

LA MER

MACA SYMPHONIC SERIES

Friday 29 & Saturday 30 August 2025, 7.30pm
Winthrop Hall, The University of Western Australia



West Australian Symphony Orchestra respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Custodians and Elders of Country throughout Western Australia, and the Whadjuk Noongar people on whose lands we work and share music.

MACA SYMPHONIC SERIES

La Mer

Richard WAGNER *The Flying Dutchman:*
Overture (11 mins)

Paul STANHOPE *Mahāsāgar*
(World Premiere) (33 mins)

- I Nara Koort
- II Lifesaver
- III *Silentio ad mare*
- IV The Osprey
- V High tide for Healing

Interval (25 mins)

Maurice RAVEL *Une barque sur l'océan*
(8 mins)

Claude DEBUSSY *La Mer* (23 mins)

De l'aube à midi sur la mer (From Dawn to
Noon on the Sea)

Jeux de vagues (Play of Waves)

Dialogue du vent et de la mer (Dialogue of
the Wind and the Sea)

Asher Fisch conductor
Sara Macliver soprano
Andrew Goodwin tenor
WASO Chorus
Aquinas College Schola Cantorum

*Asher Fisch appears courtesy of Wesfarmers Arts.
Paul Stanhope's Mahāsāgar commissioned for
WASO by Catherine Dunn and members of the
WASO Chorus.*

Listen to WASO

This performance is recorded for
broadcast on Wednesday 22 October,
1pm (AWST) on ABC Classic. Date
subject to change. For further details
visit abc.net.au/classic.

Digital Concert Program & Wesfarmers Arts Pre-concert Talk

In 2025, pre-concert talks will be delivered digitally, allowing you to listen to the talk before and after the concert — as many times as you like!

Access exclusive content, learn about the music from our digital pre-concert talk with speaker Paul Stanhope, and get our concert program at your fingertips.

Simply open your smartphone's camera app and hover the camera over the QR code to access the *La Mer* digital program.



WASO On Stage

VIOLIN

Laurence Jackson

Concertmaster

Riley Skevington

Assoc Concertmaster

Semra Lee

Assistant Concertmaster

Alexandra Isted

Principal 1st Violin

Zak Rowntree*

Principal 2nd Violin

Kylie Liang

Assoc Principal 2nd Violin

Kate Sullivan

Assistant Principal 2nd Violin

Sarah Blackman

Stephanie Dean

Amy Furfaro

Rebecca Glorie

Beth Hebert

Emma Hunt

William Huxtable

Sunmi Jung

Christina Katsimbardis

Kathryn Lee

Sera Lee

Andrea Mendham

Akiko Miyazawa

Lucas O'Brien

Melanie Pearn

Louise Sandercock

Jane Serrangeli

Cerys Tooby

Samantha

Wickramasinghe

VIOLA

Daniel Schmitt

Alex Brogan

Kierstan Arkleysmith

Nik Babic

Benjamin Caddy

Alison Hall

James Munro

Elliot O'Brien

Helen Tuckey

CELLO

Eve Silver*

Melinda Forsythe^

Jeremy Garside

Shigeru Komatsu

Andrew Leask

Oliver McAslan

Nicholas Metcalfe

Fotis Skordas

DOUBLE BASS

Andrew Sinclair*

John Keene

Robin Brawley

Christine Reitzenstein

Mark Tooby

Giovanni Vinci

FLUTE

Andrew Nicholson

Mary-Anne Blades

PICCOLO

Sonia Croucher

OBOE

Liz Chee

Acting Principal Oboe

Stephanie Nicholls°

COR ANGLAIS

Jonathan Ryan

CLARINET

Allan Meyer

Som Howie

BASS CLARINET

Alexander Millier

BASSOON

Adam Mikulicz

Acting Principal Bassoon

Chloe Turner

Acting Assoc Principal

Bassoon

CONTRABASSOON

Kina Lin-Wilmoth°

HORN

David Evans

Eve McEwen

Robert Gladstones

Principal 3rd Horn

Julia Brooke

Francesco Lo Surdo

TRUMPET

Jenna Smith

Darcy O'Malley°

Sarah Brown^

Peter Miller

Sophie Spencer^

TROMBONE

Joshua Davis

Liam O'Malley

Jeremy Alderson°

TUBA

Chloe Higgins

TIMPANI

Alex Timcke

PERCUSSION

Brian Maloney

François Combémoré!

Assoc Principal

Percussion & Timpani

Carissa Soares^

HARP

Marshall McGuire^

Melina van Leeuwen^

KEYBOARD

Graeme Gilling^

KEY

Principal

Associate Principal

Assistant Principal

Contract Musician°

Guest Musician^

Correct at time of printing. * Instruments used by these musicians are on loan from Janet Holmes à Court AC. We greatly appreciate the support of our musicians' Duet partners, acknowledged on page 22.

