THE ALBURY WODONGA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
PRESENTS



JOYFUL DANCES

CONDUCTED BY EVAN LAWSON

16.08 | 2.30PM
THE CUBE WODONGA

The Cube Wodonga

118 HOVELL ST, WODONGA, VIC, 3690

AWSO
ALBURY WODONGA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

WWW.AWSO.ORG.AU

THE ORCHESTRA

FIRST VIOLINS
Tara Chambers
Concertmaster
Liling Patterson
Alexandra Sutherland
Chloé Matammu
Margaret Hurd
Orlando Bulmer
Rosie Bulmer^

SECOND VIOLINS
Damien Jones
Bohdan Krowicky
Kaitlyn Ferrer
Mona Liu
Rachel Pringle
Emily Lescun
Sharon Emmett
Jessie Swan

VIOLAS
Cheryl Lewis
Toby Lewis
Vanessa Page

CELLOS
Ian Whitaker
Maddi Wiley
Lurene Johnston
Zahra Bourne
Janet Chapman
Paul Humphries
Catriona Byles
Billy Paffen^

DOUBLE BASS
Susan Karaffa
Rohan Tailor

FLUTES
Katie Clarke
Caoimhe McMillan
Priya Jones

PICCOLO
Robyn Watts

OBOES
Kim Lewis
Therese Scarfe

COR ANGLAIS
Therese Scarfe

CLARINETS
Terence Goh
Ruth Little
Penny Dawkins^

BASS CLARINET
Michelle Revelant

ALTO SAXOPHONE
Michelle Revelant

BASSOONS
Fiona Williams
Stephen Draper
Judith Hudson^

HORNS
Kelly McGuinness
Judy Foley
Heather Street
Helen Vincent
Esther Little
Bronwyn McGorlick~

TRUMPETS
Billy Stewart
Jeremy Kerr
Samuel Serbinek~

TROMBONES
Trevor Cooper
Graeme Stewart

BASS TROMBONE
Mardi Sergi

TUBAS
Fenella O'Sullivan~
Oliver Kurukchi~

PERCUSSION
Katja Jorgensen
Joash Little
Rory Baines

HARP/PIANO
Lisa Bektash

Bold Principal
~ Guest Musician
^ Absent for concert

AWSO
ALBURY WODONGA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

PROGRAM

EVAN LAWSON Conductor

GORDON KERRY
Acknowledgement of Country
(World Premiere)

GEORGES BIZET
L'Arlesienne
I. Pastorale
II. Intermezzo
III. Menuet
IV. Farandole

MAY LYON
***The Path* featuring trumpet soloist Billy Stewart**
(World Premiere - revised specifically for AWSO)

INTERVAL

EVAN LAWSON
Atlas of Joy

GEORGES BIZET
Carmen suite no.2, arr. Ernest Guiraud
No. 6 Marche des Contrebandiers
Act III, Chorus: Écoutes, écoutes, compagnon!
No. 7 Habanera
Act I, Aria (Carmen): L'amour est un oiseau rebelle
No. 8 Nocturne
Act III, Aria (Michela): Je dis que rien ne m'épourante
No. 9 Chanson du Toréador
Act II, Introduction and aria (Escamillo): Votre toast, je peux vous le rendre
No. 10 La Garde Montante
Act I: Avec la garde montante, nous arrivons, nous violá!
No. 11 Danse Bohème
Act II, Gypsy Dance: Les tringles des sistres tintaient

GUSTAV HOLST
The Planets, op.32
IV. Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollity



A NOTE FROM OUR GUEST CONDUCTOR

Joy is a feeling that comes in many shapes and sizes. It can be a small, personal emotion or a large, ecstatic sensation that signposts our lives.
I am so excited - joyful, in fact - to share the stage with this fantastic orchestra to present a wide selection of joyful music.

We will present widely known and loved tunes from the opera "Carmen" (in the second Carmen suite) and Holst's "Jupiter" from "The Planets," alongside two pieces of Australian music: my own piece, "An Atlas of Joy," and a work for trumpet and orchestra by May Lyon, "The Path." May and I have worked together for over 10 years, so I'm delighted to bring her music to the orchestra.

I am so delighted to be the Guest Conductor with the orchestra this year. It has been wonderful working with the group. Community music-making is the lifeblood of the music sector, and organisations like the AWSO are crucial for sharing music and community. I'm delighted to play a small role in this journey.

