



AUSTRALIAN  
BRANDENBURG  
ORCHESTRA

# Baroque Masters

*The icons. The energy.  
The essence of the Brandenburg.*

# Baroque Masters

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With Thanks

## DATES

MELBOURNE RECITAL CENTRE	CITY RECITAL HALL, SYDNEY
Thu, 12 Feb, 2026 7PM	Wed, 18 Feb, 2026 7PM
Sat, 14 Feb, 2026 5PM	Fri, 20 Feb, 2026 7PM
Sun, 15 Feb, 2026 5PM	Sat, 21 Feb, 2026 2PM
	Sat, 21 Feb, 2026 7PM
	Tue, 24 Feb, 2026 7PM

## ARTISTS

Melissa Farrow (Sydney) Baroque Flute  
 Adam Masters (Melbourne) Baroque Oboe  
 Paul Dyer AO (Sydney) Harpsichord / Conductor  
 Australian Brandenburg Orchestra

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra is privileged to live, create and perform on the lands of the longest living culture in the world, and we pay deep respect to traditional custodians and Elders, past and present.

## Repertoire

Handel

Concerto Grosso in G Major, Op. 6 No. I, HWV 319  
 i *A tempo giusto*  
 ii *Allegro*  
 iii *Adagio*  
 iv *Allegro*  
 v *Allegro moderato*

Marcello

Concerto for Oboe in D minor, S D935  
 i *Andante e spiccato*  
 ii *Andante*  
 iii *Presto*

Bach

Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G major, BWV 1049  
 i *Allegro*  
 ii *Andante*  
 iii *Presto*

Bach

Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major, BWV 1048  
 i *[Allegro]*  
 ii *Adagio*  
 iii *Allegro*

Pachelbel

Canon in D major, P 37

Quantz

Concerto for Flute in C minor, QV 5:38  
 i *Allegro*  
 ii *Lento*  
 iii *Vivace*

Vivaldi

*La Folia*, Trio Sonata in D minor, Op. I No. I2, RV 63

PERFORMANCE LENGTH  
 100 minutes including 20 min interval

HARPSICHORD PREPARATION  
 Nathan Cox (Sydney), Shaun Catchpole (Melbourne)



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## About the Brandenburg



Photo by Keith Saunders

The Australian Brandenburg Orchestra is the national Baroque music flagship. It is a world leader in historically informed performance and hugely influential in the broader musical landscape.

The rise and triumph of the Brandenburg through the unflagging passion and vision of its co-founders Paul Dyer and Bruce Applebaum is one of the most extraordinary success stories in the nation's performing arts history. Since its stunning debut at the Sydney Opera House in 1990, the orchestra has introduced Baroque (and earlier) music at a serious level, playing on instruments authentic to the period.

The Brandenburg is renowned for its energetic spirit, stylistic diversity, ambition and innovation. In the words of the Honorable Dame Quentin Bryce, the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra 'has brought untold rewards in its brilliant musicianship, imaginative programming, outstanding soloists and partnerships. It has created adventures steeped in tradition yet luminously alive and liberating.'

The unique company vibrantly reawakens Baroque and Classical masterpieces for a contemporary audience. The Brandenburg's 20 recordings with ABC Classics include five ARIA Award winners for Best Classical Album.

Discover more at [brandenburg.com.au](http://brandenburg.com.au)

'...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 and laugh... there's a warmth and sense of fun not often associated with classical performance.'

**SYDNEY MORNING HERALD**

# Melissa Farrow

Baroque Flute



Melissa Farrow is an in-demand period flautist and recorder player on the Australian early music scene. Since 2003, she has been Principal Baroque Flute / Recorder at the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra where she programmed and co-ordinated its regional touring concerts and performances between 2011 and 2021.

Melissa was tutored by Paul Dyer in Baroque chamber music when she was studying at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. At the age of 20, she made her concert debut in 1996 with the Brandenburg at the Sydney Opera House. "It was such a thrill," she recalls. "I love the passion of Baroque and classical repertoire, and the way the Brandenburg brings a fresh quality to the concert experience."

