

Australian Chamber Orchestra 50 Years

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

PRINCIPAL PARTNER



Wesfarmers Arts

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01

MISSION STATEMENT



ACO PURPOSE

To present distinctive music experiences that inspire, challenge and transform our audiences.

ACO VALUES

01 United Individuals

We are diverse and inclusive. Everyone brings something unique to our team. It's our collective experience, skill and spirit that connects us as one.

02 Mastery

We perform at an elite level and are committed to excellence. Our skills are fuelled by unwavering dedication and passion. We've taken the time to learn the rules so we can choose how we break them.

03 Adventure

We are intrepid, curious and courageous. Our imagination is boundless and we never stop looking for new and unexpected ways of challenging ourselves and our audience. While our music is steeped in history, we are not afraid to explore revolutionary ideas.

04 Community

Music brings people together. Whether it's providing life-changing music education to children or opening our home and our programs to communities with limited access, we strive to ensure that everyone has access to quality music experiences. As a nimble organisation, we connect with music lovers locally and globally through our network of venues and partners and via our expansive digital program.

Above.
Richard Tognetti, Artistic Director.
Photo by Nic Walker

2025 OVERVIEW

IN 2025 THE ACO CELEBRATED 50 YEARS

of invention, disruption and unforgettable music-making.

In 2025 the ACO performed

10 WORLD PREMIERES & 8 AUSTRALIAN PREMIERES

Richard Tognetti celebrated **35 years** as Artistic Director in 2025, while ACO Principal Violin **Helena Rathbone** and ACO Cello **Melissa Barnard** both celebrated **30-year anniversaries** with the Orchestra.

“★★★★★ I have been listening to the ACO for all of its history, and the vitality of its current incarnation does honour to the vision and audacity of Robert Pickler, John Painter and others who contributed to its founding 50 years ago.”
SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

The ACO performed **217** concerts across Australia and around the world, to a combined audience of over **122,500**.

“★★★★★ The ACO turns 50 in 2025; Tognetti has been its leader for 35 years. The young firebrand has gradually become its senior figure. But some things haven't changed: the intensity, the fearlessness, the curiosity. This remains rule-bending at its most revelatory.”
THE GUARDIAN, UK

OVER 20,000 HOURS OF MUSIC EDUCATION & MENTORING

activities delivered to nearly **600** young people and emerging musicians in 2025.

An extraordinary instrument was added to the ACO's collection of Golden Age string instruments: the

1610 MAGGINI VIOLA,

acquired by the ACO Instrument Fund and played by ACO Principal Viola **Stefanie Farrands**.

“ In the 35 years under Tognetti's direction the ACO has graced every major festival and venue in the world. But it's not just the superbly drilled precision and lyric grace of the orchestra that has placed it among the top handful of chamber orchestra. It's the way that the players cast a bright new light on everything they perform.”
THE TELEGRAPH, UK



FIFTY YEARS OF THE ACO



ABC TV News, November 2025.

The Australian Chamber Orchestra's 50-year anniversary was celebrated in high-profile media stories throughout the year, across broadcast, print and online channels.



Australian Financial Review, November 2025.



Channel 7 News, February 2025.



The Strad cover story, May 2025.



The Weekend Australian front page, November 2025.



The Age front page, February 2025.



Richard Tognetti on SBS's *The Cook Up*, May 2025.



ABC's *Creative Types* episode on Richard Tognetti, May 2025.



The Weekend Australian, Culture magazine, November 2025.



03

ACO PLAYERS



Richard Tognetti
Director & Violin

Richard plays a 1741–44 Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù violin on loan from the ACO. His Chair is sponsored by Gaby Kennard, Peter McMullin AM & Ruth McMullin, Andrew & Andrea Roberts, and Rosy Seaton & Seumas Dawes.



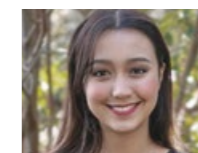
Helena Rathbone
Principal Violin

Helena plays the 1732 'ex-Dollfus' Stradivarius violin on loan from anonymous Australian private benefactors. Her Chair is sponsored by Margaret Gibbs & Rodney Cameron.



Satu Vänskä
Principal Violin

Satu plays the 1728/29 Stradivarius violin on loan from the ACO Instrument Fund. Her Chair is sponsored by David Thomas AM.



Anna da Silva Chen
Violin

Anna plays an 18th-century violin made in the style of Pietro Guarneri of Venice, kindly on loan from Jannie Brown. Her Chair is sponsored by Alenka Tindale.



Aiko Goto
Violin

Aiko plays her own French violin by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume. Her Chair is sponsored by Anthony & Sharon Lee Foundation.



Ilya Isakovich
Violin

Ilya plays a 1590 Brothers Amati violin on loan from the ACO Instrument Fund. His Chair is sponsored by Meg Meldrum.



Liisa Pallandi
Violin

Liisa plays a 1759 Giovanni Battista Guadagnini violin on loan from the ACO. Her Chair is sponsored by the Melbourne Medical Syndicate.



Thibaud Pavlovic-Hobba
Violin

Thibaud plays his own 1842 Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume violin. His Chair is sponsored by The Minta Group.



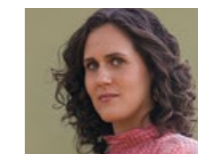
Ike See
Violin

Ike plays his own 2021 Samuel Zygmuntowicz violin.



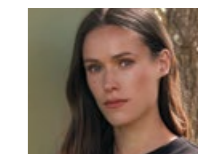
Tim Yu
Violin

Tim plays a violin ascribed to Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù in 1740, assembled by John Lott circa 1850, on loan from an anonymous Australian private benefactor. His Chair is sponsored by Barbara & Ralph Ward-Ambler.



Stefanie Farrands
Principal Viola

Stefanie plays a 1610 Maggini viola on loan from the ACO Instrument Fund. Her Chair is sponsored by peckvonhartel architects.



Elizabeth Woolnough
Viola

Elizabeth plays a 1952 A.E. Smith viola on loan from the ACO. Her Chair is sponsored by Terry Campbell AO & Christine Campbell.



Timo-Veikko Valve
Principal Cello

Tipi plays a 1616 Brothers Amati cello on loan from the ACO Instrument Fund. His Chair is sponsored by Prof Doug Jones AO & Prof Janet Walker CM.



Melissa Barnard
Cello

Melissa plays an 1846 cello by Jean-Baptiste Vuillaume. Her Chair is sponsored by Jason Wenderoth.



Julian Thompson
Cello

Julian plays a 1729 Giuseppe Guarneri filius Andreae cello with elements of the instrument crafted by his son, Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù, donated to the ACO by the late Peter Weiss AO. His Chair is sponsored by the Stewart Family, and Ms Julie Steiner AM & Prof Judyth Sachs.



Maxime Bibeau
Principal Bass

Max plays a late-16th-century Gasparo da Salò bass on loan from UKARIA. His Chair is sponsored by Janet Matton AM & Robin Rowe, and Ros Morauta.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR REPORT

In 2025 we celebrated 50 years of the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

In 1975, the visionary Australian cellist John Painter gathered a group of like-minded musicians, who shared his dream of creating an orchestra in charge of its own musical destiny. And so the Australian Chamber Orchestra was born.

The ACO made its debut on the Concert Hall stage of the Sydney Opera House on 21 November that same year. And 50 years later, to the day, the ACO took to that very same stage in celebration of those past five decades, and to look ahead to an ambitious future.

That night we paid tribute to John Painter, the visionary who started it all. We had hoped that John would be there with us in the Concert Hall, but he sadly passed away just two months shy of the concert. John, or Mr Painter as I knew him as a young student violinist, not only created the ACO and performed as a cellist in a number of the state orchestras, but was also the director of some of this country's most hallowed music schools, from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music to the Canberra School of Music and the Australian National Academy of Music. We honour his legacy as a deeply musical leader and educator who inspired generations of Australian musicians, and, in the instance of the dire very-near closure of the Australian National University's School of Music in 2025, are proud to continue his tradition of agitating and advocating for the rights of our music students, and our essential music institutions.

Alongside my ACO colleagues, including Principal Violin Helena Rathbone and cellist Melissa Barnard who both celebrated three decades with the ACO in 2025, I was honoured to share the stage that night with many of our beloved collaborators from over the years. This included surprise performances from Crowded House's Neil Finn and the Sydney Children's Choir, as well as British countertenor Iestyn Davies and the inimitable Tawadros Brothers, not to mention our own Satu Vänskä, who took to the microphone to perform songs from our film collaborations *Mountain* and *River*.

However, the musicians who left the deepest impact that night, on both the musicians onstage and the audience who joined us, were without a doubt the 68 ACO Foundations students from St Marys North Public School in Western Sydney. These brilliant young musicians, who begin each school day with 15 minutes of instrumental practice with their classroom teachers and ACO Foundations educators, joined us onstage for a moving performance of *Simple Gifts* that left the entire hall spellbound. It remains one of the most memorable, and affecting, performances of my 35 years with the ACO.

Witnessing the passion and pride of these young musicians is an experience that I will never forget, and continues to drive my ambition to bring our ACO Foundations program to primary schools across the country.



Richard Tognetti, Artistic Director.
Photo by Charlie Kinross

Throughout the 2025 Season the ACO performed with some of the world's most extraordinary musicians, from South African cellist Abel Selaocoe and his collaborator, percussionist Sidiki Dembélé, who made their Australian debut in a concert that had audiences on their feet, to ACO debuts including Ukrainian-Australian piano virtuoso Alexander Gavrylyuk, theremin star Carolina Eyck and cabaret artist Le Gateau Chocolat, who took to the stage as 'Jean Cocteau' in our venture to the glittering world of 1920s Paris, *Cocteau's Circle*. Our 2025 Season also saw the return of dear friends including Australian recorder player Geneveive Lacey, who performed in a concert directed from the cello by ACO Principal Cello Timo-Veikko 'Tipi' Valve, as well as the Australian soprano Chloe Lankshear. We were also delighted to work with the much-loved Australian composer Elena Kats-Chernin on multiple projects throughout the year, from our live performances of the Academy Award-nominated animation *Memoir of a Snail* to a new ACO Families show, *Where to Hide a Star*, premiered for our youngest audiences at our home, ACO On The Pier.

We also celebrated the talents amongst our own ranks throughout the season. Following violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja's withdrawal from guest directing the ACO in a national tour, I recognised an opportunity to spotlight the ACO's own musicians – each a soloist in their own right. With only two weeks' notice, we curated a program magnificently co-directed by Principal Violins Helena and Satu, who took centrestage alongside our newest member, violinist Anna da Silva Chen, for a blistering performance of Vivaldi's Concerto for Three Violins, while Tipi gave an impassioned premiere performance of a cello concerto written by his dear friend, the late Finnish composer Jaako Kussisto. I am proud to share that this concert, assembled in just a fortnight, went on to become one of our most acclaimed tours of the year. I have always said that the ACO has the best audience of any orchestra in the world, and the trust, passion and enthusiasm with which our audiences responded to this concert is testament to this.

The ACO would not have reached 50 years without our incredible audiences – particularly our subscribers, some of whom have been with us across all five decades – who put their faith in us each year. We are deeply grateful for your loyalty and belief in what we do.

I thank our dedicated board, led by Martyn Myer, as well as our indefatigable Managing Director of the past 10 years, Richard Evans, and the wider management and administration team. Thank you for all you do behind the scenes in supporting the Orchestra onstage.

And finally, and most importantly, I thank all ACO musicians, past and present, who have performed in this one-of-a-kind orchestra, from that original ensemble who took to the stage of the Sydney Opera House on 21 November 1975, right through to the current line-up. This isn't a job for the faint of heart, and the passion, imagination and commitment that you bring to every rehearsal and concert continues to inspire me each year. Thank you.



Richard Tognetti AO
Artistic Director



Above
John Painter AM

Right, from the top.
Richard Tognetti with Neil Finn,
and hosts Jeremy Fernandez and
Megan Burslem at *Celebrating the
Australian Chamber Orchestra*.
Photo by Nic Walker

ACO Foundations students from
St Marys North Public School
performing at *Celebrating the
Australian Chamber Orchestra*.
Photo by Nic Walker



CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR REPORT



2025 was a year of milestones and celebration for the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Alongside the ACO's 50th anniversary, 2025 also marked 35 years of pioneering leadership from Artistic Director Richard Tognetti. Richard began performing with the ACO in the 1980s while still a high school student, before being invited to lead the Orchestra in 1989, and was appointed as Artistic Director shortly afterwards in 1990. He has led the ACO to extraordinary heights, from developing an extensive national and international touring footprint to acclaimed cross-artform collaborations to performances with the world's greatest classical, jazz and indie artists. And, in its 50th anniversary year, we are proud to share that he and the Orchestra delivered their most ambitious season yet.



In 2025 the ACO presented 217 concerts to an audience of over 122,500 people around the globe. This included sold-out concerts in venues across Europe and the UK, seven bold national tours performed in concert halls across Australia and brand new family-friendly productions presented at our home at ACO On The Pier for our youngest audiences.

In 2025 we also celebrated the 20-year anniversary of the ACO Emerging Artist program. Established in 2005, our Emerging Artist program was created to provide essential, on-the-job mentoring and training opportunities with ACO musicians for talented young Australian string players in the early stages of their careers. The program has gone on to be a remarkable success, with Emerging Artist alumni now found in orchestras around the world – including six musicians of the ACO – a testament to both the program and the extraordinary calibre of young musicians in this country.

Fittingly for a milestone year, the ACO's 2025 Season opened in spectacular fashion. In a thrilling celebration of all three milestones, the ACO was joined onstage by current and former stars of our Emerging Artist program for a performance of Brahms's Violin Concerto, featuring Richard giving a truly remarkable performance as soloist that showed him to be a violinist at the absolute top of his game. The tour was sold out, with standing ovations around the country and glowing 5-star reviews.

The critical acclaim continued throughout the Season, notably during the ACO's return to Europe and the UK in March where the Orchestra performed concerts in Amsterdam, Wrocław, Stuttgart and London. The responses from critics and audiences alike on this 50th anniversary celebration tour were rapturous, with *The Guardian UK* hailing the performance as a "masterclass in chamber music-making" in their 5-star review, while *The Telegraph UK* declared "It's not just the superbly drilled precision and lyric grace of the orchestra that has placed it among the top handful of chamber orchestras. It's the way that the players cast a bright new light on everything they perform."

Above.
Martyn Myer AO,
Chairman.

Richard Evans AM,
Managing Director.

Australian Chamber Orchestra 50 Years



Celebrating the Australian Chamber Orchestra performance at the Sydney Opera House.
Photo by Nic Walker



The ACO is Australia's most travelled orchestra and to be greeted by our audiences abroad with such warmth and enthusiasm is a testament to the strong international reputation that the ACO has developed over the past 50 years.

