

Thousands of primary school students across Australia to join the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in live concert webcast



Tuesday 24 October, 2017 – Over 650,000 school students across Australia will come together next month to sing with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra (SSO). The SSO Schools Concert, in collaboration with Music: Count Us In and The Arts Unit (NSW Department of Education), is part of the national music Celebration Day on Thursday, 2 November.

Around 700 primary students will join the SSO live in concert at the Seymour Centre while 3000 schools nationwide will watch a simultaneous live stream of the concert by the NSW Department of Education. Students from Bendigo to Bourke, Dubbo to Darwin, and right across the country will sing the song that stops the nation.

Students will sing the 2017 program song for Music: Count Us In, *Shine Together*, on 2 November. The SSO will support this nationwide music celebration by performing the song at each of its schools concerts held at the Seymour Centre that week, including the performance that will be shared with schools nationally as they prepare for Music Count Us In.

The official Music: Count Us In national singalong will take place at the conclusion of the SSO's performance of 'The Bush Concert', which will see the musicians of the SSO bring the sounds of the Australian bush alive in a heart-warming interactive performance for students in years K-6.

Sydney Symphony Orchestra Director of Learning and Engagement Linda Lorenza said the orchestra was excited to collaborate with Music: Count Us In and the NSW Government to enable even more children to experience a live orchestral concert.

"Music: Count Us In is such an exciting day for students and teachers across the country because there's that sense of connection as they all sing the song especially composed for the event on the

same day at the same time around Australia. All of the children who experience the SSO's concert – both virtually and live – will get to sing along with the musicians of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, making this the ultimate music celebration.

“The SSO performs to around 18,000 school students each year at our interactive schools concerts, but we can't physically reach every school across the state,” she added.

“Through this collaboration with the NSW Department of Education, we're inviting thousands more students across the nation to experience what a live orchestral concert is like. Joining with Music: Count Us In means we can share the experience with even more students nationwide!”

Adelaide composer Mark Simeon Ferguson has composed the music for the orchestra to conjure all the sounds of the bush birds that populate the pages of Helga Visser's classic picture book, *The Bush Concert*.

In this concert Barry Conrad (*Beautiful, The X Factor*) will tell Visser's endearing story of how, during a terrible drought, the birds put on a gala concert to cheer themselves up with singing, dancing and magic tricks. Students across NSW will be encouraged to read the book in advance so they can pick the “galahs” and “noisy miners” from among the different instruments on the Seymour Centre stage.

The Sydney Symphony Orchestra is grateful for the support of its Schools Concerts Partner Sydney Airport.

NOTES:

- In 2016 more than 18,200 school children, aged four to 18, and their teachers attended 40 SSO schools concerts across greater Sydney, Newcastle, Taree and Port Macquarie.
- *The Bush Concert* is listed on the NSW Premier's Reading Challenge Booklist.
- Author Helga Visser will be in attendance at the concert.
- More information about Music Count Us In can be found [HERE](#).
- Watch one child's experience of an SSO Schools Concert [HERE](#).
- Schools can watch the live stream through their Music Count Us In live channel or [register to receive the live stream link](#) at DART Connections (registrations remain open until 2 November)

#ENDS#

IMAGE: TIM WALSH

MEDIA FILMING/PHOTO OPP:

Date: Thursday 2 November

Time: 10.30am-11.30am **

Location: York Theatre, The Seymour Centre, cnr Cleveland St and City Rd, Chippendale, Sydney

What:

The Bush Concert

FERGUSON The Bush Concert (based on the book by Helga Visser)

Toby Thatcher conductor

Barry Conrad narrator

Please RSVP by Friday 27 October to SSO Publicist Alyssa Lim on (02) 8215 4694 or at alyssa.lim@sydneysymphony.com

** This performance is one of several 50-minute performances by the SSO for primary school students taking place at the Seymour Centre on 31 October-3 November, at 10.30am and 12pm. The live stream is taking place on Thursday 2 November only.