

SXS

SOUTHERN CROSS SOLOISTS 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**“THE STARS OF AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER MUSIC”
1995 - 2024**

Magic, Mystique and Melancholy, October 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas



The concert was a delightful afternoon of glorious chamber music, well-crafted and lovingly assembled with the high quality of musicianship we have come to expect from Southern Cross Soloists (SXS).

Divine Alchemy, March 2024
Suzannah Conway (Limelight)



Amalia Hall, James Wannan, Katherine Philp
Divine Alchemy, March 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas

SXS

SOUTHERN CROSS SOLOISTS

Southern Cross Soloists (SXS) are the shining stars of Australian chamber music. Firmly established as one of Australia's pre-eminent classical music ensembles, SXS delivers programs filled with dazzling virtuosity. Composed of leading virtuosic soloists from Queensland and Australia, SXS provides dynamic, unique, and world-class musical experiences for audiences of all ages. Championing chamber music globally and nationally, SXS, each year, continues to reach new heights. The collaborative nature of the ensemble and its creative direction, ensures a commitment and desire to form long-lasting, diverse cultural partnerships with Australia's and, the world's, most notable musicians, and composers.

Pursuit of excellence in the magical art of music making, connecting, and inspiring, a healthy, vibrant community, innovating, and creating new Australian works, is at the heart of SXS; synonymous with delivering quality music in Australia. In 2025, SXS celebrates its 30th pearl anniversary of delivering outstanding excellence in music making. Creative plans for 2025 honour and celebrate our loyal audience who have followed SXS from humble beginnings in 1995 to the thriving arts organisation that will reach new heights in 2025 with the next chapter of planning and executive directorship in place.

SXS will continue to reach new audiences with a broadening scope in its regional programs and is excited to deliver its multi award nominated festival, in a new Queensland home, the 21st SXS Chamber Music Festival 2025, Tamborine Mountain, Scenic Rim. Celebrating Queensland stories and honouring our rich and powerful landscapes curatorially, SXS will continue its focus on the employment of Queensland artists and arts workers along with accessibility and affordability to quality art music performances.

SXS are committed cultural ambassadors through metropolitan and regional areas and 2025, will bring the third iteration of its popular Sunset Soirée Recital Series.

Passionate exponents for commissioning new Australian music and renowned for fostering creative partnerships with leading international soloists and composers, SXS has commissioned, to date, over 150 World Premiere new works. 2025 is no different, with the continuation of the highly innovative and successful SXS Didgeridoo Commissioning Project - 2022 - 2032, creating a canon of 30 new Australian works for Didgeridoo and ensemble. This year will feature three outstanding Australian composers who will work with SXS's First Nations Didgeridoo Artist in Residence forming a highlight of the 16th QPAC Concert Series 2025. This unique and important cultural 10-year legacy project will continue each year until 2032 in time for the Brisbane Olympics. 2025 will also see the release of the first recordings by ABC Classic of selected DCP commissioned works.

SXS are dedicated educators and mentors of the rising stars of chamber music. Through its flagship Educational Programs: the 12th SXS Next Gen Artists Program and 10th Margaret Schindler Vocal Scholarship, SXS nurtures some of Queensland's most in-demand young musicians today, providing much needed professional development and performance opportunities with virtuosic musicians.

OUR TEAM

PATRON

The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO

BOARD OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS SOLOISTS

Marg O'Donnell AO, Chair of the Board

Peter Collins, Finance Director

Laura Sweeney

Michael Barnes

Richard Monaei

Andrew Arthur

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Ashley Smith, Co-Artistic Director

Margaret Blades, Co-Artistic Director

Tim Munro, Festival Director & DCP Consultant

Maxine Williamson, General Manager

Nikhil Deo, Production Manager

Camilo Lopez, Marketing Manager

Catherine Charrington, Accounts Manager

Professor Seán O'Boyle AM, International Ambassador

EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DIDGERIDOO COMMISSIONING PROJECT

Chris Williams, Chair and Creative Director

Professor Kevin Wirra Williams, Cultural Advisor and Mentor

Tim Munro, SXS DCP Consultant

Professor Seán O'Boyle AM, SXS International Ambassador



2024 ARTISTS

Strings

- Margaret Blades (violin),
- Catherina Lee (violin),
- Amalia Hall (violin),
- Chaeun Oh (violin - Next Gen),
- Courtenay Cleary (violin),
- Jakub Jakowicz (violin),
- Jason Tong (violin)
- James Wannan (viola),
- Raquel Bastos (viola),
- Li-Ping Kuo (viola)
- David Tan (viola - Next Gen),
- Katherine Philp (cello),
- Hyung Suk Bae (cello),
- Guillaume Wang (cello),
- Katherine Hopkins (cello)
- György Déri (cello),
- Karol Kowalik (cello),
- Stirling Hall (cello - Next Gen),
- Milo Duval (cello - Next Gen),
- Andre Duthoit (cello),
- Dušan Walkowicz (double bass)

Woodwinds & Brass:

- Ashley Smith (clarinet),
- David Silva (flute),
- Stephanie Vici (flute),
- Eve Newsome (oboe),
- Chris Williams (didgeridoo),
- Celia Craig (oboe),
- Shana Hoshino (oboe),
- Alex Fontaine (oboe),
- Laura Biemmi (oboe)
- Tania Frazer (oboe),
- Tim Allen-Ankins (horn),
- Natalia Edwards (horn),
- Nick Mooney (horn),
- Isabella Geeves (trumpet).

