



**DARWIN
FESTIVAL**

**DARWIN
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA**



SHAKESPEARE & SYMPHONY

Poetry in every phrase:
Love, loss and lyrical beauty

Sat 22 Aug, 7.30pm | AANT Centre



WELCOME



William Shakespeare (1564–1616) is a poet of universal renown whose works have been translated into almost every written language.

His vast vocabulary of some 15,000 words (the nearest rival is John Milton at 8,000 words) formed the English language and gave us so many expressions which are still used today — some of which you will hear tonight: band of brothers, “a kingdom for a stage”, “all the world’s a stage”, “sounds of music” — remember the television series *Band of Brothers* and the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical.

Shakespeare also inspired composers throughout history to write symphonies, operas and incidental music inspired by his plays. Composers from the seventeenth century onwards have been fascinated by his dramas — the French, Russian and German composers of the nineteenth century made many memorable works after Shakespeare — and the twentieth, and indeed twenty-first centuries, have also seen a succession of masterpieces of Shakespearean inspiration, from Prokofiev and Britten to Aribert Reimann and Thomas Adès, as well as American composers like Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein and John Adams, most recently with his *Antony and Cleopatra* at San Francisco Opera.

Shakespeare’s language makes music when it is spoken; his text is a natural departure point for musical invention.

There is a deep sense of ritual and formality in Shakespearean drama — a point of striking congruence with the First Nations’ sense of declamation and ritual as part of ceremony, hence our landmark collaboration with Darwin’s own Brown’s Mart theatre company, with star actors Ursula Yovich and Rob Collins, who will bring these 400-year-old words freshly to life for us this evening in the context of the sublime music they inspired centuries later and our unique environment here in the Territory, with its own ancient cultural heritages.

A special thank you to Yvette Walker, Liz Rogers and their team at Brown’s Mart, and to director Gail Evans, who has crafted the dramaturgy for a special night of theatre — and to Darwin Festival Artistic Director Kate Fell, who most generously supported this initiative.

Welcome and enjoy.

Richard

DR RICHARD MILLS AO, FAHA
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CHIEF CONDUCTOR



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Darwin Symphony Orchestra acknowledges the Larrakia people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this performance is held and as the keepers of the first songs and stories of this Country. We pay our respects to their Elders – past, present, and emerging – and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

PROGRAM NOTES

FIRST HALF

Our concert begins with the words of the Chorus at the beginning of *Henry V*. In this prologue, the audience is invited to awaken their imagination and visualise the epic dimensions of the storytelling. The subject is war and the destiny of two great powers led by a charismatic leader, King Harry.

The incandescent evocation of a vast narrative canvas, encompassing both the public action and the private worlds of the characters, finds immediate resonance in the splendid music that William Walton wrote for the 1944 film version of the play, in which Laurence Olivier both directed and starred. The film was dedicated to the heroes, the "Commandos and Airborne Troops of Great Britain, the spirit of whose ancestors it has been humbly attempted to recapture."

The stage of Shakespeare's theatre, the Globe, "this wooden O", becomes the whole world, and Walton's score evokes the vast human pageant of battle and victory that unfolds before us.

The fantastical world of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* finds a perfect counterpart in Mendelssohn's incidental music, a miracle of storytelling and atmosphere. The mercurial mischief of Puck, Oberon and the fairy world interacts with the romantic entanglements of the human characters, creating havoc that is ultimately resolved beautifully and happily in the famous *Wedding March*, which concludes the first half of our concert.

SECOND HALF

The music of Berlioz serves as a prelude to the nocturnal magic of the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*. The calmness and enchantment of night, the refuge of lovers from the harsh reality of day, set the scene for this dialogue.

We then hear a musical analogue to the great drama of love and misfortune in Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture*, in which the terrible conflict between opposing families, with all its sword fighting and violence, is set against the transcendent and tragic passion of two young people caught in a web of circumstances from which escape is impossible.

