

ACO



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



**2027 SEASON
MEDIA KIT**

AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES 2027 SEASON

Defined by an irrepressible sense of adventure and curiosity combined with fearless virtuosity, the ACO is led by its pioneering Artistic Director Richard Tognetti and brings together 17 exceptional string musicians who hail from across the globe. Performing more than 100 concerts nationally and internationally each year, the Orchestra is renowned for electrifying performances that redefine what an orchestra can be and do.

The **Australian Chamber Orchestra** has announced its 2027 Season – an epic year of tradition, transcendence and transformation. Curated by ACO Artistic Director **Richard Tognetti**, the ACO's 2027 Season features revelatory performances that honour the past whilst championing the new, through music that is always moving.

In 2027 Tognetti and the ACO will redraw the boundaries of what a string ensemble can be and do. From epic collaborations with some of the world's most exciting soloists and ensembles, to world premieres that explore groundbreaking new realms and innovative interpretations of the greatest masterworks from the classical canon, the 2027 Season is a transformative celebration that revels in everything that the ACO does best.

In an exhilarating Season highlight, the ACO will present a concert curated by visionary US composer **John Adams** and Tognetti – two artists and musical friends who share an instinct for risk and pushing music forward into the unknown – in celebration of Adams's 80th-birthday year. The centrepiece of the concert is the world premiere of *Gioia*, Adams's only new work in this anniversary year, written especially for Tognetti and ACO Principal Violin **Satu Vänskä**: two soloists who will perform in charged, fluid dialogue with the Orchestra. This is a gift from a composer at the height of his powers to musicians he deeply admires.

The music of JS Bach has always been at the heart of the ACO, and in 2027 Tognetti will pay homage to one of the composer's greatest works: *St John Passion*. The ACO will join forces with the multi-award-winning Belgian vocal ensemble **Vox Luminis** for a performance of this choral masterpiece that embodies the power of music and the spirit of humanity.



RICHARD TOGNETTI — Artistic Director & Lead Violin

In 2027 the ACO will collaborate with some of the most innovative musicians performing today. The Season opens with a national tour directed by cellist **Nicolas Altstaedt**, whose boldness, emotional depth and fierce musicality finds a natural partner in the ACO, while electrifying performer **Alina Ibragimova**, a virtuoso in every sense of the word, returns to the ACO to perform Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto, a concerto so demanding it was deemed unplayable by its original dedicatee. The Season will also feature the Australian debut of **Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha**, one of the world’s most exciting sopranos, who will join the ACO for Strauss’ *Four Last Songs*, a magnificent exploration of what it means to be human.

In 2027 the ACO will present its inaugural four-day music festival dedicated to new music, ***Currents***, at the Orchestra’s home, **ACO On The Pier**. Forged through Tognetti’s restless conviction that music is music, irrespective of genre or time, *Currents* is a new festival made for right now. Curated in 2027 by Guggenheim Fellow and one of the greatest compositional minds of his generation, **Samuel Adams**, the festival brings new voices into collision by design. Music by contemporary composers including **Missy Mazzoli**, **Gabriella Smith**, **Tristan Perich** and **Caroline Shaw** will be performed by Tognetti and the ACO alongside guest artists including violin virtuoso **Karen Gomyo** and pianist **Conor Hanick**.

Rakhi Singh, co-founder and director of UK-based **Manchester Collective** – an ensemble that shares the ACO’s philosophy of music without borders, programming across centuries, genres and traditions as a matter of instinct, not novelty – makes her ACO debut in a special event in **November**. Singh and the ACO are joined onstage by percussionist **Sidiki Dembélé**, who returns to Australia after his unforgettable performances with Abel Selaocoe and the ACO in 2025, to perform as soloist in a concert of ritual, rhythm and radical connection.

The 2027 Season also marks the long-awaited return of the remarkable **Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir** for a concert honouring revered composer **Arvo Pärt**. The Choir will join the ACO onstage for a concert featuring a triptych of Pärt’s most iconic works, *Tabula Rasa*, *Berliner Messe* and *Te Deum*, that conjures humanity’s universal capacity for love and hope.



TIMO-VEIKKO 'TIPI' VALVE — Principal Cello
ANNA DA SILVA CHEN — Violin

THE 2027 SEASON

NICOLAS ALTSTAEDT

4–17 Feb

Audiences are invited to experience infinite possibility and extraordinary kinetic energy when world-renowned cellist **Nicolas Altstaedt** returns to direct the ACO. Altstaedt is one of the world’s most exhilarating musicians, and his boldness, emotional depth and fierce musicality find a natural partner in the ACO, an ensemble that shares his curiosity and delight in the act of music-making. He directs the ACO through a program that sweeps from the Baroque to the present, with CPE Bach’s Cello Concerto in A major at its heart.

