

**Chandos**

**CHAN 8488**

**VIVALDI**

**Concerto for 4 Violins and Continuo  
in B minor, Op. 3 No. 10 (9:25)**

- 1 I — Allegro (3:29)
- 2 II — Largo/Larghetto (2:25)
- 3 III — Allegro (3:19)

RONALD THOMAS, ROBERT INGRAM,  
BARBARA GILBY, ROBERT COOPER *Violins*

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**Octet for Strings in E flat Op. 20 (32:13)**

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- 8 II — Andante (7:00)
- 9 III — Scherzo (4:31)
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ROBERT INGRAM, ALAN BONDS *Violins*  
BERIAN EVANS, ROBERT HARRIS *Violas*  
GREGORY BARON, CATHERINE FINNIS *Cellos* TT = 60:47

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**CHANDOS RECORDS LTD, LONDON, ENGLAND**

**Chandos**

**DIGITAL**

**THE SOLOISTS OF AUSTRALIA IN CONCERT**

**Volume 1**

VIVALDI: Concerto for 4 Violins Op.3 No.10 HAYDN: Violin Concerto in C major  
MENDELSSOHN: Octet



FESTIVAL OF PERTH

### The Soloists of Australia

|                     |                          |          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| <i>Violins:</i>     | Ronald Thomas — Director | (WA/UK)  |
|                     | Robert Ingram            | (NSW)    |
|                     | Robert Cooper            | (WA)     |
|                     | Paul Wright              | (WA)     |
|                     | Alan Bonds               | (WA)     |
|                     | Graham Wood              | (WA)     |
|                     | Barbara Gilby            | (TAS)    |
| <i>Violas:</i>      | Berian Evans             | (WA)     |
|                     | Robert Harris            | (QLD)    |
| <i>Cellos:</i>      | Gregory Baron            | (WA)     |
|                     | Catherine Finnis         | (NSW)    |
| <i>Double Bass:</i> | John Gray                | (NSW)    |
| <i>Harpsichord:</i> | Linnhe Robertson-Thomas  | (NSW/UK) |
| <i>Timpani:</i>     | David Pye                | (WA)     |

#### A Chandos Digital Recording

Recording Producer and Sound Engineer: Ralph Couzens

Recorded in Perth Concert Hall on February 26 & 27, 1986

With special thanks to the following for their assistance and the provision of facilities:

*Perth Theatre Trust, Australian Broadcasting Corporation*

*Andrew Priest, Vincent Bresland, Bob Jones*

Front cover photograph by David Blenkinsop

Sleeve Design: Christopher Sims

Art Direction: Janet Osborn

### ANTONIO VIVALDI (1685-1741)

#### Concerto for 4 Violins and Continuo in B minor, Op. 3 No. 10

Antonio Vivaldi, born over 300 years ago, was possibly the most prolific of Italy's composers. He wrote at an amazing rate, producing sonatas, operas and much vocal music. His greatest contribution, however, was with the concerto form, writing well over 500 for solo instruments and different combinations of instruments. Most of his concertos were written for a church in his beloved Venice where he was employed as a teacher and orchestral director of a girls' orphanage. The orchestra of the school was at his disposal to experiment with orchestral effects, extend violin technique and write works for performances by the girls.

The concerto for four violins is one of the famous set of 12 concertos published under the collective title '*L'estro armonico*' (almost untranslatable, but roughly meaning 'The Harmonic Fancy'). The publication of these concertos made Vivaldi's reputation in Europe. Bach thought highly enough of them to make keyboard transcriptions of six from the set. No. 10 reveals the high drama combined with lyricism which characterises all the concertos in this set, although in Vivaldi's day this had previously only belonged to the opera house. The concerto opens with an energetic fanfare from two solo violins and solo viola with the main theme alternating throughout with brilliant passage work from all the soloists. The short, highly dramatic and pompous opening of the second movement (Largo) breaks into a contrasting light atmospheric middle length Larghetto section before returning to the original Largo theme. A playful Finale movement follows directly with interchanging phrases between solo violins.



