

# Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

CONCERT PROGRAM



## Sir Andrew Davis Conducts **Mahler 6**

**Thursday 30 June at 8pm**  
Arts Centre Melbourne,  
Hamer Hall  
Presented by Emirates

**Friday 1 July at 8pm**  
Arts Centre Melbourne,  
Hamer Hall  
Presented by Emirates

**Saturday 2 July at 8pm**  
Arts Centre Melbourne,  
Hamer Hall  
Presented by BMW



Principal Partner

**WHAT'S ON**  
JULY – AUGUST 2016

**CIRQUE DE LA SYMPHONIE**

Friday 15 July  
Saturday 16 July

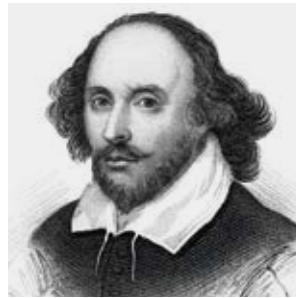
A host of international circus performers – including aerial flyers, acrobats, contortionists, dancers, jugglers, balancers, and strongmen – join the MSO in this dazzling display. Inspired by classical masterpieces, the performers bring their acrobatic and illusory skills to new and exciting levels.



**SHAKESPEARE CLASSICS**

Thursday 21 July  
Friday 22 July

2016 marks the 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare. This commemorative concert, conducted by Alexander Shelley, presents Bard-related works by four composers: Mendelssohn, Korngold, Walton and Richard Strauss. Mozart's Piano Concerto No.27 completes the program.



**BEETHOVEN'S FIFTH**

Friday 29 July  
Saturday 30 July

Three classic masterpieces on the one program with MSO Associate Conductor Benjamin Northey – but which is the greatest? Weber's dark and mystical overture to his opera *Der Freischütz*? Bruch's glorious evergreen Violin Concerto? Or Beethoven's Symphony No.5? Cast your vote, please.



**ELGAR, BACH, PUCCINI AND DVOŘÁK**

Thursday 4 August  
Friday 5 August  
Saturday 6 August

James Ehnes returns to the MSO as director and soloist in famous pieces for strings by Elgar, J.S. Bach and Dvořák. The program also includes a rare Puccini work, his brief and beautiful *Crisantemi* (Chrysanthemums) for string orchestra.



**MENDELSSOHN'S ITALIAN SYMPHONY**

Thursday 11 August  
Friday 12 August  
Saturday 13 August

Viva Italia! The voices and sounds of Italy as interpreted by two non Italian composers: Elgar's sun-drenched *In the South* (*Alassio*) and Mendelssohn's gloriously enthusiastic Symphony No.4 *Italian*. In the middle, Richard Strauss' early Violin Concerto, with soloist James Ehnes.



**TOGNETTI AND THE LARK ASCENDING**

Friday 19 August  
Saturday 20 August  
Monday 22 August

Richard Tognetti returns to the MSO, under Chief Conductor Sir Andrew Davis, to perform two very different works: the Partita for Violin and Orchestra, by Lutosławski, and Vaughan Williams' soaring, summery *The Lark Ascending*.



ARTISTS

**Melbourne  
Symphony Orchestra**

**Sir Andrew Davis** conductor  
**Jonathan Biss** piano

REPERTOIRE

**Mozart**  
**Piano Concerto No.21**

— Interval —

**Mahler**  
**Symphony No.6**

This concert has a duration of approximately 2 hours and 10 minutes, including a 20 minute interval.

This performance will be recorded for future broadcast on ABC Classic FM.

Visit [mso.com.au/broadcast](http://mso.com.au/broadcast) for more information about upcoming concert broadcasts.

**Pre-Concert Talk**

7pm Thursday 30 June, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall  
7pm Friday 1 July, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall  
7pm Saturday 2 July, Stalls Foyer, Hamer Hall

MSO Director of Artistic Planning Ronald Vermeulen will present a talk on the artists and works featured in the program.



