



BRISBANE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA.



Pictures at an Exhibition and Boléro

MICHAEL KEEN | CONDUCTOR
JONATHAN HENDERSON | FLUTE
LISA CHENEY | COMPOSER

PROGRAM

Borodin Polovtsian Dances (from Prince Igor) | **Lisa Cheney** Flute Concerto (world premiere)
Ravel Boléro | **Mussorgsky (arr. Ravel)** Pictures at an Exhibition

SUNDAY 23 JULY 3PM OLD MUSEUM CONCERT HALL BOWEN HILLS

CONCERT PROGRAM

ALEXANDER BORODIN

Polovtsian Dances (from Prince Igor)

LISA CHENEY

Concerto for Flute (world premiere)

MAURICE RAVEL

Boléro

INTERVAL

MODEST MUSSORGSKY (arr. Ravel)

Pictures at an Exhibition

I. Gnomus

II. The Old Castle

III. Tuileries

IV. Bydlo

V. Ballet of the Chicks in their Shells

VI: Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle

VII: The Market Place at Limoges

VIII: Catacombs: Sepulcrum romanum
(Promenade: Con mortuis in lingua
mortua)

X. The Hut on Hen's Legs (Baba-Yaga)

XI. The Great Gate of Kiev



VIOLIN 1

Cameron Hough*
(Concertmaster)
André Allavena
Karen Blair
Debbie Chen
Hwee Sin Chong
Tove Easton
Emma Eriksson
Keith Gambling
Kevin Hsieh
Danielle Langston
Peter Nicholls
Amy Phillips

VIOLIN 2

Ryan Walsh^
Yvette McKinnon
Nawres Alfreh
Josh Bonesso
Murari Campbell
Camilla Harvey
Anna Jenkins
Bec Johnson
Lauren Jones
Amanda Lugton
Tatiana Murasheva
Ailsa Nicholson

VIOLA

Tim Butcher^
Bronwyn Gibbs
Katrina Greenwood
Callula Killingly
John McGrath
Felicity Rynn
Daniel Tipping
Jennifer Waanders

CELLO

Mathilde Vlieg*
Charmaine Lee
Nicole Kancachian
Gabriel Dumitru
Isabel Backstrom
Sara Waak
Olliver Holms
Donald Backstrom

BASS

Samuel Dickenson*
Steve Dunn
Georgia Lloyd
Lexie Elvin

HARP

John Connolly*

CELESTA

Julian Wade#

FLUTE

Jo Lagerlow**
Jessica Sullivan

PICCOLO

Lucia Gonzáles*

OBOE

Gabrielle Knight*

OBOE D'AMORE

Anton Rayner*

COR ANGLAIS

Anneka Celotto#

CLARINET

Daniel Sullivan*
Kendal Alderman

BASS CLARINET

Melissa Baldwin*

TENOR/ALTO SAXOPHONE

Ashleigh Porter#

SOPRANO SAXOPHONE

Samantha Mason*

BASSOON

Lisa Squires*
Patricia Brennan

CONTRABASSOON

Carl Bryant*

HORN

Melanie Taylor*
Joyce Shek
Laura Guiton
Trestan McMillan

TRUMPET

Chris Baldwin*
Courtney Oxenford
Ebony Westwood
Jack O'Grady#

TROMBONE

Mathew White*
Nicholas Whatling

BASS TROMBONE

Steve Port^#

TUBA

Michael Sterzinger*

PERCUSSION

Kerry Vann*
Michael Stegeman
Craig Rabnott
Lucie Allcock
William Elvin



Conductor MICHAEL KEEN

We welcome back conductor Michael Keen for his second collaboration with BPO.

Michael began his music studies with a pre-tertiary scholarship at the Australian National University's School of Music, Canberra and completed a Bachelor of Music at the Queensland Conservatorium. Michael received his Masters degree from the University of British Columbia, in Vancouver Canada, studying trumpet with Mr Larry Knopp.

Having received his degrees in orchestral performance, Michael has performed with the Queensland Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Prince George Symphony, North Czech Philharmonic and the North Czech Opera and Ballet.

