

COCKTAIL HOUR WITH BRENT GRAPES

28 & 29 AUGUST 2026

Utzon Room,
Sydney Opera House



Presenting Partner

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FROM HANDPICKED WINES

Welcome to **Cocktail Hour with Brent Grapes**, the fifth concert in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's *Cocktail Hour with Handpicked Wines* series for 2026.

Handpicked Wines is delighted to be presenting this series, now in its third year, which brings together beautiful music and the exquisite venue that is the Utzon Room at the Sydney Opera House.

Wine and live music are natural companions. Indeed, they have been integral to human ceremony and history for thousands of years: there is evidence of winemaking from 8,000 years ago, while musical instruments have been found dating back 40,000 years!

At Handpicked, we understand the power of passion and artistry. We draw on both technical skill and creative inspiration to craft wines that elevate and enhance experiences, just as the musicians of the Orchestra draw on their expertise and artistry to enrich lives.

The carefully chosen wines, the intimate experience of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra musicians and this riveting music create the perfect combination for a memorable evening.

Handpicked and the Orchestra share values of creativity and technical excellence, which are the hallmark of everything we do. It has been a great pleasure to see our partnership flourish so successfully.

We hope you enjoy the concert and the wines we have selected to accompany this performance.

Peter Dillon
Chief Winemaker
Handpicked Wines



2026 CONCERT SEASON

COCKTAIL HOUR
WITH BRENT GRAPES

BRASS THROUGH THE AGES

Genevieve Lang presenter

Samuel Jacobs horn
David Elton trumpet
Brent Grapes trumpet
Scott Kinmont trombone
Steven Rossé tuba

VERNE REYNOLDS (1926 –2011)
Calls and Echoes (1986)

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906 –1975)
arr. **Scott Kinmont**
24 Preludes and Fugues, Op.87 (1951)
No.15 in D flat major

OSKAR BÖHME (1870–1938)
Sextet for Brass, Op.30 (1911)
i. Adagio ma non tanto — Allegro molto
ii. Scherzo: Allegro vivace
iii. Andante cantabile
iv. Allegro con spirito

Cécile Glémot trumpet

JOAN TOWER (born 1938)
Copperwave (2006)

Friday 28 August, 6pm
Saturday 29 August, 6pm
Cocktail Hour with
Handpicked Wines

Utzon Room,
Sydney Opera House

Estimated duration
The concert will run for
approx. 1 hour, with no interval.

Cover image
By Jay Patel

We acknowledge the Gadigal
people of the Eora Nation,
the traditional custodians of
the land and water on which
we work and perform. We pay
our respects to their Elders
past and present.

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FROM BRENT GRAPES

Welcome to this concert!

Verne Reynolds' *Calls and Echoes* opens the program with music built around musical conversation. Short motifs are exchanged between performers, creating a sense of space, anticipation, and interaction. This idea of musical dialogue continues in the Böhme Brass Sextet, where rich Romantic writing allows each instrument to alternate between soloistic expression and ensemble support. The work celebrates the warmth, lyricism, and virtuosity that brass chamber music can achieve.

Scott Kinmont's arrangement of Shostakovich's fifteenth Prelude and Fugue introduces a different kind of conversation. Here, the contrapuntal texture requires each player to contribute an independent voice while remaining deeply connected to the ensemble. The result is a compelling balance of individuality and collective purpose, demonstrating the precision and sensitivity demanded of chamber musicians.

Joan Tower's *Copperwave* concludes the program with an energetic and contemporary perspective on brass writing. Inspired by the movement and power of waves, the work features constantly shifting textures and rhythmic vitality, challenging performers to communicate with exceptional clarity and responsiveness. It reflects the evolving possibilities of brass chamber music while drawing together the themes of interaction and shared musical energy established throughout the concert.

I have chosen this repertoire because it represents the remarkable versatility of the brass ensemble. Together, these works showcase lyrical expression, contrapuntal complexity, rhythmic vitality, and technical brilliance, while illustrating how communication lies at the heart of successful chamber music.

The program reflects my interest in performing music from different styles and periods, while highlighting the variety and flexibility of brass chamber music.

