

16 October
Sydney Opera House

SERGEI PROKOFIEV'S PETER & THE WOLF



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«SYMPHONY»
«ORCHESTRA»

Principal Partner



SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PATRON **Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley** AC KC

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the Orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

The Orchestra's first chief conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux, Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013, followed by David Robertson as Chief Conductor from 2014 to 2019. Australia-born Simone Young commences her role as Chief Conductor in 2022, a year in which the Orchestra makes its return to a renewed Sydney Opera House Concert Hall.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra's concerts encompass masterpieces from the classical repertoire, music by some of the finest living composers, and collaborations with guest artists from all genres, reflecting the Orchestra's versatility and diverse appeal. Its award-winning education program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, and the Orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and its commissioning program.

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FAMILY CONCERT

Saturday 16 October,
10am & 11.30am
Concert Hall,
Sydney Opera House

SERGEI PROKOFIEV'S PETER & THE WOLF

FAMILY FAVOURITES

BENJAMIN NORTHEY conductor
LUKE ESCOMBE narrator

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891–1953)

Peter and the Wolf

JEAN-PASCAL BEINTUS (BORN 1966)

Wolf Tracks

ESTIMATED DURATIONS

25 minutes, 20 minutes

The concert will conclude
at approximately 10.45am
and 12.15pm.

COVER IMAGE

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PRINCIPAL PARTNER



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

BENJAMIN NORTHEY conductor

- At school Ben once hit four runs off the last ball of a cricket match to win the game for his team. Just ask him about it, he'll tell you over and over and over...
- Ben listened to *Peter and the Wolf* many, many times as a kid. It inspired him to learn to play loads of instruments including the piano, violin, trumpet, flute and saxophone.
- Once during a concert Ben's conducting baton snapped and flew over his head into a lady's lap in the audience. She wasn't impressed. It was his mother...

Australian conductor Benjamin Northey is the Chief Conductor of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra and the Principal Conductor in Residence of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. Previously Resident Guest Conductor of the Australia Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra (2002-2006) and Principal Conductor of the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra (2007-2010), *Limelight* named him Australian Artist of the Year in 2018.

Northey also appears regularly as a guest conductor with all major Australian symphony orchestras, Opera Australia (*Turandot*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, *Carmen*), New Zealand Opera (*Sweeney Todd*) and State Opera South Australia (*La sonnambula*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Les contes d'Hoffmann*). His international appearances include concerts with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra, the Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, the National Symphony Orchestra of Colombia, the Malaysian Philharmonic and the New Zealand Symphony, Auckland Philharmonia and Christchurch Symphony Orchestras.

With a progressive and diverse approach to repertoire, he has collaborated with a broad range of artists including Maxim Vengerov, Julian Rachlin, Karen Gomyo, Piers Lane, Alban Gerhardt, Johannes Moser, Piers Lane, Amy Dickson, Slava Grigoryan and Marc-André Hamelin as well as popular artists Tim Minchin, KD Lang, Kate Miller-Heidke, Barry Humphries, Kurt Elling, James Morrison and Tori Amos.

Northey is highly active in the performance of Australian orchestral music having premiered numerous major works by Brett Dean, Peter Sculthorpe, Elena Kats-Chernin, Matthew Hindson and many others. An Honorary Fellow at the University of Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, his awards include the prestigious 2010 Melbourne Prize Outstanding Musician's Award and the 2002 Brian Stacey Memorial Scholarship as well as multiple awards and nominations for his numerous recordings with ABC Classic.

In 2022, he conducts the Christchurch and New Zealand Symphony Orchestras, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Symphony Orchestra and West Australian Symphony Orchestra.



Benjamin Northey,
photo by Laura Manariti

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

LUKE ESCOMBE narrator

Luke Escombe is an internationally award-winning songwriter, musician and comedian who loves to follow his inspiration and creativity wherever it leads.

He is best known for creating *Chronic* – a musical comedy show about living with chronic illness that opened the door to a globetrotting public speaking career – and *The Vegetable Plot*, an ARIA Award-nominated children’s band whose fresh, funky songs are enjoyed by millions of listeners around the world. In fact you may know him better by his veggie name: Aspara Gus.

Luke received his early musical education in London, where his father’s job in the rock and roll industry enabled him to see hundreds of legendary performances by artists like Freddie Mercury, Prince and Bruce Springsteen while he was just a boy. His other early influences were musical theatre works like *Les Misérables* and subversive British comedies like *Blackadder* and *The Young Ones*, which he can still recite to this day.

When he’s not channelling his inner rockstar, Luke is an ambassador for a number of health charities, a member of the NSW Arts Advisory Panel, a teaching artist with the Sydney Opera House’s Creative Leadership in Learning initiative and a songwriting mentor with the Sydney Children’s Hospital’s Chronic Illness Peer Support Program. He believes strongly that music and storytelling can play a transformative role in health, education and society.