The ACO's expansive Learning & Engagement program continued to grow in 2025. Over 14,000 young people and their families attended an ACO Families production throughout the year, while 748 audience members experienced our ACO Relaxed concerts tailored for people with a disability or access needs. We were also proud to present a collaboration with Club Weld that brought together ACO musicians and neurodiverse artists for a deeply powerful performance that demonstrated the artistic and transformative potential of genuinely inclusive practice.

Following its unequivocal success at St Marys North Public School in Western Sydney over the past eight years, we were thrilled to expand our award-winning ACO Foundations instrument learning program to Victoria, made possible with funding and support from the Sidney Myer Trust at the University of Melbourne. ACO Foundations was launched at Belle Vue Park Primary School in Glenroy in February 2025, with over 200 students across Years 1, 2 and 3 participating in the program over the year. Their hard work culminated in a spectacular showcase performance that saw the students join the core musicians of the ACO onstage at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music in front of an audience of their proud families and the wider school community. Witnessing the joy and pride on the faces of these young musicians was a profoundly moving experience for everyone in the hall that day, and we thank the University of Melbourne for their incredible support in expanding this life-changing program.

In 2025 we were delighted to welcome the newest member of the ACO – a precious viola made in 1610 by the renowned Italian luthier Giovanni Paolo Maggini. Believed to be the only surviving example of its kind, this incredible instrument was acquired by the ACO Instrument Fund following a years-long international search and is played by Principal Viola Stefanie Farrands, who has described performing on the viola as 'an honour I will cherish for the rest of my life'. The 1610 Maggini viola is both a rare historical treasure and a living part of our sound today and we extend our thanks to the members of the ACO Instrument Fund for their generosity in making this possible.

It was a true privilege to see the ACO's supporters around Australia, and internationally, rally together in celebration of 50 years of this incredible Orchestra. The ACO hosted more than 40 private events and performances with our donors, partners and distinguished guests throughout 2025, including a series of special performances at Government Houses across the country at the special invitation of State Governors as well as an event at Australian House in London. To round out the celebrations, we held a truly spectacular 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser at the Art Gallery of NSW in October, where 260 friends and supporters of the ACO came together to raise vital funds for the ACO's Learning & Engagement program – with a particular focus on ACO Foundations. We are proud to share that more than \$3 million was pledged to establish the ACO Learning & Engagement Endowment Fund that evening. A vital investment in the future, this Fund will generate income to help sustain the ACO's annual education programs – with ACO Foundations at its heart – for years to come. We thank

Above.
ACO Foundations students from Belle Vue Park Primary School with ACO Cello Julian Thompson. Photo by Charlie Kinross

the Gala Committee, most notably our extraordinary Gala Committee Chair Liz Lewin, for their tireless work and invaluable contributions in making the evening an incredible success.

The underlying result from general operations in 2025 was a trading deficit of \$1,388,243 (2024: \$445,391), before the 2025 non-recurring and capital-in-nature impacts totalling \$4,518,411 (2024: \$5,872,211). The 2025 non-recurring and capital-in-nature items were caused by a variety of factors, including favourable impacts from investment income, bequests, and one-off donations for a new musical instrument and the 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser, offset by the new premises project net expenditure. Once these non-recurring and capital-in-nature items are included, the overall total comprehensive income for the year was a surplus of \$3,130,168 (2024: \$5,426,820).

Consistent with our not-for-profit status, any surpluses are reinvested in the mission of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, and the parent company has cash and other reserves to meet its obligations and continue as a going concern.

The ACO was delighted to continue to receive generous support from patrons and philanthropists towards the Capital Campaign, which supports the establishment of the ACO's new premises, ACO On The Pier, in 2025. \$270,600 in cash donations was received in 2025 [life-to-date as at 31 December 2025: \$16,623,301 (\$16,352,701 life-to-date as at 31 December 2024)].

Working with the ACO in its 50th anniversary year was a true privilege. We thank the members of the ACO Board and the ACO's administrative team for all of their dedication and invaluable contributions to this landmark year's success. We also thank our philanthropic donors, valued corporate partners and Creative Australia and Create NSW, whose support was vital in making all that the ACO does possible.

In particular, we thank Wesfarmers Arts, Principal Partner of the ACO, for their invaluable support in our 50th anniversary year. Wesfarmers Arts have been a much-valued partner with the ACO for nearly three decades, including as Principal Partner of our ACO Collective ensemble. For their first full year as ACO Principal Partner to take place during the Orchestra's 50th anniversary year was especially meaningful and impactful for our organisation.

At the heart of this extraordinary organisation are its musicians – a collective of exceptional individuals led by Richard, whose passion, virtuosity and uncompromising artistry continues to inspire us, as well as subscribers, supporters and audiences around the world. It is this awe-inspiring brilliance that will take the ACO forward into the next 50 years.

Martyn Myer AO
Chairman

Richard Evans AM
Managing Director



Above.
Stefanie Farrands, Principal Viola. Photo by Charlie Kinross

06

NATIONAL CONCERT SEASON

76 CONCERTS

83,755 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Brahms & Beethoven concert at the Sydney Opera House. Photo by Stephen Blake



Brahms & Beethoven

6-17 FEBRUARY

10 CONCERTS | 12,554 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Brahms's Violin Concerto and Beethoven's Symphony No.7 formed an epic opener to the ACO's 50th Anniversary Season.

Richard Tognetti brought his characteristic flair and feeling to perform one of the pinnacles of the violin repertoire, Brahms's Violin Concerto, before directing the Orchestra in Beethoven's Symphony No.7. Joining the ACO onstage were current and former stars of the ACO Emerging Artist Program and wind players hand-picked from orchestras around the world.

★★★★★ "As usual, Tognetti's enthusiasm could not allow him to stand still on the platform. Clearly out to have fun, he and the players radiated a sense of joyous collaboration, the true hallmark of any chamber orchestra. May such joy illuminate the ACO's next 50 years."

THE AGE, 10 FEBRUARY 2025

★★★★★ "This was a deeply committed performance showing care and expressive affinity."

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 13 FEBRUARY 2025

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Australian Chamber Orchestra
with current and former members of the
ACO Emerging Artist Program

PROGRAM

Johannes Brahms Violin Concerto in D major,
Op.77
Ludwig van Beethoven Symphony No.7
in A major, Op.92

VENUES

Newcastle City Hall
Sat 6 Feb 7.30pm

Melbourne Recital Hall
Sat 8 Feb 7.30pm
Mon 10 Feb 7.30pm

Melbourne • Arts Centre Melbourne
Sun 9 Feb 2.30pm

Sydney • City Recital Hall
Tue 11 Feb 8pm
Wed 12 Feb 7pm
Fri 14 Feb 7pm
Sat 15 Feb 7pm

Sydney Opera House
Sun 16 Feb 2pm

Brisbane • QPAC Concert Hall
Mon 17 Feb 7pm

Above.
Photo by Charlie Kinross



ARTISTS
Abel Selaocoe Director & Cello
Sidiki Dembélé Percussion
Helena Rathbone Lead Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM
Abel Selaocoe Introduction / Improvisation
Abel Selaocoe Qhawe (Hero) (Australian Premiere)
Giovanni Benedetto Platti Cello Concerto in D major, WD650
Abel Selaocoe Tshepo (Faith) (Australian Premiere)
Nigel Westlake Ascension* (World Premiere)
Giovanni Sollima When We Were Trees: Selections (Australian Premiere)
Abel Selaocoe Lerato (Love) (Australian Premiere)
Abel Selaocoe Ka Bohaleng (On the Sharp Side) (Australian Premiere)

VENUES
Wollongong Town Hall
 Thu 3 Apr 7.30pm

Sydney • City Recital Hall
 Sat 5 Apr 7pm
 Tue 8 Apr 8pm
 Wed 9 Apr 7pm

Sydney Opera House
 Sun 6 Apr 2pm

Canberra • Llewellyn Hall
 Mon 7 Apr 7.30pm

Melbourne Recital Hall
 Sat 12 Apr 7.30pm
 Mon 14 Apr 7.30pm

Melbourne • Arts Centre Melbourne
 Sun 13 Apr 2.30pm

Adelaide Town Hall
 Tue 15 Apr 7.30pm

*Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Abel Selaocoe

3-15 APRIL

10 CONCERTS | 12,273 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

International cello sensation Abel Selaocoe made his highly anticipated Australian debut with the ACO in a concert that gathered together an exhilarating harmony of classical cello, African traditions, throat singing, percussion and unbridled joy. Joining Selaocoe and the ACO onstage was his regular collaborator, percussionist Sidiki Dembélé.

★★★★ “Selaocoe and the ACO’s Timo-Veikko Valve created haunting atmospherics in the first and third excerpts and played the second, fourth and fifth with increasingly virtuosic wildness as though possessed.”

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 7 APRIL 2025

★★★★★ “Greeted like a rock star for his Australian debut tour, South African cellist Abel Selaocoe does not disappoint.”

LIMELIGHT, 9 APRIL 2025

★★★★ “This was a wild ride for the two soloists, who tossed aside the considerable technical challenges, creating an astounding synergy while evoking both Antonio Vivaldi and Jimi Hendrix. A standing ovation confirmed that this sort of church has many ardent devotees.”

THE AGE, 14 APRIL 2025

Above.
 Photo by Nic Walker

Right:
 Abel Selaocoe performance at the City Recital Hall. Photo by Nic Walker





Theremin & Beyond

8-20 MAY

10 CONCERTS | 10,525 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Richard Tognetti directed an eclectic program starring Carolina Eyck, the internationally renowned superstar of the theremin. From the swinging sounds of The Beach Boys and the unmistakable *Star Trek* theme to a new commission from Australian composer Holly Harrison, this was a concert full of fun that took audiences to other worlds.

“A highlight was the world premiere of *Hovercraft*, written for Eyck by young West Sydney composer Holly Harrison. Over eight minutes Harrison gave Eyck and her instrument a vigorous and fun-filled workout, drawing on influences from jazz and disco to punk and dance, with Nixon providing a driving four-on-the-floor pulse behind his drum kit.”

LIMELIGHT, 12 MAY 2025

★★★★★ “The haunting, unusual theremin collides with the Australian Chamber Orchestra in this spellbinding concert.”

ARTSHUB, 19 MAY 2025

★★★★ “Eyck is a highly talented performer and in this not-too-serious program, she did conjure up some musical magic.”

THE AGE, 19 MAY 2025

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin

Carolina Eyck Theremin

Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Brett Dean Short Stories: IV. Komarov's Last Words

Mikhail Glinka A Farewell to St Petersburg: X. The Lark

Johann Sebastian Bach Orchestral Suite No.3 in D major, BWV1068: II. Air

Jacques Offenbach Orpheus in the Underworld: Can-can

Camille Saint-Saëns The Carnival of the Animals: Selections

Erwin Schulhoff (arr. strings) Five Pieces for String Quartet

Miklós Rózsa Spellbound Concerto

Jörg Widmann 180 Beats Per Minute

Holly Harrison *Hovercraft** (World Premiere)

Yasushi Akutagawa Triptyque

Alexander Courage Star Trek: Main Theme

Carolina Eyck Fantasias: I. Oakunur Lynntuja (Strange Birds)

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov Flight of the Bumblebee

The Beach Boys Good Vibrations

Ennio Morricone The Good, The Bad and The Ugly: The Ecstasy of Gold

VENUES

Wollongong Town Hall

Thu 8 May 7.30pm

Sydney • City Recital Hall

Sat 10 May 7pm

Tue 13 May 8pm

Wed 14 May 7pm

Sydney Opera House

Sun 11 May 2pm

Brisbane • QPAC Concert Hall

Mon 12 May 7pm

Melbourne Recital Centre

Sat 17 May 7.30pm

Mon 19 May 7.30pm

Melbourne • Arts Centre Melbourne

Sun 18 May 2.30pm

Canberra • Llewellyn Hall

Tue 20 May 7.30pm

*Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Above.
Photo by Nic Walker



ACO Unleashed

21 JUNE - 2 JULY

10 CONCERTS | 10,303 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Following the withdrawal of guest director Patricia Kopatchinskaja, the ACO presented an updated program, curated by Richard Tognetti, to showcase the extraordinary talent within the ACO. *ACO Unleashed* celebrated the individual artistry of ACO principal musicians Helena Rathbone, Satu Vänskä and Timo-Veikko Valve, alongside the Orchestra's newest member, violinist Anna da Silva Chen, with classics by Bach, Beethoven, Schubert and Ravel, alongside a cello concerto by Finnish master Jaakko Kuusisto, performed with unwavering energy and maverick imagination.

★★★★★ “A golden concert.”

LIMELIGHT, 1 JULY 2025

★★★★★ “Valve played like a seer speaking a hard-won truth, full of intensity, sincerity and deep musical understanding.”

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 2 JULY 2025

★★★★ “Clearly delighting in their collaboration, they wove the music's contrapuntal strands into a richly detailed tapestry, abetted by the ACO's customary rhythmic drive.”

THE AGE, 24 JUNE 2025

NATIONAL TOUR PARTNER



Annual Report 2025

ARTISTS

Helena Rathbone Director & Violin

Satu Vänskä Director & Violin

Anna da Silva Chen Violin

Timo-Veikko Valve Cello

Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Johann Sebastian Bach Concerto for Three Violins in D major, BWV1064R

Maurice Ravel (arr. Bernard Rofe) Tzigane

Ludwig van Beethoven (arr. Richard Tognetti) String Quartet in F minor, Op.95 “Serioso”

Franz Schubert (arr. strings) Quartettsatz in C minor, D.703

Jaakko Kuusisto Cello Concerto, Op.38

(Australian Premiere)

VENUES

Canberra • Llewellyn Hall

Sat 21 Jun 7.30pm

Melbourne • Arts Centre Melbourne

Sun 22 Jun 2.30pm

Mon 23 Jun 7.30pm

Adelaide Town Hall

Tue 24 Jun 7.30pm

Perth • Winthrop Hall

Wed 25 Jun 7.30pm

Sydney • City Recital Hall

Sat 28 Jun 7pm

Tue 1 Jul 8pm

Wed 2 Jul 7pm

Sydney Opera House

Sun 29 Jun 2pm

Brisbane • QPAC Concert Hall

Mon 30 Jun 7pm

Above.
Photo by Nic Walker



Gershwin & Shostakovich performance at the Sydney Opera House. Photo by Nic Walker



ARTISTS
 Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
 Alexander Gavrylyuk Piano
 David Elton Trumpet
 Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM
 Claude Vivier Zipangu
 Valentin Silvestrov Moments of Memory (VI)*
 (World Premiere)
 Dmitri Shostakovich Piano Concerto No.1 in C minor, Op.35
 George Gershwin (arr. Bernard Rofe) Rhapsody in Blue
 Shostakovich (arr. Rudolf Barshai) Chamber Symphony in C minor, Op.110a

VENUES
 Sydney • City Recital Hall
 Fri 1 Aug 7pm
 Sat 2 Aug 7pm
 Tue 5 Aug 8pm
 Wed 6 Aug 7pm

Sydney Opera House
 Sun 3 Aug 2pm

Newcastle City Hall
 Thu 7 Aug 7.30pm

Canberra • Llewellyn Hall
 Sat 9 Aug 7.30pm

Melbourne • Arts Centre Melbourne
 Sun 10 Aug 2.30pm
 Mon 11 Aug 7.30pm

Adelaide Town Hall
 Tue 12 Aug 7.30pm

Perth • Winthrop Hall
 Wed 13 Aug 7.30pm

Wollongong Town Hall
 Sat 16 Aug 7.30pm

Brisbane • QPAC Concert Hall
 Mon 18 Aug 7pm

*Co-commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Arctic Philharmonic, Scottish Ensemble, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and Witold Lutoslawski National Forum of Music.

