

Monday 20 March 2023

Joint Public Statement

Emma Dunch departed as CEO of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra in December 2021 after four and a half years of service. During her tenure, Ms Dunch made significant contributions to the Orchestra in a period of unprecedented challenge, including leading the organisation’s response to COVID-19 without the loss of jobs during a multi-year venue dislocation for concert hall renovations, navigating the complex temporary relocation of the Orchestra from the Sydney Opera House to the Sydney Town Hall, successfully completing an international music director search to secure Simone Young AM as the Orchestra’s new Chief Conductor, and engaging world class musicians and conductors.

Ms Dunch leaves a great legacy to the organisation and to classical music in Australia through the 50 Fanfares commissioning project, which has given global audiences memorable works including *Of The Earth* by William Barton, which premiered as the opening work in the reopening of the Sydney Opera House Concert Hall.

In August 2021, Ms Dunch and the Board commissioned a broad review into the Sydney Symphony Orchestra’s workplace culture from Australia’s former Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Elizabeth Broderick AO, which was delivered in February 2022 and whose recommendations the Board is implementing.

Ms Dunch said: “I am proud to have led the team that placed the Sydney Symphony on a strong financial and artistic footing for its return to the Sydney Opera House and ensured that important workplace change would occur. I wish the Orchestra well.”

The Board of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra affirms its commitment to fostering a safe and inclusive work environment reflecting artistic excellence, supporting strong leadership, and ensuring good governance. The Board is grateful for Ms Dunch’s contributions to the SSO in her time as CEO and wishes her well in her future endeavours.

The parties will have no further comment.