PHILIPPE JAROUSSKY
AUSTRALIAN BRANDENBURG ORCHESTRA

PAUL DYER AO Artistic Director and conductor
PHILIPPE JAROUSSKY (France) countertenor
SHAUN LEE-CHEN (Australia) baroque violin
AUSTRALIAN BRANDENBURG ORCHESTRA

PROGRAM

Handel Overture to the ortario *Deborah* HWV51
Handel Aria “Agitato da fiere tempeste” from the pasticcio *Oreste* HWVA11
Handel Recitative and Aria "Oh patria...Sol ristoro di mortali" from the opera *Arianna in Creta* HWV32
Handel *Water Music* Suite in D major HWV349
Porpora Aria “Si pietoso il tuo labbro” from the opera *Semiramide riconosciuta*
Porpora Aria “Mira in Cielo” from the opera *Arianna e Teseo*

INTERVAL

Porpora Aria “Dall’amor più sventurato” from the pasticcio *Orfeo*
Porpora Aria “Alto giove” from the opera *Polifemo*
Locatelli Violin Concerto op 3 no 1 in D major "L'Arte del Violino"
Handel Aria “Mi lusinga a dolce affetto”, from the opera *Alcina* HWV34
Handel Recitative and Aria "Ove son...Qui ti sfido" from the opera *Arianna in Creta* HWV32

Sydney City Recital Hall Angel Place
Wednesday 13 March, Friday 15 March, Wednesday 20 March, Friday 22 March,
Saturday 23 March at 7pm, Monday 25 March at 5pm

Melbourne Melbourne Recital Centre
Sunday 17 March at 5pm, Monday 18 March at 7pm

This concert series is dedicated to the memory of James Strong AO, a visionary leader in the arts and business, a long term supporter and former Chairman of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.

This concert will last approximately 120 mins including interval
We kindly request that you switch off all electronic devices during the performance

Concert broadcast
This concert will be broadcast on ABC Classic FM on Saturday 23 March at 1pm

Australian Government
Australia Council for the Arts
The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.

NSW Government
Trade & Investment
Arts NSW
The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW.

AMPAG
AUSTRALIAN MAJOR PERFORMING ARTS GROUP

MACQUARIE
PRINCIPAL PARTNER

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

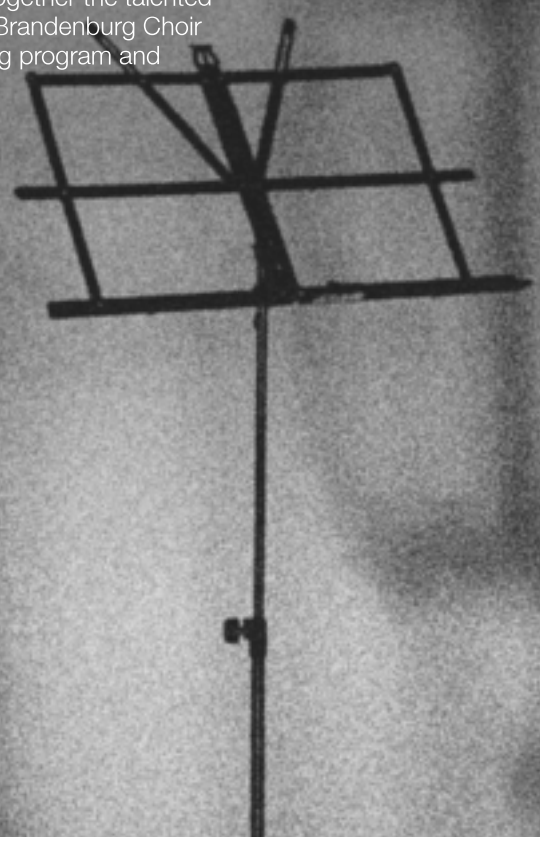
Macquarie Group and the Macquarie Group Foundation are again proud to be the principal partners of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.

The Brandenburg is one of Australia's great cultural treasures and the Brandenburg experience is the culmination of years of dedication, deep specialist expertise and an unfailing pursuit of excellence.

Macquarie recognises that dedication, expertise and excellence can deliver powerful outcomes. Inspiring audiences is an outcome worthy of celebration and it is a privilege to support the Brandenburg in their commitment to bring fresh perspective to well-loved and lesser-known masterpieces. And by ensuring the music of centuries past resonates with audiences today, the Brandenburg is making an enduring contribution to the legacy of baroque and classical composers.

Congratulations again to Artistic Director Paul Dyer for creating a wonderful year of concerts. As always, this year's program brings together the talented musicians of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, the Brandenburg Choir and stellar international guests. It is a diverse and exciting program and one we hope you enjoy.

Richard Sheppard
Chairman, Macquarie Group Foundation



MACQUARIE

PRINCIPAL PARTNER

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Welcome to 2013 with the Brandenburg!

We are all looking forward to what promises to be a year of really wonderful music.

There is nothing more exciting than to observe the careers of young talented artists. Tonight, the extraordinary countertenor from Paris, Philippe Jaroussky and Australian baroque violinist, Shaun Lee-Chen join the stage with the wonderful team of the Brandenburg. Both young men are at different stages of their early careers, but have a common thought - to bring the joy of music making to the public.

The composers Porpora and Handel were musical legends in their day and remain popular in the classical music world nowadays. Drama surrounded their work in London as they fought for status and supremacy and each composer hired extraordinary singers in their Opera Houses to outdo each other. Two of these singers were castrati, Carestini and Farinelli. They were the pop idols of their time and attracted a cult following around Europe. Tonight's program tells the story with music from both composers and arias that would have been sung by both castrati. Many of these arias have never been heard in Australia before.

Before each concert I hear our musicians warming up outside my dressing room door as they prepare to brave the stage to perform for you. I always know it is Philippe when those warm up angel tones soar through the air-conditioning duct from his dressing room next door, and I can always tell Shaun passing by my door by the way he simply rips up and down that violin like nobody's business.

Tonight I'd also like to pay tribute to one of my musicians of the Brandenburg who is retiring from playing to spend more time with her family. Helen Gill has been one of Australia's pioneering baroque trumpet specialists. Her warm personality, brilliant playing and loyalty to the Brandenburg have been extraordinary. Bravo Helen. All of us from the stage and audience wish you great happiness for your future.

