

MUSIC ON SUNDAYS



QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA



# SPIRIT OF THE VIOLIN

SEASON 2026



QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

MUSIC ON SUNDAYS

# FANFARE & FLIGHT

TCHAIKOVSKY, COPLAND, CHAUSSON,  
AND JOAN TOWER

SUN 2 AUG 2026 · 11.30AM

CONCERT HALL, QPAC



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# Welcome

Welcome to this morning's concert. I hope we all scrub up respectably today as we have returned from a mini-tour this week, performing this program to excited audiences on the Gold Coast and in Toowoomba, my hometown. It's a fitting final stop to play for our local audience in our familiar QPAC Concert Hall.

This concert is especially exciting for me, as I have the chance to perform two pieces which I've always loved and wanted to play with orchestra. I've been practising hard so I hope they're as enjoyable to listen to as they are to play!

There's a strong theme of ballet and opera in today's program. Glazunov's *Scènes de Ballet* isn't hard to translate, and *Valse-scherzo* (playful waltz) is as close to a balletic solo as a violinist can get. The *Polonaise* bridges both genres, as a dance within the opera *Eugene Onegin*, and the Waxman and Wells take us to the world of Bizet's *Carmen* and Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*.

In the absence of dancers and singers, the duty falls to the orchestra and the solo violin to bring all the energy, drama and wide spectrum of emotions that these art forms demand. We hope you feel it too!



**Johnny van Gend**  
Principal First Violin

## SPIRIT OF THE VIOLIN

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Concert Hall, QPAC  
Sunday 3 May 2026, 11.30am

## IN THIS CONCERT

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**Jessica Gethin** Conductor  
**Johnny van Gend** Violin  
**Ed Le Brocq** Host  
**Queensland Symphony Orchestra**

## PROGRAM

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<b>TCHAIKOVSKY</b> <i>Polonaise from Eugene Onegin</i>	4'
<b>TCHAIKOVSKY</b> <i>Valse-Scherzo</i>	6'
<b>JESSICA WELLS</b> <i>Butterfly Effect Suite</i> (World premiere)	15'
<b>WAXMAN</b> <i>Carmen Fantasie</i>	12'
<b>GLAZUNOV</b> <i>Scènes de ballet</i>	27'
I. <i>Préambule</i>	
II. <i>Marionnettes</i>	
III. <i>Mazurka</i>	
IV. <i>Scherzino</i>	
V. <i>Pas d'action</i>	
VI. <i>Danse orientale</i>	
VII. <i>Valse</i>	
VIII. <i>Polonaise</i>	

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

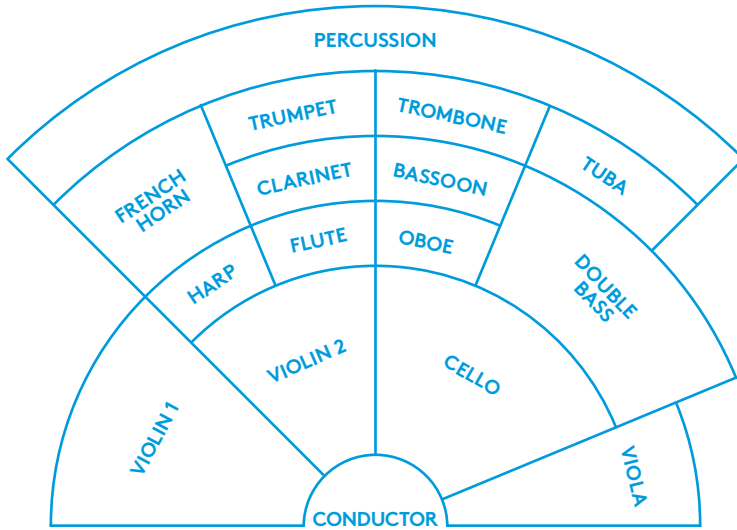
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All concert doors open at 11.10am  
This concert will end at approx. 1pm  
Please note, there will be no interval  
in this concert.

