

2025 IMPACT REPORT



SYDNEY
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA



Simone Young conducts Mahler's Third Symphony
(February 2025/Jay Patel)

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The Sydney Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the many lands on which we work and perform. We perform our art in a long tradition, as Aboriginal peoples were the first musicians on these lands of what we call Australia. We believe music is a universal language that unites. We pay our respects to Gadigal Ancestors past and present, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which our home, the Sydney Opera House stands.

CHAIR'S LETTER

As Chair of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra Board, it is my pleasure to share with you our 2025 Impact Report.

Being one of Australia's major performing arts companies and presenting more than 200 performances a year across our diverse programs, we are often so consumed by the delivery of concerts that we don't see the full picture. This Impact Report allows us to look back with immense pride not just at 2025 but at the last four years since our 'Resurrection' moment: the reopening of the Sydney Opera House and the beginning of Simone Young's tenure as Chief Conductor.

We now seem to be in rarefied air and have elevated our international standing to be considered among the great orchestras of the world. Certainly the calibre of artists making the journey to perform in Sydney is testament to that; so too the many world and Australian premieres with which the great composers of our time have entrusted us. This high esteem is felt and appreciated by the organisation and we are all working hard to maintain it.

Our ambition is to be a world-class symphony orchestra on and off the stage – we are not shy about our aspirations. We are proud that our performance of Mahler and William Barton from the reopening of the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall was released worldwide by Deutsche Grammophon, and that we are the first Australian orchestra to appear exclusively on the 'Yellow Label' in its 125-plus year history.

It is also exciting to be able to report an operating surplus of \$2.4 million in 2025, representing a \$3.8 million improvement on 2024. This was driven by an improvement in our underlying operating result to a \$1 million deficit in 2025, with a significant growth in special gifts taking us back into the black. While we still have some work to do to return the underlying operating result to a break-even or better position, 2025 represents an outstanding result that we are all very proud of. But excellence is not achieved by ambition alone. It is the result of dedication and hard work, of human beings doing amazing things on stage and off.

There was no shortage of memorable performances in 2025. Our multi-year *Ring* Cycle with Simone Young continues to excite, a major artistic triumph the equal of any orchestra in the world, while hearing her interpretations of the symphonies of Vaughan Williams and Beethoven, or the works of Richard Strauss, have been revelatory.

One of many highlights was our collaboration with Signature Choir. I have never seen anything like the sheer joy and energy that this wonderful ensemble – and the audience – brought to the Concert Hall, a sentiment echoed by our musicians and staff and everyone who experienced it.

Looking through these pages I am also struck by the breadth of the Orchestra's activity, how flexible and adaptable we are to so many venues and audiences. We are part of the fabric of this city and this state, whether that be our annual Symphony Under the Stars at Parramatta Park, recreating the legendary Studio 54 at the Hordern Pavilion or travelling across New South Wales on our regional tours. The Sydney Opera House remains our main venue – a privilege we do not take for granted – but we must never forget our responsibilities to music across the state and that much of our audience lives far from Bennelong Point.

That responsibility is evident in our reimagined Learning & Engagement programs, which in 2025 expanded significantly to offer more events for schools, more opportunities for young musicians and more resources for teachers and students. Included in these were tactile tours of the Sydney Opera House and auditory resources for those with vision impairments: these initiatives will make the magic of live orchestral music accessible to so many more people and we look forward to expanding our offerings in future years.

Deepening our collaborations with First Nations artists remains a key focus. We have been extremely fortunate to have celebrated composer and musician William Barton join our Board and provide significant cultural leadership. Working with First Nations artists is a huge part of our identity as an orchestra and we are actively building closer ties and deeper connections with Indigenous communities; we have been developing an Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan and look forward to its adoption and implementation across our organisation in 2026 and beyond.

Finally, I would like to thank and acknowledge the tireless work of my fellow Board Directors, our wonderful musicians and our staff for an extraordinary 2025. I would also like to thank our government partners, Creative Australia and Create NSW, our corporate partners, our generous donors and our audience. With your support we can continue to present wide-ranging, ambitious programs and redefine what is possible for an orchestra in this part of the world.



Geoff Wilson
Chair

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Geoff Wilson
Chair



Andrew Baxter
Deputy Chair



Geoff Ainsworth AM



William Barton



Kees Boersma



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Susan Ferrier



The Hon AJ Meagher



Katherine Shaw



Julie Sibraa



Catherine Webb



Craig Whitehead
CEO

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S LETTER



“It is a joy to lead this remarkable orchestra. The artistry, passion and ambition of the Sydney Symphony musicians inspires me every day, and I am excited to continue our journey together.”

Simone Young on her contract extension to the end of 2029

*Simone Young conducts Siegfried
(November 2025/Daniel Boud)*

Welcome to our 2025 Impact Report, a document that aims to capture some sense of what was a remarkable year for this organisation.

There are many ways to measure the impact of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. In these pages you will read all about the world-class performances and international stars that shaped our 2025 Season, and the deep connections we are building with communities across our city and our state.

But before you dive into all that, we are thrilled to be able to report an **operating surplus of \$2.4 million for 2025**. This represents a \$3.8 million improvement on 2024, driven by:

- **Record ticket revenue** of \$24.7 million – an increase of \$4.3 million on the 2024 season and almost \$3 million above the next best season on record;
- **Record ticket sales** that saw nearly 300,000 attendees at our performances, and a doubling of NSW households purchasing tickets compared to 2019.

However, it is important to note that the major factor in the financial turnaround in 2025 was an extraordinarily generous \$3.25 million donation of a beautiful 1707 Giovanni Grancino cello. Without this gift the company would have recorded a \$1 million deficit in 2025, which demonstrates the ongoing impact of the 2022 reduction of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's footprint at the Sydney Opera House.

In 2025 we were thrilled to announce the extension of Simone Young's incredibly successful tenure as Chief Conductor and her exciting partnership with the Orchestra to the end of 2029. Under Simone's leadership the Sydney Symphony Orchestra is enjoying an artistic golden age and is achieving its vision to be a leading international symphony orchestra on and off the stage.

The 'onstage' part of this is easy to quantify, and beyond the headline numbers above what I am most inspired by is the breadth of our activity and the number of people we were able to reach in 2025.

In 2025 the Sydney Symphony Orchestra presented more than 300 total events attended by close to 300,000 music lovers, including:

- 170 mainstage performances;
- 15 performances in regional NSW, in Goulburn, Bathurst, Picton, Newcastle, Wollongong, Orange, Wyong, Wagga Wagga, Nowra, Griffith and Albury;
- 21 Schools concerts and 7 student workshops, reaching more than 14,000 students.

Onstage excellence is demonstrated by our Chief Conductor Simone Young and the unforgettable performances she leads. It was captured by Deutsche Grammophon and released around the world on that

iconic yellow label. It is revealed by the dazzling array of international artists who were eager to make the journey to perform for Sydney audiences, led by our Principal Guest Conductor Sir Donald Runnicles. It is demonstrated by sold-out performances and five-star reviews, testament that it is possible to sell large numbers of tickets to core classical concerts when you bring your audience with you on a multi-year journey.

Our 'offstage' excellence is less visible to the public but no less central to our mission. We are developing and strengthening relationships with First Nations communities, from the artists that share our stages to audiences around New South Wales. We are implementing leadership training for our administrative staff and world-leading hearing preservation programs for our musicians, ensuring that our people can be their best today and into the future. We continue to invest in the entire music ecosystem in Australia, from bespoke concerts for pre-schoolers and workshops to help classroom teachers integrate music into their lesson plans to partnerships with institutions like Sydney's Conservatorium of Music, Australian Youth Orchestra and the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM) and of course our award-winning Fellowship program.

We take great pride in the breadth and depth of our activities throughout the year and the ways in which we impact so many lives across the state and around the country. But none of it is possible without the continued support of the Australian and New South Wales governments, our corporate partners – especially Emirates, our Principal Partner of over 20 years – our generous donors and, above all, the audiences who fill our concerts night after night. Thank you all for your support, and we look forward to many more exciting collaborations and memorable performances in the future.

Finally, I would like to thank each of my colleagues at the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for their hard work and dedication. Thanks to our Board of Directors, led by our Chair Geoff Wilson, for their energy and commitment to this wonderful orchestra. I thank our administrative staff for their efforts to ensure we can keep performing, and I applaud our magnificent musicians and the dedication that they demonstrate every day.

Thank you, and I hope you enjoy our 2025 Impact Report.



Craig Whitehead
CEO

STRATEGY

In 2024 the Sydney Symphony Orchestra developed and published its 2025-2028 Strategic Plan.

This strategic plan looks to a more vibrant and sustainable future, building back from the crisis created by COVID-19 and the dislocation of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra from the Sydney Opera House.

The Sydney Symphony will continue to position itself artistically as a leading international symphony orchestra, however this strategic plan will also embed community relationships at the core of what we do, and who we are as an organisation.

We believe we have started upon an exciting and fundamentally important journey for the future of the company, and this strategic plan outlines the internal and external context that has brought us to this point; the goals and strategies we will undertake over the next five years to achieve our vision; and the changes we will need to make to the internal culture, organisational structure, and financial and operational model in order to implement this.

VISION

To be a leading international symphony orchestra on and off the stage.

KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

- Share inspiring experiences
- Be a sector and community leader
- Support a high performing team
- Restore and build financial strength



OUR VALUES

Integrity

We are authentic and accountable.

Connection

We are respectful, inclusive and generous.

Joy

We share our passion with energy and gratitude.

2025 AT A GLANCE

368

works performed

319

total events, including:

170 mainstage performances

21 Schools concerts

10 performances in healthcare settings

87

Australian works performed, including 32 world premieres

81

pre-concert talks to more than 17,500 people

298,681

concert attendees

\$24.683

million in ticket revenue

INSPIRING AUDIENCES



Andrew Haveron performs Elgar's Violin Concerto, conducted by Simone Young
(February 2025/Jay Patel)

In 2025 the Sydney Symphony Orchestra built on the artistic and commercial successes of recent years to present a season defined by excellence, ambition and collaboration.

We strive to be a leading symphony orchestra on and off the stage, and under **Chief Conductor Simone Young** are presenting performances that live up to that ambition.

Our *Ring* Cycle continued with *Siegfried*, with a star-studded cast of singers travelling from around the world to be part of this major project. We took part in the year-long international celebrations of composer Maurice Ravel's 150th birthday, the centrepiece a rare performance of his complete *Daphnis et Chloé* led by conductor **Edward Gardner** in his Sydney Symphony debut.

This was a season notable for extended engagements with major international artists, giving Sydney audiences the chance to immerse themselves in the musical worlds of three great pianists: **Daniil Trifonov**, **Sir Stephen Hough** and **Lang Lang**.

Australian music was a core component of our activity, featuring in everything from our Playerlink workshops, Fellowship performances and chamber concerts to our biggest concerts of the year. We performed **87** Australian works including **32** world premieres; **73** Australian artists joined us for pre-concert talks and mainstage guest appearances. And we performed all over New South Wales – in **Goulburn, Bathurst, Picton, Newcastle, Wollongong Orange, Wyong, Wagga Wagga, Nowra, Griffith** and **Albury** – continuing our mission to share the magic of live orchestral music across the state.

