



4

Mythic
4 & 5 July
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MYTHIC

Acknowledgement of Country

Jamie Goldsmith arr./orch. Ferguson

Pudnanthi Padninthi II – Wadna

[2']

Kats-Chernin

Mythic

[11']

Stravinsky

Petrushka (1947 version)

[34']

The Shrove-Tide Fair

Petrushka's Cell

The Moor's Cell

The Shrove-Tide Fair (Towards Evening)

Interval

Beethoven

Concerto for Piano No.5 in E-flat Major, Op.73 *Emperor*

[38']

I. Allegro con brio

II. Adagio

III. Rondo: Molto allegro

JULY

Fri 4 & Sat 5

Adelaide Town Hall

Emilia Hoving

Conductor

Javier Perianes

Piano

With thanks to Sally Gordon for her generous support as Patron of Emilia Hoving

Duration

1 hr 40 min (incl. interval)

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Join us for *Classical Conversations* one hour before the concert in the stalls of Adelaide Town Hall, as pianist, Javier Perianes joins ASO cellist, Sharon Grigoryan to discuss the program.

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WELCOME

A warm welcome to *Symphony Series 4 – Mythic*.

Time flies. This concert marks the mid-point of the ASO's 2025 *Symphony Series*. We hope that you've enjoyed the ride so far, and rest-assured, there is much more to come.

Following the ASO's joyous Brahms symphony cycle with new Chief Conductor Mark Wigglesworth, we eagerly await his return for *Symphony Series 6 - Shadows* in which Shostakovich's defiant Tenth Symphony takes centre stage.

But this evening, the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra proudly continues its mission to explore great music composed by great women. The curtain goes up with a magical piece by one of Australia's leading female compositional voices, Elena Kats-Chernin. *Mythic* echoes the dark magic of a mystical cave – it is a sound world which is evocative, engaging, and unique. There's more magic to be found in Stravinsky's dazzling ballet-score *Petrushka*.

This is musical storytelling at its best as mischievous puppets wreak chaos at a Russian fair. But it is also a virtuosic concerto for orchestra, tonight conducted by the Finnish conductor, Emilia Hoving. Emilia last worked with the ASO in 2023 when she conducted another classic, Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. We welcome Emilia back to Adelaide.

After the interval, there is a much anticipated ASO début from the acclaimed Spanish pianist Javier Perianes. Javier is widely regarded as a fine interpreter of Beethoven; his playing has been described as tempestuous, lyrical, and joyful. Tonight, we hear him in one of the most majestic yet deeply human concertos in the repertoire, Beethoven's Fifth Piano Concerto, the *Emperor*.

Thank you for being with us tonight – we hope that you are transported to a world of mythic landscapes, crazy puppetry, and inspired by the majesty of music.

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Emilia Hoving
Conductor

Winner of the Finnish critics' prize 2021 for the Best Newcomer in the Arts, Emilia Hoving (born 1994) is already firmly established in Europe, and has been invited back by orchestras such as the Philharmonia Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, BBC Scottish Symphony, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Gothenburg Symphony, Swedish Radio Symphony, Helsinki Philharmonic, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic and Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France.

She made her Japan debut in 2022 at Suntory Hall with the Yomiuri Nippon Symphony and her Australasian debut with the Adelaide Symphony in 2023. She has a broad repertoire, and regularly conducts works by living (especially Finnish) composers, including at the Nordic Music Days festival in Glasgow, and is closely involved with the Helsinki Philharmonic's ongoing project to revive works by neglected Finnish composers from the last century.

Hoving's career began as Assistant to Hannu Lintu at the Finnish Radio Symphony (2019) and to Mikko Franck at Radio France (2020-22). She studied at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki with Professors Sakari Oramo and Atso Almila, having begun conducting studies in 2015 with Jorma Panula. She previously studied piano (from age 6) as well as the clarinet.



Javier Perianes
Piano

Javier Perianes has performed in the world's leading concert halls with major orchestras and esteemed conductors including Daniel Barenboim, Zubin Mehta, Gustavo Dudamel, Klaus Mäkelä, Simone Young, and Vladimir Jurowski.

Highlights of the 2024/25 season include the Spanish premiere of Francisco Coll's *Ciudad sin sueño* with Les Arts Valencia and performances with the Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, NDR Elbphilharmonie, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Gulbenkian Orchestra, and orchestras in Singapore, San Diego, Vancouver, and across the UK. He will also perform Jimmy López Bellido's Piano Concerto with the Naples Philharmonic, and all five Beethoven concertos with Orquestra de la Comunitat Valenciana and the Philharmonia Orchestra on tour. The season ends with appearances across Australasia, including the Sydney, Queensland, Adelaide, Tasmania, and New Zealand symphony orchestras.

