

Symphony Series 8



Ecstasy

Fri 3 & Sat 4 November
Adelaide Town Hall

Adelaide
Symphony
Orchestra

Season
2023



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Symphony Series 8

Ecstasy

Chloé van Soeterstède
Conductor

Anthony Marwood
Violin

Fri 3 & Sat 4 November
Adelaide Town Hall

Duration
2 hrs (incl. interval)

Acknowledgement of Country

Jack Buckskin, Jamie Goldsmith arr./orch. Ferguson

[2']

Pudnanthi Padninthi

Australian Premiere

Jessie Montgomery (born 1981)

[8']

Banner

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957)

[24']

Violin Concerto in D, Op.35

Moderato nobile

Romance: Andante

Finale: Allegro assai vivace

Anthony Marwood Violin

Interval

Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

[10']

Prélude à 'L'Après-midi d'un faune'

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

[35']

Symphonic Dances, Op.45

Non Allegro

Andante con moto (Tempo di valse)

Lento assai - Allegro vivace

Live Broadcast The concert on Friday 3 November will be broadcast live on ABC Classic.

Classical Conversation Join us in the Stalls (Level 1 of the Adelaide Town Hall) one hour before the concert for our free *Classical Conversations*, and hear from the soloist Anthony Marwood and presenter Graham Abbott.

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Welcome

Every performance by the ASO illustrates the ways in which the Orchestra serves the South Australian community – whether it's our recent season of *Swan Lake* with The Australian Ballet, the series of *Big Rehearsals* in which school-aged music students sit side-by-side and play with ASO musicians, the relaxed performances we give regularly in the Grainger Studio or tonight's final *Symphony Series* concert for 2023. This has been a year of huge achievement for the Orchestra, and we can't wait to have you alongside us in 2024, as we bring you a remarkable year of music in which timeless classics and contemporary creativity converge.

We will welcome back conductor Andrew Litton, who will build on our sell-out series showcasing the music of Rachmaninov and celebrate the 100 year anniversary of Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. In your *Symphony Series* concerts, you can look forward to an exciting lineup of conductors, including Osmo Vänskä, Douglas Boyd and Shiyeon Sung. You'll also hear firsthand the depth of our commitment to programming new music, in specially commissioned works from Adelaide-based composers Graeme Koehne and Jakub Jankowski. The premiere of Belinda Gehlert's new piece will be the centrepiece of *She Speaks*, which returns to highlight the blazing contributions of women composers.

Tonight we collaborate with two wonderful artists, in a program rich in colour and excitement. Violinist Anthony Marwood is an always welcome guest, and it's a pleasure to present a young conductor in demand across Europe and the USA, Chloé van Soeterstède, making her ASO debut.

Thanks to all our partners, supporters, and donors who together with our audience have helped make this season a great success. There is much anticipation about 2024 and I look forward to you joining us again. My best wishes for your enjoyment of tonight's program, and my best wishes to you for a happy and peaceful summer.



Colin Cornish AM
Chief Executive Officer



Chloé van Soeterstède
Conductor

Chloé van Soeterstède is attracting the attention of orchestras across the globe for her intuitive, sensitive, expressive music-making and her commanding and positive presence on the podium. She is praised repeatedly for her attention to detail, her energy and enthusiasm, and efficiency in rehearsal. She is forging some excellent relationships with orchestras across Europe, the UK and the US, and in 2023 makes her Australian/New Zealand debut.

Current season highlights include debuts with the Philharmonia and Hallé in the UK, in Europe with the Bilbao Symphony and Lausanne Chamber orchestras, in the US with Colorado Springs Symphony and at Lincoln Center, New York, with The Orchestra Now and further afield with the Auckland Philharmonia, and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras. She will also return to the Orlando Philharmonic, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Gävle Symphony and RTVE Symphony (Madrid) orchestras.