2025 was also a year in which our own musicians featured prominently. **Andrew Haveron** and **Harry Bennetts** starred as soloists in mainstage programs, performing two of the great violin concertos by Elgar and Beethoven respectively, **Alexandra Osborne's** performance of Vaughan Williams's beloved *The Lark Ascending* was a highlight of our Regional Tour, hosted with great verve by **Timothy Constable**. Our **Classics in the City** series shone a spotlight on different sections of the Orchestra, with Strings, Woodwinds and Brass each getting their own concert to demonstrate the breadth of talent in the section. And our **Cocktail Hour** series showcased our players as chamber musicians, treating performer and audience alike to a more intimate performance style.

It was a year of inspiring collaborations that brought new audiences into the hall, from the joyous outpouring of Pasifika energy in *Mana Moana* to the celebration of Blak excellence curated by **Kutch Edwards**, collaborations with major contemporary music artists **Lime Cordiale, Sigur Rós** and **King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard**, our ever-popular film concerts and two sold-out projects with **Art of the Score**.

We also took over Sydney's Hordern Pavilion for *Disco Wonderland*, a high energy evening of disco's greatest hits reimaged for orchestra.

In December our Season concluded with five sold-out performances of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the 'Ode to Joy' the perfect encapsulation of a year of ebullient, enriching music and the energy and enthusiasm that surrounds the Orchestra in this era.

Australia's Flagship Orchestra

2025 was a year that reinforced the Sydney Symphony's status as Australia's flagship orchestra, presenting performances of unmatched ambition and scale.

Chief Conductor Simone Young opened our 2025 Season with one of Gustav Mahler's symphonies, a tradition that has fast become a tentpole event in Sydney's arts calendar. This year the focus was the mighty Third: at around 100 minutes not only Mahler's longest work but the longest symphony in mainstream orchestral repertoire. It is a true test for all involved – musicians and audiences alike – but the roar that greeted each sold-out performance suggested that everyone passed with flying colours.

The involvement of both **Sydney Philharmonia Choirs** and **Sydney Children's Choir** added to the sense of occasion, as did guest artist **Noa Beinart** – the astonishing contralto last seen as Erda, goddess of the Earth in *Die Walküre*.

Our Season ended the same way it began: with sold-out performances led by our Chief Conductor. Our four-year *Ring Cycle* has become a major international event, with world-class vocalists and enthusiastic audience members alike drawn to Sydney to experience Simone Young in her element as one of today's pre-eminent interpreters of the music of Richard Wagner.

Siegfried – the third instalment in the cycle and in many ways its musical and philosophical heart – was no exception. Surrounded by singers with whom she has worked at the great European opera houses, Young and the Orchestra tackled this gargantuan score with precision and zeal, bringing this epic saga to life on the Concert Hall stage.

The final mainstage performances for 2025 were of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Always a popular work, we were confident that Sydney audiences would flock to hear Simone's reading of this famous score – but even we were shocked at the demand, so much so that we had to add an additional performance. More than 11,500 people over five concerts came to hear the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Sydney Philharmonia Choirs join forces for Beethoven's celebration of humankind, a truly joyous end to an extraordinary year.



Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Simone Young
(November 2025/Daniel Boud)

Bringing the Classical World to Sydney

Some years it just so happens that we are joined by a cluster of stars of one particular instrument, and this year was the turn of the piano. In addition to a steady stream of major international guest artists throughout the season, in 2025 Sydney audiences were privileged to have extended visits from three modern titans of the keyboard: **Daniil Trifonov, Sir Stephen Hough** and **Lang Lang**.

Trifonov presented three programs in Sydney: Rachmaninov's Fourth Piano Concerto with the Orchestra as well as two special recitals focused on the songs of Schubert, together with his regular recital partner, baritone **Matthias Goerne**, both among the most highly regarded interpreters of this repertoire in the world. These were truly special performances – nobody who was there will ever forget the silence in the City Recital Hall as the final notes of *Winterreise* drifted up into the rafters, nor the thundering applause that followed a few moments later.

A regular visitor to Sydney, Sir Stephen is a wonderful musician whose enthusiasm and superlative playing over several decades have made him a favourite of our audience (and our musicians). We were fortunate to spend two weeks with him in May-June, performing the first piano concertos by Brahms and Mendelssohn. Written less than 30 years apart these two works gave Sydney audiences a rare opportunity to luxuriate in the music of the 19th century and see how the world was responding to the vacuum that followed the death of Beethoven.

What more can be said about Lang Lang? The Chinese superstar is almost certainly the most famous classical musician of the 21st century, with a passionate fanbase that ensured both his solo recital and performance with the Orchestra sold out in quick time. It was a thrill to reunite with this brilliant performer for our first concert together since 2019.

“★★★★ Hough's visits to this country are always welcome and his performances of Mendelssohn and Brahms (in an earlier concert) on this tour have provided musical utterances of cogency, wisdom and beauty.”

Sydney Morning Herald on Stephen Hough performs Mendelssohn



Stephen Hough performs Brahms, conducted by Elim Chan (May 2025/Craig Abercrombie)

In 2025 we welcomed a number of artists making their Sydney debuts, including rising stars **Daniel Lozakovich, Eva Gevorgyan, Finnegan Downie Dear** and **Roderick Cox**. Engaging these artists early in their career creates the foundations of a positive relationship that will hopefully entice them back in future years.

It was also exciting to welcome **Dmitry Matvienko** to Sydney for the first time. Matvienko won First Prize and the Audience Prize at the prestigious **Malko Competition for Young Conductors** in 2021, named after the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's second Chief Conductor Nikolai Malko (1957–1961), and we offered engagements in Sydney as part of his prize. Already Chief Conductor of Denmark's Aarhus Symfoniorkester, Matvienko is one to watch, and his concerts with us showed why he is held in such high regard.

Several established artists who had somehow eluded us over the years finally made their Sydney debuts, including **Edward Gardner, Kian Soltani, Lisa de la Salle, Sasha Cooke** and **Marc-André Hamelin**. All were more than worth waiting for and we hope it isn't too long before their next visit.

As ever, the Orchestra benefited enormously from our weeks with Principal Guest Conductor **Sir Donald Runnicles**. The esteem in which he is held by our musicians is clear in all the feedback we receive from them – but you only have to watch them performing with him to see it on their faces. This year he conducted core repertoire by Mendelssohn, Brahms, Beethoven, Richard Strauss, Humperdinck, Shostakovich, Wagner, Elgar and Sibelius, casting new light on well-loved masterpieces, as well as works by contemporary composers Detlev Glanert and Anna Clyne. We look forward to working with him again in 2026.



“★★★★★ Lozakovich had the audience transfixed throughout this seemingly effortless performance of this herculean piece.”

Limelight Magazine on Daniel Lozakovich performs Sibelius' Violin Concerto

Daniel Lozakovich performs Sibelius' Violin Concerto, conducted by Tomáš Netopil (May 2025/Craig Abercrombie)



“★★★★★ Runnicles’ admiration and respect for this work were evident, with finely judged tempi and a keen eye for detail. As always, he got the best out of the SSO in what was a truly majestic reading, culminating in one of the great finales of the symphonic canon.”

Limelight Magazine on Donald Runnicles conducts Sibelius and Wagner

Donald Runnicles conducts Shostakovich’s Fifth Symphony (September 2025/Craig Abercrombie)

Reflecting ourselves

Many think of orchestral music as a museum piece, but it is a living artform that composers are using to speak about our contemporary world. In 2025 we performed 87 Australian works, including 32 world premieres, accounting for 23 per cent of the music performed across our season.

The dialogue between the classical tradition and the 21st century is exemplified by **William Barton's** new work, *Ayatku Muruu (One Country)*. It was commissioned specifically to partner Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, to renew that work's Enlightenment-era call for unity for a new age; sung in English and the Kalkadungu language, bringing an ancient culture into the modern wonder that is the Sydney Opera House, this is a piece that fulfills its promise with every performance.

Our **50 Fanfares** project continues to bring exciting new music into the world. This year saw the world premiere of works by **William Gardiner, Iain Grandage, Kate Moore, Bree van Reyk** and **Carl Vine**, each appearing in a mainstage performance at the Sydney Opera House.

We were excited to commission two works by very dear friends of the Orchestra. **Nigel Westlake** has composed a great many works for the Sydney Symphony over the years, none more celebrated than *Spirit of the Wild*, written for our former Principal Oboe Diana Doherty. By way of a farewell present following Diana's retirement from the Orchestra in August 2024 we commissioned Nigel to write a chamber version of his concerto, which we recorded in 2025 and will release in the future. **Justin Williams**, our Assistant Principal Viola, is also a talented composer, and his new Wind Quintet received its world premiere as part of our Cocktail Hour series.

New Australian music found its way to our smallest audience members, too, with two new works by **Emily McKnight** (better known as Emily Who) commissioned to open and close our Family programs.

It wasn't just composers contributing to this living, breathing organism: Australian musicians played a central role in our 2025 Season. 52 Australian artists were featured across our season, from soloists to singers and conductors. Our Concertmaster **Andrew Haveron** and Associate Concertmaster **Harry Bennetts** had moments in the spotlight, taking on two of the most formidable violin concertos in the repertoire by Elgar and Beethoven, respectively. Longtime friend and collaborator **Li-Wei Qin** gave the long-awaited Sydney premiere of Samuel Barber's Cello Concerto, nearly sixty years after its composition. The prodigy **Christian Li** made his mainstage Sydney Symphony debut with Korngold's dashing Violin Concerto, while **Andrea Lam** tackled Richard Strauss's fiendishly difficult *Burleske* in thrilling performances led by Simone Young.

We were fortunate to have some of Australia's finest singers perform with us in 2025. **Lauren Fagan** and **Sara Macliver** were luminous in works by Vaughan Williams and Mozart, while **Samantha Clarke, Deborah Humble** and **Samuel Dundas** were formidable in Beethoven's stirring 'Ode to Joy'. O'Neill and Clarke also starred in *Siegfried*, unforgettable performances that also featured **Warwick Fyfe** and **Teddy Tahu Rhodes**.

And our Chief Conductor **Simone Young** led a contingent of Australians to wield the baton in 2025, including Conductor in Residence **Benjamin Northey, Umberto Clerici, Jessica Gethin** and **Nicholas Buc**. We were also delighted to welcome the Chief Conductors of the Melbourne and West Australian symphony orchestras, **Jaime Martín** and **Asher Fisch**, to join us in Sydney.



Jessica Gethin conducts *The Music of Hans Zimmer*, presented by Art of the Score (February 2025/Jay Patel)

“★★★★★ The buzz of discovery, revisiting familiar films that have shaped a generation or two and being entertained plus easily educated was infectious, appreciated and given a newly-drawn soundtrack of their own, as many visited the SSO or the Sydney Opera House for the first time.”

Sydney Arts Guide on *The Music of Joe Hisaishi*

Art of the Score present *The Music of Joe Hisaishi*
(September 2025/Craig Abercrombie)

Reaching new audiences

In 2025 more than 34 percent of all tickets sold were to new audience members. This is a terrific result that demonstrates a steady increase in our non-subscriber audience and the value of our broad approach to programming.

