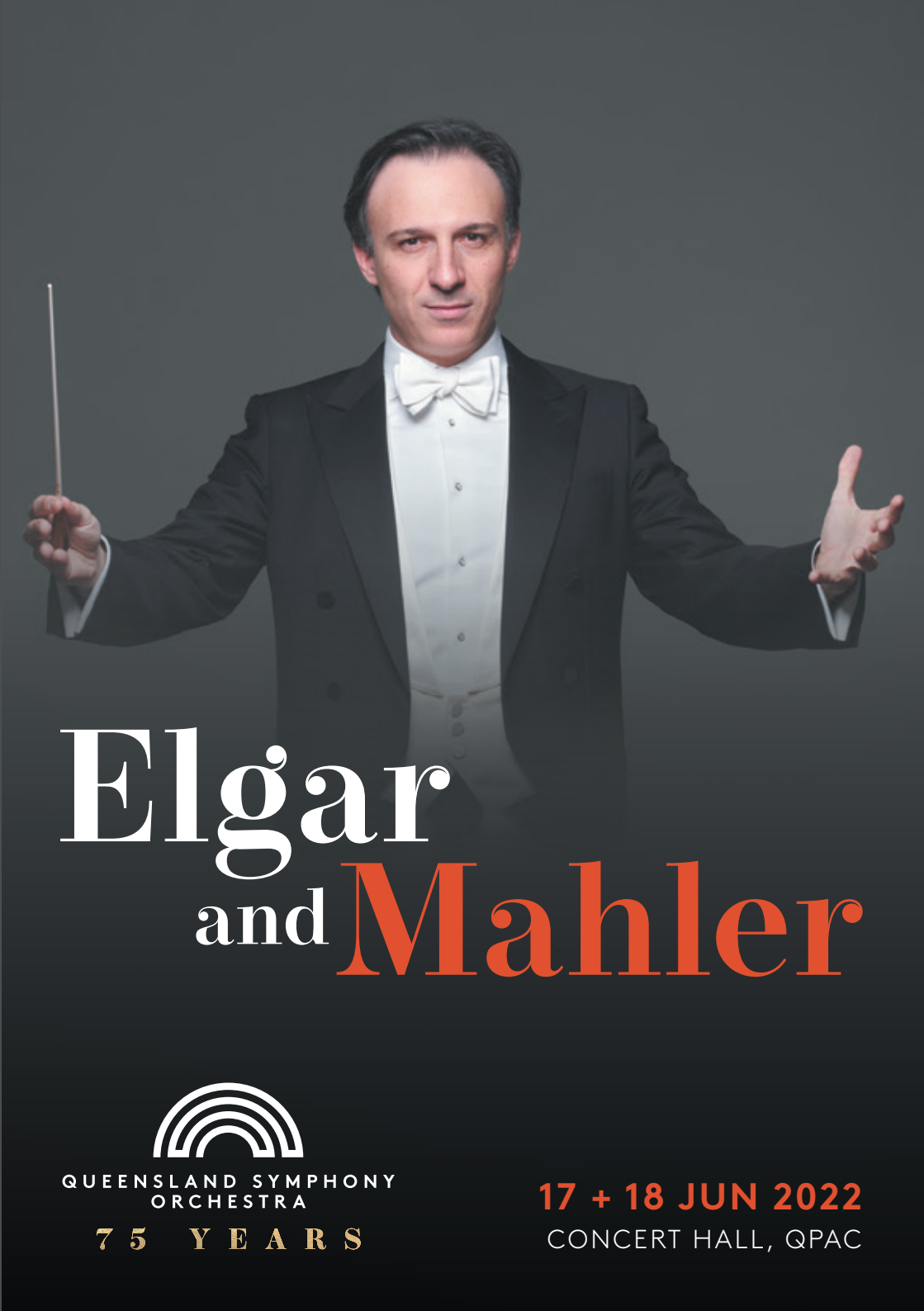


Elgar and Mahler

QUEENSLAND SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

75 YEARS

17 + 18 JUN 2022

CONCERT HALL, QPAC

CONTENTS

WELCOME

Hello everyone, and welcome!

