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AUSTRALIAN
BRANDENBURG
ORCHESTRA

Choral Splendour

Bach. Telemann. Handel. Majesty.

Choral Splendour

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With Thanks

PERFORMANCE DATES

CITY RECITAL HALL, SYDNEY	MELBOURNE RECITAL CENTRE
Fri, 10 April, 2026 7PM	Thu, 16 April, 2026 7PM
Sat, 11 April, 2026 2PM	Sat, 18 April, 2026 5PM
Sat, 11 April, 2026 7PM	Sun, 19 April, 2026 5PM
Tue, 14 April, 2026 7PM	
Wed, 15 April, 2026 7PM	

ARTISTS

Shaun Lee-Chen (Perth) Baroque Violin
 Ben Dollman (Adelaide) Baroque Violin
 Paul Dyer (Sydney) Harpsichord, Conductor
 Brandenburg Choir
 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

Bach	<i>Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme</i> , BWV 140 (Wake up, cries the watchmen's voice) I. Chorale: <i>Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme</i> 7. Chorale: <i>Gloria sei dir gesungen</i>
Bach	Concerto for two violins in D minor, BWV 1043 i <i>Vivace</i> ii <i>Largo ma non tanto</i> iii <i>Allegro</i>
Bach	<i>Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben</i> , BWV 147 (Heart and Mouth and Deed and Life) I. Chorus: <i>Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben</i> 6. Chorus: <i>Wohl mir, daß ich Jesum habe</i>
Bach	<i>Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir</i> , BWV 29 (Unto Thee, O God, do we give thanks) I. Sinfonia 2. Chorus: <i>Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir</i>
Telemann	<i>Overture from Overture in D major</i> , TWV 55:D18
Heinichen	Concerto in F major, S 234 i <i>Vivace</i> ii <i>Adagio</i> iii <i>Un poco allegro</i> iv <i>Allegro</i>
Handel	Coronation Anthem No. 1, <i>Zadok the Priest</i> , HWV 258
Handel	Coronation Anthem No. 3, <i>The King shall rejoice</i> , HWV 260

KEYBOARD TUNERS

Harpsichord & Chamber Organ preparation in Sydney by Nathan Cox
 Harpsichord preparation in Melbourne by Shaun Catchpole
 Chamber Organ preparation in Melbourne by Campbell Hargraves

PERFORMANCE LENGTH

Performance will be approximately 100 minutes with Interval



SAIL THROUGH BACH'S MUSICAL HOMELAND



BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

BIOGRAPHY

Australian Brandenburg Orchestra



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 unflinching 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.'

A unique company, the Brandenburg 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.

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'...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.'

THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

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Brandenburg Choir

The Brandenburg Choir are a passionate and versatile ensemble renowned for their astonishing vocal blend, technical virtuosity, and deep love for the music they perform. Since their first appearance in 1999 under Artistic Director Paul Dyer, they have been an essential and celebrated part of the Brandenburg story.

Their journey begins with their debut in the inaugural Noë! Noë! concert — a radiant fusion of medieval chant, polyphony, and traditional carols sung in their original languages. That first performance, featuring thirteen voices alongside the Orchestra, captures hearts with its rare combination of scholarly depth, musical authenticity, and sheer beauty. It becomes an instant success, and Noë! Noë! has since become an enduring favourite, recorded across four live albums now available on major streaming platforms.

Over the past two decades, the Choir have continued to grow and evolve, regularly taking the stage as part of the Brandenburg's annual subscription seasons. From the sacred intensity of Bach's Cantatas and Mozart's Requiem to the jubilant brilliance of Handel's Coronation Anthems and Ode for St Cecilia's Day, their repertoire spans centuries and styles — each performance offering a new opportunity to connect with audiences through the expressive power of the human voice.

What unites the Choir is their shared commitment to the distinctive Brandenburg sound. Though many members are highly accomplished singers with formal training,

they come from remarkably diverse professional backgrounds — music teachers, lawyers, doctors, business managers and more. When they gather to rehearse and perform, they become one voice and one artistic spirit.

For the Choir, the voice is the most intimate and expressive "early instrument," capable of revealing joy, sorrow, love, and triumph across time and culture. Their performances, from meditative chant to exuberant carols, are crafted to uplift, immerse, and inspire. Through the Brandenburg Mentorship Program, guided by seasoned choristers, they remain dedicated to nurturing the next generation of early-music singers.