This concert will be recorded  
by ABC Classic for broadcast  
on 16 June 2026 at 8pm



# Today's Orchestra Layout



## Who's On Stage

Scan the QR code for the list of musicians playing in this 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

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Today's concert is a dual celebration: firstly, of the subtle lyricism and virtuosic possibilities of the violin, but also of the expressive power of music from ballet and opera, even in the setting of the concert hall. Excerpts and concert suite arrangements shine a light on the detail and intricacies of the orchestral scores of these works.

Our soloist for today's concert steps out from his usual place amongst the ranks of our violin section. If you're a regular at our concerts, you'll recognise Johnny van Gend as our Principal First Violin, normally sitting at the front of the section as a full-time member of the Orchestra since last year. The soloistic fireworks he displays today will encourage you to appreciate the incredible virtuosity and talent of our musicians!

We begin with Tchaikovsky, a composer famed for his singing melodies and picturesque orchestration, beloved by the general public and the most discerning opera aficionado alike.

The merry and dramatic *Polonaise* is followed by a concert piece, the *Valse-Scherzo*, which Johnny says is "lots of fun: it's cheeky, it's charming, and it has a really soulful and unexpectedly beautiful middle section. It has those melodies that only Tchaikovsky could have written, which just tug at the heartstrings."

Johnny will also play Waxman's *Carmen* Fantaisie, a concert arrangement of themes from Bizet's iconic opera. The piece puts a new spin on beloved moments such as the famous *Habanera*.

Contemporary Australian composer Jessica Wells has also created a concert suite of her ballet *Butterfly Effect*, of which this is the world premiere performance. The ballet is a reimagining of Puccini's classic *Madama Butterfly*, and received rave reviews at its premiere performances in 2025.

We close the concert with Glazunov's *Scènes de ballet*. The last movement, a sprightly *Polonaise*, takes us full circle.

## Queensland Symphony Orchestra

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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.



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# Listening Guide

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

(1840-1893)

## POLONAISE FROM *EUGENE ONEGIN*

The scene is set: an opulent Russian ball, and the beautiful, now married Tatyana, upon her husband's arm. Then there's Eugene Onegin, the titular character of Tchaikovsky's opera, regretfully watching the woman he turned down so many years ago. A blaze of trumpets opens this Polish dance, a polonaise, as the party guests take to the floor. Did Tchaikovsky set Pushkin's great Russian tale to music because it resonated with his own turbulent love life? It's not impossible – at the time he was occupied by a fiery relationship with Antonina Milyukova, a former student, who just as the impressionable teenage Tatyana had written to Onegin, wrote ardently to Tchaikovsky to declare her love. Both tales end in tragedy. Tchaikovsky, suffocated by his marriage to Milykova, fled the country, and during this time completed the orchestration of *Eugene Onegin*, whose protagonist is also left to regret his romantic choices.

While the *Polonaise* takes place at a merrier moment in the tale, the main theme is stridently dramatic. A chirping flute interlude, paired with a cello solo presents a little respite from the action of the dance floor. Still, there's a little hint of Tchaikovsky's inner turmoil, and of the work he wrote: 'If the listener feels even the smallest part of what I experienced when I was composing this opera, I shall be utterly content and ask for nothing more.'

One of the most influential Russian composers of all time, **Tchaikovsky** initially trained as a civil servant before joining the first wave of Russian academic musicians when the Russian Musical Society opened in 1859. The first great Russian symphonist, he exhibited a particular gift for melody and orchestration, and revolutionised the ballet genre.

# TCHAIKOVSKY

ARR. BEZEKIRSKY, ORCH. NARDOLILLO

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## VALSE-SCHERZO, OP.34

It's not true that all of Tchaikovsky's music was implicated in the dramatics of his love life, but his *Valse-Scherzo* for solo violin and orchestra has another suitor to thank: a former student of Tchaikovsky's at the Moscow Conservatory, violinist and composer Iosif Kotek. The pair collaborated on a number of Tchaikovsky's projects – perhaps most famously, Kotek had ironed out the technical bumps and bruises in Tchaikovsky's fiendish Violin Concerto some years earlier.