What a treat - the gorgeous baroque music of Handel, Locatelli and Porpora and the magnificent musicians of the Brandenburg with Philippe and Shaun. Have a beautiful night.

Paul Dyer AO
Artistic Director

AUSTRALIAN BRANDENBURG ORCHESTRA
PHILIPPE JAROUSSKY

Paul Dyer AO Artistic Director and conductor
Philippe Jaroussky (France) guest soloist, countertenor
Shaun Lee-Chen (Australia) soloist, baroque violin
Australian Brandenburg Orchestra

THE MUSICIANS ON PERIOD INSTRUMENTS

Baroque Violin 1
Matt Bruce[+*], Sydney
(Resident Concertmaster)
Catherine Shugg, Melbourne
Bianca Porcheddu[1], Canberra
Shaun Lee-Chen[2], Perth
Erin Chen, Perth

Baroque Violin 2
Ben Dollman[+*], Adelaide
Skye McIntosh, Sydney
Lorraine Moxey [3], Orange
Miranda Hutton, Auckland, NZ

Baroque Viola
Monique O'Dea[*4], Sydney
Marianne Yeomans, Sydney
Stefan Duwe, Sydney

Baroque Cello
Jamie Hey[+*], Melbourne
Anthea Cottee, Sydney
Rosemary Quinn, Sydney

Baroque Double Bass
Kirsty McCahon[+*], Sydney

Baroque Oboe
Adam Masters*, Melbourne
Jane Blanchard, Perth

Baroque Bassoon
Peter Moore*, Perth

Baroque Horn
Darryl Poulsen[*5], Armidale
Dorée Dixon, Perth

Baroque Trumpet
Leanne Sullivan*, Sydney
Helen Gill, Candelo
Rainer Saville, Sydney

Baroque Timpani
Brian Nixon*, Sydney

Theorbo/Baroque Guitar
Tommie Andersson[+*], Sydney

Harpsichord
Paul Dyer*, Sydney

+ Denotes Brandenburg Core Musician
* Section Leader
1 Bianca Porcheddu appears courtesy of St. Francis Xavier College, Florey ACT (staff)
2 Shaun Lee-Chen appears courtesy of The Western Australia Symphony Orchestra (WASO)
3 Lorraine Moxey appears courtesy of Kinross Wolaroi School, Orange (staff)
4 Monique O'Dea appears courtesy of Presbyterian Ladies' College, Sydney (staff)
5 Darryl Poulsen appears courtesy of the University of New England, Armidale NSW

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra gratefully acknowledges the support of Sydney Grammar School
Porpora performance editions prepared by musicologist Susanne Kessler, Hannover, Germany
Harpsichord preparation by Geoffrey Pollard in Sydney and Alastair McAllister in Melbourne

AUSTRALIAN BRANDENBURG ORCHESTRA

"…What stands out at concert after concert is the impression that this bunch of musicians is having a really good time. They look at each other and smile, they laugh…there's a warmth and sense of fun not often associated with classical performance."
Sydney Morning Herald

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, led by charismatic Artistic Director Paul Dyer, celebrates the music of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with excellence, flair and joy. Comprising leading specialists in informed performance practice from all over Australia, the Brandenburg performs using original edition scores and instruments of the period, breathing fresh life and vitality into baroque and classical masterpieces – as though the music has just sprung from the composer's pen.

The Orchestra's name pays tribute to the Brandenburg Concertos of J.S. Bach, whose musical genius was central to the baroque era. Since its foundation in 1989, the Brandenburg has collaborated with such acclaimed and dynamic virtuosi as Andreas Scholl, Fiona Campbell, Philippe Jaroussky, Kristian Bezuidenhout, Emma Kirkby, Andreas Staier, Elizabeth Wallfisch, Genevieve Lacey, Andrew Manze and more.

Through its annual subscription series in Sydney and Melbourne, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra performs before a live audience in excess of 30,000 people, and hundreds of thousands more through national broadcasts on ABC Classic FM. The Brandenburg also has a regular commitment to performing in regional Australia. Since 2003 the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra has been a member of the Major Performing Arts Group, which comprises 28 flagship national arts organisations supported by the Australia Council for the Arts.

Since its beginning, the Brandenburg has been popular with both audiences and critics. In 1998 The Age proclaimed the Brandenburg "had reached the ranks of the world's best period instrument orchestras". In 2010 the UK's Gramophone Magazine declared "the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra is Australia's finest period-instrument ensemble. Under their inspiring musical director Paul Dyer, their vibrant concerts and recordings combine historical integrity with electrifying virtuosity and a passion for beauty."

Last year The Australian proclaimed that "a concert with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra is like stepping back in time, as the sounds of period instruments resurrect baroque and classical works with reverence and authority."

The Brandenburg's sixteen recordings with ABC Classics include five ARIA Award winners for Best Classical Album (1998, 2001, 2005, 2009 and 2010).

We invite you to discover more at **brandenburg.com.au.**

PAUL DYER

In January 2013 Paul Dyer was awarded the Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for his 'distinguished service to the performing arts, particularly orchestral music as a director, conductor and musician, through the promotion of educational programs and support for emerging artists' in recognition of his achievements as co-founder and Artistic Director of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and Brandenburg Choir.

Paul Dyer is one of Australia's leading specialists in period performance styles. He founded the ABO in 1990 and has been the orchestra's Artistic Director since that time. Paul has devoted his performing life to the harpsichord, fortepiano and chamber organ as well as conducting the Brandenburg Orchestra and Choir.

Paul completed postgraduate studies in solo performance with Bob van Asperen at the Royal Conservatorium in The Hague, performed with many major European orchestras and undertook ensemble direction and orchestral studies with Sigiswald Kuijken and Frans Brüggen.

Paul appears as a soloist, continuo player and conductor with many major ensembles including the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Queensland Orchestra, Australia Ensemble, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Opera Australia, Australian Youth Orchestra, Victorian State Opera, Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, the Pacific Baroque Orchestra, Vancouver, and the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, London.