This year that programming was more varied than ever before. We kicked the year off in style, reveling in the greatest hits of disco at **Disco Wonderland**. Our live to film concerts proved as popular as ever, with multiple sold-out performances of **Gladiator**, **Toy Story** and **Star Wars: A New Hope**. We presented **Marvel's Infinity Saga Experience**, which combined famous moments from 23 Marvel films into a brand new concert presentation. Our programs with podcasters **Art of the Score** continued to prove popular, an encore presentation of *The Music of Hans Zimmer* filling the ICC Sydney Theatre and *The Music of Joe Hisaishi* selling out the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall four times over. And our collaborations with contemporary Australian bands **Lime Cordiale** and **King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard** had the Concert Hall rocking.

2026 and beyond

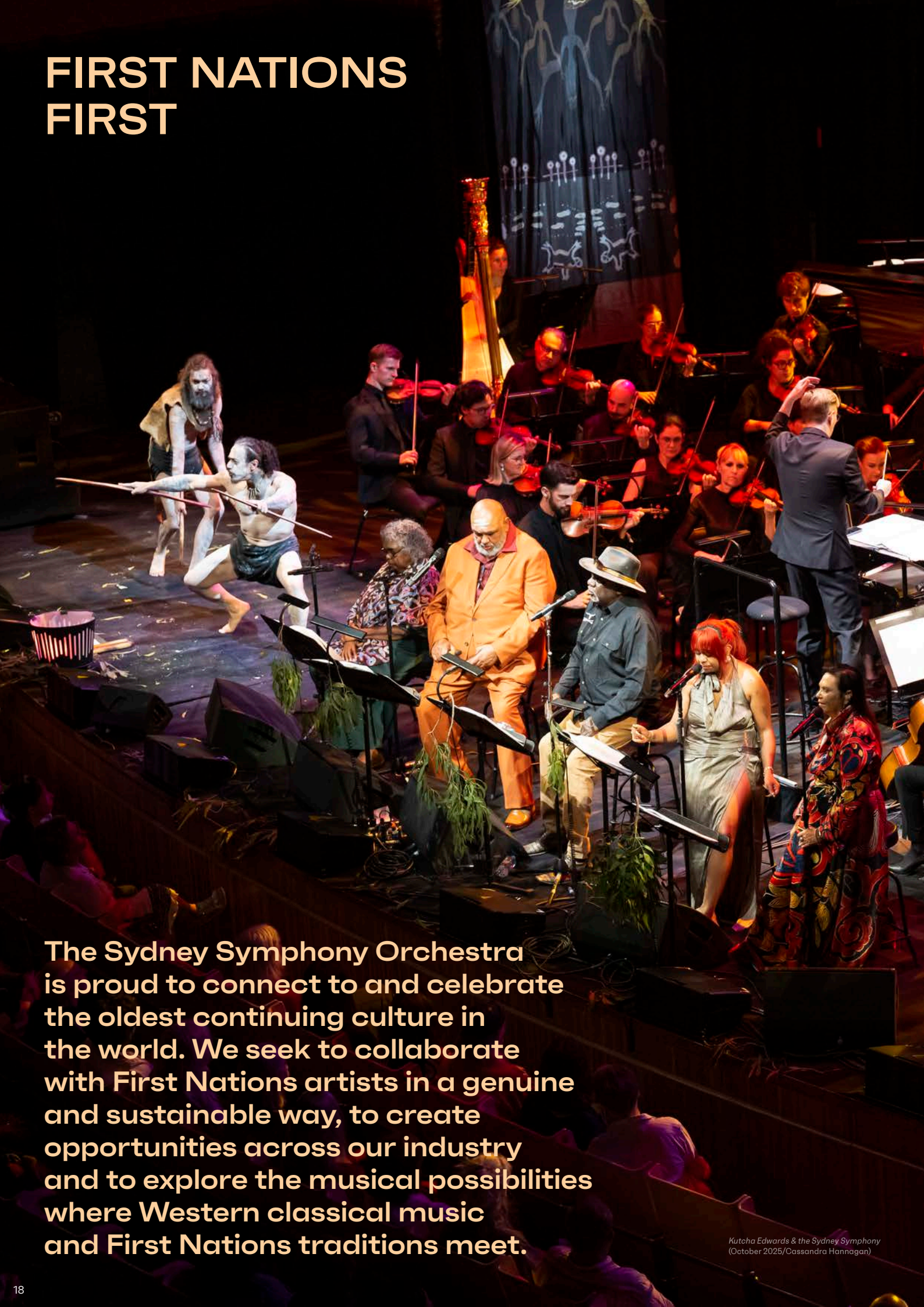
In 2032 the Sydney Symphony Orchestra will celebrate our centenary – and planning is well underway for the years leading up to it.

Working well in advance of our usual three-year window has given us the opportunity to dream big, with the significance of the milestone a chance to achieve some long-held dreams. Artists, commissions – both international and Australian – and major artistic projects are being considered, with both Simone Young and our Director of Artistic Planning Melissa King deep in conversations across their networks about our artistic ambitions.

In this we are greatly aided by Simone's current profile and standing around the world. Her invitations to work with major international orchestras and opera companies opens many doors for us and gives us direct access some of the biggest conducting names in our industry.

Early conversations with artists and managers suggest that the opportunity to conduct our Orchestra in the leadup to our centenary is proving to be captivating. We look forward to sharing these plans in the future.

FIRST NATIONS FIRST



The Sydney Symphony Orchestra is proud to connect to and celebrate the oldest continuing culture in the world. We seek to collaborate with First Nations artists in a genuine and sustainable way, to create opportunities across our industry and to explore the musical possibilities where Western classical music and First Nations traditions meet.

*Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
(October 2025/Cassandra Hannagan)*

A five-year First Nations engagement plan, led by First Nations artists, is currently being finalised in close collaboration with our Artistic Planning and Learning & Engagement teams. This will include a three-year program led by **William Barton**, and we are in discussion with **Kutcha Edwards** about multi-year projects.

Our Season Opening Gala began with the *Rhythmic Acknowledgment of Country* that has been developed by Kamilaroi musician, artist, researcher and educator **Adam Manning**, alongside our musicians. A regular feature of our concerts for many years, it is a poignant moment of grounding and ceremony.

Several works by First Nations composers were performed as part of our Cocktail Hour series. Works by **Brenda Gifford**, **Aaron Wyatt**, **Christopher Sainsbury** and **Nardi Simpson** filled the Utzon Room, offering fascinating insights into the ways First Nations composers are engaging with Western classical music.

In October, Mutti Mutti, Yorta Yorta and Nari Nari songman **Kutcha Edwards** curated and hosted “an evening of Blak excellence” at the Sydney Opera House. Entitled *Ngarli-Wangu (Our Song)*, Edwards was joined by **Kankawa Nagarra**, **Ray Dimakarri Dixon**, **Dr Shellie Morris** and **Emily Wurramarra** in highlights from their catalogues arranged for orchestra by **Roscoe James Irwin**.

Five sold-out performances of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony concluded our season – but what could possibly be performed alongside that iconic work? We commissioned **William Barton** to write a new piece of music that not only worked with the same orchestral forces as Beethoven but that spoke to similar themes.

Entitled *Ayatku Muruu (One Country)*, sung in English and the Kalkadungu language, with sounds inspired by the landscape of Kalkadungu country (around Mount Isa) in Queensland, the piece nurtures the connection between Western and First Nations worlds as well as that between the audience and the musicians on stage.

“Ngarli-Wangu is our song. It’s not Kutcha Edwards’ song, it’s our song. So it’ll be amazing. The irony is two years on from the failed Voice referendum, exactly to the day, we have our own voice in the biggest concert hall in the country.”

Interview with Kutcha Edwards on Koori Radio 93.7FM



Dancers Brent Watkins and Phil Egan performing in *Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony* (October 2025/Cassandra Hannagan)

Reconciliation Action Plan

Throughout 2025 the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has been working with Indigenous-led social change agency **Cox Inall Ridgeway** to develop our **Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)**. We are currently in the final stages of drafting and consultation and are hoping to officially have this plan in place by mid-2026.

This RAP is an important formalising of our ongoing commitment to First Nations artists, a reflection of and a renewed commitment to driving reconciliation in partnership with First Nations peoples and communities.

Our vision for Reconciliation is one in which First Nations peoples can genuinely lead in our sector and help to shape the future of the Australian arts and cultural industries. It is a vision which supports knowledge exchange, deep listening and relationship building, as well as drawing on First Nations thinking and knowing, to build a more inclusive performing arts sector. The Sydney Symphony Orchestra is proud to connect to and celebrate the oldest continuing music form in the world and bring this to audiences across Australia.

Our vision is for a sector, and for an Australia, which is deeply proud of First Nations culture and creativity and one that is not afraid to listen to, learn from and stand up for principles of self-determination, justice and human rights.

We look forward to sharing more about our Reconciliation Action Plan as we continue along this process.

Engaging with Country

It is our great privilege to perform on the traditional lands of so many First Nations peoples and we seek to do so in a respectful and considerate way, mindful of the historic and continuing connection to Country.

Prior to our Season Opening Gala, Gamilaroi and Mandandanji man Nathan Leslie and Biripi, Worimi and Wiradjuri Guri man Josh Sly performed a Smoking Ceremony on the Western Podium of the Sydney Opera House, an important ritual that cleansed the space and granted right of passage to the land.

We were honoured to be welcomed to country by respected members of the local community both in Sydney and on our Regional Tour. Thank you to Uncle Michael West from the Gadigal people (Sydney) and to Aunty Desma Newman (Griffith), Aunty Clorine Lyons (Wagga Wagga), Aunty Edna Stewart and Darren Whiten (Albury), Aunty Shirley Scott (Bathurst) and Uncle Ricky Ah See (Orange) from the Wiradjuri people.



