



A message from Emma E. Dunch, Incoming Chief Executive Officer of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra

As the incoming Chief Executive Officer of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra next January and an out, gay leader, I am proud to express my personal and professional commitment to advancing equality and inclusion for the LGBTQIA community, and to affirm my unflinching support for marriage equality. I believe that same-sex marriage is inevitable in Australia, and that this outcome is right and just.

Over the weekend, I have joined the SSO's musicians, staff, and Board members in discussions that have helped clarify the organization's position in support of marriage equality in Australia. I deeply appreciate the thoughtfulness that has been brought to bear throughout a respectful and nuanced dialogue. I know that there are very diverse views across Australia on this issue, and I respect the Board's commitment to encouraging every Australian to develop his or her own opinion, and to vote.

For me, personally, this is about more than my own identity. I believe that our society and its institutions are made stronger and more vibrant by the diversity of the individuals who people them. And I believe that denying those of us in same-sex relationships the civil rights accorded the married is the antithesis of the Aussie "fair go" and perpetuates profound inequality. I hope that my home country will soon be one that validates my committed relationship of 17 years.

Artists and their art have long played an important role in challenging accepted norms. I am committed to leading a Sydney Symphony Orchestra that champions its exceptional musicians, serves Sydneysiders in new ways, and provides value to our city beyond traditional concert-giving. I hope that you will join me and my colleagues on that journey, confident that the Sydney Symphony Orchestra will continue to welcome and support our LGBTQIA community and be an organization that strives to foster respectful, meaningful dialogue around complex issues.

After nearly two decades in New York City, I will be returning home to Sydney with my life partner, Elizabeth Scott (above left). We have been gratified by the terrifically warm welcome we have received from the SSO's Board, staff and musicians. We look forward to making new friends when we arrive next year and to proudly counting ourselves among the many Australians who support a fair and inclusive society for all.

#VoteYes #LoveIsLove @sydneysymphony @dunchnyc