



Toronto
Symphony
Orchestra



Let's Dance!

Concert Fact Sheet - May 24, 2026 - 11:00am



**Daniel
Bartholomew-Poyser**
Conductor

A message from the conductor

Welcome to *Let's Dance!* In this concert, you are going to hear dance music from around the world, as well as see some of those dances performed live on stage by an amazing cast of performers. You can expect beautiful costumes, stunning choreography, and eclectic melodies.

This show is one of my favourites and it holds a special place in my heart. It was the first concert I ever conducted at the TSO, and it was also our first Relaxed Performance, a performance where we

encourage you to take care of your needs, to make the performance enjoyable according to what works best for you. We learned so much in that first Relaxed Concert, and I think we may have inspired other organizations to try doing their own. Today, it feels like we've come full circle as we reprise *Let's Dance!*, using everything we've learned in the last six years.

Enjoy the show!

Daniel



When You Visit

Entering Roy Thomson Hall:

- All patrons will enter through the Simcoe Street doors. The lobby opens 60 minutes before the concert begins.
- For more detailed information and to help prepare for your visit, please see our [venue guide](#) at TSO.CA/Relaxed

Concessions & Coat Check:

- There are concessions in the lobby—you can buy snacks and drinks there!
- Roy Thomson Hall is now a cash-free venue that only accepts debit and credit cards, including major contactless and mobile payment methods.
- If you have a reusable water bottle, you can fill it on-site in the lobby at one of the water fountains.
- There is a coat check at the hall. It opens when the lobby opens. It costs \$2 per item to use the coat check. You should bring a debit or credit card if you plan to use the coat check.

Washrooms:

- The washrooms are located toward the front of the building and are behind the large mirrored wall where you first entered. There are family and accessible washrooms on the Main Floor beside the elevator.
- An usher can direct you if you need assistance finding the washrooms.

Resource Tables:

- We will have a limited supply of sound-dampening earmuffs on-site to lend you for free, but we recommend you bring your own if you have a pair at home.

Entering the Auditorium:

- The auditorium will open 60 minutes before the concert begins, at the same time that the lobby opens. This will give you plenty of time to find your seat.
- The ushers will help you to find your seat.
- The Main Floor of the auditorium will be open for this concert. Limited seats will also be available on the Mezzanine.

During the Concert:

- Lights over the audience will remain at approximately 50% brightness during the performance.
- The concert begins at 11:00am and will be approximately one hour in length.
- You will be able to move around the auditorium and lobby during the concert.
- If you like, you can move to the back three rows of the Main Floor to get a different view, or for the sounds to be a little softer. If you need it to be even quieter, you can enjoy the concert from the lobby or from the tunnels—there is a screen in each tunnel where you can view the concert.
- If you need to use the Quiet Room, you can ask an usher to show you where it is.
- Remember, this is a live performance, so things can change!

Things You Will Need to Pay for:

- Parking underneath Roy Thomson Hall, coat check, and concession snacks or drinks. If you do not need these services, you are not required to pay. Parking underneath Roy Thomson Hall costs \$8 per hour, or any part thereof, or \$16 for the day (weekend daily flat rate).

Repertoire Notes

Let's Dance is an exciting orchestral music concert featuring dance music from around the world. During select pieces, there will even be live dancers on stage! If you wish, you are welcome to dance along in your seats.

To get the best possible experience, we highly recommend familiarizing yourself with the music ahead of time by using our [Let's Dance YouTube Playlist](#).

Happy listening!

1. Calixa Lavallée:

[O Canada](#)

[2 minutes]

- At the beginning of the concert, you will hear O Canada performed live! Since this is the Canadian national anthem, everyone who is able to will stand and sing. Even the orchestra musicians will be standing!

2. Antonín Dvořák:

[Slavonic Dances, Op. 72, No. 7](#)

[5 minutes]

- This piece is a lively folk-inspired dance filled with energy and drive.
- It starts fast, with sharp cymbal crashes that come and go throughout. Quick, high violin passages swirl above the orchestra.
- In the middle, booming timpani rumble as the strings swell and fade.
- Near the end, high horns soar over deep drum rolls while violins race to the finish. A bright triangle ring closes the piece.

3. Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky:

[Waltz from Swan Lake Suite, Op. 20a, No. 2](#)

[4 minutes]

Featuring Ballet Dancing

- This piece is a graceful waltz from Tchaikovsky's famous ballet *Swan Lake*.
- It begins with light, plucked strings, then sweeps into bursts of cymbal crashes and horns.
- The beautiful theme is played. It will keep reappearing throughout the piece, sometimes big and bold, other times soft and delicate.
- The music grows higher and higher near the end, full of cymbals and brass, before closing with a final, dramatic crash.

