



Graham Abbott Conductor

Sydney-born Graham Abbott is a graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium. In 1985 he was awarded the ABC / Willem van Otterloo Conducting Scholarship, during the tenure of which he studied with Myer Fredman at the Sydney Conservatorium Opera School and taught at that institution. In 1986 Graham was appointed Conductor-in-Residence at the Elder Conservatorium of Music at the University of Adelaide. He was Musical Director of Adelaide Chorus from 1986 to 1992 and made his professional orchestral debut with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in 1987. Since then he has been a frequent guest conductor with all Symphony Australia network orchestras. He has also conducted the Hunter Orchestra, the State Orchestra of Victoria (now Orchestra Victoria), the Adelaide Chamber Orchestra, the Queensland Philharmonic, the Canberra Symphony, The Australian Classical Players and various new music and early music ensembles. Graham has been Associate Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and Musical Director of Melbourne Chorale and acting Chorus Master of the Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Whilst his repertoire in orchestral, choral and operatic fields spans almost every period and style (totaling more than 650 works), Graham Abbott is most respected as a conductor of, and enthusiast for, the music of Handel. He has conducted *Messiah* with every Symphony Australia orchestra, and with many other organisations, and has given first Australian performances of major Handel works such as *Athalia* and *La Resurrezione*.

An experienced conductor of opera, Graham's repertoire includes *Julius Caesar* (Opera Australia and Opera Queensland), *Alcina* (WA Opera), *Ariodante* (Stopera, Canberra), *Agrippina* (Queensland Biennial), *Orlando* (OzOpera/Melbourne Festival and WA Opera), *The Marriage of Figaro* (W A Opera and Opera Queensland), *La traviata* (Victoria State Opera and State Opera of South Australia), *Il trovatore* (State Opera of South Australia), *Don Pasquale* (State Opera of South Australia and Opera Queensland) and *Pelléas et Mélisande* (Sydney Conservatorium). He was also Assistant Conductor for the Australian premiere of John Adams' *Nixon in China* at the 1992 Adelaide Festival. In 2001 and 2002 Graham was Music Advisor to Chamber Made Opera in Melbourne.

As a respected teacher, Graham is often involved in educational projects throughout Australia, Asia and the UK. He has conducted Camerata Australia, under the auspices of Youth Music Australia (now Australian Youth Orchestras), in Sydney and Jakarta, as well as the National Music Camp. He has been Associate Conductor with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, held the post of Education Manager and was Artistic Advisor to the Education Program in 2002 and 2003.

Graham has had many years' experience as a pre-concert speaker for the Adelaide and Melbourne Symphony Orchestras and has an enviable reputation as an engaging and entertaining educator. He has taught modules for teachers, community-based musicians and high school students in the Symphony Australia Conductor Training program and is highly sought-after as a conducting teacher and workshop director.

Since the beginning of 2003 Graham has been producer and presenter of "Keys To Music" on ABC Classic FM, Australia's most successful classical music program. In 2007 Graham conducted the Adelaide, Melbourne and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras, and Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* for State Opera of South Australia.

In 2008 he will return to the Melbourne, Adelaide and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras as well as to State Opera to conduct "*The Marriage of Figaro*".

Graham is the recipient of Melbourne University's Bernard Heinze Award for 2007, in recognition of his services to music in Australia.

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