

Concordia

Mandolin & Guitar Ensemble

in concert at

Airlie Ivanhoe

1 Waverley Road, Ivanhoe

Sunday 21st September 2025 at 2:00pm

presenting

From Baroque to The Beatles



Concordia in concert at Airlie in July 2024

Musical Directors:

Juliette Maxwell and Basil Hawkins

Soloists:

Michelle Nelson (Guitar), Mujgan Tamer (Mandolin), Holly Brick (Mandola)
and Juliette Maxwell (Accordion)

Our Program

Rumba

Dieter Kreidler

Granada *

Isaac Albéniz (arr. J. Woods)

Recuerdos de la Alhambra *

Francisco Tárrega

**Here, There and Everywhere /
Michelle**

John Lennon and Paul McCartney

Il melograno

Mikis Theodorakis (arr. F. Witt)

Chanson de Matin

Edward Elgar (arr. B. Hawkins)

Romanze

Théodore Ritter (Holly Brick - Mandola)

Kolo Kolo *

Stephen Lalor (Mujgan Tamer – Mandolin)

Interval

Concerto for Lute in D Major *

Antonio Vivaldi (Michelle Nelson - Guitar)

- Allegro giusto
- Largo
- Allegro

The Godfather Suite

Nino Rota (arr. S. Prophet)

- The Godfather Waltz
- Theme I
- Tarantella
- Theme II

Czardas

(Mujgan Tamer - Mandolin)

Vittorio Monti (arr. K. Jensen & B. Hawkins)

Too Much Heaven

The Bee Gees (arr. H. Boyde)

Hungarian Journey

François Menichetti

Valse Ballet

Erik Satie (arr. M Nelson) (Juliette Maxwell - Accordion)

Libertango *

Astor Piazzolla (arr. M Nelson) (Juliette Maxwell – Accordion)

* You can read about these works and composers in the **Program Notes** below

*We wish to thank the members of the **Melbourne Mandolin Orchestra (MMO)** who have joined Concordia for today's concert.*

Our Players

Musical Directors

Juliette Maxwell and Basil Hawkins

First Mandolins

Marion Blazé (Leader), Mujgan Tamer (MMO), Jenny Krohn, Evan Webb and Raymond Mizzi

Second Mandolins

Jenny Whittam, Shirley Watson, Margaret O'Donnell and Celia Doncon

Mandolas

Holly Brick, Joan Harris and Nola Mackay

Guitars

Michelle Nelson, Carol Robinson, Bill Vrijens (MMO) and Terry Killen

Mandocello

Bill Vrijens (MMO)

Double Bass

Bruce Packard

Soloists

Michelle Nelson (Guitar), Mujgan Tamer (Mandolin), Holly Brick (Mandola) and Juliette Maxwell (Accordion)

Our Leaders and Soloists

Musical Director and Accordion Soloist - Juliette Maxwell



Originally from England, **Juliette Maxwell** began learning the accordion at the age of eight. Initially self-taught, Juliette drew her inspiration from her mother, who was also an accomplished musician. Since joining Concordia in 1994, Juliette has played the accordion, the double bass and percussion. Juliette has been a soloist for the **Melbourne Mandolin Orchestra** and was its guest conductor at its June concert. Juliette has performed in the stage show *Fiddler on the Roof* (featuring Topol) at Melbourne's Regent Theatre. Juliette has considerable experience as a conductor, including directing the musicals *My Fair Lady* and *Les Misérables*.

Ensemble Leader - Marion Blazé



Marion Blazé joined Concordia in 2015 and has been its leader since 2017. Marion began playing mandolin with the Melbourne Mandolin Orchestra and was a member of its 50th Anniversary European tour in 2018. Marion played with **La Serenata**, a small mandolin and guitar ensemble which regularly brought the joy of mandolin music to those living in retirement homes who were unable to attend concerts. Marion is very active in the mandolin world, being the president of Concordia and the acting president of Mandolins Victoria.

Emeritus Conductor - Basil Hawkins



Basil Hawkins has been Concordia's musical director since 1989. Born in India, Basil was awarded a scholarship to the Calcutta School of Music by the age of 16, studying with visiting professors Jean and Kenneth Wentworth from New York's Julliard School of Music. He studied at the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, where he was awarded degrees in teaching, performance and conducting. Basil has been involved in music education for many years, teaching violin and piano. Basil is best known for his work in conducting musicals, light opera and orchestras.

Guitar Leader, Resident Composer and Guitar Soloist – Michelle Nelson



Michelle Nelson is a Melbourne based guitarist, composer and creative educator. She was the guitar section leader for the Melbourne Mandolin Orchestra from 2001 to 2010 and joined Concordia in 2013. Michelle's compositions for plucked stringed instruments blend contemporary with traditional practices and attract regular airplay and performances in Australia, Europe and the UK.

