed thoroughly in other ways too, but by whom – by Mozart himself, or someone else? To complicate matters further, the source from which this new copy was made had disappeared too! In short, it's possible that this Sinfonia concertante may not be by Mozart at all.

Then again if the joy, delight and elegance of this music suggest Mozart to you, who's going to argue? Today, you'll hear the second of the work's three movements, in which the four soloists hand the lyrical main theme to each other in a delicate game of musical pass-the-parcel. The orchestral accompaniment throughout is gentle and discreet.



LISTENING GUIDE

Antonin Dvořák (1841–1904)

Symphony No.9 in E minor, Op.95 *From the New World*

Here is a case of worlds not so much colliding but meeting in glorious harmony. One of the most beloved of all Czech composers, Dvořák was already world famous when he was lured to the United States by the arts patron Jeanette Thurber, who was looking for a director for her National Conservatory of Music in New York. As a result of her generosity and persistence, Dvořák took up the post, and between 1892 and 1895 lived more or less in Manhattan. This symphony was one of the first pieces he created in the US, just a few months after his arrival.

He was fascinated by the music of this 'new world'. He loved the songs of Stephen Foster (*My Old Kentucky Home*, *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair*) and thanks to his student Harry T. Burleigh was introduced to the world of the Spiritual. Having read Longfellow's epic *The Song of Hiawatha* in translation, Dvořák also absorbed what he could of Native American music, for Mrs. Thurber's conservatorium was exceptionally progressive for its time by opening its arms to African American and Native American students.

While all these influences helped shape the music in this symphony, Dvořák told a journalist that the third movement (a **scherzo** marked *Molto vivace* or 'very lively') was inspired by Longfellow's description of the dance of the trickster Pau-Pau-Keewis at Hiawatha's wedding.

It's often said that the American composer Aaron Copland (1900-1990) invented the 'big sky' sound, one which suggests the plains and prairies of the American west. However, long before Copland, Dvořák captured that feeling of desolate brightness in the music which opens the final movement of the *New World* symphony. Near the end, he wistfully recalls themes from earlier in the symphony, before the return of the finale's main theme ushers in a blazing conclusion – although the gentleness of the last chord may take you by surprise.

Grace Williams (1906–1977)

Penillion

1. Moderato cantando

When the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and conductor Benjamin Northey gave the Australian premiere of Grace Williams' First Symphony (1943) as part of the *She Speaks* festival of music by women in 2022, it was a revelation: how did such an individual musical voice go 'missing' for so long? Fortunately, her music is – slowly but surely – being rediscovered.

Williams was born in the Welsh coastal town of Barry, and although she studied in London with Vaughan Williams and was, for a time, friendly with Benjamin Britten, it was Welsh musical culture which inspired her own music most consistently – and *Penillion* is a perfect example.

A penillion (the Welsh word for **stanzas**) is a type of traditional Welsh singing in which poems are sung in counterpoint to traditional melody played by a harpist. Not finding the harp's traditional penillion role suitable for an orchestral work, Williams substitutes with her favourite instrument, the trumpet (she would later write a fine trumpet concerto), which announces the theme which will soon be passed around the orchestra and accompanied in a delicate range of instrumental shadings.

Williams wrote *Penillion* for the National Youth Orchestra of Wales in 1955, and what you'll hear tonight is the opening movement of a four-part suite. The rest of the work is just as compelling, as an internet search will quickly tell you.



LISTENING GUIDE

Alexander Borodin (1833-1887)

Polovtsian Dances from *Prince Igor*

3. Dance of the Polovtsian Maidens
4. Polovtsian Dances with Chorus

To say that Borodin was a man of many parts is putting it mildly: a qualified chemist, he worked as a doctor and was, for a time, Professor of Organic Chemistry at the Russian Academy of Physicians. He also initiated a pioneering medical study course for female students in Saint Petersburg. All of this meant that his love of music had to take a back seat to his many other responsibilities so that his grandest work, the opera *Prince Igor*, remained unfinished at his death (and he'd been working on it for 17 years!).

You might be surprised to hear that these Dances – which collectively constitute one of the most popular of all Russian orchestral works – were originally created as part of an opera, but ballet within opera was customary and expected in the Grand Opera culture of the 19th century, from Wagner's *Tannhäuser* to Verdi's *Aida*. But let's answer two further questions: who was Prince Igor and what has he got to do with ballet?

The opera was based on a 12th-century Russian epic poem which chronicles the struggle between the Russians and the Polovtsi, a nomadic tribe – originally from Turkey – who were occupying the plains of the river Don. The historical Prince Igor led a great battle against them and was taken prisoner with his son Prince Vladimir by the Polovtsi and their ruler Khan Konchak.

This is where the Dances come in. Konchak, rather than treating his royal prisoners cruelly, was generous and hospitable; in the opera, in an effort to cheer the remorseful prince, Konchak presents these Dances to entertain him, a scene which forms the spectacular finale to Act II.

