

SOUNDS OF NATURE

Metro Series #1

Conductor: Nathan Aspinall

Sunday 25 April 3pm

Somerville House, VPAC



**BRISBANE
PHILHARMONIC
ORCHESTRA.**

PHOTO: ADAM FINCH

CONCERT PROGRAM

GUSTAV MAHLER

Blumine (original second movement of Symphony No.1)

NIGEL WESTLAKE

Antarctica: Suite for Guitar and Orchestra

i. Last Place on Earth

ii. Wooden Ships

iii. Penguin Ballet

iv. Ice Core

v. Finale

INTERVAL

GUSTAV MAHLER

Symphony No. 1 in D major

i. Langsam, schleppend

ii. Kräftig bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell

iii. Feierlich und gemessen, ohne zu schleppen

iv. Stürmisch bewegt – Energisch



VIOLIN 1

Clare Cooney* (Concertmaster)
Hayden Burton*
Karen Blair
Drew Cylinder
Isobel Young
Tom Riethmuller
Jiji Bae
Carmen Pierce
Amie Stolz
Elena James
Jonathan Ward
Tove Easton
Emma Eriksson
Min Tan
Peter Nicholls
Rebecca Stephenson

VIOLIN 2

Cameron Hough*
Sophia Goodwin*
Finn Williams
Vy Dinh
Anna Jenkins
Rachel Olsen
Ryan Smith
Nawres Alfreh
Tylar Leask
Lauren Jones
Lisa van Niekerk
Evie Jacobs
Amanda Lugton
Chloe Richardson
Murari Campbell

VIOLA

Sophie Ellis*
Courtney Schuurs
Bronwyn Gibbs
Tim Butcher
John McGrath
Katrina Greenwood
Eddie Watson
Michelle Adeney
Callula Killingly
Dan Tipping
Lauren Foster

CELLO

Lynn Backstrom*
Yoel Garcia Marin
Joanna Cull
Edward Brackin
Charmaine Lee
Gabriel Dumitru
Nicole Kancachian
Elouise Comber
David Curry
Angela Batch
Amy Naumann
Anitah Kumar

BASS

Samuel Dickenson*
Lesley Hooson
Dean Tierney
Georgia Lloyd
Steve Dunn
Angela Jaeschke
Chan Luc
James Mulligan

FLUTE

Ella Kay-Butterworth^
Jessica Sullivan
Jo Lagerlow

PICCOLO

Lucia Gonzalez*

OBOE

Gabrielle Knight*
Hui-Yu (Whitney) Chung
Sophie Elston#

COR ANGLAIS

John Connolly*

CLARINET

Daniel Sullivan*
Kendal Thomson

BASS CLARINET

Hugo Anaya^

E FLAT CLARINET

Annie Larsen*

BASSOON

Lisa Squires*
Sam Battock#

CONTRABASSOON

Carl Bryant*

HORN

Melanie Taylor*
Arabella Davie#
Oscar Schmidt#
Cedar Miller
Natalie Douglas#
Joyce Shek
Jess Piva#
Ryan Humphrey#

TRUMPET

Blake Humphrey*
Sophie Kukulies
Bella Geeves#
Sam Schimming#

TROMBONE

Zhao Ming Liu*
John Rotar

BASS TROMBONE

Clayton Fiander*

TUBA

Michael Sterzinger*

PERCUSSION

Kerry Vann-Leeflang*
Davis Dingle
Sarah Hundal
Isabelle Silberling
Alice Emor-Kan

HARP

Tijana Kozarcic^
Myiesha Maisuria#



Conductor NATHAN ASPINALL

Nathan Aspinall is currently the Assistant Conductor of the Nashville Symphony. Formerly, he was Associate Conductor of the Jacksonville Symphony, for whom he conducted performances of Handel's Messiah, Prokofiev's Cinderella and a tour of South Florida with pianist Bezhod Abduraimov. The program included Shostakovic's Symphony no. 5 and Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto no. 3 and received rave reviews across the state. Kevin Wilt of the Palm Beach Daily News said of the performance "In recent years the Kravis Center has heard performances by the Chicago Symphony, the Royal Philharmonic, The Philadelphia Orchestra and more. This one was just as polished as any of those."

