

2026 CONCERT  
SERIES 3 SPRING



# ‘LA MUSIQUE MAGNIFIQUE’ A FRENCH GALA

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Saturday 19th September / 7.30pm  
Sunday 20th September / 2.30pm

Bowral Memorial Hall,  
Bendooley St, Bowral

## Junior

The SHSO reserves the right to amend the advertised repertoire and venue.

Welcome to the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra's third concert of 2026! This booklet has been put together for you to read and interact with while you are listening. You will notice some **Watching & Listening Missions** throughout this programme. These are special challenges and times for you to pay close attention to the orchestra and the music.

## ORDER OF CONCERT

### **Welcome and opening remarks**

**Acknowledgment of Country** - Anne Donaldson, with music composed by John Corley

### **JACQUES OFFENBACH**

*Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld*

### **MAURICE RAVEL**

*Pavane for a Dead Princess*

### **GEORGES BIZET**

*Carmen Suite No. 2*

1. *Marche des contrabandiers (Smuggler's March)*
2. *Habañera (Dance from Havana)*
3. *Nocturne (Night Music)*
4. *Chanson du Toréador (Toreador Song)*
5. *La Garde Montante (Changing of the Guard)*
6. *Danse Bohème (Bohemian Dance)*

## **INTERVAL**

### **HECTOR BERLIOZ**

*Harold in Italy*

Soloist Tim Senior

1. *Harold in the Mountains*
2. *Procession of the Pilgrims*
3. *Serenade*
4. *The Brigand's Orgies*



## **THE SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

In 2014, a group of musicians had a big dream- to bring together the very best players from across the region to create a symphony orchestra. Led by Allan Stiles and Roma Dix OAM, that dream became the Southern Highlands Symphony Orchestra. Since their very first concert in September 2014, the orchestra has become an important and exciting part of life in the Southern Highlands. Many of the musicians have been playing together for years and they love sharing music with our community. When you look at the orchestra during this concert, you are seeing teamwork in action with strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion all working together to tell a story through sound.

### **MEET THE CONDUCTOR: ALLAN STILES**

Every orchestra needs a leader! That's the conductor. Allan Stiles has been making music since he was a teenager. He has conducted orchestras, bands, choirs and even musical theatre productions. He has helped young musicians grow into confident performers and has travelled overseas with school orchestras. When you watch him, notice how:

- His hands show the speed of the music
- His gestures shape loud and soft sounds
- The orchestra watches him closely
- How many pages of music he has to read and turn!

**Watching & Listening Mission:** Can you see how often different sections of the orchestra look towards the conductor?

### **MEET THE SOLOIST: TIM SENIOR**

A soloist is a musician who has a special featured part in a piece of music. In this concert, Tim Senior is the soloist in Hector Berlioz's song called 'Harold in Italy'. Tim plays the viola which is a string instrument slightly larger than a violin and has a warm, rich sound. Berlioz gives the viola a very special job in Harold in Italy: the viola represents Harold, a wandering character who observes the scenes around him. Listen for the viola's recurring melody. Sometimes it is quiet and thoughtful and at other times it becomes more energetic and expressive.

**Watching & Listening Mission:** Watch how Tim and the conductor communicate without speaking. Can you see them listening to each other?

## PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Some composers' names can look tricky when you first see them. Here are some simple ways to say the names in this concert. In this concert, all the composers are French.

**OFFENBACH** say OFF-en-bahk

**RAVEL** say Ra-VELL

**BIZET** say Bee-ZAY

**BERLIOZ** say BER-lee-ohz

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

Below is some information about the music you are going to hear. The composer's name (the person who wrote the music) has been written in capital letters. Underneath the composer's name is the title of the piece of music.

### JACQUES OFFENBACH

#### *Overture to Orpheus in the Underworld*

Offenbach was a French composer who became famous for comic musical theatre called operetta. His music could be playful, cheeky and full of surprises.

Orpheus in the Underworld is a funny version of the ancient Greek mythological story of Orpheus and Eurydice. In the story, Orpheus tries to bring Eurydice back from the underworld but then makes a terrible mistake by looking back at her and loses her again. Perhaps you have heard of some other Greek myths. There are many of them!

The music has a dramatic beginning then includes solos from different instruments throughout the piece before building towards the famous Can-Can.

**Watching & Listening Mission:** Which instruments do you notice having a solo during this piece of music? Towards the end, listen for the moment when the music suddenly becomes very lively (The Can-Can). Have you heard this familiar tune before?

### MAURICE RAVEL

#### *Pavane for a Dead Princess*

A pavane is a slow, stately dance that was popular in European courts hundreds of years ago. Ravel imagined this music as an old-fashioned court dance for a princess from a long-ago time.

Although the title sounds sad, Ravel explained that he was not writing a funeral piece. Instead, he wanted to create the atmosphere of a beautiful, elegant dance from the past.

**Watching & Listening Mission:** Can you imagine royals walking together while you listen? Which instruments do you think make the music sound graceful?

## GEORGES BIZET

### *Carmen Suite No. 2*

An opera tells a story using music, singing, acting and scenery. The story is sung, not spoken. Carmen is one of the most famous operas ever written. It is set in Spain and tells a story about love, freedom, jealousy and difficult choices.

The main character Carmen is a confident young woman who works in a factory in Spain. She likes to make her own choices and does not want anyone to tell her what to do. Carmen spends time with a group of smugglers and she travels with them through the mountains, helping them with their dangerous work.

A soldier named Don José falls in love with Carmen. However, Carmen wants to be free and does not want to be controlled by him. Don José becomes jealous when Carmen becomes interested in a famous bullfighter named Escamillo instead.

Micaëla is a kind and gentle young woman who cares about Don José. She travels to find him and tries to bring him a message from his mother.

