



THE PLANETS



Image Kristen Beever



Bendigo Symphony Orchestra

In 2021 Bendigo Symphony Orchestra celebrated 40 years as Bendigo's community orchestra. Over these years BSO has provided symphonic music for the Bendigo community and opportunities for orchestral musicians to play together.

Each year the orchestra works with visiting and local conductors to perform symphonic works by well-known and emerging composers, as well as concertos featuring international and local guest musicians.

Many young musicians who have joined the orchestra have gone on to enjoy orchestral and solo careers.

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THE PLANETS

Sunday 15 June 2025, 2.30pm
Ulumbarra Theatre, Bendigo

Luke Severn *Conductor*

Dale Barltrop *Violin*

Ludwig van BEETHOVEN **Violin Concerto in D, Op. 61**

INTERVAL

Gustav HOLST **The Planets**

Bendigo Symphony Orchestra recognises the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung People of the Kulin Nation to be the traditional owners and custodians of the unceded land on which we gather, rehearse and perform.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all these First Nations Peoples.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing, and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

PROGRAM NOTES

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN (1770-1827)

Violin Concerto in D, Op. 61 (1806)

I. *Allegro ma non troppo*

II. *Larghetto*

III. *Rondo: Allegro*

For a piece that is now considered to be one of the masterpieces of the violin repertoire, Beethoven's violin concerto did not initially receive the acclaim you might expect. Written for the violin virtuoso Franz Clement and premiered in Vienna on 23 December 1806, the concerto's first public performance received a somewhat underwhelming review in the *Wiener Theaterzeitung*:

With regard to Beethoven's concerto, the opinion of all connoisseurs is the same: while they acknowledge that it contains some fine things, they agree that the continuity often seems to be completely disrupted, and that the endless repetitions of a few commonplace passages could easily lead to weariness. It is being said that Beethoven ought to make better use of his admittedly great talents ...

In fairness, the circumstances of that first performance were less than ideal. In a busy year during which Beethoven completed his fourth symphony, fourth piano concerto, the three 'Razumovsky' string quartets plus a revision of his opera *Fidelio* (amongst other things), he reportedly scrambled to finish the concerto's score only 2 days before its premiere. This did not leave much time for Clement to familiarise himself with the solo part – a solo part which was hastily sketched in some passages – let alone to rehearse with the accompanying orchestra. Perhaps

recognising the difficult situation he had created for his friend, Beethoven dedicated the original manuscript to Clement with the apologetic pun '*Concerto par Clemenza pour Clement*' (Concerto with "clemency" or "mercy" for Clement).

On top of its rushed preparation, the premiere of the violin concerto may have also been overshadowed by other works advertised on the concert program, none more so than Clement's promise to perform a '*Sonata on a single string, played with the violin upside down*'!

In any event, the concerto failed to make an impact for some years after that first performance. Beethoven adapted the work for piano and orchestra, but it was not embraced in any form until some years after Beethoven's death. In 1844, a 12 year old violin prodigy Joseph Joachim revived the concerto to 'frenetic applause' at a London Philharmonic Society concert conducted by Felix Mendelssohn. By then, musicians and audiences were more open to the concerto's symphonic scope, and more willing to appreciate a composition that takes time to explore its lyrical themes rather than simply showcasing the soloist's technical skill.

The piece begins with 5 quiet beats on the timpani – a surprisingly understated opening, but a significant rhythmic figure that returns frequently during the course of the first movement. It underpins a series of interweaving melodies, as the soloist and orchestra engage in an elaborate and elegant conversation. That conversation becomes more contemplative in the delicate second movement, before transforming into a joyous dance for the exuberant finale.



