

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Richard Gill AO | Artistic Director & Principal Conductor

Australian conductor and educator, Richard Gill, one of Australia's best-known and best-loved musical figures, is a significant and vital key member of ARCO.

His career has taken him from teaching music in Sydney's western suburbs to Music Director of the Victorian Opera, Artistic Director of the Sydney Symphony Education Program, and along the way an involvement with almost every major opera company and orchestra in Australia. He is one of this country's pre-eminent conductors and a passionate advocate of music education. He specialises in opera, music theatre and vocal and choral training and his work in developing young musicians and creating opportunities for them is recognised world-wide. His appearances on the ABC's "Spicks and Specks" and "Q&A" have made him a household name within and beyond Australia's musical world.

What truly distinguishes Richard is his passion and enthusiasm for spreading not just the joy of music, but its myriad benefits. He is Australia's greatest musical educator, and many say one of the best in the world. His life's work - alongside his other roles - has been advocating music in our education system, and furthering the development of those who've gone on to choose music as a vocation. He brings music to life, and his knowledge and deep enjoyment of his subject is as inspiring and enlightening to a class of primary school students as it is to the cast of a major opera. The majority of Australia's young contemporary professional musicians count Richard as a powerful influence on their musical development. He has been awarded two Honorary Doctorates and an AO for distinguished service to the performing arts as a conductor, artistic director and advisor, to the development of music education, and as a mentor of young musicians.

Rachael Beesley | Concertmaster, Director & Member of the Artistic Team

Rachael Beesley is an internationally renowned Australian violinist, director and concertmaster. A versatile violinist and musician she has devoted her life to performing, teaching, and researching and is one of the world leaders in the field of historically informed performance (HIP). As regular member of some of Europe's finest ensembles and orchestras, Rachael performs as guest concertmaster with Anima Eterna Brugge, La Petite Bande, Il Complesso Barocco, and the New Dutch Academy as well as performing regularly with Les Arts Florissants, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Combattimento Consort.

Based in Australia since 2009, Rachael is a guest concertmaster of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, Pinchgut Opera, Opera Australia and Victorian Opera and has been invited to direct the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, Melbourne Chamber Orchestra (core member), Adelaide Chamber Players and NZBarok. She co-founded the ensembles Quartz, Ironwood and the Australian Romantic & Classical Orchestra and regularly leads the chamber music ensembles Ludovico's Band, Salut! Baroque and Accademia Arcadia. Rachael also has performed with Orchestra Victoria, the Melbourne and Tasmanian Symphonies and the Australia Chamber Orchestra.

As a highly regarded teacher and mentor, Rachael is a lecturer at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, The Netherlands, the Sydney and Melbourne Conservatoriums of Music, the School of Music Monash University and guest director at ANAM. In the field of Practising in Flow, she has been invited to speak at conferences in Australia, New Zealand and The Netherlands and is listed in the Who's Who of Australian Women. Rachael performs in festivals throughout the world, for broadcasts on radio and television in Europe and Australia and has recorded over 50 CDs for Harmonia Mundi, SONY, BIS, Accent, Pentatone, Et'Cetera, Centaur and ABC Classics.

The World According to James | Guest Ensemble in March 2018 for 'Richard Gill Presents'

James Greening is among Australia's leading jazz trombonists. In live shows, he and his tight knit ensemble radiate an infectious joy and passion for music that's almost as big as James's striking eyebrows. Featuring trombone, trumpet, saxophone, drum kit and bass, the four members of The World According to James skilfully draw students to discover the core elements of jazz and the world of improvisation, where they learn how to be "in the moment", incorporate the unexpected, and turn "mistakes" into masterpieces.

Ensemble Offspring | Guest Ensemble in May 2018 for 'Richard Gill Presents'

Ensemble Offspring are champions of adventurous new music. Presenting music from seminal chamber work to free improvisation, alongside the creation of striking interdisciplinary productions, the group embraces open-minded music making of all forms. Based in Sydney, Ensemble Offspring is led by acclaimed percussionist, Claire Edwardes, and features some of Australia's most innovative performers. The group has toured locations including Hong Kong, London, Brugge and Warsaw, performs at Australia's favourite festivals, Carriageworks, the Sydney Opera House, and even the local bowling club. Passionate about nurturing the work of emerging, as well as established composers, Ensemble Offspring has premiered over 200 works in its 20-year history.

Camerata Antica | Guest Ensemble in August 2018 for 'Richard Gill Presents'

Camerata Antica was formed in 2010 by Matthew Manchester and Anna Sandström to explore the strong connections between music for voices and instruments in the 16th and 17th centuries. It is a mixed consort, with a flexible lineup of singers and period instrumentalists including cornetts, sackbutts, trumpets, violins, viols, lute, voices, organ and harpsichord. Members of the ensemble perform regularly with many of the leading early music ensembles in the UK and Australia. Camerata Antica's debut performance was held in London, performing Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610 in its 400th Anniversary year. It has since toured extensively throughout the UK and Australia, performing chamber recitals and collaborating with larger choirs. Camerata Antica's debut CD in collaboration with Coro London, was released on Dal Segno Records in 2011, and in 2015 the ensemble was proud to commission and record new Australian works by Alice Chance and Elena Kats-Chernin.

Sydney Chamber Choir | Guest Ensemble in March 2018 for 'Pastoral Melodies' in Sydney

Founded in 1975, Sydney Chamber Choir has forged a reputation as one of Australia's leading choral ensembles. It is especially renowned for its interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque works and as a champion of contemporary Australian choral music, having commissioned and premiered scores of works by many established and emerging Australian composers. Sydney Chamber Choir has toured widely and in 2009 was a prizewinner in the 41st Tolosa International Choral Competition in Spain. In 2013, the Choir embarked on its first tour of South East Asia, with concerts in Hong Kong and Taiwan. The Choir's performances are regularly broadcast across the country on ABC Classic FM, and CD recordings are available on the ABC Classics and Tall Poppies labels. The Choir's performances are regularly broadcast across the country on ABC Classic FM, and CD recordings are available on ABC Classics and Tall Poppies.

Polyphonic Voices | Guest Ensemble in March 2018 for 'Pastoral Melodies' in Melbourne

Polyphonic Voices is a Melbourne-based chamber choir formed in 2013 under the artistic direction of Michael Fulcher, and since its inception has become renowned for its polished, innovative and engaging performances in non-traditional concert venues, often combined with multi-media elements. The choir prides itself on presenting a wide variety of music – both accompanied and unaccompanied – from the classical choral tradition, but also arrangements of music from jazz, pop, folk and other alternative genres. Polyphonic Voices' collaborations have included the Hilltop Hoods, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, and various local ensembles, freelance musicians and visual artists.