Gershwin & Shostakovich

1-18 AUGUST

13 CONCERTS | 15,589 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Richard Tognetti directed a profound program featuring Ukrainian-born, internationally renowned pianist Alexander Gavrylyuk, who made his ACO debut in Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* and Shostakovich's witty, irreverent Piano Concerto No.1 featuring David Elton on trumpet.

★★★★★ "Alexander Gavrylyuk's speed and strength showcased in a program combining introspection and melancholy with slapstick energy."

LIMELIGHT, 3 AUGUST 2025

"A moving night of music dedicated to the victims of war and fascism hits the right note for our times."

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH, 4 AUGUST 2025

★★★★ "An excellent and varied concert."

BACHTRACK, 11 AUGUST 2025

Above.
 Photo by Nic Walker



ARTISTS

Timo-Veikko Valve Director & Cello
Genevieve Lacey Recorders
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

*Illuminations**
Hildegard von Bingen
 Ave, generosa (Hymn to the Virgin)

Max Richter On the Nature of Daylight
Melody Eötvös Meraki**
David Lang flute and echo***
 (World Premiere)
Jaakko Kuusisto Wiima

*Imaginary Cities: A Baroque Fantasy**
Claudio Monteverdi Vespro della Beata Vergine –
Antonio Vivaldi Recorder Concerto in C major, RV444: I. Allegro non molto –
Erkki Veltheim Intermezzo I –
Barbara Strozzi Che si può fare –
Antonio Vivaldi Recorder Concerto in C major, RV443: III. Allegro molto

Ludwig van Beethoven (arr. strings) String Quartet in A minor, Op.132: III. Molto adagio

VENUES

Newcastle City Hall
 Thu 4 Sep 7.30pm

Melbourne Recital Centre
 Sat 6 Sep 7.30pm
 Mon 8 Sep 7.30pm

Melbourne • Arts Centre Melbourne
 Sun 7 Sep 2.30pm

Adelaide Town Hall
 Tue 9 Sep 7.30pm

Perth • Winthrop Hall
 Wed 10 Sep 7.30pm

Canberra • Llewellyn Hall
 Sat 13 Sep 7.30pm

Brisbane • QPAC Concert Hall
 Mon 15 Sep 7pm

Sydney • City Recital Hall
 Tue 16 Sep 8pm
 Wed 17 Sep 7pm
 Fri 19 Sep 7pm
 Sat 20 Sep 7pm

Sydney Opera House
 Sun 21 Sep 2pm

** Illuminations and Imaginary Cities: A Baroque Fantasy* were commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Soundscapes by Erkki Veltheim, with contributions from Genevieve Lacey (Recorders) and Kelly Dowall (Ney flute). Recording of “Hero y Leandro” by Viktoria Ventura is used courtesy of Maaleh Adumim Institute for the Documentation of the Judeo-Spanish Language (Ladino) and its Culture. Hildegard, Monteverdi and Strozzi arranged by Erkki Veltheim.

** Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra
 *** Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra, generously supported by Ulrike Klein AO.

A Musical Awakening

4-21 SEPTEMBER

13 CONCERTS | 11,837 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ACO Principal Cello Timo-Veikko Valve directed a profound program that explored music’s ability to nurture, heal and nourish. Featuring recorder virtuoso Genevieve Lacey, the Orchestra performed music by Beethoven, Pēteris Vasks, Max Richter and Hildegard von Bingen that left audiences renowned and invigorated.

“Genevieve Lacey and Simon Martyn-Ellis cast a spell in a concert spanning medieval hymns to contemporary Australian works.”

LIMELIGHT, 11 SEPTEMBER 2025

“Rich and comforting to the last lingering trace.”

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN, 12 SEPTEMBER 2025

Above.
 Photo by Charlie Kinross



Cocteau’s Circle

8-22 NOVEMBER

10 CONCERTS | 10,674 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

The ACO invited audiences to venture back in time to the intimate, dreamy light of *Le Boeuf sur le toit*, the legendary cabaret bar of 1920s Paris. Joined onstage by cabaret, opera and drag superstar Le Gateau Chocolat as maître d’ and Australian soprano Chloe Lankshear, with direction by Circa’s Yaron Lifschitz, Richard Tognetti led the ACO in an evening of storytelling, song and surrealism featuring the music of Erik Satie, Lili Boulanger and the group dubbed ‘Les Six’.

“Paris in the 1920s comes vividly to life in the ACO’s stylish and inventive homage to Cocteau and Les Six.”

LIMELIGHT, 10 NOVEMBER, 2025

“With visiting brass and percussion, Tognetti and the ACO captured well the way composers of this period created disorientation and distancing through unusual blends and unconventional balance.”

SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 11 NOVEMBER 2025

★★★★ “This thoughtful, colourful tribute to one of last century’s most precocious artistic minds has an appropriate sense of pushing boundaries, just as the ACO has done consistently over its 50 years.”

THE AGE, 17 NOVEMBER 2025

Above.
 Photo by Daniel Boud

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Yaron Lifschitz Staging Director
Le Gateau Chocolat Maître d’ & Voice
Chloe Lankshear Soprano
Libby McDonnell Costume Designer
Elena Kats-Chernin Interstitial Music
 Composer
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Elena Kats-Chernin *Pre-show*: Intermission Music#
Georges Auric* Overture [abridged]
Elena Kats-Chernin Interlude 1: Les années folles (The crazy years)#
Igor Stravinsky L’Histoire du soldat: Ragtime
Arthur Honegger* Les Mariés de la tour Eiffel: Marche funèbre
Elena Kats-Chernin Interlude 2: L’opéra (The opera)#
Henri Christiné* Phi-Phi: Bien Chapeauté
Germaine Tailleferre* String Quartet: I. Modéré
George Gershwin* Oh, Lady Be Good!
Maurice Ravel** String Quartet: IV. Vif et agité
Elena Kats-Chernin Interlude 3: Le sacré (The sacred)#
Francis Poulenc* Les Chemins de l’amour
Lili Boulanger* Pie Jesu
Igor Stravinsky Trois pièces pour quatuor à cordes: I. Danse, III. Cantique
George Gershwin* Porgy and Bess: I Loves You, Porgy
Jean Françaix* Concertino for Piano & Orchestra: I. Presto leggiero
Elena Kats-Chernin Interlude 4: Les fantômes (The ghosts)#
Claude Debussy** String Quartet, Op.10: II. Assez vif et bien rythmé
Janis Ian* Stars
Elena Kats-Chernin Interlude 5: Étonnez-moi (Astonish me)#
Darius Milhaud*** Le Bœuf sur le toit, Op.58
Édith Piaf* L’Hymne à l’amour

VENUES

Sydney • City Recital Hall
 Sat 8 Nov 7pm
 Tue 11 Nov 8pm
 Wed 12 Nov 7pm

Sydney Opera House
 Sun 9 Nov 2pm

Brisbane • QPAC Concert Hall
 Mon 10 Nov 7pm

Melbourne Recital Centre
 Sat 15 Nov 7.30pm
 Mon 17 Nov 7.30pm

Melbourne • Arts Centre Melbourne
 Sun 16 Nov 2.30pm

Adelaide Town Hall
 Tue 18 Nov 7.30pm

Canberra • Llewellyn Hall
 Sat 22 Nov 7.30pm

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra
 * Arranged by Andrew Howes
 ** Arranged by Richard Tognetti
 *** Arranged by Bernard Rofe

ACO ON THE PIER

The ACO acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as traditional owners of this land. It is a space on which we are proud to work and create.

Aiko Goto, Violin, at ACO On The Pier. Photo by Maria Boyadgis

The ACO hosted 211 public events at its home at ACO On The Pier in the Walsh Bay Arts Precinct in 2025. These events were comprised of concerts and events presented by the ACO, and concerts and events presented by other organisations who hired the spaces within ACO On The Pier: The Neilson, The Studio and the Belgiorno Room.

ACO Concerts and Events

The ACO presented over 75 performances at ACO On The Pier in 2025. These included concerts in its ACO Up Close series, ACO Relaxed series, and ACO Families seasons (detailed from page 64) and special events including *Memoir of a Snail Live in Concert* (detailed on page 39).

ACO UP CLOSE

13 CONCERTS | 2,530 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Legacies

Co-presented with Sydney Festival

23 JANUARY

2 CONCERTS | 450 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ARTISTS

Thibaud Pavlovic-Hobba Violin
Tim Yu Violin
Elizabeth Woolnough Viola
Eliza Sdraulig Cello

PROGRAM

Henry Purcell Sonata in F major "Golden Sonata"
Kaija Saariaho Botanique: Movements I, II & III
Johann Sebastian Bach The Art of Fugue, BWV1080: Chorale "Wenn wir in höchsten Nöthen sein"
Joseph Haydn String Quartet in D minor, Op.103
Grażyna Bacewicz String Quartet No.4

VENUE

Sydney • The Neilson, ACO On The Pier
 Thu 23 Jan 4pm & 6pm

Freiburg Baroque Orchestra

28 MARCH

2 CONCERTS | 458 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

The Freiburg Baroque Orchestra is widely considered one of the leading period instrument ensembles in the world. The ACO was thrilled to present them in two concerts in their ACO On The Pier debut.

CONCERT 1: MOZART'S 40TH SYMPHONY

ARTISTS

Gottfried von der Goltz Director & Violin
Kristian Bezuidenhout Fortepiano
Freiburg Baroque Orchestra

PROGRAM

Johann Christian Bach Symphony in G minor, Op.6, No.6
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Piano Concerto No.9 in E-Flat major, K.271 "Jeunehomme"
Mozart Violin Concerto No.5 in A major, K.219 "Turkish"
Mozart Symphony No.40 in G minor, K.550

VENUE

Sydney • The Neilson, ACO On The Pier
 Fri 28 Mar 2pm

CONCERT 2: THE CLARINET CONCERTO AND PIANO CONCERTO NO.23

ARTISTS

Gottfried von der Goltz Director & Violin
Lorenzo Coppola Clarinet
Kristian Bezuidenhout Fortepiano
Freiburg Baroque Orchestra

PROGRAM

Johann Christian Bach Symphony in G major, Op.6, No.1
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Concerto in A major, K.622
Mozart Symphony No.29 in A major K.201
Mozart Piano Concerto No.23 in A major, K.488

VENUE

Sydney • The Neilson, ACO On The Pier
 Fri 28 Mar 7pm

Reich & Golijov

3 MAY

1 CONCERT | 166 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Violin
Ike See Violin
Stefanie Farrands Viola
Melissa Barnard Cello
David Griffiths Clarinet

PROGRAM

Steve Reich Different Trains
Oswaldo Golijov The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind

VENUE

Sydney • The Neilson, ACO On The Pier
 Sat 3 May 7pm

Shostakovich, Silvestrov & Bach

23 & 25 AUGUST

3 CONCERTS | 387 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ARTISTS

Satu Vänskä Violin
Ilya Isakovich Violin
Amanda Verner Viola
Julian Thompson Cello
Konstantin Shamray Piano

PROGRAM

Valentin Silvestrov Three Bagatelles for piano, Op.1
Silvestrov Five Pieces for violin and piano: III. Intermezzo; IV. Barcarole
Dmitri Shostakovich (arr. Dmitri Tsiganov) 24 Preludes, Op.34: Nos. 1, 5, 10, 15, 17 & 24
Johann Sebastian Bach The Art of Fugue, BWV1080: Contrapunctus I
Shostakovich Piano Quintet in G minor, Op.57

VENUES

Sydney • The Neilson, ACO On The Pier
Sat 23 Apr 7pm

Melbourne • Primrose Potter Salon, Melbourne Recital Centre
Mon 25 Apr 4pm & 7pm

Danilo Pérez

19 OCTOBER

1 CONCERT | 237 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ARTISTS

Danilo Pérez Piano

PROGRAM

Danilo Pérez Original Improvisations

VENUE

Sydney • The Neilson, ACO On The Pier
Sun 19 Oct 7pm

Baroque Resonance with ACO & Pinchgut Opera

21-22 OCTOBER

2 CONCERTS | 434 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ARTISTS

Erin Helyard Director & Harpsichord
Samantha Clarke Soprano
Simon Martyn-Ellis Theorbo
Helena Rathbone Violin
Liisa Pallandi Violin
Elizabeth Woolnough Viola
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello

PROGRAM

Antonio Vivaldi Concerto for Strings in C major, RV114 “Paris”
Vivaldi Dorilla in Tempe, RV709: Aria “Rete, lacci, e strali adopra”
Vivaldi Giustino, RV717: Aria “Vedrò con mio diletto”
Vivaldi La fida ninfa, RV714: Aria “Alma oppressa da sorte”
George Frideric Handel Sonata a quattro in G major, HWV399
Handel Giulio Cesare in Egitto, HVW17: Recitativo accompagnato;
Aria “Se pietà di me non senti”
Vivaldi Concerto for Strings in E minor, RV134
Handel Giulio Cesare in Egitto, HVW17: Aria “Da tempeste il legno infranto”
Handel Giulio Cesare in Egitto, HVW17: Aria “Piangerò la sorte mia” *Encore:*
Handel Rinaldo: HVW17: Aria “Lascia ch'io pianga”

VENUE

Sydney • The Neilson, ACO On The Pier
Tue 21 Oct 7pm
Wed 22 Oct 7pm

Le Gateau Chocolat in Raw Cacao

25 NOVEMBER

1 CONCERT | 166 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ARTISTS

Le Gateau Chocolat Vocals
Victoria Falconer Piano

PROGRAM

Le Gateau Chocolat Raw Cacao

VENUE

Sydney • The Neilson, ACO On The Pier
Tue 25 Nov 7pm

Timo-Veikko Valve & AYO Momentum Ensemble

28 NOVEMBER

1 CONCERT | 232 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ARTISTS

Timo-Veikko Valve Director & Cello
AYO Momentum Ensemble

PROGRAM

Olivia Bettina Davies Crystalline
Franz Schubert (arr. Timo-Veikko Valve) Arpeggione Sonata, D.821
Jaakko Kuusisto Wiima, Op.27
Jean Sibelius (arr. Timo-Veikko Valve) Voces Intimae, Op.56
Interspersed with selections from:
Peter Sculthorpe String Quartet No.8

VENUES

Sydney • The Neilson, ACO On The Pier
Fri 28 Nov 7pm

Right.
Elizabeth Woolnough, Viola.
Photo by Charlie Kinross



ACO On The Pier Presenters

2025 continued the strong trajectory of events at ACO On The Pier and within the wider Walsh Bay Arts Precinct.