Nathan Leslie conducts a smoking ceremony ahead of the Season Opening Gala at the Sydney Opera House (February 2025/Craig Abercrombie)



Kutch Edwards attending a smoking ceremony at the Sydney Opera House (October 2025/Craig Aberrombie)

AUSTRALIAN GUEST ARTISTS

ALEXANDER FLOOD drums
ALEXANDRA OSBOURNE violin
ALWYN DE LOS SANTOS backing vocals
AMY MANFORD vocals
ANDREA LAM piano
ANDREW HAVERON violin
ART OF THE SCORE
 ANDREW POGSON presenter
 DANIEL GOLDING presenter
AURA GO piano
BARRY CONRAD host
BENJAMIN NORTHEY conductor
CARLO ANTONIOLI conductor
CASSANDRA SEIDEMANN vocalist
CHRISTIAN LI violin
CHRISTINE ALLADO vocals
DAVID GOODWIN piano
DEBORAH CHEETHAM FRAILLON soprano
DEBORAH HUMBLE mezzo-soprano
DYAGULA backing vocals
ELIZABETH SCOTT chorus master
EMILY MCKNIGHT presenter
EMILY WURRAMURRA vocals
HARRY BENNETTS violin
JACK STREMPPEL Moog
JESSICA GETHIN conductor
JOSHUA ROBSON vocals
KANKAWA NAGARRA vocals
KAREN KYRIAKOU presenter and consultant
KING GIZZARD & THE LIZARD WIZARD
KUTCHA EDWARDS vocals
LAUREN FAGAN soprano
LI-WEI QIN cello
LIME CORDIALE
LISA GERRARD soprano
LUCY MAUNDER vocals
NICHOLAS BUC conductor
PAULINI vocals
RAY DIMAKARRI DIXON vocals

RICHARD MILLS conductor
ROGER BENEDICT conductor
RUVA NGWENYA vocals
SAMANTHA CLARKE soprano
SAMUEL DUNDAS bass
SARA MACLIVER soprano
SHELLIE MORRIS vocals
SIMONE YOUNG conductor
SYDNEY CHILDREN'S CHOIR
SYDNEY PHILHARMONIA CHOIRS
TEDDY TAHU RHODES Fafner
THEA ROSSEN presenter
TIM HANSEN presenter
TIMOMATIC vocals
TIMOTHY CONSTABLE presenter
UMBERTO CLERICI conductor
VANESSA SCAMMELL conductor
WARWICK FYFE Alberich

PRE-CONCERT SPEAKERS

Alastair McKean, Andrew Bukenya, Andrew Howes, David Larkin, Douglas Emery, Francis Greep, Francis Merson, Genevieve Lang, Gordon Williams, Jim Coyle, Joanna Drimatis, Megan Steller, Natalie Shea, Nick Afoa, Paige Gullifer, Phillip Sametz, Sam Allchurch, Sam Weller, Yvonne Frindle

“★★★★ It might be unexpected to see a collaboration between the SSO and the pop rock Aussie band, formed by brothers Oliver (Oli) and Louis Leimbach, but the pair are both classically trained musicians – and they made sure to let everyone know it.”

Sydney Morning Herald on *Lime Cordiale* with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra



Oliver and Louis Leimbach from *Lime Cordiale*
(October 2025/Jordan Munns)

AUSTRALIAN WORKS PERFORMED IN 2025

NAME OF COMPOSER	NAME OF PIECE	EVENT / CONCERT
AARON WYATT	Cirrus	Sounds of Australia
ADAM MANNING	Rhythmic Acknowledgement of Country	Simone Young conducts Mahler's Third Symphony
BREE VAN REYK	Fanfare for Solidarity <i>SSO Commission / World Premiere</i>	Bernstein & Korngold
BRENDA GIFFORD	Walimbaya	Sounds of Australia
	Mungala	Sounds of Australia
CARL VINE	Dreams Undreamt <i>SSO Commission / World Premiere</i>	Simone Young Conducts Elgar & Vaughan Williams
CHRIS SAINSBURY	From the Deep	Sounds of Australia
DAMIEN RICKETSON	Castles Made of Sand <i>World Premiere</i>	SCM110: SSO Fellows & SCM Composers
DANIEL ROJAS	Danzas amorosas <i>World Premiere</i>	SCM110: SSO Fellows & SCM Composers
DEBORAH CHEETHAM FRAILLON	Ngarrgooroon	SCM110: SSO Fellows & SCM Composers
ELENA KATS-CHERNIN	Wild Swans Suite: Eliza Aria	Town Hall / Playerlink
	Redgum Suite	Carte Blanche
	Alexander Rag	Our Fellows Celebrate Australian Music Month
EMILY McKNIGHT	Hello, Orchestra! <i>World Premiere</i>	Ready, Set, Listen!
	Goodbye, Orchestra! <i>World Premiere</i>	Ready, Set, Listen!
EMILY WURRAMARRA (arr. Ross Irwin)	Ngarrikwujeyinama	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
FIONA HILL	Palynopholy	SCM110: SSO Fellows & SCM Composers
GEORGIA SCOTT	Harbourside Snapshots	Our Fellows Celebrate Australian Music Month
HOLLIS TAYLOR & JON ROSE	Palm+Ragonesi <i>World Premiere</i>	Sounds of Australia
HOLLY HARRISON	Jabberwock [2021 version]	Our Fellows Celebrate Australian Music Month
	Spitfire	Mozart & Harrison
IAIN GRANDAGE	LiFT <i>SSO Commission / World Premiere</i>	Stephen Hough performs Brahms
JOSEPH TAWADROS	Eye of the Beholder	Sydney Symphony Under the Stars
	Permission to Evaporate	Sydney Symphony Under the Stars
	Bluegrass Nikriz <i>World Premiere</i>	Sydney Symphony Under the Stars
	Point of Departure	Sydney Symphony Under the Stars
	Constantinople <i>World Premiere</i>	Sydney Symphony Under the Stars
JUSTIN WILLIAMS	Wind Quintet <i>World Premiere</i>	Schoenberg & Williams
KANKAWA NAGARRA (arr. Ross Irwin)	Wirlmarni	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
KATE MOORE	Blue Light Sphere <i>SSO Commission / World Premiere</i>	Mozart & Bruckner
KATIA BEAUGEAIS	The Last Flight of Saint-Ex	Our Fellows Celebrate Australian Music Month
KATIE NOONAN & ANDREW O'CONNOR	An Instrument of Peace	Australian Youth Orchestra Music in Me Summit
KING GIZZARD & THE LIZARD WIZARD	Phantom Island	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Deadstick	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Lonely Cosmos	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Eternal Return	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Panpsych	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Spacesick	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Aerodynamic	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Sea of Doubt	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
Silent Spirit	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra	

NAME OF COMPOSER	NAME OF PIECE	EVENT / CONCERT
KING GIZZARD & THE LIZARD WIZARD	Grow Wings and Fly	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Daily Blues	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Hypertension	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	The River	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Crumbling Castle	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	This Thing	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Mars for the Rich	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Dragon	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Iron Lung	King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
KUTCHA EDWARDS (arr. Alex Turley)	We Sing	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
KUTCHA EDWARDS (arr. Emma Greenhill)	Photographs	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
KUTCHA EDWARDS (arr. Matt Amy)	I Have a Dream	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
	Mother Tongue	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
KUTCHA EDWARDS (arr. Ross Irwin)	I Know Where I'm Going	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
	Mrs Edwards	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
	Ngarli Wangu	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
KUTCHA EDWARDS (arr. Sean O'Boyle)	Singing Up Country	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
LIME CORDIALE (arr. Alex Turley)	Money	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Temper Temper	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Screw Loose	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Addicted to the Sunshine	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Naturally	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Strangers	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Enough of the Sweet Talk	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Love Is Off the Table	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Colin	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	When I'm Losing It	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Hanging Upside Down	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Household Name	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Cold Treatment	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Waking Up Easy	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
	Robbery	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
LIME CORDIALE (arr. Ben Robinson)	Inappropriate Behaviour	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
LIME CORDIALE (arr. Callum O'Reilly)	Elephant in the Room	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
LIME CORDIALE (arr. Naomi Dodd)	No Plans to Make Plans	Lime Cordiale with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra
LIZA LIM	The Turning Dance of the Bee	SCM110: SSO Fellows & SCM Composers
MATTHEW HINDSON	Septet	SCM110: SSO Fellows & SCM Composers
NADIA BURGESS	Anticipation	Our Fellows Celebrate Australian Music Month
NARDI SIMPSON	Burruguu	Sounds of Australia
NIGEL WESTLAKE	Spirit of the Wild (chamber version) <i>SSO Commission</i>	Studio Recording
PEGGY POLIAS	The Moon	Our Fellows Celebrate Australian Music Month
RAY DIMAKKARI DIXON (arr. Ross Irwin)	Dimikari	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
SHELLIE MORRIS (arr. Ross Irwin)	Walk as One	Kutcha Edwards & the Sydney Symphony
STUART GREENBAUM	Chamber Concerto: 1st mvt	Our Fellows Celebrate Australian Music Month
WILLIAM BARTON	Ayatku Muruu <i>SSO Commission / World Premiere</i>	Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Simone Young
WILLIAM GARDINER	arion <i>SSO Commission / World Premiere</i>	Arabella Steinbacher Performs Prokofiev

IN MEMORIAM

Vale Donald Hazelwood AO OBE

All of us at the Sydney Symphony Orchestra were enormously saddened by the death of our former Concertmaster Donald Leslie Grant Hazelwood AO OBE on Saturday 8 March 2025.

A wonderful musician, colleague and friend, Don was Concertmaster of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for 33 years from 1965 until his retirement in 1998, an extraordinary career that assures his place among Australia's best-known and most respected musicians.

Don first played with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in 1952, under our inaugural Chief Conductor Eugene Goossens. In 1965 Don was appointed co-concertmaster alongside Robert Miller, becoming sole concertmaster shortly after upon Miller's retirement in 1967. For 20 years he held this post on his own until the arrival of Dene Olding in 1987, with whom Don shared the role until his retirement.

The concertmaster acts as the leader and spokesperson for the orchestra, a role Don took extremely seriously, but always with his trademark sense of humour. In this role Don guided the orchestra through triumphs (including the opening of the Sydney Opera House in 1973, and numerous international tours) and hardship, most notably the death of Chief Conductor Stuart Challender in 1991. Diplomatic and gentlemanly in his interactions with colleagues, conductors and visiting guest musicians, Donald was able to manage positive and professional relationships with hundreds of people over the years.

Upon Hazelwood's retirement from the Orchestra in 1997, the Sydney Morning Herald's music critic Fred Blanks described Don as 'a musician whose outstanding musicianship, diplomatic finesse and modest personal demeanour have made one of the most

significant contributions to Sydney music in the last four decades.'

Our then-Chief Conductor, Edo de Waart, was moved to write, 'Don Hazelwood is an icon of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and his retirement will mark the end of an era. He is a first-class musician who is highly respected by all his colleagues and the conductors who have had the privilege of working with him.'

Donald was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1976 and was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 1988 for his services to music. He was awarded the 1997 Sir Bernard Heinze Memorial Award for outstanding contribution to music in Australia.

Following his retirement Don remained closely attached to the Orchestra, a regular concertgoer and a valued member of the Orchestra's Honorary Council.

Through all this Don was supported and encouraged by his first wife, Anne Menzies, a clarinettist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra for 26 years until her retirement in 1994. Following Anne's death in 1998, Donald remarried in 2000 to Helen Phillips.

We extend our deepest condolences to the family, and especially to Don and Anne's daughter Jane, a long-serving and much-loved member of the Orchestra's viola section (1995-2024).



Don Hazelwood with his daughter Jane and her children Elena and Sebastian Pini in 2001 (Greg Barrett)

Vale John Painter AM

The musicians and staff of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra were greatly saddened to learn of the death of John Galloway Painter AM on Saturday 13 September 2025.

John was a hugely significant figure in Australian music in the second half of the twentieth century, serving in the Cello section of the Sydney Symphony (1954–1965, and Principal from 1960), founding the Australian Chamber Orchestra in 1975 and later directing the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (1982–1985) and Canberra School of Music (1985–1995). John was also at various times involved with the Australia Council for the Arts, Musica Viva Australia, the Victorian Institute of Colleges, the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA) and the Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM).

Born in Adelaide on 28 September 1932, Painter demonstrated musical talent early, winning a two-year scholarship to study with Harold Parsons at Adelaide’s Elder Conservatorium at the age of 12. The following year, in just his fourth year of learning cello, John was offered a position in the South Australian (now Adelaide) Symphony Orchestra – and also managed to convince his father and headmaster to cover-up the fact that he had left school before the legal age!