About the Artists

Asher Fisch

Principal Conductor & Artistic Adviser

Asher Fisch is a renowned conductor celebrated for his interpretative mastery of the core German and Italian repertoire of the Romantic and post-Romantic eras. Equally accomplished in both the operatic and symphonic realms, his repertoire spans from Haydn to contemporary works by living composers. Since 2014, he has been the Principal Conductor & Artistic Adviser of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO), making him the Orchestra's longest-serving Principal Conductor. His previous positions include Principal Guest Conductor of the Seattle Opera (2007–2013), Music Director of the New Israeli Opera (1998–2008), and Music Director of the Wiener Volksoper (1995–2000).

Born in Israel, Fisch began his career as Daniel Barenboim's assistant and Kappellmeister at the Berlin Staatsoper. He has since conducted at major opera houses worldwide, including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Vienna Staatsoper, Teatro alla Scala, Royal Opera House Covent Garden, and Semperoper Dresden. His symphonic engagements have included leading prestigious orchestras such as the Berlin Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, and Orchestre National de France, as well as top American orchestras in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, New York, and Philadelphia.

In 2023, Asher Fisch was appointed Music Director of the Tiroler Festspiele in Erl, Austria, where he collaborates with the festival's General Manager, celebrated tenor Jonas Kaufmann. Their inaugural season premiered in December 2024.



The festival, held three times annually, features a diverse program of orchestral and operatic performances, chamber music, and Lied. Known for its dedication to the works of Richard Wagner, the Tiroler Festspiele will present *Parsifal* during Easter 2025, with Fisch conducting and Kaufmann in the title role. Each year will see the addition of a new Wagner opera production.

In 2025, Fisch's engagements include *La Bohème*, Wagner's *Parsifal*, and three Verdi operas at the Tiroler Festspiele, Verdi's *Il Trovatore* with the West Australian Opera, Britten's *War Requiem* in Düsseldorf, among other performances. Recent highlights include Reimann's *Lear* at Teatro Real de Madrid, *Carmen* at the Vienna Staatsoper, and *Dialogues des Carmélites* at the Israeli Opera.

Fisch's award-winning discography includes Bruckner's Symphony No. 8, Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, and tenor Stuart Skelton's debut solo album *Shining Knight*, all recorded with WASO. His critically acclaimed releases also feature Ravel's *L'Heure Espagnole* with the Munich Radio Orchestra and the complete Brahms symphonies with WASO, released on ABC Classic. His two recordings of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* (with the Seattle Opera and the State Opera of South Australia) garnered widespread acclaim, with the latter winning ten Helpmann Awards, including Best Opera and Best Music Direction.

In addition to his conducting achievements, Fisch is an accomplished pianist. His solo recording of Wagner piano transcriptions for the Melba label showcases his versatility and artistry.

Asher Fisch appears courtesy of Wesfarmers Arts.

About the Artists



Sara Macliver

Soprano

Sara Macliver is one of Australia's most popular and versatile artists, and is regarded as one of the leading exponents of Baroque repertoire. Sara is a regular performer with all the Australian Symphony Orchestras as well as the Perth, Melbourne and Sydney Festivals, Pinchgut Opera, the Australian Chamber Orchestra and Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Musica Viva Australia, and a number of international companies. Sara records for ABC Classics, with more than 35 CDs and many awards to her credit.

In recent years, Sara has sung with the West Australian, Sydney, Melbourne, Queensland, Adelaide and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, Pinchgut Opera, West Australian Opera, Australian String Quartet, St George's Cathedral, Auckland Philharmonic Orchestra, Bangalow Festival, Collegium Musicum, Sydney Philharmonia, Freeze Frame Opera, Ten Days on the Island, Peninsula Summer Festival, Brisbane Camerata, ANAM, Melbourne Philharmonic and Genesis Baroque amongst other projects.

In 2025, she performs with the West Australian, Sydney and Canberra Symphony Orchestras, the Australian String Quartet, ANAM, Brisbane Chamber Choir, Genesis Baroque and Sydney Chamber Choir.

Sara has been awarded an honorary doctorate from The University of Western Australia (UWA) in recognition of her services to singing. She is on staff at the Conservatorium of Music at UWA and sits on the Boards of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra and Freeze Frame Opera.



Andrew Goodwin

Tenor

Andrew Goodwin has appeared with opera companies in Europe, the UK, Asia and Australia, including the Bolshoi Opera, Gran Theatre Liceu Barcelona, Teatro Real Madrid, La Scala Milan, Opera Australia, Pinchgut Opera and Sydney Chamber Opera. He has performed with the St Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Moscow and Melbourne Chamber Orchestras, all the Australian Symphony Orchestras, and has given recitals at Wigmore Hall, Oxford Lieder, and major Australian music festivals.

This year, Andrew returns to West Australian Symphony Orchestra (for Stanhope's *Mahāsāgar*), Four Winds Festival, Adelaide Festival, Victoria Chorale (*Creation*), Adelaide Symphony (Mozart's Requiem), Sydney Chamber Choir (Bach Mass in B minor), and Brisbane Chamber Choir and Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (*Messiah*).