Keyboards:

- Konstantin Shamray (piano),
- Mai-lien Olsson (piano),
- Mia Huang (piano),
- Roger Cui (piano).
- Paavali Jumpannen (piano)
- Max Foster (piano)

Vocalists:

- Nina Korbe (soprano),
- Jack Bolton (bass)
 - Margaret Schindler Vocal Scholarship

Composers & Arrangers:

- Seán O'Boyle AM,
- Stephen Leek,
- Lachlan Skipworth,
- John Rotar (arranger).
- Chris Williams

Didgeridoo Artist in Residence

- Chris Williams



SXS CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Marg O'Donnell AO

After a long association with the Southern Cross Soloists (SXS) since its early beginnings in the 1990s, it was my pleasure to take up the position of Chair of the Executive Board of the organisation and establish an eminent Board in 2024. I am very pleased that 2024 saw the appointment of our First Nations representative Richard Monaei who brought communications expertise and cultural knowledge to our practice. It was of significance that forensics auditor and retired accountant Peter Collins chose to remain on the Board to steer our finances with the Management Team. NSW Crimes Commissioner Michael Barnes who also has a long association with SXS joined the Board along with retired lawyer and classical music lover Laura Sweeney. I thank the Board for their stewardship, wisdom, and guidance throughout 2024. The current Board members also became members of the Company.

The Board was sad to lose long-serving Artistic Director Tania Frazer OAM who resigned from all her roles in May. Tania had also played with the Ensemble for two decades. The Board acknowledges her passionate long service to the Company and congratulates her on her deserved OAM. Thanks to the loyal support of SXS ensemble and Company member Perth-based Ashley Smith, who graciously stepped into the role immediately in an acting capacity, we were able to steer through the busy creative season. Upon Ashley's recommendation, the Board secured Margaret Blades, Queensland based violinist as Acting Artistic Director in partnership with Ashley. They were both secured permanently in these roles after a rigorous recruitment and selection process period. The recruitment process also unearthed an exceptional artist who returned to Queensland after having a successful career spanning multiple decades in the United States. Three-time Grammy winning flautist Tim Munro was secured to join the SXS Creative Team. This allowed the Company to divide its busy creative program into three distinct areas of focus for the three-person creative team. Ashley Smith focused his attentions on the successful delivery of the prestigious 15th QPAC Concert Series and the broad artist community; Margaret Blades took up the Sunset Soiree Recital Series, SXS's regional focus and the long-running SXS mentorship educational programs, with Tim Munro responsible for the 2025 Chamber Festival organisation and delivery and as Consultant of the Didgeridoo Commissioning Project 2022-2032.

The Board endorsed the abolishment of the SXS permanent ensemble membership with a progressive move to the SXS Artist Roster system which allows transparency, accountability, and inclusion for artists to consider joining the Roster system each year. Artists for the creative yearly rollout plan for the Company will be drawn from the Roster.

I thank our Patron, the Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO for her unwavering support of the SXS and appreciate her ongoing advocacy of the Company. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to past Chair Dr Diana Khursandi who was a fierce advocate for SXS and performed her duties with great passion. Dr Diana Khursandi passed away in December 2024. Her legacy and contributions to the success of SXS will be ongoing.

I take this opportunity to also thank our principal funder Arts Queensland and to all the Instrument Chair Donors, general benefactors and in-kind suppliers who support the delivery of excellence in musicmaking by SXS. Without their support we would not have been able to have the exceptional year that 2024 was.

Marg O'Donnell AO



Marg O'Donnell AO, Chair of the Board
Photo provided

SXS GENERAL MANAGER

Maxine Williamson

2024 was another high output delivery year for Southern Cross Soloists (SXS) charged with the delivery of excellence in musicmaking. SXS is a small arts company with a complex business output across multiple sectors of influence.

SXS's areas of business for the year were:

BUSINESS AREAS

- National broadcast of Performance
- Regional Queensland expansion and tours to new locations
- Chamber Festival relocation
- Educational mentorship programs of emerging artists
- Educational school performances and workshops
- Commissioning of New Australian Works
- Recording of New Works
- External contracts Sydney and Adelaide
- Employment of Queensland Artists and Arts Workers
- The promotion of Queensland stories and places
- Industry placement for emerging Queensland producer

CREATIVE PROJECTS

Concert Hall performances in the 15th QPAC Concert Series as Company in Residence, QPAC; the Brisbane city and regional 2nd Sunset Soiree Recital Series including a state tour; the relocation of our successful Bangalow Chamber Music Festival to Queensland; the highly successful taster event The Mountain Showcase; publishing of new Australian works under our 10-year legacy project SXS Didgeridoo Commissioning Project 2022 – 2032 (DCP) including a new work for the inaugural Queensland Ballet First Nations ballet for the BESPOKE Series 2024; recording with ABC Classics; educational programs 11th Next Gen and 9th Margaret Schindler Vocal Scholarship; external contracted works performing for the prestigious Sydney Mozart Society and Ukaria Residency with James Morrison AM; and an industry placement with SXS nurturing a new Queensland producer. Our QPAC concerts were also recorded by ABC Classics for their Lunchtime Concert series broadcast.

SXS continues to seek new business opportunities for its own sourced revenue along with opportunities to reach more postcodes. New locations in 2024 were Townsville, Pomona, Tamborine Mountain, Bundaberg. External partnerships for the year included but not limited to, QPAC, 4MBS Classic FM, JWAC, Queensland Ballet, Tamborine Mountain Arts Precinct, Shambala Estate, Kawai Pianos, Stanthorpe Regional Art Gallery, the Majestic Theatre Pomona, ABC Classic FM, Stephen Henry Photography, Sydney Mozart Society, 2MBS Classic FM, UKARIA, Moravian University (USA).