Michael also undertook studies in choral and orchestral conducting, and was assistant conductor for the Queensland Conservatorium's opera productions of Puccini's *Suor Angelica & Gianni Schicchi*, Ravel's *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, Gluck's

Orpheo et Euridice, Poulenc's *Les Mamelles de Tiresias*, and was the music director and conductor for the Conservatorium's production of Offenbach's *Orpheus in the Underworld* directed by Tama Matheson. While in Vancouver Michael served as teaching assistant to Maestro Dwight Bennett and the University of British Columbia Symphony Orchestra.

In 2014 and 2015 Michael took part in Symphony Services International's Conductor Development Program. This allowed him to work with Maestro Christopher Seaman, Maestro Johannes Fritzsche, the Auckland Philharmonia and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

In recent years Michael has worked for Opera Queensland's Open Stage, an education program for south east Queensland high schools. Michael is also resident conductor of the St Andrew's Community Orchestra, South Brisbane.



Soloist JONATHAN HENDERSON

Jonathan Henderson is the Principal Flautist of the Estonian National Opera.

Jonathan has performed with the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra (Finland), Australian Chamber Orchestra, Aldeburgh World Orchestra (UK) appearing at the BBC Proms, Pärnu Music Festival Orchestra (Estonia) and has worked under conductors including Sir Mark Elder, Neeme Järvi, Paavo Järvi, Alan Gilbert, Matthias Pinscher, Susanna Mälkki and Olli Mustonen. He is a founding member of the New Theatre Ensemble who have premiered numerous Australian works in Estonia.

Along with pianist Miyuki Ishii he was a finalist of the Kiejstut Bacewicz International Chamber Music Competition (Poland). As soloist, Henderson has appeared with the Tallinn Chamber Orchestra (2015), giving the Estonian Premiere of Lepo Sumera's 'To the Harmony' for flute and string orchestra. He has also performed concerti with the Estonian National Opera Orchestra (2013) and the Sydney Symphony Sinfonia (2010).

Jonathan is a recipient of awards from the Ian Potter Cultural Trust, PPCA Performer's Trust, DAAD, Foundation for

Young Australians, Gold Coast Arts Centre Gift Fund and Archimedes Foundation. Jonathan is a proud alumnus of the Australian Youth Orchestra and AISOI (Australia) where he was able to cut his teeth on the orchestral repertoire whilst being mentored by Emma Sholl and Janet Webb (Sydney Symphony Orchestra). In 2016 he was accepted to both the Zermatt Festival Academy (Switzerland) and the Lucerne Festival Academy (Switzerland).

Born in Newcastle, Australia in 1987, Jonathan completed his undergraduate studies at the Queensland Conservatorium in flute with Gerhard Mallon and composition with Stephen Leek. He went on to study a Master of Music at the Hochschule für Musik Freiburg (Germany) in the class of Felix Renggli. Additionally he has undertaken private study in Sydney with Sally Walker and in Berlin with Pirmin Grehl. He has attended masterclasses with Walter Auer, Emily Beynon, Sharon Bezaly, Wissam Boustany, Renate Greiss-Armin and Andrea Lieberknecht. Jonathan is currently a student at the Haute École de Musique Geneva (Switzerland) in the class of Jacques Zoon, as well as completing a PhD at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre.



Composer LISA CHENEY

Lisa Cheney is an Australian composer of acoustic and acousmatic music, hailing from Queensland and now living in Melbourne.

Her music communicates through varied styles which often explore notions of connection and authenticity through fascinations with the 'edge' of beauty; expression, poeticism, fragility, delicacy, resonant space, pacing, light and dark and atmospheric soundscapes. Cheney's work has been described as 'atmospheres of unfathomable spaciousness' (*Partial Durations*), 'melodic slivers with plaintive intensity' (*The Australian*) and 'fantastic and frightening in its detail and colour' (*Resonate*). Her body of work incorporates orchestra, chamber, voice, acousmatic collaborations, arrangements and works for theatre and ballet.