A passionate recitalist and chamber musician, Perianes appears this season at Wigmore Hall, Radio France, and in Adelaide, as well as touring with violist Tabea Zimmermann. He has performed at prestigious festivals including the BBC Proms, Lucerne, Salzburg, and La Roque d'Anthéron and Festival Pianistico Internazionale in Brescia and Bergamo.

Perianes records exclusively for harmonia mundi. His latest albums include *Goyescas*, *Chopin: Sonatas & Mazurkas*, *Jeux de Miroirs*, and *Cantilena* with Tabea Zimmermann. He received Spain's National Music Prize in 2012 and was named ICMA Artist of the Year in 2019.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

As lovers of orchestral music, we often gravitate towards pieces that remind us how it feels to be human. We listen to a cello concerto that brings us to tears, embracing its melancholy – a universal emotion. We listen to a symphony in a major key, feeling as though it captures all the joy in the world. But one of the understated powers of music can be found in the way it inspires us to feel emotional responses to places and stories that are not of this world. Using a collection of orchestral instruments, a composer can conjure a mystical location – one that does not exist, but that we can still sense in our souls, or visualise in our minds. Such a place could be a magical cave, which we'll never get the chance to explore. Yet through music, we know exactly how it would feel to enter the dark and cavernous space, cool air brushing against our skin as our eyes adjust to our surroundings. It's an environment that exists inside the mind of a composer who possesses the skills to share her dream.

This is how you will enter this concert: venturing into the otherworldly cave that Elena Kats-Chernin portrays in her 2004 composition *Mythic*. If you have listened to her music in the past, you may know this familiar sensation of being transported to an ethereal place – a world not dissimilar to our own, but one that may include brave princesses and boys transformed into swans (*Wild Swans*); water spirits and girls who become flowers (*The Spirit and the Maiden*). Like those other Kats-Chernin works, *Mythic* is transcendent. Low instruments create a sound as dense as the

rocky walls of the cave, helping to shape our perceptions of darkness and depth. We hear woodwinds jutting out like stalactites, and flute trickle like water droplets on ancient minerals. As we delve further into this mythical cave, we are invited to experience awe: a booming brass theme reveals the enormity of the space, leaving us impressed and intimidated by the scale of Kats-Chernin unnatural wonder.

In her own notes on the piece, the composer stated that her music stemmed from a “passacaglia-like chordal progression” that she couldn't stop thinking about. A passacaglia is a form of Spanish dance stretching as far back as the Baroque era, and it is centred on a repeated musical idea, often in the bass. Kats-Chernin has also described the way her *Mythic* has a romantic feel, but remains solemn in the spirit of a hymn on which variations develop throughout her work.

The musical language of *Mythic*, with its serious strings and blazing brass, can be heard through other works that reveal enchanting landscapes. Howard Shore uses these orchestral colours to emphasise the imposing scale of the snow-covered mountains in his *Lord of the Rings* fantasy score. Majestic brass portrays the lighting of the beacons, while deep strings signal danger in the Mines of Moria. Joe Hisaishi uses similar textures to connect our real-world emotions to the imaginary forests of the anime *Princess Mononoke*. And each of these modern-day composers draws from the traditions of the artists



who came before, from the low instruments that lumber through Grieg's *In the Hall of the Mountain King* to the thrill of discovery that Mendelssohn shares in *Fingal's Cave* (*The Hebrides*). Each of these environments is infused with a sense of magic – and for Kats-Chernin, *Mythic* offered a gateway into this “direction I had not explored previously...a slow, dark mood”, as she stated in her own notes. It's been many years since the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra premiered *Mythic*, but as with any landscape, real or imagined, there is forever more to discover.

Igor Stravinsky, who is next on our program, also composed music beyond the scope of reality. His 1910 ballet *The Firebird* told a tale of royalty, sorcery, and a bird whose feathers have powers of protection – and his next ballet, *Petrushka*, invites us once again to connect with our most human emotions in response to the events of a fairytale. This spirit of fantasy also flows through the works of Kats-Chernin; the Australian composer has previously described the way she feels a connection to her Russian heritage through the ballet music of Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and Tchaikovsky – scores that directly influenced her *Wild Swans* ballet. Themes of wonder and play weave a common thread between her music and historic works like *Petrushka*.