Image Mark Beever

GUSTAV HOLST (1874-1934)

The Planets, Op. 32 (1914-1917)

- I. Mars, the Bringer of War**
- II. Venus, the Bringer of Peace**
- III. Mercury, the Winged Messenger**
- IV. Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity**
- V. Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age**
- VI. Uranus, the Magician**
- VII. Neptune, the Mystic**

Gustav Holst described his epic orchestral suite *The Planets* as being ‘a series of mood pictures’, with each movement expressing the astrological significance of a different planet. Holst discovered astrology while holidaying in Spain in 1913, building on his long-held fascination with philosophies and religions that expanded his worldview, including Hinduism, Buddhism and gnostic Christianity. For Holst, astrology confirmed

that ‘everything in this world ... is just one big miracle. Or rather, the universe itself is one.’

Holst began composing *The Planets* in 1914, working on it over the next couple of years in between his commitments as a teacher at St Paul’s Girls’ School and Morley College. After an initial private performance in 1918, *The Planets* had its complete public premiere in November 1920 and quickly became a resounding hit with audiences and musicians worldwide. This vast, innovative work for enormous orchestra has remained extraordinarily popular to this day, as well as having a significant influence on film, television, theatre and gaming music. A prime example is John Williams and his soundtracks for the Star Wars movies, with the relentless, ominous march that drives *Mars, the Bringer of War*

inspiring Darth Vader's equally formidable *Imperial March* theme.

Holst completed *Mars* in mid-1914, when, as his daughter Imogen recalled, he '*had never heard of a machine gun, and the tank had not yet been invented*'. Yet the unsettling rhythm of 5 beats to a bar and brutally powerful orchestration eerily foreshadow the carnage and destruction of modern warfare.

Venus, the Bringer of Peace offers immediate respite from the violence of *Mars*, a deliberate choice by Holst in ordering the movements. Beginning with a tender horn solo, *Venus* is ethereal and tranquil, with gently pulsing chords, serene violin and oboe solos and glistening contributions from the harp, celesta and glockenspiel.

Mercury, the Winged Messenger is fleeting — a lively, restless movement with transient harmonies and melodic lines that jump between different sections of the orchestra.

Following that is the king of the planets, *Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity*. Jupiter represented an '*abundance of life and vitality*' in Holst's astrological charts, and that abundance is fully realised in this movement's jovial, spirited tunes. The middle section contains possibly the most famous melody of the suite — a lush and majestic theme that was subsequently adapted into the British patriotic hymn, *I vow to thee, my country*. Anyone with a young person in their life might also recognise this theme as the stirring accompaniment to the much-loved *Sleepytime* episode of *Bluey*.

Next comes another stark contrast, as *Saturn, the Bringer of Old Age* makes its slow and weary entrance. *Saturn* was Holst's favourite movement, in which the unavoidable progression of old age is

depicted with a solemn, bleak march. The conclusion of the movement brings hope, however, as the orchestra rises soothingly towards Holst's '*vision of fulfilment*'. After all, old age brings wisdom as well as the inevitable creaking bones...

Along comes *Uranus, the Magician* with a dramatic four-note opening that spells out Holst's name via German-note names. The orchestra then embarks on what Holst called '*a series of merry pranks*', loping along in a succession of quirky and pompous dances with a slightly sinister undercurrent.

Finally, we arrive at the most otherworldly of all the movements: *Neptune, the Mystic*. *Neptune* uses the same quintuple meter as *Mars*, but with a completely different effect: while *Mars* is driving and forceful, *Neptune* is fluid and eerie. Beginning with the haunting tones of 4 flutes (including alto flute) and ending with a wordless female chorus that disappears into silence, the alluring sounds and strange harmonies of *Neptune* point to the mysteries of the universe.

Program notes by Rebecca Beagley



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**The BSO Artistic Director
role is generously supported by
Ian and Edith Dyett.**

Ian and Edith have committed to supporting the Artistic Director role for the next three years so Bendigo Symphony Orchestra can continue to provide exciting opportunities for musicians to play, and for local and regional audiences to experience the joy of live symphonic music.

All of us involved with BSO thank them for their generosity and we look forward to sharing our music with them.