Holly Brick – Mandola Leader and Soloist



Raised in Sydney, **Holly Brick** began her musical studies on the guitar. Upon relocating to Melbourne, she commenced learning mandolin with the Concordia training orchestra in 2003. Since that time, Holly has been actively playing both the mandolin and mandola with Mandolins D'amour and Concordia. As well as being a music educator, Holly volunteers in aged care facilities, running music programmes for those living with dementia. Holly is also a much sought-after bass guitar player in the Melbourne jazz and soul scene, performing with the Women of Soul Collective, Joys Jambi and the Melba Big Band, with a notable performance at the recent Byron Bay Bluesfest.

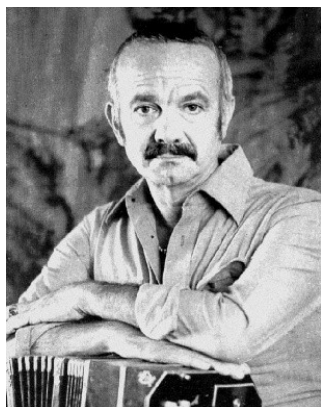
Mujgan Tamer - Mandolin



Born in Izmir, Turkey, **Mujgan Tamer** was inspired by her grandfather, a notable Turkish musician, to begin her own musical journey. Originally a mandolin player, Mujgan also specialised in the classical guitar, playing both solo and group concerts in the concert halls of Turkey. Migrating to Australia in 1993, Mujgan continued to pursue her musical passion, and, encouraged by the Turkish community, she performed at many cultural events in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne, including Australia Day commemorations, where her extraordinary talents were on show. Mujgan took a break from music in 2000, returning in 2024 as a mandolin player with the Melbourne Mandolin Orchestra. We are indeed thankful that she did!

Program Notes

Libertango – Astor Piazzolla (1921 – 1992)



Astor Piazzolla was an Argentine tango composer, bandoneon player, and arranger. His works revolutionized the traditional tango into a new style termed nuevo tango, incorporating elements from jazz and classical music. A virtuoso bandoneonist, he regularly performed his own compositions with a variety of ensembles. In 1992, American music critic Stephen Holden described Piazzolla as "the world's foremost composer of Tango music". The title *Libertango* is a portmanteau merging "Libertad" (Spanish for "liberty") and "tango". Piazzolla recorded and published *Libertango* in 1974 in Milan, symbolizing his break from classical tango to tango nuevo. While touring in 1977, he and his band performed an extended version of *Libertango* for Radio Télévision Suisse Mosaïque. According to the performance database at *All Music Guide*, *Libertango* has appeared on over 500 separate releases.

Granada - Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909)



Originally written for piano by **Isaac Albéniz**, **Granada** opens his 1886 work *Suite Española No. 1*. It has become one of the most beloved pieces in the Spanish repertoire. Granada paints a romanticized vision of Andalusian charm, filled with longing and beauty and is often associated with the Moorish heritage of Alhambra, the famous palace-fortress of Granada, known for its mystical gardens, intricate Islamic architecture, and timeless history. Since being transcribed for guitar by Miguel Llobet, it has become one of the most important works of the classical guitar repertoire, having been recorded by guitarists such as Bream, Segovia and Williams. Granada's flowing melody and evocative harmonies make it a timeless musical postcard of Spain's deep cultural heritage.

Recuerdos de la Alhambra - Francisco Tárrega (1852 – 1909)



The Alhambra Palace

Recuerdos de la Alhambra (*Memories of the Alhambra*) is a classical guitar piece composed by the iconic Spanish composer and guitarist **Francisco Tárrega** in 1899. The piece conveys the impression of flowing water, shimmering light, and the Moorish grandeur of the palace, all through the delicate interplay of notes that swirl and cascade, much like the fountains and courtyards of the Alhambra itself. The Alhambra has long been a source of inspiration for artists, poets and

musicians. Its stunning Islamic architecture, lush gardens, and panoramic views of the Sierra Nevada mountains have made it a symbol of Moorish Spain's cultural legacy. **Recuerdos de la Alhambra** captures the essence of this magical place, transporting listeners to a world of beauty and mystery. Tárrega composed during the Romantic period, which one can hear in his swooping, melancholy melodies that seem to just 'sing' with passionate emotion, longing, and at times, tragedy.

Concerto for Lute in D Major (RV93) – Antonio Vivaldi (1678 – 1748)



The Concerto for Lute in D Major is one of four works featuring the solo lute, two violins, and basso continuo written by Antonio Vivaldi (pictured). Vivaldi wrote this piece between 1730 and 1731, a period in which he wrote two other works featuring the lute, being the trios for violin and lute in G minor and C major. This concerto is in three movements. The fast tempo first movement begins with a ritornello or little return, (a recurring passage used in Renaissance and Baroque music) played by the violins (mandolins) and then repeated by the solo lute (guitar).

The second movement is described *as a reflective meditation by the soloist against accompaniment by the violins and pizzicato bass*. The third movement is another fast movement written in the 6/8-time signature. This concerto was arranged for mandolin orchestra by the renowned German guitarist and composer **Siegfried Behrend** (1933-1990).