In recent years Van Soeterstède has conducted widely across the UK and Europe, and in the US the LA Philharmonic, with whom she was a Dudamel fellow in the 21/22 season. She studied the viola in Paris and at the Royal Academy of Music London, and conducting at the Royal Northern College of Music, and was appointed the Taki Alsop Fellow in 2019 by Marin Alsop.



Anthony Marwood
Violin

Anthony Marwood enjoys a wide-ranging international career as soloist, director and chamber musician. He has worked with many of the most prominent symphony and chamber orchestras across the United States, Europe and Australia including the Boston Symphony, St Louis Symphony, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, New World Symphony, the Amsterdam Sinfonietta, the Tapiola Sinfonietta, London Philharmonic, Academy of St Martin in the Fields, the Irish Chamber Orchestra, the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra, Les Violons du Roy, Orchestre de chambre de Paris, Spanish National Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony, Australian Chamber Orchestra and Sydney Symphony.

Anthony has worked with conductors such as Valery Gergiev, Sir Andrew Davis, Thomas Søndergård, David Robertson, Gerard Korsten, Ilan Volkov, Jaime Martin, Douglas Boyd and Gemma New.

Many composers have written concertos for him, including Thomas Adès, Steven Mackey, Sally Beamish and Samuel Carl Adams. A prolific recording artist, Anthony's most recent recording with Hyperion (for whom he has recorded more than 50 albums) is Walton's Violin Concerto with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Martyn Brabbins.

He uses a bow by Joseph René LaFleur and plays a 1736 Carlo Bergonzi violin, kindly bought by a syndicate of purchasers, and a 2018 violin made by Christian Bayon.



Jessie Montgomery (born 1981)

Banner

AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE

Banner is a tribute to the 200th Anniversary of Francis Scott Key's *The Star Spangled Banner* of 1814, which was subsequently declared the American National Anthem. Drawing on musical and historical sources from various world anthems and patriotic songs, I've attempted to answer the question: 'What does an anthem for the 21st century sound like in today's multi-cultural environment?'

In 2009, I was commissioned by the Providence String Quartet and Community MusicWorks to write *Anthem: A tribute to the historical election of Barack Obama*. In that piece I wove together the theme from *The Star Spangled Banner* with the commonly named Black National Anthem *Lift Every Voice and Sing* by James Weldon Johnson (which coincidentally share the exact same phrase structure). *Banner* picks up where *Anthem* left off, but expands further both in the number of references and in the role of the string quartet as the individual voice working both with and against the larger community of the orchestra. The structure is loosely based on traditional marching band form, in which there are several *strains* or contrasting sections, preceded by an introduction.

The Star Spangled Banner is an ideal subject for exploration in contradictions. For most Americans the song represents a paradigm of liberty and

solidarity against fierce odds, and for others it implies a contradiction between the ideals of freedom and the realities of injustice and oppression. As a culture, it is my opinion that we Americans are perpetually in search of ways to express and celebrate our ideals of freedom – a way to proclaim: 'We've made it!', as if the very action of saying it aloud makes it so. And for many of our nation's people, that was the case: through work songs and spirituals, enslaved Africans promised themselves a way out and built the nerve to endure the most abominable treatment for the promise of a free life. Immigrants from Europe, Central America and the Pacific have sought a safe haven here and, though met with the trials of building a multi-cultured democracy, continue to make significant contributions to our cultural landscape. In 2014, a tribute to the U.S. National Anthem meant acknowledging the contradictions, leaps and bounds, and milestones that allow us to celebrate and maintain the tradition of our ideals.

© Jessie Montgomery

Performance History

The orchestral version of *Banner*, which you hear tonight, was premiered by the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and Catalyst Quartet in September 2017.



Moderato nobile

Romance: Andante

Finale: Allegro assai vivace

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957) Violin Concerto in D, Op.35

Between 1935 and 1938 Korngold and his family lived a transatlantic existence. While writing his opera *Die Kathrin* in Vienna, he adapted Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* music for a film production of Shakespeare's play then, on back-and-forth visits to Hollywood, composed scores for several other pictures, including *Anthony Adverse*, the score which won Korngold his first Academy Award.