Recent engagements include Renaud in Stravinsky's *The Nightingale* and other fables (Adelaide Festival); the Narr in Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* (Sydney Symphony); Mozart's Requiem (Sydney Philharmonia, MSO, TSO, QSO); Evangelist, *St. Matthew Passion* (Melbourne Bach Choir); Haydn's *Creation* (Australian Haydn Ensemble); *Messiah* (Canberra, Melbourne, Queensland, New Zealand Symphony Orchestras); Mills' *Nativity* (ASO), and *Carmina burana* (MSO, also in Singapore).

Andrew studied voice at the St. Petersburg Conservatory and in the UK and is the winner of many scholarships including the Tait Memorial Trust Scholarship, the Martin Bequest Travelling Scholarship, the Sir Robert Askin Operatic Travelling Scholarship, and the Australian Opera Auditions Committee Joan Sutherland Richard Bonyngne Scholarship.

About the Artists

WASO Chorus

The WASO Chorus was formed in 1988 and consists of over 100 volunteer choristers who represent the finest form of community music making, bringing together singers from all walks of life. They regularly feature in the WASO annual concert season and are directed by Hugh Lydon.

The Chorus has built an international reputation for its high standards and diverse range of repertoire. While its main role is to perform with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, the Chorus also maintains a profile of solo concerts, tours and community engagements.

The Chorus sings with the finest conductors and soloists including Asher Fisch, Simone Young, Stephen Layton and Paul Daniel. Recent highlights have included Mahler's Symphony No.8 and Britten's *War Requiem*. In 2019, the Chorus performed at the Denmark Festival of Voice and in 2018 toured China with performances of Orff's *Carmina burana*.



In 2020, they performed two Gala events on the Kalbarri Skywalk. In 2023, the Chorus was invited to Hobart to perform Brahms' *German Requiem* with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra (TSO), the TSO Chorus, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs and members of the public, conducted by Simon Halsey. Last year, the WASO Chorus performed with members of the WA Opera Chorus, the UWA Symphonic Chorus, Voyces and Aquinas College's Schola Cantorum in WASO's presentation of Mahler's Symphony No.8.

Hugh Lydon
Chorus Director

Gladys Chua
Répétiteur

WASO Chorus On Stage

SOPRANO

Anna Börner
Chika Brinkman
Elizabeth Bruk
Alinta Carroll
Penelope Colgan
Clara Connor
Kathie Drake
Diane Hawkins
Michelle John
Joanna Killgore
Gillian King
Katherine Langdon
Mia Lewsen
Natasha Meyers
Sue Nightingale
Hingston
Miriam O'Callaghan
Cassidy Shelton

Lucy Sheppard
Sarah Shneier
Therese Sundblad
Rebecca Thorne
Alicia Walter
Margo Warburton
Charmaine de Witt

ALTO

Marian Agombar
Lucie Alexander
Llewela Benn
Helen Brown
Patsy Brown
Sheila Byfield
Cindy Choi
Sue Coleson
Vicki Derwort
Cath Dunn

Kaye Fairbairn
Jenny Fay
Susanna Fleck
Dianne Graves
Louise Hayes
Kate Lewis
Lynne Naylor
Deborah Pearson
Deborah Piesse
Fiona Robson
Pallas Sarney
Louise Sutton
Olga Ward
Moir Westmore
Jacquie Wright

TENOR

Nick Fielding
Nicholas Matthews

John Murphy
Sim Taylor
Arthur Tideswell
Stephen Turley
Malcolm Vernon

BASS

Charlie Bond
Stephen Hastings
Brendon Jones
Benjamin Lee
Geoff Massey
Peter Ormond
Jim Rhoads
Mark Richardson
Steve Sherwood
Chris Smith
Michael Whitby
Andrew Wong

About the Artists

Aquinas College Schola Cantorum

The Aquinas College Schola Cantorum is a choir of 51 choristers, currently consisting of boys between Years 4-12. Known throughout the College as the Schola, it is a choral program unique to Aquinas College.

Formed in 2019, the Schola contributes significantly to the liturgical component of Aquinas College's identity by singing at three weekly Chapel Services, as well as at significant College events. In addition to these, the Schola also performs at the Saturday Vigil Mass at St Patrick's Basilica, Fremantle every week during term time.

On average, each chorister spends nine hours a week making music in addition to their school commitments.

The Schola is regularly invited to perform in external events with other



organisations. Past performances with WASO include Britten's *War Requiem*, Mahler's Third Symphony, Lachlan Skipworth's *The Tides of Longing* (which was nominated for an APRA AMCOS Arts Award), and Mahler's Eighth Symphony. Numerous choristers have also had the opportunity to perform as part of the WA Opera Children's Chorus, for productions including *Tosca* and *Carmen*.