Kolo Kolo – Stephen Lalor



Stephen Lalor has been for many years the mandolin and guitar soloist with the Sydney Symphony, the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, as well as overseas orchestras. He has film, jingle and ABC recording credits to his name. Stephen has performed at Montreux Jazz, Edinburgh and Tanglewood Festivals and was the former Head of Contemporary Performance Australian Institute of Music. Stephen is an internationally renowned performer and published composer for the mandolin orchestra.

Photo: Prudence Upton

Discography

Eclipse (2022)



Commenced in 2018 and intended for release in 2020, this album was eclipsed by the pandemic. All works presented on this album are composed by Michelle Nelson. *Eclipse* was first performed in 2015 at Malvern Town Hall to a large appreciative audience. *Bishops Spell* was commissioned by our leader Marion Blazé (née Bishop) in memory of her parents, Ida and Frank. This album features dazzling solo performances by Will Hardy (recorder) and Darryl Barron (mandola).

Ringing the Strings (2016)



This album boasts music by Peter Sculthorpe, Gabriel Fauré, Stephen Lalor, Erik Satie, François Menichetti and the ensemble's own Michelle Nelson.

Here is a good deal of easy listening, the works selected for their charm and felicitous adaptability to the mandolin/guitar forces available. While there are no Schoenbergian shocks, this CD is amiably honest in its prime intention of entertaining. Clive O'Connell, O'Connell the Music

Flight (2005)



Flight draws on the virtuosic, lively and passionate items in the ensemble's repertoire. The idea of flight is evoked in the choice of many of the pieces, notably *The flight of the bumble bee* and *The witches*. With their energy and vitality, the other pieces in one way or another, echo the rapture of flights of fancy. This album features inspiring solos by Kurt Jensen, Juliette Maxwell and Petra Laity.

Forgotten Dreams (2002)



Concordia's musical director, Basil Hawkins, first came across *The waltz of forgotten dreams* by Manos Hadjidakis in 1999 and was struck by its atmospheric and evocative nature. In keeping with this nostalgic ambience, this album includes pieces such as Eileen Pakenham's *Reverie*, *Sakura* and Fred Witt's *Memories of Bendigo*. Kurt Jensen delivers a masterful mandola solo in Ritter's *Romanze*.

Eclectic Collection (1998)



The mandolin orchestra is versatile both in its own right and as an accompanying ensemble. The Eclectic Collection demonstrates this diversity and distinctive character. Its works range from the Baroque period to more contemporary, and features wonderful solo performances of voice, clarinet, accordion, cello, shakuhachi, flute, oboe and mandolin.

Salut d'Amour (1996)



Concordia's maiden recording features an atmospheric and distinctively beautiful collection of pieces arranged for mandolin orchestra. This album includes works by Wolke, Mozart, Elgar, Dunnebeil and Witt and features soprano Irena Grainge, flautist Petra Webb and accordionist Juliette Maxwell.

About Concordia

The Mandolin Orchestra

Mandolin orchestras have existed in Australia since the beginning of the 20th century. There are currently eight mandolin orchestras in Australia, with Melbourne boasting three of them, namely the *Melbourne Mandolin Orchestra*, *Concordia* and *Mandolins D'Amour*. A mandolin orchestra is an ensemble of plucked string instruments, similar in structure to the string sections of a symphony orchestra. There are the first and second mandolin sections (like the first and second violins), a mandola section (like the violas), classical guitars a double bass and occasionally a mandocello (like a cello). Many such orchestras may also include percussion and instruments such as the accordion, woodwind and brass. Mandolin orchestras enjoy popularity in Australia, Europe, USA, Canada, New Zealand, Japan and the UK.



The Mandolin and Mandola

The *mandolin* is a fretted steel stringed instrument, which evolved in the 18th century from the Italian mandora, a type of lute. It has the same tuning as a violin and is played with a plectrum. The *mandola* is similar to the mandolin, but tuned an octave lower. If you are a violinist and are interested in playing the mandolin, please let us know.



Concordia is a dedicated plucked-strings chamber orchestra based in East Malvern. Formed in 1978, its first conductor was prominent Melbourne guitarist John Griffiths. Concordia has performed hundreds of concerts in Melbourne and regional Victoria. We have toured in Italy in 1984, performing in cities such as Rome, Florence, and Milan. Concordia's repertoire ranges from Baroque to Romantic to contemporary and original Australian works. For more information about Concordia, please check out our new website at concordiamandolins.org.au or scan the QR code.



You can also follow us on Facebook at [concordiamandolins](https://www.facebook.com/concordiamandolins).

Become a Friend of Concordia

If you would like to receive regular information about our concert schedules and recordings, please sign up as a **Friend of Concordia** on our website. We welcome new players, so if you would like to find out more, please talk to us after the concert or contact **Marion Blazé** at president@concordiamandolins.org.au.