2024 was the first year of the new Executive Board led by Chairperson Marg O'Donnell AO with continuing Finance Director Peter Collins. 2024 also includes the first year of SXS's commitment to First Nations representation on the Board. Long-running Artistic Director,

Board Member and Company Secretary Tania Frazer resigned in May. Ensemble and Company Member Ashley Smith was appointed Acting Artistic Director in June along with Queensland based violinist Margaret Blades. A formal national and international recruitment search was conducted with an extensive interview process that resulted in acting Co-Artistic Directors Ashley Smith and Margaret Blades formally appointed into the roles and a new creative member enlisted, recently returned to Queensland from the USA, Tim Munro to steer the new Chamber Festival for the Company and to be consultant of SXS's long-form DCP. A funded Industry Placement program by Arts Queensland also allowed SXS to capacity build its management team to engage a young emerging Queensland producer in Camilo Lopez. 2025 will see SXS continue his employment on the Management Team. Didgeridoo Artist in Residence Chris Williams, also Chair and Creative Lead of the DCP Advisory Committee continued in his role for 2024 along with the cultural protocols support and approvals led by First Nations Elder Professor Kevin Williams. Composer, conductor and musician, Sean O'Boyle AM continued his extensive support of the Company as International Ambassador.

This successful year could not have been achieved without the due diligence of our exceptional Management Team with strong strategic and business leadership skills and the good governance of our Board of Directors. SXS has a very strong brains trust in the teams to ensure integrity in all our practice. Another strong year of critical attention and placements from media ensures the SXS brand continues to gain strength in the arts eco-system in the leadup to the Company's 30th anniversary celebration in 2025.

2024 saw SXS's Artist Chair Donors continue with their invaluable financial support of the Company along with the many general donations that SXS receives from audiences across the calendar year.

SXS continues to pursue self-sustainable own source revenue finance models and remain in a strong financial position at the close of 2024. Its future business is to consolidate our Queensland business and artists to future proof for the 2032 Olympics in Brisbane.

The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO continued as SXS's Patron in 2024 playing an important ambassadorial and advocacy role of the organisation across the year.

SXS looks forward to our 30th Pearl Anniversary year in 2025 where accessibility, affordability and inclusion are paramount values to the Company as we focus on Queensland employment, regional expansion and celebrating the many vibrant stories and places of our state.

Maxine Williamson



Maxine Williamson, General Manager
Photo by Jacqueline Bawtree

SXS CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

ASHLEY SMITH & MARGARET BLADES

SOUTHERN CROSS SOLOISTS

As we reflect on an eventful 2024, Southern Cross Soloists (SXS) continues to evolve as a leading chamber music ensemble, fostering innovation, collaboration, and artistic excellence. This year marked significant transitions, outstanding performances, and a renewed strategic vision for the future.

CHANGE OF ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP

In 2024, we bid farewell to Tania Frazer, whose exceptional leadership as Artistic Director over the past 14 years has profoundly shaped SXS. Having begun as a core member in 2001 and taking the artistic helm in 2011, Tania's visionary programming and dedication to excellence have been instrumental in our success. Her contributions to SXS—through leadership, performance, and artistic curation—are immeasurable. We extend our deepest gratitude and best wishes for her future endeavours.

Stepping into the role of Acting Co-Artistic Directors, Dr. Ashley Smith (clarinet) and Margaret Blades (violin) guided SXS through the remainder of 2024, shaping the artistic direction for our milestone 30th-anniversary season in 2025.

DEVELOPMENT OF ARTIST ROSTER

Over the past five years, our ensemble has evolved, necessitating a structural model that better reflects its dynamic artistic direction. To align with this growth, we recognised the need for greater flexibility in artistic programming, ensuring we can adapt to the diverse contexts in which we perform. Additionally, simplifying and flattening our organizational structure allows us to more inclusively and efficiently engage all artists involved with the company. At the same time, we remain committed to our stakeholders by prioritizing the development of Queensland artists while maintaining a strong national presence. This period of transition also presents an opportunity to reinvigorate philanthropic support and continue challenging ourselves artistically.

The development of our new structure was an in-depth, collaborative process. We conducted extensive research into artistic models employed by domestic and international chamber music organizations, engaged in consultations with industry peers, and sought insights from both current and former artistic directors across various arts organizations. Workshops with the SXS Board, Executive, and Acting Artistic Directors, alongside consultations with Arts Queensland, played a crucial role in shaping our path forward.

At the heart of this transformation is the role of the SXS Roster Artist. These musicians are not only highly skilled and compelling performers but also embody a deep commitment to excellence in chamber music. They uphold the highest professional standards through their camaraderie, rigorous preparation, dedication, and punctuality. They embrace artistic risk, pay close attention to detail, and cultivate a meaningful connection with audiences—qualities that define the unique spirit of our ensemble and inspire our continued artistic evolution.

DIDGERIDOO COMMISSIONING PROJECT (DCP) 2024

SXS remains committed to championing Australian music and fostering First Nations collaborations through our Didgeridoo Commissioning Project (2022–2032). This year saw several world premieres that expanded the chamber music repertoire and deepened cultural storytelling through music. Highlights of 2024 included:

March 3 (QPAC) – *The Wise Woman* (Chris Williams & Sean O’Boyle AM) paid tribute to Williams' grandmother, blending evocative didgeridoo textures with a moving narrative of resilience. This incorporated the use of the QPAC visual screen, a first for SXS.

June 2 (QPAC) – *Juwoon, Tu, Ngyin’anga (Country, Heart, Life)* (Chris Williams & Stephen Leek) marked a landmark moment as the first DCP work to incorporate voice, performed in Wakka Wakka language by rising soprano Nina Korbe.

July 25 – August 3 – *gundirgan, wise woman* (Chris Williams & Sean O’Boyle AM): a collaboration with Queensland Ballet, wove First Nations storytelling with contemporary ballet in an evocative tribute to Wakka Wakka Elder Aunty Maureen Williams.

October (QPAC) – *The Ascent* (Chris Williams & Lachlan Skipworth) explored innovative didgeridoo textures, presenting a bold new sonic landscape.

These premieres reflect our ongoing dedication to artistic excellence, cultural collaboration, and expanding the Australian chamber music canon.