Evan Lawson
Conductor



Image: Simone Ruggiore

About Evan Lawson

Evan J Lawson (he/they) is an award-winning queer artist working at the forefront of contemporary culture as a composer, writer, curator, singer and conductor. Evan has worked with leading orchestras across the globe, returning from Canada just in time for this performance wtih AWSO, and is a founding member and the artistic director of interdisciplinary dance company-chamber orchestra Forest Collective.

In 2026, Evan won a Green Room Award for Outstanding New Australian Opera for Labyrinth. Evan has been composing music since the age of 10, and his music is hailed by Clive O'Connell, who wrote "...the sonorities that emerged often proved extraordinary..." He has studied with Benjamin Northey, Richard Gill, and Matthias Pintscher, who has said that his music is "serene, deep...even breathing the heritage of Mahler."

OUR NEW MUSICAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Music has the power to help us listen, connect and belong. Created through a journey of listening, learning and understanding between respected Wiradjuri Elder Uncle Darren Wighton, acclaimed Australian composer Gordon Kerry and members of the orchestra, our Musical Acknowledgement of Country is the result of a shared journey of listening to stories, landscapes and the living culture of our region. More than a new work, it is a lasting commitment by the orchestra to honour the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which we rehearse and perform, and to begin every concert with respect and reflection.



Wiradjuri Elder
Uncle Darren Wighton

The orchestra is deeply grateful to Uncle Darren Wighton for his guidance, laughter and kindness throughout this journey, and for the trust and wisdom he so generously shared with us, which has helped shape this meaningful new composition by Gordon Kerry.

AWSO thanks Murray Arts for their support through the Country Arts Support Program (CASP), and the HotHouse Theatre for their generosity in hosting our co-creation workshop.

Katie Clarke, Project Manager

A note from the composer...



Composer
Gordon Kerry

It has been wonderful to work with Wiradjuri elder Darren Wighton and AWSO to create music that celebrates the unique variety of the beautiful landscapes in which we live.

The music, sometimes using extended instrumental techniques, suggests familiar sounds and sights and includes the calls of birds and animals. A low hum reflects the quiet bush with a distant heartbeat from the timpani. This short-long rhythm is often heard on clapsticks in Indigenous music. High string notes hang like heat-haze over a soft chorale in the brass that suggests distant mountains. The calls of many different birds and frogs can be heard before a climactic sunrise, when the sounds of the natural world take over and fade away.

This work is a response to the welcome offered by Indigenous people, and an acknowledgment of the privilege we all enjoy in living here.



Gordon Kerry, Composer of the Musical Acknowledgement of Country (2026)

YOUR CONCERT AT A GLANCE

GEORGES BIZET (1838-1875)
L'Arlesienne (1872)

Georges Bizet, a French composer warmly acknowledged by the great composers of his time, was asked by Alphonse Daudet to write music for his play 'L'Arlesienne' which premiered on October 1, 1872. Daudet's play concerns a young man torn between two loves: a gentle young woman from the countryside and a seductive charmer from Arles. When the woman from Arles (who never appears on stage) proves to be unfaithful, the man attempts to console himself by returning to his country girlfriend, but he is unable to forget his other passions. Lost in lovesick despair, he takes his own life.

Bizet composed a variety of songs, dances, and interludes that Daudet eventually conceded were better than the play itself. The play was a failure, closing after only 21 performances. Bizet, however, salvaged his music by arranging it into the concert suite you are hearing today.



Portrait of the Composer Georges Bizet
by Felix Henri Giacomotti, ca. 1865

MAY LYON
***The Path* ft trumpet soloist** (2026)

May Lyon's music explores themes from nature and lore to mathematics, with narrative dualities and rhythmic precision being strong recurring elements. In 2026 Lyon completed a PhD at Sydney University, focusing on representations of nature in music using algorithmic techniques. Recent commissions have been for Musica Viva, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Offspring, and ANAM.



Image by Josh Smyth

The Path is an imagined journey travelling amongst the southern sky, looking at our distant yet familiar southern stars. Beginning in calm wonder from the perspective of Earth, the work follows the path of a lone traveller, represented by the solo trumpet. Looking up at the sparkling southern cross on a clear night, they traverse through the sparsity of space, passing constellations and a supernova, eventually reaching the constellation. This arrival is heralded by an exuberant and boisterous orchestra representing the turbulent nature of each solar giant.

