

2009 SEASON
DISCOVERY PROGRAM
PRESENTED BY TENIX

DISCOVER HANDEL

Tuesday 30 June | 6.30pm
City Recital Hall Angel Place

Richard Gill conductor
Nicholas Carter conductor*
Sydney Sinfonia



This concert will be recorded for later broadcast in the summer on ABC Radio National.

HANDEL

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba*
Sinfonia to Act III of the oratorio Solomon

Concerto grosso in E minor, Op.6 No.3

Larghetto
Allegro
Polonaise (Andante)

Sinfonia from the oratorio *Messiah*

The ABC Classics DVD of the Discovery Program is now available. Buy online at sydney_symphony.com/shop

Discover more Handel in 2009 with the Sydney Symphony:
Meet the Concerto
(9–10 September)

PRESENTING PARTNER



ABOUT THE MUSIC

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

Born Halle, 1685; died London, 1759

Handel's appealing and cosmopolitan musical style was shaped by his extensive travels. The years he spent in Italy consolidated his status as one of the foremost composers of Italian opera. This was how he initially made his name in England, achieving a triumphant success with his opera *Rinaldo* at the age of 25. When the English taste for Italian opera began to fade he turned to a new medium: the English sacred oratorio.

Handel's most famous oratorio, *Messiah*, was completed in just 24 days – an intense spell of composition that came to a climax with the writing of the Hallelujah chorus when, he said, "I think I did see all Heaven before me and the great God Himself." The opening Sinfonia to *Messiah* is a grand overture in the French style: beginning in majestic solemnity and ending with a vibrant fugue led by the oboes.

Six years later, the oratorio *Solomon* was also swiftly composed. Using the same dramatic instinct that had served him so well in his many operas, Handel crafted the story from the Old Testament, drawing a comparison between his adopted nation of England and the people of Israel. The instantly recognisable 'Arrival of the Queen of Sheba' from Act III of the oratorio describes the arrival of the Arabian queen at Solomon's palace. Calling for two oboes, continuo and strings, this bustling and brilliant sinfonia suggests the pomp of the occasion.

Handel frequently borrowed material from his own earlier compositions, not to mention those of his contemporaries. His treatment of existing melodies and musical ideas, rather than simply sounding 'recycled', led his contemporary, William Boyce, to remark that Handel 'takes pebbles and converts them into diamonds'.

Handel's 'Grand Concertos', Opus 6, are an assimilation and expansion of the model of the *concerti grossi* by Arcangelo Corelli, his former teacher. Corelli's pieces were still enjoying an enormous popularity in London 25 years after their composition – a fact that would not have escaped Handel-the-businessman, with his eye for profit.

Handel's concertos call for the same ensemble as the Italian master's: a solo group of two violins and cello, called the *concertino*, accompanied by a larger four-part ensemble of strings, or *ripieno*, with continuo. (In tonight's performance our conductors will play the keyboard continuo parts.)



Sinfonias & Overtures

In Handel's time, a sinfonia (literally 'symphony') served as an instrumental prelude or overture to an opera, occasionally also performed as an interlude between acts. In Italian opera the sinfonia was a short, vigorous orchestral piece, usually in three movements (fast – slow – fast/dance-like). Eventually this type of sinfonia evolved into the Classical symphony of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. Tonight we also hear another kind of 'Sinfonia', adopting the dramatic French overture style popularised by composers such as Lully and Rameau.

ABOUT THE CONDUCTORS

RICHARD GILL conductor

SANDRA & PAUL SALTERI CHAIR OF ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, EDUCATION

Richard Gill is the Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony's Education Program. In 2006 he was appointed Music Director of the then newly formed Victorian Opera Company, where his performances have since included *Les Noceurs*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Così fan tutte*, Puccini's Mass, *The Coronation of Poppea* and Sing Your Own Opera. He has also been Artistic Director of OzOpera, Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra and the Adviser for the Musica Viva in Schools Program.

Richard has frequently conducted for Opera Australia and OzOpera, and in recent seasons has conducted Meet the Music concerts with the Sydney Symphony, Discovery concerts with the Sydney Sinfonia; the Melbourne, Canberra, Queensland and Tasmanian symphony orchestras; Sing Your Own Opera at the Melbourne International Festival of the Arts; and the Brisbane and Melbourne premiere seasons of *The Love of the Nightingale* by Richard Mills.

His operatic repertoire includes *Orpheus in the Underworld*, *Faust*, *The Gondoliers*, Moya Henderson's *Lindy*, *The Eighth Wonder* by Alan John and Dennis Watkins, *Macbeth*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Il trovatore*, *Roméo et Juliette*, *La Périochole*, *The Merry Widow*, *Fidelio*, *Turandot*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *The Force of Destiny*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *Il combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda*, *The Love for Three Oranges*, *Julius Caesar* and *The Marriage of Figaro*. For OzOpera he has conducted *Carmen*, *The Magic Flute*, *La bohème*, and *The Barber of Seville*. His music theatre repertoire includes Jonathan Mills' *Ghost Wife*, which he has conducted in Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney and London, and *Eternity Man* for the Sydney Festival.