Gustav Mahler's 1st Symphony (*Titan*) is arguably one of the most groundbreaking first symphonies by anyone, ever. Mahler was ahead of his time in many regards - in the words of Benjamin Zander, for the opening of this symphony you simply "turn up the tuning note of the universe". In the 1960s, more than 100 years after Mahler was born, radio telescope researchers at Princeton University were finding an unaccountable background hiss in every measurement they took - it turned out to be the distant echo of the Big Bang - the fire and fury in which our universe began. I always think Mahler, with his streak of pantheistic nature worship would have found this coincidence fascinating - as he said to a friend on a walk in the Austrian Alps, "Don't bother to look, I've composed all this already". Mahler asks the big questions. We always look forward to confronting them with you, and we've enjoyed preparing this journey for you with our friend and colleague Umberto Clerici.

Edward Elgar's Cello Concerto is also a piece that asks us to confront hard questions - written in the aftermath of the First World War, it is elegiac, beautiful, and introspective. In our particular moment of history, it invites us to contemplate all that has been lost and changed in the last few years and to consider what the way forward may look like for us in the coming years. We hope you find sharing the performance with us as illuminating and fulfilling as we have felt preparing and performing it for you.

Thomas Allely
Principal Tuba

IN THIS CONCERT

Conductor	Umberto Clerici
Soloist	Daniel Müller-Schott, cello

PROGRAM

ELGAR	Concerto in E minor for Violoncello & Orchestra, Op.85	30′
INTERVAL		**20′**
MAHLER	Symphony No.1 in D major (*Titan*)	53′

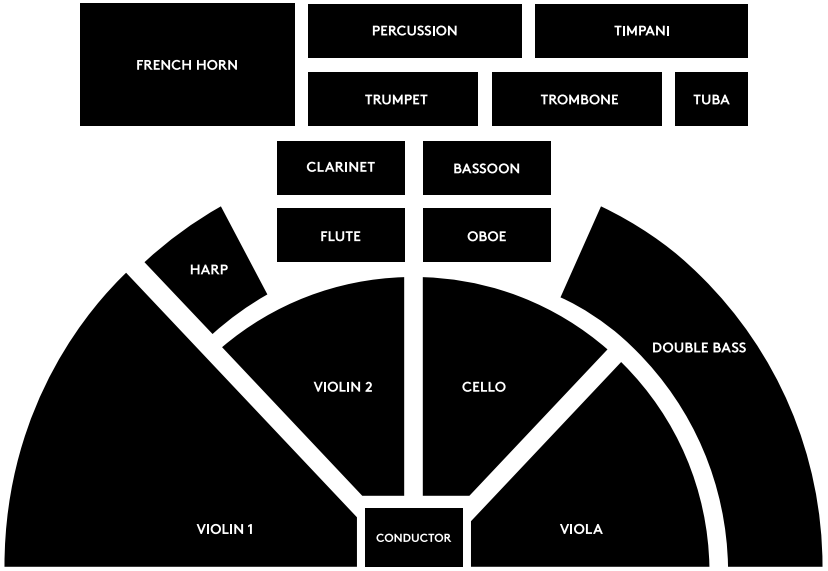
Relive Elgar and Mahler on ABC Classic on 13 August at 1pm (AEST).

Queensland Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the traditional custodians of Australia.
We acknowledge the cultural diversity of Elders, both past and recent, and the significant contributions that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to make to Queensland and Australia.

To ensure an enjoyable concert experience for everyone, please remember to turn off your mobile phones and all other electronic devices. Please muffle coughs and refrain from talking during the performance.

Concert photos throughout by Peter Wallis. Front cover by Jay Patel.

IF YOU'RE NEW TO THE ORCHESTRA



*Stage layout for Mahler Symphony No.1

WHO SITS WHERE

Orchestras sit in sections based on types of instruments. There are four main sections in the symphony orchestra (strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion) and sometimes a keyboard section.