Written and premiered in 2021 for the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, this 2026 version has been reworked specifically for the AWSO, including a trumpet solo performed by Billy Stewart.

Evan J Lawson
An Atlas of Joy (2023)

Evan Lawson describes his 'An Atlas of Joy' as "A 10 minute journey encapsulating a survey of joy in its many iterations." Inspired by Richard Strauss's Four Last Songs and Igor Stravinsky's Rite of Spring, which were also performed at the premiere of this piece, Evan decided his work would be about the 'middle bits' of life, and the joys we experience in our everyday moments. Sometimes it is loud and boisterous; sometimes more intimate and personal.



Image by Simone Ruggiore

The work is scored for a large orchestra and is structured as an Overture, in the vein of Shostakovich or Dvořák, giving every section of the orchestra a moment to shine. Evan aims for his music to be colourful, intriguing, and perhaps a little surprising.

YOUR CONCERT AT A GLANCE

GEORGES BIZET (1838-1875)
Carmen suite no.2, arr. Ernest Guiraud (1886)



Image by Étienne Carjat

Bizet finished his most famous and most popular piece of work, the opera 'Carmen', in 1874. 'Carmen', a tragic story of love, betrayal and revenge, had its premiere in March 1875. Bizet died of a heart attack 3 months later, predicting the Opera would be "a definite and hopeless flop". How very wrong he was - Bizet's melodies have made 'Carmen' a lasting favourite with audiences for the past 150 years.

After Bizet's death, his friend Ernest Guiraud created two orchestral suites in an attempt to preserve the music of 'Carmen', each using six numbers from the full opera. The 'Habanera' from Act I and the 'Toreador Song' from Act II of 'Carmen' are now two of the best known of all operatic arias, and feature in Carmen Suite no.2, which is being performed today.

GUSTAV HOLST (1874–1934)
The Planets (1914-1916)



Image: Lebrecht Music & Arts / Alamy Stock

Gustav Holst was an English composer with a style of orchestration that was influenced by Ravel, Stravinsky, and his friend and contemporary Vaughan-Williams.

In 'The Planets', Holst found a source of artistic inspiration in astrology and horoscopes, and was particularly fascinated by the characteristics attributed to the planets and their purported influence on the signs of the zodiac. Of this music, Holst wrote: *"If any guide to the music is required, the subtitle to each piece will be found sufficient, especially if it be used in a broad sense. For instance, Jupiter brings jollity in the ordinary sense, and also the more ceremonial type of rejoicing associated with religions or national festivities. Saturn brings not only physical decay, but also a vision of fulfillment. Mercury is the symbol of the mind."*

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ALBURY WODONGA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

A NOTE FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Image: Jeremy Weihrauch

Welcome to the second performance of the Albury Wodonga Symphony Orchestra's 2026 season, and what a concert it is!

AWSO is thrilled to welcome Evan Lawson to lead us for *Joyful Dances*. Bringing with him a wealth of musical knowledge, artistic flair and a contagious joyful energy, we are so very lucky to have Evan as this year's guest conductor.

The musical collection we are bringing you today will be a momentous occasion. Not only are we showcasing three established Australian composers, we are also premiering Albury Wodonga's first orchestral Acknowledgement of Country. Following in the footsteps of many of Australia's major orchestras, AWSO is so excited to embed cultural respect and connection into our work within the community. I would like to thank Katie Clarke for spear-heading this project and for all her work to make this idea come to fruition, as well as of course respected Wirudjuri Elder Uncle Darren Wighton and local composer Gordon Kerry.

The program goes on to explore the different forms of joy we all experience. The wild, passionate joy of making love's first mistakes in Bizet's Carmen; the joy of being fully immersed in magical story-telling; the joy of losing oneself in a night of stargazing the Southern skies; and of course the joy of playing and listening to truly exquisite melody and harmony. Featuring a solo by Principal trumpet player Billy Stewart, this is sure to be an unforgettable afternoon of music!

I hope audiences today leave knowing they have witnessed something incredibly special, and that they carry this concert with them as a postcard of their musical lives.



Jessie Swan

Jessie Swan
Artistic Director













Jeremy Weihrauch Photography | Albury Wodonga Symphony Orchestra

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SAVE THE DATE

The Albury Wodonga Symphony Orchestra invites you to our final performance for 2026!

Magnificat
December 6th | 2.30pm

The Cube Wodonga

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