Series  
Presenters

## MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO) was established in 1906 and is Australia's oldest orchestra. It currently performs live to more than 250,000 people annually, in concerts ranging from subscription performances at its home, Hamer Hall at Arts Centre Melbourne, to its annual free concerts at Melbourne's largest outdoor venue, the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. The Orchestra also delivers innovative and engaging programs to audiences of all ages through its Education and Outreach initiatives.

Sir Andrew Davis gave his inaugural concerts as the MSO's Chief Conductor in 2013, having made his debut with the Orchestra in 2009. Highlights of his tenure have included collaborations with artists such as Bryn Terfel, Emanuel Ax, Truls Mørk and Renée Fleming, and the Orchestra's European Tour in 2014 which included appearances at the Edinburgh Festival, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, the Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Festival and Copenhagen's Tivoli Concert Hall. Further current and future highlights with Sir Andrew Davis include a complete cycle of the Mahler symphonies. Sir Andrew will maintain the role of Chief Conductor until the end of 2019.

The MSO also works with Associate Conductor Benjamin Northey and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus, as well as with such eminent recent guest conductors as Thomas Adès, John Adams, Tan Dun, Charles Dutoit, Jakub Hrůša, Mark Wigglesworth, Markus Stenz and Simone Young. It has also collaborated with non-classical musicians including Burt Bacharach, Nick Cave, Sting, Tim Minchin, Ben Folds, DJ Jeff Mills and Flight Facilities.

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra reaches a wider audience through regular radio broadcasts, recordings and CD releases, including a Strauss cycle on ABC Classics which includes *Four Last Songs*, *Don Juan* and *Also sprach Zarathustra*, as well as *Ein Heldenleben* and Four Symphonic Interludes from *Intermezzo*, both led by Sir Andrew Davis. On the Chandos label the MSO has recently released Berlioz' *Harold en Italie* with James Ehnes and music by Charles Ives which includes Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2, as well as a range of orchestral works including *Three Places in New England*, again led by Sir Andrew Davis.

*The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra is funded principally by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body, and is generously supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources. The MSO is also funded by the City of Melbourne, its Principal Partner, Emirates, corporate sponsors and individual donors, trusts and foundations.*

*The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Land on which we perform – The Kulin Nation – and would like to pay our respects to their Elders and Community both past and present.*

**SIR ANDREW DAVIS**  
CONDUCTOR

Sir Andrew Davis is Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Lyric Opera of Chicago and Chief Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. In a career spanning over 40 years, he has been the musical and artistic leader at several of the world's most distinguished opera and symphonic institutions, including the BBC Symphony Orchestra (1991-2004), Glyndebourne Festival Opera (1988-2000), and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (1975-1988). He recently received the honorary title of Conductor Emeritus from the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

One of today's most recognised and acclaimed conductors, Sir Andrew has conducted virtually all the world's major orchestras, opera companies, and festivals. This year he celebrates his 40-year association with the Toronto Symphony, and aside from performances with the Melbourne Symphony, he will conduct the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Proms, Philharmonia Orchestra at the Three Choirs Festival, and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra at the Edinburgh International Festival.

Born in 1944 in Hertfordshire, England, Sir Andrew studied at King's College, Cambridge, where he was an organ scholar before taking up conducting. His wide-ranging repertoire encompasses the Baroque to contemporary, and his vast conducting credits span the symphonic, operatic and choral worlds.

Sir Andrew was made a Commander of the British Empire in 1992, and a Knight Bachelor in 1999.



**JONATHAN BISS**  
PIANO

Jonathan Biss began piano studies at the age of six. At 20, he made his New York Philharmonic debut under Kurt Masur. He is currently on the faculty at his *alma mater*, the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia.

Biss' appearances so far this year have included concerts at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam and London's Wigmore Hall. In 2015, he released the fourth volume of a nine-disc recording of Beethoven's complete piano sonatas.

