

We acknowledge that the land we make music on is the traditional country of the Kaurna people of the Adelaide Plains. We pay respect to Elders past and present and recognise and respect their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land. We acknowledge that this is of continuing importance to the Kaurna people living today. We extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are with us for this performance today.

The Music of Joe Hisaishi



Program

Jessica Gethin Conductor

Dan Golding Presenter

Andrew Pogson Presenter

Aura Go Piano

World Dreams: Suite – I. World Dreams (4')

DA.MA.SHI.E (7')

Kiki's Delivery Service (5')

Water Traveller (9')

Kikujiro: Summer (4')

My Neighbour Totoro (4')

INTERVAL

Howl's Moving Castle: Symphonic Variation "Merry-Go-Round and Cave of Mind" (12')

Oriental Wind: Dream More (3')

Departures (3')

Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind: Fantasia (8')

Spirited Away: Suite arr. Cannon (18')

Welcome

Welcome to this very special concert with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, performing the music of perhaps one of the most loved film composers of all time, Joe Hisaishi. Tonight's performance aims to be a little different however as we attempt to uncover *why* Joe Hisaishi's scores are so magical, and what makes them tick.

For years my good friends Nicholas Buc (regular Art of the Score conductor) and Dan Golding (my co-host) would find moments in our hectic schedules to grab lunch, or a drink, and spend 100% of the time waxing lyrical about the latest film scores. Often it included us pulling up a particular track on our phones, having it loudly play through its terrible speakers, and showing each other great moments of movie scoring magic (what great cafe guests we must have been!). I enjoyed this time so much that I suggested we record a podcast on the subject, not that I thought anyone would listen, but because it would be a good excuse for me to trick my friends into doing this more regularly. The ruse worked, and Art of the Score was born!

Why do I tell you any of this story, dear audience member who loves Hisaishi and has likely never heard of Art of the Score? Because that original premise of wanting to spend more time with my friends, geeking-out about great moments in film music and showing each other "the best bits" is exactly how we've designed our concert tonight. So I invite you, our new friends, to hang out with our friend and guest conductor Jessica Gethin, Dan and myself as we explore this wonderful music with you. This time, however, someone let us use a concert hall instead of a café, and 80 of the finest orchestral musicians in the country instead of an iPhone. Truly we are in for a treat tonight!

Andrew Pogson Presenter & Creative Director

Program Note

Despite being one of the most successful film composers of all time, sometimes it can feel a little bit like being a fan of Joe Hisaishi is to be a member of a secret club.

That's not to say that club is in any sense small. With more than 80 film soundtracks, 40 solo albums, and Billboard number one hits, the Joe Hisaishi fan club may well be the biggest secret club on the planet.

But perhaps unlike many of the other big-name film composers today, you either love Hisaishi and his music, or you don't know him at all. Chances are, by being at this concert, you love

Hisaishi and are an enthusiastic member of this wonderful club. There are very few Hisaishi fence-sitters out there: once encountered, his music tends to change the way you see and hear the movies. That said, if you're new to his music, we extend you a very warm and wholehearted welcome.

However, Joe Hisaishi is an enigma for many, a question ready to be answered. Perhaps it is the singular, unrepeatable nature of his collaborations with director Hayao Miyazaki, his most famous creative partner and one whose beloved movies have made Miyazaki famous the world over. Perhaps it is his broader body of work that is less frequently heard in Australia, like his collaborations with Nobuhiko Obayashi, Takeshi Kitano, Hisaishi's own directorial debut with the film *Quartet* (2001), or his extensive and quite wonderful non-soundtrack concert hall works. Or perhaps the enigma is the man himself, quietly spoken and modest to a fault, despite being personally responsible for some of the best loved compositions of the last several decades.

Indeed, the enigma begins with a name, as Joe Hisaishi was born as Mamoru Fujisawa in 1950 in Nakano, Japan. The young Fujisawa studied music composition at Kunitachi College of Music, where he quickly fell in love with the minimalism of the likes of Terry Riley, Steve Reich, and Phillip Glass. This was cutting edge music at the time, a new way of composing that continued to push at the boundaries of the avant-garde in the same way that the serialists or the modernists did earlier in the 20th century, but with a difference: it was also terrifically popular. Minimalism even made its way to the movies, and today the influence of Glass in particular can be heard at cinema multiplexes around the world.