Ian also has a thought for any young musician who doubts their capacity to join our wonderful orchestra:

***‘The difference between a
successful person and others is
not a lack of strength or a lack of
knowledge, but a lack of will.....’
(Vincent T. Lombardi)***

Luke Severn

Conductor and Artistic Director

Conductor, composer and concert cellist, Luke Severn is celebrated for his dynamic presence and captivating performances in the Australian music scene. As the Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Bendigo Symphony Orchestra* and the Artistic Director of The Gisborne Singers, Luke has left an indelible mark on the world of orchestral music in Victoria.

Luke has had the privilege of working with some of Australia's finest classical artists, including Teddy Tahu Rhodes, The Seraphim Trio, Merlyn Quaife AM and Tamara-Anna Cislowska. His notable achievements include leading the BSO through some of the world's greatest classical masterpieces such as Beethoven's 9th Symphony and Rachmaninoff's 3rd Piano Concerto. Notably, he directed a sold-out staged production of Purcell's opera, *'Dido and Aeneas'*, in collaboration with the Gisborne Singers and the Macedon Ranges Chamber Orchestra in 2022.

A fervent advocate for new compositions and Australian works, Luke has conducted world premieres of pieces by renowned composers, including Cally Bartlett, Christopher Healey, Matan Franco and Elena Kats-Chernin. His commitment to expanding the horizons of classical music is a testament to his dedication and passion for the orchestral arts.

In addition to conducting, Luke also enjoys a career as a concert cellist and composer. In recent seasons, his collaborations have resulted in two acclaimed studio recording projects. On *'Over Under'*, Luke collaborated with pianist Evan Fein to deliver an emotive interpretation of Brahms's Sonata No. 1 in E minor, Op. 38,

and presented Fein's vibrant Cello Sonata No. 2, Op. 28, a composition written for Luke in 2020 and premiered in 2022.

The album *'...and other lines'* showcased Luke's collaboration with Duo Obax and pianist Yasmin Rowe, featuring a seven-movement suite for soprano saxophone, oboe and piano, commissioned by the ABC, and recorded by ABC Classic. Both albums are available on all streaming platforms. With a career spanning the realms of conducting, collaborative performance and composition, Luke Severn remains a prominent figure, captivating audiences and enriching the musical landscape in Australia and beyond.

**Artistic Director role generously supported by Ian and Edith Dyett*

Dale Barltrop

Violin

Brisbane-born violinist, Dale Barltrop, has performed across Australia and the globe. He has been the first violinist of the Australian String Quartet since 2016 and also served as Concertmaster of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra for ten years.

Dale began his professional career as principal second violin of the St Paul Chamber Orchestra in the United States and was subsequently appointed concertmaster of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, a position he held for seven years. He has also appeared as concertmaster of the Australian World Orchestra under Sir Simon Rattle and as guest violinist with the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

A product of the Queensland Instrumental Music Program, Dale made his solo debut with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra at the age of fifteen. He furthered his studies in the USA at the University of Maryland and Cleveland Institute of Music. His teachers have included William Preucil, Gerald Fischbach, Elizabeth Morgan, Marcia Cox and members of the Guarneri Quartet.

As an educator, Dale regularly works with students across Australia and has taught at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra School of Music and Vancouver Academy of Music. He currently serves on the faculty of the Yellow Barn Chamber Music Festival in Vermont, USA.

Barltrop performs on a violin crafted by JB Guadagnini, Turin, 1784. It is on loan from the Ukaria Cultural Centre and was purchased through the generosity of Allan J Myers AO, Maria Myers AO, and the Klein Family.



Dale Barltrop's performance of Beethoven's Violin Concerto is generously supported by Travis and Hiranthi Perera



Lizzy Welsh

Concertmaster

Lizzy Welsh is internationally renowned as a music-maker and performer of early music, new music and experimental improvisation, principally on the baroque violin and modern violin.

Lizzy has appeared at the Bendigo International Festival of Exploratory Music, the Adelaide Festival, the Melbourne International Arts Festival, the Melbourne Jazz Festival, the University of California San Diego's Springfest, London Jazz Festival, Jazztopad Wrocław, Jazzfest Berlin, Sacred Realism (Berlin), Shanghai International Arts Festival and Shanghai New Music Week.

