



**sydney symphony
orchestra**

David Robertson
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

OBLIQUE STRATEGIES

SUNDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2016

CARRIAGEWORKS



Principal Partner



CLASSICAL



Zukerman plays Tchaikovsky & Mozart

TCHAIKOVSKY
Souvenir d'un lieu cher: Mélodie
Sérénade mélancolique
MOZART Violin Concerto No.3 in G, K216
TCHAIKOVSKY Symphony No.4
Pinchas Zukerman violin-director

Special Event
Premier Partner Credit Suisse
Thu 10 Nov 8pm
Fri 11 Nov 8pm
Sat 12 Nov 8pm

Zukerman and Mendelssohn

BOCCHERINI String Quintet in C, G.378
MENDELSSOHN Octet for strings
Pinchas Zukerman violin-director
Amanda Forsyth cello
2016 SSO Fellows

Tea & Symphony
Fri 11 Nov 11am
complimentary morning tea from 10am



Dedications

Dvořák's Cello Concerto
LUTOSŁAWSKI
Sacher Variation for solo cello
Symphony No.3
DVOŘÁK Cello Concerto in B minor
Brett Dean conductor
Alisa Weilerstein cello

Meet the Music
Wed 16 Nov 6.30pm
Thursday Afternoon Symphony
Thu 17 Nov 1.30pm
Emirates Metro Series
Fri 18 Nov 8pm



Oblique Strategies

ANDERSON Nowhere and Forever **PREMIERE**
NORMAN Try
DEAN 11 Oblique Strategies
GARSDEN We Never Come Here **PREMIERE**
REICH Clapping Music
RZEWSKI Les Moutons de Panurge
Brett Dean conductor and viola

SSO at Carriageworks
Sun 20 Nov 5pm
Bay 17, Carriageworks



Much Ado...

Celebrating Shakespeare
KORNGOLD Suite from Much Ado about Nothing
with spoken text from the play
BRIDGE There is a willow grows aslant a brook
with spoken text from Hamlet
BRITTEN Sinfonietta
SCHREKER Chamber Symphony
Jean Goodwin & Tom Heath narrators
Roger Benedict conductor

2016 Fellowship in Concert
Sun 27 Nov 3pm
Verbruggen Hall,
Sydney Conservatorium of Music



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Principal Partner

WELCOME

From Brett Dean

Today you hear the SSO in a venue that's barely ten years old yet occupies a space dating to the 1880s. Carriageworks is a magnificent example of how a site conceived at a time of industrial and commercial optimism can be reinvented and find fresh, vibrant purpose today. Similarly, no orchestra can flourish in the way the SSO has done throughout its 84-year history without reinvestment and renewal, breathing new life into the institution through ongoing cycles of new membership, new artistic leadership, new interpretations of standard repertoire and of course new repertoire itself.

It's been some years since the SSO presented a dedicated new music series, and I'm thrilled to be part of the curating and presenting team. I also applaud the generosity of the orchestra's Commissioning Circle, which has enabled new works by young and emerging Australian composers to be premiered throughout the year.

A commitment to new music is a sign of innovation but also of faith, and today's program explores the often fickle nature of inspiration and where you find it. We've imagined the program as a kind of playlist, and designed the sequence of six pieces so that each will flow naturally into the next. We hope you'll experience our 'oblique strategies' as a seamless immersion – beginning even before the concert itself – that will leave you energised and curious to hear more.



Brett Dean Artist in Residence, SSO

From Carriageworks

We are excited to welcome back the extraordinary Sydney Symphony Orchestra to Carriageworks.

Following the highly successful Crossing the Threshold concert earlier this year, we are delighted to present Oblique Strategies, the second concert in a series featuring new and recent works devised by the SSO Chief Conductor and Artistic Director David Robertson and the SSO's Artist in Residence Brett Dean. Together they have programmed some of the world's most intriguing and engaging contemporary music, including two newly commissioned works by Australia's

Natasha Anderson and Alexander Garsden, alongside contemporary classics such as Steve Reich's Clapping Music.