Hugh Lydon
Chorus Director

Aquinas College Schola Cantorum On Stage

Xavier Balm
Luca Bhatti
Maxime Blackadder
James Cacho
William Chan
Ethan Clark
Declan D'Costa
Jordan D'Costa
Morgan Davies

Denham Delfs
Alexander Delic
Elijah Fitzgerald
Hugh Franklyn
Jeremy Grant-Mackay
Aidan Griffiths
Lewis Hales
James Hawke
Liam Highman

Jacob Huynh
Nathan Huynh
Lewis Jayatilaka-Smith
Finn Jefferson
Sebastian Jennings
Lucas Johnson
Oliver Johnson
Ewan Kent
Evan Kent

Louis Lynch
Jackson Royce
Enrico De Santis
Marc Sutisna
Miles Tierney
Alfred Townsend
Nathan Veitch
William Zhu

About the Music

Richard Wagner

(1813-1883)

The Flying Dutchman: Overture

The Flying Dutchman tells the story of a sea captain who, living under a curse, is doomed to sail the seas for all eternity or until he is released from his torment through the love and redemptive sacrifice of a pure woman. He anchors his phantom ship in a sheltered cove in Norway and finds in a young woman, Senta, the redeemer he longs for. Senta, too, yearns to liberate the Dutchman and in the closing moments of the opera casts herself into the sea to be united with her beloved in death.

The robust theme announced by the horns at the beginning of the overture is strongly associated with the Dutchman. The turbulent rising and falling waves thrashed out by the strings and the pervasive and unstable diminished seventh harmonies suggest a terrifying ocean voyage. The ocean is tamed, however, with the appearance of one of Senta's melodies, enunciated by the cor anglais and supported by other woodwinds. We have moved from the key of D minor to F major and have sailed into harmonically stable waters. But, the period of calm is short-lived, for we soon return to D minor and the turbulent themes associated with the accursed protagonist. Thematic contrast appears in the form of the buoyant Norwegian sailors' song (again in F major and enunciated by the winds) but this, too, is thwarted by the Dutchman and the tempestuous sea. Finally, Senta's 'redemption' theme rings out triumphantly in D major, signifying that peace has come at last to the tragic, long-suffering Dutchman.



FIRST PERFORMANCE OF THE OPERA:

2 January 1843, Dresden.

Composer conducting.

MOST RECENT WASO PERFORMANCE:

27-28 August 2021. Asher Fisch, conductor.

INSTRUMENTATION:

three flutes (one doubling piccolo), two each of oboes (one doubling cor anglais), clarinets and bassoons; four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba; timpani, harp and strings.

Abridged from Robert Gibson © 1999

About the Music

Paul Stanhope

(b.1969)

Mahāsāgar

- I Nara Koort
- II Lifesaver
- III *Silentio ad mare*
- IV The Osprey
- V High tide for Healing

For soprano and tenor soloists, SATB chorus, children's chorus and orchestra.

Commissioned for the West Australian Symphony Orchestra by Catherine Dunn and members of the WASO Chorus.

Composer's Note

Mahāsāgar is the Hindi word for the Indian Ocean. This piece in five movements for chorus, soloists and orchestra was envisioned to be in the tradition of compositions about the sea but with the unique perspective of looking west across *Mahāsāgar*. The piece considers themes of the ocean's beauty and power, its dangers and sense of identity drawn from the West coast. The creation of new texts by West Australian poets Cass Lynch and Steve Hawke was an important element in its construction, adding to some existing works of literature in order to create a unique journey that takes in both local scenery and universal concerns.

I Naara koort

The piece begins as though the sea is breathing, with the sounds of waves imitated by the chorus inhaling and exhaling, added to by layers of percussion and static chordal sonorities from muted brass, high strings and a rippling bass clarinet. The chorus enters with a 'shallow wave' motif that appears in various guises throughout the whole score. Carefully crafted phrases in language by Kureng Wudjari Noongar poet Cass Lynch, evoke sounds that have been heard for hundreds of generations. I've tried to evoke the unique sense of place created by Cass with a sweeping, but relatively brief, wave-like surge which pushes musical elements forward like the tide. As the music heads ever higher in the orchestra, the crest of this musical wave tips back to gentler iterations before moving quickly into the second movement.



II Lifesaver

Elizabeth Riddell's poem *Lifesaver* first appeared in The Bulletin newspaper in March 1931. It might be seen as part of an artistic trend where aspects of Australian identity are forged around coastal imagery, similar to the stylised beach paintings by Charles Meere from the same decade. In Riddell's poem, a tanned-skin man is brought up, drowned from the sea, after an attempted rescue by a Lifesaver. The music dramatises the scene with fast, surging patterns and loud surf rumbling with heart-beat like pulses in the timpani. Added to this are swirling patterns in the strings and urgent repeated stabs in the brass. A declamatory style is used in the choir to highlight the dramatic scene, followed by the introduction of the soprano solo detailing the image of sun and water trembling down the youth's body. The middle stanza is such by the tenor solo in more sombre and reflective tones, before the soprano and chorus join in describing dreamlike imagery of underwater worlds. The third section of the piece recommences in the declamatory style heard earlier, moving gradually towards more sinister sounds. The heart-beats from the timpani transform a funeral march with the sounds of bells tolling.

