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brandenburg favourites

VIVALDI

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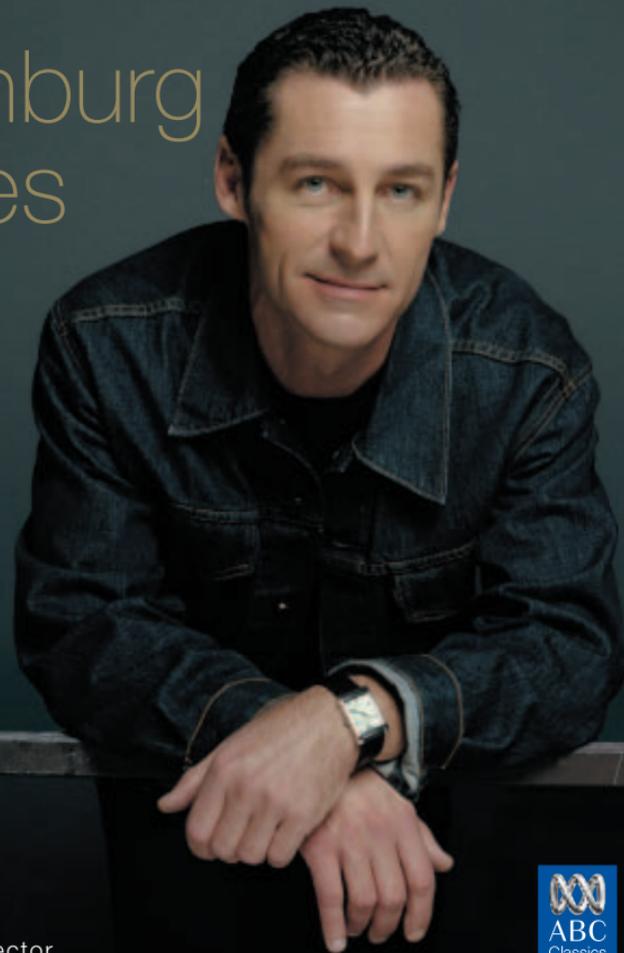
GLUCK

AUSTRALIAN

BRANDENBURG

ORCHESTRA

PAUL DYER artistic director



brandenburg favourites

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH 1685-1750

'Brandenburg' Concerto No. 3 in G, BWV 1048 [12'42]

for 3 violins, 3 violas, 3 cellos and basso continuo (Weimar, c.1711-1713)

- | | | |
|---|--|------|
| 1 | [Allegro] | 5'49 |
| 2 | Adagio (Sarabande from French Suite No. 5) | 2'21 |
| 3 | Allegro | 4'31 |

ANTONIO VIVALDI 1678-1741

Concerto No. 9 in D, RV 230, from *L'estro armonico*, Op. 3 [7'11]

(Amsterdam, 1711)

for solo violin, strings and basso continuo

- | | | |
|---|-----------|------|
| 4 | Allegro | 2'08 |
| 5 | Larghetto | 3'00 |
| 6 | Allegro | 2'05 |

Paul Wright *solo violin*

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL 1685-1759

'Flute' Suite in G, HWV 350, from *Water Music* (London, 1717) [10'16]

for 'flauto piccolo', flute, 2 oboes, bassoon and strings

- | | | |
|----|-----------------|------|
| 7 | [Menuet] | 2'36 |
| 8 | Rigaudon I & II | 2'42 |
| 9 | Minuet I & II | 3'20 |
| 10 | Gigue I & II | 1'38 |

Hans-Dieter Michatz *transverse flute*

Howard Oberg *descant recorder*

ANTONIO VIVALDI

Concerto No. 8 in A minor, RV 522, from *L'estro armonico*, Op. 3 [10'26]

for 2 violins, strings and basso continuo

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|------|
| 11 | Allegro | 3'38 |
| 12 | Larghetto e spirituososo | 3'28 |
| 13 | Allegro | 3'24 |

Paul Wright, Sayuri Yamagata *solo violins*

CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD von GLUCK 1714-1787

Ballet music from *Orphée et Euridice* (Paris, 1774) [10'40]