Brent Grapes
Trumpet



Photo by Jay Patel

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT VERNE REYNOLDS

Verne Reynolds was a storied American performer, composer and teacher. Born in Kansas in 1926, he showed early promise as a violinist, pianist and horn player, but soon chose to concentrate on the horn. He played in Navy bands and studied at the Cincinnati Conservatory from 1946, then at the University of Wisconsin, and would later teach at both schools; on a Fulbright Scholarship he attended the Royal College of Music, London. At the RCM he had some inspiring contact with the legendary horn virtuoso Dennis Brain.

At 20 he joined the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; he was later principal horn of the Rochester Orchestra while teaching for decades at the Eastman School of Music. As a chamber musician he was a founding member of the American Wind Quintet and the Eastman Brass Quintet, a group that strove, as he put it, for 'an integrity and an artistic level that would come as close as we can to the finest string quartets that you can imagine.'

His compositions are mainly for brass and include the magisterial 48 Etudes for Horn (he also published *The Horn Handbook*, based on his teaching methods, in 1996). His music has been described as falling into three periods: '1) influenced by Hindemith (50s and early 60s); (2) twelve-note (late 60s and early 70s); and (3) from the mid-70s, freely using every technique he knows.'

Calls and Echoes was written for two unsuspecting colleagues at the Eastman School, trumpeters Barbara Butler and Charles Geyer, who found this new score waiting for them at work one day in 1984.

The piece does what it says on the tin. Its trajectory takes it from freely atonal, or at least highly chromatic, harmony to a state of complete equilibrium represented by its final unison. It opens with a riot of rapid, angular calls (a short-short-short-long motif featuring triplet plus one quaver), that ricochet from one to the other while avoiding any sense of harmonic gravity. A passage in long notes signals a drop in temperature, with the use of whisper mutes (slightly less quiet than practice mutes) and, sometimes, spatial rearrangements, to create the sense

of distant echoes hanging in the air. The instruments contend and combine again in more rhapsodic music, and the piece reaches a climax on the unstable interval of the tritone, known in simpler times as 'the devil in music'. From here the music gradually becomes more tonally grounded and more suggestive of the big-sky Americana of composers like Copland and his imitators. The opening fanfare motif is now a more 'regular' duple pattern, calling and echoing before the music finds its single goal.

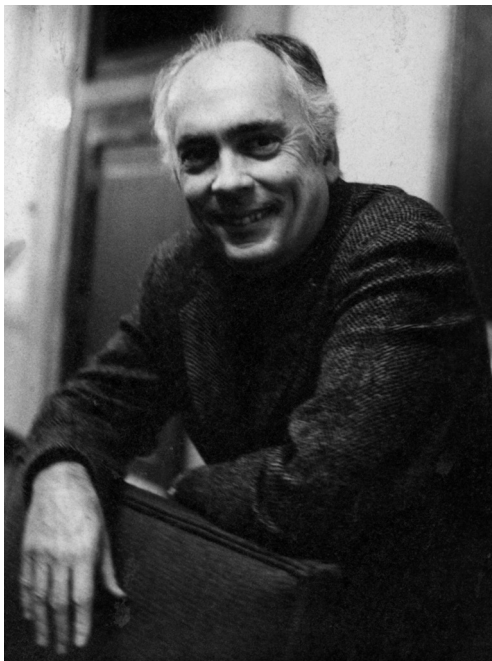


Photo courtesy Eastman School of Music
– University of Rochester.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

SHOSTAKOVICH AND THE PRELUDES AND FUGUES

The political backdrop to Shostakovich's early career was the power struggle between Trotsky and Stalin that began with the death of Lenin in 1922. By the early Thirties the ascendancy of Stalin was complete and in 1934 the purges, or Great Terror, began.

Despite having enjoyed a spectacularly successful two-year run, Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*, was attacked in the pages of *Pravda* in 1936 as 'chaos instead of music' and its composer warned that 'this could all end very badly'. Shostakovich, or the orchestral management in Leningrad, immediately withdrew his demanding Fourth Symphony, a powerfully disturbing behemoth of dissonance and irony. Shostakovich suffered several reversals of fortune: he was denounced in 1936, rehabilitated with the premiere of the Fifth Symphony but denounced again in 1948, despite having been awarded the Stalin Prize in 1940 and the Order of Lenin in 1946.