STRINGS

These instruments produce sound by bowing or plucking stretched strings.

- First / Second Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Double Bass
- Harp

WOODWIND

Wind instruments produce sound by being blown into.

- Flute / Piccolo
- Clarinet / E flat Clarinet / Bass Clarinet
- Oboe / Cor Anglais
- Bassoon / Contrabassoon

KEYBOARD

Keyboard instruments are played by pressing keys.

- Piano
- Celeste
- Organ

BRASS

Brass players create sound by vibrating their lips. When this vibration is pushed through large brass tubes, it can create significant noise.

- French Horn
- Trumpet
- Trombone / Bass Trombone
- Tuba

PERCUSSION

These instruments create sound by being struck or shaken. Some instruments just make a sound; others play particular pitches.

- Timpani, Bass drum, Snare drum, Cymbals, Glockenspiel, Xylophone, Vibraphone, Tam-tam, Triangle, Sleigh Bells.

WHO'S ON STAGE TODAY

FOR YOUNGER EARS

Edward Elgar
Cello Concerto in E minor

Today our musicians perform the beautiful Cello Concerto in E minor by English composer Edward Elgar. But this is a cello concerto, so our musicians need a soloist to perform with them! On stage today is world-renowned cellist Daniel Müller-Schott who will perform this technical and emotional marathon.

WHO WAS ELGAR?

Sir Edward William Elgar was an English composer who is well-known for his orchestral work, *Enigma Variations*. He was born in 1857 in a small town outside of Worcester to a piano tuner and the daughter of a farmer. As he grew up, Elgar had a brief foray as a solicitor and worked in his father's music shop, before beginning his travels to Europe in the 1800s. In Paris he heard composer Camille Saint-Saëns play the organ, in Germany he heard works by Johannes Brahms, Robert Schumann, and Richard Wagner, and then he returned to England and joined an orchestra for seven years as a violinist. By his forties, Elgar had gained popularity as a composer with *Enigma Variations* and other works. His Cello Concerto in E was his final work.

LISTEN OUT FOR

Sometimes knowing when a composer wrote a piece of music in their life can help you understand what the music is about or what emotions the composer is trying to evoke. When Elgar wrote this cello concerto, he was living in the middle of World War I and was likely feeling the emotional toll it was taking on those around him and his country. In addition to this, Elgar was amidst his pain post-surgery having just had his tonsils removed. In this piece perhaps we can hear the sadness he felt as war erupted across Europe, the grief of death surrounding him, and maybe even a little self-pity as he lay in a hospital bed only able to eat soup.

The concerto begins with an emotional sound from the solo cello before the entire orchestra takes over. The music begins to flow more gently. The second movement starts with a very Spanish-influenced plucking of strings (this is called pizzicato) on the cello. The orchestra join in as the cello continues to play rapidly. Then, the orchestra quietens and the passionate sounds of the solo cello have space. There are moments of joy before the music becomes sad again, hovering over the notes. As the music heads towards the finale, the orchestra joins in again in a swell of sound and finishes with a few exclamations. Phew, what a cello marathon!

DID YOU KNOW?

The word cello originally meant "little, large viola" in Italian!

FOR YOUNGER EARS

Gustav Mahler
Symphony No.1 in D (*Titan*)

In the music world, any music by Gustav Mahler is regarded as big, bold, and emotional. Mahler is known for writing long orchestral music and heavy symphonies. So, as our musicians take to the stage today, get ready to go on an emotional journey.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

In 1889 Symphony No.1 premiered in Budapest, but... not everyone liked it. Audiences found the music confusing. A disheartened Mahler put it aside for a while before revising it and adding *Titan* to the title. In his revisions the symphony took on themes from a novel of the same name, and in the music we can hear heroic ideals of a main character, the troubles they might experience, and finally the triumph!