III *Silentio ad mare*

This remarkable poem was written by two then 11-year-old school students, Alexander Maloof and Rhys Halkidis and which won them the 2012 Dorothy Mackellar Award for poetry. One of the judges noted: "These two young Australians demonstrate that they clearly understand the challenge of the refugee who leaves everything behind and seeks safety somewhere else in an unknown place." This poem created an opportunity

for me to write a boat song for the 21st century. The atmosphere in the poem is tense and claustrophobic and is sung by the tenor soloist, alternating with the choir. In between verses, a children's choir sings a verse from one of Michael Leunig's prayers "God bless this tiny little boat", capturing the innocence of the young trapped on a dangerous voyage beyond their control. When I sent the idea to Michael Leunig asking his permission to use his prayer, he immediately said yes, sensing the importance of the combination of ideas. I'm only sorry that Michael died before being able to hear it.

As the tension in the piece mounts with layers of soloist, children's choir and SATB chorus overlapping, it builds to a broken off sentence: "When the flashing lights appear at sea...". At this point all anxieties of what these flashing lights could mean are manifested in an orchestral interlude which mimics machine-like sounds of large coastal military vessels, complete with blaring horns, bells and chugging motor rhythms. Repeated figures accelerate gradually into double tempo and double again like gears moving ever upwards. After this anxious interlude plays out, the danger seems to have passed and the sentence is completed with a still picture of all on the boat keeping quiet while the boat creaks. A sense of relief is palpable in the setting of the title text *Silenzio ad mare* (silence at sea) in a sort of chorale with a child's solo at the very end.

IV The Osprey

A more uplifting movement, *The Osprey* is the third collaboration by myself and Perth-based writer, Steve Hawke. I've always loved Steve's imagery of birdlife and I requested him to create something especially for this piece – in this case a poem about a sea hawk (quite appropriate!) or osprey. Having sojourned to the Kimberley with Steve previously, the birdlife up in the northern reaches of Western Australia makes quite an impact.

In this movement, the solo soprano sings the part of Ann, a passionate twitcher, fascinated by the darting expertise of the seabird who glides skillfully over waves,

catching its prey. The chorus sings the perspective of the Osprey, who never seems to tire of the thrilling sensation of flying, while getting about the daily duties of hunting and feeding his young. The Osprey also observes Ann below and the two creatures carry out a sort of magical dialog. Throughout the movement, the orchestra imitates various aspects of bird life, from the Osprey call in the solo violin, through to strange bird-like choruses in the woodwinds and xylophone: the glorious cacophony of the Kimberly on wild display. After Ann and the Osprey observe together the slow sinking of the sun, the music moves into a final episode where the Osprey looks forward to another day enjoying the 'boundless freedom of the skies'. This is accompanied by exuberant choral and orchestral writing in fanfare-like passages. After a huge climactic build up, the chorus is released to sing 'freedom' quietly to itself. This leads directly into the final movement.

V High Tide for Healing

The music of the very opening returns including similar repetitions of the Noongar phrases in of the first movement, this time with English-word elaborations, bringing new perspectives to the material.

Whereas the musical wave surges forward in the first movement, here it recedes to calmer territory to match the concepts of healing and reflection. Quiet chorale-like passages for the choir and soloists are heard before the return of the 'sea breathing' heard in the very opening of the piece, bringing the large wave-like arch structure to a close.

© Paul Stanhope, June 2025.

WORLD PREMIERE PERFORMANCE:

29 August 2025. Asher Fisch, conductor.

INSTRUMENTATION:

two each of flutes (2nd doubling piccolo), oboes (2nd doubling cor anglais), clarinets (2nd doubling bass clarinet) and bassoons (2nd doubling contrabassoon); four horns, three trumpets (1st doubling piccolo trumpet), three trombones and tube; timpani, two percussion, harp, celesta and strings.

Text & Translation

I Nara Koort

wardan walburn
nara koort
wardan walburn
naakal dandjal
koondart koorliny
koolamwin
maamba koort
derbal nara

ocean heals
seashore heart
ocean heals
gentle shallows
clouds moving
sea breeze
seashore (literally 'father's heart')
Noongar name for Cockburn Sound

Seashore heart by Cass Lynch, written in response to *Indian Ocean Healing* by John Kinsella.

II Lifesaver

He was brought up out of the sea,
His tall body dead.
He was carried shoulder-high
Between the sea and sky.
The sun and the water trembled down
From his fingers and from the brown
Valley between his shoulders, and the spray
Fell before him as he passed on his way.
His eyes were dead, and his lips
Closed on death, and his feet
Chained with death, and his hands
Cold with death. He is one with ships
and the bones of pirate bands
Steeped in salt and knavery.
One with fish and fern and pearl
And the long lonely beat
Of the waves that ever curl
On the shell and weed and sand
Of the deep drowned land.
He was carried shoulder-high
Up the alleys of the sun,
And the heat
Washed him over from his head to his feet.
But you cannot give the body back breath
With a flagon full of sun.
He is drowned the tall one.
Thin brother Death
Has him by the throat
On the sand, in the sun.

Elizabeth Riddell

Text & Translation

III *Silentio ad mare*

Heads under hands and not a single breath audible,
The boat at a creak with every wave.

Forced to flee and left with nothing,
The conflict has taken it all.
Haunting memories with no one to trust,
Families, treasures and memories are gone.

People packed tightly no space to breathe
Any movement will result in peril.
Stomachs are starved no time to eat,
Water as far as the eye can see,
Any second might be your last.