## **JOSEPH HAYDN (1732-1809)**

### **Violin Concerto in C major**

In comparison to the well over a hundred symphonies, sonatas and vocal pieces he wrote, Joseph Haydn is known to have written only four violin concertos (one of which is lost). There are many which were attributed to him but have now been proved not to be authentic. All of the works were written for Luigi Tomasini who had been taken into the same household as Haydn, that of Prince Nicholas Esterhazy, as a valet. Servants of noble houses were often expected to play musical instruments in addition to the regular duties they performed. Haydn recognised the talents of Mr Tomasini and wrote all his violin concertos for him after having him transferred to his orchestra as a full-time concert master.

This concerto, probably written sometime between 1761 and 1765 (when the composer was in his early thirties), encapsulates all the characteristics of Haydn's music (which was to influence Mozart so much) with its fusion of high art and popular art. In the Haydn tradition the concerto begins with a dramatic gesture both from the opening Tutti and the opening violin solo, using a rhythmic theme reminiscent of the Baroque period. The orchestration is simple throughout the concerto and in the second 'Adagio' movement a wonderfully serene effect is created with the orchestral pizzicato beneath an exquisitely expressive melody line from the violin solo. The final movement completes the concerto in a light-hearted dance manner integrating popular elements into the music.

## **FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1808-1847)**

### **Octet for Strings in E flat Op. 20**

Brought up in an intellectual and artistic environment, the young Felix Mendelssohn became used to theatrical performances, literary readings and regular Sunday concerts in his Berlin home, which was the most important

salon in Berlin. It was quite natural, therefore, for the 16-year-old Mendelssohn to write the Octet in E flat for one of the family's closest friends and a regular performer in their home, the violinist Edward Rietz (hence the greater difficulty of the 1st violin part in comparison with other parts). The work was influenced by the classical literature which in turn had an enormous influence on his creative production.

The first movement, with its soaring main theme and rising and falling inner parts, covers an enormous range with its *con fuoco* impulse supplied through the rhythm and dynamics. The first and second movements are highly contrasted with the simple melody of the Andante portraying a folk-song-type quality and interesting polyphony in the variations to follow. The third Scherzo movement is directly indebted to Goethe's final lines of the 'Walpurgisnacht' scene from the first part of Faust. Mendelssohn's sister, Fanny, has written of the Scherzo: 'The lone, shivering tremolando, the lightly flickering mordents, everything is new, strange, and yet so attractive, so sympathetic... one feels so close to the spirit world, so lightly drawn up into the sky, one might even wish for a broomstick, the better to follow the mischievous host.'

The fourth movement reveals Mendelssohn's musical academic studies in the brilliant and difficult eight part fugato. The octet proved to be Mendelssohn's first mature work with its great musical clarity and scholastic adherence to the classical tradition. Throughout his life he loved the work, often playing one of the viola parts himself.

*Linnhe Robertson-Thomas*

**Ronald Thomas**, born in Western Australia in a farming community, has figured prominently as a violinist and director in the British world of music. He left Australia at 17 to study in London and Switzerland, and after winning the Carl Flesch International Competition at 21, embarked on a highly successful career as a soloist, leader and conductor of major British chamber orchestras, including the English Chamber Orchestra, London Mozart Players and the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

In 1979 he was appointed Musical Director of the Bournemouth Sinfonietta,

and under his guidance this lively chamber orchestra reached new heights, particularly in the recording field. Their many recordings include several for Chandos: Britten String Music, Purcell Overtures and Vivaldi's 12 Concertos Op. 8 including *The Four Seasons*. His own group, the New London Soloists Ensemble, has also achieved considerable fame as an ensemble of quality, precision and style.