Taking the stage name of 'Joe Hisaishi' from the Japanese transliteration of 'Quincy Jones', the American composer, musician, and producer, the then up-and-coming Hisaishi was recommended by his music publisher in 1983 to anime director Hayao Miyazaki, who was looking for a composer for the 'image album' for *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* (1984). An 'image album' is promotional music, released when an anime is announced to generate excitement and imagination. Usually a lesser-known composer does this work before making way for a bigger name and the final film, but Miyazaki was so impressed with Hisaishi's approach that he demanded Hisaishi compose the full *Nausicaä* score. And with that, the great Hisaishi-Miyazaki collaborative relationship began.

Although the famous Studio Ghibli would not be born until 1985, in many ways, *Nausicaä* set the tone. *Nausicaä* is a film about nature, technology, and war, all themes that Hisaishi would return to time and again with Miyazaki. Musically, in *Nausicaä*, there is minimalism, there is contemporary synth pop, and there is the kind of lyrical orchestral sweep that would make Hisaishi so beloved in films like *My Neighbour Totoro* (1988), *Ponyo* (2008), and *Spirited Away* (2001). Then there is also the menace and the wistfulness of *Princess Mononoke* (1997) and *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), the latter of which has found renewed life in the internet era as a popular soundtrack for social media.

People tend to talk about the food of Miyazaki's movies and the way it is so lovingly – and deliciously – animated. But it is nature and the world around us that sets Miyazaki's movies apart. Next time you revisit any of his films, watch the trees, the wind, the rain, and the waves. There is a buoyant stillness to Miyazaki's ecological worlds, and it is Hisaishi's music that gives

it that crucial life. The word 'Ghibli' was selected by Miyazaki from the Libyan Arabic for 'hot desert wind', with the idea that the studio would have a similar effect on the anime industry. Hisaishi's music is Miyazaki's own secret hot desert wind, breathing vitality into every frame. Miyazaki's films depict our environment at its most intoxicating, but just as hair, clothes, and leaves are squashed and stretched by the animator's wind and rain, they are also enlivened by Hisaishi's brass, his woodwinds, his strings, his mastery of the orchestra.

Although Hisaishi's music makes the fullest use of the orchestral palette in finding each film's soul, the piano is as central to his music as nature is to Miyazaki's images. Frequently, while listening to a Hisaishi soundtrack, a peal of piano will emerge out of a fog of orchestra, presenting the listener with a startlingly well-defined melody or romantic turn. The piano is, after all, where Hisaishi writes.

Despite being best known for his collaborations with Miyazaki, Hisaishi has formed prolific partnerships with other directors and projects – another enigma to some, but one that rewards exploration. Alongside his work with director Nobuhiko Obayashi (*Chizuko's Younger Sister* from 1991, and *Samurai Kids* from 1993), there's also collaborations with Takeshi Kitano, whose darker edged crime dramas afforded Hisaishi the opportunity to flex his dramatic musical muscles. Hisaishi wrote music for seven of Kitano's films, including the Venice Film Festival Golden Lion-winning *Hana-bi* (1997), about a violent police detective forced to retire after an accident. Hisaishi also wrote music for Yōjirō Takita's *Departures* (2008), a film where music is doubly important as it follows a struggling cellist who takes on work as a mortician. *Departures* became the first Japanese film to win the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. Hisaishi also scored the key entries in the popular role-playing videogame series *Ni no Kuni*.

More recently, Hisaishi has concentrated on composing music for the concert hall and returning to his first love of American minimalist music. Hisaishi has assembled an impressive body of concert works, including symphonies and multiple compositions for contexts ranging from orchestra to small ensemble.

Hisaishi should be an enigma no more. To those of us who know his music, he rightfully takes his place as one of the greatest film composers ever, and certainly the names Miyazaki and Hisaishi sit comfortably alongside other director-composer combinations like Hitchcock and Herrmann, and Spielberg and Williams.

Yet Hisaishi's work also speaks to something even more essential than the powers of a good soundtrack or a great concert hall work. At his best, Joe Hisaishi's music connects with the greatest enigmas that there are: the planet, our existence, our altruism for others, and a hot wind breathing life into a childlike reverence for nature.

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Jessica Gethin | Conductor

Award-winning conductor Jessica Gethin is recognised for her dynamic presence on the podium, musical versatility and inspiring artistic leadership. Equally at home in the concert hall and theatre, her repertoire spans symphonic, opera, ballet, film and contemporary works. She performs regularly with all of Australia's major orchestras, including the Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, West Australian, Queensland and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras as well as Orchestra Victoria, and works extensively with the West Australian Ballet and The Australian Ballet.