Nicolas Altstaedt Guest Director & Cello
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Felix Mendelssohn String Symphony No.4 in C minor
Giacinto Scelsi Chukrum: I.
Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach Cello Concerto in A major, Wq.172
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Adagio and Fugue in C minor, K.546
György Kurtág (arr. strings) Ligatura – Message to Frances-Marie (The Answered Unanswered Question), Op.31b
Ludwig van Beethoven (arr. strings) String Quartet in F major, Op.135

BACH’S ST JOHN PASSION

13–24 Mar

For **Richard Tognetti**, a musician who has devoted a large part of his musical life to JS Bach, taking the *St John Passion* on a national tour is a long-held dream. To mark this special event the ACO is joined by **Vox Luminis**, the multi-award-winning Belgian vocal ensemble whose radiant sound has made it one of the most admired interpreters of Baroque vocal music in the world today.

Richard Tognetti Director
Lionel Meunier Christ & Vox Luminis Artistic Director
Florian Sievers Evangelist
Vox Luminis Vocal Ensemble
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Johann Sebastian Bach St John Passion, BWV245

ALINA IBRAGIMOVA PLAYS TCHAIKOVSKY’S VIOLIN CONCERTO

6–18 May

The exhilarating violin virtuoso **Alina Ibragimova** returns to direct the ACO in a program full of intensity and passion. A virtuoso in every sense of the word, Ibragimova invites audiences into her world, offering an experience that is both authentic and thrilling. She takes centre stage in Tchaikovsky’s Violin Concerto in D major, a concerto so demanding it was deemed unplayable by its original dedicatee.

Alina Ibragimova Guest Director & Violin
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Anton Arensky Variations on a Theme by Tchaikovsky, Op.35a
Pēteris Vasks Pateicības Dziedājums (Chant of Gratefulness)* (Australian Premiere)
Grażyna Bacewicz Divertimento for String Orchestra
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (arr. Bernard Rofe) Violin Concerto in D major, Op.35

*Co-commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, NHK Symphony Orchestra, and Münchener Kammerorchester.

RICHARD TOGNETTI DIRECTS MOZART

19–30 Jun

Richard Tognetti and pianist **Alexander Melnikov** are two of the world’s most fearless and innovative interpreters. Here they join forces to celebrate the Classical era and the composers who evolved music into a new age, with performances of music including Mozart’s Piano Concerto No.17 in G major, a lively, irresistible and witty exchange of ideas between piano and orchestra, and Schubert’s effervescent Fifth Symphony.

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Alexander Melnikov Piano
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Joseph Haydn Armida: Sinfonia
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Piano Concerto No.17 in G major, K.453
Mozart Symphony No.29 in A major, K.201
Franz Schubert Symphony No.5 in B-flat major, D.485

ACO IN MOTION

29 Jul – 16 Aug

Directed by **Richard Tognetti**, *ACO In Motion* draws four landmark works into a single charged arc that plays to everything the ACO does best: electric performance, bold juxtaposition and the brazen energy of an orchestra at full stretch. Opening with Missy Mazzoli’s *The Shield of the Heart is the Heart*, a work that is taut with coiled energy, the concert showcases the ACO in full flight in Steve Reich’s *Different Trains* and Schubert’s *Death and the Maiden Quartet*, arranged for strings by Tognetti.

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Missy Mazzoli The Shield of the Heart is the Heart
Béla Bartók (arr. strings) String Quartet No.3, Sz.85
Steve Reich (arr. strings) Different Trains
Franz Schubert (arr. Richard Tognetti) String Quartet No.14 in D minor, D.810 “Death and the Maiden”

THE JOHN ADAMS ALMANAC

2–18 Sep

Music is a living tradition in this specially curated celebration from one of the world’s greatest living composers. In his 80th-birthday year, the ACO celebrates John Adams with a special program curated by Adams and **Richard Tognetti** – two artists and musical friends who share an instinct for risk and pushing music forward into the unknown. The centrepiece is the world premiere of *Gioia*, Adams’s only new work in this anniversary year, written especially for Tognetti and ACO Principal Violin **Satu Vänskä**. A gift from a composer at the height of his powers to musicians he deeply admires.