In the mid-20th century, the *Polovtsian Dances* took on a new life – not in the opera house or ballet theatre, but on Broadway, where many of their tunes were appropriated by the team of Robert Wright and George Forrest for their Arabian nights fantasy *Kismet* (1953). Tonight, you may recognise the delicious oboe melody that subsequently became the show's big hit, *Stranger in Paradise*, while the bassoon first announces the theme which would become the Act I showstopper *Not Since Nineveh*.

Incidentally, *Prince Igor* premiered in Saint Peterburg three years after the composer's death, thanks to the work of Borodin's friends and fellow composers Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov, who bravely filled in the many musical gaps he left behind.

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Opera Gala

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Enjoy epic arias from:

La Bohème

Tosca

Madama Butterfly

Manon Lescaut

and *Turandot*

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



Douglas Boyd Conductor

Currently the Artistic Director of Garsington Opera Douglas Boyd has also held the positions of Music Director of L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris, Chief Conductor of the Musikkollegium Winterthur, Music Director of Manchester Camerata, Principal Guest Conductor of the Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Artistic Partner of St Paul Chamber Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor of City of London Sinfonia. In 2020 he received the highly prestigious Grand Vermeil Médaille de la Ville de Paris for services to music, in recognition of his work as Music Director of L'Orchestre de Chambre de Paris.

Originally an oboist and one of the founding members of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Douglas's formative musical training was under musicians such as Abbado and Harnoncourt, who remain a significant influence on his style and approach to this day.



Ashleigh Denning Host

Ashleigh Denning is a dynamic and captivating performer, boasting more than 20 years' experience in live performance. She graduated as a recipient of the Award for Excellence for her Bachelor of Musical Theatre (2016) at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University; where she continued on to complete a Master of Music Studies: Vocal Pedagogy (2021). Her involvement in the Brisbane Musical Theatre scene has afforded her the opportunity to create new and exciting Australian works; including A Very Theatre Company's *Genesis* (Metro Arts, 2019) and the sell-out premiere of *Don't Call Me Ishmael: The Musical* (2018). In the same year, Ashleigh's engagement with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra began as "Flugelflusted Flingleftanglebert 2" in their 2018 production of *The Magic Watering Can*. Since then, she has returned annually as the effervescent "Izzy the Elf" in Symphonic Santa performances (2019, 2021, 2022) and (with only slightly less 'Izzy' energy) brought to life the vocal arrangements of Paul Rissman's orchestral adaptation of *Leon and the Space Between* — a role she is excited to reprise in 2024. Ashleigh's most recent performance in the QSO's Musical Theatre Gala (2023) was a career highlight for the Brisbane-based artist.

She has entertained crowds at the Lord Mayor's Christmas Carols (2019, 2020), Bleach Festival (2020), Opera in the Gardens (2019, 2020) and Outback Queensland Masters (2019, 2020), alongside the fabulous ladies of the 7 Sopranos. She is sought after event singer for weddings, private functions and gala events in Queensland and interstate — recent credits including The IndOz Festival, The Lord Mayor's Multicultural Awards & Business Awards, Royal Queensland Arts Society Biennial Gala, QCWA Centenary Launch, and Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show, to name a few. Ashleigh is a regular guest entertainer on P&O Cruises with her band, CopperTop, and resident soprano for the Underground Opera Company's West End To Broadway seasons.

As a teacher, Ashleigh utilises her extensive training in voice to help others find theirs. She has travelled across Australia with Theatre in Education companies such as Gibber Australia and Perform! Education; spent countless hours with finger puppets as an early childcare music teacher; and continues to work alongside budding performers as a vocal teacher in schools and privately.



Join the Music Chair Program

The Music Chair Program is a unique opportunity to strengthen your relationship with QSO and connect with our musicians. Support received through this program helps develop QSO as a world-class orchestra.

“ It helps establish a special rapport and relationship with our audiences, it makes it personal, we hear their views and learn about their life rather than it being all about us on stage. I enjoy looking over at the end of a performance to my supporters to gauge their reaction and hopefully to receive a thumbs up! The program is really important to us as musicians. ”

- KATHRYN CLOSE, CELLO

“ It makes us so proud when our supported musician gives us a friendly wave from the stage. If you want to engage with QSO in an exciting and meaningful way, certainly consider joining the Program. ”

- LORNA AND WILL HEASLOP

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Mozart's Jupiter

FRI 1 + 2 MAR 7.30PM

Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University

Conductor	Umberto Clerici
Soloist	Andrea Lam
Mozart	Symphony No. 41 (Jupiter)
Beethoven	Moonlight Sonata Quasi una fantasia
Kurtág	...quasi una fantasia...
Turnage	Set To
Schumann	Concerto for Piano & Orchestra
Takemitsu	Rain Tree



A Midsummer Nights Dream

22 MAR 7.30PM

23 MAR 3PM

QSO Studio, South Bank

Conductor	Umberto Clerici
Rossini	Overture to <i>La Scala di Seta</i>
Beethoven	Symphony No. 8
Mendelssohn	Suite from <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>



Triumphant Tchaikovsky

FRI 12 APR 11.30AM

SAT 13 APR 7.30PM

Concert Hall, QPAC

Conductor	Andrew Gourlay
Britten	<i>Sinfonia da Requiem</i>
Tchaikovsky	Symphony No. 5

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