Biss is an advocate for new music. He has premiered works by Kirchner, Spratlan, Ludwig and Rands, and, in Saint-Paul last November, premiered a concerto by Timo Andres, the first of five new works inspired by Beethoven's piano concertos.

Promoting music beyond the concert hall, in 2013 Biss partnered with the Curtis Institute and Coursera to offer a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to a virtual classroom of 51,000 students. His first Amazon Kindle Single, *Beethoven's Shadow*, was the first-ever Single written by a classical musician and spent many weeks on the Kindle Singles bestseller list opposite works by major commercial fiction writers. His honours include the Leonard Bernstein Award at the 2005 Schleswig-Holstein Festival. He was the first American chosen to participate in the BBC's New Generation Artist program.





Photo by Peter Tarasiuk

# A work that speaks with great humanity

This August, Sir Andrew Davis will conduct Beethoven's most visionary and spiritual work, the *Missa solemnis*, for the first time in his career. Here, he reflects on the work and the complexities behind it.

It took Beethoven four years to complete the *Missa solemnis* (it received its premiere in 1824) and he viewed it as the most important work of his life. Though based in form, and to a certain extent in manner, on the classical models of Haydn and Mozart, it is imbued with the new spirit of the Enlightenment and its values of freedom and questioning, which led inevitably to the conundrum of the position of God in this brave new world.

Was Beethoven religious? He certainly had an aversion to ritual and dogma and almost certainly felt his relationship to the divine to be highly personal. Though this view is typical of the Reformation, the movement had reached a point at the beginning of the nineteenth century that would have horrified Luther. There is no question in my mind that a spiritual immensity and splendour are amongst the overwhelming impressions left by a powerful performance of this work, but equally important and, one might say, fighting against this is the sense of Man's place in the picture. Simple, unquestioning faith is no longer enough.

It is for these reasons, not to mention the great technical challenges that face both singers and instrumentalists, that I, along with a good many eminent conductors both past and present, have waited long to climb the mighty peaks of this great work.

The dual character I have spoken of is illustrated immediately by the contrast between the first two movements: the Kyrie harks back to the formal tone of

Beethoven's predecessors, albeit with a more disturbing feel to the central section, but the extraordinary outburst at the beginning of the *Gloria* and the sheer energy of its progress have a vividness that takes one's breath away.

The *Credo* is notable for the way that the composer glosses over the more impersonal sections of the Mass text – the belief in the Catholic Church for instance – but dwells with great emotion on Christ's suffering, death and resurrection.

Beethoven wrote at the head of the final *Agnus Dei* 'A prayer for inner and outer peace' and the way that the pastoral tone of the *Dona Nobis Pacem* setting is interrupted by a crazy fugue from the orchestra and the violent military sounds of trumpets and drums demonstrates, I believe, that this great musical and humanistic visionary was not convinced that his prayer would be answered.

So the piece ends with a question. But what a journey we have had in looking for answers!

I know that all the performers in these upcoming concerts are deeply committed to the finest realisation of this master-piece. I hope to conduct it many times in the future!

*Sir Andrew Davis will be joined by four international soloists, along with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, for the Missa Solemnis on 26 and 27 August at Arts Centre Melbourne, Hamer Hall.*

**WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART**  
(1756–1791)

Piano Concerto No.21 in C, K467

*Allegro maestoso*

*Andante*

*Allegro vivace assai*

**Jonathan Biss** piano

This concerto is one of six Mozart completed between February 1785 and December 1786, during which time he also wrote *The Marriage of Figaro*. They were composed for a series of subscription concerts intended to raise money and consolidate Mozart's position with the Viennese public, both as performer and composer. He finished the Concerto in C on 9 March 1785, only a month after the Concerto in D minor, and apparently played it at a concert in the Royal Imperial National Court Theatre the next day.