Ashley Smith & Margaret Blades



Ashley Smit & Margaret Blades, Co-Artistic Directors
Magic, Mystique and Melancholy - October 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas

2024 IN NUMBERS



ACTIVITIES

NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES: 54
POSTCODES SXS VISITED: 12
PERFORMANCES: 33
TOURS: 5
EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS: 4
CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT: 1
MENTORSHIP SESSIONS: 10
SELL OUT SHOWS: 6
FIRST NATIONS ACTIVITIES: 22
QUEENSLAND STORIES PRESENTED: 2



AUDIENCE

AUDIENCE (INCLUDING NATIONAL RADIO LISTENERSHIP): 2,606,949
PERFORMANCE ATTENDEES: 7,949
EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPANTS: 450
MEDIA COVERAGE : 50 + ARTICLES , INTERVIEWS, NATIONAL
TV COVERAGE (ABC 7:30 REPORT)
AUDIENCE REACH OF OVER 50 POSTCODES



WORKERS

TOTAL ARTISTS: 121
QUEENSLAND ARTISTS: 111
EMERGING ARTISTS: 7

EXTERNAL ARTS WORKERS: 116
QUEENSLAND ART WORKERS: 114

TOTAL QUEENSLAND WORKERS & ARTISTS : 176
VOLUNTEERS: 12



PROGRAMMING

WORKS PERFORMED: 141
WORLD PREMIERES: 5
AUSTRALIAN PREMIERES: 1
NEW WORKS COMMISSIONED: 6
FIRST NATIONS WORKS: 5
RECORDINGS: 4 - PRODUCED BY ABC CLASSIC FM

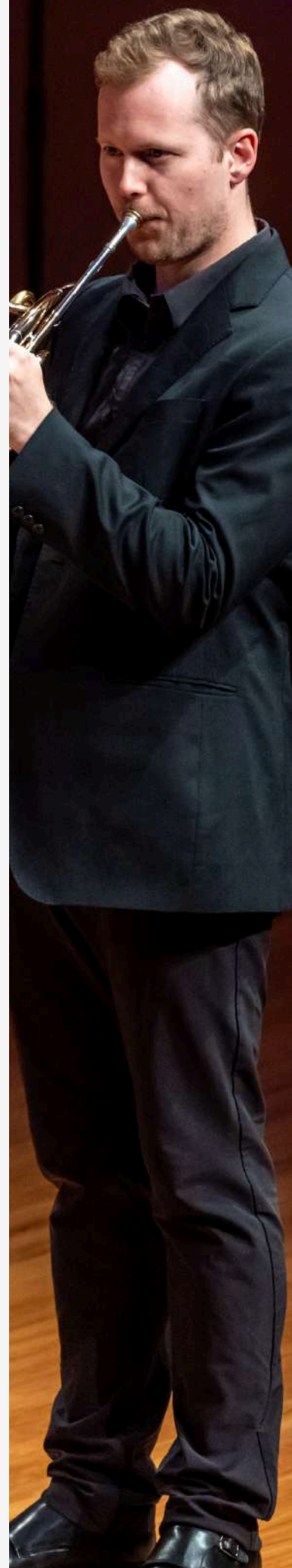


FINANCES

TOTAL INCOME: \$676,642
GOVERNMENT INCOME: \$262,329

Nick Mooney, *horn*
Perfumes of the East -
June 2024

Photo by Darren Thomas



PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Presented by QPAC & SXS

15TH QPAC CONCERT SERIES

DIVINE ALCHEMY

MARCH

PERFUMES OF THE EAST

JUNE

MAGIC, MYSTIQUE AND MELANCHOLY

OCTOBER

2ND SUNSET SOIRÉE RECITAL SERIES

METAMORPHOSIS

FEBRUARY

HYUNG SUK BAE

MAY

MAX FOSTER

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

THE CBD TRIO

OCTOBER

BACH-GLASS-BRITTEN

NOVEMBER

THE SOLOISTS' MOUNTAIN SHOWCASE

TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN

AUGUST

SPECIAL PROJECTS

SYDNEY MOZART SOCIETY

MAY

QUEENSLAND BALLET 2024 BESPOKE SERIES

JULY / AUGUST

UKARIA CULTURAL CENTRE RESIDENCY WITH JAMES MORRISON AM

SEPTEMBER

Catherina Lee, *violin*
Magic, Mystique and
Melancholy - October
2024

Photo by Darren Thomas



EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

11TH SXS NEXT GEN PROGRAM

- 4 ARTISTS
- ENGAGED IN 5 ACTIVITIES

9TH MARGARET SCHINDLER VOCAL SCHOLARSHIP

- 1 RECIPIENT
- ENGAGED IN 4 ACTIVITIES
- 10 MENTORSHIP SESSIONS

PIANO MASTERCLASS WORKSHOP MAX FOSTER TOWNSVILLE

- 9 PARTICIPANTS

GOLD COAST SCHOOL WORKSHOP KING'S CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

- 300 PARTICIPANTS

BAN BAN SPRINGS QUEENSLAND BALLET & SXS ON COUNTRY WORKSHOP

- 17 PARTICIPANTS

INAUGURAL QUEENSLAND BALLET AND SOUTHERN CROSS SOLOISTS COMBINED MUSIC AND DANCE WORKSHOP

- 22 PARTICIPANTS

QUEENSLAND BALLET & SXS BESPOKE SERIES 2024 Q&A PANEL FEATURING CHRIS WILLIAMS

- 100 PARTICIPANTS



King's Christian College Concert
Photo by Nikhil Deo

15TH QPAC CONCERT SERIES

Presented by QPAC & SXS (Company in Residence)

Supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland



Perfumes of the East, June 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas

DIVINE ALCHEMY MARCH

Divine Alchemy delved into the realm of beauty emerging from unexpected sources, presenting a musical journey forged in the crucible of adversity. The performance focused on human resilience when faced with life's trials, uncovering a wellspring of inspiration that has given rise to numerous great masterpieces.

The program showcased Konstantin Shamray in Mozart's Piano Concerto in C minor, celebrated by many as one of the greatest compositions for the pianoforte. Guest violin soloist, Amalia Hall made a welcome return in the Australian premiere of Elegie, a profoundly moving piece by the French composer Thibaut Vuillermet and a new chamber transcription of Debussy's Violin Sonata.