We are honoured to be partnering with the SSO to continue to support new music in Australia. Our thanks goes to the NSW Government through Arts NSW for their ongoing support of Carriageworks and the company's individual donors for supporting this exciting new partnership between Carriageworks and the SSO.

Lisa Havilah
Director, Carriageworks



SSO AT CARRIAGEWORKS
SUNDAY 20 NOVEMBER, 5PM
.....
CARRIAGEWORKS

OBLIQUE STRATEGIES

PRESENTED BY THE SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA AND CARRIAGEWORKS

Brett Dean conductor and viola
Musicians of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra

Natasha Anderson (born 1968)
Nowhere and Forever
for viola and electronics
PREMIERE

Alexander Garsden (born 1987)
We Never Come Here
for chamber orchestra and electronics
PREMIERE

Brett Dean (born 1961)
11 Oblique Strategies
for solo cello

Andrew Norman (born 1979)
Try
for chamber orchestra

Steve Reich (born 1936)
Clapping Music
for two performers

Frederic Rzewski (born 1938)
Les Moutons de Panurge (Panurges's Sheep)
for any number of melody instruments

.....
Estimated durations: 6 minutes, 11 minutes, 10 minutes, 14 minutes, 5 minutes, 13 minutes

The concert will conclude at approximately 6.20pm
.....

Nowhere and Forever and *We Never Come Here* were commissioned by the SSO with the generous support of Jen & JP Drysdale, Gary Linnane & Peter Braithwaite, Gabriel Lopata, Robert Larosa, Edmund Ong and Rosemary Swift.

The sequence of today's program has been planned to allow the six works to flow one to another without pause. We hope you'll feel a natural inclination to hold your applause until the end of the concert.

CARRIAGEWORKS



Oblique Strategies

Notes by Timothy Munro

A small black box arrives in the mail. On one side, embossed in gold, are the words 'Oblique Strategies'. Inside sits a deck of 113 neat, round-cornered cards. Printed on each, in sleek, sans-serif font, is a short enigmatic phrase. Do the last thing first. Change ambiguities to specifics. Be extravagant...

In the 1970s, Brian Eno was a trailblazer. Through his work as a writer of art-pop, performer with the Portsmouth Sinfonia (an orchestra unable to play their instruments), and pioneer of what he termed 'ambient' music, Eno was on the bleeding edge of the English experimental tradition. Finding the traditional recording studio stultifying, Eno sought inspiration from unexpected places: hiring a new musician every day, swinging microphones from the ceiling.

This experience led Eno and the visual artist Peter Schmidt to create *Oblique Strategies*: 113 cryptic directives to clear creative blockage. 'When a dilemma occurs, draw a single card from the shuffled pack. The card is trusted even if its appropriateness is quite unclear.' Pitchfork writer Mike Powell calls the cards: 'Part Fluxus exercise, part I Ching, part high-concept Tarot. If freedom is darkness, "*Oblique Strategies*" were a guide rail: You might not know where you were going but at least you could start to move.'

Brett Dean has chosen the works on this program to showcase his and other composers' own oblique strategies. Natasha Anderson uses the sound of *Carriageworks* as a creative spur. Andrew Norman plumbs his own trial and error in *Try*, while Alexander Garsden holds his own cards close to his chest. Eno's and Schmidt's cards coach a solo cellist in Brett Dean's *11 Oblique Strategies*, and, spurred by a primal human sound, Steve Reich finds his 'Eureka' in the clapping of hands. Frederic Rzewski turns the tables, trapping his performers in a diabolical strategy that celebrates the freedom in chaos...

Eight more Oblique Strategies, chosen at random:
Do something boring.
Get your neck massaged.
Balance the consistency principle with the inconsistency principle.
Remove a restriction.
Just carry on.
Turn it upside down.
Make what's perfect more human.
Courage!