The ACO hosted 211 public events at ACO On The Pier in 2025, welcoming approximately 31,000 guests to the venue. In total, 39 arts organisations presented events at ACO On The Pier in 2025, including Sydney Festival, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Luminescence Chamber Singers, Melba Opera Trust, Ensemble Apex, Ensemble Offspring, Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM), Australian String Quartet, Sydney Writers' Festival, Omega Ensemble, Australian Vocal Ensemble (AVE), Australian Youth Orchestra and Gondwana Choirs.

The breadth of programming reflected ACO On The Pier's position as one of Australia's most vibrant

cultural hubs, spanning chamber music, choral performance, opera, contemporary works, literary events and cross-artform collaborations. The diversity of presenting organisations highlights the venue's growing reputation as a home for both established institutions and emerging artists, fostering artistic excellence.

ACO On The Pier also hosted events for 41 organisations from a comprehensive range of industries, including media, technology, finance and FMCG. These partnerships further demonstrate the venue's versatility and appeal beyond the arts sector, reinforcing its role as a dynamic gathering place within the Walsh Bay Arts Precinct and contributing to its ongoing financial sustainability and community engagement.



Dobby performing at Sydney Festival 2025 at ACO On The Pier. Photo by Stephen Wilson Barker



30 ACO On The Pier Showcase. Photo by Mark Bond



Perry Keyes performing at Sydney Festival 2025 at ACO On The Pier. Photo by Neil Bennett



INTERNATIONAL TOURING

5 CONCERTS

4,290 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

The ACO performing in the Barbican Hall, London.

The Australian Chamber Orchestra embarked on a triumphant tour to Europe and the UK in March 2025 that saw the Orchestra perform electrifying concerts in Amsterdam, Wrocław, Stuttgart and London that were met with rapturous standing ovations and glowing 5-star reviews.

European & UK Tour

11-21 MARCH

5 CONCERTS | 4,290 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Bach & Shostakovich

11, 19 & 21 MARCH

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Jeroen Berwaerts Trumpet
Alexander Melnikov Piano
Ivan Podyomov Oboe*
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Johann Sebastian Bach (arr. Richard Tognetti) The Musical Offering, BWV1079: a 6
Bach Brandenburg Concerto No.3 in G major, BWV1048
Dmitri Shostakovich Piano Concerto No.1 in C minor, Op.35
Sofia Gubaidulina Reflections on the Theme B-A-C-H
Bach (arr. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart) The Well-Tempered Clavier Book 2: Fugue in E-flat major, BWV876
Bach Concerto for Oboe and Violin in C minor, BWV1060*
Shostakovich (arr. Rudolf Barshai) Chamber Symphony in C minor, Op.110a

VENUES

Amsterdam • Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ
 Tue 11 Mar 8.15pm

Stuttgart • Mozart-Saal | Kultur- und Kongresszentrum Liederhalle
 Wed 19 Mar 7pm

London • Barbican Hall
 Fri 21 Mar 7.30pm

* Amsterdam concert only.

Mountain

15 MARCH

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Music Director, Composer & Violin
Alexander Melnikov Piano
Satu Vänskä Violin & Voice
Helena Rathbone Violin
Ike See Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello
Australian Chamber Orchestra
 with the participation of the **NFM Wrocław Philharmonic**

CREATIVE TEAM

Jennifer Peedom Writer, Director & Producer
Richard Tognetti Musical Director & Composer
Renan Ozturk Principal Cinematography
Robert Macfarlane Narration Scriptwriter
Willem Dafoe Narrator
Christian Gazal, Scott Gray ASE Editors
David White Sound Designer
Robert Mackenzie Sound Mixer
Jo-anne McGowan Producer
Joseph Nizeti Music Editor & Music Supervisor
Paul Wiegard, David Gross, Stephen Boyle, Martyn Myer AO
 Executive Producers

LIVE IN CONCERT PRODUCTION

Nigel Jamieson Staging Director
Damien Cooper Lighting Design
Bob Scott Audio Design
Kevan Atkins Video Systems Design
Joe Cox Lighting Supervisor
Annika Unsen Audio Technician

Presented by **Screen Australia** and the **Australian Chamber Orchestra, Stranger Than Fiction Films Production**, in association with **Camp 4 Collective & Sherpas Cinema**

PROGRAM

Richard Tognetti Prelude
Tognetti Majesty
Tognetti Sublime Horror
Tognetti Gods and Monsters
Peter Sculthorpe Djilile (for strings)*
Frédéric Chopin Nocturne in D-flat major, Op.27, No.2*
Edvard Grieg Holberg Suite, Op.40: I. Praeludium
Sculthorpe (arr. for piano & strings) Djilile*
Antonio Vivaldi Concerto for Four Violins & Cello in B minor, RV580: I. Allegro
Vivaldi Winter from The Four Seasons, RV297: I. Allegro non molto
Vivaldi Concerto for Four Violins & Cello in B minor, RV580: II. Larghetto*
Vivaldi Concerto for Four Violins & Cello in B minor, RV580: III. Allegro
Vivaldi Summer from The Four Seasons, RV315: III. Presto
Arvo Pärt Für Alina
Tognetti Flying
Tognetti Madness Bites
Tognetti On High
Pärt Fratres*
Ludwig van Beethoven Violin Concerto in D major, Op.61: II. Larghetto*
Tognetti A Final Bridge
Beethoven Piano Concerto No.5 in E-flat major, Op.73 "Emperor": II. Adagio un poco moto

VENUE

Wrocław • National Forum of Music
 Sat 15 Mar 6pm

* This work or movement is abridged during this performance.
 # 'Winter Snowfall' footage presented alongside the Beethoven Violin Concerto is used under license from Shutterstock.com

Lutosławski, Dessner, Bach & Haas

16 MARCH

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Australian Chamber Orchestra
with the participation of the
NFM Leopoldinum Orchestra

PROGRAM

Witold Lutoslawski *Musique funèbre: Prologue*
Bryce Dessner *Réponse Lutoslawski*
Johann Sebastian Bach *Brandenburg Concerto No.3 in G major, BWV1048*
Pavel Haas (arr. Richard Tognetti) *String Quartet No.2, Op.7 "From the Monkey Mountains"*

VENUE

Wrocław • National Forum of Music
Sun 16 Mar 6pm

“

★★★★★ The Australian Chamber Orchestra has now been wowing audiences for half a century, with Richard Tognetti as its maverick leader for 35 years. But not even that track record could prepare me for the raw vitality of the ACO's latest UK outing at the Barbican in March with a programme of Bach, Shostakovich and Gubaidulina. The concert began as these world-class string players were still walking on, their balance of technical control and creative freedom utterly gripping from the first contact of bow on string.”

THE GUARDIAN, UK

“

★★★★★ With the Australian Chamber Orchestra, directed with unflagging energy and maverick imagination for the past 35 years by the violinist Richard Tognetti, you feel that edginess and provocation are very much the point.”

THE SUNDAY TIMES, UK



The ACO performing at the National Music Forum, Wrocław.
Photo by Karol Adam Sokolowski

09

FESTIVALS & SPECIAL EVENTS

21 CONCERTS

13,810 TOTAL ATTENDANCE



Ilya Isakovich, Violin.
Photo by Simon Lekias

Sydney Festival

29 JANUARY

1 CONCERT | 4,156 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

An ACO String Quartet gave a concert at the Art Gallery of New South Wales as part of Sydney Festival, performing a programme of music inspired by the *Magritte* exhibition and the symbolism of clouds.

René Magritte: Cloud Music

29 JANUARY

ARTISTS

Thibaud Pavlovic-Hobba Violin
Tim Yu Violin
Elizabeth Woolnough Viola
Eliza Sdraulig Cello

PROGRAM

Erik Satie (arr. Andrew Howes) Medley of Works
John Cage String Quartet in Four Parts
Gabriella Smith Carrot Revolution
Anton Webern Six Bagatelles, Op.9
Igor Stravinsky Three Pieces for String Quartet

VENUE

Sydney • Art Gallery of New South Wales
Wed 29 Jan 8pm

TarraWarra Festival

1-2 MARCH

4 CONCERTS | 747 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

The ACO returned to the spectacular setting of the TarraWarra Museum of Art to perform three concerts and a workshop.

Homage to Poland

1 MARCH

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Diana Doherty Oboe
Satu Vänskä Violin
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Witold Lutoslawski Musique funèbre: I. Prologue
Bryce Dessner Réponse Lutoslawski
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Oboe Quartet in F major, K.370
Eugène Ysaÿe Sonata for Solo Violin in D minor, Op.27, No.3 "Ballade"
Wojciech Kilar Orawa

VENUE

Healesville • TarraWarra Museum of Art
Sat 1 Mar 12.30pm

Annual Report 2025

Bach and Shostakovich

1 MARCH

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Diana Doherty Oboe
Helena Rathbone Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello
Maxime Bibeau Double Bass
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Johann Sebastian Bach (arr. Richard Tognetti) The Musical Offering, BWV1079: Ricercar a 6
John Luther Adams Three Nocturnes: I. Moonrise
Bach Sonata for Solo Violin No.2 in A minor, BWV1003: III. Andante
Bach (arr. Timo-Veikko Valve) Sonata for Solo Violin No.1 in G minor, BWV1001: I. Adagio
Kate Moore Lidy's Piece
Sofia Gubaidulina (arr. strings) Reflections on the Theme B-A-C-H
Bach (arr. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart) The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 2: Fugue in E-flat major, BWV876
Bach Concerto for Oboe and Violin in C minor, BWV1060
Garth Knox Still
Dmitri Shostakovich Chamber Symphony in C minor, Op.110a

VENUE

Healesville • TarraWarra Museum of Art
Sat 1 Mar 6pm

Workshop

2 MARCH

ARTISTS

Helena Rathbone Lead Violin
Aiko Goto Violin
Elizabeth Woolnough Viola
Julian Thompson Cello
with musicians from the
Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM)

PROGRAM

Johannes Brahms (arr. Paul Angerer) Five Choral Preludes, Op.122:
I. O Gott, du frommer Gott
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky Serenade for Strings in C major, Op.48:
I. Pezzo in forma di Sonatina

VENUE

Healesville • TarraWarra Museum of Art
Sun 2 Mar 11am

Mountains and Serenades

2 MARCH

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Helena Rathbone Director & Violin
Australian Chamber Orchestra
with musicians from the
Australian National Academy of Music (ANAM)

PROGRAM

Johannes Brahms (arr. Paul Angerer) Five Chorale Preludes, Op.122:
I. "O Gott, du frommer Gott"*
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky Serenade for Strings in C major, Op.48:
I. Pezzo in forma di Sonata*
Various Mountain Film Suite for Strings

VENUE

Healesville • TarraWarra Museum of Art
Sun 2 Mar 2.30pm

*Directed by Helena Rathbone, performed with musicians from ANAM

UKARIA Festival

31 MAY – 1 JUNE

3 CONCERTS | 171 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Richard Tognetti directed the ACO in three concerts within the spectacular setting of UKARIA.

Leaves of an Unwritten Diary

31 MAY

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Erwin Schulhoff (arr. strings) Five Pieces for String Quartet
Krzysztof Penderecki Leaves of an Unwritten Diary
Johannes Brahms (arr. strings) String Quartet No.1 in C minor, Op.51:
I. Allegro
Ludwig Van Beethoven (arr. strings) String Quartet in F major, Op.135:
III. Lento assai, IV. Grave, ma non troppo tratto – Allegro

VENUE

Mount Barker Summit • UKARIA Cultural Centre
Sat 31 May 4pm

Brahms's Violin Concerto

31 MAY

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Oswaldo Golijov Last Round
Gabriella Smith Carrot Revolution
Johann Sebastian Bach (arr. Timo-Veikko Valve) Sonata for Solo Violin
No.1 in G minor, BWV1001: I. Adagio
Kate Moore Lily's Piece
Johannes Brahms (arr. Richard Tognetti) Violin Concerto in D major,
Op.77

VENUE

Mount Barker Summit • UKARIA Cultural Centre
Sat 31 May 6pm

Brahms's String Sextet

1 JUNE

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Jörg Widmann 180 Beats Per Minute
Pēteris Vasks Concerto for Viola and Strings: I. Andante, II. Allegro
moderato
Harry Sdraulig In Wild Country
Johannes Brahms (arr. strings) String Sextet No.2 in G major, Op.36

VENUE

Mount Barker Summit • UKARIA Cultural Centre
Sun 1 Jun 6pm

Right.
Still from the film *Memoir of a Snail*.



Memoir of a Snail Live in Concert

6-8 JUNE

5 CONCERTS | 971 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Audiences were invited to experience director Adam Elliot's Academy Award-nominated and critically acclaimed animated film in concert, with Elena Kats-Chernin's score performed live by the ACO in the spectacular setting of The Neilson at ACO On The Pier.

ARTISTS

Ike See Director & Violin
James Crabb Classical Accordion
Elena Kats-Chernin Composer, Piano & Organ
Luminescence Chamber Singers
Australian Chamber Orchestra

LIVE IN CONCERT PRODUCTION

Andrew Howes & Charlie Westhoff Music Preparation
Bob Scott & Jonathan Palmer Audio
Kevan Atkins Video
Joe Cox Lighting

PROGRAM

Elena Kats-Chernin Memoir of a Snail (Original Score)

Annual Report 2025

MEMOIR OF A SNAIL

featuring **Sarah Snook**, **Kodi Smit-McPhee**, **Eric Bana**, **Magda Szubanski**, **Dominique Pinon**, **Tony Armstrong**, **Paul Capsis**, **Bernie Clifford**, **Davey Thompson** and introducing **Charlotte Belsey** as Young Grace and **Mason Litsos** as Young Gilbert with **Nick Cave** as Bill Clarke and **Jacki Weaver** as Pinky

Composer **Elena Kats-Chernin**

Score Performed by the **Australian Chamber Orchestra**

Director of Photography **Gerald Thompson**

Editor **Bill Murphy** ACE

Animation Supervisor **John Lewis**

Animators **John Lewis**, **Craig Ross**, **Pierce Davison**,

Seamus Spilsbury, **Donna Yeatman**, **Samuel Lewis**, **Nelson Dean**

Sound Designer **David Williams**

Executive Producers **Robert Connolly**, **Robert Patterson**,

Sebastien Raybaud, **Louis Balsan**, **Grace Adams**, **Carole Baraton**,

Yohann Comte, **Jean-Félix Dealberto**, **Pierre Mazars**, **Ricci Swart**,

Tony King, **Paul Weigard**, **Roger Savage**, **Michael Agar**,

Ester Harding, **Shaun Miller**

Produced by **Liz Kearney** and **Adam Elliot**

Written and Directed by **Adam Elliot**

VENUE

Sydney • ACO On The Pier

Fri 6 Jun 7pm, Sat 7 Jun 4pm & 7pm, Sun 8 Jun 4pm & 7pm



Mountain

27-30 OCTOBER

4 CONCERTS | 5,347 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

As part of its 50th anniversary celebrations, the ACO brought back one of its most groundbreaking, award-winning and popular cinematic collaborations for a series of limited gala performances.