"[The Brandenburg Choir is] one of the finest choruses one could put together in this town."

THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD



Paradisum at Melbourne Recital Hall
Photo by Laura Manariti

Paul Dyer AO Artistic Director

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

He 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 Classical Album. More recently, Paul featured on the soundtrack of the James Bond film *Spectre* and, in 2024, 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.

Paul was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) in 2013 for his distinguished service to the performing arts. He is also a recipient of a Churchill Fellowship (1995), the Centenary Medal (2003), and the University of Sydney Alumni Medal for Professional Achievement (2010).



Paul Dyer at Melbourne Recital Centre
Photo by Laura Manariti

Shaun Lee-Chen

Baroque Violin



Shaun Lee-Chen is an internationally celebrated performer with a special interest in historical performance and 19th-century violin pedagogy.

In addition to his role of Concertmaster at the Brandenburg, he holds the position of Artist in Residence at the UWA Conservatorium of Music.

Shaun was the most outstanding student to complete a Bachelor of Music in his year at UWA and the recipient of numerous prizes upon graduation. He was a student of Paul Wright, who himself held the position of Concertmaster for the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra in its formative years

In 2007, he was the winner of the prestigious ABC Young Performer of the Year Award. Shaun is at home on both modern and period instruments and has appeared as soloist with the West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO), Queensland Orchestra and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra (TSO). Shaun is the featured soloist in the Brandenburg's ARIA Nominated Brandenburg Celebrates album from 2015.

He has been guest Assistant and Associate Concertmaster with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, the TSO and WASO, and in 2016 was appointed as Concertmaster of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.

Shaun is a founding member of the Irwin Street Collective, a period chamber ensemble based in Western Australia.

Ben Dollman

Baroque Violin



One of Australia's leading performers on Baroque violin, Ben Dollman, was mentored by former Brandenburg Concertmaster Lucinda Moon and became a regular member of the orchestra in 1999. "My first concert was memorable, both for experiencing Paul Dyer's flamboyant style of direction, and for guest artist Genevieve Lacey who was a revelation to me on recorder," Ben recalls. "The Brandenburg is a very special orchestra to play for; the verve and vivacity that Paul brings to performances is unique, as is the atmosphere among the playing group. There's so much goodwill."

Based in Adelaide, Ben's studies in early violin began at Indiana University with the Australian Baroque violinist Stanley Ritchie. In 2015, he was the recipient of the Brandenburg Foundation Study Grant to undertake professional development work in Europe. He has performed as a soloist and Concertmaster on several occasions and for many years has been an influential performer in the South Australian chamber music and orchestral scene. This includes Adelaide Baroque, Ensemble Galante, Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, Evergreen Ensemble and Melbourne Baroque Orchestra.

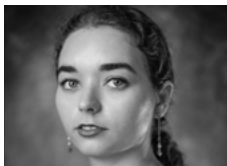
A memorable career highlight was his solo violin performance in Bach's 5th Brandenburg Concerto alongside Paul and Melissa Farrow. "It was to celebrate the orchestra's 30th birthday and it was very emotional."

Away from the concert stage, Ben enjoys getting back to nature and the simple pleasures of life through meditation and yoga.

Brandenburg Choir



Astrid Girdis (Sydney)
Soprano



Elizabeth Harper (Sydney)
Soprano



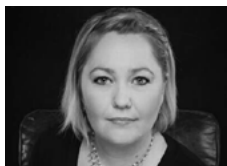
Wei Jiang (Sydney)
Soprano



Clare Macpherson (Sydney)
Soprano



Josie Ryan (Sydney)
Soprano



Anna Sandström (Sydney)
Soprano



Philip Butterworth (Sydney)
Alto



Mark Nowicki (Sydney)
Alto



Paul Tenorio (Newcastle)
Alto



William Varga (Sydney)
Alto



Daine Ellicott (Sydney)
Tenor



Aaron Erdstein (Sydney)
Tenor



Eric Peterson (Sydney)
Tenor



Richard Sanchez (Sydney)
Tenor



Philip Murray (Sydney)
Bass



James Pinneri (Perth)
Bass



Jesse van Proctor (Sydney)
Bass



Rodney Smith (Sydney)
Bass



Notre-Dame at City Recital Hall
Photo by Keith Saunders

Australian Brandenburg Orchestra



Paul Dyer* (Sydney)
Harpichord / Conductor



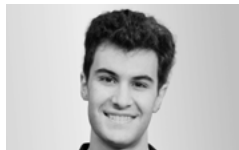
Shaun Lee-Chen* (Perth)
Concertmaster, Baroque Violin