ANDERSON Nowhere and Forever

Entering Carriageworks before this concert, listeners are enveloped by the electronic sounds of Natasha Anderson's installation, *Nowhere and Forever*. The title is a reference to the enigmatic old TV show *Sapphire and Steel*, in which two 'interdimensional operatives' confront 'breaks in time' caused by the presence of anachronistic objects. Near the end of one episode, Sapphire and Steel discover an eerie cafe frozen in time. One of the customers warns, 'This is the trap. This is nowhere, and it's forever.'

Anderson combined two recorded sources to create the raw material for *Nowhere and Forever*. First, she spent two days with a handful of microphones collecting 'sound objects' in Carriageworks, ever-present 'ghostly' silent room harmonies that remain unperceived. Second, she recorded Brett Dean's viola playing, capturing 'the texture...the grain' of the instrument.

Once the concert begins, Dean enters, beginning a dialogue between live viola and Anderson's electronic installation. Different worlds, viola and room, acoustic and electronic, colliding and morphing. The live viola 'disappears into the room sound objects, into its electronic self'. 'Gestures become stranger and stranger', writes Anderson. 'Phantasms are staged in the bodies of the room and the viola.'

As listeners, we ask, what is live, what is recorded? What is real, and what is a memory? Like the cafe, Carriageworks itself is caught between past and present, a building haunted by memories, yet transformed for a new generation, an anachronism.

Anderson's works are unsettling sonic mystery-boxes. This Australian composer, musician and installation artist aims to create 'idiosyncratic' sounds that 'explore intense experiences, the abject and the uncanny'. Physical installations evoke swollen skin and knotted blood vessels, and musical compositions conjure a 'claustrophobic, entangled environment'. Anderson takes sound that 'has a meaning', and makes it 'alien, strange, compelling. That's how I've always experienced the world'.



Construction of the Eveleigh Railway Workshops began in the 1880s, on land of the Carrahdigang people, an area of swamp and sand hills. Sydney boom times necessitated a huge rail expansion, and from their instigation the Workshops was the city's largest employer. For the SSO's first season in Carriageworks, Brett Dean wanted the venue to be part of the story: 'I was fascinated by the building's own history, as part of a boom period in the country and city's economic development.' Dean sees a kinship between 'these industrial sites and the history of symphony orchestras, symbols of burgeoning affluence, an expansion of ideas through growing wealth'. Fallen on harder times in the 21st century, both are striving to 'reinvent themselves'.

GARSDEN *We Never Come Here*

The middle ground is not for Alexander Garsden. Aiming to avoid writing music that ‘suffers an identity crisis, that fails to make a concrete statement’, this Australian composer, guitarist and electro-acoustic musician uses ‘emphatic means’ to create music of starkness and clarity. Garsden cites the bald musical architecture of composer Iannis Xenakis as a model, and admits that ‘sometimes my strategies are crude’, a preference reflected in the title of an earlier orchestral work, *Ruder Forms Survive*.

We Never Come Here comprises 36 short sections. The work is ‘a mosaic of different materials, each with its own shape and texture’, says Garsden. Each new section provides a momentary glimpse into the unknown, a glimpse of a captivating aural landscape. Low rumbles stretch to the edge of audibility. Cut. A glassy whine trembles. Cut. Maniacal, irregular tapping puts teeth on edge. Cut. Slow pulsing summons a wall of sound. Each jump-cut is hard, unexpected, communicating uncertainty, agitation.

With this work, Garsden attempts to reconcile the unreconcilable: simple and complex; whole and shattered; flowing and unpredictable; contemporary and ancient. The composer keeps the full meaning of his mysterious title to himself. But he dangles a solitary carrot: ‘I can safely offer that the title refers to the transgression into the unknown, and into the unknown’s implicit chaos. The tone is not intentionally menacing, though it is perhaps trepidatious.’



DEAN *11 Oblique Strategies*

Australian composer Brett Dean is fascinated by the creative process. ‘We all deal with the same conundrum: How do you write a piece of music, or go about any artistic pursuit?’ especially when inspiration is fickle. Dean has confronted this question before, illuminating the ‘traumatic’ insomnia of his creative brain in the works *Night Window* and *Polysomnography*. With *11 Oblique Strategies*, he confronts this quandary head-on.