Stravinsky's *Petrushka* was born during an exciting and revolutionary time for ballet in Europe. Russian ballet impresario Serge Diaghilev established his Ballets Russes company in Paris, 1909 and

commissioned works from some of the finest artists of the day – not only composers, but also set and costume designs from the likes of Matisse and Picasso. Within the span of just a few years, the Paris company premiered the ballet arrangement of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* (1910), as well as Stravinsky's *The Firebird* (1910) and *The Rite of Spring* (1913), among many other Russian and French works. *Petrushka* (1911) was choreographed by Michel Fokine – but it was not conceived as a ballet, and took this form only after Diaghilev insisted. He visited the composer who was writing music while staying in Lausanne, a city by Lake Geneva. (Stravinsky followed in the footsteps of a long line of composers who had also found inspiration around the stunning Swiss landscape, including Tchaikovsky and Brahms.) When Diaghilev heard Stravinsky's new musical ideas, he convinced the composer to turn them into a full-blown ballet, building upon the momentum of the Ballets Russes' success and the high demand for works of this artform.

Stravinsky uses a jubilant introduction to set the scene of *Petrushka*: St. Petersburg in 1830. Imagine you are swept up in the commotion of a Shrovetide fair, joining the pulsating energy of the crowd, and donning your winter coat to brave festivities in the crisp open air. You hop onto a carousel or Ferris wheel, and pause to watch the fun attractions along your way – including the puppet theatre with mischievous little characters who are about to come to life.

If you have ever attended a fair or garden festival, you may recall seeing an old-fashioned puppet show called *Punch and Judy*. While not an identical match, *Petrushka* is often compared to the quirky British character of Punch. In the first tableau of Stravinsky's ballet (here performed in the four-part concert version he reorchestrated, which was published in 1947), you will meet the puppet *Petrushka* as he dances for the carnival spectators.

In the second scene, we spend time with *Petrushka*'s love interest, the Ballerina. She is represented through the delicate twists and twirls of the music – but an ominous feeling offsets her sprightly dance, and this is because *Petrushka* is trapped inside a cell where the Magician has stored him away. It is from this isolating place that the puppet hopes to connect with the Ballerina. As humans, can we empathise with *Petrushka*'s tormented experience of masking to perform for the people, only to confront the stark realities of loneliness behind the stage? *Petrushka*'s fate will not improve from here.

The third tableau focuses on the Ballerina's own love interest – and this is not *Petrushka* (his outlandish dance had scared her off!). Instead, it is the handsome Moor whose own cell is filled with plants and bursting with colour. Romance blossoms between the Moor and Ballerina; she is now represented through a bright brass melody, which depicts her playing with a toy trumpet in their room. When a jealous *Petrushka* spots them

and tries to break them up, he is attacked by the Moor and runs away! His escape is unsuccessful, and in the final tableau, the Moor catches up with *Petrushka* and kills him. Will the puppet's ghost haunt the Magician who controlled him?

Throughout the ballet, Stravinsky's troubled puppet is represented through an identifiable group of notes known as the *Petrushka Chord* (it combines the C and F-sharp major triads to create a dissonant sound). It's not often a composer produces a chord so iconic, it gets its own name. There are just a handful of these notable combinations of notes such as the influential *Tristan Chord* (in Wagner's opera *Tristan und Isolde*, 1865) and Scriabin's *Mystic Chord* (in *Prometheus: The Poem of Fire*, 1910). Aside from the *Petrushka Chord*, Stravinsky's ballet score is also built upon the melodies of traditional folk songs, befitting the community fair inside the story.

The final work in our *Mythic* concert is not so much a literal interpretation of the title as it is symbolic. It is a piece that echoes a legendary figure – and for Beethoven, the myth of a promising leader. We have so far explored dark and complex fantasy worlds, but with Beethoven's *Emperor Piano Concerto No.5* in E-flat Major, we return to the human struggles of reality. And for this composer, it was a particularly hard reality to face: "What a destructive, disorderly life I see and hear around me," he wrote, with "nothing but drums, cannons, and human misery in every form".