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Tamara-Anna Cislowska Piano
Satu Vänskä Violin & Voice
Helena Rathbone Violin
Ike See Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello
Australian Chamber Orchestra

CREATIVES

Jennifer Peedom Writer, Director & Producer
Robert Macfarlane Writer
Jo-anne McGowan Producer
Paul Wiegard, David Gross, Stephen Boyle, Martyn Myer AO Executive Producers
Richard Tognetti Musical Director & Composer
Christian Gazal, Scott Gray ASE Editors
David White Sound Design
Robert Mackenzie Sound Mixing
Renan Ozturk Principal Cinematography
Joseph Nizeti Music Editor & Music Supervisor
Willem Dafoe Narration

LIVE IN CONCERT PRODUCTION

Nigel Jamieson Staging Director
Damien Cooper Lighting Design
Joe Cox Lighting Supervisor
Bob Scott Audio Design
Annika Unsen Audio Technician
Kevan Atkins Video Systems Design
Charles Westhoff Music Technology Assistant

PROGRAM

Richard Tognetti Prelude
Tognetti Majesty
Tognetti Sublime Horror
Tognetti Gods and Monsters
Peter Sculthorpe Djilile (for strings)*
Frédéric Chopin Prelude in F-sharp major, Op.28, No.13*
Edvard Grieg Holberg Suite, Op.40: I. Praeludium
Sculthorpe Djilile (for piano and strings)*
Antonio Vivaldi Concerto for Four Violins and Cello in B minor, RV580: I. Allegro
Vivaldi Winter from The Four Seasons, RV297: I. Allegro non molto
Vivaldi Concerto for Four Violins and Cello in B minor, RV580: II. Larghetto*
Vivaldi Concerto for Four Violins and Cello in B minor, RV580: III. Allegro
Vivaldi Summer from The Four Seasons, RV315: III. Presto
Arvo Pärt Für Alina
Tognetti Flying
Tognetti Madness Bites
Tognetti On High
Pärt Fratres*
Ludwig van Beethoven Violin Concerto in D major, Op.61: II. Larghetto*
Tognetti A Final Bridge
Beethoven Piano Concerto No.5 in E-flat major, Op.73 “Emperor”: II. Adagio un poco moto

* This work or movement is abridged during this performance.
 # “Winter Snowfall” footage presented alongside the Beethoven Violin Concerto is used under license from Shutterstock.com

VENUE

Brisbane • QPAC Concert Hall
 Mon 27 Oct 7pm

Sydney • Sydney Opera House
 Tue 28 Oct 8pm

Canberra • Llewellyn Hall
 Wed 29 Oct 7.30pm

Melbourne • Arts Centre Melbourne
 Thu 30 Oct 7.30pm

Vasse Felix Festival

12-14 DECEMBER

3 CONCERTS | 415 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

The ACO ended the year on a high as it returned to the Sound & Sense Festival at Vasse Felix in Margaret River for its annual celebration of music, wine and food.

Concert One

12 DECEMBER

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Iestyn Davies Countertenor
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Johann Sebastian Bach Violin Concerto in A minor, BWV1041
Bach St Matthew Passion, BWV244: Aria “Erbarme Dich”
Samuel Barber Dover Beach, Op.3
Arvo Pärt Für Lennart in memoriam
Nico Muhly Four Traditional Songs* (World Premiere)
Bach Violin Concerto No.2 in E major, BWV1042: I. Allegro
George Frideric Handel Saul, HWV53: Aria “O Lord, whose mercies numberless”

*Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

VENUE

Margaret River • Vasse Felix Art Gallery
 Fri 12 Dec 5.30pm

Concert Two

13 DECEMBER

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Iestyn Davies Countertenor
Stefanie Farrands Viola
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Pēteris Vasks Concerto for Viola and Strings: I. Andante
Johann Christoph Bach Meine Freundin, du bist schön: Ciaccona “Meine Freund is Mein”
Arvo Pärt My Heart’s in the Highlands
Pärt Vater Unser
Franz Schubert String Quartet in D minor, D.810 “Death and the Maiden”: II. Andante con moto
Gerald Finzi (arr. strings) Let Us Garlands Bring, Op.18: Come away, come away, death
Bryce Dessner Réponse Lutoslawski
Benjamin Britten (arr. Richard Tognetti) Corpus Christi Carol

VENUE

Margaret River • Vasse Felix Art Gallery
 Sat 13 Dec 5pm

Concert Three

14 DECEMBER

ARTISTS

Satu Vänskä Violin
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Johann Sebastian Bach Sonata for Solo Violin No.1 in A minor, BWV1003: I. Grave; IV. Allegro
Krzysztof Penderecki Leaves of an Unwritten Diary
Bach Sonata for Solo Violin No.1 in G minor, BWV1001: I. Adagio
Leilehua Lanzilotti ko’u inoa
Johannes Brahms String Sextet No.2 in G major, Op.36

VENUE

Margaret River • Vasse Felix Art Gallery
 Sun 14 Dec 11am

Left. *Mountain* performance at the National Music Forum, Wrocław. Photo by Joanna Stoga

Celebrating the Australian Chamber Orchestra

21 NOVEMBER

1 CONCERT | 2,003 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Fifty years to the day since its very first performance, the ACO walked out onto the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall stage to pay homage to the past and celebrate a bright and ambitious future.

From classics by Antonio Vivaldi, Ludwig van Beethoven and Fanny Mendelssohn that capture the ACO's thrilling dynamism and imaginative spirit, to the ACO's groundbreaking film collaborations and guest appearances from beloved collaborators across distinctive, film and dance, this concert, directed by Richard Tognetti, showcased why the ACO is one of the most distinctive, inventive and renowned ensembles on the world stage today.

ARTISTS

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Iestyn Davies Countertenor
Neil Finn Voice & Guitar
James Tawadros Riq' and Bendir
Joseph Tawadros Oud
Satu Vänskä Voice
Sydney Dance Company
Students from St Marys North Public School Violin & Cello
Charlotte Stanhope Voice
Sydney Children's Choir
Australian Chamber Orchestra

PROGRAM

Antonio Vivaldi Summer from *The Four Seasons*, RV315: II. Adagio, III. Presto
Joseph Tawadros (orch. Richard Tognetti) Constantinople
Ludwig Van Beethoven (arr. Tognetti) Violin Sonata in A major, Op.48 "Bridgetower (ex-Kreutzer)" III. Finale
Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (arr. strings) String Quartet in E-flat major: IV. Allegro molto vivace
Béla Bartók Divertimento: III. Allegro assai
Traditional (after Aaron Copland) Simple Gifts
Arvo Pärt My Heart's in the Highlands
Wojciech Kilar Orawa – from *The Reef*
Richard Tognetti Flying – from *Mountain*
Radiohead Harry Patch (In Memory Of) – from *River*
Neil Finn & Richard Tognetti Real and Right and True
Crowded House (arr. Tognetti) Weather With You

VENUE

Sydney • Sydney Opera House
 Fri 21 Nov 8pm

Australian Chamber Orchestra

50 Years



Celebrating the Australian Chamber Orchestra concert at the Sydney Opera House. Photo by Nic Walker

10

PREMIERES & COMMISSIONS



Thibaud Pavlovic-Hobba, Violin. Photo by Simon Lekias

World Premieres

The ACO presented 10 world premieres in its 2025 Season.

Nigel Westlake

Ascension

World premiere in *Abel Selaocoe*, in April 2025.

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Holly Harrison

Hovercraft

World premiere in *Theremin & Beyond*, in May 2025.

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Jakub Jankowski

Élévation

World premiere in *ACO Collective at UKARIA*, in May 2025.

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Valentin Silvestrov

Moments of Memory (VI)

World premiere in *Gershwin & Shostakovich*, in August 2025.

Co-commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Arctic Philharmonic, Scottish Ensemble, Melbourne Conservatorium of Music and Witold Lutosławski National Forum of Music.

Erkki Veltheim

Illuminations

World premiere in *A Musical Awakening*, in September 2025.

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Erkki Veltheim

Imaginary Cities

World premiere in *A Musical Awakening*, in September 2025.

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

David Lang

flute and echo

World premiere in *A Musical Awakening*, in September 2025.

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra, generously supported by Ulrike Klein AO.

Elena Kats-Chernin

Where to Hide a Star

World premiere in *Where to Hide a Star*, in October 2025.

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Elena Kats-Chernin

Cocteau's Circle: Interludes

World premiere in *Cocteau's Circle*, in November 2025.

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Nico Muhly

Four Traditional Songs

World premiere in *Vasse Felix Festival*, in December 2025.

Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Australian Premieres

The ACO presented eight Australian premieres in its 2025 Season.

Abel Selaocoe

Qhawe (Hero)

Australian premiere in *Abel Selaocoe*, in April 2025.

Abel Selaocoe

Tsepho (Faith)

Australian premiere in *Abel Selaocoe*, in April 2025.

Abel Selaocoe

Lerato (Love)

Australian premiere in *Abel Selaocoe*, in April 2025.

Abel Selaocoe

Ka Bohaleng (On the Sharp Side)

Australian premiere in *Abel Selaocoe*, in April 2025.

Giovanni Benedetto Platti

Cello Concerto in D major, WD650

Australian premiere in *Abel Selaocoe*, in April 2025.

Giovanni Sollima

When We Were Trees

Australian premiere in *Abel Selaocoe*, in April 2025.

Jörg Widmann

10 beats per minute

Australian premiere in *Theremin & Beyond*, in May 2025.

Jaakko Kuusisto

Cello Concerto, Op.38

Australian premiere in *ACO Unleashed*, in June 2025.

Right.
Abel Selaocoe performance at the
City Recital Hall. Photo by Nic Walker



ACO INSTRUMENTS



Liisa Pallandi, Violin. Photo by Simon Lekias

ACO Instrument Collection

The ACO has one of the finest instrument collections of any orchestra in the world, with nine precious Italian string instruments dating from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries played by its internationally renowned virtuoso musicians.

1741–44 Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù violin

Played by Artistic Director Richard Tognetti
Kindly on loan from the ACO

1732 'ex-Dollfus' Stradivarius violin

Played by Principal Violin Helena Rathbone
Kindly on loan from anonymous
Australian private benefactors

1728/29 Stradivarius violin

Played by Principal Violin Satu Vänskä
Kindly on loan from the ACO Instrument Fund

1590 Brothers Amati violin

Played by violinist Ilya Isakovich
Kindly on loan from the ACO Instrument Fund

1759 Giovanna Battista Guadagnini violin

Played by violinist Liisa Pallandi
Kindly on loan from the ACO

1610 Giovanni Paolo Maggini Viola

Played by ACO Principal Viola Stefanie Farrands
Kindly on loan from the ACO Instrument Fund

1616 Brothers Amati cello

Played by Principal Cello Timo-Veikko Valve
Kindly on loan from the ACO Instrument Fund

1729 Giuseppe Guarneri filius Andreae cello

Played by cellist Julian Thompson
Kindly donated to the ACO by the late Peter Weiss AO

Late-16th-century Gasparo da Salò bass

Played by Principal Bass Maxime Bibeau
Kindly on loan from UKARIA

ACO Instrument Fund



Established in 2011, the ACO Instrument Fund (the Fund) is dedicated to holding string instruments made in Italy in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, which are considered the finest instruments ever made.

For 15 years, the Fund has provided investors with the unique opportunity to participate in the ownership of these rare instruments from the perspective of achieving long-term capital gain. All instruments held by the Fund are loaned to the Australian Chamber Orchestra for use by its musicians, contributing to the Orchestra's distinctive sound and tonal quality. They are played in performances across Australia and internationally, as well as featuring in the ACO's music education and regional touring programs.

The Fund's current portfolio includes a 1728/29 Stradivarius violin, a 1616 Brothers Amati cello, a 1590 Brothers Amati violin, and a 1610 Maggini viola. In October 2025, the Fund sold a 1714 Guarneri violin, after careful consideration and extensive due diligence, in order to acquire the Maggini viola.

On 30 June 2025, the Trustee conducted the Fund's annual valuation and resolved to increase the Fund's unit price from \$1.50 to \$1.60. This adjustment is indicative of the gradual appreciation in the value of the Fund's assets over recent years and was undertaken in consultation with external fine instrument experts. At the time of the 2025 valuation, the Fund's instruments were collectively appraised at USD 7,745,667 (an increase from USD 7,620,667 in 2024). In determining the new unit price, the Trustee also took into consideration factors such as deferred tax provisions, potential sale costs, the relative illiquidity of the instruments, the AUD/USD exchange rate, the number of units issued, and net cash assets.

The ACO wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the Fund's investors, whose ongoing commitment enables both the Fund and the Orchestra to sustain continued growth. The ACO also thanks the members of the Trustee Board — Edward Gilmartin, JoAnna Fisher, Erin Flaherty, Julie Steiner AM, and John Taberner — for their prudent governance of the Fund. Additionally, the ACO extends its gratitude to JBWere Ltd in their role as the Australian Financial Services Licence holder for the Fund.

Above.
Satu Vänskä, Principal Violin.
Photo by Charlie Kinross

Right.
Timo-Veikko Valve, Principal Cello.
Photo by Simon Lekias



The 1610 Maggini Viola

This viola was crafted in 1610 by Giovanni Paolo Maggini, one of the most revered luthiers of the early 17th century and a pupil of Gasparo da Salò. Maggini's tenor violas are considered masterpieces of their time, and this instrument is believed to be the only surviving example of its kind. Despite its age, the instrument remains structurally sound and in excellent playing condition, thanks to careful restoration noted by expert John Dilworth. The instrument is played by ACO Principal Viola Stefanie Farrands.

This acquisition followed an extensive international search for a viola for Farrands, who has described performing on the 1610 Maggini viola as an honour she will cherish for the rest of her life.

Farrands says: *"This instrument possesses a warmth, mysterious darkness and depth that allures me into a world of possibilities. It is as though I have been handed a painter's palette with an infinite array of shades. At the same time, it feels so natural in my arms that it's like an extension of myself."*

"Playing the viola is my voice. It is how I express myself in this world, and this Maggini has truly transformed my ability to communicate. Being the custodian of this instrument is an honour and an opportunity I will cherish for the rest of my life."