Paul has performed with many prominent international soloists including Andreas Scholl, Cyndia Sieden, Elizabeth Wallfisch, Andreas Staier, Marc Destrubé, Christoph Prégardien, Hidemi Suzuki, Manfredo Kraemer, Andrew Manze, Yvonne Kenny, Emma Kirkby, Philippe Jaroussky and many others. In 1998 he made his debut in Tokyo with countertenor Derek Lee Ragin, leading an ensemble of Brandenburg soloists, and in August 2001 Paul toured the orchestra to Europe with guest soloist Andreas Scholl. As a recitalist, he has toured Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and the United States.

Paul is an inspiring teacher and has been a staff member at various Conservatories throughout the world. In 1995 he received a Churchill Fellowship and he has won numerous international and national awards for his CD recordings with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and Choir, including the 1998, 2001, 2005, 2009 and 2010 ARIA Awards for Best Classical album. Paul is Patron of St Gabriel's School for Hearing Impaired Children. In 2003 Paul was awarded the Australian Centenary Medal for his services to Australian society and the advancement of music. In 2010 Paul was awarded the Sydney University Alumni Medal for Professional Achievement and in 2013 was made an Officer of The Order of Australia (AO).

PHILIPPE JAROUSSKY

Multi award-winning French countertenor Philippe Jaroussky's impressive vocal techniques have wowed audiences worldwide. In 2010 he was awarded his fourth Victoires de la Musique, ("Revelation Artiste Lyrique" in 2004, "Artiste lyrique de l'année" in 2007 and in 2010, CD of the year 2009), as well as the Echo Klassik Awards in Germany in 2008 in Munich.

With a large baroque repertoire, from the refinements of the Italian Seicento with Monteverdi, Sances and Rossi to the staggering brilliance of both Handel and Vivaldi, Jaroussky has recently begun exploring a very different sound, both contemporary and modern with the pianist Jerôme Ducros.

Philippe Jaroussky has performed with baroque orchestras including Ensemble Matheus, Les Arts Florissants, Les Musiciens du Louvre, Le Concert d'Astrée, Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, L'Arpeggiata, Le Cercle de l'Harmonie and Europa Galante and performed with renowned conductors including William Christie, Jean-Christophe Spinosi, Marc Minkowski, René Jacobs, Paul Dyer, Christina Pluhar, Jérémie Rhorer, Emmanuelle Haïm, Jean-Claude Malgoire and Fabio Biondi.

Jaroussky's tones have been heard in all the great concert halls and theatres in France - Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, Théâtre du Châtelet, Salle Pleyel, Salle Gaveau, Opéra de Lyon, Opéra de Montpellier, Opéra de Nancy, Arsenal de Metz, Théâtre de Caen and abroad - The Barbican Center and Southbank Center in London, Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels, Grand Théâtre du Luxembourg, Konzerthaus in Vienna, Staatsoper and Philharmonie in Berlin, Teatro Real in Madrid, Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York.

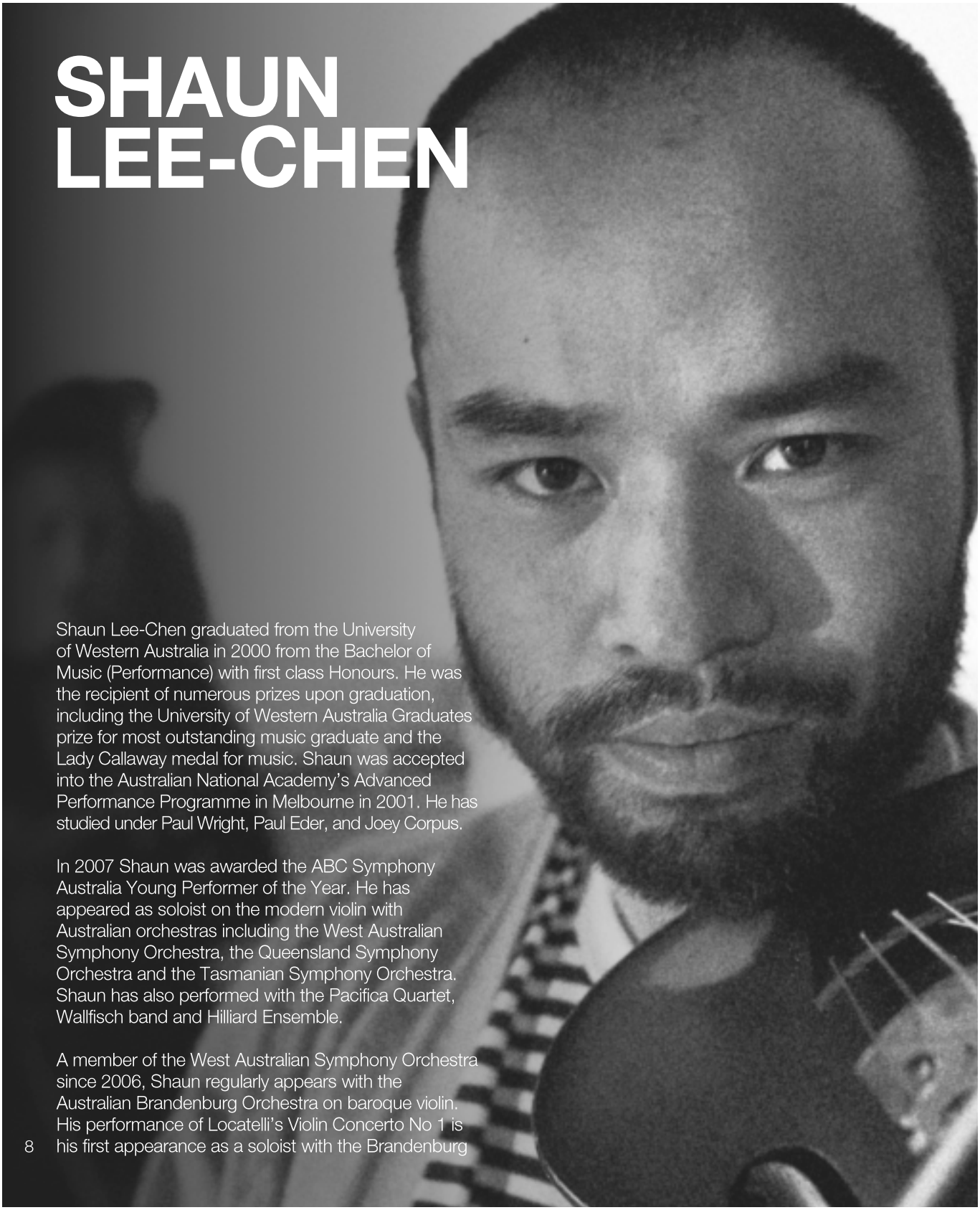
He recently joined Cecilia Bartoli in Salzburg as Sesto for stage performances of Handel's *Giulio Cesare*. He will appear with Andrea Marcon and the Venice Baroque Orchestra in 2013 after his season with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.

