

**YOUR LOCAL  
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE**  
NSW & ACT**Elegance and earthiness**

STEVEN GODBEE

IN this appealing concert on Wednesday at the City Recital Hall in Sydney, guest director and violinist Stefano Montanari shrewdly exploited the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra's capacity to vary the quality of its sound. Hard-edged earthiness in Veracini's *Concerto a otto stromenti* offered a vivid contrast to the players' bright-toned clarity in an elegant reading of Handel's *Concerto grosso*, Op 3, No 6 and a vibrant version of Brescianello's violin concerto No 4. The performance of Francesco Geminiani's concerto grosso *La Follia* was even finer, capturing its imaginative structure and dramatic character. Montanari was an impressive soloist, thrillingly virtuosic and intensely expressive by turns. Flautist Melissa Farrow's smoothly shaped solos proved an ideal foil for Montanari's flamboyance in Telemann's violin and flute concerto, while the ABO sustained a cohesive ensemble sound throughout. The program is repeated tonight, Saturday, Wednesday and Thursday before moving to Melbourne on July 27-28.

MURRAY BLACK