It is an interesting comment on changing attitudes to Mozart that this concerto, the antithesis of the stormy, even demonic D minor concerto, K466 (often admired, wrongheadedly, for showing a 'Beethovenish' Mozart), should have joined, perhaps even surpassed, its immediate predecessor in popularity. This is not just because a tantalisingly truncated part of the slow movement was used in the soundtrack of the film *Elvira Madigan*, though that no doubt helped. One would prefer to think that greater familiarity and sympathy with Mozart had led to the realisation that his music is not necessarily at its richest and most impressive when it breathes the accents of Romantic pathos. Anyone who loves the operas *The Marriage of Figaro* or *Così fan tutte* should love this concerto. It is like a dialogue between two partners, piano and orchestra, speaking different languages but to the same purpose: heroic or mock heroic, coruscating and massive by turns in the first movement; a dream of beauty speaking of a passion freed from earthly trammels in the second; a comic opera scene with a quicksilver leading character in the third.

The march theme which opens the concerto (so simple: just the notes of the common chord), is charmingly described by Cuthbert Girdlestone in his book on Mozart's piano concertos as a tiptoed march, in stockinged feet. The tempo indication *maestoso* (majestically) may not be Mozart's, but it correctly identifies the breadth which is soon proclaimed by the full orchestra. The elaborately prepared entry of the soloist, who is eventually called in by repeated invitations from solo wind instruments, sets the tone for the movement – the piano's material seems concerned to be as different as possible from that of the tutti. Every time the opening march is stated, the piano branches off into quite different excursions. The piano part is of a virtuosity at least equal to anything in Mozart's concertos thus far, and comparable with that of the very different D minor concerto. But the orchestra is a very full partner – indeed Mozart's father, Leopold, commented after reading the parts, 'The concerto is astonishingly difficult, but I very much

doubt whether there are any mistakes, as the copyist has checked it. Several passages do not harmonise unless one hears all the instruments playing together.'

The slow movement in F induces its rapture by the magic of its atmosphere, with the piano as one voice among many in a lapping, throbbing texture of muted strings and long-breathed winds. The piano here is a singer, as though Mozart was dreaming at the keyboard of an aria where the limitations of the human voice were overcome. This is Alfred Einstein's insight, and Girdlestone adds that this is the most beautiful of what he calls Mozart's 'dream Andantes' (which include those of the Violin Concerto K216 and Symphony No.34).

Many writers on Mozart confess themselves a little disappointed with the Rondo which concludes the concerto – finding in it little that is searching or exquisite. Doesn't this show the instinctive soundness of Mozart's judgment? How better to refresh the ear almost surfeited with beauty and intensity than with this playful banter, full of irregularities and witty interplay between piano and wind instruments, not to mention the revelling in powers of execution with which Mozart must have lifted his audience to its feet?

© David Garrett

*The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed this concerto on 5 August 1958 with Rafael Kubelik and soloist Gordon Watson, and most recently on 16 May 2008 with Alexander Briger and Amir Farid.*



**GUSTAV MAHLER**  
(1860–1911)

Symphony No.6 in A minor

*Allegro energico, ma non troppo. Heftig, aber markig*

*Andante moderato*

*Scherzo: Wuchtig*

*Finale. Allegro moderato – Allegro energico*

Mahler's first four symphonies mine his many song-settings of folk poetry from the collection *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, and three of them contain significant vocal elements. His three central symphonies are all works of 'absolute' as against programmatic music. Nevertheless, his Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Symphonies derive some of their thematic material from two sets of songs to poetry by Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866): the song-cycle *Kindertotenlieder* (Songs on the death of children) and five songs (which do not constitute a cycle) which include the masterpieces 'Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen' (I have lost touch with the world) and 'Um Mitternacht' (At midnight).