The poignant epilogue suggests the irreconcilable sorrow of the two warring houses, somehow absolved by the purity and dignity of the deaths of Romeo and Juliet, which bring about a peace bought too dearly and paid for so tragically in human life and suffering.

Our concert concludes with Vaughan Williams setting of lines from *The Merchant of Venice* on the charm of music. Here, the words create a music that is, in turn, transformed into music itself, creating a luminous halo around the text.

This is the very essence of our program this evening.

MUSIC REPERTOIRE

A Shakespeare Suite, Richard III – William Walton
Fanfare

Henry V Suite, William Walton
I. Overture- The Globe Playhouse
II. Passacaglia- The Death of Falstaff
III. Charge and Battle
V. Agincourt Song

Incidental Music to A Midsummer Night's Dream – Felix Mendelssohn
No. 1 Scherzo
No. 2 Allegro Vivace
No. 5 Allegro
No. 7 Nocturne
No. 9 Wedding March

INTERVAL

Romeo and Juliet Balcony Scene - Hector Berlioz
Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture – Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Serenade to Music – Ralph Vaughan-Williams

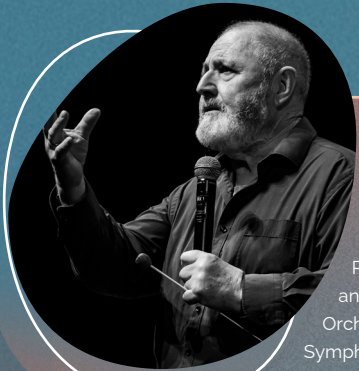
SPOKEN WORD

Henry V – Prologue
As You Like It – Act II, Scene VII
Henry V – Act II, Scene III
Henry V – Act IV, Scene III
Henry V – Prologue to Act I
A Midsummer Night's Dream – Act II, Scene I
A Midsummer Night's Dream – Act II, Scene II
A Midsummer Night's Dream – Act III, Scene II
A Midsummer Night's Dream – Act IV, Scene I

INTERVAL

Romeo and Juliet – Act II, Scene II
Romeo and Juliet – Act V, Scene III
The Merchant of Venice – Act V, Scene I

ARTISTS



RICHARD MILLS | CONDUCTOR

Internationally recognised composer Richard Mills pursues a diverse career as composer, conductor and artistic director, with an extensive discography of orchestral works including his own compositions.

Richard's posts have included Artistic Director of both Victorian Opera and West Australian Opera, Artistic Director of the Adelaide Chamber Orchestra, Director of the Australian Music Project for Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and Musica Viva's Composer of the Year.

Most recently Richard has conducted the world premiere of his new opera *Galileo*, *Elektra*, *Butterfly Lovers* (Mills), *La Cenerentola* and *Salome* for Victorian Opera; *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, a gala concert and *Tosca* for Opera Queensland; and *Voss* and *Summer of the 17th Doll* (Mills) for State Opera South Australia.

Richard's concert performance of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* with the Australian Youth Orchestra for Queensland Music Festival won the Helpmann Award for Best Classical Concert in 2005.

Richard is a Senior Fellow at the University of Melbourne.



URSULA YOVICH | ACTOR

Ursula Yovich is an award-winning actor, singer, playwright, director, and voice artist whose work spans theatre, film, and television. A proud Burarra/Serbian performer, Ursula is recognised as one of Australia's most powerful and versatile storytellers. In 2025, she appeared in *The Black Woman of Gippsland* with Melbourne Theatre Company, and in 2024, performed multiple roles in *The Lewis Trilogy* at Griffin Theatre Company. She is best known for her Helpmann Award-winning performance in *Barbara* and *the Camp Dogs*, which toured nationally and earned her Best Female Actor in a Musical, Best Original Score, and Best Musical (2019). Her stage credits include major roles in *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (STC), *Mother Courage* (QTC), *The Golden Age* (STC), and *The Sapphires* (Belvoir).