Philippe Jaroussky's award-winning recordings have received many accolades including a Gold disc in 2007 for *Heroes* (Vivaldi's Opera arias), a Diapason d'Or, a 10 by Classica-Repertoire, a Choc of the Magazine Monde de la Musique, the Timbre de Platine from Opera International, and a Gramaphone Award.

His CD *Tribute to Carestini* (with le Concert d'Astrée and Emmanuelle Haim) was CD of the year at the Victoires de la Musique in 2008 and at the Midem Classical Awards in 2009. *La Dolce Fiamma* dedicated to forgotten Bach castrato arias with Le Cercle de l'Harmonie and Jérémie Rhorer and *Tribute to Carestini*, have also both gone gold.

Philippe Jaroussky's recently released CD *The Voice* is available now.

SHAUN LEE-CHEN



Shaun Lee-Chen graduated from the University of Western Australia in 2000 from the Bachelor of Music (Performance) with first class Honours. He was the recipient of numerous prizes upon graduation, including the University of Western Australia Graduates prize for most outstanding music graduate and the Lady Callaway medal for music. Shaun was accepted into the Australian National Academy's Advanced Performance Programme in Melbourne in 2001. He has studied under Paul Wright, Paul Eder, and Joey Corpus.

In 2007 Shaun was awarded the ABC Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year. He has appeared as soloist on the modern violin with Australian orchestras including the West Australian Symphony Orchestra, the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. Shaun has also performed with the Pacifica Quartet, Wallfisch band and Hilliard Ensemble.

A member of the West Australian Symphony Orchestra since 2006, Shaun regularly appears with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra on baroque violin. His performance of Locatelli's Violin Concerto No 1 is his first appearance as a soloist with the Brandenburg

OPERA IN LONDON IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The first half of the eighteenth century saw the spread of Italian opera throughout Europe. Nowhere was it more popular than in London. Members of the upper class went to the opera two or three times a week during “the season” (the winter months), to see and be seen, to chat, and play cards and eat and drink. Sometimes they even listened to the singers.

Italian opera singers were especially drawn to London with its active musical life and the possibility of earning large sums of money. The most famous and fabulously wealthy opera singers were the castrati, who were feted by royalty, swooned over by women, and even had fan clubs dedicated to them. “One God, one Farinelli!” a woman cried out hysterically during a performance.

Handel, who had arrived in London from Germany via Italy in 1711, dominated the London opera scene. He was his own impresario and mounted thirty six of his own operas and a number by other composers between 1711 and 1741. However this began to change in 1733 when a rival opera company was set up, the Opera of the Nobility. The new company hired a highly regarded Italian opera composer and renowned singing teacher, Nicola Porpora, as music director, poached Handel’s best Italian imported singers and drew the financial support of his wealthy patrons. They were even able to attract the superstar castrato Farinelli, the most famous singer in the world (and a pupil of Porpora), who Handel had tried and failed to entice to England.

There were plenty who disliked Handel because of his brusque manner, but the motivation behind the new company was as much political as artistic. It became a focus for dissatisfaction with the government and for the on-going hostility between members of the royal family and their supporters. The King, George II, and the Queen, and their eldest daughter preferred Handel. The King’s son, the Prince of Wales, took the other side out of spite. The King “did not think setting oneself at the head of a faction of fiddlers a very honourable occupation for people of quality”, a comment designed to goad the Prince of Wales, who attempted to use the opera company rivalry to publicly humiliate the King. According to a noblewoman, “the delight of everybody’s heart seems to be set upon the King’s sitting by himself at the Haymarket [Handel’s theatre]; and t’other day the Prince was as eager and pressed me as earnestly to go to Lincoln’s Inn Fields opera as if it had been a thing of great moment to the nation.”

HANDEL

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL (1685–1759)
Overture to the oratorio *Deborah* HWV 51

Ouverture
Allegro
Minuet

In the early 1730s the London public began to lose its taste for Italian opera. Handel's response was to introduce oratorios in English into his opera subscription seasons. *Deborah*, based on a story from the Old Testament, was Handel's second oratorio, and first performed in March 1733. Handel charged double the usual ticket price and barred subscribers from the theatre unless they paid again, although from the audience's point of view they actually received less for their money compared to opera: there were no staging or costumes, and the singers were all English and not the big name Italian imports. On opening night the subscribers forced their way into the theatre, and the resulting scandal did not help Handel in holding his own against the Opera of the Nobility.

The overture for *Deborah* follows Handel's usual format with a first movement in the French style. A majestic slow first section with trumpets and drums is followed by a lively fugal second section. The overture concludes with a short, graceful minuet.

HANDEL
Aria "Agitato da fiere tempeste" from the pasticcio *Oreste* HWV A11

A *pasticcio* (meaning "hash" in Italian) was an opera consisting of arias by a number of different composers adapted to an existing libretto (text). In a period where operas were composed for specific singers, it was costly for a revival of an opera to be re-composed for new singers, so it became common practice for opera impresarios to allow singers to supply arias that they already knew and which had been composed for them. A house composer provided the only original music – the ensembles and the recitatives, sung speech which supplied the narrative and linked the arias. Because *opera seria* was composed according to fairly rigid conventions, it was a simple matter to slot an aria written for one opera into the libretto for another. The main drawback, apart from inconsistency in the musical standard of the arias, was the risk of a lack of musical variety or that the arias chosen by the singers would not fit the drama.

