

Symphony *Series*

1 – Majesty

Fri 9 & Sat 10 Feb
Adelaide Town Hall



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Symphony *Series*

1

Majesty

Douglas Boyd
Conductor

Alexander Gavrylyuk
Piano

—
Duration
2 hrs (incl. interval)

Fri 9 & Sat 10 February
Adelaide Town Hall

Acknowledgement of Country

Jamie Goldsmith arr./orch. Ferguson

[2']

Pudnanthi Padninthi I – Pukiyana

Australian Premiere

Thea Musgrave

[12']

Rainbow

Tchaikovsky

[32']

Piano Concerto No.1 in B-flat minor, Op.23

I. Allegro non troppo e molto maestoso—Allegro con spirito

II. Andantino semplice—Allegro vivace assai/Prestissimo

III. Allegro con fuoco

Interval

Mendelssohn

[40']

Symphony No.3 in A minor, Op.56 *Scottish*

I. Andante con moto - Allegro un poco agitato

II. Vivace non troppo

III. Adagio

IV. Allegro vivacissimo - Allegro maestoso assai

Listen Later ABC Classic is recording this concert for later broadcast. You can hear it again at 1pm on Saturday 17 February.

Classical Conversation Join us in the Adelaide Town Hall auditorium one hour before each concert for our free *Classical Conversations* as ASO Tutti Horn Emma Gregan and ASO Associate Principal Trumpet Martin Phillipson discuss the music.



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Welcome



Colin Cornish AM
Chief Executive Officer

I am thrilled to welcome you to the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra's 2024 Season.

As you settle in for tonight's sold-out performance, we welcome back to our stage Douglas Boyd to conduct following the triumphant Beethoven symphony cycle in 2022, and the extraordinary pianist Alexander Gavrylyuk. I hope you enjoy a taste of the vibrant music to come this year.

Behind the scenes, our preparation for this *Symphony Series* event has also brought with it some career-shaping opportunities for young talent. Over the course of the week, we were delighted to start our year nurturing 10 musicians from the Australian Youth Orchestra through our annual fellowship program. We provide these emerging talents with insights into the working life of a professional orchestral musician, and help them prepare for future auditions and opportunities to work in orchestras like ours. Through this program, and our annual fellowship program with the Elder Conservatorium of Music, our orchestra builds pathways for Australia's finest young players to pursue their dreams.

It's been a particularly busy week for us in the leadup to tonight's performance as we've also offered emerging conductors from Australia

and New Zealand valuable podium time with the ASO through the Australian Conducting Academy. With a scarcity of local conductors, we're proud of this national initiative dedicated to fostering the next generation of talent.

The ASO's musical excellence and impact on and off stage are only possible with the generous support of our audience, government, donors, and corporate partners. I'm especially delighted to welcome our new Principal Partner MMEM in 2024, and acknowledge the transformative support this collaboration brings to the ASO and our community.

Thank you for joining us this year as we share some of the greatest music of the orchestral repertoire.

The perfect bloom is
like the perfect note



TYNTE
FLOWERS



Douglas Boyd
Conductor

He first built his music career as an oboist – but you may have witnessed Douglas Boyd standing at the podium of your favourite orchestra. He has led all the BBC orchestras, City of Birmingham Symphony, Philharmonia and Royal Scottish National Orchestras – and that's only speaking locally for this Glasgow-born conductor. Boyd has also worked with major orchestras in Europe, Asia, and the United States. Landing in Australia, this sought after conductor recently led the complete cycle of Beethoven symphonies with the Adelaide and Melbourne symphony orchestras but has also recorded these beloved works with Manchester Camerata – and his extensive discography includes Mahler and Schubert symphonies as well.

In the opera world, Boyd is artistic director of Garsington Opera and is widely recognised for his leadership in shaping the company, reflected in its nomination in the 2019 International Opera Awards and appearance at the 2022 Edinburgh International Festival.

Douglas has close working relationships with many eminent soloists; some familiar names include cellist Steven Isserlis, pianist-conductor András Schiff, and cellist Alisa Weilerstein. Boyd was a founding member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and you will hear his formative musical training – including learning with such talent as conductors Claudio Abbado and Nikolaus Harnoncourt – in his style and approach to this day.



