

FIVE YEARS OF
THE
FILMHARMONIA
ORCHESTRA

QUINT ESSENTIAL



Welcome

5 years ago the founding committee of The FilmHarmonia Orchestra came together in a small apartment in Sydney and laid the foundations of an ensemble which would grow to become a mature, diverse symphony orchestra. We aimed to create a community that would celebrate and promote incidental music, growing both as individual musicians and collectively. From these humble beginnings, we've overcome every obstacle, including a global pandemic, to become an organisation attracting artists from all walks of life.

Season after season, we continue to gather musicians from across the east coast who share our passion for film and game music. Over the past five years, we've seen our members take up the torch the founding musicians lit. Now the orchestra has taken on a life of its own, one we could have only hoped for when we began this grand adventure, one indeed worthy of a Baggins.

We are forever grateful for the support of our audience, patrons, family and friends over the years. As human beings, we all have an intrinsic love of the melodies which accompanied beloved childhood films, which deepen the escape we experience in our favourite video games, and which flow through the theatres we frequent with family and friends. Performing and promoting these in a formal setting legitimises them, and our ever-growing audience base is a testament to this. The joy we bring to our audiences and members alike, from those who grew up in the age of the silver screen to those who have only ever known media at their fingertips, is an indicator that we are well and truly on the way to achieving our mission.

Justina Hanna
PRESIDENT

From the Artistic Director

Saturday, October 27th, 2018 was the first time The FilmHarmonia Orchestra played to the public, in a program titled *Take One* which was programmed loosely around the idea of classic film and game scores that everyone should know. I was asked at that concert why we had not included *Star Wars* given its ubiquity with the genre. My answer was that we weren't ready for it (and perhaps nor it for us!). Musicians are drawn to the scores of John Williams due to the musicality inherent within them. They are both challenging and satisfying to play; other repertoire may be fun to listen to, but that experience is enjoyed predominantly by the audience alone. No storyteller does not enjoy the story they are telling – the thrill of listening is based largely upon the enthusiasm of the narrator and this compositional quality pervades the 'essential' works we are playing today: one each from TV, animation, video games, musicals and film. Once again, this is a program of music that everyone should know and consequently, I don't doubt much of it will be familiar, but I invite you to listen beyond the notes to the enthusiasm and vitality invested in them by this group of dedicated musicians. After setting out on a mission to prove that this is music which is artistically meritorious, I have finally worked out what that means – it is fun and it connects with us. As Obi-Wan says to Luke: *Stretch out with your feelings! You see? You can do it.*

Joshua McNulty
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Read about us in
Cut Common
Magazine



The Orchestra

Violin 1

Mark Rossman*
Justina Hanna
Camille Hanrahan-
Tan
Madeleina
Hanrahan-Tan
Yuko Hughes
Basil Ong Tze Wee
Alvin Wan
Marina Wu

Violin 2

Daniel Zhou*
Aritree Barua
Ben Callaghan
Jesse Chen
Annabel Goodman
Kate Kebzova
Aiden Quan
Marni Ramoni Kolat
Rhea Sullivan

Viola

James Constable*
David Loonam
Ashur Varde

Cello

Mina Scarratt*
Eryn Deys
Jonah Eskander
Eva-Maria
Hekkelman
Ann Kwan
Christopher Lawn
Kay Lin Ng
James Norton

Double Bass

George Machado*
Paighthor Acevedo-
Martin
Mike Feghali

Flute

Alex Woof*
(Piccolo)
Milia Cavallaro
(Piccolo)
Morgan Ridley-
Smith

Oboe

Hannah Kovilpillai*

Clarinet

Simon Parker*
Rebecca Basclain
Talia McLennan
Hisashi Nakahara

Bass Clarinet

Helen Hamlin*

Bassoon

Keith Mitchell*
Jaslyn Nash

Horn

Alex Green*
Rachel Jamieson
Julia Leung
David Shi

Trumpet

Micah Napier*
Will Angus
Aimé Langeveldt
Emma Stanton

Trombone

Benjamin Basclain*
Angus Blake
Connor Bratty

Bass Trombone

Sebastian
Djajasukmana

Tuba

Sohtaka Kikuchi

Harp

Justina
Varkuleviciute

Piano

Er-Chih Li
Emma Stanton

Timpani

Freya Steele

Percussion

Steven Machamer*
Gloria Chen
Cameron Hall
Andrea Leong

**Principal*



PROGRAM

THUNDERBIRDS MARCH

Barry Gray,
arr. Mark Lansom

STUDIO GHIBLI SUITE

Joe Hisaishi,
arr. Adriano Carrijo

SUPER MARIO BROS. MEDLEY

Koji Kondo,
arr. Nic Raine, Andrés Soto

BOOK ONE: AS TASCEN

A Symphonic Poem drawn from "A Darker Shade of Magic"
J. Jacob McNulty

INTERMISSION

SELECTIONS FROM LES MISÉRABLES

Claude-Michel Schonberg, Alain Boublil, Jean-Marc Natel,
Herbert Kretzmer,
arr. Bob Lowden