Cheney has received several accolades, including grants from the Australia-Korea Foundation, 2017 Art Music Fund and the Silver Harris and Jeff Peck Composition Prize. Her music has been commissioned and performed by The Southern Cross Soloists, The Australian Voices, Queensland Conservatorium Symphony Orchestra, Plexus, Syzygy, Sydney Antiphony, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Tasmanian Symphony

Orchestra and the Australian Ballet amongst others.

Cheney holds a Bachelor of Music in Composition (2008) and Master of Music (2013) from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music where she studied with Gerard Brophy and Gerardo Dirie respectively. Her research in to the early career experiences of female composers in Australia was supervised by Brydie-Leigh Bartleet. She is completing a PhD in Music at The University of Melbourne, supervised by Elliott Gyger and Katy Abbott Kvasnica.

Cheney's passion for championing new music can be seen in her role as co-director and curator of 'Making Waves': an online listening and podcast space dedicated to Australian composition. She is currently working on a new opera for children based on Edward Lear's nonsense poem, *The Owl and the Pussycat*.

Select scores are available for purchase through the Australian Music Centre. For more information please visit: www.lisacheney.com.au

ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA

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

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

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

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



PROGRAM NOTES

Alexander Borodin (1833-1887)

Polovetsian Dances from Prince Igor (1887)

.....

Borodin's grand opera *Prince Igor* was the product of many years of toil, occupying the composer during the last 18 years of his life – and even then the work was left unfinished on his death and was completed by Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov!

Although rarely staged outside of Russia, *Prince Igor* is well known to most audiences through the orchestral excerpts from the opera – the Overture, the Prince Igor March, and, of course, the *Polovetsian Dances*.

Rimsky-Korsakov and Borodin were both masters of orchestral colour, and their combined efforts in *Prince Igor* explore the full potential of the orchestra for emotional intensity, with rich orchestration and exciting rhythmic drive providing exotic music to match the exotic storyline of the opera.

The *Polovetsian Dances* form the conclusion of Act II of the opera, in which Prince Igor and his son have been captured by the Polovetsy (nomadic steppe peoples). Their leader, Khan Konchak, arranges for dances to entertain the captive prince.

A series of episodes, danced by the maidens, boys and men of the Polovetsy, follow, changing in mood from exotically beautiful to frenetic and furious, and providing a vivid musical spectacle fit for the entertainment of a prince!

Lisa Cheney

Flute Concerto (world premiere)

.....

A newly commissioned work by the BPO, the *Flute Concerto* invites the listener to journey with the flute soloist as they navigates a unique, atmospheric orchestral sound-world. The landscape is still, but never stagnant and slowly expands in energy, textural shapes, momentum and transforming beauty. The harmonic language is an organic and colourful blend of diatonic and non-diatonic harmonies; blurring sonorities, chromatic flute lines and shifting perspectives of light and dark that each seek out a strange kind of harmonic beauty. There is no programmatic narrative to the *Flute Concerto*; its concerns are purely musical, creating an interesting relationship between soloist and orchestra. The audience is encouraged to listen for the shifting colours and isolation of timbres in the reduced instrumentation, with saturating divided strings, condensed woodwind and brass and very few tutti passages.

Is the musical world at its core: dark, beautiful, haunting, serene, at peace, unstable, in flux or all of the above? Where does the flute exist and how does it progress and transform? Does the orchestra influence the flute development or does the flute change the direction of the orchestra? Questioning is at the heart of the musical material. The work begins with closely related intervals often led by the divided high strings and auxiliary percussion filling the space as the flute slowly emerges from the atmospheric world, blurring the traditional concerto roles of orchestra and soloist as the material blends in the space or rises to the foreground. Framed and influenced by a virtuosic cadenza, the work is changed as the flute leads the orchestra towards new ground.

Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

Bolero (1928)

.....

Almost without question Ravel's most famous composition, *Bolero* barely needs an introduction! Modern audiences are familiar with the piece from countless appearances in concert programmes, movie and TV scores, ice skating routines and dance competitions, but may never have seen the piece in its original guise as a ballet score.

Ravel was commissioned to produce a ballet by Russian ballerina Ida Rubenstein, and was originally going to orchestrate some of Isaac Albeniz' piano suite *Iberia*, however another composer had already completed an arrangement and copyright law forbade Ravel from producing the orchestration. Although the rights to *Iberia* were eventually obtained, by that time Ravel had decided to compose a new work.