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Timo Andres Piano
Satu Vänskä Violin
John Adams Guest Curator
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Ludwig van Beethoven (arr. strings) Grosse Fuge, Op.133
Ingram Marshall (arr. Timo Andres) Flow
John Adams Gioia* (World Premiere)
Timo Andres New Work* (World Premiere)
Adams Shaker Loops

*Co-commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra, generously supported by David Thomas AM.

STRAUSS’ FOUR LAST SONGS

11–29 Nov

The ACO is thrilled to present the Australian debut of **Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha**. Winner of the Song Prize at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World competition and the prestigious Salzburg Festival’s Herbert von Karajan prize, Rangwanasha is one of the most exciting sopranos singing today. Combining sumptuous tone and tenderness with sheer vocal power, she will perform Strauss’ magnificent *Four Last Songs* with an expanded ACO featuring winds, piano and percussion, directed by **Richard Tognetti**.

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Masabane Cecilia Rangwanasha Soprano
Maxime Bibeau Double Bass
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Arvo Pärt Cantus in Memory of Benjamin Britten
Jack Symonds New Work* (World Premiere)
Benjamin Britten (arr. strings) String Quartet No.2 in C major, Op.36
Witold Lutosławski (arr. Richard Tognetti) Partita
Richard Strauss (arr. James Ledger) Four Last Songs, Op. posth.

Strauss’ Four Last Songs is supported by Marion Pender in loving memory of John Gerrit Pender.

*Commissioned by the Australian Chamber Orchestra.



SPECIAL EVENT
ARVO PÄRT MASTERWORKS
16–20 Apr

Following their sell-out ACO tour in 2019, the **Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir** reunites with the ACO for this immersion into three masterworks of Arvo Pärt: *Tabula Rasa*, *Berliner Messe* and *Te Deum*. The Choir shares a special connection with Pärt, having collaborated with him over many years, and is synonymous with some of the greatest performances and recordings of his work.

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Satu Vänskä Violin
Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Arvo Pärt
Tabula Rasa
Berliner Messe
Te Deum

SPECIAL EVENT
ACO ✳ MANCHESTER COLLECTIVE: CONSTELLATION
3–4 Nov

The UK-based **Manchester Collective** shares a philosophy with the ACO of music without borders, programming across centuries, genres and traditions as a matter of instinct, not novelty. In 2027, the ensemble’s co-founder, director and violinist **Rakhi Singh** makes her ACO debut to direct a concert constructed with the restless magic of a great mixtape. At the centre of the program is percussionist **Sidiki Dembélé**, returning to Australia after his unforgettable performances with Abel Selaocoe and the ACO in 2025.

Rakhi Singh Director, Violin and Manchester Collective Co-Founder and Co-Artistic Director.
Sidiki Dembélé Percussionist
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Sidiki Dembélé Teriya, Siniensigui, Tama (The Journey), Djikunu (Power of Water), Shaka, Hakilima
Traditional (arr. Rakhi Singh) Johnny Faa
John Playford Wallom Green
Henry Purcell The Old Bachelor, Z.607: Hornpipe, The Virtuous Wife, Z.611: Air, Timon of Athens, Z.632: Curtain Tune
Hans Abrahamsen Ten Preludes for String Quartet: Selections
Emily Hall So Far
Edmund Finnis Hymn (after Byrd)
Nwando Ebizie For You, small in the embrace of untethered unwinding possible futures
Dembélé / Rakhi Singh Simiya / Suo Gan

Constellations was produced by Manchester Collective and premiered in the United Kingdom in October 2026. Nwando Ebizie’s work was commissioned by Manchester Collective with support from the Vaughan Williams Foundation.

ACO ON THE PIER FESTIVAL: CURRENTS
3–6 Jun

The most important music being made is made right now. It is pulsing, alive and transmuted across generations. Forged through Richard Tognetti’s restless conviction that music is music, irrespective of genre or time, *Currents* is a new festival made for right now, presented at ACO On The Pier.

In 2027 *Currents* is curated by Guggenheim Fellow and one of the great compositional minds of his generation, **Samuel Adams**, and features music by contemporary composers including Missy Mazzoli, Gabriella Smith, Tristan Perich and Caroline Shaw, performed by Tognetti and the ACO alongside guest artists including violin virtuoso **Karen Gomyo** and pianist **Conor Hanick**.