Melissa is a featured player on the Brandenburg's recordings *Vivaldi* with Andreas Scholl, and *Brandenburg Celebrates*. Her most recent recordings appear on the digital platform Brandenburg One, including solo Bach and Telemann, Mozart's Flute Quartet in D major, K 285, and *Ayres & Graces*.

Melissa is a core member of the Australian Haydn Ensemble (AHE) and a member of Notturno, an ensemble with a core of flute, viola and guitar, performing music of the Classical and Romantic eras. In late 2019, she joined four colleagues from the Sydney Conservatorium to form the historical woodwind ensemble, Notos Wind Quintet. Melissa has always been drawn to new musical challenges and a level of risk-taking that brings a renewed sense of vitality to the music.

Melissa also plays regularly with Pinchgut Opera and the Orchestra of the Antipodes. She has 30 years' experience teaching flutes and recorders, giving workshops and masterclasses at the Sydney Conservatorium, where she is lecturer in period flute. Her interests outside of music include spending precious time with her daughters and husband, pottering in the garden and drinking a well-made coffee.

# Adam Masters

Baroque Oboe



Born in Perth, Australia, Adam Masters completed a Bachelor in medicine and worked as a doctor before undertaking a Bachelor's degree in Baroque Oboe at the University of Melbourne.

Adam gained numerous years of experience as principal oboe with Baroque orchestras throughout Australia and New Zealand, and received teaching positions in Baroque Oboe at the University of Melbourne and Sydney Conservatorium. Adam completed a Masters degree in Baroque Oboe at the Universität der Künste in Berlin studying with Xenia Löffler, and worked for a number of years with numerous Baroque orchestras throughout Europe including Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Elipolis Baroque Orchestra Hamburg, Collegium 1704 Prague, and the Netherlands Bach Collegium, among others.

Since returning to Australia, Adam has played principal oboe with all the major period-instrument ensembles in the country and has resumed teaching period oboe at the University of Melbourne.

# Paul Dyer AO Artistic Director



Paul Dyer AO is one of Australia's foremost specialists in historically informed performance.

Paul co-founded the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra in 1989 after completing postgraduate studies at the Royal Conservatorium in The Hague, and has served as its Artistic Director and Conductor ever since. A visionary performer and musical thinker, Paul is known for his adventurous spirit and for collaborating across genres with circus performers, contemporary dancers, and visual artists. His performances have taken him across Europe, Asia, the USA, and Canada, and his innovative approach to stagecraft continues to shape the Brandenburg's distinctive artistic identity.

A passionate champion of Australian music, Paul has been instrumental in commissioning new works by Australian composers, often weaving early music traditions with contemporary sound worlds. His artistic leadership has also fostered meaningful collaborations with First Nations musicians, including Rrawun Maymuru and Marcus Corowa.

These landmark projects blend ancient songlines with Baroque textures, offering audiences a profound and uniquely Australian musical experience.

Paul is a dedicated educator, having held teaching roles at leading institutions including the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He is also the driving force behind the Brandenburg Mentorship Program, which supports and develops the next generation of early music performers.

Over the course of his career, Paul has performed with many of the world's most celebrated soloists, including Andreas Scholl, Cyndia Sieden, Marc Destrubé, Hidemi Suzuki, Stefano Montanari, Xavier de Maistre, Shunske Sato, Maurice Steger, Riccardo Minasi, Yvonne Kenny, Emma Kirkby, Philippe Jaroussky, Samuel Mariño, Francesco Corti, Simone Kermes, and Yukie Sato.

Career highlights include the Brandenburg's European tour with Andreas Scholl in 2001, his Tokyo debut in 1998, and numerous national and international accolades for his recordings with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and Brandenburg Choir, which include five ARIA Awards for Best Australian Classical Album. More recently, Paul featured on the soundtrack of the James Bond film Spectre and, in 2024 and appeared in the acclaimed documentary film *Mozart's Sister*.