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|------|
| 14 | Dance of the Furies | 4'02 |
| 15 | Dance of the Blessed Spirits | 6'38 |

Hans-Dieter Michatz *transverse flute*

ANTONIO VIVALDI

Concerto No. 7 in F, RV 567, from *L'estro armonico*, Op. 3 [8'21]

for four violins, cello, strings and basso continuo

- | | | |
|----|---------|------|
| 16 | Andante | 2'10 |
| 17 | Adagio | 1'16 |
| 18 | Allegro | 2'39 |
| 19 | Adagio | 0'53 |
| 20 | Allegro | 1'24 |

Paul Wright, Natsumi Wakamatsu, Sayuri Yamagata, Staas Swierstra *solo violins*

Hidemi Suzuki *cello*

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba from *Solomon*, HWV 67 (London 1749) 3'02

Total Playing Time 63'32

Australian Brandenburg Orchestra

Paul Dyer artistic director

J.S. Bach compiled his collection of 'Six Concertos avec plusieurs Instruments' (Six Concertos for Several Instruments), now known as the Brandenburg Concertos, in Cöthen in 1721. Intended as a gift to please and impress a potential patron and employer, the Margrave of Brandenburg, the presentation manuscript contained a diverse selection of orchestral music written at various times during the previous decade. **Brandenburg Concerto No. 3** is almost certainly one of the earliest in the collection. Stylistic factors point to its first movement in particular having been written before, rather than after, Bach's decisive assimilation of aspects of the international Italian concerto style when he got to know Vivaldi's Opus 3 around 1713.

In contrast to his own later works which do reveal the influence of Vivaldi's solo concerto style (including the fourth and fifth of the Brandenburg set), Bach makes no strict distinction here between solo and *ripieno* groups. Instead he deploys the nine independent string parts (three for each of violins, violas and cellos) in a range of combinations, from solos for a single instrument, to dialogue between groups, to the whole band playing *tutti*. All six of the higher strings (violins and violas) appear as featured soloists for short passages in the first movement, culminating in a climactic episode in which a bar-long figure passes gradually down the texture through each of the violins and

violas, finally being taken over by the three cellos playing together.

Instead of writing out a standard central slow movement in this concerto, Bach inserted just two orchestral chords, marked *Adagio*, between the fast outer movements. This may have been a signal for the leading violinist or harpsichordist to insert or improvise a short solo passage, ending with the two chords for the whole band. For this recording, Paul Dyer has chosen to insert the Sarabande from Bach's French Suite No. 5 (BWV 816). Though not so named, the final movement is a sophisticated rendering of the Baroque dance form, the gigue (or 'jig'). Played too slowly, as it often is, the characteristic pulse of the gigue rhythm (long-short-long-short) is lost beneath the semiquavers, but performed at a suitably breakneck speed, it rises to the surface again.

In 1711 the Amsterdam publisher Etienne Roger brought out what was to become one of the most influential musical publications of the first half of the 18th century. This was Antonio Vivaldi's Opus 3, his first published set of orchestral concertos, figuratively entitled *L'estro armonico* (*The Harmonic Fancy*). If nothing else, the Amsterdam publication reflected the enormous demand for the latest Italian music in northern Europe. Johann Sebastian Bach was just one notable consumer. He made arrangements of five of Vivaldi's Opus 3

concertos for solo keyboard (without orchestral accompaniment) and as a result, some of the works are as equally well-known today in Bach's arrangements as in their original forms. These include two of the works recorded here: Concerto No. 8 (in Bach's arrangement, BWV 593) and Concerto No. 9 (BWV 972).

According to Vivaldi's original plan, the twelve concertos of the Opus 3 set are divided equally into works for one, two and four solo violins. One of each type is recorded here. **Concerto No. 7**, for four violins, includes an additional solo part for cello. In the opening movement it accompanies the four violins (both with and without the help of the harpsichord) when they play alone; however only for a moment in the third movement does it actually have a melodic role in its own right. In the final movement, the third and fourth violins rejoin the orchestral strings, leaving only the first two violins (accompanied again by the cello) as soloists. This change in their status is quite marked, for unlike in many of Vivaldi's later concertos, the orchestral (or *ripieno*) violins and violas here have a much more minor role to play; except, that is, in the two minor-keyed movements marked *Adagio*, where there are no soloists at all.

