



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

## **MSO SIDNEY MYER MUSIC BOWL FREE CONCERT**

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**Mr Michael Ullmer AO**, Chairman of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and board members

**Ms Sophie Galaise**, Managing Director of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

**The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor Sally Capp**

**Distinguished guests**

**Ladies and gentlemen, Boys and girls**

Standing here this evening, I am conscious of so much that is good about Victoria.

First, I think of the First Nations people who have cared for this beautiful land for millennia. In doing so, I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering this evening and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to Elders here with us.

In this setting, I think of the generosity of Victoria's philanthropists, like the Myer family, who have gifted us this beautiful performance space. And I think of and am grateful for our iconic institutions, such as the University of Melbourne, that has helped bring us this special performance.

Of course, front of mind as I stand here, is the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Australia's oldest professional orchestra.

For more than 90 of its 114 years, the MSO has upheld the tradition of this free outdoor concert. In that, and in so many other ways, the MSO has been a magnificent contributor to Victoria's reputation as a creative State, and a major contributor to our love of music. Many a youngster has attended one of these concerts and been inspired to play and listen to music.

You, the audience, are also a special part of this tradition. You are amongst some 4 million people who have now attended one of these outdoor concerts.

This year, you, the MSO – all of us – are part of something else. We gather in the cloud – at times literally as well as figuratively – of the awful bushfires that have ravaged parts of Victoria and other States.

We are grateful that we can gather together. That music brings us together.

We might come from many different backgrounds, but we can be unified by the universal language and emotion of music.

As this evening's concert is broadcast across Australia, it will reach those who are directly affected by the loss, the trauma and the continuing challenge of the fires.

A message to them: our thoughts are with you at such a difficult time.

Our thoughts are also with all those who show such courage in fighting the fires, and all our emergency services personnel. We thank them all, as we thank every single person and organisation who has helped and who will go on to help with the rebuilding process.

Finally, standing here, I can see the generosity of our people. Thank you to all of you who are donating to the bushfire relief funds.

It is a pleasure to be here. I am indeed the proud Patron of our MSO and Tony and I look forward to being a part of the shared experience that will be brought to us by this evening's brilliant musicians and performers.