The concert also presented Bach's exquisite Oboe Concerto in G minor, highlighted by its breathtaking Adagio movement and a unique work commissioned for the SXS Didgeridoo Commissioning Project, inspired by the life of Wakka Wakka Elder, Maureen Williams.

Konstantin Shamray, piano
Amalia Hall, violin
Chris Williams, didgeridoo
Southern Cross Soloists



578 attendees



"The concert was a delightful afternoon of glorious chamber music, well-crafted and lovingly assembled with the high quality of musicianship we have come to expect from Southern Cross Soloists (SXS)."

-Limelight Magazine - Suzannah Conway



Divine Alchemy, March 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas

PERFUMES OF THE EAST JUNE

Perfumes of the East invited audiences to explore a sensory odyssey inspired by the Mediterranean's enchanting shores.

Returning to the stage was renowned soprano superstar, Nina Korbe, after her spectacular debut at the 2023 Bangalow Chamber Music Festival with an alluring selection of songs that capture the vibrant spices and rich aromas of Mediterranean cultures, along with a new composition by the esteemed vocal composer Stephen Leek for the SXS Didgeridoo Commissioning Project. The concert also features Ashley Smith in two Spanish-inspired pieces and James Wannan, in a Concerto by Vivaldi for the rarely heard Viola d'amore, known as the 'viola of love.'

Nina Korbe, soprano

Amalia Hall, violin

Chris Williams, didgeridoo

Southern Cross Soloists



503 attendees

"What is entrancing about this group is their ability to perform whilst standing, cello and piano an exception of course, so there is additional invigorating and expressive choreography to the performances to view, well capturing the phrasing and personal interpretation of the music at hand, and with body!"

-Stage Whispers - Brian Adamson



MAGIC, MYSTIQUE AND MELANCHOLY OCTOBER

Drawing inspiration from Stravinsky's enchanting yet poignant ballet, *Petrushka*, and the iconic Ballets Russe, this program evoked an atmosphere of enchantment and allure whilst embracing the bittersweet essence of the human experience. From Russian émigré maestros to the dazzling Belle Époque era of Paris, this concert promised to captivate with the masterworks by Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, Fauré, and Saint-Saëns.

The performance showcased the exceptional talent of guest Australian violin soloist Catherina Lee, from Vienna. The concert also featured a world premiere composition for SXS and didgeridoo by the renowned Australian composer Lachlan Skipworth in collaboration with SXS Didgeridoo Soloist in Residence Chris Williams.

Catherina Lee, violin

Chris Williams, didgeridoo

Southern Cross Soloists



564 attendees

“As we reflect on this splendid evening, one cannot help but appreciate the Southern Cross Soloists' unwavering commitment to excellence”

-Weekend Notes - John Andrew



Magic, Mystique and Melancholy, October 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas

2ND SUNSET SOIRÉE RECITAL SERIES

BRISBANE - GOLD COAST - STANTHORPE - POMONA -
BUNDABERG - TOOWOOMBA - TOWNSVILLE

Supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland



2ND SUNSET SOIRÉE RECITAL SERIES

In 2024, the Sunset Soirée Recital Series (SSRS) presented five distinctive recitals in seven locations, showcasing both established and emerging classical artists. Two of these recitals featured solo performances by highly accomplished musicians: Hyung Suk Bae and Max Foster.

The remaining recitals included performances from promising Next Gen artists, highlighting SSRS's commitment to nurturing young talent. Chaeun Oh, David Tan and Stirling Hall were among the featured performers, with Milo Duval stepping in for Hall due to an injury. The series also spotlighted operatic bass, Jack Bolton, the 2024 Margaret Schindler Vocal Scholarship recipient, affirming SSRS's role in supporting young professionals.

Audiences have given feedback that the tyranny of distance has made it hard to access high level classical performances. With the aid of the Touring Queensland Fund, SXS was able to respond to this and trial new locations to produce concerts in regional Queensland. This also allowed SXS to diversify its current revenue portfolio as well. With thanks to the fund, we are now able to commit to two new locations in 2025, Pomona (Noosa) and Stanthorpe as part of our permanent offerings of classical music recitals into regional Queensland.

The series remains a vital platform for audience development, successfully expanding its geographic reach and offering themed concert experiences designed to attract a broader demographic.



656 attendees



13 ARTISTS



7 locations



14 PERFORMANCES

“Hyung Suk Bae, the adroit Southern Cross Soloist and Acting Principal cellist for the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, entertained a packed foyer...”

-Dr Gemma Regan (4ZZZ) - Hyung Suk Bae In Recital

THE SOLOISTS' MOUNTAIN SHOWCASE



Presented in association with Shambala Estate and the
Tamborine Mountain Arts Precinct.

Jakub Jakowicz and Paavali Jumppanen
Jakowicz and Jumppanen | The Soloists' Mountain Showcase, August 2024
Photo by Stephen Henry

THE SOLOISTS' MOUNTAIN SHOWCASE

Presented in association with Shambala Estate and the Tamborine Mountain Arts Precinct.

Sunday August 18th, 2024

Building on the esteemed legacy of the Bangalow Music Festival (2001 - 2023), the SXS Chamber Music Festival is one of Australia's premier chamber music events. Presented by the Southern Cross Soloists, the festival brings together world-class musicians in an intimate and immersive setting, celebrating both classical masterworks and bold contemporary compositions. In 2004, Australian composer Peter Sculthorpe described it as, "the most exciting festival, outside a capital city, that I have ever attended".

Founded in 2001, the festival has showcased over 825 artists in more than 270 concerts, earning critical acclaim and two nominations for the prestigious APRA AMCOS Art Music Awards for Excellence in a Regional Area (2019, 2022). It has been praised by Limelight Magazine as "one of the country's most captivating chamber music experiences."

