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Acknowledgement of Country
Goldsmith arr./orch. Ferguson
Pudnanthi Padninthi II – Wadna

[2']

Stravinsky
Jeu de cartes (Game of Cards)
I. First Deal
II. Second Deal
III. Third Deal

[23']

Beaugeais
Piano Concerto No.1 *Bells of Time*
World Premiere
I. Dreamy and atmospheric
II. Slowing of time
III. Free, uplifting, powerful, unifying

[15']

Interval

Mussorgsky (orch. Ravel)
Pictures at an Exhibition

[35']

<i>Promenade</i>	<i>V. Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks</i>
<i>I. Gnomus</i>	<i>VI. Samuel Goldenberg &</i>
<i>Promenade</i>	<i>Schmuyle</i>
<i>II. The Old Castle</i>	<i>VII. Limoges</i>
<i>Promenade</i>	<i>VIII. Catacombs</i>
<i>III. Tuileries</i>	<i>Cum mortuis in lingua mortua</i>
<i>IV. Bydlo</i>	<i>IX. The Hut on Fowl's Legs</i>
<i>Promenade</i>	<i>X. The Great Gate of Kiev</i>

Adelaide Town Hall

FRI 7 & SAT 8 AUGUST

Keitaro Harada
Conductor

Stefan Cassomenos
Piano



Duration
1hr 55min (inc. interval)

Listen Later

ABC Classic is recording this concert for later broadcast. You can hear it again on Saturday 29 August 2026 at 12pm.

Pre-Concert Talk

Join us in the Adelaide Town Hall auditorium one hour before each concert for our free *Classical Conversations* as composer Katia Beaugeais discusses the music in tonight's program with ASO Principal Piccolo Julia Grenfell.

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KATE SUTHERS *ASO CONCERTMASTER*

WELCOME

Welcome to tonight's concert, and welcome to the Adelaide Town Hall, where for the next couple of hours you can allow the rest of the world to melt away as you are Framed in Sound by the ASO.

It's been a busy few weeks since we were last here at the Town Hall. We've performed twice at the Festival Theatre, celebrating the rich world of ballet music in a concert setting; presented an ethereally beautiful matinee program at Elder Hall; and taken our performances of *Are We There Yet?* to schools and families in Salisbury and Gawler, as well as to our home on Hindley Street. The variety of this output highlights the ASO's ongoing commitment to connection and community. Is there a more vital aspect of humanity in 2026? My personal feeling is that it's something to cherish.

Tonight, I'm thrilled to welcome two guest musicians: pianist Stefan Cassomenos,

a longtime collaborator and friend of the ASO, and conductor Keitaro Harada, who was last here at the end of 2024. I admit my bias, but I'm particularly excited to work with Keitaro in my role as leader of the orchestra and build on the rapport we established during his last visit, when we performed the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto together.

We, the ASO, are now in the second half of our 90th birthday season, and this program reflects the values our organisation can carry towards its centenary: the teamwork found in the suite of hearts in Stravinsky's *Jeu de cartes*; the hope and unity heard in Katia's new piano concerto; and the promise of a journey as we promenade, Mussorgsky-like, through the rest of this season and beyond.

Thank you for being part of this concert and our community. I hope you enjoy the ride. ●



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Keitaro Harada
Conductor

Armed with intensity and depth, Keitaro Harada consistently provides riveting concert and opera performances across Asia, the Americas, and Europe. Since 2020/21, he has served as Music and Artistic Director of the Savannah Philharmonic, transforming the orchestra and energising audiences through imaginative programming and charismatic leadership. In 2025/26, he began a five-year tenure as Music and Artistic Director of the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra, where he also conducts Dayton Opera and Dayton Ballet.

In 2024, Harada was named Permanent Conductor of the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra and Principal Guest Conductor and Artistic Partner of the Aichi Chamber Orchestra. He maintains a close relationship with the NHK Symphony Orchestra, appearing frequently and recording three albums. His eclectic musical scope ranges from symphonic and operatic repertoire to chamber music, film scores, educational outreach and multidisciplinary projects.

A recipient of the 2023 Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award, Harada makes debuts with the World Youth Symphony Orchestra at Interlochen, New Jersey Symphony and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra in 2026/27, and returns to the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. Recent highlights include appearances with the Cincinnati, Utah, North Carolina, Houston, Seattle and Tokyo symphony orchestras.

Well-versed in the operatic canon, Harada has conducted works including *Aida*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Carmen*, *Madama Butterfly* and *Die Zauberflöte*. He is a six-time recipient of The Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Award and has released eight albums.