Alexander Gavrylyuk
Piano

A stunningly virtuosic pianist, Alexander is internationally recognised for his electrifying and poetic performances. His performance of Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No.3 at the BBC Proms was described as “revelatory” by *The Times* and “electrifying” by *Limelight*. Alexander is now Artist-in-Residence at Wigmore Hall, performing three recitals across the 2023-24 season.

Highlights of the 2023-24 season include debuts with NDR Hannover, Bochum Symphoniker and Amsterdam Sinfonietta, as well as return visits to Sydney Symphony, Adelaide Symphony, Bournemouth Symphony, Aarhus Symphony & Rheinische Philharmonie. Recent highlights also include Detroit Symphony, Dallas Symphony, Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Polish Baltic Philharmonic, Bergen Philharmonic, São Paulo Symphony & Rhode Island Philharmonic.

Born in Ukraine in 1984 and holding Australian citizenship, Alexander began his piano studies at the age of seven and gave his first concerto performance when he was nine years old. He won First Prize and Gold Medal at the Horowitz International Piano Competition (1999), First Prize at the Hamamatsu International Piano Competition (2000), and Gold Medal at the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Masters Competition (2005).

As a recitalist Alexander has performed at the Musikverein in Vienna, Tonhalle Zurich, Victoria Hall Geneva, Southbank Centre's International Piano Series, Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Master Pianists Series, Suntory Hall, Tokyo Opera City Hall, Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, Cologne Philharmonie, Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall, San Francisco's Herbst Theatre, Sydney Recital Hall and Melbourne Recital Centre.

About the Program

Thea Musgrave

Rainbow

Tchaikovsky

Piano Concerto No.1 in B-flat minor, Op.23

Mendelssohn

Symphony No.3 in A minor, Op.56 *Scottish*

How many colours make a rainbow? Physicist Isaac Newton famously counted seven, inspired by the number of notes in a Western musical scale. But in reality, the streams of colour that arch through our skies are not all that precise – and what makes a rainbow truly mesmerising is the way each colour blends together. Today we know there are far more than seven colours on the spectrum, just as more than seven colours shine through the tones of an orchestra.

Thea Musgrave's *Rainbow* does not confine itself to Newton's rainbow. Her work also reflects the grey-purple sky that heralds a storm; the blue-white flash of lightning. The Scottish-American composer begins her music with a dissonant feel, timpani rolling in like thunderous clouds. Soon the woodwinds shriek, and the rest of the orchestra roars: *Run for cover!* Strings swirl in violent gusts, but the bloom of a harp eventually signals peace. Is it finally safe to look up at the sky?

Towards the end of her work, Musgrave nurtures her listeners with three chords – all reassuringly major in feel, and each representing a colour she has plucked from her musical rainbow: yellow, blue, and red. The orchestra glistens; the 12-minute storm has come and gone, and you heard it play out in real time.

Musgrave's *Rainbow* was commissioned by the City of Glasgow, and the Scottish National Orchestra performed its premiere at the opening of the Royal Concert Hall. By the time she'd composed *Rainbow* in 1990, the composer had already crafted several orchestral works and

operas including *Mary, Queen of Scots* (1977). Later, Musgrave would be named a Commander of the Order of the British Empire.

Rewind 161 years and under the same Scottish sky, a young man in his 20s embarked on the adventure of a lifetime. Felix Mendelssohn, born in Germany, travelled with his friend to the British Isles to explore basalt sea caves (sparking his *Hebrides Overture*), traverse the Scottish Highlands, and tour the Palace of Holyroodhouse. This old castle once was home to Mary, Queen of Scots – and it's also the scene of a gruesome crime in which her husband's gang of thugs stabbed her secretary to death! Did the young Mendelssohn stand at the crumbling open-air ruins of Holyrood Abbey and look towards a rainbow-pierced sky? Or did he feel the chill of a storm approaching the old stone structure, close to where the body was initially buried?

Either way, Holyrood's dramatic history compelled this early Romantic composer to scribble a few ideas that in 1842 would become his Symphony No.3 *Scottish*. Mendelssohn wrote much of the piece on his return to mainland Europe (his trip to Scotland was in 1829), but in his notes can be heard the majesty of the decaying chapel and the mysteries of Holyrood's past.