The *Valse-Scherzo* was dedicated to him, and possibly partially orchestrated by him too, as Kotek's letters allude to the honour of transforming Tchaikovsky's piano sketches into the broader splendour of the underlying orchestra (although Kotek's letters reveal he was not entirely satisfied with his work!) The orchestra charts a steadfast accompaniment beneath the violin soloist, who is constantly on their toes. Despite the agility required of the soloist, it's a light-hearted waltz, a little more dainty in its dance than the previous *Polonaise*.

# JESSICA WELLS

(b.1974)

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## BUTTERFLY EFFECT SUITE

*Butterfly Effect* is the result of an ambitious project by choreographer Alice Topp and composer Jessica Wells – an inspired reimagining of Puccini's opera *Madama Butterfly* for ballet, premiered in 2025 by the Western Australian Ballet. The heroine, Butterfly, is recast with renewed autonomy, and her doomed fate reshaped into a story of resilience and transformation. Just as Topp uses the opera's original story to shape the outlines

of her narrative, Wells' accompanying score directly quotes Puccini's original music. Reshaped, and re-inspired, *Madama Butterfly's* enchanting melodies are imbued with Wells' own musical impressions of Australian landscapes, and elaborated into a slowly evolving, expansive score. This is the world premiere of the orchestral suite, shaped into a concise concert form by Wells herself.

**Jessica Wells** is a versatile composer, orchestrator, and arranger for concerts, films, theatre, and album recordings. Her business, Jigsaw Music, provides music preparation services for clients all over the world. She also works as a recording producer and conductor, was Musical Director of the APRA Screen Music Awards from 2017-2022, and is the current Vice President of the Music Arrangers Guild of Australia.

# Listening Guide

FRANZ WAXMAN

(1906-1967)

## CARMEN FANTASIE

Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen* was a scandal at its 19th century debut. Franz Waxman's 20th century arrangement, a fantasy on the opera's main themes, translates this scandal into a workout for solo violin and orchestra. The resulting arrangement is as difficult as it's iconic, pushing the violin to the very limits of its technical capability. Its first entrance is a dramatic cadenza, climbing into the instrument's heights before melting into the provocative *habanera*, a rumination on the perils of love (and an earworm of epic proportions).

Bizet died only three months after the opera's first performance and had no idea of its enduring fame – in his eyes, it had been little more than a failure, its premiere prompting horror from audiences and outrage from critics. He probably would have found it difficult to believe that his musical material has sown the seeds for a number of fantastical arrangements and pop culture references – from sporting theme songs to film soundtracks.

Although now a mainstay of the classical canon, Waxman's arrangement was written for the 1946 film *Humoresque*, and earned him an Academy Award nomination. Hold onto your hats for the explosive fireworks of the conclusion – where the full length of the violin is slipped and slid across with feverish virtuosity.

Having fled Nazi Germany for Hollywood in 1934, **Waxman** was best-known for his work in the film music genre, writing over 150 scores throughout his career. He received twelve Academy Award nominations, and won two Oscars in consecutive years (for *Sunset Boulevard*, for which he also won a Golden Globe, and *A Place in the Sun*).

## SCÈNES DE BALLET, OP.52

- I. Prélude
- II. Marionnettes
- III. Mazurka
- IV. Scherzino
- V. Pas d'action
- VI. Danse orientale
- VII. Valse
- VIII. Polonaise

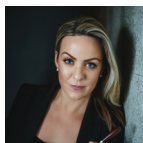
A ballet with no narrative, and a gift for the dancers of the Russian Opera in St. Petersburg: Glazunov's *Scènes de Ballet* is an imaginative musing on eight characterful movements. The brass command the opening *Prélude*, a declarative curtain-raiser for this ballet of the imagination, complete with dutiful pattering from the tambourine. The second movement *Marionnettes* twinkles, an allusion to puppets that dance with the lightest tug of the string. Silvery flute and piccolo dance, and sparkles of glockenspiel paint the magical joy of a toyhouse. It is followed by one of the two Polish dances in this suite, a folkishly-inflected *Mazurka*.