Right.
Stefanie Farrands, Principal Viola, playing the
1610 Maggini viola. Photo by Charlie Kinross



ACO Recordings & Digital Releases

Tchaikovsky: Serenade & Andante Cantabile | Shostakovich: Chamber Symphony

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Dmitri Shostakovich



The Australian Chamber Orchestra released a thrilling recording of two chamber orchestra masterpieces: the Romantic splendour of Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings*, and Shostakovich's dark, visceral *Chamber Symphony*.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky Serenade for String Orchestra in C major, Op.48

Tchaikovsky Andante Cantabile for cello and string orchestra

Dmitri Shostakovich (arr. Rudolf Barshai) Chamber Symphony in C minor, Op.110a

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin

Timo-Veikko Valve Cello

Australian Chamber Orchestra

Released 28 February 2025 on ABC Classic. CD, digital stereo & Dolby Atmos.

Beethoven & Brahms: Concertos for Violin and Orchestra

Ludwig van Beethoven, Johannes Brahms



The Australian Chamber Orchestra continued its 50th-anniversary celebrations with the release of a landmark new album, *Beethoven & Brahms: Concertos for Violin and Orchestra*, featuring Artistic Director Richard Tognetti as soloist. Timed to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Orchestra's very first concert, on 21 November 1975 at the Sydney Opera House, this release pays tribute to the ACO's remarkable legacy and honours Artistic Director Richard Tognetti's extraordinary 35 years of leadership.

Ludwig van Beethoven Violin Concerto in D major, Op.61

Johannes Brahms Violin Concerto in D major, Op.77

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin

Australian Chamber Orchestra

Released 21 November 2025 on ABC Classic. CD, Vinyl, digital stereo & Dolby Atmos.

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Melissa Barnard, Cello. Photo by Simon Lekias

Digital Overview

Digital Reach & Growth

A combination of viral content and the ACO's 50th anniversary made for an incredible year of growth and engagement across the organisation's social media channels.

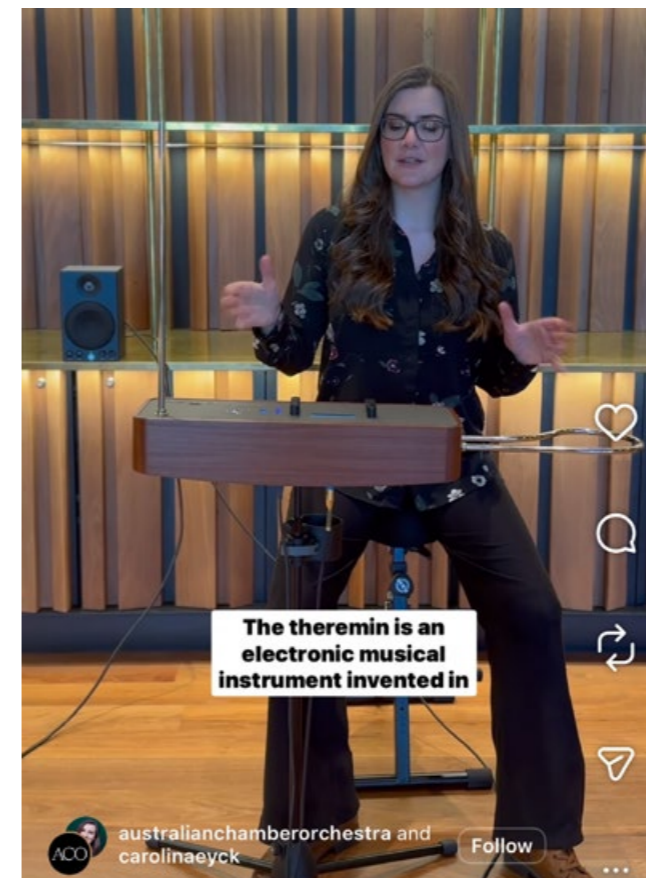
Instagram grew from 23k to 58k followers, representing a **153% increase**, while Facebook, YouTube and a TikTok grew over 30% each.

Content Highlights

1. The ACO's On The Pier Session featuring **Abel Selaocoe** in April has been the Orchestra's most viral online moment to date. The first post of this content has had 3.7m views and 177,102 interactions (likes, comments, saves, shares) on Instagram alone. **Total views across all reposts: 8.8 million**

2. Musician **Carolina Eyck and her theremin** provided a sustained boost throughout May with videos including her instrument demonstration hitting 1.3m views, the On The Pier Session at 675k, and other pieces to camera hitting between 10–45k views on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. This success was due to engagement, receiving a huge amount of comments (questions, disbelief, education). Carolina's audience of 84k followers, and collaborative posts with her and ABC Classic, made for a high reach that month.

3. On YouTube and Instagram, short-form 'classical in-jokes' also found huge success. A short video of Aiko in rehearsal with ACO Academy, "*When my teacher tells me to use up the whole bow for the long notes*" has had **14.2m views** on YouTube and 213k on Instagram. Other memey hits included "*The exact moment the ACO decided to read music from iPads*", reaching 523k views on Instagram and 44k on YouTube.



ACO On Demand

In 2025, the ACO made the decision to close *ACO On Demand*, the Orchestra's video subscription platform. Before the December closure, *ACO On Demand* received a total of 5,917 views in 2025 and had a registered user database of 4,936.

In a mission to make the ACO's content more accessible, the In Concert and ACO StudioCast performances have been made live and free to watch on YouTube.

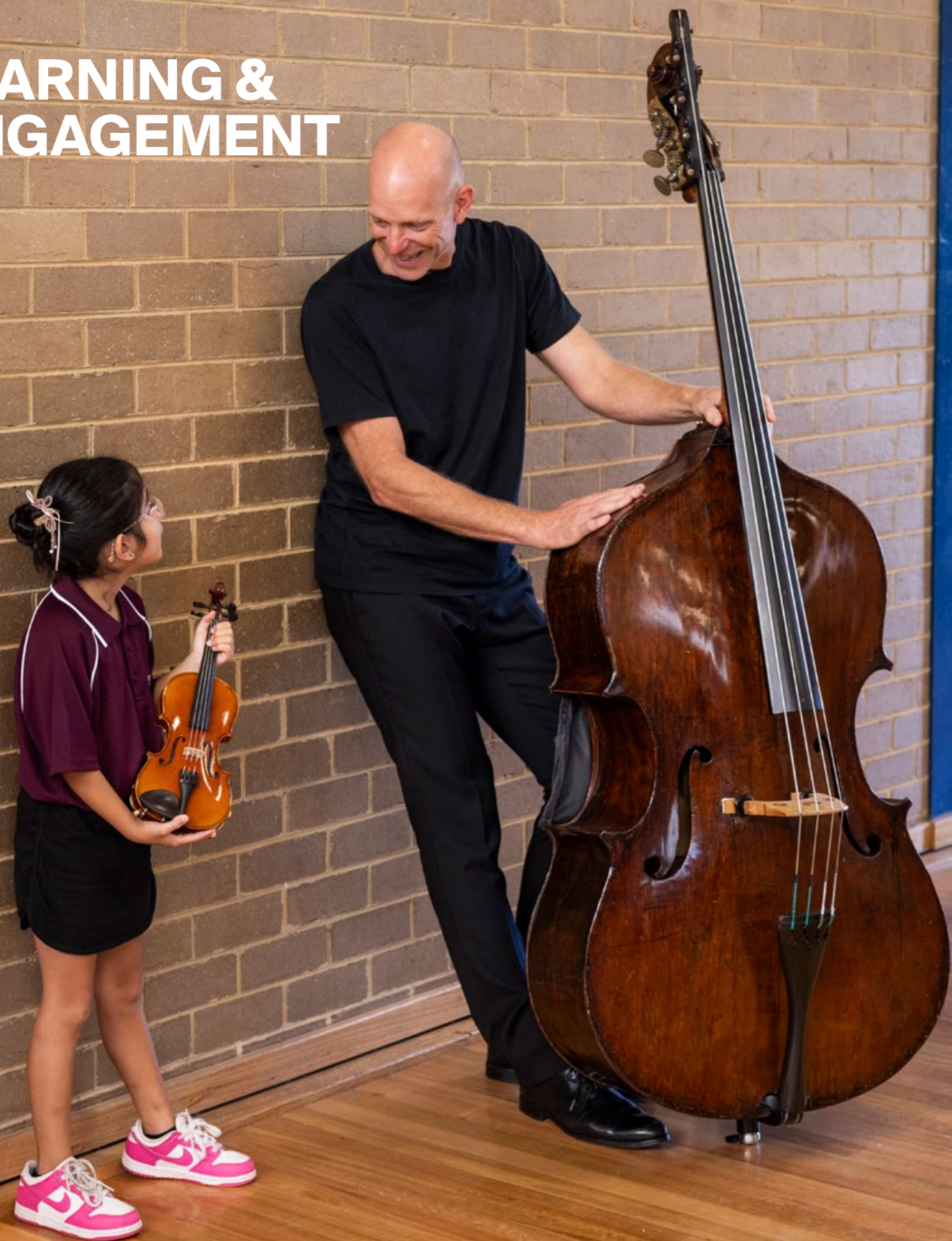
Website

Active users on aco.com.au continued to grow year on year, increasing by **20.6% in 2025**, with overall page views also rising by **12.3%**.

First time visits were up **20.3%**, reflecting strong new audience reach, and overall user engagement increased by **13.6%**.

The **Buy Tickets** page remained the most visited, recording a **3.5% increase** on the previous year. **What's On** and the **Homepage** followed, with **What's On** showing particularly strong performance with a **13% rise in views**, highlighting growing interest in upcoming programs.

LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT



Maxime Bibeau, Principal Double Bass, with an ACO Foundations student at Belle Vue Park Primary School. Photo by Charlie Kinross

Talent Development

The ACO is committed to supporting and providing opportunities for young Australian string players. Our talent development programs:

- foster emerging talent by providing the highest quality training and mentoring;
- provide critical pathways into the ACO and other professional music careers; and
- are highly impactful, potentially changing the trajectory of these young musicians' lives.

ACO Emerging Artist Program

The ACO Emerging Artist Program connects the next generation of talented young Australian string players with the professional members of the ACO, offering unparalleled mentoring, training and performance opportunities. 2025 marked the 20th anniversary of this remarkable talent development program.

The 2025 ACO Emerging Artists were:

<i>Violins</i>	Harry Egerton
	Louise Turnbull
	Fiona Qiu
<i>Viola</i>	Isabella Bignasca
<i>Cello</i>	Jack Overall
<i>Double Bass</i>	Oakley Paul

Each Emerging Artist is paired with an ACO core musician for mentorship, private lessons, and audition preparation, and participates in rehearsals, workshops, performances, and tours as part of ACO Collective, working under the direction of ACO musicians and guest artists.

ACO Academy

PRESENTING PARTNER



The acclaimed ACO Academy is the Orchestra's flagship program for talented secondary school string players, selected by audition from across

Australia. Launched in 2012, ACO Academy runs in the July school holidays every year in either Sydney or Melbourne, offering participants an immersive and intensive week of ensemble playing.

Led by ACO violinist Aiko Goto, in 2025 **29 students** participated in a week of intensive learning including rehearsals, chamber music and ensemble performances alongside ACO musicians at ACO On The Pier. The program culminated in an extremely well-attended and vibrant public concert in The Neilson.

PYO Academy

In late February 2025, **41 young musicians** from Western Sydney took part in the ACO's Penrith Youth Orchestra Academy. Under the direction of ACO violinist Ilya Isakovich, students participated in intensive rehearsals, sectionals, and workshops over the course of a weekend, culminating in a public performance at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre in Penrith.

Melbourne Conservatorium of Music Intensives

As part of the ACO's expanded partnership with the University of Melbourne, the Orchestra delivered two intensive learning programs for Melbourne Conservatorium of Music students in 2025.

In May 2025, ACO musicians spent two days working with students at the Melbourne Conservatorium, focusing on chamber music, including an 'Inside a Chamber Music Rehearsal' session, a career talk, and in-depth chamber music ensemble coaching.

In October 2025, ACO musicians delivered a weekend-long intensive learning program for students at ACO On The Pier in Sydney. The weekend involved a focus on larger ensemble skills, including instrumental sectionals, and ensemble workshops side-by-side with ACO Principal musicians and coaching from Richard Tognetti.

ACO Collective

15 CONCERTS | 2,601 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ACO Collective is the ACO's critically acclaimed string ensemble that brings together the core musicians of the ACO with current and former ACO Emerging Artists to create a high-energy string orchestra.

In 2025 ACO Collective collaborated with acclaimed contemporary dance ensemble Co3 for a tour across Western Australia, travelled to UKARIA in South Australia for a chamber music residency and joined the ACO onstage to perform in the Orchestra's first national tour of 2025, *Brahms & Beethoven*.

ACO Collective Quartet at Orange Chamber Music Festival

6-8 MARCH

ORANGE MUSIC FESTIVAL
2 CONCERTS | 320 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

An ACO Collective Quartet performed as part of the 2025 Orange Chamber Music Festival. The quartet, comprised of ACO Emerging Artist alumni, performed an exciting program of chamber music at the Orange Regional Gallery, mentored string students from the festival's regional youth orchestra, and stepped in at the last minute – due to cyclone related cancellations – to deliver the Opening Night concert to great acclaim.



ARTISTS
ACO Collective Quartet

PROGRAM
Caroline Shaw Entr'acte
Richard Meale Cantilena Pacifica
Felix Mendelssohn String Quartet No.1 in E-flat major, Op.12
Traditional (arr. Danish String Quartet) Wood Works: Sekstur from Vendsyssel / The Peat Dance

ACO Collective at UKARIA

8-18 MAY

UKARIA CULTURAL CENTRE
1 PERFORMANCE | 136 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

In May 2025, the ACO Emerging Artists travelled to UKARIA for an intensive residency with ACO musicians Aiko Goto, Liisa Pallandi, and Melissa Barnard, exploring the art of chamber music.

The group also worked alongside composer Bryony Marks and script writer Finegan Kruckemeyer in the creative development of a new Australian work, *The Shore*. The ensemble presented a showing of the work for invited guests, performed with actor Stephen Sheehan.

The culmination of this week-long residency was a showcase performance of captivating chamber music, including a new commission by Jakub Jankowski.

