



Richard Gill AO Conductor

“Perhaps it’s just as well that Leonard Bernstein is dead. Otherwise he’d probably have to relinquish his great reputation as a musical educator- or at least share it with Sydney’s Richard Gill.”

John Carmody, *The Sun Herald*

Richard Gill, AO, Founding Music Director and Conductor Emeritus of Victorian Opera, was one of Australia’s pre-eminent and most admired conductors specialising in opera, musical theatre and vocal and choral training. Internationally respected as a music educator, Richard’s work in developing young musicians and creating opportunities for them was recognised world-wide. Richard’s positions included Artistic Director of the Education Program for the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Artistic Director of OzOpera, Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Canberra Symphony Orchestra, Artistic Advisor for the Musica Viva Education program, and Music Director of Sydney Chamber Choir. He was also the Founder and Director of the National Music Teacher Mentoring Program.

The international law firm, King & Wood Mallesons, endowed a chair in music education at the Conservatorium High School, secondary arm of the Conservatorium of Music in Sydney and Richard had the honour of being the inaugural *King & Wood Mallesons Conservatorium Chair in Music Education*.

Richard’s on-going associations included conducting the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra for the *Unwrap the Music* series, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra for *Ears Wide Open*, Sydney Chamber Choir, Taipei American School’s ‘Artist in Residence’, and the Australian National Academy of Music, Melbourne as well as his role as a mentor and music educator to young musicians, teachers and many community groups across Australia.

Some of Richard’s more recent engagements include Anzac Commemorative and Discovery concerts (Sydney Symphony); New Zealand Symphony Orchestra National Youth Orchestra; Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra for Festival of Voices, including *St. Matthew Passion*; the Metropolis Festival (Melbourne Symphony); director of the National Music Camp for the Australian Youth Orchestra in Canberra; *Sleeping Beauty* (Pantomime), *Cinderella* (Pantomime), *The Rake’s Progress*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Play of Daniel*, the *Viva Verdi* Gala concerts, *The Magic Flute*, *Sing Your Own Opera*, *How to Kill Your Husband* and *The Threepenny Opera* (at Sydney Theatre Company) all for Victorian Opera; Family concerts, Meet the Music and Tea with Symphony for Sydney Symphony; Classic Kids concerts with Melbourne Symphony; New Zealand Symphony Orchestra; Sydney Youth Orchestra; Melbourne Youth Music and Young Symphonists (Australian Youth Orchestra). In 2012 Richard’s memoirs “*Give Me Excess of It*”, described by Pan Macmillan as “warm, extremely funny, highly opinionated, occasionally rude (where warranted) and always sublimely full of the love of music”, were published.

During his time as Music Director of Victorian Opera Richard also conducted *The Coronation of Poppea*, *Damnation of Faust*, *Julius Caesar*, *Don Giovanni*, *Duke Bluebeard’s Castle*, *Carmina Burana*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Noyes Fludde*, *The Snow Queen*, *Così fan Tutte*, *Metamorphosis*, *Les Noces/Oedipus Rex*, *St John Passion*, *The Parrott Factory*, *The Cockatoos* and the world premiere of *Rembrandt’s Wife*.

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His work in the concert hall was extensive and included concerts with all the major Australian symphony orchestras, Sydney Philharmonia Choir, Canberra Symphony Orchestra as well as the Australian, Sydney, and Western Australian Youth Orchestras. For the Sydney Symphony Orchestra he regularly conducted their Meet the Music concerts, Discovery concerts with the Sydney Symphony Sinfonia, and Sinfonietta concerts.

For Opera Australia Richard conducted *Julius Caesar*, *The Love for Three Oranges*, *Orpheus in the Underworld*, the world premiere of Moya Henderson's *Lindy*, *Faust*, *The Gondoliers*, *The Eighth Wonder*, *Macbeth*, *La forza del destino*, *Rigoletto*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Il trovatore*, *Romeo et Juliette*, *Pericote*, *The Merry Widow*, *Fidelio*, *Turandot*, *Pearl Fishers*, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Monteverdi's *Il Combattimento di Tancredi e Clorinda* in a double bill entitled 'Baroque Masterworks'; for Oz Opera, *The Barber of Seville*, *La bohème*, *Carmen*, and *The Magic Flute*; for Opera Queensland he conducted *The Magic Flute* and *The Marriage of Figaro*.

His music theatre repertoire included *Brundibar* (Windmill Performing Arts); the world premiere of Jonathan Mills' *The Ghost Wife* at the Melbourne International Festival of the Arts, Adelaide Festival, Sydney Festival and London Barbican; *Eternity Man* for Sydney Festival; *The World's Biggest Singing Lesson* at the UWA Perth International Arts Festival and *Sing Your Own Opera* at the Melbourne International Festival of the Arts. He also acted as Chairman of the Jury for the ABC/OA Operatunity OZ project 2005/06.

He held several other important posts including Dean of the West Australian Conservatorium of Music (1985-1990) and Director of Chorus at The Australian Opera (1990-1996) and received numerous accolades during the course of his career, including an Order of Australia Medal, the Bernard Heinze Award for Services to Music in Australia, an Honorary Doctorate from the Edith Cowan University of Western Australia for his service to Australian music and musicians, an Hon. Doc. (ACU), and the Australian Music Centre's award for 'Most Distinguished Contribution to the Presentation of Australian Composition by an Individual'. Richard was also the recipient of the prestigious Don Banks Award 2006, presented by the Australia Council and the 2014 APRA Art Music Award for Distinguished Services to Australian Music. .

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