Ursula's film work includes *The Royal Hotel* (2023), *Top End Wedding* (2020), and *Jindabyne* (2006). Her television credits include *Top End Bub* (2025), *Irreverent*, *Wakefield*, *Preppers*, and *Redfern Now*. Ursula is the recipient of multiple Helpmann Awards and nominations, the 2020 Film Critics Circle of Australia Award for Best Supporting Actress (*Top End Wedding*), and the prestigious Bob Maza Memorial Award (2002). Her body of work continues to break ground in telling stories with heart, strength, and cultural truth.

ROB COLLINS | ACTOR

Born and raised in Darwin, Rob Collins graduated from the National Institute for Dramatic Arts in 2013.

Rob's Film credits include *TOP END WEDDING*, *UNDERTOW*, *EXTRACTION*, *ANGEL OF MINE*, and Leah Purcell's *THE DROVER'S WIFE*.

Rob's Television credits include *THE WRONG GIRL*, *GLITCH* series 2, *CLEVERMAN* Series 1 & 2, *SECRET CITY: UNDER THE EAGLE*, *BLACK COMEDY*, *REEF BREAK*, *UPRIGHT* opposite Tim Minchin, *TOTAL CONTROL* alongside Rachel Griffiths and Deborah Mailman and Series 2 of the critically acclaimed ABC series *MYSTERY ROAD*.

Rob's theatre credits include a national tour of *THE LION KING* in the role of 'Mufasa' and as 'Lysander' in Sydney Theatre Company's *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*.



GAIL EVANS | DIRECTOR

Gail has made a major contribution to Top End theatre for the last 30 years as an actor, director, writer, producer, facilitator, mentor and tutor with the Territory's leading performing arts companies, and as a freelance artist. In 1997 she co-founded Knock-em-Down Theatre with playwrights Stephen Carleton and Mary Anne Butler.

KEDT was nationally recognised in 2017 with a Sidney Myer grant for professional development. In 2019 Gail was selected to attend an international Directors symposium in Umbria, Italy, run by La Mama theatre New York. Recent directing credits include *The Full Spread* by David Garnham, *New Babylon* by Stephen Carleton, *Cosi* by Louis Nowra and *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen.



MUSICIANS

BALLA NEBA | MOVEMENT DIRECTOR



A Wakka Wakka and Gungulu man from Central Queensland, Balla Neba is a performing artist and cultural practitioner whose career has made him one of Australia's most sought-after choreographers and artists.

Over a decade ago, he completed his training at both ACPA and NAISDA, and his dedication to culture has since taken him far beyond his traditional homelands. Balla is a protocol-driven creative whose work is rooted in culture, identity, and truth-telling. He's best known for his distinctive blend of traditional and contemporary fusion, as well as his contemporary lyrical hip hop style.

Beyond dance, Balla is a producer in the performing arts and continues to broaden his credits as an actor. Now newly appointed as the First Nations Senior Producer for Brown's Mart – Home of the Territory Performing Arts. His career and cultural highlights include leading the Woorabinda Kulgoodah Dancers to a win at Dance Rites at the Sydney Opera House in 2017, has been Head Choreographer and Facilitator for The Preston Campbell Foundation. Head Choreographer for the First Nations section of the 2022 Commonwealth Games Flag Handover Ceremony for the Kulin Nation in Birmingham, U.K.

Recent project highlights include Choreographer and Assistant Director for the 2023 Alice Prize winning film artwork 'Janjari' by Fiona Foley, and Co-Founder/Artistic Director of Strong House Arts.

VOCALLECTIVE | DIRECTED BY MICHAEL LOUGHLIN

Vocalective is a select Darwin-based chamber choir known for its expressive performances of classical and contemporary choral music. Bringing together some of the Top End's finest singers, the ensemble presents high-quality concerts and collaborations that enrich Darwin's vibrant cultural community.