International engagements have taken her throughout Asia, New Zealand and the United States, for appearances with orchestras including the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Malaysian Philharmonic, Orchestra Macao and The Dallas Opera. She has collaborated with distinguished classical artists including Sir Bryn Terfel and Emma Matthews, as well as international jazz and contemporary artists including Harry Connick, Jr., Makoto Ozone, Michael Bolton and Chrissy Amphlett, in projects ranging from symphonic concerts to genre-crossing productions presented at leading venues including the Sydney Opera House, Sidney Myer Music Bowl and Carnegie Hall, New York.

Jessica currently serves as Principal Conductor of West Australian Ballet, Artistic Advisor to Orchestra Victoria, and Head of Orchestral Studies and Conducting at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, where she mentors the next generation of conductors and orchestral musicians. From 2011–2019, she was Chief Conductor of the Perth Symphony, shaping the orchestra's artistic growth and national profile. She is also an ambassador and lead faculty member for Perth Symphony's Women on the Podium initiative, championing greater representation and leadership pathways for women in conducting.

Her accolades include being named twice in Limelight Magazine's Top 20 Australian Artists, inclusion in the Australian Financial Review's 100 Most Influential Women, the Brian Stacey Emerging Australian Conductor Award, a Churchill Fellowship, appointment as an inaugural Hart Institute Fellow with The Dallas Opera, finalist for West Australian of the Year, and induction into the 2024 WA Women's Hall of Fame.

Dan Golding | Presenter

Dan Golding is Professor of Media at Monash University, the host of Screen Sounds on ABC Classic, and an award-winning composer and writer. Dan is the author of *Star Wars After Lucas* (University of Minnesota Press, 2019), and created the soundtrack for the BAFTA, DICE, and GDCA winning *Untitled Goose Game* (2019). Other composing includes the soundtracks for *Mars First Logistics* (2023), *Push Me Pull You* (2016) and the *Frog Detective* series, for which his score for *The Haunted Island* (2018) won the inaugural APRA-AMCOS Australian Game Developer award for Best Music.

Dan also composed the theme for the ABC's flagship podcast, ABC News Daily. Find him on Instagram and Bluesky.

Andrew Pogson | Presenter

Andrew Pogson is a concert producer, director and presenter with more than twenty five years in the music industry, and the founder and Creative Director of Melbourne's Concert Lab.

For over a decade he was Head of Presentations and Senior Manager, Special Projects at the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, conceiving and producing multiple world premieres — from the Doctor Who Symphonic Spectacular to film music projects with Nick Cave and Warren Ellis, all the way to The Wiggles Meet The Orchestra — and programming concerts with artists from Sting and Randy Newman to Tim Minchin. He conceived and produced both Flight Facilities Live with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Symphonica with Armand van Helden, each Helpmann-nominated for Best Australian Contemporary Concert, with the former's recording winning the 2016 ARIA Award for Best Classical Album.

As a presenter, he co-created and hosts Art of the Score live in concert, performing with every one of Australia's major symphony orchestras and internationally with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Hong Kong Philharmonic and the Auckland Philharmonia. Find him on Instagram @andrewjpogson or online at concertlab.com.au.

Aura Go | Piano

Aura Go is an Australian pianist whose practice spans performance, collaboration, curation, education and artistic research. She performs across the globe, as soloist in concertos from J.S. Bach to Sofia Gubaidulina, as recitalist and chamber musician in programs that interweave old and new music, and as creative collaborator in the development of performance projects. In recent years, Aura has worked as concerto soloist with orchestras such as the Melbourne, Adelaide and Queensland Symphony Orchestras, Tapiola Sinfonietta, the Melbourne Chamber Orchestra and Orchestra Victoria. Aura has performed at international festivals including the Edinburgh Festival, Melbourne International Arts Festival, Australian Festival of Chamber Music, Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival, PianoEspoo, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Metropolis Festival, and the Musica Viva Festival.