Richard Gill has received numerous accolades, including an Order of Australia Medal, the Bernard Heinze Award, an Honorary Doctorate from the Edith Cowan University of Western Australia, the Australian Music Centre's award for Most Distinguished Contribution to the Presentation of Australian Composition by an individual, and the Australia Council's prestigious Don Banks Award.



JEFF BUSBY

Continuo

As was common practice in Handel's time, both our conductors will be directing the orchestra from the harpsichord, which places them in what's called the continuo section. The continuo role in baroque music is usually taken by a keyboard instrument in collaboration with a cello. Both instruments play from a figured bass – a melodic bass line with numbers, or 'figures' written underneath. These numbers are like a guitarist's chord chart; they indicate the harmonies the harpsichordist should play without specifying the actual patterns of notes. 'Realising' a figured bass in this way introduces an element of improvisation to the performance.

NICHOLAS CARTER conductor

Nicholas Carter graduated from the Faculty of Music, University of Melbourne in 2007, having studied voice and piano. For two years he was a member of the inaugural Artist Development Program with Victorian Opera, studying with Richard Gill. This saw him conduct productions of Britten's *Noye's Fludde*, Graeme Dudley's *Snow Queen* and Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and *Don Giovanni*, as well as assisting and preparing the chorus for a number of other productions. He has also conducted children's opera productions of *Brundibar* and *The Beggar's Opera* for OzOpera.

In 2008 he was guest conductor with Orchestra Victoria as well as ChamberMade Opera's production of *The Children's Bach*. He was also co-chorusmaster with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra for performances of *The Flying Dutchman* and Shostakovich's Symphony No.13.

Nicholas Carter has participated in the Symphony Australia Conductor Development courses for a number of years, working with The Queensland Orchestra, Melbourne, Adelaide and West Australian symphony orchestras, and the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra.

Nicholas Carter is the inaugural recipient of an Assistant Conductorship with the Sydney Symphony, supported by Symphony Australia. This 12-month position provides the opportunity to work closely with the orchestra, Principal Conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy, and guest artists and conductors, in the preparation of our concerts. The role of the Assistant Conductor includes appearances onstage in performance with the Sydney Sinfonia. Nicholas Carter will also learn the orchestra's planned repertoire and assist in preparing them in rehearsal for selected projects. The opportunity to attend rehearsals and performances, and to observe the day-to-day musical activities of our busy symphony orchestra, is invaluable training for an aspiring young conductor.



PETER CAMPBELL

About the conductorship

THE SYDNEY SINFONIA



The Sydney Sinfonia is a specialist ensemble combining the experience of Sydney Symphony musicians and Australia's most accomplished tertiary music students. The Sydney Sinfonia performs throughout New South Wales and provides music students with the chance to be mentored by Sydney Symphony musicians. The Sydney Sinfonia is part of the Sydney Symphony's Education Program and is supported by Leighton Holdings and the NSW Ministry for the Arts.

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The Sydney Sinfonia's unique structure and format drives a dynamic culture of professional development and innovative performance, benefiting not only the young musicians involved but also contributing to a greater understanding of classical music within the community regardless of age.

Leighton Holdings' corporate community investment program is focused on developing long-term partnerships with organisations that build Australia's future skills base and support excellence through arts and culture. We are proud to support the current and future generations of talented orchestral musicians as they entertain, educate and inspire us.

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Richard Gill, the Sydney Symphony's acclaimed educator and musician, has worked with Australia's leading musicians and music teachers to create our innovative and world-renowned Education Program. We bridge the gap between classroom and concert hall by producing high quality resources and offering development programs to assist teachers, giving inspiring concerts to school children and awarding fellowships to postgraduate musicians.

To support our activities and help enrich our community with the wonder of music, please contribute by making a donation.

Call Caroline Sharpen (02) 8215 4619,
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EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Sydney Symphony Education Program

Our range of programs encourages people to respond to music in a number of ways. They include: **School Concerts** for all ages, with supporting educational materials and teacher seminars; **Playerlink** and **Regional Tours**, bringing the orchestra to children in regional areas; **Sydney Sinfonia**, tonight's ensemble, providing a career pathway and mentoring for emerging professional musicians; **Sydney Symphony Sinfonietta**, an elite ensemble drawn from the Sinfonia to perform contemporary repertoire and nurture young composers; **Sydney Symphony Fellowship Program**, providing opportunities for young professional musicians to work closely with the Orchestra and to enhance their skills through work on chamber music repertoire; and **Discovery**, a concert series for adults that examines how orchestral music works.

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Tenix warmly welcomes you to the 2009 Discovery Program of concerts. We are confident you will find them musically exciting, and that they will open up for you a new understanding of the featured composers and works.

Tenix's sponsorship of the Sydney Symphony's Education Program is now in its fifth year. As a company with a commitment to technology and innovation, we support education and training across a range of fields, and we are proud to support not only the Discovery Program but also the Sydney Symphony's extensive Schools program, which brings the world of classical music to primary schools across the State.

Sydney Symphony's Discovery Program is a wonderfully innovative and exciting experience. We hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoy our Education partnership with the orchestra.

Paul Salteri
Chairman, Tenix Pty Ltd



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