STAR WARS: SUITE FOR ORCHESTRA

*Main Title, Princess Leia's Theme, The Imperial March, Yoda's Theme,
Throne Room and End Title*
John Williams

Thunderbirds March

The *Thunderbirds* theme is a quick, upright march that underscores the urgency and importance of the iconic rescue crew's work. The Transatlantic team with a secret base of operations in the Pacific Ocean carried out the most daring lifesaving missions on land and sea — and even in space — with the aid of futuristic machines and occasional old-fashioned espionage. The marionettes used in the show's filming were themselves high-tech, with electronics moving the lower jaw in sync with pre-recorded dialogue. Gray's iconic theme remains an enduring emblem of 1960s television. The mod scene influenced the broader aesthetics of the show — fittingly, the instrumentation for the *Thunderbirds March* features alto saxophone alongside the traditional instruments of the orchestra. Since 2017, "International Thunderbirds Day" has been celebrated on 30 September, the anniversary of the series' 1965 debut.

Studio Ghibli Suite

The films of Studio Ghibli feature a long-running partnership between director and animator Hayao Miyazaki and composer Joe Hisaishi. The suite opens with music from *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988). A pastoral theme introduces the story of two young sisters who move to a house in the countryside and befriend a large, silent forest spirit. Reverence for nature is a common theme in Miyazaki's works — as are complex female protagonists, and antagonists with redeeming qualities. This is followed by "A Town With An Ocean View" from *Kiki's Delivery Service* (1989), the story of a young trainee witch who starts a parcel delivery business on a path to discovering her independence. Whimsical, slightly lonely piano and strings first take inspiration from the classical music world before picking up into a lively jig. Music from *Princess Mononoke* (1997) enters with a stately and anguished string melody, to be joined by woodwind and brass, and then echoed by solo oboe.

In this historical fantasy, forest spirits are locked in a feud with villagers who seek to clear the forest to mine the earth for iron. Princess Mononoke, a girl raised by wolves, is caught between these two worlds. The wistful piano melody of “One Summer’s Day” from *Spirited Away* (2001) illustrates the bittersweet memories of our protagonist Chihiro/Sen. When Chihiro’s family becomes trapped in the spirit world, she faces an unhappy time working in a bathhouse to free herself and her parents, a task made harder by the chaotic visitor, No-Face. Finally, music from *Howl’s Moving Castle* (2004) features the film’s romantic main theme, “Merry Go Round of Life”. This eccentric yet majestic waltz reminds us with an optimistic nihilism that life goes on, unstoppably, and is only what we make of it. The idealistic but egotistical wizard Howl learns to put others first; and the resourceful and determined protagonist, Sophie, makes the most of the curse that has been placed upon her.

Super Mario Bros. Medley

Koji Kondo's timeless composition for *Super Mario Bros.* is emblematic of the video game music genre. From the carefree opening of the Overworld Theme to the whimsical waltz of the Underwater Theme and the ominous Underground Theme, Kondo’s unforgettable score accompanies the moustachioed plumber as he searches the Mushroom Kingdom for Princess Peach — collecting coins, gobbling mushrooms, and flattening Goombas on the way to the final boss fight with Bowser. Over 300 related games have been released since *Super Mario Bros.* was unleashed in all its 8-bit glory for the Nintendo Entertainment System in 1985. The most recent instalment, *Super Mario Bros. Wonder*, was released on 20 October 2023. Earlier this year, the *Super Mario Bros.* theme became the first piece of video game music selected by the U.S. Library of Congress for preservation in the National Recording Registry in 2023 based on its "cultural, historical or aesthetic importance".

Book One: As Tascen

The Shades of Magic series, penned by V.E. Schwab, is a captivating and intricate fantasy epic spanning multiple parallel Londons. The narrative revolves around Kell Maresh, one of the last *Antari* magicians capable of traveling between these parallel worlds. Red London, Grey London, White London, and the sinister Black London each possess unique magical qualities. As Kell becomes embroiled in dangerous political intrigues, he crosses paths with Delilah Bard, a cunning thief with a thirst for adventure. The series weaves a tale of power, danger, and the blurred line between hero and villain, set against a backdrop of richly crafted worlds and intricate magical systems, captivating readers with its vivid characters and immersive storytelling. *As Tascen* narrates the first book in the series - A Darker Shade of Magic - and does so utilising various motifs and chord progressions. The movement opens with hazy, unsettled chords delineating the four Londons accessible by an *Antari*. A solo bassoon takes up Kell's theme, a wandering, somewhat plaintive pentatonic tune. Very soon we're off, hurtling through worlds with the *Antari* theme in 12/8 time before a diplomatic mission in White London introduces the angular descending fourths and semitones of Holland and the Dane twins. *Vitari's* theme hangs seductively in the strings above a trombone chorale, promising power while another theme, not yet fully manifested, lurks below. All these themes and chord progressions meet across the work, as do their literary counterparts, in ways that drive them towards an epic showdown with each other in a stone courtyard in a distant, quiet world.