During the 2018/19 season, Aspinall led Jacksonville Symphony in two masterworks subscription programs and a tour with organist Cameron Carpenter to the Kravis Center. He was selected as one of two conducting fellows at the Tanglewood Music Festival during the summer of 2019.

Formerly, Aspinall held the position of Young Conductor with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in Australia, where he assisted Chief Conductor Johannes Fritzsch and visiting guest conductors, and where he conducted concerts for the orchestra's education series. He studied French horn and conducting at the University of Queensland and upon graduation was awarded the Hugh Brandon Prize. In 2012, he attended the Aspen Music Festival, studying with Robert Spano and Hugh Wolff; he was awarded the Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize, inviting him to return to Aspen the following year.

Aspinall has guest-conducted the Atlanta, Sydney, Adelaide, Queensland and Tasmanian symphony orchestras, as well as the Queensland Conservatorium Chamber Orchestra. He has acted as Assistant Conductor for Opera Queensland. Festival appearances and masterclasses have included the Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music, Oregon Bach Festival and the Tanglewood Music Center Conducting Seminar. He studied Orchestral Conducting with Hugh Wolff at New England Conservatory in Boston.



Soloist JEREMY STAFFORD

First hearing the classical guitar on his family's Julian Bream records, Jeremy was inspired to begin learning the instrument, and that spark carries through in his playing today. Upon gaining entry to the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Jeremy began his studies with the acclaimed guitarist Karin Schaupp, graduating with distinction in 2020, and the QCGU guitar prize.

Over the course of his studies, Jeremy performed in masterclasses for renowned performers and pedagogues, such as Timothy Kain, András Csáki and the Z.O.O. guitar duo, among others. His abilities as a soloist have been on display throughout Australia, such as in the Melbourne Guitar Competition, and as a concerto soloist with the Queensland Conservatorium's orchestra.

In addition to his solo experience, Jeremy has been a member of both the Aurora and Riverside guitar ensembles, touring with them to the Adelaide Guitar and Tyalgum Music Festivals, as well as his duo with flautist Anna Rabinowicz and the Jacaranda Guitar Quartet. As a teacher, Jeremy has managed a busy private studio in Manly West for three years, and works as a guitar tutor at various educational facilities in the south east of Brisbane.

Currently, Jeremy is completing an honours year at QCGU, with a focus on Australian classical guitar pedagogy and performance.

ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA

The Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO) is Brisbane's leading community orchestra. The orchestra brings together up to 200 musicians a year to play a variety of classical orchestral music. Over 100 members of the incorporated association form the core of the orchestra. Other players perform as casual musicians, but often join as full-time members after their first concert with BPO. The orchestra was founded on principles of musical excellence and development, communal participation, and organisational professionalism.

Since its creation in 2000, the BPO has become the community orchestra of choice for over 500 musicians. It is eagerly sought as a performance partner for touring choirs, festivals, and internationally acclaimed instrumentalists and vocalists. The BPO performs its own series of symphony concerts and participates in multiple community and festival events throughout the year, attracting an audience of over 2,500 people. The orchestra's main metropolitan concert series includes four to five symphony concerts at Brisbane City Hall and the Old Museum Concert Hall. Programs vary between concerts featuring the great classical, romantic, and 20th

century composers, light concerts including film music, as well as concerts with programs targeted at a younger audience. Additionally, BPO occasionally performs chamber music concerts, featuring smaller groups in a more intimate setting.

The BPO maintains many community partnerships including with the Queensland Music Festival, 4MBS Festival of Classics, Brisbane City Council, and The Brisbane Airport Corporation. These partnerships provide essential connections in artistic, educational, professional, and social programs and cater to the association's increased responsibility to culturally enhance localities and bring a diversity of people together in a fast-paced, ever-impersonal global village. Unusually for a community orchestra, entry to the BPO is by audition and the ensemble is the only community orchestra within the city that rotates guest conductors by invitation rather than establishing a permanent Music Director. Uniquely, this allows a variety of the finest local professional conductors to deliver diverse and innovative programming to artistically stimulate members of the orchestra.



PROGRAM NOTES

Gustav Mahler (1860 –1911)

***Blumine* (original first movement to Symphony No.1)**

.....

Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 1 was written between 1883 and 1888 and first performed under the composer's direction in 1889, in Budapest. The original version of the symphony, which included five movements, was subtitled Titan; a programmatic scheme was written by the composer on the title page:

PART ONE:

Aus dem Tagen der Jugend

1. *Frühling und kein Ende*
2. *Blumine*
3. *Mit vollen Segeln*

PART TWO:

Comedia humana

4. *Todtenmarsch in Callots Manier*
5. *D'all Inferno al' Paradiso*

The composer revised three of the movements in 1893 and performed the symphony, still in five movements, in 1894 in Weimar. Sometime after this, however, the composer was persuaded to delete the *Blumine* movement and to discard the "program" of the symphony; it was published in 1899 in four movements without titles.

The manuscript of the original version of the symphony was given by Mahler to a favourite student and lifelong friend, Jenny Feld Perrin, whose family kept it until 1959, when it was offered for sale. Mrs James M. Osborn, the purchaser, then most graciously donated this long unknown manuscript, with all of her rights in it, to the New Haven Symphony Orchestra.

Nigel Westlake (1958)

Antarctica: suite for guitar & orchestra

.....

In 1991 I was invited by film-maker John Weiley to compose the score for his film, 'Antarctica'. Filmed in Imax (for cinemas fitted with a super-sized screen), it was shot over a three year period, and involved 20,000 kilometres of travel around the polar ice cap by helicopter, truck, boat and dog sled. It is a film about the spirit of enquiry, about looking beyond the known - past the edge of everything.

My brief was to compose music that captured the awe-inspiring grandeur, beauty, desolation and harshness of the images. I started by sketching some ideas for solo guitar and orchestra. John Williams was in Sydney at the time, and I took him to the cutting room to view the rushes. He was immediately taken with the picture, and we both agreed it would make a marvellous vehicle for solo guitar.

We planned to record the orchestra in Sydney and then overdub the guitar part in London, John's hometown. Unfortunately last minute changes to the film resulted in several time constraints: I had to abandon the idea of a guitar-based score, and was unable to pursue the collaboration with John, although the fragments of guitar music still remaining in the score were performed by Timothy Kain on the films' soundtrack.

Continued...

PROGRAM NOTES

When the Australian Broadcasting Corporation invited me to write a guitar concerto for John Williams and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra as part of the ABC's 60th birthday celebration a year or so after completing the film, I seized the opportunity to explore some of my original ideas for the film in the form of a suite for guitar and orchestra. The suite, as heard here, is reworked from the film score; it also incorporates ideas developed during the initial writing process but not included in the film. It is in four movements, the last comprising two sections joined by a short cadenza.

1. "The Last Place on Earth"

The music begins at an aerial shot of the ice cap, taken at midnight. Due to the midnight sun, it is in full daylight.

2. "Wooden Ships"

The first explorers came in wooden ships.

3. "Penguin Ballet"

Emperor penguins are seen as never before by human eyes in a kind of ballet underneath the ice cap. They leave the water at fantastic speeds through a hole in the ice to avoid being eaten by leopard seals.

4. "The Ice Core / Finale"

The drilling of an ice core by Antarctic scientists reveals recent changes in the earth's atmosphere. The hole in the ozone layer was first discovered here. The Antarctic treaty was signed just as the film was being completed, providing an optimistic note on which to finish - as reflected in the finale.

"Antarctica - Suite for Guitar and Orchestra" was commissioned with financial assistance from the Performing Arts Board of the Australia Council. It is dedicated to John Williams and John Weiley.

Program note by the composer.

Gustav Mahler (1860 –1911)

Symphony No.1 in D Major

.....

COMPOSED: Mahler did most of the work on this symphony in February and March 1888, having begun to sketch it in earnest three years earlier and using material going back to the 1870s. He revised the score extensively on several occasions. The work is played this afternoon according to the second, and last, edition published during Mahler's lifetime and dated 1906

WORLD PREMIERE: November 20, 1889. Mahler himself conducted the first performance of the work, then called Symphonic Poem in Two Parts, with the Budapest Philharmonic

INSTRUMENTATION: 4 flutes (3 doubling piccolo), 4 oboes (1 doubling English horn), 4 clarinets (1 doubling bass clarinet, 2 doubling high clarinet in E-flat), 3 bassoons (1 doubling contrabassoon), 7 horns, 5 trumpets, 4 trombones, bass tuba, timpani (2 players), bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tam-tam, harp, and strings.

