

CHAMBER CLASSICS: BEST OF BRASS

MAGIC & MIRACLES

Welcome

Welcome back to *Best of Brass* at Albert Hall, showcasing the CSO brass ensemble.

We open with a captivating arrangement of the overture to Mozart's popular two-act opera, *The Magic Flute*. The program also features virtuosic brass quintets from English composer Sir Malcolm Arnold and Dutch composer Jan Koetsier.

Our ensemble will also give a rare performance of two exquisite motets from Raphaela Aleotta, a late-Renaissance organist, composer and Augustinian nun. We close with one of the best-loved ballads of the twentieth century: Leonard Cohen's 'Hallelujah'.

The Canberra Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the Ngunnawal people, traditional custodians of the land on which our concerts take place. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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BEST OF BRASS: MAGIC & MIRACLES

CHAMBER CLASSICS

2pm, Sunday 1 September 2024 Albert Hall, Yarralumla

Justin Lingard Trumpet Sponsored by Connor Dyson

Greg Stenning Trumpet

Robert Johnson *French Horn* The Principal French Horn chair is sponsored by Prof Brian Schmidt AC & Dr Jenny Gordon

Michael Bailey Trombone

Bjorn Pfeiffer Tuba

Arrangements for brass quintet

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Overture to The Magic Flute (1791) 7'

JAN KOETSIER Brass Quintet, Op. 65 (1991) 13'

RAFFAELLA ALEOTTI Two Motets: *Ascendens Christus* and *Miserere Mei* (1593) 6'

MALCOLM ARNOLD Brass Quintet No. 1, Op. 73 (1961) 14'

LEONARD COHEN 'Hallelujah' (1984) *5*'

* Timings are approximate

CSO CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

Justin Lingard Trumpet



Justin Lingard studied at the Queensland and Tasmanian Conservatoriums, gaining a Bachelor of Music with Honours in 1999.

The same year, Justin joined the Australian Defence Force as a

professional musician and has held appointments to the Australian Army Bands in Hobart, Melbourne, Sydney and Wagga Wagga, and the Band of the Royal Military College in Canberra.

Justin has been a guest performer with the Sydney and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, the Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra, the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, and the Sydney Philharmonia. He has also recorded with the Sydney Scoring Orchestra and performed with artists including Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Natalie Cole and George Benson.

Justin is Principal Trumpet of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra and a reserve member of the Band of the Royal Military College. He is also Head of Brass at the Canberra Girls Grammar School and a Military Instructor at the Defence Force School of Music.

Image: Martin Ollman

Sponsored by Connor Dyson

Greg Stenning Trumpet



Greg Stenning has had an extensive career as a music educator and performer. He has performed with the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Sydney Symphony

Orchestra and the Australian Wind Orchestra, and his association with the Canberra Symphony Orchestra stretches back more than a decade.

Brass ensemble music has been a passion of his since his exposure to the Phillip Jones Brass Ensemble as a child.

As a soloist, Greg has performed the Ewazen and Addison concertos with orchestra and has an extensive recital repertoire. Known more for his conducting work with symphonic wind and brass bands, Greg has led many of Canberra's community music groups for concerts and competitions.

In addition to his extensive experience as a performer, Greg is heavily involved in music education. As a classroom practitioner and ensemble director, he uses a Kodaly-inspired approach to inspire his students.

Image: Vanessa Johnson

Robert Johnson French horn



Robert Johnson was appointed Principal Horn with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (SSO) in 1986, having previously held principal positions with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra and the Opera Australia Orchestra.

During his time with the SSO, Robert performed as soloist in works by Mozart, Richard Strauss, Benjamin Britten, Messiaen, Ross Edwards and Christopher Gordon. He retired as principal in 2017.

Robert has appeared as guest principal with all the major Australian orchestras, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. He has also played with the Australia Ensemble, the Sydney Soloists and the New Sydney Wind Quintet, and appeared at the Huntington and Townsville chamber music festivals.

Robert has taught at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and the Canberra School of Music and appeared as Artist in Residence at universities and music schools around Australia and in Hong Kong.