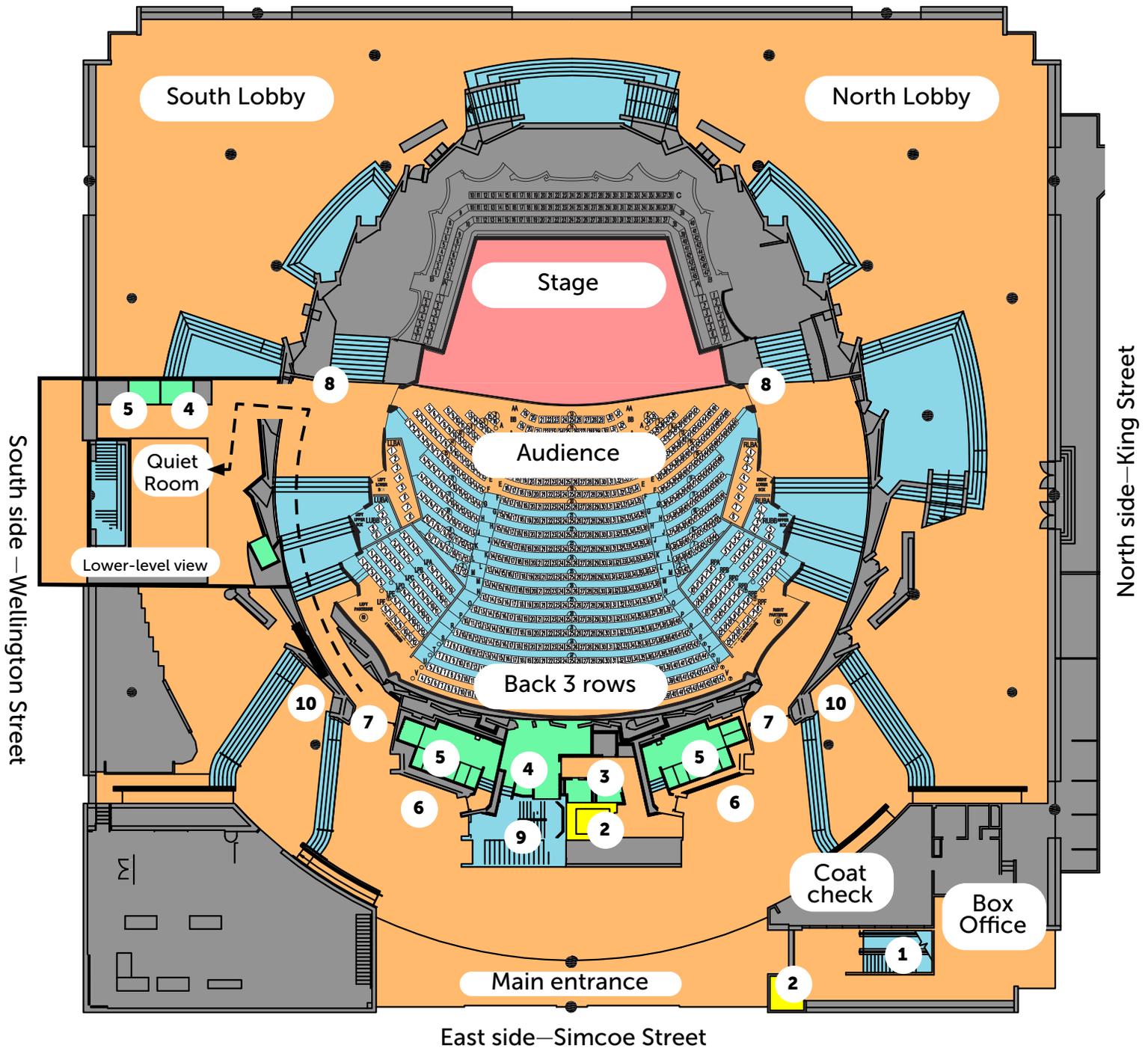
4. Mark Ronson & Bruno Mars/arr. Moore:

["Uptown Funk"](#)

[2 minutes]

- This piece is a funky, modern pop hit reimagined for orchestra.
- It kicks off with snapping fingers and strings, with a steady drum kit groove underneath and throughout the piece.
- As the verse builds toward the chorus, the strings start sliding up their fingerboards. The piece ends with a short, punchy chord.