With its five-movement scheme and strictly orchestral slow movements, the seventh concerto is among the most old-fashioned of

Vivaldi's 1711 set. By contrast, **Concerto No. 8**, for two violins, is one of the most advanced. Even the orchestral *ritornelli* are full of melodic and thematic interest, and in fact provide the bulk of the musical material in all three movements. Contrasting with these thematically rigorous *tutti* sections are extensive rhapsodic solo episodes for the two violins, characterised in the case of the first movement by long and tantalising sequences of suspended dissonances.

Stylistically, **Concerto No. 9** for solo violin falls somewhere between the two foregoing works. As is the case with the Concerto No. 8, the thematic interest in its first movement is evenly distributed between solo episodes and the *tutti ritornelli*. Its final movement, however, is reminiscent of the seventh concerto, giving undisputed pride of place to the soloist alone, as too is the case in the affective *Larghetto* slow movement.

The first occasion on which the bulk of what we know as G.F. Handel's **Water Music** was heard was probably a royal river party on the Thames on 17 July 1717. Friedrich Bonet, then the Brandenburg Resident in London, left an eye-witness account of this event:

At about eight in the evening the King repaired to his barge ... Next to [which] was that of the musicians, to wit about 50 in number — trumpets, horns, oboes, bassoons, German flutes, French flutes,

violins and basses, but no singers. The music had been composed specially by the famous Handel, a native of Halle and his Majesty's principal court composer. His Majesty's approval of it was so great that he caused it to be played three times in all, twice before and once after supper, even though each performance lasted an hour.

As to the *Water Music* itself, there is no actual record of how much of it was played on this occasion, or in what order the various movements occurred. Over the next two decades, however, various collections of movements purported to belong to the *Water Music* circulated in manuscript, and in 1733 Handel's publisher Walsh finally issued a twelve-movement selection under the title *Handel's Celebrated Water Music*. A harpsichord arrangement published ten years later contained nine further movements, but was still not (as its title claimed) 'Compleat'. In fact no single source contains all 22 of the pieces now associated under the title *Water Music*.

Some order can be made out of this chaos, however. Rather than a rambling mass of 22 unconnected pieces, the collection falls easily into three separate 'suites', distinguished by key and instrumentation. The first, in F major (known as the 'Horn' suite), was also probably the first to have been written, perhaps in time for an earlier royal 'water music' on the Thames on 22

August 1715. Bonet's 1717 list specifically mentions all the instruments used, not only in this first suite but also in the second ('Trumpet') suite in D and the third ('Flute') suite in G. In respect of this last case, the 'German flutes' mentioned were standard transverse flutes; the 'French flutes' (also referred to in the 1733 score as 'Flauti-piccoli') were descant recorders. Then, as in the case of the soloist in this recording, Handel expected his flute players to be able to play both flutes in close succession: the 'German' in the opening Minuet and the 'French' in the third and fourth movements.

Handel was a composer prone to 'recycle' music, not only his own, but also that of others. Among other composers thus honoured was his friend and correspondent Telemann, a copy of whose newly published *Musique de table* Handel acquired shortly after its publication in 1733. Subsequently short but identifiable passages from Telemann's collection found their way into a number of Handel's works, including *Hercules* (1744), the *Occasional Oratorio* (1746) and *Belshazzar* (1744). Other scores in Handel's library were equally prone to such plundering. Among them was the keyboard collection *Componimenti musicali* by Gottlieb Muffat (1690-1770), which supplied Handel with a March for *Judas Maccabeus* (1746), plus scores of the considerable number of Italian operas that Handel himself had been engaged in performing in his capacity as a leading London impresario.

One of these, *Numitore* by Giovanni Porta (c.1675-1755), produced at the Royal Academy in 1720, provided the details which Handel reworked into the famous aria 'Let the bright Seraphim' for *Samson* in 1741.