A restless student, John left the Elder Conservatorium without completing the final year of his degree and moved to Sydney in 1949, spending 18 months studying with Laurie Kennedy and working in nightclubs and dancehalls. But in 1950, still only 18, John was offered the role of Principal Cello back in Adelaide, where he also won the ABC’s Concerto & Vocal Competition.

In 1954 he moved back to Sydney to join the Sydney Symphony Orchestra where he remained for a little more than a decade, rising to Associate Principal and ultimately Principal from 1960.

John left the Sydney Symphony in 1965 but his influence on music in Australia would only grow in the years to come. In recognition of his incredible contribution, John was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 1981 and received the Sir Bernard Heinze Memorial Award in 2002.

For much of his life John formed a formidable double act with Lois Simpson. Lois became the youngest female musician ever in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in 1940, aged just 13. She left in 1944 but returned in 1953, and remained with the Orchestra for more than 30 years, much of that as Principal Cello.

Lois and John married in 1962, and their partnership was total. Lois joined John as a founding member of the ACO, and when they moved to Canberra in 1985 Lois took over the chamber music program at the School of Music throughout John’s directorship.

When she died in 2008, David Marr wrote in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that ‘Simpson was birdlike, glamorous and self-deprecating but a prize fighter in the cause of music. She was not afraid to throw her tiny weight around and there are many, mostly men, who underestimated her at their peril. She knew only one way – the right way – and not just on stage. Things had to be as perfect as practice and impeccable taste could make them’.

John and Lois’ influence is still felt in today’s Sydney Symphony Orchestra, with many of our musicians having been taught by them or performed alongside them.

Our thoughts are with John’s partner Renée Goossens, his sons Ashley and Jamie and stepsons Greg and Martin Pikler.

“John Painter was a true citizen of music.”

Kim Williams AM, Chairman of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation



Composer Igor Stravinsky with John Painter in 1961 (ABC Archives)

INCREASING COMMUNITY ACCESS AND CONNECTIONS

Sydney Symphony Orchestra performing
Stirring Strings in the City at the Newcastle
City Hall (May 2025/Good Thanks Media)



“We are very excited to welcome the Sydney Symphony Orchestra back to Griffith. Having musicians of this calibre perform is something truly special, and we know our patrons will be captivated from the first note to the last,”

Margaret Andreazza
Griffith Regional Theatre Manager

Connecting across the state

We are committed to being an orchestra for all of New South Wales.

In 2025 we gave eleven mainstage concerts across the state, visiting **Goulburn, Bathurst, Picton, Newcastle, Wollongong, Orange, Wyong, Wagga Wagga, Nowra, Griffith and Albury**. Some of these locations we had visited before, and these concerts are building on relationships and continuing to foster a community of music lovers; others we had not visited for many years, if at all, and we were excited to give these audiences the opportunity to hear the Sydney Symphony Orchestra live in their town.

A major focus of these visits was to have extended interactions with the local community, using our mainstage concerts as just the start of a longer conversation. **Family concerts in Albury, Orange and Wagga Wagga** and a **schools concert in Bathurst** allowed us to reach bigger and more diverse audiences, and we hope served as a catalyst for inspiring a love of music in listeners of all ages.

Student Orchestral Workshops

The continued health of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra relies on the Australian music ecosystem that supports it.

Without young musicians coming through the ranks we will have no orchestra; without teachers inspiring a love of music in children we will have no audience. That is why we are dedicated to supporting young musicians across the state through our involvement with **Regional Youth Orchestra**, programs like **Playerlink** and student workshops.

Our annual **Playerlink** regional workshop took place across three days in August at the Macquarie Conservatorium of Music in Dubbo. 37 students from regional NSW were mentored by fourteen Sydney Symphony musicians, immersed in aspects of musicianship such as posture, intonation, articulation, ensemble playing and stylistic interpretation. The workshop concluded with a family and friends performance by the Playerlink Orchestra.

This year's **Young Musicians Workshop** took place over three days at Parramatta Marist High School in Westmead. 70 students aged 10–17 took part in rehearsals, tutorials and masterclasses with the Sydney Symphony Fellows before performing for an audience of parents and friends, conducted by Timothy Constable.



Young Musicians Workshop held at Parramatta Marist High School (October 2025/Craig Abercrombie)



Workshop with the Regional Youth Orchestra (December 2025/Cassandra Hannagan)



Playerlink regional workshop at the Macquarie Conservatorium of Music in Dubbo (August 2025/Preserve Photography)



Playerlink regional workshop at the Macquarie Conservatorium of Music in Dubbo (August 2025/Preserve Photography)

MAKING MUSIC ACCESSIBLE TO ALL



The 2025 Sydney Symphony Orchestra
Fellows perform at a SoundBridge event
at La Perouse Public School
(August 2025/Craig Abercrombie)

We believe that everyone should be able to experience live orchestral music and are working tirelessly to remove barriers to our performances, as well as taking the Orchestra to perform for those who cannot come to us.

Our highest-profile new initiative in 2025 was our **Summer Series** of concerts. Held across two days at Sydney Town Hall, these four performances offered a program of short, easily approachable classical highlights catering to four different audiences.

A Friday lunchtime was an opportunity for office workers to experience a concert during their workday and also provided an opportunity for our older and less mobile audience members to attend a concert during the day next to a major transport hub, rather than undertaking potentially difficult journeys at night.

Saturday lunchtime was billed as a relaxed concert, welcoming audience members who prefer a less formal concert, including families with small children and those with sensory sensitivities. Friday evening was a Valentine's Day performance, while Saturday evening saw the premiere of a brand-new format that was half pub trivia, half concert entitled *QuizMaestro*.

All four concerts offered an affordable and welcoming touch point in the heart of the city and were enthusiastically received.

In 2025 we launched **SoundBridge**, a new multi-year program that focuses on a small group of schools and a bespoke program of engagement. This reimagined program ensures deeper, sustained connection to students from **Redfern Jarjum College** and

La Perouse, Glebe and Plunkett Street public schools – all that serve communities with high proportions of Indigenous students and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds – making music a regular part of their lives instead of a once-a-year excursion.

As part of the program, our Fellows travelled to the schools for performance incursions, and students attended *Peter and the Wolf* at the Sydney Opera House free of charge, including an opportunity for students to see the instruments and musicians up close and have a more exploratory experience in the Concert Hall prior to the performance.


We have also maintained **reduced ticket prices** for Under 35s and for First Nations audiences via the **Mob Tix** program, as well as offering \$20 tickets to music students through our **Student Rush** program, ensuring that as broad a demographic can attend our concerts and experience the magic of live orchestral music.

Our **Music for Health** program remains a core part of our activity, with ten performances staged in healthcare settings across 2025, taking music to those who cannot attend our concerts.



Lerida Delbridge (Violin) and Justin Williams (Viola) performing at Montefiore, Randwick as part of *Music for Health* (February 2025)

SUPPORTING MUSIC EDUCATION



We know that exposure to music at an early age has the ability to transform students' lives. Our role is to give students access to inspiring performances and to provide teachers with training and resources to empower them in their classrooms.

Students attending the *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* schools concert at the Sydney Opera House (June 2025/Craig Abercrombie)

Concerts and Events

In 2025 we brought all of our schools activity inside the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall, providing students with unique access to this magnificent venue.

Ten **Meet the Music** concerts gave students in Stages 5 & 6 the opportunity to hear some of the world's greatest artists and a broad mix of repertoire aligned with the NSW Curriculum. Two bespoke **concerts for Primary Schools** – Benjamin Britten's *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* and Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* – combined these famous works, which have stimulated young minds for generations, with interactive performances that updated them for our modern world.

Six **Open Rehearsals** provided students with rare access to behind-the-scenes experiences, where they saw the inner workings of the Orchestra, the relationship between conductor and soloist and how performances take shape.

Supporting teachers

For years our free Teacher Resource Kits have been an invaluable tool for the classroom, delivering targeted and flexible pedagogical approaches relevant to specific educational stages.

In 2025 we launched the **Music in Me Summit**, an opportunity for classroom teachers to gain familiarity with our Teacher Resource Kits and workshop how to use them in the classroom. Presented by composer and educator Tim Hansen, accompanied by thirteen musicians of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the workshop was attended by 70 Primary teachers, both generalist and specialist Music teachers.

We have created a **Teachers Advisory Group** to ensure a dedicated channel for feedback from educators, ensuring that key aspects of our Schools program including pricing, launch timing, content and booking processes are being shaped by those directly involved. After a call for expressions of interest we received 106 applications, all of whom have been invited to join the advisory group.

Inspired by our Conductor in Residence Benjamin Northey and his passion for teaching the techniques of conducting, our first **Teachers Conducting Masterclass** took place on Monday 21 July. Ben led 100 Secondary school teachers through a morning of discussion before being joined by the Orchestra for an afternoon session in which eight teachers received an extended opportunity to take to the podium and conduct under Ben's leadership.



Benjamin Northey with aspiring conductors from schools across New South Wales for a Teachers Conducting Masterclass at the Eugene Goossens Hall (July 2025/Craig Abercrombie)

Building capacity for the future

In 2024, John Nolan was appointed Director of Learning & Engagement and the department was re-established as a standalone unit, demonstrating a renewed focus on this vital aspect of our operation including the development of a new Learning & Engagement strategy for 2025–2027.

In the first year of that strategy a number of new initiatives were trialled and launched, relationships with key industry partners established and many lessons learned – not just in regards to the creation of new activity but how to make our existing activities more accessible.

We have partnered with **Auslan Stage Left** and **Aspect Autism Services** to reduce barriers to enjoyment for d/Deaf patrons and those with Autism. An autism friendly visual story is being designed to better communicate the concertgoing experience to new audience members, with a separate story to guide them through the ticket booking process and a further Hidden Curriculum guide to all the unwritten rules of concert going. These documents will be available for all Sydney Symphony concerts at the Sydney Opera House from the start of 2026.

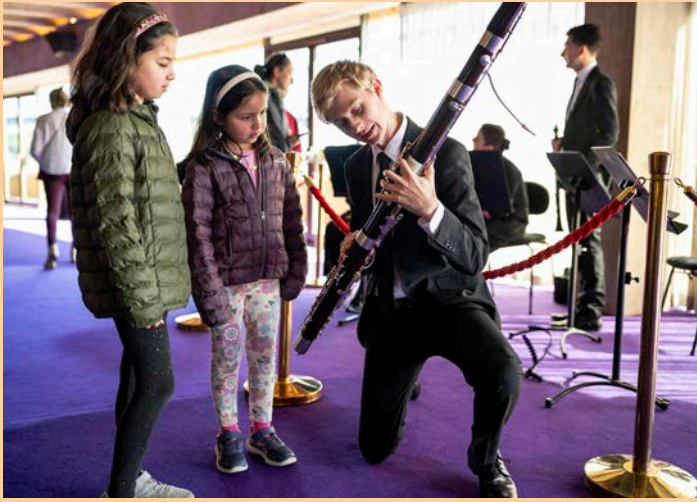
2025 saw a pilot performance of **Listen to This**, an alternative concert format that is part conversation and part performance. Modelled after the *Discovery* series championed by the late Richard Gill, Benjamin Northey guided listeners through the music of Jean Sibelius, with a particular focus on his Second Symphony. This pilot performance was warmly received by audiences and in 2026 will expand to a series of three concerts at the Sydney Opera House.

