



2

Blaze
June 11
2025

MATINÉE SERIES

2 BLAZE

Hyde

Happy Occasion Overture

[5']

Vaughan Williams

Concerto for Tuba

[12']

I. Prelude: Allegro moderato

II. Romanza: Andante sostenuto

III. Finale; Rondo alla tedesca: Allegro

Schubert

Symphony No.5 in B-flat, D.485

[27']

I. Allegro

II. Andante con moto

III. Menuetto: Allegro molto

IV. Allegro vivace

JUNE

Wed 11

Elder Hall

Nicholas Braithwaite

Conductor

Stanley McDonald

Tuba

Duration

60 mins (no interval)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The ASO acknowledges that the land we make music on is the traditional country of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains. We pay respect to Elders past and present and recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land. We acknowledge that this is of continuing importance to the Kaurna people living today. We extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are with us for this performance today.

MATINÉE SERIES

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ABC Classic

Friday 20 June

12:30pm

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Despite their obvious differences in form, style and tonal language, the three works on this program each sparkle with a freshness and vitality, providing the perfect fodder for a winter's morning.

A palpable sense of youthful jubilation and excitement pervades the aptly-named ***Happy Occasion Overture*** by Miriam Hyde (1913–2005), one of Adelaide's – and indeed Australia's – most trailblazing composers and musical educators. Written over the course of just a few days, the work was commissioned to mark the inauguration of the Australian Youth Orchestra (AYO) in 1957. Three distinct subjects are each characterised by a joyous collegiality (according to the composer, 'the first is a spirited call to attention, the second a more expressive oboe phrase, and the third a bolder, striding tune given principally to the strings, in a more serious minor mood') as the melody is distributed and interwoven throughout the orchestra, before wrapping up in the tonic major.

Composed only three years earlier, the ***Concerto for Tuba and orchestra*** by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) was, like Hyde's *Overture*, written in a spirit of commemoration: this time the auspicious occasion was the London Symphony Orchestra's golden jubilee concert on 13 June 1954, where the orchestra's Principal Tuba, Philip Catelinet, was assigned the formidable challenge of giving the world premiere of the very first tuba concerto.

The opening *Prelude* is a lively march that rollicks along with a playful and adventurous curiosity. There is something unexpected at almost every turn, as the soloist is called upon to deploy the instrument's full range of articulation and nuance, often accompanied by funky, syncopated interjections from the orchestra. The tuba's elephantine connotations are masterfully counterbalanced with fleet-footed, nimble virtuoso passage work throughout, culminating in a florid cadenza that confirms the agility and dexterity of both instrument and performer.

The *Romanza* is the emotional heart of the Concerto, recalling something of the lush, pastorate soundscape of *The Lark Ascending*. After a breezy and lyrical orchestral introduction, the soloist enters with a haunting cantabile melody in the high register, revealing the tuba's ability to sing in a way previously unimagined – and subsequently never eclipsed – in the literature. Towards the end, the tuba floats up into the heavens with all the delicacy of a swirling feather caught high on the morning breeze, before the orchestra confirms the tonality of D major in a pianissimo triad, like the sun softly emerging from behind a cloud.

The *Finale – Rondo alla tedesca* (Italian for 'in the German manner') begins with a shimmering orchestral tremolo before an energetic, rocket-like melody alternates with contrasting episodes, culminating once again in a bravura cadenza. Today the Tuba Concerto is counted among Vaughan Williams' most popular works, and it continues to occupy a central place in the instrument's repertoire.

The ***Symphony No.5 in B-flat, D.485*** was completed over a single month in 1816 by the astonishingly productive Franz Schubert (1797–1828), who at that time was still heavily influenced by Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791). Indeed, Mozart's essence is masterfully distilled into almost every measure of the effervescent fifth symphony, a work that hearkened back to Classical models from the eighteenth century through its atypically light, chamber-like orchestration (using only one flute, and omitting clarinets, trumpets and timpani).

The slow, lugubrious introductions of Schubert's previous essays in the genre are supplanted here by a four-bar musical curtain that prefaces the *Allegro*, opening out onto a spring-like vista that is unique in his oeuvre. Throughout the movement's buoyant sonata form (exposition–development–recapitulation), Mozartian melodies are spiced with the kind of chromaticism and unexpected modulations that would come to define much of Schubert's later compositional aesthetic. The equally charming *Andante con moto* second movement reveals the nineteen-year-old's preternatural gift for song in a sublime melody in E-flat major, before passing into the highly unusual, distant harmonic terrain of C-flat major. Dreamy exchanges between the strings and the woodwinds abound in music juxtaposing light and shadow.

