



SYDNEY  
*philharmonia*  
CHOIRS  
*season 2011*



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*“Sydney Philharmonia exists to champion the soul stirring power of the human voice and to enrich the lives of performers and the wider community through compelling and passionate performances of choral music.”*

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## About us

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs has grown over 90 years to become Australia's largest choral organisation, with unique national and international standing.

On its 2010 tour to London, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs was hailed by reviewers at the Royal Albert Hall:

"the real stars were the amassed choruses of the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs, BBC Symphony Chorus, and the choristers of St Paul's and Westminster Cathedrals and Westminster Abbey. Their dynamic range and sheer exuberance at times blew the roof off that great hall."

Under the baton of Sir Simon Rattle they were the first Australian choir to sing at the Proms. This groundbreaking tour in 2002 also included a concert at King's College Chapel, Cambridge, and a performance of Rachmaninov's *Vespers* in Worcester Cathedral as part of the Three Choirs Festival. More recently on their 90th anniversary UK tour they performed at Westminster Abbey, St Paul's Cathedral and Australia House.

Other highlights include:

- Helpmann Award winning performance of Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* in the 2010 Sydney Festival.
- Film soundtracks – the Oscar nominated film *Australia* and the Oscar and BAFTA award winning film *Happy Feet*.
- Performing in the Opening Ceremony of the Games of the XXVII Olympiad in Sydney, 2000.
- Beethoven's *Symphony No.9* as part of the Opening Ceremony of the Nagano Winter Olympics.
- *Dawn Chorus* spectacular choral performance at Bondi Beach in the 2009 Sydney Festival to audiences of over 7,000.



At the BBC Proms - 2010



St. Paul's Cathedral



Australia House

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## Leaders in Classical Music Performance

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Brett Weymark

Brett Weymark, Artistic and Musical Director, has presented numerous acclaimed performances.

In 2010 alone the Symphony Chorus received a Helpmann Award for their Sydney Festival performance of Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*, our Chamber Singers performance of Purcell's *King Arthur* received a Limelight nomination for Best Opera, and three programs were listed as best classical music events in 2010 by *Time Out Sydney* magazine.

With four choirs rehearsing and performing regularly – the 32-voice Chamber Singers, the 100-voice Symphony Chorus, the youth focussed VOX, and the 300-voice Festival Chorus – Sydney Philharmonia presents its own annual concert series in the Sydney Opera House and City Recital Hall Angel Place as well as performing regularly with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

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## Four Choirs and More

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Vox

From its small local beginnings in 1920, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs has grown immensely to now, every year, providing the wonderful experience of participating in choral music to over 2,000 singers.

Along with the auditioned choirs (Chamber Singers, Symphony Chorus and VOX) our massed choir programs provide singers of all levels the chance to learn and perform great choral works. The Festival Chorus of 350 voices and the Messiah Chorus with around 450 voices at Christmas give singers the opportunity to perform at our best venues. In addition our annual choral training program ChorusOz brings together up to 1,000 singers from Australia and the wider world.

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*Berlioz Te Deum 2010*  
*"...a display of power*  
*through numbers."*

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# Our Activities

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## Our Performances

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs present a wide range of choral music, extending from early a cappella and Baroque repertoire to the symphonic choral works of the 19th and 20th centuries. Popular light classics and contemporary new works are also part of the colourful mix presented in our annual season at Sydney's leading performance venues.

Our festival engagements have included; Mahler's *Eighth Symphony* at the opening concert of the Olympic Arts Festival, *War Requiem* at the UWA Perth International Arts Festival in 2007, 2004 Melbourne Festival, Sydney Festival 2009 and 2010, and the BBC Proms, London 2002 and 2010.

The 90th anniversary concert presented Berlioz *Te Deum* at the Sydney Opera House - 'a display of power through numbers' *Sydney Morning Herald*.

## Recordings and Broadcasting

Philharmonia performances now reach across Australia and the world, with recordings promoted on ABC and BBC websites.

The Australian Government commissioned the Choirs to record the Australian National Anthem.

The choirs also performed two concerts with Barbra Streisand during her *Timeless* tour, recording a CD of this tour.