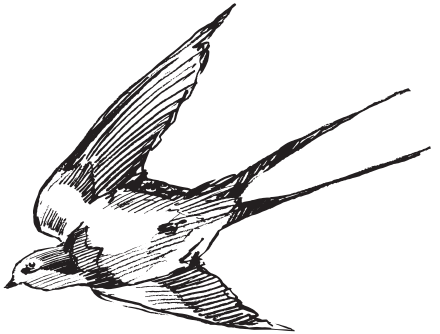
WHO WAS MAHLER?

Born in 1860 in Austria, Gustav Mahler had humble beginnings. His family was poor, but Mahler loved music and went on to study it in Vienna. In his lifetime, Mahler didn't enjoy the composer status he has today – indeed, he never actually quit his day job as a conductor and continued to write music on the side. Talk about multi-tasking!

LISTEN OUT FOR

This Titan of a symphony is made up of four movements. Let's break the music down movement by movement and see if you can hear a few instrumental highlights.

The first movement is called *Langsam. Schleppend*. If your German is a little rusty, it translates to "Slowly. Dragging," which indicates the pace that Mahler wanted the music performed. As you might guess, the music begins slowly – the violins open with a sustained pitch before the piccolo and flutes twitter a bird-like call. The oboes and clarinets join in to make the birdcall a little deeper. The French horns play us a gentle melody, before the trumpets announce themselves and the music begins to build further.



In the second movement, the music is played joyously with a little more urgency. Repetition is used a lot in this movement, but each time you think you hear the music repeating itself, it goes a bit further. This shorter movement ends in a flourish and a bang from the cymbals at the back!

In movement three, the double bass starts us off. Mahler called this movement a funeral procession for a hero (way to kill the mood Mahler). The music opens with a pacing from the timpani and a single double bass chimes in with a melancholy sway. Before long we hear the oboe play a counter-melody on top of the gradually building gloom.

The final movement is the longest and directly translated from German the title means "to play with stormy emotion." The opening thunderclap drumrolls into a succession of woodwinds, strings and brass to build the momentous sound. The strings continue in a frenzy – they drop in momentum before picking up again. The ending is triumphant and glorious.

BEFORE WE BEGIN

Before the performance begins, get to know a few musical terms in the Listening Guide.

Time Signature	an indication of how many musical beats and what duration of beats the music is played in.
Key	a group of notes that forms the foundation of a music composition.
Semiquavers	listen for runs of very fast notes.
Appassionato	with a strong feeling of passion.
Espressivo	performed in an expressive manner.
Rhythmic Unison	when two or more parts play notes with same rhythm.
Symphonic Poem	a piece of music that tells a story or is based on a poem, painting or landscape.
Staccato	performed with each note sharply detached or separated from the others.
Triplets	a three-note pattern that fills the duration of a typical two-note pattern.
Canon	Where instruments play the same music starting at different times. Perhaps the most well-known canon is Pachelbel's Canon written by Johann Pachelbel.
Fortississimo	a passage of music marked to be performed very, very loudly.
Major Key	one of the most commonly used musical scales, it is made up of seven notes and sounds happy.
Crotchets	musical notes that are one beat in length

LISTENING GUIDE

Sir Edward Elgar (1857–1934)

Concerto in E minor for Violoncello & Orchestra, Op.85

I. *Adagio; Moderato*
II. *Lento; Allegro molto*
III. *Adagio*
IV. *Allegro; Moderato; Allegro, ma non troppo*

Britain boasts a strong tradition of military music. Composers like Gustav Holst and Ralph Vaughan Williams wrote extensively for military band; Edward Elgar wrote his *Pomp and Circumstance Military Marches* in the spirit of glory.

Elgar's Cello Concerto in E minor is far removed from the genre of military music – it's not arranged for a marching band, there's no heavy beat to rally the troops, and it doesn't contain the optimism of something to fight for. Rather, it's a cry for peace lost to war – a message from the depths of this composer's soul after it had been corrupted by the battles of the early 20th Century.

But let's start from the beginning: an infected tonsil.

Elgar was 61 when he woke from surgery; his tonsil removed. From his hospital bed, he grabbed a pencil and scribbled that iconic tune that would open his Cello Concerto. Elgar and his wife then visited a countryside cottage in Sussex, where rolling hills and chirping birds might aid him through a pleasant recovery. But the composer was not without memories of former Sussex nights when the roar of weapons from World War I could be heard across the channel.