In 2014 the Emanuel Feuermann cello competition commissioned Dean to write its test piece. The composer began to imagine that Eno's and Schmidt's cards could stimulate the imagination of the performer as much as its creator. That his work might 'offer the interpreter an opportunity to reflect upon the delights and pitfalls of creativity as he or she comes to terms with the various musical and technical challenges to be found'.

Dean ordered eleven of Eno's and Schmidt's Strategies to reveal 'the logic and potential inter-relatedness within a disparate set of single ideas'. Some of the chosen Strategies act as compositional catalysts: 'Bridges – build – burn', 'Ghost echoes', 'Listen to the quiet voice'. Some are directed at the performer: 'Don't be frightened to show your talents', 'Disciplined self-indulgence', 'Disconnect from desire'.

Some of the phrases flag technical challenges: 'A line has two sides' (cello-string seesawing),

'Don't stress one thing more than any other' (reams of whisper-quiet notes). But Dean's final Strategy rejects the cellist's myopia, forcing the soloist to zoom out to a wide shot of the stage and audience, as they realise they are playing 'In a very large room, very quietly'.

Best known for grand orchestral, choral and operatic works, it is easy to forget that Dean is also a master miniaturist. The small shards of *11 Oblique Strategies*, performed without a break, plot an engaging, eventful journey. Setting its scene with fragmentary nocturnal birdsong, the cello steadily winds its way lower and lower, increasingly defiant, until a dangerous wildfire breaks out (in 'Bridges – build – burn'), after which, all fuel exhausted, wispy echoes drift like smoke from embers.

PANIEL KOPCZYŃSKI



NORMAN Try

Composed for the Los Angeles Philharmonic

A quiet piano note. We in the audience relax, anticipating calm. Instead, a screaming fanfare blares, fistfuls of notes are flung, then pandemonium ensues. How did we find ourselves in this musical barroom brawl? Who would throw us into this hornet's nest?

American composer Andrew Norman describes himself as: 'a trial-and-error composer, an incurable reviser. And this is a problem when it comes to high profile commissions from world-class ensembles in spectacular concert halls, because one gets exactly one try to get it right, and one really, really wants to get it right. Disney Hall and the LA Philharmonic have meant so much to me over the years that the overwhelming desire to write for them the perfect piece was enough to stop me dead in my creative tracks.'

It took Norman many months to realise the obvious: 'My piece was never going to be perfect no matter how hard I tried, and perfection was not even the right target on which to set my sights. The best thing I could do was to try as many new things as I could, to embrace the risk and failure and serendipitous discovery implicit in the word "try".'

A 'hero' emerges, amid the fray. An underdog we can barrack for, an outsider in this orchestral world. The piano. While the tempest rages, and other instruments fling shrill musical slurs, our violence-averse protagonist tries not to engage. A lone, quiet voice. Perhaps it is the composer himself, thumbing at ideas, assailed by doubts.

Norman agrees that *Try* is a lot like himself. 'It's messy, and fragmented, and it certainly doesn't get things right on the first try. It circles back on itself again and again in search of any idea that will stick, that will lead it forward to something new. After ten minutes of increasingly frantic trying, it finds one small, unlikely bit of material it likes enough to repeat and polish and hone until it finally (fingers crossed) gets it right.'

The instrumentalists themselves also do a lot of 'trying' in Norman's composition. *Try* is very hard, almost unplayable. Complex rhythms, hair-trigger changes and reams of notes fly at the musicians in an unceasing torrent. Spare a thought for these hardy SSO musicians, who likely share the composer's frustration, that 'I never get things right on the first try'.

JESSA ANDERSON



Hand clapping is a primal sound. When Gorillas, chimpanzees and orangutans clap in the wild, they're often frightened, and the sound is intended to be terrifying, a call to arms. In fact, our modern word 'clap' derives from an Old English term meaning 'throb, beat', and we still use the word to mean 'an explosive sound'. Clapping for approval is a later, learned behaviour, dating to the third century BC, where the instruction 'plaudite' appears at the end of Roman plays. Many cultures also connect human and supernatural worlds by striking hands, a ritual exploited by JM Barrie when the children clap to revive the dying fairy Tinkerbell in *Peter Pan*.