ARTISTS
Helena Rathbone Director & Violin
ACO Collective

PROGRAM
Jean Sibelius Impromptu for Strings in E minor, Op.5
Sergei Taneyev String Quintet No.1 in G major, Op.14
Robert Schumann String Quartet No.3 in A major, Op.41, No.3
Dmitri Shostakovich String Quartet No.4 in D major, Op.83
Jakub Jankowski *Élévation** (World Premiere)
George Onslow String Quintet No.10 in F minor, Op.32

*Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra

Left.
ACO Collective Quartet.
Photo by Stephen Blake

Right.
In the Shadow of Time concert.
Photos by Stefan Gosatti



In the Shadow of Time

ACO Collective Regional Tour with
Co3 Contemporary Dance Australia

11-28 SEPTEMBER

LIBERTY THEATRE, PERTH
5 PERFORMANCES | 801 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

MARGARET RIVER HEART
1 PERFORMANCE | 259 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ALBANY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE
1 PERFORMANCE | 204 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

BUNBURY REGIONAL ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE
1 PERFORMANCE | 314 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

In 2025 ACO Collective, directed by ACO Principal Viola Stefanie Farrands, collaborated with Co3 Contemporary Dance in a new work for orchestra and dancers, *In the Shadow of Time*. The work explored ageing, resilience, and human connection, featuring choreography by Raewyn Hill and costumes by Akira Isogawa.

ACO Collective and Co3 premiered the work in Perth and then toured to regional venues in Western Australia. The production received eight nominations in the Performing Arts WA Awards.

ARTISTS
Raewyn Hill Devisor & Director
Stefanie Farrands Director & Viola
Thibaud Pavlovic-Hobba Violin
Co3 Contemporary Dance Australia
ACO Collective
Akira Isogawa Costume Design



Mark Haslam Lighting & Set Design

PROGRAM
Arvo Pärt Tabula Rasa: I. Ludus
John Dowland Lachrimæ or seven Teares à 5: 1. Antiquae
Lisa Illean Chansons
Philip Glass Company, for string orchestra
Caroline Shaw Entr'acte, for string orchestra
Pärt Tabula Rasa: II. Silentium

The Princess, the Pea (and The Brave Escapee) Quartet Concerts

4 CONCERTS | 567 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

An ACO Collective Quartet gave a series of concerts as part of touring activities of the ACO Families show, *The Princess, The Pea (and The Brave Escapee)*.

ARTISTS
ACO Collective Quartet

PROGRAM
Johann Sebastian Bach (arr. Calvin Bowman) "O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sünde groß", BWV622
Caroline Shaw Entr'acte, for string quartet
Philip Glass String Quartet No.3 "Mishima"
Ludwig Van Beethoven String Quartet No.1 in F major, Op.18 No.1: II. Adagio affettuoso ed appassionato
Antonín Dvořák Terzetto in C major, Op.74: III Scherzo
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart String Quartet No.17 in B-flat major, K.458 "Hunt": I. Allegro
Traditional (arr. Danish String Quartet) Wood Works: Sekstur from Vendsyssel – The Peat Dance

Early Experiences

Early experiences have a critical impact on a person's life, with research proving that participating in music learning from a young age can improve a child's physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. The ACO's flagship early years programs:

- ignite a love of music from an early age;
- make arts and cultural experiences accessible to all children and families; and
- open doors and increase aspirations for the future.

ACO Foundations

ACO Foundations improves participating children's academic and developmental outcomes through an intensive instrumental music program. The pedagogical model, informed by scientific and social research, integrates string playing into the daily curriculum in a co-teaching design between classroom teachers and ACO Foundations instrumental educators.

Students participate in ACO Foundations from the beginning of Year One through to the end of Year Three, with all activities occurring as part of the core classroom curriculum. Students receive weekly tuition from ACO Foundations instrumental educators and, critically, practise their instruments every school day for 15 minutes, supported by weekly practice videos and resources developed by the ACO. Students continue to show significant improvements in focus, motivation, physical, and cognitive development, and academic performance.



In 2025, this innovative program marked its eighth year at **St Marys North Public School** in Western Sydney, and also launched at **Belle Vue Park Primary School** in Glenroy, Melbourne – realising the ACO's long-held ambition for expansion. Across the two schools, over 200 students in Years One, Two, and Three participated in the program on a daily basis in 2025 – totally over 16,000 hours of music education. The year culminated in the students participating in a showcase performance with ACO musicians. A further highlight of the year was having students from St Marys North Public School perform on stage with the Orchestra as part of the *Celebrating the Australian Chamber Orchestra* concert at the Sydney Opera House in November – an experience these young students will never forget.

Early Years Music Classes

2025 saw the continuation and growth of **ACO Music & Movement** classes – high-quality music learning experiences for 2.5–5-year-olds, based on best-practice music education principles. Children are introduced to musical concepts through singing, playing, and moving, and develop their creativity and expression through improvisation and dramatisation activities. Led by highly experienced early years music educator Simona Green, classes are tailored specifically for the age and developmental stage of the children and run on Mondays at ACO On the Pier.

ACO Families Program

In 2025 the ACO presented one return season and two premiere seasons of ACO Families productions for children aged 3–8 and their families: *The Princess*, *The Pea (and The Brave Escapee)*, *Where to Hide a Star*, and *Carols On The Pier*.

In addition, the ACO presented two **ACO Family Days** at ACO On The Pier – introductory experiences for families at an accessible price, featuring short concerts and creative play activities.

Left.
ACO musicians with students at the ACO Foundations launch at Belle Vue Park Primary School. Photo by Charlie Kinross



ACO Foundations students from St Marys North Public School with their ACO Foundations educators ahead of the *Celebrating the Australian Chamber Orchestra* concert at the Sydney Opera House. Photo by Nic Walker

ACO Families

82 CONCERTS

14,374 TOTAL ATTENDANCE



The Princess, The Pea (and The Brave Escapee)

30 APRIL – 20 JULY

ON TOUR: PARRAMATTA, WYONG & PORT MACQUARIE (NSW), ADELAIDE (SA), BALLARAT & NARRE WARREN (VIC)
24 PERFORMANCES | 4,401 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

THE NEILSON, ACO ON THE PIER
15 PERFORMANCES | 3,063 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Written by award-winning playwright Finegan Kruckemeyer with an original score by Bryony Marks, *The Princess, The Pea (and The Brave Escapee)* is an exciting reimagining of the classic fairytale. This stunning ACO Families production comes alive with music performed live by a string quartet, in a theatrical setting with live action, puppetry and projection.

The Princess, The Pea (and The Brave Escapee) premiered in 2023 with a sell-out season at ACO On The Pier and returned to the stage in 2025 touring through six venues in South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales, before returning to ACO On The Pier for school holiday performances.

CREATIVES

Finegan Kruckemeyer Script Writer
Bryony Marks Composer
Tim McGarry Director
Melanie Liertz Production Designer
Ryan McDonald Lighting Designer
Laura Turner Vision Designer

PERFORMERS (ACO On The Pier)

Micaela Ellis Actor
Aiko Goto Violin
Yuhki Mayne Violin
Beth Condon Viola
Jack Ward Cello

PERFORMERS (On Tour)

Micaela Ellis Actor
Madeleine Jevons Violin
James Armstrong Violin
Henry Justo Viola
Alexandra Claire Partridge Viola
Freya Schack-Arnott Cello

Above.
Photo by Maria Boyadgis



Where to Hide a Star

1-11 OCTOBER

THE NEILSON, ACO ON THE PIER
24 PERFORMANCES | 3,533 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Based on the internationally bestselling children's book by acclaimed author Oliver Jeffers, adapted and directed by Sandra Eldridge, and brought to life with a stellar original score by award-winning composer Elena Kats-Chernin, *Where to Hide a Star* was a brand-new ACO Families production in 2025.

The production premiered at ACO On The Pier, receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback from audiences and critics, and was nominated for Best Production for Children in the 2025 Sydney Theatre Awards.

CREATIVES

Sandra Eldridge Script Writer & Director
Elena Kats-Chernin Composer
Melanie Liertz Production Designer
Matt Cox Lighting Designer
Elle Evangelista Movement Director

PERFORMERS

William Bartolo Actor
Evelina Singh Actor
Madeleine Jevons Violin
Yuhki Mayne Violin
Henry Justo Viola
Heather Lindsay Cello

Above.
Photo by Daniel Boud



Carols On The Pier

18-22 DECEMBER

THE NEILSON, ACO ON THE PIER
13 PERFORMANCES | 2,345 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

Featuring ACO Families musicians alongside the enchanting voices of Luminescence Chamber Singers, *Carols On The Pier* combined the timeless joy of Christmas carols with the beauty of world-class classical music.

Carrying on the tradition of family Christmas experiences at ACO On The Pier each December, these exquisite carols concerts proved popular with both children and adults alike.

CREATIVES

Tim McGarry Director
Bernard Rofe (ACO), AJ America (Luminescence) Music Director
Andrew Howes & Dan Walker Musical Arrangements
Meg Anderson Production Designer
Travis Kecek Lighting Designer

PERFORMERS

Luminescence
Josephine Brereton Soprano
Rachel Mink Soprano
Elinor Trevelyan-Jones Mezzo Soprano
Dan Walker Tenor
Lucien Fischer Baritone
Alasdair Stretch Bass

Musicians

Caroline Hopson Violin
Josef Bisits Double Bass
Cathy Davis Piano
Josh Hill Percussion
Drew Wilson Actor/Host

Above.
Photo by Maria Boyadgis



ACO Family Days

16 MARCH, 15 JUNE

THE NEILSON, ACO ON THE PIER
6 PERFORMANCES | 1,300 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

The ACO presented two ACO Family Days at ACO On The Pier in 2025. These introductory experiences introduce children to classical music with short family concerts and creative play activities, at an accessible price point.

Photo by Stephen Blake

Community Engagement

The ACO's Community Engagement programs provide under-served communities opportunities to experience ACO performances and participate in collaborative arts experiences.

ACO Relaxed Performances

10 APRIL, 15 JULY, 20 AUGUST, 8 OCTOBER
4 CONCERTS | 500 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

ACO Relaxed Performances are tailored to those for whom the traditional concert hall experience might be inaccessible. They offer people with disability, with sensory sensitivities or any other access needs a chance to experience the ACO's mainstage performances in an inclusive setting. Programs are presented in a 45-minute concert, with flexible seating arrangements, adjusted lighting and sound levels, and quiet spaces to relax.

In 2025 the ACO presented four ACO Relaxed Performances: *Tchaikovsky & Westlake*, *Mendelssohn & Bach*, *The Princess*, *The Pea (and The Brave Escapee)* and *Where to Hide a Star*.



ACO X Club Weld

7 NOVEMBER

1 CONCERT | 248 TOTAL ATTENDANCE

This landmark collaboration brought neurodiverse artists from **Club Weld** together with ACO musicians in a powerful and highly impactful performance at ACO On The Pier. The project demonstrated the artistic and creative potential of genuinely inclusive practice, with musicians presenting original works developed through deep artistic collaboration.

The performance was widely celebrated for its energy, originality, and diversity of musical expression, reinforcing the ACO's commitment to access, equity, and artistic excellence, and highlighting the transformative possibilities of inclusive music making.

Above.
ACO X Club Weld collaboration.
Photo by Stephen Blake

Right.
ACO Relaxed: *Tchaikovsky*
and *Westlake* performance.
Photo by Noel McLaughlin



ATTENDANCE FIGURES



Helena Rathbone, Principal Violin. Photo by Nic Walker

National Concert Season

TOUR	DATA	ADELAIDE	BRISBANE	CANBERRA	MELBOURNE	NEWCASTLE	PERTH	SYDNEY	WOLLONGONG	TOTAL
1 Brahms & Beethoven	Concerts	-	1	-	3	1	-	5	-	10
	Attendance	-	1,572	-	3,591	714	-	6,677	-	12,554
2 Abel Selaocoe	Concerts	1	-	1	3	-	-	4	1	10
	Attendance	943	-	1,224	3,929	-	-	5,522	655	12,273
3 Theramin & Beyond	Concerts	-	1	1	3	-	-	4	1	10
	Attendance	-	1,141	1,081	2,976	-	-	4,762	565	10,525
4 ACO Unleashed	Concerts	1	1	1	2	-	1	4	-	10
	Attendance	660	1,071	915	2,574	-	824	4,259	-	10,303
5 Gershwin & Shostakovich	Concerts	1	1	1	2	1	1	5	1	13
	Attendance	899	1,434	1,263	3,717	682	865	6,007	722	15,589
6 A Musical Awakening	Concerts	1	1	1	3	1	1	5	-	13
	Attendance	710	982	999	2,840	597	852	4,857	-	11,837
7 Cocteau's Circle	Concerts	1	1	1	3	-	-	4	-	10
	Attendance	774	1,025	1,020	2,934	-	-	4,921	-	10,674
TOTAL CONCERTS		5	6	6	19	3	3	31	3	76
TOTAL ATTENDANCE										83,755

All Other Events

SPECIAL EVENTS	CONCERTS	ATTENDANCE
Sydney Festival Rene Magritte: Cloud Music	1	4,156
TarraWarra Festival	4	747
UKARIA Festival	3	171
Memoir of a Snail Live in Concert	5	971
Mountain	4	5,347
Celebrating the Australian Chamber Orchestra	1	2,003
Vasse Felix Festival	3	415
TOTAL	21	13,810

ACO UP CLOSE	CONCERTS	ATTENDANCE
Legacies*	2	450
Reich & Golijov	1	166
Freiburg Baroque Orchestra	2	458
Shostakovich, Silvestrov & Bach	3	387
Danilo Pérez	1	237
Baroque Resonance with ACO & Pinchgut Opera	2	434
Le Gateau Chocolate in Raw Cacao	1	166
Timo-Veikko Valve & AYO Momentum Ensemble	1	232
TOTAL	13	2,530

INTERNATIONAL TOURING	CONCERTS	ATTENDANCE
Bach & Shostakovich	3	1,998
Mountain	1	1,233
Lutosławski, Dessner, Bach & Haas	1	1,059
TOTAL	5	4,290

ACO COLLECTIVE	CONCERTS	ATTENDANCE
Orange Chamber Music Festival	2	320
ACO Collective at UKARIA	1	136
In the Shadow of Time	8	1,578
The Princess, The Pea (and The Brave Escapee) Quartet Concerts	4	567
TOTAL	15	2,601

ACO FAMILIES	CONCERTS	ATTENDANCE
ACO Family Days	6	1,300
The Princess and The Pea (and The Brave Escapee)	14 [#]	2,858 [#]
The Princess and The Pea (and The Brave Escapee) – Regional Tour	24	4,401
Where to Hide a Star	23 [#]	3,470 [#]
Carols On The Pier	13	2,345
TOTAL	80	14,374

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	CONCERTS	ATTENDANCE
ACO Relaxed	4	500
ACO X Club Weld	1	248
ACO Academy Showcase	1	264
PYO Academy Showcase	1	202
Music & Movement classes	–	195
TOTAL	7	1,409

*Presented in partnership with Sydney Festival

[#]A concert from this season was presented as an ACO Relaxed performance, and so is tallied in the 'Education & Community Engagement' table.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



Ike See, Violin. Photo by Nic Walker

The ACO's strategic objectives during 2025, as reflected in our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan, were:

1 ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE AND EXTENSION

Continue to create, commission and present new programs that are artistically excellent, innovative, vibrant and imbued with our distinctive character.