Pasticcios were regularly performed throughout Europe from the end of the seventeenth century until the end of the eighteenth, and were particularly common in London. *Oreste* was a self-pasticcio, as Handel re-used arias from his own earlier operas. The role of Orestes was sung by the great castrato Carestini, Handel's big drawcard for the 1733-34 season. Carestini was described by the eighteenth century English music historian Charles Burney as "tall, beautiful and majestic … a very animated and intelligent actor" who had "the most perfect style of singing."

This aria was originally from Handel's opera *Riccardo Primo Re d'Inghilterra* (Richard I King of England). It is a "tempest" aria, a device often used in opera seria to metaphorically convey a character's emotional turmoil.

Agitato da fiere tempeste *Se il nocchiero rivede sua stella* *Tutto lieto e sicuro sen va.*	Tossed by fierce storms, If the helmsman can see his star He feels that all will be well.
Lo ancor spero tra l'ire funeste *Dar la calma a quest'alma rubella* *Che, placata, poi lieta sarà.*	I hope, even in the midst of deadly anger, To bring calm to this soul Which, placated, will then be happy.

HANDEL
Recitative & aria "O patria … Sol ristoro di mortali" from the opera *Arianna in Creta* HWV 32

The first season of the Opera of the Nobility opened in December 1733 with an opera by Porpora, *Arianna in Nasso*, based on the Greek myth of Ariadne. Coincidentally (or perhaps not), Handel's first opera that season, just a few weeks later at the end of January 1734, was *Arianna in Creta* (Ariadne in Crete), based on the same myth.

Handel's version was a success with the London public, and it contains some superb arias, particularly those, like this one, which Handel composed for Carestini, and which exploited his wide range and virtuosic singing of fast passages.

Carestini sang the role of Theseus, an Athenian, who has come to Crete to slay the Minotaur, a monster half bull and half man, who lived in the labyrinth under the Cretan palace. This aria is from Act II when Theseus, torn between love for his country and love for Ariadne, is exhausted and falls asleep.

Oh patria! Oh cittadini!	Oh my country! Oh citizens!
Arianna mio bene!	Arianna my beloved!
Oh! Amor chi mi combatti!	Oh love which struggles within me!
Gloria! o fede! e chi seguir conviene?	Glory or fidelity - which should I follow?
Se t'ascolto Arianna la patria offendo;	If I listen to you, Arianna, I offend my country;
E se non t'odo, amore	and though I may not hate you, my love will
Divien per me furore.	turn to rage.
Agitato cor mio!	My heart is so agitated!
Dite, ditemi, o Dei, che far deggio?	Tell me, oh gods, what must I do?
Ma, sulle stanche luci	But, to my tired eyes comes a peaceful
Versa un placido oblio sonno pietoso;	oblivion in blessed sleep;
Non turbate, oh pensieri, il mio riposo.	do not disturb, oh thoughts, my rest.
Aria	
Sol ristoro de' mortali,	Sole comfort of mortals,
Spiega l'ali	spread your wings
Sopra il misero mio cor.	above my unhappy heart.

HANDEL
***Water Music* Suite in D major HWV 349**

Allegro
Alla Hornpipe
Menuet

On Wednesday Evening, at about 8, the King [George I] took Water at Whitehall in an open Barge… Many other Barges with Persons of Quality attended, and so great a Number of Boats, that the whole River in a manner was cover'd; a City Company's Barge was employ'd for the Musick, wherein were 50 Instruments of all sorts, who play'd … the finest Symphonies, compos'd express for this Occasion, by Mr. Hendel; which His Majesty liked so well, that he caus'd it to be plaid over three times in going and returning.

London, The Daily Courant, 19th July 1717

PORPORA

The Water Music is not one work at all, but three suites in three different keys that are commonly played one after another in modern performances. It is possible that Handel wrote three different suites for three different occasions, but it is not known which suite was for which occasion, or if indeed they were intended to be played together at all. Publications since the 1740s have organised the movements by key, but there is no evidence at all for how Handel originally organised them, or of what was played that summer night on the Thames in 1717.

The suites, full of lively and appealing dance movements, were popular not just with the king but also with the general public, and as early as the 1740s selections were regularly played in concerts. Handel scored the D major suite for trumpets, horns, oboes, and drums, instruments whose sound would carry well across the water. This is music to flatter and entertain a king – self-confident, celebratory and triumphant.

NICOLA PORPORA (1686-1768)
Aria "Se pietoso il tuo labbro" from the opera *Semiramide riconosciuta*

Nicola Porpora was a successful composer of operas in Italy primarily in the years from 1720 to 1740, but his greatest legacy was as a singing teacher of the most renowned singers of his time, including the superstar castrati Farinelli and Caffarelli. An anecdote records that he allowed Caffarelli to sing a single page of exercises for five years. Only at the end of that time, once the exercises were completely mastered, did Porpora pronounce him ready to perform.

Porpora was in Venice, teaching singing to the girls at one of the Venetian orphanages renowned for the quality of their musical performances, when he was approached by the Opera of the Nobility to become their music director. He arrived in London at the end of 1733 and stayed for three years. Despite having the finest company of singers ever assembled, and importing Farinelli, the company was not successful and folded in 1737.

Porpora composed this opera for Venice in 1729, with his star student Farinelli in one of the main roles. The libretto concerned the Assyrian princess Semiramis and had a very complicated plot involving attempted murder by poisoning, abduction, and disguise.

Sì pietoso il tuo labbro
Ragiona che quest' alma non teme
Che finga s'abbandonare
Alla dolce lusinga
E contenti sognando mi va.

Care pene, felici martiri,
se mostrasse l'ingrata Tamiri
qualche parte di questa pietà.

What you say is so merciful
it gives my soul reason not to fear,
so that it abandons itself
to sweet flattery,
and contentedly I keep dreaming.

Dear pains, happy tortures,
if they showed the ungrateful Tamiri
some part of this mercy.

PORPORA
Aria "Mira in Cielo" from the opera *Arianna e Teseo*

The libretto which Handel used for *Arianna in Creta* was one of the most popular opera libretti in the eighteenth century and had been set by many other composers, including Porpora. His version, entitled *Arianna e Teseo* (Ariadne and Theseus), was composed for Venice in 1727. The cast included Farinelli, not in the main role of Theseus, but as Theseus' friend Alceste who is also in love with Ariadne. An eighteenth century Italian audience would have readily understood the many allusions to classical mythology in the aria, which extolls the power of love.