Matthew Bruce* (Sydney)
Associate Concertmaster,
Baroque Violin



Ben Dollman* (Adelaide)
Principal Second Baroque Violin



Jared Adams* (Sydney)
Baroque Violin



James Armstrong (Melbourne)
Baroque Violin



Ella Bennetts (Sydney)
Baroque Violin



Rafael Font (Sydney)
Baroque Violin



Matthew Greco (Sydney)
Baroque Violin



Sarah Papadopoulos (Sydney)
Baroque Violin



Timothy Willis (Melbourne)
Baroque Violin



Monique O'Dea* (Sydney)
Principal Baroque Viola



Marianne Yeomans (Sydney)
Baroque Viola



John Ma (Canberra)
Baroque Viola



Jamie Hey* (Melbourne)
Principal Baroque Cello



Anton Baba (Sydney)
Baroque Cello



Edwina Cordingley (Melbourne)
Baroque Cello



Robert Nairn* (Adelaide)
Principal Baroque Violone



Melissa Farrow* (Sydney)
Principal Baroque Flute



Mikaela Oberg (Sydney)
Baroque Flute

Australian Brandenburg Orchestra



Adam Masters* (Melbourne)
Principal Baroque Oboe



Kailen Cresp (Melbourne)
Baroque Oboe / Taille



Benjamin Roe* (Melbourne)
Baroque Oboe



Sim Walters (Hobart)
Baroque Bassoon



Ben Hoadley (Canberra)
Baroque Bassoon



Michael Dixon (Sydney)
Principal Baroque Horn



Dorée Dixon (Perth)
Baroque Horn



Richard Fomison (Brisbane)
Baroque Trumpet



Alexandra Bieri (Sydney)
Baroque Trumpet



Arkie Moore (Sydney)
Baroque Trumpet



Brian Nixon (Sydney)
Principal Timpani



Heidi Jones²
Principal Chamber Organ

*Denotes Brandenburg Core Musician
Member of the Brandenburg Mentorship Program

Brandenburg Mentorship Program supported by Patricia H Reid Endowment

¹Robert Nairn appears courtesy of Elder Conservatorium, Adelaide University (Staff)

²Heidi Jones appears courtesy of SCEGGS, Sydney (Staff)

Choral Splendour

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Bach's last job was as cantor of St Thomas's church in Leipzig, a position he held from 1723 until his death. He was responsible for overseeing the music at all four main city churches and for the musical training of the students at St Thomas's school, and he directed the choir and the orchestra every Sunday at the two principal churches.

In his first years in Leipzig, Bach also set himself the huge task of composing a new cantata for each Sunday and feast day, about 60 cantatas a year. In this period he also composed the *St Matthew* and *St John Passions*, the *Magnificat*, and the first two sections of the gigantic *Mass in B minor*.

The cantata was an integral part of the Lutheran church liturgy. It presented a paraphrase of the Gospel reading for the day, set to music. Bach stretched the form beyond this conventional role by adopting the newly fashionable practice of using Italian-style recitatives and arias to create a more elaborate three-part structure, in effect, a kind of musical sermon.

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 140 (Wake up, cries the watchmen's voice)

I. Chorale: *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme*
7. Chorale: *Gloria sei dir gesungen*

Bach composed *Wachet auf* in 1731. The text was a hymn from 1559, based on the parable of the wise and foolish virgins from the Gospel of Matthew, in which Jesus advises his followers to be ready always for the coming of God. The wise virgins have extra oil (symbolising faith and vigilance) for their

lamps, the foolish ones have run out and must go out to buy more, but the bridegroom (who symbolises the return of Christ) arrives while they are away. *Gloria sei dir gesungen* is the third verse of the hymn and refers to the heavenly city of the New Jerusalem in the biblical Book of Revelation.