In 2024, the festival entered an exciting new chapter, relocating from Bangalow, NSW, to Tamborine Mountain, Queensland. Now held at the stunning Shambala Estate, the festival will present its first full-scale event in its new home from August 22-24, 2025. Under the artistic leadership of Festival Director Tim Munro, the SXS Chamber Music Festival continues to push creative boundaries while maintaining its commitment to excellence.

With a rich history, innovative programming, and a passionate national audience, the festival remains a cultural beacon for chamber music lovers.

 **311 attendees**  **6 ARTISTS**



"The synergy between the two outstanding hell-raisers produced one of the best concerts I have witnessed."

-Limelight Magazine - Dr Gemma Regan

Margaret Blades

Co-Artistic Director & violin

The Soloist's Mountain Showcase was an overwhelming success, becoming a promising cultural project that will benefit the region. The festival was met with critical acclaim, earning a prestigious 5-star review in Limelight Magazine, and received enthusiastic praise from patrons, with particular emphasis on the exceptional calibre of the performances.

While internationally renowned guitarist Slava Grigoryan was originally scheduled to appear, he had to withdraw just three days before the festival due to a personal bereavement. Despite this unforeseen change, the festival team successfully restructured the program, showcasing remarkable resilience and adaptability.

The revised lineup featured outstanding performances from:

- Roger Cui (piano)
- György Déri (cello)
- Jack Bolton (operatic bass), 2024 Margaret Schindler Scholar

Their combined efforts resulted in a cohesive and artistically rich program that resonated deeply with audiences.

A particular highlight of the festival was the recital by Pavaali Jumppanen and Jakub Jakowicz, which culminated in a standing ovation. Their performance was described by attendees as nothing short of brilliant. Pavaali Jumppanen expressed a keen interest in collaborating with Southern Cross Soloists again, especially within the QPAC concert series, signaling the potential for continued artistic partnerships.”

Margaret Blades



Margaret Blades, violin and Roger Cui, piano
The CBD Trio | The Soloists' Mountain Showcase, August 2024
Photo by Stephen Henry

THE SOLOISTS' MOUNTAIN SHOWCASE

AUDIENCE REACH

AUDIENCE CAME FROM THE FOLLOWING POSTCODES:



SXS DIDGERIDOO COMMISSIONING PROJECT 2022 - 2032

Supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.



Chris Williams (Didgeridoo Artist in Residence)
Divine Alchemy, March 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas

SXS DIDGERIDOO COMMISSIONING PROJECT 2022 - 2032

SXS's Didgeridoo Commissioning Project 2022-2032 (DCP) was launched from the Queensland Performing Arts Centre in February 2022 and received national print, radio and television media coverage. This unique cultural legacy project was established by SXS to generate a canon of new Australian works for Didgeridoo and small ensemble that honour the ancient wind instrument of our First Nations peoples. The Didgeridoo is arguably, the oldest wind instrument in the world. The DCP melds the relatively young Western art music tradition of some 400 years with the continuous living First Nations musical culture of 65,000 years.

Three years on and SXS has commissioned nine new Australian works with the plan to commission three new works annually, until the XXXV Brisbane Olympiad in 2032, establishing a canon of new hybrid Australian sounds of 30 commissioned works.

Highlights from 2024 saw the DCP move to cross artform collaborations in dance and voice. SXS delivered a new commissioned DCP work for the inaugural First Nations ballet in collaboration with Queensland Ballet's highly successful 2024 BESPOKE Series and superstar soprano Nina Korbe (SXS 2023 Margaret Schindler Vocal Scholar) sang in her Wakka Wakka language during the 15th QPAC Concert Series.

As a result of the successful SXS and Queensland Ballet premiere of *gundirgan, wise woman*, SXS and Queensland Ballet are currently refining a movement based workshop which is based on notated First Nations music. Queensland Ballet and SXS found that the senior secondary school curriculum requires more resource support in the field of First Nations music and dance. The collaborative workshop allows high school students to discuss how the body interprets First Nations music through many different lenses. The 'pilot workshop' was held in Immanuel Lutheran College - Buderim in November 2024, with feedback taken and development to continue throughout 2025, resulting in a full day immersion program for school students in Term 4 2025.

2024 Projects

- Williams / O'Boyle AM: The Wise Woman
 - 1 show
 - March, 2024
 - Concert Hall, QPAC
 - Note: Featured QPAC screen and visuals
- Leek/Williams: Juwoon,Tu, Ngyin'anga (Country, Heart, Life)
 - 1 show
 - June, 2024
 - Concert Hall, QPAC
 - Note: Featured First Nations soprano, Nina Korbe singing in Wakka Wakka language
- SXS & Queensland Ballet: *gundirgan, wise woman* (Bespoke Series 2024)
 - 12 shows
 - July / August 2024
 - Thomas Dixon Centre
 - ABC 7:30 Report with Katina Olsen: SXS & Queensland Ballet present ground-breaking dance with 2024 Bespoke Series
- Queensland Ballet & SXS Bespoke Series 2024 Q&A Panel Featuring Chris Williams
- Ban Ban Springs Queensland Ballet & SXS On Country Workshop
- UKARIA Residency with James Morrison AM
- Inaugural Queensland Ballet and Southern Cross Soloists combined music and dance workshop
 - Partnership with Queensland Ballet and SXS
 - November 2024
- Skipworth/Williams: The Ascent
 - 1 show
 - October, 2024
 - Concert Hall, QPAC



Chris Williams (Didgeridoo Artist in Residence)
Perfumes of the East, June 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas



“I particularly enjoyed Nina’s and Chris’ performances and hope to see more collaborations with First Nations artists in classical music in the future.”