For all its epic scale, the Sixth is the work, as Mahler put it, of 'an old-fashioned composer' in that it is cast in a traditional four-movement design. From the outset, though, its tone – which led to the occasional use, even in Mahler's time, of the nickname *Tragic* – is unambiguous. A fully scored A major chord, underpinned by an obsessive rhythmic motif from the timpani, fades, and as it fades, changes to the minor mode. This is music which will end in darkness. The movement begins as a march, though as scholar Michael Kennedy points out, it is not the triumphant approach of spring as in the Third Symphony, or the doom-laden funeral march of the Fifth. It is 'modern music [that] marches in with this sinister tramping start'. The movement's starkly contrasting second subject is a lyrical tune which rises and falls largely by step. In her memoirs, Alma Mahler describes how, when Mahler began work on the piece on their summer vacation in 1903, 'after he had drafted the first movement, he came down from [his study] to tell me he had tried to express me in a theme'. Its contour and mood certainly relate to any number of Romantic love-themes. The yearning lyricism provides a perfect foil for the implacable march with which the movement begins – 'change and conflict are the secret of effective music', as Mahler said. Another unique aspect of this work is the celebrated evocation of alpine scenery first heard towards the end of the movement. This striking sound world was said by Mahler to represent the 'last earthly sounds heard from the valley below by the departing spirit on the mountain top'. He noted that 'the cowbells should be played with discretion – so as to produce a realistic impression of a grazing herd of cattle, coming from a distance...'

Mahler never quite resolved the issue of the order of the two central movements. Originally the *Scherzo*, which Alma insisted depicted the 'tottering' of their children at play before the intrusion of tragedy, followed the first movement, but Mahler tried it out with the *Andante* second (as it is performed in this concert) and *Scherzo*

third before allegedly swapping them back. The *Andante* represents a complete contrast with both the *Scherzo* and the finale, and its thematic reference to the *Songs on the Death of Children* may give some credence to the theory that the scherzo dealt with Mahler's family life. But the tone is hardly tragic. Rather, with its horn calls and reminiscence of the cowbells it is poignant and romantic.

The *Scherzo*, too, has an insistent rhythm to begin with (which may have prompted Mahler to delay it). There is much Mahlerian irony in this movement, both in the dry clattering of the xylophone and what Kennedy calls the 'delicate pastiche Haydn'.

The finale is one of Mahler's largest and most complex structures, and it bears the weight of the symphony as a whole, recalling material from earlier in the work. Its introductory section contains material that will be developed as the movement unfolds, particularly the impassioned melody heard first high in the violins. The movement depicts a nightmarish world, where the *Allegro energico* strains towards climactic release, only to be brutally interrupted on three occasions. Mahler originally included a sickening thud 'like an axe-stroke' at each of these points, but later omitted the third out of superstition. Theodor Adorno wrote that in Mahler 'happiness flourishes on the brink of catastrophe'. Mahler himself said that the movement describes 'the hero on whom falls three blows of fate, the last of which fells him as a tree is felled'. The piece ends in dissolution.

Abridged from a note by Gordon Kerry © 2006

*The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra first performed Mahler's Sixth Symphony on 7 March 1972 under John Hopkins, and most recently on 14-17 July 2006 with Mark Wigglesworth.*

# Music Making Adventures

Over 11,000 children, parents and teachers filled Hamer Hall in May, for our mini-festival of music making activities that gave audiences the chance to dive into the heart of the Orchestra and learn more about classical music. Directed by internationally acclaimed music educator Paul Rissmann and MSO's Associate Conductor Benjamin Northey, this is what they got up to...



Photography by Daniel Aulsebrook



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## ORCHESTRA

### First Violins

Dale Barltrop  
*Concertmaster*

Eoin Andersen  
*Concertmaster*

Sophie Rowell  
*The Ullmer Family Foundation  
Associate Concertmaster Chair*

Andrew Beer\*†  
*Guest Principal*

Peter Edwards  
*Assistant Principal*

Kirsty Bremner  
Sarah Curro  
Peter Fellin  
Deborah Goodall  
Lorraine Hook  
Kirstin Kenny  
Ji Won Kim  
Eleanor Mancini  
Mark Mogilevski  
Michelle Ruffolo  
Kathryn Taylor  
Robert John\*  
Oksana Thompson\*