A *chorale* was a musical form based on an existing Lutheran hymn. Bach chose to set the first verse of the hymn as an extended chorale fantasia. The melody is sung by the sopranos, the other parts interject asking 'where?' ('wo?') and 'wake up!' ('wach auf!'), while the orchestra play quite independent material. The movement ends with a jazzy hallelujah.

[I. Chorale]

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme
Der Wächter sehr hoch auf der Zinne,
Wach auf, du Stadt Jerusalem!

Mitternacht heißt diese Stunde;
Sie rufen uns mit hellem Munde:
Wo seid ihr, klugen Jungfrauen?

Wohl auf, der Bräutigam kömmt;
Steht auf, die Lampen nehmt! Alleluja!

Macht euch bereit zu der Hochzeit,
Ihr müsset ihm entgegen gehn!

—
Awake, the voice of the watchman calls us
from high on the battlements,
Awake, city of Jerusalem!

Midnight is this hour;
They call to us with clear voices:
Where are you, wise virgins?

Arise, the bridegroom comes;
Get up, take your lamps! Alleluia!

Prepare for the wedding,
You must go to meet him!

[7. Chorale]

Gloria sei dir gesungen
Mit Menschen- und englischen Zungen,
Mit Harfen und mit Zimbeln schon.

Von zwölf Perlen sind die Pforten,
An deiner Stadt; wir sind Konsorten
Der Engel hoch um deinen Thron.

Kein Aug hat je gespürt,
Kein Ohr hat je gehört
Solche Freude.
Des sind wir froh,
Io, io!
Ewig in dulci júbilo!

—
Gloria be sung to you
With human and angelic tongues,
With harps and cymbals.

Of twelve pearls are the gates
Of your city; we are consorts
Of the angels high around your throne.

No eye has ever perceived,
No ear has ever heard
Such joy.
For this we are glad,
Io, io!
Eternally rejoice!

Concerto for two violins in D minor, BWV 1043

i *Vivace*
ii *Largo ma non tanto*
iii *Allegro*

Bach probably composed the double violin concerto for the Leipzig *Collegium Musicum*, a club in which the best musicians of Leipzig met weekly to play for their own enjoyment and the entertainment of others at Zimmermann's coffee-house. They also played during trade fairs and on significant state occasions.

Much of Bach's instrumental music has been lost, and of the 25 extant concertos only nine have survived in their original instrumentation. In the case of the double violin concerto, only the autographs (original scores) of the two solo violin parts and a continuo part copied by one of Bach's sons still exist. Luckily Bach used it as the basis for another concerto for two harpsichords (BWV 1062), and it has been possible to use Bach's autograph score of that concerto to reconstruct the missing parts.

What to Listen For

As in most of his concertos, Bach broadly followed Vivaldi's model of three movements. The fast movements are structured around a refrain (*ritornello*) stated with variations by the full orchestra, alternating with different thematic material for the soloist. Bach also applied his own ideas to Vivaldi's model. Here, the orchestra shares much more of the musical material with the solo instruments than was usual at the time, particularly in the passages of fugal imitation in the first movement. The orchestra is then called on to play a more typical accompanying role in the slow second movement where the fugal idea is continued by the violins alone, and again in the third movement where the melody lies entirely with the solo parts.



**Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben, BWV 147
(Heart and mouth and deed and life)**

1. Chorus: *Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben*
6. Chorale: *Wohl mir, daß ich Jesum habe*

This cantata was first performed in June 1723, shortly after Bach's arrival in Leipzig. It was for the feast day which referenced the visit of the angel to Mary to announce that she would give birth to Jesus.

What to Listen For

Bach drew on an earlier Advent cantata he had composed while at Weimar, which accounts for the celebratory nature of the first movement with trumpets and oboes.

The music of the sixth movement has become famous as the chorale known in English as 'Jesu, joy of man's desiring'. The hymn is simply sung by the choir in four parts, interwoven with a gentle, repetitive accompaniment dominated by oboes. The continuous triplets in the accompaniment probably represent the Holy Trinity (God the father, Christ the son, and the Holy Spirit). The effect is to underline the message in the text of the constant presence of Jesus in times of sadness and happiness.

[1. Chorus]

*Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben
Muss von Christo Zeugnis geben
Ohne Furcht und Heuchelei,
Dass er Gott und Heiland sei.*

—

Heart and mouth and deed and life
Must bear witness to Christ,
Without fear and hypocrisy,
That he is God and saviour.