Beyond the podium, Paul is an avid cook, traveller, and lifelong connector of people and cultures. Through the Brandenburg's programming, he continues to foster dynamic collaborations between Australian and international artists.



# Australian Brandenburg Orchestra



**Paul Dyer\*** (Sydney)  
Conductor, Harpsichord



**Shaun Lee-Chen\*** (Perth)  
Concertmaster, Baroque Violin



**Matthew Bruce\*** (Sydney)  
Assoc. Concertmaster, Baroque Violin



**Robert Nairn\*<sup>I</sup>** (Adelaide)  
Principal Violone



**Melissa Farrow\*<sup>^</sup>** (Sydney)  
Principal Baroque Flute / Recorder



**Mikaela Oberg** (Sydney)  
Baroque Flute / Recorder



**Ben Dollman\*** (Adelaide)  
Principal Second Baroque Violin



**Ella Bennetts** (Sydney)  
Baroque Violin



**James Armstrong** (Melbourne)  
Baroque Violin



**Adam Masters\*<sup>^</sup>** (Melbourne)  
Principal Baroque Oboe



**Nicholas Pollock\*** (Melbourne)  
Principal Theorbo / Baroque Guitar



**Hannah Lane** (Melbourne)  
Principal Baroque Harp



**Matthew Greco** (Sydney)  
Baroque Violin



**Monique O'Dea\*** (Sydney)  
Principal Baroque Viola



**Marianne Yeomans** (Sydney)  
Baroque Viola



**Jamie Hey\*** (Melbourne)  
Principal Baroque Cello



**Anton Baba** (Sydney)  
Baroque Cello



**Edwina Cordingley** (Melbourne)  
Baroque Cello

\*Denotes Brandenburg Core Principal

<sup>I</sup> Denotes soloist

<sup>^</sup> Robert Nairn appears courtesy of Elder Conservatorium, Adelaide University (Staff)

# Baroque Masters

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Concerto Grosso in G major, Op. 6 No. I,

HWV 319

i *A tempo giusto*

ii *Allegro*

iii *Adagio*

iv *Allegro*

v *Allegro*

Handel arrived in London from Germany in 1710 and quickly established a very successful career as composer and director of Italian operas. This lasted until the 1730s, when a rival opera company poached his best singers and drew away the support of wealthy patrons. The rival company collapsed in 1737, but Handel suffered heavy financial losses and the stress caused a stroke which left him paralysed on his right side.

*'The ingenious Mr. Handell is very much indisposed, and it's thought with a Paralactic Disorder, he having at present no Use of his Right Hand, which, if he don't regain, the Publick will be depriv'd of his fine Compositions.'*

- The London Post, 14 May 1737

A period in the vapour baths of Aix-la-Chapelle in France restored his health, but finances were still tight and he was forced to use mainly English singers rather than expensive Italian imports. To save money Handel decided to introduce English oratorios, a genre which he invented, into his subscription seasons of opera. They proved to be so popular, and made him so much money, for relatively little effort, that he gradually stopped composing operas altogether.

18<sup>th</sup> century audiences were accustomed to spending four or five hours at the opera, so to extend the evening and compensate for the lack of visual interest—oratorios were not staged—Handel composed his Opus 6 'Grand Concertos', intending to perform them between the acts of his oratorios. Regardless of their pragmatic origins, Handel seems to have taken special care with their composition.

Handel set aside a month, the length of time he usually took to write an entire opera or oratorio, and completed all twelve concertos between 29 September and 30 October 1739. He was probably inspired by the success of the Opus 6 *Concerti grossi* of the great Italian composer Archangelo Corelli, published in 1714. They had achieved 'classic' status throughout Europe and particularly in England, so it is not surprising that Handel would want to both emulate the great master and to compose his own masterpiece. As well as sharing the same opus number, the number of concertos, and the musical form, both were conceived for strings alone, although in performance Handel added parts for oboes. Like Corelli, he chose to follow the old style multi-movement concerto grosso, structured around a small ensemble of solo instruments contrasted against the full orchestra.