Stefan Cassomenos
Piano

Internationally praised for his clarity, depth of expression, virtuosity and versatility, Melbourne-born Stefan Cassomenos is regarded as one of Australia's leading concert pianists. His concerto repertoire now exceeds forty works, and has led to performances with the Beethoven Orchestra Bonn, Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra Victoria, Opera Australia Orchestra, and Melbourne Chamber Orchestra.

He has performed as a soloist at Tonhalle Zürich, Gewandhaus Leipzig, Beethoven Festival Bonn, and at concert halls across Germany, Netherlands, England, Italy, Malta, Greece, Slovenia, Poland, Estonia, Russia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and Australia. In 2013, Cassomenos was a grand finalist and recipient of the Second Grand Prize and Chamber Music Prize at the International Telekom Beethoven Piano Competition Bonn. He is a founding member of acclaimed ensemble PLEXUS, which since launching in 2014 has commissioned and premiered over 120 new works.

Cassomenos began composing at an early age, giving the premiere of his own *Piano Concerto No 1* with Adelaide Symphony Orchestra at age 16. His recent commissions include Victorian Opera, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra, and Festival Neue Musik Rockenhausen. Cassomenos is currently co-Artistic Director, together with Monica Curro, of Port Fairy Spring Music Festival. He is generously supported by Kawai Australia.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Stravinsky's ballets are perhaps his best known works: the language of the *Rite of Spring*, *Firebird*, and *Petrushka* is unmistakably modern, and often difficult to describe in any other way than 'Stravinskian.' ***Jeu de Cartes*** (Game of Cards) takes a different bent – in Stravinsky's neoclassical style, it is uncannily contemporary, and yet bears traces of a language that could have passed in Beethoven's day. In part, this is due to a small pinching of some of Beethoven's thematic material. The powerfully memorable 'fate' motif (dun-dun-dun dun) of his fifth symphony is reworked into Stravinsky's own theme, announcing the commencement of each of the card games, and each of the three sections, which Stravinsky nicknames 'deals'. It's one of a number of cheeky quotations the composer weaves through his work – including, if you listen carefully, a little foreshadowing of the market scene of the last work on this program, Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

Stravinsky's best known ballets were commissions or collaborations with Sergei Diaghilev, the pioneer of the exceptional *Ballet Russes*. *Jeu de Cartes*, written in 1933, came many years after these explosive works, and was choreographed by George Balanchine, Diaghilev's protégé, for the newly formed (and short lived) American Ballet. The ballet follows the antics of a Joker, who is convinced he cannot lose a game of poker due to his ability to transform into any card of his bidding.

The third act concludes with a royal flush, and the Joker's wit is ultimately defeated. It was an idea Stravinsky had long fostered, as he wrote: 'More than a decade before composing *Jeu de cartes*, I was aware of an idea for a ballet with playing-card costumes and a green-baize gaming-table backdrop.... The score was not designed for any particular audience, and in fact it was nearly completed before I received the commission.'

Although developed as a work for the stage, *Jeu de Cartes*, at around 25 minutes, is more often found in the concert hall. An unimpressed reviewer described the score as 'undanceable,' although after the riot-inducing *Rite of Spring*, it is almost a palatable disparagement. The three acts all feature a variety of smaller sub-movements, the outer two characterised by the feature of a waltz, while the centre features an unfolding series of variations. Stravinsky's neoclassical music often has a lightness to it that translates to unseriousness, and there is something jovial about this work, even in its more raucous, and harmonically complex moments.

From playful neoclassicism, and the distant toll of Beethoven's fate motif, we move to a different sounding of the bell. ***Piano Concerto No.1 Bells of Time*** is the first piano concerto of Australian-French composer Katia Beaugeais. Tonight it appears in its world premiere performance, and pianist Stefan Cassomenos and Beaugeais

KATIA BEAUGEAIS



worked closely together through the development of this work, the resulting performance guided by both Cassomenos' artistry, enlivened by Beaugais' vibrant compositional image.

A response to the unrest of the modern day, Beaugais' piano concerto consistently circles back to a central bell-like idea, which twinkles with optimism. The first movement opens with solo piano, a cadenza-like haze of clustered harmonies, which ripple across the width of the piano. The ensemble builds in rhythmic intensity, but rarely strays far from unabashed joy. Like a dream, the more unusual, clustering harmonies of the opening are at first uncertain, and grow with warmth as the concerto unfolds. It is the pizzicato of strings, paired with the triangle that are our first glimpses into Beaugais' sparkling bell impressions.