[6. Chorale]

*Wohl mir, dass ich Jesum habe,
O wie feste halt ich ihn,*

*Dass er mir mein Herze labe,
Wenn ich krank und traurig bin.*

*Jesum hab ich, der mich liebet
Und sich mir zu eigen gibet;
Ach drum lass ich Jesum nicht,
Wenn mir gleich mein Herze bricht.*

—

I am blessed that I have Jesus,
Oh, how firmly I hold him,

So that he refreshes my heart
If I am ill and sad.

I have Jesus, who loves me
And gives himself to me;
Ah, so I will not leave Jesus,
Even if my heart breaks.

**Herz und Mund und Tat und Leben, BWV 147
(We thank thee, God, we thank thee)**

1. Sinfonia
2. Chorus: *Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir*

Bach composed *Wir danken dir, Gott* (We thank you, God) for the church service that marked the election of new members of the city council of Leipzig in August 1731. Bach almost certainly played the virtuosic solo organ part himself, but he may not have when it was performed for a third time in 1748. By then he was suffering from 'a very painful disorder in the eyes', probably a symptom of age-related diabetes, and becoming blind. Operations to restore his sight done by a quack surgeon would result in his death two years later.

Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir is a reworking of the Prelude to Partita no. 3 in E major for unaccompanied violin (BWV 1006). It was common for composers to re-use earlier works but it was very unusual to transcribe a whole movement directly from one genre to another so different, and this shows Bach's extraordinary musical imagination.

What to Listen For

A *sinfonia* was a short instrumental work which often functioned as an overture. While the cantata is clearly on a sacred theme the occasion for which it was composed was as much a civic and political event as a religious observance, and this is reflected in the grandeur of its unusual orchestral opening, featuring a brilliant perpetuum mobile solo part for the organ, accompanied by a sizeable orchestra reinforced with trumpets and drums.

[2. Chorus]

*Wir danken dir, Gott, wir danken dir
und verkündigen deine Wunder.*

—

We thank thee, God, we thank thee
and proclaim your wonders.

[Interval]

**Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767)
Overture from Overture-Suite in D major,
TWV 55:D18**

Telemann was considered the greatest living German composer of his time (ahead of his friends Handel and JS Bach), an astounding feat considering that he was largely self-taught. He spent most of his career as director of music with responsibility for the five main churches in Hamburg, one of the top jobs in the German musical world. He was enormously prolific, producing literally thousands of works in all musical genres.

What to Listen For

Telemann composed 125 orchestral or overture-suites. The suite begins with a grand *Overture* (literally 'opening' or 'entrance') in two parts: a majestic opening section contrasted with a faster fugal second one. With both parts repeated, this movement occupies about half the length of the entire suite. Known as a *French overture*, the form quickly gained wider popularity throughout Europe and continued in use through the first half of the 18th century. Most of the overtures Handel wrote for his operas and oratorios are in French overture form.

Johann David Heinichen (1683-1729)

Concerto in F major, S 234

i *Vivace*

ii *Adagio*

iii *Un poco allegro*

iv *Allegro*

Heinichen was music director at the Electoral court in Dresden and is considered one of the most significant German composers of the early 18th century. Dresden was a major cultural centre, renowned for its art and music. Its orchestra was without rival and Heinichen produced music in an astonishing range of instrumental textures and sonorities to exploit the capabilities of this virtuoso ensemble.

What to Listen For

This concerto gives special prominence to the natural horn (*corni da caccia*), an instrument then newly played in German orchestras. Its strong hunting connotation in combination with bucolic oboes and flutes suggests that it may have been performed at the royal hunting-lodge of Moritzburg, a few kilometres outside Dresden.

George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)

Anthems for the Coronation of George II

No. 1, Zadok the Priest, HWV 258

No. 3, The King shall rejoice, HWV 260

On 11 June 1727, the news reached London that King George I had died of apoplexy during a trip back home to Germany. Luckily, one of the late King's last actions had been to sign into law 'An Act for naturalizing ... George Frideric Handel, and others', so there was no problem when the new king, George II, requested that Handel compose the anthems for his coronation and that of his wife, Queen Caroline.