2026 will see a significant expansion of many of these key programs, and 2027 – the Orchestra’s 95th year – even more.

“My 15 year old son who wants to be a composer really enjoyed the detail and I thought that Sibelius was a great choice and Ben Northey had a warm and engaging style. I’m looking forward to more.”

Audience member on *Listen to This: Discover Sibelius*

Benjamin Northey presents *Listen to This: Sibelius* at City Recital Hall (July 2025/Craig Aberorombie)



Two potential bassoonists inspect their future instrument (August 2025/Cassandra Hannagan)



Discovering the fun of making music at *Ready, Set, Listen!* (July 2025/Cassandra Hannagan)



Pre-Concert Talks at the Northern Foyer of the Sydney Opera House (Craig Abercrombie)

Fostering deeper connection with music

A major part of our role as an orchestra is to provide audiences with deeper insights into the music they love – not just to perform it, but to explain it. Orchestral music, almost by definition, rarely has a plot or narrative, and therefore explaining the historical and cultural contexts of these pieces can help audiences connect more deeply with the themes and ideas.

There are two main ways in which we do this: through our free concert guides, available online and at the venue, and through our pre-concert talks, which see experts from across Australia deliver a 30-minute presentation immediately prior to each of our performances. In 2025 we printed over 150,000 concert guides and facilitated 81 talks to more than 17,500 attendees, helping everyone gain a better understanding of music regardless of their pre-existing knowledge and music education.

“I love everything about the talks, they are incredibly informative and help you to understand not only the narrative of the pieces and their history, as well as the composers, but also the technicality of the music.”

I find that I appreciate the performance more having gone to the talk and better remember the performances due to the foreknowledge given in the talk”

Audience member on the Pre-Concert Talks

INCREASING GLOBAL REACH WITH DIGITAL CONTENT



(Jordan Munns)

For an orchestra tucked away on the edge of this vast continent, on the other side of the planet from the major centres of the classical music world, digital content is an essential element of reaching new audiences and remaining visible within our global industry.

As audience behaviour continues to be unpredictable we have sought to disseminate our digital content through as many channels as possible, always with the goal of finding new audiences on the platforms of their preference.

In 2025 that was achieved through our own activities, the strengthening of existing relationships and exciting new opportunities with major international partners.

Emirates inflight entertainment system

In December 2025 the Sydney Symphony Orchestra launched a dedicated channel on Emirates' in-flight entertainment system, debuting with a filmed performance of Gustav Holst's *The Planets* from 2022.

Further content, including our performances of Mahler's Symphony No.2 from the reopening of the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall, will follow in January 2026, with additional performances to be added over time.

Album released on Deutsche Grammophon

In 2025 the Sydney Symphony Orchestra became the first Australian orchestra to have a recording released exclusively by Deutsche Grammophon. This release on the famed 'Yellow Label' is a huge vote of confidence in the Orchestra under Chief Conductor Simone Young and a major boost to our profile overseas.

The significance of this release matched the importance of the recording itself: captured live in concert at the reopening of the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall, with Mahler's Symphony No.2, *Resurrection*, and William Barton's *Of the Earth* performed by the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, Sydney Children's Choir and Gondwana Indigenous Children's Choir, as well as vocalists Nicole Car and Deborah Humble. These vast forces were expertly directed by Simone Young in her first concerts as our Chief Conductor. This was a hugely significant event in the history of this Orchestra and we are thrilled that it will be available for future generations to hear.

The recording was also a major commercial success. Released on CD, vinyl and digital services it spent eleven weeks at No.1 on the Australian Record Industry Association (ARIA) Core Classical charts and four weeks at No.1 on the Classical/Crossover chart. The album remained in both charts for 25 weeks – almost half a year – and was nominated for Best Classical Album at the 2025 ARIA Awards.

Conversations are ongoing with Deutsche Grammophon about more releases in the future.



Livestreams and broadcasts

In 2025, three very different concerts of ours were broadcast, demonstrating once again both the Orchestra's adaptability and versatility but also the Company's enthusiasm to engage audiences wherever they may be.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra featured twice on the ABC + iview television program **Front Row with Megan Burslem**, a new series that revives the ABC's long history of broadcasting classical concerts. The first-ever concert included in this series was **Simone Young conducts Elgar & Vaughan Williams**, showcasing our Chief Conductor and our Concertmaster Andrew Haveron as soloist in Elgar's Violin Concerto, and our *Mana Moana* collaboration with **Signature Choir** featured later in the year – each reaching an estimated audience of more than 50,000 people.

In addition, our collaboration with Australian rock band **King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard** was livestreamed on YouTube and YouTube Music, reaching close to 20,000 viewers.

Our own recordings

In addition to these concerts broadcast through industry partners, we continued to build our own online catalogue with audio and audio-visual recordings throughout 2025:

- **Simone Young conducts Mahler's Third Symphony**
Audio only
- **Nigel Westlake: Spirit of the Wild (septet version)**
Audio-visual recording
- **Kutch Edwards & the Sydney Symphony: Ngarli-Wangu (Our Song)**
Audio-visual recording
- **Lime Cordiale & the Sydney Symphony**
Audio-visual recording
- **Simone Young conducts Siegfried**
Audio-visual recording

Audio broadcasts through ABC Classic

Growing and developing new audiences is vital to our strategic plans, but we are equally committed to nurturing our existing audience and industry relationships. Perhaps the most fundamental is that with the ABC, and we share their mission to make live orchestral performance accessible to all Australians.

In 2025, 25 of our concerts were broadcast on ABC Classic on 32 unique occasions, including two live broadcasts of *Simone Young conducts Richard Strauss* and *Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition*. All were subsequently available to stream for 30 days via ABC Classic's website.

We were also excited to collaborate with ABC Classic for a second consecutive year to produce a special program for the ABC's Australian Music Month in November. Led by celebrated Australian composer and conductor Richard Mills, our Fellows performed works by Australian composers **Georgia Scott**, **Katia Beaugeais**, **Stuart Greenbaum**, **Peggy Polias**, **Elena Kats-Chernin**, **Nadia Burgess** and **Holly Harrison** in a public concert at Eugene Goossens Hall at the ABC in Ultimo, Sydney, presented by Genevieve Lang and broadcast on ABC Classic.

- Simone Young conducts Elgar & Vaughan Williams
- Glowing Brass in the City
- Daniil Trifonov performs Rachmaninov
- Mozart & Bruckner
- Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony
- Daniel Lozakovich performs Sibelius' Violin Concerto
- Stephen Hough performs Brahms
- Stephen Hough performs Mendelssohn
- Donald Runnicles conducts Strauss & Beethoven
- Lang Lang and the Sydney Symphony
- Christian Li performs Korngold
- Arabella Steinbacher performs Prokofiev
- Ravel & Falla
- Javier Perianes performs Saint-Saëns
- Lyrical Woodwinds in the City
- Stephen Layton conducts Bach, Mozart & Handel
- Mozart & Beethoven
- Simone Young conducts Richard Strauss
- Donald Runnicles conducts Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony
- Marc-Andre Hamelin in Recital
- Donald Runnicles conducts Sibelius
- Harry Bennetts performs Beethoven's Violin Concerto
- Daniel Müller-Schott performs Tchaikovsky
- Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition
- Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Simone Young





AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

Our ambition is to be a world-class orchestra on and off the stage. Our musicians pursue excellence in every performance – so too do our administrative staff work hard to ensure all of the company's activities are of the same high standard.

Sydney Symphony Orchestra musicians with
Chief Conductor Simone Young (Daniel Boud)

Sydney Symphony Summit

On Tuesday 4 February the entire Sydney Symphony Orchestra – musicians and administration – gathered at BrewDog in South Eveleigh for our second annual Sydney Symphony Summit.

These Summits provide an opportunity for everyone to learn about the myriad activities happening across the organisation, provide feedback, share ideas, learn from one another and celebrate the work we do.

The three areas of focus this year were our expanded Learning & Engagement programs, our centenary in 2032 and how best to celebrate it, both in the year itself and in the lead-up to it, and a conversation about marketing, storytelling and what sort of content we want to be producing.



Sydney Symphony Summit at BrewDog in South Eveleigh (February 2025/Craig Aberrombie, Keanna Mauch)

Orchestra and Musicians

An orchestra is a constantly evolving organism, with members coming and going all the time.

In 2025 we bid farewell to esteemed colleagues Brielle Clapson (appointed 2008) and Anna Skálová (appointed 2017) and welcomed:

- **Olli Leppäniemi** (Principal Clarinet)
- **Katlijn Sergeant** (Principal Piccolo)
- **Robert Smith** (Second Violin)
- **Richard Waters** (Principal Viola)

It was also a year of significant movement within the Orchestra. **Lerida Delbridge** was appointed Principal Second Violin, vacating her former role as Assistant Concertmaster; **Marina Marsden** (Principal Second Violin) and **Anne-Louise Comerford** (Associate Principal Viola) transitioned into Emeritus roles, reflecting their long tenure with and significant contribution to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra; and **Shefali Pryor** was appointed Principal Oboe after many years as Associate Principal.

Musician Alumni Event

In October we held a Musician Alumni function, with past members of the Orchestra invited to attend rehearsal at the Sydney Opera House followed by refreshments backstage. It was wonderful to see so many old friends gather and to hear stories and reminiscences about the history of the Orchestra.



Investing in Our People

Leadership Training Program

Following feedback from both our musicians and our administrative staff, we have partnered with Aleda to provide leadership training to individuals in leadership roles, strengthening key skills that support our growth and success.

In small groups, participants have focused on topics such as giving and receiving feedback, building effective communication, fostering a positive team culture and encouraging curiosity. Two cohorts have completed the training so far, all with positive feedback on the program.

Mentoring Program

In May we launched another new professional development initiative, the Sydney Symphony Mentoring Program.

This yearlong program is designed to foster meaningful connections, share knowledge and support career development across the organisation. Establishing a formal framework for these conversations enables individuals to carve time out of their busy workdays and to explore areas of interest that may fall outside their position description, and in doing so build relationships and foster a greater understanding of everyone's roles and responsibilities.

Sottovoce

For orchestras around the world, preservation of musicians' hearing health is an increasing area of focus. We at the Sydney Symphony Orchestra have proudly invested in Sottovoce, a new industry-leading sound monitoring system, becoming the first full-sized symphony orchestra in the world to adopt the platform. This system provides a significant improvement on our previous sound monitoring approach by providing a live feed of sound levels, broader coverage across the stage, and results that are more accessible and easier to understand for all employees.

During 2025, the focus has been on working in partnership with the Sottovoce team as a development partner, helping to shape the program for use in a large orchestral environment. This collaboration will embed a more consistent, data-informed approach to sound management that supports long-term musician wellbeing and sustainable performance practices.