The second movement is where these bells reach their apotheosis: the orchestra and piano together craft an aura of stillness, while among them the gentle punctuations from tubular bells, glockenspiel and wind chimes are almost ethereal beads of light. Beaugais describes it as 'the slowing of time,' a moment for pause and reflection, suspended between the two agile outer movements.

Then the grand finale, where the components of this concerto unite in dizzying colour. In her aspirations for this concerto, Beaugais wanted

to 'showcase the piano and orchestra in a new way.' And among the virtuosic cadenzas and thrilling tutti passages, there are moments of improvisation, and an unusual, bird-like allusion. Players across the orchestra are asked to whistle, an imitation of the sounds they previously created with their instruments, now powered by the intimacy and imperfections of each individual's personal sound.

In the midst of an uncertain world, it is often easier to write something reflective of the chaos and turmoil around us. Instead, Beaugais' work is a deliberately soothing gesture that aims to shine a light on the unity that still prevails.

While Beaugais' work is written not only for the nuances of piano, but with the artistry of Cassomenos in mind, it is sometimes difficult to imagine that Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* was originally a work for solo piano. It is often ousted by the unapologetically popular arrangement by Frenchman Maurice Ravel, orchestrated almost 40 years after Mussorgsky's work.

Mussorgsky was a force in the Russian compositional world: coming from a military background, he worked as a civil servant while shaping his musical career. His early military days had been cruel, and are often attributed to contributing to the alcoholism that would snatch his life away at just 46. Most importantly,

his devotion to developing a distinctly Russian style permeated his works – he was a member of ‘The Five’ (also nicknamed ‘The Mighty Handful’), a collective of Russian composers who sought to establish a distinctly Russian voice in composition, drawing on Russian folklore and narratives, and often doing away with Western compositional conventions.

Pictures at an Exhibition, beneath its opulence, is a deeply personal work. The exhibition in question was a posthumous display of the works of Viktor Hartmann, architect, painter, and Mussorgsky’s close friend. Like the rest of ‘The Five’, both were united by their quest to cultivate a vision for a Russian art form. His sudden death at just 39 rocked the art world, and shattered Mussorgsky.

His memorial exhibition was a display of some 400 works, including two that Mussorgsky himself owned. It was only a few months later that Mussorgsky was hard at work at *Pictures*, and without the laboured, doubtful process that often accompanied his creative process. Each of the 10 movements (excluding the meandering promenade themes in between) represent a painting from the exhibition, some of which are unfortunately lost today. The opening *Promenade* symbolises walking through the gallery, before our attention hones into some of the individual works. Stately and measured, Ravel paints it here with the regal burnish of

trumpets. This theme returns between some of the paintings, sometimes smoothly, sometimes poised, and sometimes hurried.

The rest of the movements do not always obey such seriousness, and while Mussorgsky’s work was at first well received by audiences, those close to Hartmann were shocked by the frivolity of some of the subsequent movements. The work was not published until after Mussorgsky’s death, and the composer seems to have busied himself with other projects in the meantime, ultimately uncertain of the appropriateness of his tribute.

While Ravel was not the first to orchestrate *Pictures*, he was one of the first to truly broadcast it to the world. It was Ravel who introduced it to the Russian conductor Serge Koussevitzky, and together they arranged a publishing deal to have Ravel’s orchestration solely reserved for their use. At the time, it was no difficult matter of convincing – the pieces were relatively unknown. Ravel not only rapidly changed this in the orchestral scene, but revived the works for a new generation of concert pianists.

After the opening promenade, it is *Gnomus* to first arrive – Hartmann’s sketch was of a toothy nutcracker, who is shaded in rapid and menacing snarls of strings. After this moment of grotesque intensity, the promenade theme returns, guiding us gently along to the next painting: *Il Vecchio Castello*, ‘The Old Castle.’



PARIS CATACOMBS BY
VIKTOR HARTMANN

Ravel rarely spared an expense for his vision of orchestral colour, and the wistful, sinewy solo is reserved for the alto saxophone – the only moment in the entire work that it plays. Not all of Ravel's tweaks involve a simple copying over of Mussorgsky's musical material to the orchestra, and it is here he adds a bar of extra accompaniment to further carve out the ambience of the lonely castle. It is a nod to Hartmann's architectural sketches, and on a trip to Italy he made a series on its castles, often envisioning an old troubadour waiting by their ruined entrances.