The Cello Concerto was completed quickly in 1919, and it echoes Elgar's pain – perhaps his physical discomfort post-surgery, but undoubtedly his emotional turmoil. Distressed by the impact of war on the world around him, Elgar instructed his cello to howl the type of gut-wrenching melody that makes hairs stand up on the back of your neck.

It's hard to catch the beat of the first movement. The **time signature** is 9/8, which means we can feel three pulses per bar – a bit like a loose waltz. But each of *those* beats is divided into three as well, and the result is a gentle rocking feel. Is Elgar attempting to sway us into feeling calm – even though he knows it will be impossible to find true peace during his passionate protest?

The melody seems to respect a rhythm of its own, and the music changes **key** to fit the expression. Surrounding instruments are an echo of the cello's virtuosic passages: this solo has its own message to share, and other players are swept into its momentum.

The concerto moves seamlessly into the second movement, which is sparse and provides a short burst of emotional downtime. The cello rides its **semiquavers** with quaint interjections from the orchestra; some joy can be found, even if only for a moment (and even if it's also kind of menacing).

By the final movement, we can hear faint reflections of the first – but it has evolved. Though markings are **appassionato** and **espressivo**, it's far from vulnerable. It has hardened, and through bouts of **rhythmic unison** comes the unavoidable rigidity of war. We hear a final wail from the cello – it fights to the end, desperately opposing the orchestra's fate.

This nostalgic lament for peace leaves few dry eyes in the concert hall – perhaps not during its underprepared premiere in 1919, but certainly today.

Pictured: David Mitchell and Claire Ramuscak

LISTENING GUIDE

Gustav Mahler (1860–1911)
Symphony No.1 in D major (*Titan*)

I. *Langsam schleppend*
II. *Kraftig bewegt*
III. *Feierlich und gemessen*
IV. *Strumisch bewegt*

Gustav Mahler wore his heart on his sleeve.

The composer's language was symphonic: he used the full gamut of the orchestra to express his troubled inner world. In Symphony No.1, we hear the voice of a young man on the brink of his 30s, struggling with a crisis of religion and identity, struggling to measure youth and death.

Titan started out as a **symphonic poem** containing a few melodies from Mahler's first song cycle. Don't worry too much about the title – it refers to a novel by German romantic writer Jean Paul but isn't a musical translation. Mahler dropped the nickname after the first couple of performances, anyway. He revised his composition over time (also bailing on a second movement called *Blumine)*, leaving us with an hour-long symphony that winds its way through emotional and philosophical themes.

The first movement starts with the tension of a note that never lifts. Minutes pass as the strings hold their tone – a bed under the soft horn melody, and **staccato** birdcalls from winds. (Those birds fly back to us later.) 'Nicht eilen', the composer notes, 'do not rush'. We hear each instrument warming up to the music before their pleasant and pastoral union. So you might like to imagine Mahler whistling as he hiked the mountains of Austria (a pastime he enjoyed, despite a heart condition!).

Gradually, birdcalls are replaced with crashing cymbals, ripping horns, and trumpets parading through **triplets.** It sounds a little bit military, doesn't it? We know Mahler often injected his soul into his music. With a touch of nostalgia, he returns to his childhood in Iglau, recalling the military barracks near his home, the sounds of brass and drums hurtling through the wind.

Now might be the time to remind you how this piece had evolved. Mahler originally named it *A Symphonic Poem in Two Parts*. The first part of this work is about youth and nature, the second about death and despair. We know movement one sings like a bird; movement two brings us down from the alpine landscape to whisk us into a dance. So when the third movement comes, we hear that transition into Mahler's next second philosophical theme – death. And it begins with the creepiest version of *Frère Jacques* you've ever heard.