In January 1938 he left Vienna for Hollywood once again, this time to compose the music for *The Adventures of Robin Hood*, and expected to return home in a few months to supervise the premiere of *Die Kathrin*. Germany's annexation of Austria in March made that return impossible and his family escaped Austria on the last unrestricted train. Korngold's belongings, home, property and life savings were confiscated by the Nazis. and films were now his only source of income. He quietly made a vow to compose no more music for the concert hall until Hitler was defeated.

Seven years later this concerto, along with his Third String Quartet, announced his retirement from films. He'd become disillusioned with the movies themselves ('When I arrived here, I couldn't understand the dialogue,' he said at the time. 'Now I can!') and concerned that some of his best musical ideas were disappearing as each picture was taken out of circulation. He had no hesitation in re-casting his film themes for this new work – so it is that you'll hear a melody used throughout the 1937 film *Another Dawn*, as the principal theme of the first movement, while a jaunty transformation of the opening title tune for that year's movie *The Prince and the Pauper* forms the basis for the finale.

One night in 1945, Korngold's old friend, the violinist Bronislaw Huberman, revived an old running joke: Every time he met the composer, he would say: 'Erich, where's my violin concerto?' This time, in response to Huberman's question, Korngold went to the piano and played the opening theme. Huberman cried: 'That's it! That will be my concerto – promise me that you'll write it.'

Once the concerto was ready, Huberman was vague about when he might get around to performing it, yet was equally anxious that no-one else would play it before him. When Jascha Heifetz expressed interest in it, Korngold did not hesitate. 'Huberman,' he told his friend, 'I haven't been unfaithful yet, I'm not engaged...but I have flirted.' It was Heifetz who became the work's first soloist.

For Korngold, the concerto symbolised his re-emergence into a musical mainstream in which he no longer felt completely secure. In the weeks before the premiere, he wrote of the work: 'I want a confirmation, an answer to a question of decisive importance for me: is there still a place and a chance for music with expression and feeling, with long melodic themes, formed and developed on the principles of the classic masters – music conceived in the heart and not constructed on paper?'

The premiere, in St Louis, was a triumph with critics and public alike. But Korngold was rightly concerned at how it would be received when Heifetz took it to New York a few weeks later. Irving Kolodin's review in the *New York Sun* contained the famously cheap jibe: 'More corn than gold,' which hurt the composer deeply. The other New York critics were not much kinder. But time *has* been kind – the concerto is now the most performed of all Korngold's concert works, and has received more than 30 commercial recordings.

The first movement is primarily lyrical, and casts the soloist as a storyteller. The violin joins the orchestra from the opening bars, with the theme

adapted from the one Korngold first wrote for *Another Dawn*. The gentle, romantic second subject was first used in the 1938 film *Juarez*.

The *Romance* is almost a love scene played between soloist and orchestra. The solo violin plays almost continuously, for the most part spinning high, songful phrases over a carpet of gentle string accompaniment. Korngold's fondness for orchestral keyboards is particularly evident here, for embedded within the silky texture are vibraphone and celeste. For the *Romance's* lavish outpouring of melody, Korngold drew on his *Anthony Adverse* score, but created anew the brief, haunting *misterioso* episode at the movement's core. This highly chromatic idea returns at the conclusion.

Korngold establishes a decisive change of mood in the finale. In effect it's a set of variations on a theme he first created for *The Prince and the Pauper*. You hear the melody variously as a jig, as a lyrical second subject, as a stamping folk dance, then in radiant transfiguration before it suddenly bursts into virtuosic action for the dazzling coda.