## What to Listen For

Concerto No. I is in five movements, full of variety in musical texture, form and mood. Handel drew on the overture from his opera *Imeneo* for the first movement; it was common practice in the period for composers to recycle their own compositions and to borrow from other composers. The first movement leads

directly into the second movement, where the contrast between soloists and accompanying players is very apparent. Two solo violins 'sing' in duet in the third slower movement, followed by a slower fugal movement in a minor key which pits soloists against the full ensemble. The final lively *gigue* draws on a work by Domenico Scarlatti, Handel's old rival from Rome.

Alessandro Marcello (1673-1747)

Concerto for oboe in D minor, S D935

i *Andante e spiccato*

ii *Adagio*

iii *Presto*

Alessandro Marcello came from a Venetian noble family, who had a palazzo on the Grand Canal and a Doge painted by Titian among their ancestors. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Venice was a highly stratified society and all political, judicial, and administrative power was exercised by the small hereditary aristocracy. As an aristocrat, Marcello was a member of the governing council, a diplomat, and a magistrate, and like many aristocrats was exceptionally well educated. He was a mathematics scholar, a skilled globe maker, and a poet; he played the violin, collected musical instruments, and spoke seven languages. He was also expert in drawing and painted pictures for the family palaces in Venice and their country villa, and for the ceiling of the Marcello parish church. Marcello also composed concertos, violin sonatas, and cantatas for the finest singers of the day, but he was not allowed to be a professional musician as that was a career path open only to artisans, the lowest strata of Venetian society.

## What to Listen For

This oboe concerto is the best known of Marcello's compositions, but its provenance is unclear. For some time it was attributed to Vivaldi, or to Alessandro's brother Benedetto. It was published in Amsterdam in 1717, but it must have circulated earlier in manuscript, as JS Bach transcribed it for solo keyboard (BWV 974) in 1713 or 1714. It is especially famous for its melancholy slow second movement. Although its melody could stand on its own, unornamented, it was part of 18<sup>th</sup> century performance practice for the solo performer to elaborate the melody in such a way as to enhance the mood.



Engraved portrait of Alessandro Marcello, dated between 1701-1750. Artist Unknown.

**Bach's Brandenburg Concertos**

In March 1721, Bach sent 'Six Concertos for Several Instruments' to the Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt. He wrote the usual lengthy, obsequious dedication, reminding the Margrave that he had performed for him in Berlin two years earlier and that on that occasion the Margrave had asked for some of his compositions. That is the only definitive information we have about the background of the musical works now known as the 'Brandenburg Concertos'.

History does not record what the Margrave thought of Bach's gift, or if he even heard the concertos, as it is not known if they were performed anywhere in Bach's lifetime. Bach would not have composed these concertos specifically for the Margrave. Rather, he would have selected some from those he had written in the previous eight years when he worked at the courts of Weimar and Cöthen. They were largely neglected and unknown until 1849 when a German musicologist stumbled upon the autograph score in a library in Berlin. It was not until 100 years later, with the early music revival of the 1950s and widening access to recordings, that they began to be widely heard.

Bach began his first job at Weimar in 1703 as a chamber musician, but he only stayed seven months before leaving to work as organist in the nearby town of Arnstadt. In 1708, he returned to Weimar as organist and chamber musician, and later orchestra leader. Internal politics at the Weimar court meant that he was overlooked for promotion, and in 1717 he accepted the position of music director to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Cöthen, although before he was allowed to leave he was imprisoned for a month for being impertinent enough to ask for his own dismissal.

Before moving to Cöthen, at Weimar Bach had begun to study the new style of Italian concerto for one or two soloists made popular by Antonio Vivaldi. A variant featured a number of contrasting solo instruments, and in the Brandenburg Concertos Bach used the widest range of solo instruments imaginable—fourteen in total—in completely innovative and unprecedented combinations. Prince Leopold himself was a keen amateur musician and he employed some of the finest players in Europe when the royal Berlin orchestra was dissolved by King Frederick William I (Frederick the Great's father and no music lover). There was no question that these virtuoso musicians could play whatever Bach wrote for them, and some of his finest instrumental music dates from this time.