In mitigation, it must be pointed out that Handel seldom failed to extend and often drastically improve upon his 'borrowed' material. One of the clearest demonstrations of this is his famous orchestral symphony **Arrival of the Queen of Sheba** from *Solomon* (1749), which Handel crafted out of bits from not one but three composers: Telemann, Muffat and Porta's *Numitore*. Scored for an orchestra of strings, with obbligato parts for a pair of oboes, Handel's new synthesis depicts the splendid arrival of Solomon's Arabian visitor as described in the Bible (First Book of Kings): 'She came to Jerusalem with a great retinue with camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones.'

Orphée et Euridice is a radically revised version, in French, of Gluck's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*, originally composed to a libretto by his exact contemporary Ranieri Calzabigi. The opera premiered at Vienna's Imperial Theatre in 1762, with the internationally renowned alto castrato Gaetano Guadagni (formerly a member of Handel's company in London) taking the role of Orpheus. *Orfeo* also featured a large role for the court theatre's *corps de ballet*, then under the direction of Gasparo Angiolini, who later also

worked with Mozart on his *Thamos* in 1774. Unfortunately Angiolini's choreography has not survived. However, one of Gluck's dance pieces for his company, the menuet-like *Andante* of the so-called 'Dance of the Blessed Spirits', has since become one of the most popular survivors of the Vienna production.

Though not a runaway success in Vienna, *Orfeo* was revived a number of times elsewhere. Thanks to J.C. Bach (youngest son of Johann Sebastian), it was heard at the King's Theatre in London in 1770, still in Italian but with the addition of some new arias composed by Bach himself. The French version on this recording, *Orphée et Euridice*, was mounted at the Académie Royale in Paris in 1774. This time Gluck himself supervised the musical additions, which included a number of dance pieces, among them music both old and new. The 'Dance of the Furies', a tempestuous *Vivace* in D minor, had already achieved fame in Vienna over a decade earlier as the original closing number of Gluck's 1761 ballet-pantomime *Don Juan*. In its new context, at the end of Act II Scene 1, it accompanies a tumultuous ballet for the Furies and Shades who, having sought to block Orpheus's path into the Underworld, discover that they have been thwarted.

In the following scene, Orpheus then enters the Elysian Fields and is greeted by the Blessed Spirits. For this sequence, Gluck retained the

popular F major *Andante* from the Viennese production; however for Paris he added an entirely new component, a *Lento* in D minor for solo flute, probably intended as a showcase for the talents of Felix Rault, then principal flautist at the Académie. After this effective interlude, the ballet continues with a reprise of the menuet.

Reporting on the Paris opening, the *Mercure de France* paid due tribute not only to the composer but to his (this time two) choreographers. M. Gardel, who conceived the Furies' dance, was appropriately acclaimed as possessing the 'boldest talent', while for his elegant ballet of the Blessed Spirits, Gaetano Vestris was said to have perfectly combined 'art with nature'.

Graeme Skinner

Paul Dyer

Paul Dyer is one of Australia's leading specialists in period performing styles. He founded the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra in 1990 as a natural outcome of his experience as a performer and teacher of Baroque and Classical music, and has been the Orchestra's Artistic Director since that time.

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

As well as directing the Orchestra, Paul has a busy schedule appearing as a soloist, continuo player and conductor with many major ensembles, including the Sydney Symphony, The Queensland Orchestra, Australia Ensemble, Australian Chamber Orchestra, Opera Australia, The Australian Youth Orchestra, the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra and the Pacific Baroque Orchestra, Vancouver.

Paul has performed with many prominent soloists including Graham Pushee, Yvonne Kenny and Emma Kirkby. In 1998 he made his debut in Tokyo with countertenor Derek Lee Ragin, leading an ensemble of Brandenburg Orchestra soloists, and in August-September 2001 Paul toured the Orchestra to Europe with

guest soloist Andreas Scholl, appearing in Vienna, France, Germany and London (Proms). As a recitalist, he has toured the United States, playing in Carnegie Hall in New York, as well as Germany, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

In 1995 he received a Churchill Fellowship and he has won numerous awards for his CD recordings with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, including the 1998 and 2001 ARIA Award for Best Classical Recording. Paul was recently awarded the Australian Centenary Medal for his services to Australian society and the advancement of music.