Phillip Sametz© 2000/2023

Performance History

Michael Dauth was soloist in the Orchestra's first performance of Korngold's Violin Concerto, in November 2000; Marin Alsop conducted. Most recently, the Orchestra performed this work with violinist Akiko Suwanai in March 2017, under Mark Wigglesworth's direction.

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AUSTRALIA



Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

Prélude à 'L'Après-midi d'un faune'

Published in 1876, Stéphane Mallarmé's eclogue, *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, is a monument of symbolist poetry, reflecting in its sumptuous but fragmentary language the erotic fantasies of a drowsy faun – a mythical half-man, half-goat – on a hot, languid, Sicilian afternoon. Running like a thread through the imagery of fruit and flowers and naked nymphs are references to music, specifically to the syrinx, or flute fashioned from reeds by the god Pan. One such reference, to the syrinx's 'sonorous, airy, monotonous line', would become the kernel of Debussy's musical rendering of the poem. Inviting Mallarmé to hear the work in 1894, he described 'the arabesque which... I believe to have been dictated by the flute of your faun'.

The first, repeated phrase of the solo flute arabesque with which the piece begins has rightly been described as a founding moment in modern music. Its chromatic line traces and retraces the ambiguous interval of the tritone: it is in no clearly discernible key, as is shown by the varied ways in which it is harmonised on its subsequent reappearances. The second half of the melody provides more 'conventional' motifs that are taken up from time to time by the rest of the orchestra.

Mallarmé's poem rhymes, but otherwise avoids traditional forms or a narrative line; similarly, Debussy's piece avoids the goal-directed development and tonal architecture that informs 19th-century symphonism. Musical events, like the vivid splashes of colour that first answer the flute, are there for the immediate pleasure they give; climaxes are approached by simple repetition of motifs; the most extended melody is a richly scored, Massenet-like tune at the work's midpoint, accompanied by rocking ostinatos.

The faun's dream is overcome by sleep and the 'proud silence of noon', and the piece ends with the flute fading to nothingness.

Gordon Kerry © 2013

Performance History

Bernard Heinze conducted the ASO's first performance of Debussy's *Prélude à 'L'Après-midi d'un faune'* in May 1942. Most recently, the Orchestra performed the work in a *Classics Unwrapped* concert in May 2021, conducted by Guy Noble.



Non Allegro

Andante con moto (Tempo di valse)

Lento assai – Allegro vivace

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873–1943)

Symphonic Dances, Op.45

Prior to Rachmaninov leaving Russia in 1917, the new Soviet government seized the income from his family's estate; now this triple-threat musician had to earn a living from performing or conducting, rather than composition. Aged 44, he began building up a piano soloist's repertoire and wrote no original work for nine years. Leaving his homeland meant spiritual exile from the culture that had nurtured his music, and to his friend Medtner's question, 'Why do you no longer compose?' Rachmaninov replied: 'The melody has gone.'

Yet the urge to compose did re-assert itself. A fitful procession of 'Indian summer' pieces emerged between 1926 and 1940, marked by a new clarity of texture, and a tendency to express ideas more concisely than he had in his earlier work.

The result was too 'modern' and lean-sounding for audiences who wanted him to keep re-writing the Second Piano Concerto, and too conservative for critics whose twin gods were Stravinsky and Schoenberg.

But since his death, the *Symphonic Dances* have gradually come to be regarded as perhaps the richest results of Rachmaninov's new approach to the orchestra. They are also, collectively, his last original composition.

'I don't know how it happened. It must have been my last spark,' is how he described the music's origins. Yet the idea of a score for a programmatic ballet had been at the back of his mind since 1915, and when Michel Fokine successfully choreographed the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* in 1939 the opportunity presented itself again. He wrote the Dances the following year, giving the three movements the titles *Midday, Twilight* and *Midnight* respectively. At this point the work was called *Fantastic Dances*. Fokine was enthusiastic about the music but non-committal about its balletic possibilities. His death a short time later cooled Rachmaninov's interest in the ballet idea. He deleted his descriptive titles, substituted the word 'Symphonic' for 'Fantastic', and dedicated the triptych to

his favourite orchestra, the Philadelphia, and its chief conductor Eugene Ormandy. It is a work full of enigmas which the ever-secretive Rachmaninov does nothing to clarify.