The 1948 denunciation was for 'formalism', which as Carl Rosman has noted, 'must have struck Shostakovich as yet another of his life's ironies' when, a mere two years later

he found himself on the jury of a Bach piano competition. The bicentenary of Bach's death was widely commemorated on both sides of the Iron Curtain. A celebratory competition in Bach's own home town of Leipzig (then in Soviet-controlled East Germany) saw many performances from that quintessentially formalist collection, *The Well-Tempered Clavier* – in fact two collections of preludes and fugues in all 24 major and minor keys, sometimes known as 'the 48'. Shostakovich was so struck by the artistry of one competitor, Tatiana Nikolaeva, that he composed for her his own cycle of 24 preludes and fugues in all the keys.

[...]

The fifteenth prelude is comparatively straightforward, in the form of a cheery little waltz. It thus contrasts dramatically with the following fugue - marked *ff marcatissimo sempre al fine*, and

featuring a rhythmically irregular subject containing 11 of the 12 available notes of the chromatic scale. Nevertheless, Shostakovich manages to smooth out the contrast a little: the prelude ends with several 'wrong-note' cadences anticipating the fugue's chromaticism, while the prelude's opening rhythm turns up in the midst of the fugue.

Scott Kinmont, who made this arrangement of Shostakovich's Prelude and Fugue, explains that

during the Covid lockdown I 'discovered' the preludes and fugues of Shostakovich, and fell in love with number 15, a boisterous and crazy piece surrounded by many that are deeply personal and introverted. I particularly love the way the carefree, almost sunny prelude won't allow itself to be stifled by darker forces, even sticking its head back up at the end of the tumultuous fugue.

I often feel a bit guilty about the fact that when I hear a piece I try and re-imagine it for a combination of brass, until I read in his Memoirs that Shostakovich did the same thing when hearing a piece, often imagining an ensemble piece for piano – it made me feel better that I suffer from the same affliction as one of my favourite composers, and made me hope that he wouldn't mind so much that I've tried to set this for brass quintet.



Shostakovich photographed at the Bach Celebration in Leipzig, 28 July 1950. Photo by Roger & Renate Rössing.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT OSKAR BÖHME AND THE BRASS SEXTET

In 1934 in the Soviet Union the purges, or Great Terror, began. Within that period (1934-38) were two particularly bloody years which saw the imprisonment and murder of Stalin's principal remaining Party rivals as well as leading scientists, writers and musicians. Shostakovich is said to have kept a packed suitcase in his hallway so as not to disturb his children when the knock at the door came. Absurdly, the effect of the purges was to rob the USSR of millions of its citizens, especially leading intellectuals in most fields, so that by the end of the 1930s the country's infrastructure was almost fatally weakened. But the cruelty was, as they say, the point, and it extended to apolitical individuals like the composer, teacher and brass-player Oskar Böhme, whose only crime was, seemingly, to have been born near the German city of Dresden.

Böhme studied with his father, a distinguished trumpeter in his native Germany, soon becoming a solo cornetist of some renown, and also studied composition in Berlin and Hamburg. He worked for a time in Budapest before arriving in St Petersburg in 1898, where he played in the Mariinsky Theatre's orchestra for nearly twenty years, took Russian citizenship and was named an honorary citizen of the imperial city. After the 1917 revolution, despite his spending two years in a Red Army band, his career declined, first slowly, then all at once; his life ended three years after he had been effectively banished for being 'counter-revolutionary' to Orenburg – some 2200 kilometres from what was by then Leningrad – where he taught until being arrested and 'confessing' in 1938. In October that year he was shot and buried in an unmarked grave.

Böhme's legacy might have entirely disappeared had he not produced one of the most important trumpet concertos of the 19th century, and the extremely attractive Sextet, Op.30. In fact it was only in the 1970s that details of Böhme's early life were pieced together by scholars, and only in 2015 that German journalist Christian Neef confirmed the details of Böhme's exile and murder.