## Supporting and Training Australian Musicians

As a promoter Sydney Philharmonia engages leading soloists and provides a platform for the young Australian singers of the future. We also provide employment for hundreds of musicians as we present at least six orchestral choral concerts each season.

We regularly work in partnership with Sydney Youth Orchestra and Sydney Children's Choir to provide training for young instrumentalists and singers and our Assistant Chorus Master role is a unique training position. Each year this role provides a talented young musician the opportunity to conduct choirs of the highest standard and to experience conducting magnificent orchestral choral music.

## Education

Sydney Philharmonia has an important role in providing education and training for choristers, choral directors and the wider community through courses at its rehearsal space, the Festival Chorus program and our flagship participatory project ChorusOz. An exciting new venture in 2011 is our *Philharmonia Immersion* series, which is directly linking skills workshops for singers and audience development events to our season of concerts. An eclectic series of free talks will invite the general public to join us at the SPC Wharf venue and provide insights into the repertoire in performance.

## Commissioning New Choral Music

SPC has a commitment to the continued creative development of the art form. We regularly commission new works, often from Australian composers, and include performances of both challenging and accessible contemporary choral works in our programs.

Recently commissioned Australian works include Andrew Schultz's *Beach Burial* in 2009 and works from Iain Grandage and John Peterson for *Dawn Chorus*.

Peter Sculthorpe especially wrote a work - *To Music* - for our 90th Anniversary concert and which was premiered in the Sydney Opera House in September 2010.



## Where

The choirs perform regularly at the Sydney Opera House and the City Recital Hall Angel Place. Other programs such as the *Choral Pilgrimage* have taken the choirs on tour to the churches and cathedrals of NSW. We are engaged in providing outreach programs for regional NSW and to developing partnerships with orchestras and festivals which will enable us to visit other Australian capital cities.

Our home and rehearsal studio in Walsh Bay is a hub of singing and choral training.

This is the location for most of the choir rehearsals and education workshops and events. The massed choirs rehearse in a number of locations in central Sydney.



Sydney Opera House

## The Organisation

The Choirs with their management collectively make up Sydney Philharmonia Limited, a company limited by guarantee, whose directors are drawn from the wider business community as well as from chorister members.

Sydney Philharmonia Limited is an Australian not-for-profit arts organisation receiving both Federal and State funding. We are registered on the Register of Cultural Organisations, thus are eligible to receive tax-deductible donations.

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs is assisted by the NSW Government through the NSW Ministry for the Arts



Sydney Philharmonia Choirs is assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body



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## **Bach - St John Passion**

A dramatic realisation of the gospels, immediate and arresting. The perfect way to celebrate the Holy Week.



## **It's All About Rhythm**

Music from three composers, each a master in harnessing the seductive and enormous power of rhythm.



## **ChorusOz**

A unique experience for singers and audience alike, when up to 1,000 voices and full orchestra present Beethoven's fantastic choral work, attracting participants from across Australia and abroad.



## **Fauré - Requiem**

### **De Lalande - De profundis clamavi**

The sublime Fauré Requiem is combined with the elegance of the court of Louis the XXIV in this concert revealing the best of French choral music.



## **Brahms - Ein Deutsches Requiem**

Fans of choral music will not be able to resist the excitement of hearing a new work by Eric Whitacre, one of today's leading composers of choral music, together in the same program as the deeply moving romantic masterpiece.



## **Brighton to Bondi**

A feast of music for organ and large chorus with British composers making way for the best of Australian choral music presented by our virtuosic youth ensemble VOX.



## **Bach - B Minor Mass**

*"Music is an agreeable harmony for the honour of God and the permissible delights of the soul"*  
J.S. Bach.

You'll agree when you hear Bach's groundbreaking work.



## **American Journeys**

America has the most vibrant and varied choral tradition on the planet. This a cappella program captures an array of entertaining and enchanting musical gems to delight your ears.



## **Handel - Messiah**

A work that has inspired an amazing musical community tradition each Christmas. Handel's greatest choral work this year features star soloists with David Hobson and Fiona Campbell.



## **A European Christmas**

VOX coming out in full force in 2011 has a special treat in store for the festive season, lending their youthful energy and fun with SYO for the perfect family Christmas concert.

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