Porpora's great knowledge of vocal technique is very apparent in his compositions, which show that he was more interested in exploiting the range and flexibility of the voice than in creating a character or conveying the drama. His arias are highly florid, their long sustained passages showing off the singer's breath control, a hallmark of Porpora's teaching.

Mira in cielo, a Giove impera.
Vedi in mar, comanda all'onde
Turba il cielo, il mar confonde,

Look to heaven: he rules over Jove;
Look to the sea; he commands the waves.
The heavens are in turmoil, the seas in confusion.

Pluto cede, e Stige nera
Pur paventa il suo poter.

Pluto surrenders, and even the black river
Styx fears his power.

È fanciullo, e tutto affalle,
Cieco impiega,
E tutti atterra;
Scherza, alletta, e poi fa guerra
Colla face, collo strale,
Ed è legge il suo voler.

It is the boy [Cupid], and all the illusions
that he blindly employs,
make everyone powerless before him.
He plays, he entices, then makes war
with the torch and the dart,
and his wish is law.

INTERVAL

PORPORA
Aria "Dall'amor più sventurato" from the pasticcio *Orfeo*

The Opera of the Nobility mounted this pasticcio in March 1736. This aria was sung by Farinelli, acclaimed as the greatest singer of the eighteenth century and according to Charles Burney "gifted with a voice of uncommon power, sweetness, extent and agility." His acting was not praised – Burney describes him as being "as motionless as a statue" – but "without the assistance of significant gestures or graceful attitudes, [he] enchanted and astonished his hearers … his voice was so active, that no intervals were too close, too wide, or too rapid for his execution." Farinelli's ability to sustain a note was particularly astonishing and he was suspected of using "some instrument by which the tone was continued, while he renewed his powers by respiration."

Dall' amor più sventurato
Gode il cor cangiando stato:
Sente l'alma in questa istante
Quella calma che l' amante
Più costante sa bramar.

From the most unhappy love
The heart delights in changing;
The soul feels in this instant
That calm for which
The most faithful lover longs.

Va scherzando il gioco e il riso
`Con le grazie del bel viso,
Che gli affetti, che i diletti
Sempre cari fan tornar.
E l'amor più sventurato
Fan beato diventar.

He plays, with games and laughter,
Yet the graces of the beautiful one,
Her affection, her charms
Always make him turn back;
And the most unlucky lover
Becomes blessed.

D'ogni tormento che porge Amore
Un sol contento quanto è maggiore!

Despite every torment which love brings
A single contentment is greater than all of them!

Paga un momento tutto il penar.
E l'amor più sventurato
Fan beato diventar.

One moment can repay all the pain.
And the most unlucky lover
Becomes blessed.

NICOLA PORPORA (1686-1768)
"Alto giove" from the opera *Polifemo*

Polifemo premiered on 1 February 1735, and again featured Farinelli. His performances caused a sensation and Sir John Hawkins commented that "In the city it became a proverbial expression, that those who had not heard Farinelli sing… were not qualified to appear in genteel company."

LOCATELLI

The libretto was based on the classical Greek myth of the giant Polyphemus who fell in love with the water nymph Galatea, but she preferred the shepherd Acis. Finding the lovers together, Polyphemus crushed his rival under a rock but Acis was transformed into a river by Zeus, King of the gods, known as Jupiter or Jove in Roman mythology.

Alto Giove è tua grazia e tuo vanto *il gran dono di vita immortale* *che il tuo Cenno sovrano mi fà.*	Great Jove, it is your mercy and merit that gives me this great gift of immortal life, at your sovereign command.

PIETRO ANTONIO LOCATELLI (1695-1764)
Violin Concerto Op. 3 No. 1 in D major "*L'Arte del Violino*"

Allegro
Largo
Allegro

Pietro Locatelli is often regarded as the founder of modern instrumental virtuoso violin playing. During the 1720s he toured extensively throughout Europe, creating a sensation with his spectacular style of playing. By 1729 he had settled in Amsterdam where he remained for the rest of his life, supervising the publishing and sales of his compositions. Although he had been, according to a contemporary, "the greatest violinist in the world", he now gave concerts only on Wednesday evenings in private houses and would never "play anywhere but with Gentlemen".

As a player, Locatelli was a revolutionary. Although some critics commented unfavourably on a lack of beauty in his tone, he experimented with new kinds of articulation and extended the range of the violin into an extreme high range unheard of until then, expanding the boundaries of violin technique in ways that still challenge players today.

HANDEL
Aria "Mi lusinga a dolce affetto" from the opera *Alcina* HWV 34

Although the libretto of *Alcina* is concerned with the supernatural, Handel turned it into something far greater through music which depicts the humanity of the characters. The opera is considered one of his masterpieces.

Ruggiero (originally sung by Carestini) has been in love with the enchantress Alcina. Released from her spell he recognises his true love Bradamante, but suspects her of being a phantom conjured by Alcina. In this aria Ruggiero beings to doubt, his state of mind reflected by the sequences of gentle leaps in the melody.

Mi lusinga a dolce affetto *Con l'aspetto del mio bene.* *Pur chi sà? Temer conviene,* *Che m'inganni amando ancor.*	I am charmed by the sweet affection On the face of my beloved. But who knows? It's wise to be afraid, As I could be tricked into falling in love again.
Ma se quella fosse mai *Che adorai, e l'abbandono?* *Infedele, ingrate io sono.* *Son crudele e traditor.*	But what if this was really The one I adored, and abandoned? Unfaithful, ungrateful am I. I am cruel and a traitor.

Handel
Recitative and Aria "Ove son … Qui ti sfido" from the opera *Arianna in Creta* HWV 32

Theseus is about to confront the Minotaur, and the opening recitative provides a vivid depiction of Theseus' horror at what he sees. The aria itself bursts with energy as Theseus summons all his strength to kill the monster, which he does at the very end of the aria.