It was 1809 and at this point in his life – often described as his Heroic or Middle Period – Beethoven was nearing 40 years of age. He was already experiencing profound changes to his hearing, including tinnitus and difficulties with higher frequencies. Yet his ears also had to compete with the militaristic roar of Vienna’s political instability – and it was literally deafening as Napoleon Bonaparte attempted to take over much of Europe. When his forces entered Vienna, it was enough to send Beethoven’s friend and patron, Archduke Rudolf of Austria, fleeing from the city. Beethoven stayed, hiding in his brother’s basement and holding pillows over his ears to block out the explosive sounds of Napoleon’s attacks on the city. Beethoven composed the *Emperor* during this tumultuous year, dedicating it to Archduke Rudolf. Its second movement is richly sentimental and soothing – a massive juxtaposition with the circumstances Beethoven was surviving. But the first and third movements sing with a heroism and triumph that would see him, and now us, through challenging times.

By 1811, Beethoven’s hearing loss had further progressed, which is why the *Emperor* was not premiered under his own hands but those of the local pianist and organist Friedrich Schneider in Leipzig. Beethoven had lost the confidence to present his music; his final public concerto performance as a soloist was in 1808 with his Piano Concerto No.4, and he dedicated that composition to Archduke Rudolf as well.

Notably, Beethoven’s student Carl Czerny performed the *Emperor* in Vienna, 1812 and at this event, a French officer famously compared the heroic nature of the music to “the emperor” – hence the title. This is one explanation, and it could be a myth. Another is that the work’s publisher Johann Baptist Cramer thought it would be a catchy nickname.

While the concerto’s dedicatee Archduke Rudolf was son of Emperor Leopold II (perhaps another contender for the nickname), the “emperor” of the concerto is generally associated with Napoleon due to the impact he made on Beethoven’s life and work. This is despite Beethoven’s vehement disapproval of the man. After all, he had originally dedicated his Third Symphony to Napoleon – then later, once his political views had changed, ripped up the page that bore the dictator’s name. Beethoven renamed that symphony *Eroica*, so what must he have thought of the nickname *Emperor*, which would forever link his composition with the figure who had so greatly disappointed and enraged him? Even when Beethoven’s hopes were dashed by the myth of Napoleon as an ideal leader, the composer’s optimism remained. And this resilient human quality lives tangibly in the notes of his concerto, which we continue to enjoy through the realities of today.

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The perfect bloom is
like the perfect note



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L-R — Amanda Tillett Principal Bass Trombone, Gillian Braithwaite Violin, Sami Butler Associate Principal Percussion/Timpani, David Khafagi Section Principal Trumpet, Lisa Gill Flute

The power of video game music: *Press Play* with Amanda Tillett

What's your earliest memory of video game music?

I don't think I've forgotten the music to a single game I've ever played, the score is always so intrinsically linked with gameplay. A great example of this is *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* on Nintendo 64. An integral element of this game is learning short songs; usually an 8 bar phrase, on an ocarina you are given after the first boss fight in order to progress – things like changing night to day, summoning your horse, making it rain etc. The player needs to recall these various songs multiple times throughout the game, and if you've forgotten the correct order of buttons to press you will hear an incorrect note and won't be able to proceed. You literally develop pitch awareness without even realising. The game also boasts a wonderful background score, changing for each location you find yourself in. It took my brother and I a good part of a year to realise you could actually leave the Kokiri Forest, so I'll never forget the tune that plays at the beginning of the game by Koji Kondo.

Do you think video game music deserves a more permanent place in orchestral seasons?

It's a fallacy that video game music is just for gamers. The perfect example is Christopher Tin's score for *Civilisation VI*. I often hear tracks from this requested live on ABC Classic, not just on the Game Show!

If the music is good it doesn't matter what it was originally intended for, people will enjoy it. Including excerpts from game or film scores in a concert season exposes audiences to local, contemporary music that may be more accessible and easier listening than other offerings and hopefully opens up our concerts to younger audience members too. I love the thought that a diehard gamer could be coming to a concert like this seeing an orchestra for the first time but recognising everything we play.

Do you ever game to unwind after rehearsals or performances?

I just finished *Ratchet and Clank Rift Apart*, and next on my list is *The Last of Us Part 2*. (I know, I'm behind). I won't deny that an immersive campaign can at times be too much of a distraction from daily trombone practice, so if I'm short on time and feeling extra disciplined I'll just play a short session of *Tony Hawk Pro Skater*. I think as an artform video games are highly underrated – not only can they be more memorable and impactful than a good movie or novel, but you as the player have to interact and make decisions as you go. It's a great way to unwind without completely switching off your brain.

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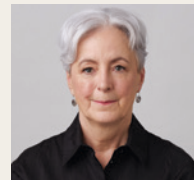
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