This coronation was particularly spectacular. Onlookers were amazed at the jewels worn by the nobility; Queen Caroline's skirt was covered with so many precious stones that she had difficulty walking and needed a hoist to help her stand up after she knelt during the ceremony. The English coronation ceremony consists of rituals designed to impress those present with the wealth and power of the monarch and to emphasise that the monarch derives his or her power from God.

Anthems have been part of the coronation liturgy for centuries, sung at significant points in the ritual, with the same texts frequently used, taken from the Bible or the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. The rehearsal went well, but the actual ceremony on 11 October 1727 did not go so well, at least as far as the music was concerned.

The performers were arranged in two sections on scaffolding high above the altar and could not see each other, and the first anthem (not one of Handel's) was omitted altogether 'by the Negligence of the Choir of Westminster' as the Archbishop of Canterbury noted tersely in the margin of his order of service. Then, when Anthem No. 3, The King shall rejoice, should have been performed, Anthem No. 4 was sung instead. 'The Anthem all in confusion: All irregular in the Music', grumbled the Archbishop.

What to Listen For

Zadok the Priest is the only piece of music to be performed at every subsequent coronation of a British monarch. It was sung at the most crucial point of the coronation, the Anointing, when the monarch is anointed with holy oil to show he or she has been chosen by God. With 40 singers and 160 in the orchestra it must have made an astonishing impact, as the whisper-quiet instrumental introduction built to the thundering power of the first choral entry with all voices and instruments sounding.

The King shall rejoice actually came first in the coronation service, at the Recognition, when the people are asked to pay homage to the monarch. 'The People signify their Willingness and Joy, by loud and repeated Acclamations, all with one Voice crying out, "God Save King George the Second". Then the Trumpets sound. And the choir sing this Anthem.' Whether it was actually sung at that point, or later on during the Crowning, remains unclear.

This anthem is in four distinct contrasted movements. The future composer of *Messiah* can be heard in the pastoral triplets of the second movement, and in the long vocal melismas which depict the eternal nature of 'blessings' in the third. The final movement is a weighty *Alleluia*, again with all voices and instruments blazing.

[No. 1]

Zadok the priest
And Nathan the prophet
Anointed Solomon King.
And all the people rejoiced and said:
God save the King!
Long live the King!
May the King live for ever.
Alleluia. Amen.

[No. 3]

[1.]
The King shall rejoice in Thy strength, O Lord!

[2.]
Exceeding glad shall he be of Thy salvation.

[3.]
Glory and worship hast Thou laid upon him.
Thou hast prevented him*
with the blessings of goodness,
And hast set a crown of pure gold
upon his head.

[4.]

Alleluia.

Program notes & translations © Lynne Murray
2026



WITH THANKS

Australian Brandenburg Orchestra

PATRON

Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC,
Governor of New South Wales

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Paul Dyer AO

MANAGING DIRECTOR
Bruce Applebaum

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Vale Mary Holt OAM – Brandenburg Life Patron



The Late Dr John Holt & Mary Holt OAM

We are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Mary Holt OAM, Life Member of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.

Since Mary and her late husband John Holt were introduced to the Brandenburg in 1995, Mary has been an enduring supporter and integral member of our Brandenburg family. Mary was a constant and enthusiastic presence at our performances and events for 32 years, generously supporting the refurbishment of our rehearsal studios in Edgecliff, and donating a replica of Mozart's forte piano, inside of which includes a touching tribute to Toby, her terrier.

"Mary's passionate support of our work has inspired our musicians and audiences alike. She has significantly contributed to the Brandenburg's trajectory as Australia's flagship Baroque and early music ensemble, and to the entire sector through her profound commitment to Australian cultural excellence.

"Mary loved belonging to the Brandenburg family and we were privileged to enjoy such a close connection with her. We salute her extraordinary generosity and

are humbled to have played such a demonstrably important role in her life".
-Bruce Applebaum,
Managing Director and Co-Founder

Mary enjoyed her profession as a pharmacist and was active within her community in Mt Wilson. With her husband John, renowned veterinarian, they were passionate about supporting wildlife and conservation, animal research and welfare, and natural history.

We are grateful for Mary's legacy, passion, and dedication to the Brandenburg.



Paul Dyer AO, Mary Holt OAM and Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales

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Handel's Rome at City Recital Hall. Photo by Keith Saunders.



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