The movements of the suite differ significantly in their length: we fly through the breathless *Scherzino*, the shortest of the set, before indulging in the gem at the collection's centre, the *Pas d'action*. Coaxed to life by the gentle strum of the harp, honeyed layers of sonorous bassoon, cello, and clarinet tug on the heart strings. It's a moment that we can't help but want to cling onto, but we're whisked away by the *Danse Orientale*, Glazunov's rhythmic conjuring of the distant exotic. The penultimate *Valse* feels suspended, the floating, otherworldly movements of a ballet dancer in flight. Then at last, the grand finale and the second of the Polish dances – just like the opening work of this concert, a lively *Polonaise*.

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**Glazunov** represents a direct link between the Mighty Handful of Russian nationalist composers including his teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Shostakovich, whom he taught as Director of the St Petersburg Conservatory. Glazunov enjoyed huge international renown during his lifetime, and is remembered for his eight complete symphonies, ballets, and Violin Concerto.

# Artist Biographies



## JESSICA GETHIN

### CONDUCTOR

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Award winning conductor Jessica Gethin has gained widespread attention for her stellar musicianship and vibrant energy on the podium. As one of the most versatile conductors in the country, Gethin glides seamlessly between core symphonic repertoire to ballet, opera, contemporary and film score. Gethin's international roster includes engagements with the Sydney Symphony, Melbourne Symphony, West Australian Symphony, Adelaide Symphony, Singapore Symphony, Dallas Opera, Orchestra Victoria, Perth Symphony, Canberra Symphony, Malaysian Philharmonic, Tasmanian Symphony, Opera Queensland, Orchestra Macao, the West Australian Ballet and The Australian Ballet among others.

Gethin is currently the Principal Conductor of the West Australian Ballet, Artistic Advisor of Orchestra Victoria and Head of Orchestral Studies and Conducting at the WA Academy of Performing Arts. From 2011-2019 Gethin was the Chief Conductor of the Perth Symphony and is now Ambassador and lead faculty for their Women on the Podium initiative.

Her accolades include being listed twice in Limelight Australia's Top 20 Artists and AFR's 100 Most Influential Women of Australia, a winner of the Brian Stacey Emerging Australian Conductor Award, a Churchill Fellow and inaugural Dallas Opera's Hart Institute Fellow, a finalist in the West Australian of the Year Awards and induction into the 2024 WA Women's Hall of Fame.



## JOHNNY VAN GEND

### VIOLIN

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Johnny van Gend started learning violin at age five with Mary Nemet in his hometown of Toowoomba. He achieved AMusA at age eleven and LMusA (with Distinction) at age twelve, and in 2015 began tertiary studies with Michele Walsh at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University. During his three years there, van Gend won every competition for which he was eligible, and performed as soloist with the Queensland Conservatorium Orchestra.

In 2018 he entered the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) under Dr Robin Wilson. During his two years at ANAM, Johnny was the winner of the ANAM Concerto Competition, performing with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, and was a finalist in the ANAM Chamber Competition. He was also a two-time finalist and multi-prize winner in the Kendall National Violin Competition.

In October 2019 he moved to Germany to complete a degree under Esther Hoppe at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg, alongside performing with the Bavarian State Opera as an academist. A highlight in this time was leading performances of Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll* under chief conductor Kirill Petrenko.

In 2021 he won a permanent position in the National Theatre Orchestra Mannheim. After five years in Germany, Johnny returned home to take on the role of Principal First Violin with Queensland Symphony Orchestra.

# A Farewell to Craig Allister Young

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**After many years of playing the cello in Queensland Symphony Orchestra, it is now time to bid a very fond farewell to Craig Allister Young. The QSO Cellos share some memories of Craig in this tribute.**

Craig has made an exceptional contribution to the orchestra, and especially the cello section. He has created countless musical arrangements – including ballets and small group touring versions of operas, and presented concerts that have enriched both players and audiences alike.