Mahler's third movement is a funeral march. If you remember humming *Frère Jacques* as a child – or to your child – you're bound to find this music disturbing. It unravels in a 'round' (in classical terms, we'd call it a type of **canon**), where one instrument starts the melody, then the next enters, and so on. Just like the way you used to sing at school. Bassoon, cello, tuba – see if you can pick out the instruments as they join in with this hypnotic theme.

Layering darkness over darkness, we hear a pulse reminiscent of a final church bell (as the song goes, 'ding dang dong'), then the mood is transformed. Double reeds play a folk melody designed to sound like a Klezmer band. Timpani ticks over like a pendulum, reminding us rather morbidly that our time is running out. *Frère Jacques* is eventually juxtaposed with the Klezmer theme in this grim contemplation of mortality.

Mahler drew some inspiration from a woodcut called *The Hunter's Funeral Procession*. Yet, if we think about the bigger picture, we may also feel a hint of the composer's inner torment. Mahler was born to a Jewish family, but as an adult he converted to Catholicism. This may have been a spiritual move, but most historians believe it was a professional one, too: in those days, the Vienna State Opera wouldn't accept members of the Jewish faith as their director. Therefore, Mahler was baptised so he could work in that role. He held the post for a decade, and was still subjected to rampant antisemitism. This sombre music foreshadows a genuine conflict of identity – traditional Klezmer band overlapping and competing with the Catholic friar, Jacques.

Then it's loud, loud, *loud*! (That's the translation of **fortississimo** – *fff* – the dynamic at which these musicians are instructed to play.) You're being warned so when the fourth movement arrives, you don't jump out of your skin, but you probably will anyway.

Sticking with that 'part two' theme of death and despair, the fourth movement is a battle of biblical proportions: it literally rattles your bones. The orchestra can hardly contain its energy (except when Mahler instructs players to express 'reluctance' and 'reticence' – a translation of his markings). It's absolutely cyclonic.

The 'cuckoo' from the first movement is once again heard. With great relief, we remember this symphony is after all in a **major key** (and hopefully has a happy ending). But Mahler's joy is tainted with uncertainty, and timpani rolls us into a final showdown. Which will prevail, life or death? The beauty of nature, or its withering end?

After an enriching hour of soul-searching, Mahler triumphs. He spends the remaining minutes of his ecstatic climax telling us: *Look how much we have struggled. But life prevails, so let's enjoy it while we can!* Two comically short **crotchets** wrap up this piece – an abrupt 'that's that'.

As with many now-famous works (like Elgar's Cello Concerto), the premiere of Mahler's first symphony was not a success. The version you hear took time to write and rewrite; it premiered in 1889 under the composer's baton and continued to evolve in the following decade, prior to its publication. His final version leaves you to contemplate how *you've* evolved – what *you* feel, and what story of *your* life is revealed through this music. You won't come away from a Mahler symphony unchanged.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Umberto Clerici
Chief Conductor Designate

With a career spanning more than 20 years as a gifted cello soloist, orchestral musician, and now conductor, Umberto Clerici has gained renown as an artist of diverse and multifaceted talents.

Umberto is the Chief Conductor Designate of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and will commence as their Chief Conductor from January 2023.

It was in Sydney in 2018 that Umberto made his conducting debut with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra at the Sydney Opera House. Following a rapid trajectory of conducting engagements in Australia, Umberto is now in high demand with the major symphony orchestras of Australia and New Zealand.

As a guest conductor, highlights include multiple series' with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Umberto recently made his debut with the West Australian and Adelaide Symphony Orchestras and looks forward to making his debuts with the New Zealand and Dunedin Symphony Orchestras.

Umberto began his career as a virtuoso cellist making his solo debut at the age of 17 performing Haydn's D Major cello concerto in Japan. After years of performing on the stages of the world's most prestigious concert halls, Umberto took up the position as Principal Cellist of the Royal Opera House in Turin, which he held for four years. In 2014, he was then appointed as the Principal Cello of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, a position he held until 2021.

As a cellist, Umberto is beloved by Australian audiences and has performed internationally as a soloist at New York's Carnegie Hall, Vienna's Musicverein, the great Shostakovich Hall of St Petersburg, Auditorium Parco della Musica in Rome, the Salzburg Festival and in 2012 he performed Tchaikovsky's "Rococo variations" under the baton of Valery Gergiev.