-ClassikON - Claire Matthews

Nina Korbe & David Silva - Perfumes of the East, June 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas

2024 SPECIAL EVENTS



gundirgan, wise woman (QB 2024 Bespoke Series)- July & August 2024
Photo by David Kelly

QUEENSLAND BALLET 2024 BESPOKE SERIES

- Collaboration between Southern Cross Soloists and Queensland Ballet as part of the SXS Didgeridoo Commissioning Project 2022 - 2032 & the Queensland Ballet 2024 Bespoke Series
- 12 shows
- 4137 audience members
- 7 SXS performers
- ABC 7:30 Report with Katina Olsen: SXS & Queensland Ballet present ground-breaking dance with 2024 Bespoke Series



SYDNEY MOZART SOCIETY

- Mozart focused program performed by Southern Cross Soloists and presented by the Sydney Mozart Society.
- 1 show
- 300 audience members
- 9 SXS performers



UKARIA RESIDENCY WITH JAMES MORRISON AM

- Mozart focused program performed by Southern Cross Soloists and presented by the Sydney Mozart Society.
- 3 shows
- 600 audience members
- 14 SXS performers





"The Soloists lost nothing compared to a full orchestra – powerful and accurate"

-**Tony Burke, ClassikON, Sydney Mozart Society performance**

James Morrison UKARIA Residency:

"Each soloist sang out into the audience, welcoming them into the dazzling conclusion of an extraordinary collaboration."

- **InReview**

UKARIA Cultural Centre - Photo taken from website



QUEENSLAND STORIES

The Wise Woman | Divine Alchemy, March 2024
Photo by Darren Thomas

QUEENSLAND STORIES

Southern Cross Soloists is committed to celebrating QUEENSLAND STORIES. This is a new ongoing curatorial stream for the Company and SXS looks forward to shining a light on Queensland figures of note and the powerful and unique landscapes of our vast State.

To date, Southern Cross Soloists has honored and highlighted, through new commissioned works, the celebrated contemporary artist William Robinson, the powerful landscape of Beerwah (Beerwah is the “The Pregnant Mother of the Glass House Mountains” and the narrative is full of love, longing and great tragedy) and honoured the legacy of First Nations educational advocate Aunty Maureen Williams through the inaugural First Nations Queensland Ballet *gundirgan, wise woman*.

2025

Will see SXS curate Stayin’ Alive - The Bee Gees – Reimagined; Johnnies and Mehmetts honouring the close relationship between Queensland and Turkey on what is the 110th anniversary of the fateful Gallipoli landing and Poetry in Motion saluting the works of two of Queensland’s female literary greats, Judith Wright and Zora Cross through our 3rd Sunset Soirée Recital Series.

2024

Williams/Seán O'Boyle AM – *gundirgan, wise woman* Bespoke Series Queensland Ballet.
Williams/Seán O'Boyle AM – The Wise Woman.

2023

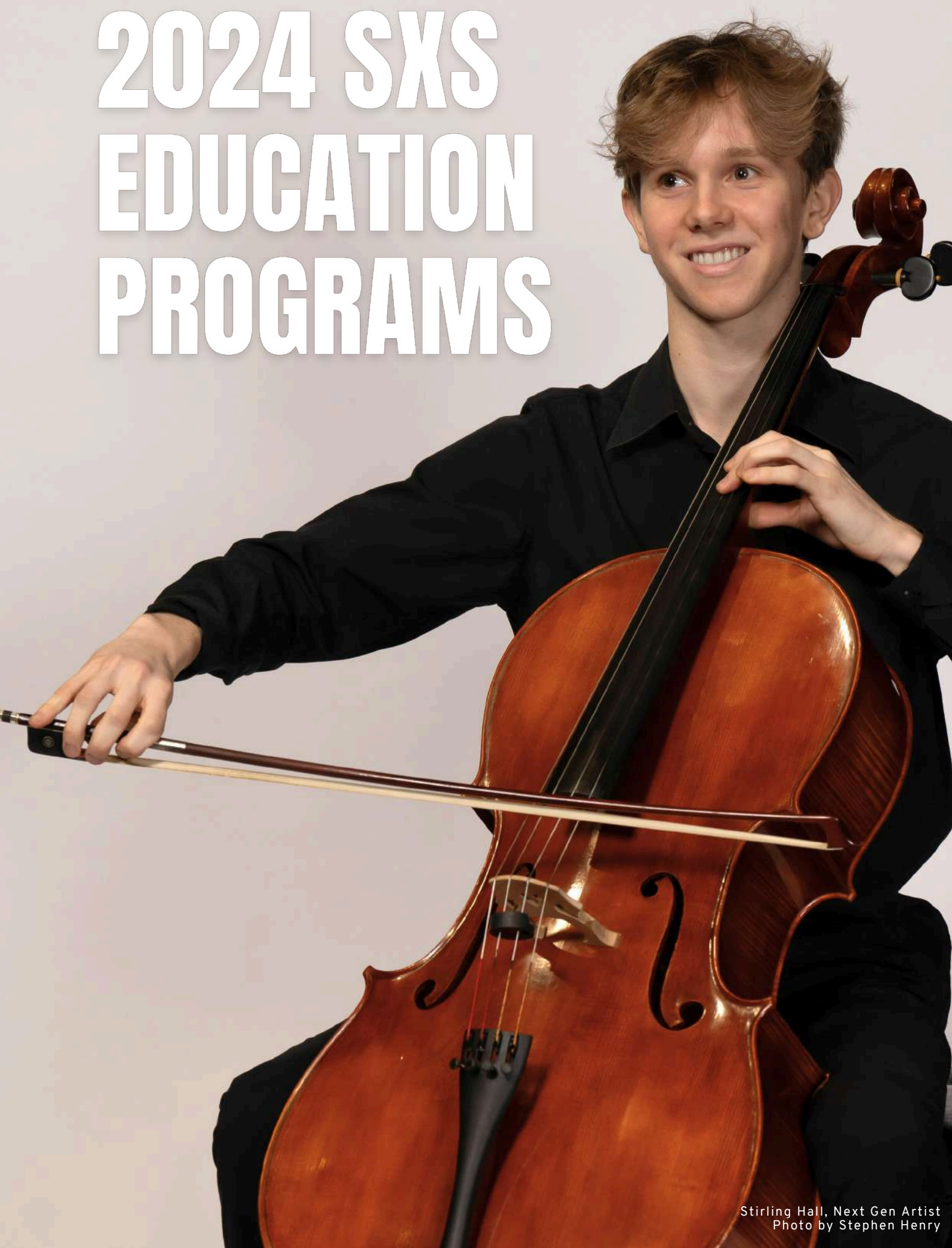
Williams/Seán O'Boyle AM – The Wise Woman & ‘Beerwah’ The Mother of the Glasshouse Mountains - performed at Sunshine Coast Chamber Music Festival.