Ravel's lifelong inspiration in dance forms came to the fore, and he selected the bolero, a Spanish dance with a characteristic triplet rhythm as his musical form. He had the idea to slowly build up the piece by adding more and more instruments – making it essentially a giant orchestral crescendo – in Ravel's own words:

"Don't you think this theme has an insistent quality? I'm going to try to repeat it a number of times without any development, gradually increasing the orchestra as best I can."

Ravel's natural gifts in orchestration allowed him to create musical interest through musical colour alone – *Bolero* is very simple in terms of structure (two eighteen-bar halves of a theme, over an endlessly-repeated snare drum pattern) – but through the masterful use of orchestration (and the overall increase in loudness as the piece goes on) it retains interest throughout.

Bolero calls for a very large orchestra with many additional wind instruments, including the shrill Eb clarinet, and saxophones in one of their first inclusions in the symphony orchestra, as well as resurrecting old instruments such as the oboe d'amore (a mezzo-soprano oboe in between the oboe and cor anglais in register).

A Spanish feel to the piece is achieved partially through the extensive use of pizzicato by the strings, evoking the feel of accompanying guitars.

An interesting harmonic effect is achieved as the iterations of the melody continue – although the base melody is always in C major (except for a brief eight bar excursion in E major towards the end), in some of the later iterations Ravel assigns a "harmony" line to another instrument playing the melody in a different key. The juxtaposition of the melody simultaneously in two keys gives these sections an exotic (if somewhat strident) musical quality.

After close to 15 minutes of musical crescendo, *Bolero* ends with the full-orchestra joining in pounding out the repeated "bolero" rhythm, then ending with a dissonant Db chord that resolves down to the "home" C major.



Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881)

Pictures at an Exhibition, arr.

Ravel (1874/1922)

.....

Like Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov, Mussorgsky was one of "The Five", a group of Russian nationalistic composers in the late 1800s who sought to forge a new Russian musical style free from the strict rules of the Western tradition.

Pictures at an Exhibition was originally composed for solo piano as a tribute to Mussorgsky's friend Viktor Hartmann, an artist who suddenly died of an aneurysm in 1873 at the age of only 39. A posthumous exhibition of Hartmann's works was arranged in St Petersburg early the following year, and Mussorgsky attended, contributing two paintings by Hartmann that he owned.

He composed a suite of ten movements plus a connecting "Promenade" introduction/interlude in only 20 days and played it for a private audience of Mussorgsky's friends and colleagues soon after. Although Mussorgsky wanted to publish the work, he was discouraged by the reaction of some of his colleagues who allegedly found the work too avant garde. In the words of Mussorgsky's then-roommate:

"There was no end to the enthusiasm shown by his devotees; but many of Mussorgsky's friends, on the other hand, and especially the comrade composers, were seriously puzzled and, listening to the 'novelty,' shook their heads in bewilderment. Naturally, Mussorgsky noticed their bewilderment and seemed to feel that he 'had gone too far.' He set the illustrations aside without even trying to publish them".

Pictures was not published until after Mussorgsky's death, but it swiftly became a showpiece for virtuoso pianists, and has been arranged for orchestra numerous

times, most famously by Ravel in 1922, in a commission for Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

The work begins with a Promenade with a trumpet solo, introducing the main promenade theme of the suite which alternates between 5/4 and 6/4 time and suggests, in the words of Mussorgsky's friend, the critic Stasov, Mussorgsky himself "roving through the exhibition, now leisurely, now briskly in order to come close to a picture that had attracted his attention, and at times sadly, thinking of his departed friend."

The first picture, *Gnomus* (Gnome) is thought to depict a design for a nutcracker designed to look like a gnome (the picture has since been lost). The musical depiction features contrasts between vehement outbursts by the full orchestra, ponderous plodding by the bass instruments, and a grotesque dance on celesta and pizzicato strings, which finally gets faster and faster and leads the music to a turbulent finish.

The following Promenade has a subdued character, as if shaken by the ugliness of *Gnomus*, and features the horn and woodwinds prominently.