With these thoughts in mind your home is far,
And sickness draws near as hopes run free.
Your safety is like a thread,
Once cut can't be restored.

When the flashing lights appear at sea,
The blankets are drawn and all is still.
For getting caught is not intended.
Heads under hands and not a single breath audible,
The boat at a creak with every wave.

Silentio ad mare (Silence at Sea)
Alexander Maloof and Rhys Halkidis

God Bless this tiny little boat
And all who dwell within it.
It stays afloat for years and years,
And sinks within a minute.

Michael Leunig

IV The Osprey

Anne (Soprano soloist):

Reaching away to far Madagascar
The turquoise sea unfurls before me.

At my back a pair of sun warmed grouse;
Strange engraven birds of antiquity.

Unknown hands, whose dreams I cannot know,
Have carved their shapes onto this rock on which I lean.

Ah! An osprey! The fish hawk glides elliptically.
Lord of his sky domain. Soaring majestically.

Osprey (Chorus):

Like an arrow I fly.

Like a mayfly I hover.

Riding thermals with a wing-tip feather.

I scan the waves, alert for glint of sun on scale;
With the patience of my forebears I will prevail.

That land bound creature lifts her eyes,
She lifts her eyes to me and smiles.
She shall never know the freedom of the skies.

Anne:

The Burrup soothes my soul; this
Sacred ancient swirl of graven stones.

Their defiant silence a testament
Amidst the chaos of this fractious globe.

Fierce hawk! My heart catches to see your dive.
You strike, you rise above the salty foam

A frantic, sparkling salmon in your pair
Of talons, gasping in the unaccustomed air.

Osprey:

Like an arrow I fly,
Back to my craggy nest.
A salt blown eyrie on a clifftop's crest.

Anne: (echoes)

Flies like an arrow
Back to the nest

A hot inland wind has my wings beating fierce,
As I carry this fish to my three little hungry chicks.
That land bound creature below with yearning eyes,
She shall never know the freedom of the skies.

Anne:

Magnificent bird spearing through the sky.
Would that I could see your inbound landing.

At your unseen nest beyond that ridge, and
Hear the raucous calling of your nestlings.

But I am landbound, I can only turn to
Watch the lowering sun, Madagascar bound.

Painting my horizon gold and crimson
As its westward march goes ever on.

Osprey:

As an arrow descends,
Wide wings ease me down
Slowly downward.

Anne: (echoes)

I watch the low'ring sun...

Like an arrow I flew
To my soft-beaked, squawking, squabbling brood.
Now they're devouring their briny food.

I settle on my perch, parental duty done,
To contemplate through hooded eyes a sinking sun.

On the morrow I shall return to soar and glide
Once more, the boundless freedom of the skies.

Steve Hawke

Text & Translation

V High Tide for Healing

Chorus:

wardan walburn

nara koort

wardan walburn

nara koort

nara koort

wardan walburn

wardan walburn

nara koort

wardan walburn

nara koort

koondart koolamwin

maamba koort

it is high tide for healing
my fingers move at ocean's edge
and lay my heart in lapping shallow
in dark blue depths the sunlight spears
seashore heart in a gentle swell
maamba koort

Seashore heart by Cass Lynch

Soloists:

it is high tide for healing

my fingers move at ocean's edge

seagrass mounds are nested time

my heart seeks out a deeper beat

in dark blue depths the sunlight spears

seashore heart on a gentle swell
maamba koort

About the Music

Maurice Ravel

(1875-1937)

Une Barque sur l'océan

Ravel was not only a great pioneer of piano writing, but a great orchestrator who could adapt a piano piece and make it sound as if it had originally been conceived for orchestra. His orchestration of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* is a spectacular example.

A Boat on the Ocean began life as the most impressionistic of Ravel's piano set *Miroirs*, composed 1904-1906. Ravel began orchestrating it in October 1906, some nine months after the first performance of the complete *Miroirs* by his friend, the Spanish pianist, Ricardo Viñes.

Critic Denis Herlin describes *Une Barque* as 'a magical evocation of the sea, soaked in **arpeggios**, and climaxing in high **trills**.' The structure of all sections of *Miroirs* is extremely subtle. At this time, Debussy was aiming to compose music with a form so free as to seem like an improvisation. Ravel 'admitted that the work he had on hand was concerned with a similar problem'.

The complete *Miroirs* is a panorama of Ravel's typical musical landscape. '*Mirrors*' conveys perfectly the sense of subjects glimpsed objectively through reflection. *Une Barque* fits into that tradition of French music to which Ravel was heir: it paints rather than expresses emotion.

In the orchestral version, muted and **glissando** strings substitute for the piano's arpeggios. Oboe, cor anglais and trumpet



solos delineate the briefest of melodic **motifs**, like fragments of line glimpsed through a wash. Critic Pierre Laloy said that *Une Barque* was 'a collection of examples... of how to alter the **timbre** of an instrument... In Ravel's orchestration... there are no trumpets but muted ones.'

Ravel was not happy with his initial attempt at orchestration. He withdrew the piece after its first performance, but came back to it and introduced the reworking on 30 October 1926.

