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Eternal
February 14 & 15
2025

SYMPHONY SERIES

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1 ETERNAL

Acknowledgement of Country
Buckskin & Goldsmith / arr. Ferguson
Pudnanthi Padninthi

[3']

Clyne
This Midnight Hour

[12']

Beethoven
Concerto for Piano No.4 in G, Op.58
I. Allegro moderato
II. Andante con moto
III. Rondo: Vivace

[34']

Interval

Tchaikovsky
Romeo and Juliet: Fantasy Overture

[19']

Respighi
Pines of Rome

[23']

I. The Pines of the Villa Borghese
II. Pines Near a Catacomb
III. The Pines of the Janiculum
IV. The Pines of the Appian Way

FEBRUARY

Fri 14 & Sat 15
Adelaide Town Hall

Tito Muñoz
Conductor

Pavel Kolesnikov
Piano

Duration
2 hrs (incl. interval)

Listen Later
ABC Classic
Saturday 22 February
12:30pm

Pre-Concert Talk
Adelaide Town Hall
auditorium, one hour before
each concert. Free *Classical*
Conversations with conductor
Tito Muñoz, discussing
the music in tonight's
program with Emma Gregan.



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WELCOME

Tonight, we open the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra's 2025 *Symphony Series* with *Eternal*, paying homage to love in all its forms, whether intimate, romantic, tragic, mysterious, or transcendent.

Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* reminds us why great stories, like great music, are eternal. Respighi's *Pines of Rome* transports us to the Eternal City, where history and vitality converge.

Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 is a work of remarkable beauty that continues to captivate centuries after its creation, and tonight we are fortunate to experience it with pianist Pavel Kolesnikov, accompanied by Tito Muñoz on the podium. It's an absolute pleasure to have them with us this evening.

Looking ahead, as we approach Adelaide's bustling Festival season, we're excited to once again play a major role in the Adelaide Festival. I hope that you will have the chance to discover extraordinary new music in the stunning production of Kaija Saariaho's opera *Innocence*. Continuing our mission to discover and share more great music this year ASO will present *Light–Song*, two performances of music by women composers curated by long-time friend of the ASO, Cathy Milliken. We are grateful to the Miriam Hyde Circle of supporters, and to Mary Lou Simpson OAM for making *Light–Song* possible.

ASO is fortunate to receive the loyal support of so many who contribute to and champion the value and importance of what we do. So it is a profoundly moving and sad moment when these friends leave us. I would like to pay tribute to two of our close friends who passed away last December, and whose contributions have left an indelible mark on the ASO. Janet Hoopman was a devoted supporter of the ASO, whose generosity and warmth, shared alongside her loving partner Roger Lang, brought joy and lasting impact to our community. We also acknowledge the leadership of the late John Uhrig AC, former Chair of the ASO Board, whose guidance helped shape the Orchestra's legacy.

Finally, it was wonderful to see my predecessor, Vincent Ciccarello OAM acknowledged in the Australia Day Honours List this year. Vince's passion for music making with ASO and at all levels of the South Australian community has left a remarkable legacy that I am honoured to continue and build upon.

Thank you for being with us tonight. We look forward to celebrating another extraordinary season with you.

Colin Cornish AM
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Tito Muñoz
Conductor

Praised for his versatility, technical clarity, and keen musical insight, Tito Muñoz is internationally recognized as one of the most gifted conductors on the podium today. After 10 years as the Music Director of The Phoenix Symphony, Tito's tenure concluded at the end of the 2023-24 season, and he now continues as their newly appointed Artistic Partner. Tito previously held Music Director positions with the Opéra National de Lorraine and the Orchestre symphonique et lyrique de Nancy in France and Assistant Conductor positions with Cleveland Orchestra, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati Chamber Orchestra and Aspen Music Festival.

Tito has appeared with many of North America's most prominent orchestras, including Atlanta, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, Houston, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, New York and Utah. Recent international engagements include the Frankfurt Radio Symphony, SWR Symphonieorchester, Deutsche Radio Philharmonie Saarbrücken, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Lausanne Chamber Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony, Ulster Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic (London), Luxembourg Philharmonic, Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra, Opéra Orchestre National Montpellier, Opéra de Rennes, Auckland Philharmonia, Sydney Symphony, Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg and Sao Paulo State Symphony.