YOUNG AMERICANS
Thu 3 Jun 7pm

Richard Tognetti Director & Violin
Maxime Bibeau Double Bass
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Gabriella Smith Carrot Revolution
Reena Esmail Darshan, for solo violin: I.
Missy Mazzoli Dark With Excessive Bright, for solo double bass and string quintet
Ted Hearne Law of Mosaics: I. Excerpts from the middle of something
Jessie Montgomery Chemiluminescence
Samuel Adams Echo Transcriptions, for electric violin and string orchestra
Paul Wiancko (arr. strings) Lift: Part III

SURFACE IMAGE
Fri 4 Jun 7pm

Conor Hanic Piano

Tristan Perich Surface Image, for piano and 40-channel 1-bit electronics

MOZART MEETS CAGE
Sat 5 Jun 3pm

Karen Gomyo Violin
Conor Hanick Piano

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Violin Sonata No.27 in G major, K.379
John Cage Eight Whiskus
Cage Nocturne for Violin and Piano
Mozart Violin Sonata No.21 in E minor, K.304
Cage In a Landscape
Cage 4’33”
Mozart Violin Sonata No.32 in B-flat major, K.454

NOW IS THE TIME
Sat 5 Jun 7pm

Richard Tognetti Violin
Helena Rathbone Violin
Ike See Violin
Elizabeth Woolnough Viola
Timo-Veikko Valve Cello
David Griffiths Clarinet
Conor Hanick Piano
Samuel Adams Sound Design

Samuel Adams Devotions, for string quartet, percussion, and electronic sound design
Olivier Messiaen Quartet for the End of Time

KAREN GOMYO PLAYS BACH
Sun 6 Jun 3pm

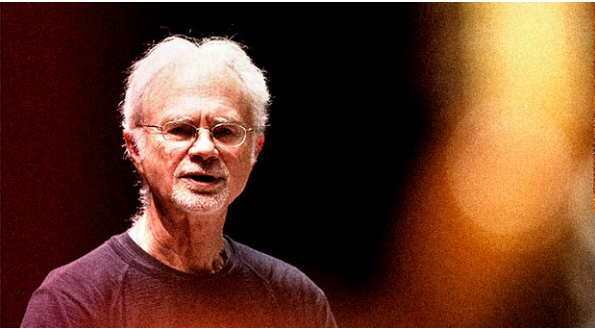
Karen Gomyo Guest Director & Violin
Helena Rathbone Violin
Maxime Bibeau Double Bass
Conor Hanick Piano
Australian Chamber Orchestra

Johann Sebastian Bach (arr. Stefano Scodanibbio) The Art of Fugue, BWV1080: Contrapunctus I
Bach Brandenburg Concerto No.3 in G major, BWV1048
Samuel Adams Violin Diptych, for violin and piano
Adams Arches, for two violins, piano, and strings
Caroline Shaw Punctum
John Luther Adams Three High Places, for solo double bass
Bach Concerto for Two Violins in D minor, BWV1043”

LIISA PALLANDI, Violin



GUEST ARTISTS & COLLABORATORS



JOHN ADAMS Curator
The John Adams Almanac



NICOLAS ALTSTAEDT Guest Director & Cello
Nicolas Altstaedt



ALEXANDER MELNIKOV Piano
Richard Tognetti Directs Mozart



LIONEL MEUNIER Vox Luminis Artistic Director
Bach's St John Passion



TIMO ANDRES Piano
The John Adams Almanac



ESTONIAN PHILHARMONIC CHAMBER CHOIR
Arvo Pärt Masterworks



MASABANE CECILIA RANGWANASHA Soprano
Strauss' Four Last Songs



FLORIAN SIEVERS Evangelist
Bach's St John Passion



SIDIKI DEMBÉLÉ Percussion
ACO X Manchester Collective: Constellations



KAREN GOMYO Guest Director & Violin
Currents



RAKHI SINGH Director, Violin & Manchester Collective Co-Founder and Co-Artistic Director
ACO X Manchester Collective: Constellations



VOX LUMINIS Vocal Ensemble
Bach's St John Passion



CONOR HANICK Piano
Currents



ALINA IBRAGIMOVA Guest Director & Violin
Alina Ibragimova Plays Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto

OUR MUSICIANS



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 a 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, on loan from Jannie Brown. Her Chair is sponsored by Alenka Tindale.

Aiko Goto

VIOLIN
Aiko plays her own 1862 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 Colin Golvan AM KC & Dr Debbie Golvan and anonymous patrons.

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 Zygmuntowicz violin. His Chair is sponsored by Gus & Nanna Lehrer.

Tim Yu

VIOLIN
Tim plays an 1850 violin by John Lott, in the style of Giuseppe Guarneri del Gesù, kindly 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, kindly 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.

MEDIA CONTACT

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