Robert sings Mediæval and Renaissance songs in his 'other life' as a countertenor.

Image: Keith Saunders

The Principal French Horn chair is sponsored by Prof Brian Schmidt AC & Dr Jenny Gordon

Michael Bailey Trombone



Michael is a trombonist and cultural professional.

By day, Michael works for the ACT Government Cultural Facilities Corporation as Assistant Director, Business Development and Activations.

working to develop and implement strategies that drive revenue growth and attract new audiences, as well as collaborating to develop and deliver engaging events and activations that promote the arts and cultural heritage.

As a trombonist, he has been a member of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra for over 20 years, is one of the founding members of Brass Knuckle Brass Band, and has previously worked as the Lecturer in trombone at the Australian National University (ANU).

Michael performs regularly with other ensembles in Canberra, including appearances with the Australian War Memorial Orchestra, Canberra Choral Society, Llewellyn Choir Orchestra, Canberra Philharmonic Society and ANU Symphony Orchestra, and at Voices in the Forest and the Canberra International Music Festival. Michael has a bachelor's degree and a postgraduate diploma in music from the ANU.

Image: Martin Ollman

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Bjorn Pfeiffer Tuba



Bjorn Pfeiffer is the Principal Tuba of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra (CSO), a position he has held since 2011.

As a freelancer, Bjorn has performed and recorded with many of Australia's top artists and

orchestras including Kate Miller-Heidke, The Whitlams, Kate Ceberano and John Farnham. In 2024, he will perform in the musical *Chicago* and release his first solo album.

Bjorn is also Principal Tuba of the Band of the Royal Military College. During his 28-year career, Bjorn has performed with Army Bands in Adelaide, Brisbane, Wagga Wagga and Canberra. He has also been a featured soloist, and has travelled and performed internationally. Career highlights include performing for the Queen and for the President of the United States of America.

A passionate educator, Bjorn teaches at the Australian National University and co-directs the CSO's Kingsland Brass program, mentoring and developing the next generation of brass players.

Bjorn is a proud Eastman Artist.

Image: Martin Ollman

MOZART

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)

Overture to *The Magic Flute,* K.620 (1791)

Dramatic brass chords ring out to announce the beginning of Mozart's 1791 opera *The Magic Flute.* Mozart's final opera is a 'Singspiel' – an opera that includes both singing and spoken dialogue – and it brings together adventure, silliness and esoteric masonic rites, not to mention wonderful music.

The opening three chords of the overture evoke the gravity of sacred ceremonies (the number three is significant in Freemasonry) but it's not long before the music takes off. Mozart deftly infuses the seriousness of a fugue with an energetic, bubbling effervescence – perfectly capturing the mood of impresario Emanuel Schikaneder's rather bonkers libretto. The opera tells the story of prince Tamino, who must undergo a series of challenges in order to marry the princess Pamina, accompanied by his comic sidekick Papageno, the bird-catcher.

Mozart finished the overture days before *The Magic Flute*'s first performance in Vienna, at which he led the orchestra from the harpsichord, just weeks after premiering his opera *La clemenza di Tito* in Prague. *The Magic Flute* premiered to a sold-out crowd at Schikaneder's theatre on 30 September 1791, two months before Mozart's death, and was wildly successful – as it has been ever since.

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Jan Koetsier (1911–2006)

Brass Quintet, Op. 65 (1974)

Andante con moto -Allegro con brio Andantino Molto vivace

KOETSIER

Dutch composer Jan Koetsier's Brass Quintet opens with a warm, hymn-like melody that shows off the exquisite timbres of the instruments for which he was writing. This slow introduction soon gives way to a cheery, rhythmic first movement, perfectly capturing what the composer described as the 'American insouciance' of the brass quintet as an ensemble.

Koetsier studied composition, piano and conducting in Berlin after his family moved there from Amsterdam when he was a child. During his long career he conducted orchestras including Amsterdam's Concertgebouw Orchestra and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and taught at the Hochschule für Musik in Munich. As a composer, he was particularly passionate about brass music. He wrote for several ensembles including the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble, and founded a competition to support young brass musicians, the International Jan Koetsier Competition. It was colleagues from the Concertgebouw Orchestra's brass section who gave the premiere of his Brass Quintet, Op. 65 in 1974 in Straubing, Germany.