Adopting the ubiquitous eighteenth-century dance form of the *Menuetto* within a four-movement, nineteenth-century symphony was yet another way Schubert could directly invoke his Viennese forebears: it is here in the darker tonality of G minor that we find the most overt reference to Mozart's Symphony No.40, K.550 – a work Schubert greatly admired. The spirited *Allegro vivace* finale returns us once again to sonata form and the work's prevailing atmosphere of breezy frivolity in a whistle-stop tour through the history of Viennese classicism, encompassing Haydnesque humour, Beethovenian contrast and, of course, the all-pervasive Mozartian elegance that casts a unique, sun-tinged aura of nostalgia over some of the most radiantly perfect music Schubert ever wrote.

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Nicholas Braithwaite
Conductor

Nicholas Braithwaite's career has spanned five continents and 15 countries. Highlights include the Orchestre National de Belgique, Orchestre National de France, Oslo Philharmonic, Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, Odense Symphony Orchestra, Aarhus Symfoniorkester, Aalborg Symphony Orchestra, New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, Auckland Philharmonia, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Danish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, and Collegium Musicum Copenhagen.

Nicholas studied at the Royal Academy of Music, Bayreuth Festival Master Classes, and in Vienna. His career began as Associate Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, followed by Associate Principal Conductor of English National Opera where his performances of Wagner's Ring cycle received widespread critical acclaim. He was then Music Director of Glyndebourne and Principal Conductor of the Manchester Camerata.

He has held Principal Conductor positions from Norway to New Zealand, including the Tasmanian and Adelaide symphony orchestras. He has recorded more than 30 CDs with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Symphony Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, and Ulster Orchestra amongst others.

Nicholas has conducted more than 70 operas with companies around the world. In 2021 he was appointed Conductor Laureate of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, cementing a relationship of more than four decades.



Stanley McDonald
Tuba

Stan McDonald joined the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in 2023 and is currently the ensemble's youngest member after successfully auditioning as Principal Tuba at 19 years of age. Before this, he was a student of the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University, where he was undertaking his Bachelor of Music degree under the esteemed tutelage of Thomas Allely (Queensland Symphony Orchestra) and David Cribb (Gewandhaus Orchestra). He has also performed with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and toured with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra.

Stan's musical journey began on the trombone at the age of 10, but he soon progressed onto tuba through the local brass bands of Brisbane, a community he is still incredibly connected with to this day. Among the highlights of being a 'brass bandie' are competing with some of the country's top ensembles, including his hometown band Brisbane Excelsior. Through these competitions Stan has won numerous titles, such as the 'Low Tuba Champion of Australia' in the open and under-19 divisions, as well as 'Junior Champion of Champions' in 2018. He was also a member of the Queensland and Australian Youth Orchestras from 2018 until his appointment with the ASO.

Away from the orchestra, Stan plays bass trombone and sousaphone in the local jazz bands of Brisbane and Adelaide. Truly and unashamedly obsessed with brass instruments, he also works as a brass instrument repairer as a side hustle.

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Mark Wigglesworth
Chief Conductor

Violins

Cameron Hill**
Acting Concertmaster
Helen Ayres**
Guest Associate Concertmaster
Minas Berberyan*
Acting Principal 1st Violin
Lachlan Bramble**
Acting Principal 2nd Violin
Janet Anderson~
Acting Associate Principal
2nd Violin
Erna Berberyan
Gillian Braithwaite
Julia Brittain
Hilary Bruer
Nadia Buck
Belinda Gehlert
Danielle Jaquillard
Alexis Milton
Ambra Nesa
Liam Osborne
Emma Perkins
Alexander Permezel
Alison Rayner

Violas

Justin Julian**
Martin Alexander~
Acting Associate Principal
Lesley Cockram
Linda Garrett
Anna Hansen
Natalie Maegraith

Cellos

Sharon Grigoryan**
Acting Section Principal
Gemma Phillips~
Acting Associate Principal
Joseph Freer
Sherrilyn Handley
Cameron Waters

Double Basses

Harley Gray**
Acting Section Principal
Belinda Kendall-Smith~
Acting Associate Principal
Jacky Chang
Gustavo Quintino

Flutes

Kim Falconer**

Piccolo

Julia Grenfell*

Oboes

Joshua Oates**
Hannah Kovilpillai

Clarinets

Mitchell Berick**
Acting Section Principal
Darren Skelton

Bassoons

Jackie Newcomb**
Acting Section Principal
Leah Stephenson

Horns

Sarah Barrett~
Emma Gregan
Philip Paine*
Timothy Skelly

Trumpets

David Khafagi**
Gregory Frick

Trombones

Colin Prichard**
Ian Denbigh

Bass Trombone

Amanda Tillett*

Tuba

Stan McDonald*

Timpani

Andrew Penrose*

Percussion

Steven Peterka**
Sami Butler~

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~ denotes Associate Principal
* denotes Principal Player

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