Born in Queens, New York, Tito began his musical training as a violinist in New York City public schools. He made his professional conducting debut in 2006 with the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center and made his Cleveland Orchestra debut at the Blossom Music Festival that same year.



Pavel Kolesnikov
Piano

Following performances with the London Symphony Orchestra at *Classical Pride* in 2024, Pavel gives recitals at Southbank Centre, Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Brugges, Spivey Hall and Severance Music Center as part of the Cleveland Orchestra's Piano Series. He also returns to The Hallé, Bournemouth Symphony, Hong Kong Sinfonietta and debuts with Adelaide Symphony.

Other highlights include concertos with the Danish National Symphony, Cincinnati Symphony, Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Netherlands Philharmonic and at the *BBC Proms* with the BBC Scottish Symphony, collaborating with conductors Susanna Mälkki, Manfred Honeck, Sir Mark Elder, Alpesh Chauhan, Gemma New, Alexander Bloch and Vasily Petrenko.

In addition to performances with the Britten Sinfonia and Sinfonia of London, Pavel gave immersive performances with partner and pianist Samson Tsoy. The duo has since performed at Carnegie Hall, Barbican Centre and BOZAR.

Pavel's cross-genre collaborations include the premiere of *Celestial Navigation* – with architect Sophie Hicks and text by Martin Crimp and his realisation of Bach's *Goldberg Variations* with dancer Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker.

Pavel won the 2012 Honens Piano Competition and was a BBC New Generation Artist. He was artist-in-residence at Wigmore Hall, and has performed at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Berlin's Konzerthaus, Klavier-Festival Ruhr and La Roque-d'Anthéron and Piano aux Jacobins festivals. His discography includes music by Reynaldo Hahn, Louis Couperin and Chopin.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Composers throughout history have been inspired by works of literature. On this program, you will hear Tchaikovsky convey an ill-fated love story from Shakespeare, and experience Anna Clyne's response to poetry from Jiménez and Baudelaire. Clyne composes with an awareness of her music's capacity to evoke art of various forms; she traverses the creative boundaries between words, music, and visual impressions. In her notes accompanying *This Midnight Hour*, the London-born composer writes of her intention to 'evoke a visual journey' for her listeners – even when literary narratives are at the heart of her work.

You may first imagine a woman dashing freely through the night, their skin illuminated by the moon and stars. Clyne translates this picture into sound through the textures of tumbling winds and vigorous strings. She represents the physicality of the scene Juan Ramón Jiménez described in his poem *La Musica*, itself an homage to the expressive nature of music.

In the second half of her 2015 composition, Clyne uses the viola to give an impression of a French waltz that could have been played on accordion. Here, she was moved by *Harmonie du Soir*, a 19th-Century poem by Charles Baudelaire that describes flowers exhaling their scents: 'Sounds and perfumes mingle in the evening air; mournful waltz and languid vertigo!'

This Midnight Hour premiered in France, the year of its composition. After tonight's performance, we travel to a faraway time and place – Vienna, 1808. The public premiere of Beethoven's **Piano Concerto No.4 in G major** was a marathon event. It spanned more than four hours in which the composer also

conducted his Fifth and Sixth symphonies, as well as his Choral Fantasy, a solo fantasia, and movements from his Mass in C! The composer even performed the solo part in his piano concerto – although, due to his increasing deafness, he would never premiere another.

We often refer to Beethoven as an innovator and rule-breaker, and he made a daring move with this concerto: it was the first composition of its form to eliminate the orchestral introduction. Under normal circumstances, a concerto would have commenced with the sounds of the orchestra before the solo pianist begins. Instead, Beethoven chose to open this concerto with a gracious phrase from the piano – a call to which the strings respond in a similarly uncompetitive spirit. The warmth of the soloist's approach is guided by the composer's marking of *dolce*, which means 'sweet'.

The second movement agitates the relationship between strings and pianist through contrasting expressions. The strings enter *forte* (loudly) and with abrupt and detached articulation. The soloist then plays *cantabile*, like a song. This strained conversation continues, but orchestra and pianist eventually share a sombre last word that leads into the livelier (*vivace*) Rondo.

By pushing audiences outside their comfort zones, and composing music that challenged the conventions of his day, Beethoven helped bridge the Classical and Romantic periods of Western music. Romanticism, which commenced at the turn of the 1800s, embraced the musical ideas that had fuelled much of Beethoven's output – namely, the expression of emotions and the use of nature, literature, and the human experience as sources of inspiration.