Gordon Kalton Williams
Symphony Australia © 2008

FIRST PERFORMANCE:

3 February 1907, Paris. Gabriel Pierné conducting.

FIRST WASO PERFORMANCE:

3-4 August 2001. George Pehlivanian, conductor.

MOST RECENT WASO PERFORMANCE:

11-12 July 2008. Oleg Caetani, conductor.

INSTRUMENTATION:

three flutes (two doubling piccolo), two oboes, cor anglais, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet and two bassoons; four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani, three percussion, two harps, celesta and strings.

Glossary

Arpeggio – a musical gesture in which the notes of a chord are 'spread', or played one after the other instead of simultaneously. It nearly always starts at the bottom of the chord.

Glissando – playing scales very quickly, for example by running a thumb along a piano keyboard.

Motif – a short, distinctive melodic or rhythmic figure, often part of or derived from a theme.

Timbre – the distinctive sound quality or 'colour' produced by an instrument or a voice, or by particular combinations of instruments and voices.

Trill – a very rapid alternation of two notes.

About the Music

Claude Debussy

(1862-1918)

La Mer – Three Symphonic Sketches

De l'aube à midi sur la mer (From Dawn to Noon on the Sea)

Jeux de vagues (Play of Waves)

Dialogue du vent et de la mer (Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea)



‘Never before had that marvellous music *La Mer* appeared so seductive and yet mysterious at the same time, so imbued with the enigmatic life of the Cosmos, than on that evening when her great creator, with a gentle hand, was ruling over her waves.’

So wrote a young Russian composer, Lazare Saminsky, on hearing Debussy conduct *La Mer* in St Petersburg in 1913. But, the work’s greatness had by no means seemed self-evident when it had first appeared in 1905. Debussy himself was weathering a personal scandal, having left his second wife, and part of the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Parisian public may have stemmed from its disapproval. The first performance, too, was by all accounts under-rehearsed and the conductor, Camille Chevillard, unsympathetic to Debussy’s style. The composer and conductor Lalo complained that he could neither hear, see nor feel the sea, and a reviewer in Boston wrote that ‘we clung like a drowning man to a few fragments of the tonal wreck, a bit of theme here, a comprehensible figure there, but finally this **muted**-horn sea overwhelmed us.’

The point missed by the authors of such remarks, however, is that Debussy’s music (both generally speaking and with regard to this work) is not intended as visual imagery,

or the soundtrack to some imaginary film. The composer may have invited such misinterpretations: in subtitled the work ‘Three **Symphonic** Sketches’ he of course evokes the media of visual art; moreover, he often used terms like ‘colour’ and ‘shading’ when discussing his music. But, in 1903, when he began work on *La Mer*, Debussy wrote to a friend from the Burgundian countryside:

‘You may not know that I was destined for a sailor’s life, and that only chance led me in another direction...You will say that the ocean does not exactly bathe the hills of Burgundy, and my seascapes may be studio landscapes, but I have an endless store of memories, and in my mind they are worth more than reality, whose beauty often weighs heavily on the imagination.’

The work, then, is about the *idea* of the sea rather than being a representation of it; significantly, much of the composition of the work took place away from the coast.

Debussy’s genius for **orchestration** and subtle rhythmic organisation certainly make for an evocative work where it is possible to imagine the crash of waves, the call of seagulls and the protean movement of light on water. The final climactic moments of the first movement, for instance, somehow create a sense of emerging from the deep into the light.

Other masterly touches abound: the unusual timbre of cellos divided into four parts; the use of muted horns (which Debussy admitted to taking from the music of Weber) to evoke space; the soloistic use of wind instruments and harp.

But *La Mer* is as much 'symphonic' as it is 'sketch'. Its three movements are by no means simply rhapsodic, but rather show Debussy's subtle and careful approach to form. In the first movement, his careful development of short motifs is perfectly symphonic; the second movement, 'Play of Waves', is, among other things, a symphonic **scherzo**; and the third movement – which has one of the rare 'big finishes' of any work by this composer – is a symphonic finale.

The pianist and Debussy expert, Roy Howat, has also shown how Debussy's structure corresponds to the ancient Greek idea of the Golden Section where a line is divided so that the ratio of the shorter portion to the longer portion forms the same ratio as the longer portion does to the whole length. By applying this formula to time, a composer can plot where significant events (changes of speed, colour moods or **metre**) will have the greatest dramatic effect. Howat has argued persuasively that the moment in the

last movement of *La Mer* where the violins play a soft, impossibly high **harmonic** represents the Golden Section of the piece.

By a nice paradox, Debussy's marvellous musical reflection on the constant flux of the sea is achieved by the most painstaking and careful calculation. Not for nothing did the published score carry the intricately designed woodcut *The Hollow Wave* by the Japanese artist Hokusai.

Abridged from a note by Gordon Kerry © 2005

FIRST PERFORMANCE:

15 October 1905, Paris.

Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Camille Chevillard.

FIRST WASO PERFORMANCE:

22-23 July 1966; Thomas Mayer, conductor.