Main Floor Map

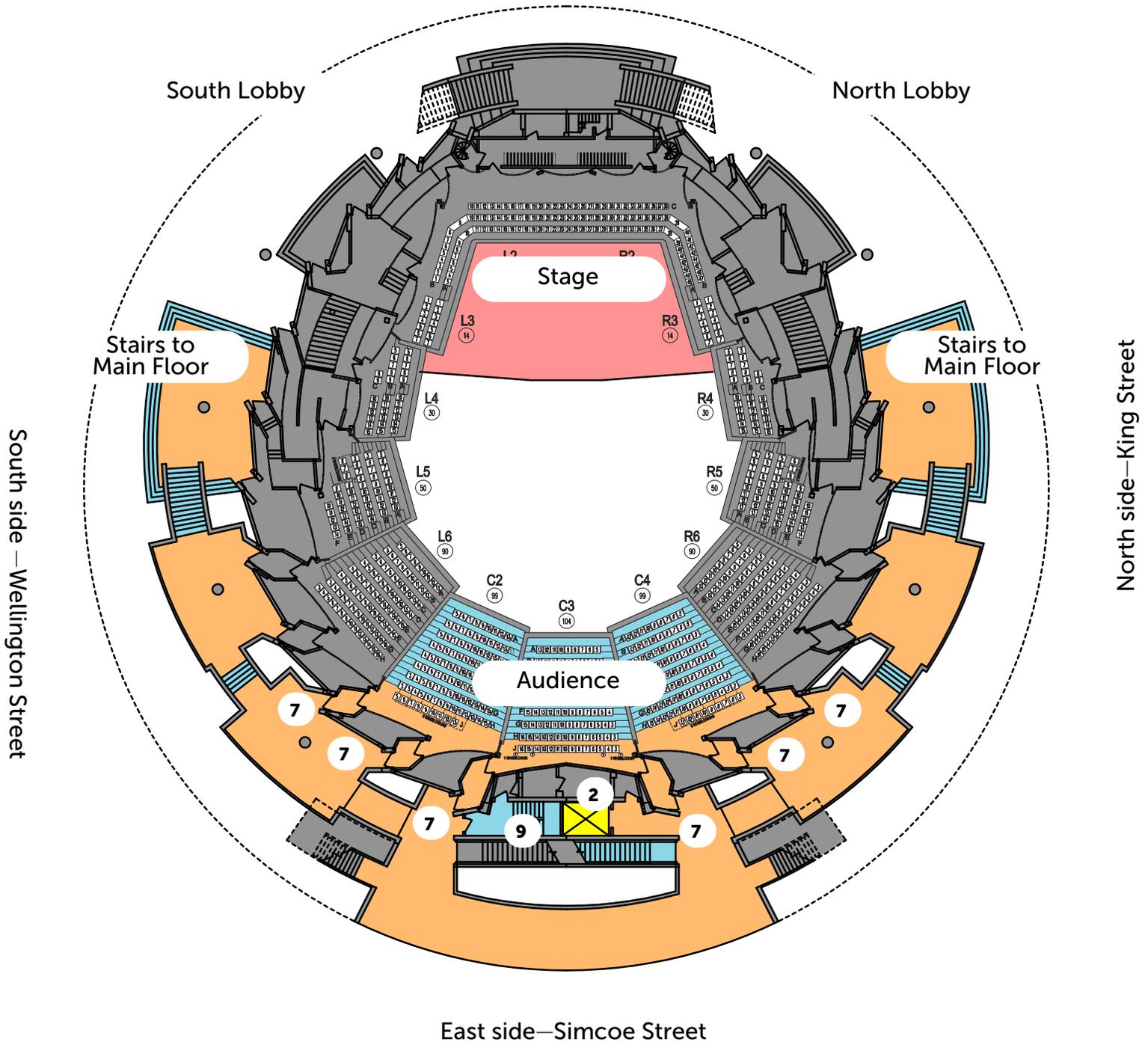


Legend

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Subway PATH | 7. Doors to the auditorium |
| 2. Elevators | 8. TV screens |
| 3. Accessible washrooms | 9. Stairs to access washrooms. |
| 4. Men's washrooms | 10. Water Fountain |
| 5. Women's washrooms | |
| 6. Sensory stations | |

To access the Quiet Room, please use the south tunnel.

Mezzanine Floor Map (2nd Floor)



Legend

1. Subway PATH
2. Elevators
3. Accessible washrooms
4. Men's washrooms
5. Women's washrooms
6. Sensory stations

7. Doors to the auditorium
8. TV screens
9. Stairs to access washrooms in between floors

To access the Quiet Room, you will need to go back down to the Main Floor.