FIRST VIOLIN

Jo Beaumont#
Erin McCann+^
Liz Latimer*
Anna Ingram
Fia Walsh
Jeremy Chin
Katharina Fehringer
Jacob Botha
Oberon
Tahli Elsner
Ben Spiers+

SECOND VIOLIN

Lucy Vallentine^
Marissa Loh
Eloise Toohey
Toby Koefoed
Ben Koefoed
Sonya Bree
Hannah Johnston
Helen Humphreys
Aya Smith+

VIOLA

Molly Collier-O'Boyle+^
Clare Gorton^
Annette Anderson*
Mary Frost
Mary Wheaton
Caroline McNair
Rachael McMinn
Bridget McCullough+

CELLO

Rebecca Harris+^
Amelia Noble
Cathy Applegate
Maddison Sims
Harshini Bhoola
Kate Stephens
Miah Smith+
Tonia Griffiths
Liz Clarkson

DOUBLE BASS

Phillip Waldron^
Andrea Sitas+
Sally Cutter
Kathy Campbell
Adele Mammone
Sandra Lapenta

FLUTE

Rozanne Mentzel^
Lucy Kennedy

OBOE

Rachel Curkpatrick+
Sarena Wegener
Kristen Berry

CLARINET

Stephen Pevely^
Laura Llewellyn
Natalie Chin

BASSOON

Rob Llewellyn^
Alana Bryett*
Madeline Nickelson
TJ Bird

FRENCH HORN

Heath Parkinson^
Riley Byfield+
Jethro Llewellyn
Joel Hoare

TRUMPET

David Pye^
Jessica Anderson*
Sam Vallentine

TROMBONE

Kabir Khara^
Marcus Dhu
Oliver Locos

TUBA

Per Forsberg+

HARP

Erna Jarvis

PERCUSSION

Ingrid Purich^
David Smith
Anthony Sherwood
Buddy Lovett+

LEGEND

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^ Principal + Guest Artist

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The Darwin Symphony Orchestra empowers musicians of all ages through workshops, performances, community engagement, education and outreach, touring programs, and our Darwin Amphitheatre concert. We are also proud to commission new works that are uniquely inspired by and created for the Northern Territory. As a not-for-profit organisation, we rely on the generosity of our community to sustain and grow this work.

With a donation of \$250 or more, you can become a DSO Patron and play a vital role in shaping the future of music in the Territory. Your support helps bring new orchestral works to life, expands our regional and remote touring programs, nurtures emerging local talent, and ensures more people across the NT can experience the power of live music.

Join us in creating unforgettable performances and enriching our community through music. Together, we can continue to inspire, connect, and celebrate the unique cultural voice of the Northern Territory.



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SEVEN DEADLY GINS

By Yvette Walker

Co-Directed by Shari Sebbens & Ursula Yovich

6-17 October

Brown's Mart Theatre

"IT'S TIME TO LAY IT ALL TO REST"



brownsmart.com.au

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Palmerston Classics

Memorable music from Mozart, Saint-Saëns, Tchaikovsky, Albéniz, Elgar and Rimsky-Korsakov.

FRI 9 OCT | 7:30PM | PALMERSTON RECREATION CENTRE



Palmerston Family Proms

Discover the orchestra in a musical playground for curious minds

SAT 10 OCT | 10:00AM | PALMERSTON RECREATION CENTRE



Score!

Bounce, beat and breathe - where music meets movement.

SAT 24 OCT | 9:30AM & 11:00AM
CDU CASUARINA, BASKETBALL COURT



Songs of the Season

The rains arrive, frogs sing, voices soar and joy abounds.

SAT 5 DEC | 7:30PM | THE PLAYHOUSE, AANT CENTRE

Visit our website to book your tickets.
www.dso.org.au/2026-season-program/

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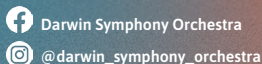
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