His gifts as an arranger and composer have been shared generously and enthusiastically, particularly in our cello ensemble concerts. We, the cellos, love these concerts – they're fun, challenging and richly rewarding, reaching a pinnacle during Covid when we recorded and filmed *Danny Boy*. He also brought us together during that time through *Controlled Chaos*, an orchestral work we each recorded remotely and he masterfully assembled into a unified performance. These and other recordings and cooking videos (yes, he does that too) can easily be found on YouTube.

We're fairly certain Craig doesn't sleep – he just adds another skill to his resume. He is a cellist, arranger, composer, songwriter, singer, cabaret artist and the director of Brisbane Sings (big choir festival). He can sew tails, cook like a Masterchef finalist for the entire orchestra (yes, he was on Masterchef), tile your bathroom and still turn up to rehearsal like that's completely normal.

Because that isn't enough, Craig also created *Symphonic Santa*, a children's Christmas concert with the Orchestra.

Craig is, of course, a perfect Santa.

In recent years, Craig has developed our high school composer program, Compose, nurturing young composers and giving them the opportunity to write for the orchestra. This inspiring program will now expand further, reaching new communities and orchestras.

We, the cellos, say "Craig is incredibly generous, outrageously talented, warm, and endlessly creative. He is an excellent baker, a cello ensemble genius, a little bit crooked, deeply caring, a wonderful colleague, quite hairy, funny, delightfully wicked, appalling, somehow still much loved, and above all, will be greatly missed."

With much love, admiration and our very best wishes from the cello section (and we suspect, the rest of the orchestra too...)



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In Memory of Dr J F Jones

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In Memory of Jean Kratzing

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QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY  
ORCHESTRA

# Here for Queensland

## Help keep QSO on the road



From the rich red soil of the Darling Downs to the far reaches of tropical North Queensland, QSO is proud to bring the power and joy of live orchestral music to communities across our vast state. **We are here for Queensland.**

In 2026, QSO musicians will travel more than **10,000 kilometres across Queensland** to inspire young musicians, support local teachers and unite communities through world-class orchestral music. Touring an Orchestra across our vast state is important – and it is expensive.

Please help us continue our great tradition of regional touring by donating today. Our goal is to raise \$20 for each kilometre we travel through regional Queensland this year. Whether you support one kilometre or many, your contribution helps ensure that world-class music reaches every corner of Queensland.

Your support has never been more important.

**Donate today to help ensure QSO is always here for Queensland**  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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The Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP  
Minister for Education and the Arts Sharon Schimming  
Director-General, Department of Education  
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.

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We give heartfelt thanks to QPAC's Principal Partners Hyundai and MinterEllison.

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# Coming Up

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## Italian Gala

FRI 15 MAY 7.30PM

Concert Hall, QPAC

<b>Umberto Clerici</b>	Conductor and Cello
<b>Natsuko Yoshimoto</b>	Violin
<b>James Crabb</b>	Accordion
<b>Eva Kong</b>	Soprano

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A vivid portrait of Italy, drawing from opera, film and the concert hall. From Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* to the drama of Puccini and Verdi, take a trip through Italy's musical heartlands – no passport required.



## Rachmaninov & Shostakovich

FRI 22 MAY 11.30AM & SAT 23 MAY 7.30PM

Concert Hall, QPAC

<b>Umberto Clerici</b>	Conductor
<b>Konstantin Shamray</b>	Piano

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<b>CATHY MILLIKEN</b>	<i>Catalogue of Sky</i>
<b>RACHMANINOV</b>	Piano Concerto No.2 in C minor
<b>SHOSTAKOVICH</b>	Symphony No.5



## Beethoven, Dvořák & Smetana

FRI 12 JUN 11.30AM & SAT 13 JUN 7.30PM

Concert Hall, QPAC

<b>Umberto Clerici</b>	Conductor
<b>Ivan Karizna</b>	Cello

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<b>SMETANA</b>	<i>The Bartered Bride Overture</i>
<b>DVOŘÁK</b>	Cello Concerto
<b>BEETHOVEN</b>	Symphony No.7



# QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



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