Ove son? Qual orrore *Spirano da ogni parte* *di quest' orrido claustro i duri sassi?* *Che fo? Dove rivolgo* *per l'obliquo sentier gl'incerti passi?* *Qui del mostro biforme* *parmi veder l'orme ferine impresse,* *ei non lunge s'aggira.*	Where am I? What horror breathes from the hard rocks on every side of this horrible cloister? What can I do? Where can I turn my steps in these tangled paths? Here I seem to see the voracious two-formed monster's tracks, and not far from here he is stalking.
Il filo condottiero al muro appendo,	The thread which will lead me out of here is attached to the wall,
e nel aperto vallo il crudo attendo.	and in this open vale I will wait for the cruel beast.
Cielo! Patria! Arianna! Gloria! Amore! *Da forza al braccio, se dai moto al core.*	Gods! Country! Arianna! Glory! Love! Give force to my arm, as you give movement to my heart
Aria *Qui ti sfido, o mostro infame!* *Vieni pur che io non pavento* *La tua rabbia, il tuo furor.*	Here I'll defy you, oh infamous monster! Come then, I don't fear Your rage or your fury.
Caderai; ma se foss'io *Dato in preda alle tue brame,* *Perchè già non è più, mio* *Lascia almeno intatto il cor.*	You shall die; but if I Were to fall prey to your desires - Because it is no longer mine, At least leave my heart intact.

WHAT WAS OPERA SERIA?

Italian *opera seria* (serious opera) was the prevailing opera genre in the early eighteenth century, and conformed to a set of conventions relating to plot, libretto and structure. The main characters were always noble, and the plots dealt with serious subjects usually from classical mythology or ancient history.

An *opera seria* consisted of a series of arias linked by recitative (sung speech), which told the story and propelled the action. In the arias the characters expressed their reaction to what had just taken place, or to what they had been told had just taken place, as not much actually happened on stage. The arias were nearly always *da capo*, in three parts with the first part repeated after a contrasting middle section. The singer was expected to show his or her virtuosity and artistry by adding extra ornamentation on the repeat.

WHAT WAS A CASTRATO?

A castrato was a male singer who had been castrated before puberty to preserve his high pitched voice. With a choirboy voice supported by a man-sized body, the result was a voice of often extraordinary range and power. Castrati were an integral and honoured part of the European music scene from the late 16th to the early 19th centuries.

WHAT IS A COUNTERTENOR?

A countertenor sings in his falsetto (upper) register, which is a natural function of all male voices. Men singing in falsetto have been used for centuries for the alto parts in traditional all-male cathedral choirs. Castrati roles are now usually sung by either a woman or a counter-tenor, although a counter-tenor voice does not have the same timbre or range as a castrato's.

	HANDEL'S LIFE AND CAREER	PORPORA'S LIFE AND CAREER	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS
1685	Born in Halle, Germany		JS Bach born
1686		Born in Naples	
1695			Locatelli born
1706	Travels to Italy		Twinings tea room opens in London
1708		First opera performed	
1710	Music director to the Elector of Hanover		First copyright legislation passed in England
1711	First London opera *Rinaldo* performed		
1713	Moves to London. Dismissed by court of Hanover	Music director to Portuguese ambassador in Rome	
1714			Queen Anne dies; Elector of Hanover becomes King of Great Britain
1717	Composes *Water Musick*		
1721		Established as opera composer	JS Bach completes Brandenburg concertos
1727	Composes music for the coronation of George II; becomes a British subject	Opera *Arianna e Teseo* premieres in Venice	First performance of JS Bach's *St Matthew Passion*
1729		*Semiramide riconosciuta* performed in Venice	Locatelli retires to Amsterdam
1733	Oratorio *Deborah* premieres	Moves to London. Premiere of *Arianna in Nasso*	Opera of the Nobility established. Locatelli publishes *The Art of the Violin*
1734	Premiere of *Arianna in Creta.* Pasticcio *Oreste* performed		Opera of the Nobility perform Handel's opera *Ottone*
1735	Premiere of *Alcina*	Premiere of *Polifemo*	
1736		Stages pasticcio *Orfeo*. Returns to Venice	Opera of the Nobility collapses
1742	First performance of *Messiah*		Celsius devises centigrade thermometer
1747		In Dresden as court singing teacher	Last person beheaded on Tower Hill London
1751	Begins to go blind		
1752	Going blind. Premiere of oratorio *Jephtha*	In Vienna. Haydn plays for his singing lessons	Benjamin Franklin proves that lightning is electricity
1759	Dies, buried in Westminster Abbey.		Mozart is aged 3
1761		Last opera a failure. Dies in poverty in Naples	
1764			Locatelli dies

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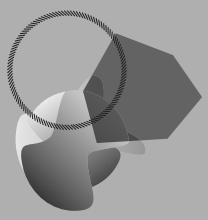