As the story continues, Don José becomes more jealous and angrier. Carmen makes it clear that she wants to choose her own life. The characters' choices eventually lead to a tragic ending.

Carmen was written in the 1800s as an opera but later, another composer, Ernest Guiraud, designed a version of the opera that an orchestra could play without needing the singers. The Carmen Suite No. 2 contains six sections (called movements):

#### **1. Marche des Contrabandiers (Smuggler's March)**

The smugglers are travelling back to their camp in the mountains with their loot. Listen for the steady marching feeling. **Watching & Listening Mission:** Can you hear a walking or marching rhythm?

#### **2. Habañera (Dance from Havana)**

This music comes from Carmen's famous Habañera. Its rhythm has a Cuban influence and a strong, catchy pulse. **Watching & Listening Mission:** Can you hear the repeating rhythm?

#### **3. Nocturne (Night Music)**

This beautiful movement represents Micaëla, who is searching for José. The music is gentle and expressive. **Watching & Listening Mission:** Which instrument or melody sounds most peaceful to you?

#### **4. Chanson du Toréador (Toreador Song)**

The famous Toreador's Song celebrates the excitement and glory surrounding the bullfighter Escamillo. **Watching & Listening Mission:** Which instruments do you think make the music sound heroic?

#### **5. Montante (Changing of the Guard)**

Fresh soldiers arrive to take over guard duty outside the factory. **Watching & Listening Mission:** Can you hear music that sounds like a parade?

#### **6. Danse Bohème (Bohemian Dance)**

Carmen and her friends entertain some soldiers. The music grows faster, louder and wilder as it rushes towards its exciting finish. **Watching & Listening Mission:** How does the music build towards the end? What changes do you notice?

## HECTOR BERLIOZ

### *Harold in Italy, Op. 16*

Harold in Italy is a musical journey through the Italian countryside. Berlioz was inspired by Italy's landscapes, sunshine, legends and characters.

The solo viola represents Harold, a thoughtful wanderer. The viola's melody returns throughout the piece of music, like a musical character we recognise each time we meet him.

**Watching & Listening Mission:** Listen for the recurring Harold theme. Can you recognise it when it comes back?

There are four movements in this piece:

#### **1. Harold in the Mountains**

Harold wanders through the mountains. The music moves between sadness, happiness and joy, creating the feeling of exploring a huge landscape.

**Watching & Listening Mission:** Which instruments make you imagine mountains or wide open spaces?

#### **2. Procession of the Pilgrims**

A group of pilgrims (people who are going on an important and special journey) are walking slowly and steadily towards a church, singing as they go. A steady rhythm gives the feeling of footsteps, while the orchestra creates a peaceful atmosphere.

**Watching & Listening Mission:** Can you hear the steady walking rhythm? Listen for the church bell.

#### **3. Serenade**

A mountain climber performs a piece of music for his sweetheart. Berlioz was inspired by the travelling musicians he heard in Italy, including players using bagpipes and instruments similar to the oboe.

**Watching & Listening Mission:** Can you hear two different musical ideas happening at the same time—one smooth and one more lively?

#### **4. The Brigand's Orgies**

The final movement is wild, energetic and unpredictable. Berlioz imagined brigands (rough and dangerous people living outside the law) having a very noisy party.

Listen carefully and you may hear ideas from earlier movements returning near the beginning, after which the viola soloist leaves the stage. Berlioz uses these memories to help tie the whole musical journey together.

Near the end, the orchestra becomes increasingly fast and powerful. The brass and strings drive the music towards a spectacular finish.

**Watching & Listening Mission:** How many different moods can you hear in this movement? Can you recognise any musical ideas from earlier in Harold in Italy? Listen to the very end. How does Berlioz make the finish feel exciting?

## **INSTRUMENTS OF THE ORCHESTRA**

Below are the names of the instruments or sections of instruments in our orchestra. Just like you, they have their own family! How many instruments and players can you see and hear?

### **String Family:**

Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Harp

### **Woodwind Family:**

Piccolo, Flute, Oboe, Cor Anglais, Clarinet, Bassoon

### **Brass Family:**

Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Bass Trombone, Tuba

### **Percussion Family:**

Timpani, Other Percussion Instruments (which ones can you see in this concert?)

## **AFTER THE CONCERT - TALK ABOUT IT!**

On the way home, talk about these questions with your family:

- Which piece was your favourite? Why?
- Which piece had the biggest change in mood?
- Which instrument did you notice most?
- Which piece made you want to move?
- Did any music make you imagine a place, person or story?
- Which composer would you like to hear more music from?

## **DRAWING/WRITING SPACE**

Throughout the concert you might like to draw or write about what you're hearing, seeing and feeling.









# 2026 CONCERT SERIES 4 SUMMER



## ‘PIANO AND PASSION’

Saturday 28th November / 7.30pm  
Sunday 29th November / 2.30pm

Bowral Memorial Hall,  
Bendooley St, Bowral



FEATURED  
SOLOIST

Luke Bowen  
(Piano)

### SUMMER REPERTOIRE

Giuseppe Verdi | *Overture to Nabucco*  
Pyotr Tchaikovsky | *Piano Concerto No.1* (Soloist Luke Bowen)  
John Williams | *Jurassic Park Theme*  
Edvard Grieg | *Wedding Day at Troldhaugen*  
Oscar Dunn-Luck | *Waltz Fantasia*  
Antonin Dvořák | *Slavonic Dance No. 8*  
John Corley | *Christmas Crackers*

CONDUCTOR: Dr Allan Stiles

PATRONS:  
Ann Carr-Boyd AM  
Andrew Ford OAM

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The SHSO reserves the right to amend the advertised repertoire and venue.