Romantic composers often took up their own language of love: flowing strings, extravagant melodies designed to make you swoon, and crunching dissonances that signified heartbreak. Tchaikovsky would use this language to communicate a powerful love theme in his fantasy overture, *Romeo and Juliet*. In this composition, gentle courtship and subtlety are replaced with a heart-on-your-sleeve sentimentality so brilliantly matched to the doomed characters of Shakespeare's play.

Tchaikovsky developed an interest in the works of Shakespeare and would later compose *The Tempest* (1873), and a fantasy overture to *Hamlet* (1888) followed by incidental music to *Hamlet* (1891). But for *Romeo and Juliet*, it would be the desire of forbidden love that burned through Tchaikovsky's sensational melodies – a feeling he knew intimately, having worked to hide his own romantic feelings. As a gay composer, his sexuality was seen as taboo, causing an emotional strain that can be heard as an undertone through many of his compositions, including his 1885 symphonic work *Manfred* based on an English poem of tormented love. Tchaikovsky was about 29 years old when he composed *Romeo and Juliet*, and he was infatuated with Eduard Zak – a relative of a student. Devastatingly, Zak would later commit suicide. 'It seems to me that I have never loved anyone so strongly as him,' Tchaikovsky wrote.

In many ways, *Romeo and Juliet* was a tragically resonant narrative for Tchaikovsky. Although Shakespeare wrote the play in English, he forged an Italian backdrop for the feuding Montague and Capulet families, and the young lovers trapped in between. While Tchaikovsky translated the themes of this play into his Romantic style of music, many Russian composers were working to resist the cultural

influence of the West. A group of composers known as the Mighty Five prioritised the development of a nationalistic sound – and one of them, Mily Balakirev, challenged Tchaikovsky to structure *Romeo and Juliet* after his own specifications. (Balakirev was also behind Tchaikovsky's involvement in *Manfred*.)

These two composers could be seen as artistic opponents: Tchaikovsky taught music theory at the Moscow Conservatory, and his understanding of composition was informed by his travels to England, France, and Germany as well as his diverse interests in both Russian and Western European music. Balakirev, on the other hand, was a passionate advocate for a purely Russian sound – and he surrounded himself with likeminded composers who would further his nationalistic mission. But Tchaikovsky was comfortable working across both cultural worlds and despite their artistic differences, the two artists were united in their shared passion for music and literature. Balakirev had pitched Tchaikovsky the narrative of *Romeo and Juliet*. He told him how to develop the themes into music, and recommended the instruments that should be used. 'The layout is yours,' Tchaikovsky wrote to Balakirev. The work premiered in Moscow, 1870 and was later revised.

Romeo and Juliet depicts three core themes from the English play. Tchaikovsky gently introduces the character of Friar Laurence, representing his spirituality through the simple parallel movements of clarinet and bassoon that give the understated feel of an old hymn. In Shakespeare's play, the Friar helps the title characters get married in secret – and is responsible for giving Juliet the potion that seals their unfortunate fate. We hear the essence of the Friar's theme towards the conclusion of the work, reframed within the context of love and death.

The second theme of *Romeo and Juliet* represents the conflict between the lovers' families – the Montagues and Capulets. Tchaikovsky uses a musical language of war: pounding timpani, angular strings, aggressive brass, and shrieking winds all storm decisively through the theme. The main love theme remains, and it's a tender melody that eventually culminates in explosively heart-rending strings against descending horn. This juxtaposition between the two instrumental sections creates a dissonance that casts their romance into doubt. The music continues to progress through the drama of the sparring families, and the young characters' soul-stirring battle for love. While the work is referred to as an overture – a form of music you'll often find at the start of a ballet or opera – *Romeo and Juliet* is nevertheless a standalone piece, and it fulfils the emotional and narrative depth of Shakespeare's entire play without any further musical elaboration.

This work shares an unusual link to the next piece on our program: Ottorino Respighi was an Italian-born composer who performed and studied music in St. Petersburg. He infused Russian influences into his music after he returned to his Western homeland. His *Pines of Rome* is a type of symphonic poem, which is music inspired by a non-musical source – a similar structure to Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, but this time drawn from nature instead of literature. However, there are stark differences between their works: where Tchaikovsky's overture was rooted in Italian drama, Respighi's ode to the same country begins with ecstatic optimism. There is no battle to be felt in the first movement of *Pines of Rome*: instruments are given their own roles, and they come together to share in a feeling of brightness.