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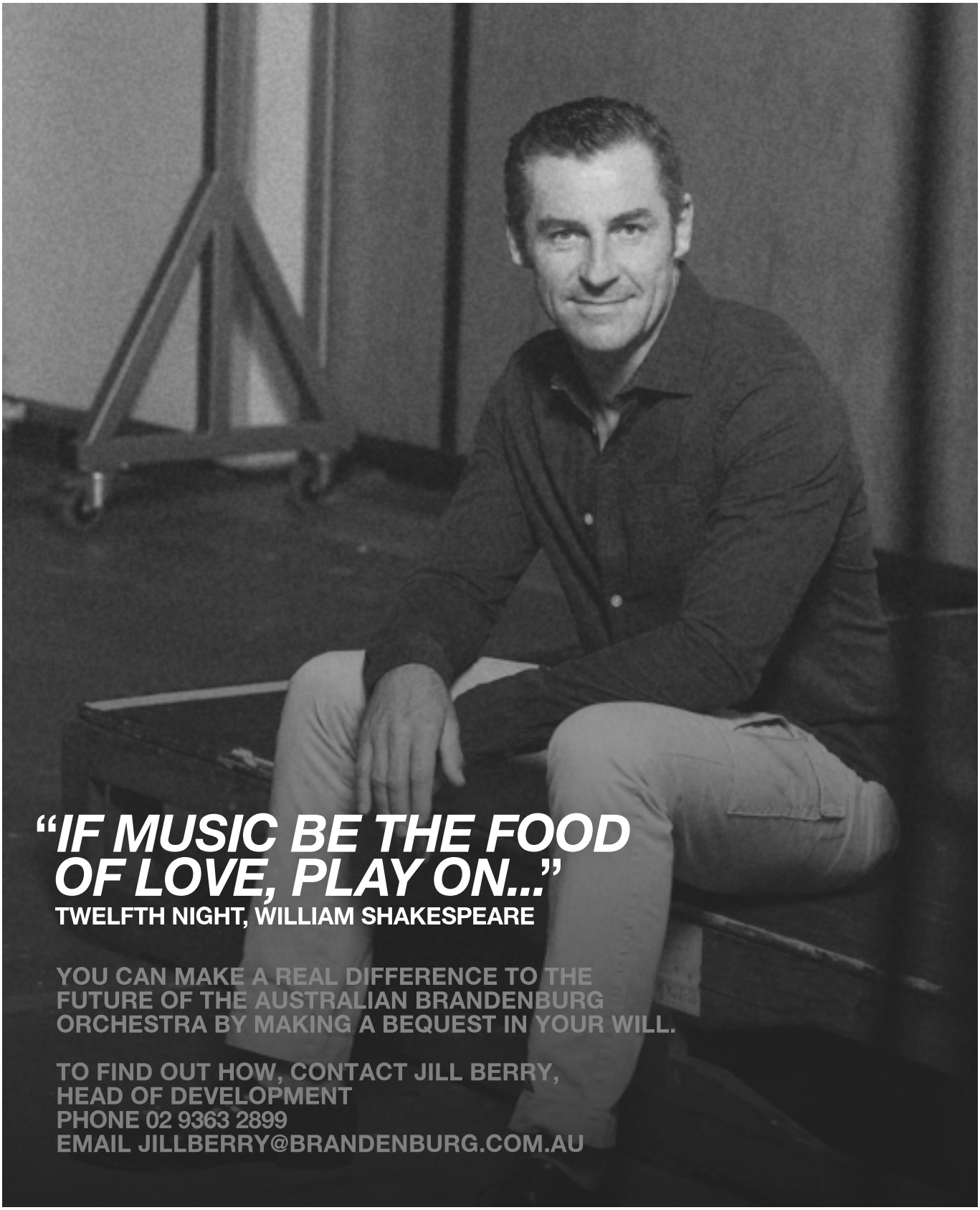

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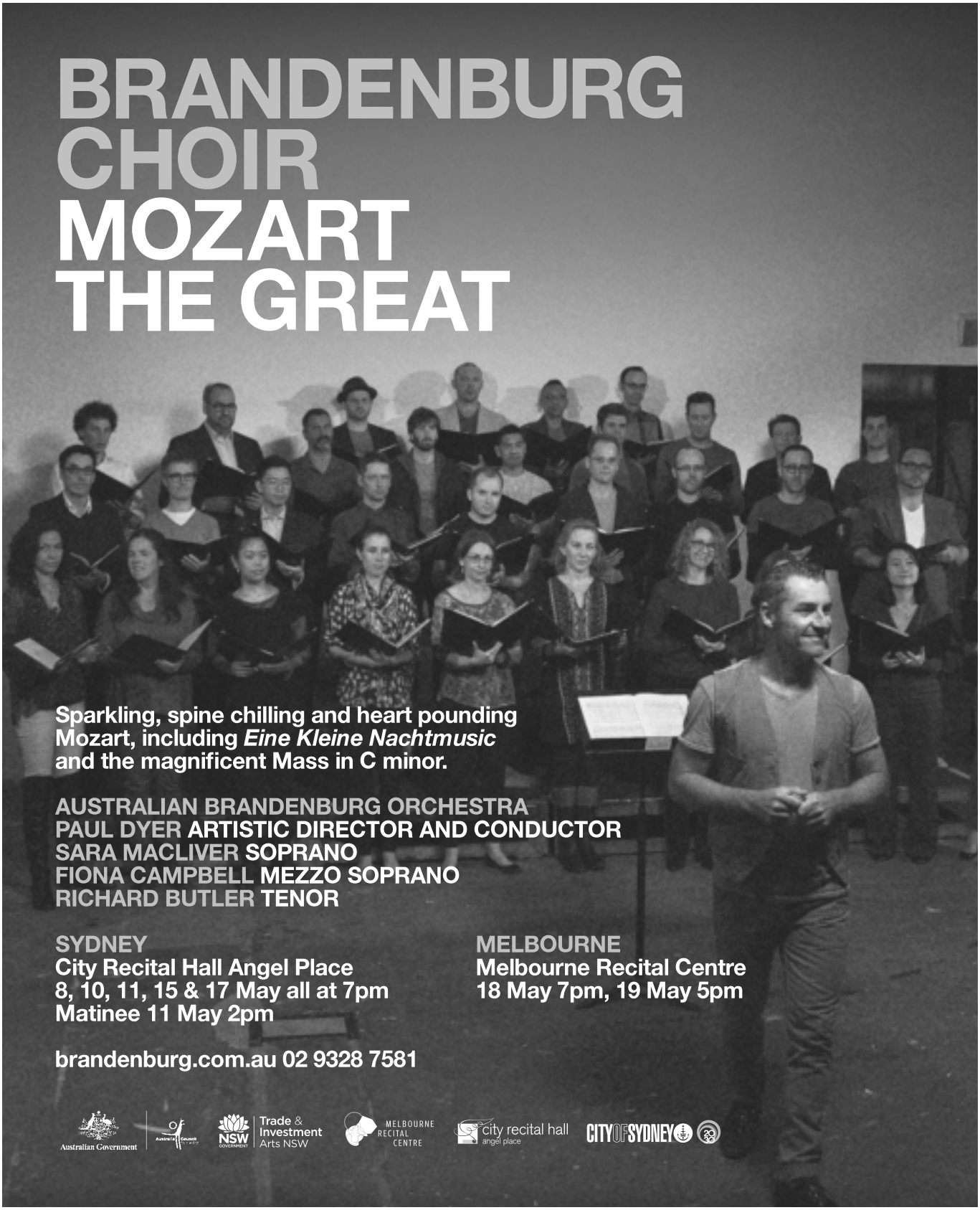

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