### Second Violins

Matthew Tomkins  
*The Gross Foundation  
Principal Second Violin Chair*

Robert Macindoe  
*Associate Principal*

Monica Curro  
*Assistant Principal*

Mary Allison  
Isin Cakmakcioglu  
Freya Franzen  
Cong Gu  
Andrew Hall  
Francesca Hiew  
Rachel Homburg  
Christine Johnson  
Isy Wasserman  
Philippa West  
Patrick Wong  
Roger Young

### Violas

Christopher Moore  
*Principal*

Fiona Sargeant  
*Associate Principal*

Lauren Brigden  
Katharine Brockman  
Christopher Cartlidge  
Gabrielle Halloran  
Trevor Jones  
Cindy Watkin  
Caleb Wright  
Lisa Grosman\*

### Cellos

David Berlin  
*MS Newman Family  
Principal Cello Chair*

Rachael Tobin  
*Associate Principal*

Nicholas Bochner  
*Assistant Principal*

Miranda Brockman  
Rohan de Korte  
Keith Johnson  
Sarah Morse  
Angela Sargeant  
Michelle Wood  
Jack Bailey\*  
Zoe Knighton\*

### Double Basses

Steve Reeves  
*Principal*

Andrew Moon  
*Associate Principal*

Sylvia Hosking  
*Assistant Principal*

Damien Eckersley  
Benjamin Hanlon  
Suzanne Lee  
Stephen Newton  
Young-Hee Chan\*

### Flutes

Prudence Davis  
*Principal Flute Chair -  
Anonymous*

Wendy Clarke  
*Associate Principal*

Sarah Beggs  
Paula Rae\*  
Katie Zagorski

### Piccolo

Andrew Macleod  
*Principal*

### Oboes

Jeffrey Crellin  
*Principal*

Thomas Hutchinson  
*Associate Principal*

Ann Blackburn  
Emmanuel Cassimatis\*

### Cor Anglais

Michael Pisani  
*Principal*

### Clarinets

David Thomas  
*Principal*

Philip Arkinstall  
*Associate Principal*

Matthew Larson\*\*  
Craig Hill

### Bass Clarinet

Jon Craven  
*Principal*

### Bassoons

Jack Schiller  
*Principal*

Elise Millman  
*Associate Principal*

Natasha Thomas  
Colin Forbes-Abrams\*

### Contrabassoon

Brock Imison  
*Principal*

### Horns

Grzegorz Curyla\*‡  
*Guest Principal*

Geoff Lierse  
*Associate Principal*

Saul Lewis  
*Principal Third*

Jenna Breen  
Abbey Edlin  
Trinette McClimont  
Robert Shirley\*  
Julia Brooke\*≠  
Anton Schroeder\*  
Philip Wilson\*

### Trumpets

Geoffrey Payne  
*Principal*

Shane Hooton  
*Associate Principal*

William Evans  
Julie Payne  
Rob Maltessi\*  
Rainer Saville\*

### Trombones

Brett Kelly  
*Principal*

Iain Faragher\*  
Benjamin Lovell-Greene\*

### Bass Trombone

Mike Szabo  
*Principal*

### Tuba

Timothy Buzbee  
*Principal*

### Timpani

Christine Turpin  
*Principal*

### Percussion

Robert Clarke  
*Principal*

John Arcaro  
Robert Cossom  
Shanie Klas\*  
Leah Scholes\*

### Harp

Yinuo Mu  
*Principal*

Yi-Yun Loei\*  
*Guest Principal*

Melina van Leeuwin\*

### Celeste

Leigh Harold\*

\* Guest Musician

† Courtesy of Auckland  
Philharmonic Orchestra

‡ Courtesy of Malaysian  
Philharmonic Orchestra

≠ Courtesy of West Australian  
Symphony Orchestra

## BOARD

### Chairman

Michael Ullmer

### Board Members

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Danny Gorog  
Margaret Jackson AC  
Brett Kelly

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