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**  
**Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G major,**  
**BWV 1049**  
 i *Allegro*  
 ii *Andante*  
 iii *Presto*

In Concerto No. 4, as in most of his concertos, Bach broadly followed Vivaldi's model of three movements. The fast outer movements are structured around a refrain (*ritornello*) which is repeated with variations by the full orchestra, alternating with different thematic material for the soloists. In this concerto, the soloists are a violin and two recorders, which mostly work together as a pair. There is much imitation between all solo parts with the violin dominating in a dazzling display in the first and third movements, while the solemn middle movement favours the recorders. Unlike the final movements of all the other concertos, this is not in a dance form but instead is a brilliant fugue beginning with the violas.

**[Interval]**

**Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)**  
**Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G major,**  
**BWV 1048**  
 i *[Allegro]*  
 ii *Andante*  
 iii *Allegro*

Concerto No. 3 is for strings alone, with three parts for each of violins, violas, and cellos, accompanied by double bass and harpsichord continuo. The exhilarating dance-like first movement shows the strong influence of Vivaldi on Bach's concerto style, with its use of the *ritornello* and episode structure. Each instrument or instrumental group takes a solo role in turn, but in a far more complex and original way than in Vivaldi's concertos. Bach re-used this movement in his Cantata No. 174 in 1729.

The second movement consists of just two chords. Did Bach deliberately omit a movement from the copy he wrote out for the Margrave, or did he envisage a solo improvisation at this point? And on what instrument? Musicians of the day would have been similarly perplexed, having never encountered such an issue in any of the concertos published to that time, with not even an 'ad lib' in the score to guide them. Now it is common in performance for players to improvise based on Bach's chord structure. The rushing third movement is in the style of a *gigue*, a lively dance.

**Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)**  
**Canon in D major, P 37**

Pachelbel composed far more than the one canon which is now associated with his name. In fact, he was a prolific composer and wrote hundreds of works, mainly for keyboard as he was a highly acclaimed organist. He was a close friend of Johann Ambrosius Bach, father of JS Bach, and taught Johann Sebastian's elder brother.

The canon vies with Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* as the most recorded piece of classical music. Its ground bass (a continually repeated sequence of eight notes, over which the melody of the canon is constructed) has served as the basis for pop and rap songs, New Age ambient music, and mobile phone ring tones.

**What to Listen For**

Pachelbel composed the canon for three violins and continuo. It consists of 28 variations, while the ground bass keeps the same harmonic progression throughout. A *canon* is a work in which a melody in one part is imitated exactly in other parts; here Pachelbel varies the melody so that at one moment it is inverted, the next back-to-front, the next the note values are longer, then shorter and so on, all the while using the same sequence of notes. The sparse texture of the three solo violins enables this ingenious interchange of the melody between the parts to be clearly heard.

Adam Masters in *Baroque Unleashed*, 2025.  
Photo by Laura Manariti.



**Johann Joachim Quantz (1697-1773)**  
**Concerto for flute in G major, QV 5:174**  
 i *Allegro*  
 ii *Arioso e mesto*  
 iii *Presto*

Quantz is best known as the flute teacher of Frederick the Great, great military strategist, obsessive music-lover, and king of Prussia from 1740 to 1786. In 1728, when Frederick first heard him, Quantz was a virtuoso flautist at the Dresden court of the immensely rich and powerful Augustus II, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, but he agreed to travel to Berlin twice a year to give the teenaged Frederick flute lessons. They were somehow kept secret from Frederick's father, King Frederick-William, a brutal, violent man who sought to crush what he regarded as his son's effeminate tendencies, that is, any activity not related to the military or government. On one occasion, an aide burst into a lesson to warn Frederick that his suspicious father was on the way from another part of the palace. Quantz, the flute, and the red silk and gold brocade dressing-gown Frederick was wearing were all bundled hurriedly into a cupboard.