REICH Clapping Music

It is the early 1970s. Steve Reich, on tour with his ensemble in Brussels, heads to hear a late-night flamenco performance at a local bar. To the surprise of these American musicians, several of the flamenco performers set aside their guitars, weaving entrancing patterns with just hand claps. 'Every one of us snapped around and watched them like a hawk. We went out into the foggy night and started clapping at each other, and a lightbulb just went on in my head: 'This is it, EUREKA!'

Reich describes the result, *Clapping Music*, as 'short, sweet, and to the point'. A simple African-derived rhythmic pattern (short short LONG, short LONG, LONG, short LONG) is repeated by two performers. At the outset they clap the pattern together, but one comes unstuck. The single-celled organism splits, expands, grows more complex. As listeners, we lose the beat, find it, lose it again, finding ourselves invigorated, frustrated or enervated by the search.

The unadorned nakedness of *Clapping Music* can be unsettling for percussionists. Reich, who has performed the work more than a thousand times, still takes the stage nervously: 'It never ceases to be a challenge. You're very exposed. If you make one little hesitation you can find yourself at a place in the piece where you have to figure out where you are to get things right.

RZEWSKI Les Moutons de Panurge (Panurge's Sheep)

The 16th-century writer François Rabelais delighted in scatology. On a fictional bookshelf sits *On the Art of Discreetly Farting in Company*, *On How to Defecate*, and *Martingale Breeches with Back-flaps for Turd-droppers*. He revelled in low matters because he revelled in all matters. The world is a repulsive, fascinating place, and Rabelais peopled his fictions with grotesque characters and absurd antics.

Les Moutons de Panurge by American-born composer Frederic Rzewski (pronounced 'SHEV-ski'), takes one of Rabelais' tales as inspiration. The story, from *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, takes place aboard a ship. Panurge, a disreputable cad, is in a dispute with the sheep merchant Dingdong. To exact revenge, Panurge buys a sheep from Dingdong, and immediately throws it into the sea:

'All the other sheep throw themselves in the sea after it, all in a line. The herd was such that once one jumped, so jumped its companions. It was not possible to stop them, as you know, with sheep, it's natural to always follow the first one, wherever it may go.'

WONGE BERGMANN



It was inevitable that *Clapping Music* would be gamified. It's all in good fun, but you can be contributing towards research as well. Visit clappingmusicapp.com to download (iOS only).

MICHAEL WILSON



MORE RABELAISIAN BOOK TITLES...

The Pomegranate of Vice. The Kettle of Magnanimity. The Furred Cat of the Solicitors and Attorneys. The Racket of Swag-waggers. The Skinnery of the new Start-ups extracted out of the fallow-butt, incornifistibulated and plodded upon in the angelic sum.

Dingdong's sheep become Rzewski's notes in *Les Moutons*. Sixty-five musical notes, to be exact. Each note in the melody is 'counted off', one by one, by all the instruments (1, 12, 123, 1234, 12345), until the 65 notes are complete. Rzewski then hurls his musical sheep overboard, one by one, subtracting from the beginning, until only one note, number 65, is left hanging in the air.

If that process seems hard to understand, it is exponentially more difficult to play. Performers' eyes dart back and forth, doubts mount: 'What note-number am I up to?', 'What is the rhythm of the first note again?', 'Did I just miss a number?!' The composer has fiendishly ensured that *Les Moutons* is unplayable, and, once a player comes unstuck, his instruction is crucial: 'If you get lost, stay lost. Do not try to find your way back to the fold.'

Why would Rzewski torture his musicians by having them ignore their instincts? A passionate pianist, improviser and Socialist, Rzewski wants us as musicians and humans to defy the herd, and instead chart our own path. For him, the point at which the first musician becomes lost is where the music truly begins. 'Freedom,' writes Boston Globe critic Matthew Guerrieri, 'is a sometimes chaotic harmony between order and anarchy.'