Oskar Böhme

The Sextet for Brass in E flat minor – scored for cornet, two trumpets, bass trumpet, trombone and tuba – was first published in Dresden in 1911 and represents a late-flowering of what we might call the neoclassical stream of Romanticism that includes Brahms and Reger. The piece is in the four movements of a classical chamber work. The first begins with a short, hymnal slow introduction before a deftly worked out sonata design *Allegro molto* which pits a strongly rhythmic first theme against a long lyrical tune which the cornet sings over the top of the texture.

The scherzo is deceptively simple in its seeming lack of counterpoint, but its rhythmic accents and displacements create crisp momentum in contrast to the comic (and contrapuntal) games of the central trio section. The *Andante cantabile* again features the cornet's gleaming melodic line, entwining with other instruments until a climactic chorale-like figure.

The finale (*Allegro spirituosso*) uses the jig-like 6/8 rhythm of many a Mozart rondo, the brass timbre inevitably evoking the sounds of the hunt.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

ABOUT JOAN TOWER AND *COPPERWAVE*

Joan Tower is widely regarded as one of the most important American composers living today. During a career spanning more than sixty years, she has made lasting contributions to musical life in the United States as composer, performer, conductor, and educator. Her works have been commissioned by major ensembles, soloists and orchestras, including the Emerson, Tokyo and Muir quartets; soloists Alisa Weilerstein, Evelyn Glennie, Carol Wincenc, David Shifrin, Paul Neubauer and John Browning; and the orchestras of Chicago, New York, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Nashville, Albany NY and Washington DC among others. Her recent commissioned premieres include the concertos *A New Day* (cello) and *Love Returns* (saxophone), the orchestral *1920/2019*, and the chamber *Into the Night* and String Quartet No. 7.

In 2020 Chamber Music America honoured her with its Richard J Bogomolny National Service Award; *Musical America* chose her to be its 2020 Composer of the Year; in 2019 the League of American Orchestras awarded her its highest honour, the Gold Baton. Tower is the first composer chosen for a Ford Made in America consortium commission of 65 orchestras. Leonard Slatkin and the Nashville Symphony recorded *Made in America* in 2006 (along with *Tambor* and *Concerto for Orchestra*). In 2008 the album collected three Grammy awards: Best Contemporary Classical Composition, Best Classical Album and Best Orchestral Performance. Nashville's latest all-Tower recording includes *Stroke*, which received a Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Classical Composition.

In 1990 she became the first woman to win the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for *Silver Ladders*, a piece she wrote for the St. Louis Symphony where she was Composer-in-Residence from 1985-88. Other residencies with orchestras include a 10-year residency with the Orchestra of St. Luke's (1997-2007) and the Pittsburgh Symphony (2010-11). She was the Albany Symphony's Mentor Composer partner in the 2013-14 season.



Photo by Bernie Mindich

Tower was co-founder and pianist for the Naumburg Award-winning Da Capo Chamber Players from 1970-85. She has received honorary doctorates from Smith College, the New England Conservatory, and Illinois State University. She is Asher B. Edelman Professor in the Arts at Bard College, where she has taught since 1972.

The composer writes:

Copperwave (2006) was commissioned for the American Brass Quintet by the Juilliard School for its centennial celebration. This commission was supported by the Trust of Francis Goelet.

The work is dedicated with great admiration to the distinguished American Brass Quintet.

My father was a geologist and mining engineer and I grew up loving everything to do with minerals and rocks. Copper is a heavy but flexible mineral that is used for many different purposes and most brass instruments are made of copper. The ideas in this piece move in waves, sometimes heavy ones and at other times lighter — also in circles, turning around on the same notes. Occasionally, there is a Latin type of rhythm that appears, which is a reminder of my years growing up in South America where my father was working as a mining engineer.

**Notes by Gordon Kerry © 2026
(Reynolds, Böhm, Shostakovich),
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NV Collection Sparkling Cuvée, Tasmania

A soft and supple wine, it has delicate red fruits from Pinot Noir and some sweet lemon and oyster shell notes from the Chardonnay.

All is balanced with fresh natural acidity and a clean finish. Good length and an abundant fine mousse.



2024 Regional Selections Chardonnay, Yarra Valley

This wine shows why the Yarra Valley is one of the world's premiere Chardonnay regions. Scented with fresh citrus and stone fruit.

