



Amy Dickson

Saxophone

"Amy Dickson, a player of distinction and strong musical intelligence"
International Record Review

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Named the UK's Young Australian of the Year 2016 and Grammy™ nominated twice, British-Australian Sony Artist, Amy Dickson, made history by becoming the first saxophonist to win a Classic Brit Award and the first ever Australian to win the Mastercard Breakthrough Artist of the Year award. This followed the release of her third album, *Dusk and Dawn*, which attained the coveted No. 1 position in the UK Classical Album Charts. Recognised widely for her remarkable, distinctive tone and exceptional musicality, Gramophone has described her as "a player with a difference who has an individual and unusual tone, luscious, silky-smooth, sultry and voluptuous by turns; her phrasing is beautifully finished, her control of dynamic infinitely subtle."

Now based in London, Amy Dickson was born in Sydney, Australia and began musical studies at the age of two, taking her first saxophone lesson aged six. She made her concerto debut at 16, and on her 18th birthday made her first recording as soloist with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. That year she moved to London to study at the Royal College of Music, and then at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam. She was recipient of the James Fairfax Australian Young Artist of the Year award and has won a string of major competitions including the Gold Medal at the Royal Overseas League Competition, the Symphony Australia Young Performer of the Year Competition and the Prince's Prize. No saxophonist had ever won any of these titles before.

At the beginning of 2018, Amy world premiered the new saxophone concerto by Sir James MacMillan with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Joseph Swensen. Her performances and the subsequent BBC broadcast met with great acclaim. She will be premiering the concerto world-wide, recording it with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and touring the work in the UK with Aurora Orchestra in 2019.

Forthcoming world premieres include new saxophone concerti by Matthew Hindson and Lachlan Skipworth.

In 2016 Amy was a Judge for the BBC Young Musician Final. Amy has always been passionate about music education and always tries to combine art with well-being when visiting schools or hospices. In 2017 she launched her own primary schools programme called "Take a Breath" in the UK and in Australia. The "Take a Breath" programme helps equip young children in their formative years with simple yet invaluable techniques to encourage them how to breathe properly. The idea is that they carry some simple breathing exercises with them into their teenage years where they could provide useful support when dealing with situations that may cause pupils stress and anxiety, such as preparing for impending examinations.

Taking her obsession with breath one step further, and passionate about sharing contemporary music with a wider audience, Amy recently premiered her first "Take a Breath" recital, a multimedia solo project in which short films (filmmaker David Donnelly) conveying chapters in the human musical relationship with breath are interwoven with performances of works by contemporary classical composers. Amy is now working on creating the Take a Breath Family Concert and the Take a Breath multimedia concert with Orchestra.

As an internationally regarded soloist Amy performs throughout the world with many of the great orchestras and in recent seasons has performed at the Royal Albert Hall, Sydney Opera House and the Konzerthaus, Vienna. In North America she has performed with the Phoenix Symphony and Louisville Orchestra among others. As a highly sought-after chamber musician she has performed in prestigious series, in venues including the Berliner Philharmonie, the Wigmore Hall, and at the Enescu Festival. She regularly appears at international chamber music festivals where she has worked with the Chilingirian, Goldner and Mandelring string quartets.

Musical partners have included Piers Lane, Catherine Milledge, Lavinia Meyer, Tine Thing Helseth, William Barton, Colin Currie, Daniel de Borah, Simon Mulligan, Martin Cousin, Kathy Stott, Huw Watkins and Danny Driver. As a proud ambassador of Australian culture she has performed for heads of state at the Scottish and Australian Parliaments; in various Australian Embassies, High Commissions and Government Houses; at St James' Palace, London; and at diplomatic meetings including the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings in Malta (2005) and Perth (2011).

In 2015 Amy gave her Latitude Festival debut, returned to the BBC Prom in the Park stage and toured with the Scottish Ensemble. The Herald Scotland commented "I have never heard saxophone playing so seductive and alluring. The Australian lass is a magician, whose playing elevated the music in her hands to a stature where one could only be beguiled..."

Amy thrives on the diverse repertoire possibilities the saxophone can straddle and continually seeks to explore new genres. As a Sony Classical recording artist Amy Dickson has released seven albums on the label which showcase a diverse repertoire highlighting the versatility of her musicianship and the varied capabilities of the saxophone. See "Recordings".

Whilst proving to be a brilliant interpreter of contemporary music, she is equally devoted as a champion of established saxophone repertoire, regularly performing the concerti of Glazunov, Debussy, Villa Lobos, Ibert, Larsson, Dubois and Milhaud, as well as those of Turnage, Adams, Higdon, Birtwistle, Williams, Glass, Sculthorpe, Torke and Kancheli.

Amy's repertoire is strongly influenced by her passion for new music. She is deeply committed to the development of new repertoire for the saxophone and has made a substantial contribution to the concerto, chamber and solo repertoire. She has premiered new works for saxophone and orchestra or chamber ensemble and is a regular collaborator with today's leading composers. Amy has worked with composers including James MacMillan, Peter Sculthorpe, Huw Watkins, Steve Martland, Graham Fitkin, Graham Koehne, Martin Butler, Brett Dean, Cecilia McDowall and Timothy Salter. She has formed a particularly close musical relationship with Ross Edwards and their collaboration has led to the creation of a number of important works for the saxophone. His concerto Full Moon Dances was premiered in 2012 and since then has been toured extensively. His arrangement for Amy of his oboe concerto, Bird Spirit Dreaming, was given its first performance in 2011. Frog & Star Cycle, the new double concerto for saxophone and percussion by Ross Edwards was premiered in July 2016 to standing ovations and five-star reviews at the Sydney Opera House by Amy Dickson, Colin Currie and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra.

Amy is honoured and delighted to be affiliated with the Australian Childrens' Music Foundation in Australia, and Children & The Arts in the United Kingdom. She is thrilled to have been able to witness the passionate and dedicated efforts of the staff, and experience the inspiring discovery of music by the children with whom they work.

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