It is a vast contrast to the *Tuileries*, a nod to the playful ambience of this garden in summer, with children abound. This rapid fire, twinkling movement prepares us for the lowing of cattle in the following movement, *Bydlo*. Mussorgsky had the image of an ox-drawn wagon, and Ravel gives this stout robustness to the tuba.

Then comes the most peculiar movement of the set, the *Ballet of the Unhatched Chickens*. Perhaps this was the movement that shocked Mussorgsky's friends, an almost comedic setting based on some concept art Hartmann had painted. These little chicks flit around with chirping and agile woodwinds, like a manic barnyard ballet.

In between, the promenades have slight variations, as the pace of the walking changes, until we arrive at the 6th movement, *Samuel*

Goldenberg and Schmuyle. Thought to be based on two separate portraits, one man is a patriarch, the other a beggar, and their themes are first one after the other, before interweaving.

From here we are back in France: movement 7, *Limoges*, is the bustle of a market, complete with the bickering of women as they make their way through the stalls. It totters straight into the ominous 8th movement, an evocation of the Paris catacombs. Mussorgsky imagined Hartmann's own spirit leading him through this land of the dead.

Finally, the last two movements are also paired together in seamless succession. A rapid-fire depiction of Baba Yaga – *The Hut on Hen's Legs*, gives way to some of the finest music Mussorgsky ever wrote: *The Great Gate of Kiev*. A grand, opulent theme is proclaimed with ringing bells at the climax, the promenade transformed. This music is countered by a hymn, the movement's secondary theme, taken from Russian Orthodox chant – identifiable as it appears much softer than the majestic opening, which draws this tableaux of fantastical images to its close. A tribute to a friend, transformed, and indeed, solidified into the musical canon by Ravel's insightful eye.

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A LOVE LETTER IN SOUND: Mark Wigglesworth on Mahler's Tenth Symphony

Ahead of our final Symphony Series concert of 2026, hear from Chief Conductor Mark Wigglesworth about the extraordinary story behind Mahler's final work.

Mahler's final symphony, his 10th, is one of the most emotional works ever composed. A love letter from the dying composer to his wife Alma, the work expresses their tempestuous relationship in all its beauty and passion.

Their marriage had certainly not been straightforward. He, the most famous musician in Vienna, and she, the city's most beautiful woman, were always going to be challenged by the celebrity pressures they faced. Alma was a budding young composer herself when the two first met, but Gustav, twenty years her senior, demanded she give it up. The resulting frustration was inevitable. Mahler's ego made him oblivious to his part in her unhappiness, and it wasn't until the renowned psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud pointed it out to him that he understood what he had done.

Mahler's symphony expresses far more about his love for Alma than he could ever say in words. We hear the loneliness of his life before her, the longing he felt when they met, the roller-coaster thrills and spills of their life together, the pain of discovering her infidelities, the guilt when he realised he was responsible, and his desperate plea for her forgiveness. His manuscript of the score is littered with agonised messages. *'You alone know what this means,'* he scrawls in one place, *'Why have you forsaken me?'* in another. *'Have mercy...To live for you,*

Alma, to die for you...' And over the very last phrase of the symphony, the affectionate diminutive *'Almschi...'*

When Mahler died in 1911, he left the symphony unfinished. Many people felt this was fitting for a work reflecting Mahler's own short-lived life. But when, fifty years later, his aged widow handed over four extra pages of the surviving manuscript to the English musicologist Deryck Cooke, it became clear that the work was not as unfinished as had previously been thought. The orchestration was increasingly thin, but there was an uninterrupted line of music that continued all the way through. Mahler's 10th Symphony may not have been finished, but it was complete, and Cooke's masterful work in creating a format for this music to be performed allows us to experience Mahler's final thoughts in all their meaning and beauty.

Unlike Mahler's Ninth Symphony, which is about death, the Tenth is ultimately a celebration of life. A life of strife and loss yes, but also one of joy and love. The closing bars reveal a man who is saying yes to love, yes to life. Amazingly, this piece has never been performed in South Australia before. I am thrilled to be sharing its wonders with everyone for the first time in Adelaide and have no doubt that in hearing it, we will all experience something truly special. It will be a unique way to end what has been a unique season. We're not finished yet!

Don't miss Symphony Series 8 – *Completely Unfinished*, Sat 21 & Sun 22 Nov. Book now.

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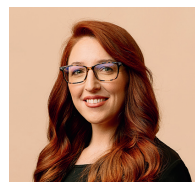
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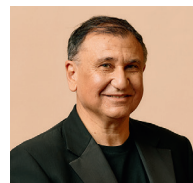
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In memory of Mary Angel ♪

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