While Musgrave depicts her murky skies with oboe tones and a flute flourish, Mendelssohn begins his *Scottish* with a heavier feel. In the first movement, Mendelssohn crafts a hymn-like melody punctuated with swift changes in dynamic. Violins climb and fall, soon enveloped



Ruins of Holyrood Abbey

by woodwinds and lower strings as they engage in a call-and-response that echoes the opening theme. In just a few moments, you'll be whisked away – *assai animato!* – on Mendelssohn's thrilling adventure to the landmarks of Scotland. Keep an ear out for the outrageously vivacious (*vivacissimo*) closing. You may choose to read into it, imagining the criminals who scurried up Holyrood's spiral staircase to seek out their victim – or simply kick back and enjoy the piece for what it really is: a gripping memoir of Mendelssohn's travels and his daydreams of Scottish history.

The elephant in the room of this majestic program is Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No.1, which sits elegantly between these pieces from Musgrave and Mendelssohn. Tchaikovsky was a big fan of the latter composer (and could have enjoyed the former too, had he lived long enough to hear her work!). This 19th-Century concerto is an absolute blast (quite literally: you'll hear the full orchestra blasting an extra-loud *fortissimo* as early as the second bar). There's barely a moment to catch your breath before the star of the show – your virtuosic pianist – enters with weighty on-the-beat chords that hold up the strings' sprawling melody. Then they trade places, and the piano indulges in this same luscious theme, stretching it out with embellishments before a let-loose cadenza.

The first movement dominates more than half the concerto, while a deliciously sweet (*dolcissimo*) flute solo opens the *Andantino semplice* movement, the gentle feel of which is answered by an equally tender piano line. After a dancing middle

section, you're eased into the catchy and repetitive rhythm of the final movement, which brings the piece home with fiery passion (*con fuoco*).

Tchaikovsky tinkered with this concerto well into the 1880s, but he presented an early iteration to the deeply unimpressed Nikolay Rubinstein – a skilled pianist and friend who may have become the work's dedicatee, had he not criticised it so abysmally that Tchaikovsky gave the premiere to pianist Hans von Bülow instead. Its 1875 debut in Boston's Music Hall went swimmingly, rendering worthless Rubinstein's judgment of the work (he later backflipped on his harsh opinions) – and making it a must-hear staple of the repertoire these centuries on.

Stephanie Eslake

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

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Holly Piccoli**
Acting Concertmaster
Helen Ayres*
Guest Associate
Concertmaster
Michael Milton~
Acting Principal 1st Violin
Alison Heike**
Principal 2nd Violin
Lachlan Bramble~
Associate Principal
2nd Violin
Janet Anderson
Ann Axelby
Erna Berberyán
Minas Berberyán
Gillian Braithwaite
Julia Brittain
Hilary Bruer
Elizabeth Collins
Jane Collins
Danielle Jaquillard
Zsuzsa Leon
Lucy Macourt
Alexis Milton
Ambra Nesa
Julie Newman
Liam Osborne
Alexander Permezel
Alison Rayner
Kemerí Spurr

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David Wicks~
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Martin Alexander
Lesley Cockram
Linda Garrett
Anna Hansen
Rosi McGowran
Michael Robertson
Cecily Satchell

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Aurora Henrich
Gustavo Quintino

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Piccolo

Julia Grenfell*

Oboes

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Colin Dunsford AM in
memory of Lib Dunsford ♪



Cameron Hill
Associate
Concertmaster
Graeme & Susan
Bethune ♪



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Principal 2nd Violin
FASO in memory of
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Elizabeth Collins



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Lesley Cockram



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Tutti Cello



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Roderick Shire
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& Katrina Bochner ♪



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FASO in memory of
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Associate Principal
Percussion/Timpani
Annabel Barrett ♪

Bass Trombone

Tuba

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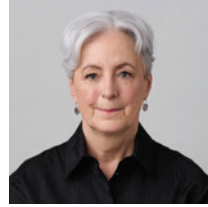
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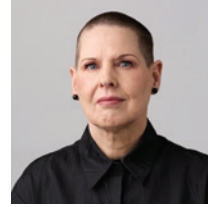
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