Repertoire Notes

5. Traditional/arr. Anderson:

["Irish Washerwoman"](#)

from The Irish Suite

[3.5 minutes]

Featuring Irish Dancing

- This piece is a playful Irish dance tune full of quick energy.
- It begins with bold horns that call on and off before leaping into the lively main theme. This tune repeats with different instruments taking turns.
- In the middle, deep horns and percussion join in as the pace picks up.
- Near the end, cymbal crashes and fast percussion drive the excitement higher, ending with one big cymbal crash.

6. Ranjit Bawa/arr. Bartholomew-Poyser:

["Jatt Mele Aa Gya"](#)

[3 minutes]

Featuring Bhangra Dancing

- This is a cheerful, bouncy, fast-paced song that will make you want to dance!
- We'll be playing an orchestral arrangement. It will be very similar to the original, but it will sound different.
- In the original song, the tumbi is the first instrument heard, immediately bringing the energy and liveliness to the piece. A tumbi is a high-pitched, single-string plucking instrument.
- The dhol is also used in this song, providing both high and low pitched drum sounds.
- A sapp is employed to emulate a clapping sound, played by both the musicians and sometimes by the dancers as a prop. It looks a bit like an wooden accordion that you open and close to make a clapping sound!

7. Liu Tieshan & Mao Yuan:

[Dance of the Yao People](#)

[5 minutes]

Featuring Chinese Dancing

- This piece is a Chinese folk-inspired work.
- It opens with a gentle string melody and light plucking while woodwinds weave in counter-melodies.
- A sudden cymbal crash launches a fast, full-orchestra section, which fades back to the soft theme. This pattern repeats, with crescendos and booming timpani leading to another lively dance. The piece ends with a bright, energetic finish.

8. Béla Bartók

Romanian Folk Dances

[3 minutes]

- [Mvt. 1 \(Stick Dance\)](#) - In this first movement, the lower strings play a steady, pulsating rhythm while the violins play a beautiful melody over top.
- [Mvt. 5 \(Romanian Polka\) & Mvt. 6 \(Fast Dance\)](#) - These final two dances are performed *attacca*, meaning there is no a break between movements. The polka is a happy dance with a quick, bouncy rhythm. The fast dance is just as cheerful, but even faster!

9. J.S. Bach:

[Cello Suite No. 1 in G Major, Prélude](#)

[3 minutes]

Featuring Modern Dancing

- This is peaceful and calm music played by a single cellist. It is one of the most popular cello pieces of all time.
- Throughout the music, you will hear arpeggiating chords, meaning the notes in the chords will be played one by one rather than all at once.

Repertoire Notes

- Yo-Yo Ma once described this piece as "constant but always changing". Throughout the piece, the bass note will often be repeated while the harmony keeps changing above.

10. Traditional/arr. Bartholomew-Poyser:

[*Hlonolofatsa*](#)

[4 minutes]

Featuring Afro-Fusion Dancing

- This happy-sounding piece begins with low bassoon and solo oboe, soon joined by bursts of South African drums.
- The music shifts from dark to bright, moving between winds, brass, and strings. As the bassoon and drums return, the marimba brightens the sound before building to a joyful peak with the orchestra.
- Towards the end, a drum roll leads to the orchestra musicians shouting "Hlonolofatsa!" followed by an energetic finish.

11. James Poyser/arr. Daniel Bartholomew-Poyser:

Three Hip Hop Moments

[4 minutes]

Featuring Hip Hop Dancing

- This piece is a groovy, hip-hop orchestral work.
- Drums set the beat while smooth melodies float above.
- Later, a solo trumpet steps forward, answered by more brass.
- In the middle, the music drops to just drums and chimes.
- Towards the end, the beat shifts, strings pluck, and the orchestra shouts "Hey!" a few times.
- It closes with a smooth, sustained - but short - ending.

12. Leonard Bernstein/arr. Peress:

[*"Mambo!"*](#)

from *West Side Story*

[2 minutes]

- This thrilling piece is a fiery Latin dance number from *West Side Story*.
- It opens with fast drums and short trumpet blasts, with trumpets using flutter-tongue for extra flair.
- About 45 seconds in, the orchestra musicians shout "Mambo!" They do this again later in the piece as the excitement builds.
- Near the end, a trumpet soars high before the whole piece stops with one sharp, snappy note.



Have a Question?

Call: 416.598.3375
(Mon–Fri, 9:30am–5:00pm)

Email: contactus@TSO.CA

For more information:
[TSO.CA/Relaxed](https://www.tso.ca/Relaxed)