Apart from his orchestral and concerto work, Ronald Thomas also performs in a Piano & Harpsichord Duo with his wife Linnhe Robertson, and in 1985 he formed a Piano Trio: The Thomas, Wallfisch, Goldstone Trio.

Since leaving Australia in 1958 he has made frequent returns for concerts and broadcasts with the ABC, and in 1986 he returned to Perth as Director of the Soloists of Australia.

### The Soloists of Australia

The exciting birth of this new ensemble, the concept of which is entirely new in Australia, was the mastermind of the Festival of Perth Director David Blenkinsop and the virtuoso violinist and conductor Ronald Thomas.

It is a special orchestra drawn from the most distinguished Australian performers resident within Australia and overseas. The ensemble is not permanent but comes together for festivals and important occasions by invitation only, to perform and record a repertoire that is a lively mix of periods and styles with regular inclusion of centenary Australian works. New works are commissioned whenever possible.

Also available:

### The Soloists of Australia Vol. 2

Music by Bach, Mozart, Elgar,  
Tippett and Brian Howard

ABRD 1208 LP, ABTD 1208 Cassette, CHAN 8498 Compact Disc

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**[DDD]** = digitales Tonbandgerät bei der Aufnahme bei Schnitt und/oder Abmischung, bei der Überspielung

**[ADD]** = analoges Tonbandgerät bei der Aufnahme, digitales Tonbandgerät bei Schnitt und/oder Abmischung und bei der Überspielung

**[AAD]** = analoges Tonbandgerät bei der Aufnahme und bei Schnitt und/oder Abmischung; digitales Tonbandgerät bei der Überspielung

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The Compact Disc Digital Audio System offers the best possible sound reproduction—on a small, convenient sound-carrier unit. The Compact Disc's superior performance is the result of laser-optical scanning combined with digital playback, and is independent of the technology used in making the original recording. This recording technology is identified on the back cover by a three-letter code.

**[DDD]** = digital tape recorder used during session recording, mixing and/or editing, and mastering (transcription).

**[ADD]** = analogue tape recorder used during session recording; digital tape recorder used during subsequent mixing and/or editing and during mastering (transcription).

**[AAD]** = analogue tape recorder used during session recording and subsequent mixing and/or editing; digital tape recorder used during mastering (transcription).

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If you follow these suggestions, the Compact Disc will provide a lifetime of pure listening enjoyment.

Le système Compact Disc Digital Audio permet la meilleure reproduction sonore possible à partir d'un support de son de format réduit et pratique. Les remarquables performances du Compact Disc sont le résultat de la combinaison unique du système numérique et de la lecture laser optique, indépendamment des différentes techniques appliquées lors de l'enregistrement. Ces techniques sont identifiées au verso de la couverture par un code à trois lettres:

**[DDD]** = utilisation d'un magnétophone numérique pendant les séances d'enregistrement, le mixage et/ou le montage et la gravure

**[ADD]** = utilisation d'un magnétophone analogique pendant les séances d'enregistrement, utilisation d'un magnétophone numérique pendant le mixage et/ou le montage et la gravure

**[AAD]** = utilisation d'un magnétophone analogique pendant les séances d'enregistrement et le mixage et/ou le montage, utilisation d'un magnétophone numérique pendant la gravure.

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**[ADD]** = sta ad indicare l'uso del registratore analogico durante le sedute di registrazione, e del registratore digitale per il successivo mixing e/o editing e per la masterizzazione.

**[AAD]** = riguarda l'uso del registratore analogico durante le sedute di registrazione e per il successivo mixing e/o editing, e del registratore digitale per la masterizzazione.

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**Chandos**

CHAN 8488

# THE SOLOISTS OF AUSTRALIA IN CONCERT Volume I



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This recording has been made possible  
by the generous sponsorship of the  
following organisations:

**Festival of Perth**

**Utah Foundation**

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DDD



**FESTIVAL OF PERTH**

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