Former percussionist Colin Piper with percussionist Timothy Constable and Principal Timpani Antoine Siguré



Olli Leppöniemi



Katlijn Sergeant



Robert Smith



Richard Waters

ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP



Simone Young AM
Chief Conductor



Sir Donald Runnicles OBE
Principal Guest Conductor



Benjamin Northey
Conductor in Residence



Vladimir Ashkenazy
Conductor Laureate



Andrew Haveron
Concertmaster

FIRST VIOLINS



Harry Bennetts
Associate
Concertmaster



Alexandra Osborne
Associate
Concertmaster



Fiona Ziegler
Assistant
Concertmaster



Sun Yi
Associate
Concertmaster
Emeritus



Jennifer Booth



Brielle Clapson
(until December)



Sophie Cole



Sercan Danis



Claire Herrick



Georges Lentz



Emily Long



Alexandra Mitchell



Alexander Norton



Anna Skálová
(until September)



Léone Ziegler

SECOND VIOLINS



Lerida Delbridge
Principal



Kirsty Hilton
Principal



Marina Marsden
Principal Emeritus



Emma Jezek
Assistant Principal



Alice Bartsch



Victoria Bihun



Rebecca Gill



Emma Hayes



Shuti Huang



Monique Irik



Wendy Kong



Benjamin Li



Nicole Masters



Robert Smith
(From March)



Maja Verunica

VIOLAS



Tobias Breider
Principal



Richard Waters
Principal
(from August)



Anne-Louise Comerford
Associate Principal
Emeritus



Justin Williams
Assistant Principal



Sandro Costantino



Rosemary Curtin



Stuart Johnson



Justine Marsden



Felicity Tsai



Amanda Verner



Leonid Volovelsky

CELLOS

Catherine Hewgill
Principal



Simon Cobcroft
Associate Principal



Leah Lynn
Assistant Principal



Kristy Conrau



Fenella Gill



Timothy Nankervis



Elizabeth Neville



Christopher Pidcock



Adrian Wallis

DOUBLE BASSES

Kees Boersma
Principal



Alexander Henery
Principal



David Campbell



Dylan Holly



Steven Larson



Richard Lynn



Jaan Pallandi



Benjamin Ward

FLUTES

Emma Sholl
Associate Principal



Carolyn Harris



Katlijn Sergeant
Principal
(from August)

PICCOLO

Shefali Pryor
Principal

OBOES

Callum Hogan

COR ANGLAIS

Alexandre Oguey
Principal

CLARINETS

Olli Leppäniemi
Principal
(from March)



Francesco Celata
Associate Principal



Christopher Tingay

BASS CLARINET

Alexander Morris
Principal

BASSOONS

Todd Gibson-Cornish
Principal



Matthew Wilkie
Principal Emeritus



Fiona McNamara



Noriko Shimada
Principal

HORNS

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Euan Harvey



Marnie Sebire



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Principal/Section
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Timothy Constable

HARP

Louisic Dulbecco
Principal

CELEBRATING OUR DONORS

Our heartfelt thanks to the many donors who made it possible to share our music on stages, in homes and in communities in 2025. We are incredibly grateful for your support which has had a significant impact on the quality, growth and excellence of our programs.

Your donations have helped bring music to vulnerable communities, inspire the next generation of musicians and music-lovers, and share the joy of live performances far and wide across NSW. Many thanks to those who are listed below, as well as those who wish to remain anonymous, for being part of our Sydney Symphony family.

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Anonymous (27)

In 2025, the Sydney Symphony
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The Estate of Beryl M Jamieson

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STORIES OF SIGNIFICANT GIFTS

The end of an era

This year we closed a remarkable chapter in the Sydney Symphony's history. Mrs Roslyn Packer AO has not only been a devoted concertgoer for more than three decades, but since 2017 she has served as the inspirational President of the Maestro's Circle. This is a role she stepped into at the invitation of her dear friend, the late Peter Weiss AO. Her presence, passion and generosity have left an indelible mark on the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

During her presidency, the Maestro's Circle has become the cornerstone of many extraordinary projects, from international tours to the most ambitious artistic undertakings in the Concert Hall. At its core, the Maestro's Circle supports inspirational conductors who lift the Sydney Symphony Orchestra to new heights. Through the prism of the International Conductor's Fund, Mrs Packer and the Packer Family Foundation have supported the engagement of world-class conductors to perform here in Sydney. The talent, expertise and collaboration shared on stage enhances the artistry of the Orchestra's performances, creating transformative experiences that resonate both artistically and emotionally with audiences.

Furthermore, through the enduring support of the Packer Family Foundation, Mrs Packer has championed our Hearing Preservation Project: a world-leading effort that places the wellbeing of our musicians at the heart of the Orchestra's future.

We thank Mrs Packer for her incredible generosity and know that her legacy will continue to resonate through the halls of the Concert Hall for years to come.



Mrs Roslyn Packer (September 2025/Jay Patel)



Leslie Macleod-Miller, Roslyn Packer, William Murray and Jennifer Drysdale (September 2025/Jay Patel)



Simone Young and Geoff Wilson (September 2025/Jay Patel)

A legacy gift supporting emerging artists

Deciding to leave a bequest to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra is a powerful and generous gesture. This year, we were honoured to be contacted by OMB Solicitors in Queensland on behalf of Adriana (Jenny) Dines. Jenny Dines had lived in Sydney for many years and attended Sydney Symphony concerts with her neighbour. Later in life, Jenny retired to Queensland.

Jenny lived a very long and active life; she passed away this year aged 100, but not before instructing her advisors that she wished her Estate to support the performing arts in Australia – one of her passions. Jenny specifically wanted to support talented young musicians aspiring to establish a career with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra or other professional ensembles.

Through her advisors, Jenny's estate will directly support and enhance our Fellowship Program for many years to come. We are incredibly grateful to be the recipient of this generous bequest which ensures that the Sydney Symphony can continue to deliver our world-class Fellowship Program that will produce young musicians of great skill and maturity, able to build professional careers in Australia and around the world.

Acknowledging a special connection

Supporting a musician as a Chair Patron is a unique and personal connection to the very heart of the Orchestra. This year, Brian Jones became the Chair Patron of cellist Kristy Conrau to honour his wife, Deborah, after her recent passing. Classical music was a shared interest for many years: Brian and Deborah attended concerts, followed the work of the Orchestra and valued the experience of live performance.

The genesis of this gift came through conversation with Brian's neighbours, parents of a musician in the Sydney Symphony. Knowing how important music had been to the couple, they suggested that this could be a meaningful way to remember Deborah while also supporting an individual artist.

The suggestion resonated immediately. Supporting one of the cello players felt especially appropriate, as the cello was an instrument they both admired for its depth, warmth and expressiveness.

This patronage allows Deborah's memory to remain connected to something they valued together, while providing practical, ongoing support to the Orchestra. Brian and Kristy have met several times, in conjunction with a rehearsal and after a performance and are enjoying their budding friendship. Brian's decision to become a Chair Patron is a thoughtful and personal one, reflecting gratitude for the music that played a part in his and Deborah's life together and offering a way to stay strongly connected to the Sydney Symphony family.



Kristy Conrau (Jay Patel)

Elevating the sound of the Orchestra

To create extraordinary musical experiences, the Orchestra needs the best 'tools of the trade'. Our supporters know firsthand the dedication and passion the musicians bring to every performance. But many people may not realise that our ability to deliver the world-class sound loved by audiences is deeply tied to the instruments we play. Our collection of high-quality instruments is not only a vital part of our history, but they are essential for ensuring the future of the Orchestra's sound and legacy.

In 2025, the Orchestra received an incredible gift from a donor that has enabled the purchase of a new harp. Their gift was given in remembrance of the donor's mother for whom Sydney Symphony Orchestra performances had provided much joy over many decades.

The beautiful new instrument was selected by Louisic Dulbecco, our Principal Harp. Louisic travelled to Europe and tested ten harps in Berlin and Paris during July 2025. Her assessment concluded that the harp must be very well balanced over the different octaves, present a rich bass tone but most importantly, demonstrate a warm and colourful sound. The new golden coloured harp will be showcased on stage during performances of Mahler's *Song of the Earth* for the opening of the Orchestra's 2026 Season in February 2026 and we can't wait to hear its incredible sound filling the Concert Hall.





Vanguard at the SCG. (L-R) Musicians Andrew Jezek, Timothy Nankervis, Natalie Mavridis, Alexander Morris, Alexander Norton, David Campbell (March 2025/Jay Patel)



Harry Bennetts with Chair Patrons Judy Weiss and Sam Weiss (October 2025/Craig Abercrombie)



Maestro's Circle Dinner. Nora Goodridge and Elena Kats-Chernin (September 2025/Jay Patel)



Bequest Society Lunch. (L-R) Ross Burns, Louise Burney, Patricia Spring, Dorothy Hoddinott, Raymond Camillire, Ray Wilson, Sarah Falzarano, Barbara Brady (July 2025/Craig Abercrombie)

CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

2025 was an exciting year for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's corporate partnerships, characterised by a deepening of our relationships with long-standing partners and the commencement of two new significant partnerships.

Our relationship with our Principal Partner **Emirates** continued to underpin so much of what we do, presenting our Masters and Thursday Afternoon Series as well as supporting the vision of our Chief Conductor Simone Young. The relationship with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra is one of the cornerstone partnerships in the arts Australia-wide, and is also Emirates' longest non-sporting partnership – something of which we are exceptionally proud.

We were excited to establish a new multi-year agreement with **Metal Manufactures Pty Limited/TLE Electrical & Data Suppliers** to support all of our Learning & Engagement programs. MM was founded in 1916 and has evolved into a large and diverse Australian company which includes TLE, Australia's leading electrical products distributor. MM is a noted supporter of classical music in Australia, in particular programs that nurture the next generation of musicians, and we are excited about what we can achieve together.

In May we hosted a special event supported by **Hantec Markets Australia**, celebrating Chinese-Australian cellist Li-Wei Qin, who was being honoured as Alumni of the Year by the Australia China Alumni Association (ACAA). Li-Wei is an old friend of the Orchestra and we were delighted to join in celebrating his contribution to music.

Our Fine Wines Partner and Presenting Partner of our Cocktail Hour Series, **Handpicked Wines** held a beautiful event in the Northern Foyer of the Sydney Opera House to celebrate their Spring release of wines. Named *Handpicked Harmonies* and hosted by Genevieve Lang (the voice of Cocktail Hour), invited guests were guided through Handpicked's latest releases by Chief Winemaker Peter Dillon, paired with beautiful food, accompanied by performances from past and present Sydney Symphony Fellows.

Our partnerships are built on collaboration and shared values, and the ongoing contributions of our partners allows us to create these meaningful experiences for our audiences, partners and artists. We thank all our partners for their trust and dedication and we look forward to continued success together.

We also wish to thank companies with which our agreements concluded in 2025: **Royal Caribbean** and **Hantec Markets Australia**. Royal Caribbean were major partners for three years and presented the Royal Caribbean Symphonic Friday and Royal Caribbean Symphonic Saturday series, and Hantec presented the Great Classics series on Saturday afternoons. Their support made possible countless unforgettable performances and helped bring major international artists to Sydney, and we thank them both for their partnerships.



James Ehnes performs Brahms' Violin Concerto post-concert event at Bennelong Restaurant, presented by Hantec Markets Australia (March 2025/Jay Patel)



Handpicked Harmonies event at the Northern Foyer of the Sydney Opera House, presented by Handpicked Wines (August 2025)



Professor Li-Wei Qin Receives ACAA 2024 Alumni of the Year Award. (L-R) Geoff Wilson, Li-Wei Qin, Grace Li, Bruce Whall, Joanne Ding, Damon Sze (May 2025/Jay Patel)

SALUTE

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



The Sydney Symphony Orchestra is assisted by the Australian Government through Creative Australia, its principal arts investment and advisory body.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.