Twelve unhappy years later, after an escape attempt which led to being imprisoned in dire conditions by his father and forced to watch his close friend executed, Frederick became king. Now, with virtually unlimited power and wealth, he was able to employ the finest musicians in Germany, and he induced Quantz to move to Berlin permanently, at more than double his Dresden salary.

Quantz's duties revolved around Frederick's private concerts. For two hours every evening the king played three to five flute concertos and a number of sonatas composed by either himself or Quantz, then listened as Quantz played another concerto. Frederick was an accomplished player, as the few people who heard him attest, but only Quantz was allowed to critique his playing. History does not record what Quantz thought about devoting the remainder of his career—the next 30 years—to the king's evening concerts, but it must have given him time to write his treatise 'On Playing the Flute'. Published in 1752, it is now regarded as one of the most important sources on the performance of 18<sup>th</sup> century music.

#### What to Listen For

Quantz composed 299 flute concertos for Frederick (he was working on number 300 when he died). They follow the Vivaldian solo concerto form and are in the 'galant' style which Frederick favoured, and which emphasised elegance, clarity, and grace. This concerto opens with a cheerful first movement, the flute part consisting mainly of scalar passages and repeated note motifs. The contemplative middle movement is given an unusual tempo indication of *mesto*, meaning sad or sorrowful, but an optimistic mood returns with a lively *presto* to finish.

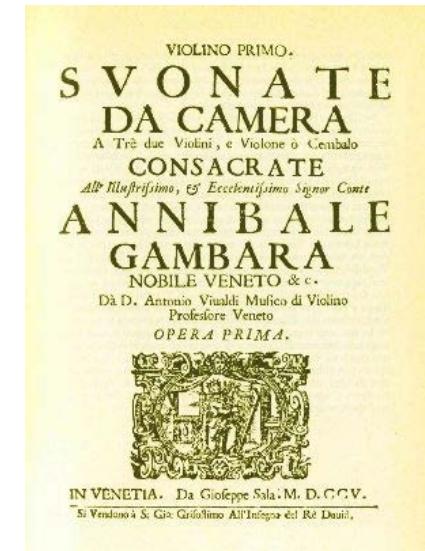
**Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)**  
**La Folia, Trio sonata in D minor Op. I No. 12, RV 63**

Vivaldi was taught violin by his father, who played in the orchestra at the Basilica of San Marco and was also a barber and wigmaker. Antonio was ordained as a priest in 1703, and in the same year he began working at the Pietà, a girls' orphanage in Venice along the waterfront from the Doge's Palace. He was violin teacher and music director there on and off for most of his working life, and he wrote many of his compositions for the exceptional girls' choir and orchestra which performed each Sunday and on feast days in the church next to the orphanage.

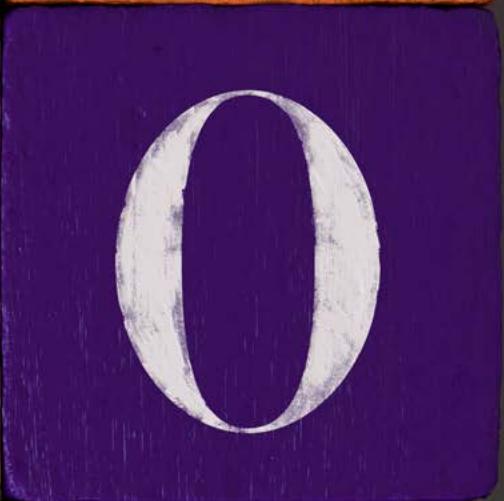
#### What to Listen For

'La follia' was a standard chord progression and accompanying melody which emerged at the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Over 150 composers from Handel to Rachmaninov based compositions on it, and it even underlies a Britney Spears song. Vivaldi composed his version as a theme and nineteen variations in one long movement for three instrumental parts: two violins and basso continuo.

Program notes © Lynne Murray 2026



Original cover of Vivaldi's Twelve Trio Sonatas, Op. I, 1705



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Paul Dyer AO  
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