Aura enjoys a regular collaboration with cellist Timo-Veikko Valve, with whom she recorded the complete Beethoven cello and piano sonatas for ABC Classics. Other recordings to her credit include first recordings of Japanese works for four-hands and two pianos with KIAZMA Piano Duo partner Tomoe Kawabata, and a recent release of first recordings of piano duets by Ekaterina Komalkova with Ian Munro. In 2023 Aura toured nationally for Musica Viva as pianist-actor in the new stage adaptation of Paul Kildea's *Chopin's Piano*.

Aura is Head of Piano at the Sir Zelman Cowen School of Music and Performance at Monash University. A passionate educator, she has been visiting artist at the Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Arkansas (USA), the Royal Academy of Music in Aarhus (Denmark), the Feliks Nowowiejski Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz (Poland) and the Australian National Academy of Music. She has taught piano at Yale College (USA) and the Sibelius Academy (Finland). Following studies at the Victorian College of the Arts and the Australian National Academy of Music, Aura completed her Master of Music at the Yale School of Music. Aura received her doctorate from the Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki, where her artistic research drew on the acting methodology of Michael Chekhov to explore the embodied imagination, creativity, and collaboration in music performance.

Art of the Score

Art of the Score is a Melbourne-based podcast that explores, demystifies and celebrates some of the greatest soundtracks of all time from the world of film, TV and video games. In each episode hosts Andrew Pogson, Dan Golding and Nicholas Buc check out a soundtrack they love, break down its main themes, explore what makes the score tick and hopefully impart their love of the world of soundtracks.

Art of the Score has been recommended by The New York Times, enjoyed time in the iTunes Top 10, What's Hot and New & Noteworthy lists and is listened to by soundtrack geeks all around the world. Head on over to artofthescore.com.au for more nerdery and tomfoolery.

Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Violins

Cameron Hill** (Acting Concertmaster)
Holly Piccoli** (Acting Associate Concertmaster)
Helen Ayres* (Guest Principal 1st Violin)
Lachlan Bramble** (Acting Principal 2nd Violin)
Emma Perkins~ (Acting Associate Principal 2nd Violin)
Janet Anderson
Runa Baagøe
Erna Berberyan
Minas Berberyan
Gillian Braithwaite
Julia Brittain
Nadia Buck
Chia-Nan Hung
Zsuzsa Leon

Lucy Macourt
Alexis Milton
Michael Milton
Julie Newman
Liam Osborne
Alexander Permezel
Alison Rayner
Kemerì Spurr

Violas

Michael Robertson** (Acting Section Principal)
Rosi McGowran~ (Acting Associate Principal)
Martin Alexander
Samvel Berberyan
Oliver Brown
Andrew Crothers
Teagan Freer
Linda Garrett

Cellos

Sharon Grigoryan** (Acting Section Principal)
David Sharp~ (Acting Associate Principal)
Joseph Freer
Kate Hwang
David Moran
Cameron Waters

Double Basses

Belinda Kendall-Smith** (Acting Section Principal)
Harley Gray~ (Acting Associate Principal)
Jacky Chang
Holly Little
Gustavo Quintino

Flutes

Julia Grenfell** (Acting Section Principal)
Lisa Gill

Piccolo

Caitlin Malcolm* (Guest Principal)

Oboes

Joshua Oates**
Renaë Stavelly~

Cor Anglais

Peter Duggan*

Clarinets

Dean Newcomb**

Darren Skelton

Bass Clarinet

Mitchell Berick*

Bassoons

Mark Gaydon**

Chiara Panetta

Contra Bassoon

Jackie Newcomb*

Horns

Adrian Uren**

Emma Gregan

Philip Paine*

Timothy Skelly

Trumpets

David Khafagi**

Martin Phillipson~

Gregory Frick

Trombones

Colin Prichard**

Ian Denbigh

John Gluyas

Bass Trombone

Amanda Tillett*

Tuba

Stan McDonald*

Timpani

Andrew Penrose*

Percussion

Steven Peterka**

Sami Butler~

Jamie Adam

Amanda Grigg

Ryan Grunwald

Harp

Jessica Fotinos*

Keyboard

Jamie Cock* (Guest Principal)

** denotes Section Principal

~ denotes Associate Principal

* denotes Principal Player

Production

Jess Thomas Stage Manager

Josh Cutts Lighting Designer

Adelaide Festival Centre

Matt Dodds Head Mx

Graham Silver Venue Head LX

Adam Budgen FOH Sound

Jackson Price FOH Sound Training

Matt Adams Monitor Operator

Tarlee Penwill Floor Sound

Tom Garrett Floor Sound

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