In the opening movement – *The Pines of the Villa Borghese* – the triangle rings, winds blossom, and brass presents a delightful fanfare. The first melody depicts the innocent playfulness of childhood through a reference to *Madama Doré* – a song Respighi's wife Elsa may have sung when she was a child frolicking in the Borghese Gardens.

This movement, as stated in Respighi's original program, conjures the sounds of children who 'shriek like swallows at evening' as they flutter around the pines – a joyful introduction to Respighi's four-part tour of Rome.

None of these delights can be heard in the second movement, *The Pines Near a Catacomb*. The slow (*lento*) pace and low strings give the work an ominous feel, signifying the physical depth of the underground burial structure. The pines cast a shadow over the entrance of the catacomb – and 'from the depths rises a chant, which echoes solemnly like a hymn and is then mysteriously silenced', as the original program detailed.

The Pines of the Janiculum brings a sense of healing through dreamy visions of the trees under a full moon. The Janiculum Hill overlooks the rooftops of Rome. Towards the end of this movement, instruments such as the solo clarinet evoke the calming sounds of a nightingale's early morning tune. Listen for a pre-recorded birdsong in tonight's performance.

The Pines of the Appian Way begins in a march-like tempo (*marcia*), and rocks hypnotically back and forth. This trudging beat represents the footsteps of an ancient army as it traverses one of the oldest roads in Europe – the Appian Way, dating back to 312BCE. This movement culminates with the rising of the sun, which blazes down on the pines that border the road. These trees guide the military figures who make their way to the Capitol, ensuring the strength of their old Italian city – and a booming majestic conclusion to this music.

Pines of Rome was exceedingly well received at its 1924 premiere. The composer also paid homage to the city in his *Fountains of Rome* (1916), and *Roman Festivals* (1929), both of which depict the eternal wonders of Italy.

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ASO

25



The perfect bloom is
like the perfect note



TYNTE
FLOWERS



ETERNAL LOVE

ASO musicians Joshua Oates, Principal Oboe and Martin Alexander, Tutti Viola share how music brought them together, the pieces that hold special meaning for them, and what to listen for in this Valentine's Day concert.

How did you two first meet, and was music involved in bringing you together?

Joshua: Music was involved! We met in Melbourne to rehearse for a tour of *Marriage of Figaro* that toured around China for a month.

Martin: I wish I could say it was love at first sight – and that would be a lie!! It wasn't until the flight over to China that we really clicked.

Do you have a favourite musical work or composer that feels meaningful to your relationship?

Joshua: We do listen to music a lot together, showing each other something that we've just heard that caught our attention. I'm always really amazed by good singers, so often that's what I'm sharing with Martin – or when we first met I was listening to musicals a lot, so I was sharing some of my favourite hits.

Martin: I always think of opera in our relationship – obviously *Figaro* but also Verdi's *Aida* and *Rigoletto*, which we had the opportunity to perform together as well. Orchestrally speaking,

Mahler's 9th symphony is probably one of the toughest works we've faced together and the musical journey you undertake as a listener or performer really stays with you, so as a couple, I think that's left a pretty indelible mark!

This *Symphony Series* concert falls on Valentine's Day—what would you recommend the audience listen out for that you feel is a great sonic depiction of love?

Joshua: Well you can't miss the love theme in Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, which is shared between our sections! It's the beautiful sound of the violas with the Cor Anglais, a classic combination.

Martin: This is hard – I feel like any oboe solo is a sonic depiction of love, so I'm usually quite spoilt for choice! For me, it would be the oboe solo in *Pines of Rome*, in the third movement, '*I pini del Gianicolo*'. It's yearning, singing and ephemeral – it gives me goosebumps just thinking about it!

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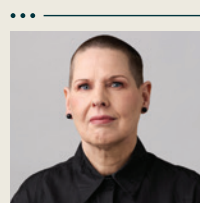
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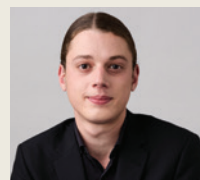


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