MOST RECENT WASO PERFORMANCE:

5-6 October 2018; Ludovic Morlot, conductor.

INSTRUMENTATION:

two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets, three bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, two harps, strings.

Glossary

Harmonics – high, flute-like sounds produced by lightly touching, instead of pressing down firmly, the string with the fingers of the left hand.

Metre – the prevailing pulse of a piece of music, i.e. the number of beats in each bar. This is indicated by the time-signature at the beginning of the score or sheet music.

Mute – device applied to an instrument which has the effect of dampening the sound. In brass instruments the mute (or the player's hand) is inserted into the bell or held over it; in string instruments, it takes the form of a clamp attached to the bridge.

Orchestration – the allocation of various notes and melodies to the different instruments and combinations of instruments in the orchestra.

Scherzo – a movement in a fast triple time which may involve playful elements and which, as the second or third movement in a symphony, replaced the minuet and trio.

Symphonic – like a symphony, i.e. for full orchestra, on a large scale, in several movements.

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Perth Concert Hall Redevelopment Update



We're pleased to share that the first phase of redevelopment works at Perth Concert Hall is now complete, marking a major milestone in the redevelopment of our much-loved home of music.

Demolition of the southern forecourt has made way for the next phase of the Government-led project, with on-site investigations and structural works progressing steadily. Sustainability is a key focus, with materials from the site being repurposed through WA's Roads to Reuse initiative.

We want to thank many of our Subscribers and Giving Circle members who contributed valuable feedback to inform the new seat selection process,

which is now underway, and look forward to updating you as the next phase of major works begins over the coming months.

As we move toward completion in late 2027 and reopening in early 2028, we're excited to see the new home for WASO taking shape.

For more info, visit waso.com.au and search 'New home for WASO'.

This project is led by Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport and funded by \$134.3M from the Western Australian Government, \$12M from the Australian Government, and \$4M from the City of Perth.

WASO in the Community



Side-by-Side Symphony

Side-by-Side Symphony is a collaboration between the West Australian Symphony Orchestra and talented, passionate community musicians from across Australia. These community musicians are active and enthusiastic members of their communities – teaching, composing, arranging, and playing music, as well as performing in and leading community orchestras and bands. WASO's *Side-by-Side Symphony* is an opportunity to perform alongside WASO and be led by WASO's Associate Conductor, Jen Winley.

In June, 43 community musicians, alongside 34 WASO players, performed Boulanger's *D'un matin de printemps*, Khachaturian's *Spartacus* Suite No.2: Adagio, Silvestri's *Back to the Future* – Suite for Orchestra, and Smetana's *Má Vlast: Vlatava* (The Moldau).

Community musicians were chosen by the WASO Principals and sent the repertoire to rehearse independently before meeting in June. Following a similar structure to a regular WASO rehearsal schedule, all musicians rehearsed together on Friday and Saturday – yes, just twice! – before performing at Winthrop Hall on the Saturday evening.

One community participant described *Side-by-Side Symphony* as a “unique outreach activity” saying “I've never had more respect, admiration and appreciation for WASO players than after having played amongst them”. Winley described the event as being about “connection, community and collaboration; reigniting the joy of creating music together to share with loved ones and pushing ourselves to exceed our own expectations in a supportive environment.”

Side-by-Side Symphony is an annual event; registrations for 2026 will open later this year via waso.com.au.

Supporting WASO

United Through Music

Music has the power to bring people together. Tonight, that power is amplified by a remarkable act of giving.

Tonight's concert features a special work commissioned through the collective support of members of the WASO Chorus, who believe deeply in the power of music to move, inspire, and unite. Their generosity made *Mahāsāgar* possible, adding a unique and lasting voice to the musical landscape.

Every person in the audience shares in the impact of this gift. Whether you are a long-time lover of choral music or experiencing something new tonight, the work you hear is a direct result of a shared commitment to artistic creation and collaboration.

To the Chorus members who donated to the commission, and all who give so generously, thank you. Your belief in the value of music makes moments like this possible.

By supporting WASO, you too can help bring more original works and unforgettable performances to audiences across the State. Together, we're building musical experiences that reach beyond the stage and into the hearts of communities across WA.

To learn more about supporting WASO and helping us to continue bringing music to every corner of WA, please contact our Philanthropy Team on (08) 9326 0014 or visit our website via the QR code.



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Anne & William MacLeod
Deborah Marsh
Lesley & Murray McKay
Suzanne Nash
Paul Nendick
Paula Phillips
Wayne Robinson
Jan & Bryan Rodgers
Nigel & Dr Heather Rogers
Rosalin Sadler in memory
of Joyce Durbin Sadler
Peta Saunders
Jacinta Sirr-Williams

Ross & Laurel Smith
Susan Stitt
Ruth Stratton
Ruth E. & Neville Thorn
Gavin Toovey
George Van Beek
Agatha van der Schaaf
Sheila Wileman
Sagitte Yom-Tov Fund
Unnamed (53)

Every effort is made to ensure our Giving List is accurate; however, should you notice an error please contact our Philanthropy team on (08) 9326 0016.

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Julia Brooke – WASO Horn