

# HELPMANN AWARDS

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Live Performance Australia (LPA) is honoured to announce Richard Tognetti AO, as the recipient of the 2017 JC Williamson Award®.

Australian violinist, conductor and composer Richard Tognetti was born in Canberra and raised in Wollongong. He has established an international reputation for his compelling performances and artistic individualism.

He began his studies in his home town with William Primrose, then with Alice Waten at the **Sydney Conservatorium**, and Igor Ozim at the **Bern Conservatory**, where he was awarded the Tschumi Prize as the top graduate soloist in 1989. Later that year he led several performances of the **Australian Chamber Orchestra**, and that November was appointed as the Orchestra's lead violin and, subsequently, Artistic Director. Under Richard's leadership, the orchestra has earned a reputation as one of the leading chamber orchestras in the world. He was Artistic Director of the **Festival Maribor** in Slovenia from 2008 to 2015.

Richard performs on period, modern and electric instruments and his numerous arrangements, compositions and transcriptions have expanded the chamber orchestra repertoire and been performed throughout the world. As director or soloist, he has appeared with the **Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment**, the **Academy of Ancient Music**, **Slovenian Philharmonic Orchestra**, **Handel & Haydn Society** (Boston), **Hong Kong Philharmonic**, **Camerata Salzburg**, **Tapiola Sinfonietta**, **Irish Chamber Orchestra**, **Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg**, **Nordic Chamber**

**Orchestra** and all of the Australian symphony orchestras, most recently as soloist and director with the **MSO** and **TSO**. Richard also performed the Australian premieres of *Ligeti's Violin Concerto* and *Lutosławski's Partita*. In November last year, he was London's Barbican Centre's first Artist-in-Residence at **Milton Court Concert Hall**.

Richard was co-composer of the score for Peter Weir's *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World*, starring Russell Crowe; he co-composed the soundtrack to Tom Carroll's surf film *Storm Surfers*; and created *The Red Tree*, inspired by Shaun Tan's book. He also created the documentary film *Musica Surfica*, as well as *The Glide*, *The Reef*, and *The Crowd*.

In 2015, Richard celebrated 25 years as Artistic Director of the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Richard was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2010. He holds honorary doctorates from three Australian universities and was made a National Living Treasure in 1999.

He performs on a 1743 Guarneri del Gesù violin, lent to him by an anonymous Australian private benefactor.

Andrew Kay AM said "The JC Williamson Award is presented in recognition of a longstanding contribution to the live performance industry and is bestowed on an individual who has made a truly outstanding contribution to the enrichment of Australia's live performance culture and shaped the future of the industry for the better.

As the esteemed Artistic Director of Australian Chamber Orchestra for the past 27 years and an award winning violinist, Richard exemplifies the spirit of this Award.

Richard was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for his service to music through leadership of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, as an internationally acclaimed violinist, through the development and promotion of educational programs for children, support for emerging artists and contributions to charitable organisations."

Richard Tognetti AO said "It came as a big surprise to be nominated for this award. I thought this award was for luminaries and I don't consider myself one of those. I was 10 years old and living in Wollongong when the Australian Chamber Orchestra was cleaved by John Painter and company out of the rock face of what was then the collection of ABC orchestras. The ACO was created with the purpose of giving musicians control over their musical destiny – just 13 of them in the beginning. And now, 42 years later, there are 17 of us and I have been fortunate enough to be Artistic Director of this

remarkable group of musicians since 1990. I consider this an award to all my colleagues, not just at the ACO but my many and diverse collaborators over the years.”

**The JC Williamson Award will be officially presented to Richard at the 17th annual Helpmann Awards on Monday 24 July at the Capitol Theatre in Sydney.**



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