This Yarra Valley Chardonnay is bright on the palate, with layers of flavour, creamy texture and a clean finish.



2024 Regional Selections Pinot Gris, Yarra Valley

This dry wine shows off fresh fruity purity of green melon, bosc pear and a touch of honeysuckle.

The palate is bright with minerality and citrus flavours shining through. Length, purity and savoury spice make this wine a classic expression of Yarra Valley Pinot Gris.



2021 Collection Pinot Noir, Yarra Valley

A classic Yarra Valley Pinot Noir combining the drive and precision of the upper Yarra and the weight and flesh of the lower Yarra.

This wine displays lovely perfume and delicate rosehip florals which lead to a palate brimming with concentrated red berry fruits, underlying savoury notes all framed by fine, lithe tannins, delicate acidity and subtle oak.



2024 Trial Batch Syrah Mencia Sangiovese

A concentrated and perfumed wine of length and structured tannins. Aromas of dried herbs, all spice and blackberry.

The palate blends carbonic characters of fresh red and dark fruits with blood orange and Campari, aniseed, and liquorice.

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Producer Artistic Planning
Sarah Thomas
Concert Manager
Ilmar Leetberg
Artist Liaison Manager

Library

Alastair McKean
Head of Library
Victoria Grant, Mary-Ann Mead
Library

BUSINESS SERVICES

Sarah Falzarano
Director of Finance
Daniela Ramirez
Finance Manager
Laura Soutter
Payroll Manager
Jonathan Zaw
IT Manager
Alex Hong
Assistant Accountant
Anel Jansen van Vuuren
Accounts Payable Officer

DEVELOPMENT

Jennifer Drysdale
Director of Development
Rachel Shafran
Development Manager
Benjamin Moh
Head of Corporate Relations
Fleur Griffiths
Head of Philanthropy
Patricia Laksmono
Events Manager
Gabriela Postma
Philanthropy Officer
Alison Eom
Philanthropy Coordinator

LEARNING & ENGAGEMENT

John Nolan
Director of Learning & Engagement
Daniella Garnerio
Program Manager, Schools & Families
Giulian Favrin
*Program Manager, Artist Development
& Public Engagement*
Alice Jarman-Powis
Learning & Engagement Coordinator

MARKETING

Charles Buchanan
Director of Marketing
Alexandra Barlow
Head of Communications & Content

Craig Abercrombie
Content Producer
Elizabeth Arrigo
Communications Manager
Hugh Robertson
Editorial Manager
Brittany Wyper
Social Media Specialist
Tina Ma
Publicity Coordinator
Andrea Reitano
Head of Growth Marketing
Nicola Solomou
Senior Marketing Manager
Katelyn Del Rosario
Digital Marketing Specialist
Amy Zhou
Graphic Designer
Laura Dang
Marketing Coordinator
Lynn McLaughlin
Head of Lifecycle Marketing
Douglas Emery
Senior Marketing Manager & Insights Analyst
Elinor Hillock
Database Specialist
Olivia Georgas
Loyalty Marketing Coordinator

Customer Relations

Adriana Law
Customer Relations Project Manager
Meg Chaseling
Customer Relations Coordinator
Jennifer Calacoci, Milly McPherson
Customer Relations Team Leaders
Maia Jelavic-Cummins
Customer Relations Representative

OPERATIONS & PRODUCTION

Kerry-Anne Cook
Director of Operations & Production
Aeva O’Dea
Operations Manager
Shanell Bielawa, Elissa Seed
Production Managers
Jacinta Dockrill
Deputy Production Manager
Jordan Blackwell, Jess Hughes,
Rory Knott, Matthew Landi,
Harvey Lynn, Ella Tomkins
Production Assistants

ORCHESTRA MANAGEMENT

Aernout Kerbert
Director of Orchestra Management
Brighdie Chambers
Orchestra Manager
Emma Winestone
Deputy Orchestra Manager
Joseph Hourigan
Orchestra Assistant

PEOPLE & CULTURE

Daniel Bushe
Director of People & Culture
Rosie Marks-Smith
Head of Culture & Wellbeing
Keanna Mauch
People & Culture Advisor
Sue Burnet
Work Health & Safety Specialist

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