Pictured: Phoebe Russell and Kirsten Hulin-Bobart

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Daniel Müller-Schott
Cello

Daniel Müller-Schott is one of the most sought-after cellists in the world and can be heard on all the great international concert stages. For many years he has been enchanting audiences as an ambassador for classical music in the 21st century. The New York Times refers to his "intensive expressiveness" and describes him as a "fearless player with technique to burn".

Daniel Müller-Schott guests with international leading orchestras in New York, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Los Angeles; the Berliner Philharmoniker, the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Bayrisches Staatsorchester and Münchner Philharmoniker, the Radio Orchestras from Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Leipzig, Hamburg, Copenhagen and Paris, the London Symphony and Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as Sydney and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Tokyo's NHK Symphony Orchestra, Taiwan's National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) and Seoul Philharmonic Orchestra. He has appeared worldwide in concert with such renowned conductors as Marc Albrecht, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Cristian Măcelaru, Thomas Dausgaard, Christoph Eschenbach, Iván Fischer, Alan Gilbert, Gustavo Gimeno, Manfred Honeck, Neeme Järvi, Karina Canellakis, Susanna Mälkki, Andris Nelsons, Gianandrea Noseda, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Kirill Petrenko, Michael Sanderling und Krzysztof Urbański.

In the 21/22 season, Daniel Müller-Schott will perform twice with Filarmonica della Scala at George Enescu Festival and at Dvořák Festival Prague, in Germany with the Symphonieorchester Bayerischer Rundfunk. He is invited for concerts with Dallas Symphony Orchestra and in Australia with West Australian Symphony Orchestra and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Further concerts are planned with Copenhagen Philharmonic, Turku Philharmonic Orchestra, Frankfurter Opern- und Museumsorchester and Budapest Festival Orchestra. As Co-Artistic Director at Vevey Spring Classic Festival 2022 he can be heard with Janine Jansen, Francesco Piemontesi, Nils Mönkemeyer and Cameristi della Scala/Wilson Hermanto.

International music festivals regularly invite Daniel Müller-Schott. In his chamber music concerts, Daniel Müller-Schott collaborates inter alia with Kit Armstrong, Renaud Capuçon, Xavier de Maistre, Julia Fischer, Daniel Hope, Igor Levit, Sabine Meyer, Nils Mönkemeyer, Anne-Sophie Mutter, Francesco Piemontesi, Lauma and Baiba Skride, Emmanuel Tjeknavorian, Simon Trpčeski with the Ebene Quartet.

Recording for Orfeo, Müller-Schott's extensive and award-winning discography includes his latest recording CD "Four Visions of France". Daniel Müller-Schott studied under Walter Nothas, Heinrich Schiff and Steven Isserlis, was supported personally by Anne-Sophie Mutter and received, among other things, the Aida Stucki Prize as well as a year of private tuition under Mstislaw Rostropovich. At the age of fifteen, Daniel Müller-Schott won the first prize at the International Tchaikovsky Competition for Young Musicians in 1992 in Moscow.

Daniel Müller-Schott plays the "Ex Shapiro" Matteo Goffriller cello, made in Venice in 1727.

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QSO Studio, ABC Building

Conductor Johannes Fritzsch

Mozart Excerpts from *The Magic Flute*
Brett Dean *Short Stories*
Beethoven Symphony No.2, Op.36

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SUN 24 JUL 11.30AM
Concert Hall, QPAC

Conductor Umberto Clerici
Host Guy Noble

Mussorgsky *Night on Bald Mountain*
Wagner *Ride of the Valkyries*
Ravel Excerpts from *Mother Goose* Suite

and much more

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FRI 29 JUL 11.30AM
SAT 30 JUL 7.30PM
Concert Hall, QPAC

Conductor Giordano Bellincampi
Tenor Kang Wang

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Puccini Che gelida manina from *La Bohème*
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