Selections from *Les Misérables*

Based on Victor Hugo's novel of the same name, the French musical *Les Misérables* premiered in Paris in 1980, with music by Claude-Michel Schönberg and lyrics by Alain Boublil and Jean-Marc Natel. The English-language version premiered in London in 1985, with lyrics by Herbert Kretzmer. Initially poorly received by critics, it became one of the longest-running musicals in history. The original Broadway production debuted in 1987 and won eight Tony Awards. This arrangement by Bob Lowden features five songs from the much-loved musical set in the tumult of 19th-century France, beginning with "At the End of the Day", gruffly depicting the misery of the Parisian poor. "I Dreamed a Dream", the solo of impoverished single mother Fantine, laments the loss of much happier times. The song has become popular in its own right, entering the music charts in several countries. "Master of the House" is the farcical song of the corrupt husband-and-wife innkeepers who have taken in Fantine's daughter, Cosette. The innkeepers' own daughter, Éponine, realises she is unlucky in love in the emotional "On My Own". Finally, the people of Paris rally against injustice in "Do You Hear The People Sing?", with the steady crescendo throughout the song reflecting the growing numbers of citizens joining the revolutionary cause.

Star Wars: Suite for Orchestra

George Lucas' 1977 space opera *Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope* spawned an extended franchise that has become an essential part of pop culture. The films are elevated by John Williams's dramatic and iconic score which accompanies the battle between the Rebellion and the Empire, an unambiguous struggle between good and evil for the future of the galaxy. Star Wars fans have been rewarded over the decades with a rich universe comprising eleven feature films (not counting the Star Wars Holiday Special), animated and live-action television series, novels, comics, and video games. This five-movement suite for orchestra is faithful to the original soundtrack and features themes belonging to the central characters and scenes.

I. Main Title – the famous sweeping melody that opens the film reflects our hero, Luke Skywalker and his aspirations. It is also strikingly complex, underpinned by martial staccato rhythms in the brass and percussion.

II. Princess Leia's Theme – the opening French horn solo (later repeated by solo flute and then the violin section) is strong but slightly unsettled, revealing the human vulnerability of the accomplished and resolute Senator Princess Leia Organa.

III. The Imperial March (Darth Vader's Theme) – this darkly powerful and sinister theme is surely one of the most recognisable in film. Anakin Skywalker's tragic path leads him to become synonymous with the authoritarian Galactic Empire.

IV. Yoda's Theme – the Jedi Master's theme is fittingly reflective, but just as it appears to be building to a crescendo, it meanders into a gently playful section. A lighthearted approach, however, must not be mistaken for lack of dedication to one's duty.

V. Throne Room & End Title – this triumphant celebration of victory features sonorous brass echoing the opening movement as well a re-statement of Princess Leia's Theme in the strings. The extravagant ending closes the first chapter of the original Star Wars trilogy.

2023 Committee

President: Justina Hanna

Artistic Director: Joshua McNulty

Secretary: Jessica Rainert

Treasurer: Aiden Quan

Orchestra Manager: Milia Cavallaro

Librarian: Morgan Ridley-Smith

General Members: Ben Callaghan, James Constable

Acknowledgements

The FilmHarmonia Orchestra would like to thank the Inner West Council for generously subsidising the hire of Balmain Town Hall. We also extend our gratitude to St Brigid's Parish in Marrickville for use of their hall and storage facilities during our rehearsals. Special thanks to Steve, Tim, and Harps Australia for instrument hire, and a big shout-out to the Three Sisters for afternoon tea. We gratefully acknowledge Andrea's time and work on the program notes. Thanks also to our advertising partners, Cut Common Magazine and 2MBS Fine Music Sydney. We want to express our deepest gratitude to our devoted musicians, who journey from far and wide to perform with us, and to our hardworking committee members, whose tireless efforts have made *QuintEssential* possible. Lastly, we want to thank YOU, our wonderful patrons, for your unwavering enthusiasm and passion. Here's to the next five years!

About the Orchestra

The FilmHarmonia Orchestra (TFO) is a Sydney-based ensemble of roughly 60 musicians who have come together since 2018 to play film, game, stage and television soundtracks, with two primary goals working together to further our mission: to provide a quality orchestral group in which musicians collaborate to create authentic and artistically expressive performances of both popular and lesser-known soundtracks, and to present entertaining, informative and engaging public concerts in order to raise the profile of incidental music as a valid and meaningful artform. We are very proud of the diverse demographics from which our musicians hail. FilmHarmonia members include professional musicians, music teachers and other people as varied as engineers, doctors and students.

We are a registered charity and rely heavily on ticket sales and the continued support of our audience to continue our mission and we thank you for allowing us to do so. If you would like to make a donation, go to filmharmonia.com/support-us or scan the QR code.





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