MAJOR PARTNERS



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Fine Wine Partner

GOLD PARTNERS



SILVER PARTNERS



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FOUNDATIONS



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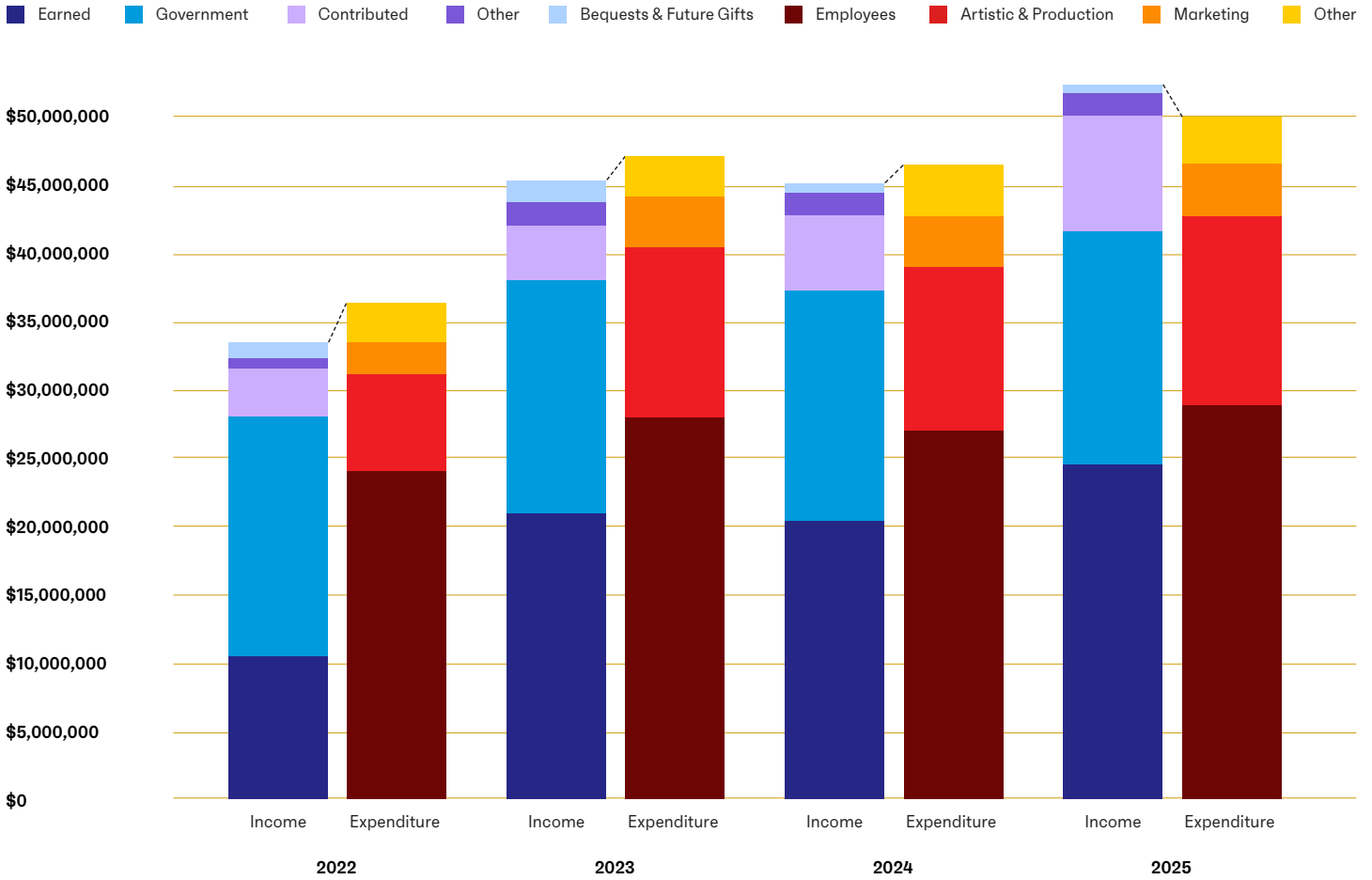
A MUSICAL
JOURNEY

Principal Partner



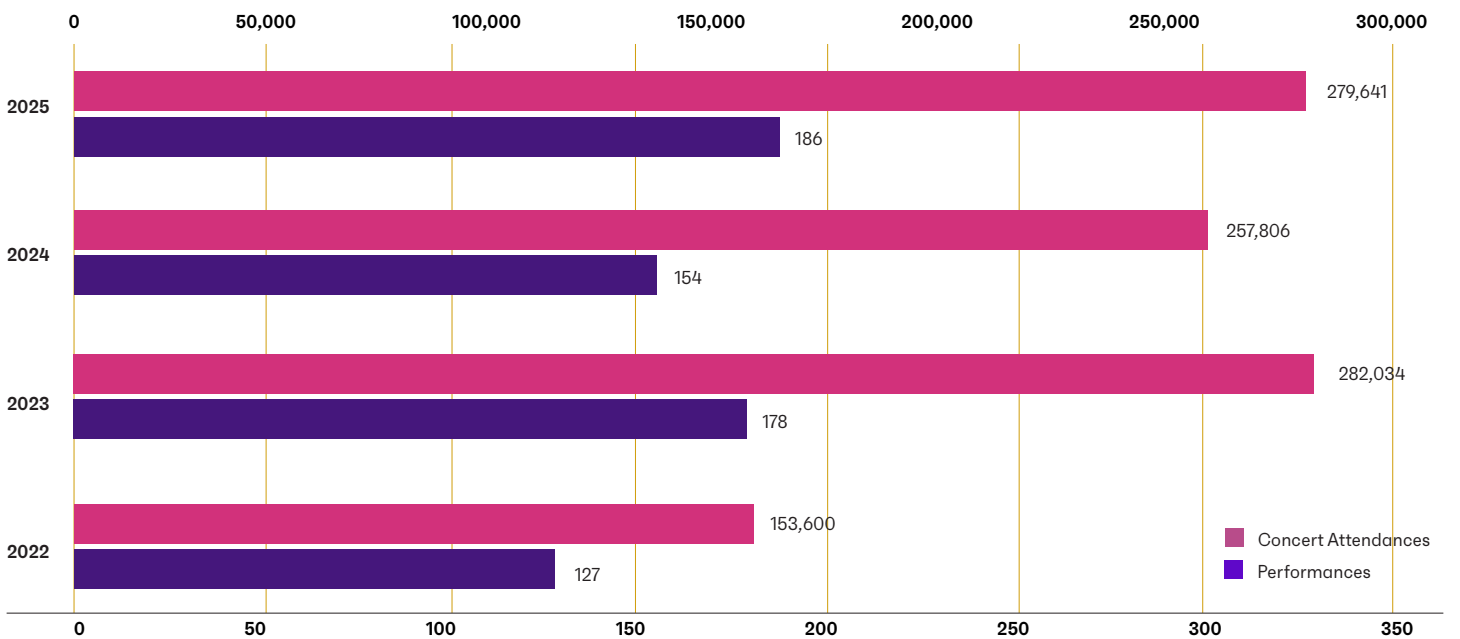
BUSINESS PERFORMANCE

OPERATING RESULT



	2022	2023	2024	2025
Annual surplus/(deficit)	(\$2.9m)	(\$1.8m)	(\$1.4m)	\$2.4m
Net assets at 31 December	\$9.6m	\$7.9m	\$6.6m	\$9.0m

TICKETED PERFORMANCES AND CONCERT ATTENDANCES IN SYDNEY & NSW





SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ADMINISTRATION

MANAGEMENT & STAFF

Craig Whitehead

Chief Executive Officer

Ben Chapman

Head of Government Relations

Milena Stajcic

Executive Assistant

ARTISTIC PLANNING

Melissa King

Director of Artistic Planning

Sam Torrens

Associate Director –
Concerts and Programming

Andrew Groch

Executive Producer

Vico Thai

Producer Artistic Planning

Sarah Thomas

Concert Manager

Ilmar Leetberg

Artist Liaison Manager

Alastair McKean

Head of Library

Mary-Ann Mead

Senior Librarian

Victoria Grant

Library

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Daniela Ramirez

Finance Manager

Laura Soutter

Payroll Manager

Jonathan Zaw

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Samudika De Silva

Accounts Payable Officer

Alex Hong

Assistant Accountant

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Director of Development

Rachel Shafran

Development Manager

Benjamin Moh

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Sabrina Jelacic

Corporate Relations Officer

Fleur Griffiths

Head of Philanthropy

Patricia Laksmono

Events Manager

Gabriela Postma

Philanthropy Officer

Alison Eom

Philanthropy Coordinator

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Director of Learning
& Engagement

Daniella Garnero

Program Manager,
Schools & Families

Giulian Favrin

Program Manager,
Artist Development
& Public Engagement

Alice Jarman-Powis

Learning & Engagement
Coordinator

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Douglas Emery

Senior Marketing Manager
& Insights Analyst

Rachael Hoffmann

Senior Outbound Supervisor

Jack Peggie, Thomas Peggie

Outbound Supervisors

Pim den Dekker

Head of Customer Relations

Georgia Mulligan,

Jennifer Calacoci,

Megan Chaseling

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Nicole Dimitriadis, Ofri Einav,

Isabelle Epps, Rosa Griffith,

Maia Jelavic-Cummins,

Jane Jones, Sarah Judd,

Rory Knott, Rhi McCourt,

Milly McPherson,

Analene Montes, Reuben Ryan,

Oli Shute, Ebony Tait,

Emily Veness, Fatima Zafar

Customer Relations
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Director of Operations
& Production

Aeva O’Dea

Operations Manager

Tom Farmer

Production Manager

Elissa Seed

Production Manager

Jacinta Dockrill

Production Administrator

Shanell Bielawa

Production Coordinator

Jordan Blackwell,

Jess Hughes, Rory Knott,

Matthew Landi, Harvey Lynn,

Ella Tomkins

Production Assistants

Georgia Holmes, Reede Palmer

Production Interns

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Aernout Kerbert

Director of
Orchestra Management

Brighdie Chambers

Orchestra Manager

Emma Winestone

Deputy Orchestra Manager

PEOPLE & CULTURE

Daniel Bushe

Director of People & Culture

Rosie Marks-Smith

Head of Culture & Wellbeing

Keanna Mauch

People & Culture Coordinator

Sue Burnet

Work Health & Safety Specialist

THANKS TO THOSE WHO LEFT THE COMPANY IN 2025

Emma Ferrer, Nusrat Khan,
Meklit Kibret, Julian Konle,
Minerva Prescott, Yen Sharratt
and Ruth Tolentino.

EXIT

“So – why do this? Because it is six hours of utterly enthralling music and drama. Because live performance, even without sets or costumes, can conjure whole worlds through sound. Because Simone Young and the SSO make Wagner absolutely breathtaking. Because you won’t hear music like this anywhere else, anytime soon.”

ClassikON on Simone Young conducts Siegfried



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