An advocate for creating new music for early instruments, Lizzy has a Doctor of Musical Arts in this field, and has developed one of the world's largest repertoires of new music for the baroque violin and viola d'amore, premiering many of these works at leading international festivals including the Darmstadt Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik (Germany) and Sacrum Profanum Festival (Poland).

Her debut solo album *The Target has Disappeared* was released on Swiss label Discreet Editions in 2023 to critical acclaim.



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Meet the BSO

Bendigo Symphony Orchestra is fortunate to have talented, skilled and generous players leading each section. We would like to thank and introduce our five string section leaders who support our string players:



Leonie Schellhorn
Violin

Leonie Schellhorn is one of our first violin leaders, and chose to play the violin because her father was a very keen amateur violinist. She spent much of her childhood travelling to and from Melbourne for music lessons, as well as playing Beethoven string quartets with her father, cellist sister and a school teacher. After completing a music degree, Leonie took part in the vibrant professional freelance music scene in Melbourne, playing everything from chamber music to theatre shows, opera and ballet. Since joining BSO a few years ago, she is really enjoying playing works from the symphonic repertoire that she has always known and loved, as well as discovering new favourites.



Heather Cummins
Violin

Heather joined BSO in 2022 and loves leading the committed bunch of violinists who make up the mighty second violins. Her driving passion is to create and participate in regional musical communities that are inclusive, joyful and musically engaged. She is co-founder and co-artistic director of Resonance String Orchestra, a community music-making initiative based in Castlemaine and Woodend that delights members and audiences with its joyous energy and vibrant sound.

Heather holds a Bachelor of Music (Hons) from the University of Melbourne. She is a keen chamber music performer and currently teaches violin and viola at Castlemaine Secondary College.



Cally Bartlett
Viola

Composer, arranger and educator Cally Bartlett leads our viola section, but has played with every BSO string section over the years, even once making an appearance in the woodwind section! Having trained professionally as a cellist, Cally plays and teaches violin, viola, cello and double bass and is happy to dabble on just about any instrument (including bassoon in a previous life). Cally is the Head of Faculty–Arts at Girtton Grammar School, the musical director of the City of Greater Bendigo Brass Band and a committee member of Bendigo Youth Music. She is passionate about supporting community music and anyone who wants to learn and improve their musical skills.



Philip Kelynack
Cello

Our cello section leader Philip Kelynack was introduced to the cello by one of our longtime members Diane Chapman. When she brought the cello in to Philip’s primary school, he looked at it and immediately thought “that’s the instrument for me!”. After playing with BSO as a youngster, Phil studied at the Victorian College of the Arts and then in London, before spending 20 years freelancing as a cellist all over the UK, Europe and China. After returning to Australia in 2017, Phil rejoined BSO and enjoys producing high-quality concerts with this friendly, relaxed orchestra. He particularly loves to play anything by Brahms or Mahler.



David Kenihan
Double Bass

David Kenihan has joined our double bass section this year after recently moving to Macedon, and is very impressed by the community support that BSO enjoys. He has devoted his life to “making low noises with a horse’s tail dragged across four bits of wire attached to a wooden box”, spending 40 years in the UK working as a professional double bass player, mainly with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. He chose to play the double bass after his brother left it very late to get tickets to a sought-after concert featuring Vladimir Ashkenazy playing the Brahms and Beethoven concerti. The only two seats available were directly under the double bass section, and David was transfixed!



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Community Enterprise, Bendigo North Districts Community Enterprise and Kangaroo Flat Community Enterprise as well supporting other community organisations and events, we play a significant role in creating community outcomes for community groups such as Bendigo Symphony Orchestra.

We are proud to support groups and organisations like the Bendigo Symphony Orchestra who are making their own community impact.