THE BACKSTORY Once, contemplating the failures of sympathy and understanding with which his First Symphony met at most of its early performances, Mahler lamented that while Beethoven had been able to start as a sort of modified Haydn and Mozart, and Wagner as Weber and Meyerbeer, he had the misfortune to be Gustav Mahler from the outset. He composed this symphony, surely the most original First after the Berlioz *Fantastique*, in high hopes of being understood, even imagining that it might earn him enough money so that he could abandon his rapidly expanding career as a conductor—a luxury that life would never allow him.

PROGRAM NOTES

But he enjoyed public success with the work only in Prague in 1898 and in Amsterdam five years later. The Viennese audience in 1900, musically reactionary and anti-Semitic to boot, was singularly vile in its behaviour, and even Mahler's future wife, Alma Schindler, whose devotion to The Cause would later sometimes dominate a concern for truth, fled that concert in anger and disgust. One critic suggested that the work might have been meant as a parody of a symphony. No wonder that Mahler, completing his Fourth Symphony that year, felt driven to mark its finale "Durchaus ohne Parodie!" (With no trace of parody).

The work even puzzled its own composer. No other piece of Mahler's has so complicated a history and about no other did he change his mind so often and over so long a period. He changed the total concept by cancelling a whole movement, he made striking alterations in compositional and orchestral detail, and for some time he was unsure whether he was offering a symphonic poem, a program symphony, or just a symphony.

When Mahler conducted the first performance with the Budapest Philharmonic in November 1889, he billed it as a "symphonic poem" whose two parts consisted of the first three and the last two movements. (At that time, the first movement was followed by a piece called Blumine, which Mahler later dropped.) A newspaper article the day before the premiere outlined a program whose source can only have been Mahler himself and which identifies the first three movements with spring, happy daydreams, and a wedding procession,

the fourth as a funeral march representing the burial of the poet's illusions, and the fifth as a hard-won progress to spiritual victory.

When Mahler revised the score in January 1893, he called it a symphony in five movements and two parts, also giving it the name Titan after a novel by Jean Paul (Johann Paul Friedrich Richter, 1763--1825), a key figure in German literary Romanticism and one of Mahler's favorite writers. But by October he announced the work as TITAN, a Tone Poem in the Form of a Symphony.

Before the Vienna performance in 1900, Mahler again leaked a program to a friendly critic, and it is a curious one. First comes rejection of Titan, as well as "all other titles and inscriptions, which, like all 'programs,' are always misinterpreted. [The composer] dislikes and discards them as 'anti-artistic' and 'anti-musical.'" There follows a scenario that reads much like an elaborated version of the original one for Budapest. During the nineties, when Richard Strauss's Till Eulenspiegel, Also sprach Zarathustra, Don Quixote, and Ein Heldenleben had come out, program music had become a hot political issue in the world of music. Mahler saw himself as living in a very different world from Strauss, and he wanted to establish a distance between himself and his colleague. At the same time, the extra-musical ideas would not disappear, and he seemed now to be wanting to have it both ways. There was no pleasing the critics on this issue. In Berlin he was faulted for omitting the program and in Frankfurt for keeping it.

PROGRAM NOTES

THE MUSIC Mahler writes “Wie en Naturlaut” (Like the sound of nature) on that first page, and in a letter to the conductor Franz Schalk we read, “The introduction to the first movement sounds of nature, not music!” Fragments detach themselves from the mist, become graspable, coalesce. Among these fragments are a pair of notes descending by a fourth, distant fanfares, a little cry of oboes, a cuckoo call (by the only cuckoo in the world who toots a fourth rather than a third), a gentle horn melody.