Near the end of the first movement for example, there is a quotation of a prominent theme from his Symphony No.1. The premiere of that work in 1897 had been such a fiasco that the young Rachmaninov could not compose at all for another three years; the work had not been performed again in his lifetime. So the reference to it in this new piece had a meaning that was entirely private. There is also the curious paradox that the word 'dance', with its suggestion of life-enhancing, joyous activity, is here put at the service of a work that is essentially concerned with endings, coloured by a chromaticism that darkens every musical step.

The first movement begins hesitantly, before a bold statement of a theme that sounds very much like the plainchant for the dead, *Dies irae*, in disguise. This leads to the main part of the movement. From this point on, most of the major musical ideas are introduced by the woodwinds. The major lyrical theme, for example, is announced by the alto saxophone (making its only appearance in the entire work). Rachmaninov also employs orchestral piano, and when the lyrical theme is handed to the strings, the piano traces a filigree accompaniment, creating an effect of shining brightness. In the coda, harp and piano together create a glistening counterpoint to the plush, chorale-like statement of the motif plucked from that long-ago Symphony.

The waltz movement begins with muted trumpet fanfares that have a sinister fairy-tale quality to them. Although the atmosphere becomes warmer and more passionate at times, it does not lighten, and sometimes becomes quite macabre. It is as if you are experiencing a memory of a ballroom rather than a ball itself.

The finale is the work's most complex movement. The extensive use of the *Dies irae* (a regular source of inspiration for Rachmaninov) and the curious inscription 'Alliluya', written in the score above the last motif in the work to be derived from Orthodox chant, suggest the most final of endings mingled with a sense of thanksgiving. The tolling of the midnight bell that prefaces the movement's vigorous main section reinforces the view that the work might, after all, be a parable on the three ages of man.

Much of the main *Allegro vivace* material here is derived from chant, as is the motif that eventually drives the *Dies Irae* away and dominates the work's forthright conclusion. In this movement Rachmaninov also takes time out from the dance, in an extensive central section in which morbidity, regret, passion and tears commingle in a complex and beautifully scored musical design.

Phillip Sametz© 1999/2018/2023

Performance History

Elyakum Shapirra conducted the ASO's first performance of Rachmaninov's *Symphonic Dances*, in April 1982. The Orchestra's most recent performance, given in July 2019, was conducted by Dalia Stasevska.

Adelaide *Symphony Orchestra*

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Cameron Hill**
Acting Concertmaster
Holly Piccoli**
Acting Associate Concertmaster
Janet Anderson*
Acting Principal 1st Violin
Alison Heike**
Principal 2nd Violin
Lachlan Bramble~
Associate Principal
2nd Violin
Ann Axelby
Erna Berberyan
Minas Berberyan
Gillian Braithwaite
Julia Brittain
Hilary Bruer
Elizabeth Collins
Jane Collins
Danielle Jaquillard
Zsuzsa Leon
Alexis Milton
Michael Milton
Ambra Nesa
Julie Newman
Emma Perkins
Alexander Permezel
Alison Rayner
Kemeru Spurr

Violas

Justin Julian**
Jacqui Cronin~
Guest Associate Principal
Lesley Cockram
Linda Garrett
Anna Hansen
Natalie Maegraith
Rosi McGowran
Michael Robertson

Cellos

Simon Cobcroft**
Sherrilyn Handley
Acting Associate Principal
Joseph Freer
Christopher Handley
Andrew Leask
Gemma Phillips
David Sharp
Cameron Waters

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Belinda Kendall-Smith~
Acting Associate Principal
Jacky Chang
Harley Gray
Nemanja Petkovic
Giovanni Vinci