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Bendigo Symphony Orchestra

VIOLIN 1

Lizzy Welsh
concertmaster[^]
Leonie Schellhorn*[>]
Jeanette Stoll
Miriam Oldfield
Toni Williams
Jane Dimsey
Andrew Schellhorn
Lea Bursac

VIOLIN 2

Heather Cummins*[>]
Meg Holmes
Joan Ledwich
Melanie McCarthy
Bianca Blackberry
David Dore
Geoffrey Cook
Ally Yeh

VIOLA

Cally Bartlett*[<]
Frances Gall
Charlie Bellette
Amanda McDonald
James Gunasegaram
Isabel Lee
John Gault OAM

CELLO

Phil Kelynack*[<]
Steve Millard
Lina Cutler
Anne Begg
Diane Chapman
Liz Wilson

DOUBLE BASS

David Kenihan*
Bevan Madden
Julia Arnold
David Gorrie

FLUTE

Julie Prenzler
Dan Rigby
Nigel McGuckian
(piccolo)
Jazmine van Agtmaal
(piccolo, alto flute)

OBOE

Renée Badcock
Julie-Ann Watson
Rebecca Beagley
(bass oboe)
Owen Matthews*⁺
(cor anglais)

CLARINET

Jacquie Tolhurst*
Will Patterson
Meg Martin
Warwick Cohen
(bass clarinet)

BASSOON

Matthew Kneale
John Matthews*
Nyree O'Connor
Joanne Angus
(contrabassoon)

FRENCH HORN

Catherine Moore*
Nicholas Benbow
Geordie Walker
Chandra Hale
Claire McLean
Aidan Ratcliff

TRUMPET

Kaid Normington*
Jacqui Vine
Tristan Vine
Jasmine Elliott

TROMBONE

Steve Vine*
Chris Lees

TENOR TUBA

Matthew Pankhurst

TUBA

David Martin

TIMPANI

Charles Chilvers*
David Stockwell

PERCUSSION

Annette Conway
Evan Pritchard
Judy Oliver
Josh Gitsham
Dannielle Wilkinson

HARP

Danielle Forbes
Liena Lacey

CELESTA

Stephen Briggs

* Section Leader

[^] Zona Sevcik Concertmaster
Chair

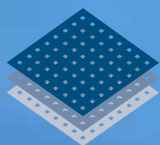
⁺ Chair supported by Bendigo
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Family

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member donations



Image Mark Beever



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We extend our grateful thanks to long-time
BSO members John Gault OAM and Travis
Perera, and their respective partners Ann
Parris and Hiranthi Perera, for their ongoing,
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Dale Barltrop's performance of Beethoven's
Violin Concerto is generously supported by
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Ulumbarra Theatre

Luke Severn | Conductor

Sunday, 16 March 2025

Joshua Oates | Oboe

2:30pm

WILLIAMS Across the Stars from Star Wars: Episode II**KOEHNE** In-flight entertainment**DVOŘÁK** Symphony No. 9 in E minor, 'From the New World' Op. 95

THE PLANETS

Ulumbarra Theatre

Luke Severn | Conductor

Sunday, 15 June 2025

Dale Barttrop | Violin

2:30pm

BEETHOVEN Violin Concerto in D, Op. 61**HOLST** The Planets

YEARNING

Ulumbarra Theatre

Luke Severn | Conductor

Sunday, 31 August 2025

Amir Farid | Piano

2:30pm

VERDI Overture from Nabucco with players from Resonance String Orchestra**BRAHMS** Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73**RACHMANINOV** Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor, Op. 18

RHAPSODY

Ulumbarra Theatre

Luke Severn | Conductor

Sunday, 16 November 2025

Elyane Laussade | Piano

2:30pm

KHACHATURIAN Adagio of Spartacus and Phrygia from Spartacus Suite No. 2**BEETHOVEN** Piano Concerto in B-flat No. 2, Op. 61**GERSHWIN** Rhapsody in Blue**RESPIGHI** Pines of Rome, P. 141



Ulumbarra
Foundation

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The Ulumbarra Foundation's goal is to support a vibrant and sustainable local performing arts community by creating a Future 50 Fund.

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- ***Spread the Word:*** Share our vision with friends, family and fellow arts lovers.
- ***Connect:*** Stay up-to-date on the future you're helping to build by signing up for our news and success stories.