2 AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND REACH

Continue to ensure that a broad range of Australians are able to access the ACO and engage with our artform and diverse programs.

3 NURTURE OUR SECTOR

Maintain our commitment to supporting the development and growth of the next generation of Australian artists and our sector more broadly.

4 ORGANISATIONAL STRENGTH

Maintain best practice in governance, financial and people management.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

27 MARCH 2025



Introduction

This statement outlines the Australian Chamber Orchestra's (ACO) corporate governance practices and addresses the *Essential Governance Practices for Arts Organisations* published in January 2021 and monitored by Creative Australia.

The implementation of the governance practices embodied in the ACO's Governance Manual continues to ensure that the ACO achieves compliance with the Creative Australia's *Essential Governance Practices for Arts Organisations* January 2021, the Australian Institute of Company Directors *Not-for-Profit Governance Principles*, Third Edition, April 2024 and the ACNC Governance Standards.

The Board is committed to ongoing strengthening its governance practices. Its compliance with each of Creative Australia's *Principles of Good Arts Governance* with reference to the relevant sections of the ACO's Governance Manual, is outlined as follows.

PRINCIPLE 1 Purpose & Values

As per the Board Charter of the ACO Governance Manual, a central element of the Board's purpose is to establish the Company's purpose, values and ethical standards and delegate an appropriate level of authority to management.

ACO PURPOSE

We exist to create extraordinary music experiences that inspire, empower and transform all people

ACO VALUES

- **United Individuals:** We are a diverse and inclusive family. Everyone brings something unique to our team. It's our collective experience, skill and spirit that connects us all as one.
- **Mastery:** We are committed to excellence. We perform at an elite level. Our skills are fuelled by unwavering dedication and passion. We've taken the time to learn the rules so we can choose how we break them.
- **The Adventure:** We are intrepid and inspiring. With boundless imagination and bravery, we transport our audiences to new worlds where they can experience the unlimited power of human emotion.
- **Inclusivity:** We bring people together. Whether it's providing life-changing music education or opening our home to the community, we strive to ensure that everyone has access to quality music experiences no matter who they are or where they live.
- **Curiosity:** We are always evolving. While our music is steeped in history we are not afraid to experiment or explore new ideas. We never stop searching for original and unexpected ways of challenging ourselves and our audience.

PRINCIPLE 2 Performance

The ACO Board Charter notes the Board's role of bringing an independent and objective view to the Company's decisions and overseeing the performance and activities of management, including through contributing to the development and overseeing implementation of corporate strategy, and approving the business plan, budget and corporate policies.

The ACO is committed to having a Board of effective composition, size and commitment to adequately discharge its responsibilities and duties. The ACO's Governance Manual incorporates Board and Committee Charters, a Board Code of Conduct and Director selection and induction processes. The Manual also sets out the duties and responsibilities of the Board with regard to the Company's overall operations, performance and compliance and defines the role of the Chair, the processes for selection, appointment and renewal of directors and the Board performance review process.

The Board includes Directors with a diverse set of skills and experience. This experience is set out in their biographies published in the ACO's Annual Financial Report. All Directors are independent. The Board is supported by its Nominations and Remuneration Committee in the recruitment of new Directors and the process for evaluating Board performance.

The ACO acknowledges that its ongoing success is reliant on ensuring the ACO continues to have the skills and expertise necessary to achieve our goals. Succession planning across key Board, Artistic and Management roles within the Company is a focus for the Board and specific initiatives and practices in relation to this are articulated in the ACO's Strategic Plan and Risk Management Framework.

PRINCIPLE 3 Systems

The ACO has processes in place that independently verify and safeguard the integrity of the organisation's compliance and management reporting. The ACO Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Management (FAIRM) Committee includes members with appropriate audit, finance and risk management expertise. The Committee meets prior to every Board meeting and comprises up to three Directors and, by invitation, the Managing Director, the Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer. This Committee's responsibilities and duties cover review of the Company's management and statutory accounts and accounting policies and the results of the annual audit as well as making recommendations to the Board on the appointment, reappointment or replacement, remuneration and monitoring of the effectiveness of the external auditors.

The ACO is committed to ensuring that the level and composition of remuneration is sufficient and reasonable and that its relationship to organisational and individual performance is defined. The Company's Remuneration Policy and Processes are set out in the Governance Manual. The Board's Nominations and Remunerations Committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending to the Board the remunerations of the Managing Director and the Artistic Director. Staff and executive salaries are approved by the Board as part of the annual budget approval process. As a not-for-profit charitable institution, payment of any fees or salaries to directors of the Company is prohibited, in accordance with its constitution.

PRINCIPLE 4 Manage Risk and Compliance

The ACO has established a sound system of risk oversight and management and internal control. This system is designed to identify, assess, monitor and manage risk. The Company's risk management policy, responsibilities and processes for review of the risk management system are set out in the Governance Manual. The policies are further delineated in the company's Risk Management Framework.

The Board has the ultimate responsibility for overseeing the risk management framework and monitoring business risks and is assisted in discharging this responsibility by the FAIRM Committee whose responsibilities in relation to the Company's risk management system are contained in the Committee's charter.

Organisational risk is under continual review. In accordance with the ACO's Risk Management Framework, the FAIRM Committee considers the Company's risk profile as part of the annual program and budget setting process and in turn reports to the Board.

In conjunction with an organisational review of policies, the ACO's WHS Management System provides for regular consultation with employees, mechanisms for WHS risk management, reporting of incidents and injuries, a workers' compensation framework and training of employees. WHS reports are prepared for each meeting of the FAIRM Committee and Board.

To assist the Board in discharging its responsibility in relation to compliance, the Board has delegated the monitoring and review of compliance to the FAIRM Committee. An Annual Compliance Calendar is maintained in order to monitor requirements and reporting obligations.

PRINCIPLE 5 Relationships

The ACO respects and observes its legal and other obligations, including the rights of all legitimate stakeholders. These principles are enshrined in the Company's Compliance Policy within the Governance Manual and Stakeholder Communication Strategies. The Board's duties and responsibilities specifically include ensuring effective communication with key stakeholders. The Code of Conduct sets the standard of ethical behaviour required of Directors, including ensuring that all stakeholders are recognised for the contributions they make and ensuring full, fair and understandable disclosure in reporting and public communications.

The Board both oversees and contributes to the ACO's organisational culture through oversight of how culture is defined and aligned to organisational strategy. The Board holds accountable the Managing Director and the Artistic Director for how culture is communicated and embodied.

The ACO's procedures for handling conflicts of interest, actual or potential, are embodied in the Governance Manual.

Martyn Myer AO Chairman

Above.
Celebrating the Australian Chamber Orchestra concert at the Sydney Opera House, featuring Neil Finn and the Sydney Children's Choir. Photo by Nic Walker



DEVELOPMENT REPORT

ACO Chairman Martyn Myer AO, ACO Principal Violin Satu Vänkä, ACO Artistic Director Richard Tognetti AO, ACO Deputy Chair and Gala Committee Chair Liz Lewin, and ACO Managing Director Richard Evans AM at the ACO 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser.

Introduction

2025 was a year of celebration and achievements across the ACO's Philanthropy & Partnerships programs. The ACO hosted more than 40 private events and performances for donors, partners, and distinguished guests across Australia, in addition to a very special private recital at Australia House in London.

Donors looked to the future, supporting the ACO generously through the annual Mid-Year Fundraising Campaign, as well as through special initiatives including the ACO GOLD 50th Anniversary Circle and the ACO Learning & Engagement Endowment Fund, which was launched and supported through the ACO 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser.

2025 also marked the first full year of Wesfarmers Arts' ACO Principal Partnership, and the University of Melbourne's expanded seven-year University Partnership which supported the launch of ACO Foundations in Melbourne.

Special Events

In celebration of the Orchestra's 50th Anniversary year, the ACO was invited to perform at state government houses across the country. Dignitaries, patrons and supporters of the ACO attended these very special performances in Queensland, South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria, which were hosted by the Governor of each state.

The ACO's 2025 Government House engagements culminated in an intimate performance at Admiralty House, hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

Introducing the ACO to the guests in attendance, Governor-General Mostyn said: *"Elevating music and performance as a way to explore worlds old and new, as an invitation to bring people together to forge a shared future, and as a thing of beauty in itself, the ACO sits firmly, thrillingly, at that same intersection."*

Government House Queensland, Private Performance

Hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland
18 February

Government House Adelaide, Private Performance

Hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia
30 May

Government House Sydney, Private Performance

Hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales
19 August

Government House Victoria, Private Performance

Hosted by Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC, Governor of Victoria
24 September

Admiralty House Private Performance

Hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
31 October



Above.
Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, Elizabeth Woolnough, Helena Rathbone, Richard Tognetti AO, Melissa Barnard and Simeon Beckett SC at Admiralty House, 31 October. Photo by the Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General

ACO 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser

On Thursday 23 October, the ACO celebrated its milestone year with 260 friends and supporters at the Art Gallery of NSW for the ACO 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser, which raised vital funds for the ACO's Learning & Engagement program, including ACO Foundations.

Guests enjoyed bespoke cocktails, a specially designed menu by Matt Moran and spellbinding virtuosic performances from ACO Artistic Director Richard Tognetti and the ACO. The highlight of the event was the ACO being joined onstage by the young ACO Foundations students from St Marys North Public School in Western Sydney for a very special performance. Later in the evening, St Marys North Public School educator and ACO Foundations co-pioneer Nia Voulgaris-Donas shared her experiences of the life-changing transformation that her students have undergone because of the program.

Host Chris Taylor (The Chaser) commandeered the evening's proceedings, which included live donation pledging, live and silent auctions, and the Pallion Raffle, the prize of which was the spectacular one-of-a-kind Volute gold and diamond ring, inspired by the scroll of a violin, generously donated by Pallion. Auction prizes included original artworks donated by Bill Henson, Lindy Lee and Janet Laurence.

The 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser was supported by generous event partners led by LGT Wealth Management, and included THE WORLD OF (who designed and delivered the evening) Pallion, Champagne Taittinger, Tyrrell's Wines, Four Pillars, Glenfiddich, Harry the Hirer, My Violet, Orotan and Special T Print.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of guests, over \$3 million was pledged on the night to establish the ACO Learning & Engagement Endowment Fund. As a vital investment in the future, this fund will generate income to help sustain the ACO's annual education programs – with ACO Foundations at its heart – for years to come.

The ACO acknowledges the extraordinary success of the 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser with immense gratitude to the event's guests, donors, supporters and partners, and to the Gala Committee Chair, Liz Lewin, and the Gala Committee for their invaluable contributions to the ACO: Christina Birtles, Coreena Cochineas, Barbara Coombes, Judy Crawford, Naysla Edwards, Odaria Finemore, Daniel Haddon, Adam Halbert, Mim Haysom, Ellie Malouf, Camilla Marr, Marcus Moufarrige, Marie-Louise Theile, Monika Tu, and Charlie Tynan.



Above, from the top.
The ACO 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser at the Art Gallery of NSW.
Photo by Wesley Nel

The ACO 50th Anniversary Gala Fundraiser at the Art Gallery of NSW.
Photo by Wesley Nel

ACO Foundations students from St Marys North Public School at the Fundraiser.
Photo by Wesley Nel

Fundraising & Patron Events

Brahms & Beethoven: Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
5 February

TarraWarra Festival Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
27 February

European Tour Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
5 March

Special Recital with Nicolas Altstaedt

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
12 March

London Private Performance

Australia House
20 March

Composer Workshop with Nigel Westlake

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
1 April

Abel Selaocoe: Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
2 April

ACO Next Sydney Cocktails

Michael Reid Gallery, Chippendale Sydney
1 May

Composer Workshop with Holly Harrison

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
6 May

Theremin & Beyond: Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
7 May

Patrons' Cocktails

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
21 May

UKARIA Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
29 May

Chairman's Council & Major Patrons Dinner

Cutler & Co, Melbourne
10 June

ACO Unleashed: Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
19 July

Richard Tognetti & Konstantin Shamray

Special Recital
ACO On the Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
29 June

Gershwin & Shostakovich: Private Rehearsal

ACO On the Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
31 July

Medici Patrons & Creative Partners Dinner

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
21 August

A Musical Awakening: Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
3 September



Above, from the top.
Special Recital with Nicolas Altstaedt at ACO On The Pier

ACO Next Sydney Cocktails at Michael Reid Gallery

Private event at Australia House

ACO Collective Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
13 September

Calile Culture X ACO

The Calile Hotel, Brisbane
1 October

Chairman's Council Dinner

ACO On the Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
9 October

50th Anniversary Gala, Sydney Fundraiser

Art Gallery of NSW
23 October

Celebrating the ACO: Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
19 November

50th Anniversary Concert Reception

Sydney Opera House
21 November

Special Recital with Joseph Tawadros

ACO On the Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
22 November

Patrons' Private Performance

Private Home, Point Piper Sydney
23 November

ACO Foundations Showcase

Hanson Dyer Hall, Melbourne
2 December

Perth Fundraiser

Private Home, Cottesloe
11 December

Partner Events

These included:

Johnson Winter Slattery Private Performance

Howard Smith Wharves, Brisbane
18 February

ACO Prospective Partners & Venue Hire Clients Private Performance

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
30 April

BNP Paribas Private Performance

Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
22 May

BNP Paribas Private Performance

Cargo Hall, Melbourne
26 August

Johnson Winter Slattery Private Performance

Quay Quarter Tower, Sydney
25 September

JBWere Private Performance

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
30 September

EY Private Recital

Art Gallery of NSW, Sydney
18 November

Business Sydney Private Performance

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
24 November

Chubb Insurance Private Performance

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
27 November

Tyrrell's Summer Soirée Private Performance

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
4 December

Johnson Winter Slattery Private Rehearsal

ACO On The Pier, Walsh Bay Sydney
9 December

Acknowledgements

ACO Life Governor

Guido Belgiorno-Nettis AM

ACO Life Patrons

Susie Dickson
Alexandra Martin
Faye Parker
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We thank those generous patrons of our special golden anniversary circle who are helping us blaze a trail into the next 50 years.

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The ACO thanks the late Dame Margaret Scott AC DBE for establishing the Dame Margaret Scott AC DBE Fund for International Guests and Composition.

The ACO thanks the Commonwealth Bank of Australia for its generous support of the Orchestra’s collection of golden age instruments.

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The Chairman’s Council is a limited membership association which supports the ACO’s international touring program and enjoys private events in the company of Richard Tognetti and the Orchestra.

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These acknowledgements reflect Musical Chair dedications made in 2025.

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The Instrument Fund offers investors the opportunity to participate in the ownership of a bank of historic stringed instruments. The Fund's assets are the 1728/29 Stradivarius violin, the 1616 'ex-Fleming' Brothers Amati Cello, 1610 Maggini viola and the 1590 Brothers Amati Violin.

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