2022

Williams/Joe Twist – The Ancient Rainforest, QPAC, Old Government House and HOTA, Home of the Arts.

Williams/Seán O'Boyle AM – ‘Beerwah’ The Mother of the Glasshouse Mountains.

2024 SXS EDUCATION PROGRAMS



Stirling Hall, Next Gen Artist
Photo by Stephen Henry

11TH SXS NEXT GEN PROGRAM

Supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland & Private Donor Siok Tan

SXS are continuing their commitment to nurturing and mentoring the next generation of classical musicians, and in 2024 we featured up and coming artists in our QPAC Concert Series & Sunset Soirée Recital Series.

These young artists gain experience in performance and professional development, and SXS is thrilled to be a part of their journey. 2025 will see SXS deliver the 12th SXS Next Gen Program and will also feature Next Gen Alumni throughout a variety of programs.

2024 NEXT GEN

- Chaeun Oh, violin
- David Tan, violin/viola
- Stirling Hall, cello
- Milo Duval, cello

9TH MARGARET SCHINDLER VOCAL SCHOLARSHIP

Supported by Private Donor Carolyn Mason

Under the guidance of the Southern Cross Soloists and Margaret Schindler, the MSVS recipient is awarded to a young opera singer who has shown great aptitude in their craft. Recipients are given the opportunity to perform with Southern Cross Soloists and to receive mentoring from Margaret Schindler.

In 2024, our MSVS recipient featured in the Soloists' Mountain Showcase alongside the CBD Trio and in our Sunset Soirée Recital Series Tour in November 2024

2024 Margaret Schindler Scholar

- Jack Bolton, bass

With support through the Touring Queensland Fund, SXS delivered a school concert and workshop to the Grade 3 and 4 students of King's Christian College - Pimpama (Gold Coast). Students listened to delightful classics, and were able to ask questions about music to the Next Gen artists and Artistic Director. The school was able to link the workshop and concert to their string immersion program as well, showing the need for high level music performances in schools.

Jack Bolton, bass & 2024 MSVS
Photo provided by Artist

The highlight of the show was Bolton singing O'Boyle's Shapes and Signs, based on a tragic phone call. The song embodied chaos with screeching strings and an almost demonic voice as the music went through the stages of grief."

-Dr Gemma Regan (4ZZZ)

2024 MEDIA

Explore our 2024 Media Summary to discover Southern Cross Soloists' media highlight, national TV coverage and interviews throughout the year.

[Click here >](#)

Media coverage : 50 + articles , interviews, and National TV Coverage



Ashley Smith, Co-Artistic Director
Photo by Stephen Henry

Patron

Executive Board

Administration

General Manager
Co- Artistic Directors
Producer & Marketing Manager
Accounts Manager
Production Coordinator

Partnerships & Development

Instrument Chair Donors
Donors
Strategic Partnerships

Artists

Artist Roster
Guest & Associate Artists
Artists in Residence

Education

11th SXS Next Gen
Artists Program

9th Margaret Schindler
Vocal Scholarship

**SXS Didgeridoo
Commissioning Project**
2022 - 2032
x 3 works a year

Inaugural workshop
presented at Immanuel
Lutheran College -
Buderim in
collaboration with
Queensland Ballet,
'Music and Movement
with SXS'.

SXS and Queensland Ballet 'Day
on Country' workshop at Ban Ban
Springs

Queensland Ballet
gundirgan, wise woman
(2024 Bespoke Series)

Performance

15th QPAC Concert
Series
Company in Residence

2nd Sunset Soirée
Recital Series

The Soloists' Mountain
Showcase

Collaborations:
Sydney Mozart Society
Queensland Ballet
Bespoke Series
UKARIA Residency with
James Morrison AM

Publishing and Broadcast

SXS DCP New Works
recorded by ABC
Classic

ABC Classic Lunchtime
Concert
QPAC Concert Series

In Development

21st SXS Chamber
Music Festival 2025

Voxalis Opera 2025
Collab

OUR PARTNERS

Southern Cross Soloists acknowledges and thanks the following organisations and private donors for their generous support.

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS



The Queensland Government, through Arts Queensland:

- Organisation Transitional Fund
- Touring Queensland Fund
- Queensland Arts Showcase Program

2024 INSTRUMENT CHAIR DONORS

Ian and Cass George (violin), Peter Collins (oboe), Marg O'Donnell AO (oboe), Philip Dubois and Leanda Elliot (viola), Jenny Blake (clarinet), Shirley Leuthner (flute), Susan and Paul Garside (piano).

DIDGERIDOO ARTIST IN RESIDENCE DONORS

Kay Feeney, Michelle May QC.

SXS NEXT GEN ARTISTS PROGRAM DONOR

Siok Tan.


MARGARET SCHINDLER VOCAL SCHOLARSHIP DONOR


Carolyn Mason.


PARTNERS






 [facebook.com/southerncrosssoloists](https://www.facebook.com/southerncrosssoloists)
<https://www.facebook.com/sxsfestival>

 @southerncrosssoloists1
@sxsfestival

 southernxsoloists.com
sxsfestival.com

 0457 045 301

Southern Cross Soloists respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and First Nation owners of the different lands across Queensland on which we work. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We also recognise those whose ongoing effort to protect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures will leave a lasting legacy for future Elders and leaders.