Gradually the tempo quickens to arrive at the melody of the second of Mahler’s Wayfarer Songs (one of the most characteristic, original, and forward-looking features of this movement is how much time Mahler spends not in tempo but en route from one speed to another). Mahler’s wayfarer crosses the fields in the morning, rejoicing in the beauty of the world and hoping that this marks the beginning of his own happy times, only to see that no, spring can never, never bloom for him. But for Mahler the song is useful not only as an evocation but as a musical source, and he draws astounding riches from it by a process, as Erwin Stein put it, of constantly shuffling and reshuffling its figures like a deck of cards. The movement rises to one tremendous climax, and the last page is wild. Most important, however, and constant is another of the features to which Mahler drew Schalk’s attention: “In the first movement the greatest delicacy throughout (except in the big climax).”

The scherzo is the symphony’s briefest and simplest movement, and also the only one that the first audiences could be counted on to like. Its opening idea comes from a fragment for piano duet that may go back as far as 1876, and the movement makes several allusions to the song “Hans und Grethe,” whose earliest version was written in 1880. The trio, set in an F major that sounds very mellow in the A major context of the scherzo itself, contrasts the simplicity of the rustic, super--Austrian material with the artfulness of its arrangement.

The funeral music that follows was what most upset audiences. The use of vernacular material presented in slightly perverted form (the round we have all sung to the words “Frère Jacques,” but set by Mahler in a lugubrious minor); the parodic, vulgar music with its lachrymose oboes and trumpets; the boom-chick of bass drum with cymbal attached; the hiccupping violins; the appearance in the middle of all this of part of the last Wayfarer song, exquisitely scored for muted strings with a harp and a few soft woodwinds—people simply did not know what to make of this mixture, how to respond, whether to laugh or cry or both. They sensed that something irreverent was being done, something new and somehow ominous, that these collisions of the spooky, the gross, and the vulnerable were uncomfortably like life itself, and they were offended.

PROGRAM NOTES

Mahler likened the opening of the finale to a bolt of lightning that rips from a black cloud. Using and transforming material from the first movement, he takes us, in the terms of his various programs, on the path from annihilation to victory, while in musical terms he engages us in a struggle to regain D major, the main key of the symphony, but unheard since the first movement ended.

When at last he re-enters that key, he does so by way of a stunning and violent coup de théâtre, only to withdraw from the sounds of victory and to show us the hollowness of that triumph. He then goes all the way back to the music with which the symphony began and gathers strength for a second assault that does indeed open the doors to a heroic ending and to its celebration in a hymn in which the horns, now on their feet, are instructed to drown out the rest of the orchestra, “even the trumpets.”

Program notes by Michael Steinberg



Coming up:

SUNDAY 18 JULY, 3pm
VPAC, SOMERVILLE HOUSE

Conductor: **Simon Hewett**
Guests: **Canticum Chamber Choir**

PROGRAM:

Elgar | *Sospiri* Op.70
Sibelius | *Oma Maa* Op.92 (My Own Land)
Elgar | *Enigma Variations* Op.36

For tickets, visit:
www.bpo.org.au

THE TEAM

Executive Committee

President: John Connolly

Secretary: Josephine Lagerlow

Treasurer: Daniel Tipping

Committee Member: Michael Sterzinger

Committee Member: Hayden Burton

Committee Member: Lucia Gonzalez

Committee Member: Davis Dingle

DONATIONS

The Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra accepts donations from individuals, groups and businesses. Every donation, whether it be a one-off donation or an ongoing arrangement, greatly assists us to realise our goal of delivering an annual program of high quality music-making to benefit the Brisbane community and our members.

BPO holds deductible gift recipient status (DGR) for tax purposes. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible and receipts are provided.

For further information email info@bpo.org.au

AUDITIONS

Being a member of the BPO is a rewarding community experience and a lot of fun. Our members are just like you – ordinary people who enjoy coming together to make extraordinary music! Auditions are held to fill vacant positions or to appoint suitable reserve players capable of filling temporary vacancies from time-to-time.

Visit our website to download audition excerpts and fill out the online form to sign up!
www.bpo.org.au

SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

The Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra is proudly supported by the Brisbane City Council as part of the 'Creative Brisbane Creative Economy 2013-2022' strategy.



The Brisbane Airport Corporation generously contributes an annual sponsorship amount to the Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra



Brisbane Philharmonic Association Inc
(ABN 12 092 897 904)
Website www.bpo.org.au
Email info@bpo.org.au
Post PO Box 792 Paddington QLD 4006





Brisbane Philharmonic Association Inc (ABN 12 092 897 904)