Among Luke’s more obscure awards is the title of “Sydney’s Sexiest man voice”, which he won in a competition on a once-popular Sydney radio station (though he doesn’t like to mention this unless absolutely necessary).

“Luke Escombe is funny and brave, a showman and an artist, a brilliantly engaging lyricist, expert tunesmith, fine guitarist and exceptional singer. Seldom is such sophistication wrapped in a coating of such overt fun. Hear him” – John Shand, *Sydney Morning Herald*



Luke Escombe,
photo by Lyn Taylor

ABOUT THE MUSIC

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891–1953)

Peter and the Wolf

When you watch TV or a movie, it is easy to know what is going on.

There are actors playing characters, and they speak words that describe their actions and thoughts, and you can also see what they are doing.

But with music, that's much harder to do – especially when there aren't any lyrics telling you what a song is about.

In *Peter and the Wolf*, Russian composer **Sergei Prokofiev** lets you know what is happening by making the instruments in the orchestra play different characters - and the narrator also helps you out by telling the story!

Peter and the Wolf was written by Prokofiev in 1936. He had been asked to write a symphony for children, as a way of getting young people interested in classical music from an early age. Prokofiev was so inspired by the idea he wrote the entire piece in just four days!

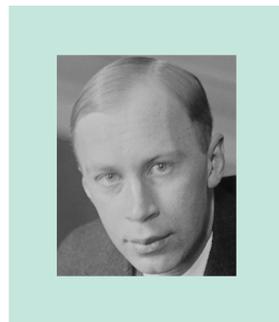
In this story, Peter is a young boy who lives with his grandfather on the edge of a forest, and he is friends with birds and ducks and cats. Peter's grandfather tells him to be careful of the wolf who lives in the forest, but Peter doesn't listen – until one day, the wolf shows up...

Peter is played by the **string** instruments – the violins, violas, cellos and double basses.

His animal friends and his family are played by the **woodwinds**: Peter's grandfather is played by the **bassoon**, a bird is played by a **flute**, a duck is played by an **oboe**, and a cat is played by a **clarinet**.

The wolf is played by **brass instruments** – specifically the **French horn**.

You can tell when these characters are involved in the story because they all have their own unique **melody**.



Sergei Prokofiev, c. 1918

ABOUT THE MUSIC

WHAT IS A MELODY?

A melody is a tune. If you can sing it, that's a melody – think of *Happy Birthday*. But in classical music, there are often multiple melodies being played at once, by different instruments. You might have fun trying to sing each of the melodies that you hear!

In *Peter and the Wolf*, each character has their own melody – it's basically their own special theme music. This is called **leitmotif**, and the music tells you which characters are on stage, and sometimes even warns you they are coming.

Have you ever seen *Star Wars*? That is one of the most famous examples of *leitmotif*: Princess Leia, Yoda and Luke Skywalker all have their own themes, and of course the most famous one of all is Darth Vader's *Imperial March*.

WHICH INSTRUMENT IS WHICH?

Can you listen out for the melody representing each animal or character?

Turn the page to see a guide to the instruments of the orchestra!

ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA



Ti = Timpani



CEL = Cello



DB = Double Bass



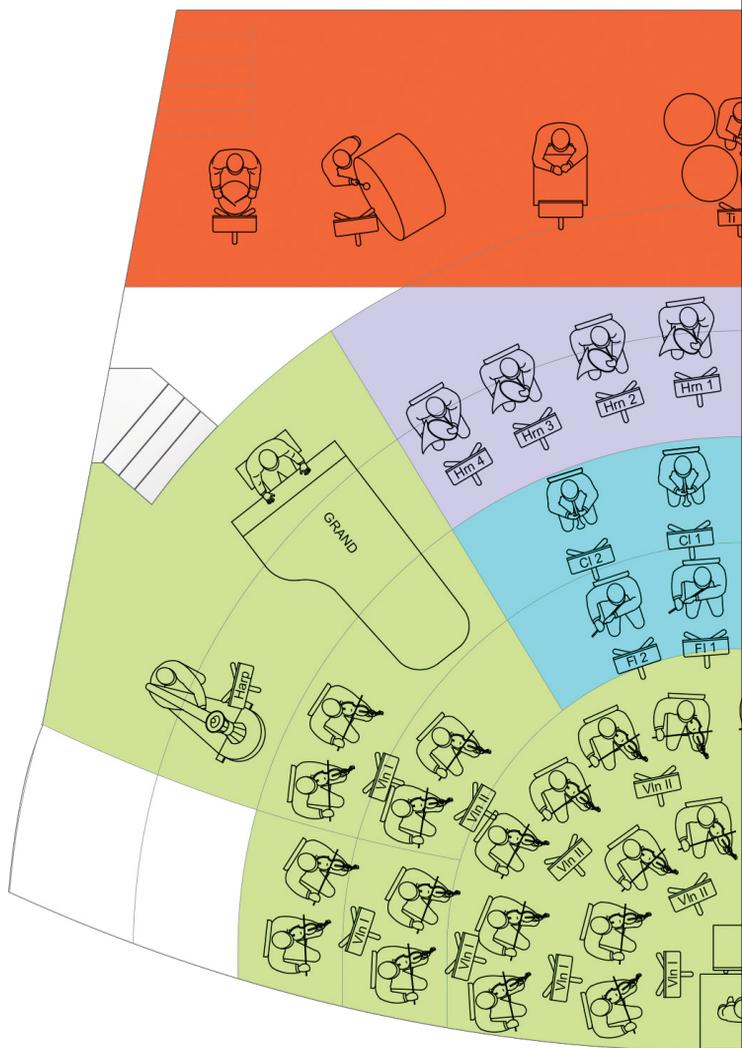
Vla = Viola



Vln = Violin



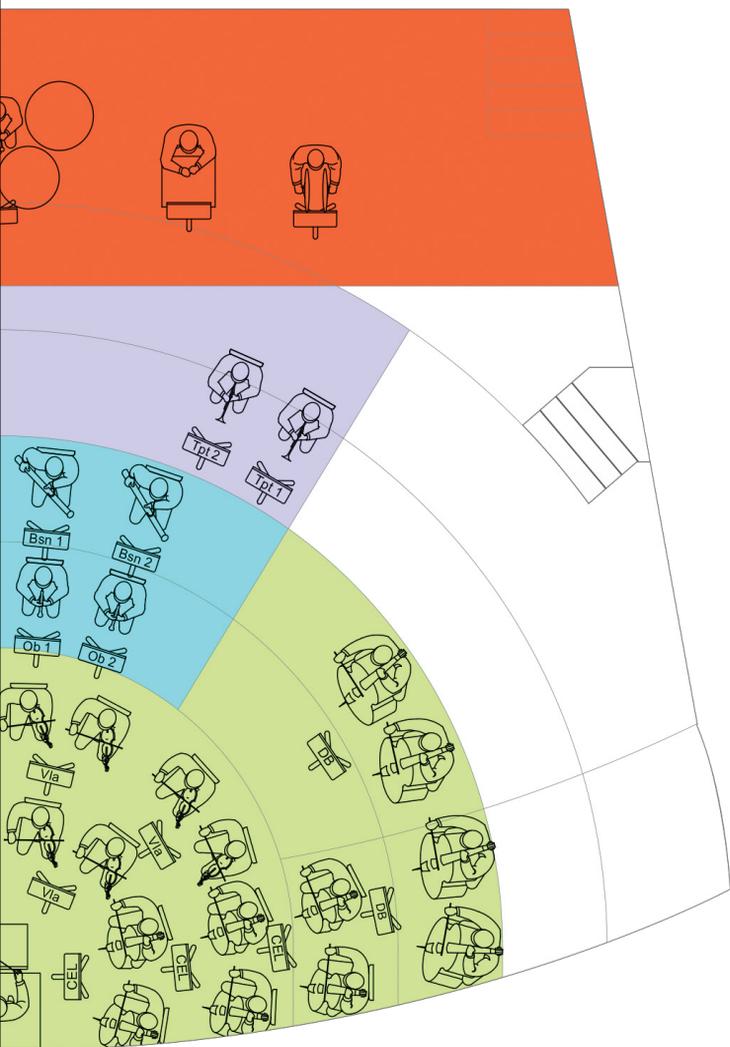
Harp = Harp



PERCUSSION

STRINGS

ABOUT THE ORCHESTRA



Bsn = Bassoon



Cl = Clarinet



Fl = Flute



Ob = Oboe



Hrn = French Horn



Tpt = Trumpet

WOODWINDS

BRASS

ABOUT THE MUSIC

JEAN-PASCAL BEINTUS (BORN 1966)

Wolf Tracks

Wolf Tracks was written in 2002, intended as a sequel to *Peter and the Wolf* 66 years after Prokofiev wrote his work.

In *Wolf Tracks* we meet another Peter, the grandson of the original Peter. The young Peter hears his grandfather's story about the wolf, and decides he should hunt one down too. Old Peter tells him not to, saying that things have changed since he was a boy, and that wolves are now "hungry, desperate animals" since so much of their home – the forest – has been destroyed.

Young Peter ignores his grandfather and goes out to catch a wolf – and he finds one and captures it! But then Young Peter looks at the animal, and hears his sad howls, and realises his grandfather was right. Wolves are not meant to be hunted and captured; wolves are just trying to protect their families; and humans have harmed more wolves, and destroyed more of their homes, than wolves ever have to humans.

"Wolves belong to the world... their world, our world of wonder, of nature's splendour."

Young Peter lets the wolf go free, and go back to his family, and then Peter himself goes home.

In the final scene, Young Peter is now an old man, and is telling the story of his adventure to his granddaughter.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Why do you think Young Peter let the wolf go?

What can you do to look after the environment and take care of animals?



Jean-Pascal Beintus

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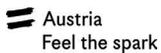
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