Australian Brandenburg Orchestra

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra is Australia's finest period instrument orchestra, made up of leading specialists in the performance of Baroque and Classical music. The Orchestra is committed to energetic and lively programming, combining popular Baroque and Classical favourites with premiere Australian performances of seldom-heard masterpieces.

The musicians play from original edition scores and on instruments of the period. These have been restored or faithfully reproduced to recreate a seventeenth-century orchestral sound and they differ significantly from their modern equivalents – softer and more articulated with an often raw and earthy timbre.

The Orchestra's name pays tribute to the

Brandenburg Concertos of J.S. Bach, whose musical genius was central to the Baroque and Classical periods.

Founded in 1990 by Paul Dyer when a team of hand-picked musicians was assembled for intensive rehearsals leading up to debut performances at the Sydney Opera House for its Mostly Mozart Festival, the success of that first concert still rings true to this day – the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra combines historical integrity with a distinctly fresh Australian style.

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra makes regular appearances in the major concert halls and historic cultural venues of Australia, and has performed with guest artists such as Andreas Scholl, Emma Kirkby, Andreas Staier, Cyndia Sieden, Marc Destrubé, Elizabeth Wallfisch, Hidemi Suzuki, Derek Lee Ragin and Andrew Manze.

The Orchestra has appeared at both Sydney and Melbourne Festivals, performed Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* with Opera Australia in 1993, and from 1994 established a sell-out annual series of 'salon style' concerts at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

In March 1998 the Orchestra made its Tokyo debut with countertenor Derek Lee Ragin. Moving from strength to strength, the Orchestra accompanied 'the world's leading countertenor of our time', Andreas Scholl, in a concert tour to Europe in August 2001, finishing at the London Proms.

The year 2000 brought two major developments: the use of the newly-built City Recital Hall Angel Place as the Orchestra's major concert venue, and the highly successful launch of the Orchestra's first subscription season. Since then the Orchestra has developed into a significant player in the Australian music scene and was admitted into the Major Performing Arts Group of the Australia Council in 2003.

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra has released ten compact discs, with soloists including Andreas Scholl, Genevieve Lacey, Yvonne Kenny, Elizabeth Wallfisch, Sara MacIver, Graham Pushee and Cyndia Sieden. Several of these recordings have received awards, including two ARIA awards for Best Classical Recording.

Director/Harpisichord Paul Dyer*

Violin Paul Wright (Concertmaster)*, Fiona Ziegler (Leader), Scot Armstrong, Lorna Cumming, Alice Evans, Stephen Freeman, Shuti Huang, Nicola Lewis, Lorraine Moxey, Simon Musgrave
Viola Staas Swierstra*, Colin Cornish*, Graeme McKean, Amanda Murphy, David Wicks*
Cello Hidemi Suzuki*, Kate Morgan*, Cameron Retchford*
Bass Max McBride*

Flute Hans-Dieter Michatz, Howard Oberg

Recorder Howard Oberg

Oboe Geoffrey Burgess, Anne Gilby

Horn Anthony Buddle, Nigel Davies

Bassoon Julia Cunynghame

*players in Brandenburg Concerto No. 3

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For the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra

General Manager Bruce Applebaum

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Handel Arias

Graham Pushee *countertenor*

1995 ABC Classic FM Best

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1995 24 Hours Magazine

Listeners' Choice Award

ABC 446 272-2



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Handel Arias

Yvonne Kenny *soprano*

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The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra Collection

Paul Dyer *artistic director*

ABC 465 428-2



The Four Seasons

Elizabeth Wallfisch *Baroque violin*

1997 24 Hours Magazine

Listeners' Choice Award

ABC 456 364-2



Vivaldi - Andreas Scholl

Andreas Scholl *countertenor*

ABC 466 964-2



Il Flauto Dolce

Genevieve Lacey *recorder*

2001 ARIA Award: Best

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ABC 461 828



NOË! NOË!

Christmas with the Australian

Brandenburg Orchestra

ABC 472 606-2



Mozart Clarinet Concerto & Arias

Craig Hill *basset clarinet*

Cyndia Sieden *soprano*

ABC 476 126-0