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Joshua Batty**
Guest Section Principal
Lisa Gill

Piccolo

Julia Grenfell*

Oboes

Joshua Oates**
Renae Stavely~

Cor Anglais

Peter Duggan*

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Dean Newcomb**
Darren Skelton

Bass Clarinet

Mitchell Berick*

Bassoons

Mark Gaydon**
Laura Brown

Contra Bassoon

Leah Stephenson*
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Horns

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Sarah Barrett~
Emma Gregan
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Jamie Cock*
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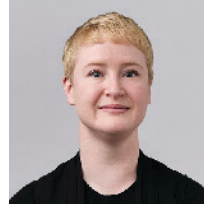
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Concertmaster

Colin Dunsford AM in
memory of Lib Dunsford ♪



Cameron Hill
Associate Concertmaster

Graeme & Susan
Bethune ♪

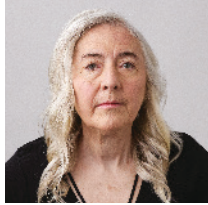


Alison Heike
Principal 2nd Violin

FASO in memory of Ann
Belmont OAM ♪



Elizabeth Collins



Jane Collins

Helen Kowalick* ♪



Danielle Jaquillard

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Alexis Milton

Samuel Joyce & Mark
Taylor ♪



Michael Milton

Judy Birze & Ruth Bloch ♪



Julie Newman



Liam Osborne

Violas



Justin Julian
Section Principal

In memory of
Mrs JJ Holden ♪



Lesley Cockram



Linda Garrett

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Anna Hansen

Anonymous donor ♪



Rosi McGowran

Liz & Mike Bowen ♪



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Bob & Julie Clampett in
memory of their daughter
Carolyn ♪



Cecily Satchell

Double Basses



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Jonathon Coco
Associate Principal

John Sulan KC &
Ali Sulan ♪



Jacky Chang

Dr Melanie Turner ♪



Harley Gray

In memory of Bob
Croser ♪



Belinda Kendall-Smith

In memory of Dr Nandor
Ballai and Dr Georgette
Straznicki ♪



Lisa Gill

Dr Tom & Sharron
Stubbs ♪



Julia Grenfell
Principal

In memory of Father
Kevin McLennan and
Barbra McLennan ♪

Flutes

Piccolo

Bassoons



Mark Gaydon
Section Principal

Pamela Yule ♪



Leah Stephenson

Liz Ampt ♪



Jackie Newcomb
Principal

Norman Etherington AM
in memory of Peggy
Brock AM ♪



Adrian Uren
Section Principal

Roderick Shire &
Judy Hargrave ♪



Sarah Barrett
Associate Principal

Margaret Lehmann ♪



Emma Gregan

The Richard Wagner
Society of South
Australia ♪



Philip Paine
Principal

Tom Pearce &
Peggy Barker ♪

Contra Bassoon

Horns

Bass Trombone Tuba



Amanda Tillett
Principal

Garry Roberts & Dr Lynn
Charlesworth ♪



Stanley McDonald
Principal



Andrew Penrose
Principal

Andrew & Denise
Daniels ♪



Steven Peterka
Section Principal

FASO in memory of
Bev McMahon ♪



Sami Butler
Associate Principal
Percussion/Timpani

Annabel Barrett ♪

Timpani

Percussion



Lachlan Bramble
Associate Principal
2nd Violin
—
In memory of Deborah
Pontifex ♪



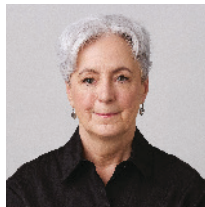
Janet Anderson
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Sharon Grigoryan
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—
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Oboes



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—
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Cor Anglais

Clarinets

Bass Clarinet

Trumpets

Trombones



Timothy Skelly
—
Dr Scott C Y Ma ♪



David Khafagi
Section Principal
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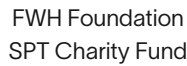


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