TIMOTHY MUNRO © 2016

Tim Munro is a Brisbane-born, Grammy-winning flautist based in Chicago.



COUNTING SHEEP

Rzewski's sheep-counting builds on an old tradition. For many hundreds of years, English shepherds used an old Celtic counting rhyme to keep track of their sheep: 'Yan, tan, tethera, pethera, pimp, sethera'. Elsewhere, in a 12th-century text from Islamic Spain, a servant sends his master to sleep with a story in which a farmer must take his two thousand sheep across a stream, counting them two at a time.



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ABOUT THE ARTISTS



PAWEŁ KOPICZYŃSKI

Brett Dean *conductor and viola*

Artist in Residence

Brett Dean studied in Brisbane before moving to Germany, where he was a viola player in the Berlin Philharmonic (1985–2000). In 1988 he began composing, initially concentrating on experimental film and radio projects and as an improvising performer. He gained recognition as a composer as the result of worldwide performances of the ballet *One of a Kind* (Jiří Kylián for the Nederlands Dans Theater); *Carlo* (1997), inspired by the music of Carlo Gesualdo; and his clarinet concerto *Ariel's Music* (1995), which won an award from the UNESCO International Rostrum of Composers.

He returned to Australia in 2000 to concentrate on composition. Major works of note include his first opera, *Bliss* (premiered in Sydney in 2010), the violin concerto *The Lost Art of Letter Writing* (which the SSO performed with its dedicatee Frank Peter Zimmermann in 2011) and *Dramatis Personæ*, a trumpet concerto for Håkan Hardenberger, who performed it with the SSO and the composer conducting in 2014. In 2009 *The Lost Art...* won him the prestigious and valuable Grawemeyer Award, the equivalent of a Nobel prize for music. He is now one of the most widely performed composers of his generation, and his music is championed by leading conductors such as Simon Rattle, Andris Nelsons, Marin Alsop, David Robertson and Simone Young.

Brett Dean combines his composing activities with performances as a violist, chamber musician and conductor, and he frequently appears as soloist in his own *Viola Concerto*. His career as a conductor is blossoming, with imaginative programs often combining his own works with those of other composers. In addition to the SSO, recent conducting highlights include engagements with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic, Gothenburg Symphony, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Royal Northern Sinfonia, and as Artist in Residence with the Swedish Chamber Orchestra and the BBC Symphony Orchestra. This year he began a three-year appointment as the SSO's first Artist in Residence, a role encompassing conducting, performing and programming.

This week Brett Dean also conducted the SSO at the Sydney Opera House in a program of music by Lutosławski and Dvořák.

The Artist in Residence role is supported by Geoff Ainsworth AM and Johanna Featherstone.

SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



DAVID ROBERTSON

THE LOWY CHAIR OF
CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

.....
PATRON Professor The Hon. Dame Marie Bashir AD cvo
.....

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the SSO also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

Well on its way to becoming the premier orchestra of the Asia Pacific region, the SSO has toured China on four occasions, and in 2014 won the arts category in the Australian Government's inaugural Australia-China Achievement Awards, recognising ground-breaking work in nurturing the cultural and artistic relationship between the two nations.

The orchestra's first chief conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux,

Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013. The orchestra's history also boasts collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

The SSO's award-winning Learning and Engagement program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, developing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. The orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and commissions. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Lee Bracegirdle, Gordon Kerry, Mary Finsterer, Nigel Westlake, Paul Stanhope and Georges Lentz, and recordings of music by Brett Dean have been released on both the BIS and SSO Live labels.

Other releases on the SSO Live label, established in 2006, include performances conducted by Alexander Lazarev, Sir Charles Mackerras and David Robertson, as well as the complete Mahler symphonies conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy.

This is David Robertson's third year as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director.

THE MUSICIANS



David Robertson

THE LOWY CHAIR OF
CHIEF CONDUCTOR
AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Brett Dean

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ELECTRONICS

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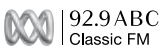
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