The second picture, *Il Vecchio Castello* (the old castle), shows a medieval troubadour singing a song outside an old castle. Ravel's orchestration gives the main melody to alto saxophone, with bassoon introduction, cor anglais and muted strings giving the movement a melancholic beauty, while the central section features the upper woodwinds.

The third Promenade is a more optimistic tone, with the brass returning and the full orchestra joining in, until the promenade suddenly stops, leading into the third picture, *Tuileries*, a portrait of children playing and quarreling in the *Tuileries* garden in Paris. The lilting duple meter and the flurrying sequences of notes on woodwinds vividly depict the children, while a central section with a lush string melody provides contrast.

The fourth picture, *Bydlo*, is of an ox-cart, with the driver singing a folk song. The driver is depicted by a tuba solo, while the rumbling wheels of the cart are shown by the plodding bass notes. The piece crescendoes to a climax and then recedes into the distance, as if seeing the cart travel past the listener.

A fourth promenade follows, with flutes and strings giving it a more mysterious character, before the fifth movement, the *Ballet of Unhatched Chickens*, which is based on costume designs by Hartmann for a ballet, showing dancers dressed as chickens in shells. The orchestration of flutes, oboes, harp and pizzicato strings evokes the chirping of birds, while the rapid flurries of notes and the sudden “squawk” held chord at the end of the first section provide some humour and the mental image of a chaotic dance of chickens in shells bumping into each other!

The fifth picture, entitled *Samuel Goldenburg and Schmuyle* is based on two portraits by Hartmann of Jewish men, one rich and one poor. The rich man’s theme is a solemn, imperious theme for unison strings which evokes Jewish folk music, while the poor man’s theme is a “shivering” trumpet and woodwind theme, evoking the poor man pleading with the rich man for help. The final section combines the two

themes together, and just as it seems the rich man is going to relent, a final peremptory phrase brings the movement to a finish.

The original piano version included another promenade, which is very similar to the opening Promenade and is omitted in Ravel’s orchestration, which moves straight on to the next picture, *Limoges*, a depiction of the busy market with women gossiping. The movement heavily features the horns and strings in a virtuosic and pattering scherzo, which ends in a faster sequence of notes that ascends into the eighth picture, *Catacombs*, based on a self-portrait of Hartmann himself in the Paris catacombs with a lantern, and is a showpiece for the brass, with sudden contrasts between loud block chords and soft phrases evoking the echoing catacombs. The brass chorale acts as Mussorgsky’s elegy for his friend, and leads into a second section titled *Con mortuis in lingua mortua* (“[speaking] with the dead in a dead language”) where underneath shimmering tremolo strings, winds and bass instruments intone a rhythmically modified version of the promenade, suggesting Mussorgsky talking with departed friend, until wind chords and harp arpeggios slowly bring the mood to a contemplative harmony.



The serenity is abruptly shattered by the ninth movement *Baba Yaga*, a depiction of a clock in the shape of the hut on bird's legs of the witch Baba Yaga from Slavic folklore, which features grotesque outer sections as if depicting the hut running through the forest, with blaring brass and strident string repeated phrases. The slower central section has unsettled tremolos, first on flute, and then on bass clarinet, under which the bass instruments intone an ominous theme - first on double bass, bassoon and contrabassoon, and then on tuba and cello, while string pizzicato, harp and celesta notes suggest the ticking of a demonic clock. The faster section returns, with renewed intensity, before ending in an ascending upward phrase that leads directly into the finale.

The final movement, *The Great Gate of Kiev*, is perhaps the most famous of the suite, and is based on a design for a triumphal gate for the city of Kiev designed by Hartmann (which was never built). The opening brass chorale of the main theme leads into a restatement of the main theme for the full orchestra. A quiet woodwind chorale leads to a magnificent return of the main theme, and then yet another version of the woodwind chorale. Chiming bells introduce the next section of the movement, with gently oscillating string notes that grows into a return of the promenade theme played by brass and percussion, and then a final triumphant return of the Great Gate theme which brings the whole suite to a magnificent conclusion.

Program notes by Cameron Hough



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Committee Member: Carl Bryant

Committee Member: Michael Sterzinger

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