The chorale-like quality of the Quintet's introduction returns in the second movement, the trumpet carrying the melody before the tuba responds with what the composer dubbed a 'burlesque theme'.

The finale is agile and rhythmic, capping off the Quintet with a virtuosic flourish.

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ALEOTTI

Italian convents were an incredible source of music in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and many women who showed musical aptitude found a vocation in religious orders.

The earliest example of printed sacred music written by a woman was a collection of motets penned by composer, conductor, teacher and organist Raffaella Aleotti in 1593. An Augustinian nun at the convent of San Vito in the city of Ferrara, she was Prioress of the convent from 1636 to 1639 and was held in such high esteem that a contemporary guide to the city's churches included mention of her musical knowledge. Some scholars believe she was born Vittoria Aleotti (under whose name music was also published in 1593) and that she took the name Raffaella when she joined the convent; others argue Vittoria and Raffaella were sisters. Her father, a prominent architect in the city, only mentions Raffaella and not Vittoria in his will, which suggests that they might have been the same person.

Motets are compositions for voice setting sacred texts (in this case Psalms) to multiple interweaving, or polyphonic, vocal lines. According to her printed dedication, Aleotti wrote these motets between her regular sacred and musical duties at the convent.

© Angus McPherson, 2024

Raffaella Aleotti (c. 1570 – after 1646)

Two Motets: Ascendens Christus and Miserere Mei (1593)

ARNOLD

Malcolm Arnold (1921–2006)

Brass Quintet No. 1, Op. 73 (1961)

Allegro vivace Chaconne Con brio English composer Malcolm Arnold was inspired to pick up the trumpet after he heard Louis Armstrong play while on a family holiday in Bournemouth at the age of 12. He went on to study trumpet and composition at London's Royal College of Music and played with the London Philharmonic and BBC Symphony orchestras before devoting himself to composition.

A versatile and very prolific composer, Arnold is perhaps best remembered for his Oscar-winning score for the 1957 war film *The Bridge on the River Kwai* and the *St Trinian's* series of comedies. But he also wrote symphonies, concertos and chamber music – as well as plenty of music for wind and brass ensembles. Among his many awards and honours, he was knighted for services to music in 1993. Arnold wrote his first Brass Quintet in 1961 for the New York Brass Quintet, who premiered it in November that year at the New York Town Hall. The Quintet shows off Arnold's remarkable skill in writing for brass instruments and it has been a cornerstone of the brass quintet repertoire ever since.

The first movement is vigorous and brilliant, while the *Chaconne* is a dark, uneasy dance – listen out for the unearthly trombone solo. The final movement, *Con brio*, is wonderfully chirpy and virtuosic.

© Angus McPherson, 2024

COHEN

Leonard Cohen's now-iconic ballad 'Hallelujah', a potent mingling of the sacred and the sensual, was rejected when the Canadian singer-songwriter pitched it to his record label in 1977. It barely registered when Cohen finally released it on his LP *Various Positions* in 1984. Yet the song has since enjoyed such success Cohen even told a journalist in 2009 that 'too many people sing it'.

Its incredible rise really began with American singer-songwriter Jeff Buckley's cover of the song on his 1994 album *Grace*. It was Buckley's haunting rendition that made 'Hallelujah' a cult classic, rendered all the more poignant after his tragic death in 1997. In the first years of the twentyfirst century 'Hallelujah' was everywhere. Buckley's recording featured in television series including The O.C. and The West Wing while John Cale's cover appeared in the 2001 film Shrek (though it was Rufus Wainwright's version released on the soundtrack album). The song has been performed and recorded by countless artists including Bono and Regina Spektor as well as classical stars like cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason and soprano Renée Fleming.

It's a testament to the enduring power of Cohen's song that it remains an indelible part of our musical culture today.

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Leonard Cohen (1934–2016)

'Hallelujah' (1984)

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